CAPITOL REGION 
TRANSPORTATION PLAN
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -

A guide for transportation investments through the year 2030

The Capitol Region Transportation Plan defines a comprehensive program for improving our transportation system to meet travel needs through the year 2030. It is a systems level plan that provides general policy guidance. It defines the Region's greatest needs, identifies which problems are the Region’s highest priority, and recommends how the Region should spend its limited capital funds.

The Transportation Plan reaffirms the Council’s commitment to policies set in earlier editions, including:

• development of a transportation system that offers more and better travel choices,
• development of a good regional transit system as an alternative to the automobile,
• development of an improved bicycle and pedestrian system, and
• improvement of the existing infrastructure rather than building new infrastructure, by emphasizing freeway incident management, coordinated traffic signal systems, Intelligent Transportation Systems, and access management on arterial roads.

The Plan establishes some new emphasis areas. These include:

• commitment to link land use and transportation planning,
• support for Bradley International Airport,
• commitment to start a freight planning program, and
• commitment to address environmental justice issues.

This Executive Summary serves as an outline of the issues, policies and recommendations that comprise the Capitol Region Transportation Plan. More detail and discussion is found in the complete document that can be obtained from the CRCOG offices by calling 860-522-2217, or downloaded from the Transportation Page of the CRCOG website: www.crcog.org/transportation.htm.

Capitol Region Council of Governments
Adopted by CRCOG Policy Board on March 24, 2004
1. **Linking Land Use & Transportation**

The 2004 Regional Transportation Plan places renewed emphasis on the issue of coordinating transportation policies with the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, or more generally the question of linking land use planning with transportation planning.

The benefits of a coordinated approach to planning transportation and land use are many, and they can help achieve the goals of both planning processes. Recommendations that will help achieve the goal of better linking land use and transportation planning are listed below.

1. **Support livable community goals**, at all levels of the planning process by:
   - encouraging economic growth that builds on past investments and preserves prime farm land and open space,
   - supporting the building of communities that provide a high quality of life for residents,
   - strengthening a sense of community through physical design and more citizen involvement in creating a common vision for how the community will be developed, and
   - adhering to context sensitive planning and design principles as discussed below.

2. **Support Regional Plan of Conservation and Development goals**, especially:
   - supporting economic development and transportation investment at the six Regional Growth Centers.
   - supporting revitalization of Hartford & older urban centers.
   - supporting preservation of community character & natural resources.
   - supporting more (transportation) choice for diverse needs.

3. **Continue planning coordination** between CRCOG’s Transportation and Community Development departments.

4. **Support for transit oriented development (TOD)** as described in the section on Transit.

5. **Improve CRCOG’s travel forecast model**.

6. **Continue to use sensitivity testing with alternative land use scenarios** when evaluating specific transportation project proposals.

7. **Incorporate Context Sensitive Design in corridor studies**.

8. **Encourage ConnDOT to continue Context Sensitive Design in its designs**.

9. **Continue regional access management program**, as recommended in the Arterial Road System section.
2. TRANSIT SYSTEM

The private automobile is not the only way to travel within the Capitol Region. Alternative travel modes to the private automobile include local and express bus service, paratransit services provided for elderly and disabled residents, and rideshare services. These services play an important role in meeting the travel needs of our residents.

The Council of Governments recognizes that while transit is a small part of a much larger transportation system, it is a critical part nonetheless. And it is likely to become even more important as our roadways become more congested over time and people seek alternative ways to travel. Recommendations to place more emphasis on transit improvements as a way to improve mobility for those who rely on transit, provide viable travel choices for everyone, and reduce congestion on our streets are listed below:

1. **Maintain and improve existing levels of bus, paratransit and vanpool services.**

2. **Continue the Jobs Access Program.**

3. **Support integrating advanced technologies (ITS) into current transit and paratransit operations to improve their operational efficiency.** Opportunities exist in the New Britain Busway project and with the replacement of CT Transit’s current radio system.

