

Appendix 1

TECHNICAL REPORT

Task 1: Public Involvement Report

December 2014



New Hampshire

Capitol Corridor Rail & Transit Alternatives Analysis (Parts A & B)

State Project Numbers 16317 and 68067-A



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Public Involvement Materials and Meeting Notes (See Appendices 10a and 10b to the AA Final Report)

List of Acronyms

AA	Alternatives Analysis
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MassDOT	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MBTA	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
NHDES	New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
NHDRED	New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development
NHDOT	New Hampshire Department of Transportation
NHRTA	New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PAR	Pan Am Railways
PSIP	Public and Stakeholder Involvement Plan
PSNH	Public Service of New Hampshire
RPC	Regional Planning Commission

1 Project Purpose and Need Summary

Increasing transportation demand and growing concerns about mobility, economic development, and quality-of-life have led New Hampshire and Massachusetts citizens and officials to explore transit and/or intercity passenger rail service options in the 73-mile corridor (Capitol Corridor) between Boston, Massachusetts and Concord, New Hampshire.¹ The purpose of this Capitol Corridor Rail and Transit Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study is to evaluate a diverse set of rail and bus options to improve connectivity by leveraging existing transportation infrastructure, including Pan Am Railways (PAR), Route 3, and I-93. Investment in an improved transportation strategy is needed for several reasons:

- Projected population growth will result in increased roadway congestion
- New Hampshire’s existing transportation network does not effectively connect existing modes
- The regional economy is singularly dependent on roads for movement of goods and passengers
- Improved transportation options will attract employers to New Hampshire and improve employment options for New Hampshire residents
- Young New Hampshire professionals are leaving the area to be closer to employment and cultural/social opportunities associated with larger urban centers
- New Hampshire’s growing senior population needs shared transportation accommodations that support “car-light” mobility
- Growing residential development patterns may negatively impact the region’s existing quality-of-life
- The existing transportation network cannot accommodate increased levels-of-demand without negative environmental consequences

2 Task Objectives

A Public and Stakeholder Involvement Plan (PSIP) was developed that outlines how the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) – in cooperation with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Study team – would both educate and seek input from private entities, public agencies, communities, residents, and the traveling public. The PSIP’s purpose was to describe how stakeholder and public input would be sought to inform the completion of key project milestones, including the definition of the Study Purpose and Need, the development of alternatives, the evaluation of alternatives, the selection of a recommended strategy, and the methods by which clear and understandable information would be developed and disseminated at the conclusion of each Study milestone. Activities described in this plan would educate key stakeholders and the public

¹ The report “Task 2: Project Purpose and Need” (Appendix 2 to the AA Final Report) provides an in-depth evaluation of the Capitol Corridor’s historical, current, and future state, and how Massachusetts and New Hampshire citizens would benefit from a transit investment strategy responsive to transportation needs and the region’s economic, social, and environmental climate

about the technical analyses that fed into the decision-making process and to receive input for that process.

A variety of approaches were used to inform stakeholders of Study activities and there were numerous opportunities for discussion and comment. Public opinion and comments were documented and considered throughout the process. The main objectives of the public and stakeholder outreach activities for the Capitol Corridor AA Study are as follows:

- Build support for the AA Study and service development planning process among different stakeholder groups
- Encourage stakeholders to engage in the development process
- Provide clear and understandable information at each step of the process
- Document public and stakeholder opinion as part of the decision-making process
- Create a high-level of transparency regarding how the project is conducted

Because the Study included rail transit service as an alternative in the State of New Hampshire, the Study attracted significant interest from public and private stakeholders throughout the region, as well as members of the general public. Public and stakeholder outreach began at Study initiation and was proactive, consistent, and timely to fully engage the public and key stakeholders in the process. Federal, state, and local agencies with regulatory authority were contacted throughout the process to provide input and comment. In addition, NHDOT identified quasi- and non-governmental stakeholders, and solicited comments through public information meetings, Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, a project website, and other activities.

3 Agency and Stakeholder Coordination

The Study team and NHDOT conducted 91 stakeholder meetings, three PAC meetings, and three public meetings (in Concord, Manchester, and Nashua) over the Study's 21-month lifecycle. The initial phase of stakeholder engagement was designed to solicit input from a broad, diverse range of players who all have a stake in the future of passenger rail in New Hampshire.

3.1 Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

The PAC provided input to the Study, including the vetting of early, preliminary alternatives. Throughout the Study, the PAC held meetings (including ongoing Study progress discussions) that coincided with the conclusion of major Study milestones and phases. The Study team coordinated the PAC's efforts. In addition, the Governor's Office, Congressional Delegation Offices, Executive Councilors, and State Senators and State Representatives from communities along the Capitol Corridor were notified of all meetings (public meetings and PAC meetings). Information on the PAC meetings is provided in Appendices 10a and 10b to the AA Final Report.

