

Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan for New Hampshire's North Country

June 2009



North Country Council, Inc.
The Cottage at the Rocks
107 Glessner Road
Bethlehem, NH 03574
www.nccouncil.org

**Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services
Transportation Plan for
New Hampshire's North Country
June 2009**



Adopted by:

North Country Council Transportation Advisory Committee on August 19th, 2009

North Country Council Board of Directors on August 26th, 2009

North Country Council Representatives on October 8th, 2009

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Prepared by:

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Transportation Advisory Committee Membership

- 2009 -

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Frank Claffey Jr. – Bethlehem	Bill Ernst – Littleton
Bill Rines – Carroll	Dick Hamilton – Littleton
Bonnie Moroney – Carroll	Donna Clark – Lyman
Peter Dimmitt – Clarksville	Jim Trudell – Lyman
Judith Roche – Clarksville	Henry Anderson – Madison
Rich McLeod – Franconia	David Auger – Northumberland
Scott Knowlton – Franconia	Miriam Bader – Plymouth
William Jackson – Gorham	John Kelly – Plymouth
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Joel Godston – Haverhill	Frances Ruch – Stratford
Mark Dindorf – Hart’s Location	Carl Martland – Sugar Hill
Bob Stevenson – Jackson	Sidney Regen – Sugar Hill
Charles Muller – Jefferson	Joe Elgosin – Whitefield
Steve Young – Lancaster	Ed Betz – Whitefield
Joe Chenard – Lincoln	

Elected Officials, New Hampshire Department of Transportation Staff, and Representatives from Various Modes of Transportation

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Greg Placy - NHDOT
Alan Hanscom – NHDOT
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A large portion of the residents of New Hampshire's North Country, as well as the rest of the state, does not have access to personal automobiles. Given the rural nature of the region, there is inadequate access to public transportation and transit, making it difficult to access employment, health care, shopping and recreation. North Country Council updated the Regional Coordinated Transit Plan with the purpose of developing a comprehensive strategy to assist stakeholders like the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS), transportation providers, transportation coordinators, and other community agencies to help affected residents meet their transportation needs.

The study area for this plan includes the North Country Council planning region and the additional towns in Carroll County that are part of the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC). A Coordinated Transportation Plan for Carroll County was prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. and can be used as an appendix to this document: <http://www.lscs.com/projects/carroll/final.htm>. The Executive Summary is located in Appendix I.

This plan was developed in response to the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which was signed into law in August of 2005. SAFETEA-LU requires that a locally developed Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan be in place in order for transportation providers to receive funding through the Federal Transit Administration for the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310), the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC – Section 5316), and the New Freedom Program (Section 5317).

1.1 Goals

The goals for this plan include:

- Develop an inventory of transportation providers (public, private, and human services).
- Identify the unmet transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.
- Identify gaps in available services.
- Identify strategies to meet the identified needs and to maximize the use of limited transportation resources through coordination.
- Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.
- Recommend funding sources that can be used for various transportation projects.
- Enhance mobility between communities.

- Increase access to jobs, schools, medical centers, and other essential human services.
- Increase citizen awareness of public transit and human service transportation providers and programs.

1.2 Description of the Process

Development of Advisory Committee: North Country Council (NCC) developed an advisory committee of stakeholders in the region to help guide the development of this document and to provide knowledge about transportation services, operations and funding. Members of this advisory committee included representatives from the following agencies: North Country Transit, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC), Plymouth Transport Central, Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Gibson Center for Senior Services, and Granite State Independent Living.

Transportation Provider Survey: NCC developed a transportation provider survey in order to create an inventory of existing transportation services in the region and to better understand the providers' opinions on coordinating transportation. The survey was sent to a list of transportation providers that were identified in the NCC region and providers in the LRPC Carroll County communities, and was later sent to additional transportation providers that were identified through public meetings and other forums. A total of 34 transportation providers and other agencies completed and returned surveys out of the 45 identified transportation providers to which the surveys were distributed. The response rate was 75.6%. The survey results are summarized in Chapters 3 and 4, and the survey and provider contact list are located in Appendices A and B of this document.

Inventory/Description of Existing Services: In order to coordinate transportation services, it is important to know what systems are currently in place. Information was gathered to identify:

- Current transportation providers and to whom transportation services are provided.
- Types of services offered.
- Service areas.
- Ridership numbers.
- Funding used to operate services.
- Hours/days of operation.

A description of existing transportation services is located in Chapter 2.

Identify Perceptions on Benefits and Barriers to Coordinating Transportation:

There are many real and perceived barriers as well as benefits to coordinating transportation services. These benefits and barriers are realized by both the transportation provider and the user. Providers were surveyed to identify the benefits and barriers to coordination that they are confronting or expect to confront in the future. The results of this survey are summarized in Chapter 3 provider comments from each responding organization are located in Appendix C of this document.

Public Meetings: Five public meetings were held throughout the region (Haverhill, Plymouth, Lancaster, Berlin, and Conway) to gather input on:

- Existing transportation service.
- Experiences accessing transportation.
- Unmet transportation needs.
- Possible strategies/services to meet the needs.
- Specific projects that transportation providers need funding to implement.

Information that was gathered at these public meetings is summarized in Chapters 3 and 4 and the notes from each meeting are located in Sections D-H of the Appendix.

Transportation and Coordination Needs: By reviewing demographics, survey data, existing transportation services, and information gathered at the public meetings, an overview of coordination needs, unmet transportation needs and gaps in service was developed. The transportation and coordination needs are summarized in Chapter 4.

Strategies: The Advisory Committee worked to identify strategies to meet the unmet transportation and coordination needs. These strategies will assist transportation and human service providers, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, and other organizations to address the regional and local needs and enhance the transportation system that currently exists. The strategies to meet transportation and coordination needs are explained in Chapter 5.

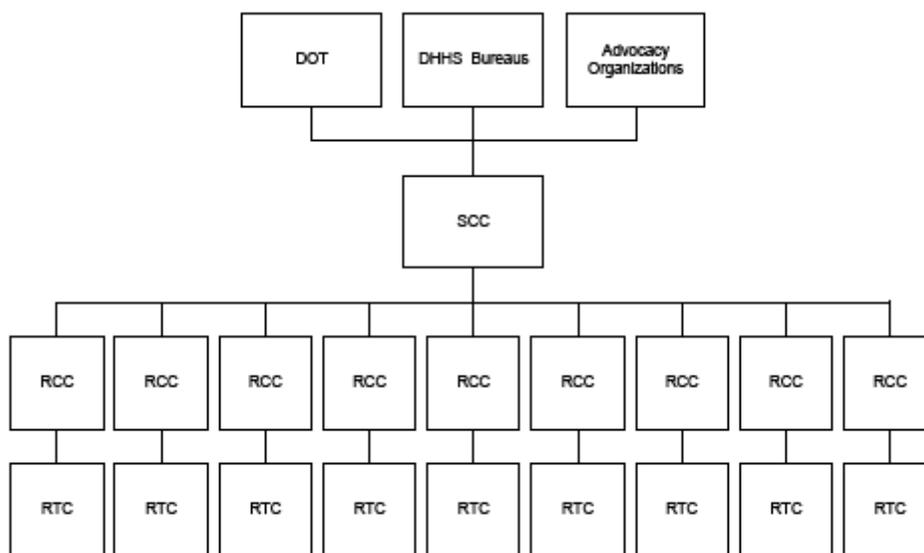
Prioritized Transportation Services for Funding: Priorities were assigned to transportation services that are needed in the region in order for them to be funded and implemented efficiently. The prioritized services are explained in Chapter 6.

Funding: North Country Council identified funding resources that are available to transportation providers through the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. The funding programs and descriptions are summarized in Chapter 7.

1.3 Statewide Coordination Efforts

The Governor’s Taskforce on Community Transportation was established by a Governor’s Executive Order in 2004 to create an affordable and accessible transportation infrastructure for New Hampshire citizens. This group developed recommendations and policies to guide the development of a “seamless” transportation system that connects system users from one part of the state to another. These recommendations and other findings were published in the Statewide Coordination of Community Transportation Services report that was developed by Nelson-Nygaard Consulting Services (2006). Following the recommendations of this report, a Statewide Coordinating Council (SCC) was established to oversee transportation coordination policies, assist with regional efforts, and to monitor the program statewide. To do this, the SCC will also oversee the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) and the Regional Transportation Coordinators (RTC), or the “regional brokers”. This relationship is displayed in Table 1.1 below and explained in more detail on page 5.

Table 1.1: Structure of the New Hampshire Statewide Coordinated Plan



Source: Governor’s Taskforce on Community Transportation, Statewide Coordination of Community Transportation Services, October 2006. Prepared by Nelson-Nygaard Consulting Associates.

Statewide Coordinating Council (SCC): The Statewide Coordinating Council is comprised of major funding agencies and other stakeholders acting primarily as an advisory body. However, the SCC could have some policy and approval powers. The Statewide Coordination Plan recommended that this council be charged with “setting coordination policies, assisting regional efforts as needed, and monitoring the

results.” The Statewide Coordinating Council, under the plan, will directly oversee the Regional Coordinating Councils, and will have the ability to approve or reject the Regional Coordinating Councils’ selection of their Regional Transportation Coordinator. The Statewide Coordinating Council does not have the power to execute contracts, so no funding will flow through the Statewide Coordinating Council.

Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC): The Regional Coordinating Councils will be comprised primarily of organizational members, but could include regional representatives of funding agencies and service providers. This entity will work with providers to create local service designs, implement coordination policies, and provide feedback to the Statewide Coordinating Council relative to policies. The Regional Coordinating Councils will provide direct oversight of their respective Regional Transportation Coordinators. Efforts are currently underway to establish RCCs statewide. Each of the Regional Coordinating Councils will have the following responsibilities under the Statewide Coordination Plan:

- Implementing coordination initiatives and policies in their region.
- Recommending, guiding, and monitoring their Regional Transportation Coordinator.
- Working with their Regional Transportation Coordinator to develop the “local service design”, including determining how service is delivered and how inter-regional trips are coordinated.
- Providing feedback to the Statewide Coordinating Council on coordination policies that are working or not working well in their region.
- Nominating or replacing Regional Transportation Coordinators.

It is expected that the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) will review the RCCs’ recommendations for the selection of the Regional Transportation Coordinators and other decisions. Currently, the SCC and the RPCs are working to define that relationship and responsibilities. *There will be approximately 10 Regional Coordinating Councils, but this number could change until the time when the SCC makes a final ruling on boundaries and regions.*

Regional Transportation Coordinator (RTC): The Regional Transportation Coordinator will essentially act as a regional transportation “broker,” and could be a service provider, public entity, or private firm. Under the Statewide Coordination Plan, the purpose of the Regional Transportation Coordinator is to “coordinate the service delivery of customers of sponsoring organizations so as to maximize the use of scarce resources and combine RideShare-able trips sponsored by different organizations.” At the operational level, Regional Transportation Coordinators will contract directly with state agencies and/or other groups purchasing transportation services. The Regional Transportation Coordinator will have the following responsibilities under the Statewide Coordination Plan:

- Developing and/or maintaining a database of customers in the region that have been deemed eligible for service by each sponsoring organization.

- Processing service requests from registered customers, according to the policies of the applicable sponsoring organization.
- Scheduling trips via appropriate transportation service providers.
- Monitoring the performance of transportation providers to ensure that the service quality and cost efficiency goals of each sponsoring organization are met.
- Performing customer service functions, responding to information requests, “same-day issues”, and complaints.
- Preparing and submitting reports and invoices per the requirements of each sponsoring organization.

1.4 Demographics

There are a number of factors that contribute to the widespread need for coordinated transportation in the North Country as well as the rest of the state. Many families live below the poverty level and cannot afford the expenses of owning and operating a vehicle; there is a large population of elderly and disabled people that cannot physically operate vehicles; and many people are commuting long distances for work and medical trips to the same locations. The following charts compare some of the data related to transit needs by town (in the North Country Council planning region); by county (Grafton, Carroll, and Coos); and for the State of New Hampshire.

Autoless Households - Tables 1.2 through 1.4 show the number/percentage of autoless households in Grafton, Coos and Carroll Counties. Based on the 2000 US Census, in the State of New Hampshire, there are 474,606 occupied housing units, 27,360 of which (5.8%) do not have vehicles. In Coos County, 8% of occupied housing units do not have vehicles available, compared with Grafton and Carroll Counties which experience rates of 6.5% and 4.3% respectively.

Table 1.2: Autoless Households - Grafton County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Grafton County)	Occupied Housing Units	Units with No Vehicle Available	% of Units with No Vehicle Available
Bath	345	16	4.6%
Benton	93	1	1.1%
Bethlehem	924	51	5.5%
Campton	1,128	64	5.7%
Easton	113	2	1.8%
Ellsworth	25	0	0.0%
Franconia	392	10	2.6%
Groton	160	2	1.3%
Haverhill	1,755	135	7.7%
Landaff	163	2	1.2%
Lincoln	586	59	10.1%
Lisbon	629	36	5.7%
Littleton	2,514	256	10.2%
Lyman	206	5	2.4%
Monroe	315	15	4.8%
Plymouth	1,678	122	7.3%
Rumney	576	10	1.7%
Sugar Hill	250	2	0.8%
Thornton	759	13	1.7%
Warren	352	15	4.3%
Waterville Valley	119	0	0.0%
Wentworth	309	16	5.2%
Woodstock	501	31	6.2%
Grafton County	31,598	2,062	6.5%
New Hampshire	474,606	27,360	5.8%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.3: Autoless Households - Coos County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Coos County)	Occupied Housing Units	Units with No Vehicle Available	% of Units with No Vehicle Available
Berlin	4,555	628	13.8%
Carroll	287	11	3.8%
Clarksville	128	0	0.0%
Colebrook	1,044	91	8.7%
Columbia	291	11	3.8%
Dalton	377	13	3.4%
Dummer	145	4	2.8%
Errol	141	0	0.0%
Gorham	1,294	90	7.0%
Jefferson	405	9	2.2%
Lancaster	1,286	82	6.4%
Milan	530	2	0.4%
Northumberland	989	48	4.9%
Pittsburg	383	10	2.6%
Randolph	140	0	0.0%
Shelburne	158	0	0.0%
Stark	196	4	2.0%
Stewartstown	371	21	5.7%
Stratford	399	39	9.8%
Whitefield	816	60	7.4%
Coos County	13,961	1,123	8.0%
New Hampshire	474,606	27,360	5.8%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.4: Autoless Households - Carroll County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Carroll County)	Occupied Housing Units	Units with No Vehicle Available	% of Units with No Vehicle Available
Albany	237	6	2.5%
Bartlett	1,220	52	4.3%
Chatham	105	2	1.9%
Conway	3,716	193	5.2%
Eaton	144	3	2.1%
Hart's Location	12	0	0.0%
Jackson	364	5	1.4%
Madison	790	14	1.8%
Carroll County	18,351	798	4.3%
New Hampshire	474,606	27,360	5.8%

Source: US Census, 2000

Below Poverty Level - Tables 1.5 through 1.7 and Map 1.1 on page 13 show the number/percentage of individuals below the poverty level in Grafton, Coos and Carroll Counties. Based on the 2000 US Census, in the State of New Hampshire, there were 78,530 individuals (6.5%) living below the poverty level. In the North Country, the highest percentage of individuals living below the poverty level was found in Coos County (10%), followed by Grafton County (8.6%) and Carroll County (7.9%).

Table 1.5: Poverty Level - Grafton County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Grafton County)	Number of Individuals Below Poverty Level	% of Individuals Below Poverty Level
Bath	44	5.1%
Benton	19	8.8%
Bethlehem	248	11.4%
Campton	239	8.8%
Easton	25	10.0%
Ellsworth	0	0.0%
Franconia	76	8.9%
Groton	28	6.7%
Haverhill	289	6.8%
Landaff	28	7.1%
Lincoln	101	8.0%
Lisbon	118	7.5%
Littleton	663	11.4%
Lyman	31	6.5%
Monroe	12	1.6%
Plymouth	785	18.6%
Rumney	140	9.5%
Sugar Hill	30	5.3%
Thornton	175	9.5%
Warren	93	10.7%
Waterville Valley	16	6.2%
Wentworth	63	7.9%
Woodstock	110	9.6%
Grafton County	6,462	8.6%
New Hampshire	78,530	6.5%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.6: Poverty Level - Coos County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Coos County)	Number of Individuals Below Poverty Level	% of Individuals Below Poverty Level
Berlin	1,249	12.4%
Carroll	46	6.9%
Clarksville	11	3.7%
Colebrook	277	12.0%
Columbia	53	7.3%
Dalton	53	5.6%
Dummer	23	6.7%
Errol	41	13.1%
Gorham	202	7.0%
Jefferson	81	8.2%
Lancaster	303	9.7%
Milan	75	5.7%
Northumberland	274	11.4%
Pittsburg	64	7.4%
Randolph	6	1.8%
Shelburne	14	3.7%
Stark	27	5.1%
Stewartstown	108	11.5%
Stratford	133	14.3%
Whitefield	187	9.8%
Coos County	3,231	10.0%
New Hampshire	78,530	6.5%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.7: Poverty Level – Carroll County

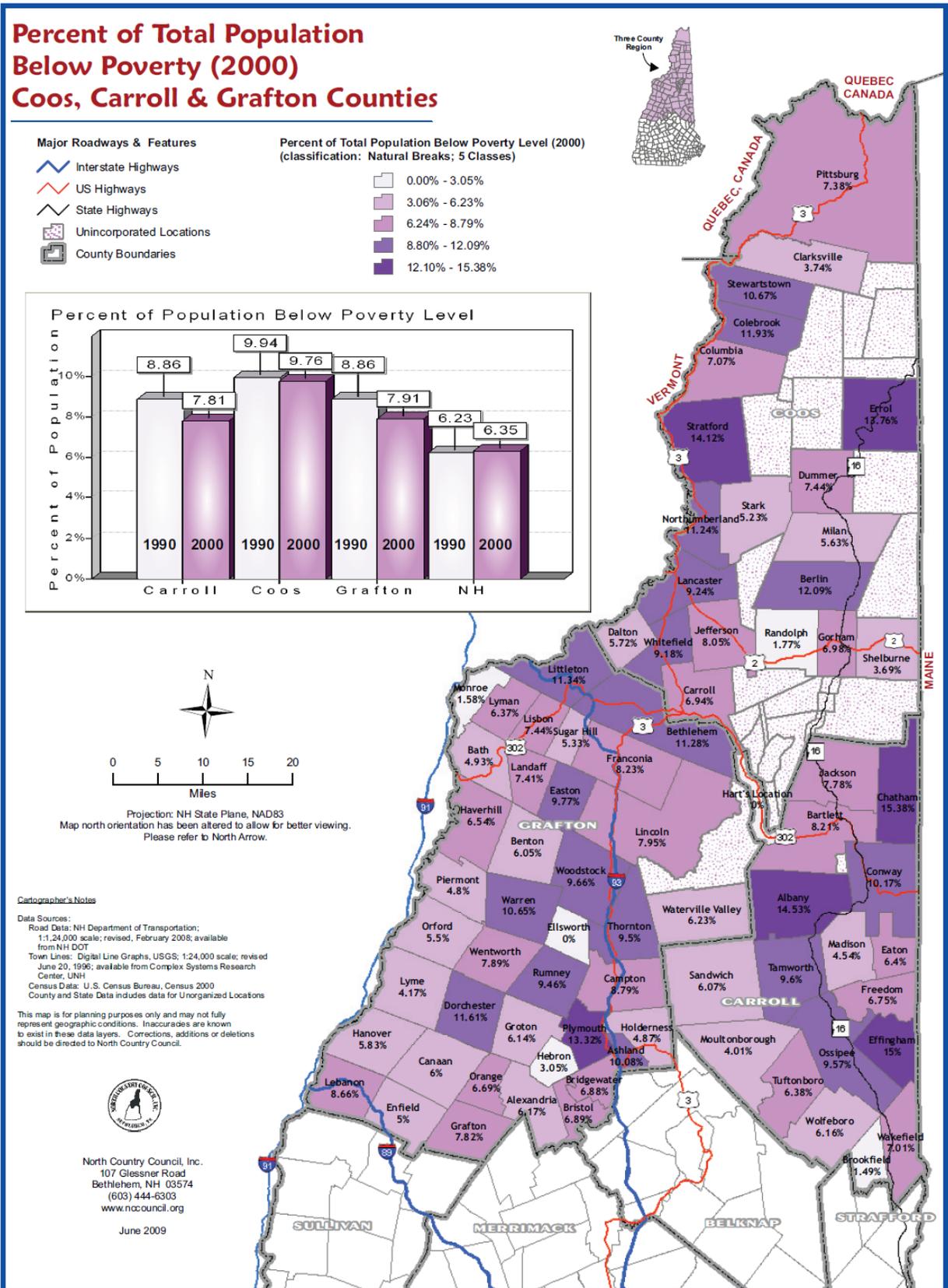
NCC Planning Region Towns (Carroll County)	Number of Individuals Below Poverty Level	% of Individuals Below Poverty Level
Albany	95	15.7%
Bartlett	222	8.1%
Chatham	40	15.4%
Conway	875	10.3%
Eaton	24	7.2%
Hart's Location	0	0.0%
Jackson	65	8.1%
Madison	90	4.5%

Carroll County	3,411	7.9%
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New Hampshire	78,530	6.5%
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Source: US Census, 2000

Map 1.1: Percent of Total Population Below Poverty Level



Senior Population - Tables 1.8 through 1.10 show the number/percentage of individuals over the age of 65 in Grafton, Coos and Carroll Counties. Based on the 2000 US Census, in the State of New Hampshire, there were 147,970 individuals (12%) above the age of 65. In the North Country, the highest percentage of individuals over the age of 65 was found in Coos County (18.6%), followed by Carroll County (17.9%) and Grafton County (13.4%).

