



**NAUGATUCK VALLEY
COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS**

49 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, CT 06702 • 203-757-0535 • 203-735-8688 • nvcogct.gov

**MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments and Central Naugatuck Valley MPO
Friday, January 16, 2025**

This meeting may be viewed on the NVCOG YouTube channel: [CNVMPO-NVCOG MEETING - January 2026](#)

COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING (Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call)

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10 a.m. by Chair Pete Hess. All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance, and the roll was called.

NVCOG CEOs/Reps:

In person: N. Warren “Pete” Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; Frank Tyszka, Mayor, Ansonia; Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Mayor, Bristol; Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager, Cheshire; Jennifer Mahr, First Selectwoman, Middlebury; George Temple, First Selectman, Oxford; David Sekorski, Mayor, Plymouth; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Mark Lauretti, Mayor, Shelton; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott; Paul Zulpa, First Selectman, Woodbury.

Remote: Joseph DiMartino, Mayor, Derby; Annmarie Drugonis, First Selectwoman, Seymour; Mark Raimo, Town Manager, Watertown

GUESTS: Chris Bernier, DEMHS; Ellen Graham (Blumenthal).

NVCOG Staff: Executive Director Rick Dunne, Drew Baklik, Trish Bauer, Desira Blanchard, Patricia Bruder, Aaron Budris, Demetre Coles, Heidy Coronel, Richard Crowther, Rich Donovan, Thomas Dougherty, Kevin Ellis, Lana Harrison, Shahadat Hossein, Mark Nielsen, Molly Johnson, Anthony Lagana, Timothy Nolan, Eyitayo Olaleye, Christine O’Neill, Inez Ortiz, Kate Pipa, Emely Ricci, Joanna Rogalski, Craig Stevenson, Nicole Sullivan, Michael Szpryngel, Danny Thomas, Faith Thurmond, Savannah-Nicole Villalba.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – JANUARY 2026 THROUGH DECEMBER 2027

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee met Thursday, January 15th and agreed to recommend a proposed slate of officers and at-large representative members of the NVCOG Executive Committee for the period of January 2026 through December 2027, as follows:

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Chair: N. Warren "Pete" Hess, Naugatuck
Vice-Chair: Mark Laretti, Shelton
Treasurer: Paul Pernerewski, Waterbury
Secretary: Robert Chatfield, Prospect

At-Large Executive Committee members:
Thomas Dunn, Wolcott
George Temple, Oxford
Annmarie Drugonis, Seymour
Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Bristol
Richard Sileo, Thomaston

Election of NVCOG Slate of 4 Officers and 5 At-Large Members of the Executive Committee

Gerry Smith MOVED to approve the recommended Slate of Officers and At-Large representative members of the Executive Committee for the period of January 2026 through December 2027; SECONDED by Andrew Martelli. Motion carried unanimously.

CNVMPO MEETING

2025-2028 TIP Amendments – Projects # 0096-0212, 0171-0535

Rich Donovan explained that Project 0096-0212 is a drainage asset study along I-84 covering Middlebury and Southbury in our region. Project 0171-0535 is for traffic control signals throughout District 1 – in our region, both are in Wolcott.

George Temple MOVED to adopt CNVMPO Resolution 2026-05; SECONDED by Jennifer Mahr. Motion carried unanimously.

NVCOG ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Minutes for Approval

Annmarie Drugonis MOVED to accept the 12-19-2025 meeting minutes; SECONDED by Frank Tyszka. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report for the period ending 11-30-2025

Michael Szpryngel explained that this report indicates the agency is five months through the fiscal year. We are 38% budget to actual due to unfilled positions we are working on filling. The net position is \$136,000 with a cash balance of a little over \$4 million. Expense, G&A budget to actual is about 33 percent. There have been no unexpected funding cuts. There are several grant applications and fee for

service contracts pending for the upcoming fiscal years. The year two funds from NOAA in the amount of \$10.7 million for the Kinneytown Dam project have not yet been released.

Bob Chatfield MOVED to accept the financial report for the period ending 11-30-2025; SECONDED by Paul Zulpa. Motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report

Rick Dunne discussed the following items from the 01-15-2026 Executive Committee meeting.

Audit RFQ

The Audit Committee authorized issuance of an RFQ for an auditor to be published starting 01-21-2026. The proposed schedule is as follows: The Audit Committee will meet sometime in the week of February 23-27 to review and discuss any RFQs received. Virtual interviews will be conducted in the week of March 9-14. The Audit Committed will meet again in the week of March 15-20 to discuss and make a selection.

