

Public Transit Advisory Council Meeting

November 2, 2016

Discussion Notes – For Review and Comment

Note: The opinions and suggestions in this presentation are those of the authors and not necessarily those of MaineDOT

Rich Rothe Slides 4 -26

Peter Schauer Slides 27 - 70

Agenda

- Introductions
- MaineDOT Updates
- Veterans Initiatives
- State Management Plan
- Questions and Summary
- Wrap up 3:00 PM

Veterans Initiatives

Rich Rothe, Consultant
Comments or Questions on Veterans
Initiative
rothe@midmaine.com

**Maine Department of
Transportation - Veterans'
Transportation Study**

MaineDOT Study

Directive (Chapter 77 Resolves of 2016):
MaineDOT, in consultation with Department of Defense, DHHS, DOL –to determine need for locally available transportation system for veterans for:

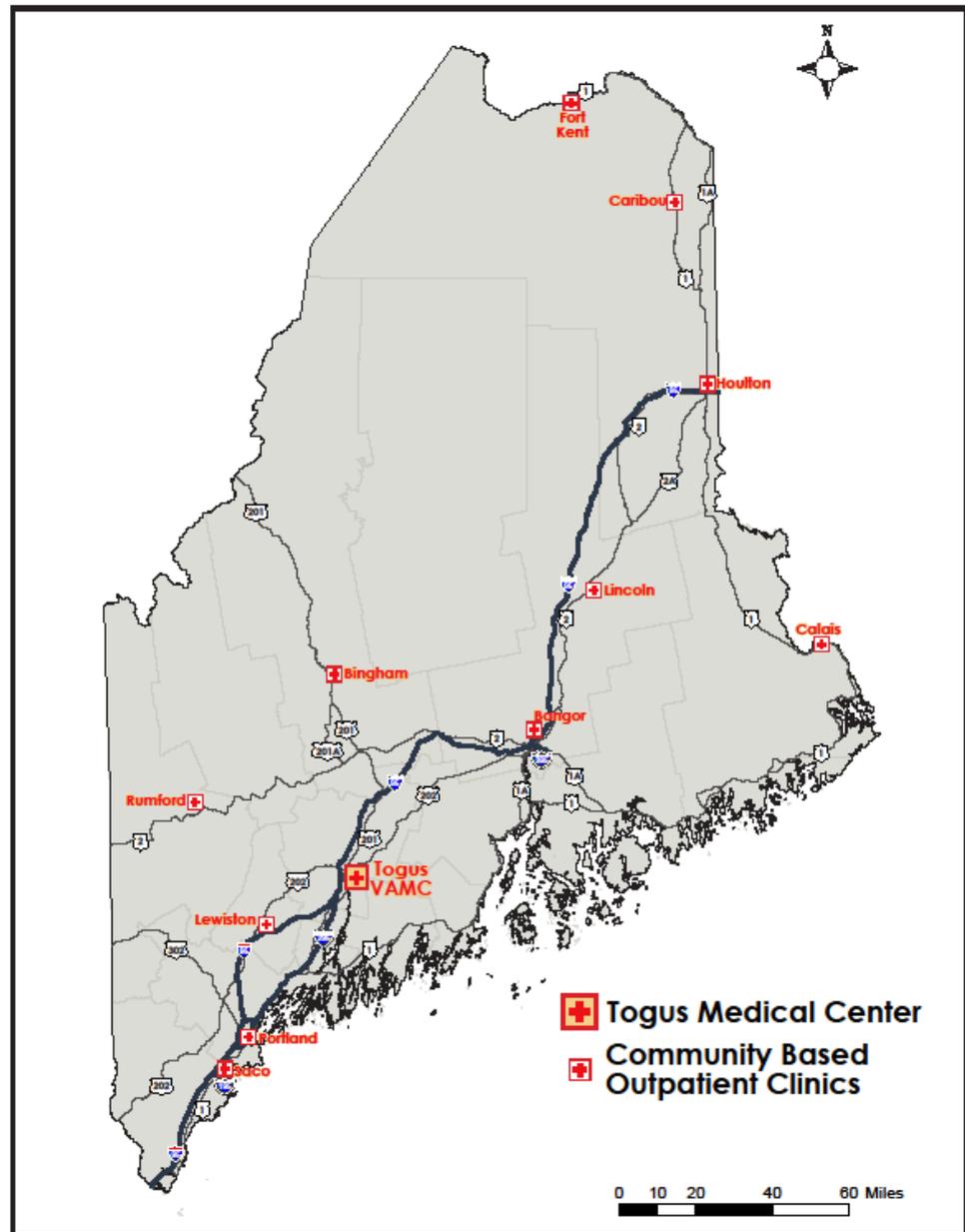
- Employment/employment services
- Medical appointments
- Mental health services
- Community activities

- **Purpose:** To inform the development of a pilot program served by a regional transportation network, and inform potential future development of a long-term transportation policy to meet need of veterans.
- **Participants:** Various stakeholders including Public Transit advisory Council.
- **Reports:** Initial report to Legislature Feb. 1, 2017; final report Jan. 15, 2018.

