Comprehensive Transit Service Analysis

Advisory Committee Meeting #3

APRIL 2015

NELSON NYGAARD
ASG PLANNING

CRCOG
CAPITOL REGION
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

CTtransit

Agenda

- **Welcome and (Re)Introductions**
  - Study Goals
  - Approach
- **Update on Comprehensive Service Analysis (CSA)**
  - Work Completed and Key Findings to Date
  - Route Evaluations
  - Design Your Transit System Survey
- **Update on CT*fastrak* Implementation**

CT*fastrak* Implementation

CSA Study Goals

- **Identify strengths and weaknesses of existing system**
  - Review current and near term travel patterns
  - Assess system efficiency
  - Identify unmet transit needs

- **Recommend service improvements**
  - Integrate with new system investments
  - Better serve existing riders
  - Attract new choice riders

CSA Study Approach

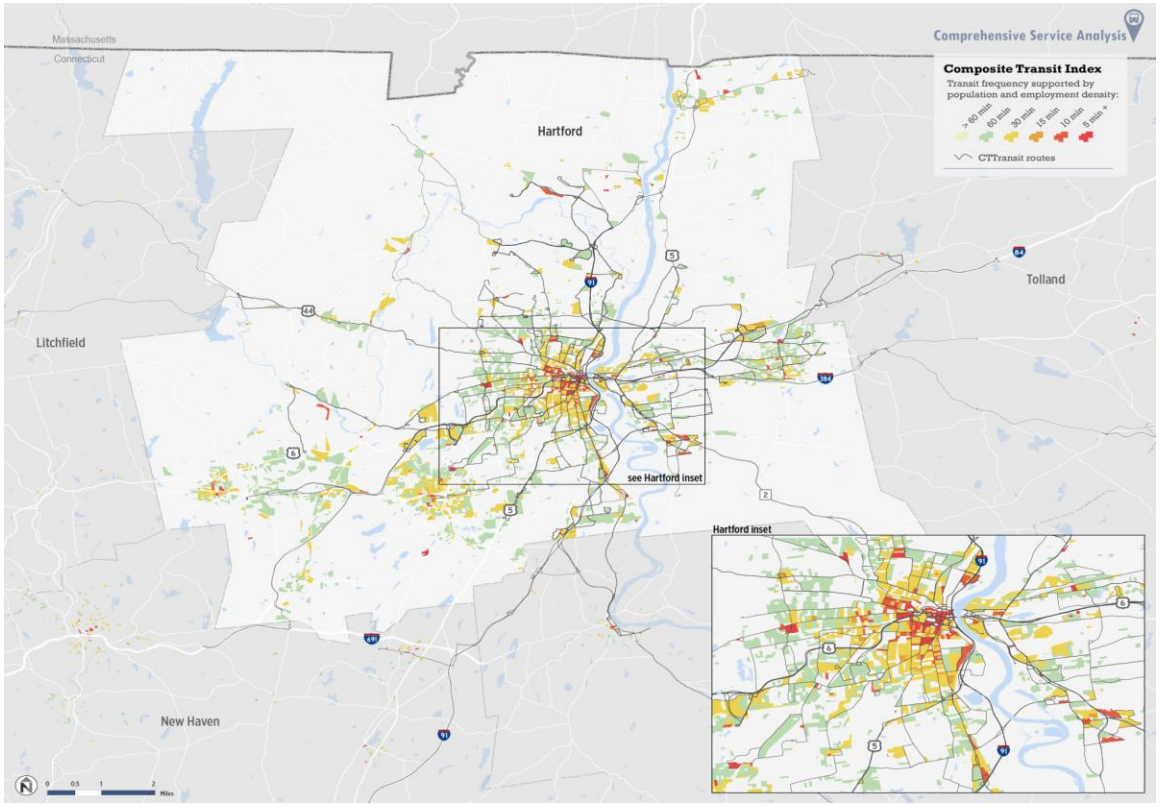
- **Three Main Focus Areas of Analysis:**
  1. What does the market say?
     - Population and Employment density
     - Population characteristics
     - Land-use characteristics
     - Regional travel patterns
  2. What do the numbers say?
     - Ridership
     - Productivity
     - On-time Performance
  3. What do the people say?
     - Riders
     - Non-riders
     - Staff
     - Stakeholders

