Waterbury & New Canaan Branch Lines Needs & Feasibility Study

Presentation to:

VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS &
GREATER BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

City of Ansonia
City of Bridgeport
City of Derby
Town of Seymour
City of Shelton
Town of Stratford

Derby, CT
June 19, 2008

Agenda

- Introductions
- Purpose of the study
- Study area & scope
- Project goals
- Waterbury Branch
- New Canaan Branch
- Schedule
- Discussion

Introductions

Project Team:

- Connecticut Department of Transportation
- Study Advisory Committee (SAC)
- Consulting team:
  - Parsons
  - Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
  - URS
  - SYSTRA

Why are we conducting the study?

Growing traffic congestion

+

Rising fuel costs

+

Increasing development

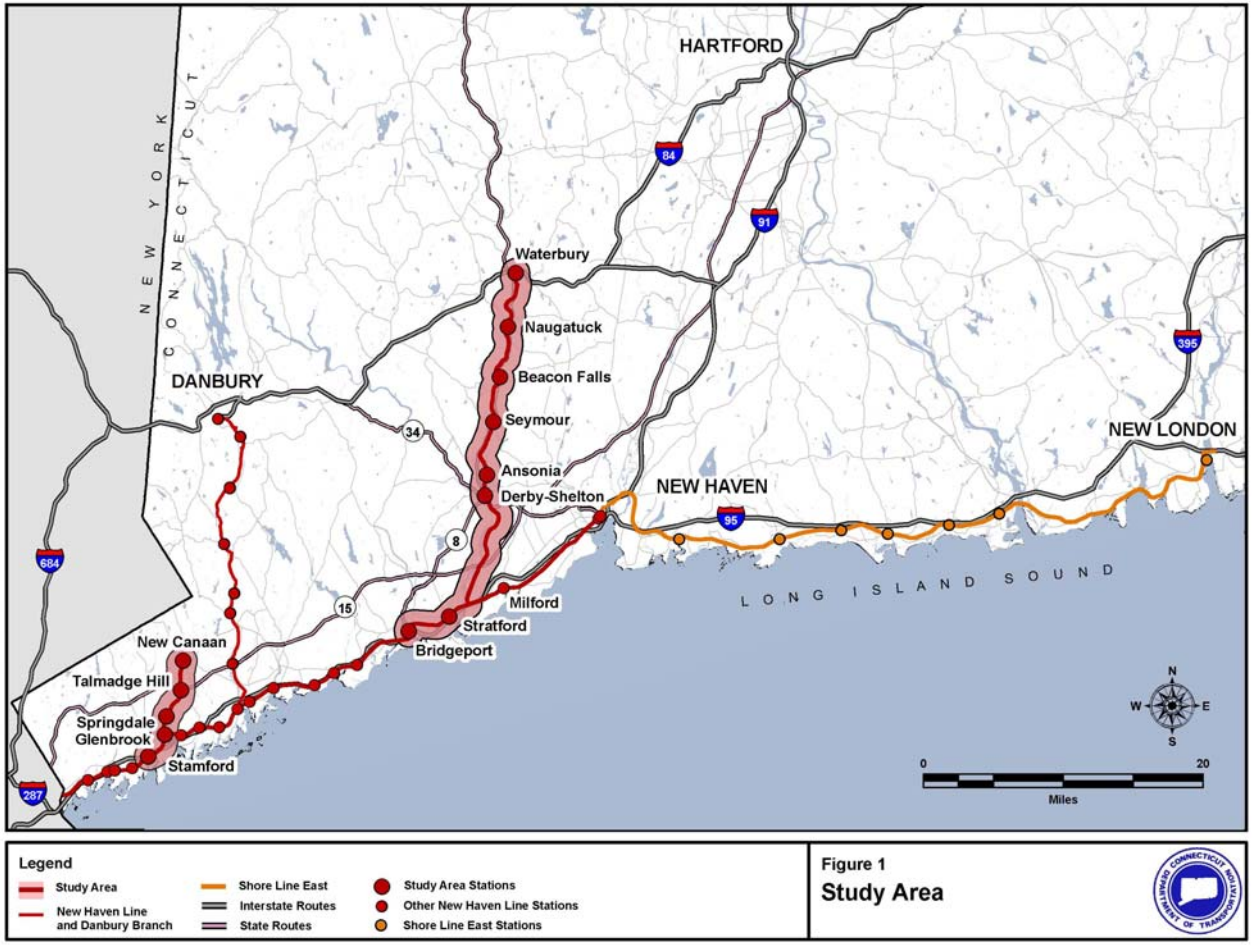
+

Air quality non-attainment

=

The need for **more transportation options**, providing commuters with **alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle**

