



MEMBERS

Chair	Jim Gildea	Derby
Vice Chair	Jeffrey Maron	Stamford
Secretary	Blaize Levitan (Interim)	Guilford
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	Marcellus Edwards	North Haven
	Ashlee Fox	Fairfield
	Douglas Hausladen	New Haven
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	Julia McGrath	Old Saybrook
	Sue Prosi	Stratford
	Kate Rozen	Woodbridge
	Caroline Simmons	Stamford
	Zell Steever	Groton

2022 Annual Report

The Connecticut Commuter Rail Council (CCRC or Council) is an independent board which acts as the advocate on behalf of rail users throughout the state, including the New Haven line, New Canaan, Danbury and Waterbury branches, Shore Line East, and the Hartford Line.

[CT General Statute - CCRC Power & Duties](#)

Sec. 15. Section 13b--212c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2013*):

The Connecticut Commuter Rail Council shall study and investigate all aspects of the daily operation of commuter rail lines in the state, monitor their performance and recommend changes to improve the efficiency and the quality of service of the operation of such lines. The council may request and shall receive from any department, division, board, bureau, commission, agency, public authority of the state or any political subdivision thereof such assistance and data as it requests and will enable it to properly carry out its activities for the purposes set forth in this section. The council shall also work with the CTDOT to advocate for customers of all commuter lines in the state and shall make recommendations for improvements to such lines.

The Governor and senior leaders of the General Assembly appoint council members in order to make certain that a broad range of perspectives are included in all meetings. We work with the Department of Transportation, Amtrak, and Metro North Railroad to represent the experiences of rail users and ensure their voices are heard.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONNECTICUT COMMUTER RAIL COUNCIL ADVOCACY FOR COMMUTERS IN 2022

[Minutes | Connecticut Commuter Rail Council](#)

[Agendas | Connecticut Commuter Rail Council](#)

Council:

In January 2022 the CCRC kicked off with a very successful Hartford based meeting where we met with the Governor's office, the CTDOT and members of the State Legislature including members of the Transportation Committee. It was a successful start to the year.

The coronavirus continued to linger with us last year and rail transportation continued to be impacted in many ways including reduced ridership, lack of a Quiet Car on the Metro North line and mask enforcement issues. The Council continued to meet virtually but did conduct 2 in person meetings; one in New York and one in Guilford. We did our best to stay relevant, engaged, informed and act as a resource for those rail users who were current rail customers but also for those who resume rail transportation in the future.

One continued benefit of our virtual meetings was that the Council had participation from all the various service providers of the various branches and lines to attend meetings, weigh in, be available and answer questions.

We continued to meet, and hold mainline and branch line meetings. For instance, we held Waterbury Branch, Hartford Line, Danbury Branch and New York City themed meetings.

As of this writing, the Council has one vacant position. This position is an appointee of the ranking member of the Transportation Committee and must be a representative of either the Danbury or Waterbury Branch.

Safety / Security:

The Council has been working to better understand the “total” experience of the rail user. In that regard, we are trying to integrate a security metric into our monthly Operations Report. The Council has request that Metro North begin including the “Major crimes metric per station” as part of that monthly report.



Social Media:

The CCRC’s website continues to serve as a resource for rail passengers and advocates. The CCRC posts all relevant meeting information to the website (members, contact information, meeting agendas, minutes, operations reports, etc.).

The website also serves as a vehicle for commuters to communicate with the CCRC on issues. In 2022, the Council website attracted over 6,000 visitors.

The CCRC’s Twitter feed continues to attract new followers. The CCRC uses Twitter to update followers on Council business and provide a glimpse into the work of the Council. The feed is also used to share updates that are provided to the CCRC by the CTDOT and Metro North Railroad, as well as other news items of interest.

The CCRC continued to use all available methods to connect and reach out to the rail users we advocate for including taking live Twitter questions and live streaming meetings. We will continue to do so in the upcoming year. The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of multiple forms of communication.



Legislative:

In January 2022, the Council held its annual Hartford based meeting. The Governor's office was in attendance, the CTDOT and members of the State Legislature.

