



## ***Transit Committee Meeting***

**April 17th, 2024**

**2:30 PM – 4:00 PM**

**Zoom Meeting**

### **Agenda**

**1) Call to Order**

**2) Public Comment**

Members of the public in attendance of today's meeting have an opportunity to provide public comment on today's agenda items.

**3) Approval of December 13th, 2023 Transit Committee Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)**

**4) Ridership Report - Laurie Linscott**

Laurie Linscott will provide a brief overview of the ridership report for year end FY23 and Quarter 1 of FY24.

***Proposed Action: For discussion only***

**5) 2025 Community Connector Budget Update (To be sent separately)**

City of Bangor staff will provide information on the upcoming Community Connector budget.

***Proposed Action: For discussion only***

**6) FY24 Q2 Financial Report (To be sent separately)**

Community Connector will update the committee on FY24 Quarter 2 financials.

***Proposed Action: For discussion only***

**7) Transit Committee Elections**

Committee elections for chair, vice chair, and the rider representative are to take place in July. Staff would like to discuss member interest in maintaining this structure or switching to BACTS staff led meetings. If members would like to maintain the current chair/vice chair structure, members should begin considering nominations for the summer election.

***Proposed Action: For discussion only***

**8) MDOT Grant Letter of Support**

MDOT is applying for a grant on behalf of Maine transit agencies for low - or - no emission vehicles (buses or ADA vans). Community Connector is looking for letters of support to aid the application. If granted, Community Connector would receive two vans and one bus at the typical 80/20 split.

MDOT has offered to split the local share with us for a total of \$137,000. Our share would come out of reserves, if awarded.

***Proposed Action: For discussion only***

## **9) Penobscot Climate Action Transit Recommendations (Attachment B)**

The Transit Committee has been identified as a key partner for recommendations coming out of the Penobscot Climate Action planning process. Staff will give an overview of transit related strategies and ask the group to discuss how the committee would like to proceed with implementation. See relevant toolkits in the attachments.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **10) Service Updates**

Laurie Linscott will provide a brief overview of any service updates as well as project updates for Transit Technology and Bus Stop Designation.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **11) Transit Center Update**

The Transit Center has been operational for one year! Laurie Linscott will provide a brief overview of any transit center updates.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **12) Rural, Intercity, and Commuter Transit Provider Updates**

Any transit provider in attendance will provide an update on services, initiatives, and/or projects.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **13) Municipal Partner Updates**

Members will provide updates on any initiatives or projects in the region which may affect transit.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **14) MaineDOT Update**

MaineDOT staff will provide an update on any MaineDOT projects, policies, or plans.

***Proposed Action:*** *For discussion only*

## **15) Other Business**

Discussion of other items not on today's agenda.

## **16) Upcoming Meeting**

July 10th, 2024 & October 9th, 2024

## **17) Adjournment**



**Attachment A**  
**December 13th, 2023**  
**2:00 PM - Zoom Meeting**  
**Minutes**

Committee Members	Affiliation
Karen Fussell	Brewer
Laurie Linscott Sherri Clark	Community Connector
Mitch Stone	Orono
Amy Ryder	Hampden
Jack McKay	Rider Representative (Non-voting)
William Biberstein	University of Maine
<b>MaineDOT</b>	
Ryan Neale	
<b>BACTS</b>	
Sara Devlin, Madeline Jensen	
<b>Other Attendees</b>	
Ben Treat (Bangor Public Library); Luke Van Denend, Ellie McCarny, and Jill Cahoon(GOMaine); Dan Dixon(University of Maine)	

**1) Call to Order**

Madeline Jensen began the meeting reinstating Karen Fussell as the committee Chair to replace Belle Ryder. Meeting was called to order by Karen Fussell at 2:04PM.

**2) Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**3) Approval of September 13th, 2023 Transit Committee Meeting Minutes**

Karren Fussell asked if there were any comments or corrections to be made to the minutes. Mitch Stone made a motion to approve, William Biberstein seconded. None opposed, accepted as written.

