State of Connecticut
Department of Transportation

Final Report

TRUCK STOP AND REST AREA PARKING STUDY

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Table of Contents

	Page
Background and Summary	**1**
Options Investigated to Address Truck Parking Demand	**8**
Option 1: Do Nothing	**9**
Option 2: Current Policies and Practices	**10**
Option 3: Opportunities to Reduce Truck Traffic on Highways	**12**
Option 4: Using Intelligent Transportation System Communications to Display the Status of Parking Availability	**16**
Option 5: Reconfiguring Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking Spaces	**18**
Option 6: Expanding Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking	**19**
Option 7: Constructing New Facilities for Additional Truck Rest Area Parking	**20**
Conclusions	**28**

List of Tables

Table 1	**Public Rest Areas – Existing and Possible Truck Parking Spaces**	**20**
Table 2	**Sites Investigated for Overflow Truck Parking**	**23**

List of Figures

Figure 1	**Connecticut Public Rest Areas with Truck Parking**	**4**
Figure 2	**Connecticut Private Rest Areas with Truck Parking**	**6**
Figure 3	**Sites Investigated for New Public Rest Areas**	**25**
Appendix A	**Preliminary Concepts for Reconfiguring or Expanding Public Rest Areas for Truck Parking**	
Appendix B	**National Association of Truck Stop Operators Correspondence**	
Appendix C	**Meeting Report**	
Appendix D	**Comments**	

TRUCK STOP AND REST AREA PARKING STUDY

Background and Summary

This report is the final of three documents that have been prepared by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) during the conduct of this study. Interim Report Number 1 provides study background and truck parking inventory data, and Interim Report Number 2 provides survey results, accident data, and truck parking demand forecasts.

Nearly all of the goods and commodities that come into or leave Connecticut are moved by private industry, with the majority being moved by truck. Over 74 percent of the volume of commodities that travel into, out of, and through Connecticut, travel by truck, 19 percent by water, 6 percent by rail, and 1 percent by air (Southwest Corridor Commodity Flow Study, Interim Report Number 1, ConnDOT 1999). Federal regulations place limitations on the number of hours a truck driver is allowed to operate his vehicle, with substantial fines for non-compliance. Consequently, areas are needed off of the travel way to allow truckers to safely park and obtain the rest and services they need. Crowding and extralegal parking of trucks at existing public rest areas and along the highway ramps and shoulders has been recognized as a growing concern, with potential safety implications. In the spring of 1998, the Connecticut

State Police examined accident records and incident reports to determine the extent of this situation. In response to a request to address an identified need for additional parking for trucks, ConnDOT conducted an evaluation of the public rest areas located along Interstate 95 (I-95) in Darien, Fairfield, Milford, Branford, and Madison. The intent was to identify the opportunity for implementing a low cost, minimal impact strategy to increase the number of parking spaces for trucks at these locations. Revised pavement marking plans were subsequently developed; and in the spring of 1999, the northbound and southbound areas in Darien, Fairfield, Milford, Branford, and Madison were re-striped. As a result, the total number of truck parking spaces at these facilities was increased from 100 to 180. This action, however, has not met the total demand for truck parking spaces.

During the summer of 1999, incident management observation cameras, which are located along I-95 near the Darien and Milford rest areas, were used to monitor the overnight activity and conditions at these sites. Videotapes of the monitoring showed that the truck parking at these areas are filled beyond capacity throughout the night. The videotapes documented trucks being parked extralegally along the rest area entrances and exit ramps, within the gas pump area and car parking areas, and along the shoulders of I-95.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) began an update of its national study of truck parking needs which it had chronicled in the 1996 report, Commercial Driver Rest & Parking Requirements: Making Space for Safety. That study inventoried public rest areas around the country and developed an analytical model to predict the demand for truck parking spaces along interstate corridors. That analysis indicated a shortage of more than 28,000 truck parking spaces nationwide and predicted the shortage would grow to 39,000 in ten years. It found the I-95 corridor to have the most critical problem and identified Connecticut as one of the states where the demand per rest area is greatest. There are a total of 13 public rest areas in Connecticut that provide parking for truckers to rest (Figure 1). FHWA determined (in 1996) that Connecticut public rest areas needed 1,462 truck parking spaces and had 437 available, leaving a shortage of 1,025 spaces on an average day.

The FHWA study also investigated private truck stops around the country to determine their ability to meet the shortage of spaces identified at the public rest areas. They found overcrowding occurring at the private truck stops that was similar to the overcrowding being experienced at the public rest areas. Furthermore, through surveys of truckers, they found that drivers use private and public facilities for different purposes (due in part to the different services available at each). Also, the demand for public truck parking spaces was independent of the private parking

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC REST AREAS WITH TRUCK PARKING

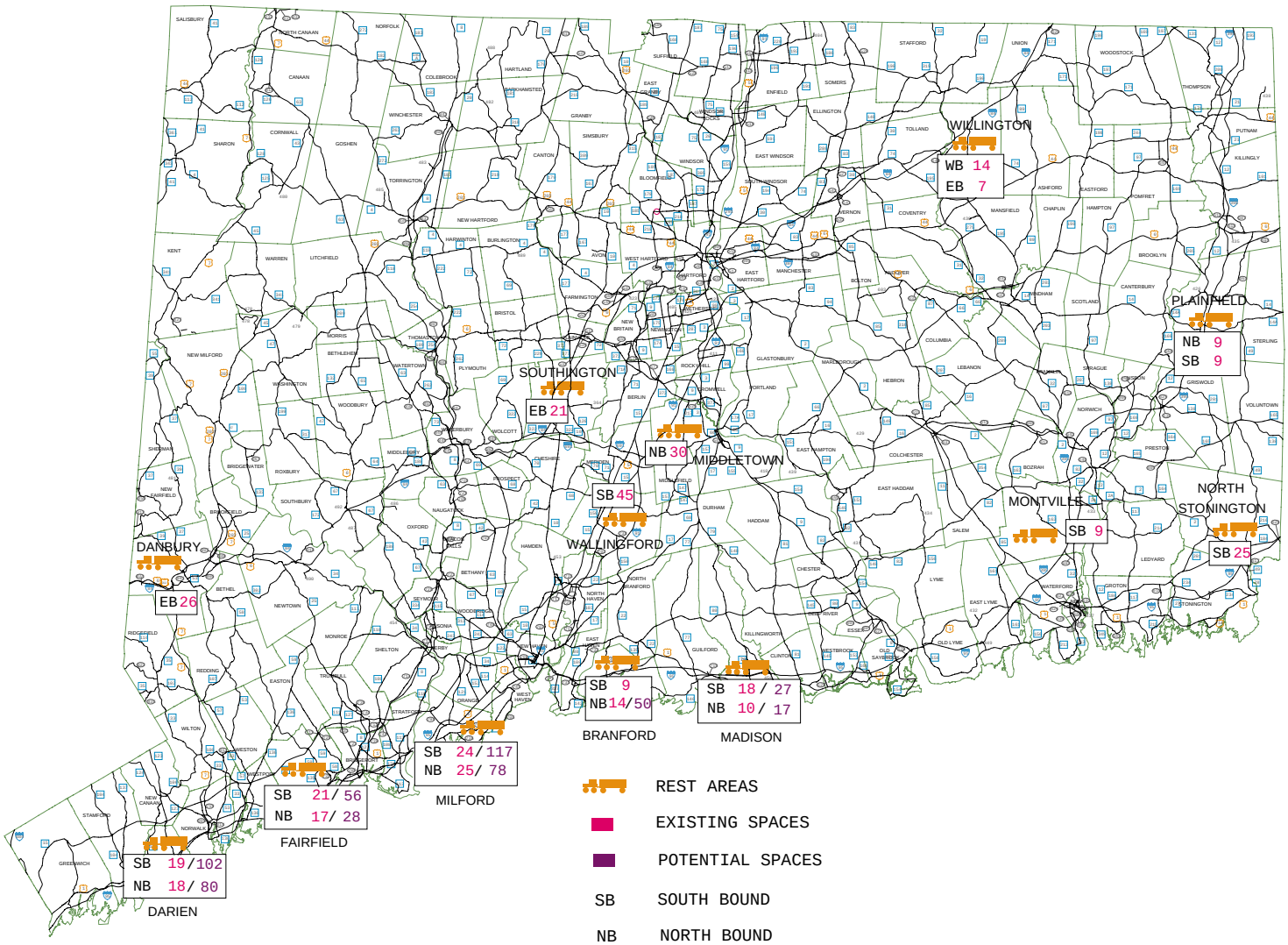


FIGURE 1

capacity that was being provided. There are six privately-operated truck stops in Connecticut that provide 770 parking spaces and other services for truckers (Figure 2).

