

Connecticut DOT
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
ACTION PLAN

Annual Progress Report

July 2025

About the Progress Report

In June 2023, after months of extensive public outreach, CTDOT's Bureau of Public Transportation released the [Customer Experience \(CX\) Action Plan](#). The Plan highlights numerous "action items", projects, programs, and initiatives, led by the Bureau of Public Transportation that aim to improve various elements of the transit customer experience. This initial report reflects what we heard from transit customers across Connecticut and from the state's service partners, stakeholders, and transportation leaders.

Last year we shared the first Annual Progress Report that provided updates on the progress made with each action item since the original Action Plan was released. We are committed to providing annual updates to the CX Action Plan, and to informing you, our transit customers, about new initiatives improving customer experience that have developed since 2023.

Our goal is to deliver safe, equitable, affordable, frequent, and reliable services that are easy to understand, easy to use, and the travel mode of your choice. Our successes reflect our strong partnerships with bus, rail, and paratransit service providers, and our commitment to listen to you, our customers.

Happy reading!

-The CTDOT Customer Experience (CX) Unit

Community Outreach (2024)



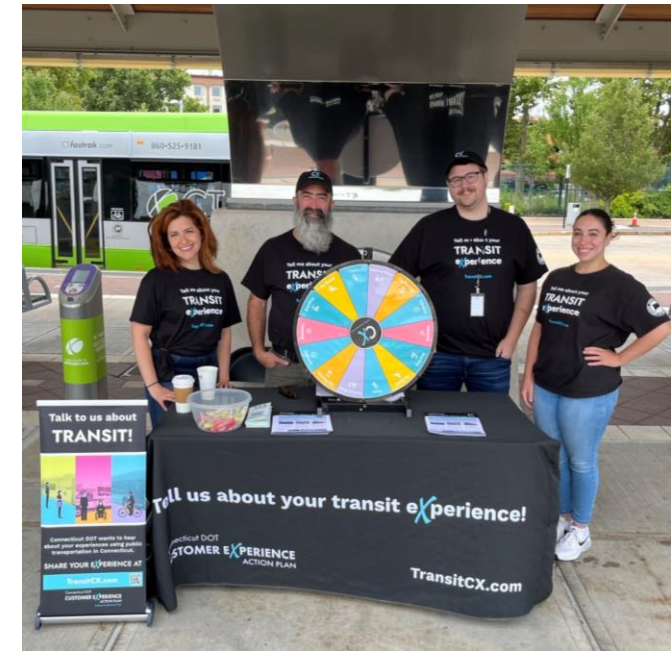
New Haven Union Station
August 1, 2024



Waterbury Green
August 13, 2024



Downtown Hartford
August 27, 2024



Downtown New Britain CTfastrak Station
August 29, 2024

The CTDOT Customer Experience (CX) Unit held pop-up events during Summer 2024 to share the first Annual Progress Report with transit customers.

Focusing on Customer Priorities

Our customers told us what is most important to them and what they need from their transit systems. We listened and identified the following 3 color-coded priority focus areas.

Improved Service

Provide service that is reliable and schedules that meet the needs of as many customers as possible.



Schedule & Frequency



Reliability

Easier to Use

Make it easier to plan trips and pay fares. Provide real-time schedule and service information in a variety of ways and locations – online, in stations, at stops, and on board transit vehicles.



Trip Planning



Fares

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort

Ensure that stations and stops are accessible, have the services and security features customers need, are well-maintained, and provide clean and comfortable transit vehicles.



Stations & Stops



On Board

This year's progress report provides updated descriptions of 25 action items with several items from past years having been completed.

July 2025 Snapshot

Completed Actions

The 5 actions listed below were completed this past year, and their project updates are included in this progress report.

CT*transit* Bus Service Improvements

CDL Training Program

Microtransit Pilots

Statewide Transit Customer Code of Conduct

New Electric Buses with Customer Picked Seats

Additional Northeast Regional Train Service (2023)

New Haven Line Express & Waterbury Line Weekday Service Improvements (2023 & 2022)

Transit is a Trip Campaign (2023)

M8 Electric Trains (2023)

New Rail Station Boarding Platforms (2024)

The 5 actions listed above were previously completed, and their final update was provided in the 2024 progress report. Visit www.transitcx.com to read last year's report.