The following organizations were PAC members:

- Amtrak
- Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission
- City of Concord, New Hampshire
- City of Manchester, New Hampshire
- City of Nashua, New Hampshire/Nashua Transit System
- Conservation Law Foundation of New Hampshire
- The Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce
- The Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce
- Lowell Regional Transit Authority
- Manchester Transit Authority
- Manchester-Boston Regional Airport
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation
- Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
- Nashua Regional Planning Commission
- New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority
- Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
- Pan Am Railways
- Rockingham Planning Commission
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

3.2 Other Stakeholders

One-on-one interviews and group briefings were held early in the Study with representatives of stakeholder groups identified by the Study team in consultation with NHDOT. These sessions allowed NHDOT and the Study team to convey information about the Study' scope and process and gain an understanding of stakeholders' perceptions of the Study, sensitivities associated with the project, and how local communities might react to the project. Stakeholders also provided information on other individuals and organizations that might have a particular interest in or provide support for the project.

Following is a list of stakeholders and a brief description of each.

- Anagnost Companies: Manchester developer
- C&J Trailways: Regional bus service provider in the Study area
- Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (RPC): Planning commission serving 20 communities in Central New Hampshire, including the City of Concord

- City of Concord, New Hampshire
- City of Dover, New Hampshire
- City of Manchester, New Hampshire – Board of Aldermen: Legislative body of the City of Manchester
- City of Manchester, New Hampshire – Mayor’s Office: Executive Office of the City of Manchester
- City of Nashua, New Hampshire/Nashua Transit System: Second largest city in New Hampshire; both Route 3 and existing rail line runs through the city
- Concord Area Transit: Public transit provider in the City of Concord
- Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce: Business advocacy organization representing businesses in the Central New Hampshire region
- Concord Coach/Dartmouth Coach/Boston Express: Regional bus service providers in the Study area
- Conservation Law Foundation: Non-profit focusing on environmental issues in New England
- FRA: Grantee for the portion of the Study to develop a Service Development Plan and related documents for intercity passenger rail service in the corridor between Boston and Concord
- FTA: Grantee for the portion of the Study to provide an AA for transit service in the Concord-Boston corridor
- Mount Washington College, Manchester, New Hampshire
- Lowell Regional Transit Authority: Public transit provider in the greater Lowell region
- Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce: Business advocacy organization representing businesses in the Manchester region
- Manchester Community College, Manchester, New Hampshire
- Manchester Transit Authority: Public transit provider in the greater Manchester region
- Manchester-Boston Regional Airport (Manchester Airport): Public airport located in Manchester, New Hampshire
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)/Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA): MassDOT is the state agency that coordinates, plans, and funds all public transportation infrastructure within the Commonwealth; MassDOT oversees the MBTA, which is responsible for providing public transit service to 176 cities and towns in Massachusetts
- Massachusetts Historical Commission: Established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth
- Merrimack Chamber of Commerce: Business advocacy organization representing businesses in the Merrimack region
- Merrimack Valley Planning Commission: Regional planning agency serving 15 communities in the northeast region of Massachusetts
- Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce: Business advocacy organization representing businesses in the Southern New Hampshire region

- Nashua RPC: Planning commission serving 13 communities in Southern New Hampshire, including the City of Nashua
- National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak): Publicly-supported service that operates intercity passenger rail service throughout the U.S.
- New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA): Established by the legislature in 2007 for the general purpose of developing and providing commuter rail or other similar forms of passenger rail service; the authority is administratively attached to NHDOT
- New Hampshire Technical Institute, Concord, New Hampshire
- New Hampshire Congressional Delegates: Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Kelly Ayotte; Representatives Carol Shea-Porter and Annie Kuster
- New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES): State agency concerned with the protection and wise management of New Hampshire's environment
- New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (NHDRED): State agency concerned with economic development in the State of New Hampshire
- New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources: Established as the State Historic Preservation Office in 1974 to preserve the historical, archaeological, architectural, and cultural resources of New Hampshire
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority/*Downeaster*: Amtrak's rail service from Massachusetts to Maine
- Pan Am Railways (PAR): Operator of more than 2,000 route miles of railroad in the Northeast, including the track included in the Study corridor
- Public Service of New Hampshire (PSNH): New Hampshire's largest electric utility and owner/operator of the coal-fired Merrimack Station in Bow, New Hampshire
- Rivier University, Nashua, New Hampshire
- Rockingham Planning Commission: Planning commission serving the southernmost corridor communities
- Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, New Hampshire
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission: Planning commission serving 13 communities in Southern New Hampshire, including the City of Manchester
- The Duprey Companies: Concord, New Hampshire Developer
- The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments: Regional planning agency serving nine communities in the Northeast region of Massachusetts
- Town of Bedford, New Hampshire
- Town of Bow, New Hampshire
- Town of Durham, New Hampshire
- Town of Exeter, New Hampshire
- Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

- Town of Hudson, New Hampshire
- Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire
- Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire
- University of New Hampshire

Notes and details of stakeholder meetings can be found in Appendices 10a and 10b to the AA Final Report.

