

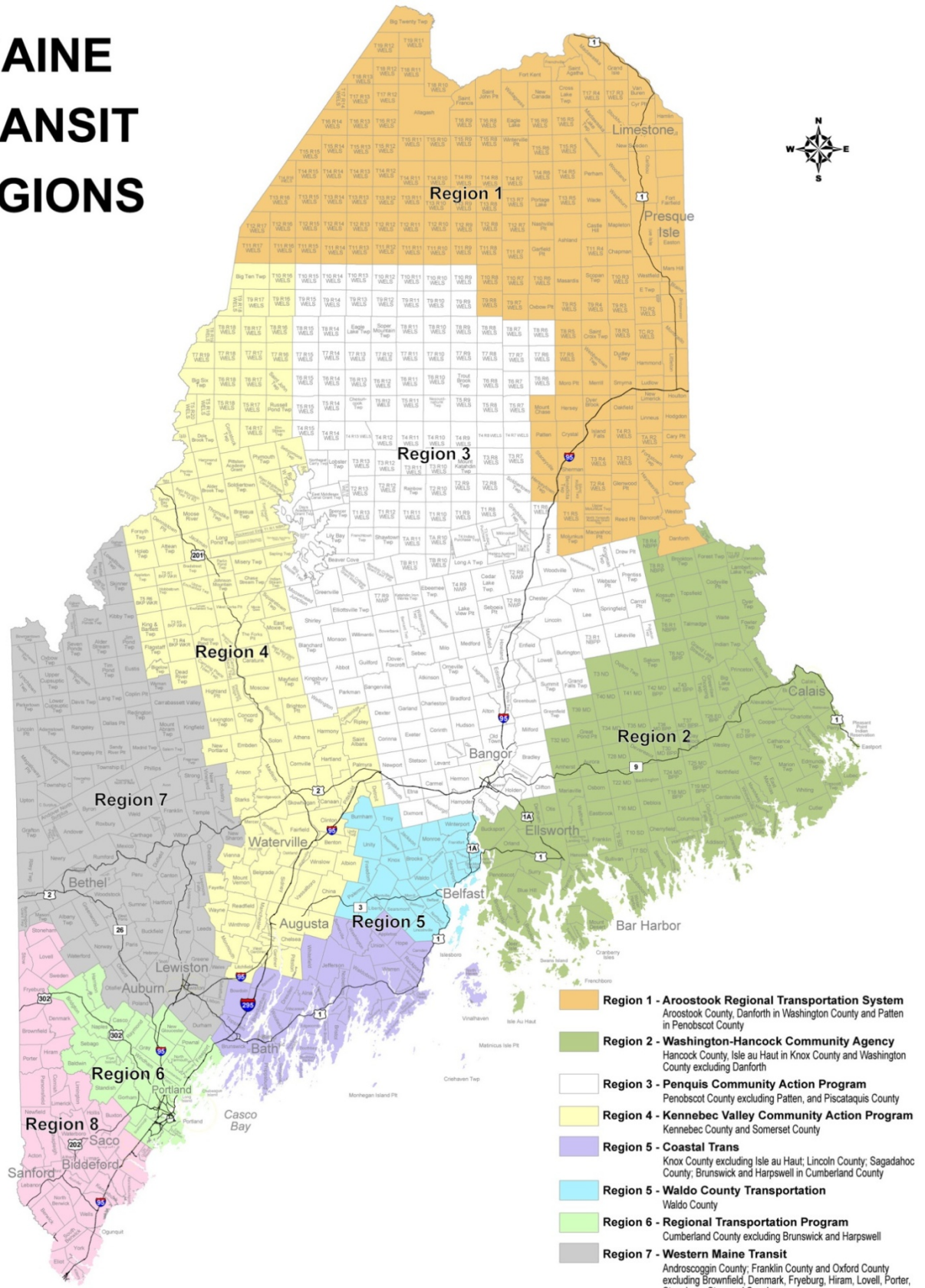
MaineDOT Region 7
Locally Coordinated Plan
FY 2013—FY 2017

Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS)

Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC)

