

2023-2050 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

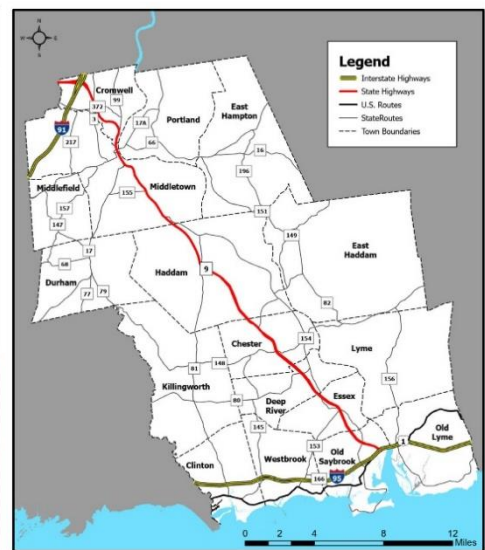
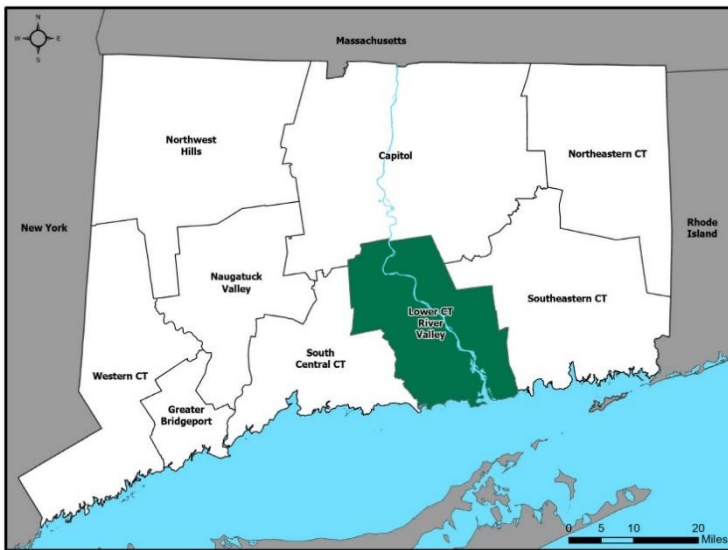
SPANISH SUMMARY

A safe, reliable, efficient, and accessible transportation system is important to those who visit, live, and work in the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region. The 2023-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) establishes regional transportation goals and objectives, and recommends strategies that will maintain and improve the transportation system through 2050. The MTP represents a consensus among regional partners on transportation issues, and should be implemented collaboratively throughout the region.

Planning for the MTP is continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative. It is comprehensive in that it addresses all surface travel options including the automobile, transit, bicycles, pedestrians, freight and other modes of transportation. It also recognizes that the transportation system impacts, and likewise is impacted by development patterns, economic conditions, and environmental policies. It is estimated that the programs and projects identified in the MTP will be constrained estimated available resources by 2050, but specific funding has not been allocated for most of the projects therein.

PLANNING AREA

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) is one of nine regional planning organizations in Connecticut. The RiverCOG board also serves as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) board along with the regional transit district, chamber of commerce and CTDOT. Federal, state, local and other entities are also involved with transportation planning in the region. The Lower Connecticut River Valley (LCRV) Region is shown below.



GOALS

The goals of this plan are to: 1) Provide a strategy for capital and planning resources for both motorized and non-motorized transportation modes and infrastructure improvements; 2) Ensure that people and goods move effectively, efficiently, and safely throughout the region while addressing social, economic and environmental needs; 3) Address the transportation issues in the region through both specific and general recommendations; and 4) Provide an overall view of the regional transportation system to place these recommendations in perspective.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population statistics are considered when planning for transportation purposes, since population changes influence regional development. The MTP analyses historic, current and projections for various demographics, socio-economic conditions, density, employment and other factors related to the regional transportation system

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The region is defined by the Connecticut River which drove the development of the communities along the river and still plays an important role in the region's economy. The region's expressways (I-95, I-91 and RT 9), state routes, and local roads make up much of the region's transportation infrastructure. Transit such as rail and bus, as well as bridges, marine, air, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, trails, and agricultural facilities are also included in the existing transportation network.

TRANSPORTATION INTEGRATION

RiverCOG coordinates local, regional, and state land use plans to ensure continuity with other federal and statewide initiatives, plans, and programs. Coordinated transportation, housing, and commercial development gives people access to affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation. The MTP incorporates USDOT livability principals into transportation planning to enhance the regional transit network and provide guidelines for better connectivity through place-based policies and investments that ultimately increase transportation choices and access. The MTP analyses development patterns, housing, economic development, environmental integration with recommendations to the transportation network.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Transportation planning activities included in the MTP include: Intelligent transportation systems, TMA and UZA coordination, congestion management and air quality, aging population, transportation demand management, FAST Act/IIJA compliance, incident management, security, safety, and performance-based planning and programming with recommendations to the transportation network.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) can be defined as the application of advanced information and communications technology to surface transportation in order to achieve enhanced safety and mobility while reducing the environmental impact of transportation.