**4) FY23 Review/Wrap up**

Laurie Linscott shared financial reports summarizing Community Connector’s FY23 expenditures including capital, operating, local match, etc.. Laurie Linscott pointed out that actual expenses were lower than the estimated budget for the year. This created an approximate \$196,000 overpayment by the partners. The partners will reach out to Laurie Linscott to indicate whether their municipality would like to have the overpayment returned to them or set aside in capital reserves for future needs.

## **5) Quarter 1 - FY24 Financial Report Update**

Laurie Linscott shared financial reports for Quarter 1 of FY24 including capital, operating, local match, etc. Laurie Linscott also provided an update on the current financial standing of multiple projects in progress this year.

## **6) Reprogramming of Funds**

Laurie Linscott explained that Community Connector initially budgeted a bus barn roof repair for FY23 but this project will no longer be necessary after Community Connector was awarded an almost \$10million grant to replace the entire building. The funds initially programmed for the repair are now being reprogrammed for the purchase of an ADA van and to fund a portion of the Transit Technology contract with Passio that began in early FY24.

## **7) Ridership Report - Laurie Linscott**

Laurie Linscott delivered a review of FY23 ridership for the entire year, explaining that while we have not returned to pre-pandemic ridership, we are increasing steadily. This is especially positive given that Saturday service was suspended for a majority of the year. Laurie Linscott also shared figures for the first few months of FY24 which similarly show a positive ridership trajectory.

## **8) Service Updates**

Laurie Linscott provided an update that the return to Saturday service is still going well though Community Connector is still looking to hire more drivers. A new hiring video/advertisement has been released, Laurie Linscott requested that the partners share it however possible.

## **9) Transit Center Update**

Laurie Linscott shared that, as of December 14, 2023, the Transit Center has been open one year. Operations of the building are still going well and it has become a great resource/amenity for riders.

## **10) GOMaine Presentation**

Luke Van Denend, Ellie McCartney, and Jill Cahoon introduced the organization and gave background on the services that GOMaine provides. They also described microtransit options that are being implemented around New England and the country and gave examples of how it might fill gaps in service, reduce costs, or improve efficiency. GOMaine is willing to provide more information or support in the future as needed.

## **11) E-bikes on the Buses**

Community Connector has been exploring their ability to support the increase of e-bike riders in the region. Laurie Linscott has been working with BACTS and Bicycle Coalition of Maine to look into the feasibility of allowing ebikes on the bus and has discovered a need to purchase new on-bus bike racks which are able to support more weight. Madeline Jensen asked Ryan Neale whether their new Carbon Reduction Strategy funding would support a capital purchase like this. Ryan Neale explained that it is definitely something to explore and he is happy to discuss options further.

## **12) Rural, Intercity, and Commuter Transit Provider Updates**

No updates at this time.

## **13) Municipal Partner Updates**

No updates at this time.

## **14) MaineDOT Update**

No updates at this time.

**15) Other Business**

No other business at this time.

**16) Upcoming Meeting**

It was decided at previous meetings that a quarterly meeting schedule was sufficient for updates and budget discussions. The following schedule was suggested: January 10th, 2024; April 10th, 2024; July 10th, 2024; October 9th, 2024. However, Madeline Jensen proposed canceling the January meeting as there will not be any budget updates nor other project information needs. The committee agreed. The first meeting of 2024 will take place in April though the committee is free to request additional meetings at any time as needed.

**17) Adjournment**

Meeting ended at 3:25PM



# CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT #3

## Create a Capacity-Building Strategy for Public Transit



**PENOBSCOT**  
CLIMATE ACTION



**MODERATE POTENTIAL**  
to achieve greenhouse gas  
emissions reductions



**HIGH POTENTIAL**  
to build community  
resilience

### Description of the Action

A Capacity Building Strategy for the Community Connector bus system will identify pathways for meeting current resource and capacity gaps, as well as pathways for meeting resource and capacity needs at various levels of growth. This action would be primarily led by the City of Bangor, as the operator of the Community Connector bus system, with support from the Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System (BACTS) and the Transit Committee; nevertheless, collaboration and involvement of municipal and tribal governments not yet served by the Community Connector bus network, as well as other key stakeholders (e.g., education and medical institutions), will both benefit the process and be imperative for working together towards public transportation goals as a region.

