

**Public Transit Advisory Council
Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, October 9th, 2024

9:30am – 1:00pm

Location: Zoom

<https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/82691279804>

Or One tap mobile :

+16468769923,82691279804# US (New York)

Agenda Item	Responsibility	Action or Information
1.) Call to Order (9:30)	Chad Heid, Chair	Action
2.) Ascertain Quorum (9:30-9:35)	Chad Heid, Chair	Action
3.) Approval of Previous Minutes (9:35-9:40) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• August 2024	Chad Heid, Chair	Action
4.) Committee Updates (9:40-10:15) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• State of Transit• Research & Policy• Equity• Mobility Alternatives• Steering	Committee Chairs	Information
5.) Regional State of Transit Presentations (10:15-12:20) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Region 1• Region 5• Region 7• NNEPRA• Q & A	Multiple	Information
6.) Discussion Items (12:20-12:45) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee activities• PTAC member survey• Deliverables / timeline• Remaining stakeholder presentations - December• Meeting schedule	Chad Heid, Chair	Information
7.) Public Comment (12:45-12:55)	Chad Heid, Chair	Information
8.) New Business / Meeting Feedback (12:55-1:00)	Chad Heid, Chair	Information
9.) Adjournment (1:00)	Chad Heid, Chair	Action

Public Transit Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes of August 14, 2024 – Held via Zoom

PTAC Members in Attendance: Josh Caldwell, Stephanie Carver, Andrew Clark, Representative Lydia Crafts, Amanda Dioszeghy, Eamonn Dundon, Senator Brad Farrin, Katherine Freund, Michael Hallundbaek, Cheryl Harkins, Chad Heid, Maddie Jensen, Jonathan LaBonte, David Landry, Susan Lessard, Jessica Maurer, Ryan Neale, Barbara Schneider, Duane Scott, Mike Tremblay.

Others in attendance: Lori Brann, Kathleen Spear from MaineDOT, Zoe Miller, Megan Saban, Steve Richard, Kirk Bellavance.

(Note: Chats made during this meeting are found at the end of these minutes).

- 1. Call to Order.** Chad Heid called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
- 2. Ascertain Quorum.** It was determined that the quorum requirements were met.
- 3. Approval of June 2024 Minutes.** Jonathan LaBonte moved to approve the minutes; Jess Maurer seconded. ***The minutes were unanimously approved.***
- 4. Committee Updates.** Chad noted that committees are just beginning their work and a lot of work can be expected over the next 4-6 weeks.

Steering Committee: The Steering Committee is chaired by Chad and has met once. The committee will focus on coordination with MaineDOT staff.

State of Transit Committee: The State of Transit Committee is chaired by Chad. Chad asked the PTAC members what data MaineDOT could provide to improve understanding of the current level of transit service and help the Council make informed recommendations in its report to the Legislature. Discussion included the role of the committee, data reported to the National Transit Database, travel patterns, funding distribution by mode, vehicle fleet age and condition, facilities, bus stops, transit centers, staffing, and labor. The hope is to be able to quantify a metric of riders relative to subsidy. MaineDOT has provided SFY24 actual expenses that fund the transit network.

Research and Policy: The Research and Policy Committee is chaired by Josh Caldwell and has met once. The committee could use more members. Research is expected to focus on actionable items such as transparency in decision making, funding, climate, efficiency, land use and housing, access, and affordability. The committee will research these issues for final recommendations. The committee will next meet in October before the October PTAC meeting. Katherine Freund noted that ITN is doing work on policy for volunteer driver networks and insurance is a costly issue. She noted the relationship between transportation and social determinants of health.

Equity Committee: The Equity Committee has not yet met. There are currently 4 volunteers on this committee.

Mobility Alternatives: The Mobility Alternatives committee has not yet met.

Chad noted that he received notice from some Council members on their committee preferences and asked members to continue to share those. Chad will share a Doodle poll to help find meeting times for the two committees that have not yet met.

The work of the committees will inform the report to the Legislature. Research and recommendations should begin to come together in the next 6-8 weeks.

5. Regional State of Transit Presentations.

Region 4. Presentation by Kirk Bellavance, the new Senior Transportation Director at KVCAP, which covers Region 4, Kennebec and Somerset Counties. Kirk noted that KVCAP is a non-profit organization providing a range of services to clients in its service area including demand-response transportation services. Funding sources include state contracts for MaineCare, DHHS Low-Income, and DHHS Child Welfare, as well as nonprofits and FTA 5311 formula grants for rural areas. KVCAP may provide less service going forward due to increased costs. KVCAP receives federal funds through MaineDOT. Raising the match required for FTA 5339 and FTA 5310 formula funds is a challenge as many regional municipalities do not have a large tax base.

KV Van has moved away from flex routes to curb-to-curb transit service. KVCAP operates in several zones and is considering a run on Route 201 between Augusta and Waterville. MaineCare makes up approximately 95% of trips and 95% of funding. The decision to award the MaineCare contract to a new broker is a major concern.

Chad asked about the sources of local share (approximately \$268,000 is needed annually). KVCAP's annual golf tournament raises \$40K per year. KVCAP does an annual solicitation of regional municipalities, but municipal contributions are small as communities in the service area have a limited tax base. Brad Farrin agreed to discuss offline with Kirk his understanding that KVCAP can still provide trips under the new DHHS model. Jess noted the challenge of garnering financial support from municipalities and suggested that municipal support for transit service be explored as a policy recommendation in the PTAC's upcoming biennial report. Jess commented that forcing service agencies to compete for limited resources is not efficient. Josh asked if any studies have been done on the viability of fixed route service in the service area. Kirk noted that KVCAP had operated a flex route but changed to demand-response service in 2023 due to low ridership, limited frequencies, and staffing issues. Chad asked if fixed route service might be appropriate in Augusta and noted the importance of studying potential demand for public transit. Kirk said he was not sure about Augusta but noted interest in service between Skowhegan and Waterville. Demand-response ridership is down and KVCAP will look at the potential for fixed route service in Augusta and elsewhere. In response to a question from Chad on drivers, Kirk noted an effort to train drivers with Kennebec Valley Community College. Jonathan asked about discussions with Proctor & Gamble in Auburn and will connect offline with Kirk about possible connections.

Region 3. Presentations by Steve Richard of Penquis and Maddie Jensen of BACTS for BACTS and Bangor Community Connector. Region 3 includes Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties. Existing service includes fixed route, demand-response, and paratransit service. Community Connector is the fixed route service in the greater Bangor area.

Steve noted that Penquis is the MaineDOT designated provider and provides demand-response service throughout the region. Trips may be combined to meet customer needs. Penquis provided MaineCare non-emergency medical transportation rides with KVCAP in Region 4 and is the lone provider in Region 3. MaineCare accounts for 92% of total funding. Penquis is involved in an appeal of the DHHS brokerage decision and is looking for ways beyond the MaineCare brokerage to further its mission and provide service to the entire region. Fares make up 0.1% of total revenues and Penquis may consider fare free service in the future.

Steve noted that volunteer drivers are an important piece of Penquis' service. The potential loss of NEMT service would likely reduce the number of volunteer drivers. Maine's network for accessible transportation service is lacking. Loss of MaineCare funds would require a rethinking of Penquis' operating model. Steve noted Penquis' high level of reliability and its importance to the community.

Steve stated that Penquis coordinates services and funding to maximize efficiency and make the best use of resources. Wheelchair accessible trips are a particular challenge as demand is growing and capacity is not keeping pace. Penquis is working to coordinate funding, increase hour availability, add to its transportation fleet and infrastructure, and improve technology, which yields good data on regional travel patterns and demand. Vehicle procurement delays are challenging. Lack of NEMT rides will reduce service and economies of scale. The lack of private transporters puts additional pressure on community action programs to meet all transportation needs. Penquis is looking at moving to smaller vehicle such as sedans rather than vans.

Maddie Jensen of BACTS provided an overview of Bangor Community Connector on behalf of Laurie Linscott. BCC serves Bangor, Brewer, Hampden, Orono, Old Town, and Veazie 6 days a week. More regular communication between transit providers and MaineDOT on issues such as grant opportunities and technology would be helpful. BACTS is the federally designated MPO for the Bangor region. BACTS is working to implement several transit-related recommendations from recent plans.

