

Transportation Needs

The two Councils of Government covering the NVC area have indicated that economic expansion for the NVC will be dependent on the transportation system capacity to accommodate the desired growth and demands that would be placed on the existing infrastructure. The many capital improvement projects outlined in the Strategy focus on new commerce and business parks, downtown development programs and the expanding housing market will further test the capacity to the transportation systems. Both Regional Planning groups developed regional transportation plans that examined highway and transit systems with recommendations for improving the transportation network over a five-year period. These planning initiatives were distributed to a diverse group, plus subject to public hearings and comment period. The following are snapshot versions of the transportation needs outlined in the report.

Goals and Objectives of the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) builds on the initiatives established in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century combines existing programs with new initiatives to improve safety, protect the environment, and advance economic growth and competitiveness through efficient and flexible transportation.

The Central Naugatuck Valley Region's Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan 2000 reflects goal and objective of TEA-21:

GOAL: To develop and maintain a transportation system that will provide the public with a high level of mobility, safety, and choice, while also addressing social, economic, and environmental needs and concerns.

Objective 1: To provide a transportation system that reinforces and compliments the regional land use plan and the land use objectives to the region's 13 municipalities.

Objective 2: To maintain and improve the region's highway system with an emphasis on making better use of existing transportation facilities while seeking to improve the safety and reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and motor vehicle emissions.

Objective 3: To maintain and improve public transportation service by providing a choice of travel modes, reducing highway congestion, improving efficiency, and providing mobility for people who are transit dependent.

Objective 4: To provide transportation services to eligible low-income residents participating in the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute program, in order to promote their employment opportunities.

Objective 5: To provide transportation services that include ramps for wheelchairs, curb cuts, intersection timing, minibus service, large print signage, and audio-visual signal crossing cues that are responsive to the elderly and the disabled.

Objective 6: To plan and program transportation improvements according to existing and realistic future funding sources.

Objective 7: To provide “walkable communities”, especially in downtown centers and in congested areas, connecting these areas with commuter parking lots, residential areas, schools, commercial and industrial corridors, and recreation areas.

Local Priorities for Transportation Projects

Through narrative reports provided by chief elected officials, municipal planning and zoning staff and commissioners, municipal engineers, and other city and town representatives, a list of local priorities for transportation projects was developed. State and local road, bridge, bus (i.e. local bus, paratransit services for the disabled, elderly minibus. Job Access and Reverse Commute services, and intercity bus), rail, and enhancement projects are included.

COGCNV cannot guarantee that local priorities will match regional or state priorities, although inclusion of these projects in the plan was vital to the public comment process. COGCNV will assist municipalities with their priorities whenever possible. Each of these projects will be prioritized, evaluated, and, if deemed to be a regional and/or state priority, it will be moved into the "Recommended Plan" (section V of the *Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan 2000*). Funding has been included for road projects that are moved into the "Recommended Plan" in the cost estimates, under item "Future road improvements in member towns" (see Table V-A2).

Beacon Falls

#1 Conduct a corridor study along Route 42 in Beacon Falls and Oxford.

#2 The intersection of Lopus Road and Pines Bridge Road (Route 42) should be straightened and widened. This intersection will see increased activity with the development of Pines Bridge Industrial Park.

#3 Develop a riverfront greenway along the Naugatuck River as part of a regional and interregional proposal. Make connections to schools, industrial parks (Pines Bridge and Murtha), commuter lots, residential areas, recreational areas (Matthies Park and Pent Field), and train stations.

#4 Improve Beacon Falls train station and the Depot Street Bridge.

Bethlehem

#1 Improve sight lines and grading along Route 132 including intersections with Hard Hill Road; Nonnewaug Road and Magnolia Hill Road; Carmel Hill Road; and Judge Lane.

#2 Improve sight lines at Route 61 intersection with Flanders Road.

#3 Implement traffic calming and access management along Main Street (Route 61) or evaluate traffic congestion for other alternatives.

#4 Improve sight lines at Munger Lane and Bellamy Lane intersection and Double Hill and Munger Lane intersection.