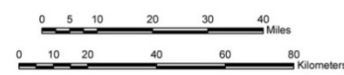
Community Concepts

MAINE TRANSIT REGIONS



- Region 1 - Aroostook Regional Transportation System**
Aroostook County, Danforth in Washington County and Patten in Penobscot County
- Region 2 - Washington-Hancock Community Agency**
Hancock County, Isle au Haut in Knox County and Washington County excluding Danforth
- Region 3 - Penquis Community Action Program**
Penobscot County excluding Patten, and Piscataquis County
- Region 4 - Kennebec Valley Community Action Program**
Kennebec County and Somerset County
- Region 5 - Coastal Trans**
Knox County excluding Isle au Haut; Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County, Brunswick and Harpswell in Cumberland County
- Region 5 - Waldo County Transportation**
Waldo County
- Region 6 - Regional Transportation Program**
Cumberland County excluding Brunswick and Harpswell
- Region 7 - Western Maine Transit**
Androscoggin County; Franklin County and Oxford County excluding Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Hiram, Lovell, Porter, Stoneham, Stow and Sweden
- Region 8 - York County Community Action Program**
York County and Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Hiram, Lovell, Porter, Stoneham, Stow and Sweden in Oxford County

Maine Transit Districts
Maine Department of Transportation
Prepared by
Bureau of Maintenance & Operations
2014



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Regional Overview

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MaineDOT Region 7 Locally Coordinated Plan

Regional Overview

Location of Region 7

Region 7 encompasses Androscoggin, Franklin, and most of Oxford Counties (see map below). Region 7 has a population of approximately 196,303 (2010 Census). Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS) headquartered in Auburn, is the Maine-DOT-designated regional transportation provider for Region 7.

Population of Region 7

The table below shows that in the year 2010, Androscoggin County had a population of 107,702 people and was the largest county in Region 7. Lewiston and Auburn, with a combined population of 59,647 account for 55% of the people in Androscoggin County. Between 2000 and 2010, Oxford County grew at a higher rate (6%) than the state as a whole (4%). Androscoggin and Franklin County each grew at the same rate as the rest of Maine (4%).

Population of Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties and Maine - 2010				
Year	Androscoggin County	Franklin County	Oxford County	Maine
1960	86,312	20,069	44,345	970,689
1970	91,279	22,444	43,457	992,048
1980	99,657	27,098	48,968	1,124,660
1990	105,259	29,008	52,602	1,227,928
2000	103,793	29,467	54,755	1,274,923
2010	107,702	30,768	57,833	1,328,361
1970-80 change	9%	21%	13%	13%
1980-90 change	6%	7%	7%	9%
1990-00 change	-1%	2%	4%	4%
2000-10 change	4%	4%	6%	4%
1960-10 change	25%	53%	30%	37%

Source: US Census

The following table shows that in 2010, the median household income in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties (\$43,315, \$39,628, and \$40,055, respectively) were below the state median (\$46,541). Comparing all three counties, the percentage of people living below the poverty level was highest in Franklin County (17.0%). Oxford County had the highest percentage of people aged 65 and over (17.0%) of any jurisdiction.

County Profiles – 2010				
Measure	Androscoggin County	Franklin County	Oxford County	Maine
Total Population	107,702	30,768	57,833	1,328,361
Total Households	44,315	13,000	24,300	557,219
Average Household Size	2.49	2.36	2.40	2.43
Median Household Income	\$43,714	\$39,628	\$40,055	\$46,541
Persons below Poverty	15.5%	17.0%	13.6%	12.6%
65 Years and Over	14.1%	16.8%	17.0%	15.9%

Source: 2010 U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Transit Needs Analysis Region 7

What is the transit need in Region 7? Region 7 includes Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties. Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS) serves the entire three-county area, as does Community Concepts. The Citylink fixed route system serves Lewiston and Auburn. It is important to look at the number of households in these three counties without a vehicle. By applying the methodology described below, the estimated need of trips on an annual basis can be determined. When comparing annual need in to the actual service provided, the unmet need can be estimated as follows:

- Androscoggin County: 89%
- Franklin County: 78%
- Oxford County: 77%

The Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) in Washington, D.C., developed and made available in 2013 an objective methodology for analyzing transit needs in rural areas. The methodology is contained in “TCRP Report 161 Methods for Forecasting Demand and Quantifying Need for Rural Passenger Transportation: Final Workbook.” The formula used in this technical memorandum utilizes the number of no-vehicle households to determine overall transit needs. The formula includes a mobility gap, which is basically the difference between the number of trips per day that a household with one vehicle would take and the number of trips that a household with no vehicles would take (1.7 trips/day). In urbanized areas, the mobility gap is 5.2 trips/day, based on the 2009 National Household Travel Survey, Federal Highway Administration.

