Help shape our region...

- ✓ Do you think passenger rail service is needed? At what cost?
- ✓ Would you prefer exclusive busways?
- ✓ Do you have opinions on how your community should handle population and employment growth in the future?

If you have an opinion on the study we want to hear from *you!* This study will help devise a strategy that meets your needs.

Visit the study website:
www.i93transit.org

Get more information on the study, join the mailing list, and/or click on "Contact Us" to submit comments.

You can also contact us via email:
info@i93transit.org

Or write:
Ram Maddali
Bureau of Transportation Planning
NHDOT
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

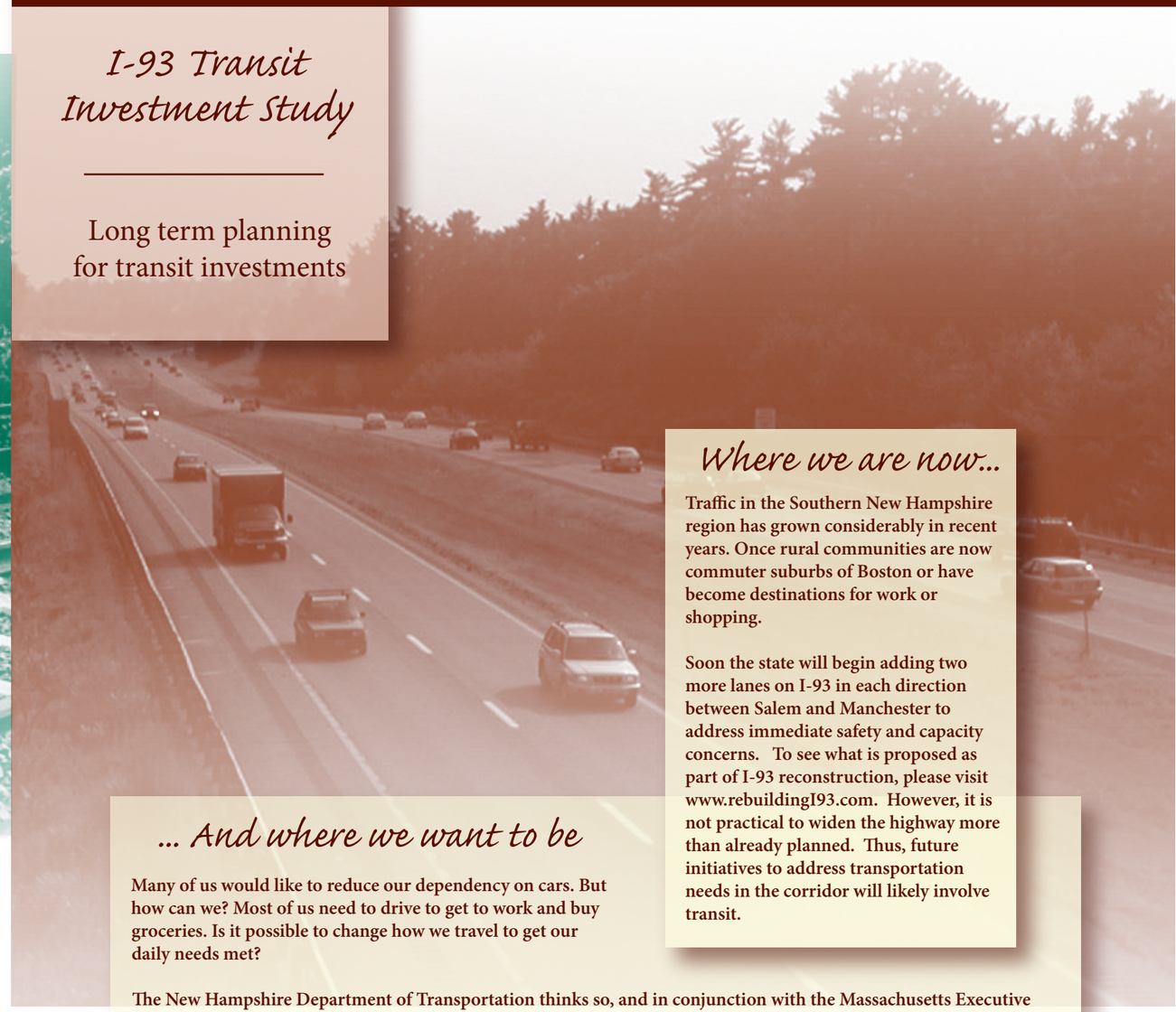
Advancing I-93

THINKING AHEAD

Winter 2007

I-93 Transit Investment Study

Long term planning for transit investments



Where we are now...

