



# **TOPIC: REGIONAL FAIR RENT COMMISSION**

HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATING COUNCIL

DECEMBER 16, 2025

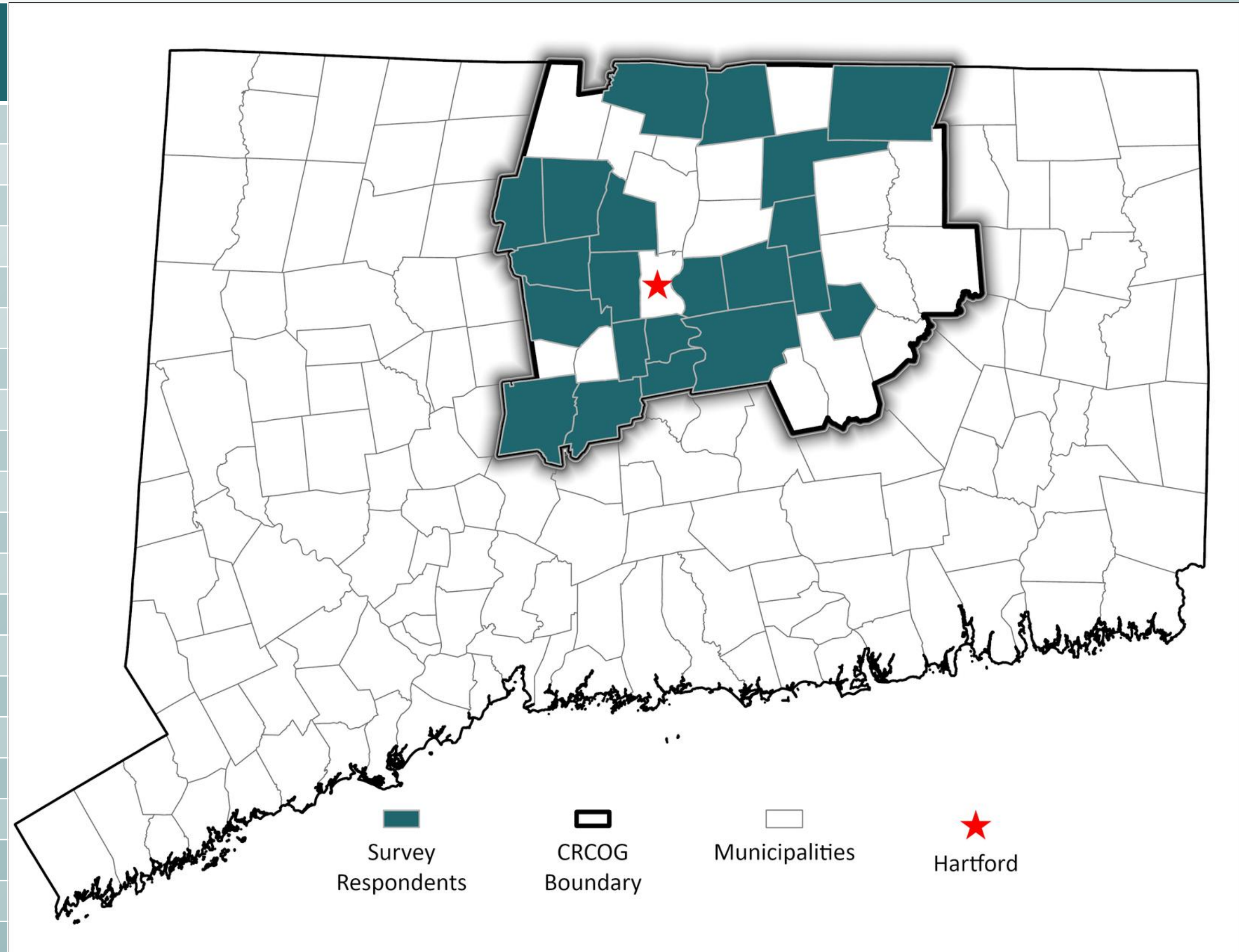
10 – 11 AM

# TALKING POINTS

- Overview of Regional/Shared Fair Rent Commission (FRC) Program
  - Enactment of HB 8002
  - CRCOG's survey results
- Next Steps:
  - Draft Budget
  - Draft Ordinance & Interlocal Agreement
  - Meet virtually every other Tuesday at 2 pm

# SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents	Interested in Regional/Shared Program
Andover	
Avon	X
Berlin	X
Bloomfield	X
Bolton	X
Canton	X
East Hartford	X
Ellington	X
Enfield	X
Farmington	X
Glastonbury	
Manchester	X
Newington	X
Rocky Hill	X
Simsbury	X
Southington	
Stafford	X
Suffield	X
Vernon	
West Hartford	
Wethersfield	X



Survey Respondents
  CRCOG Boundary
  Municipalities
 ★ Hartford

# SURVEY RESULTS

## SUMMARY

- 21 towns responded; 18 have an FRC
- Caseloads are generally low (fewer than 5 cases/year in most towns), but cases can be complex and time-sensitive.
- Rent increases are the predominant issue; maintenance/condition concerns also appear.
- Training and procedural clarity are the most requested supports (commissioner/staff training, templates, legal guidance).
- Interest in a regional/shared model exists, especially among smaller towns; larger/experienced towns favor local control but welcome collaboration/backup.
- Attorney time is a common cost driver.
- Volunteer recruitment and quorum are persistent challenges.

# SURVEY RESULTS

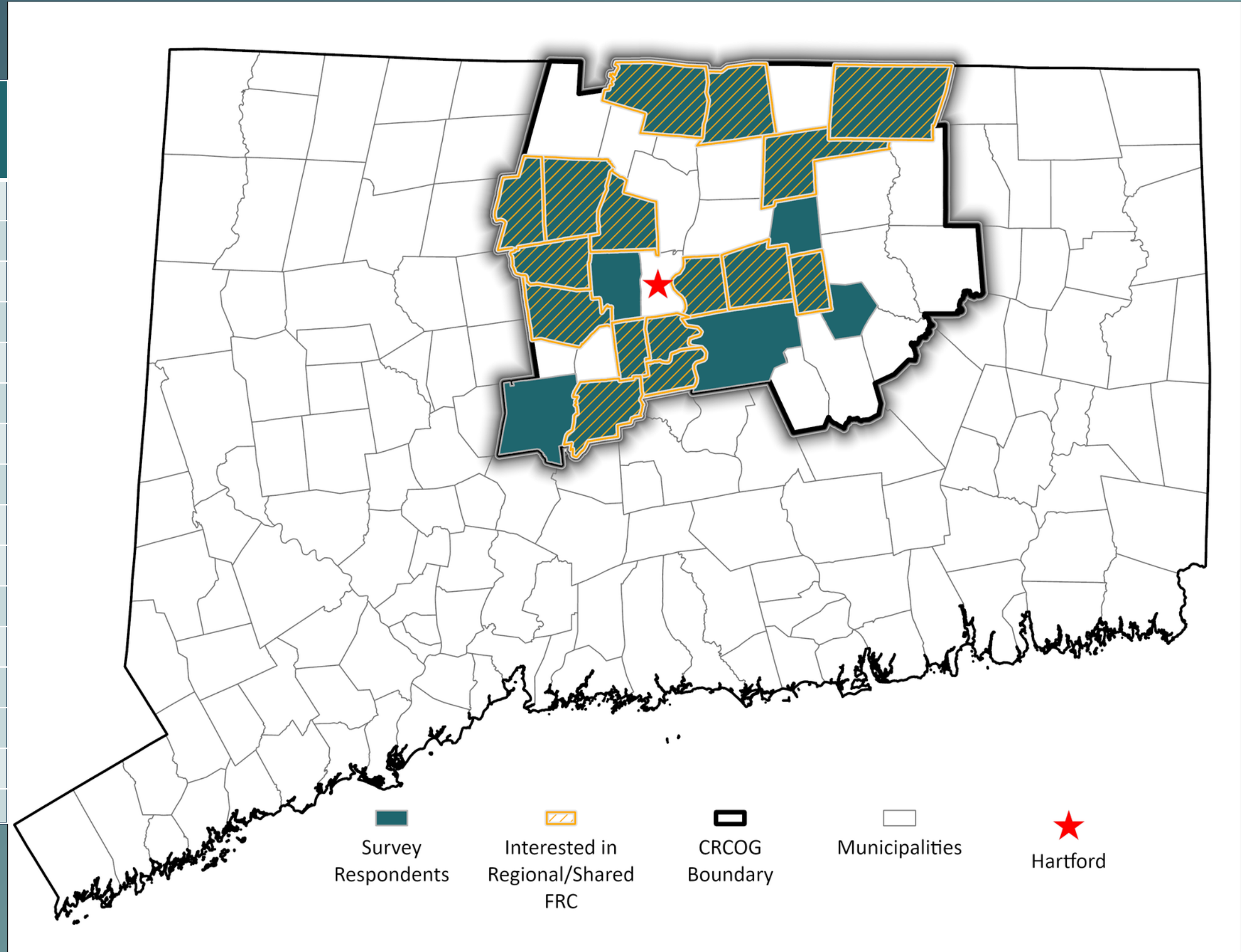
	Town	Population	Required (≥25k)	Has FRC
<b>&gt;25K</b>	Manchester	59,713	Yes	Yes
	East Hartford	51,045	Yes	Yes
	Enfield	42,141	Yes	Yes
	Newington	30,536	Yes	Yes
	Wethersfield	27,298	Yes	Yes
	Farmington	26,712	Yes	Yes
<b>&lt;25K</b>	Simsbury	24,517	No	Yes
	Bloomfield	21,535	No	Yes
	Rocky Hill	20,845	No	Yes
	Berlin	20,175	No	No
	Avon	18,932	No	No
	Ellington	16,426	No	No
	Suffield	15,752	No	No
<b>&lt;15K</b>	Stafford	11,472	No	No
	Canton	10,124	No	No
	Bolton	4,858	No	No