The number of no-vehicle households is derived from the American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates, 2008-2012. The five-year estimate for the ACS is based on the largest sample size and is therefore the most reliable compared to other ACS data collected over shorter periods of time.

The formula is conservative (it may significantly understate the need) because it does not take into account people who may have a vehicle but can't rely on it or may need to use transit because of a disability or limitations due to old age.

The key question which the formula addresses is how much transit service would be needed to fully address the mobility needs of transit dependent persons?

No-Vehicle Households

The TCRP Report 161 formula utilizes the number of no-vehicle households in various jurisdictions to calculate transit needs. The following table provides an overview of the number of no vehicle households in Region 7. The table also contains information on other counties for comparison purposes.

No-Vehicle Households by County		
County	# of No-Vehicle Households	% of state
Androscoggin	4,329	11%
Franklin	804	2%
Oxford	1,515	4%
Aroostook	2,472	6%
Cumberland	9,448	24%
Hancock	1,383	3%
Kennebec	4,197	11%
Knox	1,044	3%
Lincoln	375	1%
Penobscot	4,943	12%
Piscataquis	543	2%
Sagadahoc	953	2%
Somerset	1,503	4%
Sagadahoc	953	2%
Waldo	1,059	3%
Washington	1,166	3%
York	3,981	10%
Total - Maine	39,697*	100%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Table B08201

*Does not exactly equal the sum of the 16 counties, but is the number reported in the ACS.

The table above shows that the greatest concentration of no-vehicle households in Region 7 is in Androscoggin County (4,329 households, or 11% of the state’s 39,697 no-vehicle households).

Transit Needs

The following paragraphs contain a summary of transit needs in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties. Information from other counties is shown for comparison purposes. The data on numbers of trips is based on FY 2012 trips (the last full year of service prior to implementation of the broker system) as shown in the Locally Coordinated Plans for the various providers and in municipal ride reports prepared by regional providers.

One of the most important yardsticks in measuring transit services is the percentage of needs actually met. TCRP Report 161 states that “In the testing of these suggested methodologies with a number of

rural transit agencies, it was found that, at best, only about 20% of the mobility gap trip-based need was met.” Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, meeting 20% of the need is deemed to be a good baseline goal for rural services.

The data are also subject to the following:

- The number of trips provided includes the total of transit and MaineCare trips.
- Trip data includes fixed route, flex route, and MaineCare (agency vehicle, volunteers, friend and family).
- The information includes only land-based transit (ferry trips are not included).
- Seasonal service data is not included.
- Intercity trips are included in the data for the county of origin.

The following table provides an overview of the annual transit need in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties, the number of trips provided, and the number of trips provided as a percentage of the annual need. All other counties are shown for comparison purposes.

County Summary of Transit Need and Trips Provided FY 2012			
County	Annual Need (Trips)	Trips Provided	Trips Provided as a % of Annual Need
Androscoggin	6,025,200	654,002	11%
Franklin	410,100	90,833	22%
Oxford	772,800	178,367	23%
Cumberland	11,696,100	2,099,781	18%
Hancock	705,330	115,027	16%
Kennebec	2,131,290	310,322	15%
Knox	532,440	37,166	7%
Lincoln	191,250	23,178	12%
Penobscot	5,788,600	1,420,462	25%
Piscataquis	276,930	43,029	16%
Sagadahoc	486,000	40,507	8%
Somerset	766,540	136,829	18%
Waldo	540,000	115,009	21%
Washington	594,600	81,317	14%
York	3,535,800	607,019	14%
Total, Maine	35,713,580	6,231,020	17%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Table B08201, TCRP Report 161, Locally Coordinated Transit Plans for all transit providers receiving MaineDOT financial support.