In addition to the meeting in Hartford, the Council took a much more active role in sharing their opinions on a wide range of legislative topics and participating in legislative events:

- We aggressively worked with the various legislative appointing authorities to fill all Council member appointments
- We met with representatives of the Governor's office to discuss their legislative priorities
- We had a very successful Hartford meeting with a number of legislators
- We completed and shared our 2022 – 2026 Rail Plan recommendations
- The Council endorsed and submitted legislation on HB5423 – An Act Concerning the Expansion of Passenger Train and Ground Transportation Services In Eastern Connecticut
- The Council submitted legislation on HB5839 - An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for Operational Growth and Expenses of the Naugatuck Valley Waterbury Branch Line of the Metro North Commuter Railroad.
- The Council was a part of the "WBL Service increase" press event and spoke at the event

Testimony can be read on the Council website: [Connecticut Commuter Rail Council | Serving Connecticut's Rail Commuters](#)

Finally, the Council thanks the following legislators for appearing at Council meetings in 2022:

State Senator	Christine Cohen	28th
State Senator	Will Haskell	26th
State Senator	Cathy Osten	19th
State Senator	Heather Somers	18th
State Representative	Aundre' Bumgardner	41st
State Representative	Brian Carney	23rd
State Representative	Christine Conley	40th
State Representative	Christine Goupil	35th
State Representative	Cindy Harrison	69th
State Representative	Roland Lemar	96th
State Representative	Cristin McCarthy Vahey	133 rd
State Representative	Kara Rochelle	104 th



Governor Ned Lamont and the "Increased Service on the WBL" Press Event

New Haven Line

2019 total ridership – 40,234,513

2019 YTD on-time performance – 97.0%

2020 total ridership – 11,545,691 (-68.7%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 97.8%

2021 total ridership – 12,647,827 (11.2%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 97.9%

2022 total ridership – 22,969,570 (+62.0% versus 2021) (-42.9% versus 2019)

2022 YTD on-time performance – 98.4%

While the pandemic continues to affect ridership levels for the New Haven line, it is important to point out that at the end of 2022; ridership will end up coming in at just about 23 million rides on the New Haven line and its branches. This is a number that should continue to rise over the coming years.

With regards to the pandemic, this year also saw the end of required mask wearing on all trains. With the sunset of MTA's many of the COVID related restrictions, the Council requested a return to service of the Quiet Car. This was initially an issue that the Council advocated for previously and was satisfied to see the MTA implement a Quiet Car. It continues to be an issue from members of the public who ask us to advocate for on their behalf. Unfortunately, at this time the MTA has decided against putting the Quiet Car back in service. The Council will continue to advocate for this return to service.

Another area where the Council has continued to advocate is policy that would allow bikes on rail cars. This was another victim of COVID and as we return to regular pre COVID service, the Council continues to advocate for recognizing that in many cases, the first mile and the last mile does involve bicycles and / or scooters.

The Council also continues to hear from our ridership base that reducing travel times continues to be one of their biggest priorities. This summer, new express trains were rolled out on the New Haven line that did reduce travel time from New Haven to Grand Central terminal by only stopping at the major stations. The Council has requested the data necessary to indicate whether these express cars are in fact being utilized or whether the additional travel time to major stations serves as too much a detriment. The Council remains interested in the work associated with "Time for Connecticut". It is this work, such as reinforcing the rail bridges, reducing curves, etc. that will have the greatest impact on reducing travel times.

[Opinion: CT's commuter rail is still too slow \(ctmirror.org\)](http://ctmirror.org)

The Council once again submitted comments with regards to the 2022 – 2026 CT Rail Plan. We feel that there are 3 core ideals that should be followed.

- Expansion, as will be noted elsewhere throughout the section, the Council believes the expanding the existing rail lines not only intrastate, such as to New Milford or to the Groton area but also to Boston and Westerly RI, this will be transformational when it comes to rail commuting.
- Electrification - the Council also is a proponent of electrification of both the Waterbury branch and the Danbury branch and freight where feasible. This will allow us to retire the diesels and help reduce our carbon footprint.
- Ease of travel - the Council believes this will be a critical opponent to attracting new rail users. We need to discontinue the practice of treating our rail lines as three separate entities: Amtrak on the Shore Line East, TASC on the Hartford line and Metro-North with the mainline and the branches. The Council also believes also need to be able to do a better job linking first mile and last mile alternatives for rail commuting. Our transit and rail commuting opportunities need to be interconnected amongst all of the vendors and transit district and needs to be looked at as a single transportation network.