4. **Support improvements to the existing bus system**, including more hours of service, more timed transfer centers with increased service frequency, increased service frequency on express routes, new routes to provide for greater suburb to suburb service, circulators within activity centers, a circumferential route in the region’s inner ring suburbs, modifications to create more direct service, and integration of alternate fueled vehicles in the transit fleet as soon as practicable.

5. **Support the proposed rapid transit system** in the New Britain Busway corridor, the Griffin Busway corridor, the Manchester Busway corridor, the Rocky Hill Busway corridor, and the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Commuter Rail Service corridor.¹

6. **Preserve the existing rail rights-of-way for future transportation**, while allowing for interim use by other transportation functions such as multi-use trails.

7. **Support the proposed Downtown Circulator for Hartford.**

8. **Examine the potential for a Buckland Hills circulator.**

9. **Support improvements at bus stops and stations.**

10. **Support transit oriented development along transit lines**, by:
   - developing a long range strategy for the Region that encourages both transit and transit-supportive land use,
   - making station area planning a part of the general planning process for all rapid transit lines,
   - working with planners and the developers to integrate transit oriented development into their plans and development projects, and
   - building support for transit among community groups, business leaders, and other stakeholders.

¹ Feasibility study for Griffin Busway suggests deferring construction until operating experience from New Britain Busway is available; feasibility study for Rocky Hill Busway is deferred indefinitely due to low projected ridership.
3. **Freeway System**

Freeways are the most important part of the Region’s roadway system. There are 98 miles of freeways in the Capitol Region. These constitute only 2.7% of the total 3,686 road miles in the Region, but they carry 41% of the total traffic. Recommendations that place the primary emphasis on safety and operational efficiency include:

1. **Continue the Greater Hartford Incident Management Steering Committee work**, to provide safer and faster clearance of freeways when accidents occur.

2. **Support statewide incident management initiatives**.

3. **Support completion of the traffic management system and ITS projects**, such as traffic surveillance cameras, highway advisory radio, and variable message signs.

4. **Support operational improvements to I-84 from Hartford to Farmington**, as follows:
   - reconstructing the Rt4/Rt6/Rt9 interchange,
   - constructing operational lanes, and
   - reconfiguring interchange at Flatbush.

5. **Study the need for improvements to Route 2**.

6. **Study or implement freeway access improvements**, by:
   - building the flyover connection between I-84 and Rentschler Field,
   - improving access to the Flatbush-Parkville-Elmwood redevelopment area from I-84, and
   - improving access to the Day Hill - Griffin development area from I-91.

7. **Evaluate the need for operational improvements** at the I-84 Buckland interchange, at the I-91 and I-84 interchange, and at the I-91 ramp northbound to Route 15 eastbound.

8. **Construct Route 6**, on an alignment north of existing Route 6, following a full assessment of the Route 6 issue.

4. **Arterial System**

The Region recognizes the need to continue to maintain and improve its arterial roadways. Our approach to improving the roadway system is based on a planning requirement to include consideration of community concerns and an emphasis on better management of existing roads. Recommendations emphasizing safety and operational efficiency include:

1. **Continue to include Context Sensitive Design in corridor studies**.

2. **Improve and expand the regional network of computer controlled traffic signal systems**.

3. **Support roadway improvements proposed in previously adopted studies**, including the Bradley Area Transportation Study; the Rt 4 Study in Farmington; the Rt 10 Study from Granby to Farmington; the Rt 44 Study from Hartford to Canton; the Rt 175 Study in Wethersfield and Newington; the Rt 190 Study in Enfield and Somers; the Berlin Turnpike Study in Wethersfield and Newington; and the Rentschler Field Access Study in East Hartford.
4. **Continue to implement access management programs and policies**, by:
   - providing funding for the preparation of access management plans, usually as part of an arterial corridor study, and
   - requiring access management issues to be addressed as part of the design phase of any roadway improvement project.