Overcrowding at Connecticut's public rest areas continues to occur. Trucks are observed parked in undesignated areas within the rest areas and along the expressways statewide. These public rest areas are the focus of this study. ConnDOT's investigation and analyses of existing truck parking capacity and anticipated (year 2020) needs at public rest areas has determined that there are actually 375 truck parking spaces statewide (not the 437 spaces reported in the FHWA report), leaving a current shortage of nearly 1,200 spaces. By the year 2020, the number of additional public parking spaces that will be needed for trucks will increase to over 1,600. (These numbers have been adjusted from Interim Report Number 2, due to the recent addition of several spaces in Madison southbound and revised traffic projections.) Estimates of the number of parking spaces have been documented in the "Truck Stop and Rest Area Parking Study" Interim Report Number 1 (May 2000) and Interim Report Number 2 (October 2000).

ConnDOT has conducted this study to determine the current and anticipated demand for resting areas and parking for trucks and identify measures that should be considered to address undesirable conditions.

CONNECTICUT PRIVATE REST AREAS WITH TRUCK PARKING

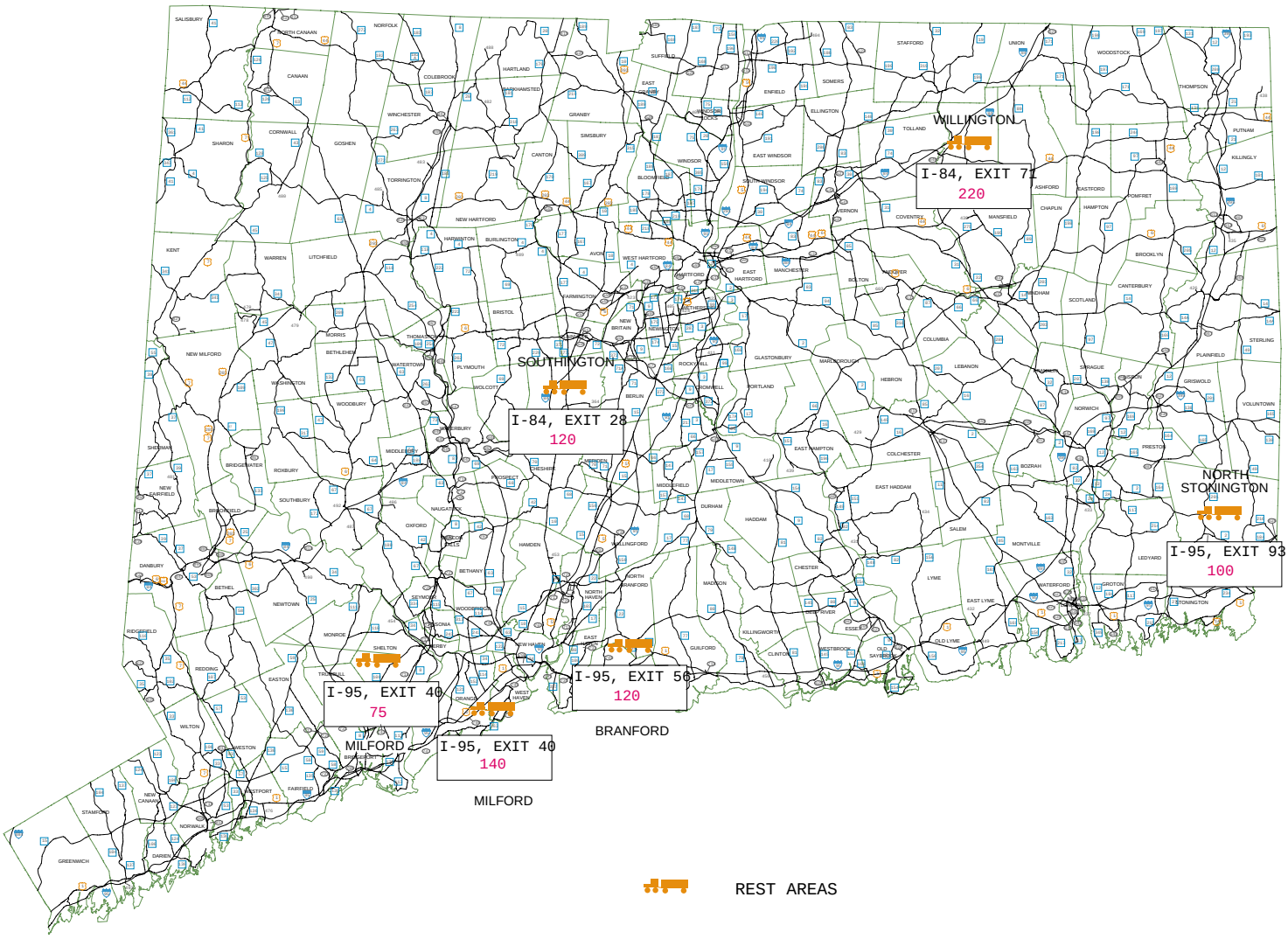


FIGURE 2

ConnDOT formed liaisons in the conduct of this study, with the State Departments of Public Safety (State Police) and Motor Vehicles (DMV), which are the two State agencies that are responsible for enforcing motor vehicle and truck regulations on state highways. The Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC) also participated and provided their perspective as a representative of the trucking industry in Connecticut.

A series of discussions were held among representatives of ConnDOT's Offices of Planning, Concessions, Maintenance, Traffic, and Construction, and representatives of the State Police, DMV, MTAC, FHWA, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Additional coordination was conducted with truck drivers, owners and operators of private truck stops, Regional Planning Organizations, and municipalities. These discussions provided an opportunity for the trucking industry, those responsible for regulating the industry, and those directly affected by public rest areas, to cooperatively identify the issues and consider solutions.

The results of this investigation have identified a current need for additional area to provide truck operators with the opportunity to rest. In Connecticut there are approximately 1,200 trucks that travel into, out of, and through the state on an average day that cannot be accommodated within existing designated public parking areas. This demand is expected

to increase to approximately 1,600 by the year 2020. A number of options have been evaluated to address this need. It has been determined that the current and anticipated demand could not be accommodated by doing nothing, changing current enforcement practices and policies, and using Intelligent Transportation System Communications to post the status of parking availability and/or direct drivers to other locations. Also, there is only limited opportunity to reconfigure existing public rest areas to expand parking for trucks or to reduce truck traffic on highways by diverting the movement of goods to other modes. The opportunity does exist to provide additional parking area within many of the existing public rest areas to accommodate a portion of the immediate demand. Sites have also been identified along the interstate system, which could accommodate new rest area facilities, with ample parking for trucks.

<u>Options Investigated to Address Truck Parking Demand</u>

To address the current and anticipated demand for truck parking, the following options have been investigated:

1. **Do Nothing**
2. **Current Policies and Practices**
3. **Opportunities to Reduce Truck Traffic on Highways**
4. **Using Intelligent Transportation System Communications to Display the Status of Parking Availability**

5. **Reconfiguring Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking Spaces**
6. **Expanding Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking**
7. **Constructing New Facilities for Additional Truck Rest Area Parking**

Option 1 – Do Nothing:

There is a recognized national demand for additional areas to allow truck drivers to rest, and the Northeast region has been identified as being substantially deficient in accommodating this demand. The FHWA has estimated that freight traffic will double in the next 20 years and that trucks will carry most of the increase. Therefore, it can be anticipated that there will be an associated increase in the demand for additional areas for truckers to rest. In a report adopted by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on May 17, 2000, Highway Special Investigation Report Truck Parking Areas (Report NTSB/SIR-00/01), it is stated (Page 18): "The Safety Board concludes that the Federal and State governments have the responsibility to maintain highway safety and that the lack of available truck parking or the truck drivers not knowing where parking would be available can negatively impact safety."

The identified shortage of public truck parking spaces in Connecticut is exemplified by the widespread and regular use of undesignated areas within public rest areas and along highway ramps and shoulders for parking trucks. Existing privately operated truck stops are also at or near capacity on a regular basis. For Federal and State government to do nothing would allow these current practices to continue, and possibly worsen, as the demand increases. This could put greater emphasis upon the private sector to provide resting facilities. However, private truck stop providers have indicated that there are many difficulties that must be overcome over a lengthy process to secure the necessary authorizations that would allow them to add truck parking capacity or to construct new facilities. Truck stops are typically viewed negatively by communities and are seldom welcomed without resistance.