In-Progress Actions

The following 20 actions are still progressing. Although they are not entirely complete, many of these initiatives are already having a positive impact on transit customer experience.

Bus Service Expansion Package	Unified Fare Project	New Rail Cars
Rail Service Improvements	Tap & Ride On Board Buses	Major Rail Station Enhancements
ParkConneCT	Metro-North Rail Station Customer Service Initiatives	Rail Station ADA Accessibility Improvements
Faster Train Speeds	On Board Bus Electronic Information Displays	New Train Stations
On-Street Bus Rapid Transit	CTrail Passenger Information Displays and Connectivity Initiative	Enhanced Wireless Connectivity Initiative for Rail Service
Mobile Ticketing for Buses	Statewide Bus Stop Enhancement Program	CTrail and CTfastrak Security Program
Transit Royale		
CTpass Program		

Action Item Updates

Improved Service

Bus Service Expansion Package



Route expansions and changes have gone into effect within the last two years across many transit districts. The final district to implement service changes associated with this funding package will be the Southeast Area Transit District (SEAT).

These services will increase ridership levels across the various bus systems, increase economic opportunity and mobility in some of the most economically distressed parts of the state, while increasing transit access to some of the newest employment centers. For more information, visit [Bus Service Expansions \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/transportation/sectors/bus-service-expansions).

Rail Service Improvements



In 2024, *CTrail* was awarded an \$11.6 million grant from the Federal Railroad Association (FRA). This grant was matched with state funds to provide a total of \$25 million for service improvements to the Hartford Line. This funding will support one additional round trip on weekdays between New Haven and Hartford, extend weekend trips that currently go between New Haven and Hartford to the new Windsor Locks station, and extend customer service hours at Hartford Union Station.

Super Express trains on the New Haven Line now take as little as 90 minutes or less to travel between New Haven Union Station and Grand Central Terminal due to infrastructure improvements.

Improved Service

ParkConneCT



After four years of operating fixed-route service for ParkConneCT, CTDOT & CT DEEP have decided to pilot a new excursion-based model for the 2025 program.

ParkConneCT will now focus on pre-scheduled trips to specific state parks through partnerships between the state agencies and community organizations. The new model will still connect riders to many state parks that were part of the program in the past.

Existing fixed-route and microtransit service connections to state parks will still be highlighted on the ParkConneCT webpage:

[ParkConneCT | Connecticut State Parks and Forests](#)



ParkConneCT program logo.

Improved Service

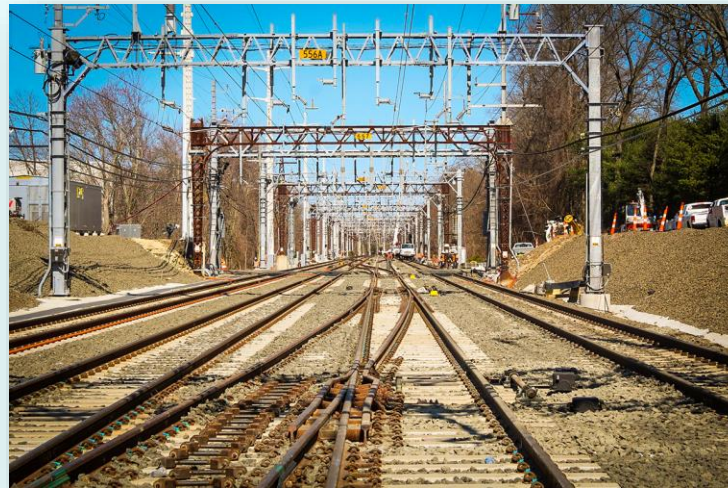
Faster Train Speeds



The Track Improvement and Mobility Enhancement (TIME) program focuses on track improvements and increased travel speeds on the New Haven Line.

The design phase for the TIME-1 project, which covers a 3-mile stretch between Bridgeport and Stratford, is over 90% complete and approaching the final design phase.

On the New Canaan Line, design for track improvements has reached 60%. As a part of this design, new interlockings and a new siding will enhance track infrastructure to better support future increases to service levels.



