

CHAPTER 3

Social, Environmental, and Economic Effects

The Recommended Package defined in Chapter 2 was compared to the constraints mapping prepared and reported in Technical Report #1. In general impacts were found to be minimal because alternatives have been limited to existing transportation corridors - Interstate 84, Amtrak and freight rail corridors. Social, environmental, and economic impacts were considered both within the right-of-way and in areas adjacent to existing corridors.

Information relative to each of these topics was gathered from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), municipal staff, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), a review of current aerial photographs of the study area and from field evaluations of some study area locales. The analysis was conducted at a 'planning level' as opposed to involving an in-depth analysis of socioeconomic conditions in the study area communities. The following is a summary of effects associated with the Recommended Package of improvements.

3.1 SOCIAL EFFECTS

Social effects, including land use, public facilities and services, relocation impacts, community cohesion, access issues, aesthetic impacts, and conservation development plans, are those impacts which effect the livability and characteristics of the community.

Land Use

Impacts to land use resulting from the Recommended Package can be measured in terms of the degree to which they may induce a change to the predominant land use patterns within the communities and neighborhoods of the study area. Change to predominant land use patterns in a community may be caused by land acquisition for a project which reduces existing land use or the availability of land for a future use. Impacts to local land use patterns may also result indirectly, over time, not from changes in land use, but from change in the economy or business and real estate climate of a community. These indirect changes may be positive in that they support land use plans, or they may be negative by resulting in an undesirable result. None of the proposed improvements is anticipated to have an adverse impact on predominant land use patterns

within the study area. The improvements are not anticipated to require any substantial land takings to accommodate construction. Opportunities exist to define opportunities for joint development melding public and private resources to achieve defined goals and objectives.

Visual and Aesthetic Impacts

Impacts to the visual and aesthetic quality of an area as caused by Recommended Improvements cannot be quantitatively measured. Aesthetics is a subject concerned with the quality of the visual experience, both the visual resource and the response of the viewer. Visual and aesthetic impacts were considered in terms of potential changes to the existing visual setting of study area communities.

Important visually aesthetic features in the study area are limited. They occur primarily as parks, ridge lines, and scenic community neighborhoods, particularly historic neighborhoods. Neither freeway reconstruction nor the Busway are not anticipated to have any impact on visual and aesthetic features within the study area. In fact West Side access improvements hold the potential of improving the visual quality of the communities by reducing the number of structures at the Sisson and Flatbush Avenue interchanges.

Visually aesthetic features which may effected by the Busway include the view of Pope Park in Hartford, the Park River, and the Elmwood neighborhood in West Hartford. Pope Park in Hartford abuts the I-84 ROW, although the two occur at different elevations. Hartford Public High School property abuts the freeway and rail right-of-way at this locale. The visual and aesthetic qualities of the new athletic facilities which are under construction at the high school may be adversely effected by greater proximity to highway elements under these alternatives.

Public Facilities, Services and Utilities

Public facilities, services and utilities include such community assets as hospitals, libraries, municipal buildings, parks, paratransit services and water and sewer service. No adverse impact is anticipated to public facilities, services and utilities with any of the Recommendations. No land takings from any community facility is anticipated and

no permanent interruption or impairment of the delivery of services can be expected.

There are a number of schools, parks and community centers within the study area. These include the following: Trinity College, Pope Park and state government buildings in Hartford, University of Connecticut (UCONN) Health Center in Farmington, Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in New Britain, the Newington High School and the town offices and Elmwood Community Center in West Hartford. The Hartford Public High School property is potentially in the most direct proximity as it abuts I-84 near exit 46 in the study area.

Relocation Impacts

Relocation impacts are those impacts resulting from the taking of land or elimination of access to a property and thus requiring a family or business to relocate. Important considerations are the socio-economic status of the families or businesses being moved, the availability of suitable locations for the family or business to move to and whether the relocation will impact a businesses with neighborhood and/or regional significance. The relocation of a business with neighborhood and/or regional significance could result in secondary impacts to the economy of the area over time. While there may be some incidental property takings as a result of the Recommended Improvements, they will be minor and only involving isolated properties. The West Side Access Improvements hold the biggest potential for substantial impacts, and these will be viewed in more detail prior to implementation.