FY 2027 Preliminary Budget and Dues Estimates

The Executive Committee adopted the preliminary budget estimates and issuance of annual dues notices. The second half of the hazardous mitigation \$2,600 match will not be billed until 2028. The first half was billed and paid for last year. There will be a proposed 3% budget increase in dues. The full board adopts the final budget in May or June, typically after we receive the State budget.

Housing Act discussion

Savannah-Nicole Villalba has been working with the Housing Working Group of the Connecticut COGs to put together the full analysis as to how this impacts the towns, what they need to do and when they need to do it. Rick reviewed the first things that will be coming up – the Summary Review going into effect on July 1st. NVCOG strongly advises the CEOs to work with their commissions to get their rules updated so they're able to deal with summary review applications as they come in.

Savannah-Nicole distributed and reviewed the actual statutory language (annotated) of the summary review and the parking requirements.

Rick explained that It is NVCOG's hope that all the towns join the regional plan, because that's where we'll be able to provide the towns with the most assistance. Plymouth, Bristol, Ansonia, Naugatuck, and Waterbury are designated ANGEL communities by OPM. SN's team will be working to develop and submit the plan from now until it is due in 2029.

SN reviewed the definition key considerations of the Summary Review – Section 17 of Special Session Public Act 25-1. She reviewed the definitions and requirements included in Section 16 and noted that municipalities that comply with the optional provision in Section 16 get the incentive of additional unit equivalent points toward an 8-30g moratorium.

She discussed the ambiguity of Section 16 and the two different ways the Housing Group views it. Hopefully it will be clarified, but it has not been clarified yet.

Rick explained that the COG directors are looking into using some of the money the State has given them to hire a single consultant to write an analysis and model regulations to send to the municipal commissions. The municipalities will receive support from the COG in trying to develop language that gives them the most control as a community. The COGs believe there will be a fixed bill to clarify some of these things in the upcoming session.

The Working Group is very close to completing its work. SN explained that they believe their legislative summary will be out before February. They went through a very rigorous review where, at the end of the process, at least four COGs have affirmed each section that's been reviewed. It's organized by municipal actions, what you're required to do, what's optional for you to do, and then fiscal considerations. We're also including additional areas that you need to know about and where you may need to spend money. We are identifying the areas where we can provide technical assistance. Desira Blanchard is providing the design for us, so NVCOG is playing a strong role in leading here.

Rick added that NVCOG is working with the other COGs to hold training sessions for the commissions and any CEOs that want to participate, on the bill and how to implement it.

SN then reviewed the Minimum Parking Requirements in Section 18. This is another July 1 deadline. This prohibits zoning regulations from requiring a minimum number of off-street motor vehicle parking spaces for any residential development with exceptions articulated in Section 19 of the Act. It also makes modifications regarding manufactured homes.

Section 19 provides two exceptions. The first is that a municipality can require minimum parking for residential developments of 17+ units but must allow a developer to submit a Parking Needs Assessment. She stressed that the Parking Needs Assessment is paid for by the developer. Municipalities should make sure that their regulations contain the requirement that third-party reviews are to be paid for by the developer. If it is not in there, they should add it as soon as practicable.

The other exception is that a municipality can establish up to two Conservation and Traffic Mitigation Districts that can require parking for any residential developments under 16 units. Developers can still submit Parking Needs Assessments, and if they do, the municipality must condition the approval on the lesser of the same criteria for parking for residential developments of 17+.

Section 19 spells out new rejection criteria. Municipalities must not reject an application solely based on failure to meet off-street parking requirements unless the lack of parking will have a "specific adverse impact" on public health and safety which cannot be mitigated through approval conditions that have no substantial impact on the viability of such development.

Rick commended SN on the work that she's doing along with her Community Planning Team and that of the entire CTCOG working group.

The slides will be sent out to the CEOs.

NVCOG Legislative Position – CGS Section 8-30g – 2026 Legislative Session

Rick explained that another action came out of the Executive Committee meeting; it was a unanimously approved motion to recommend to the full board to adopt a position to advocate for the General Assembly moratorium of Section 8-30g until such time as regional housing growth plans are effective under Special Session Public Act 25-1.

