Press Releases

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NEWS RELEASE
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CT DOT Awarded $450,000 Federal COVID-19 Grant for New Voice Activated Ticket Vending Machines at CTrail Shore Line East Stations

The CTDOT today announced it was awarded a $450,000 federal grant from the Federal Transit Administration's COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant Program, for the design, modification, installation and pilot testing of contactless, voice-activated Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) for seven CT*rail* Shore Line East (SLE) stations in Connecticut.

"COVID-19 has forced a change in thinking and has required everyone, including the CTDOT, to adapt the way they live and do business on a day to day basis," said Department of Transportation Commissioner Joe Giulietti. "I am thankful to our federal partners and congressional delegation for supporting our efforts to improve customer safety by piloting contactless TVMs at SLE stations."

Most TVMs currently available for procurement require physical interaction or manipulation, including touch screens or keypads, which in today's pandemic-climate is a concern for public health. The funding received through this grant will be used to design a safer, no-touch, voice activated system, allowing customers to purchase tickets in an interaction that involves no physical contact with vending machine equipment.

Stations to receive the pilot TVMs are:

- New Haven Union Station
- New Haven State Street
- Branford
- Guilford
- Madison
- Clinton
- Westbrook
- Old Saybrook
- New London

Implementation of the pilot program will require lead time for the design and testing of new contactless TVMs, as well as site preparations at each station for necessary utilities and facility modifications. Features will include voice activation, contactless ticket distribution, and contactless payment methods, while adhering to ADA requirements.

Rollout of the new TVMs is anticipated in 2022, followed by a customer survey to garner feedback, acceptance, satisfaction and effectiveness of the technology. A successful implementation of contactless TVMs in Connecticut could lead to adoption by other transit systems currently using conventional TVM interfaces.

The CTDOT also reminds customers that rail tickets can be purchased using the CT*rail* eTix mobile app. Payments methods accepted include credit, debit, Google Pay and Apple Pay. The app can be used to purchase Shore Line East and Hartford Line tickets, with optional connecting service on New Haven Line (Metro-North) trains. The CTrail eTix app is available for download from the **Apple App Store (https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ctrail-etix/id1467982541)** and the **Google Play Store (https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.CTrail.eTix)**.

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