Neighborhoods and Community Cohesion

Neighborhoods within a community are defined by unifying physical attributes of the area and by residents perceptions of their neighborhood boundaries. Adverse impacts to neighborhood or community cohesion can result from a project which creates a physical and/or visual barrier inside neighborhood boundaries or which inhibits travel from one portion of a neighborhood or community to another. The No-Build Base Case Scenario could have an adverse impact to many of the study area neighborhoods or to community cohesion over time. Congestion may be expected to increase on major arterials within the study area, creating, in effect, a barrier to residents sense of connection to their neighborhood. Ease of travel within the neighborhood or community may also be inhibited by increased through traffic forced by congestion on major arterials onto minor arterial roads

which traverse the area.

The majority of land uses in the immediate vicinity of the Busway are industrial or commercial. The only area of significant residential development is in New Britain. While the rail corridor has been a part of neighborhood life for some time, the noise impacts of returning the corridor to active service will be assessed as part of the development of the EIS.

The reconstruction of interchanges in Farmington, West Hartford, and Hartford will reduce the amount of traffic through residential neighborhoods due to partial interchanges at Routes 4 and 6 and at Flatbush and Sigourney. Similarly, reconstruction may reduce visual and aesthetic impacts on these neighborhoods. The New Britain-Hartford Busway offers the opportunity to hold congestion in check by providing alternatives to the private automobile.

Access Issues

Access issues arise from proposed transportation projects when there would be a change induced in local travel patterns because current access points are eliminated, altered, or made more difficult to reach. The Recommended Package will have a beneficial impact on the ability of travelers to reach their destinations. Access to the major activity centers and major employers, especially along the New Britain - Hartford Busway, would be improved. These improvements would address the need for transit dependent Hartford and New Britain residents to access job opportunities in the suburban portions of the study area.

Consistency with Plans for Conservation and Development

The Plans for Conservation and Development (PCD) in a community represent local goals, objectives and programs for the community's future. The PCDs in the study area communities were reviewed to determine whether the Recommended Package would conflict with the stated goals, objectives and implementation programs. The Busway would address the goal for the City of Hartford to provide mobility for transit dependent City residents who work at suburban locations. The construction of Auxiliary Lanes on I-84 would support the goal expressed in the West Hartford PCD of supporting effective traffic improvements to I-84. It should be noted that the PCD for Newington calls for intersection improvements at some locations along Route 175 (Cedar Street). While the intersection improvements for Route 175 were

addressed as part of a separate corridor study by CRCOG, a BRT station along Route 175 will require careful study especially with respect to vehicular, pedestrian, and transit accessibility.

Historical/Archaeological/Section 4(f)/Section 106 Evaluation

Because improvements will be located within existing transportation corridors, there would not be any sites on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and Town Historic Surveys directly impacted. However, there would be several sites in proximity to the system.

Environmental Justice

The concern for “Environmental Justice” springs from Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Population and Low-Income Populations, signed by President William Clinton on February 11, 1994. Specifically, this EO calls attention to requirements contained in other regulations such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In brief, the EO calls for methods and techniques to identify, measure, and resolve disproportionately high and adverse impacts (disparate impacts) resulting from transportation projects. In addition to adverse impacts, the EO requires that all segments of the population should receive an equality of benefit from the investment of Federal funds. Along with technical analysis, public outreach and consultative decision making were used in the study process.

The consideration of Environmental Justice in terms of the Recommended Package was made by examining census data regarding socioeconomic status of residents within the study area as compared with the effected communities as a whole. As shown in Table 3-1, the four service area communities have a combined population of 305,000. Both Hartford and New Britain have experienced significant population loss since 1980. They have a substantial portion of their respective regions’ multi-family housing stock, as well as a far greater proportion of residents living below the poverty line. The combination of dense housing conditions and low-income households also leads to a substantially greater number of households not having a vehicle available to them. In the City of Hartford, nearly forty percent of households have no vehicle available. In New Britain, the proportion of transit-dependent households is approximately sixteen percent.

The urban portions of the study area also house a greater share of minority (i.e. African-American, Hispanic, or Asian) population than adjacent suburban areas. Sixty-nine percent of Hartford’s population are members of minority groups, with African Americans constituting the single largest segment. The City of Hartford contains 65 percent of the Capitol Region’s minority population. New Britain’s population is 24 percent minority.

Table 3.2 compares disadvantaged population groups within the study area to those in the communities at large. However, in general, the census tracts which fall within the study area cover large geographic areas. The impacts are anticipated to be more localized.

