Central CT Rail Study

Advisory Committee Meeting
Bristol, CT
June 9, 2016

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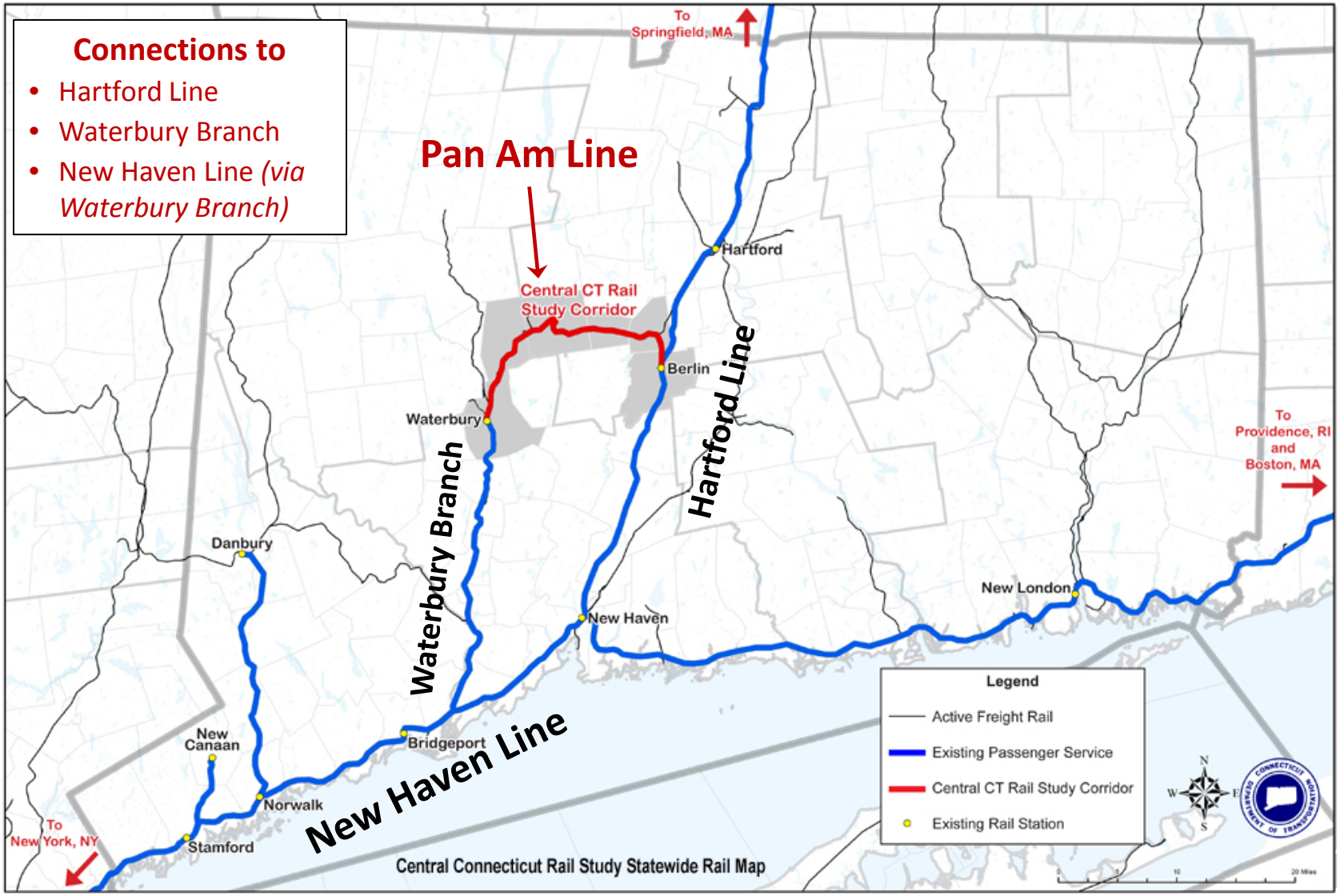
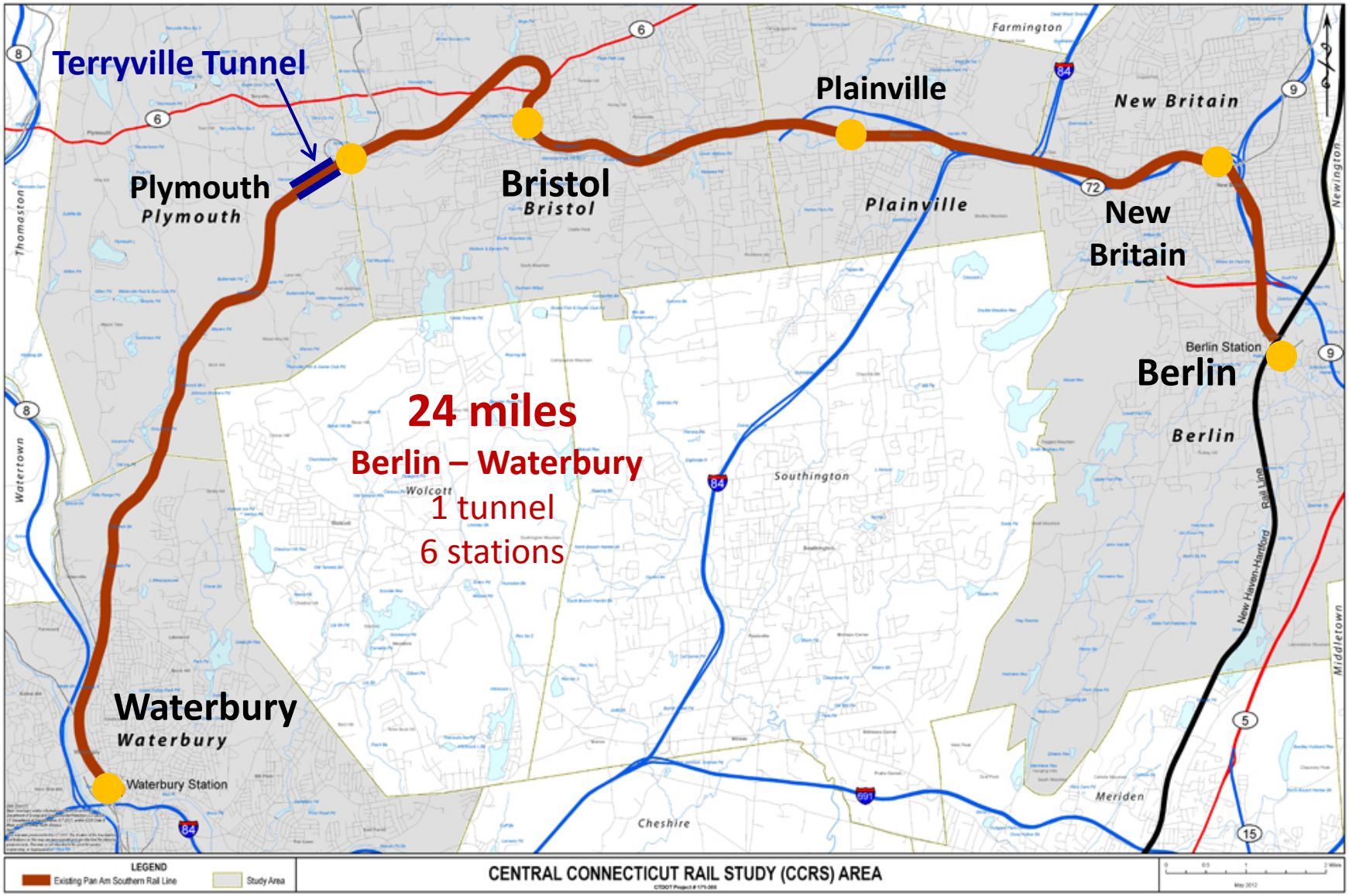
Pan Am Rail Line