**16 municipalities  
are interested in  
regional services**

# SURVEY RESULTS

## INTEREST IN REGIONAL/SHARED PROGRAM

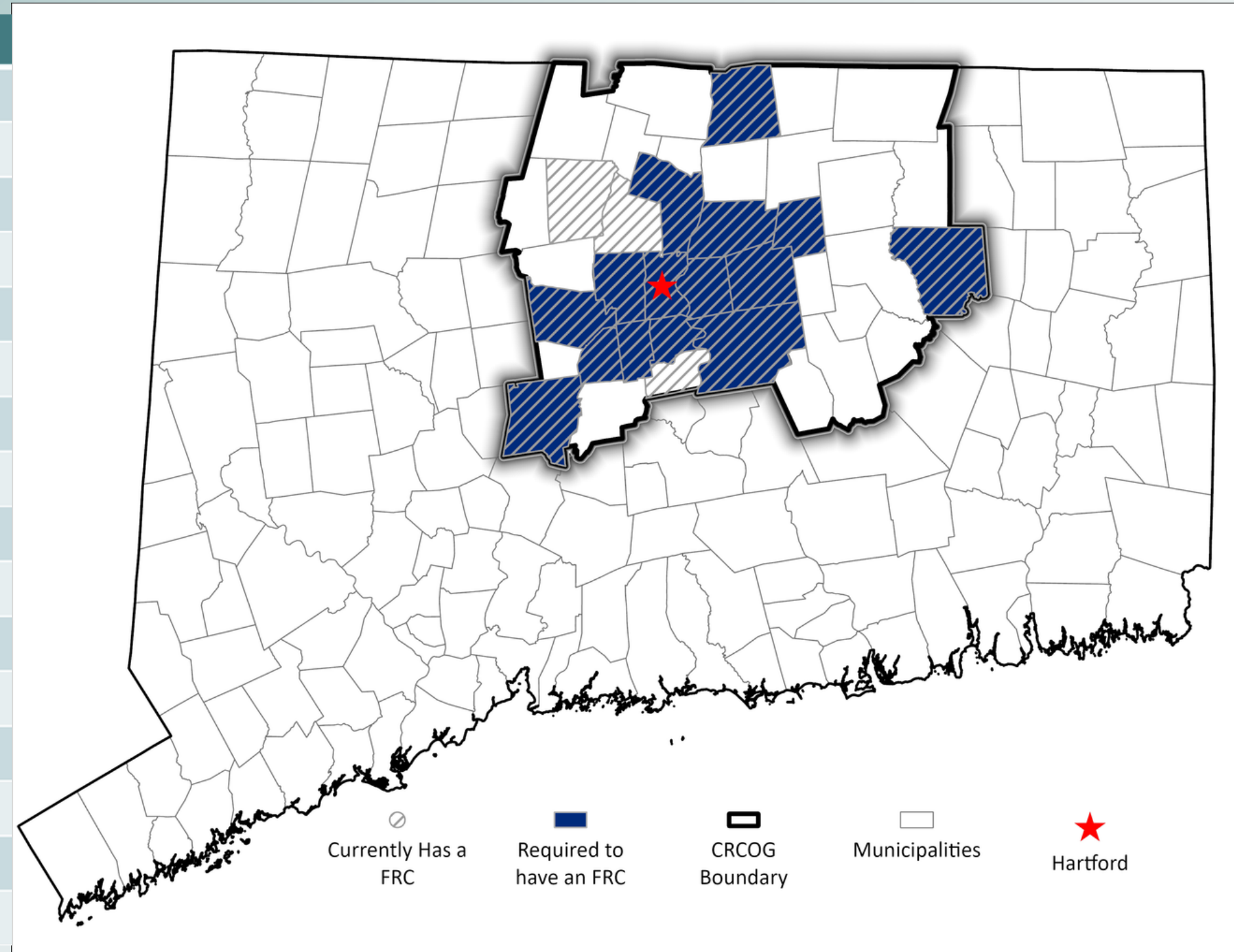
Respondents	Interested in Regional/Shared Program
Avon	X
Berlin	X
Bloomfield	X
Bolton	X
Canton	X
East Hartford	X
Ellington	X
Enfield	X
Farmington	X
Manchester	X
Newington	X
Rocky Hill	X
Simsbury	X
Stafford	X
Suffield	X
Wethersfield	X



