

ALTERNATIVES TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

New Haven – Hartford – Springfield
Commuter Rail Implementation Study



August 2004

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1-1
1.1	Elements of a Commuter Rail System	1-1
1.2	Alternatives Evaluated in this Report.....	1-2
2	Minimum Build Scenario	2-1
2.1	Minimum Build Scenario Service	2-1
2.2	Stations Under a Minimum Build Scenario	2-4
2.3	Construction of a Minimum Build Service	2-4
2.4	Ridership Levels Under a Minimum Build Service	2-4
2.5	Capital Costs for a Minimum Build Service	2-6
2.5.1	Train Set Equipment.....	2-6
2.5.2	Maintenance Facility/Storage.....	2-7
2.5.3	Station Costs.....	2-9
2.5.4	Total Capital Costs	2-10
2.6	Operating Costs for a Minimum Build Service.....	2-10
2.6.1	Train Miles	2-10
2.6.2	Cost per Train Mile	2-11
2.7	Revenue Under a Minimum Build Service	2-11
2.8	Minimum Build Service Issues and Concerns	2-13
3	Maximum Build Scenario.....	3-1
3.1	Maximum Build Scenario Service	3-1
3.2	Stations under a Maximum Build Scenario.....	3-2
3.3	Construction of a Maximum Build Service.....	3-5
3.4	Ridership Levels under a Maximum Build Service	3-5
3.4.1	Commuter Ridership	3-6
3.4.2	Intercity Ridership.....	3-6
3.4.3	Airport Ridership.....	3-12
3.4.4	Airport Connection Alternative Ridership	3-14
3.4.5	Off-peak and Weekend Ridership	3-15
3.4.6	Total Weekday Ridership.....	3-16
3.5	Capital Costs for a Maximum Build Service.....	3-17
3.5.1	Train Set Equipment.....	3-17
3.5.2	Maintenance Facility / Storage.....	3-19
3.5.3	Station Costs.....	3-21
3.5.4	Double Track Costs	3-24
3.5.5	Bridge Costs	3-26
3.5.6	Airport Connection Costs.....	3-32
3.5.7	Total Capital Costs	3-33
3.6	Operating Costs for a Maximum Build Service	3-34
3.6.1	Train Miles	3-34
3.6.2	Cost per Train Mile	3-35
3.7	Revenue for a Maximum Build Service	3-35
3.8	Summary of Maximum Build Service Findings.....	3-37



4	Connecting Bus Service Plan for Maximum Build Scenario	4-1
4.1	New Haven Union and State Street Stations	4-1
4.1.1	B Whalley Avenue & B Congress Avenue	4-3
4.1.2	C North Haven.....	4-4
4.1.3	D Grand Avenue/Dixwell Avenue	4-4
4.1.4	F East Haven/West Chapel Street	4-4
4.1.5	G Shelton Avenue/East Chapel Street.....	4-4
4.1.6	J Whitney Avenue/Kimberly Avenue	4-4
4.1.7	M Washington Avenue/State Street	4-5
4.1.8	Q State Street/Edgewood Avenue	4-5
4.1.9	Z Goffe Street/Sargent Drive	4-5
4.1.10	Commuter Connection: Downtown New Haven.....	4-5
4.1.11	Commuter Connection: Sargent Drive	4-5
4.1.12	Temple Street Garage Parking Shuttle	4-5
4.2	Hamden Station	4-5
4.2.1	M Washington Avenue/State Street	4-6
4.3	North Haven Station.....	4-6
4.3.1	C North Haven.....	4-8
4.4	Wallingford Station	4-8
4.4.1	C North Haven.....	4-8
4.4.2	NET Wallingford Bus Route	4-8
4.5	Meriden Station	4-10
4.5.1	A Yale Acres	4-11
4.5.2	B Kohl's – South Meriden.....	4-11
4.5.3	C East Main Street – West Main Street.....	4-11
4.6	Berlin Station.....	4-11
4.6.1	CTTransit - New Britain BK Berlin Kensington/Berlin Turnpike.....	4-12
4.7	Newington Station.....	4-12
4.7.1	W Capitol Avenue	4-13
4.7.2	New Britain – Hartford Busway Shuttle	4-13
4.7.3	BK Berlin/Kensington Local	4-13
4.7.4	BU Burritt Street Local	4-15
4.7.5	FA Farmington Ave Local	4-15
4.7.6	OK Oak Street Local	4-15
4.7.7	PL Plainville Local.....	4-15
4.7.8	ENB East New Britain Local	4-16
4.8	Hartford Union Station.....	4-16
4.8.1	Top Ten Ridership Routes.....	4-17
4.8.2	A Asylum Ave/Hillside Ave	4-17
4.8.3	B Silver Lane.....	4-17
4.8.4	E Farmington Ave	4-17
4.8.5	F Ashley Street/Broad Street.....	4-17
4.8.6	K North Main St/Park St	4-17
4.8.7	Q Vine Street/New Britain Avenue/Westfarms Flyer.....	4-18
4.8.8	T Franklin Avenue/Blue Hills Avenue.....	4-19