Through the Penobscot Climate Action process, community members emphasized the importance of public transportation in advancing equity, climate justice, community resilience, carbon mitigation, and regional collaboration goals. To continue to make progress towards a robust public transit system, it will require both meeting current capacity gaps, and scaling up resources, funding, and staff capacity to make that growth possible. The goal of this toolkit is to more clearly understand “what it will take” to both meet current needs and strategically grow the public transit system as a region.

### Steps for Implementation

#### PHASE 1

#### Groundwork

##### Launch the process with the BACTS Transit Committee

– The Transit Committee, which focuses on regional collaboration around the operations of the Community Connector, would spearhead the development of the capacity building strategy. The Transit Committee includes staff from the Community Connector and the municipalities that financially contribute to the operation of the public transit system; consider if and how the committee can support participation from other constituents (e.g., staff from local governments that may be served in the future by the Community Connector, staff from local transit providers such as Penquis, or others) that may have insight important to the capacity building strategy.

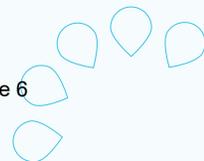
##### Understand community-driven visions for public transit

– Draw on recent and ongoing transportation planning processes that have gathered or are currently collecting insight on community-driven visions for public transportation in the region. Use this insight to assess: What kind of support is there for growth in the public transit system? When community members are envisioning the future of the public transportation system, what are they envisioning? Focus on the insight of community members who will be most impacted by climate change, in particular, including older adults, residents with disabilities, and low-income residents, among other priority populations. Use this

### How This Action Supports the Goals of Penobscot Climate Action

- ★ **Equity and Environmental Justice.** Public transportation increases access to affordable transportation options, especially for individuals who are not able to drive or not able to afford a private vehicle.
- ★ **Environmental Health.** Public transportation reduces the number of trips taken in a private vehicle, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of air pollution.
- ★ **Community Resilience.** Access to resources—whether that’s healthcare, groceries, school, or a job—is critical for community resilience. Public transportation expands access to resources both day-to-day and in an emergency.
- ★ **Regional Collaboration.** The Community Connector bus system operates at a regional scale. Developing this strategy calls on local governments in the region to work together to strategize around resource constraints and make a joint commitment towards growing the transit system.

Photo in upper left: Buses stop off at the Bangor Area Transit Center • Photo by the Community Connector



insight to contextualize current resource and capacity needs (phase 2), as well as to define a set of growth scenarios in line with community goals (phase 3).

**PHASE 2**

**Assessing and Meeting Current Resource and Capacity Needs**

**Outline the capacity of the current Community Connector system** – Outline the current service provided (e.g., total service miles per week and/or other metrics) as well as the capacity and resource requirements to operate the Community Connector sustainably at that scale (e.g., number of buses, drivers, administrative staff, operational budget, capital budget, etc.).

**Assess resource and capacity gaps** – Outline current gaps that may be preventing the system from operating at full capacity. Resource or capacity constraints may include

shortages in vehicles, drivers, administrative staff, or other constraints.

**Host strategic planning workshops** – Host strategic planning workshops with town and city councils to discuss gaps and to identify, assess, and further develop potential solutions. This step could occur at multiple points concurrently with developing a suite of pathways for meeting capacity needs (below).

**Identify pathways for meeting capacity needs** – Consider partnering with a consultant to support this step. Together, research, identify, and evaluate potential pathways for meeting capacity needs through new financing structures, funding sources, as well as other potentially cost-effective service solutions. This process will likely include:

- Exploring cost-effective service models, such as microtransit or vanpool / vanshare programs, that could meet capacity needs or expand service without substantially raising costs. Currently it is difficult to attract and retain drivers with a commercial driver license (CDL); micro-transit may expand the qualified labor pool if a CDL isn't required, and vanpool or vanshare programs may sidestep that challenge altogether.
- Looking into models for restructuring how the Community Connector is funded so that municipal costs are consistent and can be expected a number of years out. Building a consistent funding structure would allow the Community Connector to build and draw from savings, rather than requesting funding on a project-by-project basis.
- Exploring new or expanded revenue streams, which may include modified municipal cost-sharing structures, grants, partnerships, or other revenue streams. Consider business and community partnership opportunities as outlined in Toolkit #4.

