

# NEWSLETTER

Fall 2016



## FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The NHHS Rail Program continues on its path towards providing significant new regional passenger rail service on the future **CTrail** Hartford Line. Scheduled to

launch in January 2018, the Hartford Line will become the newest component of a robust and vibrant multi-modal regional transportation system. Expanded service will join communities, generate sustainable economic growth, help build energy independence, and provide links to travel corridors and markets within and beyond the region.

A significant amount of station construction was completed in 2016. To showcase our progress earlier this summer, I had the pleasure of escorting Governor Dannel Malloy and State Representative Mary Mushinsky on a tour of the new Hartford Line, Wallingford station. We observed construction of the station framing and climbed the stairs of the newly constructed towers, which will eventually connect to the overhead pedestrian bridge. With station construction at 50% complete and scheduled to open in spring 2017, construction workers enthusiastically described the importance the Hartford Line brings to our local communities. The significant progress in Wallingford echoes what's happening at other stations along the Hartford Line. In August, the new high-level platform at Hartford Union Station opened to the public, making it faster and easier for passengers to board trains. By the end of 2016, construction at the Meriden and Berlin stations will be over 50% complete, with a target for late spring opening.

In October/November we saw 9 miles of new second track constructed between North Haven and Newington via state-of-the-art Track Construction Machine. Constructing up to one mile of track per day, it was the first ever use of the 250-ton machine in Connecticut.

In this newsletter, readers will learn more about the innovative Track Construction Machine, station construction and funding approved for Transit-Oriented Development around stations, among other topics.

Thank you for reading this edition.

James P. Redeker  
Commissioner,  
CT Department of Transportation



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## State-of-the-Art Track Construction Machine Showcases Innovation on Future Hartford Line

On October 11th, Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) Commissioner James P. Redeker showcased the mammoth Track Construction Machine (TCM) used to double-track portions of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) rail corridor, which is now branded as the **CTrail** Hartford Line. A second track parallel to the existing single track, currently used by Amtrak trains will allow more frequent train service and more efficient train movements when the **CTrail** Hartford Line, which will allow frequent, faster rail service between New Haven, Hartford and Springfield, begins operations in January 2018.

As part of the NHHS Rail Program, the 250-ton TCM constructed nearly nine miles of track between North Haven and Meriden. The effort took approximately three weeks to complete and safely and efficiently constructed new track without interfering with existing train traffic on the adjacent existing mainline track. The primary benefits of using a TCM over other methods of track construction are its production capability and the fact that it can lay track without disrupting train operations on adjacent tracks. This marks the first time a TCM was used to lay this significant length of track in Connecticut.



*At about 150 feet in length and weighing over 200 tons, the TCM is one massive machine!*

“We are excited to finally launch rail service between New Haven, Hartford and our friends in Springfield, and state-of-the-art, 21st Century machinery like this is helping keep us on schedule so we can begin service as soon as possible,” Governor Malloy said. “A modernized transportation system brings so many benefits to an area. High among them are the economic advantages that attract businesses and grows jobs, however for too many decades our state lacked the forward-thinking vision to make these improvements. We are committed to building a best-in-class transportation system for Connecticut’s residents, and the Hartford Line is one piece of this vision that will move us forward.”

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“Launch of the Hartford Line will provide an opportunity for Connecticut to join in a regional vision to make rail a more convenient and faster option for travelers,” Commissioner Redeker stated. “Expanded rail service will strengthen transportation infrastructure in Connecticut and the region.”

The TCM is the main component of a moving assembly line designed to install rails and ties in one efficient operation. Prior to start of the operation, train cars carrying fifty, 1,600-foot long rails were off-loaded and the rail was deposited on either side of the rail bed. Fifteen tie cars, each carrying 176 concrete railroad ties weighing over 800 pounds each, are towed behind the TCM and feed it with concrete ties via a conveyor system. While pulled along the rail bed by a bulldozer, the TCM uniformly lays the ties onto the ballast (rail bed) at predetermined spacing and simultaneously threads the rails onto the ties. A clipping machine attaches the rail clips to hold the completed track assembly together.