# SURVEY RESULTS

## FRC STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

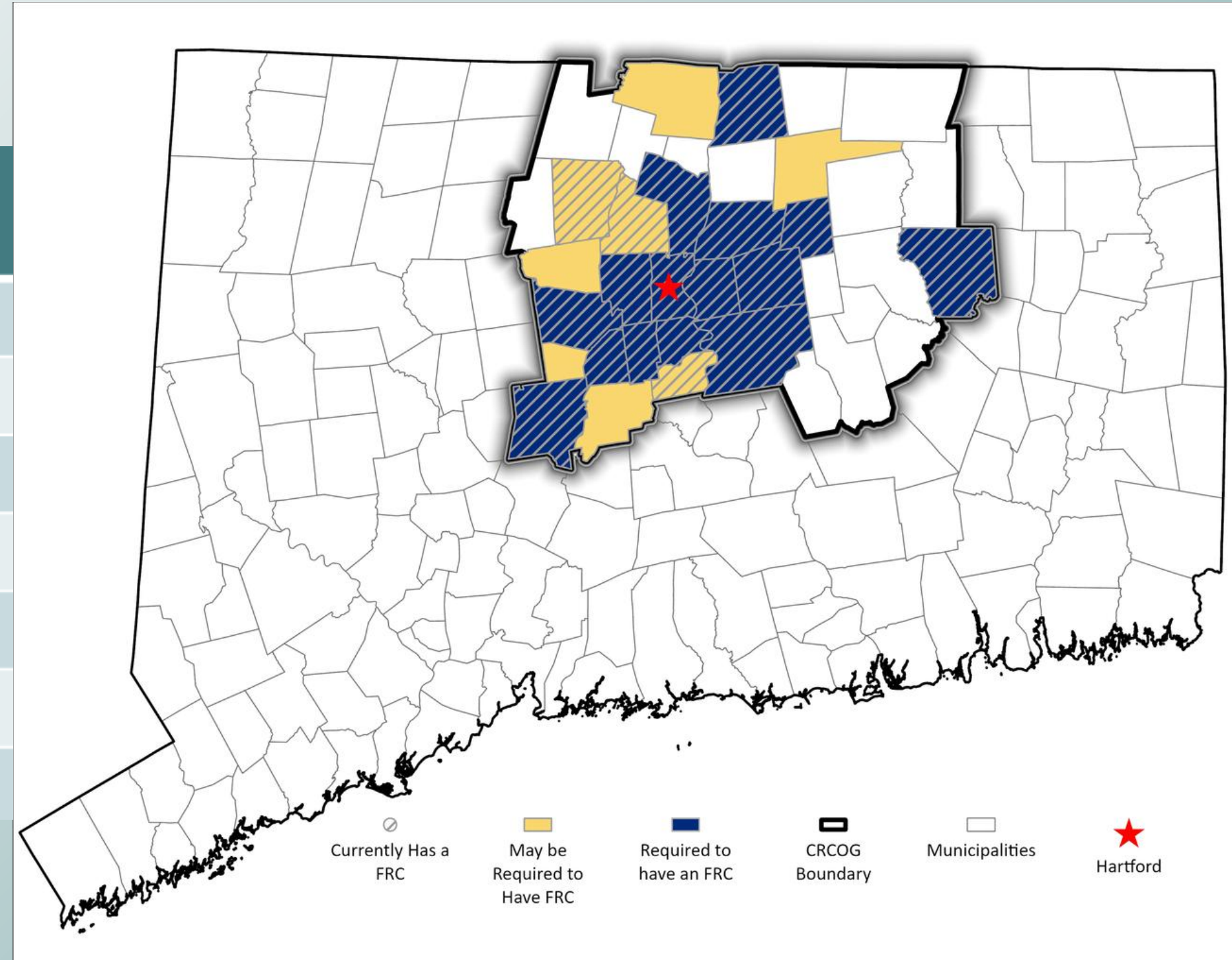
Town Name	Population	Has FRC	Does not have FRC
Avon	18,932		X
Berlin	20,175		X
Bloomfield	21,535	X	
Bolton	4,858		X
Canton	10,124		X
East Hartford	51,045	X	
Ellington	16,426		X
Enfield	42,141	X	
Farmington	26,712	X	
Manchester	59,713	X	
Newington	30,536	X	
Rocky Hill	20,845	X	
Simsbury	24,517	X	
Stafford	11,472		X
Suffield	15,752		X
Wethersfield	27,298	X	



