

Capitol Region Council of Governments

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRCOG Announces Active Transportation Initiative

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) announces the kickoff event for its Active Transportation Initiative: a **Public Input Session** will be held **Thursday, November 8, 2007, from 6 to 8 PM, at Union Station in downtown Hartford.** The public is invited to attend and share their thoughts on how to develop a walkable and bikeable region.

Active transportation is travel powered by human energy, and walking and biking are the most common means of active transportation. To encourage more walking and biking, communities must create active transportation systems – seamless networks of accessible trails, sidewalks and on-road bike facilities. Why invest in active transportation? Increased mobility, improved public health, economic development, cleaner environment and enhanced community are just some of the benefits of active transportation systems.

CRCOG has created the Active Transportation Initiative to examine the existing conditions for walking and bicycling in our region and to develop a plan to make the region bike and pedestrian friendly. Building upon existing bicycle and pedestrian plans, the Active Transportation Initiative will 1) Create the vision for a Walkable Bikeable region, 2) Make the case for a Walkable and Bikeable region, and 3) Define how to move the Vision to reality.

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The Initiative includes a wide range of stakeholders who understand the benefits of enabling more people to walk and bicycle for regular transportation:

Troyen Brennan, MD, Aetna's Chief Medical Officer, notes, "As a parent, as a physician in the health benefits industry, and as a bicyclist myself, I recognize the importance of having a transportation system that enables individuals to be active in their daily lives. Any measures we can take locally to get people more active are important for individual health and for the health of our region. Inactivity can impact quality of life, in addition to medical costs and lost productivity. I personally know the benefits of an active lifestyle, and I also know that much needs to be done to enable more people to walk and bicycle. Aetna is pleased to be a partner in the Active Transportation Initiative, and we invite other businesses and individuals throughout the region to get involved."

Dr. Ed Johnson, Senior Vice President of Saint Francis Hospital is working with the Active Transportation Initiative because, "Having a walkable and bikeable community is essential to the health of the community. We already have a program within our organization that encourages our employees to be more active to maintain their health. We support this initiative which will enable more people throughout the region to get outside walking and bicycling and enjoying life."

Lyle Wray, Executive Director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments recognizes the importance of bicycling and walking as elements of a balanced transportation system. "There is no question that with a commitment to providing safe biking and walking facilities we can encourage more people to get out of their cars to walk and to bike to get where they need to go. The fuel savings, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and reductions in traffic make this kind of investment worthwhile."

The Active Transportation Initiative will be completed in February 2008, with the plan for making the region walkable and bikeable to be released at that time.

The Public Input Session for the Active Transportation Initiative will be held:

Thursday, November 8

6 to 8 PM

Union Station, downtown Hartford

(Parking will be validated, bring in your parking stub.)

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for more information:

Additional information at www.crcog.org