New Haven Line track infrastructure improvements pictured above.

On-Street Bus Rapid Transit



CTDOT is in the early stages of design for a new on-street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system called Move New Haven.

This project aims to improve bus travel speed and reliability by setting aside specific traffic lanes for buses along a designated corridor.

This project will also feature upgraded BRT bus stops and enhancements to bicycle, pedestrian, and ADA-accessible infrastructure throughout the corridor.

In late 2025 CTDOT anticipates starting public outreach for the project.

Improved Service - COMPLETED

CTtransit Bus Service Improvements



NEW Routes:

August 2024

- **Route 262** providing an additional link between New Haven and CT Post Mall Road, providing increased access to unserved employment opportunities.
- **Route 125** New addition to the CTfastrak system. The route provides a more consistent and effective link between Hartford and the Berlin Turnpike.
- **Route 567** providing an additional link between Meriden Transit Center and Wallingford railroad station, improving access to employment.

Expanded:

August 2024

- Changes on Route 34 were replaced with 34x limited-stop service via I-91 due to customer feedback about overcrowding and increased demand.
- New early morning trips to enhance coordination for customers connecting to River Valley Transit routes.
- Expanded service on weekends between New Haven, Wallingford and Meriden all-day on Sundays via Route 215.

May 2025

- New inbound trips at 5:40 a.m. and 6:20 a.m. have been added to Route 38 to increase service options for those traveling earlier in the day.

Improved Service - COMPLETED

CTtransit Bus Service Improvements Cont.


COMPLETED!

Extended:

August 2024

- Route 223 to accommodate customers going to New Haven Wal-Mart.
- Route 268 to connect with West Haven railroad station.
- Route 331 to serve Turn of River School.

May 2025

- Route 215 to improve passenger connections to workplaces; the 6:15 a.m. trip from downtown New Haven to Amazon will now extend to Wharton Brook Industrial Center.

Adjusted:

August 2024

- Route 278 to enhance connectivity with Hartford and Shore Line East trains.
- Routes 38, 72 and 87: New schedules to improve on-time performance and service reliability.

January 2025

- Route 224 to provide enhanced connectivity between US 5 Corridor and Universal Drive area of North Haven.

May 2025

- Routes 53 & 55 allow for more time when traveling through South Green (Main & Park). Applies to inbound and outbound trips on 53 Jordan Lane and 55 Middletown via Silas Deane Highway.
- Route 215: The 5:27 a.m. trip from Wallingford railroad station will now depart five minutes earlier to enhance efficiency and improve connectivity with downtown New Haven buses.

Improved Service - COMPLETED

CDL Training Program


COMPLETED!

CTDOT piloted a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training program last year with the Highway Operations Training team. This was an effort to ramp up workforce development. CTDOT's program had two successful passenger endorsement classes of applicants who passed their CDL testing with the CT Department of Motor Vehicles.

CT*transit* offers a long-standing CDL training program that not only helps in their hiring process but also helps the transit districts if their hired employees a) need to obtain a CDL, b) need endorsements, or c) need restrictions removed on their current CDL. A transit district can send a candidate to CT*transit*'s CDL program if the candidate is first hired as an employee by the transit district.

CT*transit*'s program will continue to run in collaboration with the surrounding transit districts, while CTDOT's pilot training program is complete.

Improved Service - COMPLETED

Microtransit Pilots

COMPLETED!

Microtransit service is an accessible, on-demand mode of transportation that allows customers to use an app or telephone number to request and schedule a ride within a designated microtransit service area. Microtransit can provide transit trips to and from places not covered by local fixed-route bus, so get to know the microtransit options available near you!

CTDOT has funded nine microtransit services in the state. As of March 2025, all nine of the services have launched. Three **NEW** services have launched in the past year.

- Norwalk Transit District – Wheels2U
- Greater Hartford Transit District – GHTD Link
- Milford Transit District – Milford Micro
- River Valley Transit – XtraMile
- Southeast Area Transit District – HOP and NL Smart Ride
- Greater Bridgeport Transit – GBTConnect **NEW!**
- City of Stamford – StamFORWARD **NEW!**
- City of New Haven – Via NHV **NEW!**

Previously Completed Actions

Additional Northeast Regional Train Service (2023)

COMPLETED!