**KEY PARTNERS**

- **City of Bangor, Community Connector**
- **BACTS and the Transit Committee** (with representatives of municipalities that financially support the Community Connector system)
- **Local neighboring governments** currently not yet served by the Community Connector bus network
- **Additional local transit and paratransit service providers**, such as Penquis
- **Community constituents** who depend on, or who could most benefit from, access to affordable, accessible public transit
- **State and Federal partners**, such as MaineDOT and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

**Connections Across Existing Work and Other Climate Action Strategies**

This action builds off of and complements a number of actions that are already underway, which are working towards a more robust and high-quality public transit system, including:

- **Implementing a fixed stop system** (as opposed to the current flag-stop operation), and building out amenities based on stop type;
- **Implementing smart bus technology systems**, including real-time bus tracking, mobile payment options, and trip planning functionality on the Community Connector website and on third-party apps (e.g., Google Maps);
- **Conducting a study on how to expand service in the near-term**, including specifically evening service, with the plan to launch pilots based on findings;
- **Conducting a fare structure analysis to identify how to improve the fare structure to be affordable and equitable**, while also eliminating Community Connector staff burden;
- **Launching and running a free commercial drivers license (CDL) training program** through the City of Bangor that connects participants with bus driver and municipal public works positions to fill employment gaps.

Climate Action Toolkits #4 and #5 will also further support the growth of a robust and high-quality transit system.



**Outline and implement promising pathways** – Outline and implement promising pathways to meet resource and capacity needs. Establish regular points for the Transit Committee to evaluate whether the pathways are meeting intended outcomes.

### PHASE 3

#### Outlining Pathways for Growth

**Create growth scenarios** – Use the community-driven visions to craft a set of growth scenarios, such as a slight growth in service, medium growth, and robust growth over different timeframes. The scenarios could be defined by a percent increase in service; for example, the “medium growth scenario” may be defined by a 15% increase in service miles per week. It is recommended that the scenarios avoid specifying specific routes or changes in service; however, it would be useful to note what that increase could look like (e.g., this increase would allow for night and weekend service at a given frequency, etc.).

**Outline capacity and resource requirements** – Using the baseline scenario as a reference, outline the capacity and resource requirements to meet each of the growth scenarios, including staff capacity, operating costs, and capital budget. Consider potential needs for expanded administrative capacity (e.g., grant writing, legal support), and what it might take to retain drivers (e.g., cost-competitive salaries and benefits).

**Host strategic planning workshops** – Host strategic planning workshops with town and city councils to discuss resource and capacity needs to enable growth and to identify, assess, and further develop potential solutions. This step could occur at multiple points concurrently with developing a suite of pathways for meeting capacity needs.

**Identify pathways for meeting capacity needs** – Consider partnering with a consultant to support this step. Together,

research, identify, and evaluate potential pathways for meeting capacity needs. These will likely include expanded models of what is identified for meeting existing needs and/or potential pathways that may seem most viable within a longer timeframe.

### PHASE 4

#### Ongoing Community Conversations

**Host a series of community conversations** – Bring the findings of the capacity building strategy to a wide range of community spaces to discuss opportunities for growing the public transportation system and what it would take to invest in this growth as a region. These spaces may include, for example, town/city councils, local universities, large employers, youth spaces, among others. The goal would be to both continue to build support for the public transit system, as well as share ways that business or community partnerships may help play a role in expanding sources of revenue. See Toolkit #4 for more details.