# SURVEY RESULTS

## NEW 15K THRESHOLD

Town	Population	Has FRC	Interested in Regional/Shared
Simsbury	24,517	Yes	Yes
Bloomfield	21,535	Yes	Yes
Rocky Hill	20,845	Yes	Yes
Berlin	20,175	No	Yes
Avon	18,932	No	Yes
Ellington	16,426	No	Yes
Suffield	15,752	No	Yes



# SURVEY RESULTS

## METRICS

Category	Count	Share of Respondents
Total Surveyed	21	100%
No FRC established	8	38%
Have an FRC but rarely meet	4	19%
Manage more than 5 cases/year	5	24%
Manage fewer than 5 cases/year	15	71%
Rent increases cited as main issue	17	81%
Identify need for assistance	13	62%
Interested in regional/shared FRC	16	76%

# SURVEY RESULTS

## FRC ADMINISTRATION

Town	Housing	Legal	City Manager	Operations	Social Services	Land Use	Building	Mayor's Office
	3	5	2	2	7	1	1	1
Bloomfield		x		x				
East Hartford								x
Enfield					x			
Farmington	x				x			
Glastonbury	x							
Manchester		x						
Newington		x			x			
Rocky Hill	x			x	x	x	x	
Simsbury					x			
Southington		x	x					
Vernon					x			
West Hartford		x			x			
Wethersfield			x					

# SURVEY RESULTS

Town	Highlights
Bloomfield	Hybrid; long-standing FRC; main challenge is public/commissioner education; hesitant to regionalize without details.
Simsbury	Newer FRC; early cases focus on rent + repair issues; values shared best practices and trend data.
Manchester	Monthly hearings; complaints increasing; attorney time is stretched.
Enfield	As-needed; maintaining full commission membership is a challenge.
Farmington	Monthly; many cases mediated pre-hearing; standardized process works well.
West Hartford	As-needed; complex/novel cases lack precedent; recommends connecting with Statewide FRC Network.
Rocky Hill	Monthly; logistics and legal intricacy; open to regional model administered by CRCOG.
East Hartford	Monthly; quorum challenges; would consider CRCOG-administered/shared options.
Wethersfield	As-needed; staff time coordinating parties; open to regional/backup and mediation support.
Newington	Hybrid; commission on the books but rarely meets; issues often resolved informally.