Table 1.8: Senior Population - Grafton County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Grafton County)	2000 Population	Population over 65 in 2000	% of Population
Bath	893	139	15.6%
Benton	314	102	32.5%
Bethlehem	2,199	236	10.7%
Campton	2,719	324	11.9%
Easton	259	50	19.3%
Ellsworth	87	13	14.9%
Franconia	924	189	20.5%
Groton	456	52	11.4%
Haverhill	4,416	778	17.6%
Landaff	378	56	14.8%
Lincoln	1,271	221	17.4%
Lisbon	1,587	181	11.4%
Littleton	5,845	844	14.4%
Lyman	487	58	11.9%
Monroe	759	146	19.2%
Plymouth	5,892	458	7.8%
Rumney	1,480	239	16.1%
Sugar Hill	563	105	18.7%
Thornton	1,843	228	12.4%
Warren	873	115	13.2%
Waterville Valley	257	35	13.6%
Wentworth	798	113	14.2%
Woodstock	1,139	117	10.3%
Grafton County	81,740	10,973	13.4%
New Hampshire	1,235,550	147,970	12.0%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.9: Senior Population - Coos County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Coos County)	2000 Population	Population over 65 in 2000	% of Population
Berlin	10,331	2,336	22.6%
Carroll	663	98	14.8%
Clarksville	294	34	11.6%
Colebrook	2,321	382	16.5%
Columbia	750	114	15.2%
Dalton	927	135	14.6%
Dummer	309	40	12.9%
Errol	298	52	17.4%
Gorham	2,895	568	19.6%
Jefferson	1,006	140	13.9%
Lancaster	3,280	560	17.1%
Milan	1,331	164	12.3%
Northumberland	2,438	386	15.8%
Pittsburg	867	165	19.0%
Randolph	339	63	18.6%
Shelburne	379	62	16.4%
Stark	516	67	13.0%
Stewartstown	1,012	179	17.7%
Stratford	942	120	12.7%
Whitefield	2,038	377	18.5%
Coos County	32,936	6,113	18.6%
New Hampshire	1,235,550	147,970	12.0%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.10: Senior Population - Carroll County

NCC Planning Region Towns (Carroll County)	2000 Population	Population over 65 in 2000	% of Population
Albany	654	52	8.0%
Bartlett	2,705	356	13.2%
Chatham	260	28	10.8%
Conway	8,604	1,329	15.4%
Eaton	375	45	12.0%
Hart's Location	37	10	27.0%
Jackson	835	182	21.8%
Madison	1,984	239	12.0%

Carroll County	43,608	7,789	17.9%
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New Hampshire	1,235,550	147,970	12.0%
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Source: US Census, 2000

Disabled Population - Tables 1.11 through 1.13 show the number/percentage of individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities in 3 age ranges in Grafton, Coos and Carroll Counties. Based on the 2000 US Census, in Coos County, nearly 50% of people ages 65 and up have a physical and/or mental disability, compared to Grafton and Carroll Counties where the number is closer to 40%. When looking at these statistics in each of the three counties for the younger age ranges (5 to 20 and 21 to 64), one can expect that these numbers will be increasing as disabled US Veterans are returning home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Table 1.11: Disabled Population – Grafton County

Age Range	Total Population	Population with Disability	Percent of Population with Disability
5 to 20	19,647	1,542	7.8%
21 to 64	46,659	6,917	14.8%
65 and up	10,187	3,876	38.0%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.12: Disabled Population - Coos County

Age Range	Total Population	Population with Disability	Percent of Population with Disability
5 to 20	6,911	651	9.4%
21 to 64	18,351	4,678	25.5%
65 and up	5,690	2,705	47.5%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.13: Disabled Population - Carroll County

Age Range	Total Population	Population with Disability	Percent of Population with Disability
5 to 20	8,904	730	8.2%
21 to 64	24,829	5,077	20.4%
65 and up	7,481	2,776	37.1%

Source: US Census, 2000

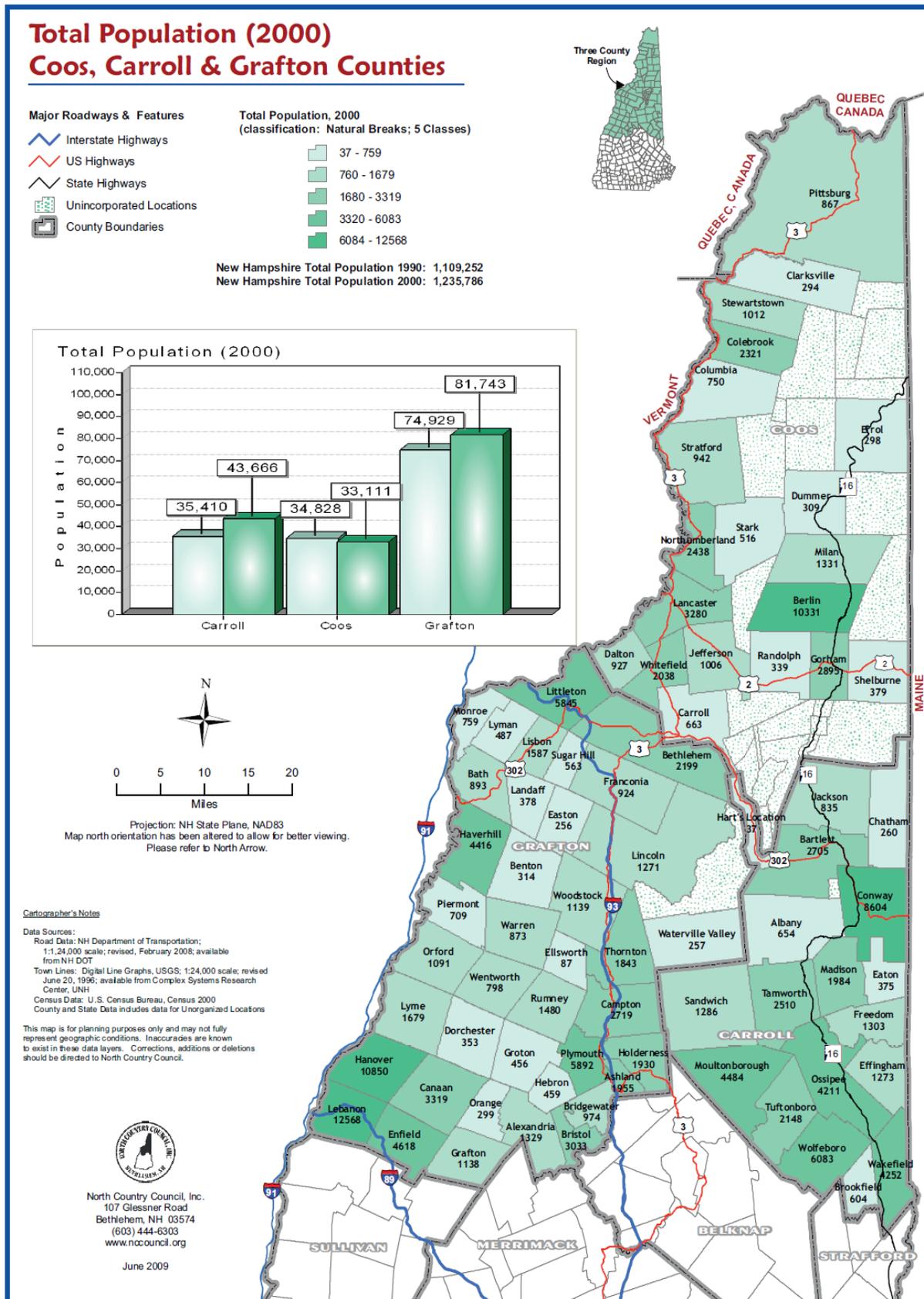
Population Growth Trends - Table 1.14 below shows the population growth trends in Carroll, Coos, and Grafton Counties, and the State of New Hampshire between 1990 and 2007. Based on the 2000 US Census and NH Office of Energy and Planning figures, in the State of New Hampshire, the population has increased by 18.6% between the years of 1990 and 2007. Carroll and Grafton Counties experienced population increases of 33.6% and 16.8% respectively, while Coos County saw a 2% decrease in population. Map 1.2 on page 18 shows the population by community in the North Country in 2000.

Table 1.14: Population Growth Trends

	Carroll County	Coos County	Grafton County	New Hampshire
1990	35,410	34,693	74,929	1,109,117
2000	43,608	32,936	81,740	1,235,550
2007 Estimate	47,325	33,982	87,487	1,315,000
% Change from 1990 to 2007	33.6%	-2.0%	16.8%	18.6%

Source: US Census, 2000 and NH Office of Energy and Planning Population Estimates

Map 1.2: Total Population in the North Country



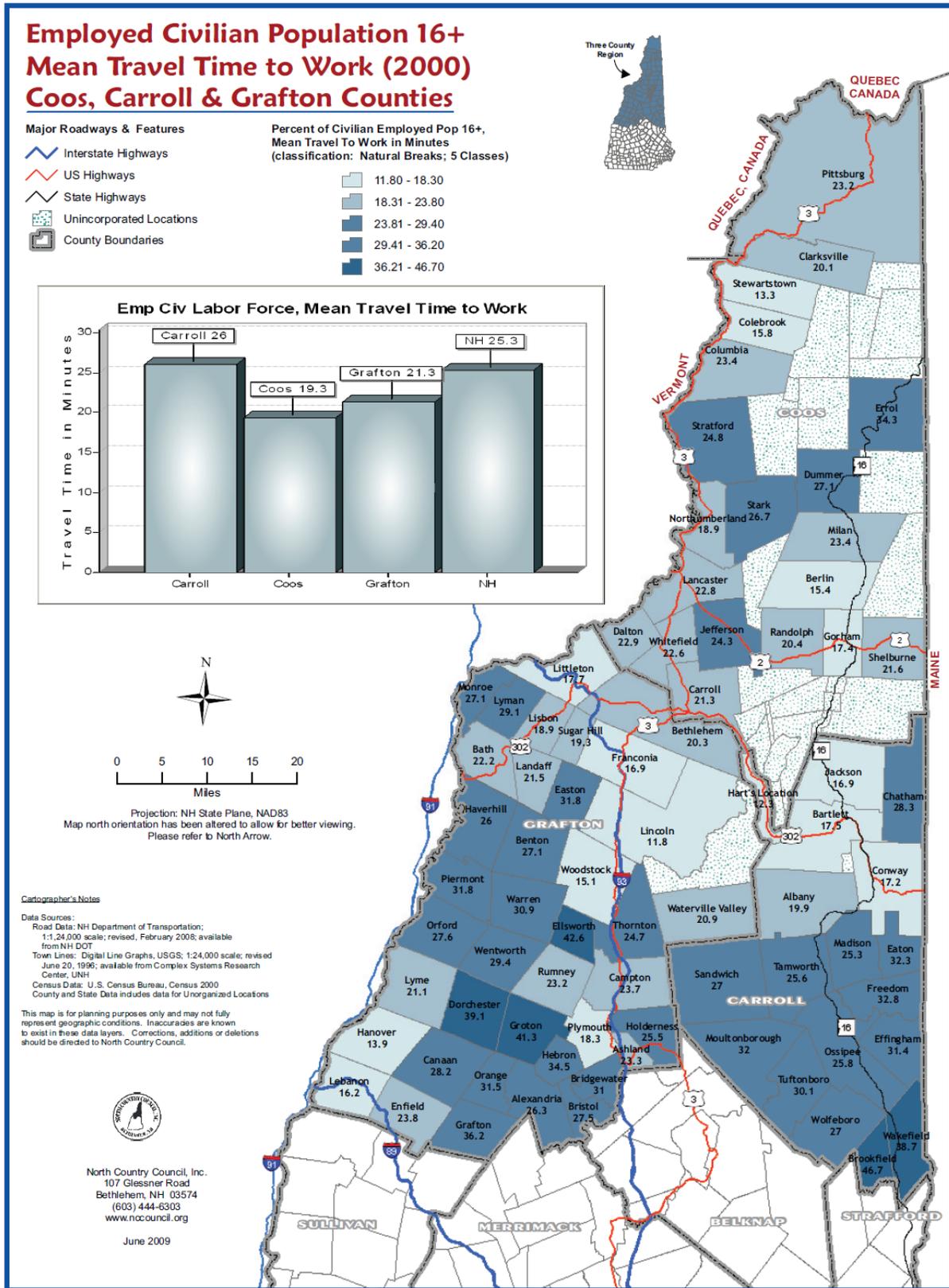
Commuting – Table 1.15 below and Map 1.3 on page 20 show the average travel time to work for residents of Grafton, Carroll, and Coos Counties and for the State of New Hampshire, and also shows the means of getting to work (drive alone, carpool, public transportation, etc.) These figures are based on the 2000 US Census and NH Office of Energy and Planning figures and are not a true “snapshot of 2009.” Since 2000, there have been new transit providers in the North Country, and, based on some of the ridership numbers for these organizations, it is expected that there will be visible changes in these figures when the 2010 US Census has been completed.

Table 1.15: Commute to Work

		Carroll County Towns within the NCC Planning Region			
		Grafton County	Coos County	Carroll County	New Hampshire
Car, Truck, Van (drove alone)	#	30,100	11,998	16,540	522,043
	%	72.8%	78.8%	79.6%	81.8%
Car, Truck, Van (carpooled)	#	5,025	1,742	2,058	62,763
	%	12.2%	11.4%	9.9%	9.8%
Public Transportation (including taxi)	#	287	27	63	4,645
	%	0.7%	0.2%	0.3%	0.7%
Walked	#	3,176	677	678	18,545
	%	7.7%	4.4%	3.3%	2.9%
Other Means	#	545	214	261	5,262
	%	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%	0.8%
Worked at Home	#	2,200	572	1,185	25,307
	%	5.3%	3.8%	5.7%	4.0%
Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)		21.3	19.3	26	25.3

Source: US Census, 2000 and NH Office of Energy and Planning

Map 1.3: Mean Travel Time to Work



1.5 Future Updates

Based on Federal Transit Administration final guidance (Coordinated Planning chapters of the revised program circulars for the Section 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom programs, issued in May 2007), North Country Council expects to update this plan every five years. If needed, North Country Council will work with New Hampshire Department of Transportation to perform small updates during that five year period to make sure that regional transit and coordination priorities are eligible for funding.

North Country Council intends to evaluate the process that was used in the development of this plan, and improvements that could be made to increase public involvement, prior to seeking funding for the next update of this plan.

2.0 INVENTORY / DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING SERVICES

2.1 Fixed Route/Public

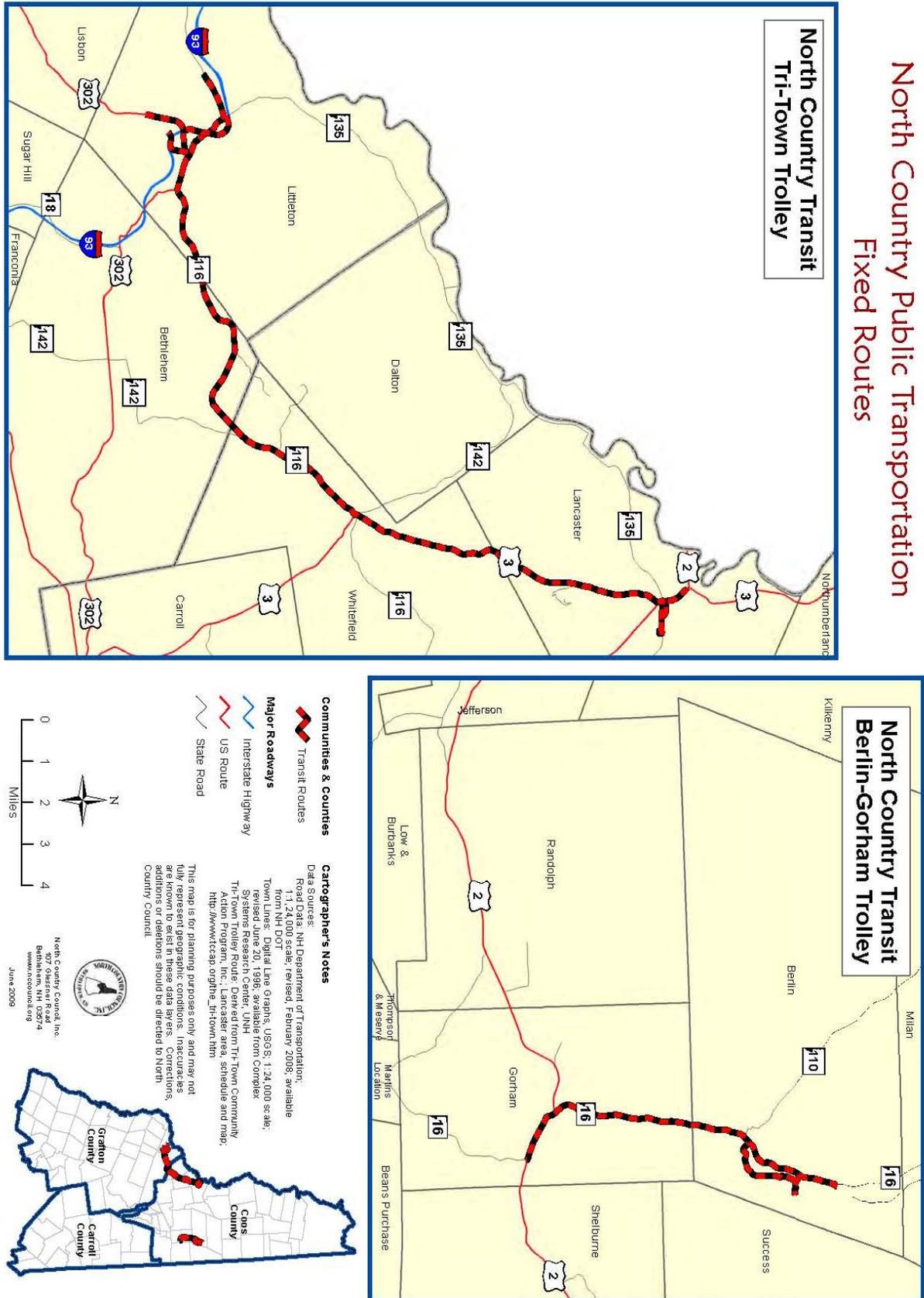
North Country Transit - North Country Transit (NCT) is a service of the Tri-County Community Action Program (Tri County CAP) and primarily serves the public, seniors and persons with disabilities within Coos County and northern Grafton County. NCT is financed through Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS), Community Services Block Grants, and local sources. Local funding sources include revenues from the state, county, towns, United Way, and contracted services.