Chad asked about alternatives Penquis may be considering depending on the outcome of the DHHS process. Steve noted that Penquis is looking at all alternatives including grants, private employers, medical centers, working with the MaineCare broker, and other options. Penquis uses DHHS guidelines for its on-time performance metrics. Steve noted the lack of accessible transportation infrastructure and suggested a public subsidy to cover insurance costs for private start-ups. Regional demand might be as high as 50 vehicles (Penquis currently has 25 vehicles).

Chad asked all presenters about gaps in service and the possibility of extending service hours beyond first shift. Kirk noted that there are requests for weekend and evening service but current funding does not allow for expansion. The move to demand-response service was done in part to help stretch available resources. BCC is hearing requests for both evening and weekend service. Adding a few additional hours of service is likely not cost prohibitive but finding drivers would be a real challenge. Steve agreed that finding drivers is an issue for Penquis as well and that the lack of evening and weekend service is challenging for riders. All presenters agreed that driver shortages are a limiting factor in continuing or expanding service. KVCAP has moved to non-CDL vehicles to expand the pool of potential applicants but wages are low compared to other industries.

Steve noted that wages may not be high enough for drivers who must deal with challenging riders. Chad agreed that this is a challenge and noted that the CDL-P certification is required for drivers transporting passengers and that training resources for de-escalation are available for operators. Safety is a concern for drivers and potential drivers. Kirk mentioned work with KVCC on driver training that is on hold. Chad mentioned customer training and adherence to passenger codes of conduct. BSOOB does not have a “three strike” policy but has issued temporary bans for riders. KVCAP has also done short suspensions but does not want to deny access to public transportation. Some incidents rise to the level of needing law enforcement involvement. Chad noted that most riders are pleasant and appreciative but a few instances can negatively affect the driver’s view of the job. Retaining operators is difficult when operators deal with challenging passengers and their CDLs afford them other options. Cheryl Harkins noted that navigating the transit system can be frustrating for those with language or cultural barriers. Jess noted that many individuals with behavioral health issues are aging and likely to be reliant on public transportation. Refusing service would limit their ability to travel for essential needs and other purposes. Bringing behavioral health, social service, transit providers, and potentially volunteer driver networks together could be helpful in addressing some of these issues. Mike Tremblay noted that a longer conversation, perhaps in a session at the 2025 Tri-State Transit Conference, may be needed.

Ryan noted MaineDOT’s willingness to explore options with the PTAC and/or others on a holistic approach to driver and staff training initiatives.

6. MaineDOT Coordination.

Chad reviewed the timeline for the report that is due to the Legislature by the end of February 2025. The intent is for the PTAC to review the first draft report at its December meeting. MaineDOT will help author and publish the report, but the content, priorities, and goals and objectives must come from the committees. MaineDOT has asked that the content for the first draft be submitted by the committees by the end of October. Chad asked what data and information the PTAC committees and members will need from MaineDOT and elsewhere to support their work. The State of Transit Committee has developed a list of 36 items. Discussion included:

- The Council should focus on recommendations that are financially feasible. A “wish list” that is financially and logistically unrealistic may not be helpful to policymakers. MaineDOT may be able to provide guidance on what is realistic within realistic financial parameters. A prioritized list including essential and non-essential objectives may be helpful.
- A map of existing transit resources may be helpful to show interconnections and overlap between regions.
- An improved understanding of existing funding sources and uses would help inform the Council’s thinking. MaineDOT staff has already shared information on the current fiscal year to the PTAC Chair and Co-Chair.
- Chad noted that a shared portal accessible for all PTAC members would be helpful.
- Recommendations should be in tune with the work and recommendations of the Governor’s Climate Council. Transportation accounts for more than 50% of emissions in Maine.
- The Council should explore private resources that could support community mobility. Incentives, tax incentives or other, for employers, health care providers, and others to contribute to the costs of public transportation could also be considered. The rapidly aging

population will outstrip available public funds. MaineDOT may be able to identify policies or tools in other states. Transportation impact statements are required for new development. There may be a way to calculate the benefit to private entities of public transportation.

- Jonathan asked about a list of aggregate needs and suggested that other resources, such as the Roux Institute, may be needed for some data collection and analysis. PTAC volunteer members have limited time and MaineDOT staff has limited capacity as well.
- Policies that create incentives for volunteer drivers and other opportunities to assist volunteer drivers and volunteer networks should be considered.
- Chad reiterated that this report is different from past years as the direction is coming from the PTAC. Research should be led by the Research and Policy Committee rather than MaineDOT.
- The labor shortage will be an issue across the work of all committees and across all recommendations. The PTAC is charged with making recommendations and identifying objectives that will ultimately be prioritized by policymakers and the political process.
- The Council's recommendations should be at a high level and should provide options for policymakers to consider rather than focusing on details.
- The Council can help reframe the conversation around why public transportation is important. Equal access to employment opportunities benefits individuals and the economy. The fact that the old \$0.86 per capita transit funding is included in economic plans speaks to its importance in Maine's economy.
- Josh commented that the Council's task is not to solve all problems. The Council's task is to reflect its overall understanding of the current transit system and offer recommendations. The report can identify data gaps and needs. The Council could offer a prioritized list of recommendations and note other recommendations that may not be funded. The PTAC can share the understanding and recommendations that emerge from its work.
- Chad noted the Council's charge is to provide an assessment of current conditions for public transportation and offer recommendations for policy and funding in the next Legislative session. The PTAC is responsible for developing this report, not MaineDOT.
- Ryan noted that MaineDOT/DHHS coordination is included as a priority in the Maine State Transit Plan. DHHS staff was invited to the meeting but was not able to join due to a schedule conflict. There is an opportunity and need for MaineDOT and DHHS to improve coordination of transportation services. At the federal level, the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are encouraging new approaches to transportation in rural areas and pilots to test the new cost allocation formula before it is rolled out nationally. Making better use of existing funding can provide additional resources for public transportation. MaineDOT and DHHS are looking at a regional demonstration model and study.
- Chad will share a list of aggregate needs for Council members to review and add to.
- MaineDOT staff will set up a shared portal for the PTAC.

7. Discussion Items.

- More Committee Engagement: the working groups need more volunteers for meetings in September with recommendations for the report due in October.
- Vacant Seats: the Council discussed adding members to fill seats, including DHHS, the Maine Municipal Association, and Amalgamated Transit Union, which represents several Maine

transit agencies. MMA could be helpful in understanding the need for funding and land use that supports public transit.

- Deliverables/Timeline: the draft report recommendations and content should be to MaineDOT by the end of October.
- Remaining Regional Presentations: the October meeting will include the remaining regional presentations.
- Meeting Schedule and Council Responsibilities: the full Council will meet on the second Wednesday of October and will likely meet in November and December as well. Committees will need to be active in completing their work.
- Jonathan suggested that the limited capacity of PTAC members requires that the Council's recommendations be limited and focused.
- Chad noted that transit operators are concerned about the historic level of state transit funding. The amount was increased through considerable advocacy in the current budget. The MTA's request for \$6.7M was focused on addressing funding gaps. Transit operators are looking for additional funds in the next legislative cycle. Past PTAC reports have not adequately captured the specific need for additional funding. A narrow focus may mean that items that are not included in the report may not be addressed by the Legislature. The 2025 report should highlight the need for additional transit funding.
- The biennial report to the Legislature is due by March 1 of each odd numbered year; the next reports are March 2025 and March 2027. The Council then meets throughout the year as decided by the Chair and members.
- Josh noted that the regional presentations have been helpful in informing the understanding of the state of transit. The full Council can prioritize recommendations for the 2025 report.

8. Public Comment. There were no public comments.

9. New Business/Meeting Feedback. There was no business or meeting feedback.

10. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Substantive Zoom meeting chat comments:

09:30:51 Cheryl Harkins: I had volunteered for the Mobility Committee. I actually used the bus and train systems last month to a conference in DC. I've spoken with Metro employees as well as riders to get opinions. I'm looking forward to sharing.