Medical Transportation

- Self Drive
- Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
- Veterans Transportation Service (VTS)
- Highly Rural Transportation Grant - Piscataquis County
- Transit Providers

The System



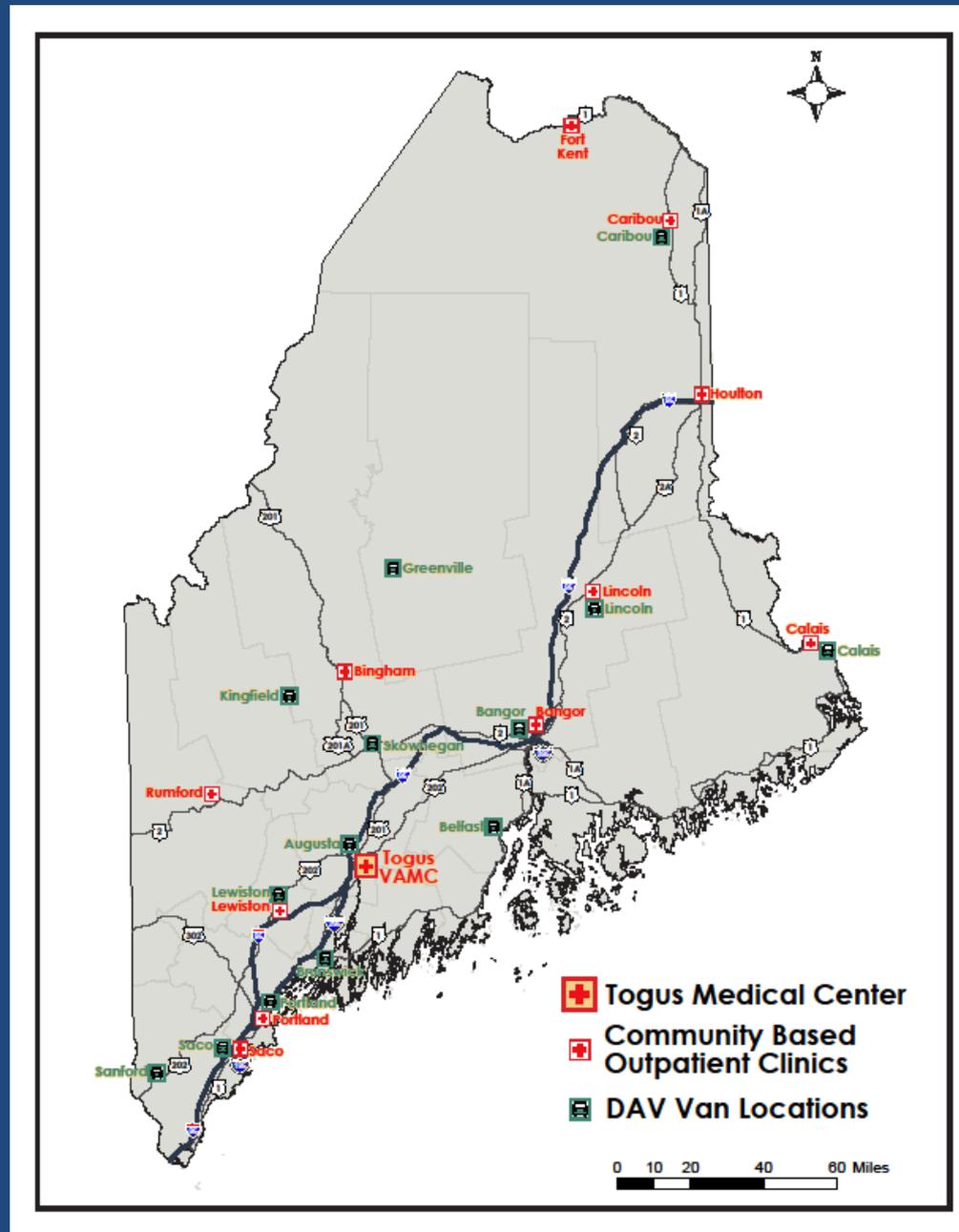
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)

