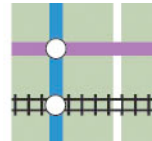


# **Transit Route Redesign Study in the Hancock County Area**

*Final Report  
Submitted to  
Downeast Transportation, Inc.*

*July 27, 2007*

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# Chapter 1: Introduction and Summary

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## 1.1 Introduction

During 2006 and 2007, Tom Crikelair Associates carried out a *Transit Route Redesign Study in the Hancock County Area*. The project addressed year-round transit services operated by Downeast Transportation, Inc. This work was done for Downeast Transportation, with funding from the Maine Department of Transportation. An Advisory Committee consisting of members of the DTI Board of Directors and other interested members of the community provided guidance and oversight for this planning effort.

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the study. It includes twelve chapters:

### **Chapter 1 Introduction and Summary**

Chapter one presents a summary of the project report, including key recommendations and findings.

### **Chapter 2 Review of Past Studies**

Chapter two examines recent studies that provide background information for transit planning in Hancock County. The discussion focuses on transit-related issues addressed in these earlier reports. It identifies goals, findings, and recommendations that may be relevant for Hancock County's year-round transit system.

### **Chapter 3 Evaluation of Existing Year-round Services**

Chapter three presents a critical evaluation of year-round DTI routes and services. The evaluation process involved review of DTI ridership records, on-site inspections of Downeast Transportation operations, and interviews with managers, bus drivers, and passengers. The chapter describes how buses are currently being used, and it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the existing service design.

### **Chapter 4 Passenger Survey**

Chapter four presents the results of an onboard passenger survey carried out on Downeast Transportation buses during a one-week period in January of 2007. Passengers were asked to evaluate existing services and to suggest possible improvements. The survey included questions about trip purpose, travel patterns, and unmet transportation needs.

**Chapter 5 Public Participation**

Chapter five describes efforts to inform members of the public about the transportation study and to obtain ideas and suggestions for the year-round transit program. The first section presents findings from a public workshop held in Ellsworth on January 29, 2007 to discuss the future of year-round transit in Hancock County. The second section describes efforts to contact stakeholders in the region. The third describes Advisory Committee meetings held throughout the development of the year-round transit plan.

**Chapter 6: Coordination with Other Planning Efforts**

Chapter six discusses efforts to coordinate year-round transit planning with related ongoing planning efforts. Relevant projects include the Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan and the Biennial Operations Plan for Region 2.

**Chapter 7: Market Groups and Transportation Needs**

Chapter seven identifies various market segments that might benefit from improved transportation links in Hancock County. It examines local travel patterns for senior citizens, people with disabilities, school children, commuters, and others. It identifies service features that would be required to successfully meet the transportation needs of potential user groups.

**Chapter 8: Service Design Strategies**

Chapter eight discusses possible service design improvements for year-round transit services in Hancock County. It identifies possible changes to existing operations, and it discusses opportunities to add routes to meet additional needs in the community.

**Chapter 9: Marketing Strategy**

Chapter nine discusses a possible marketing strategy for Hancock County's year-round transit program. It identifies target markets, and suggests a short list of outreach efforts to ensure public awareness of the bus system and the opportunities it provides for area residents.

**Chapter 10: Capital and Financial Plan**

Chapter ten presents a five-year capital and financial plan for year-round transit services operated by Downeast Transportation. It includes new and expanded services recommended in Chapter 8. It presents capital and operating cost projections for the period FY 2008 through FY 2012, along with estimates of revenues required to pay for proposed services.

## **1.2 Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

### *Review of Previous Studies*

1. In a 2006 Jackson Laboratory survey, employees were asked about their willingness to use alternative transportation. The two issues that appear most frequently in employee responses concern (1) the need for more arrival and departure choices, and (2) the high cost of using the existing DTI service.
2. The authors of an Eastern Maine Transportation Collaborative report cite DTI's Bucksport Shuttle as a "rural community model of public transit that could easily be replicated in similar communities throughout the state." According to the EMTC report, a community forum in Bucksport found interest in expanding the shuttle service, adding a bus service to Bangor, and increasing volunteer driver and taxi services for rural residents.

### *Evaluation of Existing Service*

3. Boardings on the Stonington route have held fairly steady throughout the past fifteen years. Weekly bus service from Stonington, Deer Isle, Sedgwick, Brooklin, and Blue Hill generates an average of between 8 and 12 riders per one-way trip. Other productive routes include the weekly service from Bar Harbor to Bangor and the weekly in-town Bucksport Shuttle.
4. One of the biggest changes since the 1980's is the decline in bus travel to the senior citizen Meals for Me lunch program.
5. Increased demand for the Bar Harbor-Ellsworth-Bangor service occurs during the late spring, summer, and early fall. Much of this increase involves Eastern European and other international workers who travel to Bangor for shopping.
6. Midday bus service suffers from the lack of a clearly identified bus stop in downtown Ellsworth. The former bus stop on the corner of Main and Franklin Streets was eliminated several years ago during a downtown Ellsworth redesign project.
7. A number of downtown Ellsworth businesses have relocated to the Mill Mall, and DTI should probably look for a way to add service to this location. A single bus stop could accommodate both the Mill Mall and the YMCA. Also, the in-town Ellsworth route does not include medical offices on Resort Way near the Route 1 Triangle.

8. Given the decline in usage, DTI should seriously consider discontinuing one-day-a-week shopping trips to Ellsworth from Winter Harbor, Northeast harbor, Southwest Harbor, Otis, and Bucksport. The same is true for shopping trips from Southwest Harbor to Bar Harbor.

### *Passenger Survey*

9. Ninety-five percent of Lab commuters said they have a driver's license. One-third of midday riders said they have a driver's license, while two-thirds did not. Seventy-nine percent of midday riders said no one in their household owns a car.

10. Commuters are very satisfied with the politeness and safety of bus drivers. The chief concern among subscription commuters appears to be vehicle comfort. Only 27% said that buses are "always" comfortable.

11. Midday riders express high levels of satisfaction with DTI service quality. Ninety-eight percent said that drivers are "always" polite and safe. Some midday passengers suggest that there may be problems with the distribution and availability of printed DTI bus schedules.

12. Two-thirds of DTI's subscription commuters are female. Ninety-one percent of DTI's midday riders are female. Two-thirds of DTI's midday riders are over 65.

13. A Blue Hill resident said: "I love your service! It's the best." A Sedgwick resident said: "I like the friends, the ride, the drivers, getting out, the route, the passing countryside." Another Blue Hill resident said: "Comes to my door. It's on time. Good people aboard."

14. Several midday riders said they would like bus service to the Mill Mall in Ellsworth. Others requested service to Rite Aid, Resort Way doctor's offices, and Home Depot in Ellsworth. A Bar Harbor resident said she has difficulty getting to swimming at the MDI YMCA. An Ellsworth resident said: "I would like more trips to Bangor." Several midday riders suggested that better connections are needed with West's Coastal Connection in Ellsworth, especially for southbound trips at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

### *Public Participation*

15. A public workshop to discuss the future of Downeast Transportation's year-round transit program was held at Meadowview Apartments in Ellsworth on the evening of January 29, 2007. In addition, the consultant traveled to Southwest Harbor on January 30, 2007 to meet with senior citizens at Ridge Apartments. The consultant met with Bucksport's Senior Resource Committee and Transportation Committee at the Bucksport Senior Center on February 21, 2007.

## *Service Design Strategies*

16. A proposed service plan includes the following:

- Comprehensive commuter service linking Ellsworth and the Jackson Laboratory
- Improved in-town shuttle service for Ellsworth, Bucksport, Bar Harbor, and Southwest Harbor
- Continued one-day-a-week midday transportation from Stonington to Ellsworth
- Enhanced five-day-a-week midday service from Bar Harbor to Ellsworth
- Five-day-a-week bus service between Ellsworth and Blue Hill
- Two routes for the Downeast Horizons Day Center in Bar Harbor, including one that provides a five-day-a-week link between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor
- Two-day-a-week service between Bar Harbor and Bangor
- One-day-a-week service between Bucksport and Bangor

17. The service plan calls for elimination of a number of DTI routes that are currently used by only a handful of individuals. Routes proposed for cancellation include one-day-a-week service to Ellsworth from Winter Harbor, Otis, Bucksport, Southwest Harbor, and Northeast Harbor. The plan also calls for discontinuing one-day-a-week cross-island bus service between Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor.

18. Three buses could be used to provide four daily commuter trips in the morning from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor and the Jackson Laboratory. The same three buses could provide four afternoon return trips. Schedules were designed to accommodate workers commuting to other job sites in Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, as well as people traveling to the Downeast Horizons Day Center on Route 3 in Bar Harbor.

19. The plan anticipates a reduction in the fare for DTI's existing commuter subscription services. It calls for DTI's long-distance subscription fares to drop from \$27.50 and \$24.50 a week to \$15 a week for participating employers. It envisions an Ellsworth-Bar Harbor subscription fare of \$15 a week.

**ELLSWORTH-BAR HARBOR COMMUTER SERVICE**

*Monday through Friday*

	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down
<b>Ellsworth</b>									
City Hall				8:00				3:00	4:20
Me Coast Mall	6:00	6:30	7:05	8:10				-	-
<b>Bar Harbor</b>									
DE Horizons	-	-	7:20	8:25				-	-
Village Green	6:35	7:05	7:40	8:45				3:45	4:55
Jackson Lab	6:40	7:10	7:45	8:50				3:50	5:00
<b>Bar Harbor</b>									
Jackson Lab		7:10				3:05	3:35	4:05	5:05
Village Green		7:15				3:10	3:40	4:10	5:10
DE Horizons		-		2:15		-	-	-	-
<b>Ellsworth</b>									
Me Coast Mall		7:50				3:45	4:10	4:40	5:40
City Hall		7:55		3:00		4:20	R	R	

20. The plan includes one-day-a-week in-town shuttles for Bucksport and Southwest Harbor, and two-day-a-week in-town shuttles for Bar Harbor and Ellsworth. These in-town services could be expanded to more days per week, depending on the level of local financial support.

21. The plan includes five-day-a-week bus transportation between Bar Harbor and Ellsworth and between Ellsworth and Blue Hill.

*Marketing Strategy*

22. The purpose of the DTI marketing program should be to inform area residents about available year-round transit services, to show people where buses operate and how they can use the service, to generate increased ridership, and to ensure that local taxpayers and potential business supporters understand how area residents benefit from the transit program.

23. This should be accomplished by developing and distributing a new tabloid Riders Guide, by installing bus stop and information signage at key locations, by developing and implementing an annual program of display advertising, by issuing press releases informing the public about service developments, and by posting route and schedule information on the Internet.

24. The Downeast Transportation market position should be: A community transportation program that provides environmentally-friendly, low-cost transportation for commuters, shoppers, and disabled adults, helping area residents lead active and

productive lives without needing a car and a parking space for every occasion and activity.

25. The DTI marketing budget should be approximately \$20,000 per year. A Marketing Subcommittee of the DTI Board of Directors should meet quarterly to review community outreach efforts.