New Haven Line Express & Waterbury Line Weekday Service Improvements (2023 & 2022)

COMPLETED!



Logos from all 9 microtransit services available across the state of Connecticut.

Easier to Use

Mobile Ticketing for Buses

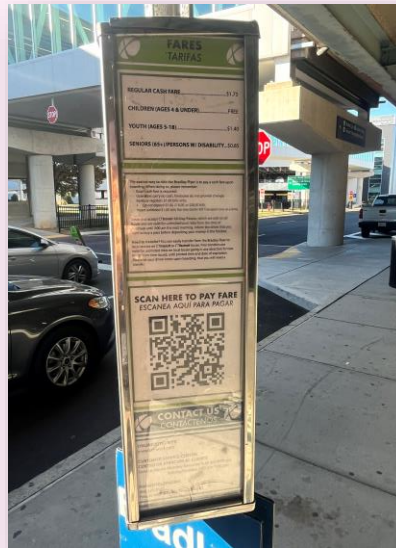


 IN PROGRESS

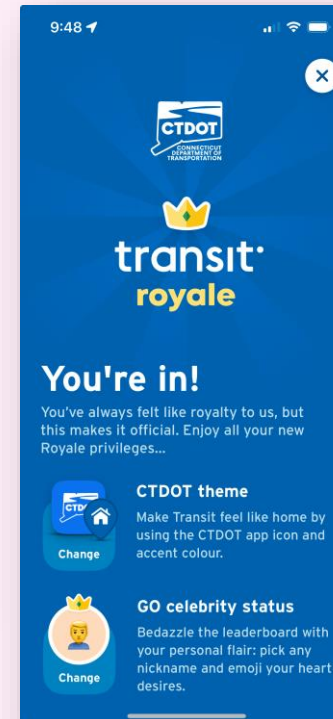
Since April 2023, 4.5 million passes have been sold on Token Transit. Mobile ticketing is steadily becoming a preferred method of fare payment for transit customers in Connecticut.

In November 2024, a scannable QR code leading customers to Token Transit was installed at the bus stop at Bradley Airport (BDL). *CTtransit* also recently added a video to their website on how to use Token Transit; watch it here:

<https://youtu.be/5SA6Oe6oWMI>.



Bus customers leaving from BDL can easily access mobile ticketing options at the scan of a QR code located at the stop pictured above.



Download the Transit app to explore all the benefits of Transit Royale!

Transit Royale



 IN PROGRESS

Transit Royale has been renewed for another year! Connecticut transit users have free access to all the benefits of the premium version of the trip planning app, Transit, through February 2026. In May 2025, over 93k transit customers used the Transit app to complete their journeys on public transit, which is 10,000 more users than May 2024.

CTDOT and the transit providers also use the app to communicate important transit-related information to customers via banners, with 10 banners used in the past 2 years. Be sure to check the top of the screen when you open Transit app for updates that could impact you.

CTpass Program

CTDOT continues to accept applications for CTpass program participation. Qualified organizations can purchase 31-day local bus passes for CT*transit* and CT*fastrak* services at a 10% discount. Now, Executive Branch State of CT employees can purchase discounted passes through Token Transit ([CTpass Program](#)).

For more information on the CTpass program please visit [CTpass](#).



The fare component of the transit experience is one of the key areas that is currently being improved through CTDOT-led initiatives.

Unified Fare Project

The goal of the Unified Fare Project is to make fares and transfers between bus systems in Connecticut simpler by identifying a unified statewide fare policy and structure for CT*transit* and transit district services.

CTDOT completed a study in 2025. Coordination to implement the changes will begin in late 2025. Public outreach will occur in 2026 to seek feedback on the specific changes.

Fare structure and policy changes will be closely coordinated with fare collection technology upgrades over the coming years.

Easier to Use

Tap & Ride On Board Buses



The Tap & Ride contactless fare payments pilot received positive feedback from bus drivers and customers. During the test period between October 2024 and March 2025, over 5,000 trips on River Valley Transit (RVT) and CT*transit* Meriden buses were paid for on board using contactless payments.