#5 Construct a pedestrian walkway along Main Street.

Cheshire

#1 Implement traffic calming techniques along Mountain Road, Cheshire Street, and Peck Lane.

#2 Secure a shuttle to transport visitors to the prison.

#3 Determine if additional commuter parking facilities are needed.

#4 Continue development of the Farmington Canal Trail.

Middlebury

#1 Evaluate traffic congestion and safety concerns at Abbotts Pond where the existing bridge crosses a pond. Preliminary designs have been completed. Environmental issues should be addressed with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

#2 Tucker Hill and Regan Road are being used as bypass roads. Implement access management strategies to deter non-local traffic.

Naugatuck

#1 Secure a shuttle for elderly residents.

#2 Osborn Road should be improved to address safety concerns.

#3 The intersection of Jones Road, Field Street, and Neumann Street should be improved. This intersection is dangerous; mirrors are currently being used to create site lines.

#4 The s-curve at City Hill and Donovan Road should be straightened.

#5 Rubber Avenue Bridge, Maple Street Bridge, and Parson's Bridge (on Rubber Avenue) are listed as being in "poor" condition by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. These bridges must be repaired.

#6 Bridge construction is needed over Hop Brook on Porter Avenue.

#7 Conduct a corridor study of Route 68 through Naugatuck and Prospect.

#8 A regional greenway is proposed along the Naugatuck River, and part of the conceptual plan is to link downtown Naugatuck with the train station, commuter parking facilities, schools, recreation and open space areas, and the commercial and industrial zone.

#9 Encourage economic development along Route 63, Rubber Avenue, and downtown Naugatuck by implementing transportation strategies.

Oxford

#1 Traffic patterns on Routes 42, 188, and 34 should be evaluated for improvement.

#2 Construction of a rear access road for Waterbury-Oxford Airport, connecting Christian Street with Prokop Road is a high priority project for Oxford. The access road would link Oxford's corporate industrial park off Hurley Road and Waterbury-Oxford Airport with the Towantic Energy Plant located off Towantic Hill Road.

#3 Secure a shuttle for elderly residents.

#4 Drainage along Quaker Farms Road (Route 188) should be improved just north of Edmunds Road.

#5 There are eight skewed intersections along Route 67, remaining from where the old highway was located approximately seventy years ago. Site lines should be improved on spurs along Route 67, from Chestnut Tree Hill Road to Hawley Road. Spurs demanding attention include Old State Road 67, Old State Road #3, Old State Road #2, and Old State Road #1.

#6 The intersection of Chestnut Tree Hill Road (Route 42), Oxford Road (Route 67), and Riggs Street should be improved.

#7 Chestnut Tree Hill Road (Route 42) should be straightened at its intersection with Oxford Road. The spur (Old State Route #3) should be eliminated, and the intersection should be at a 90 degree angle.

#8 Christian Street should be widened to accommodate additional traffic to the airport and due to the siting of a new school along this roadway. Curves along Christian Street, from Jacks Hill Road to Oxford Road, should be straightened and sight lines improved.

#9 In conjunction with Oxford Greens, an elderly residential and golf course complex, a greenway is planned to connect Naugatuck State Forest with Larkin State Bridle Trail in Oxford.

#10 A major curve in Pines Bridge Road at the intersection with Old Litchfield Turnpike (now a gravel road) should be softened. This roadway is a heavily used route into and out of Beacon Falls.

#11 The impact on Oxford of construction on the Stevenson Dam and widening of Route 34 in Monroe and Shelton should be considered.

Prospect

#1 Conduct a corridor study of Route 68 through Prospect and Naugatuck, focusing on the intersection of Routes 69 and 68. Routes 68 and 69 are being used as an 1-84 bypass, a situation that will worsen with construction commencement on 1-84 east of Waterbury.

#2 Consider making Old Schoolhouse Road a two-way road to alleviate congestion, and straighten Straitsville Road.

#3 Prepare for commercial and industrial development along Route 69 by implementing access management methods.