NCT provides transportation services throughout Coos County and northern Grafton County. NCT operates two fixed route systems; one is the Berlin-Gorham Trolley that runs between the towns of Berlin and Gorham in Coos County (Monday-Saturday) and the other is the Tri-Town Bus Route that runs between Lancaster, Whitefield, and Littleton in both Coos and Grafton Counties (Monday-Saturday). In 2010, North Country Transit hopes to expand operations to include a demand response vehicle in Lisbon that will provide a connection with the Tri-Town Trolley in Littleton. (*See Map 2.1 on page 24*).

NCT operates a demand response service for elderly, disabled, and the general public throughout all of Coos County and in Littleton and the surrounding towns through a contract with Littleton Regional Hospital (LRH). LRH contracts with NCT to provide transportation to patients of their physicians, but, to promote coordination, does allow other passengers. NCT also provides Long Distance Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (7 days a week subject to the availability of drivers) to adults 60 years of age and over and for the general public by suggested donations for the elderly and fee for service for the general public. Passengers call an 800 number 24 hours in advance to book a trip; the information is then verified for eligibility and entered into dispatch software. The software compiles the information into manifests that are faxed to the drivers in the different areas for trips the next day. Demand response services are provided 5 days (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.).

NCT has a dispatch center staffed with two part time dispatchers, an Operations Manager, a Maintenance Manager/Vehicle Technician, 20 drivers (majority part time) and a Director and Administrative Assistant/Accounts Clerk. North Country Transit provided 56,782 rides in 2007. NCT services are funded by town, county, state and federal funding; private donations; and other sources.

Map 2.1: North Country Public Transportation – Fixed Routes



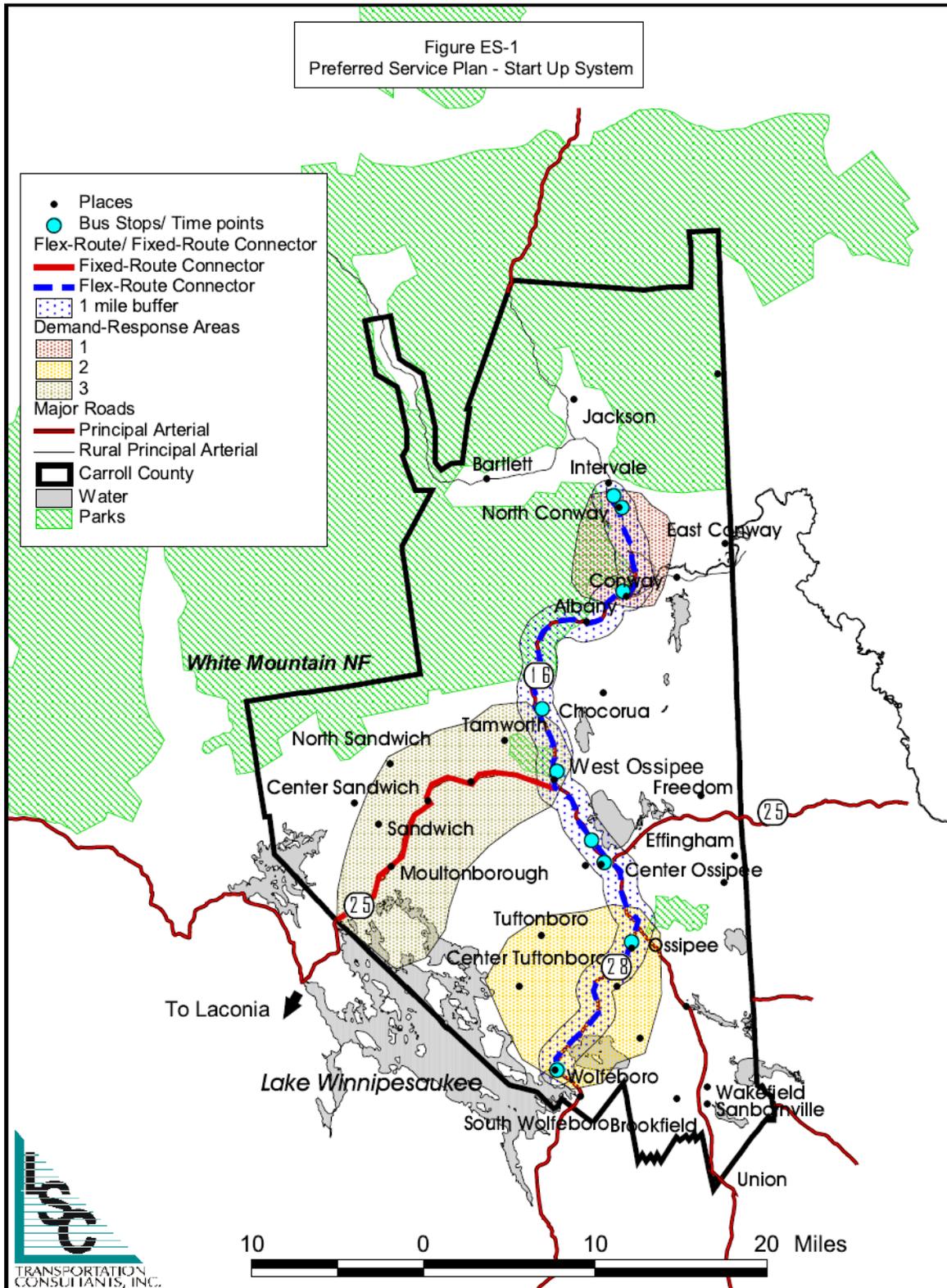
Services currently being developed: **

Carroll County Transit Program – This proposed service concept includes an all-day flex route connector which would originate in Wolfeboro, run north along NH Route 28 to drop-off passengers in the West Ossipee area, and would continue north along NH Route 16, traveling to the Chocorua, Conway, and North Conway areas. The service would be provided using two buses running in opposite directions. Transfer between the northbound and southbound buses can be done at the West Ossipee area. The buses would travel on a designated route according to a published schedule, but the schedule would include additional time to allow the buses to deviate to serve passengers that live within 1/4 mile off the route. (Map 2.2 on page 26 shows the “proposed route.”)

There would also be three in-town demand-response service (dial-a-ride service) areas that would operate in the Conway-North Conway, Moultonborough-Tamworth, and Ossipee-Wolfeboro areas from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to meet the transportation needs of local residents. Service would be provided throughout the day, Monday through Friday. Additionally, a fixed-route connector would operate between West Ossipee and Laconia all day, five days per week. Finally, all areas not included in the proposed service area would be served by the Tri County CAP (TCCAP) volunteer drivers as well as the retired and senior volunteer and Caregiver programs. These volunteer drivers and Caregiver programs will fill the gap in transit service by providing residents a ride to the public transit service, further increasing the service area. This service will be coordinated, scheduled, and dispatched through TCCAP, Transportation Division, North Country Transit.

***Future phases including week-end service and extension of services to Madison, Freedom, Effingham, and Wakefield will be discussed once the first phase is up and running.*

Map 2.2: Proposed Route – Carroll County Transit



Source: LSC Transportation Consultant, Inc.

Transport Central (TC) – Transport Central is a New Hampshire 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization that has been established to develop transportation services for transportation-challenged residents of the 19-town Plymouth catchment area. The goal of Transport Central is to make sure that three types of transportation services are available for residents in need:

- Scheduled transportation to medical facilities at Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital, Lakes Region Hospital, and Concord Hospital.
- An on-call volunteer system to provide local transportation in the 19-town area as well as to coordinate with fixed-route services.
- Scheduled service with multiple stops within the Plymouth area, including medical services and shopping.

(Transportation will be coordinated with the Plymouth Area Senior Center's transportation system so as to not duplicate services.)

North Country Council will be receiving funding to assist Transport Central with a study of the feasibility of a transit system in the Plymouth area.

2.2 Human Services / Senior Services

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Inc. (GCSCC) – Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization that provides programs and services to support the health and well-being of our older citizens. The Council's programs enable elderly individuals to remain independent in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. The Council's senior centers in the North Country include Plymouth, Littleton, Haverhill, and Lincoln. GCSCC provides demand-response transportation with some regularly scheduled routes, long distance medical trips, shopping, and recreational/social trips to the following people: elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, non-elderly disabled, low-income and the general public. Services are available all day (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) and as needed for users (volunteer-based). GCSCC employs 5 full-time and 7 part-time drivers that operate 10 wheelchair accessible mini-buses, augmented by 50-60 volunteer drivers. Grafton County Senior Citizens Council provided an estimated 46,000+ rides in 2007. GCSCC services are funded by revenues from town, county, state and federal funding; private donations; private foundations; and other sources.

The Holiday Center – The Holiday Center provides daily local trips and monthly long-distance trips for seniors in Berlin, Gorham, and Milan. Services are provided year-round, Monday through Friday as needed for clients. There are three part-time employees and 3 volunteers that operate a van (not wheelchair accessible) to provide clients with transportation services. This organization provides an estimated 1,951 rides/year. The Holiday Center transportation services are funded through state resources and private donations.

Easter Seals – Easter Seals Transportation Resource and Access Coordination initiative (TRAC) is a statewide provision of services including contracted services to the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS), Division for Children Youth and Families (DCYF), the Bureau of Behavioral Health (BBH), school district transportation of special needs students, and veterans. Easter Seals is currently contracting with 8 for-profit providers and taxi operators throughout the state. A call center is operated using state of the art software to improve tracking, reporting, and scheduling of transportation for multiple agencies and populations statewide. Statewide, this organization operates 120 vehicles (105 of which are wheelchair accessible) and provides an estimated 400,000 rides per year to the various populations including: elderly disabled and non-disabled, non-elderly disabled (mental/physical), low-income, youth, and general public. Trips provided include demand-response, route deviation (up to ¼ mile), long distance medical trips, and recreational/social trips. Easter Seals TRAC also provides other contract services.

Gibson Center for Senior Services – The Gibson Center for Senior Services is a nonprofit organization that provides year-round demand-response services for the elderly, elderly disabled, non-elderly disabled and for low income persons in Conway, North Conway, Albany, Bartlett, Jackson, Madison, Eaton, and Silver Lake. Services are provided Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for trips to the senior center, for medical appointments and for shopping and recreational outings. The Gibson Center employs four part-time drivers and one full-time driver that provide approximately 15,000 rides per year. Fares are not charged, however, donations are accepted. Transportation services are funded through revenues from town, state, and federal resources and private donations.

Serenity Steps – Serenity Steps is a Mental Health Peer Support Center in Berlin. Serenity Steps uses a 6 passenger van to transport members and participants to and from the center. This organization provides services to the elderly (disabled and non-disabled), non-elderly disabled (mental/physical), and low-income persons. There are two part-time drivers and it is estimated that they provide an average of 15-20 rides/week (780-1,040 rides/year). Serenity Steps is funded through state resources.

Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) – Granite State Independent Living is a statewide nonprofit service and advocacy organization that serves Grafton, Carroll and Coos Counties, as well as a number of areas in the southern part of the state. GSIL provides transportation to elderly non-disabled and low income individuals on a fee-for-service basis or using Part C funds for Peer Group meetings. Part B funding from the State Independent Living Council limits van transportation to eligible consumers requiring an accessible vehicle. Part B funds also provide for GSIL's transportation reimbursement program (TRP) which will reimburse eligible ambulatory consumers with significant disabilities for mileage reimbursement for volunteer drivers, bus passes and taxi fares for pre-approved rides for social, shopping and recreational trips. GSIL employs 1 full-time and 5 part-time drivers and has 6 wheelchair accessible vehicles. Vehicles are available 24/7 for clients

based on the availability of drivers. GSIL services are funded by the state, private donations, and other sources.

Northern Human Services (NHS) – Northern Human Services is a nonprofit provider of behavioral health services, developmental disability services and substance abuse treatment and prevention with locations throughout northern New Hampshire. The following are some of the Northern Human Services offices in the North Country:

- ***Mental Health Center*** – The Mental Health Center serves clients in Carroll County in the towns of Conway, North Conway, Center Conway, Chocorua, and Effingham. The Mental Health Center provides transportation (Monday-Friday) for eligible clients (elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled) to medical and treatment-related appointments within northern Carroll County. There is one part-time driver that operates a 10 passenger wheelchair lift van and provides rides to clients during the day for demand response and long distance medical trips. In 2007, the Mental Health Center provided an estimated 1,000 rides to clients. The Mental Health Center services are funded through state resources.
- ***Community Services Center*** – This organization is located in Berlin and serves clients (elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled) in Carroll and Coos Counties. The Community Services Center provides transportation 7 days per week as needed for clients only. The organization does not hire “drivers,” rather, the staff transports and supports clients to and from various community activities through the use of vans and personal vehicles. The Community Services Center also uses the fixed route and demand response services provided by North Country Transit as much as possible. These services are funded through state and federal resources.
- ***New Horizons*** – This organization is located in Conway and serves clients (elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled) in Carroll County. New Horizons provides demand-response transportation services 7 days per week, all day (8 a.m. - 4 p.m. or longer). There are 10 full-time and 2 part-time employees involved in transit at this organization, operating six vehicles, five of which are wheelchair accessible. New Horizons services are funded through state resources.
- ***Vershire Center*** – This organization is located in Colebrook and serves clients (elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled) in Pittsburg, Stewartstown, Colebrook, Clarksville, North Stratford, Errol, Groveton, and Stark. The Vershire Center employs approximately 25 people, using their own vehicles and one wheelchair accessible van, providing clients with transportation to worksites, recreational/social activities and for shopping/errands. This organization provides transportation 7 days per week all day (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) and as needed for clients.
- ***Gilpin House*** – This organization is located in Littleton and serves clients (elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled) in Warren, Pike, Lancaster, Littleton, Franconia, Dalton, Haverhill, Lisbon, North Haverhill, and Bethlehem. The Gilpin House employs 17 people that use their own

vehicles, an 8-passenger van, and a mid-sized pick-up truck to provide demand-response services, long distance medical trips, and transportation for recreational/social activities. Demand-response services are provided to mental health consumers within the local area of their homes, at which time rides are coordinated with identified treatment needs. This organization provides services 7 days per week as needed for clients.

2.3 Health Care

Littleton Regional Hospital (LRH) – LRH provides patient transportation (Care-A-Van) under contract with North Country Transit, Monday through Friday, all day for medical trips within the LRH service area. Transportation includes medical office visits and LRH services (including limited support services such as stopping at a pharmacy). LRH coordinates services with other providers such as the Senior Center and the NCT Tri-Town Bus. LRH provided an estimated 3,000 rides in 2007 for medical patients in Upper Grafton and Lower Coos Counties.

Country Village Center (Genesis Health Care) – Country Village Center in Lancaster provides services for seniors and for long term care-rehab for the general population. This agency employs two people that are involved in transit (one full-time and one part-time) and they operate one wheelchair accessible van. The agency provides demand-response rides, long distance medical trips, and recreation/social trips to clients year-round from Monday through Friday. In 2007, the Country Village Center provided 256 rides to clients.

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) – The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC), located in Lebanon, is a nationally ranked academic medical center. DHMC is home to the Norris Cotton Cancer Center (a National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center) and the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD). DHMC does not provide transportation directly to patients, but it contracts services with other agencies.

North Country Medi-Van – North Country Medi-Van is a private company offering both medical and non-medical transport services for disabled individuals for medical appointments, business appointments, shopping, family, outings, airport transportation and special events. Service is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as needed for clients. Rates vary depending on distance and wait time. Contracted services and discounted rates are available. This service is funded through state resources and other sources.

American Cancer Society NH – The American Cancer Society of New Hampshire is a private nonprofit providing rides to and from treatment for cancer patients. An average of 20 rides per week are provided statewide (about 1,040 rides/year), using a network of volunteer drivers operating their own vehicles. Services are provided year-round, Monday-Friday, as needed for clients. North Country Transit handles

phone calls and coordinates trips for the Coos County area through their dispatch center. The American Cancer Society of New Hampshire is funded through private donations, private foundations, and other resources.

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) - Through the Transportation Network, DAV volunteers drive sick and disabled veterans to and from VA medical facilities for treatment. The DAV has 189 Hospital Service Coordinators around the country who coordinate the transportation needs for disabled veterans; there are two Hospital Service Coordinators (Manchester, New Hampshire and White River Junction, Vermont) that can be contacted for transportation services, information, or assistance in the North Country. The DAV Transportation Network is staffed by volunteers and strives to provide transportation services for as many veterans as possible.

2.4 Volunteer

Carroll County Retired & Senior Volunteer Programs (CCRSVP) – This is a volunteer program that is sponsored by the North Conway Community Center. This program assists seniors who are 55 years and older by providing transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other errands, thus helping seniors remain independent in their homes. CCRSVP provides transportation for both local and long-distance trips to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, and other areas including Manchester, Tilton, Laconia, Portland, Maine, and White River Junction, Vermont. It is requested that 48 hours advance notice be given so that volunteer drivers can be located. Volunteers drive their own vehicles and provide demand-response rides as well as long distance medical trips. In 2007, this program provided 746 trips for clients in the 18 towns of Carroll County. CCRSVP services are provided through town, county, state and federal funding; private donations; and other sources.

Caleb Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers – The mission of this organization is to enhance independent living for the elderly, infirm, and homebound by relieving isolation and assisting with friendly visits, care, and support services through a network of volunteers and fostering of caring communities. Caleb Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers transports clients (elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, and low-income/any income person) via volunteers (33), using the volunteers' vehicles. This organization provides demand-response services, long distance medical trips and recreational/social trips for clients in Bethlehem, Dalton, Groveton, Jefferson, Lancaster, Littleton, Twin Mountain, and Whitefield. Transportation services offered are primarily medical-based, but also provide for other trips such as shopping, social visits, and pet care appointments. Trips are provided (as needed for clients) Monday through Saturday. Caleb Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers provided over 1,100 rides to clients in 2007. These services are funded through town funding, private donations, and private foundations.

Caleb Foundation – Highland House – This is an elderly housing complex that is home to 36 elderly residents in Whitefield. This organization does not provide transportation directly, rather, it assists with providing resources for rides through the use of volunteers, Littleton Regional Hospital Care-A-Van, and North Country Transit.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors – This is a volunteer program in the Madison area providing demand-response trips, long distance medical trips, and trips for social and recreational outings for elderly, low-income and other Madison residents. Service is provided by 12 volunteer drivers, operating their own vehicles, year-round, Monday-Friday. Neighbors Helping Neighbors provides approximately 250 rides each year. A fare is not charge, although donations are accepted. This program is funded locally and through private donations.

Caregiver Program - The Caregiver Program helps adults continue to live independently in their own homes or in other community settings. Volunteers operate their own vehicles. There is a 48-hour advance reservation required in order to schedule a ride. No fare is charged, however donations are accepted. The volunteer Caregiver Programs that provide transportation include:

- ***Sandwich Caregivers*** – This program is located in Center Sandwich.
- ***Community Caregivers*** – This program is located in Center Harbor and provides services to Center Harbor, Meredith, and Moultonborough, Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- ***Wolfeboro Caregivers*** – This program is located in Wolfeboro and provides service to Ossipee, Tuftonboro, and Wolfeboro (in Carroll County), and Alton (Belknap County), Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Transportation services are provided for long-distance medical trips and local trips for shopping and other services. Approximately 1,357 trips were provided in 2006.
- ***Good Shepherds*** – This volunteer program is located in Sanbornville and provides transportation services to the towns of Sanbornville, Wakefield, and Brookfield. This program provides rides for medical appointments only.
- ***Tamworth Caregivers*** – This program is located in Tamworth and provides transportation services to the Tamworth area.

(LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., 2007.)

2.5 Nursing Home/Nursing Hospital

Coos County Nursing Home – Coos County Nursing Home in Berlin provides rides to elderly disabled and non-elderly disabled residents for medical appointments and for recreational outings. The agency employs four full-time and six part-time people that are involved in transit, operating the two vehicles, a car and a van with a wheelchair lift.

Coos County Nursing Hospital – Coos County Nursing Hospital in West Stewartstown owns a passenger car and a wheelchair van which are used to transport elderly disabled residents to medical appointments and recreational outings. There is a 40 hours a week transportation aide that works to provide these rides for residents. Services are funded through revenues and county resources.

The Morrison – The Morrison Nursing Home in Whitefield provides rides to nursing home and assisted living residents (elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, and low-income persons) for medical appointments and recreational/social trips. There are four full-time employees and one volunteer that are employed as nurses' aides or residential aides, and provide rides using a van that is owned by the organization. Transportation services are provided during the spring, summer, and fall seasons, Monday-Friday, as need for clients. Approximately 30-40 rides are provided each year. The Morrison transportation services are funded through state and federal resources, private donations, private foundations, and other sources.

2.6 Private Providers

Concord Coach Lines – Concord Coach provides inter-city scheduled bus service from nineteen (19) communities in New Hampshire to Boston South Station and Logan Airport. Bus stops in the North Country include: Berlin, Gorham, Conway, North Conway, Jackson, Pinkham Notch (AMC), Littleton, Franconia, Lincoln, and Plymouth. Fares and schedules are available on the following website: www.concordcoachlines.com .

White Mountain Transit Authority – Provides shuttle service to and from local attractions in the Conway area. Taxi services and charters are also available. More information is available on their website: <http://www.wmtransit.com> .

Mount Washington Resort – Provides transportation to all resort guests, homeowners and employees to all areas of the resort. Daily transportation is also provided to international student employees that reside in Littleton. Weekly shopping trips are also provided for employees to Littleton. Transportation services are offered all day (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or longer) 7 days a week. A fare is charged.

Dave's Taxi – Based in Littleton and provides 24-hour local and long-distance trips.

The Shuttle Connection – Provides 24-hour local and long-distance trips, charters, and offers special rates for hikers. Information about rates is available at the following website: www.shuttleconnection.com .

Dependable Taxi – Based in the Berlin-Gorham area.

KM Town Taxi – Based in the Plymouth-Holderness area.

Apple Valley Taxi and Transportation – Based in the Campton-Plymouth area.

Fast Taxi – Based in the Conway area and provides local and long distance trips and delivery services. Fast Taxi has a community shuttle that stops at set locations in the Conway area hourly. Prior notice is requested for long distance trips and to accommodate special physical needs. Information about rates and schedules is available at the following website: www.fasttaxi.net .

Turtle Taxi – Based in the Conway area and provides local and long distance trips. Information about services is available at the following website: www.turtletaxi.net .

Waterville Valley Cab Company – Based in Campton and provides services to Waterville Valley, Campton, Thornton, Plymouth, and the Lincoln/Woodstock area. Transportation needs outside of the local service area can be accommodated with advanced reservations. Information about rates and schedules is available at the following website: <http://wvcabco.com/> .

2.7 Recreation

Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) – The AMC operates a seasonal fixed route transport system for hikers to designated stops surrounding the major trailheads and AMC destinations in the White Mountain National Forest. The system of “hiker shuttles” operates 7 days a week during the major outdoor recreation season, June through October, providing assistance in trip planning and accomplishing multi-day backcountry adventures within the White Mountain National Forest. AMC employs 4 full-time (seasonal) drivers that operate (2) 14-passenger short buses. AMC transportation services are funded through revenues.

Waterville Valley Transit Authority – The Waterville Valley Ski Area provides a seasonal shuttle bus service within Waterville Valley. Transportation services are offered all day (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or longer), 7 days a week, during the winter and summer seasons. This organization provides demand-response contract services if requested. Services are funded through local funds and other sources.

Ski Resorts – Many of the ski resorts in the North Country provide shuttle services from the ski area to local downtowns. Information about services and hours of operation can be found directly through the ski resort.

Wolfeboro Trolley Company – “Molly the Trolley” in Wolfeboro is a 45-minute tour for tourists. This trolley can be boarded at the Wolfeboro Town Docks every hour or at the visitors’ center every half-hour. The trolley service operates along Route 28—along South Main Street and Center Street. This tour operates 7 days a week, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., from June 23 until Labor Day. (*LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., 2007.*)

Town Recreation Centers – Some towns may operate vehicles out of local recreation centers.

2.8 Education

Plymouth State University (PSU) Shuttle Service – PSU provides shuttle services around the town of Plymouth to students, faculty, staff, and event customers of the University. The PSU Shuttle Service provides fixed route transportation services seasonally (during the school year), all day (8 a.m. – 4 p.m. or longer), 7 days a week. This organization employs 11 part-time seasonal drivers that operate (3) 20-passenger vehicles. This service provided 116,207 rides in 2007. PSU transportation services are funded by student tuition and other sources.

NH Department of Education, NH Vocational Rehabilitation – This is a public program to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain or maintain employment. This organization does not provide transit services, however, they may, in certain instances, provide funds to hire a transit provider for a customer. Services are funded through state and federal resources.

2.9 RideShare

North Country Council (NCC) is pursuing funding through the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to launch and promote "North Country RideShare": an initiative to promote the NH RideShare matching service and provide public education to increase success of the program in the North Country. North Country RideShare will offer some residents an alternative to single occupancy vehicle commutes. For some residents who have no vehicle at all, North Country RideShare will provide a means to travel to employment where none now exists. In order to develop this program, NCC will: develop and facilitate an Advisory Committee, develop a webpage, develop promotional materials, perform outreach to a group of pilot communities and outreach to employers in the region. North Country Council anticipates “spinning off” the program to another organization in the future.

2.10 Park & Ride Facilities

Park and Ride lots are conveniently located parking facilities where a driver can access public transportation, carpooling, and/or vanpooling. There are currently no designated New Hampshire Park and Ride lots in the North Country.

2.11 ServiceLink

ServiceLink is a statewide network of community-based connections for elders, adults with disabilities, and their families. The *ServiceLink* network is comprised of thirteen community-based ServiceLink Resource Centers and a number of satellite offices that share the common purpose of providing information and referrals about resources for older adults, adults living with disabilities or chronic illness, and their families and caregivers. More information about these resources can be found at www.nh.gov/servicelink/.

3.0 PERCEPTIONS ON COORDINATION

Results from the transportation provider survey and discussion at public meetings show that there are many providers that are interested in coordinating services to improve the efficiency of transportation systems in the North Country and Carroll County. However, there are many concerns that could prevent providers from participating in coordination. This chapter reviews the benefits and barriers to coordination that have been identified by transportation providers. (The Transportation Provider Survey, Provider Comments, and Public Meeting Notes can be found in the appendix of this document.)

In the summer of 2008, a list of transportation providers (transit, human services, volunteer, etc.) in the North Country Council (NCC) Planning Region was gathered, based on the list from the 2006 NCC Regional Coordinated Transit Plan and from input from the public and transportation providers in the region. As public meetings were held, additional providers were identified and were sent surveys (information about each provider is located in Chapter 2). The identified transportation providers were surveyed (75.6% response rate) and asked questions about their opinions on coordination. The following information was gathered from the 34 respondents (See Table 3.1 on page 38):

- 76.5% of respondents answered yes to the question: “Do you think your agency and its clients would benefit from improved coordination with other local or regional agencies that provide similar transportation services?”
- 41.2% of respondents answered yes, while 35.3% answered no, to the question: “Would you be interested in coordinating trips provided by your service with other providers?”
- 61.8% of respondents answered no to the question: “Would you be willing to share vehicles and drivers with other providers?”
- 52.9% of respondents answered yes to the question: “Do you think having one call center for trip requests in the North Country region would be helpful to your agency?”

Table 3.1: Provider Survey Results – Opinions on Coordination

		Yes	No	Maybe	No Answer	Total
Do you think your agency and its clients would benefit from improved coordination with other local or regional agencies that provide similar transportation services?	Number of Respondents	26	4	0	4	34
	Percentage of Respondents	76.5%	11.8%	0.0%	11.8%	100.0%
Would you be interested in coordinating trips provided by your service with other providers?	Number of Respondents	14	12	4	4	34
	Percentage of Respondents	41.2%	35.3%	11.8%	11.8%	100.0%
Would you be willing to share vehicles and drivers with other providers?	Number of Respondents	6	21	2	5	34
	Percentage of Respondents	17.6%	61.8%	5.9%	14.7%	100.0%
Do you think having one call center for trip requests in the North Country region would be helpful to your agency?	Number of Respondents	18	7	6	3	34
	Percentage of Respondents	52.9%	20.6%	17.6%	8.8%	100.0%

3.1 Benefits to Coordination

At the public meetings, there was a lot of discussion about how coordination could benefit both providers and users of the system. Many providers felt that coordination will maximize the use of time, money, and distances travelled. Potential users of a coordinated system felt that there are many positive side effects related to coordination, including:

- Increased communication for the elderly and medical patients - if someone fails to show up for a ride to a medical appointment, people will realize this and check in on them. Also, people going through similar experiences (regarding illness and medical procedures) become a support system for each other.
- Increased use of medical care - people will seek medical assistance earlier if physically getting to an appointment is not an impediment.
- Increased social interaction between users of the transportation system.
- More people will be able to access more services.

Some other potential benefits of coordination that were identified on the transportation provider survey are shown below in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Provider Survey Results – Potential Benefits to Coordination

		Total Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Potential Benefits	cost efficiency	17	54.8%
	consumer satisfaction	21	67.7%
	better means of keeping data	4	12.9%
	better links to get people places	27	87.1%
	increased revenue	7	22.6%
	opportunities to expand services	14	45.2%
	other	1	3.2%

3.2 Barriers to Coordination

Although there are many benefits to coordination that could have a positive impact on the transportation system in the North Country and Carroll County, there are also a number of barriers that could prevent providers from participating in coordination.

At the public meetings, the providers voiced a number of concerns:

- Insurance and liability issues.
- Distribution of funding.
- Confidentiality of riders’ personal and medical information.
- Need for policies and regulations across the board that all participants/providers would be required to adhere to, e.g., maintenance and cleaning of vehicles, treatment of riders, record keeping, etc.
- Ongoing training for drivers and background checks.

Some other potential barriers to coordination that were identified on the transportation provider survey are shown below in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Provider Survey Results – Potential Barriers to Coordination

	Number of Providers	Percentage of Providers
Potential Drawbacks	loss of personal assistance	12 38.7%
	loss of funding	6 19.4%
	loss of ability to provide rides as needed	10 32.3%
	loss of staff or volunteer positions	4 12.9%
	other	4 12.9%

At the public meetings, there was concern expressed that some riders might be hesitant to use a coordinated system at first, because it can be difficult to try new things and because people will be unfamiliar with the drivers and other riders. However, people felt that if the services provided were safe and reliable, then people would realize that it is a good resource and will continue to use it.

Based on information gathered, it appears as though the real and perceived barriers to coordination that have been discussed in Grafton, Coos, and Carroll Counties are the same as the concerns experienced in the other regions of the State.

4.0 TRANSPORTATION AND COORDINATION NEEDS

In November, 2008, five public meetings were held in the North Country Council Planning Region, in the towns of Plymouth, Haverhill, Conway, and Lancaster and in the city of Berlin. The goal of these meetings was to gather input on transit in each area from the perspective of the users and potential users of public transportation and from transportation providers. The attendance varied at each meeting, with the largest turnout of 10 people gathering in Plymouth. The total number of participants at the public meetings throughout the region was 28. Information was also gathered from the final report of the NH Transit Operations Expansion for Carroll County, prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. The needs that were discussed include:

- 1) ***Mobility for all Residents of Coos, Grafton and Carroll Counties*** – In order for residents (elderly, disabled, low-income, and general public) of the Coos, Grafton, and Carroll Counties to be able to access essential services, a transportation system must exist to provide them mobility within and between communities. Currently, the fixed route services that exist are located in the Berlin-Gorham area and the tri-town area of Littleton, Lancaster, and Whitefield, leaving most of the North Country region unserved or underserved by existing transportation services. At many of the public meetings, a common theme was that many people felt that they had little to no access to public transit, especially at nights and on weekends. In areas such as Conway, Haverhill, and Plymouth, people felt that there was little to no access to transportation for the general public. At all five meetings, the groups agreed that although taxi services and shuttles are helpful, they are typically too expensive to use as a consistent means of transportation to medical appointments, employment, etc.
- 2) ***Access to Medical Care and Employment*** – Although there are seven hospitals in the North Country Region (10 total in Coos, Carroll, and Grafton Counties), many residents need access to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, and other hospitals providing cancer treatment and dialysis services and to VA Clinics that are located as far as Lebanon; Manchester; Portland, Maine; and White River Junction, Vermont. Many people in need of these services require more care than the typical public transit user, as some of these medical treatments are very taxing and leave patients weak and feeling ill. In many cases door-to-door service is required. There are currently no scheduled services for long-distance medical trips; however, many transportation providers, including public, private, human services, and volunteers, provide these trips as needed for clients and others. (Map 4.1 on page 46 shows the location of North Country Hospitals.)

A common thread discussed at all public meetings was the need for medical appointments to be scheduled in coordination with transportation providers for patients that are coming from the same area. There was a lot of discussion about how many people from the same town or surrounding towns are travelling to the same hospitals and clinics for medical services, but are accessing transportation from

different providers, organizations or volunteers. Many providers, human service organizations, and other groups would be able to save money and provide more rides for patients to access these medical services if there was more coordination between hospitals, patients, and drivers making the trips.

There is a considerable need for transportation services for Grafton, Carroll, and Coos County residents to access employment. With the recent mill closures and the declining economy, unemployment is up and people are travelling long distances to find employment. Many people are having a hard time affording personal vehicles, and with the lack of public transit and/or other affordable transportation options in most of the region, this could be the difference between being employed and unemployed. In this declining economy, many people that have access to vehicles will choose to use public transit to save money that could otherwise be spent on bills, food, medical, and other expenses. There was discussion at all of the public meetings about the need to tie transportation services into existing economic and job center areas in order to increase employment options. Many felt that large employers throughout the region should participate in efforts to provide transportation for employees.

- 3) ***Coordination with Existing Transit Providers*** – At most of the meetings, there was discussion about providing links to existing transit services. For instance, Stagecoach Transportation Services, Inc. (STSI) provides transportation services to the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the general public in Vermont. The Stagecoach “River Route” stops in Newbury, Vermont, just over the state line from Haverhill, and travels south to the VA Hospital in White River Junction, Vermont and to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon. There are many residents of Haverhill and the surrounding area that would use this service if they had access to it. There was also a lot of discussion about providing links to Concord Coach Lines Inc., which makes stops in Berlin, Gorham, Conway, North Conway, Jackson, Pinkham Notch (AMC), Littleton, Franconia, Lincoln, and Plymouth. If North Country residents had access to these stops, with parking areas and shelter from the elements while they are waiting, it would allow for travel to other areas of the state, as well as links to other states from Concord.
- 4) ***Transportation Accommodating Persons with Disabilities*** – At all of the public meetings, there was discussion of a need for wheelchair accessible vehicles and trained drivers that can accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities. Although many providers in the North Country do have wheelchair accessible vehicles, there are many that do not. Of the 34 organizations/transportation providers that responded to the Transportation Provider Survey done by North Country Council in 2008, only 16, or 47%, have wheelchair accessible vehicles. At many of the public meetings there was discussion about how some people that provide rides, i.e., taxi and shuttle services, volunteers, and others, need training on how to transport people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.

- 5) ***RideShare Program*** – Another common theme discussed at the public meetings was the development of a RideShare program. Most of the people in attendance recognized that there will never be a fixed-route transportation system that runs through every town in the North Country, operating day and night, seven days a week, with stops every 15 minutes. However, at every meeting, the participants recognized that supplementing the existing transportation system with a RideShare program would provide increased mobility for residents of Grafton, Carroll, and Coos Counties. With the rural nature of this region, many people travel long distances to job centers areas and to large employers to access jobs. North Country Council is pursuing funding to develop, launch and promote "North Country RideShare": an initiative to promote the NH RideShare matching service and provide public education to increase success of the program in the North Country. North Country RideShare will offer some residents an alternative to single occupancy vehicle commutes. For some residents who have no vehicle at all, North Country RideShare will provide a means to travel to employment where none now exists.
- 6) ***Park and Ride Facilities*** – At all of the public meetings, attendees discussed how Park and Ride lots would increase mobility in the region. There are currently no designated New Hampshire Park and Ride lots in the North Country. The development of these facilities in the North Country, specifically in the areas where fixed-route transit systems exist, would allow people to access public transit to get to work, medical appointments, shopping, etc. There was a need identified to work with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to designate Park and Ride facilities on state-owned land and/or to work with commercial landowners to review liability issues and to identify informal park and ride lots.
- 7) ***Identification and Use of Existing Funding Sources*** – Many transportation providers are not aware of the potential funding sources that are available through the NHDOT, NHDHHS, and/or other sources. In order to afford each provider a chance to pursue funding for transportation services, the information about the funding programs must be easily accessible. The information about funders, eligible applicants, eligible activities, funding amounts, timelines, and reporting criteria must be compiled in one place so that each provider is getting the same information. If the transportation providers have more knowledge of what types of funding are available and how to access them, then there is a greater probability of bringing money into the region to support existing and new transportation services. Chapter 7 describes the funding sources that are available in New Hampshire for transit services.
- 8) ***Public Education and Outreach*** – In order for transportation systems to work, the potential users must know that they exist and how to use them. In addition, if they own their own vehicles, they must be educated on the benefits of using a public transit system. At the meeting in Plymouth, there was discussion about how the Plymouth State University Shuttle will provide rides to Plymouth residents. Many people at the public meeting were not aware of this and, once they knew, they stated that they had no idea how to use the system. Although there are bus stop signs in various locations in the town, there did not appear to be one specific location to get

information about routes and schedules and other services. There was also discussion at some of the meetings about how using a fixed-route system for the first time can be “intimidating,” especially if you do not truly know how to use it. A common theme was that there is a need for “travel trainer programs” to teach people how to use transportation systems. Another need expressed was for a database, website, or booklet that would show which transportation providers operate in different parts of the region and to whom they provide rides; information about RideShare programs or other carpooling options; and other information that might be helpful to people who are trying to access transportation.

9) *Development of Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC)* – The New Hampshire Department of Transportation and New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services are working to develop a “seamless” transportation system that connects system users from one part of the state to another. In order to do this, Regional Coordinating Councils must be developed in each region to work with providers to implement coordination policies and provide feedback to the Statewide Coordinating Council relative to policies. The Regional Coordinating Councils would oversee their respective Regional Transportation Coordinators, or transportation brokers. There is a need for transportation providers, users, regional planners, and others interested in public transit to be involved in this process.

10) *Volunteer Drivers* – In the North Country, volunteer drivers provide thousands of rides every year to people that need them. Some of the drivers volunteer through human service agencies, nursing homes, and other programs. Others have set up their own network of volunteers like Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors in Madison. Some volunteers are neighbors, family members and friends. All of these people are dedicated and caring people that transport people to medical appointments and other services in the North Country. At many of the public meetings, there was a lot of discussion about volunteer drivers, insurance restrictions, and reimbursement rates. Many insurance providers are raising rates or declining coverage for volunteer drivers. In addition, many people expressed dissatisfaction with the reimbursement rate for Medicaid rides. The insurance restrictions*** and reimbursement rate issues need to be resolved or many volunteer drivers will no longer be able to provide rides.