09:47:41 Barbara Schneider: Is there anyone from Maine Municipal Association on this committee?

10:32:24 Zoe Miller: Accessible vehicles are such an important issue and one that the Moving Maine Network is eager to work on. Accessible vehicles - especially wheelchair lift equipped.

11:19:20 Sue Lessard: Josh - I would like to be on the Research & Policy Committee if that is possible.

11:25:04 Duane Scott: Perhaps provide needed data, etc. at PTAC's existing <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/transit/ptac/>

11:29:46 Amanda Dioszeghy: I really support a centralized repository for our work and what Maine DOT provides

11:40:42 Duane Scott: Is there a “designated” MTA rep?

DRAFT

State of Transit Region 3

August 14, 2024

Existing Transit Service

- ▶ Fixed route
 - ▶ Community Connector
 - ▶ West Transit
 - ▶ Downeast Transportation
 - ▶ Cyr Bus
 - ▶ Concord Coach/Greyhound
 - ▶ WCAP
- ▶ Demand Response
 - ▶ Penquis Lynx Transportation
- ▶ Paratransit
 - ▶ Community Connector

PENQUIS

Helping Today • Building Tomorrow

Steven Richard (Director of Transportation Services)

Address: 262 Harlow St. Bangor, ME 04401

Phone Number: (207)973-3512

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Overview

- ▶ Service area: Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties
- ▶ Frequency: General Public schedule stops in each town at least one day per week. Other funding Penquis receives is offered daily at times requested by the client.
- ▶ Fare Structure: Most trips do not require a client fare. Those that do are between \$0.50 - \$7.00 per one way trip.
- ▶ Limitations:
 - ▶ Child transportation due to a lack of trained child driver availability
 - ▶ Nights and weekends due to driver availability
 - ▶ Demand exceeding funding
 - ▶ Lack of drivers to meet demand
 - ▶ Lack of time diversity to meet demand

Budget

- ▶ MaineCare: ~\$12.4million
- ▶ Passenger Paid Fares: ~\$35,000
- ▶ Service Contracts and Grants: ~\$500,000
- ▶ State: ~\$423,000
- ▶ Federal: ~\$1.8million

Performance

- ▶ Completed Trips: ~330,000
- ▶ Missed Trips: 2,800
 - ▶ Overall OTP: 93.35%
 - ▶ Children under 16 and Waiver OTP: 99.46%
 - ▶ Number of late trips resulting in missed appointments: 182
- ▶ Cost of Service: ~\$15.2million (FY23)

Needs Assessment / Current Strategies

- ▶ Penquis coordinates services between DHHS and MDOT
- ▶ Unmet needs include
 - ▶ Transportation requests for Rural Piscataquis County especially during odd hours where there are few drivers based
 - ▶ Out of area lift trips. Connectivity issues for border towns of the region where the closest transportation provider may be another regional provider.
- ▶ Penquis alignment with LCP
 - ▶ working to coordinate funding sources
 - ▶ increase hour availability
 - ▶ adding to transportation fleet and infrastructure
 - ▶ improving technology
- ▶ Data management and reporting infrastructure - QRyde state of the art software customized to meet our needs and evolving as our transportation demands change into the future.

Challenges / Opportunities

- ▶ Vehicle Procurement
 - ▶ MDOT doesn't have enough funds to meet 5310 and 5339 vehicle requests.
 - ▶ Slow turnaround from request to delivery



Laurie Linscott (Bus Superintendent)
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Overview

- ▶ Community Connector is owned and operated by the City of Bangor
- ▶ Service area: The towns of Bangor, Brewer, Hampden, Orono, Old Town, and Veazie are served by 11 routes and ADA Paratransit.
- ▶ Frequency:
 - ▶ 6 days a week from 6:15am-5:45pm
 - ▶ 30-60 min lead times
 - ▶ Peak service: 13 buses and 7 vans
- ▶ Fare Structure: Pre-purchased tickets or cash. Number of discount rates for students, elderly, etc.

Budget

- ▶ Overall budget \$5.6million (including fixed route and ADA)
 - ▶ Receives 5307 and 5339 funding
 - ▶ Local Budget
 - ▶ Municipalities pay based on service hours
- ▶ Last +10 years have been flat funded with first increase in FY24 and FY25
- ▶ Recent FTA Discretionary Grant Awards: Cold Bus Barn, Bus Stop Designation project, bus purchases, etc.
 - ▶ MDOT has been very supportive by contributing match in some cases.

Performance

- ▶ Completed Trips FY24: ~554,000
 - ▶ ~25% increase from FY23
 - ▶ Still recovering from Covid ridership reduction (Over 775,000 rides in FY19)
- ▶ Fare Recovery
 - ▶ FY22 annual vehicle revenue miles: ~\$690,000
 - ▶ FY22 fare revenue = ~\$420,000
- ▶ Service Reliability
 - ▶ Community Connector and ADA Paratransit back up to full service from Covid and driver shortages

Needs Assessment / Current Strategies

- ▶ State and local goals are largely aligned
- ▶ Mobile fare payment should be coordinated statewide if possible
- ▶ Lack of regular communication between transit providers and MDOT
 - ▶ Regular meeting frequency might allow us to collaborate more frequently/effectively
- ▶ We have strong local support for existing service level
- ▶ Expansion and maintenance is the largest concern for region
- ▶ Region is focused on funding active projects, to the detriment of building reserves

Challenges / Opportunities

- ▶ Labor
 - ▶ CC constantly struggles against driver shortages (caused year long service reduction)
 - ▶ MDOT could support CDL training statewide and create pipelines to municipal/transit positions
 - ▶ Partner with community colleges or adult education courses?
- ▶ Safety
 - ▶ MDOT previously gave transit agencies materials and merch to distribute to riders
- ▶ Vehicle Procurement
 - ▶ FTA encourages joint procurement for bus grants. MDOT should partner with bus manufacturers directly on future applications. Many of the successful Low/No Emission applicants were partnered with Gillig.
- ▶ Public Education / Marketing
 - ▶ Fare Free Friday was previously a state initiative. Transit agencies got funds to support that free fare and MDOT assisted with marketing
 - ▶ Expand GOMaine! and BCM presence here for overall mode shift support
- ▶ Improve coordination with fixed route transit providers, non emergency providers, DHHS, and MDOT. Riders shouldn't carry burden to navigate these different providers, regions, processes.



Maddie Jensen (Planner)
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Overview

- ▶ BACTS is a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that coordinates transportation planning and investment decisions with the state, municipalities, and the public.
 - ▶ Serving the Greater Bangor Urbanized Area, including Bangor, Bradley, Brewer, Hampden, Hermon, Milford, Old Town, Orono, Orrington, Penobscot Nation, and Veazie.
- ▶ BACTS also holds contracts with MDOT for
 - ▶ Transportation technical assistance in rural Penobscot County
 - ▶ Statewide Traffic Incident Management.