#### *Capital and Financial Plan*

26. DTI hopes to purchase two large heavy-duty buses in FY 2008 for use on its Cherryfield and Bangor subscription commuter routes. The capital plan calls for DTI to purchase a 44-passenger motorcoach commuter vehicle for its Bangor-Bar Harbor route, and a 40-passenger transit bus for the Cherryfield-Bar Harbor route. The DTI capital plan includes an additional heavy-duty 40-passenger transit bus in FY 2009 for use between Franklin and Jackson Laboratory. The capital plan also suggests that DTI will acquire three medium-duty 28-passenger buses in FY 2010.

27. The capital plan suggests that Federal Transit Administration funds will be used to cover 80% of bus purchases and related infrastructure improvements. It suggests that MDOT transportation bonds will cover 15% of the cost of new buses. Local capital reserve funds will cover the remaining 5% for two year-round buses to be purchased in FY 2008. The plan anticipates that Jackson Laboratory will provide the 5% local match for Jackson Lab subscription buses. It divides the 5% local match for MDI commuter and midday buses in FY 2010 between Jackson Lab and DTI's local capital reserve fund.

28. The new DTI service plan includes a total of 11,825 service hours per year. This is a 37% increase over the current total of 8,425 annual service hours. FY 2008 operating costs are projected to total \$221,935 for commuter service, \$38,110 for Downeast Horizons transportation, and \$180,323 for midday service. The plan presents five-year operating cost projections using an annual inflation rate of 2.5%. The plan applies the same rate of increase to most revenue sources.

29. The financial plan assumes that the Federal Transit Administration will pay 50% of the operating deficit for Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter services. It calls upon Jackson Laboratory to increase its subsidy for commuter services from \$15,000 a year to \$50,000 in FY 2008. The plan anticipates that Acadia National Park and other local employers will contribute an additional \$12,000 per year in local support.

30. Bus service for the Downeast Horizons Day Center is projected to cost \$38,110 in FY 2008. The financial plan assumes that DTI's contract with WHCA for Downeast Horizons bus service will be adjusted to cover the full cost of this service.

31. The financial plan assumes that FTA support from the Section 5311 rural transit program will increase to \$111,928 in FY 2008. The plan anticipates \$7,200 per year in private business support for midday bus service, along with \$4,800 per year in revenue from the sale of advertising.

32. The plan includes \$97,919 in FY 2008 fare box revenue from commuters, and \$30,367 in fare box receipts from midday riders. Ridership is projected to total 81,900 one-way trips per year in FY 2008. Ridership and fares are increased by 2.5% per year.

33. The financial plan includes \$20,000 per year for marketing expenses. It anticipates 100% grant funding from the Maine Department of Transportation to cover marketing costs.

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## Chapter 2: Review of Previous Studies

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This chapter examines recent studies that provide background information for transit planning in Hancock County. The discussion focuses on transit-related issues addressed in these earlier reports. It identifies goals, findings, and recommendations that may be relevant for the Hancock County's year-round transit system.

The chapter addresses the following studies, documents, and reports:

- Section 2.1 Year-round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island (2003)
- Section 2.2 Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Grant Application (2002)
- Section 2.3 Downeast Scenic Railroad Business Strategy Plan (2005)
- Section 2.4 Schoodic Draft General Management Plan Amendment (2004)
- Section 2.5 MDI Tomorrow Community Survey (2004)
- Section 2.6 Strategic Management Plan: Route 3 Corridor and Trenton Village (2005)
- Section 2.7 Acadia Gateway Center Business Plan (2006)
- Section 2.8 Jackson Laboratory Commuter Survey (2006)
- Section 2.9 EMTC Health Services Needs Assessment (2005)

### 2.1 Year-round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island

Tom Crikelair Associates prepared a Year Round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island in 2003. The study was carried out for Downeast Transportation, Inc. with participation and support from Jackson Laboratory, College of the Atlantic, MDI Hospital, Acadia National Park, the MDI School District, the MDI League of Towns, Harbor House, and the Maine Department of Transportation.

The study identified a number of potential year-round transit services, including

- In-town shuttle connecting Bar Harbor with COA and Jackson Lab
- Cross-island commuter service
- Subscription commuter buses to Bar Harbor from Bangor and Milbridge
- Year-round commuter service between a Trenton parking area and Bar Harbor
- Modified midday routes, with increased service to Ellsworth
- Limited Saturday cross-island service to support local youth programs

The study suggested that Trenton commuter service could consist of five bus trips to Bar Harbor in the morning and four or five bus trips returning to Trenton in the afternoon. It suggested that this commuter service could become part of an expanded Island Explorer shuttle bus program during the summer months.

There have been a number of relevant developments since the year-round study was completed in January of 2003.

- Subscription buses from Bangor and Cherryfield were started later in 2003 and continue operating successfully.
- A cross-island bus route was tested with Island Explorer equipment during the summer of 2003, but only a handful of local workers took advantage of the service.
- College of the Atlantic agreed to pay their share for an in-town Bar Harbor shuttle, but Jackson Laboratory took no action to fund an in-town shuttle.

## **2.2 Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Grant Application**

In 2002, the Washington-Hancock Community Agency submitted an application for grant funding under the FTA Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program. The application addressed transportation projects in Hancock and Washington Counties. It included three fixed-route commuter services in Hancock County to be operated by Downeast Transportation.

New Hancock County commuter routes will provide improved and affordable access to employment opportunities in the Hancock County communities of Bar Harbor and Ellsworth. One route will operate from western Washington County to Ellsworth and Bar Harbor. Another will run from Bangor to Ellsworth and Bar Harbor. A third will operate from Tremont and Southwest Harbor to Bar Harbor.

The three routes were designed to give area residents improved access to job opportunities at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor. The JARC application suggested that deadheading commuter buses operating between Bangor and Bar Harbor could provide improved intercity bus transportation in the Bangor-Bar Harbor corridor.

The application suggested that a year-round Southwest Harbor-Bar Harbor Island Explorer route could benefit area residents who work in Bar Harbor at Jackson Laboratory, MDI Hospital, College of the Atlantic, Acadia National Park, and other work sites.

JARC funding was awarded to Downeast Transportation for expanded commuter operations. Routes from Cherryfield to Bar harbor and from Bangor to Bar Harbor were implemented as subscription commuter services. The Southwest Harbor / Bar Harbor route was not implemented, in part because of poor response to experimental summer service offered on the route through the Island Explorer program.

## **2.3 Downeast Scenic Railroad Business Strategy Plan**

Downeast Rail Heritage Preservation Trust hired Stone Consulting and Design to develop a Business Strategy Plan for a tourist excursion railroad operating from the Ellsworth

area. This 2005 study focused on a 12-mile segment of the former Maine Central Calais Branch linking Ellsworth with Green Lake.

The consultants projected that after an initial start-up year, annual ridership would exceed 72,000 rides. They projected that a Downeast Scenic Railroad would generate over \$6 million in revenues during the first five years, to become a self-sustaining tourism and economic generator for the region. The study envisions the construction of a new train depot that would provide facilities and parking for train riders, as well as educational and general Downeast tourism information.

The plan suggests that tourist trains would operate between May and October, with special events at other times of the year. It envisions two round trips per day, with a possible third dinner train trip.

The study states: “The single most significant issue in successfully starting a tourist railroad in 2005 is putting an attraction where tourism flows already exist.” It suggests that “the key draw to the Downeast Maine market, and the destination attraction for much of the through traffic through Ellsworth, is Acadia National Park and Bar Harbor.”

The document identifies a number of locations in Ellsworth where an excursion train station could be developed, and suggests that the most viable alternatives are likely to be adjacent or near to the Comfort Inn.

Ridership projections in the Downeast rail study are based in part on the experience of a tourist railroad near Mount Rushmore National Park. Ridership on the Black Hills Central Railroad increased significantly when the railroad was physically extended two miles into the town of Keystone, where it intersected the major highway access point to Mt. Rushmore.

#### **2.4 Schoodic Draft General Management Plan Amendment**

The Schoodic Draft General Management Plan Amendment defines the future direction for the management of Acadia National Park’s Schoodic District. It provides a foundation for decisions regarding resource management, cooperative efforts and partnerships, visitor use, and operational efficiencies.

The plan’s preferred alternative calls for establishment of the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC), with collaborative partnerships to promote broad-based research and education. It envisions the creation of a new non-profit organization to coordinate and manage the use of former Navy base facilities. This would include meetings, retreats, and special events. Under the preferred alternative, Acadia National Park will work with other partners to develop laboratory, library, computing, and other research and education facilities.

The plan projects that approximately 31,500 new program participants would use the facility each year. The preferred alternative includes overnight housing for approximately 190 program participants in dorms and apartments.

## **2.5 MDI Tomorrow Community Survey**

A survey of Mount Desert Island area residents was carried out at the request of MDI Tomorrow in December 2003 and January 2004. The survey was conducted by the Margaret Chase Smith Center for Public Policy and the Department of Resource Economics and Policy at the University of Maine.

MDI Tomorrow is a citizen's forum that has worked since October 2001 to identify issues that will affect the Mount Desert Island area as a place to live and work over the next several years. The survey was designed to help identify a preferred future for the region and ways to achieve it.

The survey addressed three population groups: year-round residents who live on Mount Desert Island, year-round residents of neighboring communities, and seasonal MDI residents. Seasonal residents were defined as property taxpayers with mailing addresses outside the MDI area.

Issues addressed by survey questions included:

- Auto congestion
- Open space and land use
- Walking and biking
- Marine industries and fisheries
- Drug and alcohol use and abuse
- Healthy growth and social development of youth
- Affordable housing
- Local agricultural and foods
- Year-round economy

A number of the survey findings and recommendations pertain to transportation planning in general and to services operated by Downeast Transportation.

- Sixty-eight percent of survey respondents said they “strongly support” increasing Island Explorer service as a strategy to reduce auto congestion during the summer months. Another 20% said they “somewhat support” increasing Island Explorer service.
- Forty-one percent “strongly support” establishment of a parking facility in Trenton with bus service to village centers. Another 31% said they “somewhat support” a Trenton parking facility.

- Forty-three percent “strongly support” providing year-round commuter bus service as a strategy for promoting the region’s year-round economy. Another 33% “somewhat support” establishment of year-round commuter service.
- Fifty-five percent of survey respondents “strongly support” expanding public transportation in the MDI region to provide access to after-school youth programs. Another 31% said they “somewhat support” expanding public transportation for this purpose.

## **2.6 Strategic Management Plan: Route 3 Corridor and Trenton Village (2005)**

A 2005 Strategic Master Plan examined ways to manage transportation and land use development within Trenton’s Route 3 corridor. Among other things, the study discusses possible development of a village center for the town of Trenton. The study was carried out for the town of Trenton and the Maine Department of Transportation by Coplon Associates, with assistance from the Hancock County Planning Commission and two subcontracting consulting firms.

The planning effort sought to:

- Preserve and enhance Route 3 highway capacity
- Anticipate and accommodate alternative modes of transportation
- Enhance corridor traveler experience
- Promote Trenton as a destination
- Promote a greater sense of community for the citizens of Trenton.