The machine can assemble up to 1,000 feet of track per hour (500 ties) in ideal conditions, at over one mile of track per day. Prior to the use of the TCM, it took months to complete this work using either track panels, which require offsite assembly and transportation to the site, or manual installation through the use of more traditional track construction equipment.

The TCM is expected to return to Connecticut in 2017 to construct another ten miles of track between Meriden and Newington. By the time the expanded service begins in 2018, about 32 miles of the 62-mile corridor between New Haven and Springfield will be double-tracked.

TCM’s have been used successfully around the world on some of the largest track construction projects over the last ten years, including in Italy, Northern Ireland, Brazil, India, and Saudi Arabia, among others. Only a handful of these machines exist in the United States.

## Construction Progresses at Hartford Line Stations

Construction of the new Hartford Line stations in Wallingford, Meriden and Berlin is well underway with a target completion of spring 2017.

Construction at stations generally includes the installation of high-level platforms (approximately 500 feet), an overhead pedestrian bridge, passenger information display systems, ticket vending machines, automatic snowmelt systems and one electronic vehicle charging station. All station elements will be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant. Other planned improvements include increased parking, bicycle racks, video surveillance systems and emergency telephones.



CTDOT Commissioner James P. Redeker and Governor Dannel P. Malloy view construction progress at the future Wallingford Station.

(outer 29 inches) of the platform to fold up so freight trains may carry wide loads through the station, as needed.

South of Hartford, work began in July on a new high-level platform at New Haven’s State Street Station. Currently, this station serves Shore Line East, with plans to include this as a daily stop for Hartford Line riders, providing a quick and convenient walk to and from the downtown area.

Hartford Union Station underwent improvements as a newly installed high-level platform went into service the first week of August. Unique to Union Station is the incorporation of a fold-up edge along the platform. While normally in the level or “down” position for passenger use, this feature allows the edge



Overhead pedestrian bridge at the new Wallingford Station.



Construction of the new Meriden Station.



Overhead pedestrian bridges, such as this one at Berlin Station, will enable passengers to safely access both platforms.

# State Approves Funds for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Projects

On June 8th, 2016, Governor Dannel P. Malloy announced that nearly \$4.5 million in grants was approved to five municipalities along the CTrail Hartford Line under the state's Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development Grant Program.

Governor Malloy said, "Investing in transportation is critical. Transportation and the future of our economy are fundamentally linked. Our focus is on not only improving overall quality of life for residents in these areas, but also encouraging economic development by making our towns and cities more accessible. These grants will help us take another step towards making our state more competitive."

Grants were awarded to these projects:

**Berlin:** \$500,000 to assist commercial property owners in the rail TOD zone with facade and landscaping upgrades to attract new businesses and encourage pedestrian activity near the station.

**Hartford:** \$2,000,000 for storm-water infrastructure, streetscape improvements, transit, pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity, and

infrastructure capacity to accommodate development around the Parkville CTfastrak Station.

**Meriden:** \$869,389 for sidewalk and complete streets improvements within the city's central business and TOD district.

**Windsor:** \$993,000 to create a development-ready site in Windsor Center adjacent to the station.

**Windsor Locks:** \$137,000 for acquisition and pre-development costs for three properties near the soon-to-be relocated station.

In addition, on June 24th, the Capitol Region Council of Governments received a \$200,000 grant from Connecticut's Regional Performance Incentive Program to analyze how anchor institutions such as hospitals, universities/colleges, and large employers, could provide opportunities to support ridership and increase economic activity within the CTrail Hartford Line and CTfastrak transit corridors.

## Wallingford Adopts New Zoning to Aid Development Around Rail Station

The Wallingford Planning and Zoning Commission recently adopted a Transit-Oriented Development Plan, which outlines recommendations for development and infrastructure updates around the new station.

The plan recommends replacing the existing commercial, industrial zone near the station with medium- and high-density residential zoning while moving the heavier commercial and industrial uses towards North Plains Highway. The plan also supports improvements in the station area that will encourage new residential and commercial development and better connect the station to downtown Wallingford.