- DAV, under contract to VA, provides rides only to Togus in VA vans operated by volunteers (not permitted to go to a CBOC, even if van travels past one – except for Caribou)
- 12 VA Vans; about 34 volunteer drivers
- Veteran must be ambulatory to ride van
- No cost to veterans riding DAV Vans
- 2015 – transported 4900 veterans

(DAV Continued)

- Service from outlying areas to Togus (5 to 8 vans/day)
- DAV receives \$15,000 annually from Legislature from table games in Bangor
- Riders not eligible for MaineCare

DAV Van Locations



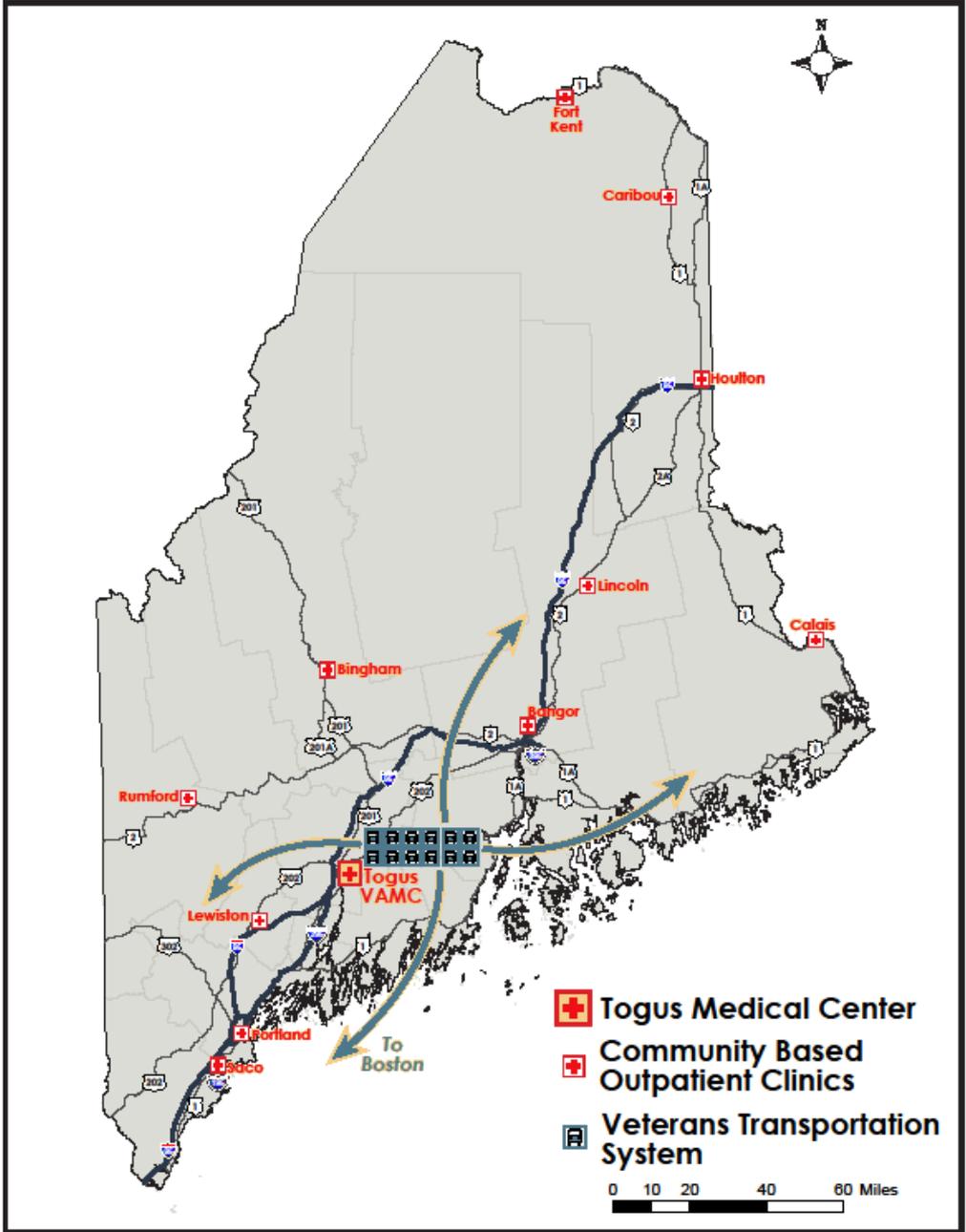
Veterans Transportation System (VTS)