The consultants suggest that the town of Trenton create a new village center west of the Trenton Marketplace. They propose a local road network that would link the Trenton Marketplace, the current Trenton town office on Route 230, and the Trenton Elementary School. This would allow Trenton residents who live west of Route 3 to access the new town center, the school, and the Trenton Marketplace without entering Route 3.

In addition, the consultants proposed that Route 230 and the airport access road be realigned to intersect Route 3 at a new signalized intersection.

The consultants suggested that a network of roads that separates local traffic from the Route 3 arterial will “significantly improve local access, alleviate traffic conflicts, and create new development opportunities.”

The plan envisions a village center along the new roads west of Route 3. The report suggests that the village center could include a post office and library, along with a relocated town office and a relocated Trenton Grange. It suggests that these village uses could be organized around a common open space or village green, and that mixed commercial/residential properties could be developed on adjacent parcels.

## **2.7 Acadia Gateway Center Business Plan**

DMJM Harris prepared an Acadia Gateway Center Business Plan in September of 2006. This document addresses the funding, implementation, and operation of an Acadia Gateway Center on Route 3 in Trenton. The plan anticipates the construction of a Downeast Transportation bus maintenance facility that would open in 2009. It anticipates development of an intermodal transportation and welcome center that would be completed in 2014.

The plan assumes that MDOT would build and own the bus maintenance facility, that MDOT would lease the facility to DTI for a nominal amount, and that DTI would operate and maintain these facilities on MDOT's behalf.

It assumes that MDOT would build and own the proposed intermodal facility, and that additional land would be leased to Acadia National Park for a National Park Service welcome center. The plan suggests that the National Park Service would operate the intermodal/welcome center complex.

The plan assumes that FTA earmark funds will be used to pay for the bus maintenance facility and related roadways and utilities. It anticipates additional funding from FTA's Bus Facilities Program and the Alternative Transit in Parks and Public Lands program for the intermodal and welcome center facilities.

The business plan projects that operating and maintenance costs for the bus maintenance facility will equal \$147,000 in 2010, increasing to \$181,000 by 2016 due to inflation. These estimates do not reflect any savings from closing existing leased office and fueling facilities. They include the cost for snow removal on a 3,500 foot access roadway.

The bus maintenance facility would include a 56-space employee parking lot and a 126-space commuter park and ride lot. According to the study, the bus maintenance facility "is a key to the sustainable, long-term operation of Downeast Transportation, its Island Explorer service, and its year-round Hancock county transit services."

The bus facility would include two service bays and one wash bay, indoor storage for up to twelve buses, plus outdoor bus storage, a covered fueling area, administrative offices, and facilities for employees.

The plan anticipates that DTI mechanics would perform general repair work at the new facility, with major maintenance and complicated repairs outsourced to private garages. It suggests that the new facility will have enough capacity to accommodate the maintenance needs of other transportation providers, and that this could become a future revenue stream for DTI.

The plan suggests that costs to operate and maintain the planned Intermodal Center during the Island Explorer season would be funded through DTI, “since the primary function of the intermodal building, the Busway, and the park-and-ride lots is to serve Island Explorer passengers.” It suggests that off-season costs will be borne by the National Park Service. The plan estimates annual operating and maintenance costs for the Intermodal Center to be \$149,000 in 2015 dollars.

## **2.8 Jackson Laboratory Commuter Survey**

During July of 2006, the Jackson Laboratory’s Transportation Committee carried out a survey of Jackson Lab employees to assess their interest in alternatives to personal vehicles. A total of 417 people completed the survey, which is roughly one-third of the Jackson Lab workforce.

Two-thirds of the survey respondents indicated that they live more than fifteen miles from the Laboratory. Twenty-nine percent said they commute more than 30 miles each way.

Eighty percent commute in a personal car with no more than one additional rider. Eight percent travel in carpools with three or more riders. Seven percent use DTI subscription buses.

Sixty-nine percent have flexible work hours. Twenty-five percent said their hours were not flexible, while 6% were unsure.

Half of the survey respondents said they would consider using a park and ride service. Just over one quarter said they would not use such a service, while just under a quarter were unsure.

Two-thirds of the people who identified preferred bus stop locations identified sites along the Route 3 corridor in Ellsworth and Trenton. Ninety-seven individuals said the Maine coast Mall in Ellsworth, 59 said Display Concepts, and 47 said the Trenton Grange.

Twenty-three percent of those who identified preferred bus stops named locations on Mount Desert Island. Twenty-one individuals said Somesville, 18 said the Southwest Harbor Food Mart, 26 said Bass Harbor or Tremont School, and 6 said Seal Cove.

The most popular incentives to encourage use of transportation alternatives were:

- Financial incentives (57%)
- Emergency ride home (53%)
- More frequent bus service (47%)

Just over half of the respondents who not currently commute by bus indicated that they are “likely” to try a bus service.

The most common employment times that people start work were 7:00 a.m. (61 individuals), 7:30 a.m. (78 individuals), and 8:00 a.m. (60 individuals). An additional 22 people said 6:00 a.m., 13 said 6:30 a.m., 17 said 8:30 a.m., and 20 said 9:00 a.m.

The most common ending times were 3:00 p.m. (34 individuals), 3:30 p.m. (105 individuals), and 4:00 p.m. (36 individuals). An additional 22 work until 2:00 p.m., 13 work until 2:30 p.m., 8 work until 4:30 p.m., and 36 work until 5:00 p.m. Thirty-seven people said they get out of work at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m.

Employees were asked about their willingness to use alternative transportation. The two issues that appear most frequently in employee responses concern (1) the need for more arrival and departure choices, and (2) the high cost of using the existing DTI service. Here are some representative comments:

There are many days when I need to start early, to finish early, or come later to deal with an appointment. It would help a lot to have more bus time options if possible.

If there were a bus that ran more than once a day I would be more likely to use it. I cannot be sure that I can be out of work when the one bus is ready to depart.

What would encourage me to keep using the bus is the price. If it keeps going up, I would have to find another way to get to work.

Start time is consistent, but end of workday is unpredictable - between 4 - 5:30. Later bus service may make the bus an option over carpool.

Even tho' I ride the Ellsworth bus, lately I have to drive in 2-3X a week to stay until 5pm. I think we need buses that are available at the end of normal business hours.

A bus that runs later, for office workers that work other than a 7:30-3:30 schedule.

The bus rates seem pretty high, so far driving myself has been more economical than taking the bus.

Bus is ok. Not sure why the price went up again. Just went up last year when gas prices were about the same.

I currently do a lot of my work reading on the ride to Ellsworth - but have to continue working when I get home because the bus only leaves at 3:30 and I do not want to fall behind. This is not a problem - but it would be easier and balance my life if I could catch the 6:30 am bus from Ellsworth, and take a later bus home around 4:30.

I would use the bus but I work more than 8 hours a day. There should be one that leaves at 4:30 p.m. Then a lot of salary folks would be able to do it. The current program is only viable for hourly employees.

If there were a bus that left several times in the afternoon, even if it only left once/hour, would make the option of taking a bus a more likely possibility.

## **2.9 EMTC Health Services Needs Assessment**

In 2005 the Eastern Maine Transportation Collaborative funded a study of the transportation needs of chronically ill patients ages 65 and older in Penobscot, Washington, and Hancock counties. EMTC is a partnership of social service, state, and local organizations, an academic research center, transportation providers, healthcare providers, community leaders, and others interested in rural transportation issues. The University of Maine Center on Aging carried out the study for EMTC.

The study focused on the needs of older people with chronic illnesses. Chronic conditions include diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, cancer, and stroke. The study found that transportation is a critical link to essential medical care for older adults in rural areas. Older adults who are unable to drive safely or who do not own a car often must rely on others for their medical transportation needs. The study looked for opportunities to give elderly rural residents improved access to quality transportation.

The report found that most chronically ill seniors require transportation with flexible hours and door-to-door service. While the report stresses the limitations of fixed-route transit programs for older rural populations, it recognizes the success of DTI's one-day-a-week Bucksport shuttle program.

The authors refer to the Bucksport service as a "rural community model of public transit that could easily be replicated in similar communities throughout the state." According to the EMTC report, a community forum in Bucksport found interest in expanding the shuttle service, adding a bus service to Bangor, and increasing volunteer driver and taxi services for rural residents.

The study included a survey of older patients in the three-county area. Most said they either drive themselves or obtain rides from family members or friends. Twenty-six percent of Hancock County residents included "volunteer drivers" in the types of transportation available to them. Apparently, there was little or no awareness among Hancock County residents of available bus or van service.

Sixty percent of all survey respondents were unaware of resources in their community that they could call if they needed help with transportation for medical visits. Hancock County respondents cited a greater need for assistance with errands than for medical trips. Just over half of the Hancock County survey respondents who require transportation assistance said they need weekly transportation for personal errands.

Study recommendations include:

- Educate community members about available transportation services.
- Advocate for increased volunteer reimbursement rates for MaineCare clients.
- Establish “senior escorts” to assist seniors getting on and off city buses.
- Establish transportation planning groups in service center communities.
- Promote ways to reach people who are not MaineCare eligible but who do not have enough money to pay for transportation.

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## **Chapter 3: Evaluation of Existing Year-round Services**

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This chapter presents a critical evaluation of year-round DTI routes and services. The evaluation process involved review of DTI ridership records, on-site inspections of Downeast Transportation operations, and interviews with managers, bus drivers, and passengers. The chapter describes how buses are currently being used, and it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the existing service design.

The chapter addresses three categories of year-round service:

- Section 3.1 Midday Routes and Services
- Section 3.2 Commuter Services
- Section 3.3 Transportation for Downeast Horizons

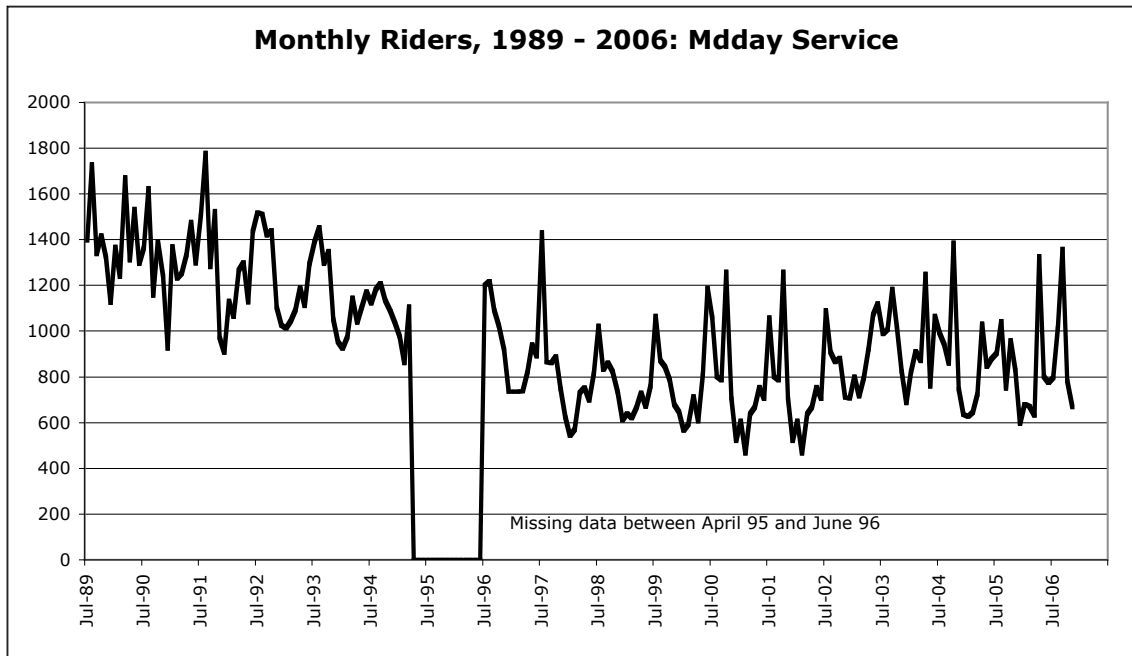
### **3.1 Midday Routes and Services**

Midday bus service was introduced for Hancock County mainland communities in 1980. Midday bus service for Mount Desert Island towns was added in 1983. After roughly 25 years, midday routes and timetables remain largely unchanged. Exceptions include the expansion of the Ellsworth midday shuttle to Wal-Mart, and the introduction in 1991 of one-day-a-week bus service from Bar Harbor and Ellsworth to Bangor.

