

Public Transit Advisory Council Meeting

June 8, 2016

Discussion Notes – For Review and Comment

Note: The opinions and suggestions in this presentation are those of the authors and not necessarily those of MaineDOT

Rich Rothe Slides 3 -11

Peter Schauer Slides 12 - 47

Agenda

- Introductions
- MaineDOT Updates
- Veterans Initiatives
- State Management Plan Considerations
- Questions and Summary
- Adjourn 3:00 PM

Veterans Initiatives

Rich Rothe, Consultant
Comments or Questions on Veterans
Initiative
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Directive (Chapter 77 Resolves of 2016):
MaineDOT, in consultation with Department of
Defense, DHHS, DOL –to determine need for
locally available transportation system for
veterans for:

- Employment/employment services
- Medical appointments
- Mental health services
- Community activities

- **Purpose:** To inform the development of a pilot program served by a regional transportation network, and inform potential future development of a long-term transportation policy to meet need of veterans.
- **Participants:** Various stakeholders including Public Transit Advisory Council.
- **Reports:** Initial report to Legislature Feb. 1, 2017; final report Jan. 15, 2018.

Report of Commission to Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans, January, 2016

- **Transportation recommendation:** Develop long-term transportation policy using existing regional provider networks that includes veterans as targeted constituency (resulted in Chapter 77 Resolves of 2016).
- **Focus of report's transportation analysis:** transportation provided by Veterans Administration (VA) and Disabled Americans Veterans (DAV) and volunteers.

Limitations of Commission's report:

- No mention of MaineDOT's Strategic Transit Plan
- No mention of existing fixed and flex route systems

Highlights of Commission's Report

- There are about 140,000 veterans in Maine;
- Veterans can receive medical care at Togus or at a Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Bangor, Calais, Caribou, Lewiston, Lincoln, Portland, Rumford, Saco;
- VA provides reimbursement for transportation expenses incurred by veterans who are at least 30% disabled travelling to Togus for medical appointments;

- DAV, under contract to VA, provides rides only to Togus in VA vans operated by volunteers (not permitted to go to a CBOC, even if van travels past one);
- DAV receives \$15,000 annually from Legislature from table games in Bangor;
- Veteran must be ambulatory to ride van;
- VA and DAV transportation doesn't meet the need;
- MaineCare does not allow reimbursement for travel to Togus or a CBOC.

Study Approach – Initial Thoughts

- Build in/highlight Maine Strategic Transit Plan
- TCRP Report 164 – Tools to Improve Transportation Options for Veterans
- Interviews with VA, DAV, Maine Bureau of Veterans Services – info on existing and emerging programs, partnerships with transportation providers

- Existing provider services to Togus, CBOCs
- Ridership survey, select systems, to determine veterans' usage?
- Transit provider contacts to consider viable approaches for urban/rural services (funding for things like YCCAC WAVE program, paratransit service beyond current boundaries, voucher program, discount ticket program, Togus van from major urban areas).

Advancing Passenger Transportation State Management Plan Revisions

Peter Schauer, Consultant
Comments or Questions:
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Strategic Transit Plan Recommendations