****Many of the issues regarding insurance for volunteer drivers have recently been addressed with the passage of RSA 412:17-a in 2007.*

11) *Identification and Elimination of Barriers to Coordination* – The results of the Transportation Provider Survey showed that approximately 76% of respondents thought that their agency and its clients would benefit from improved coordination with other local or regional agencies that provide similar transportation services. In addition, 87.1% of respondents thought that coordination would provide better links to get people places and 67.7% thought that it would improve customer satisfaction. However, approximately 61.8% of respondents said that they would not be willing to share vehicle and drivers with other providers. It is clear that many providers see the benefits of coordination, but the barriers are great enough to hold them back from

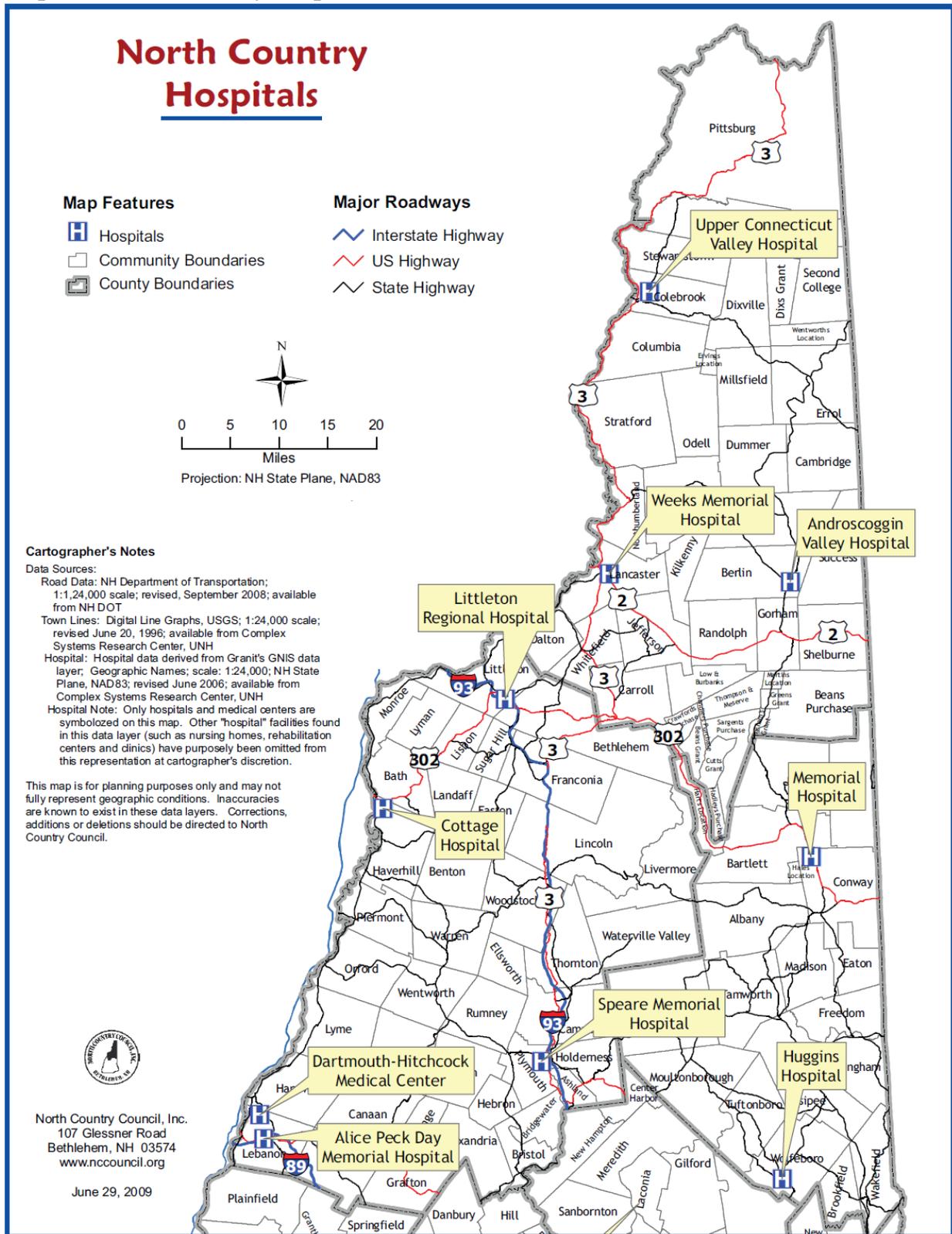
participating. Federal funding often has restrictions which prevent the flexible use of vehicles and other transportation-related resources, making it seemingly impossible for providers to share resources and vehicles. Insurance/ liability issues are another barrier that makes providers uneasy about coordinating resources. There are also many perceived barriers to coordinating transportation that need to be resolved through communication with New Hampshire Department of Transportation and New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services in order for providers to be able to participate in coordination.

12) Improved Technology – Transportation providers need to have access to dispatching software, Global Positioning System (GPS), and/or Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems to be able to better coordinate rides between providers, to plan trips/routes, and to streamline reporting.

13) Centralized Dispatch – At all of the public meetings, the transportation providers, users, and potential users in attendance agreed that it would be helpful to have one phone number to call with a dispatch center to coordinate the ride. Having access to a centralized dispatch would reduce the occurrence of unnecessary rides, maximize the benefit of funding and resources for providers, and would make accessing rides for the user considerably less problematic.

14) Policies for Participants – At all of the public meetings, there was a need expressed for a set of policies and rules to which all transportation providers participating in coordination efforts would adhere. Some of the specific issues discussed regarding uniformity of services include: insurance/liability, vehicle maintenance and cleaning, driver hiring/training, record keeping, and confidentiality of riders.

Map 4.1: North Country Hospitals



5.0 STRATEGIES TO MEET TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION NEEDS

The following strategies, activities, and projects are suggested in order to meet the identified transportation and coordination needs in the North Country and to fill the gaps between existing services and needs. These strategies outlined are also opportunities to make the delivery of transportation services more efficient.

- 1) ***Maintain and Expand Existing Service*** – Existing transportation providers should work with state agencies, private and nonprofit agencies, employers, and communities to identify and apply to appropriate funding sources that will enable them to make improvements or expansions to meet the transportation needs of North Country and Carroll County residents.

Implementation Tasks

- Evaluate funding needs and seek funding from appropriate sources.
 - Maintain existing services provided.
 - Expand geographic areas that are served by fixed-route transit and other transportation providers to include large employment areas.
 - Expand hours/days of operation for fixed-route transit and other transportation providers.
 - Increase number of clients served by transportation providers.
 - Increase the type of clients served by human service agencies and other transportation providers.
 - Procure new technology that will improve services and use resources in a more efficient manner.
- 2) ***Review and Improve Existing Transportation Service Delivery Systems*** – There are many factors that contribute to the ever-changing needs for public transit. The downturn of the economy is making it unaffordable for many to operate private vehicles. The war in Iraq and Afghanistan is causing many courageous veterans to return home to New Hampshire with physical and mental disabilities for which they need medical attention, but do not always have transportation services to access. There is also an increasing elderly population in New Hampshire that need transportation services for medical appointments, meals, and social outings.

Needs are changing and transportation providers are aware that they are not always able to meet all the needs of their clients. In the summer of 2008, transportation providers were surveyed and asked the following questions: “Given the constraints of your agency’s resources, how well are the transportation needs of your clients being met?” Of the 27 providers that responded to that question, 51.9% responded “very well,” 40.7% responded “somewhat,” and 7.4% responded “not at all,”

In order for transportation providers to adjust to the emerging transportation needs of North Country and Carroll County residents, it is important to continuously review the existing transportation network and to examine other ways for providers to efficiently meet transportation needs.

Implementation Tasks

- Identify and survey transportation providers that have not been surveyed to assist in evaluating service needs and potential gaps.
- Investigate ways to use the funding sources (Chapter 7) to adapt to changing needs.
- Develop a central dispatch center to coordinate rides as part of the Statewide Coordination Initiative.
- Develop and maintain RideShare programs as a transportation resource.

- 3) ***Develop Education and Outreach Materials*** - In order for transportation systems to work, the potential users must know that they exist and how to use them and private vehicle owners must be educated on the benefits of using a public transit system. Also, transportation providers need to be educated about the benefits of coordinating services (some identified benefits are listed in Chapter 3). Community support for transportation providers can be instrumental in helping providers receive commitments of local match to maintain and enhance services provided.

Implementation Tasks

- Develop promotional materials, e.g., a database, website, or booklet that would show which transportation providers operate in different parts of the region and to whom they provide rides information about RideShare programs or other carpooling options; and other information that might be helpful to people who are trying to access transportation.
- Promote and host public meetings to inform the public about public transportation options/benefits and to educate providers about the benefits of coordinating services.
- Develop partnerships with other groups to distribute education and outreach materials to a wide audience. Partnerships could include: VA Clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, community organizations, etc.

- 4) ***Identify and Overcome Barriers to Coordination*** – There are a number of real and perceived barriers to coordination, many of which make providers wary to get involved in coordinating services. In order to develop and maintain an effective coordinated system, these barriers must be identified and resolved.

Implementation Tasks

- Identify provider concerns and potential barriers to coordination, and educate providers on which barriers are real and which are perceived.
- The Regional Coordinating Councils and the Statewide Coordinating Council should work with transportation providers to identify ways to overcome barriers.

5) ***Develop and Operate Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC)*** - The Statewide Coordinating Council is working to develop a “seamless” transportation system that connects system users from one part of the state to another. Regional Coordinating Councils must be developed in each region to work with providers to implement coordination policies and provide feedback to the Statewide Coordinating Council relative to policies. The Regional Coordinating Councils will be responsible for recommending and overseeing their respective Regional Transportation Coordinators, or transportation brokers. There is a need for representatives from the following areas to be involved in this process:

- Any public, private nonprofit, or for-profit organization that currently funds, arranges or provides transportation services for its citizens, clients or customers.
- Any regional public transportation agency or state/regional agency involved in the planning or provision of public/passenger transportation.
- Organizations representing groups of consumers and constituents that would be positively affected by mobility and access improvements.
- Citizen members that are residents of New Hampshire and have an active interest in improving mobility for seniors, persons with disabilities, people with lower incomes or the general public.

Implementation Tasks

- Pursue funding opportunities to develop and administer the RCCs.
- Identify stakeholders that will become the RCC (listed above).
- Recommend a Regional Transportation Coordinator to the Regional Planning Commission(s) and oversee the Regional Transportation Coordinator.
- The Regional Transportation Coordinator and the Regional Coordinating Councils should identify transportation providers that are ready and willing to participate in the brokerage.
- Identify transportation provider standards (insurance, training, vehicle maintenance, etc.)
- Identify standards for Regional Transportation Coordinator (e.g., experience, financial status, management experience, etc.)

6.0 PRIORITIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Federal transit law, as amended by SAFETEA-LU, requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedoms programs be “derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public.” Part of this law states that the locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan (“coordinated plan”) prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation (FTA C 9070.1F).

The transportation services prioritized in this chapter were discussed at the public meetings that were held in the North Country Council Planning Region in November, 2008, the transportation provider survey that was distributed in the fall of 2008, and the final report of the NH Transit Operations Expansion for Carroll County, prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. At the public meetings, transportation providers were asked to identify services for which they will be applying for state and federal resources. All attendees were asked to review and prioritize a list of eligible activities for funding that would make accessing transportation in their respective areas easier. The following list of prioritized services for funding is based on those responses. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 show how the services discussed at the public meetings were prioritized.

- 1) ***Basic Needs*** – All people should have access to basic human needs, such as delivered and community meals, medical care and prescriptions, and interaction with other people. Funding should be available to transit providers and other agencies that support these basic needs.
- 2) ***Replacement Vehicles*** – There is a need to maintain current service as provided in the region, thus replacement vehicles for continuing transportation services are supported.
- 3) ***Expanding Existing Fixed-Route Systems and Demand Response*** - In the North Country, there are currently two fixed-route systems in operation: the Tri-Town (serving Littleton, Whitefield, and Lancaster) and the Berlin-Gorham Trolley, and demand-response services are offered by a number of providers. At the Lancaster and Berlin meetings, the overall view of the public was that these fixed-route systems are a necessity for residents to access employment, medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other errands or activities. However, there was a need expressed at all five meetings to expand services to provide for night and weekend services and larger service areas. At the Haverhill meeting, people expressed a need for the Tri-Town to expand their service area to Lisbon and Haverhill, and at the Lancaster meeting people were interested in seeing North Country Transit make stops in Northumberland and surrounding towns. People were generally pleased

with the demand-response services available; however, many felt that night and weekend services are needed.

In order for providers to expand services, some of the following are needed:

- Feasibility Studies
- New vehicles (wheelchair accessible)
- Operational/administrative funding

4) ***Development of New Fixed-Route Systems*** – At the Plymouth, Conway, and Haverhill meetings, the overall consensus of the groups was that there need to be fixed route systems operating in those areas.

In Plymouth, the only access to transportation is through Grafton County Senior Citizen's Council, the Plymouth State University Shuttle, and private taxi companies. Many residents of the area are finding it difficult to access medical appointments, employment, shopping, and other essential services. Representatives from Transport Central were at this meeting and explained that they are working to develop a transit system in the 19-town Plymouth area (749 square miles), which serves approximately 31,000 residents. The goal of Transport Central is not to duplicate services, but rather to develop a "hospital-based system" that would provide people with rides to medical appointments, employment, and other places of need. This system would supplement services that are already provided by the Plymouth Senior Center and Grafton County Senior Citizens Council. The transit users and potential users at this meeting agreed that there is a need for transit service in this area. Transport Central will be applying for funding to do a Feasibility Study for this project.

In Conway, the main priority discussed at the meeting was the development of a fixed-route transit system. There was discussion about how there are a number of different transportation providers in the region, but that the general public is still having a difficult time accessing transportation and that there is not adequate transportation services to employment, shopping, and other services. Many people in the region are having a difficult time accessing transportation to employment, as there are often times only one vehicle per household and more than one person that need transportation to and from work. There was also a lot of discussion about how people would like to be able to use public transit in order to drive less, thus saving money and being environmentally friendly. There was discussion about the proposed fixed-route system for the Conway area that would include an all-day flex route connector, originating in Wolfboro, running north along Route 28 to drop off passengers in the West Ossipee area, and continuing north along Route 16, traveling to the Chocorua, Conway, and North Conway areas. The proposed schedule would include additional time to allow the buses to deviate to serve passengers that live within 1/4 mile of the route. All of the attendees at this meeting agreed that this service would be beneficial to Carroll County and the Conway area.

In Haverhill, there was discussion about developing a fixed-route transportation system that will be able to link to the existing systems, i.e., the Tri-Town, Advance Transit (Dartmouth area) and Stagecoach Transportation Services, Inc.

In order for new fixed-route systems to be developed, some of the following are needed:

- Feasibility Studies
- New vehicles (wheelchair accessible)
- Operational/administrative funding
- Mobility Manager

- 5) ***Improved Technology*** – At all of the public meetings, the transportation providers shared a need for access to dispatching software, Global Positioning System (GPS), and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems to be able to better coordinate rides between providers, to plan trips/routes, and to streamline reporting.
- 6) ***RideShare Program*** - Supplementing the existing transportation systems with a RideShare program will improve mobility for Grafton, Carroll, and Coos County residents. North Country RideShare will offer some residents an alternative to single occupancy vehicle commutes. For some residents who have no vehicle at all, North Country RideShare will provide a means to travel to employment where none now exists.
- 7) ***Accessibility Improvements*** - Making accessibility improvements will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities. Some activities that could remove barriers include:
 - Building an accessibility path to a bus stop that is currently inaccessible (i.e., curbcuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signal, etc.).
 - Adding ramps or an elevator, detectable warnings, or other accessibility improvements to a bus station or stop.
 - Improving signage.
 - Implementing technology improvements.
- 8) ***New Vehicles*** – Participants at the public meetings agreed that most taxis and shuttles are not wheelchair accessible and are not an option for individuals with disabilities. Purchasing new vehicles that will support wheelchair accessible taxi services, ride sharing, and/or carpooling programs will increase the mobility options for individuals with disabilities.

9) ***Paratransit Services*** – There are currently no ADA paratransit services in the region, however, it is a priority to expand services and increase mobility for individuals with disabilities and this could include the following activities:

- Expanding paratransit service parameters beyond the ¾ mile that is required by the ADA.
- Expanding hours of operation for ADA paratransit services beyond the hours of fixed-route services.
- Providing same-day services.
- Making door-to-door service available to all eligible paratransit riders.
- Enhancing level of service by providing escorts or assisting rides through the door of their destination (e.g., from their doorstep to the doctor's waiting room).
- Acquiring vehicles and equipment designed to accommodate mobility aids like oversized wheelchairs, and funding the labor costs involved with hiring aids to help the drivers assist passengers.
- Installing additional securement locations on public buses beyond the minimum that is required.

10) ***Travel Training Programs*** – Many participants of the public meetings explained that if public transit did exist in their regions, they would not know how to use it. Support for new training programs for individual users to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills of transportation options that are available in their communities (i.e., travel instructions or travel training services) will enhance mobility for individuals with disabilities, older adults, people with low incomes, and the general public.

11) ***Car Loan Programs*** – Participants of the public meetings agreed that car loan programs are another mobility option for residents of the Grafton, Carroll, and Coos Counties. Supporting local and regional car loan programs for shared rides and carpooling programs will supplement transportation services that currently exist.

12) ***Volunteer and Driver Aid Programs*** – Supporting new and existing volunteer and driver aid programs will ensure that people in need of transportation services are getting from point A to point B safely.

13) ***Mobility Management and Coordination*** - Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs for transportation and human services providers will allow for development and coordination of transportation services. This service could include the following activities:

- Development and administration of Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC).
- Promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low income individuals.
- Support for short term management activities to plan and implement coordination services.

- The operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies, and customers.
- Development of customer-oriented travel navigator systems like travel training and trip planning activities.
- Development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on travel modes available, eligibility requirements, and arrangements.
- Operation planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies to help plan and operate coordinated systems, e.g., GIS mapping, GPS, dispatch and monitoring technologies, and tracking costs and billing.

14) Voucher Programs – Support for the administration and expenses of new and existing voucher programs for transportation services that are offered by human service providers will create more options for people in need of transportation.

15) Park and Ride Facilities – The development of park and ride facilities in Grafton, Carroll, and Coos Counties, specifically in the areas where fixed-route transit systems exist, would allow people to access public transit to get to work, medical appointments, shopping, etc. Park and ride facilities would also make RideSharing and carpooling programs more accessible.

16) Vehicle Improvements for Bicycling – Adding bike racks to vehicles or bike racks/storage at bus stops will allow people that live and work near the transit routes to access the services more efficiently.