Option 2 – Current Policies and Practices:

In general, stopping on the interstate highway in Connecticut is prohibited unless there is an emergency with the vehicle or the driver. An emergency can be a sudden loss of mechanical power, structural failure of the vehicle or incapacitation of the driver due to medical reasons. Federal regulations place limitations on the number of hours a truck driver is allowed to operate his/her vehicle and there are substantial fines for non-compliance. An incident, where a driver in danger of exceeding their hours of operation parks on the side of the highway because he/she claims there

is no parking area available for him/her or that he/she is tired and needs to rest, is not considered an emergency.

The Connecticut State Police along with other agencies have examined this situation. It is recognized that drivers who continue to drive beyond mandated time limits are in danger of falling asleep. Tired drivers jeopardize themselves and other motorists. These drivers need to find a safe place to park and rest. While these drivers may feel it is necessary to stop and rest on the side of the highway, they are in violation of the law and subject to its penalties. Troopers normally will direct these parked drivers to rest areas, commuter lots or off the highway to local parking areas. ConnDOT's recent Truck Drivers Survey ("Truck Stop and Rest Area Parking Study", Interim Report Number 2) did indicate that 43 percent of the drivers participating in the survey have at one time or another been asked by the State Police to move after having parked in an undesignated area to rest. Drivers should not expect to be allowed to park on the side of the highway.

The lack of sufficient and convenient parking at the highway rest areas, does not allow the State Police to abdicate its responsibility to the rest of the motoring public by allowing trucks to park on the side of highways. Changes in this practice are not in the best interest of the motoring public nor would it promote safety on the highways. Troopers

will continue to exercise discretion in directing drivers to the nearest, safest and most convenient areas to rest.

Option 3 – Investigate Opportunities to Reduce Truck Traffic on Highways:

When evaluating intermodal transportation options, Connecticut is considered primarily a destination state. Connecticut receives approximately 16,000 intermodal rail trips annually, but the major portion of the intermodal trips in Connecticut is by truck. For almost all products that are moved intermodally, trucks are eventually used to complete the delivery of that product. Shipments that are most susceptible to diversion to other modes are those that have trip origins and destinations outside of the State of Connecticut. Many of the intermodal services needed to reduce truck trips would have to be provided in other states. The decisions to use rail (or other) intermodal transportation are made by the shippers and receivers of the commodities and are outside the purview of State government. The State Department of Transportation provides infrastructure which supports the interest of transportation companies to efficiently and economically move goods into, out of, and through Connecticut. The State does not directly influence the decision of a shipper or receiver to use one mode of transportation over another. ConnDOT does support and has provided the transporting community with information that may be beneficial to shippers, receivers and transportation providers regarding the availability of alternative transportation methods to

encourage less reliance on transportation facilities that may be congested, such as I-95. ("Southwest Corridor Commodity Flow Study, Final Report, ConnDOT 1999".)

It is the policy of ConnDOT to continue to nurture the competitive existence of intermodal transportation options for the transportation consumers in the region. ConnDOT will continue to advocate regional economic development by promoting and maintaining intermodal transportation options and to specifically identify transportation system improvements geared towards increasing the efficiency of the freight and passenger transportation systems.

ConnDOT supports a program for local rail freight preservation and improvement for various Connecticut-based short-haul railroads to assist them in their operations. These operations contribute to removing trucks from Connecticut highways and encourage the use of intermodal transportation services.

Various barge operators are transporting commercial products by barge into and out of Connecticut. An operation by Gateway Terminal, located in the Port of New Haven, provides tug and barge services to major transportation centers along the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico, and Puerto Rico. The dry products that the barges are designed to transport

include steel, sand, salt, and pumice. Some of the products coming into New Haven through Gateway Terminal by barge include sand and salt, which are transported from the port to its destination by truck. Products shipped from the port by barge include rock and wood chips for use in other areas.

Buchanan Marine of New Haven, Connecticut operates a fleet of approximately 250 barges, 10 owned tugs, and an additional 10 leased tugs. They operate along the coastline, as opposed to deep-water operations. They service an area from Tampa Bay, Florida to the Connecticut region. They own various docks and facilities along the Eastern Seaboard to support their operations. In the Connecticut and New York area, at the present time, they primarily barge aggregate and scrap metal. The aggregate is shipped from the Tilcon Branford facility to New York City. Each barge carries the equivalent of 50 tractor-trailer loads of aggregate. The company also barges scrap metal from New Haven to various customers in the Greater New York Metropolitan Area.

Buchanan has purchased property in Norwich on the Thames River for the purpose of operating an intermodal facility. The site has direct rail access to the New England Central Railroad main line and is located within a short drive to I-395, which provides a connection to I-95, I-84, and Route 2. The company plans to barge cargo from a site they own in New Jersey

on the Upper New York Bay. They will initiate the service by primarily handling break bulk items such as lumber, steel, pipe, sand, and aggregate.

ConnDOT and the South Central and Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Organizations have conducted Commercial Barge Transportation Feasibility Studies. These studies investigated the opportunity for increasing commercial barge service, particularly between the Ports of New York and New Jersey, and the Ports of Bridgeport, New Haven and New London in Connecticut. The emphasis of these studies was to promote the diversion of commercial truck traffic from the congested roadways in the southwest corridor, particularly I-95. Demonstration projects are being planned by private operators to provide a container barge feeder service between New York and New Jersey Ports and Connecticut Ports.

Average Daily Two-Way Traffic on I-95 in October 1999 was 135,100, or nearly 6,000 vehicles per hour (with 9,000 vehicles in the peak hour). Ten percent of the average daily traffic volume on I-95 is truck traffic. In the Commercial Barge Transportation Feasibility Study, the potential market for diverting truck traffic from I-95 onto a container feeder barge service in Connecticut was being identified as the international container trips destined for the Northeast, traveling into, out of, and through Connecticut. These container trips are forecast to be approximately 15,000

to 20,000 containers a year (or up to approximately 60 to 80 containers each day). It is not possible to accurately determine how many of these truck trips would have used Connecticut public rest areas. Truck parking demand is related to the truck volumes on the highways; therefore, a reduction in the number of trucks on the road should result in a reduction in the demand for truck resting spaces. Given the short distance nature of trucks traveling from the Ports of New York and New Jersey to Connecticut, this option may not have a measurable beneficial impact on the truck parking demand at Connecticut rest areas.

Option 4 – Using Intelligent Transportation System Communications to Display the Status of Parking Availability:

ConnDOT currently operates an extensive Intelligent Transportation System, which is in place or planned along all of the major highway corridors. This system consists of observation cameras and speed detectors for highway monitoring, electronic variable message signs, and traffic advisory radio stations. The system provides travelers with real time information regarding roadway conditions. ConnDOT also participates in the I-95 Corridor Coalition. This group promotes the use of Intelligent Transportation System activities such as web sites, electronic toll and traffic management, variable message signs, and highway advisory radio to provide information on traffic and congestion all along the Eastern Seaboard.

Using electronic display boards to provide real time information regarding parking space availability and/or direct drivers to other facilities does not appear to be beneficial. This is primarily due to the need to continuously monitor the rest areas and the frequency at which the status of parking space availability changes. The probability of providing information that is outdated by the time a driver arrives at a rest area could be high and could mislead drivers. Providing real time information could also be counterproductive. Drivers anticipating parking availability, based on information they received electronically as they approach a rest area, upon arriving, may be forced to park in a now overcrowded rest area or bypass the site as a result of parking conditions that have changed within minutes of the information read.

Discussions with personnel from nearby states (New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts) have indicated their similar experience with this situation, with no immediate solutions. The State of New York is in the process of rehabilitating their public rest areas as part of an ongoing program. They are increasing the amount of commercial vehicle parking wherever possible, and are including areas for vehicle inspection. In some areas, commercial interests are participating in the redevelopment. Rhode Island has indicated that they have one public rest area. They do not feel that they have a significant problem regarding the

lack of truck parking. Massachusetts acknowledges a deficiency in the availability of parking spaces for trucks at their public rest areas. The state is in the process of converting their public rest areas into Visitor Centers. They are interested in making the facilities more secure and attractive to tourists. The existing parking areas are also being reconfigured to provide more auto and truck parking spaces. New Jersey also recognizes the need for additional spaces. Improvements are undertaken whenever a rest area is being rehabilitated. They also identify the need for more and better facilities for commercial vehicles, particularly in high volume corridors.