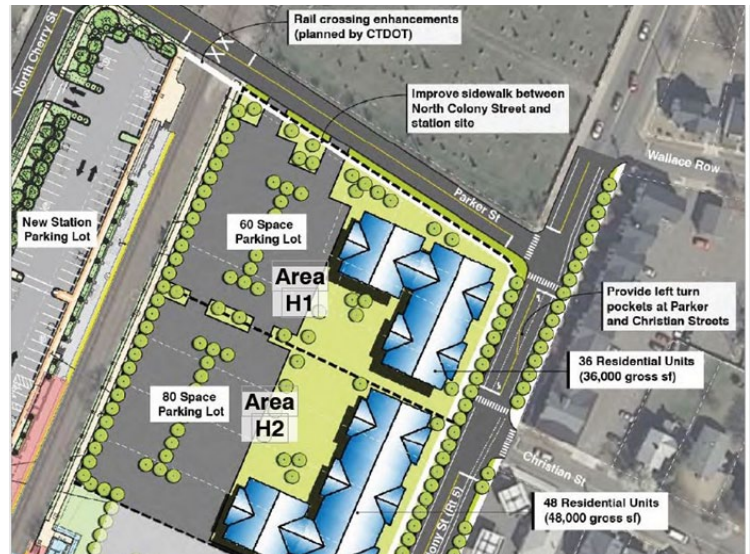
Proposed improvements to North Colony Street include on-street bicycle lanes, dedicated on-street parking, and a wider landscaping buffer on the east side of the street for greater pedestrian safety and ambience.



This Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) project in Meriden, across the street from the train station, will provide a combination of 63 affordable and market rate apartments, 11,000 square feet of ground floor retail space and a 275-space parking garage for use by residents, customers, and rail passengers.

### WHAT IS TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)?

TOD creates compact, walkable, mixed-use development, centered around the ¼ mile of transit destinations to encourage the use of mass transit. TOD reduces reliance on driving, and fosters more dense, livable, walkable communities, while connecting people to job opportunities, housing, and retail and entertainment destinations.



The TOD plan envisions residential townhouse units between the rail line and North Colony Street.

# Website Photo Gallery

To keep the public informed of construction progress, construction photos are posted weekly. Visit the photo gallery section of the website at [www.nhhsrail.com/gallery](http://www.nhhsrail.com/gallery).



Setting the Signal Foundation In North Haven



New Track Construction in North Haven



Construction of the overhead pedestrian bridge at the new Wallingford Station



Construction at Willow Brook Bridge in Berlin



Communications crew removing split steel in Berlin

## Did You Know?



To ensure that the hundreds of plant and animal species continue to thrive along the 62-mile NHHS rail corridor, the Program team studied the environmental impacts of rail expansion. In this photo, workers are transplanting State-endangered plant adjacent to the rail line to nearby sandy soils where the plants will flourish.

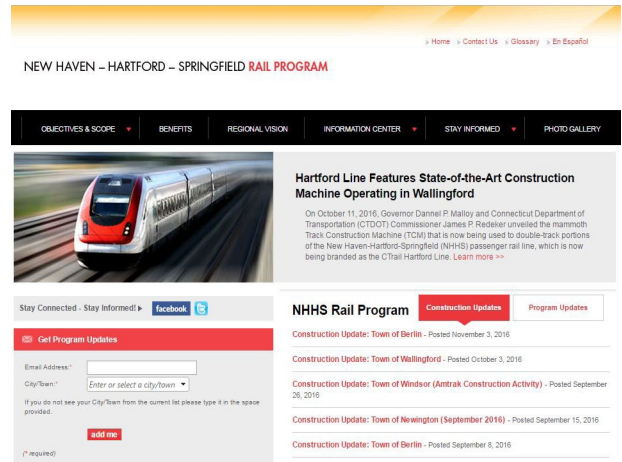
# GET INVOLVED & STAY INFORMED

## NHHS Contact List

Over 3,800 residents, businesses, local groups and public agencies have already subscribed to the NHHS contact list! Subscribing to the contact list on the [www.NHHSrail.com](http://www.NHHSrail.com) website takes only a few minutes and ensures that you will receive:

- E-alerts with Program updates, including station construction
- Construction impacts
- Future issues of the Program newsletter
- Notices of upcoming public meetings

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## Questions & Comments

The Program website ([www.nhhsrail.com](http://www.nhhsrail.com)) provides an easy way to ask questions or provide comments to the Program team and receive a response via email.

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