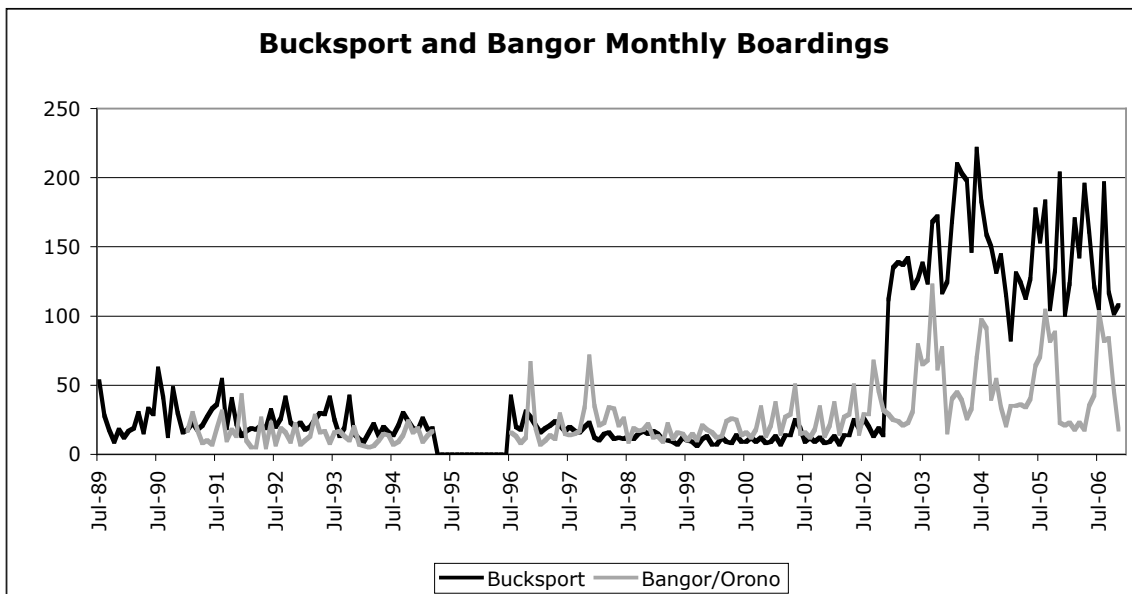
Midday service was designed primarily to meet the needs of area senior citizens, although DTI encourages other members of the community to take advantage of the service. Midday schedules provide access to Ellsworth and Bar Harbor for lunch and shopping. Buses serve outlying Hancock County communities on different days of the week. DTI offers midday shuttle service in Bar Harbor two days a week and in Ellsworth five days a week. The current timetables were designed around the Meals for Me lunch programs in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor.

Buses offer scheduled stops at hospitals in Blue Hill, Bar Harbor, and Ellsworth. However, because travel choices are limited, relatively few people schedule medical appointments using DTI's fixed-route buses.

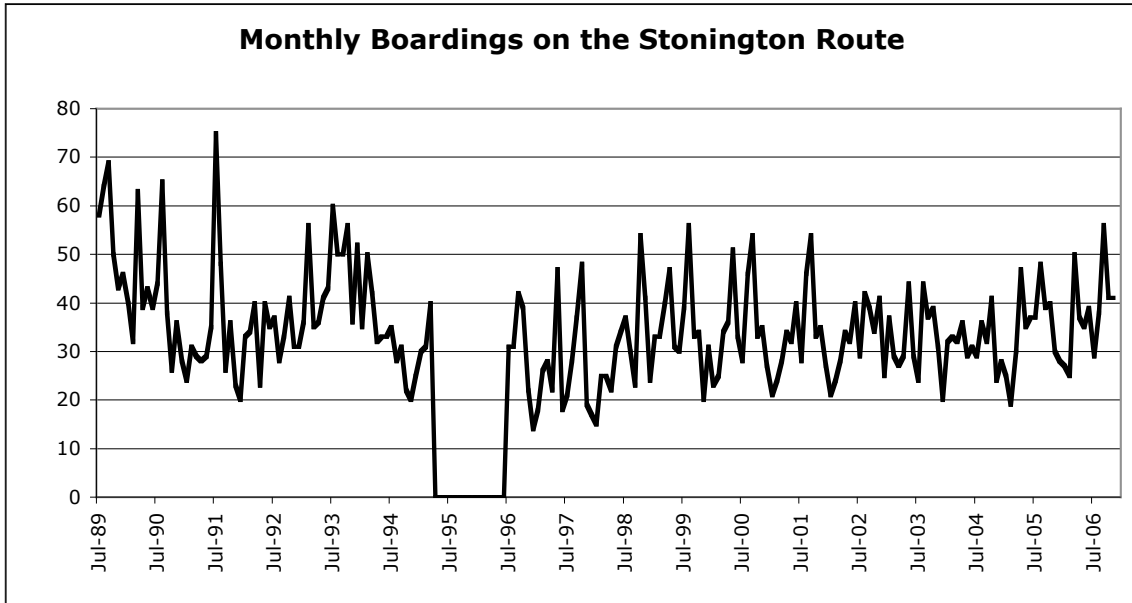
A chart of monthly midday ridership shows a steady decline through the mid and late 1990's. Midday ridership recovered somewhat in 2002, and appears to have remained fairly stable since then.



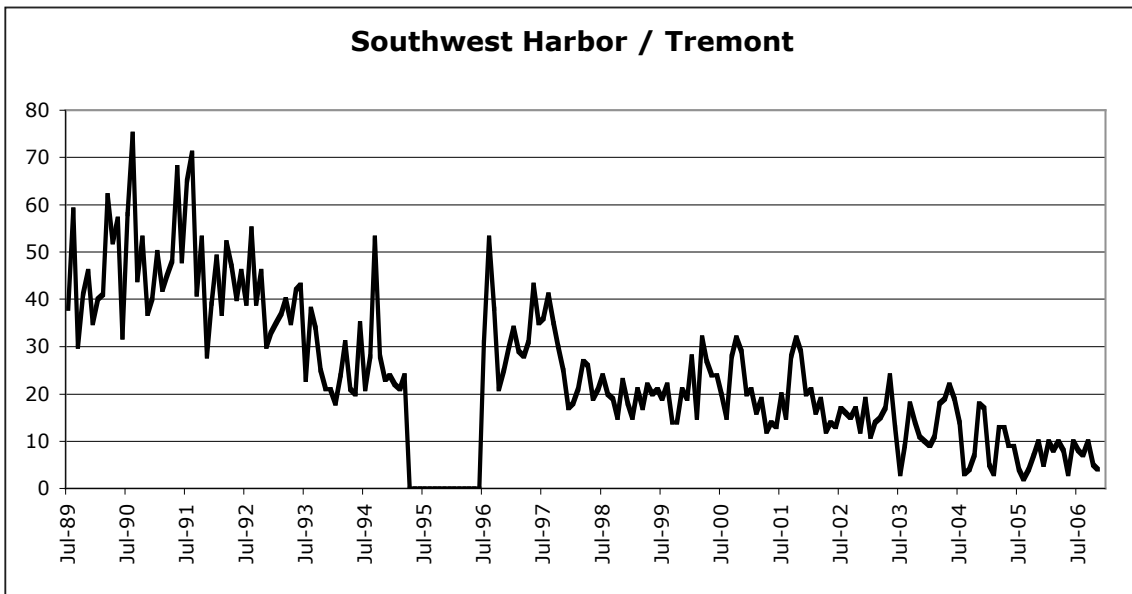
Town-by-town data show that trends vary for different routes. Most of the increase that occurred in 2002 appears to involve the new one-day-a-week Bucksport shuttle, and increased ridership on the one-day-a-week service between Bar Harbor and Bangor, as reflected the chart below.



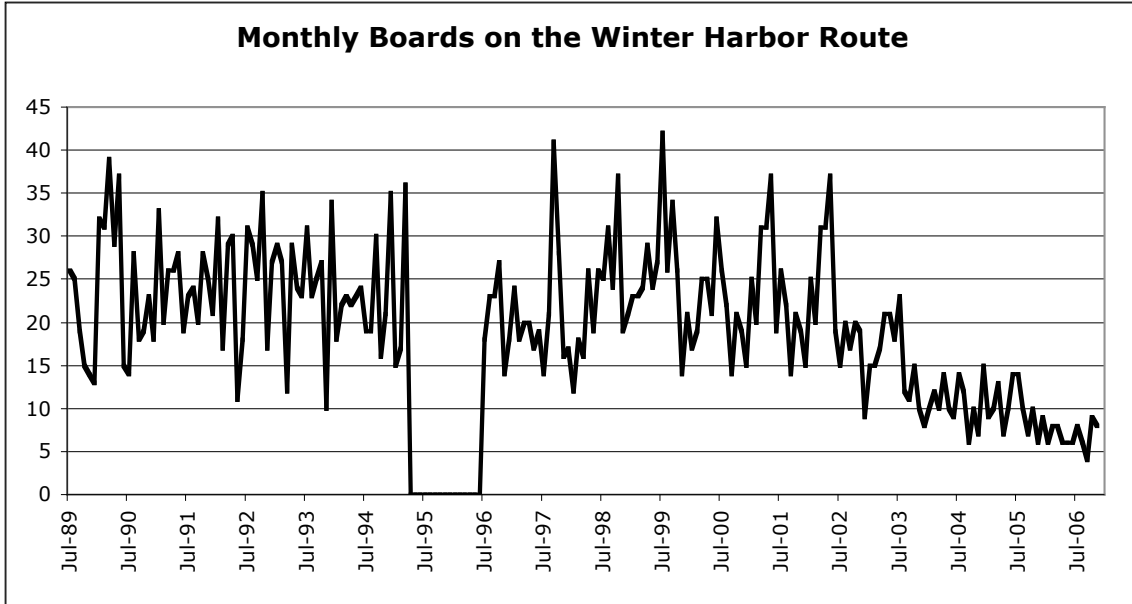
Monthly boardings on the Stonington route have held fairly steady throughout the past fifteen years. Weekly bus service from Stonington, Deer Isle, Sedgwick, Brooklin, and Blue Hill generates an average of between 8 and 12 riders per round trip. Passengers travel to Ellsworth for a variety of errands. They utilize the in-town Ellsworth shuttle if they want to visit more than one in-town location.