A Transportation Management Area (TMA) is designated by the Secretary of Transportation, when an urbanized area (UZA) has a population of over 200,000. TMA coordination is essential in the administration of the federal surface transportation program. RiverCOG shares transportation planning

responsibility for portions of the Hartford, New Haven, and New London TMAs and UZAs. RiverCOG coordinates with the other COGs, including Capitol Region COG, South Central Region COG, and Southeastern Connecticut COG.

RiverCOG is partnering with other COGs in planning for congestion mitigation and reduction. The congestion management process analyses performance measures, performance monitoring, trend analysis and mitigation strategies in an effort to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

The challenge for the region and Connecticut as a whole is to get ahead of the needs of the aging population trends by proactively investing in more complete transportation networks and implementing land use policies that are less auto-centric.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a general term for strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation resources. Some TDM strategies are designed to achieve specific objectives such as congestion reduction, emissions reduction, improving equity, improving livability, parking solutions, safety strategies and others. They can be implemented by individuals, community organizations, institutions, businesses and municipal, regional, state, and federal governments.

Federal planning legislation establishes a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas and providing surface transportation funding programs

The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's (CTDESPP) division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) encompasses five emergency planning regions and works with COGs and municipalities within these regions to develop emergency response plans.

The Natural Disaster Plan establishes the roles of all state agencies responding to natural disasters and the National Infrastructure Protection Plan establishes a framework to develop, implement and maintain a coordinated effort to protect the nation's critical infrastructure and key resources.

The region's transportation network emphasizes safety for all users of the region's transportation system. Safety is an ongoing concern for RiverCOG with an emphasis on safety for users of non-motorized transportation modes within the region. The 4E process (Engineering, Education, Emergency and Enforcement) makes important and overlapping contributions to increase safety on the region's highway network.

Performance based planning and programming increases the accountability and transparency of Federal-aid programs and offers a framework to support improved investment decision making by focusing on performance outcomes for national transportation goals.

MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

Chief elected officials, town managers and staff provided transportation priorities of their municipalities. This section is a listing of the priorities of the seventeen municipalities and two transit districts of the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region

FINANCIAL PLAN

The MTP is required by federal guidelines to be fiscally constrained. This means plans can only include projects that the region can reasonably expect to afford to build and operate over the given time period. As a long range plan, the fiscal constraint must be based upon the estimates of the available revenue for transportation needs over the timeframe of the plan. CTDOT has provided estimates of the anticipated highway funding. These estimates have been allocated to major categories of system preservation and system improvements. System preservation projects include tasks such as roadway repaving and bridge repair or replacement. System improvement projects include designs that enhance safety, improve mobility, increase system productivity or promote economic growth.

APPENDIX

The Appendix summarizes the public involvement process, environmental justice analysis, municipal bridge list and transportation demand management strategies.

A robust public involvement process is essential in the planning process. Public review, comments, and questions bring new information forward and ensure that the plan accurately reflects the community. The information received through the public involvement process not only assists the writing of the plan, but further assists decision makers as they use the MTP in making regional transportation investments.

Incorporating Environmental justice (EJ) into the planning process makes for better transportation decisions that meet the needs of everyone. It does so by: mitigating impacts on minority and low income populations, enhancing participation in the decision making process and, assuring minority and low income populations receive a proportionate share of benefits.

Minority, low income and limited English proficiency populations are analyzed in relation to transit, highways, bicycle and pedestrian and other factors and assessed based on investment, implementation and operation impacts. Title VI, ADA and other initiatives are discussed.

The municipal bridge list shows the complete list of all municipal bridges as expanded on from Chapter 3 of the plan. They may be eligible for funding under the local bridge program, but the municipalities are responsible for the inspections. All other bridges on the list are over twenty feet and inspected biannually by CTDOT.

Transportation demand management (TDM), is defined a set of strategies aimed at maximizing traveler choices. Traditionally defined as commuter ridesharing and its planning application restricted to air quality mitigation, development mitigation, or efforts to increase multi-modalism in transportation plans. The list provides examples of strategies under the TDM umbrella term.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

RiverCOG will work with state and local governments and regional planning partners to execute the strategies identified. In the MTP While it is estimated that the projects identified in the MTP will be within expected available resources by the year 2050, specific funding has not yet been allocated to most of the projects. When state agencies, the COG or secure and commit funding for the design and construction of a project, the project is added to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and programmed for construction.

To measure progress of the MTP, RiverCOG monitors established targets for each of the objectives as listed in the MTP. This is done by comparing current data to the benchmarks and targets, to assess if the region is moving towards meeting targets identified in the plan.

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