Work to Date

- Existing Conditions and Service Overview
- Stakeholder Input

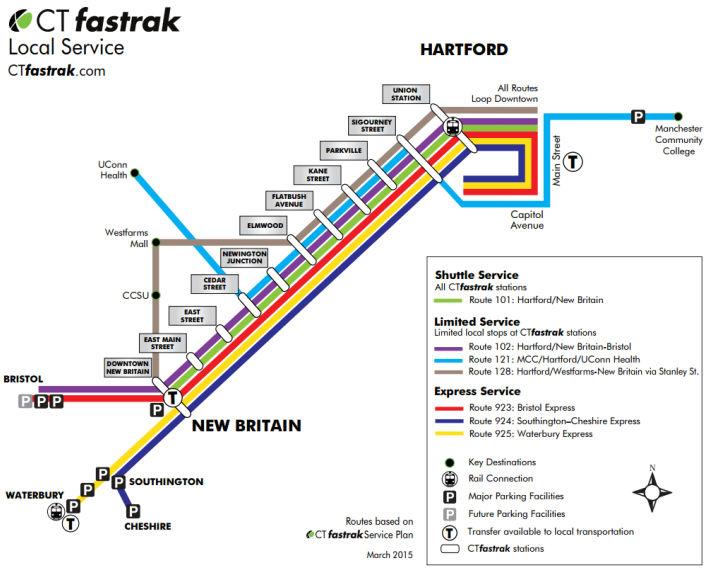
Existing Conditions and Service Overview

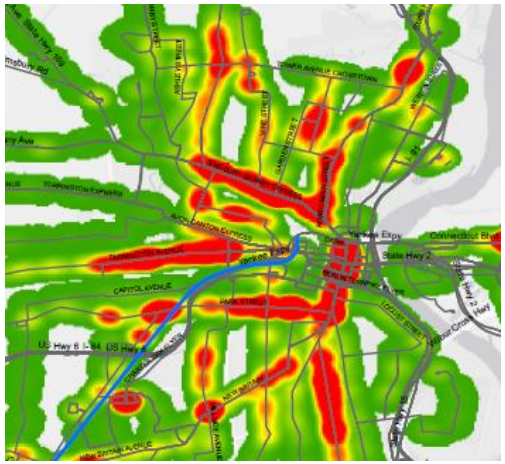
- **Key Findings:**
  - Overall, CT*transit* services in the Capitol Region appear to be well matched to local demand, at least in terms of service coverage.



Existing Conditions and Service Overview

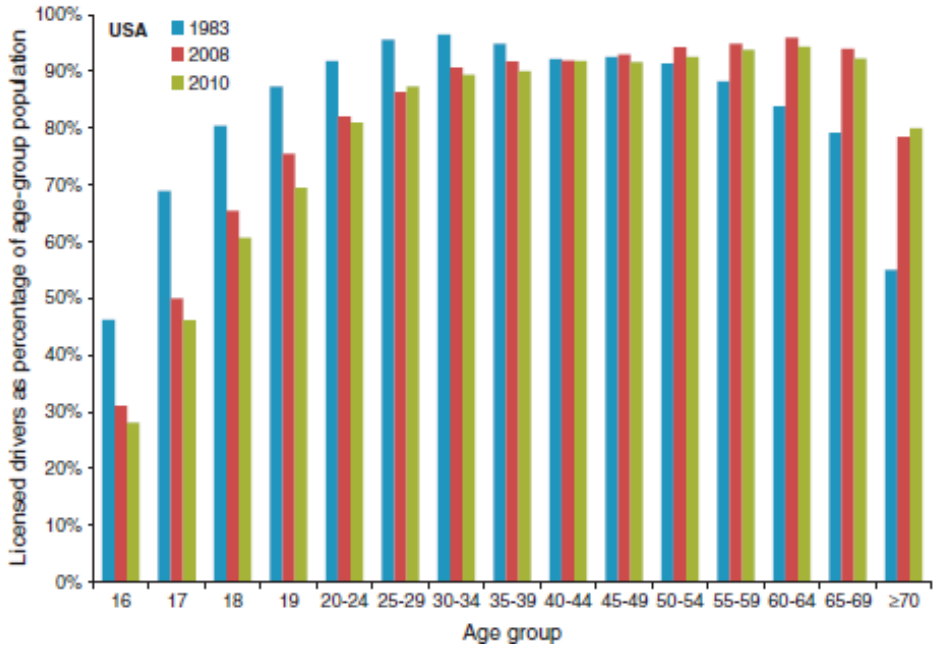
- **Key Findings:**
  - Travel patterns are being shaped by regional transit initiatives.
  - Strong regional transit corridors are emerging.
  - Opportunities for improvement:
    - Local service
    - Reverse-commute and non-radial connections
    - Low-density environments