New Canaan Branch:

2019 total ridership – 1,504,487

2019 YTD on-time performance – 94.4%

2020 total ridership – 443,617 (- 68.2%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 97.6%

2021 total ridership – 357,504 (- 21.7%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 97.6%

2021 total ridership – 677,875 (+77.2% versus 2021) (-54.9% versus 2019)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 98.3%

There were many positive signs on the New Canaan Line in calendar year 2022. On March 29, 2022, an increased number of trains began to run from New Canaan to Grand Central Terminal each weekday. Metro-North Railroad has increased its New Canaan Line service to 40 trains per weekday. Additionally, the train's schedules have been adjusted to closely match pre-pandemic service and to reduce the travel time between New Canaan and Grand Central Terminal, officials said.

[Metro-North Increases New Canaan Line Weekday Service | New Canaan, CT Patch](#)

In addition to that good news, a new parking fee schedule for the 2022-23 season went into effect starting this September which included with lower rates. The Town is also offering daily parking opportunities which can be paid for through using the machine or PaybyPhone app.

Finally, in an effort to make progress towards addressing the ongoing noise complaint issues, the Western Connecticut Council of Governments, announced that they were seeking a firm to study train noise on the New Canaan line. It was announced that the goal of the study was to provide options for reducing the noise pollution. One such potential option is to petition the Federal Railroad Administration to establish a quiet zone along the line.



New Canaan Rail Station

Waterbury Branch:

2019 total ridership – 243,671

2019 YTD on-time performance – 90.2%

2020 total ridership – 127,635 (-58.7%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 97.9%

2021 total ridership – 150,928 (18.2%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 94.5%

2022 total ridership – 197,392 (+55.0% versus 2021) (-19.0% versus 2019)

2022 YTD on-time performance – 98.9%

This was an exciting year on the Waterbury branch line. After many years, grassroots advocacy, and a commitment from Governor Ned Lamont and the Department of Transportation, this year saw the long, awaited addition of seven daily trains. Through

the years, the state has made significant investment on the Waterbury branch, which culminated in the completion of the 4 passing sidings necessary to roll out additional service. On July 11, 2022, this work came to fruition and the new daily service began. The additional service began paying off almost immediately and was easily noticeable as the increase in ridership showed. The Waterbury branch continues to outpace all other branches and lines from a ridership number perspective as compared to the pre-COVID numbers. It's also noteworthy to add that in December 2022, the branch, in fact for a month actually had greater ridership than the pre-COVID numbers.

[New Express Trains on the New Haven Line and Increased Services on the Waterbury Branch Line \(ct.gov\)](#)

The investment does not stop there, platform upgrades will be part of the Derby / Shelton Station, Raise grant. It was also recently announced that all of the remaining platforms on the branch will be receiving federal funding to upgrade those platforms as well.

[Valley Independent Sentinel | Federal \\$12.6 Million Grant For... \(newhavenindependent.org\)](#)

[Ansonia, Seymour train stations to receive upgrades \(ctpost.com\)](#)

The branch continues to make progress and has come a long way in the last decade. The Council remains hopeful that the electrification of the Waterbury branch will also receive more advocacy and focus in the upcoming year. The last major hurdle will be coach upgrades to bring the fleet up to par with the New Haven line, Hartford line and Shore Line East.



Derby / Shelton Station

Danbury Branch:

2019 total ridership – 708,825

2019 YTD on-time performance – 91.0%

2020 total ridership – 197,701 (-70.4%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 93.9%

2021 total ridership – 139,662 (-29.4%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 93.3%

2022 total ridership – 289,673 (+92.4% versus 2021) (-59% versus 2019)

2022 YTD on-time performance – 96.4%

The Council has been advocating heavily in two key areas, electrification and expansion and nowhere are those two ideas more necessary than the Danbury branch.

