



FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The New Haven – Hartford – Springfield Rail Program has reached two major milestones in recent weeks – the receipt of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the release of \$121 million in funding from the FRA. The FONSI and the federal funding will enable the NHHS Rail Program to move forward with plans for design and construction.

The NHHS Rail Program is also advancing service planning and design of track, bridges and stations. This issue provides an update on this work. In addition, work has progressed on the cable installation project, to prepare for construction to begin in October.

The new NHHS service is part of a 2030 vision for a regional high speed rail network. The new NHHS rail service, which is scheduled to launch in 2016, will link communities along the NHHS corridor with destinations throughout the Northeast, providing not only significant transportation benefits, but also opportunities for economic development and growth of sustainable communities.

James P. Redeker
Commissioner,
CT Department of Transportation



Public hearing for the EA/EIE in North Haven on June 14th.



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FRA Announces Award of \$121 Million for NHHS Rail Program

On October 1st, the FRA will announce the release of \$121 million to the Connecticut Department of Transportation to advance the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) Rail Program. Governor Dannel Malloy, Deputy US Transportation Secretary John D. Porcari and Commissioner James Redeker will speak at a press event to be held at the Meriden train station. Members of the Connecticut Congressional delegation also plan to attend the event.

The funding obligation follows the receipt of a signed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) from the FRA for the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) on August 15th. FRA approval of the EA/EIE was a precondition to obligation of the federal funding.

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EA/EIE Receives Federal Approval

On August 15th, the Connecticut Department of Transportation received a signed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Programmatic Agreement from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the New Haven – Hartford – Springfield Rail Program. The FRA approval of the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) was a precondition to FRA's obligation of the \$121 million in Federal funding awarded to the NHHS Rail Program.

The public comment period on the EA/EIE opened on May 8th and closed on June 22nd. During this period, nearly 150 public comments were received, many expressing strong support for the rail program. Public hearings for the EA/EIE were held in New Britain, Enfield and North Haven in June. The EA/EIE document, including Appendix A, Comments and Responses, is posted on the NHHS website (www.nhhsrail.com).

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FRA Announces Award of \$121 Million for NHHS Rail Program (continued from page 1)...

This release of funding is a significant milestone in the Program and will allow CTDOT to move forward with the design of new track, signal and communication systems, bridge and station infrastructure improvements between New Haven and Hartford.

The funding will be used for reinstallation of 10 miles of track structure from North Haven to Meriden and an upgrade of 1/2 mile of existing freight siding in Hartford. The grant will also fund installation of interlockings in North Haven, Meriden, and Berlin; at-grade crossing upgrades at 21 public at-grade crossings and 7 private crossings and rehabilitation, repair replacement or closure of 13 bridges and culverts. Station improvements include the addition of high-level platforms at existing stations in Berlin and Hartford and new stations in Meriden and Wallingford.

The federal funding, which was awarded in 2010, will be matched by \$141 million in state funding.

COMING SOON: ON-BOARD PASSENGER SURVEY

As part of the service planning efforts for the NHHS Rail Program, CTDOT (in partnership with Amtrak, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Transportation) will conduct an on-board survey of passengers riding the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield and Vermonter lines in October.

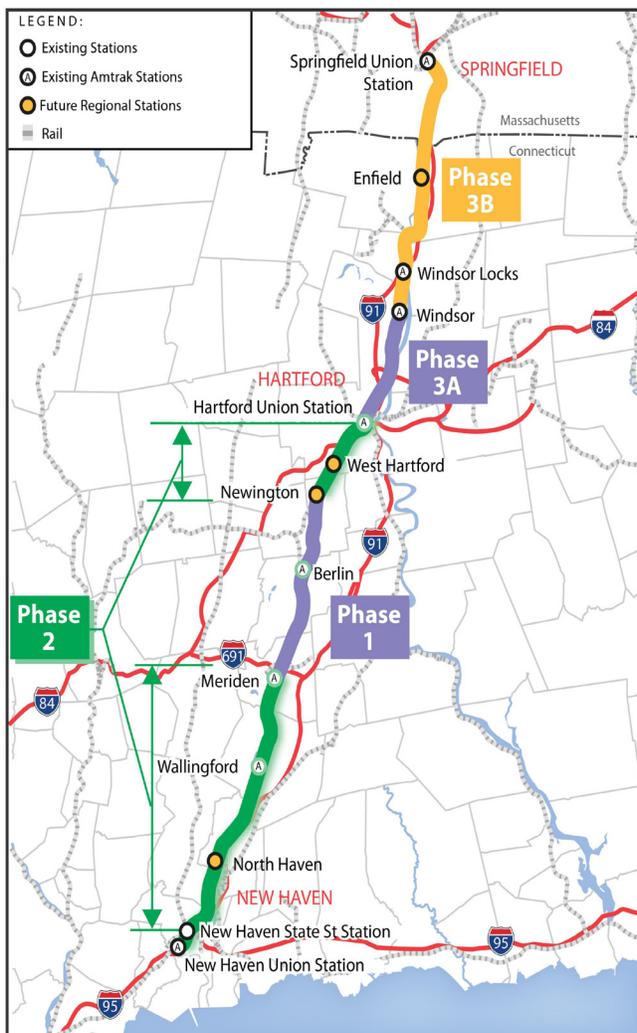
The survey will collect important information that will be used to:

- Develop a profile of who is riding the trains, and why;
- Verify ridership travel patterns and access modes;
- Understand how frequently passengers ride the train;
- Determine the role of passenger rail service in regional mobility patterns;
- Verify customer satisfaction levels with existing Amtrak train services; and
- Gather information on customer preferences for future NHHS and Vermonter passenger rail services.