Therefore, the application of the Intelligent Transportation System electronic display cannot be expected to appreciably benefit reducing overcrowded parking at public rest areas.

Option 5 – Reconfiguring Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking Spaces:

As previously indicated, the existing public rest areas located on I-95 were recently reconfigured to provide additional truck parking. These rest areas were originally designed in the 1950s and reflected a much lower estimate of truck traffic. In the spring of 1999, reconfiguring the existing rest areas did increase the total number of spaces from 100 to 180 in the northbound and southbound rest areas in Darien, Fairfield, Milford, Branford, and Madison. The public rest areas located on other Connecticut

interstates, which are more recent designs, incorporate more modern construction theory. Therefore, they offer less opportunity for reconfiguring. Reconfiguring rest areas that have not yet been modified to increase available truck parking is an option that warrants further consideration.

Option 6 – Expanding Existing Public Rest Areas for Additional Truck Parking:

Each of the existing public rest areas was reviewed to determine the opportunity for expansion to provide additional space for truck drivers to park their vehicles and rest. The configuration and topography of each site was reviewed. Space appears to be available, primarily within the existing highway right of way, for enlarging the truck parking areas at many of the existing public rest areas. Preliminary concepts have been developed to maximize the number of spaces possible at each area based on the existing property lines and observed adjacent land use and geology. The preliminary concepts are based on parking spaces that are 70 feet long and 14 feet wide. Table 1 presents the number of existing and total potential spaces at each rest area based on these parameters. Aerial photographs of the rest areas illustrating the preliminary concepts for expanded parking for trucks (and buses) are provided in Appendix A.

ConnDOT anticipates the opportunity to review, and possibly reconfigure, existing public rest areas along the expressways in the near future. Contract leases with current service providers (Mobil and McDonald's) will begin to expire in the year 2003. At that time, reconfiguration of the facilities may be possible. Coordination with the affected municipalities would be conducted should expansion of existing public rest areas be pursued.

Table 1
Public Rest Areas
Existing and Possible Truck Parking Spaces

Route	Area	Existing Spaces	Possible Spaces
I-84 Eastbound	Danbury	26	26
I-84 Eastbound	Southington	21	63
I-84 Eastbound	West Willington	7	72
I-84 Westbound	West Willington	14	14
I-91 Southbound	Wallingford	45	75
I-91 Northbound	Middletown	30	30
I-95 Northbound	Darien	18	63
I-95 Southbound	Darien	19	102
I-95 Northbound	Fairfield	17	28
I-95 Southbound	Fairfield	21	56
I-95 Northbound	Milford	25	78
I-95 Southbound	Milford	24	117
I-95 Northbound	Branford	14	50
I-95 Southbound	Branford	9	17
I-95 Northbound	Madison	10	57
I-95 Southbound	Madison	23	107
I-95 Southbound	North Stonington	25	25
I-395 Southbound	Montville	9	9
I-395 Southbound	Plainfield	9	9
I-395 Northbound	Plainfield	9	15
	Totals	375	1,013

Option 7 – Constructing New Facilities for Additional Truck Rest Area Parking:

ConnDOT has investigated the opportunity for constructing new public rest areas for truckers, to satisfy some of the parking demand. This included investigating the opportunity to use existing facilities in the near term and constructing new facilities to meet future demand.

The near term effort was directed toward identifying existing parking lots which could be used for overflow parking when the rest areas become crowded. Aerial photographs were reviewed to identify areas near the interstates that have open space or existing parking lots. Areas that have apparent difficulties regarding access, maneuverability, or apparent environmental considerations, were eliminated from further consideration. Thirty-eight sites were reviewed. Field examinations were then conducted for approximately 26 select sites to further evaluate these areas. Table 2 identifies the towns and the number of the sites in each town that were considered during this study.

Current commuter park-and-ride facilities were also considered to accommodate the trucking industry in the near term. Current legislation does not allow the use of these facilities for commercial vehicle parking. Section 13b-29 of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes the Commissioner of Transportation to provide parking lots for the purpose of

encouraging the use of mass transit and to develop regulations for their use. It limits the usage of such lots to people using mass transit or carpools or vanpools.

Section 13b-29 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies contains the administrative regulations governing the use of commuter parking facilities. Subsection 3 of those regulations specifically prohibits the parking of tractor trailer trucks, semi trailer trucks, or tandem trailer trucks in any ConnDOT designated commuter parking facility.

In addition, commuter parking lots are not designed to accommodate large and heavy vehicles on a regular basis, either in terms of operating geometrics or in terms of strength of pavement. These facilities are intended to encourage ridesharing and reduce the number of single-occupant automobiles. Mixed use of these facilities could act as a determent to their intended use. If this strategy were to be pursued, it would be necessary to modify the existing legislation, and evaluate the potential of each lot on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to questions regarding the suitability of a particular location for truck parking, other issues had to be addressed regarding the use of alternate sites. These issues included developing standards, signage, and enforcement for any additional rest areas or truck parking

areas, methods for directing truck drivers to the alternate sites, providing security and essential services at the sites, maintaining the sites, and possible enforcement of removing vehicles from the facility during closing hours. Also, consideration was given to long-term environmental effects and the potential for hazardous material incidents occurring either at the site or on the access and egress routes. Because of these requirements for handling trucks, no suitable locations were found.

Table 2
Sites Investigated for Overflow Truck Parking

Town Name	# Sites
I-95	
Greenwich	3
Darien	4
Norwalk	1
Westport	3
Fairfield	8
Bridgeport	2
Stratford	1
Milford	10
Orange	1
West Haven	2
I-84	
Middlebury	1
Newtown	1
I-395	
Plainfield	1
Total Sites	38

The investigation of options to address the long-term demand has been directed toward identifying locations where new parking facilities could be constructed. This included analyzing current highway

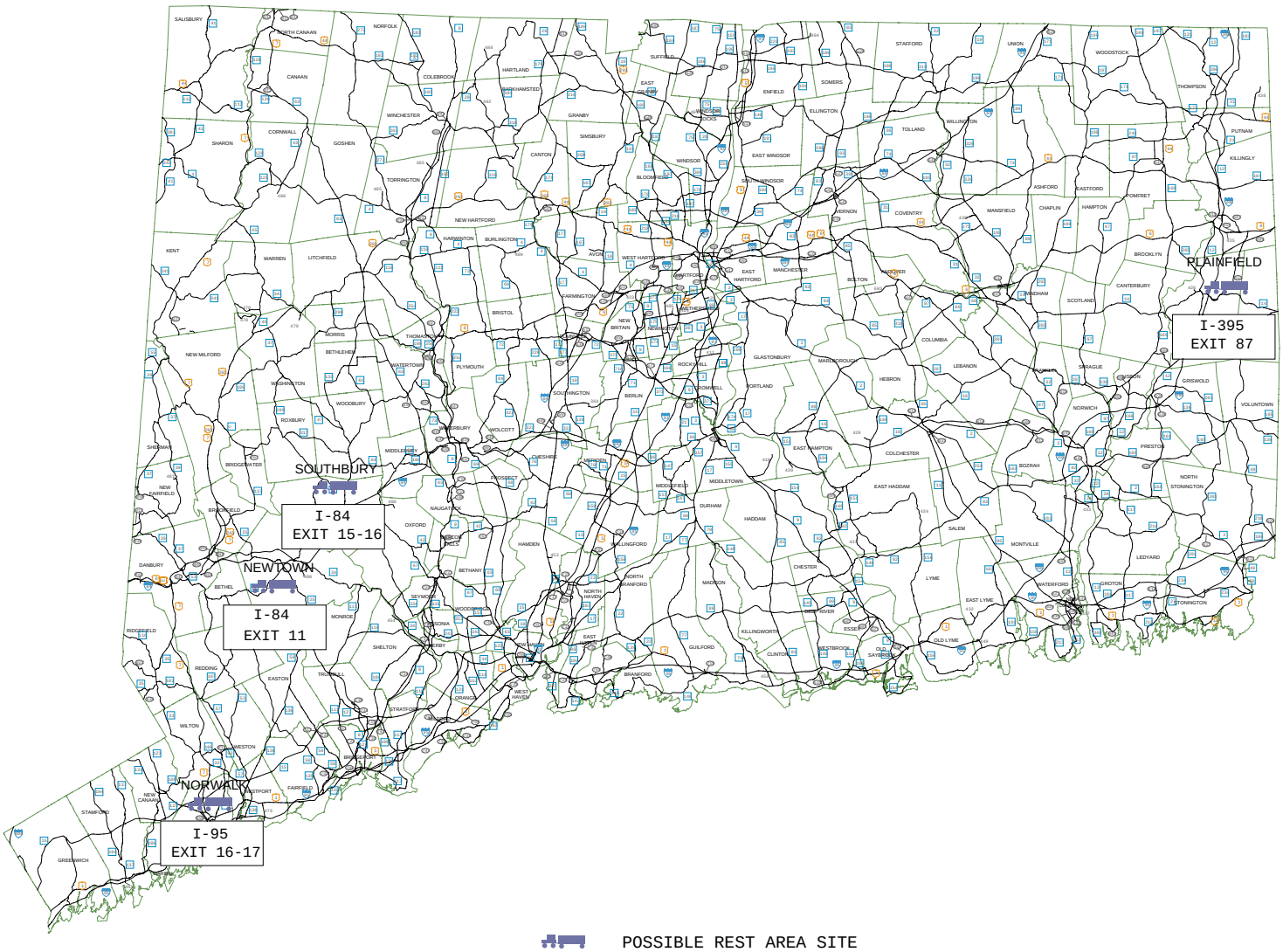
improvement projects to identify whether the project could be modified to include a rest area, and investigating the possibility of locating new rest areas in regions that currently have demonstrated an inadequate supply of truck parking spaces. Sites investigated include the former Norden factory property located near Interchange 16 along the south side of I-95 in Norwalk (I-95 north), undeveloped property at Interchange 11 off of I-84 in Newtown, undeveloped property located between Interchanges 15 and 16 along I-84 in Southbury, and undeveloped property located south of Interchange 87 along I-395 in Plainfield. These areas were identified on aerial photographs and site inspections were made to evaluate their suitability. Each of these areas could conceivably accommodate a large number of trucks. The locations of these sites are identified in Figure 3.