While Tap & Ride payment readers were removed from CT*transit* Meriden Division buses in May 2025, customers can still try contactless fare payments on board RVT fixed-route buses.

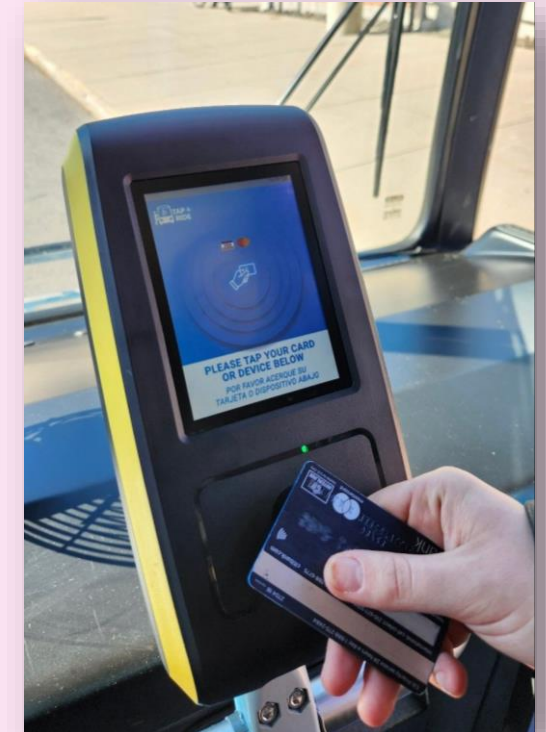
With valuable lessons learned through pilot usage data and robust public outreach efforts, CTDOT is planning to bring contactless payments to more bus systems in coming years. For the latest information about Tap & Ride visit <https://portal.ct.gov/tapandride>.



Tap & Ride customer focus group.



Tap & Ride pilot launch day.



Tap & Ride payment reader in use onboard River Valley Transit bus.

Easier to Use

Metro-North Rail Station Customer Service Initiatives



The fiber backbone necessary for customer service initiatives at Metro-North rail stations has been completed. Improvements at these stations will include upgrades to existing customer information resources including new and improved displays, arrival and departure boards, and public announcement speakers that provide better, faster, more vibrant, and more relevant information to customers.

Full design for this project is expected to be complete in 2026.

On Board Bus Electronic Information Displays



CTDOT has purchased a total of 99 brand new public transit buses that will be used in various transit divisions across the state. Vehicle delivery to the transit districts began in March 2025 and will continue through the end of 2025.

All these new buses contain on board electronic information display screens that will show customers real-time information updates, stop identification and service alerts.



A new electronic information display screen on board CTfastrak route 125.

CTrail Passenger Information Displays and Connectivity Initiative



This initiative will enhance the overall customer experience at stations along the Hartford Line and Shore Line East. Upgrades will include:

- Passenger Information Displays
- EV charging
- Ticket vending machine systems
- Wireless connectivity
- Security cameras

Guilford station on Shore Line East has been selected as the pilot site for the design of these station upgrades. The design is currently 30% complete. Full design of all stations is expected to be complete in 2027.

Easier to Use - COMPLETED

Previously Completed Actions

Transit is a Trip Campaign (2023)

COMPLETED!



Watch the Transit is a Trip video series [here](#).



The experience is otherworldly at
The Connecticut
Science Center



Explore and enjoy open air
shopping and dining at
The Shops at Yale



Art and regional history are
on display at
Waterbury Mattatuck
Museum



Travel in style for a fun
adventure on
Essex Steam Train &
Riverboat



Eat, drink, shop
and be merry at
The SoNo Collection

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort

Statewide Bus Stop Enhancement Program



The Bus Stop Enhancement Program is a multiyear, multiphase effort to improve the customer experience and accessibility at bus stops across the state. CTDOT will be installing 46 new shelters at pilot locations throughout the state during Summer through Fall 2025.

Phase 1 of the program targets installation of about 750 shelters at high-ridership stops, along with piloting specialty products like real-time information signs, solar lighting, and sign post mounted seating. Phase 2 focuses on installing various enhancements, including specialty products, and building out ADA access at stops.



Various shelter style options available through the CTDOT contract with Brasco International.