The table above shows that in FY 2012, WMTS, CCI, and Citylink met 11% of the estimated need in Androscoggin County. WMTS and CCI met 22% of the need in Franklin County, and 23% of the need in Oxford County.

As the table indicates, only five counties (including Franklin and Oxford Counties) exceed the baseline estimated annual need (20%).

The following tables demonstrate the estimated trip need at the local level in all three counties.

Androscoggin County Summary of Transit Need and Transit Trips Provided in FY 2012				
	Annual Need (trips)	% of County Need	Trips Provided	Trips Provided as a % of Annual Need
Androscoggin Co. Total	6,025,200	100%	654,002	11%
Citylink Service Area (Lewiston and Auburn)	5,205,000	86%	572,490	11%
Lisbon	480,000	8%	7,049	1%
Sabattus	99,000	2%	5,398	5%
Remainder of County	241,200	4%	69,065	29%

Source: Locally Coordinated Transit Plans FY 2013-2017 for Citylink, Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts, Municipal Ride Reports for FY 2012 (Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts), and TCRP Report 161.

The above table shows that 86% of the county’s estimated transit need is in Lewiston/Auburn, and that only 11% of the need is met. The low percentage of estimated needs met in Lisbon and Sabattus is due to the fact that both communities are in the Lewiston/Auburn urbanized area, and annual estimated need is calculated at a higher rate than in rural areas. Note that a higher percentage of the estimated need is met in the remainder of the county than in Lewiston, Auburn, Lisbon, and Sabattus.

Franklin County Summary of Transit Need and Transit Trips Provided in FY 2012				
	Annual Need (trips)	% of County Need	Trips Provided	Trips Provided as a % of Annual Need
Franklin County Total	410,100	100%	90,833	22%
Farmington	191,700	47%	35,655	19%
Remainder of County	218,400	53%	55,178	25%

Source: Locally Coordinated Transit Plans FY 2013-2017 for Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts, Municipal Ride Reports for FY 2012 (Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts), and TCRP Report 161.

The above table shows that 47% of Franklin County’s estimated transit need is located in one community – Farmington. Overall, Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts met 22% of the county’s estimated transit need. This is above the baseline figure of 20%. In Farmington, 19% of the estimated need was met; just below the baseline figure of 20%.

Oxford County Summary of Transit Need and Transit Trips Provided in FY 2012				
	Annual Need (trips)	% of County Need	Trips Provided	Trips Provided as a % of Annual Need
Oxford County Total	772,800	100%	178,367	23%
Rumford	220,800	29%	28,258	13%
Mexico	41,400	5%	7,118	17%
Remainder of County	510,600	66%	142,991	28%

Source: Locally Coordinated Transit Plans FY 2013-2017 for Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts, Municipal Ride Reports for FY 2012 (Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts), and TCRP Report 161.

The above table shows that Western Maine Transportation Services and Community Concepts met 23% of the county’s estimated transit need. This is above the baseline figure of 20%. Roughly a third of Oxford County’s estimated transit need is located in Rumford and Mexico, but the two agencies met only 13% and 17%, respectively, of the two communities’ estimated transit need. In the remainder of the county, WMTS and Community Concepts met 28% of the estimated transit need, which is above the baseline figure of 20%.

Estimating General Public Demand

Estimating overall trip needs is important because it includes the travel needs of the general public as well as people being served by various social service programs such as the MaineCare non-emergency medical transportation. It also provides a starting point for determining the number of trips in a given area as a percentage of the overall need and from that, whether additional trips are needed to meet an overall baseline service goal of 20% (trips as a percentage of overall need).

However, for the purposes of long-range transit planning to meet the needs of the general public, it’s important to ask “how much transit will the public use in rural/non-urban areas?” TCRP Report 161 has a formula for estimating general public transit demand in rural areas:

Trips / year =

- 2.2 x the population 60 and over
- + 5.21 x the mobility limited population 18-64
- + 1.52 x the number of residents in households with no vehicles

The data sources for use in the formula are derived from the American Community Survey, 2008-2012 five-year estimates, Locally Coordinated Transit Plans for the various providers, and provider municipal ride reports.