#### COST CONSIDERATIONS

- BACTS is able to lead the planning process; BACTS staff time and any consultant fees can be covered by FTA §5303 Urban Transit Planning Funds.
- Funding sources and financing pathways for meeting resource and capacity needs will be identified through the capacity building strategy.

#### POTENTIAL SOURCES FOR FUNDING

- **FTA §5303 Urban Transit Planning Funds** to facilitate the development of the capacity building strategy (including the planning process and any consultant costs).

#### PRECEDENTS

- **Building Revenue Sources (2015)** - Article in Mass Transit, highlighting examples of different revenue streams used by four different transit agencies.

#### RESOURCES TO GET STARTED

- **Local Funding Options for Public Transportation (2023)** - This study by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute compiles a wide range of literature and research documenting potential revenue streams for public transit systems. The Institute is based in Canada, but most revenue streams are also applicable within the States.
- **APTA Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment (2020)** – This study models the economic impact of investing in public transportation, and provides a great “business case” for the Community Connector growth scenarios. The study looks at three different growth scenarios (business as usual, medium growth, and larger growth) and models the benefits to the economy and cost savings to residents and businesses (for both users and non-users of public transit) correlated with every dollar invested.
- **Transportation Investment Strategy Tool Documentation (2023)** – The Transportation Investment Strategy Tool was developed to help states or regions in the northeast calculate potential outcomes of various low-carbon transportation strategies. See section 4.5.2 “Bus Operating Improvements” (page 43) for assumptions that may be useful for developing the growth scenarios, such as the “estimated percent change in ridership per percent change in service level.”
- **APTA Transit Workforce Shortage (2022)** – This report summarizes root causes of driver shortages and provides recommendations for meeting workforce needs.

# CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT #4

## Partnerships to Promote Active and Public Transit



**PENOBSCOT**  
CLIMATE ACTION



**MODERATE POTENTIAL**  
to achieve greenhouse gas  
emissions reductions



**HIGH POTENTIAL**  
to build community  
resilience

### Description of the Action

The primary action of this toolkit is to foster partnerships with local businesses and key community organizations around active and public transit. These partnerships can benefit the transportation system in the region by increasing funding for transit services through advertising and potential route sponsorships, sharing resources and information about transportation options to make them more easily accessible and increase ridership, and expanding the reach of public and active transit opportunities. This action can be implemented through some or all of the following components:

**Transportation Hub Website** - Create a single website that is a one-stop shop for all transportation-related information for the region. The site can house information and link to the Community Connector, regional bus systems, paratransit programs, rideshare and vanpooling options, information for walking and biking (e.g., maps of trail and bike networks, maps of bike parking), and transportation opportunities and incentive programs. Concentrating all of this information to be found on or linked to one website will make the information easier to find and navigate, removing barriers to ridership and community participation. While not directly a partnership with a business or organization, this is an important action to house information about the following partnership actions.

**Employer-Sponsored Commuter Routes** - Work with large employers in the region and the Chamber of Commerce to create new transit routes or extend existing

ones to be convenient for employee commutes. Employer sponsorship, or pay-in, can be a method of bringing revenue into the transit system in addition to increasing ridership among employees and others who may also use the route. This strategy can also apply to any larger apartment complexes in the region who may be interested in convenient transit as a selling-point for tenants, and to senior centers or living facilities that may want to establish or expand mobility options.

**Vanpool/Vanshare Program** - Establish a vanpool/vanshare program in areas that aren't served by existing bus routes. Residents can sign up and rent a van for a certain regular commute or other trip with a small group of people. This service can be available for a monthly fee split between all participating vanpool members, set based on duration and frequency. This is often much more affordable than each individual needing their own personal vehicle, reduces vehicles on the road, and is a source of income for the transit system. A vanpool/vanshare program can require less staffing than establishing regular routes to serve similar purposes, and can be a great option when there are staffing or funding challenges. This would be a good option to explore as part of a microtransit study.