Study Area


HARTFORD
NEW YORK
CONNECTICUT
Waterbury
Naugatuck
Beacon Falls
Seymour
Ansonia
Derby-Shelton
DANBURY
NEW HAVEN
NEW LONDON
Milford
Stratford
Bridgeport
New Canaan
Talmadge Hill
Springdale
Glenbrook
Stamford
LONG ISLAND SOUND
84
91
395
34
8
15
95
684
287
N
W
E
S
0
20
Miles
Legend
Study Area
New Haven Line and Danbury Branch
Shore Line East
Interstate Routes
State Routes
Study Area Stations
Other New Haven Line Stations
Shore Line East Stations
Figure 1
Study Area

Study Scope

Feasibility Study to identify the most promising options and weigh the tradeoffs between them

Steps:

- Define study "Purpose and Need"
- Analyze existing and future no build conditions
- Identify a long list of alternatives
- Evaluate and refine the long list
- Develop a short list of alternatives
- Evaluate and refine short list
- Draft recommendations
- Recommendations for further study in the environmental phase

Project Goals

Goal 1: Encourage integrated transportation improvements that foster safety, efficiency, and mobility in the study corridors.

Goal 2: Enhance transit opportunities along the Waterbury Branch Corridor.

Goal 3: Improve service on the New Canaan Branch.

Goal 4: Positively impact environmental quality and land use planning in the corridor.

