Planning with Transit at the Table
Part I: Background
Maine Department of Transportation

Challenges

- **Rural** – Sparse population/difficult delivery of alternative services
- **Urban** – Changing demographics/ congestion showing impact
- **Suburban** – Increasing commuter demand for transit to service centers
- **Coast** – Mix of all…plus high seasonal tourist traffic
Strategies

• Make the right investment for the area
• Deploy regional projects balanced w/land use that support economic expansion
• Benefit freight operations by linking advancements in passenger services
• Provide increase access to alternative modes to preserve highway improvements and promote quality of life
• Use innovation, common sense and sound policy
Access to Transit Service

- **3,500,000 Annual Ridership**
  - 130 Communities Served
  - 20 Transit Providers
    - FTA supported, regularly scheduled, fixed route ferry/bus service & scheduled seasonal Service

- Special Projects
  - Pass Programs
    - MaineCard (Bangor, Portland)
    - University (UMO, USM)
  - CNG Project/Portland Metro
    - $4M Investment
    - Fueling Station
    - Maintenance Facility
    - 13 New Buses
  - Signal Priority
    - Metro & South Portland Buses
    - South Portland/Maine Mall area

\[\text{Maine Department of Transportation}\]
Maine Department of Transportation

Intercity Bus Service

• Private Providers
  – Concord Trailways
    • Portland Transportation Center
    • Augusta Transportation
    • Bangor/Coast
  – Greyhound
    • Augusta Airport
    • Bangor
    • Lewiston Intermodal Center
    • Portland

• Publicly Funded
  – Shuttlebus/BSOOB
  – Cyr Bus Lines
  – West’s Coastal Connector
Passenger Rail Service
Inaugurated December 2001

- Downeaster 2010
  - 509,833: Ridership
  - $8.1M: Revenue
  - 10% projected ridership increase

- Rail Extension to Brunswick -
  - Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program
  - Freeport & Brunswick Stations
  - Three daily round trips

Stations
Portland, Old Orchard Beach, Saco, Wells, Dover, Durham, Exeter, Haverhill, Woburn, Boston
Ferry Service

• Public
  – Maine State Ferry Service: Rockland to Vinalhaven, North Vinalhaven, Matinicus, Isleboro
    • Annual Ridership – 600,000
  – Casco Bay Island Transit District: Portland to Peaks, Cliff, Chebeague, Long, Great Diamond and Little Diamond Island
    • Annual Ridership – 900,000

• Private
  – 12 private ferry operators provide a vital link to Maine’s many island communities.
Park & Ride Lot Network

- Over 50 convenient Park & Ride lots located statewide including:
  - 519 spaces in Greater Portland
  - 368 spaces in Lewiston/Auburn
  - 285 spaces in Southern Maine
  - 100 spaces in Freeport
  - 170 spaces in Central Maine

- Urban lots offer connections to local transit
Commuter Services

• Conscription
  - ARTS/GO Maine Express
    Presque Isle to Limestone
  - ZOOM Commuter Bus -
    Biddeford to Portland
    Downtown/USM
  - Jackson Lab - Bangor to Bar
    Harbor

• GO Maine
  - Vanpools:
    - 27 Commuting Statewide
    - Expanded Routes
  - Carpools:
    - 360 registered carpools
    - 8000 database
  - Benefit Programs:
    - Commuter Choice Pre-
      Tax Program
    - State of Maine pilot
      project
    - Preferential Parking
    - Real-Time Matching
    - Commuters
    - Employees
Part II: Coordination & Innovation
Explore Maine

A network of passenger transportation options that are destinations in themselves.

Offering travel alternatives that will continue to attract new visitors to the state while preserving the character of Maine that makes it unique.
Explore Maine Initiatives

- **Bus Initiatives**
  - Island Explorer/Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor: 1999
  - Mountain Explorer/Sunday River Ski Area/Bethel: 2000
  - Shoreline Explorer/Wells, Ogunquit, Kennebunk: 2006
  - Sugarloaf Explorer/Carrabassett Valley: 2007

- **Rail Initiatives**
  - Amtrak’s Downeaster/Portland to Boston: 2001
  - Amtrak extension to Brunswick: 2012
  - Seasonal/Rockland Branch: 2005
  - Portland North to Brunswick w/Integrated Commuter Service from Yarmouth: 2008

- **Marine Highway**
  - Rockland Waterfront Development: 2005
  - Bangor Waterfront Development: 2005
  - Bar Harbor/Agamont Park: 2005
  - Ocean Gateway Terminal: 2007

- **Intermodal Transportation Centers**
  - Portland: 2001
  - Lewiston: 2004
  - Acadia Gateway - 2012
  - Auburn: 2012
Acadia National Park Partnership Project

- Partnership includes 21 agencies and organizations
- Key local partners include:
  - Federal Transit Administration
  - National Park Service
  - Maine Department of Transportation
  - Friends of Acadia
  - Towns
  - Downeast Transportation
  - LL Bean Inc.
Acadia National Park Partnership Project

• **Grand Vision**
  A model, multi-modal, three phase transportation System

• **Phase 1 – 1997**
  - 8 buses, six routes
  - Links campgrounds and motels with park/towns
  - Serves overnight visitors and residents

• **Phase 2 – 2004 to present**
  - 17 buses on eight routes
  - Numerous system enhancements
  - Park transportation demonstration fee (P.L. 105-391)
  - Serves overnight visitors and residents
Phase 3