Traffic in the Southern New Hampshire region has grown considerably in recent years. Once rural communities are now commuter suburbs of Boston or have become destinations for work or shopping.

Soon the state will begin adding two more lanes on I-93 in each direction between Salem and Manchester to address immediate safety and capacity concerns. To see what is proposed as part of I-93 reconstruction, please visit www.rebuildingI93.com. However, it is not practical to widen the highway more than already planned. Thus, future initiatives to address transportation needs in the corridor will likely involve transit.

... And where we want to be

Many of us would like to reduce our dependency on cars. But how can we? Most of us need to drive to get to work and buy groceries. Is it possible to change how we travel to get our daily needs met?

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation thinks so, and in conjunction with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation has begun a study to identify ways to meet mobility needs. The study will look at what investments in bus and rail service are desirable and practical, and how to get more people carpooling.

The study team will work with local communities in reviewing the impacts of land use policies on transportation choices. For example, do development guidelines encourage town centers and transit-served residential neighborhoods?

THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF BROCHURES THAT WILL PROVIDE PERIODIC UPDATES ON THE I-93 TRANSIT INVESTMENT STUDY

THINKING AHEAD

The study at a glance

- ✓ Covers travel corridor between Boston, MA and Manchester, NH.
- ✓ Began in Summer 2006 and will end in Spring 2008.
- ✓ Looks at alternatives to car travel, such as rideshare/vanpooling, rail, bus, and bus rapid transit.
- ✓ Examines local land use policies, working with local communities and the Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP).
- ✓ Seeks public input.

What land use policies can alleviate traffic?

An effective way to reduce future congestion is to limit land-consuming development by encouraging, and even establishing, policies for more dense development. Denser land use patterns enable people to travel shorter distances to work, school, and leisure activities. Before automobile dominated land use practices became the norm, neighborhoods surrounding transportation systems were typically densely developed. Policies that support transit oriented development (TOD) can assist in increasing density around existing and future transit stops by placing a combination of residents and employment within walking distance of stations while preserving open space in other areas.

Transit oriented development is typically characterized by:
- ✓ Transit station as major feature.
- ✓ Mixed-use development (housing, office, retail, civic).
- ✓ Pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- ✓ Reduced and managed parking.
- ✓ Compact, dense development and targeted open space.

How can commuter rail reduce congestion?

Commuter rail typically provides journey to work service from outlying communities into a central city. The I-93 region includes several opportunities for transit corridors – the roadway corridor itself, the Manchester & Lawrence railroad, and the New Hampshire main line along the Merrimack River. Each of these offers potential connectivity to existing MBTA commuter rail services.

Commuter rail systems have the following characteristics:
- ✓ There is scheduled and frequent service.
- ✓ Rail coaches are larger than those of light rail or rapid transit.
- ✓ Trains are electric or diesel powered.
- ✓ Stations are well spaced and can serve as a catalyst to town center development.
- ✓ Commuter trains use standard railroad technology and can safely share tracks with freight and intercity services.

Alternative approaches

Busways and bus rapid transit (BRT) offer possible alternative approaches to rail transit – and can make good use of inactive rail corridors or other rights-of-way that would separate the service from normal traffic. Bus rapid transit services can provide an effective means of initiating transit services in a region either as an incremental step, or a longer term solution to meet shorter distance market needs.

BRT systems often use a variety of improvements including:
- ✓ Level boarding.
- ✓ Separate bus roadways or busways (no delays from other traffic or signals).
- ✓ Bus turnouts and boarding islands (improves pedestrian safety).
- ✓ Off-bus fare collection.
- ✓ Traffic signal prioritization for buses at intersections.

> "This type of development [sprawl] generates disproportionate amounts of traffic, creates poor road connectivity, contributes to congestion on the state highway system by funneling more traffic onto it, and is expensive to provide public services."
>
> - Report of the Community Advisory Committee to the Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation on the Long Range Transportation Plan (June 2006)