The formula is intended to apply to rural/non-urban areas. As shown in the table below, the percentage of trips provided as a percentage of general public demand included: 3% in rural Androscoggin County, 15% in Franklin County, and 7% in Oxford County.

**County Summary of General Public Transit Demand
and Trips Provided FY 2012**

County	Annual General Public Need	General Public Trips Provided	Trips Provided as a % of General Public Demand
Androscoggin (rural only)¹	27,886	746	3%
Franklin	22,360	3,434	15%
Oxford	43,744	2,925	7%
Aroostook	60,716	50,360	83%
Cumberland (rural only) ²	60,131	6,456	11%
Hancock	41,227	62,412	151%
Kennebec	47,024	65,416	139%
Knox	31,294	2,953 ⁵	9%
Lincoln	28,070	1,887 ⁵	7%
Penobscot (rural only) ³	61,543	2,355	4%
Piscataquis	15,353	3,618	24%
Sagadahoc	24,691	15,794 ⁵	64%
Somerset	40,504	611	2%
Waldo	28,670	10,328	36%
Washington	28,305	9,491	34%
York (rural only) ⁴	97,019	71,133	73%
Total, Maine	658,537	431,314	65%

Sources: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Table B08201, TCRP Report 161, Locally Coordinated Transit Plans for all transit providers receiving MaineDOT financial support, municipal ride reports, transit providers.

¹Exclusive of Citylink service area (Lewiston/Auburn)

²Exclusive of METRO service area (Portland, Westbrook, Falmouth) and South Portland Bus Service jurisdiction

³Exclusive of Community Connector service area (Bangor, Brewer, Hampden, Old Town, Orono, Veazie)

⁴Exclusive of ShuttleBus service area (Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach)

⁵Coastal Trans general public trips were estimated using total general public trips time ratios of county trips to total trips in CTI service area

Overview of the Elderly Population

The tables below provide an overview of the elderly population in Region 7 as well as the rest of Maine. As shown in the first table, the elderly population as a percentage of the total county population was 14.1% in Androscoggin County, 16.8% in Franklin County, and 17.0% in Oxford County. The second table shows that between 2015 and 2025 the population of people 65 and older is expected to see an increase of 4,847 people (28.0%) in Androscoggin County, 1,750 people (29.1%) in Franklin County, and 3,213 people (28.7%) in Oxford County. The overall state increase is expected to be 31%.

Distribution of Maine's Elderly Population 2010

County	Population	# 65 +	% of County	% of State	Median Age
Androscoggin	107,702	15,184	14.1	7.2	39.8
Franklin	30,768	5,160	16.8	2.4	43.4
Oxford	57,833	9,843	17.0	4.7	44.6
Aroostook	71,870	13,651	19.0	6.5	45.3
Cumberland	281,674	40,157	14.3	19.0	41
Hancock	54,418	9,937	18.3	4.7	46.3
Kennebec	122,151	18,960	15.5	9.0	42.8
Knox	39,736	7,594	19.1	3.6	46.2
Lincoln	34,457	7,393	21.5	3.5	48.1
Penobscot	153,923	22,253	14.5	10.5	39.9
Piscataquis	17,535	3,564	20.3	1.7	48.1
Sagadahoc	35,293	5,788	16.4	2.7	44.1
Somerset	52,228	8,537	16.3	4.0	43.6
Waldo	38,786	6,280	16.2	3.0	44.1
Washington	32,856	6,426	19.6	3.0	46.1
York	197,131	30,353	15.4	14.4	43
Maine	1,328,361	211,080	15.9	100	42.7

Source: U.S. Census 2010.