5. **Continue to allow the use of federal funds to address serious problems on town roads.**

6. **Support continued operation of the historic Rocky Hill – Glastonbury ferry**, with adequate hours of operation and a reasonable fare structure.

## BIKES & PEDESTRIANS

CRCOG adopted the Capitol Region Bicycle Plan in April 2000. In subsequent years, a Policy for Integrating Bicycling and Walking into the Transportation Infrastructure was adopted; a series of Walkability Workshops were held; and a Capitol Region Pedestrian Plan was adopted. Each of these activities were intended to help the Region realize its goal of creating a bike and pedestrian friendly environment. Recommendations for achieving this goal include:

1. **Provide proper facilities for cyclists and pedestrians**, by
   - integrating biking and walking facilities in the transportation infrastructure whenever possible and not cost prohibitive,
   - completing the Regional Greenway System,
   - including wide curb lanes and wide shoulders in roadways whenever possible, and especially into and out of Hartford,
   - encouraging a more bike and pedestrian friendly land use, and
   - supporting the provision of bike racks and lockers at bus stops, and special bike racks on buses.

2. **Address safety education and enforcement issues.**

3. **Promote a regional culture supportive of cycling and walking**, by
   - planning and sponsoring a variety of promotional activities,
   - involving the private sector in promoting cycling, and
   - producing a regional cycling map.

4. **Support bike and pedestrian planning activities**, by continuing to provide staff support to the regional bike and pedestrian program, including the bike and pedestrian planning committee.
5. **Secure funding**, for staff support and to implement these recommendations.

6. **BRADLEY AIRPORT**

Previous editions of this Transportation Plan recognized the importance of Bradley International Airport as both a transportation facility and as an engine of economic growth. But the prior plans did not include a detailed policy supportive of improving the airport, improving access to the airport, or supporting other actions needed to fully realize the economic growth benefits that the Airport can generate. This Plan strongly supports these goals and includes specific recommendations on how some of these can be achieved, including:

1. **Improve roadway access** by extending Bradley Park Road, improving Bradley Park Road and International Drive, improving Route 75 from Route 20 to Route 140, and following an environmental review, building a 2-lane connector from Route 75 to the Route 190 bridge.

2. **Improve transit access** by including a transit connection from the airport to the proposed NHHS commuter rail service, and improving bus service for both air travelers and airport area workers.

3. **Support opportunities for appropriate economic development**, by
   - continuing CRCOG's designation of the airport area as a Regional Growth Center, and continuing to develop policies that support economic growth in these areas,
   - implementing the roadway improvements recommended above,
   - supporting proposals to establish pre-approved development sites at the airport, and
   - supporting policies that discourage noise-sensitive land uses near flight paths, and that encourage construction techniques with adequate noise insulation.

4. **Support improvements to both domestic and international air passenger service.**

5. **Support improvements to air cargo capabilities and service.**

6. **Evaluate the potential for improving rail freight access and developing support facilities for trucks to make the airport a true multi-modal facility.**

7. **Encourage community sensitive planning**, by involving local officials in the planning process.

7. **FREIGHT TRANSPORT SYSTEM**

The movement of goods plays an important role in economic growth that is often not fully appreciated. This lack of understanding is especially true in Connecticut where primary industries such as agriculture and mining play a small role, and secondary economic activities such as manufacturing play a decreasing role. However, the efficient movement of goods is still important even in economies dominated by the financial, insurance, and service industries. The mode of transport might be different to suit the higher value - lower bulk goods being shipped, but the need to move these goods in and out of the Region still exists.

