



# New Haven - Hartford - Springfield Commuter Rail Implementation Plan

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## Project Description

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has hired Wilbur Smith Associates to perform a feasibility study for the implementation of commuter rail service between New Haven, Hartford and Springfield, Massachusetts. The corridor was identified as a potential key component in meeting the goals of improving and sustaining the regional economic viability and improving regional livability in the Capitol Region Council of Government's Regional Transit Strategy. This study was further recognized by the Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board as an important step in developing a statewide strategic plan.

This study will evaluate the ridership, impacts and costs of providing commuter rail service from New Haven to Hartford to Springfield. Potential services could include:

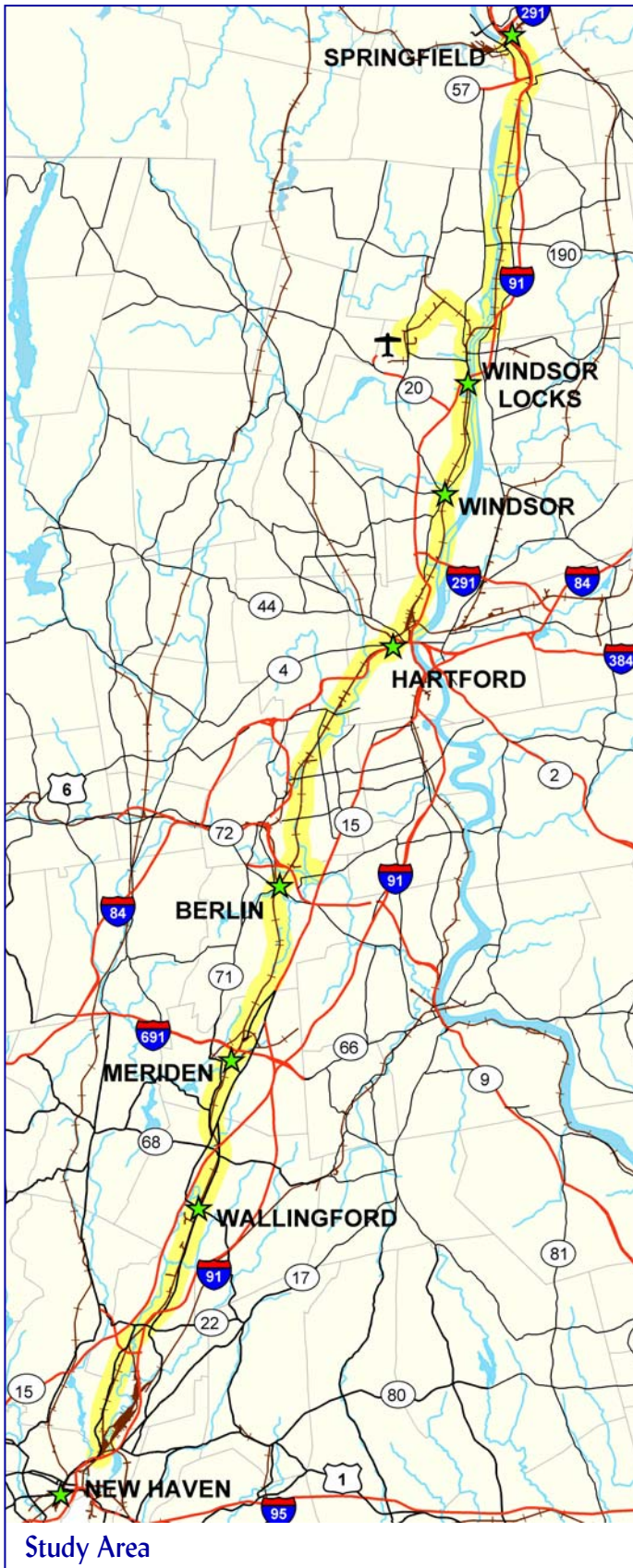
- Commuter Work Trips
- Regional Travel with Connections to:
  - Amtrak Intercity Service
  - Metro North Commuter Rail to New York City
  - Shore Line East Commuter Rail
- Off-peak Travelers Including Events and Recreation
- Bradley International Airport Access

## Corridor Facts

Some facts about the New Haven - Hartford - Springfield rail line:

- The line is owned by Amtrak.
- The distance from New Haven to Springfield along the rail line is 61.9 miles.
- The rail line passes through 17 towns in 2 states.
- The current travel time on the line from New Haven to Springfield is about 1 hour 25 minutes on Amtrak with 8 stops.
- 38.2 miles (62%) of the line has only one track.
- There are approximately 50 at-grade crossings, in which a road and the railroad intersect.
- The speed trains can travel is up to 80 mph, but in some areas the speed is restricted to 25 or 35 mph due to crossings or curves.
- Freight railroads using this line include Connecticut Southern (four trains per day), Boston and Maine Corporation (two trains, twice per week), CSX Transportation (two trains per day) and Providence and Worcester R.R. (two trains per day).
- Amtrak currently provides service on six trains daily in each direction, including:
  - Vermonter - Washington, DC to St. Albans, VT
  - Northeast Direct - Newport News, VA to Boston, MA
- There are 8 current Amtrak stops in New Haven, Wallingford, Meriden, Berlin, Hartford, Windsor, Windsor Locks, and Springfield.