The former Norden factory site is a currently unoccupied manufacturing plant located adjacent to I-95 north in Norwalk. A parking facility could be configured within this site to accommodate approximately 200 or more trucks, with possible direct access to and from I-95 north. Discussions with the town however, indicate that other possible development options are being considered for this site which would preclude its use as a rest area and truck parking site.

The site in Newtown off Interchange 11 of I-84 was identified through a recently completed (June 2000) study of transportation needs and

SITES INVESTIGATED FOR

NEW PUBLIC REST AREAS



POSSIBLE REST AREA SITE

FIGURE 3

deficiencies of the I-84 corridor between Danbury and Newtown. The study proposes modifications to interchange 11. It is anticipated that, should the proposed modifications be pursued, sufficient land could possibly be made available within the highway property limits to provide a new rest area. The site in Southbury on I-84 was identified through an existing study, which is being conducted to identify needs and deficiencies of I-84 between Waterbury and Newtown. Undeveloped land was identified along I-84 west, which may be adequate to construct a possible new rest area. This site is also along a portion of I-84, whereby the shoulder and adjacent area is regularly used by truckers to park and rest, particularly during the evening.

The site in Plainfield on I-395 was identified through the investigation of a requested release of state-owned property in the area. A portion of the state property adjacent to the highway was identified (to be retained) as a possible location for a new rest area.

Two locations on I-95 in Fairfield County were also identified by study participants for consideration: the Truck Weigh and Inspection Facility at I-95 north (east of Interchange 2) in Greenwich, and Sherwood Island State Park (I-95, Interchange 18) in Westport. The Truck Weigh and Inspection Facility was constructed in 1992 in response to a need for State Police and DMV inspectors to have a dedicated area along I-95 in Fairfield County to enforce truck weight and safety regulations. This facility is

designed to conduct weighing and inspection operations in a controlled situation. The facility can accommodate parking for 40 trucks during operations. Use of this area during periods when the weighing and inspections are not being conducted is currently prohibited. An agreement between ConnDOT and the Town of Greenwich stipulates that the facility will be closed to vehicle access when not operating.

This agreement would need to be modified to allow its use for anything other than the enforcement of truck regulations. Further review would also be required to determine the feasibility of intermittent mixed use and the need for modifications to the site, to allow its use as a rest area.

Sherwood Island State Park is located on the south side of I-95 at Interchange 18 in Westport. This is a public recreational facility which is operated by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (ConnDEP). This site was used in 1986 as a temporary area for truck weigh and safety enforcement.

ConnDOT has contacted the ConnDEP facility manager to discuss use of this site for a rest area for truckers. Such use of this facility for this purpose was strongly discouraged, due to the recreational use of this site and the environmental sensitivity of the area.

The National Association of Truck Stop Operators (NATSO) has indicated that they believe that the private truck stop industry has the capability of accommodating the truck parking shortages that have been identified. NATSO believes that the State of Connecticut should not provide any additional parking for trucks unless there are additional fees assessed to cover the costs of providing that parking. NATSO also believes that the State should close rest areas on highways that are sufficiently served by the private sector and focus public resources in areas that currently need better service. Also NATSO would like the State to remove requirements for developers to provide road improvements associated with a proposed new truck parking facility. A copy of the correspondence may be found in Appendix C.

Conclusions

The FHWA has estimated that freight traffic will double in the next 20 years and that trucks will carry most of the increase. This will increase the need for rest areas (and parking) for truck drivers. This is a national concern, and the northeast region has been identified as having a substantially inadequate number of truck parking spaces.

The NTSB May 2000 report (Report NTSB/SIR-00/01, page 29) concludes that:

1. **Shippers, brokers, and consignees frequently influence truck schedules and should be an integral part of any solution to the truck parking area dilemma.**
2. **Testimony at the National Transportation Safety Board's four public hearings and available research indicate that not enough adequate truck parking spaces are available to accommodate traffic patterns in certain locations.**
3. **The Federal and State governments have the responsibility to maintain highway safety and that the lack of available truck parking, or the truck drivers not knowing where parking would be available, can negatively impact safety.**
4. **The prohibition against private development of rest area facilities on interstates may be an impediment to the construction of adequate truck parking.**
5. **While existing guides and mapping programs may list the private truck stops and public rest areas, they are not all-inclusive of the available truck parking, such as alternative locations like park-and-ride and weigh stations.**
6. **Some truck drivers do not have enough information on parking locations and need to be made aware of all available parking, both in advance of, and during, trips.**
7. **The global positioning systems technology, combined with electronic maps and the ability to communicate that information**

to truck drivers, could also be used to help drivers locate parking areas.

8. **Parking time limits for public rest areas can result in drivers returning to the roadway without obtaining adequate rest or parking unsafely on shoulders or ramps.**

The NTSB study findings recommend the following:

- **The National Industrial Transportation League should participate as a stakeholder in the ongoing truck rest parking study that is being conducted by the FHWA per the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century Section 4027 legislation.**
- **As part of the report to Congress on the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century Section 4027, the FHWA evaluate the benefits, related to truck parking, of eliminating the prohibition against private development of rest area facilities on interstates. Should this evaluation conclude that truck parking could be improved, obtain legislative authority to eliminate the prohibition where needed.**
- **The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, in cooperation with the FHWA, the American Trucking Associations, Inc., the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, the National Private Truck Council, and the National Association of Truck Stop**

Operators, create a comprehensive guide, available both on paper and in electronic format, for all truck drivers to use, that will inform drivers about the locations of all parking areas (both private and public) and the space availability. Also, develop a plan for its distribution and maintenance.

- **Once those states that currently enforce time limits at public rest areas have ensured that adequate parking is available, eliminate or modify those time limits that can prevent truck drivers from obtaining adequate rest, or redirect drivers to nearby parking facilities where they can obtain adequate rest.**

ConnDOT is aware that drivers are using unauthorized locations on the side of highways and along entrance and exit ramps as ad hoc rest areas. In addition, they are parking in undesignated places within and near established public rest areas. Private truck stops are also at capacity on a regular basis. This demonstrates a need for additional truck parking areas, especially along the I-95 corridor.

The Department of Public Safety (State Police) intends to continue its policy and practice of moving vehicles that are parked in areas that are considered to be unsafe or potentially hazardous. If necessary, the State Police will escort trucks to park in locations that are acceptable to avoid

putting the drivers in a situation where they would be driving beyond their legal hours of service.

In Connecticut, according to FHWA forecasts, there are approximately 1,200 trucks that travel into, out of, and through the state on an average day that cannot be accommodated within existing designated public parking areas. This demand is expected to increase to approximately 1,600 by the year 2020.