Table 6.1: Top Priorities Discussed at Public Meetings:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Transportation to meet basic needs.2. Replacement vehicles.3. Improved technology.4. Expanding services.5. New fixed-route systems.6. Feasibility studies for new fixed route systems. |
|--|

Table 6.2: Prioritized Transportation Services Discussed at Public Meetings

	Plymouth	Haverhill	Lancaster	Conway	Berlin	Average Score	Overall Ranking
Expanding systems/late night and weekend service	1	3	1	2	1	1.60	1
Developing fixed-route public transit services	2	1	n/a	1	n/a	1.33	2
RideShare/Carpool programs	9	2	3	6	3	4.60	3
Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities so they have easier access to public transportation systems.	3	8	6	3	7	5.40	4
Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing, and or carpooling programs	4	7	10	4	2	5.40	5
Enhancing paratransit services	5	5	5	8	6	5.80	6
Travel training programs	7	4	7	10	8	7.20	7
Local car loan programs for shared rides	11	10	4	7	5	7.4	8
Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs	6	6	8	9	9	7.60	9
Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs	10	11	9	5	4	7.80	10
Promoting and administering new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers	8	9	2	11	10	8.00	11

7.0 FUNDING SOURCES

7.1 New Hampshire Department of Transportation/Federal Transit Administration Funding

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) administers funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and distributes this funding to transportation providers throughout the state. These funding sources include:

- 1) **Section 5304** – The Statewide Planning and Research Program provides funding to support cooperative, continuous and comprehensive planning in order to make statewide transportation improvement decisions. Some of the considerations for funding include:
 - Supporting the economic vitality of areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
 - Increasing the safety of the transportation systems for motorized and nonmotorized users.
 - Increasing the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.
 - Increasing the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
 - Protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, improving the quality of life, and promoting consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
 - Enhancing the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
 - Promoting efficient system management and operations.
 - Emphasizing the preservation of the existing transportation system.

- 2) **Section 5309 – Capital Improvements Program** - The Capital Improvements Program (49 U.S.C. 5309) provides capital assistance for three primary activities:
 - The purchase of new and replacement buses and facilities. (Eligible capital projects include the purchase of buses for fleet and service expansion, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, acquisition of replacement vehicles, bus rebuilds, bus preventive maintenance, passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs, accessory and miscellaneous equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fare boxes, computers and shop and garage equipment.) (FTA, 2009)
 - The modernization of existing rail systems. (Capital projects to modernize or improve fixed guideway systems are eligible including purchase and rehabilitation of rolling stock, track, line equipment, structures, signals and

communications, power equipment and substations, passenger stations and terminals, security equipment and systems, maintenance facilities and equipment, operational support equipment including computer hardware and software, system extensions, and preventive maintenance.) (FTA, 2009)

- Construction of new fixed guideway systems (New Starts Program). (Eligible purposes are light rail, rapid rail (heavy rail), commuter rail, monorail, automated fixed guideway system (such as a “people mover”), or a busway/high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facility, or an extension of any of these. Projects become candidates for funding under this program by successfully completing the appropriate steps in the major capital investment planning and project development process.) (FTA, 2009)

3) Section 5310 – Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities

This program (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides funding to public and nonprofit organizations to purchase accessible vehicles and other equipment intended to serve elderly persons and persons with disabilities where existing transportation services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet these needs. It is a requirement of SAFETEA-LU that a regional public transit-human service coordination plan be in place in order for providers to receive funding from this program. (FTA, 2009)

4) Section 5311 – Non-urbanized Area Formula Program

This program (49 U.S.C. 5311) provides formula funding for planning, capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation services to support public transportation in areas with populations of less than 50,000. (FTA, 2009)

5) Rural Training and Assistance Program (RTAP)

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) funds are available for the training of personnel who provide transportation to elderly or disabled persons for public or nonprofit agencies. According to New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), eligible grantees are nonprofit organizations under contract with the NHDOT and direct FTA recipients. Grantees are eligible for a 100% reimbursement for all required trainings, including the Defensive Driving Courses (DDC) offered by the Safety & Health Council of Northern New England (SHCNNE) and the NH Traffic Safety Institute (NHTSI).

Non-grantees, which are nonprofit organizations that are not under contract with the NHDOT, are only eligible to utilize RTAP funds for the Defensive Driving Courses (DDC) that are offered by the Safety & Health Council of Northern New England (SHCNNE) and the NH Traffic Safety Institute (NHTSI). Non-grantees are eligible for a 50% reimbursement for approved defensive driving courses. (NHDOT, 2009)

6) Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program provides funds for transportation projects that are created to help provide low-income individuals access to employment and related activities where existing transit services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. The JARC program also funds reverse commute transit services available to the general public. This program was created to address the transportation challenges for welfare recipients and low-income persons that seek to obtain and maintain employment. It is a requirement of SAFETEA-LU that a regional public transit-human service coordination plan be in place in order for providers to receive funding from this program. (*FTA, 2009*)

7) Section 5317 – New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program provides funding for the purpose of encouraging improvements to facilities and services that address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities, going beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is a requirement of SAFETEA-LU that a regional public transit-human service coordination plan be in place in order for providers to receive funding from this program. (*FTA, 2009*)

Table 7.1 on page 60 shows information about the various FTA funding programs that are administered by the NHDOT.

Table 7.1: NHDOT/FTA Funding Programs

		CAPITAL		OPERATING		PROGRAM GUIDANCE	NOTES
Program		Federal	Local	Federal	Local	FTA Circular	
5303	Metropolitan Planning Program	80%	20%			C8100.1C	
5304	Statewide Planning & Research Program	80%	20%			C8100.1C	
5307	Urbanized Area Formula Program	80%	20%	50%	50%	C9030.1C	Population 50,000-200,000—operating. Population >200,000--no operating. Stringent local match requirements.
5309	Bus & Bus-Related Facilities Program	80%	20%			C9300.1A	
	New Starts					& C5200.1A	Rail only.
5310	Elderly Individuals & Individuals with Disabilities Program	80%	20%	50%	50%	C9070.1F	
5311	Nonurbanized Area Formula Program	80%	20%	50%	50%	C9040.1F	At least 15% of apportionment must go to Intercity bus unless needs are met.
	Rural Training and Assistance Program (RTAP)	100%					
5316	Job Access & Reverse Commute	80%	20%	50%	50%	9050.1	
5317	New Freedom Program	80%	20%	50%	50%	9045.1	

Source: NHDOT, 2009

7.2 New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Funding

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS) provides funding for health and human service providers. These funds are available for providers that own and operate vehicles and are also available to fund rides that are provided through volunteer drivers and other transportation providers that perform trips through contracted services.

1) Office of Medicaid Business and Policy

The Office of Medicaid Business and Policy provides funding for transportation services that are not reimbursed or purchased through the NHDHHS Medicaid Client Services (described below). This service includes non-emergency medical transportation (*transportation that is provided to Medicaid recipients that require wheelchair-accessible vehicles*).

2) Medicaid Client Services

This program provides funding for non-emergency medical transportation that is provided to ambulatory Medicaid recipients and family members. This is done by reimbursing volunteer drivers and family members for driving Medicaid clients to and from appointments. This program also provides funding for demand-response services and other public and private transportation services (to a limited extent).

3) Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services

The Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services provides funding for transportation to people 60 years of age or older, people with physical disabilities, long-term healthcare residents, and adult Medicaid recipients. These trips are commonly made for the purpose of medical appointments and shopping trips. The Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services provides Adult Medical Day Care (AMDC), which is funded by Medicaid for clients that are on a Home and Community Based Care (HCBC) waiver.

4) Bureau of Behavioral Health

The Bureau of Behavioral Health provides funding for transportation services to individuals that have mental illness and are in residential programs. This program provides funding for transportation services to and from medical appointments and to children for various programs.

5) Division for Children, Youth and Families/Division of Juvenile Justice Services

This program provides funding for transportation services to children, youth, and families for the purpose of going to and returning from appointments for medical, mental health, social services, court and visitations.

6) *Division for Family Assistance*

This program provides reimbursements through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to participate in the NH Employment Program (NHEP). Reimbursements are available to eligible persons in the amount of \$130/month (maximum).

7.3 Disabled American Veterans Funding

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust – The DAV Charitable Service Trust is a not-for-profit charitable organization that was organized in 1986. The Trust is dedicated to “building better lives for our nation’s disabled veterans and their families.” The goals of this organization are to:

- Make sure sick and disabled veterans have transportation to VA medical facilities for treatment.
- Provide food and shelter and medical aid to homeless and needy veterans.
- Meet the special needs of veterans faced with such specific disabilities as paralysis, amputation and brain injuries.
- Support physical and psychological rehabilitation projects aimed at some of America’s most profoundly disabled veterans.
- Bring hope to the forgotten and suffering families of disabled veterans.

Information regarding eligibility, guidelines, criteria and deadlines can be found at www.cst.dav.org.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Transportation Provider Survey



Transportation Providers' Survey

Please return this as soon as possible so we can make sure that the information about your organization is part of the Regional Coordinated Transit Plan for the North Country Council Planning Region. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Deppe, Transportation Planner at North Country Council (603) 444-6303 x24 or mdeppe@nccouncil.org.

1. Contact Information:

Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Contact Person: _____ Email: _____

Title/Department: _____

Please describe your transit operations:

2. Which of the following best describes your agency? (check all that apply)

- Public
- Private
- Human Service
- Senior Service
- Medical Service
- Other (please specify) _____

3. Please identify your agency's client groups? (check all that apply)

- Elderly (60+) Non-disabled
- Elderly Disabled
- Non-elderly Disabled (Mental/Physical)
- Low-Income
- Youth
- General Public
- Other (please specify) _____

4. What types of funding does your agency use for service operations? (Please include the estimated percentage from each source.)

- Revenues _____%
- Town _____%
- County _____%
- State _____%
- Federal _____%
- Private Donations _____%
- Private Foundations _____%
- Other (please specify) _____

5. How many people at your agency are involved in transit?

- # Full Time _____
- # Part Time _____
- # Volunteers _____

6. How many drivers does your agency employ?

Type of Driver	# Year Round	# Seasonal
Full Time		
Part Time		
Volunteer		

7. Are drivers required to be CDL certified?

- Yes No

8. How many vehicles does your agency operate for transportation services?

Total: _____ # Wheelchair Accessible: _____

Please list the types/quantity of vehicles operated by your agency for transportation services:

9. How many rides does your agency provide each year? _____

10. When does your agency provide transportation services:

- Year Round
- Seasonal
- Other (please specify) _____

11. What days of the week does your agency provide transportation services? (check all that apply)

- Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat
- Sun

12. When does your agency provide transportation services? (check all that apply)

- All day (8 am – 4 pm or longer)
- Early morning & late afternoon only
- Mid-day only
- As needed for clients only
- Weekends
- Other (please specify) _____

13. Does your agency charge a fare for use of transportation services offered?

- Yes
- No
- Donation suggested

14. What type(s) of transportation service(s) does your agency provide? (check all that apply)

- Fixed Route
- Demand Response
- Route Deviation (please specify) 1/4mi 1/2 mi other
- Long distance medical trips (outside normal area)
- Recreational/Social Trips (outside normal area)
- Other

15. Does your agency provide contract service?

- Yes No
- **if yes, please check all that apply:** Fixed Route Demand Response
- Other

16. Please check the counties your agency provides transportation services to:

- Grafton Carroll Coos

Please list the towns served by your agency in the space provided:

17. Given the constraints of your agency's resources, how well are the transportation needs of your clients being met?

Very well Somewhat Not at all

18. Has your agency done any transportation studies or plans? If so, please list the titles.

Coordination

Coordinated transit involves transit agencies, human service agencies, private providers and other transportation providers working together efficiently to improve mobility throughout the region for individuals with special transportation needs as well as the general public.

1. Do you think your agency and its clients would benefit from improved coordination with other local or regional agencies that provide similar transportation services?

Yes No

2. Would you be interested in coordinating trips provided by your service with other providers?

Yes No

Why? (please explain:)

3. What benefits would you see coming from the coordination of ride service by provider? (check all that apply.)

- Cost efficiency
- Consumer satisfaction
- Better means of keeping data
- Better links to get people places
- Increased revenue
- Opportunities to expand services (offered / area)
- Other (please specify) _____

4. Do you view any of the following as potential drawbacks to the coordination of ride services?

- Clients would lose the personal assistance provided by agency drivers
- Loss of transportation funding (Local, State, Federal)
- Loss of ability to provide rides as needed for specific clients
- Loss of staff or volunteer positions within the agency
- Other (please specify) _____

5. Would you be willing to share vehicles and drivers with other providers?

- Yes No

Why or why not?

6. Do you think that having one call center for trip requests in the North Country Region would be helpful to your agency?

- Yes No

Why or why not?

7. What has been your experience providing a ride from your area to other regions? (please explain)

- Easy _____
- Somewhat difficult, but accomplished anyway _____
- Difficult _____

8. Please use this space to tell us about any other comments you have about how to improve transportation services in the North Country Region.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix B:

Transportation Provider Survey Distribution List

	Name	Town	Contact Person
Northern Human Services	Community Services Center	Berlin	Steve Finnigan-Allen
Northern Human Services	The MH Center	Conway	Linda Lauzon
Northern Human Services	New Horizons	Redstone/Center Conway	Marshall Allan
Northern Human Services	Vershire Center	Colebrook	Ann Champagne
Northern Human Services	Gilpin House	Littleton	Clyde Martin
Northern Human Services	Common Ground	Whitefield	Val Gauthier
Human Services	Serenity Steps	Berlin	Ellen Tavino
Human Services	Granite State Independent Living	Statewide	Ken Hazeltine
Human Services	Easter Seals TRAC	Statewide	Mickey McIver
Senior Services	Grafton County Senior Citizens Council	Grafton County	Roberta Berner
Senior Services	Gibson Senior Center	North Conway	George Cleveland
Senior Services	Carroll County Retired & Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP)	Carroll County	Bernadine Jesseman
Senior Services	Derby's Lodge	Berlin	n/a
Senior Services	The Holiday Center	Berlin	Lisa Tilton
Volunteer	Caleb Interfaith Caregivers	Lancaster/Whitefield	Bobbie Gaudes
Volunteer	Neighbors Helping Neighbors	Madison	Barbara Anderson

	Name	Town	Contact Person
Volunteer	Caleb Foundation - Highland House	Whitefield	Jacalyn McIssac
Nursing Home	Coos County Nursing Home	Berlin	Jeannette Morneau
Nursing Home	Coos County Nursing Hospital	West Stewartstown	Michelle Hyde
Nursing Home	Morrison Nursing Home	Whitefield	Roxie Severence
Health Care	Country Village Center - Genesis Healthcare	Lancaster	Denise Cate
Health Care	Littleton Regional Hospital	Littleton	Kurt Lucas
Health Care	American Cancer Society	Northern NH Region	Mollie White
Health Care	North Country Medi-Van	Bath	Jeff Gould
Health Care	The Friendship House	Bethlehem	Sandra Letourneau
Transit	Plymouth Transport Central	Plymouth	Patsy Kendall
Transit	North Country Transit	Berlin/Littleton	Beverly Raymond
Transit	Greyhound Lines	New Hampshire	n/a
Transit	Concord Coachlines	Concord	Ken Hunter
Public	White Mountain Transit Authority	Conway	Michael Curreri
Public	Dave's Taxi	Littleton	Dave Warren
Public	EZ Taxi	Berlin	n/a
Public	KM Town Taxi	Plymouth	n/a
Public	Fast Taxi	North Conway	Katy Robbart
Public	Mount Washington Resort	Bretton Woods	Barbara Meaney
Public	The Shuttle Connection	Lincoln	n/a
Public	Waterville Valley Cab Company	Campton	n/a

	Name	Town	Contact Person
Public	Turtle Taxi Service	Conway	Wayne Botting
Recreation	Appalachian Mountain Club	Gorham	Chris Thayer
Recreation	Berlin Recreation Department	Berlin	Laura Lee Viger
Recreation	Gorham Recreation Department	Gorham	Mitch Weathers
Recreation	Waterville Valley Transit Authority	Waterville Valley	Mark Decoteau
Education	NH Community Technical College	Berlin	Gloria Tremblay
Educational	Disabled American Veterans	Berlin/Gorham	Louise Belanger
Education	Plymouth State University Shuttle Service - Physical Plant	Plymouth	Ellen Shippee

Appendix C:

Transportation Provider Survey – Comments on Coordination

The comments below were offered by providers when asked the following questions:

1) *Would you be interested in coordinating with other providers? Why?*

- “Yes. Time and money could be saved.”
- “Yes. Will increase utilization of available rolling stock while providing more options to meet the demand in communities. Additional upsides will be the savings to the state and the ability of providers to leverage funds against federal funds in new ways.”
- “No. We provide services specific to our clients only.”
- “No, we transport only nursing home residents.”
- “Yes, only if a funded position was available. We cannot support the entire program.”
- “Yes, it is obvious!”
- “No, transportation is provided to state eligible individuals only.”
- “Yes. To reduce cost by reducing dead-head mileage and combining riders from multiple programs.”
- “Maybe, on rare occasions, we do receive requests from low-income individuals needing rides to and from doctor appointments. At this time, we are unable to provide this service.”
- “Yes. Local bus meets intercity bus.”
- “Yes. If we plan community trips, we try to organize transportation for the residents.”
- “Not sure. It would depend on liability issues, involving non-clients.”
- “Yes. Decrease down time and increase transportation options during peak times.”
- “No. Specific seasonal route serving recreational clientele within and around WMNF.”
- “No. It would be very difficult as we only service individuals who receive services through our agency.”
- “No. Highly unlikely.”
- “Yes. Cost effective purposes, getting people to more places when they want to go and expanding on travel opportunities.”
- “No. Our agency works on primarily demand response need of our consumers serviced. Additionally, transportation is provided generally while providing a particular needed service.”
- “No. We like the autonomy and flexibility we have now.”
- “Yes. Always looking to expand transportation services.”

- “Yes. Not only would you be "spreading" the wealth, but accommodating more people who need the service.”
- “Yes, if it would make it easier for us to service our constituency.”
- “No, we are a privately owned resort serving our guests, homeowners, and employees.”

2) *Would you be willing to share vehicles and drivers with other providers? Why or why not?*

- “Yes, it would provide more access for people to transportation services for many areas.”
- “No. Liability issues and confidentiality issues.”
- “Yes, reciprocal agreements will expand to meet demands among partnering agencies.”
- “No, against agency policy.”
- “No, liability/insurance”
- “No, we do not own vehicles. Volunteer cars.”
- “Yes, coordination/cost sharing”
- “No, our transportation department is very small, we only have one vehicle.”
- “No, vehicles must be driven by our drivers due to insurance and vehicle care issues.”
- “Yes, we have offered but cost was prohibitive for the other provider.”
- “No. We provide intercity bus service.”
- “Yes. Our vans are aging and we are trying to save on them, as we do not have mileage/year to justify DOT application for new van.”
- “Not sure, it depends on the volunteer base and of course, the liability issue.”
- “No. We are restricted by state regulations and our DOT funded vans.”
- “No. Liability/cost/scheduling”
- “No. Our insurance agency does not allow us to do this.”
- “No. Don't really have drivers (non-dedicated) and the van is too old.”
- “No. Communication often breaks down.”
- “No. Insurance.”
- “No. Volunteer vehicles and drivers”
- “No. Too complicated, too many problems related to liability, tracking and record keeping.”
- “No. Insurance considerations and lack of accountability for vehicle safety and maintenance.”
- “No, we are a privately owned resort serving our guests, homeowners, and employees.”