Budget

- ▶ Unified Planning Work Program (2 year performance period)
 - ▶ FHWA: ~\$1million
 - ▶ FTA: ~\$200k
 - ▶ State: ~\$150k
 - ▶ Local: ~\$150k
- ▶ Received formula funding increase starting in FY24
- ▶ MDOT Rural Contract: ~\$40k
- ▶ MDOT TIMS Contract: ~\$90k

Needs Assessment / Current Strategies

- ▶ Transit Related Recommendations from Recent Plans
 - ▶ Transit supportive strategies
 - ▶ Complete streets policy adoption and assessment
 - ▶ Update zoning and new development standards
 - ▶ Create a capacity building strategy for public transit
 - ▶ Expand partnerships to promote active and public transit
 - ▶ Community Connector strategies
 - ▶ Explore on-demand service for low performing routes
 - ▶ Refresh branding
 - ▶ Evaluate bus stop amenities
 - ▶ Introduce asset management software
 - ▶ Expand service hours/frequency
 - ▶ Assess fare structure
 - ▶ Add mobile fare payment capabilities

Region 4: Kennebec & Somerset Counties

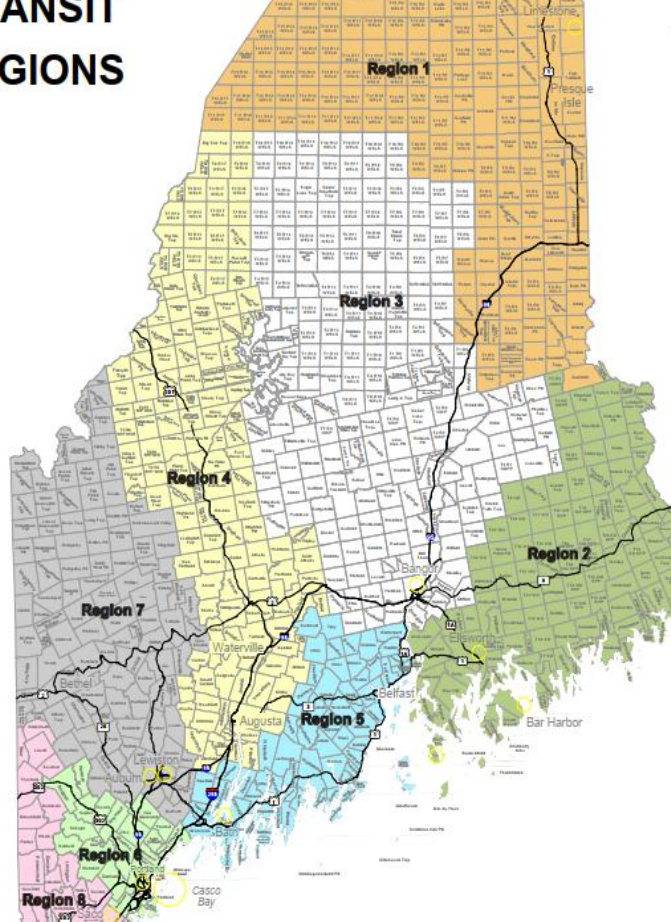


About KVCAP

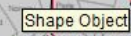
KVCAP is a non-profit community action program which has been providing services to the people of Kennebec and Somerset counties since 1965. We offer a variety of services geared towards helping our clients achieve economic and social self-sufficiency. Each year, thousands of residents access KVCAP services to assist them in their struggle to overcome the barriers of poverty.

- **Services and support provided by KVCAP include:**
 - Home Ownership Education
 - Home Repair & Weatherization Services
 - Heating Assistance
 - **Transportation Services**
 - A Teen Center
 - Home Visitation For New Parents
 - Parenting Classes
 - Childcare & Preschool Services
 - Head Start and Early Head Start

MAINE TRANSIT REGIONS



A detailed map of Maine divided into eight transit regions, each color-coded and labeled. The regions are: Region 1 (orange, northernmost), Region 2 (green, eastern), Region 3 (white, central), Region 4 (yellow, western), Region 5 (blue, southern coastal), Region 6 (pink, southwestern), Region 7 (grey, west-central), and Region 8 (dark pink, southernmost). Major cities like Bangor, Waterville, Augusta, Belfast, Lewiston, and Portland are marked. The map includes a compass rose in the top right corner and a scale bar at the bottom.



Demand-Response System

- Curb-to-curb and door-to-door service.
- Shared-ride
- Riders call to schedule their trips at least 1 day in advance
- Broker up to 1,500 daily trips (20,000 monthly)
 - Agency drivers w/ accessible vehicles
 - Taxi providers
 - Volunteer drivers

Funding Sources

State Contracts:

- MaineCare (Medicaid) (95% of daily trips) (*at-risk*)
- DHHS Low-Income (*rates do not cover costs*)
- DHHS Child Welfare (*rates do not cover costs*)

Nonprofits:

- Maine Cancer Foundation
 - United Way (Mobility Management Program)
-
- FTA 5311 Formula Grant for Rural Areas
 - KV Van (public transit)

MaineDOT 5311 Allocations

Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
Guaranteed 30% Regional Distribution by Formula
Federal/State Funds
for Rural Area Projects
July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

FTA APPORTIONMENT

Region		% of Distribution	FY2024 Federal Section 5311 Funds	SFY2025 State Funds	Total Formula Funds
1		11.76	\$358,890	\$67,358	\$426,249
2	*	11.84	\$361,332	\$67,817	\$429,148
3		13.20	\$402,836	\$75,606	\$478,442
4		15.97	\$487,371	\$91,472	\$578,843
5	**	13.79	\$420,842	\$78,986	\$499,827
6		7.45	\$227,358	\$42,672	\$270,030
7		14.74	\$449,834	\$84,427	\$534,261
8		11.24	\$343,326	\$64,437	\$407,763
Total		100%	\$3,051,789	\$572,775 ***	\$3,624,564

Local Match:
\$421,157.00

**Total Budget w/
Local Match:**
\$1,000,000

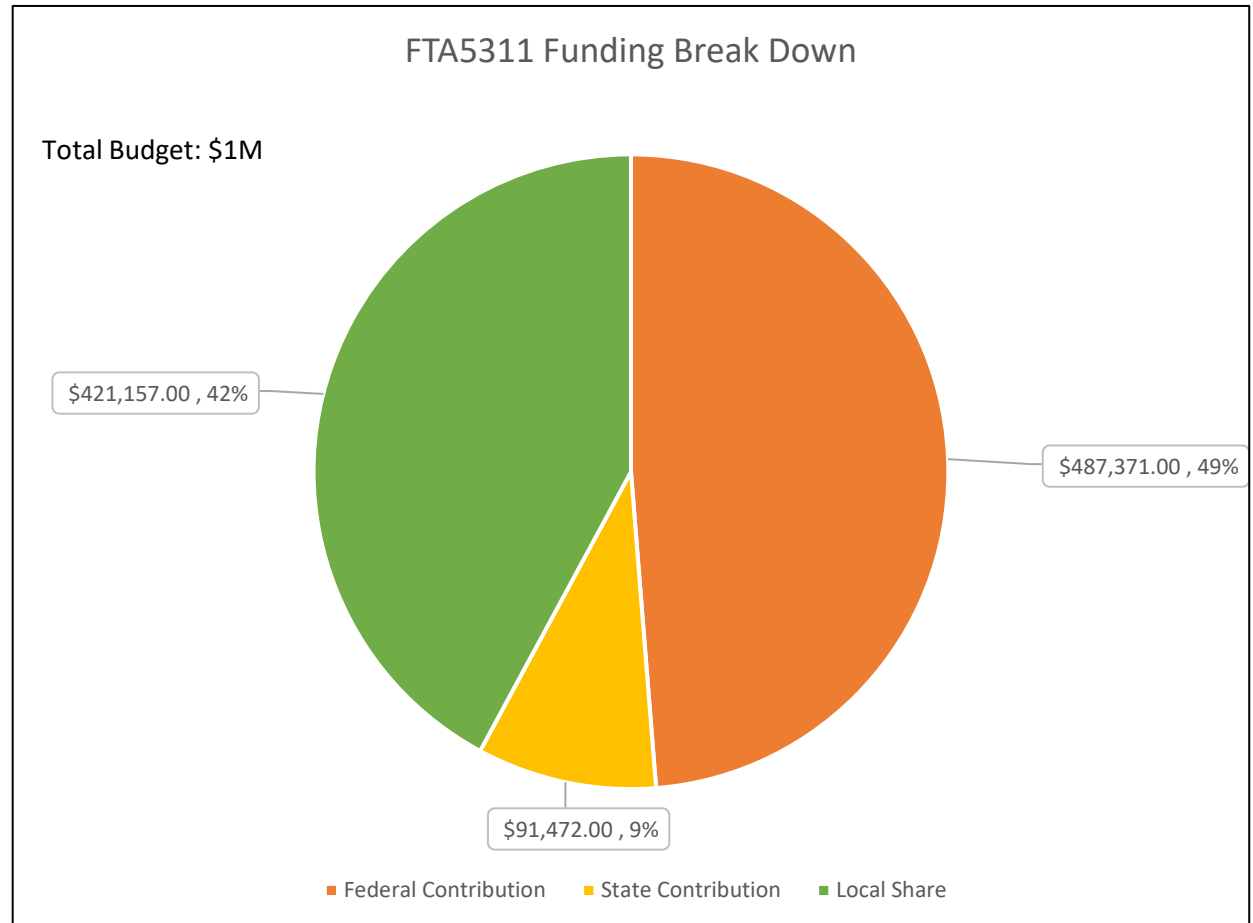
FTA 5311 Formula:

50% Federal

10% State

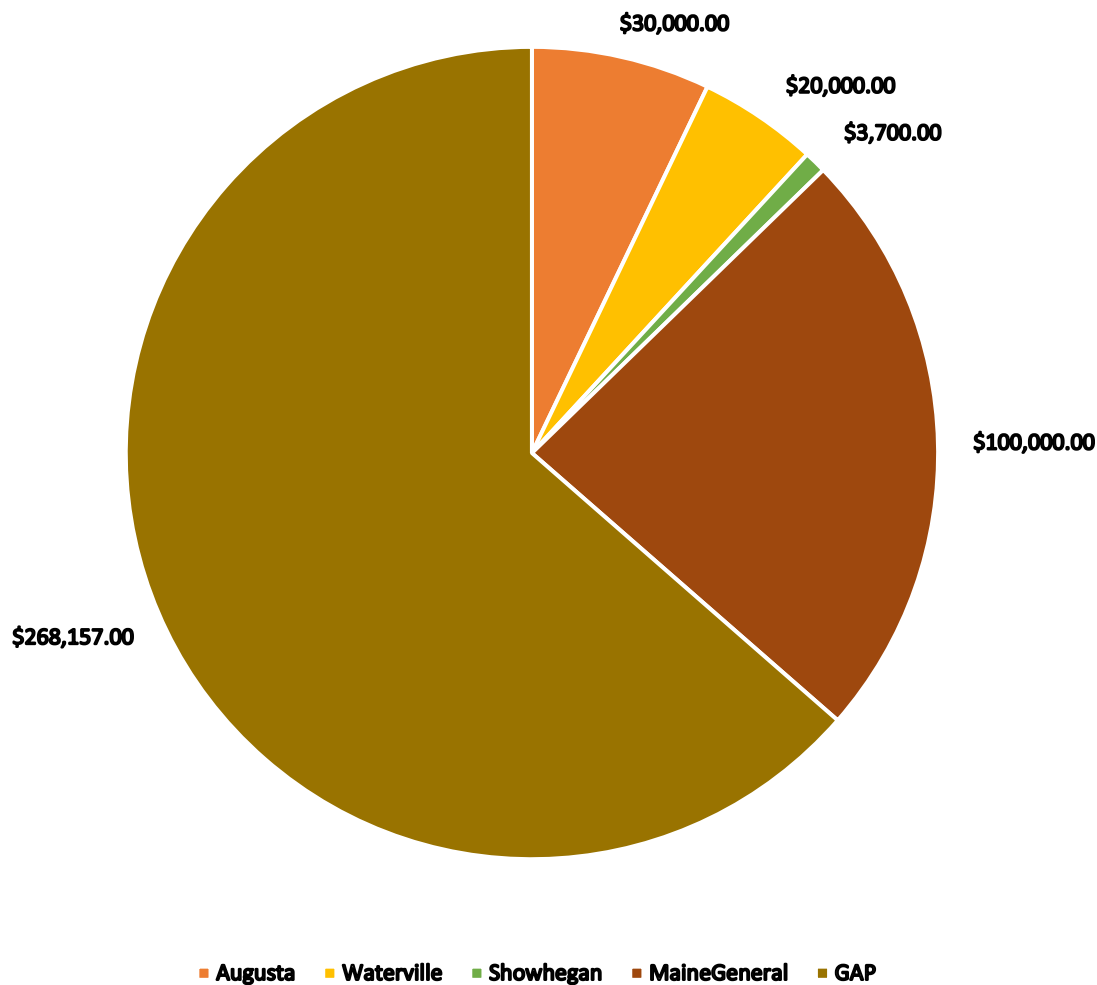
40% Local

Note: this funding includes wages, preventative maintenance, and fuel, among others.



Local Match for 5311 Program

Local Match Received



Note: the **GAP** represents the amount of local match KVCAP must locate **ANNUALLY** just to operate public transit in Region 4

Local match is typically generated from municipal and private donations

Many of the municipalities in Region 4 do not have a large tax base so it is difficult for them to contribute a meaningful amount of money annually

FTA Formula Grants & Local Match

- **FTA 5339**

- *Bus and Bus Facilities program to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities*
 - Capital formula: 80% Federal and 20% Local

- **FTA 5310**

- *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities; Accessible Vehicle Purchases*
 - Capital formula: 80% Federal and 20% Local
 - Operating formula: 50% Federal and 50% Local

Literally every funding source we have access to for public transit requires Local Match, which means we have to locate hundreds of thousands of dollars to even qualify for the funds.

In a rural, historically economically distressed area like Region 4, this is virtually impossible.

KV Van (public transit)

KV Van offers convenient curb-to-curb public transit service throughout the cities of Augusta, Waterville/Fairfield/Winslow, and Skowhegan. KV Van is custom-fit to your schedule and your neighborhood.

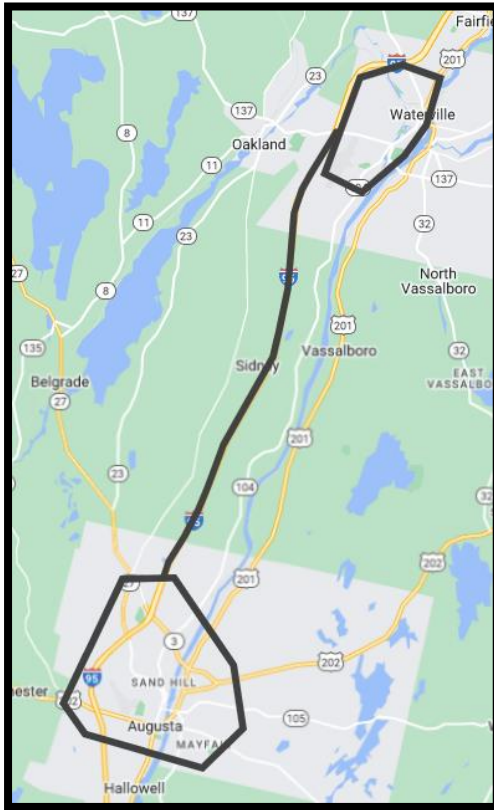
KV Van is available to the general public by appointment, Monday-Friday, 8:30-4:00.

Individuals may request trips to and from any location within each city's service zone, including for shopping, employment, and recreational activities, among others.

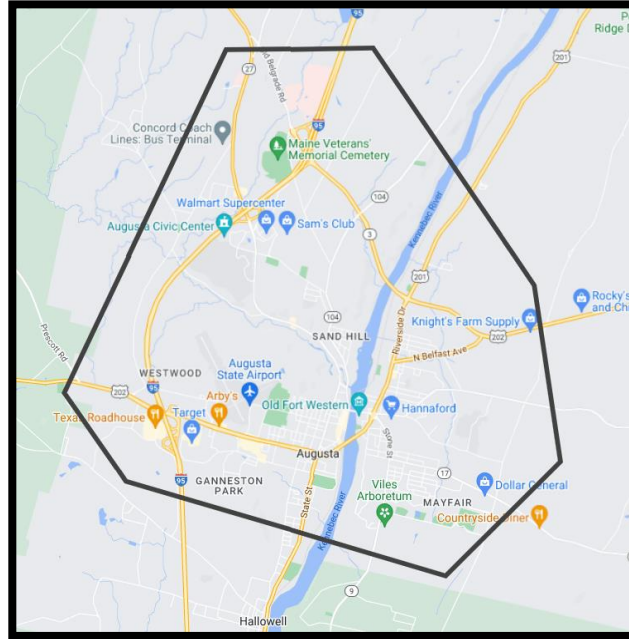
Intercity Trips Between Waterville and Augusta

KV Van offers direct trips between Waterville and Augusta, by appointment.