Growth of Maine's Elderly Population 2015 to 2025

County	Population In 2010	Population In 2015	Population In 2025	# Change 2015-2025	% Change 2015-2025
Androscoggin	15,184	17,322	22,169	4,847	28.0%
Franklin	5,160	6,015	7,765	1,750	29.1%
Oxford	9,843	11,204	14,417	3,213	28.7%
Aroostook	13,651	15,371	18,599	3,228	21.0%
Cumberland	40,157	47,635	65,838	18,203	38.2%
Hancock	9,937	11,835	14,970	3,135	26.5%
Kennebec	18,960	21,939	28,645	6,706	30.6%
Knox	7,594	9,069	11,765	2,696	29.7%
Lincoln	7,393	8,877	10,844	1,967	22.2%
Penobscot	22,253	25,635	33,674	8,039	31.4%
Piscataquis	3,564	4,194	5,130	936	22.3%
Sagadahoc	5,788	7,019	9,406	2,387	34.0%
Somerset	8,537	10,025	12,842	2,817	28.1%
Waldo	6,280	7,868	10,409	2,541	32.3%
Washington	6,426	7,489	9,019	1,530	20.4%
York	30,353	36,860	50,832	13,972	38.0%
Maine	211,080	248,358	326,320	77,962	31.0%

Sources: U.S. Census 2010 and Maine Office of Policy and Management

Regional Public and Private Transportation Providers

Public Transportation Providers

Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS)

Lisbon Connection
Norway-Paris Shuttle
Mountain Explorer
Sugarloaf Explorer

Lewiston Auburn Transit Committee (LATC)

Citylink

Community Concepts

Private Transportation Providers

Bus Companies

Greyhound Bus Lines, 44 Oak Street, Lewiston, 782-0311

Hudson Bus Lines, 280 Bartlett, Lewiston, 783-2033

Charter Service

Northeast Charter & Tour Co., 235 Goddard Road, Lewiston, 784-3159

Taxi Service

Celebrity Cab, 242 Main Street, Lewiston, 784-3271

City Cab Company, 29 Avon Street, Lewiston, 784-4521

Five Star Taxi, Auburn, 782-1074

L/A Cab 24 Hour Service, 28 Riverside Drive, Auburn, 689-5080

Mountain Valley Taxi Service, Mexico, 364-9900

River Valley Taxi, 178 Main Street, Mexico, 364-4588

Road Hog Express, 242 Waldo Street, Rumford, 364-3377

Town Taxi, 52 Autumn Lane, Lewiston, 784-5765

Town Taxi, 145 Wilton Rd., Farmington, 778-3788

Tri-Town Taxi, 21 McNamara Lane, Lewiston, 777-5777

Wheelchair Van Service

United Ambulance, 192 Russell Street, Lewiston, 783-2219

Community Based Volunteer Transportation

Senior Transportation Program, Bridgton, 647-2483

Other Services

Veterans Administration Transportation Program. The Veterans Administration operates a transportation program utilizing vans and volunteer drivers to transport veterans from around the state to Togus Hospital in Augusta. 207-623-5725.

Potential Transportation Providers. In 2014, MaineDOT sent a transportation survey to assisted living facilities, service organizations, volunteer groups and others, requesting information about their transportation services. Several survey respondents in this region indicated a conditional interest in providing transportation to the general public. Contact MaineDOT for information about these survey respondents.

Providers Seeking Section 5311 Assistance

Western Maine Transportation Services is the only provider seeking Section 5311 assistance.

Development of the Locally Coordinated Plan

Coordination of public transit services is at the core of MaineDOT's mission of providing statewide public transportation through the development and maintenance of efficient, effective and safe transit systems that meet the access and mobility needs of its citizens. Coordination occurs not only at the state agency level, but also at the regional and local levels to assist in prioritizing transit needs, identifying funding sources and avoiding duplication of services.

The Locally Coordinated Plan is a planning process that documents and prioritizes local, regional and statewide transit needs, creates opportunities for discussion regarding potential projects and funding mechanisms, and reports out on adequacy of current services. The coordination of transit planning is a federal (SAFETEA-LU) and state (23 MRSA §4209 et seq.) requirement when selecting transportation projects for funding to ensure public participation and equitable distribution of available funding among disadvantaged populations such as the elderly, low-income and individuals with disabilities.

Below are the various processes used in meeting the locally coordinated plan requirements and the state mandates on coordination of human services transportation.