- “No. They are private/volunteer vehicles.”
- 3) ***Do you think having one call center for trip requests in the NC region would be helpful to your agency? Why or why not?***
- “Yes. The call center would allow for dispatchers and software to better coordinate trips by dispatching them to the most appropriate provider, taking timeliness and cost efficiency into consideration.”
 - “Yes. A call center would be able to coordinate trips - more efficient.”
 - “Yes, one of the key concerns among users has always been not knowing who to call if the only provider you know can't meet your requested day or time. The frustration of making many calls (if you know who to call) or giving up altogether and forgoing medical care or other necessary trips out of an inability to connect with an available resource could be alleviated by bringing all of the requests to one place and sorting them to all of the communities resources to maximize efficiencies.”
 - “Yes, have one central location that you can troubleshoot and pull resources from.”
 - “Yes, better coordination.”
 - “Probably, but we have major questions about the "kinks." ”
 - “Yes, if it was easy to use. Our clients often experience communication difficulties”
 - “Yes. Reduce paperwork and reporting, streamline payment and billing.”
 - “Yes, possibly. Again, we would be focused on ensuring that older adults receive services - may still benefit from more than one access point. Don't necessarily see transportation as distinct from other elder services SLRC lessons”
 - “Yes. One call center would be so much more convenient for the clients and the agency staff.”
 - “No. We have our own call center.”
 - “No. Many of our clients need intense support and require vehicle to be immediately accessible.”
 - “Yes. Elderly population, the easier the better.”
 - “Not sure. Better coordination of rides. It would cut down on the number of rides to one specific locale.”
 - “No. Specific need providers.”
 - “Yes. We need a call center to coordinate transportation needs. A call center represents an organized system that can assist both clients and providers.”
 - “Yes/No. Our system works very smoothly. We would need to have input on details.”
- 4) ***Comments about how to improve transportation services in the North Country:***
- “A centralized call center using technology to screen ride requests that has the ability to track, report and invoice trips to funders while leveraging the available resources will encourage other providers to participate. Many small social service and Faith

based providers do not or cannot negotiate the maze of red tape and bureaucracy necessary to access funds available to help fund transportation. For all of the potential benefit to the state and federal funders of transportation the greatest benefit will be to the consumer who now will have direct access to all of the available transportation resources with one call. It is not a mistake that over 20 states have developed coordination plans that have operated in some cases for over 20 years. I know that New Hampshire is at least as smart as those 20.”

- “We need a transit system that will transport our patients all over the State of NH and VT. We need a central number to call to be able to set up the rides.”
- “We would greatly benefit from transportation services that would provide for bariatric patients.”
- “Our transport aide does many medical appointments. It would be nice if our residents had transportation for recreational trips when transportation aide is busy.”
- “Our clients need portal to portal transportation service. Money will always be a sticking point.”
- “Look at grass roots approaches more, how are you planning to encourage ridership?”
- “Scheduled small bus (large van) runs daily from different locations (homes) to stops like medical centers, grocery stores, pharmacies 2 times each day round trip. Maybe 1 time or 2 times each month for longer distance trips (location/routes to be determined by need.)”
- “DHHS must understand that multiple programs must be coordinated in order to support the call center. This cannot be delayed over multiple years. Also, it is not providing good equal delivery of Human Service Transportation if they are allowed to continue under the current system of delivery.”
- “Coordinate with local service to give people access to cities such as Concord, Manchester, and Boston.”
- “We need to upgrade the vehicles we have. We are reliant on staff vehicles but continue to require wheelchair vehicle upgrades. In minimizing miles, we make ourselves ineligible for NHDOT grants. Our agency just purchased an accessible (wheelchair) van but we still need the larger vans for heavily modified wheelchairs.”
- “Additional transportation as an alternative to PSU shuttle service would provide an opportunity for travel beyond the Plymouth/PSU immediate location/region.”
- “Sometimes residents travel by ambulance because there is no wheelchair van.”
- “Many people do need medical transportation which is getting harder for people to find.”
- “Need more volunteer drivers.”
- “The most important thing is to ‘get the word out’ to the masses. They need to either have a list of providers with phone numbers, or a central number to a call center.”

- “Because of our remote location, many of our employees do not have transportation. We also have 140 employees that live at the resort and most do not own automobiles.”

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council. Patsy explained that Transport Central will be applying for 5304 funding from DOT to study the feasibility of this project.

Public Comment:

What has been your experience in accessing transportation to meet your needs?

The bus for the Senior Center is great but there isn't much else. KM Taxi is available but is too expensive for every day use, is hard to get in touch with, and is not wheelchair accessible. Most of the group was not aware that the University Shuttle is open to the public and is not only for students. Local residents do not feel like it is available for them and would not know how to use it. (Where are the stops? What are the hours? How often does it run?) People also feel that they would like to go out at night or on weekends, but they can't because there is no transportation to do so.

What would make accessing transportation easier?

- Need education and travel training for the Plymouth Shuttle.
- Need central location where you can get charts and stop information and times for the Plymouth University Shuttle, Concord Coach Line, and ride share information. (Maybe a transportation bulletin board somewhere that has all of the information in one place.)
- The town(s) needs to work with PSU more regarding transportation.
- Making more vehicles and taxis wheelchair accessible.
- Educating drivers on HOW to transport people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.
- Need different vehicles that meet the needs of different people in different areas.
- Need to put bike racks on all or most new vehicles purchased.
- Parking is limited at the Plymouth Senior Center and that causes problems for people when they are trying to access the services. More parking or a shuttle would help.

What types of transportation would work in the Plymouth area?

- A ride-share program
- Fixed route system
- Dial-a-ride services (extended hours, nights/weekends)
- Taxi services that can accommodate wheelchairs
- Tie park and rides into the PSU shuttle system

Would it help if there was one number to call and someone would coordinate a ride for you?

YES! People already try to coordinate rides to doctor appointments to the same place on the same days, but it would be great to have someone else that could help with this.

Are you comfortable with the idea of coordinated transportation and having different drivers and transfers that you may not be used to?

As long as it is reliable and you can get a ride where you need to go, then yes.

Provider Comments:

Do you support the idea of a coordinated transportation system?

Some providers supported the idea while others still have mixed feelings. There are concerns about continuing to receive the same amount of financial support from funders in order to continue to provide the same services that currently are offered. There was discussion about how people are warming up to the idea and that coordinating rides would save money, time, and vehicle miles traveled. The group agreed that there would need to be:

- Centralized dispatch
- Uniformity of services/drivers/record keeping

What are some of the issues that need to be resolved regarding coordinating transportation?

- Insurance and liability issues.
- Distribution of funding.
- Confidentiality of riders when sharing vehicles and drivers.
- Need policies and regulations across the board that all participants (transportation providers) would be required to adhere to. This is in regards to maintenance, cleaning vehicles, treatment of riders, record keeping, etc.

Are any of the providers here going to be applying for funding to DOT in the near future? If so, what for?

Plymouth Transport Central – Funding for a Feasibility Study of a fixed route system in and around the Plymouth area.

North Country Transit – Replacement buses.

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council – Replacement buses and dispatching software (that can talk to other providers and try to set up transfers for long distance medical care.

Eligible Activities for Funding (top priorities for Plymouth region that were identified at this meeting.)

- Expanding services that currently exist (hours of operation, distance traveled, etc.)/ late night and weekend services.
- Developing Fixed Route public transit services in Plymouth area.
- Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities.
- Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing or carpooling programs.
- Enhancing paratransit services.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Travel Training programs.
- Promoting and administering new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.
- Ride-sharing and carpooling.
- Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs.
- Local car loan programs for shared rides.

Appendix E:

Public Meeting Notes - Haverhill

North Country Council
Regional Coordinated Transit Plan



Public Meeting Notes
Cottage Hospital, Haverhill
Wednesday, November 5th 2008, 4-6pm

Attendance: - Mary Deppe (NCC) - Roberta Berner (GCSCC)
- Glenn English (Haverhill)
- Mike Gilman (NH Employment Security)

Welcomes and Introductions:

Everyone in the room introduced themselves and explained where they work or live. Mary Deppe explained the purpose of the Coordinated Transit Plan update and why it is important. She explained that the major goals of the plan are to:

- ID all current public transportation providers and other organizations that offer transportation services in the North Country and include an overview of what services currently exist.
- ID the transit needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.
- ID gaps in available services between what exists and what is needed.
- ID strategies to meet the identified needs.
- Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.
- Recommend funding sources that can be used for various transit projects.

Mary handed out a list of transportation providers that we currently know about in the Haverhill area and asked the group to help identify others that may not be listed. The group suggested the following transportation providers:

- Stage Coach (based nearby in Vermont)
- Dave's Taxi (serves Haverhill)
- WW Barry Transportation (Lisbon/Bath)
- school buses

Public Comment:

What has been your experience in accessing transportation to meet your needs?

There is no public transportation in the Haverhill area. Dave's Taxi services the area but is based out of Littleton. There is access to the Stage Coach bus line in Vermont, but it does

not come into New Hampshire in Haverhill. The only transportation services are from Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, friends, neighbors, volunteers, and churches.

What would make accessing transportation easier?

- Use of school buses that aren't being used during the day time.
- The Stage Coach bus line crossing into New Hampshire to provide services to Lebanon area.
- Buses from private school providing transportation services during day (Beckett Schools and White Mountain School in Bethlehem).
- Tie transportation services into existing economic and labor market sites.
- Large employers (Wal-Mart, Cottage Hospital, School, County, NE Wire) contributing in transportation services for employees).

What types of transportation would work in the Haverhill area?

- The RideShare program
- Fixed route system (going towards Hanover/Lebanon and Littleton)
- Park-and-Ride

Would it help if there was one number to call and someone would coordinate a ride for you?
YES!

Are you comfortable with the idea of coordinated transportation and having different drivers and transfers that you may not be used to?

As long as it is reliable and safe.

Provider Comments:

Do you support the idea of a coordinated transportation system?

Some providers supported the idea while others still have mixed feelings. Grafton County Senior Citizens Council explained that they have already built a coordinated system for elder services. There are fears that if services are taken away (due to funding cuts) the system that exists will start to break apart.

What are some of the issues that need to be resolved regarding coordinating transportation?

- Insurance and liability issues.
- Distribution of funding.
- Confidentiality of riders when sharing vehicles and drivers.
- Need policies and regulations across the board that all participants (transportation providers) would be required to adhere to. This is in regards to maintenance, cleaning vehicles, treatment of riders, record keeping, etc.

Are any of the providers here going to be applying for funding to DOT in the near future? If so, what for?

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council – Replacement buses and Dispatching Software (that can talk to other providers and try to set up transfers for long distance medical care.

Eligible Activities for Funding (top priorities for Haverhill region that were identified at this meeting.)

- Developing fixed route public transit services in Haverhill area.
- Ride-sharing and carpooling.
- Expanding services that currently exist (hours of operation, distance traveled, etc.)/ late night and weekend services.
- Travel training programs.
- Enhancing paratransit services.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing or carpooling programs.
- Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities so they have easier access to public transportation system.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Local car loan programs for shared rides.
- Support new mobility management and coordination projects.

Appendix F:

Public Meeting Notes - Berlin

North Country Council
Regional Coordinated Transit Plan



Public Meeting Notes
Androscoggin Valley Hospital, Berlin
Tuesday, November 11th 2008, 4-6pm

Attendance: - Mary Deppe (NCC) - Beverly Raymond (NCT)
- Pat MacQueen (City of Berlin)

Welcomes and Introductions:

Everyone in the room introduced themselves and explained where they work or live. Mary Deppe explained the purpose of the Coordinated Transit Plan update and why it is important. She explained that the major goals of the plan are to:

- ID all current public transportation providers and other organizations that offer transportation services in the North Country and include an overview of what services currently exist.
- ID the transit needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.
- ID gaps in available services between what exists and what is needed.
- ID strategies to meet the identified needs.
- Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.
- Recommend funding sources that can be used for various transit projects.

Mary handed out a list of transportation providers that we currently know about in the Berlin area and asked the group to help identify others that may not be listed. The group suggested the following transportation providers:

- St. Vincent De Paul Nursing Home
- Family Resource Center (Gorham)
- Drug and Alcohol Program (CAP)
- Dan's Scenic Tours
- Kayak Tours in Milan
- EZ Taxi (head-quarters in Bethel, ME)
- Dave's Taxi (Littleton)

Public Comment:

What has been your experience in accessing transportation to meet your needs?

The major needs in the Berlin area are transportation services for the elderly, physically/mentally disabled, and lower income persons. There was discussion about the Berlin-Gorham Trolley and how there are usually about 10 people on it. Beverly Raymond explained that it is a two hour loop that is driven 4 times each day. There was some discussion about how people from the welfare office need rides. Beverly explained that the welfare office often refers clients for rides to North Country Transit.

Beverly also explained that the route had just been expanded on the west side of Berlin and on Route 2 in Gorham to go up and down the trailer park.

What would make accessing transportation easier?

- Having one number to call for rides would help many residents of the Berlin-Gorham area.
- More transportation options with longer hours.
- Using school buses that sit idle all summer long and during school hours.

What types of transportation would work in the Berlin area?

- Expand fixed route to tie into other fixed route systems in the state.
- Using dispatching software to coordinate rides through different providers.
- RideShare programs

Would it help if there was one number to call and someone would coordinate a ride for you?
YES!

Are you comfortable with the idea of coordinated transportation and having different drivers and transfers that you may not be used to?

Yes, as long as it is reliable and safe. If it is available, people will use it. Drivers need to be consistent with the level of training and with driving and dealing with special needs. The City of Berlin is developing a new ordinance to outline what is expected of drivers for EZ taxi when they are hired. Something like that could be done will all drivers.

Provider Comments:

Do you support the idea of a coordinated transportation system?

Yes. In rural areas it is important to use all of the resources that are available to get from one place to another.

What are some of the issues that need to be resolved regarding coordinating transportation?

- Concerned about letting other organizations drive vehicles.
 - Insurance and liability issues.
- Ongoing training for drivers and background checks.
- Distribution of funding.
- Confidentiality of riders when sharing vehicles and drivers.

Are any of the providers here going to be applying for funding to DOT in the near future? If so, what for?

Tri-County CAP:

- Replacement buses.
- Operation/administration funding for the Tri-Town route.
- Mobility manager in Carroll County.
- Software.
- Start-up funding for the Carroll County project.

Eligible Activities for Funding (top priorities for Berlin region that were identified at this meeting.)

- Expanding services that currently exist (hours of operation, distance traveled, etc.)/ late night and weekend services.
- Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing or carpooling programs.
- Ride-sharing and carpooling.
- Support new mobility management and coordination projects.
- Local car loan programs for shared rides.
- Enhancing paratransit services.
- Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities so they have easier access to public transportation system.
- Travel training programs.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Promoting and administering new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.

Appendix G:

Public Meeting Notes - Lancaster

North Country Council
Regional Coordinated Transit Plan



Public Meeting Notes
Weeks Memorial Library, Lancaster, NH
Wednesday, November 12th 2008, 4-6pm

Attendance: - Mary Deppe (NCC) - Beverly Raymond (NCT)
- L. Merrow (DHHS) - Charlie Ryan (Littleton Planning Board)
- Lyndall Demers (Great North Woods Journal)

Welcomes and Introductions:

Everyone in the room introduced themselves and explained where they work or live. Mary Deppe explained the purpose of the Coordinated Transit Plan update and why it is important. She explained that the major goals of the plan are to:

- ID all current public transportation providers and other organizations that offer transportation services in the North Country and include an overview of what services currently exist.
- ID the transit needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.
- ID gaps in available services between what exists and what is needed.
- ID strategies to meet the identified needs.
- Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.
- Recommend funding sources that can be used for various transit projects.

Mary handed out a list of transportation providers that we currently know about in the Lancaster area and asked the group to help identify others that may not be listed. The group suggested the following transportation providers:

- DAV (White River Junction Transportation Services)
- Northern Gas Transport (Lyndonville)
- Moose Tour Buses
- RCT (Vermont)
- Gilpin House

Public Comment:

What has been your experience in accessing transportation to meet your needs?

The Tri-Town operates in the area and is very helpful, but they do not service users on nights and weekends. It is a shame that there is no passenger rail service. Dave's taxi is an

option for people, but it is expensive for low-income persons and is not handicapped accessible. There used to be a shuttle that picked up people in Littleton and brought them to Burndy's in Lincoln, it was a great service but is no longer in operation. The DAV vans leave Berlin early in the morning in time to get people to their doctor appointments and they do not leave until the patients are finished.

With the economy declining and the recent mill closures, people are finding it harder to afford personal vehicles. People will ride public transportation to save money that can be spent on other bills, food, medical expenses, etc. People are also concerned about their "carbon footprint" and making environmentally conscious decisions.

What would make accessing transportation easier?

- Employers could be more flexible with letting people get to work at times when the transportation is available to get them there.
- More transportation options with longer hours.
- There should be a connection with social service centers and for people that need rides to dialysis and other medical appointments.
- The hubs of transportation systems should be located in the towns and cities where hospitals/dialysis services are.
- Hours of operation of hospitals and medical appointments should be scheduled in coordination with transportation providers.
- The last ride of the day should correspond with the last appointment of the day.
- There should be coordination with Concord Coach Line in order to get people around the state.
- RideShare programs.
- Meetings should be moved around and not located just in Concord.
- Phone conferences should be considered to save on gas mileage.
- The reimbursement rate needs to be reasonable to volunteers to continue providing rides.
- Using school buses that sit idle all summer long and during school hours.

What types of transportation would work in the Lancaster area?

- Fixed route system (expanded hours/schedule).
- Expand fixed route to tie into other fixed route systems in the state.
- RideShare programs.

Would it help if there was one number to call and someone would coordinate a ride for you?
YES! It would save so much money and time.

Are you comfortable with the idea of coordinated transportation and having different drivers and transfers that you may not be used to?

As long as it is reliable and safe. If it is available, people will use it. Drivers need to be consistent with the level of training and with driving and dealing with special needs.

Provider Comments:

Do you support the idea of a coordinated transportation system?

Yes, people thought there are positive side effects like increased communication for the elderly and medical patients. If someone doesn't show up for their ride to an appointment, people will realize this and check in on them. Also, people going through similar experiences (regarding medical appointments) become a support system for each other.

If transportation is available, people will start getting medical help sooner, as they won't have to spend all their time trying to figure out how to get there.

What are some of the issues that need to be resolved regarding coordinating transportation?

- Concerned about letting other organizations drive vehicles.
 - Insurance and liability issues.
- Ongoing training for drivers and background checks.

Are any of the providers here going to be applying for funding to DOT in the near future, if so, what for?

Tri-County CAP:

- Replacement buses.
- Operation/administration funding for the Tri-Town route.
- Mobility manager in Carroll County.
- Software.
- Start-up funding for the Carroll County project.

Eligible Activities for Funding (top priorities for Lancaster region that were identified at this meeting.)

- Expanding services that currently exist (hours of operation, distance traveled, etc.)/ late night and weekend services.
- Promoting and administering new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.
- Ride-sharing and carpooling.
- Local car loan programs for shared rides.
- Enhancing paratransit services.
- Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities so they have easier access to public transportation system.
- Travel training programs.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Support new mobility management and coordination projects.
- Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing or carpooling programs.

Appendix H:

Public Meeting Notes - Conway

North Country Council
Regional Coordinated Transit Plan



Public Meeting Notes
Gibson Center, Conway, NH
Thursday, November 13th 2008, 4-6pm

Attendance: - Mary Deppe (NCC) - Jack Rose (Albany)
- Lee Ann Shand (New Horizons-NHS) - Mickey McIver (Easter Seals)
- George Cleveland (Gibson Center) - Theresa Kennett (CCTP)
- Tom Buco (NH House of Representatives) - Beverly Raymond (NCT)
- Katy Robbart (Fast Taxi & Shuttle Service) - Larry Garland (AMC)

Welcomes and Introductions:

Everyone in the room introduced themselves and explained where they work or live. Mary Deppe explained the purpose of the Coordinated Transit Plan update and why it is important. She explained that the major goals of the plan are to:

- ID all current public transportation providers and other organizations that offer transportation services in the North Country and include an overview of what services currently exist.
- ID the transit needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.
- ID gaps in available services between what exists and what is needed.
- ID strategies to meet the identified needs.
- Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.
- Recommend funding sources that can be used for various transit projects.

Mary handed out a list of transportation providers that we currently know about in the Conway area and asked the group to help identify others that may not be listed. The group suggested the following transportation providers:

- Storyland shuttle
- Ski area shuttles
- Schools (private/public)
- Red Jacket Hotel shuttle
- Turtle Taxi
- AMC Hiker Shuttle
- Harris Taxi
- Registered transporters throughout the state
- Green Granite Hotel/Christmas Farm Inn/Holiday Inn Express shuttle

Public Comment:

What has been your experience in accessing transportation to meet your needs?