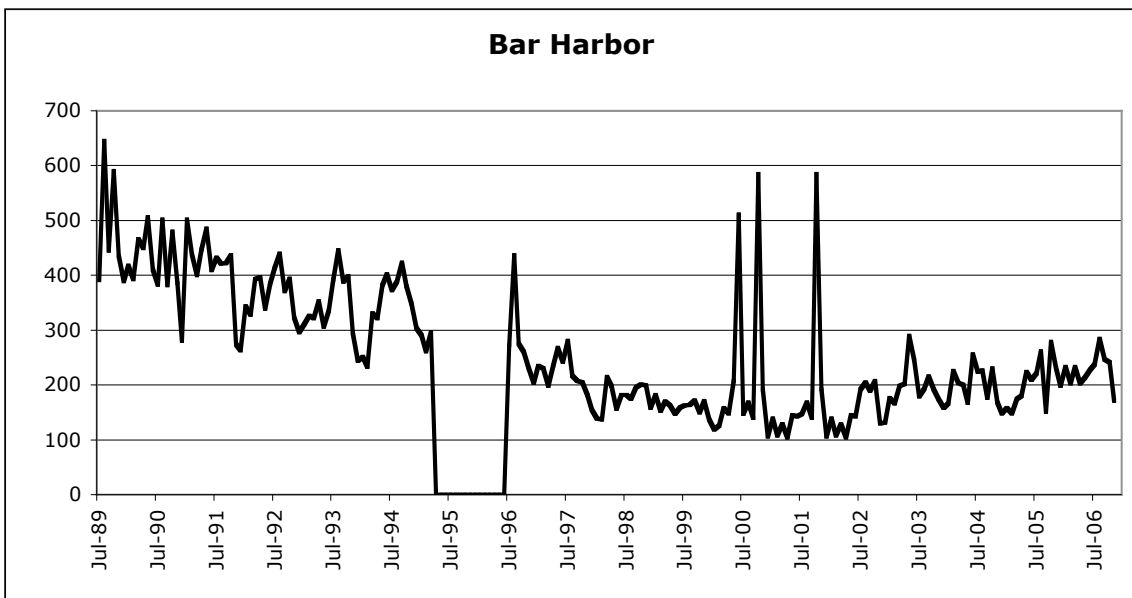
Ridership has declined drastically on bus routes serving Southwest Harbor/Tremont and Northeast Harbor, as shown below. Each of these communities has one-day-a-week service to Ellsworth and one-day-a-week service to Bar Harbor. In recent months, the Southwest Harbor/Tremont average has dropped to 10 or fewer per month, which translates into 1.3 people per day.



Buses from Northeast Harbor have recently been carrying an average of about 3 people per day. The one-day-a-week bus that serves Winter Harbor, Gouldsboro, Sullivan, and Hancock has recently been carrying between one and two round-trip riders per day.



It is a bit more difficult to discern trends for individual midday routes serving Bar Harbor, because the available data combines in-town shuttles with trips to Ellsworth and Bangor. Combined Bar Harbor monthly ridership dropped from about 400 boarding a month in 1990 to less than 150 a month in 2000, a decline of 63%. In recent years, monthly boardings in Bar Harbor appear to have stabilized at about 200 boardings per month.



One of the biggest changes since the 1980's is the decline in bus travel to the Meals for Me lunch program. Instead of 16 or more senior citizens, the bus to the Bar Harbor lunch site now typically carries no more than one or two individuals. Instead of traveling to the community dining room, many of the residents of Bar Harbor's senior apartment complexes now have their midday meals delivered directly to their apartments.

On-site inspection of the in-town Bar Harbor shuttle suggests, however, that this bus is still meeting many of the needs that it was designed to serve. Residents of Malvern-Belmont and Rodick-Lorraine Apartments board the midday bus on Tuesdays and Thursdays to travel to downtown banks and drug stores and to the Hannaford supermarket for grocery shopping. They also use the bus on occasion to reach the MDI Hospital and the MDI YMCA. The bus driver lets people know that she is happy to make special drop offs and pick ups on request.

Increased demand for the Bar Harbor-Ellsworth-Bangor service occurs during the late spring, summer, and early fall, and for the most part involves Eastern European and other international workers who travel to Bangor for shopping. A young Bulgarian man suggested: "Run the Bangor bus more days of the week, change the schedule to allow people to stay in Bangor longer, and don't stop at so many apartment complexes."

Separate monthly ridership figures are not available for the in-town Ellsworth shuttle. First hand inspections and conversations with DTI staff suggest that only a handful of senior citizens board the in-town bus at Meadowview, Union River, and Riverview Apartments. Residents of Meadowview Apartments have suggested they would use the bus more if the in-town shuttle offered more return trips to Meadowview, allowing them to spend less time in town.

There is typically only one individual who currently travels to Meals for Me at Meadowview. Much of the use of the midday Ellsworth shuttle involves people who have traveled by bus to Ellsworth from outlying towns.

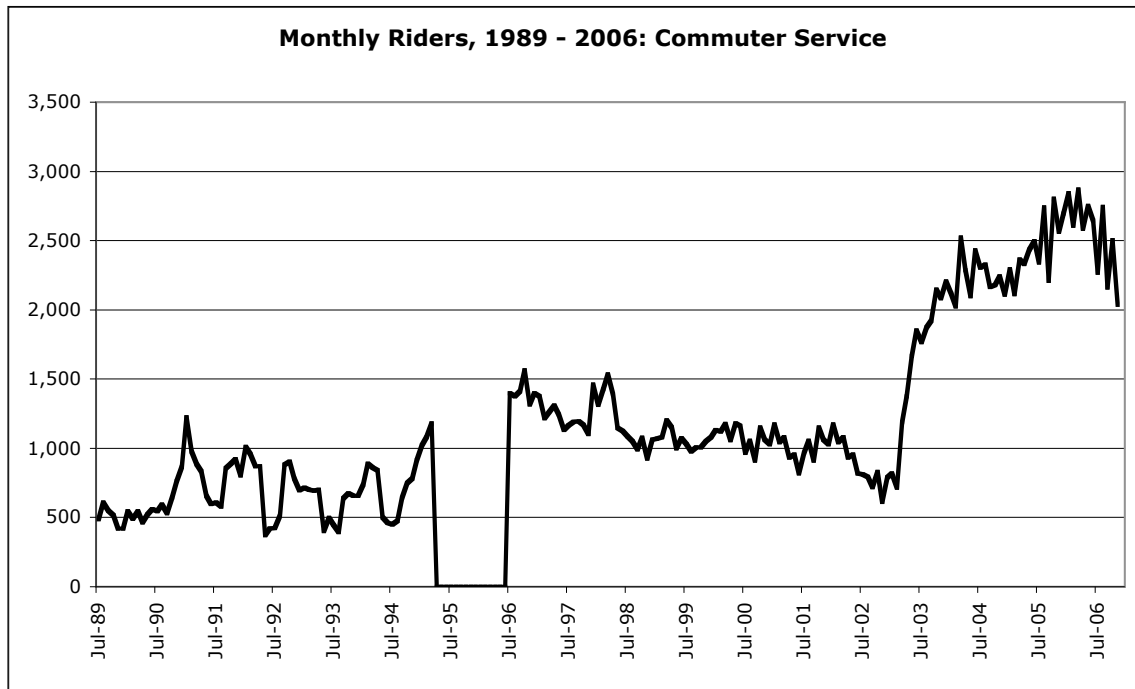
Midday bus service suffers from the lack of a clearly identified bus stop in downtown Ellsworth. The former bus stop on the corner of Main and Franklin Streets was eliminated several years ago during a downtown Ellsworth redesign project. Midday buses stop at various locations in the Ellsworth City Hall parking lot. The project would benefit from a designated bus stop closer to Main Street.

While the in-town Ellsworth route was modified several years ago to include the new Wal-Mart store, the in-town bus does not provide any service to the Mill Mall or to the Ellsworth YMCA. A number of downtown Ellsworth businesses have relocated to the Mill Mall, and DTI should probably look for a way to add service to this location. A single bus stop could accommodate both the Mill Mall and the YMCA. The bus route also does not include medical offices on Resort Way near the Route 1 Triangle.

Given the decline in usage, DTI should seriously consider discontinuing one-day-a-week shopping trips to Ellsworth from Winter Harbor, Northeast harbor, Southwest Harbor, Otis, and Bucksport. The same is true for shopping trips from Southwest Harbor to Bar Harbor. Alternate service strategies will be discussed in Chapter 8.

### 3.2 Commuter Services

DTI operates subscription commuter service to Bar Harbor and the Jackson Laboratory. The current service includes three routes, originating in Bangor, Franklin, and Cherryfield. Subscription commuter service from Bar Harbor to the University of Maine in Orono was discontinued in 1996.



Between 1996 and 2002, DTI commuter operations included just the Franklin-Jackson Lab route. Ridership decreased gradually during these years from about 1,300 riders a month to about 700 riders a month, apparently due mostly to changing work shifts at the Laboratory. Commuter usage increased dramatically beginning in June of 2003 with the introduction of new commuter routes from Bangor and Cherryfield.

Ridership on the three Lab routes peaked at about 2,800 riders a month during the winter of 2006. In more recent months, demand has appeared to decrease somewhat.

The main weakness with Jackson Lab commuter service is the limited travel choices provided to Laboratory employees. Each of the three commuter routes includes only a single bus in each direction, with no back-up service for employees who are required to work later than 3:30 p.m. In a recent transportation survey, Lab employees expressed an interest in a wider range of travel times for people who work different work shifts.