Study Area

## Project Scope

Elements of the study include data collection, existing conditions analysis, future no build conditions assessment, development of ridership forecasts, alternatives development and assessment, operating and capital plan, and financing needs. The study schedule is shown below.

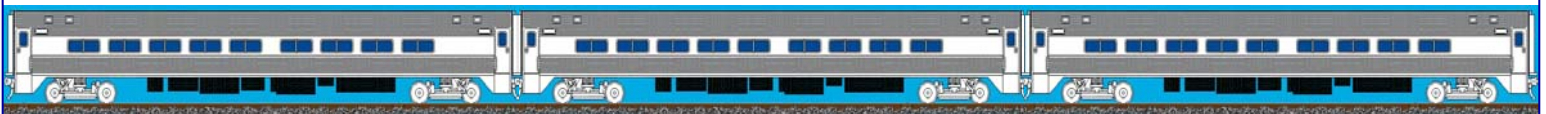
Agency Coordination and Public Outreach	Ongoing
Data Collection and Project Evaluation Criteria	Fall 2002
Existing Conditions	Winter 2003
No Build Assessment	Winter 2003
Ridership Forecasts	Spring 2003
Initial Alternatives	Spring 2003
Operating and Capital Plan	Summer 2003
Environmental Impacts	Summer 2003
Final Report	Summer 2003

The study team is collecting and sharing information through public informational meetings, an advisory committee, local official and stakeholder meetings, newsletters, and a project website. For more detail, please visit the study website at <http://www.nhhsrail.com>. You are invited to attend the first set of Public Information Meetings in April and May.

## Public Meeting Dates

- April 29, 2003 - Windsor Town Hall, 275 Broad Street
- April 30, 2003 - Meriden City Hall, 142 East Main Street
- May 6, 2003 - Hartford Union Station, One Union Place
- May 7, 2003 - North Haven, Mildred Wakeley Community Center, 7 Linsly Street
- May 22, 2003 - Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street

6:00 p.m. - Open House with informal discussion  
7:00 to 9:00 p.m. - Presentation and Questions





## Alternatives

The study team will evaluate eight different alternatives with varying levels of service, track configurations and station locations and enhancements.



State Street Station, New Haven

The “Minimum Build” Alternative for the rail line will include no new stations, and service only in the peak hours (typical morning and evening commute to work). The train will stop at the existing Amtrak stations at Union Station in New Haven, Wallingford, Meriden, Berlin, Hartford Union Station, Windsor, Windsor Locks, and Springfield Union Station, as well as the new State Street Station in New Haven.

The “Maximum Build” Alternative will include several new additional stations and frequent all-day and weekend service on the line. Potential new station locations include South Springfield, Enfield, North Hartford, Newington, and North Haven. Attend the public meetings to give us your views on station locations and service schedule options.

## Evaluation Criteria

In order to determine the best new station locations, each of the station location alternatives will be evaluated using the following criteria:

**Station Spacing** – Ideal spacing between stations is approximately five miles. Stations with a greater distance may miss potential ridership and stations closer

together typically have decreased level of service due to increased travel times.

**Proximity to Riders** – The ability of a station to attract riders is in part reflected by the current population and employment within a half-mile walking distance of the station.

**Bus Service Access** – The current bus service and potential for new bus service to and from the station can affect ridership.

**Parking Availability** – The ability of some stations to serve commuters is partially dependent on the number of parking spaces available for those driving to the station. Parking demand, existing available parking and the ability to provide potential new parking will be evaluated.

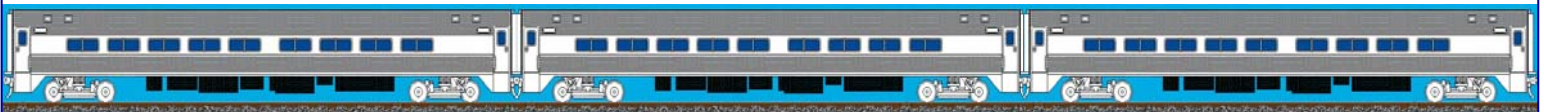
**Transit Oriented Development Potential** – The ability of a rail station to generate future economic development near the station that is consistent with transit use.

**Geometry and Site Characteristics** – The constraints that the station surroundings and rail geometrics present could influence where stations are sited. For example, it would not be desirable to site a station on a banked rail curve, in areas with drainage problems, residential impacts on adjoining houses, etc.

**Major Roadway Access** – The proximity and ease of access to a station from nearby major roadways would influence the success of the rail service to draw passengers from private vehicles.



Windsor Station





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## Contacts

If you have questions or comments about the project, please contact us:

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To obtain more information about this study or submit comments visit the website at:  
<http://www.nhhsrail.com>.

**YOUR IDEAS ARE IMPORTANT – ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING IN APRIL OR MAY!!**