People need rides at night and on weekends, but those services aren't offered. Northern Human Services provides services on weekends and they have recently hired someone who takes people to their jobs during the day. There is a good amount of access to transportation during the day, but more is needed for the general public. Easter Seals provides DCYF and Medicaid transportation throughout the region. Some agencies try to contract with local providers if it is cost effective; if not, they try to provide rides through volunteers or through the organizations' staffs. Employees of the shopping areas do not have adequate transportation. Most families only have one vehicle, but multiple workers.

People are having a difficult time paying for their vehicles because of high gas prices and expensive car repairs. Some people would like to be able to use public transportation and drive less in order to save money and be environmentally friendly.

What would make accessing transportation easier?

- Rides/services for employees at major employers to and from work.
- Employers could bundle workers with work times depending on where people live, in order to make rides easier to come by.
- Employers could contract with ski areas to provide rides to and from work. This would save money by not having to buy vehicles and start from scratch.
- Night and weekend services are needed.

What types of transportation would work in the Conway area?

- Fixed route system
- Dial-a-Ride
- Taxi Services

Would it help if there was one number to call and someone would coordinate a ride for you?
YES! Absolutely! It would be helpful to put all of the resources into one pool.

Are you comfortable with the idea of coordinated transportation and having different drivers and transfers that you may not be used to?

As long as it is reliable and safe. Drivers need to be consistent with the level of training and with driving and dealing with special needs.

Provider Comments:

Do you support the idea of a coordinated transportation system?

People felt that transportation isn't just about the ride for a lot of people, it is about the visit and the relationship. Coordination will provide more services to more people. It will allow relationships to become strong and new relationships to develop. Some providers think that some riders might be hesitant at first because it can be difficult to try new things. If the services provided is good and consistent, then people will think it is a good experience.

What are some of the issues that need to be resolved regarding coordinating transportation?

- Concerned about letting other organizations drive vehicles.

- Insurance and liability issues.
- Distribution of funding.
- Drivers need to be employees multiple organizations so they can be insured no matter who they are driving for.
- Partnering resources (drivers, training, etc.).
- Confidentiality of riders when sharing vehicles and drivers.
- Need policies and regulations across the board that all participants (transportation providers) would be required to adhere to. This in regards to maintenance, cleaning vehicles, treatment of riders, record keeping, etc.
- Tacking local option fee onto local car registrations and put a percentage towards public transportation.

Are any of the providers here going to be applying for funding to DOT in the near future, if so, what for?

Tri-County CAP – Replacement buses.

Gibson Center – Replacement buses.

Easter Seals – Replacement buses.

Fast Taxi – A vehicle (possibly).

Carroll County Transit Project – Vehicles.

Eligible Activities for Funding (top priorities for Conway region that were identified at this meeting.)

- Developing fixed route public transit services in Conway area.
- Expanding services that currently exist (hours of operation, distance traveled, etc.)/ late night and weekend services.
- Making accessibility improvements that will remove barriers to transportation for individuals with disabilities so they have easier access to public transportation system.
- Purchasing vehicles to support new wheelchair accessible taxis, ride sharing or carpooling programs.
- Support new mobility management and coordination projects.
- Ride-sharing and carpooling.
- Local car loan programs for shared rides.
- Enhancing paratransit services.
- Supporting new volunteer and driver aid programs.
- Travel training programs.
- Promoting and administering new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.

Appendix I:

Executive Summary of the Coordinated Transportation Plan for Carroll County

Providing
Public
Transportation

Carroll County, New Hampshire

TRANSPORTATION
CONSULTANTS, INC.

Prepared for

ctaa

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), on behalf of North Country Transit (NCT), contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to provide Technical Assistance in developing a new public transportation system in Carroll County. The project focuses on the transit needs within Carroll County for local residents, especially the low-income population, elderly, disabled, and tourists that come to Carroll County, and how to effectively provide transit services to meet those needs.



North Country Transit and several other agencies within Carroll County have recognized the need for public transportation in Carroll County. Currently, there is no general public transportation service in the county. However, there is limited transportation provided by taxi services, specialized transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities, volunteer agencies that provide transportation for non-emergency medical services, private shuttle services, and an intercity private provider. For many residents, a public transportation system will link them directly with the community. A key issue in the Technical Assistance project was to identify the existing available resources and additional resources that may be needed to provide public transit service.

STUDY AREA

Carroll County is located in the northeast area of New Hampshire near the Maine border. It is the second least populous county in the State of New Hampshire with 47,439 persons (2005 estimates). The county seat—the Town of Ossipee—lies in the southeast portion of the county and is adjacent to the Pine River State Forest, which lies approximately 50 miles northeast of New Hampshire’s capital, Concord. Other communities in Carroll County include Albany, Bartlett, Brookfield,

Chatham, Conway, Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Jackson, Madison, Moultonborough, Sanbornville, Sandwich, Tamworth, Tuftonboro, Wakefield, and Wolfboro. Prominent topographic features of Carroll County include the White Mountain National Forest to the north and the Lakes Region to the south. The overall population density of Carroll County is approximately 48 persons per square mile.

TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Chapter VI of the Final Report provides a transportation needs assessment for Carroll County. The transportation needs for the county are significant, especially based on the high elderly population and rural geographic character.

In order to estimate the transportation needs for Carroll County, it is important to have an approach that considers the local demographics, economics, and service characteristics. Chapter VI describes the development of a transit demand model for the study area. The transit demand estimates were based upon the 2000 US Census data and population estimates for 2006 and 2030 as presented in Chapter IV of the Final Report. These data were used for the 2006 transit demand estimates and 2030 projected transit demand using the *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Project A-3: Rural Transit Demand Estimation Techniques*.

The TCRP analysis procedure considers transit demand in two major categories: “*program demand*,” which is generated by transit ridership to and from specific social service programs; and “*non-program demand*” generated by the other mobility needs of the elderly, disabled, and general public (including youth). Examples of non-program trips may include shopping, employment, and medical trips.

As presented in Chapter VI of the Final Report, the model indicates that if a high level of public transit were available in Carroll County, approximately 101,000 annual trips (non-program trips) would be provided. This should not be construed to indicate the actual ridership which might occur on any particular service. Actual ridership is a function of the level of service that is provided and includes

such factors as frequency of service, schedules, fares, travel times, and specific routes.

When combining the program and non-program estimates based upon the TCRP methodology, the total existing transit need for Carroll County is approximately 277,000 annual trips.

At this time, few non-program trips are provided, but some of the 176,000 program trips are likely being met by human service agencies and volunteer groups. However, the exact number of trips provided is unknown.

The result shows that there is a large unmet need for transit trips.

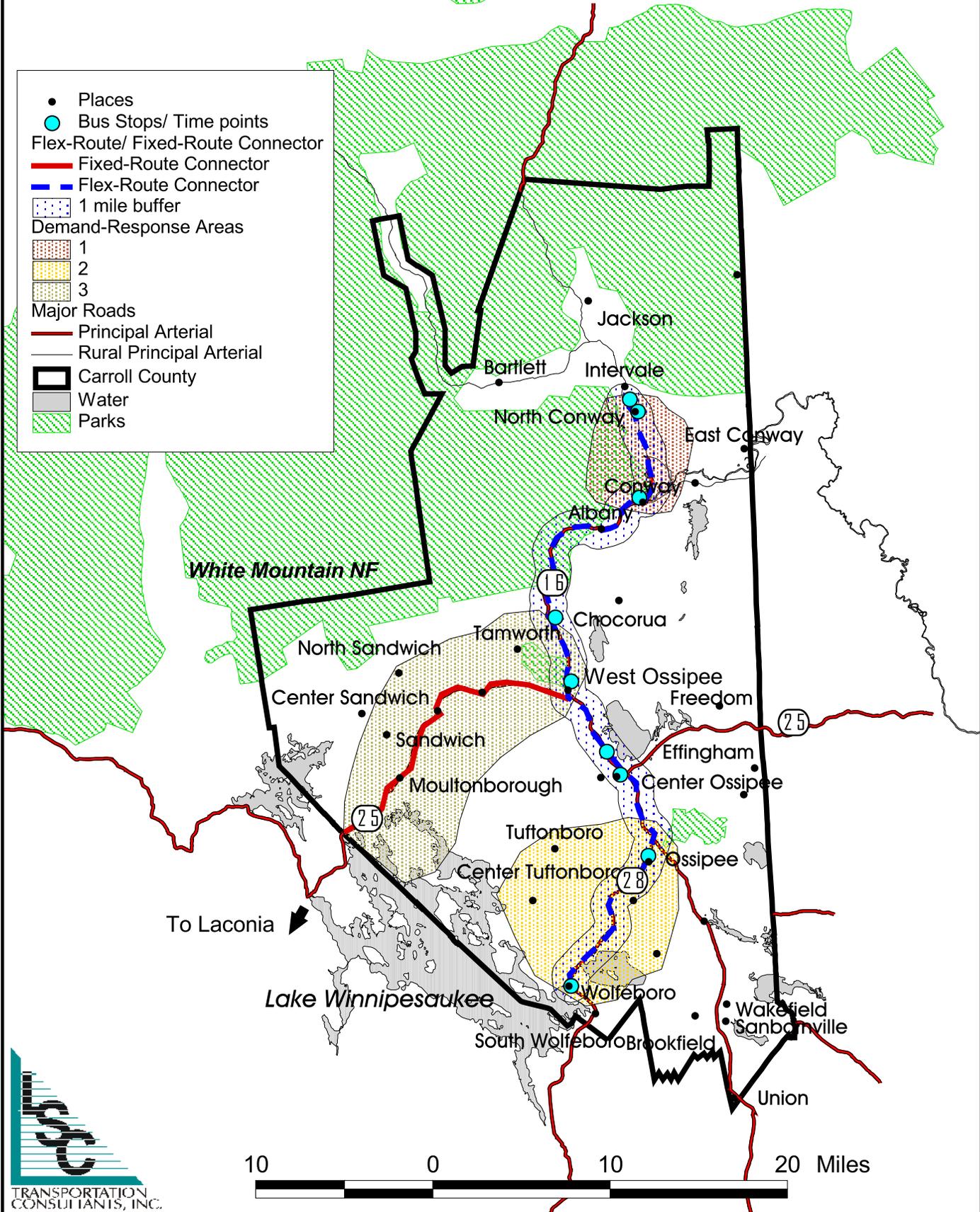
RECOMMENDED TRANSIT SERVICE PLAN

Chapter XII of the Final Report presents the details of the preferred transit service plan including the hours of service, route schedules, operational costs, capital needs, and capital costs. The preferred transit service alternative would be developed in three phases, each serving different areas.

The preferred transit service alternative is based on various transit service elements. Phase 1, as shown in Figure ES-1, would include an all-day flex-route connector between Wolfeboro and North Conway. The service would be provided using two buses running in opposite directions. Transfer between northbound and southbound buses can be done in the West Ossipee area. The buses would travel on a designated route according to a published schedule, but the schedule would include additional time to allow the buses to deviate to serve passengers that live within one mile of the route.

Figure ES-1
Preferred Service Plan - Start Up System

- Places
- Bus Stops/ Time points
- Flex-Route/ Fixed-Route Connector
- Fixed-Route Connector
- Flex-Route Connector
- 1 mile buffer
- Demand-Response Areas
- 1
- 2
- 3
- Major Roads
- Principal Arterial
- Rural Principal Arterial
- Carroll County
- Water
- Parks



There are also three in-town demand-response service (dial-a-ride) areas that would operate from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Conway-North Conway, Moultonborough-Tamworth, and Ossipee-Wolfeboro areas to meet the transportation needs of local residents. Additionally, a fixed-route connector would operate between West Ossipee and Laconia all day. The preferred service plan will also have two future phases. Phase 2 would include weekend service, demand-response service covering the towns of Madison, Freedom, and Effingham, and another demand-response service for Wakefield. The weekend service is estimated to have the same service hours as the weekday service. Phase 3 would include service to Dover and Portsmouth. Table ES-1 provides the cost estimate for each of these phases.

**Table ES-1
Carroll County Transit Service Plan**

Service Component	Hours	Number of Vehicles	Annual Operating Cost	Vehicle Capital Cost**
Flex-Route Connector (<i>Wolfeboro-North Conway</i>)	M-F, 6a to 6:15p	2	\$178,000	\$170,000
Demand-Response Area 1 (<i>Conway and North Conway area</i>)	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
Demand-Response Area 2 (<i>Wolfeboro and Ossipee area</i>)	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
Demand-Response Area 3 (<i>Moultonborough and Tamworth area</i>)	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
Fixed-Route Connector (<i>West Ossipee to Laconia</i>)	M-F, 6a to 6:30p	1	\$97,000	\$85,000
		1		\$85,000 *
Total Service Cost		7	\$473,000	\$595,000
Future Phase 2: Weekend Service	Sat-Sun, varies	7	\$194,000	\$510,000
<i>Madison, Freedom, and Effingham</i>	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
<i>Wakefield Service</i>	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
Future Phase 3: Service to Dover and Portsmouth	M-F, 8a to 5p	1	\$66,000	\$85,000
<p><i>Note: These operating costs are based on 2006 dollar values.</i></p> <p><i>Note: These costs are based on service operated by North Country Transit.</i></p> <p><i>Note*: One additional spare vehicle would be required</i></p> <p><i>Note**: Bus cost based upon \$85,000</i></p>				
<p>Source: LSC, 2007.</p>				

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Chapter XII of the Final Report lists the activities that need to be completed in order to implement the preferred transit service alternative, which would be developed in three phases. Phase 1 (years 2009 through 2010) has an estimated annual operational cost of \$473,000. Phase 1 costs include route-deviation, fixed-route, and demand-response services. Phase 2 (years 2011 through 2012) increases the estimated annual operational cost to \$700,689 with inflation. Phase 2 costs include weekend service and expanded demand-response service areas. Phase 3 (years 2017 through 2018) increases the estimated annual operational cost to \$1,000,000 with inflation. Phase 3 costs include the increased expense of regional service to Dover and Portsmouth. The plan also details the proposed fare structure, which is based on a zone system.

An organization plan is presented for the Carroll County Transit Program. Based on the Advisory Committee meetings, it was decided that North Country Transit (NCT) should operate the new service in Carroll County. North Country Transit is part of Tri-CAP, a nonprofit agency, and currently provides service in Coos County and Northern Grafton County. This agency is very familiar with the New Hampshire area, is a Federal Transit Administration recipient, and has the functional capabilities to operate service in Carroll County. Public transportation services provided under North Country Transit will function under the Tri-County Community Action Program, Inc. (Tri-CAP). NCT already has an established director and administrative support. However, additional drivers, dispatchers, and mechanics will be required to support the new Carroll County Transit Program.

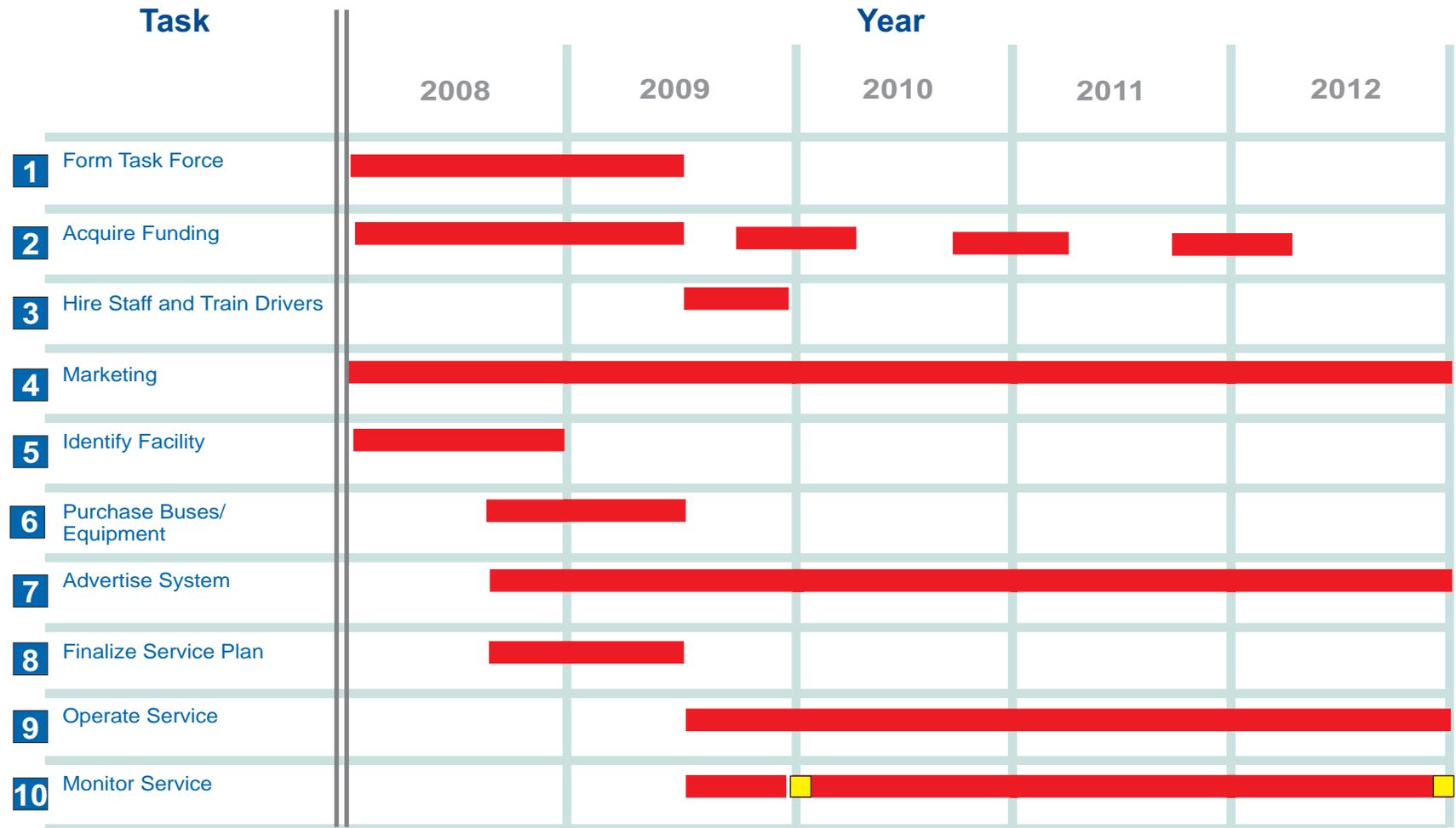
There are existing volunteer drivers through the Carroll County RSVP and Caregiver programs that will be a valuable resource to the newly formed transit program. These programs could supplement transportation to the new transit service areas by providing service for out-of-county medical appointments. Volunteers can thus effectively stretch the resources of the Carroll County Transit Program beyond what it might otherwise cover. They can also play key roles in public relations, fundraising, public education, and other outreach programs.

Executive Summary

Coordination and consolidation of services allow local entities to provide additional and enhanced services to the community using the existing resources. Other coordination opportunities presented include the White Mountain Transit Authority, a private provider, that currently provides transportation services mainly aimed toward tourists and getting workers to and from jobs. White Mountain Transit Authority and Carroll County Transit could coordinate services in the North Conway area. The newly formed transit program in Carroll County could contract services with the White Mountain Transit Authority to operate general public transit services in the North Conway area. White Mountain Transit Authority is interested in this cooperative effort, knowing that this study would serve as a guide for public transportation options.

The implementation timeline is designed to implement the preferred transit service alternative over the next five to six years. This timeframe allows for forming an implementation task force, acquiring funding, hiring staff and training drivers, marketing, identifying the facility, purchasing buses/equipment, and advertising the system. LSC's recommended timeline for implementation of the preferred transit service alternative is presented in Figure ES-2. Recommendations are also provided for marketing the service and performance monitoring.

Figure ES-2 Carroll County Transit Implementation Timeline



LEGEND

- Feed Back
- Planning Phase/ Implementation Phase