3.3 Public Involvement

The Study team held three public meetings at key Study milestones, one of which was a scoping meeting to satisfy FRA requirements:

- Study Initiation Public Meeting, Manchester, New Hampshire – June 5, 2013
- Public Scoping Meeting, Concord, New Hampshire – March 5, 2014
- Final Alternatives Meeting, Nashua, New Hampshire – November 20, 2014

Public meeting documentation can be found in Appendices 10a and 10b to the AA Final Report. Table 3.1 is a summary stakeholder outreach activities.

Table 3.1: Stakeholder Outreach Summary

Date	Stakeholder
3/11/2013	Central New Hampshire RPC
3/12/2013	NHRTA
3/12/2013	City of Nashua, New Hampshire
3/12/2013	Nashua Chamber of Commerce
3/12/2013	Concord Area Transit
3/12/2013	Concord Coach/Dartmouth Coach/Boston Express
3/13/2013	FRA
3/13/2013	FTA
3/13/2013	Nashua RPC
3/13/2013	Southern New Hampshire RPC
3/13/2013	Manchester Chamber of Commerce
3/13/2013	Manchester Airport
3/14/2013	Manchester Transit Authority
4/2/2013	Mayor of the City of Manchester, New Hampshire
4/2/2013	Conservation Law Foundation
4/3/2013	MBTA
4/3/2013	MassDOT
4/3/2013	Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
4/3/2013	Town of Durham, New Hampshire
4/3/2013	University of New Hampshire
4/16/2013	Senator Shaheen District Office
4/16/2013	Southern New Hampshire RPC

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Date	Stakeholder
4/16/2013	City of Manchester – Board of Alderman
4/17/2013	City of Concord, New Hampshire
4/17/2013	Rockingham Planning Commission
4/17/2013	Town of Exeter, New Hampshire
4/17/2013	C&J Trailways
4/18/2013	Nashua RPC
4/18/2013	Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire
4/18/2013	Merrimack Chamber of Commerce
5/14/2013	Concord Chamber of Commerce
5/14/2013	NHDES
5/14/2013	PAC Meeting – Concord, New Hampshire
5/15/2013	Congresswoman Shea-Porter District Office
5/16/2013	FRA/FTA Conference Call
5/16/2013	Congresswoman Kuster District Office
5/16/2013	Manchester Chamber of Commerce
5/16/2013	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
5/16/2013	Anagnost Companies
5/28/2013	Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
5/28/2013	PAR
5/30/2013	City of Dover, New Hampshire
6/5/2013	Public Meeting – Manchester, New Hampshire
6/28/2013	FTA
7/17/2013	MBTA
7/19/2013	Briefing for NHDOT Commissioner Clement
7/19/2013	PAR
7/23/2013	Land Use Workshop – Nashua, New Hampshire
7/23/2013	Land Use Workshop – Concord, New Hampshire
7/25/2013	Land Use Workshop – Manchester, New Hampshire
7/29/2013	EPA
8/19/2013	Congresswomen’s Kuster and Shea-Porter’s Staff Project Briefing/ Senator Shaheen’s Staff Project Briefing/FRA Project Briefing – Washington, DC
11/20/2013	FTA/FRA – Washington, DC
12/17/2013	Central New Hampshire RPC
12/17/2013	City of Concord, New Hampshire
12/17/2013	City of Nashua, New Hampshire
12/17/2013	Nashua RPC
12/18/2013	City of Manchester, New Hampshire
12/18/2013	Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission
12/20/2013	FRA & FTA
1/21/2014	PAC Meeting – Concord, New Hampshire
1/31/2014	MassDOT/MBTA
2/06/2014	Boston Express
2/06/2014	MassDOT/NHDOT
3/03/2014	Commissioner Clement; Governor’s staff
3/04/2014	Harry Blunt, Mark Sanborn; NHDOT Project Management
3/05/2014	Congresswoman Niki Tsongas’ staff
3/05/2014	Public Scoping Meeting at NHDOT, Concord, New Hampshire

