

West's Transportation, Inc.

Contact Information

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Service Summary

Service area:	Washington and Hancock Counties
Type of service:	Intercity, flex route, demand response, contract

Public Bus Service

West's Coastal Connection (Calais-Bangor Intercity Route): The intercity service operates daily, seven days per week, between Calais and Bangor (round trip 350 miles), with stops at a number of locations within Washington and Hancock Counties. The daily roundtrip service departs from Marden's parking lot in Calais at 9:30 a.m. and arrives in at the Concord Trailways bus station in Bangor at 1:10 p.m. and the Bangor International Airport at 1:15 p.m. The return trip departs from the Concord Trailways bus station in Bangor at 3:10 p.m. and the Bangor International Airport at 3:15 p.m. and arrives at Marden's parking lot in Calais at 7:00 p.m. Major stops between Calais and Bangor include Perry, Machias and Ellsworth. Flag stops are located in Pembroke, Dennysville, Whiting, Jonesboro, Columbia, Milbridge, Gouldsboro, Sullivan and Hancock.

Washington County Service: West's Washington County service consists of five flex routes in Washington County and eastern portions of Hancock County. The bus will deviate from the fixed route by as much as a mile, upon request. The routes are as follows:

Beals Island to Ellsworth on Mondays: This flex route departs Beals at 8:30 a.m., passes through Jonesport, Addison, Columbia Falls, Columbia, Harrington, Cherryfield, Milbridge and Steuben, and arrives in Ellsworth at 10:30 a.m. After making stops in Ellsworth, the return trip departs Ellsworth at 1:30 p.m. and arrives in Beals at 3:05 p.m.

Steuben to Machias on Tuesdays: This flex route leaves Steuben at 8:15 a.m., passes through Milbridge, Cherryfield, Harrington, Columbia, Columbia Falls, Addison and Jonesport, and arrives in Machias at 9:30 a.m. After making stops in Machias, the return trip departs Machias at noon and arrives in Steuben at 1:35 p.m.

Steuben to Jonesport Mondays through Fridays: This flex route departs Steuben at 7:10 a.m. and arrives in Jonesport at 7:40 a.m. The return trip leaves Jonesport at 4:00 p.m. and arrives back in Steuben at 4:30 p.m. Reservations required.

Lubec to Machias first Wednesday of each month: This flex route leaves Lubec at 8:45 a.m. and arrives in Machias at 9:30 a.m. The return trip departs Machias at 11:30 a.m. and arrives in Lubec at 12:15 p.m. Reservations required.

Franklin to Winter Harbor Mondays through Fridays school season only. This flex route leaves Franklin Trading Post at 8:40 a.m. and arrives at Winter Harbor garage at 9:05 a.m. The return trip departs Winter Harbor garage at 1:35 p.m. and arrives at Franklin Trading Post at 2:00 p.m. Reservations required.

Summary of Service Changes

Within the past five years, service changes have included the addition of two flex route services, both of which are summarized above: a flex route service from Lubec to Machias on the first Wednesday of the month, and a Franklin to Winter Harbor flex route service Mondays through Fridays during the school year.

Summary of Accomplishments

- **Maintaining transit services.** West's has worked hard to maintain its intercity and Washington County services despite declining ridership due to relatively low gas prices, competition from publicly funded services, and a decline in Canadian visitors.
- **Punctual, reliable service.** West's has placed a priority on providing punctual, reliable transit service for the people of Washington County, as well as people in Hancock County who can use the intercity system.

Future Priorities

- **Coordination.** Coordination with other transit systems and public agencies to strengthen transit services, especially feeder systems so that people using the intercity service can safely return to their homes at a reasonable cost.
- **Fleet upgrade.** Procurement of new or late model, low mileage buses to replace an aging, high mileage fleet.

Ridership

Ridership figures for West's Transportation services are shown in the table below. Most of the decline in ridership between FY 2016 and FT 2017 is because of a decline of 2,717 MaineCare trips.

West's Transportation, Inc.					
Flex Route and Demand Response Trips					
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Washington County Service	4,399	4,268	3,905	4,569	4,441
Bangor/Calais Intercity	2,982	2,876	2,893	3,323	2,868
MaineCare	5,492	4,795	4,182	6,595	3,878
Total	12,873	11,939	10,980	14,487	11,187

Fares

Tickets can be purchased at the Concord Coach Lines bus station in Bangor or on the bus. Tickets purchased on the bus require exact change in U.S. currency. Children under 5 ride free when accompanied by a fare-paying adult. Children between 5 and 12 years of age pay half-fare.

Calais-Bangor Intercity Route. \$27 one-way, \$42 round trip for the entire distance; lesser rates, depending on distance traveled, for travel between towns along the way.

Beals Island to Ellsworth on Mondays: \$10 round trip.

Steuben to Machias on Tuesdays: \$8 round trip.

Steuben to Jonesport Mondays through Fridays: \$8 one-way, \$10 round trip.

Lubec to Machias first Wednesday each month: \$8 one-way, \$10 round trip.

Franklin to Winter Harbor Mondays through Fridays school season only: \$8 one-way, \$10 round trip.

Buses/Facilities

West's fleet needs to be updated. All of West's buses are at least three years old and all of them are high mileage vehicles on account of large distances that must be covered in Washington County and on the intercity route. Buses are stored at West's office or at drivers' homes.

Coordination/Outreach/Partnerships/Unmet Needs

Within the recent past, West's worked with Downeast Community Partners to establish a transit feeder system for transporting people from the intercity system to their homes. The effort included publicizing the system and setting up procedures for people to request the service while riding the bus.

Unfortunately, the system did not succeed, but West's is still interested in partnering with others to make it work.

Major Challenges

Major challenges include:

- Maintaining a successful business in light of ridership declines
- Vehicle procurement
- Lack of coordination/feeder services

Public Participation

Within the past year, West's has worked with the Community Caring Collaborative and the Washington County Council of Governments to explore options and opportunities for providing transportation for people who do not qualify for MaineCare yet do not have the means to provide their own transportation.