4.8.9	U Wethersfield Ave/Albany Ave	4-19
4.8.10	YM Burnside Ave/Manchester.....	4-19
4.8.11	Z Tolland Turnpike	4-19
4.9	Other CTTransit Routes	4-19
4.9.1	S Granby Street/Garden Street	4-19
4.10	New Britain – Hartford Busway Routes.....	4-19
4.10.1	X1 Bristol Express.....	4-20
4.10.2	X2 Cheshire/Southington Express.....	4-20
4.10.3	X3 Waterbury Express	4-20
4.10.4	X4 Meriden Express	4-20
4.10.5	P New Britain/Newington Limited.....	4-21
4.10.6	Q New Britain Avenue Limited	4-21
4.10.7	Other New Britain Hartford Busway Routes	4-21
4.11	Meadows Station	4-21
4.11.1	N Campfield Avenue/Windsor	4-21
4.11.2	W Weston Street.....	4-21
4.12	Windsor Station	4-22
4.12.1	N Campfield Avenue/Windsor	4-23
4.13	Windsor Locks Station	4-24
4.13.1	5 Enfield – Somers and 13 Windsor Locks Express	4-24
4.13.2	AS Bradley Airport Shuttle	4-24
4.13.3	AL Bradley Airport Local	4-24
4.14	Enfield Station.....	4-25
4.14.1	5 Enfield Express.....	4-25
4.14.2	16 Longmeadow/Enfield	4-27
4.14.3	EN Enfield Local.....	4-27
4.15	South Springfield Station	4-27
4.15.1	16 Longmeadow/Enfield	4-27
4.16	Springfield Union Station.....	4-28
4.16.1	G1 Chicopee Center-Fairfield Mall/Summer-Allen.....	4-30
4.16.2	G2 Carew-East Springfield/Belmont-Dwight Road.....	4-30
4.16.3	G3 Springfield Plaza via Liberty/King-Westford	4-30
4.16.4	B4 Plainfield/Walnut Street-Springfield College.....	4-30
4.16.5	G5 Dickinson-Tiffany-Jewish Home	4-30
4.16.6	B6 Ludlow via Bay.....	4-31
4.16.7	B7 State-Boston Road-Eastfield Mall	4-31
4.16.8	G8 Orange-Plumtree.....	4-31
4.16.9	B9/15 Saint James Avenue/Worthington Street.....	4-31
4.16.10	R10 Westfield State College via Main Street West Springfield	4-31
4.16.11	P11 Holyoke Community College Express.....	4-31
4.16.12	B12 Stonybrook Express	4-32
4.16.13	B13 Maple Street/Longmeadow	4-32
4.16.14	B14 Feeding Hills/Springfield.....	4-32
4.16.15	R16 Longmeadow/Enfield	4-32
4.16.16	B17 Eastfield Mall via Parker-Wilbraham Road	4-32



4.16.17	P20 Holyoke via Holyoke Mall-Riverdale	4-32
4.16.18	P21 Holyoke/Springfield via Chicopee	4-33
4.16.19	26 Trolley Loop Service	4-33
4.16.20	R27 Wilbraham/Eastfield Mall/Sixteen Acres	4-33

5 Natural Resource Secondary Source Review for Maximum Build

Alternative..... 5-1

5.1	New Haven Union Station.....	5-1
5.2	New Haven State Street Station	5-3
5.3	North Haven / Hamden Station	5-3
5.4	Wharton Brook Station.....	5-6
5.5	Wallingford Station	5-8
5.6	Meriden Station	5-8
5.7	Berlin Station.....	5-11
5.8	Newington Station.....	5-13
5.9	Hartford Station.....	5-15
5.10	North Meadows Station.....	5-15
5.11	Windsor Station.....	5-17
5.12	Windsor Locks Station	5-19
5.13	Bradley International Airport Station.....	5-21
5.14	Enfield Station.....	5-23
5.15	Springfield State Street Station	5-25
5.16	Springfield Union Station.....	5-27

