



## MARCH 2012 Newsletter

### **CACT Awareness & Prevention Workshop**

On Thursday, April 12, CACT will be offering a workshop on identifying the work environment risk factors from standing, lifting, pulling, etc, and techniques to reduce employees risk of injury from Musculoskeletal Disorders . The workshop will be held from 12 noon- 4 pm in the Meeting Room at the Greater Hartford Transit District. *(flyer attached)*

### **CACT Annual Awards Luncheon**

Mark you calendars for the CACT Annual Awards Meeting & Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2012, 11:30 am. Awards will be given to employees who've excelled at their jobs and for an individual who has demonstrated leadership and dedication to the enhancement of public transportation. Nomination forms will be available in April.

### **CACT Annual Legislative Breakfast**

DOT Commissioner Jim Redeker gave an update on transportation funding; the shift in direction from a highway focus to a 50/50 highway and transit focus; his belief that communication is essential; and building a structure that enables smooth transitions when senior employees retire. Representatives Gail Lavielle and Jonathan Steinberg spoke about the legislative session and their goals for this year. More than 80 attended the breakfast which was co-sponsored by CACT and WTC. Executive Director Mary Tomolonius gave a power point presentation on "Transportation in a Changing Economy."

### **Connecticut Transportation Updates**

#### **CPTC Report**

The 2011 Connecticut Public Transportation Commission Annual Report and Recommendations was completed on December 30, 2011 and is available for review at [http://www.ct.gov/dot/lib/dot/CPTC\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2011.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/dot/lib/dot/CPTC_Annual_Report_2011.pdf)

#### **Legislative Forum : Growing Connecticut Around Transit**

On Wednesday, Feb. 29, 2012, a Legislative Forum at the LOB was opened by Senator Cassano who stated "TOD is not a local issue, rather a regional issue". Next were featured presentations by David Kooris, RPA; Tom Maziarz, DOT; Kip Bergstrom, DECD Deputy Commissioner and Roger Reynolds, CFE Senior Attorney. David noted the economic, social and environmental benefits of TOD (transit-oriented development) and there's not a "one size fits all solution...(TOD) requires robust partnerships". Tom Maziarz noted that "TOD can help improve our transit system" by boosting ridership, creating a more efficient operations, and placing more residents and jobs close to transit. Kip Bergstrom spoke about innovation and that placing development near transit fosters innovation. "Despite the internet, most innovation still happens between face-to-face interaction", Kip said. On the job front, he noted "Art makes great places, great places attract great talent; great talent creates great jobs."

Following the presentations a panel discussion led by Moderator Joe McGee, Vice President, Public Policy and Programs for The Business Council of Fairfield County, began. "20 years ago you never talked about the power of transit, it was about highways" said Joe, and for TOD "someone's got to plan this because the relationship between municipal and state government is complex." Jim Finley from CCM said "TOD is a win-win for municipalities." Rep. Tim Larsen noted "We all love the idea (of TOD) we simply don't know how to pay for it". CRCOG Executive Director Lyle Wray wrapped up the session by noting there are 4000 TOD sites in the U.S. that can be used as models, but "We need to get it done...because we are in danger of falling behind."

The event is available for viewing on CTN-on demand.. This can be viewed on [www.ctn.state.ct.us](http://www.ctn.state.ct.us) On Demand Feb. 29, 2012.

#### **Wetlands Permit for Busway**

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) hearing officer recommended issuing a wetlands permit to the Connecticut Department of Transportation which is required prior to the construction of the New Britain-Hartford Bus Rapid Transit. This follows the FTA's Full Funding Grant Agreement of \$275 million which was signed on November 21, 2011.

## National Transportation Updates

### People want to Age in Place

As Americans age, the 65 and older population of 15.5 million by 2015 will be aging in communities “where public transportation service is poor or non-existent.” <http://t4america.org>

### American Energy and Infrastructure Act

This bill before Congress that removed the certainty of a continued revenue source for transit systems; terminated funding from the excise tax on gasoline and replaced it with the Alternative Transportation Account; provided a one-time \$40 billion transfer of General Fund revenues to the Alternative Transportation Account and funds and subjected funding to the annual appropriations process was pulled from the House floor reportedly to protect dedicated transit funding and shorten the bills length. According to Rep. Chris Murphy, the proposed bill would have “cut highway and road funding to Connecticut by \$335 million over 5 years and \$87 million for state transit programs over the same period.”

## CACT Updates

### A Great Loss

Middletown Area Transit Executive Director and longtime CACT Board member Tom Cheeseman passed away in February. Tom was a passionate advocate for transit and willingly shared his expertise with others. His knowledge and sense of humor will be missed.

### New Executive Director

Congratulations to Doug Holcomb who was recently appointed the CEO of Greater Bridgeport Transit. Doug succeeds former CEO Ron Kilcoyne (a CACT Board member) who moved to Eugene, Oregon where he was appointed the General Manager of Lane Transit District. <http://gogbt.com/>

### Nominations for CACT Executive Board

The CACT Executive Board is seeking nominations to fill the vacancy of Tom Cheeseman. Please submit nominations to CACT Chairman Alan Naudus at [Anaudus@gnhtd.org](mailto:Anaudus@gnhtd.org) or CACT Executive Director Mary Tomolonius at [mary.cact@yahoo.com](mailto:mary.cact@yahoo.com).

## Opinions & Opportunities

### Transit Cuts

A February 6, 2012 Hartford Courant “No Time to Cut Transit” notes that the two House transportation bills “would eliminate dedicated funding for public transportation, reversing a decision made 30 years ago by President Ronald Regan to fund mass transit out of a small share of gas tax revenues.”

### Do You Have News or Updates?

If you have news of interest, please email a brief update to [mary.cact@yahoo.com](mailto:mary.cact@yahoo.com).

**CACT BOARD MEMBERS:** Al Naudus, Chairperson, *Greater New Haven Transit District*; Jonathan Rubell, Vice Chair, *The Kennedy Center*; Joseph Comerford, Secretary, *Estuary Transit District*; Tammy Ostroski, Treasurer, *Northwestern CT Transit District*; Ella Bowman, *South East Area Transit District*; Barbara Kalosky, *North East Transportation Co., Inc.*; DJ Gonzalez, *Greater Hartford Transit District*; Pegi Brandt, *Norwalk Transit District*. **CACT Executive Director:** Mary Tomolonius