This information will enable decision makers to make informed choices about important NHHS rail service elements such as fares, scheduling, amenities, branding and other key rail service attributes.

All passengers riding trains with survey representatives will have an opportunity to participate in the survey.

NHHS Rail Program Phases



Engineering News: Program Update

Design work on the NHHS Rail program is moving forward on several parallel tracks, with construction work for cable installation to begin in October. Follow-on construction projects will begin between now and Spring 2014.

Progress on major design activities is summarized below:

- Permitting:** Permits for the cable installation project have been obtained from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) which will enable this work to proceed as planned in October. In addition, draft permit applications for US Army Corps of Engineers and CTDEEP are in preparation for the Main Line track work.
- Service Planning:** Studies are underway for ticketing, fare collection, and safety. In addition, an on-board ridership survey is planned for October (see sidebar) to gather information on current ridership patterns and preferences for future service.
- Preliminary Design:** Preliminary Design was completed in July for Phase 2 (North Haven to Meriden), including stations. This completes the Preliminary Design for all funded phases of the NHHS Rail program.



Views of Public Hearing in New Britain on June 7th.



Views of Public Hearing in North Haven on June 14th.

Construction Work for Cable Installation to Begin in October

The first phase of NHHS construction – the installation of underground fiber optics communication cable – will begin in October. This work is an important first step in preparing for the upgrade of signals and communications for the new rail service. Initiating the cable installation at this time will enable the subsequent track and infrastructure improvements to proceed more quickly.

The work will include installation of approximately 59 miles of underground signal, communications, and power cables between Hamden and Springfield. The cabling is required to support existing and future equipment and the implementation of positive train control. Positive train control is a system which provides for monitoring and controlling train movements to provide increased safety.

The cable installation work, which will be contracted by Amtrak, is expected to be completed in May 2014. CTDOT will provide updates on the status and location of the cable installation activity. Please check the program website at www.nhhsrail.com for further information and to sign up for email updates on the status of the cable installation construction.

EA/EIE Receives Federal Approval

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FRA’s approval enables the NHHS Rail Program to proceed with detailed engineering and service planning and the preparation of project specific environmental reviews.

As described in the FONSI, the FRA indicated that the EA/EIE satisfies the FRA’s requirements for environmental review and determined that the program will have no foreseeable significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. The Programmatic Agreement among the FRA, FTA, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office, the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office and CTDOT, describes the phased process for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for identifying historic properties, determining adverse effects on historic properties, and consultation measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate such effects if needed.

The FONSI and Programmatic Agreement are posted on the NHHS website (www.nhhsrail.com).

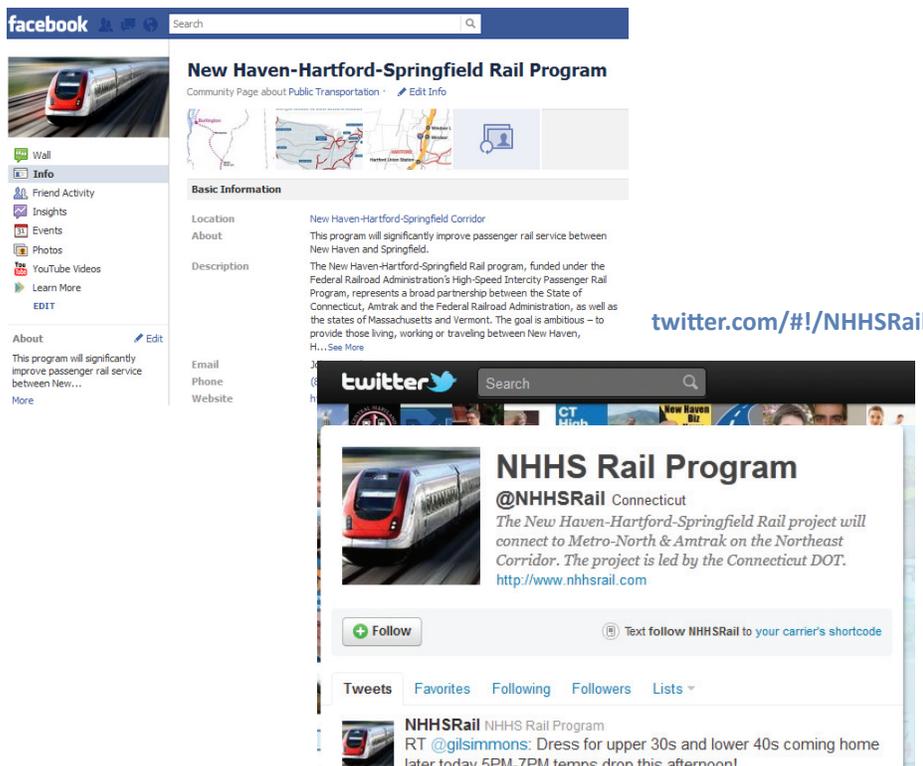
Public Outreach



Follow NHHS on Facebook & Twitter

Follow the latest New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program news on Facebook and Twitter:

www.facebook.com/NHHSRail



twitter.com/#!/NHHSRail

www.NHHSrail.com

GET INVOLVED & STAY INFORMED

NHHS Contact List

More than 1,200 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 website takes only a few minutes and ensures that you will receive:

- E-alerts with program updates
- Notices of upcoming public meetings
- Future issues of the program newsletter

subscribe >

Questions & Comments

The program website www.NHHSrail.com provides an easy way to ask questions or provide comments to the program team and receive a response via email.

Watch for: Interactive Map on www.NHHSrail.com

Soon you will be able to learn more about the proposed New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program train stations through the Interactive Map on our program website. The map will provide station details, existing conditions photos and proposed station concept plans. We will send an email alert when we launch the Interactive Map.