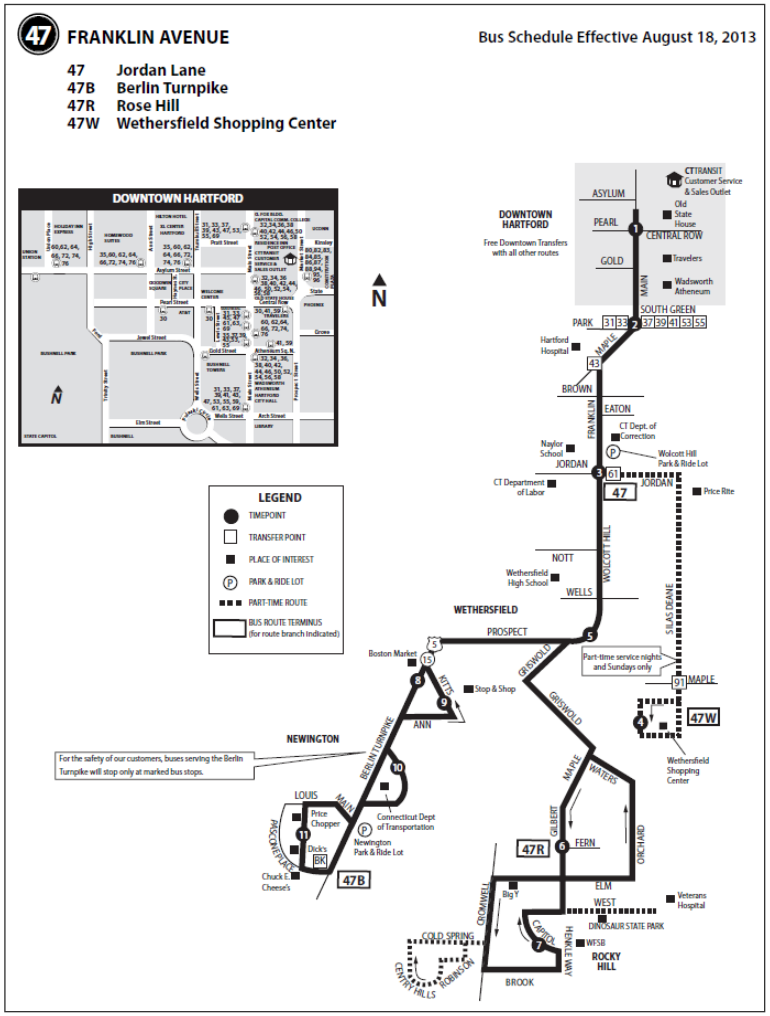
Existing Conditions and Service Overview

- **Key Findings:**
  - Demographic and generational shifts point toward growing demand for transit-oriented lifestyles.
  - Development market is responding to these trends, and CT*transit* must too.



Existing Conditions and Service Overview

- **Key Findings:**
  - Service design and the user experience are key to attracting and retaining riders.
  - CT*transit* routes were re-numbered in 2009 to make service easier to understand, but more can be done to simplify service.