Hartford and New Britain have a much larger non-white and poverty level population than the remainder of the

Table 3.1
COMMUNITY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
Hartford West MIS

Corridor Community	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION DENSITY (per sq. mi.)	PERCENTAGE MINORITY	PERCENT CHANGE (1980-90)
Hartford	139,700	8,100	69%	-13.6%
New Britain	75,500	5,600	34%	-11.5%
West Hartford	60,100	2,700	8%	-9.9%
Newington	29,200	2,200	6%	11.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 3.2
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EVALUATION
Hartford West MIS

Census Tract or Area	Total Population	Percent Non-White	Percent Over 65	Percent Below Poverty Level
Farmington	20,600	4%	1.5%	1.0%
Study Area Census Tracts	5,500	3.9%	11.0%	1.0%
Hartford	139,700	96%	11.8%	25.7%
Study Area Census Tracts	56,500	37.1%	13.7%	30.1%
New Britain	75,500	18.1%	16.9%	10.7%
Study Area Census Tracts	38,100	17.9%	18.4%	10.4%
Newington	29,200	4.5%	20.7%	1.0%
Study Area Census Tracts	16,600	2.6%	9.2%	.05%
West Hartford	60,100	6%	22.0%	2.1%
Study Area Census Tracts	37,500	7.3%	21.1%	3.0%

Source: 1990 Census

study area communities. Yet, the percentage of disadvantaged populations is, in general, comparable between the study area and the communities at large.

Five of Hartford’s neighborhoods within the study area (each as represented by a consolidation of several census tracts) have lower median income and a higher percentage of non-white population than the city as a whole. These are South Green, Parkville, Flatbush, Frog Hollow and Asylum Hill. The Recommended Package would specifically benefit the Parkville, Flatbush, Frog Hollow , and Charter Oak neighborhoods in Hartford.

The Busway would improve access for residents of these neighborhoods for commuting to work and shopping, both within Hartford and throughout the study area, such that impacts are expected to be primarily beneficial. In general, the Recommendations would not have an adverse impact on any concentration of disadvantaged populations. The highway modifications that are likely to result from the West Side Access improvements will most directly benefit the Parkville, Frog Hollow, Charter Oak, and Elmwood neighborhoods without major property takings. This benefit will be caused by improved accessibility from the Interstate especially for truck traffic and goods movement. The direct linkage of New Britain and

Hartford via the Busway will provide a significant benefit to transit dependent residents of New Britain. In addition to access to employment, the Busway will also provide access to educational opportunities at Central Connecticut State University.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A planning level analysis has been undertaken for the environmental resources, with detailed descriptions to follow.

Active Farms and Prime Farmland Soils

Active farms were identified using color aerial photographs taken by the US Department of Agriculture during the summer of 1996. It was determined from these aerials that no active farms will be impacted by the Recommended Package.

Prime farmland soils were identified using Natural Resources Conservation Service soil survey maps of Hartford County (1962). Those prime farmland soils which have been converted to developed land were determined using the most recent U.S.G.S. topographic quad maps of the study area. Since the potential benefit of prime farmland soils is lost when the land is developed, only impacts to undeveloped prime farmland soils were

considered. Encroachment to a minor amount of undeveloped prime farmland soils could occur for the Recommended Package even though construction will take place within existing transportation corridors.

Hazardous/Contamination Risk

No information is available on the exact location of the hazardous/contamination risk within given sites, thus, only proximity impacts can be listed. Most of the environmental risk sites are located along the existing rail right-of-way, as shown in [Figure 3.1](#). The Busway would have the greatest potential for proximity to identified hazardous waste sites due to the location of contemporary and historic industrial facilities adjacent to the railroad right-of-way.

Wetlands

Planning level assessment of documented wetlands locations indicates that wetlands impacts will potentially occur adjacent to the rail right-of-way. Wetlands impacts may also occur in the vicinity of the Route 4 interchange in a forested area. Another area of significant wetland is adjacent to the rail right-of-way in Newington north of Route 175 - the Piper Brook area. Assessment of wetland impacts have been made primarily from Soil Survey and National Wetland Inventory maps, and have not been assessed in the field.

Natural Resources/Fish and Wildlife/Endangered Species

According to information obtained from both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Natural Resources Data Base, no State or Federally-listed plant, animal or habitat will be effected by any of the Recommended Package. There is a known pair of State and Federally-listed Endangered peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) just outside the northeast edge of the project study area. Initial coordination with the DEP has indicated that the falcons would not be effected by the improvements. ConnDOT will continue to coordinate with the DEP and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service throughout this planning process regarding the falcons and any other State and Federally listed species.

Stream Channel Encroachment

Construction of the Busway and stations could impact stream channel encroachment lines in Piper Brook in Newington.

