

**MaineDOT Locally Coordinated Transit Plan**

**Region 4**

**Kennebec Valley Community Action Program  
(KVCAP)**

**FY 2013 – FY 2017  
Locally Coordinated Plan Update**

**Updated May, 2017**

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**KENNEBEC VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM  
KVCAP TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

**Summary of Service Changes since FY 2012**

- 1. Schedule revamp, ridership growth.** The Kennebec Explorer schedule has been revamped, and ridership has grown, from about 44,000 general public trips annually in 2011, to over 100,000 rides annually as of December 30, 2016.
- 2. Augusta area service expansion.** Service in the Augusta area was expanded in 2013, with additional computer service between Augusta and Waterville, and expanded service to the Cohen Center in Hallowell. Currently, over 1,000 rides are being delivered each month on the commuter services.
- 3. Somerset Explorer.** Somerset Explorer service has been in operation for several years and has been operating successfully.
- 4. Additional bus.** An additional bus was added in November, 2013, to provide service to MaineGeneral Hospital.

**Accomplishments since FY 2012**

- 1. Ridership Growth.** The schedule has been revamped and ridership has grown, from about 44,000 rides annually in 2011 to over 100,000 rides annually as of December 30, 2016.
- 2. Growing Interest in General Public Ridership.** For the first time beginning this year, general public ridership exceeds Demand-Response Agency Vehicle ridership. There has been a huge and growing interest in developing transit, and there are ongoing discussions with a number of groups interested in providing more transit services.
- 3. Diverse Base of Local Support.** Only about a third of KVCAP's match comes from municipalities; the rest is from MaineGeneral Health, the University of Maine at Augusta, downtown Augusta employers, Inland Hospital, Waterville business supporters and youth organization.
- 4. Augusta Area Expansion.** Service in the Augusta area was expanded in 2013, with additional service between Augusta and Waterville and expanded service to the Cohen Center in Hallowell. The schedule is being revised to enhance efficiencies.
- 5. Work towards additional Waterville Bus.** KVCAP is working with a variety of interested parties including Waterville Public Housing, Thomas College, Colby College, and Sustain Maine to accomplish this goal.
- 6. Work towards expanded Somerset County service.** KVCAP continues to work with interested parties to develop route plans and funding sources. Recent discussions have

highlighted the need for enhanced transit service throughout Somerset County including linkages between Jackman, Bingham, Solon and Skowhegan.

7. **Bus shelters.** New bus shelters have been installed in Skowhegan and Augusta at the new bus depot near Maine State Housing Authority. Additional locations are being identified.
8. **MaineGeneral Hospital Service.** An additional bus was added in Augusta to provide commuter and general public service to MaineGeneral Hospital.

## **Report on Projects and Priorities in the FY 2013-2017 Locally Coordinated Plan**

The projects and priorities shown below reflect investments that were first identified by KVCAP and subsequently modified and prioritized by the public at a MaineDOT-sponsored Regional Transit Summit that was held at the Armory in Waterville on October 17, 2013. Attendees were provided the opportunity to add a potential project or identify an issue for consideration at any time during the meeting.

1. **Expand service to seniors by expanding range of services.** Service in the Augusta area was expanded in 2013, with additional service between Augusta and Waterville and expanded service to the Cohen Center in Hallowell. The schedule is being revised to enhance efficiencies.
2. **Additional bus in Waterville.** This continues to be a work in progress. KVCAP is working with a variety of interested parties including Waterville Public Housing, Thomas College, Colby College, and Sustain Maine to accomplish this goal. KVCAP hosted a Waterville Area Public Transit Forum on November 1, 2016, to establish priorities and identify partners in this effort.
3. **Lower Somerset County to Waterville service.** There continues to be an identified demand for service between Skowhegan/Madison and Waterville. KVCAP continues to work with interested parties to develop route plans and funding sources. Recent discussions have highlighted the need for enhanced transit service throughout Somerset County including linkages between Jackman, Bingham, Solon and Skowhegan.
4. **More buses to expand beyond the existing Kennebec Explorer system.** Somerset Explorer service has been in operation for several years and is operating successfully. Additional buses were added to the Explorer system in 2013 that enhanced commuter routes and provided additional Augusta area service.
5. **Monthly Explorer Bus Pass for commuter, healthcare workers, shoppers.** Monthly bus passes are available and widely used. Local monthly bus passes are available for \$40 and full access passes are available for \$80.
6. **Commuter service to Cancer Center, health care.** Commuter service between Waterville and Augusta was implemented in 2013 and is operating successfully. Currently, over 1,000 rides are being delivered each month on the commuter routes.

