

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

225 N MAIN STREET, SUITE 304, BRISTOL, CT 06010 • WWW.CCRPA.ORG • 860.589.7820(f) • 860.589.6950(f)

Bob Hammersley
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106.

DRAFT

October 8, 2010

Dear Mr. Hammersley:

On September 8, 2010, we received a letter from Mr. Bruce Alexander, Chairman of the Transportation Strategy Board (TSB), inviting each Regional Planning Organization to provide recommendations to the you regarding “(1) any changes in, or additions to, the 2007 strategy and recommendations which [we]... believe are needed; and (2) a list of projects which [we]... believe are needed.”

In response to that invitation our staff and Board members have reviewed the 2007 Strategy and have the following recommendation in relation to the issue of I-95 Corridor Congestion.

The I-95 Corridor, including both the rail and highway components, is one of the most, if not the most, congested transportation corridor in the Northeast - and possibly in the entire nation. Impacts from that congestion reverberate throughout the State in terms of employee loss-time, equipment damage and losses, attractiveness of the State to new business, environmental pollution, and personal physical and emotional stress. Those problems, which are acknowledged in the 2007 Strategy, have only increased with the passage of time, and may even be exacerbated as some of the Strategy’s policies are implemented. For example, while the Bridgeport feeder barge facility may shift some freight traffic from the Corridor between New York/New Jersey and Bridgeport, once that barge freight reaches Bridgeport, it will virtually have no place to go other than back into the I-95 Corridor, adding to the existing rising tide of congestion.

There is an alternative that could help mitigate that negative impact and, in fact, make it a positive asset to the State - that is, improvement of the inland rail connection between Bridgeport and Hartford. That rail connection could enable the substantial amounts of freight and passenger traffic, which is ultimately headed northward, to proceed directly northward out of Bridgeport to Waterbury, thru New Britain, and on to Hartford. There exist rail lines linking those areas at the current time; their utilization, however, is hindered by their state of dis-repair which imposes speed limits on them in certain locations below 15-20 miles per hour.

This rail link could also provide a significant opportunity for the relocation of some of the freight and passenger traffic that currently congests both the I-95 and I-91 transportation corridors in a

manner that could greatly enhance statewide access to the inland manpower resources of the Waterbury, Bristol and New Britain areas.

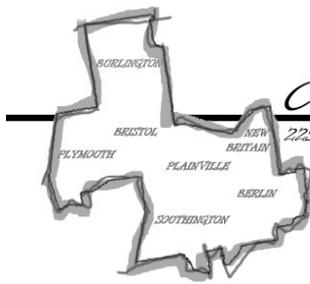
In support of the improvement of this Bridgeport to Hartford rail link, the CCRPA has been actively seeking funds to complete required scoping and other studies precedent to precisely identifying, designing, and constructing the needed rail line improvements. The CCRPA needs State support for these efforts and for that reason is recommending, that the Transportation Strategy Board include in its 2010 Strategy Update a \$1 million project to complete an alternatives analysis and NEPA scoping study for the Waterbury to Berlin portion of the rail network linking Bridgeport with Hartford.

We thank the TSB for this invitation to participate in its 2010 Strategy Update, and offer whatever assistance we are able to help the Board understand the tremendous positive statewide impact the project that we are recommending would provide.

Yours very truly,

David J. Dudek
Chairman of the Board

cc: CARPO
I-84 TIA Board members



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Improvement Committee (TIC)
FROM: Carl J. Stephani, Executive Director

DATE: September 22, 2010

FOR AGENDA: September 30, 2010

SUBJECT: State Rail Plan

On September 14, 2010, ConnDOT held a coordination meeting with the state's regional planning organizations (RPOs) during which a ConnDOT staff member presented information about the draft State Rail Plan and invited the RPOs to submit comments about the Plan (<http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=1386&q=437648&PM=1>). Since that time, Agency staff has reviewed the draft Plan for consistency with our regional plans. The Plan includes a recommendation that the State "Study the feasibility and cost of implementing commuter rail service between Hartford and Waterbury..." (P. 10), which is strongly supported by our Region.