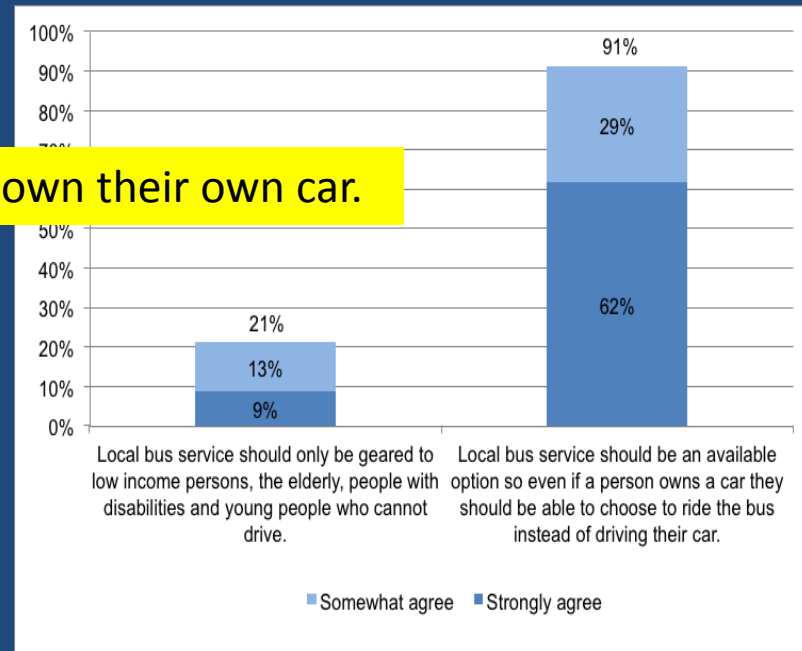
Policy and Implementation
Considerations

Background

From Strategic Transit Plan

- Concept of public transit is well supported by population of Maine. Mainers recognize that there are needs for people to get places who do not have an automobile.

Buses should be open to all even if they own their own car.