- Collect, analyze and evaluate existing coordination efforts among transportation stakeholders within each region to determine how best to maximize available resources to meet the transportation needs of the region, as described below;
- Organize statewide public Transit Summit Meetings to collaborate on existing and future transit needs as described in paragraph B, below;
- Schedule meetings as needed with interested parties such as advocacy groups and volunteer organizations interested in transportation services;
- Develop and implement outreach efforts with other stakeholders such as tribal governments, regional planning organizations, and the Maine Transit Association to expand potential transportation funding partnerships; and
- Report quarterly to the Governor's Interagency Transportation Coordinating Committee.

Existing Coordination Efforts in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties

Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS) has an ongoing working relationship with nonprofit organizations and area social service agencies to address the transportation needs of Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties. In FY 2012, 61% of total revenues received were derived from MaineCare funds. Consequently, WMTS relied heavily on MaineCare transportation services to leverage other funding sources and coordinate trips to remain as a viable public transportation provider in the region. For example, there are members of the general public that rely solely on WMTS to access medical care, groceries, and other basic living needs including elderly, individuals with disabilities, and low income individuals who have marginal incomes and who do not qualify for any local, state, or federal assistance programs. The importance of using a variety of funding sources as reflected in the chart provide the region with an affordable, integrated and comprehensive transit service. Moreover, the ability to leverage a variety of funding sources, instead of relying on a single source of revenue, is critical to support the current level of service or the expected demand for more services.

As the MaineDOT-designated regional transportation provider for Region 7, and the contracted fixed route operator for the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC), and the operator for the Lisbon Connection, WMTS is in a unique position to coordinate both fixed route and paratransit services in Region 7. WMTS has informal working relationships with York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC), Regional Transportation Program, Inc., (RTP) and Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP) concerning the coordination of services between regions, particularly when it is necessary to transport a person from one region to the next. WMTS dispatchers work with dispatchers from Community Concepts when the need arises.

Coordination of services occurs at all levels of planning and implementation at WMTS to ensure that a comprehensive, regional approach is used when evaluating available transportation services, including those agencies and organizations that request transportation services on a programmatic level. WMTS dispatchers, in particular, are responsible for ensuring eligibility of services as well as appropriate mode of service. Dispatchers take incoming calls from a variety of individuals seeking transportation, including the general public, individuals with disabilities, low-income and the elderly. Coordination with other social service agencies is also critical to ensure the most efficient and appropriate ride is arranged for their clients if no other means of transportation is available.

Transit Summit Meeting

The Maine Department of Transportation and WMTS solicited widespread input in the development of the locally coordinated plan using a Regional Plan Transit Summit Meeting held on December 10, 2013 at the Auburn Public Library, Auburn. An extensive list of interested parties was developed representing various organizations such as social service agencies, tribal governments, regional planning organizations, hospitals, nursing homes, advocacy groups, providers of transportation services, and interested citizens. Notices of the meeting were mailed to the interested parties and public notices were advertised in the Sun Journal.

The notices included the purpose of the Transit Summit Meeting as follows:

- Evaluate current transit services and mobility management efforts for:
 - Low income individuals
 - Elderly individuals
 - Individuals with disabilities
 - General public

- Evaluate and prioritize future transit projects as identified by the transit provider; (a list of the projects were provided with the invitation)

- Collect information on coordination efforts.

An opportunity was provided for attendees to identify needs and propose additional strategies and projects for the region.

The response from the meeting was comprehensive and participants specifically expressed the need for LATC to construct a bus station in Auburn, installation of bus stop signs and update the route design study; WMTS—to replace old equipment, offer services to recreation, and develop a three loop system, and CCI—to obtain additional resources to aid in flexibility and upgrade computers. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the new MaineCare broker in Region 7.

For a summary of the results of the Transit Summit, please refer to the Locally Coordinated Transit Plans for WMTS, LATC and Community Concepts.

Ongoing Collaboration

MaineDOT meets with non-profit agencies, advocacy groups, transportation providers, volunteers, religious organizations and individual members of the public as requested to provide information regarding funding opportunities, approaches to effective collaboration within existing transit regions, and innovative solutions to transit challenges such as leveraging of other federal and state grants to assist communities in seeking local match for both operating and capital grant requests through the Federal Transit Administration.