Acadia Gateway Transportation Center

OBJECTIVES

• Traffic demand reduction
• Increased capacity and ridership
• Regional transportation links
• Intermodal transportation center
  – Parking for day use visitors to ANP/MDI
  – Parking for Island Commuters
  – Park entrance fee and information station
  – Regional information
  – Bus maintenance facility
Island Explorer Ridership 2008
Total summer riders: 348,753
Daily average: 4,982
Peak day: 8,440

Increase from 2007: 42,677
Percent increase from 2007: +14%

Cumulative 10-year total as of 8/31/08: 2.8 million

Bicycle Express 6/23/08 through 8/31/08: 14,026
Bicycle Express daily average: 200

Public/Private Partners
– Acadia National Park/DOI
– Downeast Transportation
– MaineDOT
– Participating Businesses & Communities

2005 Season: 17 Propane Buses
2006 Season: 29 Propane Buses
Mountain Explorer/2010
Seasonal Fixed Route Service
Bethel/Sunday River

- **Public/Private Partners**
  - Sunday River Ski Company
  - Western Maine Transportation
  - MaineDOT
  - Bethel Chamber of Commerce
  - Local Communities & Businesses

- **Mountain Explorer Ridership**
  - 35,000 annually
Shoreline Explorer

- Reduce seasonal traffic congestion
- Preserve and enhance existing trolley services
- Provide a car-free link for Amtrak travelers
- Increase convenience for visitors with cars
- Increase mobility for residents & workers
- Improve the region as a visitor destination
- Facilitate commerce without congestion

2010 Ridership
66,000
• The Sugarloaf Explorer is operated by Western Maine Transportation.
• Ridership: 152,035 (11/22/10 to 4/13/11)
• Total mileage: 99,246
• 25 people were employed during the season, many working 40+ hrs/wk during that time, no reportable incidents, no employee injuries
• 8 routes, 10 buses
Public/Private Partnerships
Portland Transportation Center

• **Benefits:**
  – Provider & Consumer
  – Shared Expenses
  – Increase Ridership
  – Connection to local transit
  – Parking Fees

• **Partners:**
  – Concord Trailways
  – MDOT
  – Amtrak/Downeaster
  – Orthopedic Associates
Part III: Regional Approach
Case Studies
Regional Approach

Southern Maine Corridor - Bangor/Bar Harbor

- Transportation Improvements
  - Directly linked to economic development
- Congestion
  - Increasing traffic volume
  - Impact on communities
  - Seasonal Impact
- Improving Connectivity
  - Creating a smooth flow
Southern Maine Corridor

- Greater Portland Connections
  - Portland Jetport
  - Downeaster
  - Intermodal Stations –
    Portland Transportation
    Center
  - Casco Bay Lines
  - METRO, Zoom, South
    Portland Bus & GO
    Maine

- Moving up & down the coast
  - Shoreline Explorer
  - Portland North
  - Maine Eastern Railroad
Public/Private Partnerships
Portland Transportation Center

- **Benefits:**
  - Provider & Consumer
  - Shared Expenses
  - Increase Ridership
  - Connection to local transit

- **Partners:**
  - Concord Trailways
  - MDOT
  - Amtrak/Downeaster
Bangor/Bar Harbor Region

- Bangor International Airport
- Cruise Ships
- The BAT
  - University of Maine
- Calais Branch
- Island Explorer
  - National recognition as innovative project and a model for other rural states and national parks
  - Acadia Gateway Center
    - Partnerships
    - Model for Explorer System
      - Shoreline Explorer
      - Mountain Explorer
      - Sugarloaf Explorer
Main Objectives

- The plan will align with the MaineDOT 20 year long-range plan as the department prioritizes service improvements and responds to the need for expanded transit services.

- The plan will have a particular focus on Maine’s aging population and will assess and make recommendations to meet the elderly transportation needs statewide.

- The plan will identify existing surface passenger transportation initiatives/programs and make recommendations on best practices and funding strategies.
Statewide Multimodal Planning Division

Multimodal Planning and Operations

- Capital Procurement
  - Transparency & Increased Information
  - New Match Policy
  - Fleet Services
- Grant Management
  - Combining Urban and Rural FTA Programs
  - Multi-Pin Project Contracts
- New Initiatives
  - Kennebec Explorer
  - Brunswick Explorer
  - Acadia Gateway Center
- Core Responsibilities
  - DHHS Coordination & Collaboration
  - BOP, ITCC
Maine Department of Transportation

Statewide Multimodal Planning Division

Looking Ahead

• Fiscal Crisis
  • No End in Sight
  • Doing More with Less
  • Opportunities to Serve the Public

• Federal Funding Trends
  • USDOT & HUD – Joining Land Use Policies w/Transportation
  • More Discretionary Programs/Less Formula Funding
  • Livability Grants -
    • Gateway 1, Gorham East-West Study, Sanford Regional Study

• Going Beyond the Explorer Systems
  • Lessons Learned – Put into Practice
  • Investing in Core Transit Services
  • More Service - Looking for New Programs and New Partners

• Maine Transit Association and MaineDOT
  • Improved Communication w/Maine Transit Association
  • Process Simplification
    • Standardizing Vehicle Specifications & Procurement
  • Statewide Strategic Transit Plan
Moving Ahead
What we have learned

Maine Transit has a strong foundation funded with Federal, State and Local support. In order to grow, we must partner with communities and identify needs and stakeholder support.

The *Explore Maine* strategy and vision has been clearly stated, coordinated logically, implemented practically and gained public acceptance. Ridership gains have been through impressive service, low-key marketing & word of mouth. Success breeds success.