

Project 0320-0008 West Hartford/Hartford PIM Report of Meeting

On Wednesday October 22, 2025, the project team presented the subject project to the public at a Public Information Meeting that was held at the Elmwood Community Center in the Town of West Hartford.

Brief Background on the project:

This project will facilitate the realignment of the existing track for the Hartford Line and addition of a second track through the Towns of West Hartford and Hartford. The project will also include trackside drainage improvements, new signal equipment and grade crossing safety improvements. This project aims to improve overall rail safety and capacity for the Amtrak Hartford Line corridor at this West Hartford to Hartford segment.

The scope of work under this project is as follows:

- Construction work will consist of a full relocation of utilities and roadway improvements:
- Trackside drainage improvements
- New signal equipment
- Grade crossing improvements
- Adding second track

Highlights of the presentation:

- Opening Greeting and Introduction of the project team members
- Title VI statement
- Information of the Hartford Line Program
- Project Overview
- Design Presentation
- ROW statement
- The estimated Construction cost is \$51 Million using all State and Federal Funds.
- Construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2026 and end in winter 2028.

Q&A

During the Q&A session following the presentation, questions posed by attendees included:

Q: It was asked whether the funding for the project has been secured?

A: It was explained that funds have been awarded and is a combination of Federal and State funds pursued through a grant process with FRA. Currently going through the steps to obligate the funds moving into final design.

Q: It was asked if the construction would be delayed if funding was delayed?

A: It was explained that this would not be likely the project is still going through the required steps to continue to construction.

Q: It was asked if night work was anticipated or not?

A: It was explained that certain work for the project could be done on nights or a temporary detour of operations along with other discrete elements that may need to be performed at night.

Q: It was asked whether the drainage element couldn't be jacked under the Fastrak?

A: It was explained that certain areas were investigated but it was determined to be not feasible due the lack of space on the west side of the Fastrak ROW.

Q: It was asked what was anticipated for the interruptions to bus and Fastrak?

A: It was explained that the rail construction would require outages and is being coordinated with CT Transit and other impacted forms of transit. These details are typically worked out during the design development and completion. As the contract moves to construction, our department staff hold the contractor accountable to the requirements established in design.

Q: An explanation of what this project is for and recap the expansion's purpose was requested? What's existing vs. what's being installed?

A: It was explained that currently the HL goes from New Haven to Springfield, the overall program seeks to expand capacity by installing a second track next to the existing track and all of the associated improvements (drainage, etc.) required this project will be adding.

Q: It was asked why a second track would be needed given that there is already a second track currently existing in the ROW?

A: It was explained that the existing siding does not handle the higher speeds desired by this project, so our project is upgrading the siding and creating a second mainline to achieve the higher speeds and trains traveling at higher speeds need more clear space for safer operations.

Q: It was asked whether there would be sound barriers installed to break up the potential noise along the rail lines?

A: It was explained that there are currently no plans to install barriers, there are sound studies that are performed and the recommendations (especially at the grade crossings) are provided to the project. There is an opportunity for municipalities to apply for quiet zones with the FRA.

Q: It was asked whether trains currently reach 100 MPH?

A: It was explained that there are some rolling stock that allow for the higher speeds but the majority of the fleet cannot yet reach 100 MPH.

Q: It was asked what the plan is for beyond the project limits?

A: It was explained that there are other segments that are addressing the double tracking outside of the this project to include the adjacent Greater Hartford Mobility Program (a future project) due to the complexity of the Hartford area near the 84/91 interchange.

Q: It was asked who the responsibility for maintaining and repairing the infrastructure under the tracks is? For example, the Fastrak and rail line that carries over Capitol Ave in Hartford.

A: It was explained that bridge assets on the ROW and the associated maintenance are owned by DOT and Amtrak depending on structure.

Q: It was asked why there are ROW impacts if only a second track was being added within the Railroad ROW?

A: It was explained that the location of the new track would require grading and drainage improvements that extend outside of the existing ROW.

There were 15 people in attendance from the public. The project and overall Hartford Line Program was generally well received by the attendees, and the question and comment session went smoothly. The meeting began at 6:00pm and ended at approximately 6:35pm.

The public comment period runs through November 5th.