Doing nothing, changing current enforcement practices and policies, and using Intelligent Transportation System Communications to post the status of parking availability or direct drivers to other facilities could not accommodate current and anticipated demand. Also, there is limited opportunity to reconfigure existing public rest areas to accommodate additional parking for trucks or to reduce truck traffic on highways by diverting the movement of goods to other modes. The opportunity does exist to expand the parking areas within many of the existing public rest areas to accommodate a portion of the immediate demand for trucks. Sites have also been identified along the interstate system which could accommodate new rest area facilities, with ample parking for trucks.

Though provision for additional truck parking is both a regional and statewide issue of concern, the acceptability within local jurisdiction is

highly problematic. As such, local participation and consensus is critical to addressing this deficiency. Therefore, ConnDOT will coordinate with the Regional Planning Agencies and municipalities in those locations where expansion of existing public rest areas, or the construction of new facilities, is considered to be a viable action. Such an action may be considered in conjunction with the anticipated new service contracts at public rest areas along the interstate. Although funding for implementation of parking expansion or new public rest areas is currently not available in ConnDOT's budget, the Department would work to secure the necessary resources from the State Legislature.

Appendix A
Preliminary Concepts for Reconfiguring or Expanding Existing Public Rest Areas for Truck Parking

Public Rest Area - Possible Truck Parking Expansion

Lot Location	Interstate	Existing Spaces	1996 Demand	2020 Forecasted Demand	Proposed Spaces	Comments	Comments
Darien *	I-95 NB	18	132	138	**63**	63 - 14' Back in	
Darien *	I-95 SB	19	132	199	**102**	74 - 14' Back in 28 - 14' Pull Through / Back in	
Fairfield *	I-95 NB	17	120	152	**28**	21 - 14' Pull Through 7 - Back in	
Fairfield *	I-95 SB	21	124	152	**56**	14' Pull Through	
Milford *	I-95 NB	25	115	129	**78**	78 - 14' Back in	
Milford *	I-95 SB	24	113	129	**117**	43 - 14' Back in 74 - 14' Pull Through	
Branford *	I-95 NB	14	70	82	**50**	23 - 14' Back in 27 - 14' Pull Through	Possible Environmental Clean up Inactive Sewage Treatment Area
Branford *	I-95 SB	9	69	82	**17**	8 - 14' Back in 9 - 14' Pull Through	
Madison *	I-95 NB	10	51	84	**57**	19 - 14' Back in 38 - 14' Pull Through	Possible Environmental Clean up Inactive Leaching Field
Madison *	I-95 SB	18	50	84	**107**	58 - 14' Pull Through 49 - 14' Back in	Possible Environmental Clean up Inactive Leaching Field
North Stonington *	I-95 SB	25	36	44	**25**		No Changes, Topo and Wetlands do not allow for expansion
Montville *	I-395 SB	9	40	52	**9**		No Changes, Bounded by Stony Brook
Plainfield *	I-395 SB	9	24	36	**9**		No Changes, Topo does not allow for expansion
Plainfield *	I-395 NB	9	24	36	**15**	15 - 14' Pull Through	Will make truck parking easier for drivers
Middletown *	I-91 NB	30	82	115	**30**		No Changes, Topo does not allow for expansion
Wallingford *	I-91 SB	45	67	100	**75**	30 - 14' Pull Through 45 - Existing	Possible wetland impacts
Danbury *	I-84 EB	26	61	99	**26**		No Changes, Topo and wetlands do not allow for expansion
Southington *	I-84 EB	21	67	127	**63**	63 - 14' Pull Through	
Willington *	I-84 EB	7	43	66	**72**	72 - 14' Pull Through	Possible Wetland Impact, Complete reconfiguration of all buildings on site
Willington *	I-84 WB	14	43	66	**14**		No Changes, Topo and Willimantic River do not allow for expansion
	Total	370	1463	1972	1013		

*** Click on the Town lot location name to view a diagram of the proposed layout.**

Appendix B
National Association of Truck Stop Operators Correspondence

NATSO, Inc.
1199 North Fairfax Street
Suite 801
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703/549-2100
703/684-4525 FAX
www.natso.com

NATSO Government Affairs
499 South Capitol Street, S.W.
Suite 502
Washington, D.C. 20003
202/554-2510
202/554-2520 FAX

November 13, 2000

The Honorable James Sullivan
2800 Berlin Turnpike , PO Box 217546
Newington, CT 06131

Dear Secretary Sullivan:

We are aware that many states are currently studying the truck parking issue and will soon be submitting recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration to deal with apparent parking shortages.

While we believe that our industry is meeting the parking needs of the trucking industry, there are some that maintain that more truck parking places are needed. If a policy is adopted that requires states to construct additional parking places for trucks, the federal government should provide state transportation departments a way to pay for these new truck terminals. Further, we believe that the users of these facilities – trucking companies – should pay for this benefit to their industry.

Our industry has developed a list of recommendations on ways to increase truck parking capacity while adhering to the objectives outlined above. As you will note, our main recommendation calls for the establishment of a special truck parking trust fund that would provide a dedicated source of revenue for states to use in providing this service to the commercial trucking industry. The trust fund would be created through a new annual registration fee for the licensing of trucks and the dollars raised could only be used by states on initiatives to address the truck parking issue.

We hope you will seriously consider the enclosed recommendations as you explore the various options for your state. Please feel free to call me at (202) 554-2513 if you have any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Scot Imus
Vice President
NATSO Government Affairs

Enclosure
cc: Gerald T. Jennings
CT DOT
2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131-7546

George Giguere
Willington Travel Center
495 Upper Grassy Hill Rd.
Woodbury, CT 67983

Options for Truck Parking Solutions

(NATSO believes that the private sector truck stop industry will respond to those isolated areas that are experiencing truck parking shortages. Further, we believe that the trucking industry can do much to alleviate the problem. One such change would be paying drivers by the hour, not by the trip. The fact remains that drivers often bypass areas that have sufficient parking and are forced to keep driving, even if that means ending the day in areas that don't have sufficient parking facilities. The following proposals are offered based upon the assumption that state governments will be called upon to take a more active role in providing additional truck parking.)

- **Increase yearly truck registration fees by an additional $300 per truck with the stipulation that these special funds can only be used by states on initiatives to address the truck parking issue.**

While the private sector truck stop industry believes that it has in the past and will in the future adequately meet the needs of the professional driver, the trucking industry continues to insist that the government provide more truck parking facilities. If states are obligated to construct what will essentially be truck terminals, then the trucking industry should be required to pay for them as a cost of doing business. Scarce highway trust fund safety dollars should not be used to underwrite what essentially would be a special service for a commercial for-profit industry. With state transportation budgets already stretched thin, and given that approximately one-third of all bridges are deficient, and over one-third of roads in our largest metropolitan areas are in poor or mediocre condition, there are no funds available to construct additional truck parking places.

Contrary to popular belief, the trucking industry has not already paid for construction of these new spaces through the diesel fuel tax. Diesel fuel taxes, combined with receipts from the gasoline fuel tax, are used to develop and maintain the world's most efficient highway system. More importantly, government studies have shown that the amount of money the trucking industry pays in fuel taxes covers only about 70 to 80 percent of the damage that heavy trucks cause to the highways. Again, the cost of constructing new truck parking spaces should be borne by those who will be using the facilities and not on the shoulders of the other highway users.

The new truck parking trust fund could be created within the framework of the International Registration Plan (IRP). Under the IRP, a carrier registers in a single base state or province, declaring all member jurisdictions in which they will operate, plus the actual or estimated mileage of operations in each declared jurisdiction. The registration fee paid to the base jurisdiction is apportioned among the remainder of the declared IRP jurisdictions based on mileage traveled in those states.

States would be required to use these funds on projects that would only further enhance truck parking availability. Such projects might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- constructing and maintaining additional rest areas;
- providing better signage or real time parking information to drivers;
- providing low interest loans to private sector truck stop operators who wish to expand parking lots; and
- providing infrastructure grants or funds to local communities who permit private parking development in their communities.

- **Implement an Interstate Oasis program that will allow states to better target their resources away from areas well served by private sector interchange establishments to those areas where additional development is desirable.**

States should close rest areas on stretches of highway that have sufficient private sector development and reallocate those funds to areas that need additional services. This program is similar to the approaches undertaken in Vermont and Utah, whereby private sector interchange businesses were asked to provide services formally offered by the state at nearby rest areas.