**Launch a campaign with GO MAINE** - Collaborate with GO MAINE in order to expand its reach and benefits to the Bangor region. This collaboration could take many forms, but would focus on 1) increasing the number of local businesses participating in the GO MAINE rewards programs, and 2) increasing the number of people

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### How This Action Supports the Goals of Penobscot Climate Action

- ★ **Equity and Environmental Justice.** A key aim of transit partnerships with businesses and organizations is to expand public and active transportation systems. Safe and reliable transit options make it more affordable to commute and reach community resources and necessities, and make these essential activities more accessible for individuals who can't afford or aren't able to drive a personal vehicle.
- ★ **Environmental Health.** More robust and successful public and active transportation systems reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions by reducing individual vehicle trips.
- ★ **Community Resilience.** Public transit provides reliable access to resources and services both regularly, and in emergencies. Additionally, when businesses and organizations are invested in and connected to transit systems, it makes for more reliable and varied sources of financial, social, and logistical support, providing stability and resilience for this essential resource.
- ★ **Regional Collaboration.** Many existing transit services like the Community Connector and BACTS are already regional. Enhancing these services and involving more stakeholders, businesses, and community organizations in the region fosters stronger ties and connections between all of these communities and makes travel among and between them more accessible.

(continued from page 1)

participating in the rideshare features to make ridesharing more feasible in the region. This campaign can reach out to local businesses about the free GO MAINE Lunch and Learn programs for employers. Employers may be interested, because participation in GO MAINE can help reduce parking needs, offer vanpool programs to assist with employee commutes, contribute to sustainability and emissions goals, and promote active transportation (linked to healthier, more productive employees). Additionally, there are participant rewards offered through GO MAINE and the WAY 2 GO MAINE bi-annual event.

**Employer Transit Benefit Program** - Collaborate with the Bangor Chamber of Commerce to roll out the employer transit benefits program recommended in the Stantec Bangor Transit Study Final Report (pg. 27, 2019) and proposed by the Community Connector. In a transit benefits program, employees are able to pay for transit using pre-tax dollars, which creates cost savings for both employees and employers.

**Transportation Demand Management** - Work with large employers to integrate transportation demand management strategies into wellness policies and/or adopt a citywide / townwide transportation demand management policy. The most robust version of this action involves adopting an ordinance with certain transportation demand-related requirements for employers above a certain size and municipalities themselves. The following strategies are often included in these requirements or recommended as opt-in programs for employers: parking cash out (employees who do not drive personal vehicles are offered the equivalent value of a parking space in cash); travel allowances (which offset the cost of parking, transit, or other modes of transportation equally); free or subsidized transit passes; tax-free benefits for transit and vanpool costs (via Employer Transit Benefit Program);

carpool/vanpool parking priority spots; secure, covered bike parking (and showers); shuttle service from a transit stop; and business wellness programs rewarding active transportation (potential area of collaboration with GO MAINE).

**Events hosted by local businesses and community partners** - Work with businesses, schools, libraries, and other community-based organizations to host or sponsor events that celebrate and encourage active and public transportation (e.g., bike or bus breakfasts). Work with community resources and cultural centers including libraries and schools to host active/transit programs (e.g., walking school buses, bike to school weeks, bike to the library prizes). Additionally, these community-based organizations are great places to disseminate information in the form of posters, flyers, and pamphlets about public transit routes, programs and how to use them, and active transit programs and health benefits.

**Partner with universities in the region** - This action can be incorporated into many of the other actions in this toolkit depending on community need and student interest. Ideas include website building, program information brochures, creative promotional materials or videos, business outreach and event planning, and more.

**Public transit advertisement program for local businesses** - Continue to expand the program for local businesses to advertise on buses, vans, bus stop infrastructure, and for highlighting local sponsors on the transportation hub website. This would be an additional source of revenue for the transit system and provide businesses with mobile advertising space. Establishing a pathway, process, and rates for advertisements and hosting the information and application on the transportation hub website, would provide a streamlined process and could facilitate more business participation.

