



May 1, 2018

Re: Renewing Windham's GPCOG membership

Dear Tony,

I understand from you that the Council is in discussion about whether to renew Windham's longstanding membership in the Greater Portland Council of Governments. I wanted to provide the Council with some information for its deliberations.

Below is a summary of the value that GPCOG membership provided to Windham in 2017 and 2018.

- Cooperative purchasing savings. Our cooperative purchasing program covers 10 categories, from road salt to paving to office supplies. Windham participated in two products last year. Windham saved \$23,382 alone in salt purchases last year through our program. You will see similar savings this year. In addition we save you the staff time for processing an RFP, at least \$1,000 per item – last year Windham took advantage of that savings twice.
- Mobility for all. Windham benefitted last year from over \$100,000 of staff time that GPCOG provided to the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS). Specific projects that directly benefitted Windham included the PACTS mobility management demonstration project, which serves older residents and people with disabilities and the PACTS Active Transportation Plan. These projects helped Windham residents and employers with improved transportation services.
- Lakes Explorer. GPCOG provided direct benefit to Windham through our ongoing support to improve service for Lakes Region residents through the Lakes Region Explorer. The focus of our work has been to build ridership to ensure the long-term viability of serving Windham and surrounding communities with public transportation.
- Education for elected officials and managers. Over the past year, we provided educational programming for our members to help communities prepare for legalized marijuana, with a focus on edible marijuana.

- Clean water. GPCOG is working with Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Highland Lake Association to help address a first-of-its-kind algae bloom in the Highland Lake watershed, which has resulted in a development moratorium within the watershed in Windham. GPCOG is assisting CCSWCD and the municipal staff from Falmouth and Windham to strengthen local ordinances in both towns to help incentivize stewardship and proactive watershed management.
- Electric vehicles. Our energy expertise is hard at work in Windham supporting electric vehicle use in your community. Most recently, we spoke to a group of Windham fourth graders, who knew all about the solar on Windham's fire station and the town's EV charger.
- Leveraged federal funding. Each year we bring in significant federal and state money to our entire region, funding projects and doing work that benefits all our members, including Portland. Last year, member dues leveraged over \$600,000 in investments, excluding brownfields assessment and clean-up investments.

Windham's dues support all this work, and more. Your dues helps make our newest initiative possible - the establishment of a Regional Voice Committee, our members' top new strategic priority for GPCOG, making sure your community is heard when state and federal decisions are being made, and that your voice matters. Councilor Jarrod Maxfield was confirmed as Windham's RVC representative just last week.

As you know, in May of 2018, the General Assembly, which is composed of voting members from all GPCOG members, voted to increase member dues. The membership decided to collectively invest in GPCOG's role of helping members work together to tackle the problems no one city or town can deal with alone. This will save money. This will help the region get the attention it needs in Augusta. And, lastly, this will help build the long-term prosperity of the region. Members also made this decision because dues had not been increased for 28 years. Attached is the dues proposal that was adopted by the members.

Tony, thank you for the opportunity to detail all the benefits that continued GPCOG membership provide to Windham and its residents. We are working hard to make Windham's dues create the value that justifies your Council's investment in our work. And we are always happy to learn how we can provide your community with even better service.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve Windham as a member of GPCOG. With your Council's decision to renew Windham's membership we will deliver even greater value to your community in 2018, and beyond.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristina Egan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kristina Egan  
Executive Director  
Greater Portland Council of Governments

# GPCOG Executive Committee's Proposal to Increase Member Dues

**Spring 2017 (Approved by GPCOG General Assembly on 5/31/17)**

To build a stronger capacity to serve members and the region, GPCOG's Executive Committee is recommending a dues increase from \$1 per capita to \$2 per capita. The dues increase would be phased in, with the first portion not occurring until FY19 (July 2018).

Regional collaboration benefits everyone in the Greater Portland and Lakes Region by supporting economic growth, a viable transportation network, and natural resource sustainability. Since 1969, the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) has supported the region's cities and towns by providing responsive services and collaborative, regional solutions. GPCOG has helped members save money, improve services and develop regional approaches to transportation, economic development, and natural resource challenges. Under the leadership of the new Executive Director, GPCOG is poised to become even more responsive, dynamic and innovative.

## Today's Challenge

As state and federal government devolve more and more responsibilities to the local level, cities and towns across the region are stepping up to develop new and better ways to serve their residents.

We continue to need to grow jobs and maintain roads, but we are also encountering new challenges. The region is looking for ways to tackle opiate addiction, help an aging population, and keep young people in our region.

GPCOG aims to build stronger capacity to strengthen cities and towns and help the region tackle challenges and seize opportunities. We can face these obstacles better together, as a region.



## Proposal

GPCOG's Executive Committee is recommending a dues increase from \$1 per capita to \$2 per capita to build GPCOG's capacity to serve our members and the region,

This increase will be phased in over 2 years.

The first dues increase of 60 cents per capita would go into effect July 2018. The second increase of 40 cents per capita would go into effect July 2019. Going forward, the General Assembly will review the dues rate every three years.

Dues have not increased in 27 years. In that time, we have remained a constant support to our member municipalities, but our capacity to serve has declined as the value of the revenue has fallen. Today, GPCOG operates with about half the support it used to receive from members.

As our municipalities need more, GPCOG will do more. Increasing member dues will provide the flexible resources to:

- 1) **Attract more resources to the region.** Additional local funding will provide local match for federal grants.
- 2) **Serve as the voice for the region.** GPCOG will add the new service of voicing the region's priorities and recommendations on issues to state decision makers. GPCOG will develop research and regional approaches to issues like ensuring adequate resources to maintain our roads, retaining younger people, and helping residents age in place.
- 3) **Provide more responsive and tailored services.** GPCOG will improve its capacity to support cities and towns with consolidating services, in partnership with County government, rural economic development, and pursuing grant opportunities.
- 4) **Facilitate regional approaches to shared challenges.** As a trusted convener, GPCOG will focus more on facilitating collaborative actions to address regional problems identified as priorities by our members.