Freight line owned & operated by Pan Am Railways



PAN AM RAIL LINE: BERLIN TO WATERBURY



PURPOSE OF STUDY

Objective 1: Assess ***condition of rail infrastructure*** in corridor

- **Corridor:** Pan Am rail line between Berlin & Waterbury
  - Essential step for entire study

Objective 2**:** Identify opportunities to ***improve public transit***

- **Passenger rail options**: potential market & cost
- **Bus options:** potential market & cost

Objective 3**:** Identify opportunities to ***improve freight rail***

- **Market**: existing & potential freight market

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Overview of major findings

Rail Infrastructure

Assessed entire ***24-mile*** rail line:

- Track & track bed
- Bridges & culverts
- Terryville Tunnel

Condition:

- ***Class 1*** – train speed is ***10 mph*** or less
- Significant improvements required for better ***freight*** service
- Additional improvements required to support ***passenger*** service

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Terryville Tunnel:

- **3,600 feet,** opened in **1911** *(over 100 yrs)*
- **Freight:** significant repairs required to tunnel lining & drainage
- **Passenger:** Major *safety upgrades* required
  - Add lighting
  - Add ventilation
  - Add safe emergency egress

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Cost to Attain
Safety, Condition, & Service Objectives

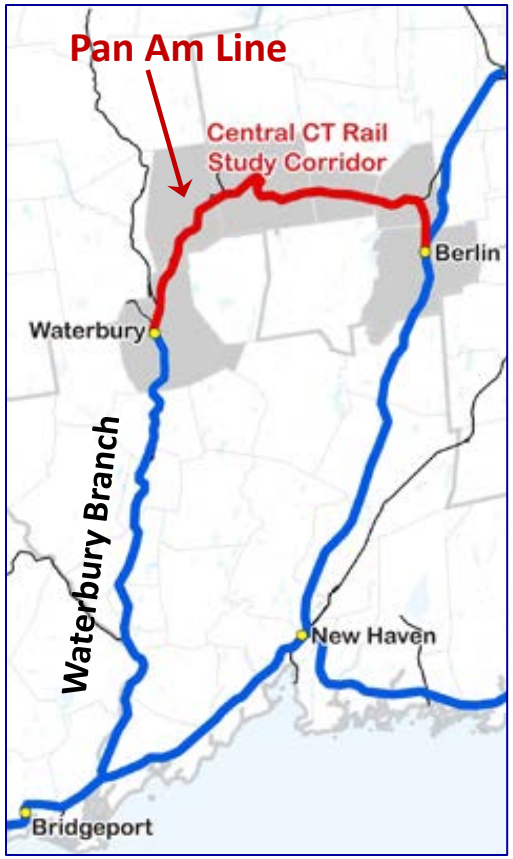
(Preliminary estimates – engineering analysis still required)

FREIGHT Service:	
$140 million	**Class 2:** Improvements needed to attain **State of Good Repair** *Eliminate 10 mph speed restrictions & attain **25 mph**)*
$170 million	**Class 3:** Improvements needed to attain **40 mph**
PASSENGER Service:	
$410 million	**Class 3:** Passenger upgrades *Added cost ($240M):* track, passing sidings, signal system, tunnel
$530 million	**Class 3:** Full cost with **stations & train equipment**

Passenger Rail Potential

Evaluated potential demand for ridership,
as well as prerequisites to start *passenger service*

Passenger Rail Potential



Ridership: 600 – 800 daily

- Low estimate assumes 'transfer' needed in Waterbury
- High estimate assumes 'thru train' to Bridgeport

Prerequisite: Upgrade Waterbury Branch

Before we can operate passenger service on Pan Am Line, we need to upgrade the Waterbury Branch

- Signalization & passing sidings *(funded in 5-Year Ramp-Up for Let's Go CT)*
- Expand train storage & maintenance facility in Waterbury *(necessary but not yet funded)*

Passenger Rail Potential

Ridership versus Cost

- **Riders: 600 – 800 daily.**
- **Cost: $530 million**
  - Upgrade 24 miles to Class 3 for passenger rail
  - Upgrade 3600-foot Terryville Tunnel for safe passenger service
  - Build or modify 6 stations
  - Purchase 2 additional train sets

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PASSENGER RAIL POTENTIAL

Conclusion *(draft)*

- **Passenger rail not viable in near-term**
  - Waterbury Branch improvements a prerequisite & priority
- **Preserve passenger rail option for long-term**
  - maintaining freight service key to future passenger service
  - *freight rail upgrades* to Class 2 & Class 3
    - **preserve & enhance viability** of passenger service in future