By electrifying both the Danbury and Waterbury branches, this would retire the diesels from the line and help reduce our carbon footprint. These are lofty environmental goals. Through the years there has been much talk about the electrification of the line and it

does appear to be gaining momentum. During a recent CCRC meeting, CTDOT indicated they would be conducting a study on the electrification of those lines.

Another key advocacy issue for the Council is expansion. We believe that if COVID showed us anything, it was that there is a thirst for Interstate rail. Those lines that were Connecticut focused seemed to experience the least drop in ridership. The Council continues to believe that expansion to New Milford on the Danbury line makes sense and helps not only the commuters on the line but also will serve as an economic driver. We are hopeful that during the upcoming year, this idea will also gain more traction.

As with the Waterbury branch, the Council continues to advocate for coach upgrades to bring the fleet up to par with the New Haven line, Hartford line and Shore Line East.



Bethel Train Station

Shore Line East:

2019 total ridership – 609,028

2019 YTD on-time performance – 93.3%

2020 total ridership – 151,648 (-75.1%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 96.5%

2021 total ridership – 110,351 (-37.4%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 96.1%

2022 total ridership – 190,278 (+59.8% versus 2021) (-71.2% versus 2019)

2022 YTD on-time performance – 99.2%

Shore Line East had both a positive and challenging year. On Tuesday, May 24, 2022, electric trains began running on Shore Line East (SLE). The M8 Electric Multiple Units (EMU), long overdue, represent a major improvement over the old diesel-powered trains. Electric trains emit no direct carbon emissions and include additional amenities, such as electrical outlets at each seat, brighter interior spaces, updated restrooms, higher back

seats, and improved luggage racks. The M8s provide more reliable service than diesel-powered trains. This was a major investment by the State in SLE.

Throughout 2022, the CTDOT continued to operate Shore Line East at only 66% of pre-COVID service. CTDOT has also continued to suspend the highly popular THRU Express service, which provided direct service through New Haven to Stamford. CCRC advocated for a full return to pre-COVID service, something the State has implemented for every other line except SLE. As of the date of this report, CTDOT has no timeline for the return of the service, and the Governor has proposed further cuts to SLE. In September, CCRC held a dedicated forum on SLE at Clinton Town Hall, hearing from CTDOT about planned work, ridership, an update on the expansion study.

[Strong Showing by State Legislators to Support Shore Line East Expansion - The Connecticut Examiner \(ctexaminer.com\)](https://www.ctexaminer.com/2022/11/strong-showing-by-state-legislators-to-support-shore-line-east-expansion/)

SLE has struggled to return pre-COVID ridership. Although the data indicated an increase in ridership throughout the year, especially during exceptionally high gas prices this summer, a major ridership gap remains. CTDOT's position throughout 2022 has been that until ridership increases, they do no plan to increase service. CCRC has advocated that schedule design and reduced service created an extremely challenging environment for SLE ridership. Peak hour frequency still leaves riders stranded for 1-2 hours, and off-peak service can leave a rider stranded for over 3-5 hours. Schedule design and connections with MNR remained poor throughout the year, disincentivizing ridership unless one had no other option.

As Statewide rail commuters, CCRC recognizes that SLE conductors are among the best in the State. SLE provides a high-quality on-board customer service experience. Wayfinding at the stations remains a serious challenge.

The Madison station remains the only remaining station on the SLE with two tracks, but only one boarding platform. The State has invested in other stations along the line, including the Guilford Station. The CCRC advocated throughout 2022 to better connect the SLE website with the other rail lines in CT. The trip planner continues to not work with the Hartford Line.

Throughout 2022, the State expressed a desire to see more development around SLE stations but did not release any plans or guidance on how this would be achieved.

Expansion of Passenger Train and Ground Transportation Services In Eastern Connecticut

At CCRC's September public meeting in Clinton the CTDOT outline the Eastern Connecticut Rail and Transit Feasibility Study (feasibility study). During the public comment session, the public expressed strong support for expansion of SLE to Westerly,

R.I., and the establishment of new passenger branch service to Norwich.

Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) in the summer of 2021 passed legislations that directed and funded the CTDOT to conduct a feasibility study to bringing additional passenger rail and transit services to Eastern Connecticut. The feasibility study began in earnest in February 2022 with the development of a work plan and the selection of five consulting firm to undertake the work. The final report is expected before January 2024. The study is looking at establishing new train stations in Groton, Stonington and Norwich (9 possible locations in all.) CTDOT is considering how public bus transportation might connect to train service to complete the first and last mile of public transportation.

This train/bus proposal is expected to reduce GHGs emissions from the transportation sector, provide the public with an alternative way of traveling in Connecticut, reduce congestion on our highways, improve air quality, and stimulate economic development and transit-oriented development (TOD) near train stations. The proposed expansion supports expanding major industrial partners in Eastern Connecticut. It will provide a continuous regional rail link between Rhode Island and New York, and possibly in the future, to Providence, and Boston.

The CTDOT held three public meetings in late December in Norwich, Groton and on Zoom to report on the study progress and to hear from the public. The public meetings were well attended and receive overwhelming support from the public and from local and state legislators. The CTDOT expects to complete a Draft Preliminary Feasibility Assessment in March of 2023. This assessment will be used to: define the next steps to refine the corridor and possible station sites; conduct more detailed market and TOD analysis; identify rail and bus service options; and estimate ridership potential and costs. A second round of CTDOT public meetings are expected in the summer of 2023.

For more information on the study see the CTDOT Study Website at: <http://portat.ct.gov/Eastern-CT-Rail>. The CTDOT Project Manager is: Elise Greenberg at: Elise.Greenberg@ct.gov

This past year the U.S. Congress passed major infrastructure legislation to fund expansion of public rail and bus transportation, and to reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. This new funding may be used to supports expanded public rail and transit in Connecticut.



Bipartisan group of state legislators took the opportunity of a Connecticut Commuter Rail Council meeting to voice support for a long-discussed expansion of Shore Line East.

Hartford Line:

2019 total ridership – 665,471

2019 YTD on-time performance – 90.7%

2020 total ridership – 264,192 (-60.3%)

2020 YTD on-time performance – 92.2%

2021 total ridership – 318,071 (-60.3%)

2021 YTD on-time performance – 92.1%

2022 total ridership – 513,283 (+43.4% versus 2021) (-29.7% versus 2019)

2022 YTD on-time performance – 96.8%

On January 19, 2022, the CCRC held our annual legislative and Hartford Line meeting. Updates were provided by Bruce Olmstead who discussed the history of the Hartford Line and the state's plans specifically for the Hartford Line. He shared that Connecticut had received three (3) high speed rail grants. Connecticut was the only applicant that completed the high-speed rail grant. The Hartford Line began operating in 2018. There are sixty-two (62) miles of track between New Haven station and the Springfield station. Twenty-seven (27) miles of the track are double tracked. There are twenty-four (24) public crossings and nine (9) private crossings. At the time of this meeting, the Windsor

Station was almost complete and the Windsor Locks station was going out to bid. All stations will be ADA compliant and contain high level boarding.

In this same January meeting Tom Aparo discussed the recent ridership trends on the Hartford Line. As of December 2021, the Hartford Line was running at about sixty (60) percent of pre-COVID ridership. Ridership was improving until about Thanksgiving 2021 when the Omicron virus set in. Ridership had declined but CTDOT was hopeful for a return to better ridership. Customer service was added to the Hartford station. There were service adjustments between January 24, 2022 and March 27, 2022. It was anticipated that the Hartford station would have a canopy roof replacement in mid July.

During the course of the spring and early summer of 2022, the CCRC continued to receive positive updates on the Hartford Line. Ridership remained consistent and had been less impacted by waves of virus than other services.

In the August CCRC meeting update on the Hartford Line, the CCRC learned that the Hartford Line bus substation was going well. Even with fighting some traffic, the bus was operating 35-45 minutes faster. The system was getting folks where they needed to be and CTDOT had few complaints. There was a slight dip in ridership during this time and it was down about 3,000 people, fewer than expected.



A CTrail commuter train pulls out of the Meriden train station enroute to New Haven

New Haven Union Station Transportation Center:

Union Station Partnership.

