

## NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL REGION

For Immediate Release March 26, 2015

### CRCOG Celebrates the Launch of the CT *fastrak* Rapid Transit Line in the Region

Hartford, Connecticut - Chip Beckett, Chair of the CRCOG Policy Board and Chair of the Glastonbury Town Council hailed the impending opening on March 28, 2015 of CT *fastrak* as providing a world of opportunity for employers seeking to access skilled labor, and residents looking for improved access to educational and employment opportunities.

“We recognize that it will take several years for CT *fastrak* to realize its full potential, but that potential goes far beyond an affordable, quick and efficient rapid transit system,” says Chip Beckett, Chairman of the Capitol Region Council of Governments. There are over 110,000 jobs within a half mile of the CT *fastrak* corridor, including linked feeder bus service areas. CRCOG expects 11,000 riders in the first year of operation increasing over time to 16,000.

CT *fastrak* joins dozens of successful Bus Rapid Transit projects in the country – from east coast Boston to west coast Los Angeles. CRCOG began working on Bus Rapid Transit in 1998 with visits to similar systems in Pittsburgh and Ottawa, Canada. In 2001, CRCOG issued the **Regional Transit Strategy** which defined a new vision for a transit system that would serve travel needs within the Region, provide transit links to cities outside the Region, and provide travelers with more transportation choices. CT *fastrak*—a key element of that regional strategy—is now coming to life.

Some of the key benefits that have led CRCOG to support CT *fastrak* over the years include:

- CT *fastrak* will reduce traffic congestion in the Hartford area’s most highly-travelled corridor – I84 west of downtown Hartford, which has more than 60% of the region’s freeway congestion.
- CT *fastrak* has 11 stations that will provide development opportunities, many of which are in urban areas with neighborhoods that can benefit from new investment that will spur community revitalization. The comparable “Health Line” in Cleveland, OH generated an estimated \$4.3 billion in new transit-oriented development between 2008 and 2013.
- CT *fastrak* will help improve the region’s air quality, as an estimated 5,000 riders per day shift by 2030 from their single-occupant cars to hybrid-electric buses that are far more efficient, and much less-polluting.

- **CTfastrak** will make the trip quicker for people already riding the bus through this corridor to jobs or necessary services, thereby giving them more time for family, recreation or other pursuits.

The extension of CTfastrak, Fastrak East, was also part of the 2001 **Regional Transit Strategy**. The planned Fastrak East would extend rapid transit service from East Hartford to Manchester and ultimately the University of Connecticut at Storrs. It is in its early planning stages. The first phase of the extension to Manchester would give riders access to an additional 40,000 jobs, increasing the corridor's New Britain to Manchester employment total to 150,000.

CTfastrak will be free for the first nine days starting March 28, 2015 and a transfer from any local CTtransit bus to CTfastrak will be at no cost beyond the first fare paid.

CRCOG looks forward in the coming years to working with member towns and cities and the state of Connecticut Department of Transportation to make **CTfastrak** a success and to leveraging the opportunities for development around rapid transit stations.

A fact sheet on the **CTfastrak** project is attached.

For further information, contact Lyle D. Wray, Executive Director, at 860 522 2217 extension 232 or [lwray@crcog.org](mailto:lwray@crcog.org) . The CRCOG website is at [www.crcog.org](http://www.crcog.org)

*CRCOG is established under the Connecticut General Statutes as a voluntary association of municipal governments serving the 38 Metro Hartford municipalities and their 993,000 residents. Our members have collaborated for more than 30 years on a wide range of projects related to planning, transportation, service sharing, and cooperative procurement to benefit our towns individually and the region as a whole.*

## CTfastrak: BY THE NUMBERS\*

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) provides a fast fact sheet to help inform the public, state legislators, municipal leaders, and town administrators throughout the capitol region about potential opportunities for the new **CTfastrak** Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System opening on March 28, 2015.

**4.8 million** — Estimated ridership on CTfastrak system on an annual basis by 2030

**16,000** — Estimated daily ridership on CTfastrak by 2030

**100** — Number of permanent jobs that are created by CTfastrak operations

**96** — Number of local and express bus transit routes CTfastrak will connect to throughout the region\*\*

**24** — Connecticut becomes the 24<sup>th</sup> state to embrace a Bus Rapid Transit System in its borders

**21** — Number of hours; CTfastrak will be available for up to 21 hours each day

**10** — Number of newly constructed stations to serve CTfastrak rider service

**10** — Minutes (or less) between bus arrivals at peak operating hours on CTfastrak

**9.4** — Number of miles the primary bus guideway serves

**\$1.50** — Base cost of purchasing a ticket on local CTfastrak bus trips

## LESS CONGESTION, BETTER AIR QUALITY\*\*\*

**17 million** — Estimated fewer vehicle miles traveled (VMT) annually because of CTfastrak by 2030

**12,800** — Tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions reduced annually due to reduced road congestion

**5,000** — Estimated daily ridership who will switch from commuting by car to CTfastrak by 2030

**5** — Miles of newly constructed multi-use trails that will be accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists

## A MORE COMPETITIVE REGION: POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

**5.8 billion** — Estimated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) value of comparable BRT “Health Line” in Cleveland, OH, since 2008. (<http://www.sasaki.com/project/105/cleveland-euclid-avenue-healthline-brt/>)

**571 million** — Estimated TOD value of comparable BRT “Silver Line” in Boston, MA, since 2008  
(Mass Transit Magazine, 2013)

**17.16 million** — Estimated Gross Revenue Product (GRP) value added annually following 10<sup>th</sup> year of transit operations (CCEA, 2001)

\* Source: FAQs, last updated: October 2014, [www.ctfastrak.com](http://www.ctfastrak.com).

\*\* Source: CTfastrak, CT DOT, Bureau of Public Transportation, August 14, 2012, <http://www.ct.gov/dot>

\*\*\* Source: *Better Air Quality, Cleaner Water, Greener Neighborhoods*, July 2014, [www.ctfastrak.com](http://www.ctfastrak.com).