On that basis, it is my

RECOMMENDATION

that your Committee

Recommend that the Agency Board endorse the draft State Rail Plan and encourage the ConnDOT to expand its support for a study of the feasibility of implementing commuter rail service between Hartford and Waterbury, to also include support for the improvement of the physical condition of the rail line to support higher speed rail freight traffic through the corridor as well.

cc: Agency Board

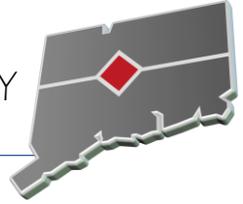
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

Serving Berlin, Bristol, Burlington, New Britain, Plainville, Plymouth, and Southington

225 North Main Street, Suite 304
Bristol, CT 06010-4993

Internet: <http://ccrpa.org>
Fax/TDD: (860) 589-6950

Tel: (860) 589-7820
or (860) 224-9888



September 30, 2010

Commissioner Jeffrey A. Parker
Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06111

Dear Commissioner Parker:

The Transportation Improvement Committee for the Central Connecticut Region would like to recommend a reevaluation of the "Local Roads Accident Reduction Program." We feel there are a number of problems that weaken the efficacy of the program. Specifically, the complexity of the application process along with the limited funding available per project dissuades potential applicants from submitting proposals. The onerous nature of this process is frustrating because the stated goal of the program of reducing roadway departure accidents and subsequent fatalities and serious injuries is an important policy directive.

The submittal requirements call for detailed information concerning accident history, project costs, and the development of a concept plan. Accidents are well-documented events, and consolidating these data for accident-prone locations is a reasonable part of the application process. With that said, there are a number of concerns our Region has with the program. The public involvement design process is the same for this program as it is for large projects, but the potential scope of these projects does not warrant such an exhaustive procedure. If the application process could be simplified, the result would be a greater number of worthwhile projects attaining consideration.

The type and scope of projects that can be addressed by this program is also limited by the nature of the program. Significant geometric improvements and other more complex design changes are virtually impossible to achieve given the funding constraints. This program is better at addressing relatively inexpensive modifications to improve safety such as signalization and signage, increased visibility and lighting, and roadside hardware. Since these are relatively straightforward improvements, shouldn't the application process itself be more straightforward.

[Recipient Name]

August 31, 2010

Page 2

The “Component Flow Chart and Activity Assignment,” which consists of one page for the planning component, two pages for the implementation component, and one-half page for the evaluation component highlights the difficulty inherent in the process. The proposal submittal date is another aspect of the program that should be reconsidered. The towns in our region feel that the summer is not the best time for proposals to come due.

In conclusion, it is our contention that the efficacy of the program can be improved by a more streamlined and realistic application process.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

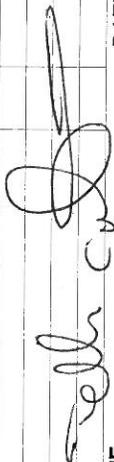
Sincerely,

Ethan Abeles

Transportation Planner

Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency

REQUESTED CHANGES
(ACTION)

Region	FACode	Proj#	TempP#	AOCd	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments	change
09	STPH	0017-0174	0017-H027	X7	CT 72	BRISTOL	MAJOR INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT AT SOUTH ST UNION ST & CHURCH ST.	ROW	2010	550	440	55	55	55 INCRE. EST. FROM FED \$240K	4
										<p align="center">  DATE <u>15 Sept 2010</u> </p>					
										<p align="center"> CONCUR WITH ACTION: NAME ETHAN ABELES CCRPA </p>					
										<p align="center"> WILL REQUIRE FURTHER REVIEW: NAME DATE </p>					
<p>CODE KEY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Move projects from one year in the STIP to another year in the STIP 02 Fiscal constraint issues 03 Adjust existing projects for design schedule changes 04 Adjust existing projects for revised cost estimates 05 New Project 06 New Phase 07 Administrative Requirement 08 Delete phase 09 Delete project 10 Correction 															

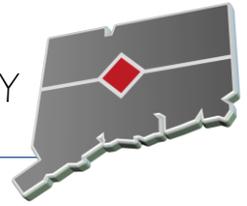
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

Serving Berlin, Bristol, Burlington, New Britain, Plainville, Plymouth, and Southington

225 North Main Street, Suite 304
Bristol, CT 06010-4993

Internet: <http://ccrpa.org>
Fax/TDD: (860) 589-6950

Tel: (860) 589-7820
or (860) 224-9888



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Improvement Committee (TIC)
FROM: Ethan C. Abeles, Transportation Planner

DATE: September 23, 2010
FOR AGENDA: September 30, 2010

SUBJECT: The creation of a CCRPA Complete Streets Design Manual

The City of New Haven has recently prepared a draft [Complete Streets Manual](#) that will be adopted shortly. The purpose of the Manual is to provide “technical guidance on the building, rebuilding, repair and rehabilitation of city streets with the intent of balancing the needs of all users.” Complete Street Design Manuals have been adopted in many states and communities around the country including Michigan, New Jersey, Louisiana, and South Carolina; and are fast becoming considered the next step in the evolution of the street planning process where all users and uses of the road network are considered.

On that basis, it is my

RECOMMENDATION

that your Committee

Support the preparation by CCRPA staff of a Complete Streets Design Manual for the Region based on the Complete Streets Manual recently produced by the City Of New Haven.

cc: Agency Board

Note: See the document prepared by the City of New Haven by clicking on the above link.