



# Capitol Region Council of Governments

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## **New Britain to Hartford Busway Gets Greenlight**

On November 21, 2011 at Central Connecticut State University, U.S. First District Congressman John Larson, leaders of the Federal Transit Administration and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) came together to announce the approval of the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) for the New Britain Hartford Busway. According to the Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Busway is one of the region's top two transit priorities, along with passenger rail in the New Haven Hartford Springfield corridor. Extensive study of this project has indicated that the Busway will improve mobility, alleviate congestion on highways, and provide opportunities for development and redevelopment in Central Connecticut.

The full funding grant agreement (FFGA) is the final step of the New Starts planning and project development process which ConnDOT embarked upon in 1999. With the FFGA, the Federal Transit Administration and ConnDOT have entered into a multi-year contractual agreement that formally establishes the maximum level of Federal financial assistance and outlines the terms and conditions of Federal participation. The firm funding commitment embodied in the FFGA is not made until a project demonstrates that it is ready for such an agreement, i.e. the project's development has progressed to the point where its scope, costs, benefits, and impacts are considered firm and final. The busway will now move forward to construction.

The busway is a rapid transit facility: a bus only roadway that will provide frequent, rapid service and the service will be reliable all day long, because buses will not be delayed by other traffic. At peak hours services will be every three to six minutes. When complete, the busway will help the region and state to address the growing congestion and delay on Interstate 84 west of downtown Hartford. The busway is ideally suited to a region with the population and population density of metropolitan Hartford because of its flexibility. Bus routes are not limited to the busway, buses will be able to enter the busway at several locations, picking up and dropping off passengers close to their ultimate destinations. Once on the busway, the buses benefit from the traffic free travel. And the busway will provide connections from many communities to the rail stations on the New Haven Hartford Springfield rail line.

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The busway will improve mobility for the 11,000 trips that are already made in the corridor and will attract another 5,000 daily trips. With 11 stations and numerous routes utilizing the busway, the benefits extend far beyond the busway corridor itself.

The Capitol Region Council of Governments has been working to promote transit oriented development along the busway. According to Mary Glassman, Chair of CROCOG and First Selectman of Simsbury, “The Busway will improve mobility but it is about a lot more than just mobility. It is a step forward in insuring economic viability for our region in the future. Demographics are changing and the generations following the baby boomers are demanding communities with efficient transit systems and interesting urban areas. The busway helps us to be a region of choice for this demographic. Additionally, it provides a platform for the encouragement of sustainable development, revitalizing our core cities and inner suburbs. We look forward to supporting ConnDOT as partners in ushering in this new era of rapid transit.”

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