- Paid VA Drivers
- 12 vans (5 accessible) based at Togus
- Daily shuttle to Boston (15-25 veterans/day; In 2015, 2,160 veterans transported)
- Can take non-ambulatory veterans to CBOCs, TOGUS
- Service to veterans in community living center, contract nursing homes, dialysis, homeless veterans, veterans with no other transportation options

(VTS Continued)

- No cost to veterans
- Special mode veterans (door-to-door; 3-5/day) in central and southern Maine (2015 – 1,167 veterans transported)
- Shuttle van in Caribou serving Caribou, Fort Kent, Houlton, Bangor
- Ambulance transport, Angel flight, VA
- Coordination with FTA-funded providers, other groups (Friends in Action in Washington County)

Veterans Transportation System



DAV/VTS Transportation Summary

Unique patients – FY 2013

Togus	37,953
Togus Misc	886
Aroostook County	2,855
Calais	1,023
Rumford	1,910
Saco	4,511
Lewiston/Auburn	3,733
Bangor	8,833
Portland	3,671
Bingham	415
Total	40,613

Highly Rural Transportation Grant

- Piscataquis County only Maine county with density low enough to qualify
- \$50,000 pilot project grant
- Administered by The Lynx; funds veterans' travel to Bangor CBOC and Togus
- Potential future program: Rural Urban Community Areas – in President's budget
- In 2015, 209 trips totaling 20,657 miles at a cost of \$13,010.52

Veterans MEDICAL Transportation by Transit Provider

- Region 1: ARTS – service to Caribou CBOC/Hospital & Houlton CBOC/Hospital (no data on # of vets)
- Region 3: Community Connector – service near Bangor CBOC; Penquis – service from Piscataquis to Bangor, Togus using \$50,000 grant
- Region 4: Kennebec Explorer – service to Togus 3 times/daily
- Region 6: Metro – service ¼ mile from Portland CBOC (no data on # of vets)
- Region 7: Citylink, WMTS - service to Lewiston CBOC

Multi-Purpose Veterans Transportation

Existing general public transit systems (subject to gaps and unmet need identified in MaineDOT's Strategic Transit Plan)

- Little to no data on # of veterans transported
- In FY 2012, 4,195,476 total trips on intercity, fixed route, flex route and seasonal systems. Veterans' trip estimate is 9% of total, or 377,600 trips.

Intercity

- Cyr Bangor to Caribou
- ShuttleBus Intercity
- ShuttleBus ZOOM
- West's Coastal Connection

(Multi-Purpose Veterans Transportation)

Fixed Route

- Metro (Portland and adjacent communities)
- South Portland
- Citylink (Lewiston-Auburn)
- Community Connector (Bangor, Brewer)

Flex Route

- Bath City Bus
- Brunswick Explorer
- Downeast Transportation, Inc.
- DTI Commuter

(Multi-Purpose Veterans Transportation)

(Flex Route Continued)

- Kennebec Explorer
- Sanford Transit
- ShuttleBus Local Service (Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard)
- West's Washington County Service
- York WAVE

Seasonal Flex Route Systems

- Island explorer, Hancock County
- Mountain Explorer, Sugarloaf Explorer
- Shoreline Explorer, York County

Examples of Miscellaneous Resources

- Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot Project – federal grant, pilot program for veterans discharged after August 26, 2012: help transitioning veterans by removing barriers to employment
- United Way – funds for veterans transportation (Community Concepts)
- Veterans Fund – contributions to YCCAC from Patriot Riders, AMVETS, VFW
- Choice Card (VA) – can be used by veterans with 30+ day wait at VA facility or more than 40 miles from facility

Veteran's Transportation Needs

County	Population	Veterans	% Veterans	Tot. Trip Gap	Vet Trip Gap
Androscoggin	107,702	9,833	9%	551,038	49,593
Aroostook	71,870	6,946	10%	-	-
Cumberland	281,674	21,403	8%	239,439	19,155
Franklin	30,768	2,941	10%	-	-
Hancock	54,418	5,313	10%	26,039	2,604
Kennebec	122,151	11,721	10%	115,936	11,594
Knox	39,736	4,148	10%	69,222	6,932
Lincoln	34,457	3,583	10%	15,072	1,507
Oxford	57,833	5,666	10%	-	-
Penobscot	153,923	14,229	9%	-	-
Piscataquis	17,535	1,995	11%	12,357	1,236
Sagadahoc	35,293	4,052	11%	56,693	6,236
Somerset	52,228	5,178	10%	16,479	1,648
Waldo	38,786	3,944	10%	-	-
Washington	32,856	3,559	11%	37,603	4,136
York	197,131	18,399	9%	100,141	9,013
Total, Maine	1,328,361	122,910	9%	1,240,119	113,654