Zones & Fares



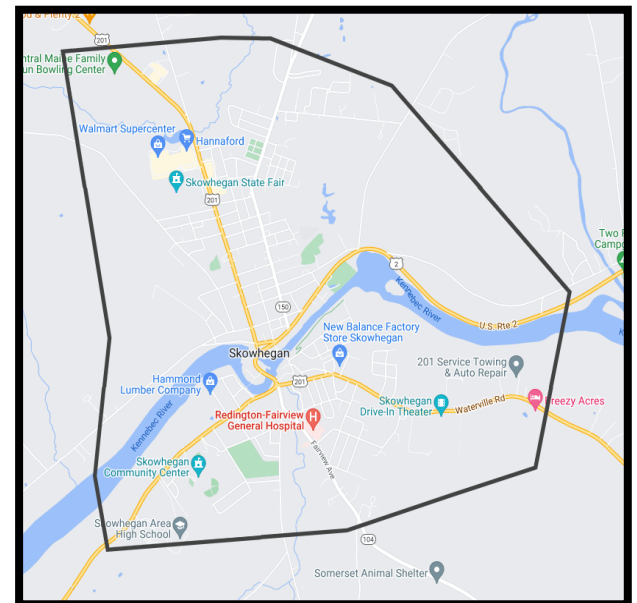
Intercity



Augusta



Waterville/Fairfield/Winslow



Skowhegan

Within each zone:
Intercity:
Children under 10:

<i>Regular</i>	<i>Discount</i>
\$5.00	\$3.00
\$10.00	\$5.00
FREE	

The Future

MaineCare currently makes up to 95% of trips, and therefore up to 95% of our funding.

The recent decision by MaineDHHS to award to MaineCare Transportation Brokerage contract to a new Broker will decimate our infrastructure, resulting in mass layoffs and a significant reduction in transportation services in Region 4.



AROOSTOOK REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Background

Incorporated in July 1979

Formed originally to provide transportation to ACAP, CAA, and AAAA clients.

Board of Directors represent the entire region and a variety of disciplines.

Only transportation provider in the region.



Service Area

- ✓ **Primarily Aroostook County but also serves northern Washington County (Danforth) and northern Penobscot (Patten area).**
- ✓ **65 organized towns including 2 cities, 3 larger communities,. but mainly small rural communities**
- ✓ **Approximately 6,600 square miles-largest county east of the Mississippi.**
- ✓ **No communities over 10,000 in population**

The Region

39% above the state average for households with disabilities

33% above the state average for households below poverty

29% lower than the state average median household income

52% higher than the state average for households receiving SNAP benefits

17% above the state average for people 65 years old and older

17% above the state average for single parent households

- 40% live more than 5 miles from the nearest grocery store
- 24% live more than 20 miles away from the nearest hospital
- 26% find it “somewhat” or “very difficult” to access alternative transportation

Current Services

Demand Response

Cancer Care

Medical Appointments

Veterans Services

Workforce Pilot

Public Transportation (Saturday in Presque isle)

ARTS serves each community in the region at least one day per week.....in most cases two

Overviews

STAFF

Executive Director

7 Office Staff

2 Maintenance Staff

21 Drivers

INFRASTRUCTURE

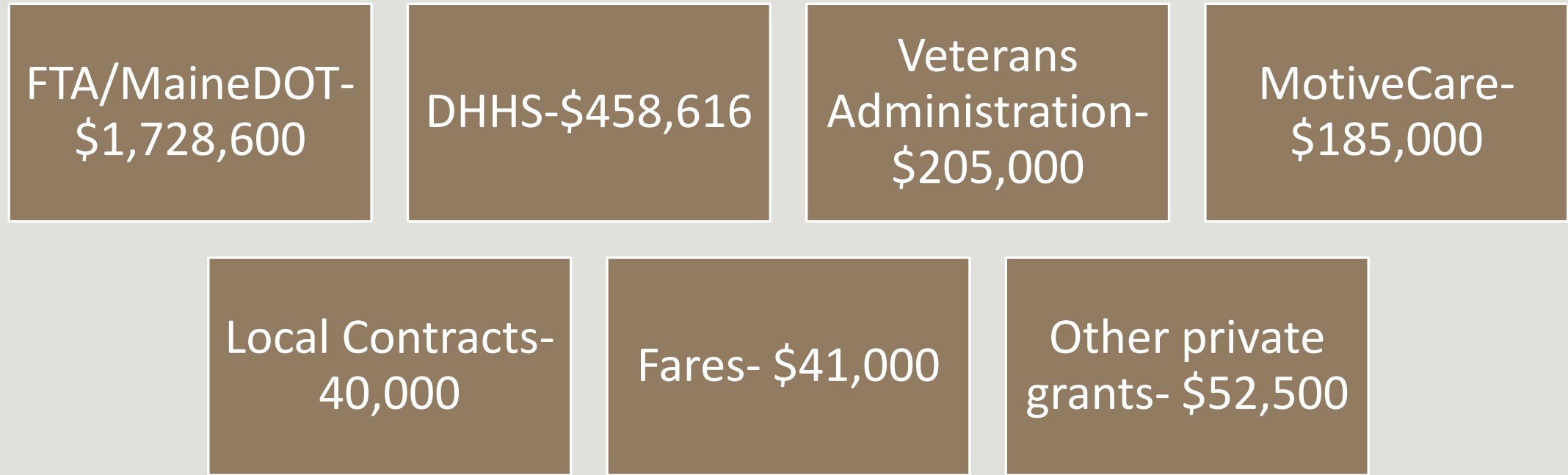
15 vehicles (ADA/FTA compliant)

- Buses
- School buses
- Vans

Most vehicles purchased using Federal funds with local match. Several purchased with local funds.

Central office located in Presque Isle. Buses housed in both the St. John Valley and Houlton areas.

Recently completed energy efficiency projects



Funding- A Variety of Sources

The Numbers

Average Annual Revenue Miles-478,729

Average number of passenger served 46,375

Funding (major funders)

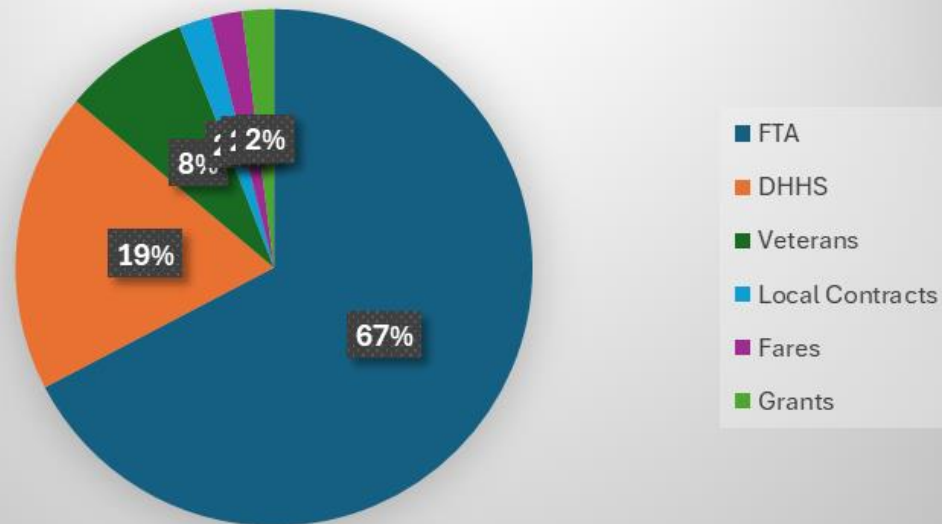
Ø FTA-MaineDOT

Ø DHHS

Ø Motivcare

Ø Local contracts

Revenue



Opportunities

Workforce Transportation

University Sports Team Travel

HeadStart Transportation

Fill gaps in non-emergency health care transportation

Municipal school bus service

Partnership with tribes

Advertising and education



Threats



Challenge to determine if ARTS can meet the changing community needs in a timely manner