Date	Stakeholder
3/25/2014	FRA Conference call
3/26/2014	Manchester Board of Advisors Meeting
4/03/2014	Meeting with Amtrak Regarding Ridership Forecasting
4/15/2014	John D. (Jody) Ray (MBTA) and Chris Clement (NHDOT)
4/16/2014	NHDOT Natural Resource Coordination Meeting
4/17/2014	FTA – Cambridge, Massachusetts
4/22/2014	FRA Conference Call
4/25/2014	City of Nashua, New Hampshire – Tom Galligani, Economic Development Director
5/07/2014	NHDOT Commissioner and NHDOT Management
5/08/2014	Montagne Communications (NHRTA Public Relations firm)
6/04/2014	Meeting on Bow-Concord Project with NHDOT
5/14/2014	1 st Hy-Rail trip with PAR
6/13/2014	FTA Meeting – Washington, DC
7/14/2014	Nashua RPC – Exit 36 SB Planning Study
7/1&28/2014	FRA Conference Calls
7/30/2014	2 nd Hy-Rail Trip with PAR
8/06/2014	Mayor of the City of Nashua, New Hampshire
8/6/2014	Meeting with Chris Clement, selection of locally preferred alternative and State decision-making
8/6/2014	Meeting with Dan Kelly, development at Spit Brook Road
8/14/2014	FRA call, comments on deliverables
10/21/2014	FRA call with NHDOT Project Management
10/23/2014	Chris Kennedy, Governor's Transport Assistant
10/23/2014	FTA – Cambridge, Massachusetts
11/18/2014	PAC Meeting – Concord, New Hampshire
11/20/2014	Montagne Communications – EJ Powers
11/20/2014	Manchester Union Leader – Michael Cousineau
11/20/2014	Public Meeting – Nashua, New Hampshire
11/21/2014	Congresswoman Annie Kuster
11/21/2014	NHRTA

As a result of agency and stakeholder input, the following is a compilation of the most frequent comments and concerns:

- New Hampshire would benefit from a transportation system that provides multiple transit options, is less focused on single occupancy vehicles, and provides an increase in options that have the potential to ease traffic congestion and save commuting time.
- The Manchester-Boston Regional Airport is an important cog in the New Hampshire economy and a rail connection to the airport should be part of the Study.
- The state needs to work to attract and retain young professionals, who are now leaving New Hampshire at a faster rate than they are moving to the state.
- It is important to demonstrate the impacts and benefits of passenger rail to the state (economic, social, and environmental).

- The project needs to have a solid financial plan.
- State demographics are changing (the population is getting older), and the transportation system needs to address the needs of this changing demographic.
- The location of potential rail stations is important to many of the communities, and they would like to be part of the discussion in identifying appropriate locations.
- System safety needs to be analyzed.
- The fare structure for any system needs to be competitive with other forms of transportation.
- The frequency of operation needs to be competitive with other forms of transportation.
- The Study has many implications for development in New Hampshire, which needs to be quantified.
- Freight rail along the corridor is important, and the Study needs to examine the benefits to freight that could be realized by a passenger rail project.
- The project needs to quantify environmental impacts, including emissions, air quality, noise/vibration, etc.
- An increase in transit options has the potential to ease traffic congestion or slow the increase in traffic congestion in the state.
- Parking issues associated with potential rail stations is a concern in many communities.
- Any transportation study needs to include connections between rail/bus and other parts of the state, i.e., local transit systems.
- There is a concern among stakeholders that any proposed train service would negate the need for existing bus routes, which have been successful to date.
- A transparent process for the Study is important with a high-level of stakeholder and public engagement.
- Many stakeholders are interested in how passenger rail would impact the state's economy.

3.4 Website

A Study-specific website, <http://www.nhcapitolcorridor.com>, was developed to both disseminate and receive information about the Capitol Corridor AA Study.

3.5 Media Outreach

In cooperation with the NHDOT Public Information Office, notices of upcoming meetings were sent to the following local news media outlets:

- **Print Media**
 - Concord Monitor
 - Manchester Union Leader
 - Nashua Telegraph
 - Lawrence Eagle Tribune

- **Broadcast Television**
 - WBIN, Concord
 - WMUR, Manchester
 - TV 23, Manchester
 - TV 16, Nashua

- **Radio**
 - WEVO 89.1 FM, Concord
 - WGIR 610 AM, Manchester

3.6 Project Electronic Mailing List

A project electronic mailing list was developed with input from NHDOT, and maintained and used throughout the Study. Some individuals/organizations requested they be added to the list during public open houses, project briefings, or on the project website.

The mailing list is provided in Appendices 10a and 10b to the AA Final Report.