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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**

Emily J. (Moos) Hultquist, AICP  
CCAPA President,  
Senior Planner and Policy Analyst  
(860) 522-2217 ext. 219  
Capitol Region Council of Governments

**The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association Announces  
2013 Award Recipients for Outstanding Planning Efforts in Connecticut**

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) recently announced its annual award recipients for outstanding planning efforts in the State of Connecticut. Award winners were recognized at the CCAPA annual luncheon on December 6, 2013 at the Inn at Middletown in Middletown. Awards were given out in five different categories: Innovative Plan, Education and Outreach, Implementation, and Physical Planning. In addition, an award was given out to an individual planner for his contributions to the field: the Bruce Hoben Distinguished Service Award. Descriptions of the award recipients are as follows:

**INNOVATIVE PLAN AWARD: Norwich Plan of Conservation and Development**

The innovation that the Awards Committee specifically recognized in this project is the use of locational guides rather than a "Future Land Use Plan." Norwich is the first community in Connecticut to integrate the state's approach into local planning. The plan was also recognized for its emphasis on implementation, with a section to support policy guidance and implementation. Plans are intended to be communications tools while providing thoughtful approaches to balancing the forces of conservation of resources and development of land. By focusing on the geographic aspects of desirable policies for the City, this plan provides outstanding graphics to communicate the connection between places and policies.

**INNOVATIVE PLAN AWARD: Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency,  
2013-2023 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development**

Like municipalities, Connecticut's regional planning organizations must adopt a regional Plan of Conservation and Development (RPOCD) every ten years. Instead of using the conventional starting point of completing a build out analysis, CCRPA decided to take a new approach and focus on sustainable land use. Embracing form-based and performance zoning, the CCRPA took a hybrid approach to develop the plan. Using remote sensing data, land in the region was divided into five categories according to the intensity of development that would be appropriate and that the surrounding infrastructure could support.

Recommendations were tailored to each category to ensure that the costs of future growth could be met. "Plan area" overlays were also superimposed on downtowns, village centers, and crossroads. This approach, combining development intensity with plan area overlays, will result in flexibility in land use that will preserve community character while promoting sustainable development across the region.

**EDUCATION AND OUTREACH AWARD: Connecticut Main Street Center, "Come Home to Downtown"**

Through a successful collaboration between the Connecticut Main Street Center and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, a comprehensive approach to revitalizing downtowns was developed to educate owners of small, under-utilized downtown properties and provide



technical assistance to the host community. CMSC chose three communities – Middletown, Torrington and Waterbury – as well as three property owners and their buildings as the focus of the program. CMSC worked with municipal officials and the building owners to develop viable redevelopment options. Specific recommendations for improving the buildings were also provided to each property owner. Each of the buildings was chosen in part because they are representative of the types of buildings found in downtowns all across Connecticut. They will serve as models for the redevelopment process, signaling what changes need to be made in order to facilitate this type of redevelopment in other downtowns.

**IMPLEMENTATION AWARD: Landworks Development, The Mill at Hop Brook**

Landworks Development used a new Planned Area Development Zoning Regulation in the Town of Simsbury as an opportunity to create a mixed-use experience that provides new housing options. The development, the Mill at Hop Brook, includes a restaurant, apartments and town homes, and offices within walking distance to Simsbury Town. Parts of the site date back to the 1600s, and an existing gristmill was renovated into Millwright's, rated a 4 star restaurant. Mill Commons contains 88 apartments including 4 completely separate gatehouse style residences and a meeting house. Another section of the development, currently under construction, consists of 20 townhouses. The project fully embodies the Town's new regulations and is a wonderful complement to the existing setting.

**PHYSICAL PLANNING AWARD: Town of New Milford, Comprehensive Transportation Management Plan**

The Town of New Milford's comprehensive transportation plan is a creative yet practical multi-modal plan that treats bicycles and sidewalks as key components of connectivity within the Town's transportation system. The outlined transportation system improvements balance operations with the preservation of community character, environmental resources and promotion of economic development. The final plan illustrates the alternatives discussed and evaluates them against a set of multi-modal performance standards established during the public process. The methodology, public involvement and blueprint for the future serves as a great example to our communities looking to address traffic congestion in a downtown area that will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors as well.