

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)

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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



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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.



BANGOR AREA COMPREHENSIVE

BACTS

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

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