## TOWN COMMENTS

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

# **REQUESTS FOR HELP**

- Commissioner/staff training about required procedures
- Templates & toolkits for complaint intake and hearing notices
- Translation/interpretation resources
- Public-facing outreach materials
- Overflow/backup forum for complex or high-volume periods
- Coordinating with housing/code enforcement, legal counsel and clerks
- Structuring hearings and adhering to timelines and quorum maintenance

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

# **REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

## **Training**

- Staff trainings (running public meetings, timelines, writing decisions)
- Monthly office hours and Q&A channel

## **Templates & Tools**

- Intake/complaint forms, notices, agendas, scripts, decision language
- Screening checklist to process complaints
- Model ordinance/bylaws, onboarding checklist and hearing workflow

## **Mediation & Interpreter Access**

- Regional mediation services
- Centralized interpreter/translation resources

## **Legal & Procedural Support**

- Case digest
- Sample decisions

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

## **REGIONAL OPPS (CONT.)**

### **Regional Operations**

- Overflow/backup services to support local FRCs during peak times
- Shared/regional FRC model administered by CRCOG

### **Communications & Outreach**

- Plain-language web pages and flyers for tenants/landlords
- Shared FAQs and public education session templates

### **Data & Reporting**

- Regional dashboard to report case volume, timelines, and outcomes
- Periodically refine procedures and identify training needs

# REGIONAL PROGRAM

## Memorandum to CRCOG's Municipal Services Committee, September 14, 2025

### Key Points:

- Regional/Shared FRC can help municipalities meet new state mandates.
- CRCOG administers the FRC, managing staff/consultants.
- Commissioners appointed through a process with municipal officials and CRCOG Executive Director.
- CRCOG accepts referrals from participating municipalities.

To: CRCOG Municipal Services Committee

From: Elizabeth Sanderson, Grants Coordinator/Principal Program Manager

Meeting Date: September 9, 2025

Subject: Establishing a Regional Fair Rent Commission Program at CRCOG

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### Executive Summary

Fair Rent Commissions (FRCs) are municipal administrative agencies that serve as a platform for tenants and landlords to settle complaints over excessive charges. FRCs are unique to Connecticut. They are required for all towns with more than 25,000 residents, although this may soon be extended to additional municipalities. Most commissions have 5-7 members serving on a voluntary basis. FRCs are subject to the Minority Representation Act, which limits the maximum number of members registered to the same political party. Support staff is needed to receive complaints, process them, schedule hearings, and record decisions.

### Background

The Fair Rent Commission Act was enacted in 1969 (P.A. 274) and last amended in 2022 (P.A. 22-30), codified in [C.G.S., Sec. 7-148b](#) through 7-148f. Municipalities with a population of 25,000 or more are required to adopt an ordinance that creates an FRC, although any municipality may provide one. As of July 2025, 54 municipalities in Connecticut have FRCs. Each FRC functions as a municipal board that receives and reviews tenant complaints. Unique to Connecticut, FRCs have the primary power to limit or modify rent increases and other rental charges that are determined to be “so excessive, with due regard to all the circumstances, as to be harsh and unconscionable.”

Of CRCOGs 38 Member Municipalities, fourteen must have FRCs, and sixteen provide them. If new legislation expands the requirement to all municipalities, or those with population of 15,000 or more, then more municipalities will need to provide them. In 2024, [HB-5056](#) passed, which allows COGs to perform the required administrative and regulatory activities required for fair rent and fair housing commissions.

### Role of an FRC

FRCs conduct studies and investigations, hold hearings, and receive complaints related to rental charges on housing accommodations. They respond to tenant complaints about excessive rent increases and other rental charges. Excessive rents are “so excessive, with due regard to all the circumstances, as to be harsh and unconscionable” and are intended to be reset to an amount that is “fair and equitable.”

Tenant complaints are often resolved in mitigation through informal meetings, without

# REGIONAL ORDINANCE

## REGIONAL FAIR RENT COMMISSION ORDINANCE, FOR ADOPTION BY EACH PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITY

BE IT ORDAINED, by the [NAME OF MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE BODY], in a meeting duly assembled on [MEETING DATE] that the following ordinance is adopted, hereby creating a new Section [XX.XX] and a new Division [NEW DIVISION NUMBER AND TITLE §§ XX-XX – XX-XX in Chapter [XXX] of the [TITLE OF MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES (e.g., Code of Ordinances of the [insert name of municipality], Connecticut)], which reads as follows: [insert appropriate municipal code reference, Connecticut] is hereby as follows:

### Section 1. Creation of Regional Fair Rent Commission

(a) Pursuant to and in conformity with C.G.S. § 7-148b (a) through (e), there is hereby created a Regional Fair Rent Commission (“Commission”) under the auspices of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (“CRCOG”) for the purpose of controlling and eliminating excessive rental charges for housing accommodations within the Capitol Region, and to carry out the purposes, duties, responsibilities and all provisions of the above described sections and any other sections of the statutes, as they may be amended from time to time, pertaining to fair rent commissions.