However, the Vermont and Utah program should be improved to allow all businesses meeting specific criteria the opportunity to serve as a designated oasis. This will guarantee that all interchange businesses have the opportunity to participate in the program, providing more options and greater stopping choices for the highway traveler. The state can then take the savings generated from closing rest areas where they are not needed to focus on areas of the state where additional facilities may be needed.

- **Remove cost prohibitive road improvement requirements imposed by state transportation departments upon developers attempting to open new facilities.**

It is not uncommon for state transportation departments to require developers of private truck stop facilities to make costly road improvements before allowing construction of a new site. This burden is often placed on the developer despite the fact the road improvements are part of the state transportation department's multi-year plan. These added expenses are a critical factor in determining whether the development is ultimately feasible. If state departments of transportation want to see more truck parking in a corridor, then they should not create barriers that make it impossible for the private sector development to occur.

Appendix C
Meeting Report

Report of Meeting

Truck Stop and Rest Area Parking Study

March 1, 2001
Connecticut Department of Transportation
Conference Room A

Attendees:

Connecticut Department of Transportation:

Mr. Bruce H. Garrett, Intermodal Planning
Mr. William Stoeckert, Highway Operations
Mr. John Micali, Maintenance
Mr. Carmine Trotta, Intermodal Planning
Mr. Gerald Jennings, Intermodal Planning
Mr. John Valengavich, Intermodal Planning
Mr. Andrew Davis, Intermodal Planning
Ms. Mila Kalyuznov, Intermodal Planning
Mr. Jim Choquette, Traffic
Mr. Richard Corona, Field Coordination
Mr. Philip Parcak, Propety and Facilities
Mr. Terry Conlon, Concessions
Mr. Daniel Smachetti, Traffic
Mr. James Cavanaugh, Highway Operations

Others:

Mr. Michael J. Riley, Motor Transport Association of Connecticut, Inc.
Mr. Robert Harrel, Town of Darien
Mr. George Giguere, Willington/Southington Travel Centers
Ms. Susan Prosi, South Western Regional Planning Agency
Ms. Tanya Court, South Western Regional Planning Agency
Mr. Paul LaValle, Secondi Truck Stop, Milford
Ms. Stephanie Reitz, The Hartford Courant

Discussions:

Mr. Jennings opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending and their participation in this investigation. He gave a brief overview of the Department's activities to date and summarized the analyses of the various study options that were considered. He suggested that several of the options could provide minor relief, but that they would not eliminate the need for more truck parking spaces.

Mr. Valengavich then gave a brief description of the strategy used to develop the preliminary concepts for reconfiguring or expanding the existing public rest areas. He said it was an attempt to determine the maximum number of spaces that could be designed within the existing highway property limits. He then opened the meeting for discussions.

Mr. Harrell was concerned that he thought the preliminary configurations were unrealistic and would not work. He said that truckers do not stay inside the lines now and don’t use the available spaces, but that they prefer to park on ramps.

Mr. Garrett explained that this exercise was the starting point for any potential expansion. Further engineering design would be needed before any project could be pursued. He stressed that the department is interested in input from the towns to determine our next steps. He said that these layouts were typical of many truck stops.

Mr. Jennings noted that many of the truck stops in the state use this type of parking.

Mr. Choquette indicated that the concept layout provided in the draft report for possible expansion of the Darien rest area is similar to the Pilot Truck Stop in Milford, and that the Pilot parking area is full nearly every night.

Mr. Giguere agreed that the space size used was typical, he also agreed that the truckers will park anywhere they can. He stated that his Willington Truck Stop is rarely full, but that truckers still crowd into the nearby rest areas and park illegally. Parking at the Truck Stop is free for 4 hours, and the minimal parking fee charge after 4 hours is refunded with a nominal purchase from one of the facility's stores or restaurants. He also stated that his truck stop in Southington is full every night.

Mr. LaValle indicated that the Pilot and Secondi truck stops are full from 5:00 p.m. and through the evening with no parking spots available.

Mr. Parcak stated that one problem is that the truckers often use the rest areas for staging. He indicated that “buy in” is needed from the dispatchers and receivers on the times that truckers can get to the loading docks. He noted that turnover at the rest areas might produce an opening in the parking lot after a trucker has parked in an illegal spot.

Mr. Riley agreed that the shipping industry wouldn't face the problem. He stated that the truckers get the job done despite the obstacles. He announced that the Motor Trucking Association of Connecticut and the Connecticut Business and Industry Association would be sponsoring a joint conference on freight shipping in the State on April 26, 2001. He said that data show that truckers spend an average of 30 hours a week waiting to load and unload. He reminded everyone that truckers usually get paid by the mile, so they don’t earn any money when they are not moving, no matter what the reason. His organization would be proposing establishing a compact on time schedules and establishing a professional relationship between the truckers and shippers. He noted that this is an interstate problem and that the National Industrial Traffic League would be invited to attend the April meeting.

Mr. Harrell asked about the possibility of public/private partnerships for the parking areas.

Mr. Valengavich stated that the current federal regulations do not allow direct access between the Interstate highways and private businesses.

Mr. Riley noted that this policy could change.

Mr. Jennings brought out that towns do not want or like truck stops in their areas. He noted that when we contacted a town about the possibility of developing a truck stop, they were not in favor of the plan and said they had other plans for the property.

Mr. Riley indicated that this issue needs to be addressed looking beyond possible local objection.

Mr. Jennings stated that the initiative may need to come from the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Mr. Giguere asked if the conference would include someone from New York.

Mr. Riley replyed that they would be invited, and that some long distance truck drivers would also be there.

Mr. Giguere said the problem was the time of delivery and that we could not build our way out of it. He said that the government should set rules regarding time of delivery.

Mr. Riley said that government is not the solution. He said that the solution would depend on the industry's cooperation. The question is how do we pay for it. The problem is that local truckers don't use the local rest areas. He suggested using a fuel tax to pay for increased parking. He suggested that a proposal be developed to present to the Federal Highway Administration regarding possible ways to fund and develop additional roadside rest areas for trucks. He said that there should be a way to resolve these issues for a "higher purpose" and not let them be stymied by "3 people and a lawyer." He agreed that there could be an advantage to scheduling deliveries and pick-ups at off-hours, but that it would need to be a widespread system for efficiency. He thought it would take a large corporation to undertake it as a demonstration project since they have the clout and control. Smaller firms are at the mercy of the trucking companies.

Mr. LaValle stated that it takes an hour and a half to load and unload a trailer. He also stated that truckers do not like parking on the highway and ramps, but they have no place else to go. Even large corporations have limited capacity to park waiting trucks, and smaller firms have no room.

Mr. Harrell and Mr. Riley both commented on the advisability of keeping this issue before the State's congressional delegation.

Mr. Harrell stated that he would be willing to discuss the possibility of expanding the rest areas in Darien. Mr. Harrell also indicated that he, along with Ms. Tanya Court and Mr. John Valengavich would be participating in a discussion panel on this topic at the March 8, 2001 meeting of the New York metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC).

Mr. Giguere noted that larger areas require additional services and security. He suggested using State employees in an experiment to monitor truck parking and provide security. He noted that it is important to treat the truckers with respect.

Mr. Parcak stated that the concession operators are responsible for security, and that ConnDOT always treats all rest area customers with respect.

It was agreed that this group should continue to meet. It was agreed that future meetings should be scheduled (approximately every three months) to continue to discuss this topic.

Prepared By: John Valengavich

Approved By: Carmine P. Trotta

Date: March 20, 2001

Appendix D
Comments

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

60 STATE STREET WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06161
http://dmvct.org

Seat Belts Do Save Lives

February 2, 2001

Mr. Bruce H. Garrett
Director of Intermodal & Policy Planning
Dept. of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Dear Mr. Garrett:

The Rest Area and Commercial Motor Vehicle Parking study and interim report has been reviewed. The document is complete and concise and puts forth the options in a logical and easy to understand format. The Connecticut Department of Transportation, Office of Intermodal Goods deserves credit for preparing this document. As the report indicates, the expansion of existing public rest areas appears to be the most logical and expedient method to address the ongoing rest area/ truck stop issue.

Several points/comments are submitted for consideration:

A lack of adequate commercial vehicle inspection/weight areas also exists. Safety concerns for Motor Vehicle Inspectors and Troopers, in addition to the motoring public, must be taken into consideration when conducting commercial vehicle enforcement. Congress, through 49 CFR part 350, mandates states conduct inspections with the safety of personnel and the drivers as a foremost concern.