Stakeholder Input

- **14 Stakeholder Interviews:**
  - Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitative Services
  - Way to Go Connecticut
  - Connecticut Public Transportation Commission (CPTC)
  - Hartford Business Improvement District
  - Metro Hartford Alliance
  - Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice
  - The Kennedy Center
  - Partnerships for Strong Communities
  - Connecticut Association for Community Transportation (CATC)
  - Connecticut Airport Authority/Bradley International Airport
  - Capital Workforce Partners
  - Transit for Connecticut Coalition
  - Department of Economic and Community Development
  - Connecticut Housing Coalition

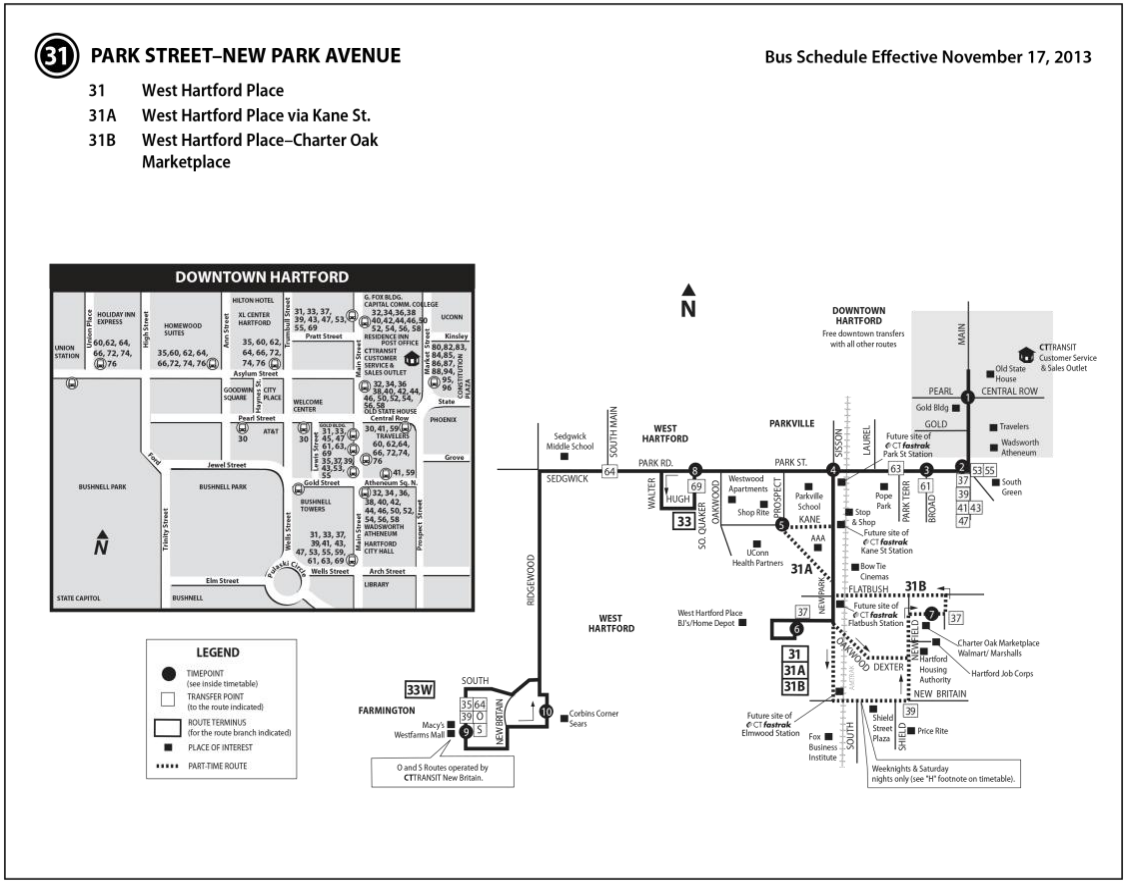
- **5 Focus Groups:**
  - CT*transit* Drivers / Front Line Staff
  - Students/Faculty Manchester Community College
  - Spanish Speakers
  - Hartford Young Professionals & Entrepreneurs (HYPE)
  - Major Employers

Stakeholder Input

- **Key Themes:**
  - Job Access
    - Access to jobs is essential, but not everyone works 9:00-5:00.
    - Demand has shifted away from the historic radial transit network.
  - Service Attributes
    - Need for more service, especially increased frequency.
    - Maintain on-time performance.
  - Regional Connections
    - Capitalize on regional investments in transit infrastructure.
    - Improved airport service.
  - Customer information
    - Provide better customer information via mobile apps, real-time data, etc.