- 7. Employment transportation through Waterville Disability Support Group.** While no specific initiatives have been implemented regarding the Waterville Disability Support Group, accessible boardings continue to increase on the Explorer system. The Explorer system provided 12,423 rides using the accessible boarding systems including ramps and lifts.
- 8. Additional service to KVCC/Hinckley campus and Fairfield.** This is being considered for enhancement along with Skowhegan to Waterville service. KVCAP is working to identify potential funding sources for match and service options.
- 9. Bus shelters.** New bus shelters have been installed in Skowhegan and Augusta at the new bus depot near Maine State Housing. Additional locations are being identified.
- 10. Expand hours to Saturday, possibly Sunday.** Not fiscally feasible at this time.
- 11. Transportation to Togus.** Service is currently being provided to Togus from Augusta three times per day.
- 12. Software to upload driver manifests to IPAD.** KVCAP is partnering with Penquis CAP for an RFP for new dispatching/reporting software with tablet technology. Proposals are due November 18 (2016) with implementation planned by Spring, 2017.
- 13. Additional bus in Augusta to MaineGeneral Hospital.** Implemented November, 2013.
- 14. Commuter service to New Balance, Backyard Farms.** Potential service between housing facilities being developed at the Goodwill-Hinckley campus and Backyard Farms is being explored.
- 15. Targeted access to food pantries, farmers markets.** KVCAP has provided bus tickets to some local food pantries to enhance access for low-income people. Farmers markets in Augusta and Waterville and on existing bus routes.
- 16. Larger bus to meet commuter demand at MaineGeneral.** With changes in commuter schedules, vehicle capacity is currently adequate to meet service demands on most days. The increased cost of larger buses and the related local match costs make this fiscally impractical at this time.

## **New Topics of Interest**

The following ideas were identified and prioritized at a public transit workshop held at KVCAP's office on November 17, 2016. An anonymous polling system was used to determine instant digital ratings. There were 26 Active Participants and a total of 23 questions. The polling results obtained at the workshop are summarized for each question.

It was explained to those in attendance that support for a topic of interest does not guarantee its implementation. Transit providers face many challenges, not least of which are budget considerations, as well as opportunities that may not be foreseen at this time.

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In addition, MaineDOT reserves the right to address service gaps by redirecting funds to other groups and organizations, even though such actions could negatively impact one or more of the identified areas of interest summarized and rated below.

1. How important is Public Transportation to you?

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	73.08%	19
Somewhat Important	19.23%	5
Little Importance	3.85%	1
No opinion	3.85%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

2. Have you or a member of your family used Public Transportation in the last two weeks?

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	16.00%	4
No	84.00%	21
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

3. Partner w/AARP in order to better serve seniors.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	28.00%	7
Somewhat Important	56.00%	14
Little Importance	16.00%	4
No opinion	0.00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

4. Expand Somerset & Kennebec Explorer linkages to rural areas.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	68.00%	17
Somewhat Important	12.00%	3
Little Importance	16.00%	4
No opinion	4.00%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

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5. Provide more buses in Waterville to better serve the community.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	45.83%	11
Somewhat Important	29.17%	7
Little Importance	20.83%	5
No opinion	4.17%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

6. Provide for adult education transportation

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	37.50%	9
Somewhat Important	41.67%	10
Little Importance	8.33%	2
No opinion	12.50%	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

7. Expand service times to early evening hours.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	41.67%	10
Somewhat Important	50.00%	12
Little Importance	4.17%	1
No opinion	4.17%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

8. Expand service to Quarry Road Recreation Area in Waterville.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	16.00%	4
Somewhat Important	36.00%	9
Little Importance	32.00%	8
No opinion	16.00%	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

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9. Increase layover times at Head Start in Augusta for better service.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	40.00%	10
Somewhat Important	52.00%	13
Little Importance	0.00%	0
No opinion	8.00%	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

10. Expand transit service to rural Somerset County.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	48.00%	12
Somewhat Important	32.00%	8
Little Importance	8.00%	2
No opinion	12.00%	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

11. Explore the feasibility and cost of “scheduled route” service to China, Vassalboro and Winslow.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	37.50%	9
Somewhat Important	45.83%	11
Little Importance	12.50%	3
No opinion	4.17%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