#4 Plan for possible future development of water company land.

#5 Determine the feasibility of JobLinks shuttle and fixed route bus stops in Prospect (at industrial parks, downtown, and along the Route 69 corridor).

#6 Determine and analyze commuting patterns through Prospect. Examine and deter use of bypass roads such as dark Hill Road from Naugatuck to Waterbury.

#7 Add sidewalks and greenways in heavily trafficked areas (i.e. from schools to recreation areas, in the College Farms area, and around elderly housing on Schoolhouse Road). Determine the feasibility of linking downtown Prospect with regional greenways (i.e. the Farmington Canal Trail in Cheshire and the Naugatuck River Greenway [proposed] in Naugatuck).

#8 Improve commuter parking lot signage in Prospect.

#9 Reactivate signal timing along Route 69 in Prospect and Waterbury.

#10 Consider construction of an 1-84 bypass road, such as a Scott Road extension.

Southbury

#1 Secure funding for Pomperaug River Bridge repairs.

#2 Improve the Route 188 and Waterbury Road intersection through the addition of a right-dedicated lane.

#3 Implement recommendations of the Interstate 84 West of Waterbury Needs and Deficiencies Transportation Study when completed including adding an exit in Middlebury and the reconfiguration of exit 13.

#4 Implement the recommendations of the Route 67 Traffic Operations Study.

#5 Conduct a corridor study of Route 6 from Interstate 84 to Woodbury.

Thomaston

#1 Participate in a Route 6 corridor study.

#2 Monitor existing bus, including JobLinks, services.

#3 Participate in planning a regional greenway along the Naugatuck River.

Waterbury

#1 The following roads in Waterbury are reported to be functioning at or above capacity: Huntingdon Avenue, Lakewood Road, Chase Avenue, Homer Avenue, Boyden Street, West Main Street, and Austin Road. Consider traffic generation from the proposed University of Connecticut at Waterbury and Arts Magnet School being located on East Main Street.

- #2 Locate a multimodal transportation center in downtown Waterbury.
- #3 Implement recommendations of the Route 69 Traffic Operations Study upon completion.
- #4 Implement recommendations of Interstate 84 West of Waterbury Needs and Deficiencies Transportation Study upon completion. Special consideration should be given to transportation services along Austin Road where economic development is planned.
- #5 Implement recommendations of Route 73 corridor study including improving intersection with Falls Avenue.
- #6 Install intelligent transportation systems, such as video technology, at appropriate intersections.
- #7 Develop a linear park in the Freight Street area with assistance from Partnership 2000 and Naugatuck Valley Development Corporation. Develop bike paths and greenways connecting Brass Mill Center and Commons with downtown Waterbury. Revitalize South Main Street Rails-to-Trails project. Connect urban streetscapes and bike paths to regional Naugatuck River greenway, south to Naugatuck and north to Thomaston and Watertown.
- #8 Consider improving sight distances and grading along Pearl Lake Road.
- #9 Consider an 1-84 bypass along Chase Avenue and Grilleytown Road and an extension.

Watertown

- #1 Evaluate traffic congestion on Straits Turnpike (Route 63) in the vicinity of the Stop and Shop plaza for traffic flow improvements.
- #2 Alleviate congestion along Main Street (Route 63) with a bypass along the former railroad track, or create a new road adjacent to Steele Brook.
- #3 Construct sidewalks along Main Street connecting the public library and town hall; connecting elderly housing and a school on Buckingham Street with downtown Watertown and Main Street (Route 63); connecting residential housing on Davis Street with Straits Turnpike (Route 63). Link sidewalk projects with the regional Naugatuck River greenway (proposed).
- #4 Improve existing bus shelters, and install new shelters (without advertising).

#5 Add access management techniques to zoning regulations, such as a provision for sharing driveways along primary arterials.

#6 Request an easement for the Naugatuck River greenway at the site of the new North East Transportation bus garage.

Wolcott

#1 Traffic flow on the bridge at the intersection of Wolcott Road (Route 69) and Center Street (Route 322) should be analyzed for improvement.