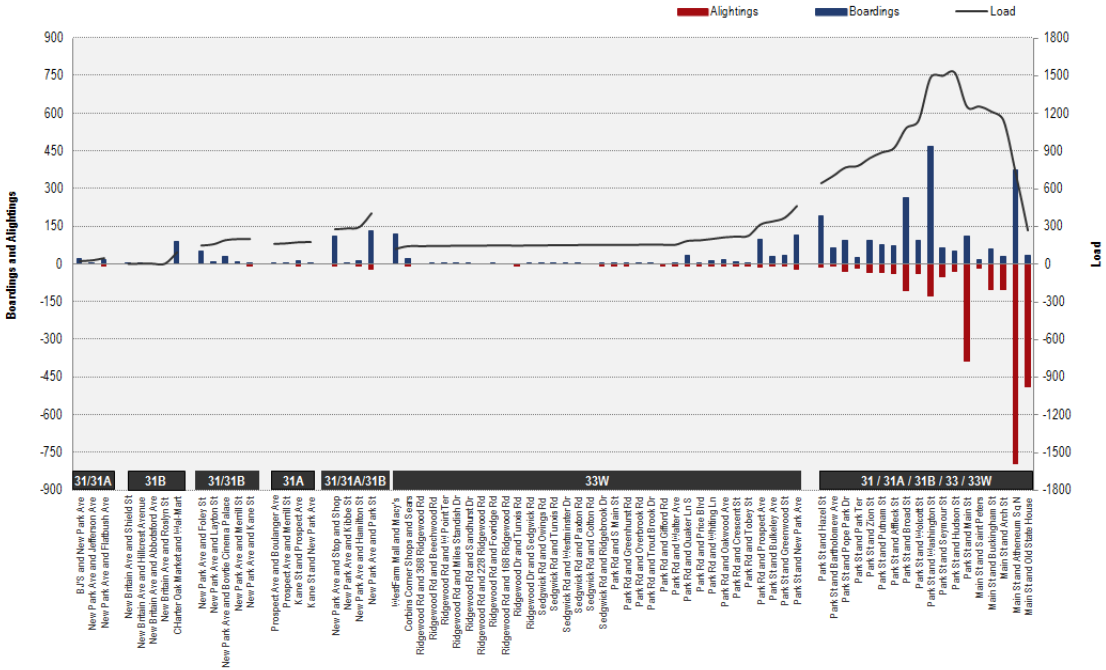
Route Profiles

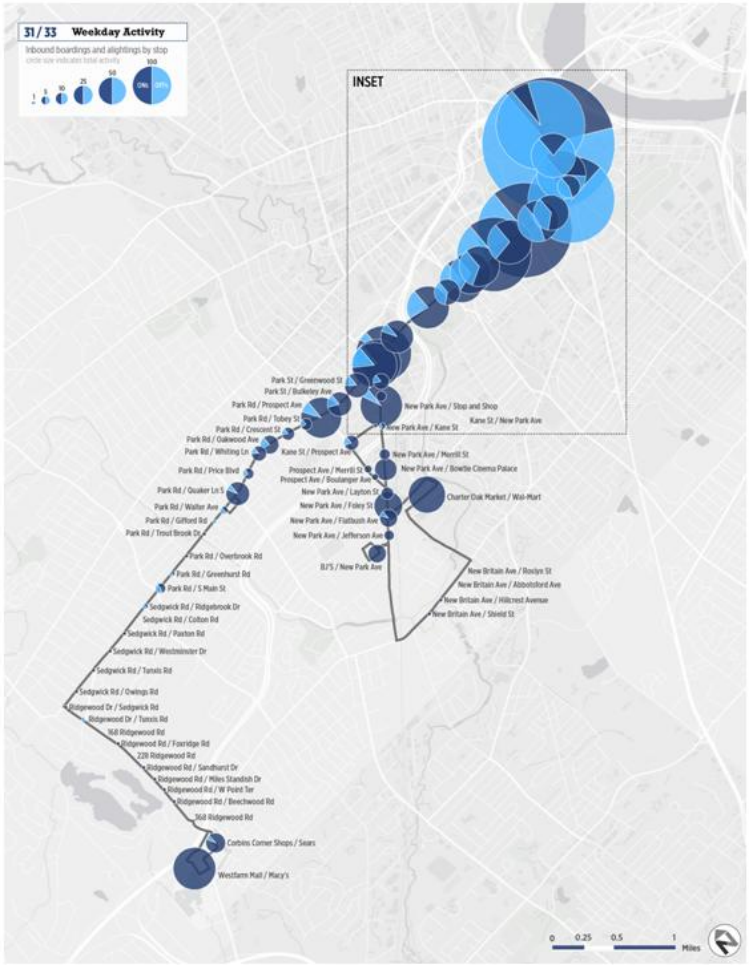
- **Key Elements:**
  - Alignments and Service Patterns