## Connections Across Existing Work and Other Climate Action Strategies

This toolkit builds on existing and growing momentum to support public and active transportation in the region through business and community partnerships. The Community Connector has started to develop an Employer Transit Benefit Program and a Transit-Supportive Toolkit for the Development Community, in line with recommendations from the Bangor Transit Study (2019). Additionally, GO MAINE offers a statewide platform for encouraging active and public transportation modes through programs, incentives, and partnerships with businesses and employers, though it is currently more relevant in the Portland region.

The Transportation Hub Website and information sharing recommendations of this toolkit, along with the vanpool/vanshare program, should coordinate with the recommendations in Toolkit #5 (Foster Complete and Walkable Neighborhoods) and Toolkit #3 (Create a Capacity Building Strategy for Public Transit) to align resources, information, and initiatives around public transportation options.

Photo by the Community Connector



## Steps for Implementation

Employer engagement is a necessary first step for a number of the strategies listed above. For the sake of efficiency and effective communication, the outreach for many of the components – and specifically for the employer transit benefits program, transportation demand management, advertisement program, and employer-sponsored commuter routes – can be combined into a single outreach process outlined below:

### PHASE 1

#### Preliminary Employer Outreach

**Define topics for outreach** – Decide on and clarify a menu of ways employers can engage with transportation systems. This might include the Public Transit Advertisement program, Employer Transit Benefit Programs, Employer-Sponsored Commute Routes, and voluntary Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies outlined above. At this stage, the process of defining each of these strategies should include a definition of the type of program, how it works, what the benefits are to employers, and what the benefits are to the transportation system and public. For the TDM strategies, municipalities can develop a preliminary checklist of TDM strategies that businesses can voluntarily opt into with the idea that it could eventually become required as policy.

**Identify businesses for program input** – Inventory a cross-section of large and small businesses, including those that currently participate in transit-supportive activities or that have in the past (e.g., through the existing advertisement program, a previous route expansion, etc.). Work with Chambers of Commerce and other business groups to identify additional businesses that are highly active in the public sphere, engaged in community activities, mission-driven, or large employers in the area.

**Conduct outreach** – Use connections through previous contacts, Chambers of Commerce, etc. to reach out to the identified businesses to gauge interest in each of the programs (or reach out directly if there are no readily available connections). Be prepared with the clear articulations of each of the programs (step 1) and a proposition for the businesses to have a conversation at a later date discussing the programs, and what they find appealing and unappealing about each of them. If there is funding available, these can be offered in a lunch and learn format as incentive to participate.

### PHASE 2

#### Partnership and Program Development

**Host a focus group** – Collect all the feedback received from the initial conversations with businesses to shape the focus group conversations and questions. Meet with business owners and potentially employees, either individually or collectively. Present the strategies and ask people what seems doable and beneficial, and for the things that are not, what could be improved to make business participation more likely?

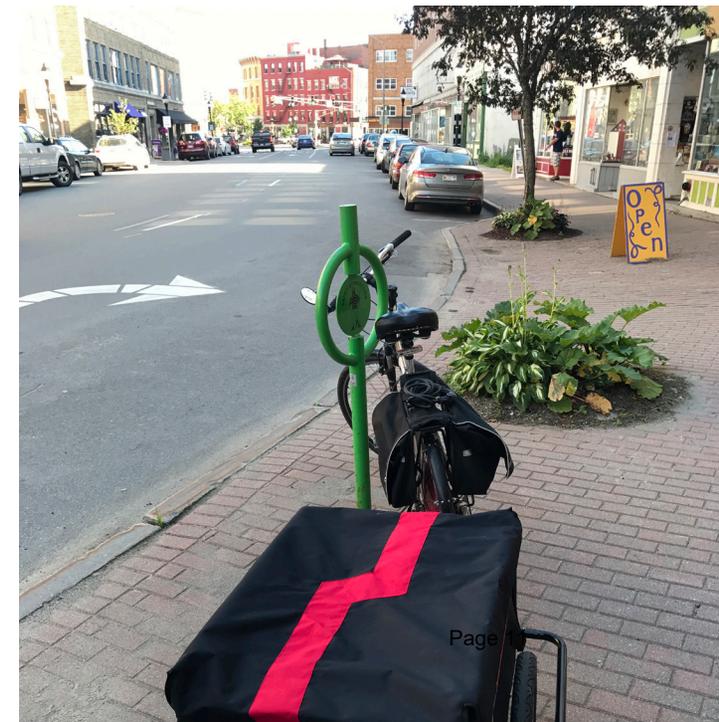
**Define programs** – Use the feedback from businesses, along with examples from precedents elsewhere, to define program details and logistics, including processes for enrollment and/or program rollout.