Wells

According to the CT DEP Atlas of the Public Water Supply Sources and Drainage Basins of Connecticut, Bulletin No. 4 (1982) two public water supply wells are located in the study area. Neither of these wells will be impacted by any of the Recommended strategies. Individual household wells are not reported. Impact to individual wells would be assessed later in the study process.

Stratified Drift Aquifers

Two types of aquifers are located in the study area: coarse-grained stratified drift (having a potential water yield of more than 700 gallons per minute) and fine-grained stratified drift (having a potential water yield of generally less than 20 gallons per minute). The Recommended alternatives would cross stratified drift aquifers. The majority of this impact for these alternatives would be adjacent to existing highway and rail rights-of-way and therefore minimal.

Flood Plains

In general minor encroachment within the 100-year flood plain boundary may occur in the vicinity of the South Branch of the Park River; in areas currently impacted by the railroad; and in association with a tributary to the south branch of the Park River. These flood plain impacts are expected to be negligible, as they are associated with minor amounts of fill required primarily along previously disturbed areas.

Public Water Supply Watersheds

Information regarding public water supply areas was obtained from the CT DEP Atlas of the Public Water Supply Sources and Drainage Basins of Connecticut, Bulletin No. 4 (1982) and the Metropolitan District Commission. According to these sources, no public water supply watersheds or public water supply areas are located in the study area.

Noise

Heavily utilized transportation corridors, both rail and highway, have the potential to create noise impacts to nearby sensitive land uses. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have established noise impact assessment guidelines and procedures for federally funded highway and transit projects, respectively.

The project study area was reviewed to locate potential

noise-sensitive areas. Sensitive land uses that abut a project alignment (e.g., the Railway) or are located near a potential corridor for a project alternative should be considered in the environmental assessment of the project. Relatively dense concentrations of sensitive land uses or facilities in a small area would indicate high sensitivity for that area as a whole. The Busway corridor would also have limited effect on sensitive receptors due to the absence of sensitive receptors in this corridor.

Air Quality

The Clean Air Act of 1970 (as amended in 1977 and 1990) was promulgated by Congress to preserve air quality and to protect the public's health and welfare. Under the authority of the Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons (also known as volatile organic compounds or VOC), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), respirable particulate matter (PM10), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and lead (Pb). These standards are applied equally everywhere throughout the country and must be complied with at any location where the general public has reasonable access.

Air quality standards define allowable limits for atmospheric concentrations of air pollutants. States can develop and implement such standards as long as they are at least as stringent as the prevailing national standards. The Connecticut Ambient Air Quality Standards, as described in Regulation Section 22a-174-24 are similar to the NAAQS. Primary standards are established to protect public health; and Secondary standards are established at levels designed to protect the public welfare by accounting for the effects of air pollution on vegetation, soil, materials, visibility, and other aspects of the general welfare. Compliance with these standards must be achieved by any proposed project being constructed in the State of Connecticut. The Air Quality Conformity Report produced by ConnDOT in February 1999 demonstrates that all elements of ConnDOT's transportation program and the Regional Long Range plans conform with applicable SIP and 1990 Clean Air Act Amendment (CAAA) conformity guidance criteria.

Relevant Pollutants. Public awareness of the effects of air pollution has increased noticeably in recent years with the passage of the Clean Air Act. Air pollution is of concern because of its potential adverse effects on human health. Of special concern are the respiratory effects of the pollutants, as well as their general toxic

effects. Transportation sources primarily emit these pollutants:

- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)**
- **Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)**
- **Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx)**
- **Particulate Matter - 10 Micrometers (PM10)**
- **Sulfur Dioxide (SO2)**

Mobile Source Emissions. The air pollutants of most concern in the assessment of impacts from this project are associated with emissions from mobile sources (motor vehicles, buses and locomotives), and include VOC, NOx, and CO. VOC and NOx are the only pollutants for which a detailed regional analysis is required for compliance with the Connecticut State Implementation Plan (SIP). CO impacts tend to be localized and are associated with intersections and roadways that experience severe levels of traffic congestion. Therefore, any necessary assessment of CO impacts will be conducted as part of site-specific environmental studies after the project alternatives are defined in sufficient detail to identify locations where excessive CO concentrations might occur. There are no regulatory requirements to perform an assessment of PM10 or SO2 for this project, as transportation sources generally do not emit these pollutants in notable amounts.

Relationship of the Project to Air Quality Regulations.