Possible Pilot Program Candidates

Medical

- Service similar to Piscataquis County service – in area underserved by VTS/DAV (Washington County)
- Transit provider contracts for paratransit service beyond current boundaries, voucher program, discount ticket program, Togus van from major urban areas
- Free van service for veterans to local CBOC (e.g. Lewiston)

Multi-Purpose

- Funds for evening, weekend general public service in areas with high unmet need (Lewiston/Auburn)
- Funds for service from outlying communities to central cities

(Pilot Programs Continued)

(Multi-Purpose Continued)

- Free fare service (fixed route, flex route) to veterans with disability when they show a VA-issued ID card indicating a service-connected disability
- Free fare service (fixed route, flex route) to any veteran on certain days of the week
- ½ fare discounts to veterans with a VA-completed certificate of disability
- Transportation to and from Career Centers to support Maine Department of Labor's Jobs for Veterans State Grant

(Possible Next Steps)

- Establish a veterans transportation steering committee to include representatives of state agencies, the VA, veterans groups, transit providers and others to further projects and initiatives and assess programs that tailor transportation options to veterans and their needs
- Local interviews in potential pilot project area

Committee Discussion

- Identify potential pilot project for report to Legislature

Advancing Public Transit State Management Plan Revisions

Peter Schauer, Consultant

Comments or Questions:

peter@peterschauer.com

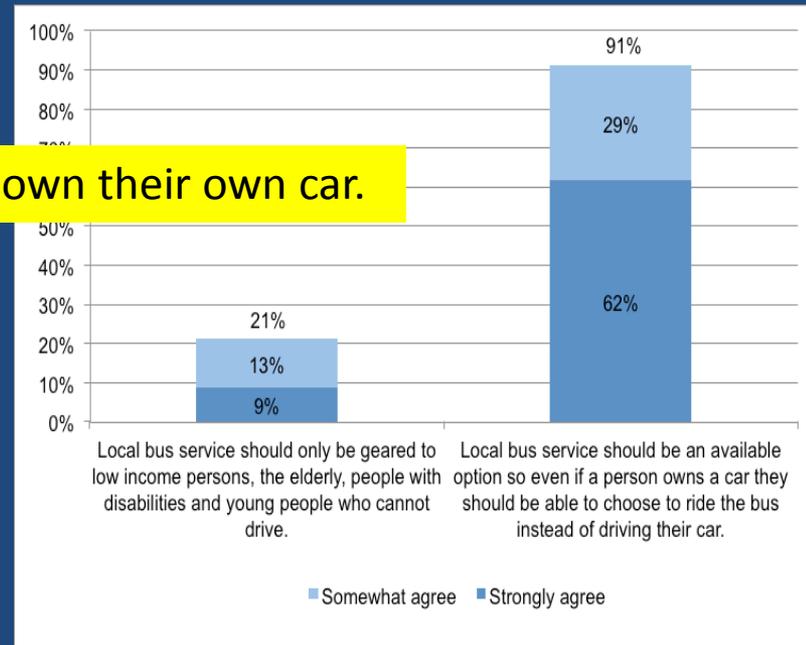
Strategic Transit Plan Recommendations

Policy and Implementation
Considerations

From Strategic Transit Plan

- Concept of public transit is well supported by population of Maine. Mainers recognize that there are needs for people to get places who do not have an automobile.

Buses should be open to all even if they own their own car.