6 Implementation Alternatives..... 6-1

6.1	Service Alternatives	6-1
6.1.1	Alternative CT1	6-1
6.1.2	Alternative CT2.....	6-2
6.1.3	Alternative Bi-State1	6-3
6.1.4	Alternative Bi-State2.....	6-3
6.2	Service Alternative Evaluation.....	6-9
6.2.1	Ridership Comparison	6-9
6.2.2	Capital Cost Comparison.....	6-9
6.2.3	Operating Cost Comparison	6-13
6.2.4	Revenue Comparison	6-13
6.3	Menu of Additional Elements	6-15
6.3.1	Off-peak Service.....	6-15
6.3.2	Weekend and Holiday Service	6-16
6.3.3	Possible New Stations	6-16
6.3.4	Rail Connection to Bradley International Airport.....	6-17
6.3.5	Full High-Level Platforms at All Stations.....	6-17
6.3.6	Grade Separated Pedestrian Crossing Facilities at All Stations	6-18
6.3.7	Station Buildings at All Stations	6-18
6.3.8	Access Walkway to the Legislative Office Building	6-18
6.4	Conclusions	6-19
6.5	Draft Recommended Action for Initial Commuter Rail Service.....	6-22



Figures

Figure 2-1 Minimum Build Stations	2-5
Figure 2-2 Maintenance Facility Schematic for Minimum Build	2-8
Figure 3-1 Maximum Build Stations.....	3-4
Figure 3-2 Future Trip Mode.....	3-9
Figure 3-4 Train Set Schematic.....	3-19
Figure 3-5 Maintenance Facility Schematic for Maximum Build	3-20
Figure 4-1 CTTransit New Haven Service.....	4-2
Figure 4-2 CTTransit New Haven Alignment Changes	4-3
Figure 4-3 Connecting Bus Service at Hamden Station.....	4-6
Figure 4-4 Connecting Bus Service at North Haven Station.....	4-7
Figure 4-5 Connecting Bus Service at Wallingford Station.....	4-9
Figure 4-6 Meriden Transit District Meriden Station Service	4-10
Figure 4-7 CTTransit - New Britain Berlin Station Service	4-12
Figure 4-8 Services Associated with the New Britain – Hartford Busway	4-14
Figure 4-9 CTTransit Hartford Alignment Changes	4-18
Figure 4-10 CTTransit Routes Serving Meadows Station	4-22
Figure 4-11 CTTransit Routes Serving Windsor Station	4-23
Figure 4-12 Routes Serving Windsor Locks Station.....	4-25
Figure 4-13 Routes Serving Enfield Station.....	4-26
Figure 4-14 PVTA Bus Service at South Springfield Station	4-28
Figure 4-15 PVTA Bus Connections at Union Station	4-29
Figure 5-1 Natural Resources Review – New Haven Union Station	5-2
Figure 5-2 Natural Resources Review – New Haven State Street Station.....	5-4
Figure 5-3 Natural Resources Review – North Haven – Hamden Station.....	5-5
Figure 5-4 Natural Resources Review – Wharton Brook Station	5-7
Figure 5-5 Natural Resources Review – Wallingford Station.....	5-9
Figure 5-6 Natural Resources Review – Meriden Station.....	5-10
Figure 5-7 Natural Resources Review – Berlin Station	5-12
Figure 5-8 Natural Resources Review – Newington Station	5-14
Figure 5-9 Natural Resources Review –Hartford Union Station	5-16
Figure 5-10 Natural Resources Review – Windsor Station	5-18
Figure 5-11 Natural Resources Review – Windsor Locks Station.....	5-20
Figure 5-12 Natural Resources Review – Bradley International Airport Station	5-22
Figure 5-13 Natural Resources Review – Enfield Station	5-24
Figure 5-14 Natural Resources Review – Springfield State Street Station.....	5-26
Figure 5-15 Natural Resources Review – Springfield Union Station	5-28