On July 1, 2022, a new agreement between the City of New Haven and the New Haven Parking Authority (NHPA) went into effect for the day-to-day operation of Union Station Transportation Center Campus (including Union Station Building, Garage, certain adjacent lots to the east and west as well as the State Street Station). NHPA will be the Station and Parking Manager and additionally take on the brokerage of the campus. Their responsibility is subject to the direction of the newly created Operations Committee for the USTC Partnership and the Executive Oversight Committee at the City of New Haven.

For more information on the redevelopment of the campus, please follow the project on the link here: <https://unionstationnewhaven.com>

Look for agendas, minutes and recordings of the Operations Committee Agent meetings at the relaunch of our website coming in March 2023.

COVID 19 Impact

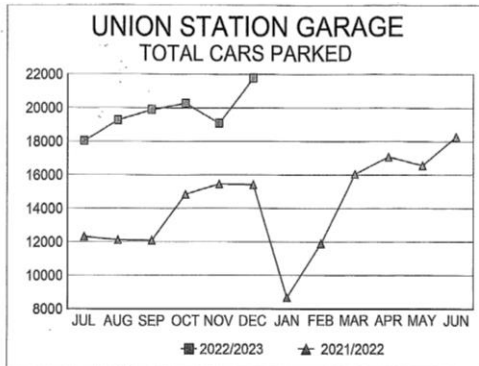
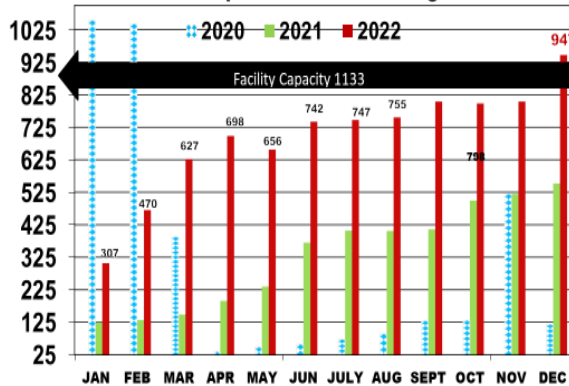
Along with the preventive measures that have been put in place, Griffin Hospital again has sponsored vaccine clinics at the Station for the convenience of the public and commuters on the balcony at the Station. This program has been well received.

Return of Rail Users

Although not meeting pre-pandemic levels, there has been a significant increase in average occupancy seen over last year and a steady increase over the last several months at the Station as can be seen in the charts that follow.



**Average Occupancy Statistics Union Station Garage
Facility Capacity 1133
Comparison of 2020 through 2022**



TOTAL CARS PARKED						
Weekdays	COMPARISON BY MONTH				CUMULATIVE COMPARISON	
	FY	2022/2023	2021/2022	% CHANGE BY MONTH	2022/2023	2021/2022
JUL	22	18,034	12,324	-1%	18,034	12,324
AUG	23	19,266	12,131	7%	37,300	24,455
SEP	22	19,907	12,103	3%	57,207	36,558
OCT	21	20,289	14,847	2%	77,496	51,405
NOV	22	19,101	15,457	-6%	96,597	66,862
DEC	22	21,782	15,412	14%	118,379	82,274
JAN	21		8,681			90,955
FEB	20		11,906			102,861
MAR	23		16,057			118,918
APR	21		17,075			135,993
MAY	22		18,576			152,569
JUN	22		18,285			170,854
Total	132	281				

Security Initiatives To Assist the Unhoused:

Due to the increasing number of unhoused individuals that are being observed, NHPA has been aggressively seeking solutions to assist them. This has become a major focus for security at the Station. Monthly security meetings with all stakeholders (CT State Police, NHPD, Metro PD, Amtrak PD along with various community stakeholders throughout the City, CTDOT and NHPA Staff) are being held to discuss what assistance from various community agencies is available for them. A review of the Code of Conduct for the Station

is also in progress as to what behaviors can be enforced to assure we are all working together for everyone's safety.

Along with that, in conjunction with Upon this Rock Ministries and DESK, a "Hot Bus" initiative was started. The bus is a twelve-passenger van that comes to the Station as well as other spots, to pick up those who would like to be transported to various warming centers that are open in the area.