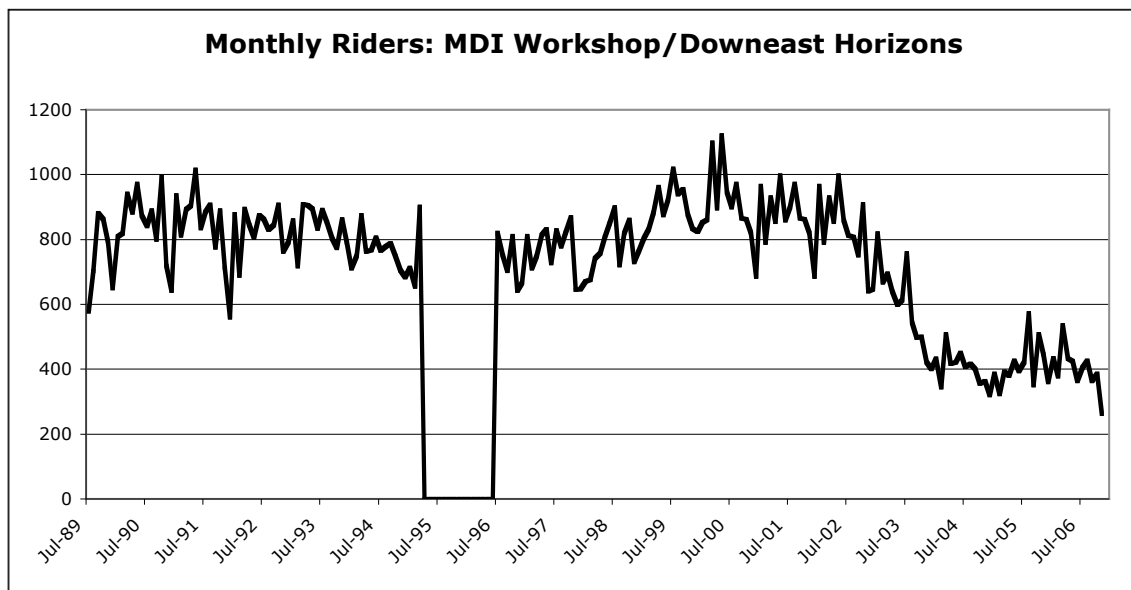
In addition, some Lab employees suggested that the fare charged for weekly rides is too high and that the cost limits their interest in the service.

Another possible issue for Laboratory commuters is the diversion of buses through the Main Coast Mall in Ellsworth. This introduces some delay for passengers traveling to and from Bangor and Cherryfield. Longer distance bus riders would have faster rides if people boarding in Ellsworth stop could be served by a separate set of buses.

### 3.3 Transportation for Downeast Horizons

Downeast Transportation began providing commuter transportation for developmentally disabled adults employed at the MDI Workshop in 1983. The transit agency operated a bus from Ellsworth, and a van from Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and Somesville.

In recent years, the Sheltered Workshop has been phased out. Some former workshop employees have been shifted to community-based jobs. The Route 3 center has been changed to a Downeast Horizons day facility that provides education and training for developmentally disabled adults.



When the mission changed, ridership on DTI's Ellsworth and MDI routes dropped dramatically, from about 800 boardings per month to roughly 400 boardings a month. DTI continues to operate two vehicles, a bus between Ellsworth and the day center, and a van that picks up disabled adults in Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and Somesville.

Scheduling for both routes has involved some cost inefficiencies. The Ellsworth-Day Center route involves unproductive deadhead time, since the driver returns to Ellsworth with an empty vehicle in the morning and then travels empty to the Day Center in the late

afternoon. The Bar Harbor-Northeast Harbor-Somesville route has required overtime pay for one of DTI's regular full-time bus drivers, although this situation is likely to change.

Past inefficiencies have been particularly costly to Downeast Transportation, because the transit agency has not received full reimbursement for the service it has been providing to Downeast Horizons. Recent budget analysis suggests that the Day Center routes have involved combined out-of-pocket costs of about \$38,000 per year, with fully allocated costs totaling about \$46,000. DTI's operates this service through a contract agreement with WHCA. The current WHCA contract totals \$33,000, leaving an out-of-pocket deficit of about \$5,000 a year, and a full-allocated shortfall of about \$13,000 a year.

DTI is in the process of restructuring the Downeast Horizons service to accommodate an earlier afternoon departure time. This should reduce DTI's operating costs somewhat. Further improvements may be possible by integrating Day Program trips with other expanded commuter operations. A redesigned service might also qualify for a New Freedom grant. This new FTA program provides funding for transit services designed to benefit people with disabilities.

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## Chapter 4: Passenger Survey

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This chapter presents the results of an onboard passenger survey carried out on year-round Downeast Transportation buses during a one-week period in January of 2007. Passengers were asked to evaluate existing services and to suggest possible improvements. The survey included questions about trip purpose, travel patterns, and unmet transportation needs.

A copy of the survey form is included as an appendix to this report, along with full transcriptions of passenger comments. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 4.1 Methodology and Response
- Section 4.2 Residence
- Section 4.3 Destination and Trip Purpose
- Section 4.4 Driver's License and Auto Availability
- Section 4.5 Frequency of Use
- Section 4.6 Service Evaluation
- Section 4.7 Gender, Age, and Employment Status
- Section 4.8 Passenger Comments

### 4.1 Methodology and Response

Downeast Transportation bus riders were surveyed during the week of January 22 through January 26, 2007. Surveys were distributed on Jackson Laboratory commuter buses and on regular midday bus routes.

Passengers were handed a survey form and a pencil by the bus driver when they boarded the bus. Individuals were asked to complete only one copy of the survey form. Passengers turned in completed forms as they exited the bus. No record was kept of the number of people who declined to participate or who accepted survey forms without filling them out.

DTI drivers collected a total of 98 completed surveys. Fifty-five were submitted by subscription commuters on DTI's three Jackson Lab commuter buses. The remaining 43 surveys were completed by regular midday riders.

Forty-nine percent of the Lab surveys were filled out by passengers on the Franklin bus. The Cherryfield bus accounted for 31%, and the Bangor bus accounted for 20% of Lab surveys. Thirty-five percent of midday surveys responses came from the MDI bus. The Bucksport shuttle accounted for 19% of midday responses, while other County routes accounted for the remaining 47%.

## **4.2 Residence**

For Jackson Lab commuters, the towns with the greatest representation were Ellsworth (15% of Lab surveys), Franklin (15%), Hancock (13%), and Bangor (7%). Individual responses were obtained from a variety of communities, including people who live as far away as Hartland, Kenduskeag, and Winterport.

Bar Harbor accounted for 34% of midday responses, while 22% came from Bucksport residents, and 17% from people who live in Ellsworth. Sedgwick accounted for 7% of midday surveys and Blue Hill accounted for 5%. Individual surveys came from residents of Tremont, Gouldsboro, Otis, Stonington, Swans Island and Trenton.

Eighty-six percent of Lab commuters said they live in single-family homes, while 11% live in apartments, and 4% live in mobile homes. Twenty-one percent of midday riders live in single family homes, while 74% live in apartments. Five percent of midday riders listed their type of dwelling as “other.”

## **4.3 Destination and Trip Purpose**

All of the survey respondents on the Franklin, Bangor, and Cherryfield commuter buses said their destination was Bar Harbor. All of these subscription riders said their trip purpose was “work.”

Fifty percent of midday riders said they were traveling to Ellsworth. Nineteen percent were riding to destinations in Bucksport, and 14% were riding to destinations in Bar Harbor. Twelve percent of midday participants were traveling to Bangor.

Seventy percent of midday riders identified the “main purpose” of their bus trip as shopping. Seven percent said travel to Meals for Me was their main purpose, while another 7% said their main purpose was “just getting out.” Five percent identified their main purpose as “medical.”

Midday passengers listed a variety of trip purposes in addition to their “main purpose.” Eighty-four percent said their trip would include some shopping. Thirty-five percent included “getting out.” Nineteen percent said they were visiting friends, while 14% included “medical” in their list of relevant trip purposes. Only one individual included “work” as a purpose. No midday riders were traveling to school or college.

#### **4.4 Driver's Licenses and Auto Availability**

Ninety-five percent of Lab commuters said they have a driver's license, while 5% did not. Eighty-six percent of Lab commuters said they had a car available for their trip. Nine percent had no car available, while another 6% said, "Sometimes, but not today."

One-third of midday riders said they have a driver's license, while two-thirds did not. Twenty-two percent of midday riders had a car available for their trip, while 76% did not. Two percent said, "Sometimes, but not today." Seventy-nine percent of midday riders said no one in their household owns a car.

Fifty-three percent of midday passengers said they rely on DTI for their access to grocery shopping, while 15% get rides from family members and 13% drive themselves. Twenty-two percent of midday riders rely on DTI buses to travel to medical appointments. Seventeen percent rely on family members, 15% get rides from friends, and 12% drive themselves. Fifteen percent of midday bus riders said they use WHCA to get to the doctor, while 2% said Island Connections and 2% said Community Connections.

#### **4.5 Frequency of Use**

Eighty-nine percent of Lab commuters said they use DTI buses daily to get to work. The remaining 11% said they use DTI for weekly trips to work.

Forty-nine percent of midday riders said they use DTI for weekly in-town shopping and errands. Another 5% said they occasionally ride to in-town destinations. Forty-two percent travel weekly to Ellsworth, another 9% travel to Ellsworth monthly, and 5% ride to Ellsworth occasionally.

Seven percent of midday riders make weekly trips to Bangor. Two percent said they ride to Bangor monthly, while another 21% said they make occasional trips to Bangor. This means that bus service to Bangor has some relevance for 30% of midday riders who responded to the onboard survey.

## 4.6 Service Evaluation

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate the services provided by Downeast Transportation. Responses from Lab commuters are summarized in Figure 4.1. Midday responses are summarized in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.1 Subscription Commuter Service Evaluation**

	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
Clean	40%	47%	8%	6%
Comfortable	27%	46%	15%	13%
Find a seat	44%	42%	13%	2%
Polite drivers	93%	7%		
Safe drivers	91%	9%		
On time	73%	24%	2%	2%
Find schedules	64%	33%	3%	
Understand schedules	67%	31%	3%	

The chief concern among subscription commuters appears to be vehicle comfort. Only 27% said that buses are “always” comfortable. Twenty-eight percent said that commuter buses are “sometimes” or “never” comfortable. There also appears to be some concern about seat availability, with only 44% saying that it is “always” easy to find a seat.

Commuters are particularly satisfied with the politeness and safety of bus drivers.

**Figure 4.1 Subscription Commuter Service Evaluation**

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Clean	89%	12%		
Comfortable	85%	15%		
Find a seat	85%	15%		
Polite drivers	98%	2%		
Safe drivers	98%	2%		
On time	88%	12%		
Find schedules	81%	10%	5%	5%
Understand schedules	83%	12%	2%	2%

Midday riders express high levels of satisfaction with DTI service quality. Ninety-eight percent said that drivers are “always” polite and safe, while the remaining 2% said they are “usually” polite and safe. Some midday passengers suggest that there may be problems with the distribution and availability of printed DTI bus schedules. A combined 10% said that schedules are “sometimes” or “never” easy to find.