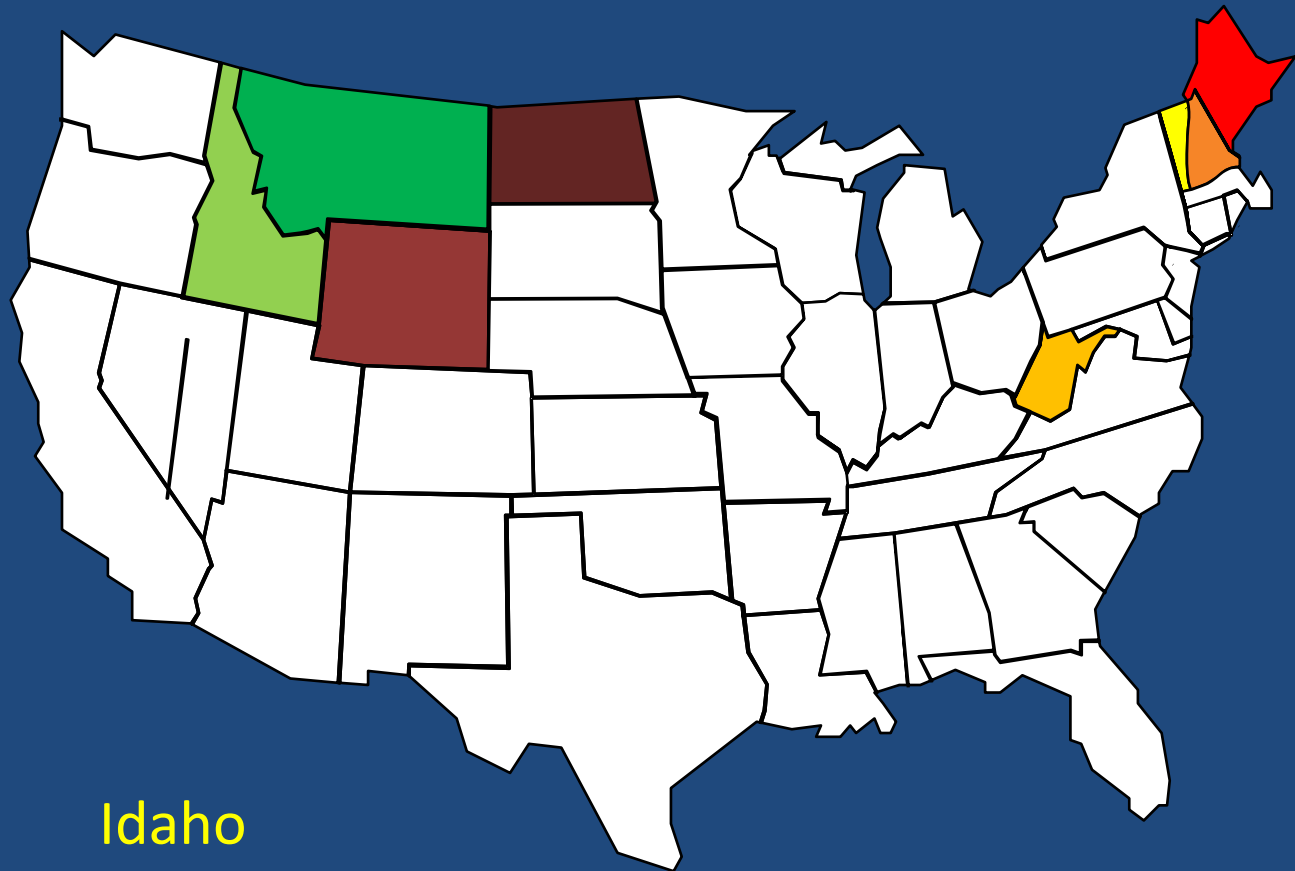


From the Strategic Transit Plan

Key Issue: Inability to Match Federal Funds

- Maine is in the lower quartile of states providing state funding for public transit.
- Modest local community funding support.
- Below average farebox recovery at 3%
 - (Peer 5.4% National 8%)

Maine's "Peer States"



Idaho

Montana

Wyoming

North Dakota

New Hampshire

Vermont

West Virginia

Compared to Peer States Lower Productivity

Maine Providers

- Higher cost per mile \$3.61
- Farebox Recovery Ratio 3%

Seven State Peer Average

- Peer Average \$3.04
- Peer 5.4%
- National 8%

Demand Response

- .04 passengers /mile
- .79 passengers /hour
- .15 passengers/mile
- 2.15 passengers/hour

Three “Take-Aways” from Strategic Transit Plan and Reality

1. Good public support for concept of transit.
2. Complicated funding support – Match/30 years
FAST Act 5 year bill modest growth 3% -2%
barely inflation adjusted – only good news
added discretionary funds for bus and
facilities
3. Room for improvement on productivity of
existing providers to meet predicted demand

MaineDOT is not the major provider of funds for ground passenger transportation

When considering the entire budget for ground based passenger transportation

Maine Department of Health and Human Services is the largest funder

Relationship between DOT and DHHS

DOT \$1,105,600,000

(annual total budget)

<http://maine.gov/mdot/about/docs/funding/2016-2017-uses-funds.pdf>

- Estimated total transit program planning, administration, direct services rural and urban
\$32,000,000
- Approximately \$8,000,000 for rural transportation

DHHS \$3,400,000,000

(annual total budget)

http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/financial_management.shtml

- Estimated total indirect and direct transportation services MaineCare, Child Welfare and other programs
- Estimated \$100,000,000 for all types transportation

Why relationship is important:

Many providers use DHHS funds as match on 5311

Review

Where we are at.