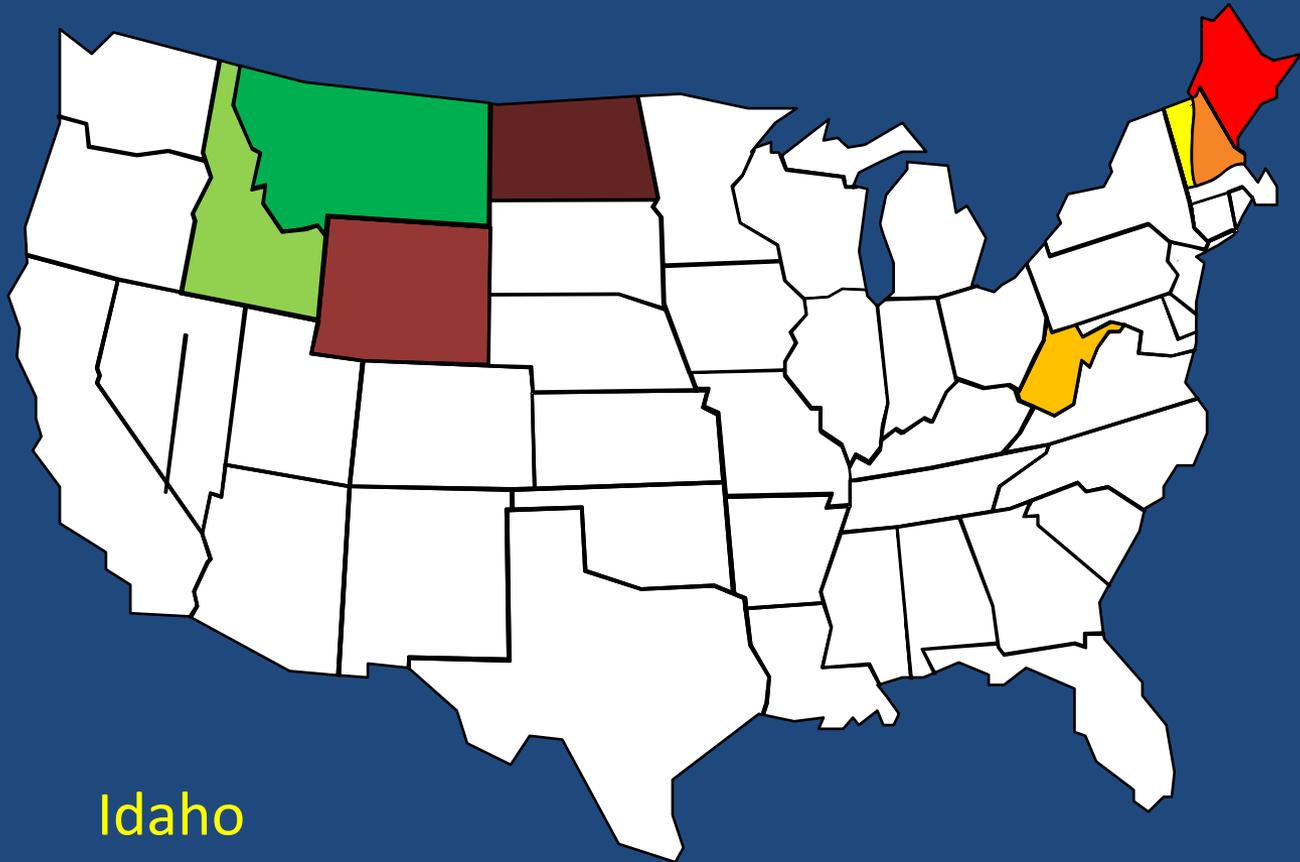


From the Strategic Transit Plan

Key Issues: Productivity and Funding

- Maine is in the lower quartile of states providing state funding for public transit.
- Modest local community funding support.
- Below average farebox recovery at 3%
 - (Peer 5.4% National 8%)

Maine's "Peer States"



Idaho

Montana

Wyoming

North Dakota

New Hampshire

Vermont

West Virginia



Compared to Peer States Lower Productivity

Maine Providers

- Higher cost per mile \$3.61
- Farebox Recovery Ratio 3%

Seven State Peer Average

- Peer Average \$3.04
- Peer 5.4%
- National 8%

Demand Response

- .04 passengers /mile
- .79 passengers /hour
- .15 passengers/mile
- 2.15 passengers/hour

Lessons from Strategic Transit Plan and Reality

1. Good public support for concept of transit.
2. Funding – difficult – need more local support
FAST Act 5 year bill modest growth 3% -2%
barely inflation adjusted – only good news
added discretionary funds for bus and
facilities
3. Room for improvement on productivity of
existing providers to meet predicted demand
and all providers are in a state of flux due to
changes in MaineCare.

Problems to Solve

1. More service to general public/non-sponsored rider.
2. Increase productivity and allocate funds to productive services by having procedures to allocate funds differently.
3. Better maintenance of buses and vans (Transit Asset Mgt)
Foster Regional Garages
Biddeford (already does maintenance for York)
WMTS (has done work for Coastal)
ARTS (distance self contained and open to full cost service of other agencies.)
4. Recognition for providers to be more flexible regarding service boundaries.
5. More local involvement both for policies and funding.