Outreach Efforts

MaineDOT through its various planning processes regularly seeks public input to help identify transit priorities and funding solutions to meet the needs for each of the transit regions. MaineDOT’s long-range plan, mid-range plan and the two-year capital work plan are just some examples of the ongoing public participation efforts used to achieve comprehensive and equitable transportation planning priorities. Organizations such as the economic development districts, regional planning organizations, tribal governments, municipalities, Maine Turnpike Authority and Maine Transit Association are examples of transportation partners that MaineDOT relies upon in order to fully implement transit strategies at local, regional and statewide levels.

Interagency Transportation Coordinating Committee

The Interagency Transportation Coordinating Committee is the result of a state mandate requiring three state agencies to collaborate with each other in the delivery of passenger transportation services in Maine. Specifically, the law mandates the Departments of Transportation, Health and Human

Services and Labor to serve on the committee to promote efficiency, cooperation and strategic planning for public transportation purposes.

The law also requires that the Biennial Operations Plan (now called the Locally Coordinated Transit Plan, LCP), which serves as the basis for federal and state funding of public transportation projects, be approved by the ITCC as way to ensure that collaboration and coordination is achieved in order to maximize efficiencies in the delivery of human transportation services. The LCP is an additional tool used by the committee to review current fixed-route and demand-response mass transportation services and to identify opportunities for enhancing these services. As noted earlier, the development of the LCP offers the service providers and transit users an opportunity for structured dialogue concerning the opportunities and obstacles to providing efficient and productive mobility for travelers in Maine.

Periodic Review of Service

Overview

MaineDOT through its contract agreements with WMTS and LATC has identified performance measures and ridership reporting requirements to analyze transit services in the region. Region 7 challenges are unique in that it has a vast geographic area with only a few transportation options available to the public. Increased service and expansion of services is difficult to achieve as the ridership revenue does not support the expense of such an expansion. Changes to existing services are made as service statistics demand. The public, other potential providers, and human service agencies are given an opportunity to review the service through the public notice process required for the preparation of the LCP.

There has been no expression of interest expressed by private operators to participate in supplying service. In the future, area transportation providers interested in competing for service would be requested to submit relevant cost/service proposals for inclusion in the public/private service decision making process.

Locally Established Criteria

WMTS periodically reviews its operations to ensure that the widest possible range of transportation services is provided in Region 7, particularly for those persons who are low income, disadvantaged, individuals with disabilities or elderly. WMTS conducts internal reviews of its operations to determine how best to provide/adjust services so that transportation services are provided in a cost-effective manner.

In the event that a private operator presented a proposal for delivering transportation services in the three-county area, a cost comparison analysis would be conducted for the purpose of determining the most cost effective method of service delivery. The private operator would be allowed to build in a 10% profit objective. The cost analysis would be reviewed by the WMTS General Manager and presented to the WMTS Board for final determination. WMTS anticipates that the major criteria to be employed in making a public versus private service decision would be (1) contract cost on a per-trip and mile basis and (2) demonstrated ability of the operator to provide high quality, well maintained service.

Methodology for True Cost Comparison

There are currently no private transportation providers competing for service in the area. In the event that a private operator expressed interest in competing for service, specific guidelines would be developed to enable an accurate comparison of all related costs and services. All proposals would be evaluated by the Executive Director and submitted to the Board of Directors with a recommended course of action. Determination of appropriate action would be made by the Board of Directors. Disputed decisions would be submitted to the Maine Department of Transportation for resolution.

Complaints from Private Operators

WMTS has received no complaints from private operators.

Americans with Disabilities Act Plans

Western Maine Transportation and the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee are in compliance with the "Non Discrimination on the Basis of Handicap" in Financial Assistance Programs in accordance with CFR Parts 27 and 609, Federal Register, May 23, 1986. Both agencies have taken steps to ensure access to transportation services by elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Vehicles of both agencies are accessible as required.

WMTS' service routes have been designed to allow elderly persons and persons with disabilities access to community services. Origins and destinations commonly used by the elderly and persons with disabilities have been integrated into existing service stops.