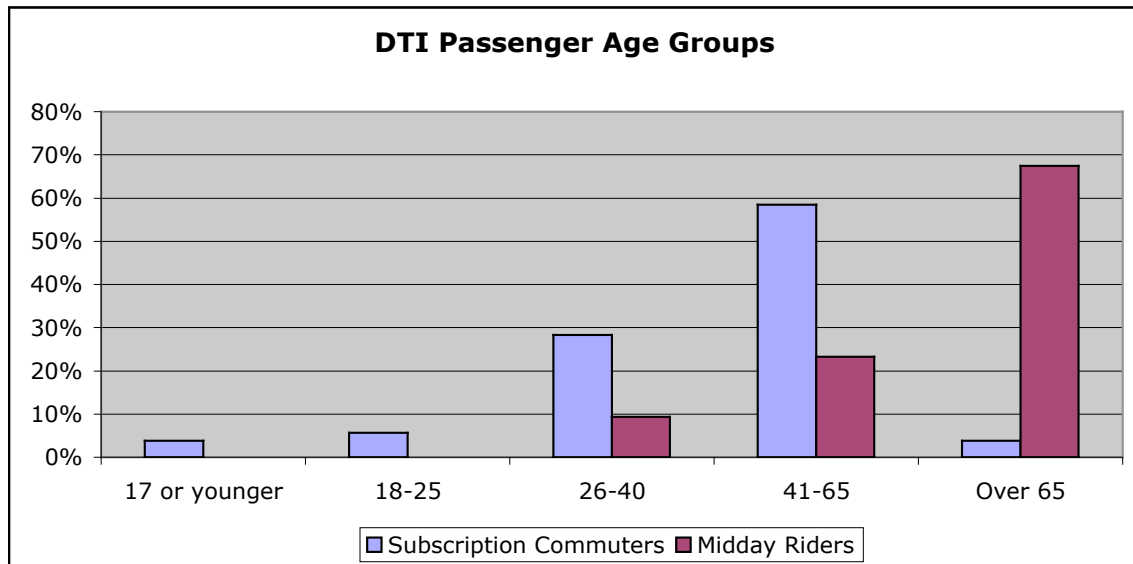
#### 4.7 Gender, Age, and Employment Status

Survey results suggest that two-thirds of DTI’s subscription commuters are female, while one-third is male. Ninety-one percent of DTI’s midday riders are female, and 9% are male.

Fifty-nine percent of subscription commuters are between the ages of 41 and 65, while 28% are in the 26 to 40 age group. A combined total of 87% are between the ages of 26 and 65. Ten percent are younger than 26, and 4% are over 65.

Two-thirds of DTI’s midday riders are over 65. Twenty-three percent are between 41 and 65, and 9% are between 26 and 40. There were no midday survey participants under the age of 26. Distribution by age is presented in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3** *Passenger Distribution by Age*



Ninety-five percent of DTI’s subscription commuters are employed full-time, while the remaining 5% work part time. Five percent of DTI’s midday riders are employed full-time, and 7% work part-time. Seventy-nine percent of midday riders are retired, while the remaining 10% are unemployed.

There were no subscription commuters who require use of DTI’s wheelchair lift. One midday rider indicated that she sometimes needs the wheelchair lift.

## 4.8 Passenger Comments

Passengers were asked to identify destinations they have difficulty reaching because of transportation. They were asked what they like about Downeast Transportation bus service. And they were asked what DTI can do to improve the service.

### *Subscription Commuters*

Six subscription commuters suggested new or extended commuter routes. One person asked for bus service from Winterport, and one person asked for a bus from Blue Hill. One person suggested a bus from H.O.M.E. in Orland, and two people asked for a bus from Bucksport. Another individual suggested bus service on the Bayside Road in Trenton.

Many commuters expressed appreciation for the bus service. A passenger on the Franklin bus said: "I have found the service very safe and reliable." Another Franklin rider said: "I get to work safely and on time and save gas and miles on my car." A rider on the Bangor bus said: "Safe transportation to and from work. I am very happy with it." A passenger on the Cherryfield route characterized the service as: "A good asset for lab employees."

A Bangor commuter said: "If not for this bus, I would not be at Jackson Lab. I cannot drive that far daily." A passenger on the Cherryfield bus said: "Saves me money on gas. I have four children. I am always struggling to make ends meet. The bus helps me save money!"

There were several favorable comments about bus drivers. A rider on the Franklin bus said: "My driver is very dependable and safe, and is better in the snow than I am." A Cherryfield passenger said: "They are good drivers."

Most of the suggested improvements focused on the quality of buses and a need for lower fares. A passenger on the Bangor bus said: "A newer, warmer bus in winter would be appreciated, as would A/C in the summer. It's a long haul from Brewer to Jackson Lab." Another Bangor rider said: "Sure wish we had a potty!"

A commuter on the Cherryfield bus said: "The bus is essential to my ability to work at Jackson Labs, and I very much appreciate the service. However, the buses we ride were clearly not meant to be used regularly for such long hauls, and they are not comfortable enough to spend 2+ hours per day on."

Several Cherryfield riders commented about buses breaking down and not starting in cold weather. One said: "A bus that starts and keeps running even in cold weather would be better than what we have." Another Cherryfield rider said: "In the last month, we've swapped out four buses. They break down easily."

A passenger on the Franklin bus said: "I've had problems fitting in an aisle seat when another passenger is seated in the window seat, and I'm very thin."

Two Bangor riders suggested that if bus fares are going to increase when gas prices go up, then fares should decrease when the price of gas goes back down. A Franklin route rider said: "I'd like to see the cost of the bus back at \$17 for Ellsworth again." A rider on the Franklin bus said: "Prices are reasonable, but could be lower." Another Franklin bus rider said: "I'd like to see the Lab pay some or all of the fare."

### *Midday Passengers*

When asked: "What do you like about Downeast Transportation bus service?" midday riders had many good things to say about the transportation program and its bus drivers. A Bar Harbor resident said, "I like just about everything about the DTI service, and depend on it as my PRIMARY means of transportation (other than walking, and except when the Island Explorer is running)."

A Blue Hill resident said: "I love your service! It's the best." A Sedgwick resident said: "I like the friends, the ride, the drivers, getting out, the route, the passing countryside." Another Blue Hill resident said: "Comes to my door. It's on time. Good people aboard."

A Swans Island resident said she likes: "The driver! She is so helpful to all, helps us all off and on the bus, carries groceries to our door when needed." A Bar Harbor resident agreed: "Friendly driver, helpful with schedule and groceries. Keeps us jolly."

A Bar Harbor resident traveling to Bangor said: "I don't have to take the car. I don't have to drive. I might not go if I had to drive myself. Drivers are wonderful. Bus is clean and comfortable."

Several midday riders said they would like bus service to the Mill Mall in Ellsworth. Others requested service to Rite Aid, Resort Way doctor's offices, and Home Depot in Ellsworth. A Bar Harbor resident said she has difficulty getting to swimming at the MDI YMCA. She said: "It's too far to walk."

An Ellsworth resident said: "I would like more trips to Bangor." Several midday riders suggested that better connections are needed with West's Coastal Connection in Ellsworth, especially for southbound trips at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Someone pointed out that the morning connection in Bangor with Concord Trailways is too tight.

Two Bucksport riders suggested adding a bus route to Bangor. An Ellsworth resident suggested adding "Old Town bingo trips."

A Bar Harbor resident said: "Some don't ride because they find it difficult to step up in. A small stool might be helpful to some."

## **Chapter 5: Public Participation**

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This chapter describes efforts to inform members of the public about the transportation study and to obtain ideas and suggestions for the year-round transit program. The first section presents findings from a public workshop held in Ellsworth on January 29, 2007 to discuss the future of year-round transit in Hancock County. The second section describes efforts to contact stakeholders in the region. The third describes Advisory Committee meetings held throughout the development of the year-round transit plan.

### **5.1 Public Workshop – January 29, 2007**

A public workshop to discuss the future of Downeast Transportation's year-round transit program was held at Meadowview Apartments in Ellsworth on the evening of January 29, 2007. Workshop participants included two community health representatives from Bucksport, the director of Meadowview Apartments, two Meadowview Apartment residents, a parent from Ellsworth representing the Bay School in Blue Hill, and an official from the Jackson Laboratory. DTI's general manager and Hancock County's transportation planner also participated in the discussion.

The Bay School parent said she came to the meeting on behalf of the school and other parents from the Ellsworth area. She indicated that there are more than twenty families who drive their children between Ellsworth and Blue Hill. Many utilize carpools to reduce the high cost of transportation.

She suggested that there are many families that would agree to pay a reasonable subscription fee for a shuttle service to and from the Bay School. School children need to arrive at the Bay School at approximately 8:00 a.m. They need to be picked up between 2:45 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. She said there are some high school students at George Stevens Academy that might also be interested in a bus service. GSA students need to arrive in downtown Blue Hill by 7:50 a.m. She said that her carpool often includes one GSA student.

The consultant shared ridership data showing strong ridership on the Bucksport in-town shuttle, and very limited usage of the Bucksport to Ellsworth bus. He asked the two representatives from Bucksport if they thought the community would be interested in replacing the Ellsworth service with a one-day-a-week bus to Bangor, or with an additional day of in-town shuttle service. The Bucksport officials suggested that the consultant travel to Bucksport to discuss service choices with community members.

One of the Meadowview residents indicated that she uses DTI's Monday bus service to Bangor. She reported that there were occasions during the summer when she did not ride

because the bus arrived at Meadowview with all seats already filled. She said that she likes the current schedule that allows three hours for errands in Bangor. She suggested, however, that she could stay somewhat longer if necessary.

Another Meadowview resident said that she does not use DTI's in-town Ellsworth bus because the current schedule requires her to remain away from home for too long a period of time. She felt that an hourly service would better suit her needs. She expressed an interest in making shorter trips to take care of individual errands.

The representative from the Jackson Laboratory said his organization remains interested in expanding transportation alternatives for commuting workers. He said the institution is continuing to grow and to hire additional workers. He suggested that expanded bus service can help attract new employees, while limiting the need to build more parking lots.

The consultant discussed the results of the Laboratory's employee transportation survey. In the survey, many people said they would like to commute by bus, but that they need additional departure choices for the days when they must work late. Also, some survey respondents suggested that DTI's current commuter fares are too high. DTI's general manager pointed out that increased financial support from the Laboratory can be matched by FTA JARC funding, and that this would allow the bus program to offer reduced fares for Lab employees.

Other identified needs in the Route 3 corridor include commuter options for people seeking tourism-related jobs in Bar Harbor, and improved access to community-based employment for disabled adults living in Downeast Horizons group homes.

The group discussed the need for transportation to medical appointments in Bangor. They suggested that the study should look for ways to combine the resources of DTI, WHCA, Island Connections, and Faith and Practice Community Connections to provide improved transportation choices for medical trips to Bangor.

## **5.2 Outreach to Stakeholders**

The consultant contacted a variety of individuals with a potential interest in the future of Hancock County's public transportation program. He discussed the project with representatives of the following organizations and groups:

- Washington-Hancock Community Agency
- Island Connections
- Faith in Action Community Connections
- Downeast Horizons
- Birch Bay Village Retirement Community (Bar Harbor)
- Parker Ridge Retirement Community (Blue Hill)
- MDI YMCA
- Harbor House (Southwest Harbor)
- John Bapst High School
- Bay School parents
- GO MAINE Commuter Rideshare Program

The consultant explained to each stakeholder that Downeast Transportation is looking for ways to increase the effectiveness of its year-round transit program. The results of these discussions are reflected in Chapter 7: Market Groups and Transportation Needs.

The consultant traveled to Southwest Harbor on January 30, 2007 to meet with senior citizens at Ridge Apartments prior to the Wednesday afternoon BINGO game sponsored by Community Connections. Seniors were asked to comment on DTI's existing year round service and to offer ideas on how the service could be improved. Many of the people in the group said they had cars. Only one individual said she had used the DTI bus. The consultant asked about a possible in-town Southwest Harbor shuttle service, but little or no interest was expressed in such a service. One senior citizen remarked: "I don't use it because I drive my car, but I might need it when I get old."