Route Profiles

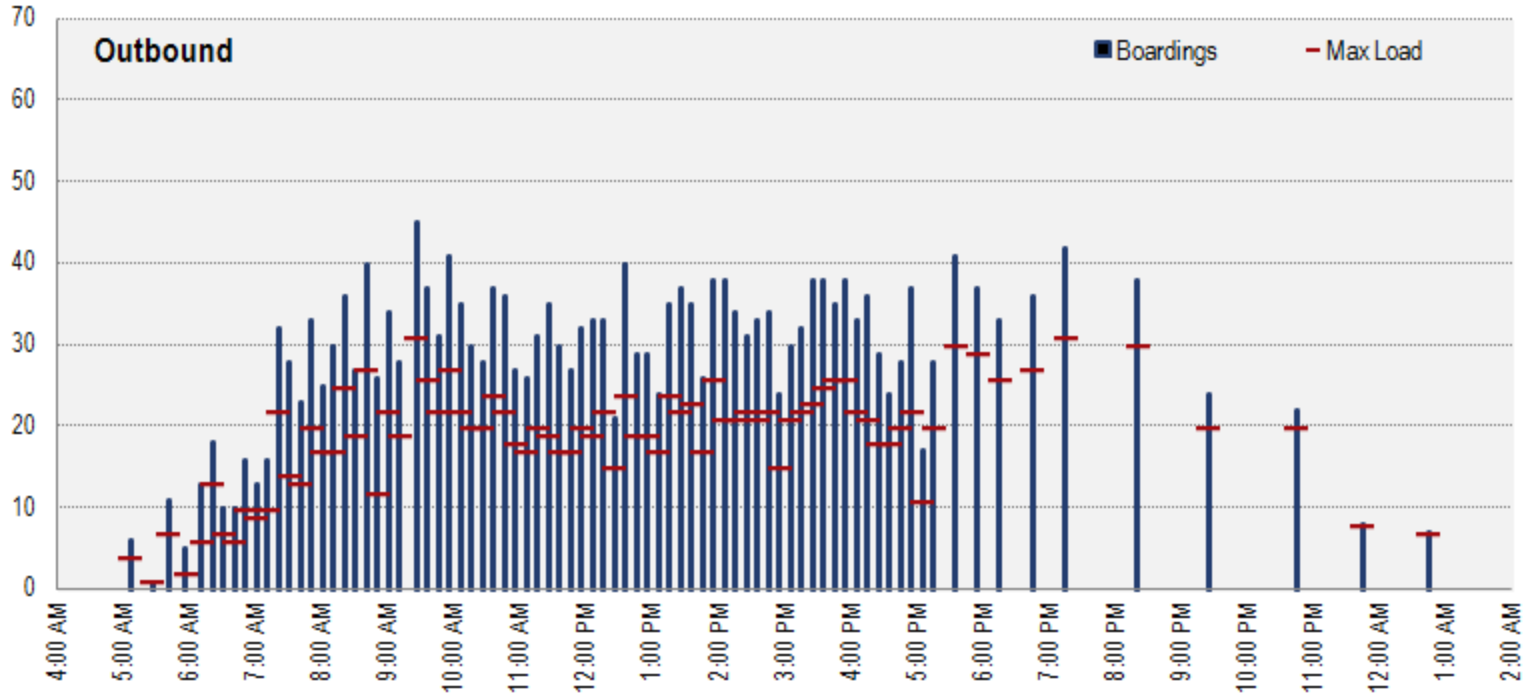
- **Key Elements:**
  - Ridership by Stop