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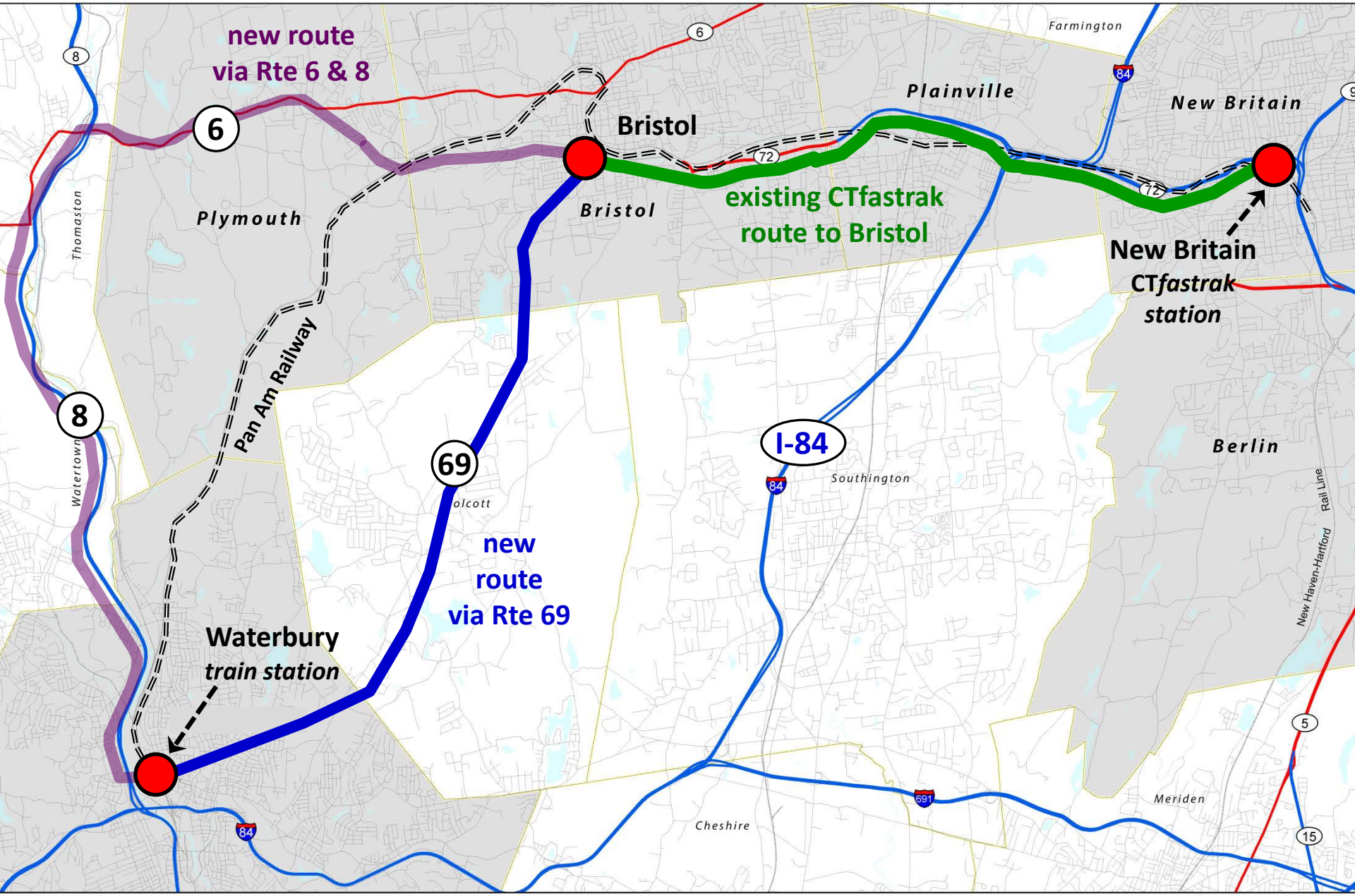
Bus Service Expansion Potential



Bus Service Expansion Potential

Ridership Estimates:

- **200 – 400 daily riders**
  - Based on existing CTfastrak routes to downtown Bristol
  - 2 route options possible
    - Direct to Waterbury via Route 69
    - To Waterbury through Terryville center via Route 6 & Route 8
- **Requires**
  - Purchase of additional buses
  - Possibly priority treatments for buses at traffic signals
  - Estimated cost: **$5 -10 million**

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Bus Service Expansion Potential

Conclusion *(Draft)*

Bristol to Waterbury service possible in near-term

- Low-moderate ridership, but low capital cost
- Takes advantage of existing CT*fastrak* service to Bristol

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Freight Rail Potential

3 factors considered in assessment:

1. **Market study**: conducted as part of study
2. **Workshop:** with rail experts
3. **Discussions:** with Pan Am officials

Freight Rail Potential

1. **Market study**: conducted as part of study
   - Stressed importance of supporting existing industries.
   - Provided optimistic outlook on potential for future market growth
2. **Workshop:** with rail experts
   - Less optimistic
   - Priority should be to improve *major* rail routes into & thru CT
     - Upgrade *track* & *bridges* to allow *286,000 lb*. rail cars

       (significant statewide issue, but beyond scope of current study.)
3. **Discussions:** with Pan Am officials & potential Pan Am clients
   - Increasing demand from business for freight rail access
   - CTDOT continuing discussions with Pan Am

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FREIGHT RAIL POTENTIAL

Conclusions *(Draft)*

- Supports *existing businesses*
- Serves *future demand* for rail access & business expansion
- Freight infrastructure upgrades
  - $130M - $170M will be primarily private investment
  - Incremental upgrades as businesses expand or new businesses added
- Freight service expansion seems *feasible in near–term* & *preserves option for passenger* rail in long-term

STUDY CONCLUSIONS *(DRAFT)*

- Infrastructure: Pan Am line is very slow, speed restricted
  - Major infrastructure investments required.
- Passenger rail: not viable at this time
  - Need to preserve option for future.
- Bus service: opportunity to extend service
  - CTDOT will consider bus service from Bristol to Waterbury
- Freight rail: most viable use of rail corridor
  - Needed to support existing businesses
  - CTDOT will work with Pan Am to serve growing demand

THANK YOU