Fastrak to Opportunity – Connecticut’s First Rapid Transit Corridor

Garrett Eucalitto, Undersecretary for Transportation Policy and Planning
Connecticut’s Office of Policy and Management
Friday, February 12, 2016
CTfastrak (Bus Rapid Transit)
CTfastrak Bus Rapid Transit System

- Connecticut’s FIRST bus rapid transit system (BRT)
- Opened March 28, 2015
- 9.4-mile bus-only roadway connecting the City of New Britain, Town of Newington, Town of West Hartford, and the City of Hartford
- Bus service every 3-7 minutes during peak hours and every 5-15 minutes off-peak
- 10 transit stations
A QUICK HISTORY OF CTFASTRAK: FROM DOUBTS TO SUCCESS STORY
Municipal Coordination and Cooperation

- **CTfastrak** started off as a joint study between CTDOT, CRCOG, CCRPA and towns in 1997
- It crossed multiple town boundaries, two regional planning agencies, transit districts, and multiple federal agencies
Municipal Coordination and Cooperation
From Doubts to Success Story

• 1997-1999 – Major Investment Study in the I-84 Corridor West of Hartford
• January 2000 – Approval to Enter Preliminary Design
• February 2002 – EIS – Record of Decision
• October 2006 – Entered Final Design
• December 2009 – Submitted Full Fund Grant Agreement request to FTA
• November 2011 – Full Funding Grant Agreement signed
• Spring 2012 – Construction Begins
• March 28, 2015 – Opening Day
TOD COORDINATION AND SUPPORT
Connecticut: 169 Towns and Cities

- Lack of County government has led to the development of 169 local governments, plus boroughs and fire districts
- Property taxes and zoning are the domain of local governments
- Transportation capital improvements are largely borne by the state
Regional Councils of Government

- Regional Councils of Government have taken a larger role due to a recent consolidation effort, bringing the statewide number to 9
- Many also serve as boundaries for MPOs
- Recent consolidation has brought all of CTfastrak into CRCOG
December 2012, Governor Malloy created an interagency TOD task force to strategize and coordinate TOD projects

Agencies:
- Policy & Management
- Transportation
- Housing
- Housing Finance Authority
- Economic and Community Development
- Energy & Environmental Protection

Governor Malloy proposed legislation to create a quasi-public transit corridor development authority
Financial and Planning Assistance for TOD

- $15 million TOD Acquisition and Pre-Development Loan Fund
  - Administered by LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation); $2 million in state seed funding
  - Max $3m loan, 5% interest, 3-year term max
  - Project must be located within ½ mile of CTfastrak or Hartford Line station
  - Project must include a residential component with a min % of affordable housing

- Affordable Housing
  - Since 2011, DOH and CHFA have helped to fund nearly 16,000 affordable units, and invested about $1 billion in affordable housing creation
  - DOH: CHAMP, Gap financing, HomeConnecticut, Incentive Housing Zones, etc.
  - CHFA: administer the LIHTC and state HTCC programs

- Brownfield Remediation and Development
  - $140 million statewide since 2012
  - Up to $4m of financial support per project – grants (municipalities) and loans (developers)
  - Multiple liability relief programs
Financial and Planning Assistance for TOD

- CTDOT Planning Assistance
  - $700,000 grant from FTA’s Pilot Program for TOD Planning, for the new Hartford Line rail system
  - $250,000 state funded TOD planning assistance for CTfastrak corridor

- OPM Funding for Capital and Planning
  - Awarded $1.5 million in TOD planning grants to eleven municipalities in 2015
  - TOD/Responsible Growth Grant Program application period closed February 4, 2016
  - $15 million TOD bond authorization, with additional funds requested in this biennial budget
  - $15 million Responsible Growth Fund authorization

- Other Infrastructure Support Funds
  - Urban Action Program
  - Small Town Economic Assistance Program
  - DEEP Clean Water Funds
CT TOD in Action: 24 Colony Street, Meriden

- Multi-agency collaboration
- Main street of town
- Mixed use and mixed income
- 63 apartments and 11,433 SF of commercial

- LIHTC, CHFA mortgage, DOH funding
- Department of Transportation site and 272-space commuter lot
CT TOD in Action: 125 Columbus Blvd, New Britain

Transit: CTfastrak Corridor
Previous Use: Former Police Station
Size: 2.26 acres
Zoning: Central Business District
69,800 s.f. three-story structure

Grants

$2.7 million DECD brownfield grant for removal of hazardous materials, demolition costs, abatement and site remediation

$100,000 OPM TOD grant to assist the city in seeking development proposals for the site
Contact information
Garrett Eucalitto
Connecticut’s Office of Policy and Management
Garrett.Eucalitto@ct.gov
860-418-6467