Significant Solutions for Problems

- Change in matching ratio (80% to 50%) for Administration (All 5311 operating grants at 50%)
- Regional Provider allocation formula changed
 - 5311 percent from 55% to 30%
 - 5310 is discretionary
- Contracts are for one year – no operational carryover
- No operating costs at 100%
- Requirement to not exceed 35% (FY18), 30% (FY19), 25%(FY 20) administration of total project cost
- Regional Boundaries less important – corridor planning encouraged
- Low performing projects – termination procedures

35% → 30% → 25%

National data shows that 7 out of 10 private non-profits (pnp) that were evaluated spend at least 75% of their budget on the programs and services they exist to provide. And 9 out of 10 spend at least 65%. Those spending less than a third of their budget on program expenses are simply not living up to their missions.

<https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=48#.Vd8RjJeumVc>

Recommendations
from
Strategic Plan
and
How they are addressed

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Improve and Update the State Management Plan

In progress. You are reviewing it today and it will be posted for public comment no later than December 12, 2016. Public hearing will be January 12, 2017

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Elevate and Clarify the Message that MaineDOT's Focus is on General Public Transportation

Focus of State Management Plan is on general public services and more effective monitoring of those services. In addition RTAP funds will be used to educate and inform public on what is available and how to use it.

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Administer State, Federal, and Local Funding for Public Transportation

Through the State Management Plan revisions more effective administration will come about. Building more time into evaluation process and a more thorough application with a scoring methodology will improve fund allocation and productivity.

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Improve the Grant Decision Making Process

The applications for funding have been revised and will continue to be refined. What is key is having the applications on hand longer prior to when decisions must be made. More time has been built into the grant decision making process. Most importantly a review and scoring tool is being developed.

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Use Population Density of a Geographic Area to Determine Types of Service Offered

The formula for distribution of funds is being revised to set amounts that will be available for demand response services so more funds can be allocated for flex services to connect and provide more transportation in populated areas.

Was 55% now 30%

- Page 20: Allocation of Section 5311 funds to each region is by the use of a formula which includes the three basic factors of population, road mileage and square miles. 30 % of rural funding remaining after the 10% administrative deduction and the 15% deduction for the intercity program is distributed by this formula. The remaining 70% is assigned to projects which meet needs identified by MaineDOT and the LCP.

Benefit – Why done

- Recognizing the need to consolidate the funding to projects that are successful in generating more ridership.
- Flexibility in funding to follow DOT corridor approach coupled with more accountability.
- Providers will have to apply for funds which are tied to performance measures diminishing entitlement legacy.

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Use a Demand Based Capital Priority Setting Process

The 5310 capital program will be removed from the current formula allocations and applications will be evaluated on demand and needs met. Not for profit service providers beyond the regional providers can be eligible for 5310 funding support.

5310 is now discretionary

- Page 20: *Project Evaluation Criteria and Method for Distributing Funds*
- **Introduction**
- § 5310 funds are distributed on the basis of need and project evaluation criteria.

Benefit – Why Done

- Done for two reasons – need will be able to be addressed immediately for most productive and high demand projects.
- Fewer open grants addressing FTA requirements. (No accumulating funds over a number of years.)

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Establish and Use Performance Measures and provide technical assistance to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of sub-grantees.

Performance measures were solicited and required as part of the current grant application process and are being evaluated for broad application.

Page 39, 40,41 Draft SMP

Monitoring of Project Productivity and Termination of Projects

- Page 40, 41: Service measure goals are compared against Maine peers and average performance measures are established. The peer states selected in the Maine Strategic Transit Plan 2025 are Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming. Those services performing at or above the average are rated “Successful.”
- Those services performing at or above one half the statewide average are rated as “Acceptable.” Those services below one half of the statewide average are rated as “Deficient” and are subject to further review.
- Those services rated as deficient are placed in a three year improvement program to help improve their performance. The improvement program consists of technical assistance and more frequent monitoring until project is improved or terminated.

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Support General Public Transportation Systems

Risk assessment is formalized in SMP.

Services that have a history of minimal 5311 general public ridership are being reviewed.

Page 39, 40 Draft SMP

Risk Assessment

- Page 39: The risk assessment review conducted at any time may be generated by the following or other notable actions or issues:
- Exceeding grant contract funding amounts or requests for additional funds.
- Tardy or inadequate reports and reimbursement requests
- Significant changes in principal staff or changes in oversight boards or advisory groups
- Pattern of service delivery problems
- Pattern of incidents, complaints, crashes and collisions

Monitoring of Project Productivity and Termination of Projects

- Page 40, 41: Overall trends are monitored such as, local cash share (not contract), in-kind and contract match share, farebox recovery, percent of elderly, disabled, and general public riders.
- Boardings per hour, cost per hour, cost per trip, ridership per capita (population of service area using Maine only statistics) are also monitored and all measures are used to evaluate services.