Research should be conducted to ensure all possible areas available for expansion have been examined. An example: Just off I-395 in Thompson, a State funded regional tourism bureau/facility is in the planning stages. Although planning is very preliminary, and the area is accessible only by exiting the highway, it should be checked as a possible rest area. Rest facilities will be available for drivers.

Since the contract with the vendors (Mobil and McDonalds) will be due in the next several years, and serious re-configuration of some of the facilities is under consideration, it could be beneficial to research the possibility of including commercial weight and inspection areas in the design plan. These areas could be more simplistic in nature than our port/border stations. Funding offsets may be realized as re-coup of funds expended to expand the area would be available from revenues for violations that would be discovered and penalties assessed. It is recognized that these areas would not be available at all times, as commercial traffic in need of parking would be the primary use.

The design of highways, rest areas, and CMV enforcement areas needs to be addressed as a complete picture. With the projected increases in traffic, continued roadside CMV enforcement will become more limited. Those areas currently under consideration for expansion should also be considered or evaluated for the use and installation of Intelligent Transportation Systems for Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITS/CVO). The study did not identify ITS technologies as having a measurable impact on the improvement of the rest area use. Some of these technologies, however, coupled with proper design and configuration of expanded rest areas, could provide law enforcement performing size and weight and commercial vehicle inspections with significant operational benefits. For example, SHRP (the acronym pronounced "SHARP" and refers to Strategic Highway Research Projects) involves the installation of high-speed weigh in motions that can be monitored remotely. The use of this type of site would allow screening of overweight trucks at highway speeds and would allow law enforcement to target only those vehicles who are overweight and then take them off the highway to be weighed with portable scales. Size and Weight enforcement and commercial vehicle inspections could be maximized and greatly enhanced without the expensive construction and maintenance of official "Scale Houses". Although this issue is not the focus of the study, it should be included for consideration during any reconfiguration of existing facilities.

Sincerely,

Sgt. Michael Glinski
Commercial Vehicle Safety Division

Sgt. William Clark
Commercial Vehicle Safety Division

Lt. Rudolph Supina
Commercial Vehicle Safety Division

C: A. Portanova, Deputy Commissioner
D. Cornell, Division Chief

TravelCenters of America

327 Ruby Rd
Willington, Ct. 06279

February 26, 2001

State of Ct. Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike Road, P.O. Box 317546
Newington, Ct. 06131

Dear Mr Valengavich:

Thank you for the copy of the Final Report concerning the Rest Area Parking study made available to us by your office. I regret not being able to make the meeting on the first of March as I will be out of town. I do appreciate the opportunity to comment in writing.

TravelCenters of America is committed to providing safe places for our customers to park, fuel, rest, shower, and eat. There are times between Monday at 5 p.m. and Thursday at midnight when our lot appears to be full. There are many times during this same period when we are not full. The problem seems to be during the evening hours when loading facilities across the State and in other States are closed and not available to commercial drivers. Adding facilities to current Rest Areas may seem a good idea but does not come without pain. It also appears from the study that this may help in a small way, but will not solve the problem. Many states have added highway rest areas in hopes of solving a problem with truck parking and have actually experienced other problems related to the upkeep and safety of these areas. Many of these areas, including some on I-84, have been closed down in the past. Environmentally, these areas must be designed to handle potential spills or leaks. The must also be patrolled and the patrons of these facilities must expect to be safe. The States find themselves trying to provide services and safety that end up being an unanticipated drain on resources.

The proposed addition to parking specifically in the Willington area is a concern because of the potential impact on wetlands and streams in the area. How would the State plan to manage and spills or leaks or potential illegal activity including prostitution or drug traffic? A privately run facility is already set up to monitor and react to these situations.

I am interested in the possibility of asking companies that handle a bulk of the offloading of commercial vehicles to join in our discussion. There may be a way to "schedule" some of the truck traffic in such a way that the State, the trucking company, the offloading companies, and privately owned Truck Stops can all "win". This option would cost the State much less money than trying to build facilities. A well thought out system designed by people working together towards one goal could save a great deal of money and pain.

Sincerely,

Douglas W. Parker
General Manager, TravelCenters of America, Willington

ROYCE PROPERTIES LLC
495 Upper Grassy Hill Road
Woodbury, CT 06798-3108
Tele. 203 263-6100 Fax. 203 263-4321

February 27, 2001

Via Fax and USPS

Mr. Bruce H. Garrett
Director of Intermodal and
Policy Planning
Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06131

Dear Mr. Garrett;

I am writing in response to your letter dated February 8, 2001 regarding the draft version of the Connecticut Department of Transportation's **Truck Stop and Rest Area Parking Study,** dated January 2001.

As the owner of the ***Willington TA travel Center*** located off I-84 in Willington, CT and a businessman who has a significant financial interest in the ***Southington TA Travel Center*** located off I-84 in Southington CT, I feel compelled to comment on several issues being discussed in the study you are undertaking.

One serious problem I find with the study is that it tends to combine and analyze the two main Connecticut intrastate highways, namely I-84 and I-95 as though they were one, and had the same problems. Not only should they always be analyzed separately, but each highway should also be broken into sections, namely western, central and eastern since conditions vary so widely along these roadways. For example, I think there is little question that we face some serious and unique problems along the western segment of I-95 that perhaps do not extend to the rest of the state.

That being said, I think I can be most helpful to the study by giving you some insights regarding the Willington truck stop.

1) We have never turned a trucker away who wanted to park at Willington, and yet there are always trucks parked on the entrance and exit ramps at the state rest area, which is only 1 mile away. Why, because it is easier than having to back into a limited space in the Truck stop, it's free, and the police allow it.

ROYCE PROPERTIES LLC
495 Upper Grassy Hill Road
Woodbury, CT 06798-3108
Tele. 203 263-6100 Fax. 203 263-4321

2) We allow truckers to park for 4 hours at no charge always, and never charge any fees for parking on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. On the days we charge the fees, they are refunded if they make nominal purchases at the facility.

3) When the demand for additional parking is demonstrated, we have additional land that will accommodate another 100+ trucks. Needless to say if the State ends up getting into the truck stop business and expands the rest area in Willington to accommodate more truck parking we will not risk additional capital expenditures for expansion.

Even though I would like to expand my holdings in the Truck Stop business to the I-95 corridor, I feel the financial risks are too high at this time. There is too much uncertainty of what the state is going to do regarding truck parking. You are tough competitors.

I strongly recommend that the State of Connecticut take a long hard look at what it takes to manage truck parking at rest areas, and keep conduct at a level that would be acceptable. The negative publicity that can accrue to the state by failing to control prostitution, drugs, unruly behavior, etc., could seriously undermine the State's image.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

George Giguere

Cc: Mr. John Valengavich
Mr. Gerald Jennings -- via email

Editorial Comment from The Hartford Courant

March 8, 2001

Truckers Need Places To Rest

Gov. John G. Rowland's decision to ban tractor-trailers from state highways during this week's snowstorm dramatized the critical need for more highway rest areas for truckers. Because of a severe shortage of spaces, even in good weather, drivers often can't find a place to park when they need to rest.

The space crunch here is more severe than in many other parts of the nation. Connecticut has about 1,150 available spaces in public rest areas and privately operated truck stops — about half the number needed according to state estimates to accommodate the daily flow of big-rig trucks on state highways.

OUR TOWNS

GREATER HARTFORD

During a major storm, the shortage becomes more obvious. The crisis was particularly acute Monday at the Darien rest stops on I-95, where dozens of trucks were jammed into parking lots and along ramps. The northbound and southbound lots have a combined total of fewer than 40 spaces, compared with an estimated need of more than 150 spaces.

By federal law, truckers must rest for eight hours after driving for 10 hours, a sensible provision designed to prevent situations in which drivers become drowsy at the wheel. However, it does little good to require them to rest while there's no place to stop. Often, trucks park illegally, and dangerously, on highway shoulders or ramps, or drivers pull into parking lots behind fast-food restaurants hoping to catch some sleep.

One problem has been local opposition anytime construction or expansion of private truck stops is proposed. Residents want the groceries, clothing and other items that truckers deliver but don't want to give the drivers a safe place to stop.

State officials have long been aware of the problem but so far have failed to take decisive action to address it. A report released last week by the state Department of Transportation listed several possible options, including expansion of existing public rest stops.

It would be unfortunate if this report became just one more study left on a shelf to gather dust.