The 1990 CAAA established timetables and requirements for attaining the NAAQS, and also included provisions for the EPA to review transportation projects to determine whether they conform with the SIP. The conformity provision states that no federal agency may approve, accept or fund any transportation plan, program or project unless the plan, program or project has been found to conform to an applicable SIP. (Title I, Section 101, Paragraph F of the 1990 CAAA). The 1990 CAAA established levels and timetables related to ozone and CO for each region not in attainment of the standards and directed these regions to develop revised SIPs. A SIP must demonstrate how a region plans to reach its attainment levels and timetables.

Pursuant to the 1990 CAAA, Hartford, West Hartford, Farmington, New Britain, and Newington are located in an ozone non-attainment area identified as "Serious." Serious ozone non-attainment areas are defined as geographical areas with the fourth highest ozone concentration (known as the average hourly design value) ranging from 0.160 parts per million (ppm) to 0.180 ppm based on

three consecutive years of monitoring data. The NAAQS for ozone is 0.12 ppm which is not to be exceeded more than once per year. This area of Connecticut is required to reach attainment of the ozone standards by the year 1999. With respect to CO, the entire project study area is designated as being in attainment of the CO standards.

Conformity is defined as meeting a SIP's purpose of eliminating or reducing the severity and number of violations of the NAAQS and achieving expeditious attainment of those standards. To achieve conformity, projects must not cause or contribute to any new violation of the NAAQS, increase the frequency or severity of any existing violations of the NAAQS, or delay the timely attainment of the NAAQS (or any interim emission reduction standard or milestone).

Emission Inventory and Analysis. Air quality analysis for the Hartford West MIS was conducted to evaluate the 1995 Existing Condition, the 2020 No-Build Alternative (Base Case), 2020 Build Alternatives. Analysis were performed based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) procedures and guidance from Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP). Emission inventories of VOC and NO_x were estimated for the 1995 Existing Condition, 2020 No-Build Alternative (Base Case), and 2020 Build Alternatives.

Emissions of VOC and NO_x for the 1995 Existing Condition are 3,170 Kg/day and 9,440 Kg/day, respectively. For the 2020 No-Build Alternative, VOC emissions were estimated to be 1,340 Kg/day and NO_x emissions were 4,520 Kg/day. Reductions from 1995 to 2020 are due to emissions reductions in motor vehicle exhaust required by the Federal Motor Vehicle Emissions Control Program and the Connecticut vehicle inspection and maintenance program. These reductions more than offset the 17 percent increase in VMT projected to occur from 1995 to the 2020 No-Build Alternative.

The New Britain - Hartford Busway will result in an additional reduction in VOC emissions due to decreases in VMT. Also, due to the reduction in VMT, the Busway would result in a reduction in NO_x emissions.

3.3 ECONOMIC EFFECTS

Economic Impacts are related to the financial resources of a community, such as economic trends, secondary economic impacts and user benefit.

Economic Trends and the Local Tax Base

The impact of the Recommended Package in terms of

economic trends in each community and local tax base was evaluated by a review of the town and city plans of development and/or by interviews with the town and city planning departments. An adverse impact to the economy of a community can be considered to occur if the desired trend in economic development in the community is substantially inhibited by the recommendation. The local tax base can be considered to be impacted where an improvement would include substantial land takings that would decrease tax revenue and effect the provision of community services.

The no-build alternative would not support the economic development goals of the communities in the study area. Congestion is anticipated to increase both on I-84 and major arterials in the region, thus discouraging travel and perhaps frustrating attempts to encourage new employers and businesses to locate in the area.

In general, all of the study area communities with the exception of Farmington are almost fully developed in terms of land use. Land available for new business and industry will come primarily from redevelopment of existing parcels. Relevant economic development concerns or goals in each community can be briefly summarized as follows:

- Farmington has a goal to retain its small community character while discouraging development of new sites for large scale retail centers and improving its manufacturing base.
- Hartford and New Britain both have a goal to aggressively market their city for new business and to revitalize the downtown as well as to increase the employability of residents.
- Newington has a goal to promote the use of the former Route 291 land and encourage the location of new retail uses along the Berlin Turnpike as well as to revitalize the downtown for specialized retail and professional office space. In addition both Newington and New Britain are concerned with the continued vitality and accessibility of the CCSU campus as contributing to the economic strength of each community.
- West Hartford has a goal to continue to minimize the impacts of non-residential land uses on residential areas and to broaden the economic tax base by enhancing existing business and industrial districts and maintaining the economic health of existing businesses.