In the last 50 years, the public sector, and metropolitan planning organizations in particular, have had little direct role in the development or operation of freight transportation systems. This has been left largely to the private sector. However, within the past decade there has been an increasing awareness that the public sector needs to play some role in helping develop more efficient delivery systems if the United

More detailed recommendations will be developed over time as we begin a goods movement planning effort.
States is to stay economically strong in the face of an increasingly competitive world economy. To this end, the US DOT, which funds the transportation planning function at metropolitan planning organizations like CRCOG, has asked MPOs to begin addressing goods movement issues in their regions. Therefore, CRCOG is beginning its effort to develop a goods movement planning program. At this time, we do not know, or understand, all the deficiencies in our freight transport system. However, more detailed recommendations will be developed over time as our efforts at goods movement planning progress.

8. SPECIAL POLICIES

There are several policies and programs the Council has adopted that warrant special mention. They are described briefly below.

**MPO Coordination**: CRCOG is committed to working cooperatively with all its neighboring regional planning agencies. Coordination assures that major transportation projects address inter-regional needs and are not duplicative or conflicting.

**Congestion Management System**: CRCOG will continue to follow its longstanding CMS Policy that places greater emphasis on reducing congestion through better management of the existing highway system, rather than on projects to expand or increase capacity.

**Air Quality - Transportation Policy**: The Capitol Region has conducted a full review of air quality-transportation issues and by developed a regional air quality policy that enhances the State air quality program. CRCOG will continue to work to implement this policy, and to support alternate travel modes and efforts to reduce diesel emissions.

**Demand Management Policy**: An important alternative approach for reducing congestion is to reduce, or otherwise modify, the demand for transportation. CRCOG will continue to encourage programs that focus on getting people to use an alternate form of transportation (bus or carpool), or to shift their travel to off-peak periods when there is excess capacity.

**ITS Policy (Intelligent Transportation Systems)**: In 1997, CRCOG adopted a strategic plan for the deployment of ITS systems in the Capitol Region. Many of the basic recommendations in the ITS Plan are already being implemented. CRCOG will continue to support implementation of the ITS Plan, with special emphasis on the transit-related ITS proposals that have lagged behind roadway ITS projects.

**Transportation Security**: The tragedy of September 11, 2001 brought a new emphasis on transportation security at the federal, State, regional and local level. As a result, CRCOG has been proactive in bringing people together to plan for the security of our regional surface transportation systems and is committed to continuing to conduct and/or support security forums, emergency drills and the efforts of the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee in the future.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The Capitol Region Council of Governments is committed to fully integrating the basic principles of environmental justice into all of its transportation planning programs and activities.

CRCOG has agreed to support items of special interest to minority, low-income, and transit-dependent households, including

- access to jobs,
- better transit services,
- clean fuel buses and
- pedestrian and bicycle safety in urban areas.

CRCOG also works to insure that environmental justice communities continue to have an opportunity to be heard in the Region’s transportation planning programs and processes.
10. Financial Plan

This section provides an overview of the cost of projects recommended in the Transportation Plan and an estimate of the revenues that will be used to finance the improvements. Many of the cost estimates and most of the revenue estimates are preliminary. The intent is to prepare an approximate, but realistic, estimate of total program cost; and a similar estimate of total revenues that the Region can expect to receive over the next 20 years. A goal of this process is to prepare a 'financially constrained plan' whose costs can to be paid from the 20-year revenue stream.

A summary of estimated capital costs is shown below. The total estimated cost of the capital improvements proposed in this Plan is about $1,201,200,000. The total amount of State and federal transportation capital funds that will likely flow to the Region over the next 20 years will total about $1,242,458,000. This revenue estimate is based on continuation of existing annual revenues and anticipated special discretionary funds that the Region has applied for or already received. A complete discussion of operating and maintenance costs is provided in the Full Plan.

### Cost Improvement Program

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<tr>
<td>639,000,000</td>
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<td>(D)</td>
<td>Freight Transport System</td>
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**1,201,200,000** TOTAL CAPITAL COST

(A) Unfunded; cost estimated at $286,000,000
(B) Estimate to be determined
(C) Costs are included in projects listed in the Transit section: NHHS Rail and Griffin Busway.
(D) Recommendations are general policy statements and do not included specific capital improvement recommendations.