#2 Sight lines at the intersection of Wolcott Road (Route 69) and MacCormack Drive should be improved to reduce the number of accidents occurring there.

#3 Sight lines at the intersection of Woodtick Road, Todd Road, and Scovill Road should be improved.

#4 Sight lines at the intersection of Woodtick Road and Lindsay Drive should be improved.

#5 Sight lines at the intersection of Wolcott Road (Route 69) and Charles Drive should be improved.

#6 Sight lines at the intersection of Woodtick Road and Beecher Road should be improved.

#7 Sight lines at the intersection of Todd Road and Meriden Road (State Road 844) should be improved.

#8 Water and sewer problems must be addressed around Cedar Lake.

#9 Sidewalks, in heavily trafficked areas, and greenways, connecting Wolcott's open space areas to the regional Naugatuck River Greenway (proposed) or Farmington Canal Trail should be considered.

Woodbury

#1 Conduct a corridor study along Route 6 through Thomaston, Woodbury, and Southbury to examine the following intersections: Main Street (Route 6) and Sherman Hill Road (Route 64); Main Street (Route 6), Judson Avenue, and Old Middle Road Turnpike; Main Street (Route 6) and Sycamore Avenue (State Road 317). The study should include the impact of traffic from Bethlehem along Flanders Road.

#2 Implement traffic calming mechanisms, rather than impose traffic lights or street widening, along Main Street. Create a pedestrian friendly Main Street.

#3 Secure a shuttle for weekend use along Main Street to transport tourists and shoppers and alleviate congestion.

Copies of the full transportation plan are available and are on file in the Valley Council of Government and/or Council of Government Central Naugatuck Valley. Several transportation initiatives were recommended by various communities in the Capital Needs Assessment Questionnaire. **These can be found in Section ???????** of the Strategy.

Valley Council of Government Area

Overview

For the Region to achieve its smart growth strategies, the desired growth and economic development initiatives must be supported by the transportation system. This includes vehicular transportation as well as transit services (rail and bus) and pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

- Improve Route 8
- Enhance Transit Services
- Make necessary improvements on major roadways
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle transportation

Improve Route 8

Make improvements to Route 8 to improve access and service within and between local communities and other areas.

Route 8 is the primary transportation spine in the Valley Region. Improvement of the traffic flow at Route 8 interchanges is essential to reducing congestion and improvement service, safety, efficiency of traffic flow, and ultimately air quality in the Valley.

Significant planning work has already been undertaken and the main priority is to complete any additional planning work and have the roadway improvements funded and built.

Strategies

1. Promote efforts, to obtain designation of Route 8 as a federal interstate, to improve highway design, condition and funding.

2. Continue to work with CT DOT to obtain funding to implement the changes designed for Route 8 interchanges.

Enhance Transit Service

Enhance transit services in the region.

The Valley is fortunate to have bus and rail transit services provided by:

- Valley Transit District (VTD)
- Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA)
- CT Transit, and
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro North).

However, most of the service routes are configured for commuters and the quantity and quality of transit service for residents is modest. The fixed route services, both bus and rail, are infrequent. In addition, the Valley Transit District is struggling with limited resources to meet the needs of the ever increasing number of elderly and handicapped residents using dial-a-ride transportation.

Regional planning efforts needs to be devoted to supporting increased transit service and improving coordination between different transit modes.

Strategies

1. Create, support and enhance local bus transportation that helps achieve the region's housing, employment, and economic development objectives.
2. Encourage preparation of a regional multi-modal transportation study.
3. Continue to work with Valley Transit to enhance local bus services for the handicapped and senior citizens.
4. Explore the feasibility of expanded employment shuttle service to serve more residents and destinations.
5. Continue to develop and encourage marketing efforts to increase mass transit use in the region.

Make Necessary Improvement on Major Roadways

Make necessary improvements on other major roadways in the region in order to enhance level of service, improve safety, and support desired growth patterns.