Tables

Table 2-1 Minimum Build Illustrative Southbound Weekday Schedule	2-2
Table 2-2 Minimum Build Illustrative Northbound Weekday Schedule	2-2
Table 2-3 Minimum Build Daily Ridership	2-6
Table 2-4 Minimum Build Scenario Capital Costs	2-10
Table 2-5 Shore Line East Operating Costs per Train Mile.....	2-11
Table 2-6 Proposed One-Way Fare Matrix	2-12
Table 2-7 Proposed Monthly Fares per Trip	2-12
Table 3-1 Illustrative Weekday Schedules for Maximum Build Scenario.....	3-3
Table 3-2 Amtrak Survey Results - Trip Purpose	3-7
Table 3-3 Amtrak Survey Results - Trip Frequency	3-8
Table 3-4 Amtrak Survey Results - Mode of Access and Mode of Egress.....	3-8
Table 3-5 Potential Commuter Rail Amtrak Customers - Trip Purpose	3-10
Table 3-6 Potential Commuter Rail Amtrak Customers - Trip Frequency	3-10
Table 3-7 Potential Commuter Rail Amtrak Customers - Mode of Access and Mode of Egress	3-11
Table 3-8 Notes about Commuter Rail – Airport Connections.....	3-12
Table 3-9 Commuter Rail Transit Airport User Percent Calculations	3-13
Table 3-10 Estimated Percentage of Airport Ridership from Each Location	3-14
Table 3-11 Commuter Rail Systems Peak and Off-peak Ridership.....	3-15
Table 3-12 Components of Total Weekday Ridership.....	3-16
Table 3-13 Maximum Build Scenario Weekday Ridership by Station	3-17
Table 3-14 Rolling Stock Summary	3-19
Table 3-15 Station Area Costs.....	3-23
Table 3-16 Total Order-of-Magnitude Estimate for Double Track.....	3-26
Table 3-17 Items Included and Not Included in Cost Estimates.....	3-29
Table 3-18 Summary of Recommended Actions and Construction Costs for Bridges...	3-30
Table 3-19 Maximum Build Scenario Capital Costs.....	3-34
Table 3-20 Maximum Build Scenario One-Way Fare Matrix	3-36
Table 5-1 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near New Haven Union Station.....	5-1
Table 5-2 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near New Haven State Street Station.....	5-3
Table 5-3 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near North Haven / Hamden Station	5-6
Table 5-4 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Wharton Brook Station.....	5-6
Table 5-5 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Wallingford Station	5-8
Table 5-6 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Meriden Station	5-11
Table 5-7 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Berlin Station.....	5-13
Table 5-8 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Newington Station	5-13
Table 5-9 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Hartford Union Station	5-15
Table 5-10 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Windsor Station	5-17
Table 5-11 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Windsor Locks Station	5-19
Table 5-12 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Bradley International Airport Station	5-23
Table 5-13 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Enfield Station	5-23



Table 5-14 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Springfield State Street Station 5-25

Table 5-15 Natural Resource Impacts (Acres) near Springfield Union Station..... 5-27

Table 6-1 Alternative CT1 Illustrative Schedules 6-5

Table 6-2 Alternative CT2 Illustrative Schedules 6-6

Table 6-3 Alternative Bi-State1 Illustrative Schedules 6-7

Table 6-4 Alternative Bi-State2 Illustrative Schedules 6-8

Table 6-5 Summary of Capital Costs 6-10

Table 6-6 Parking Costs 6-11

Table 6-7 Bridge Costs..... 6-12

Table 6-8 Rolling Stock Costs..... 6-13

Table 6-9 Operating Cost Comparisons 6-13

Table 6-10 Revenue Comparison 6-14

Table 6-11 Possible New Station Costs 6-17

Table 6-12 Operational Comparison of Alternatives 6-20

Table 6-13 Evaluation Comparison of Alternatives 6-20

Table 6-14 Steering Committee Recommended Bi-State 1 Preliminary Results..... 6-22



Chapter 1

Introduction

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) is currently studying the feasibility of implementing commuter rail service between New Haven, Hartford and Springfield. A previous report produced for this study evaluated the existing conditions in the corridor. The purpose of this report is to evaluate different alternative elements of a commuter rail system.

1.1 Elements of a Commuter Rail System

The various alternatives that will be described and evaluated in the chapters that follow will be studied for the following elements:

Service hours and frequency: The hours and frequency of commuter rail service will vary between alternatives. Some alternatives will include service in peak commuter hours only while others will include all day service and even weekend service.

Station locations: The number and placement of commuter rail stations will vary between alternatives.

Construction cost: The cost to build infrastructure needed by the commuter rail system (primarily in the form of parking and new track, but also potential grade crossing improvements, new stations, etc) will vary by alternative based upon the needs to provide varying service for different hours and different station locations.

Ridership: Numbers of passengers using the commuter rail system will vary by alternative based upon the needs to provide varying service for different hours and different station locations.

Operating cost: The annual cost to operate the commuter rail system will also vary by alternative for differing levels of service.

Maintenance Facility: A new maintenance facility will be needed for New Haven – Hartford – Springfield commuter rail service and the size and cost of this facility would vary based upon operational needs.



Airport Connections: It is anticipated that all the alternatives will serve Bradley International Airport in some capacity. The type of service (shuttle versus rail connection) and the location of such a connection could vary among alternatives.

1.2 Alternatives Evaluated in this Report

Subsequent chapters of this report consider:

- A “Minimum Build” Alternative (Chapter 2)
- A “Maximum Build” Alternative (Chapter 3)
- Service Plan for the “Maximum Build” Alternative (Chapter 4)
- Environmental Assessment for the “Maximum Build” Alternative (Chapter 5)
- Implementation Alternatives (Chapter 6)

The minimum and maximum build were designed to provide the two extremes in possible service on the line. Using the data from these two initial alternatives, a set of four possible implementation alternatives were created for initial startup of the service along with a menu of additional options that could be added either immediately or over time.