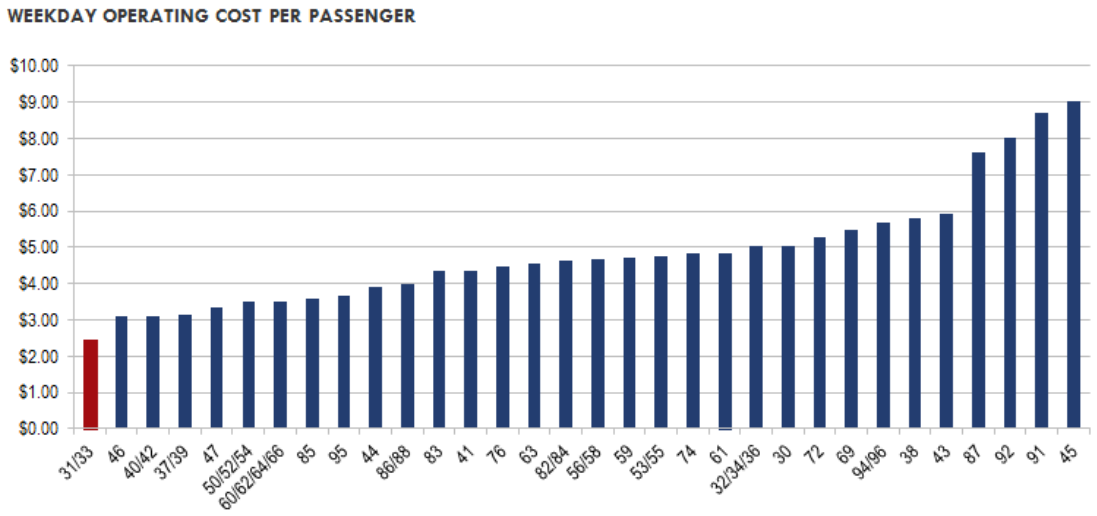
Route Profiles

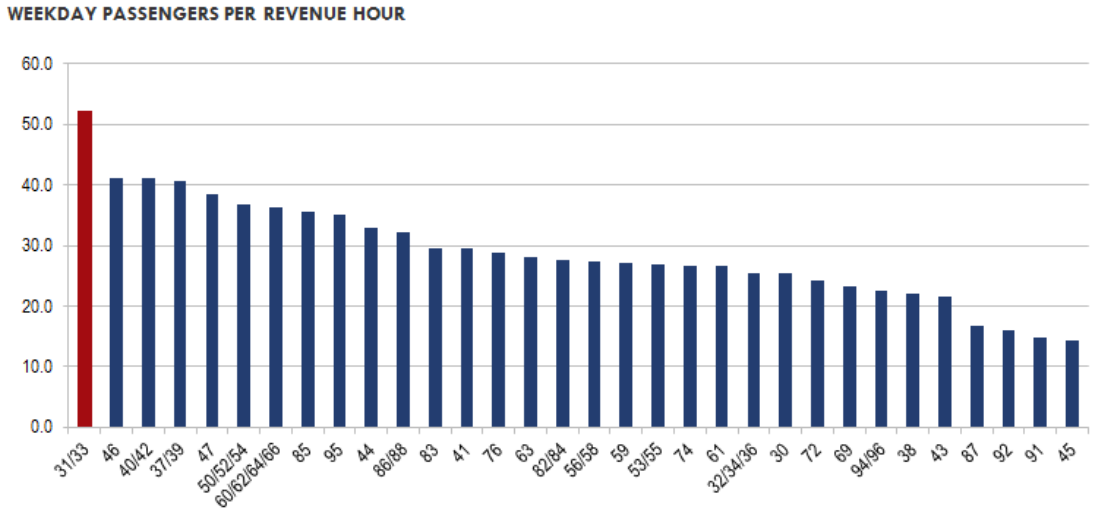
- **Key Elements:**
  - Ridership by Trip and Maximum Loads