Driving Forces

Maine Strategic Transit Plan
Completed

June 30, 2015

and

Mandated State Management Plan

To be completed

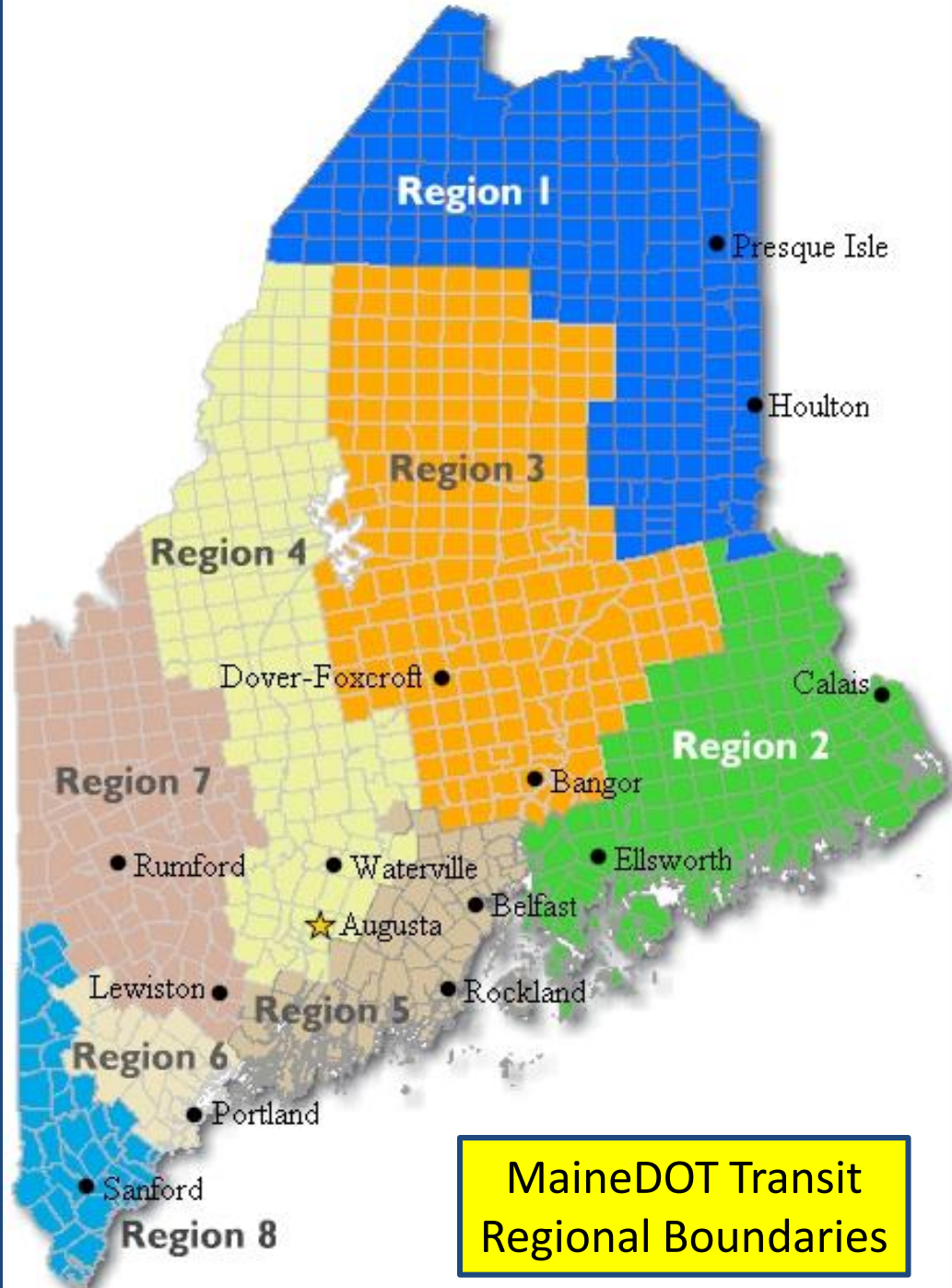
January 12, 2017

Activities

- Implementation of Strategic Plan Recommendations
- Site Visits
- Policy Reviews
- Analysis of FTA Mandated State Management Plan

Site Visit Findings and Testing Strategic Plan Hypothesis

- Operational Review. Long Range Plans.
- Some services have adapted well to brokerage concept.
- Urban there is a dramatic shift to ADA paratransit rather than demand response ride
- Regional boundaries – Keeping the boundaries will retain balance of transportation through fund allocation but will not be restrictive for service provision.



MaineDOT Transit Regional Boundaries

Problems to Solve

1. More service to general public
2. Increase productivity
3. Better maintenance of rolling stock (buses and vans)
 - Foster Regional Garages
 - Biddeford (already does maintenance for York)
 - WMTS (has done work for Coastal)
 - ARTS (distance self contained and open to full cost service of other agencies.)
4. Recognition for providers to be more flexible regarding service boundaries.
5. More local involvement both for policies and funding.