Waterbury Branch

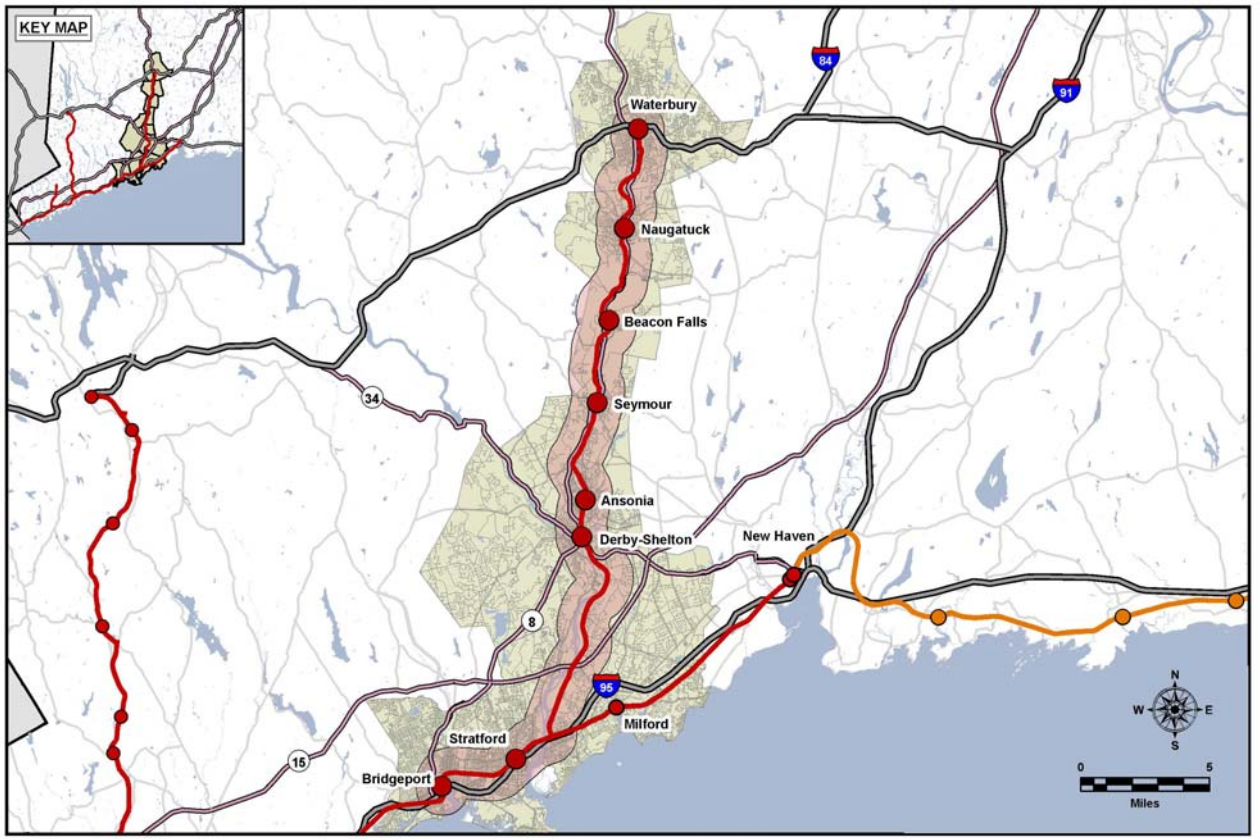


Figure 2
Waterbury Branch

Waterbury Branch

Goal:

Enhance transit opportunities along the Waterbury Branch Corridor

Objectives:

- Reduce vehicle trips/congestion on Route 8 and local roads
- Improve transit service in the corridor
- Provide more frequent service
- Attract new ridership through more effective service
- Improve connection to New Haven Line service to provide better access to employment centers (e.g., Bridgeport, Norwalk, Stamford, and NYC)
- Promote multi-modal transit connections
- Identify potential multi-modal station locations
- Investigate the potential for BRT and LRT service
- Maintain rail freight service

Waterbury Branch

Current Service

- Diesel
- Single track operation
- Manual Block signal system limits operational speed to 59 MPH and does not support “meets” between opposing direction trains on the line

Waterbury Branch

Constraints

Capacity Issues:

- Single track operation limits operational flexibility

Operational Issues:

- New Haven Line between Stamford and New York has planned Amtrak and Metro-North service that exceeds capacity by 2030
- Potential Shore Line East, Danbury Branch, and New Canaan Branch service expansions may compete with Waterbury Branch service expansion in terms of available slots on the New Haven mainline
- Penn Station access, if advanced, would require existing New Haven Line peak trips to be split between two New York terminals, further limiting opportunities for additional service from the branches
- The track and signal configuration at Stamford limits the ability to “turn” westbound terminating trains at the station

Waterbury Branch

Facility/Systems Enhancement Options:

- Construct transfer/intermodal station at Derby-Shelton
- Provide a cab/no wayside Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) system to enhance operational efficiency, safety, and (possibly) operating speeds
- Provide passing sidings
- Extend station platforms
- Expand parking facilities
- Construct intermodal station at Waterbury with secure parking and convenient access to and from Route 8/Interstate 84
- Electrify to Derby-Shelton
- Electrify to Waterbury

Waterbury Branch

Operational Enhancement Options:

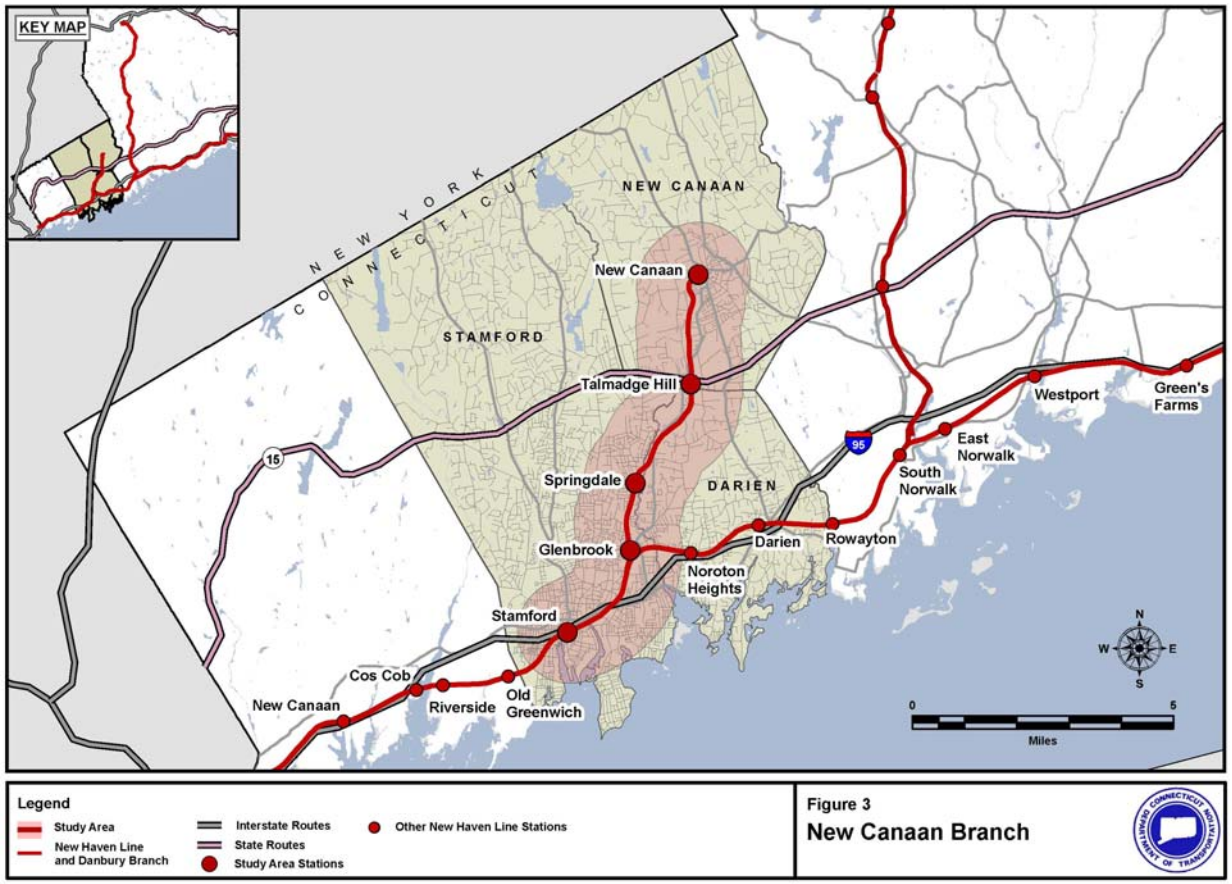
- More frequent service
- Direct service to Stamford and/or NYC
- Reverse commute service to New Haven
- Run non-revenue trains between the Waterbury Branch and New Haven maintenance facilities

Waterbury Branch

Alternatives Analysis:

- Light rail on the Waterbury Branch
- Exclusive busway on the Waterbury Branch
- Express bus on the existing roadway system
- Innovative technologies – TDM / TSM / ITS strategies
- New, Expanded, and Relocated Stations

New Canaan Branch



New Canaan Branch

Goal:

Improve service on the New Canaan Branch

Objectives:

- Increase capacity, including both train capacity and station access capacity
  - Increase train frequency
  - Evaluate expanded overnight storage in New Canaan
  - Expand parking facilities and station access
- Improve operational efficiency and reduce travel time
  - Provide passing sidings, with associated signal system improvements
  - Extend station platforms to accommodate longer trains
  - Extend signal system into New Canaan Station
- Improve and/or increase direct service to NYC
- Identify TOD options and station opportunities

New Canaan Branch

Constraints

Capacity Issues:

- Single track operation on the New Canaan Branch
- Station platforms designed for a maximum of 4 train cars; some are shorter
- Parking facilities are limited
- New Canaan overnight storage capacity is limited
- Traction power system may require upgrades to support longer trains and/or more frequent service (including “meets” at passing sidings on the line)

Operational Issues:

- New Haven Line between Stamford and New York has planned Amtrak and Metro-North service that exceeds capacity by 2030
- Potential Shore Line East, Danbury Branch, and Waterbury Branch service expansions may compete with New Canaan Branch service expansion in terms of available slots on the New Haven mainline
- Penn Station access, if advanced, would require existing New Haven Line peak trips to be split between two New York terminals, further limiting opportunities for additional service from the branches

New Canaan Branch

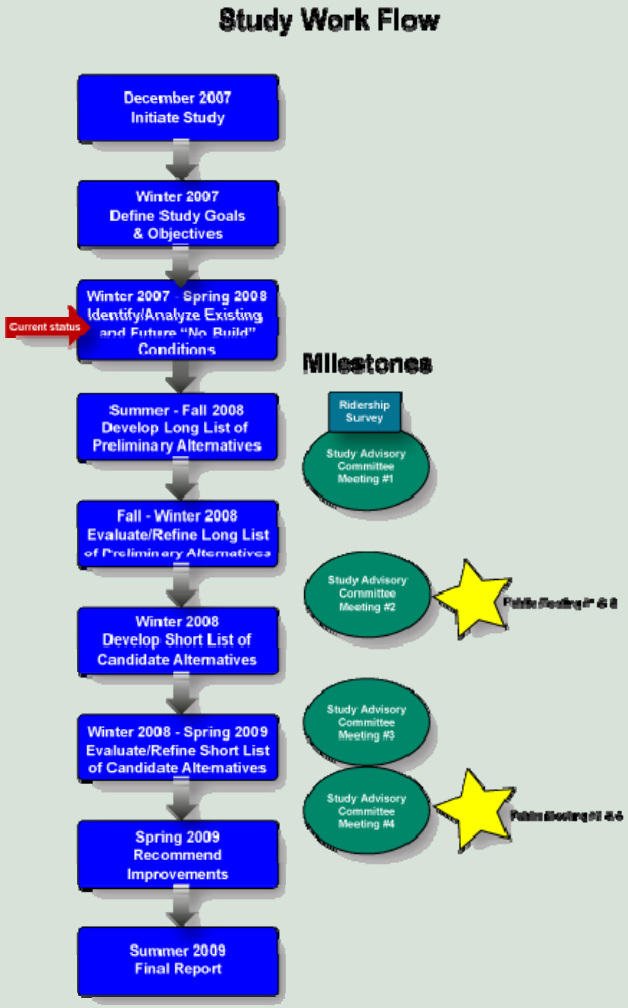
Facility Enhancement Options:

- New Canaan Station
  - Remove old freight track
  - Extend the existing platform to 860 feet
  - Construct a second 860-foot platform
  - Provide a passing siding south of Richmond Road
- Talmadge Hill Station
  - Expand parking capacity—the physical layout of the station and its location directly adjacent to the Merritt Parkway present a unique opportunity to add parking along the branch
- Springdale Station
  - Extend Springdale Station platform
  - Provide a passing siding
- Explore new station locations

Operational Improvement Options:

- Run more frequent service, including more direct service to NYC

Study Schedule



Public Outreach

- Website www.waterbury-newcanaanrail.org
- Study Advisory Committee meetings (4)
- Public information meetings (4)
- Stakeholder meetings
- Passenger and commuter surveys
- Mailing list
- Media notification
- Newsletters

Current Status

- Data collection
- Website is operational
- Stakeholder meetings in progress
- Base mapping almost complete
- Rail operations analysis underway
- Study Advisory Committee (SAC) upcoming

Upcoming Milestones

- Passenger and transportation user surveys
  - Scheduled for September 2008
- Existing Conditions and Future No Build reports
  - Scheduled for August 2008
- Study Advisory Committee Meeting #1:
  - Scheduled for September 2008

Discussion

- What is your vision for the study area in the future?
- What opportunities and issues do you see in the corridors?
- What information can you share that might be relevant to the study?

Waterbury & New Canaan Branch Lines Needs & Feasibility Study

Thank you for your time today!

Please visit the study website at:

www.waterbury-newcanaanrail.org