**Advertise programs** – Present the finalized programs to the businesses that participated in the focus group, and work with Chambers of Commerce and business groups to widely advertise the programs. Building awareness of the programs may include ongoing outreach by municipal staff to existing and new businesses, advertisements in local media outlets or local listservs, hosting events (e.g., lunch and learns, green drinks, webinars) with local organizations or businesses, or other modes.

### KEY PARTNERS

- **Community Connector, City of Bangor**
- **BACTS and the Transit Committee** (with representatives of municipalities that financially support the Community Connector system)
- **Local and statewide organizations and advocacy groups** supporting transportation, such as GO MAINE, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, and Transportation for All
- **Local businesses and business groups**, including Chambers of Commerce, downtown organizations, and industry groups
- **Large employers and institutions**, including universities and colleges, hospitals
- **Community spaces**, including schools, libraries, senior centers, and apartment complexes, and assisted living facilities

Bike parking • Photo by Greg Edwards



**PRECEDENTS**

- **Choose Your Way Bellevue, Go Howard, and Ride Together** - These are three great examples of “transportation hub” websites that concentrate information about transit options, programs, and events.
- **King County Vanpool and Vanshare** - This vanpool and vanshare program in King County, Washington provides options for groups of people to commute together and split costs.
- **Ten Cities’ Strategies for Transportation Demand Management** - This is a collection of policy- and service-based strategies and actions implemented by ten different cities as part of Transportation Demand Management.
- **METRO Partnership Opportunities** - This is a collection of strategies identified by Houston’s METRO for businesses to partner with the public transit system.

**COST CONSIDERATIONS**



- Costs will vary notably depending on the action items pursued; rolling out a vanpool / vanshare program will be the most cost-intensive in terms of upfront costs (over \$1 million), whereas other steps such as the advertisement program only require staff time.
- Grants under “potential sources for funding” can help cover the planning, program development, and capital costs (as relevant) associated with these actions.
- Most importantly, effectively rolling out these actions will require staff capacity, which is limited for the Community Connector currently. Identifying strategies to expand capacity (via Toolkit #3: Create a Capacity Building Strategy for Public Transit) will be needed to enable this toolkit, as well.



Crosswalks at Main Street and Mill Street • Photo by Town of Orono

**RESOURCES TO GET STARTED**

- **MAPC Parking and Transportation Demand Management** - This resource describes a variety of parking and transportation demand management strategies, along with a few case studies of municipalities who have implemented them.
- **Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community** - This guide is a compilation of 14 fact sheets on topics related to transit-business partnerships that highlight strategies and why they are beneficial to employers, employees, and transit systems.
- **In Motion Tool Kit** - This tool kit is a guide to implementing a public and active transit campaign (with goals similar to GO MAINE) based on and provided by the In Motion program in King County, WA.
- **Sustainable CT** - The Sustainable CT program compiles actions for municipalities to take on to increase sustainability. See 6.3 “Encourage Smart Commuting.”

**POTENTIAL SOURCES FOR FUNDING**

- **MaineDOT Grants** - including Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program, Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program, RAISE Grant.
- **Federal Transit Administration Grants** - including Accelerating Innovative Mobility, Enhancing Mobility Innovation, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Integrated Mobility Innovation, Public Transportation Innovation, Rural Transportation Assistance Program, Technical Assistance and Standards Development, Tribal Transit Formula Grants, Urbanized Area Formula Grants.
- **FTA §5303 Urban Transit Planning Funds** - BACTS can support background preparation and promotion of active and public transit through general assistance planning funds.