



**Connecticut Legislative Session Begins
at 10 am on Wednesday, January 7 and
adjourns June 3, 2015**

January 2015 Newsletter

Issue 1

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*A United Voice for Public
Transportation in Connecticut*

Connecticut Transportation Updates

Jobs and Transportation Forum in December

CACT, Transit for Connecticut, RPA, CFE, Tri-State Campaign and CCIA sponsored the December 3 forum “*Getting to Work: Transportation and Jobs Access for the 21st Century*” at the Legislative Office Building.



Governor Malloy welcomed the audience and speakers and noted it was time to “go from talking about transportation to talking about transportation in specific terms” and the need to have “an honest, full and vibrant discussion with the public about transportation.”

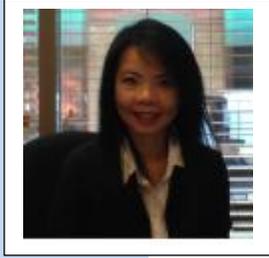
RPA Connecticut Director Amanda Kennedy introduced key note speaker Robert Puentes, of the Metropolitan Policy Program of the Brookings Institution. He noted that “8.3 million jobs are needed post-recession. “Transportation is critical to advancing a productive economy” particularly since younger people are driving less and the number of people utilizing public transportation is increasing. Robert noted it is important to go to the voters and thoroughly explain any transit project because “voters are good at determining good projects.”

During the first panel discussion, CONNDOT Deputy Commissioner Anna Barry said that 20% of people in Connecticut have a disability and of those 70% are unemployed, partly due “to the lack of public transportation access. Bill Villano, Workforce Alliance President & CEO said the lack of transit for evening workers and the lack of adequate notification of work schedules contributes to unemployment. In a recent survey, 61% of New Haven residents said they use public transportation in New Haven to get to their jobs, while 20% said they used it sometimes. Traveler’s Director of Parking & Mass Transit Anne Hayes said they advertise transportation options to their employees, noting she has personally ridden the bus for the past 23 years while working at Travelers. They also provide free motorcycle and bike parking and hold transit fares so employees know what their options are.

Christof Spieler, via skype, provided a detailed power point presentation of the “Reimagining Houston” project. He said there were various reasons people didn’t ride the bus, including, 1)infrequency, 2)the bus is confusing, 3) the bus doesn’t run on weekends, 4) the bus doesn’t run on evenings and 5)the bus doesn’t go to where people want to go. He said it is important to create an integrated network, simplify routes, set up transfer hubs which are what the “Reimagined Networks” were developed to provide. An efficient transit system has more frequent stops, a stronger connection between bus and rail and up-to-the minute schedules.

During the second panel discussion GBT CEO Doug Holcomb said a 2013 bus survey of 713 coastal link rides indicated 90% used the bus to go to work. GBT has seen a steady growth in ridership during the last five years, and Doug believes this trend will continue.

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CACT Member Highlight

Nhan Vo-Le, *Director of Fiscal & Administrative Services*

This past November the Greater Hartford Transit District announced the hiring of Nhan Vo-Le as the new Director of Fiscal & Administrative Services. Ms. Vo-Le comes to the District having spent over eighteen years with the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (a quasi-state agency). Ten of those years were dedicated to her position as the Director of Accounting and Financial Reporting. She also spent two years as the Assistant Director of Finance and Planning for the Town of Windsor. Ms. Vo-Le has her Bachelor Degree in Accounting and her Master of Science in Management with a concentration in Finance.

In a short, but extremely busy one month with the District Ms. Vo-Le has exhibited many traits which have quickly impressed those that she has come in contact with. She is an analytical and decisive problem solver who is experienced in all phases of accounting, auditing, budgeting, financial management, and taxation. Ms. Vo-Le will also be taking on the role of the Drug & Alcohol and Statewide Insurance Consortium Coordinator. Her professional values, commitment, determination, and energy are strong and visible characteristics that Nhan has shown early on in her new career in transit. The District staff is thrilled that she has joined our team!

CACT Member Highlights

If you or a staff member would like to be featured in an upcoming issue, please send your bio and a jpeg photo to Mary Tomolonius at mary.cact@yahoo.com.

Advertising in the CACT Newsletter

The rates are full page \$300; ½ page \$150; and ¼ page \$100. CACT members receive a 10% discount. All ads must be submitted prior to the last week of the month to mary.cact@yahoo.com.

Getting to Work

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The newest fare boxes will be in place as of February 2015 said Mike Sanders, CONNDOT Transit and Ridesharing Administrator. Mike said that DOT is looking into smart cards, updating the website, mobile apps all in an effort to make transportation more accessible. CRCOG Executive Director Lyle Wray summarized the importance of technology and harmonizing the transit system, noting that "Houston is one of the most exciting major system redesigns at this time."

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Federal Funding

TIGER planning grants have been eliminated for the fiscal year 2015 budget and TIGER funding has been reduced by \$1 million dollars. Transit funding will not increase, but remain the same at \$9 billion dollars with funding still available for bus rapid transit and streetcar projects.

CTRTP Update

CTRTP has on-site training programs available on Defensive Driving, Coaching Van Driving and a Driver Simulator programs through DATCO.

CTfastrak

CTfastrak will be opening on March 28. This project was the result of a 1997 study "that examined a variety of highway and transit improvements to provide improved mobility and congestion relief as traffic increased along the I-84 corridor." Open house, maps, updated construction info is all available at www.ctfastrak.com.



Calendar

Wednesday, Jan. 7, 9:00 am. Wheelchair Securement Training, Middletown Area Transit, 91 North Main St. Space limited. For info and to reserve a spot contact DJ Gonzalez at DJGonzalez@ghtd.org

Thursday, Jan. 15, 9:00 am. CACT Executive Board Monthly Meeting, Middletown Area Transit Meeting Room.

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 9:00 am. CACT Annual Legislative Breakfast, co-sponsored with WTS at the Old Judiciary Room at the state capitol. DOT Commissioner Jim Redeker will be the main speaker. Registration 8:30 am. To register email: mary.cact@yahoo.com. Space limited.

Wednesday, April 1, 9:00 am. Understanding ADA. Greater Hartford Transit District. 12 noon- 4 pm. Reservations required since space is limited. The event is free, so sign up today. Mary.cact@yahoo.com or call 860-693-0368.

Understanding ADA

Date: Wed., April 1, 2015

Registration 12:30 pm, Course 1-5 pm

Greater Hartford Transit District, 1 Union Place, Hartford, CT

This workshop will teach transit providers about the legal background of ADA and Paratransit requirements

- *You will learn about the ADA legal requirements that apply to public and private transportation.*
- *The criteria for complementary paratransit service.*
- *Requirements for existing and new transportation facilities*
- *Compliance and enforcement responsibilities for FTA, DOT and DOJ.*
- *Enforcement and Investigation processes.*
- *And much more.*

This workshop is for individuals who work at a transit agency or provide transit service, those who manage or operate paratransit service, and Federal, State