Route Profiles

- **Key Elements:**
  - Productivity





Route Profiles

- **Key Elements:**
  - Service Improvement Options

Service Improvement Options

Despite being one of CT*transit*'s strongest routes, there are a number of potential service improvements that could strengthen Route 31/33:

- **Create a transit corridor on Park Street.** Park Street is one of Hartford's most important transit corridors, because it is both a densely developed corridor and serves transit dependent neighborhoods. The corridor is narrow slowing down the buses and making service unreliable. CT*transit* has mitigated some of the unreliability of service, in part, by providing more service frequency. Vehicle speeds, however, are still slow. Given the high ridership on the route, there is potential to improve the travel corridor through a combination of roadway and service improvements. Roadway improvements may include limiting parking to one side of the street, dedicating travel to transit vehicles only, installing queue jump lanes at critical intersections and/or adding signal prioritization to increase travel speeds. Potential service improvements included level boarding platforms and/or pre-paid boarding to reduce dwell times. CT*transit* may also consider consolidating stops to reduce travel time and help focus passenger amenities investment.
- **Eliminate Route 31A variant.** Ridership on the Route 31A variant is fairly low and the deviation is not especially far from the primary alignment. Both of these factors make the variant a candidate for elimination. Eliminating Route 31A would simplify the route overall, making it easier to use. Eliminating the variant may help improve the route's on-time performance with more consistent routing.
- **Operate all Route 31 service to CT*fastrak* Flatbush Station.** If Route 31's A variant is eliminated, Route 31 may operate all service as a consistent alignment terminating at CT*fastrak* station. This alignment would serve the majority of the riders and simplify the route so it is easier to understand and use. Operating Route 31 with a consistent alignment may also improve the route's on-time performance.
- **Operate all Route 31 service to CTfastrak Charter Oak Marketplace.** If Route 31 can be operated with a consistent alignment, another option is to terminate the service at Charter Oak Marketplace. Ridership at this location is high and continuing on from Flatbush Station could also help with local circulation around the Flatbush station. It would also make the route easier to understand and use and potentially improve the route's on-time performance.
- **Operate all Route 33 trips to South Quaker Lane.** South of South Quaker lane, ridership is low. In addition, while riders use Route 33W to get to the Westfarms Mall, there are other routes that also travel to the mall, including the new CT*fastrak* service 128. Terminating Route 33 at South Quaker Lane would help make the route more productive and concentrate service on the highest ridership segments of the route.
- **Use Route 33 to travel between Westfarms Mall and Parkville Station (without traveling into downtown).** Ridership on the unique segment of Route 33 is generally low, with the exception of riders traveling to the Westfarms Mall. Operating Route 33 between Westfarms Mall and Park Street Station will reduce service miles on the route and allow for a more appropriate service frequency for the overall ridership demand expected from the route's service area. Any reduction in service along Main and Park Streets, however, would need to be replaced by an increase in service on Route 31.
- **Operate high-frequency service until 8:00 PM on weekdays and Saturdays.** High frequency service (10-15 minute) on both Route 31 and Route 33 is available until approximately 6:00 on weekdays and Saturdays. However, ridership figures show that ridership demand begins to subside after 7:00 PM. Thus, maintaining higher service frequency until approximately 8:00 PM should be considered. This would also be more consistent with the level of service provided along CT*fastrak*.

Design Your Transit System Tool

- **Meant to gauge preferences and illustrate trade-offs**

Next Steps

- **Route Evaluation Reviews**
  - May - June
- **Design Your Own Transit System**
  - May - June
- **Public Meetings**
  - Late June / Early July (pending committee input)
- **Next AC Meeting**
  - Late June / Early July (pending committee input)