(b) The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members and three (3) alternates, all of whom shall be residents of one or more of the municipalities that have formally adopted this ordinance, the list of such municipalities shall be maintained by CRCOG (the “participating municipalities” or “participating municipality”). CRCOG will strive to maintain balance on the Commission by encouraging at least one representative from each participating municipality. In addition, of the seven (7) regular members, at least two (2) shall be landlords and two (2) shall be tenants. Among the alternate members, at least one (1) shall be a landlord and one (1) shall be a tenant.

The members and alternates shall be nominated for appointment by the Chief Elected Official or Chief Administrative Officers of each participating municipality. Nominees will undergo a background check, conducted or coordinated by CRCOG, with final appointment of nominees to be made by CRCOG’s Executive Director. A quorum shall consist of four (4) members or seated alternates. Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

(c) Members of the Commission shall be appointed for four (4) years, with initial appointments staggered. Vacancies on the Commission shall be filled, within a reasonable time, in the manner of original appointment for the unexpired portion of the term. Any member of the Commission may be reappointed in the manner of the original appointment.

# BRIEFING SHEET

## CRCOG REGIONAL FAIR RENT COMMISSION

### PURPOSE: STABILIZE HOUSING IN CT

The Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) will help meet the demand for fair and affordable housing in our region through establishing a regional or share Fair Rent Commission (FRC) Program. Fair Rent Commissions help empower residents, giving them a voice against unconscionable increases in rent or other charges that may threaten their housing security. Unstable housing can be the root cause of many other health and socio-economic challenges an individual or family may experience. Establishing a fair and accessible platform to receive complaints, hear, and decide outcomes can help improve housing affordability and stability across the CRCOG region.

### NEED: ESTABLISH A QUALITY PROGRAM ON A REGIONAL SCALE

With the passage of new legislation in H.B. 8002, 23 of CRCOG's 38 Member Municipalities are required to provide Fair Rent Commissions. Eight new towns will be required to provide FRCs by January 1, 2028, five of which do not currently have an FRC. Consistent with our mission to enhance the quality of life, vibrancy, and vitality of the Greater Hartford region, CRCOG seeks to assist our Member Municipalities by implementing a regional solution to address the persistent problem of affordable housing for Connecticut residents.

A recent survey of CRCOG's Member Municipalities revealed that sixteen municipalities are interested in regional FRC services:

**CRCOG is requesting \$xxxxxxx in funding to establish a regional Fair Rent Commission Program**

### BUDGET:

The cost to operate a Fair Rent Commission Program in the region is estimated to be \$xxx:

- \$50,000 legal costs
- \$65,000 part-time program administrator (process complaints, coordinate mediation services, administrative tasks related to monthly public hearings, and serve as recording secretary during monthly hearings).
- \$xxxxx contractual mediation services
- \$15,000 for supplies and mailing costs

Program costs can fluctuate depending on workload and the number of cases processed.

CRCOG intends to fund the program through:

- \$xxxxxx from Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) Grant, subject to approval
- Annual dues from participating Member Municipalities (base fee of \$xxxxxx + additional fee by population tier (\$xxxx - \$xxxxxx))

New law requires eight more municipalities in the CRCOG region to provide a Fair Rent Commission or join a shared/regional Commission.

A shared/regional Fair Rent Commission Program can address workforce capacity issues on municipal level while providing residents with quality services at a regional scale.

[Municipalities across CT struggle to retain

# NEXT STEPS

- Municipal Budgets – **add annual dues/membership fee to your municipal budgets.**
- Discuss and address comments about the **Regional/Shared FRC Ordinance.**
- Draft Resolutions to **adopt the ordinance and interlocal agreement.**
- **Next meeting:** Tuesday, December 23, 2 pm

# CONTACT

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