Vehicle procurement and shortages



Alternative fuel vehicles and climate change



ARTS Workforce



Loss of volunteer drivers



Increasing number of no show trips



Fare discrepancies



Safety Issues



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Region 5

Northern Cumberland & Sagadahoc Counties

Bath CityBus

*Brunswick
Link*

BlueLine

BlueLine Express



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Flex Route

- **WMTS took over operation June 2023**
- **2 bus service / 1 spare**
- **17 runs/day + 4 BIW runs/day**
- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Flex Route

- **2 AM and 2 PM commuter runs for BIW**
- **2 trips/day to MidCoast Hospital** (by reservation only)



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Flex Route

Fares:

One-way \$1.00 • All-day \$2.00 • 12 Ride \$10.00
• Midcoast Hospital One-way \$2.00 •



Western Maine
Transportation Services

*Brunswick
Link*

Fixed Route & ADA

- **WMTS took over operation April 2016**
- **3 bus service / 2 spares**
- **11 runs/day from ~ 6:45 AM to ~ 6:30 PM**
- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

*Brunswick
Link*

Fixed Route & ADA

- **Free Fares initiated October 2023**
- **Council reviews every 6 months**
- **Currently extended to March 31, 2025**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

BlueLine
BlueLine Express

Commuter

- **Lewiston/Auburn ↔ Bath**
- **Began operation November 2019**
- **6 runs/day from 5:45 AM to 11:00 PM**
- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

BlueLine
BlueLine Express

Commuter

Fares:

\$2.00-\$5.00 One-way depending on distance



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Brunswick
Link

BlueLine

BlueLine Express

Funding:

FTA 5311 • State of Maine • Municipalities
• Housing • Businesses •
• Androscoggin County (BlueLine) •



Western Maine Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

*Brunswick
Link*

BlueLine

BlueLine Express

Ridership:

FY2024

FY2023

- **Bath CityBus** **17,035** **5,224** (6/1-9/30 '23)
- **Brunswick Link** **23,910** **16,246**
- **Brunswick ADA** **1,951** **963**
- **BlueLine & Express** **21,229** **10,141**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Brunswick
Link

 **BlueLine**

 **BlueLine Express**

Challenges:

- **Sustainable local match**
- **Capacity**
- **Staffing**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Brunswick
Link 

BlueLine

BlueLine Express

Challenges:

- **Vehicle availability**
- **Branding**
- **Consistent messaging**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Brunswick
Link 

BlueLine

BlueLine Express

Unmet Needs:

- **Passenger amenities**
- **Evening/Weekend service**
- **Additional technology**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Bath CityBus

Brunswick
Link

BlueLine

BlueLine Express

Priority projects:

- **Connecting Bath, Brunswick, Topsham**
- **Revamp Bath CityBus routes**
- **Signage**
- **Amenities**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Region 5

Northern Cumberland & Sagadahoc Counties

Bath CityBus

*Brunswick
Link*

 **BlueLine**

 **BlueLine Express**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

On-line at:
wmtsbus.org

Thank you



**Western Maine
Transportation Services**



Region 7

**Androscoggin
Franklin**

&

**Northern Oxford
Counties**

Worx  Link

sugarloaf  explorer

**Farmington-Carrabassett Valley  Daily Seasonal Bus Service
sugarloaf  express
Operated by Western Maine Transportation Services Open to the Public**

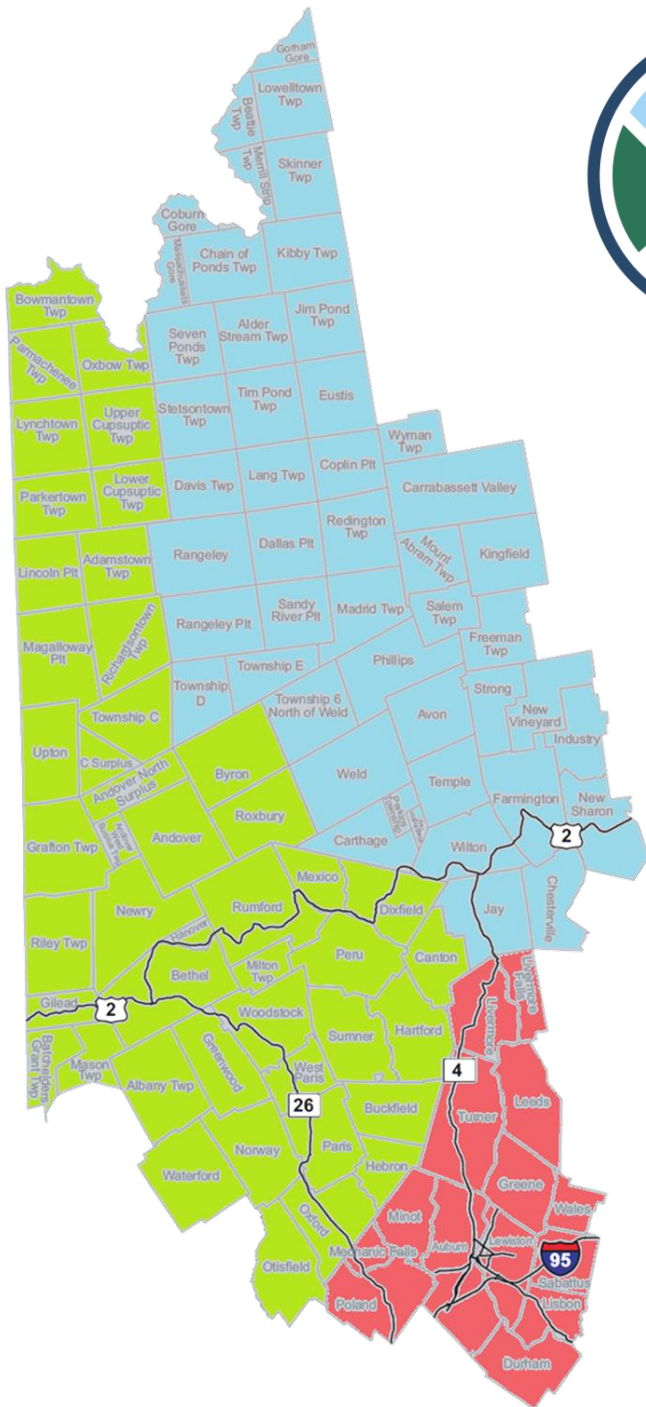
 GreenLine

 GreenLine >>> Connection

** The Lisbon
Connection
Public Bus Service from Lisbon Falls to Lewiston**

 BlueLine

 BlueLine Express





Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

- **Oxford Hills (Oxford, Norway, Paris)**
- **River Valley (Rumford, Mexico, Dixfield)**
- **Mt Blue (Farmington, Wilton, Jay/Livermore Falls)**
- **Androscoggin County**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

- **~ 7:00 AM ~ 4:00 PM (region dependent)**
- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

Funding:

- **FTA 5311 & 5310**
- **MaineDOT**
- **Counties**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

Funding:

- **Social service contracts**
- **Foundation grants & United Way**
- **Business sponsorships**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

Fares:

- **\$2.50-\$5.00**
- **Based on age, disability, distance**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Demand-Response

Ridership for FY 2024:

- **42,055 trips**

Fleet:

- **12 vehicles / 4 spares**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Worx ***Link*** **Workforce Pilot**

- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**
- **L-A Evening/Night/Early AM**
- **To/from work**
- **Outside times/places currently served by citylink**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Worx ***Link*** **Workforce Pilot**

Collaboration between:

- **Auburn & Lewiston**
- **LA Metro Chamber of Commerce/Strengthen LA**
- **citylink & WMTS**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Worx ***Link*** **Workforce Pilot**

Funding:

- **MaineDOT-Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan Grant**
- **Businesses (sponsorship or fares)**
- **Philanthropic Grants**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Worx ***Link*** **Workforce Pilot**

Fares:

- **\$3.00**
- or
- **Employer-paid**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

sugarloaf *explorer* **Seasonal Service**

Free-fare flex-route

- **9 routes**
- **Serves homes & condo associations**
- **Car-free access to the base lodge**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

sugarloaf *explorer* **Seasonal Service**

Free-fare flex-route

- **15-18 hours/day**
- **Late November through mid-April**
- **18 vehicles / 2 shared spares used at peak times**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Farmington-Carrabassett Valley

sugarloaf

Operated by Western Maine Transportation Services



Daily Seasonal Bus Service

express

Open to the Public

Seasonal Service

Commuter:

- **Farmington ↔ Sugarloaf**
- **2 vehicles / 2 shared spares used at peak times**
- **Sugarloaf employees & day-trippers**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

Farmington-Carrabassett Valley

sugarloaf

Operated by Western Maine Transportation Services



Daily Seasonal Bus Service

express

Open to the Public

Seasonal Service

Fares:

- **Farmington ↔ Sugarloaf \$3.00**
- **New Vineyard / Kingfield ↔ Sugarloaf \$2.00**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Seasonal Service

Funding:

- **FTA 5311**
- **Carrabassett Valley**
- **Condo associations**
- **Sugarloaf Mountain**
- **Area businesses**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

sugarloaf  *explorer*

Farmington-Carrabassett Valley
sugarloaf  *express*
Operated by Western Maine Transportation Services Daily Seasonal Bus Service
Open to the Public

Seasonal Service

Ridership FY 24:

- **Sugarloaf Explorer 96,704 trips**
- **Sugarloaf Express 2,630 trips**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine

Commuter

- **Farmington ↔ Lewiston-Auburn**
- **Monday-Saturday except major holidays**
- **5:15 AM to 6:50 PM**
- **4 runs/day Monday-Friday & 2 runs Saturday**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine

Commuter

Fares:

- **\$2.00-\$5.00 dependent on distance**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine

Commuter

Ridership FY 2024:

- **4,561 trips**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine >>> Connection **Commuter**

- **Rumford ↔ Livermore GreenLine stop (Brettun's)**
- **Combined with River Valley Demand-Response**
- **Monday-Friday except major holidays**
- **7:10 AM- 4:45 PM by reservation**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine>>>Connection **Commuter**

Fares:

- **\$2.00-\$5.00 dependent on distance**
- **Free transfers between to/from GreenLine**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

GreenLine >>> *Connection*

Commuter

Ridership FY 2024:

- **813 trips**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Commuter

- **Lisbon/Lisbon Falls ↔ Lewiston**
- **Monday-Friday except major holidays**
- **5 runs/day**
- **5:15 AM-5:45 PM**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Commuter

Fares:

- **\$.75 - \$1.50 depending on age/disability**
- **Free Transfer to/from citylink**
- **Free Tuesday Shoppers Bus for Lisbon residents**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Commuter

Ridership FY 2024:

- Lisbon Connection** **3,068 trips**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Commuter

Update:

- **Lisbon Connection & BlueLine being combined**
- **In-town demand-response service to be added**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

BlueLine
BlueLine Express

Commuter

- **Lewiston/Auburn ↔ Bath**
- **Began operation November 2019**
- **6 runs/day from 5:45 AM to 11:00 PM**
- **Mondays-Fridays except major holidays**



Western Maine
Transportation Services

BlueLine
BlueLine Express

Commuter

Fares:

\$2.00-\$5.00 One-way depending on distance



Western Maine
Transportation Services

BlueLine
BlueLine Express

Commuter

Ridership FY 2024:

- **BlueLine** **13,612 trips**
- **BlueLine Express** **7,617 trips**



Western Maine
Transportation Services



Commuters

Funding:

- FTA 5311 • State of Maine •**
- Counties • Businesses •**
- Municipal (Lisbon Connection) •**



Western Maine Transportation Services



sugarloaf  explorer

 **GreenLine**

**The Lisbon
Connection**
Public Bus Service from Lisbon Falls to Lewiston

 **BlueLine**

Worx  **Link**

Farmington-Carrabassett Valley
sugarloaf  Daily Seasonal Bus Service
Operated by Western Maine Transportation Services **express** Open to the Public

 **GreenLine**  **Connection**

 **BlueLine Express**

Challenges:

- **Sustainable local match**
- **Capacity**
- **Staffing**



Western Maine Transportation Services



sugarloaf  explorer

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Challenges:

- **Vehicle availability**
- **Branding**
- **Consistent messaging**



Western Maine Transportation Services



sugarloaf  explorer

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 **GreenLine**  **Connection**

 **BlueLine Express**

Unmet Needs:

- **Passenger amenities**
- **Additional technology**
- **Evening/Weekend service**



Western Maine Transportation Services



sugarloaf  explorer

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Public Bus Service from Lisbon Falls to Lewiston

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Worx  **Link**

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express
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 **GreenLine**  **Connection**

 **BlueLine Express**

Priority projects:

- Integrating Lisbon Connection into BlueLine
- Oxford Hills ↔ Lewiston-Auburn
- Evening pilots for Oxford Hills & Mount Blue



**Western Maine
Transportation Services**

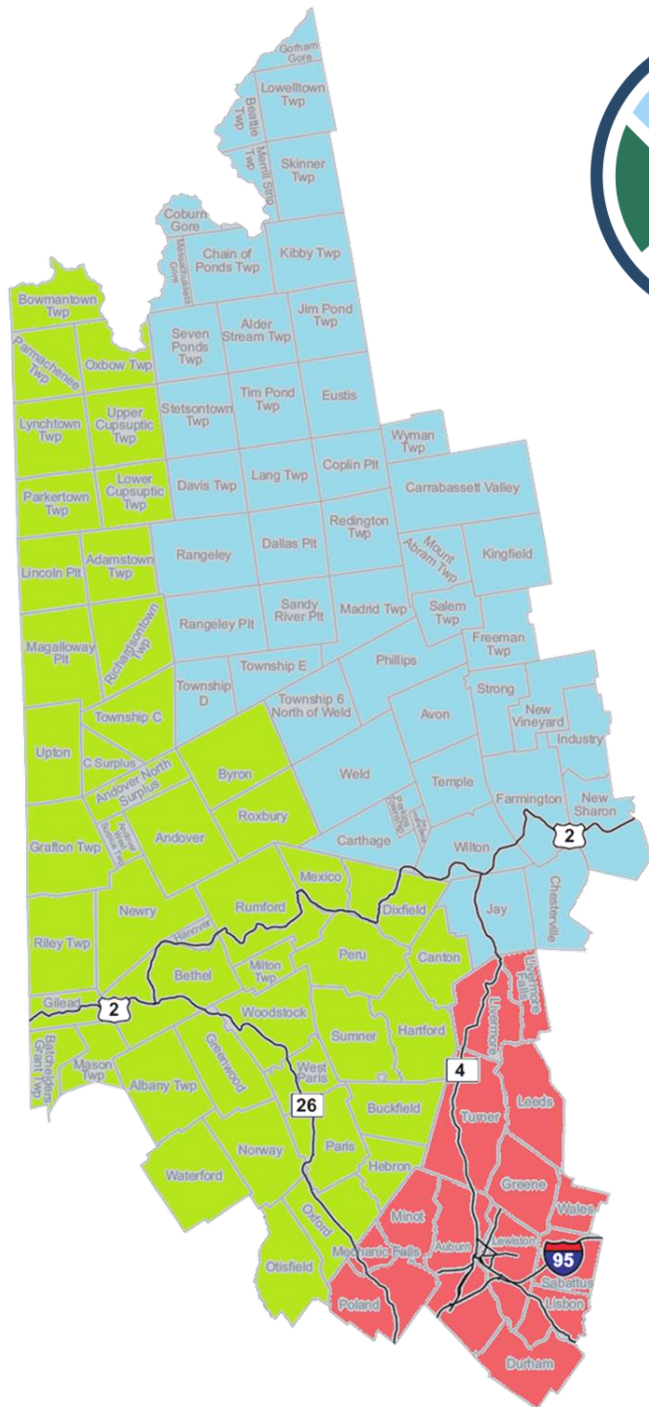


Region 7

**Androscoggin
Franklin**

&

**Northern Oxford
Counties**



Worx  Link

sugarloaf  explorer

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BlueLine

BlueLine Express



Western Maine
Transportation Services

On-Line at:
wmtsbus.org

Thank you