As noted above, the anticipated land takings would be minimal in the context of the total tax generating land use in the study area municipalities. Therefore, no negative impact to the local tax base is anticipated.

Secondary Economic Impacts

Secondary economic impacts - both positive and negative - consist of those impacts caused indirectly by the transportation alternative selected. These impacts are the result of a changed economic climate based on the operational characteristics of the individual modal alternative or alternatives. Examples of potential secondary economic impacts include:

Potential Positive Secondary Economic Impacts

- Increased investment in residential and commercial real estate;
- Improvement and repair to existing residential and commercial properties;
- Improvement in market position for retailers and other businesses based on improved access;
- New demand for retail facilities due to proximity to transportation access points; and
- Redevelopment in accordance with community Master Plan or Plan of Development.

Potential Negative Economic Impacts

- Displacement of corridor residents and existing businesses due to speculation or rising rents (i.e. “Gentrification”); and
- Changes in neighborhood character;

The listing of these potential impacts does not imply that they would all occur within the Hartford West study area. Instead, they are provided as factors that should be evaluated to determine whether they can be expected or not within a given analysis area.

It should also be noted that the Busway is anticipated to produce greater secondary economic impact, because it would offer a transportation alternative which is different in type and scope from what is presently available within the corridor. And, furthermore, the Busway would offer locations of increased activity around stations located along the corridor.

The town and city Planning Departments for each of the effected jurisdictions have been contacted to obtain their views on the potential for secondary economic impacts associated with the improvements. The following comments have been made relative to the five communities of the Hartford West study corridor.

New Britain. The City of New Britain Planning Department has identified the Busway as conforming most closely to its goal of developing Downtown New Britain as a regional center for “back office” information

processing functions. The secondary economic impacts which would serve Downtown New Britain via the existing railroad right-of-way, would include:

- Strengthening the proposed redevelopment of the Landmark Center/“Greenfield” development parcel - the site of the current weekly farmers market;
- Generating additional revenue for both existing and proposed off-street parking facilities within the Downtown area;
- Offering opportunities for the development of convenience retail facilities to serve commuters; and
- Increasing opportunities for residential redevelopment in the surrounding neighborhoods, including Walnut Park and North Avenue.

The impact of busway station locations are illustrated in [Figure 3.2](#). These stations facilitate walking accessibility to downtown employment centers as well as residential areas within the city. Accessibility to Central Connecticut State University would also be an important element of this Recommendation.

Hartford. The Busway and West Side Access improvements would support the continuing Regional Core role for Downtown Hartford by providing easier, less congested access to Downtown employment and cultural centers. Because Hartford offers the type of high-density, pedestrian-oriented setting, a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) concept could be very successful. The concentration of major employment generators in the vicinity of potential BRT station stops is shown in [Figure 3.3](#) provided by the City of Hartford’s Department of City Planning. As can be seen, the BRT stations offer access within walking distance (i.e. 1,000 feet) to the State Capitol complex, the Aetna campus, and other major insurance offices located in Asylum Hill. Based on the City of Hartford’s analysis an estimated 49,000 employees and 20,000 residents are located within the service areas of this rail corridor.

The experience of other major North American metropolitan areas, such as Ottawa, Portland, Pittsburgh and San Diego, which have invested in fixed guideway systems, has been that transit investment of this type has led to a renaissance of Downtown office occupancy, development and retailing. It should be noted, however, that other economic factors, such as the overall vitality of the financial, governmental, and defense industry sectors, will play a more important role in determining the future economic health of Downtown Hartford.

Newington. Newington's two station locations along the Busway are located along the railroad right-of-way at Cedar Street (Route 175) and at Willard Avenue - Newington Junction. The Cedar Street area is characterized by low density industrial use in combination with substantial amounts of undeveloped land, as well as wetlands along Piper Brook. The potential exists for commercial/office development, with a retail component, in connection with high capacity transit service associated with the BRT. However, the Town's current Plan of Development suggests an emphasis on the Berlin Turnpike and Town Center area's for retail investment and other types of development.

The Willard Avenue station area is surrounded primarily by developed residential land and a few isolated industrial properties (i.e. J.C. Penney warehouse on Fenn Road). It therefore offers few opportunities for further development and will likely not experience positive secondary economic impacts.

West Hartford. The Town of West Hartford has a great potential for secondary economic impact from the Busway. The selection of the railroad corridor would support the Town's initiative to redevelop the southeastern part of town. The Elmwood station would increase accessibility to this section of the Town, and would possibly have a modest positive impact on residential property values in the surrounding neighborhood.