Recommendations from Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Improve and Update the State Management Plan

In progress. Public hearing will be January 12, 2017

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Elevate and Clarify the Message that MaineDOT's Focus is on General Public Transportation

RTAP funds can be used to educate and inform public on what is available and how to use it.

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Administer State, Federal, and Local Funding for Public Transportation

This is ongoing but through the State Management Plan revisions more effective administration will come about. Building more time into evaluation process and more thorough application.

Goal 1: Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Improve the Grant Decision Making Process

The applications for funding have been revised and will continue to be refined. What is key is having the applications on hand longer prior to when decisions must be made. More time has been built into the grant decision making process.

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Use Population Density of a Geographic Area to Determine Types of Service Offered

The formula for distribution of funds is being revised to set amounts that will be available for demand response services so more funds can be allocated for flex services to connect and provide more transportation in populated areas.

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Use a Demand Based Capital Priority Setting Process

The 5310 capital program will be removed from the current formula allocations and applications will be evaluated on demand and needs met. Not for profit service providers beyond the regional providers can be eligible for 5310 funding support.

Goal 1 (con't): Manage the Existing System. Effectively manage Maine's existing transportation system for safety and effectiveness within reliable funding levels.

Recommendations:

- Establish and Use Performance Measures and provide technical assistance to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of sub-grantees.

Performance measures were solicited and required as part of the current grant application process and are being evaluated for broad application.

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Support General Public Transportation Systems

Services that have minimal 5311 general public ridership are being reviewed.

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Support a Mix of Transit Services

Applications for any type of transit service are accepted (Flex, Intercity, Demand Response). Expansion of existing services and establishment of new services are being encouraged

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Support New Systems and Expand Existing Services

New methods of providing state match for new and expanded systems are being investigated.

Goal 2: Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Encourage Volunteer Networks and Alternatives to Traditional Transit Services.

Studying possibility of a leadership role for statewide mobility manager to help advance volunteer and other services as part of DOT staff position.

Goal 2 (con't): Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Provide incentives for local communities and transit providers to leverage new sources of private funding for transit services.

With revised formula funding, incentives can be provided for applicants that receive more private or community support. Concept is to provide match on a sliding scale where over a three period services would be programmed to meet more strenuous match requirements.

Goal 2 (con't): Support Economic Opportunity. Wisely invest available resources to support economic opportunity for our customers.

Recommendations:

- Explore ways to Increase State and All Sources of Potential Funding for Public Transportation

Ways to leverage funds through alternative state match are being studied.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Establish a Public Transportation Advisory Group

Established January 2016.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Expand Education, Outreach, and Marketing

Program to upgrade brochures and web sites of providers is in place.

Program is being planned to improve statewide education and information to improve knowledge of available services and how to use them.

Goal 3: Build Trust. Demonstrate our core values of integrity, competence, and service, both individually and organizationally.

Recommendations:

- Reinvigorate Provisions of Maine Revised Statutes Title 30-A, Part 2, Subpart 5, Chapter 163 Concerning Regional Transportation Corporations and Transition to Government or Quasi-governmental Governing Bodies

2017 funding application will require specific involvement and oversight by advisory or governing boards.

2016 Activities

- April 10: Status Quo-Applications due Formula applications for Federal FY2016 monies to be expended July 1, 2016 to June 30 2017
- April-May: Site Visits, Technical Assistance
- June 8: Advisory Council Meeting. Review possible SMP changes and progress to future directions
- August 16: DHHS Child Welfare Low Income Bids Due
(Brokerage for MaineCare had impacts. Impacts of this bid?)

November 3: Advisory Council Meeting, Augusta DOT, Maine

- June – December: Policy Review, revise SMP and determine impact of DHHS bid RFP# 201604098 Child Welfare and Low Income Transportation Services

2017

- January 12: Public Hearing On SMP
- February 1: Revised Application Distributed
- April 7: Application for Federal FY 2017 Funds Due
(Formula money reduced and awards will be based on service provision and productivity)
- June TBD: Advisory Council Meeting

Comments or Questions

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