Benefit – Why done

- Accountability
- Stewardship – funds go to productive services
- Transparency – process to monitor and evaluate is clear

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Support a Mix of Transit Services
- Support New Systems and Expand Existing Services
- Encourage Volunteer Networks and Alternatives to Traditional Transit Services.

Applications for any type of transit service are accepted (Flex, Intercity, Demand Response). Expansion of existing services and establishment of new services are being encouraged.

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

Administrative costs will be reduced so that more funds can be allocated to productive services.

Page: 20, 17 administration

Regional Boundaries

- Page 20: While the eight regions are autonomous, coordination among and between regions is encouraged. However only one sub-grantee for any specifically defined service will be funded in any given region. That is no two like services will be funded in any specific geographic area. But any region can have more than one sub-grantee providing the services provided do not overlap or duplicate each other.

Wise Use of Resources

- Page 17: Administrative expenses cannot exceed 35% of the total sub-grantee budget in FY18, 30% in FY19 and 25% in FY20 and following years.
- Page 20: The remaining 70% is assigned to projects which meet needs identified by MaineDOT and the LCP.

Benefit – Why done

- Flexibility of services and directing funding to operations and service related administration.
- Covering state with essential services (Demand Response) but fostering services focused on general public non-sponsored riders in populated areas
- Allows for creativity and innovation in new services and funding partnerships that further strengthen the services (less reliance on limited Federal funds – which incidentally will be increased through limiting administration and 50% match)

Goal 2 (con't): Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Provide incentives for local communities and transit providers to leverage new sources of private funding for transit services.

With revised formula funding, incentives can be provided for applicants that receive more private or community support. Concept is to provide match on a sliding scale where over a three period services would be programmed to meet more strenuous match requirements.

Page: 17 sliding scale of state match.

Sliding Scale of State Match

- Page 17: Section 5307 and 5311 programs may also receive State funds as available for match. The State may provide up to 10% as matching funds and, upon request, may increase its share up to 50% of deficit for § 5311 programs.

Goal 2 (con't): Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Explore ways to Increase State and All Sources of Potential Funding for Public Transportation

Ways to leverage funds through alternative state match is an ongoing activity.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Establish a Public Transportation Advisory Group

Established January 2016.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Expand Education, Outreach, and Marketing

Program to upgrade brochures and web sites of providers is in place.

Program is being planned to improve statewide education and information to improve knowledge of available services and how to use them.

Page: 10, 26 (application revised)

Expand Education, Outreach, and Marketing

- Page 10: MaineDOT provides RTAP funds to assist subrecipients in meeting their technical assistance and training needs.
- Page 26: These funds are available to rural transit providers and planning organizations for training and technical assistance in matters of statewide significance.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Reinvigorate Provisions of Maine Revised Statutes Title 30-A, Part 2, Subpart 5, Chapter 163 Concerning Regional Transportation Corporations and Transition to Government or Quasi-governmental Governing Bodies

FY2018 funding application will require specific involvement and oversight by advisory or governing boards.

Involvement and oversight by advisory or governing boards

- Page 23: Local Oversight and Public Comment on Fare and Service Changes
- Each 5311 project must have a locally based oversight and policy board specific to passenger transit.

Benefit – Why Done

- Improved linkage to community by insuring boards are representative of community
- Increase focus on public transit
- Specific group that builds capacity in the area of public transit
- Will be used as one of the evaluation criteria on the application scoring tool. (Highest points to those meeting Provisions of Maine Revised Statutes Title 30-A, Part 2, Subpart 5, Chapter 163- Regional Transportation Corporations)

2016

- November 9: Comments to Sue
- December 12: Post State Management Plan on MaineDOT website and email to all stakeholders. (30 day public comment review period ends with public hearing January 12, 2017)

2017

- January 12: Public Hearing On SMP
- March 1: Revised Application Distributed
- April 7: Application for Federal FY 2017 Funds Due
(Formula money reduced and awards will be based on service provision and productivity)
- June 15: Advisory Council Meeting

Comments or Questions

Susan Moreau

Manager, Multimodal Planning Division

Bureau of Planning

MaineDOT - 16 SHS

Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Direct Line: 207.624.3239

Office: 207.624.3300

Susan.Moreau@maine.gov