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort

New Rail Cars



A total of 60 new rail cars are being purchased and will be prioritized for use on the Hartford Line. With additional cars to be used on the Waterbury or Danbury branch lines. The initial rail cars are expected to be delivered for preliminary testing in 2026.

CTDOT has collaborated with the manufacturer throughout the design process to offer modern customer amenities, better accessibility, and improved reliability on board.

In addition to the features highlighted in last year's report, customers can also expect to enjoy the following features in the new rail cars:

- Spacious 2-by-2 style seating
- End-to-end accessibility
- Restrooms equipped with touch-free or hands-free amenities
- Luggage tower for larger items



A design rendering of the interior of new rail cars.



A photo of the old STC parking garage demolition from August 2024.

Major Rail Station Enhancements



Elevator and escalator improvements at the Stamford Transportation Center (STC), and demolition of the old STC parking garage were completed in December 2024.

A contractor has been selected to conduct improvements to the parking garage and the station interior and exterior at New Haven Union Station. These improvements include concrete and masonry work, as well as restoring decorative elements on the outside of the station. Construction is expected to begin before 2026.

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort

Rail Station ADA Accessibility Improvements



Waterbury Branch Line Stations:
 Construction for ADA improvements at the relocated Naugatuck station began in July 2025 with the station expected to open in 2027.

Designs for the Ansonia, Seymour, Derby/Shelton, and Beacon Falls stations were presented to the public in November 2024. Construction on these stations will begin in 2025 and they are anticipated to open for service in 2027. Additionally, the Waterbury station is getting new ADA platforms and a new interior waiting area.

New Haven Line Stations:
 The first half of the new platforms at Darien station, which include ramp, railing and elevator upgrades, should be complete and open to the public later this year.

Design work on the ADA accessibility improvements at the Stratford station is nearly 30% complete.



Groundbreaking for construction at the relocated Naugatuck station, July 2025.

New Train Stations



Construction continues at the relocated Windsor Locks station which is planned to open in late Fall 2025.

Construction for the new Enfield station along the Hartford Line is planned to start by the beginning of 2026.



Digital rendering of the new Enfield station.

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort

Enhanced Wireless Connectivity Initiative for Rail Service



Wi-Fi will be available on the new *CTrail* rail cars that were ordered. The technology supporting this service was developed to provide customers with fast, secure, and reliable internet connection while on board the train.

In addition, with the support of a \$6 million investment from AT&T, 30 strategic sites have been updated with new network infrastructure improving 5G cellular service along the corridor from New Haven to the New York border.



Police officers supporting the Transit Security Program.

CTrail and *CTfastrak* Security Program



The *CTrail* and *CTfastrak* Transit Security Program provides coverage of four dedicated state troopers and an Amtrak police officer. Our law enforcement partners collaborate with the Director and Manager of Security for *CTrail* Hartford Line, the Transit Homeless Outreach Program (T-HOP) and CTDOT staff to provide a secure, safe and clean public transportation network.

While there have been hundreds of service calls, what is more important is the number of incidents that have been prevented since the program began.

Enhanced Accessibility and Comfort - COMPLETED

Statewide Transit Customer Code of Conduct

COMPLETED!

CTDOT, in partnership with bus service providers throughout the state, established a Transit Customer Code of Conduct on all fixed-route and paratransit bus services. New posters were installed on buses statewide in late 2024.

Together we can create a safe and welcoming environment for customers and employees on all bus and paratransit services in the State of Connecticut.

New Buses with Customer-Picked Seats

COMPLETED!

All 99 new transit buses purchased by CTDOT feature customer picked silica material seats, which are more comfortable and easier to keep clean.

The buses are also equipped with USB 3.0 ports, based on customer feedback.



New silica upholstered seats on board buses.

Previously Completed

M8 Electric Trains (2023)

COMPLETED!

New Rail Station Boarding Platforms (2024)

COMPLETED!

Let's Stay Connected!

Visit: www.TransitCX.com

Email: DOT.TransitCX@ct.gov

Call: 860-594-3618

Mail: Customer Experience Unit

Bureau of Public Transportation

2800 Berlin Tpke, P.O. Box 317546

Newington, CT 06131-7546