- Route 34 in Derby

- Route 67 in Seymour
- Route 115 in Ansonia
- Route 110 in Shelton
- Pershing Drive in Derby/Ansonia.

In addition to these necessary improvements on major roadways the Valley Council of Government at its April 2003 meeting, supported the planned road system by a private developer to construct a road connecting Route 67 in Seymour on the south with Route 42 in Beacon Falls on the north with approximately 2.5 miles of new roadway system. The road will also open approximately 240 acres of land for commercial and business opportunities. The site will have all utilities plus rail service running parallel to the entire site. This north/south connector will provide improved roadway system between the two towns and will relieve traffic on CT Route 8, the major traffic corridor in the Valley.

Minor Arterial Roads

Unlike many other less urbanized regions in the state minor arterial roads in the Valley Region carry fairly high amounts of traffic. The 1997 Consolidated Traffic Plan for the Region indicates that the following roadways carry very high traffic volumes:

- Bridgeport Avenue,
- Commerce Drive, and Huntington Street in Shelton, and
- Division Street on the Derby/Ansonia line.

Various transportation plans have called for intersection improvements and, in some cases, widening of these routes. Access management plans are a good method to ensure efficient traffic flow, and alleviate accident conditions, on these generally commercial roadways. The Shelton Route 8 Corridor Study calls for the widening of Bridgeport Avenue to four lanes and this is supported by the Valley Regional Transportation plan.

Strategies

1. Work with CTDOT to design improvements (as necessary) to Route 34.
2. Work with CTDOT to prepare a corridor study for Route 67 (with emphasis on an access management program).
3. Develop a circulation plan for Main Street in Ansonia (Route 115) as a key part of a Downtown Enhancement Plan for this area.
4. Work with CTDOT to design improvements (as necessary) to Route 110.
5. Work with CTDOT to extend Pershing Drive to connection to downtown Derby.

6. Work with the local communities and CTDOT to address needed improvements on major roadways in the region.
7. Support access management planning for Huntington Street and Commerce Drive in Shelton and Division Street on the Derby/Ansonia line.
8. Assist in obtaining state funding to implement plans to widen Bridgeport Avenue in Shelton to four lanes.

Enhance Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

Continue to plan for pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide alternatives to automobile use.

In recent years, there has been increased emphasis at the State and Federal levels on supporting alternatives to automobile transportation. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities have been significant components of these efforts.

Sidewalks and Trails

Sidewalks (on-street pedestrian facilities) provide for safe pedestrian movement, an important element in creating and maintaining an active and vital community. Trails (off-street pedestrian facilities) provide additional opportunities for pedestrian circulation and opportunities for recreation. In addition, both types of routes can provide an alternative to vehicular transportation. With more sidewalks and trails, the number of trips that require automobiles may be reduced and the opportunities for recreational use increased.

Bicycle Routes and Multi-Use Trails

The Consolidated Transportation Plan (for the Greater Bridgeport and Valley Regions) talked about the need to establish priorities for a network of on-street bicycle routes and special trails located on a separate right-of-way.

State, federal, and local resources must be mobilized in a coordinated fashion in order to realize the regional goals for non-vehicular transportation. Current federal funding programs reflect these goals and projects in the region that will be funded under these programs include:

- Recreational trails in open space areas in all four municipalities, and
- Sections of multi-use trails in Ansonia, Derby, and Seymour that are part of the Naugatuck River Greenway.

Strategies

1. Conduct an inventory of where sidewalks and trails exist in each community and develop strategies to extend and interconnect them.
2. Assist communities seeking funding for sidewalks and trails in open space/ recreational areas.
3. Continue to plan for multi-use trails within open space and recreation areas that accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
4. Provide improved mapping for the Bicycle Route Concept Plan developed for the Region, as part of the Consolidated Regional Transportation Plan.
5. Encourage provision of safe, convenient bicycle facilities (including signage, pavement markings, etc.) when improvements are undertaken on major roads.
6. Support provision of public facilities such as bicycle racks, where appropriate, to encourage bicycle use.