In an effort to enhance security and create a more inviting environment at the Station, a new security post/station has been established at a central location within the main hall of the Station. The objective is to provide additional security staffing levels to support security patrols and also to address customer service-related matters at the Station.

Capital Repairs and Improvements:

In 2022, New Haven Parking Authority successfully accomplished a number of important capital repairs and enhancements at New Haven Union Station Building. These include:

- Fast-track replacement of 3 roof-top air conditioning units serving the upper floors;
- Replacement of the handrail lighting in the underground passageway to the track platforms with new, bright, energy efficient LED fixtures;
- Replacement of the lights in the stairways to the track platforms with new LED lamps;
- Accomplishment of professional, deep-cleaning of the stairs to the track platforms;
- Construction of a new wellness and lactation room on the 2nd Floor East;
- Together with other miscellaneous electrical repairs and improvements throughout the Building.



ONGOING ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR THE COUNCIL IN 2023 AND BEYOND

Returning Ridership

- As rail advocates, the CCRC remains concerned with returning ridership and the impact on service. We recognize that service levels are being adjusted based upon ridership levels, but we also hear from surveys and the commuting base that one of the main contributors for a return to riding is ensuring that there are commuter friendly service times. MTA projected returning ridership estimates: ([MTA Returning Ridership Projections | Connecticut Commuter Rail Council](#)).

Financial Commitment for Ongoing Service

- The CTDOT has indicated that they will need significant resources to bring the line up to a point of good working order. The signal systems from Norwalk to New Haven and on the New Canaan Line are designed for replacement and are just awaiting track time and construction funding. As a background, each year Metro North installs tens of thousands of ties, miles of replacement rail, thousands of bridge timbers, and surfaces about 50 miles of track.
- While the WALK Bridge is expected to begin construction, Both Cos Cob and Devon can be expected to cost about \$1B as they each have extensive approach spans making them much longer than WALK but there is likely less peripheral construction. Saga Bridge in Westport is shorter, and CP 243 will aid in the construction rerouting here as well, so this bridge could be \$500M. To replace just the remaining moveable bridges would cost approximately \$3.5B.
- Ensuring that the CTDOT has enough funding to maintain service levels will be critical.

Last Mile Connectivity and Bus/Shuttle Service Connections

- Planning for the rebound means planning for more ways to get to the main line for both everyday commutes and trips involving recreation or life. Connecticut will bounce back due to its quality of life and education, and our location in the Northeast Corridor cannot be understated. In addition to access for parked vehicles, the council continues to prioritize last mile connectivity of our states' rail stations including public bus service, private employer shuttles, taxi/TNC pick up/drop off, biking, and walkability surrounding our train stations. This means we need to continually improve our transit systems to magnify each other and serve our residents seven days a week with strong spans of service and narrow headways to support density and growth along the transit system corridors.

UPass Expansion and Open Payment Systems

- Continuing the trend in digital payment expansion for the overall transit picture moving forward needs continued work of simplification of various types of fare collections between transit modes and transit lines, including the main line and branches. The success of UPass with public universities can be expanded to create transit passes for private universities and larger corporations or cooperatives (like a business or property association or Transportation Demand Management).

Branch line Riders

- Shore Line East continues to suffer from a lack of attractive commute options. At just 66% of pre-COVID service schedules, the Shore Line East will continue to struggle to attract riders.
- The Danbury Branch and Waterbury Branch customers all are subjected to the oldest cars of the fleet that often have mechanical difficulties or amenities not working properly within the coaches. Previously, the bonding package for Waterbury rail cars was pulled at the last-minute from the Bond Commission meetings in 2020 and there appears that there no current plans to upgrade the Waterbury or Danbury branch fleets.
- The Council continues to believe that ridership trends show that there is support and a ridership base for Intrastate expansion. The Council continues to support the expansion efforts in eastern Connecticut and into Westerly, RI as well as expanding the Danbury branch to New Milford. The Council also is keeping an eye on the grant application to extend the Hartford line to Boston.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

[Reports | Connecticut Commuter Rail Council](#)

[Connecticut State Rail Plan for 2022-2026 Comments | Connecticut Commuter Rail Council](#)

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