12. Survey employers to determine the market for weekend service.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	11.54%	3
Somewhat Important	34.62%	9
Little Importance	50.00%	13
No opinion	3.85%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

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13. Form a “local match” group to evaluate new and expanded sources of local match.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	56.00%	14
Somewhat Important	32.00%	8
Little Importance	4.00%	1
No opinion	8.00%	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

14. Explore the establishment of volunteer networks in rural areas to provide service to central cities/hubs.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	60.00%	15
Somewhat Important	40.00%	10
Little Importance	0.00%	0
No opinion	0.00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

15. Survey the public about transit services.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	34.62%	9
Somewhat Important	30.77%	8
Little Importance	26.92%	7
No opinion	7.69%	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

16. Explore the establishment of commuter services to Backyard Farms, New Balance, Kennebec Valley Community College.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	40.00%	10
Somewhat Important	40.00%	10
Little Importance	12.00%	3
No opinion	8.00%	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

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17. Consider the establishment of service on the Route 201 Corridor.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	54.17%	13
Somewhat Important	33.33%	8
Little Importance	4.17%	1
No opinion	8.33%	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

18. Continue public outreach efforts.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	79.17%	19
Somewhat Important	16.67%	4
Little Importance	0.00%	0
No opinion	4.17%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>

19. Establish promotional rides for the press and members of the Legislature.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	50.00%	13
Somewhat Important	34.62%	9
Little Importance	11.54%	3
No opinion	3.85%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

20. Continue to work on implementing the projects and priorities contained in the current Locally Coordinated Plan.

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Very Important	80.77%	21
Somewhat Important	15.38%	4
Little Importance	3.85%	1
No opinion	0.00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

21. Support the establishment of an advocate to the Legislature.

<b>Responses</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Very Important	69.23%	18
Somewhat Important	19.23%	5
Little Importance	7.69%	2
No opinion	3.85%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

22. Continue to enhance the Kennebec Explorer Brand.

<b>Responses</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Very Important	69.23%	18
Somewhat Important	15.38%	4
Little Importance	11.54%	3
No opinion	3.85%	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26</b>

23. Improved signage throughout the Kennebec Explorer service area.

<b>Responses</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Very Important	68.00%	17
Somewhat Important	20.00%	5
Little Importance	12.00%	3
No opinion	0.00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>

**One-Way Trips FY 2013 – 2016**

<b>Kennebec Explorer General Public Flex Route Trips</b>				
	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
Augusta	49,372	53,062	56,825	61,640
Waterville	14,995	14,331	15,680	15,542
Somerset	1,492	5,846	7,488	7,692
Intercity	5,160	9,574	14,351	12,929
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,019</b>	<b>82,813</b>	<b>94,344</b>	<b>97,803</b>

<b>KV Van Demand Response Trips</b>				
	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
General Public	1,796	776	761	820
Paratransit (Fixed Route only)				
MaineCare	392,588	175,816	296,058	302,842
DHHS Other	20,585	16,278	21,837	27,832
Other	1,055	2,712	1,719	1,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>416,024</b>	<b>195,582</b>	<b>320,375</b>	<b>332,991</b>

**Public Participation Summary**

Public participation has played a central role in planning and providing general public transit services in Kennebec and Somerset Counties. KVCAP values the important role that the public plays in ensuring that general public transit services continue to support the economic and social fabric of the communities that it serves. The following highlights major public participation milestones.

- 1. Public transit forum.** 11/1/2016: KVCAP hosted a Public Transit Forum in Waterville to establish priorities and identify partners in the effort to establish an additional bus in Waterville.
- 2. Transit workshop.** 11/17/2016. KVCAP hosted a Transit Workshop at its offices in Waterville at which future projects and priorities were identified and prioritized for the updated Locally Coordinated Plan.

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- 3. Sustain Mid-Maine Transportation Committee.** KVCAP Transportation Director served as the Team Leader for the Sustain Mid-Maine Transportation Committee that meets 5-6 times annually to gather local input and develop transportation strategy.
- 4. Somerset Transit Committee.** KVCAP regularly meets with local public officials and interested parties as a member of the Somerset Transit Committee. This committee regularly meets to review utilization of existing service and gain input for new development.
- 5. Jackman Leadership Team.** On several occasions, KVCAP met with the Jackman Leadership Team, including a legislative listening session on 9/24/2016. Transportation was a major topic of discussion.