The recommendation is that this body take a position that until the housing growth plans are in place, and we understand all the rules of how everything's working, that acceptance of 8-30g applications be suspended.

NVCOG Legislative Position – CGS Section 8-30g – 2026 Legislative Session

Amend CGS Section 8-30g to place a moratorium upon municipal zoning appeals, until such time as Regional Housing Growth Plans are effective under SS PA-25-1.

Purpose:

To support the logical and sensible implementation of SS PA 25–1 and appropriately implement the goals of that law to build more housing as quickly as possible in places and zones that make sense for the state's housing and job markets, the regions and Connecticut's municipalities.

This will be shared with all the other COGs in the State and will be sent to Brian O'Connor at CCM and Betsy Garrett at COST to lead on this issue at the General Assembly. It will be sent to our own advocate in Hartford and all the Legislators – the entire delegation.

Rich Sileo asked that the position statement is sent to the CEOs so they can speak directly with their legislators about it.

Gerry Smith MOVED TO adopt this position as part of our 2026 legislative agenda; SECONDED by Rich Sileo. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director's Contract

Rick reported that the Executive Committee and he have entered into an agreement for his employment for another five years. This contract will take us out through 2031. He expressed his appreciation to the Executive Committee for their confidence and for entering into this agreement. He looks forward to transitioning the agency to new leadership over the next five years with the same type of high service the agency provides to the municipalities.

NVCOG Relocation

Mike reported that at NVCOG's new space at One Exchange Place, demolition is finished and framing and electrical are underway.

There will be a status meeting next week focused on improving the timeline. We need to get some wiring work done while the walls are open. Staff is working on packing up here and getting everything transitioned over to the new address. The construction team is moving very quickly, and we should have control of the space sometime in March.

Rick advised the CEOs that while we are still meeting at 49 Leavenworth, their City parking placards are ready. Once we're in the building there may be a different parking arrangement.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

[Introduction to Community Planning at NVCOG](#) (starts approximately at position 1:20:00 on the YouTube recording)

The Community Planning Team: Savannah-Nicole ("SN") Villalba, AICP II, AZT, Community Planning Director; Lana Harrison, Senior Community Planner; Emely Ricci, Community Planner II; Demetre Coles, Housing and Community Planner. Community Planning has two vacancies – one is for a Senior Community Planner and the other is for a Senior Housing and Community Planner.

SN provided a high-level overview of the Community Planning Division. This division focuses on providing high-quality technical support, legislative analyses and education and training, on all things Land Use, Housing, and Comprehensive Planning. It serves municipal staff, boards and commissions, and the broader community. She provided a few examples of the support that is offered to the member municipalities. Regional plans and projects were discussed.

NVCOG can offer Comprehensive Planning services to a limited number of municipalities at a time. Our first collaboration was with the Town of Thomaston, and we are very close to a contract with Plymouth. We're in talks with two other communities about facilitating their POCD processes. Until we fill those vacancies, we do not have the capacity currently in house.

In 2021, we believe, NVCOG was the first to establish a Housing Program. We plan to provide a variety of programming that we'll make sure municipalities are adequately noticed about. We do a lot of work in helping municipalities with 8-30g and are becoming more proficient in the moratorium process. We can help with various planning efforts such as a housing needs assessment, or some affordable housing planning. Our affordable housing plan offerings are going to change to reflect the new legislation and Special Act. We are committed to supporting municipalities who opt into the regional process and achieving compliance under the new Special Act. We are also prepared to provide technical assistance when it comes to the new Housing Bill.

We are statutorily required to review certain land use decisions. Emely Ricci runs our Referrals Program. We provide an annual Land Use Referrals Summary that shows the trends of the types of referrals we receive. She will provide a report later in the meeting.

We are working on the region's first Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. We strongly encourage you, if you do not have a representative, to please appoint one. We need someone to

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participate from all 19 municipalities in our region. Cheshire's Assistant Town Manager, Andrew Martelli, chairs the RPOCD Steering Committee, which meets next on Tuesday, January 27th in Beacon Falls.

Special Session PA 25-1 will significantly change what regional housing looks like for us. We will be working on a regional housing needs assessment, a developable land analysis and inventory, and regional housing growth plan. More details will come about those things as we continue to move through these processes. NVCOG is ready to meet the challenge.

Referrals Update

Emely Ricci reported that NVCOG is statutorily required to review zoning referrals, subdivision referrals, and POCD referrals. We prepare a bi-monthly referral report summarizing referrals received and reviewed by NVCOG. This month's report covering the period of 11/1 through 12/31/2026 was included in the meeting packet and sent to CEOs and Land Use staff via email. Previous reports may be found on the NVCOG website under the Community Planning project page.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Emergency Management Update

Drew Baklik reported that the Homeland Security Grant Program and Emergency Management Planning Grant funds for 2025 have not yet been accepted by the State of Connecticut due to pending litigation between the State and Federal Government.

He announced staffing changes at the CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. After 37 years of State service, DEMHS Deputy Commissioner Brenda Bergeron will be retiring effective February 1st. There is a brand-new Recovery, Mitigation and Resilience Unit being led by Zachary Smith, who previously worked for FEMA. John Field, who previously was the Region 5 Coordinator for us, has moved on to a different position in a local municipality. We are joined today by Chris Bernier, who is John's replacement.

Chris thanked Drew and introduced himself. Region 5 is made up of 43 municipalities in the northwest part of the State and includes 13 of the 19 NVCOG municipalities. He looks forward to working with everyone.

NVC EDD Update

Drew reported that funding is available for the FY25 Economic Development Association Disaster Supplemental Grant Program. NVCOG Staff is working to identify potential projects directly related to the flooding from August 18 and 19, 2024, and items that potentially prevent things like that from happening in the future. We're looking at things we have already put together and are submitting for the Climate Resilience Funding, and also our Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and other plans we've put

together, that may be of interest to you locally. We are considering putting together a regional application and will consider that based on the level of interest.

CEDS report

NVCOG Staff has met with most of the CEOs and/or their local Economic Development professionals or Commission members to talk about the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) report. We have learned a lot from those preliminary meetings and are working on a draft report. The first meeting of the Strategic Advisory Board will be held in February.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

State Local Bridge Program Lunch & Learn

Kevin Ellis reported that on January 21st there will be a State Local Bridge Program Lunch & Learn. The guest speaker will be Andrew Shields, Project Engineer from DOT. If you have any local bridges in your municipality that need to be improved or updated in the next couple of years, the State Local Bridge Program is a great place to look for a funding source.

ROUNDTABLE

Rick Dunne explained that we have deviated from our regular meeting format to give a presentation from each of the Divisions. Next month we'll hear about Kinneytown Dam, Environmental Planning, and Mapping, Data and Technology. We'll be returning to our normal format after that, which is an external presenter at the beginning of the meeting, and a brief report from each of the divisions.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 11:45 a.m., Tom Dunn MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Frank Tyszka. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Bruder
Executive Administrative Clerk

Attachment:

CNVMPD Resolution 2026-05 – TIP Amendments – Projects 0096-0212, 0171-0535

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**CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY
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CNVMPO RESOLUTION 2026-05

AMENDMENT

**FFY 2025-2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY MPO**

WHEREAS, the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO is authorized by the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)* and related US Department of Transportation regulations to prepare, endorse, and periodically amend a short-range Transportation Improvement Program for the 15-town MPO within the Waterbury Urbanized Area and is required to maintain a fiscally constrained program of priority projects; and

WHEREAS, the CNVMPO endorsed the *FFY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for the Central Naugatuck Valley Planning Region (TIP)* at its April 19, 2024, meeting; and the US Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) have approved the *State FFY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*; and

WHEREAS, the projects within the TIP are being changed by the project sponsors in the way demonstrated on the attached sheets; and


WHEREAS, the proposed projects have been reviewed for compliance with air quality conformity, and either are exempted under federal legislation or have been found in compliance; and

WHEREAS, the public notification and review of these amendments was consistent with and followed the procedures set forth in the MPO’s public involvement guidelines, the proposed changes were posted for public review and comment to the EcoInteractive Portal for the CNVMPO prior to consideration, and the proposed amendments are consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Central Naugatuck Valley planning region;

BE IT RESOLVED that Central Naugatuck Valley MPO approves the amendments of projects 0096-0212 and 0171-0535 as demonstrated in the attached sheets of the FFY 2025-2028 TIP.

This resolution shall become effective as of January 16, 2026.

I do hereby certify that the resolution was adopted by the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO at a public meeting held on January 16, 2026, at which a quorum was present and that the same is a correct and true transcript from the original thereof.



N. Warren "Pete" Hess, Chair

January 16, 2026
Date

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