The consultant met with Bucksport's Senior Resource Committee and Transportation Committee at the Bucksport Senior Center on February 21, 2007. Meeting participants agreed that there was little demand for continuing DTI's one-day-a-week bus service from Bucksport to Ellsworth. The group discussed whether DTI should replace the Ellsworth trip with a second day of in-town Bucksport service, or experiment instead with a new one-day-a-week bus route between Bucksport and Bangor. Members of both committees expressed a preference for the idea of trying one-day-a-week bus service to Bangor. A number of people pointed out that local residents need daily transportation to Bangor for access medical appointments in the morning and in the afternoon.

### **5.3 Advisory Committee Meetings**

Downeast Transportation invited ten individuals to serve on an Advisory Committee to oversee work on this transportation study. The committee includes representatives from Island Connections, Faith in Action Community Connections, Washington-Hancock Community Agency, Jackson Laboratory, Acadia National Park, Downeast Horizons, Hancock County Planning Commission, the Beth Wright Cancer Center, and the city of Ellsworth. Three of the members are also members of the Downeast Transportation Board of Directors. DTI's general manager served as the committee chair.

The Advisory Committee met at various stages during the planning effort to discuss the goals of the project, to review draft materials, and to provide guidance to the consultant on future steps.

*December 7, 2006*

At this introductory meeting, Advisory Committee members described their goals and expectations for the transit study. Issues and concerns expressed by Committee members included the following:

- A DTI Board member said he would like the study to facilitate coordination among various Hancock County transportation programs, including fixed-route, door-to-door, volunteer, and carpool services. He identified information sharing with the public and among providers as a key need.
- WHCA's transportation director described her agency's efforts to provide social service and medical transportation in Hancock and Washington counties. She said that people who need rides to medical appointments could benefit from more public bus trips from coastal peninsulas to Bangor and Ellsworth. She suggested it might be possible to institute a Medicaid pass program for use on local transit buses – similar to programs in Bangor and Portland.
- The representative from Faith in Action Community Connections identified a need for an expanded shuttle service within the city of Ellsworth. She suggested the shuttle needs to run more hours during the middle of the day, and that the route needs to be extended to include medical offices on Resort Way and the YMCA.
- Island Connection's representative said there is a need for more transportation choices for Mount Desert Island residents. He said that given a choice, many people prefer the ability to travel independently, without special assistance.
- A DTI Board member said the Board of Directors is unsure whether DTI's current route design is meeting the needs of today's markets. He said the Board would like to make sure that the transit agency is doing the best possible job with the resources available.
- DTI's general manager said the company needs an updated service plan that serves more people, while continuing to meet the community needs identified in DTI's original mission statement. He said the program should provide countywide service, and pay particular attention to the needs of elderly, low-income, and disabled residents. He would like to add new services, while continuing to transport the people who currently rely on the year-round service.

- The representative from Downeast Horizons said her agency's goals for the project include continuation of the current commuter routes to their Day Center, more transportation choices for the disabled community, and more integration of developmentally disabled adults with the wider community.
- Ellsworth's city planner observed that most people in the local community are unaware of DTI's year-round transit program. She said they don't know what the service is, where it goes, or who can use it. She said there is a potential for improved bus stops, bicycle racks, and pedestrian paths to facilitate use and understanding of the local transit program. She said the city of Ellsworth is particularly interested in providing links between the downtown center and commercial growth areas.

The consultant reviewed the project scope of work and described the various tasks to be completed. The group discussed the consultant's draft chapter describing past studies, opportunities for planning coordination, and the list of stakeholders for the planning project. Ellsworth's city planner suggested that the consultant should consider Ellsworth's ongoing Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, as well as the city's interest in an intermodal visitor facility that would include access to excursion rail service and trails.

*February 15, 2007*

The Advisory Committee reviewed draft background chapters submitted earlier by the consultant. Some minor corrections were identified. The consultant said that he expected to add two sections to the discussion of target groups and market needs. One will address potential transportation needs for the Schoodic Education and Research Center, and the other will discuss transportation for young people to recreation programs.

The consultant asked representatives from Hancock County Planning Commission and the city of Ellsworth about efforts to establish an intermodal visitor center in Ellsworth. The HCPC planner will provide background information for use in the planning coordination task.

Most of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the consultant's preliminary service design concepts. The consultant shared draft timetables for a variety of midday and commuter services. Committee members provided a number of observations and suggestions.

- Proposed bus service between Blue Hill and Bucksport could be routed through the Orland village center.
- Proposed in-town Ellsworth shuttle service could perhaps be extended to Ellsworth Falls to serve the Open Door Recovery Center. Another possible destination is the Department of Human Services office near Eastward Lanes.

- The representative from Faith in Action Community Connections asked if the proposed in-town Ellsworth Shuttle service could be expanded from two days a week to three days.
- The group discussed the need for improved bus stops in Ellsworth. A key issue is the lack of a designated accessible bus stop in the downtown center.
- Jackson Laboratory is in the middle of a growth phase, and this has resulted in changes in shift times to match production and shipping requirements. This has made it difficult for some employees to use the existing DTI subscription buses.
- The Laboratory's representatives on the committee felt that the expanded schedule proposed by the consultant would benefit administrative workers whose schedules do not currently permit them to commute by bus.

The consultant will meet with Jackson Laboratory officials to review the projected impact of different service levels and fares on local subsidy requirements. Someone suggested that the MDI Hospital is facing a parking shortage, and may be willing to participate in a partnership to provide local share funding for expanded Bar Harbor commuter services.

The consultant pointed out that five different programs are providing transportation between Ellsworth and Bangor. This includes Downeast Transportation, WHCA, Island Connections, Community Connections, and West's Transportation. Committee discussed possible strategies to combine resources to improve transportation choices in the Bar Harbor / Ellsworth / Bangor corridor. The consultant suggested there might be a need for two daily round trips, one for morning medical appointments, and one for afternoon appointments. He pointed out that West's Transportation currently provides a midday arrival and a 3:30 p.m. departure. The 3:30 p.m. West bus from Bangor could connect in Ellsworth with a proposed 4:20 p.m. commuter trip to Bar Harbor.

DTI representatives cautioned against scheduling morning departures from Bar Harbor to Bangor too early in the morning for elderly shoppers. DTI's existing Monday bus to Bangor departs Bar Harbor at 9:13 a.m. and arrives in Bangor at 10:45 a.m. Although doctor's appointments typically begin as early as 8:00 or 8:30 a.m., representatives from Island Connections and Community Connections agreed that a bus that arrives in time for 10:00 a.m. appointments would probably be early enough to benefit many people.

While people traveling to morning medical visits might prefer to depart Bangor at noon, the group agreed that morning shoppers would probably prefer a return trip that departs Bangor just after lunch.

*June 14, 2007*

Advisory Committee members discussed two draft chapters that had been distributed earlier – Chapter 4: Passenger Survey and Chapter 8: Service Design Strategies. The consultant presented the group with a draft of Chapter 10: Financial and Capital Plan.

The consultant pointed out that the service plan consists of integrated parts, and cautioned that it will be very difficult to implement only selected pieces of the plan. Committee members expressed support for the consultant's draft service plan.

- A committee member asked if the proposed Ellsworth shuttle included service to Ellsworth Falls. The consultant indicated that this was not envisioned in the draft plan, but that DTI should be able to experiment with extending the shuttle route to serve a portion of Route 1A north of the Mill Mall.
- Ellsworth's city planner asked about the proposed location for a new downtown bus stop. The consultant described how buses would operate two loops through the downtown area. A bus stop in front of the Citgo Station on the south side of Main Street allows both loops to share the same downtown stop location. While this requires an adjustment in the curbing at the Main Street crosswalk, it does not displace any existing parking.
- A committee member asked about the size of the increase in year-round service. The consultant referred members to the discussion of service hours in Chapter 10. During the discussion it became apparent the percentage increases shown in the draft chapter were incorrect. The plan calls for a net increase in combined year-round service hours of 43%. This includes a 93% increase in commuter service hours between Ellsworth and the Jackson Laboratory, and a 32% increase in regular midday service hours.

The consultant went over highlights of the draft capital and financial plan chapter. He pointed out that the capital plan envisions purchasing a commuter motor coach for the Bangor-Bar Harbor commuter route. If grant funding is limited, a heavy-duty transit bus could be substituted. The transit system in Biddeford is getting ready to purchase one of each type of bus, and is budgeting \$350,000 for a commuter motor coach and \$250,000 for a heavy-duty transit bus.

The draft financial plan uses an annual inflation rate of 2.5%. DTI's general manager expressed concern that the general rate of inflation has been higher than 2.5%, and that fuel and insurance cost increases have been much greater. The Advisory Committee agreed that the plan should include an annual inflation increase of 3% per year.

The consultant called the group's attention to two revenue line items for midday service. The plan assumes that DTI will receive \$7,200 per year in private financial support from retirement communities in Bar Harbor and Blue Hill. It also calls upon DTI to resume the practice of obtaining financial support from local banks and businesses in exchange for advertising on buses and in the DTI timetable. It anticipates \$4,800 in net advertising revenues for FY 2008.

A member of the DTI Board of Directors suggested that ridership projections for individual route segments be expanded to also show a breakdown of anticipated fare box revenues. He suggested that this information would help the Board of Directors assess the cost of reducing or eliminating passenger fares on individual service segments. Someone suggested that operating cost projections for individual service segments might also be helpful.

One of Jackson Laboratory's two representatives on the Advisory Committee commented on the proposal to set Bar Harbor/Laboratory subscription rates at \$15 per week. She suggested that subscription fares from Bangor, Cherryfield, and Franklin could be \$18 per week, while charging \$15 per week to people who board in Ellsworth. She felt that Ellsworth riders might object to paying the same amount as longer-distance commuters.

The consultant will make adjustments to the draft Capital and Financial Plan chapter, adding information about. He will also proceed with development of a marketing chapter, along with an introduction and summary.

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## **Chapter 6: Coordination with Other Planning Efforts**

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This chapter discusses efforts to coordinate year-round transit planning with related ongoing planning efforts. Relevant projects include the Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan, planning for the Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton, the Biennial Operations Plan for Region 2, Ellsworth Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and efforts to develop an intermodal transportation and visitor center hub in Ellsworth.

### **6.1 Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan and the Acadia Gateway Center**

Planning for DTI's year round transit program was closely integrated with planning for the Island Explorer project. The consultants for this year-round DTI study are also developing a Short Range Transit Plan for the Island Explorer. Tom Crikelair Associates has also participated in planning for the Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton.

Coordination between the three planning efforts is particularly important in the Route 3 corridor between Bar Harbor and Ellsworth. Acadia Gateway Center plans envision year round commuter bus service between Trenton and Bar Harbor, with service to begin when the Phase 1 bus maintenance facility is completed. The Island Explorer plan anticipates express shuttle service between Trenton and Bar Harbor when the Phase 2 intermodal center is opened.

Both transit plans anticipate that separate buses will be needed for peak-hour commuter trips during the summer. The Island Explorer study calls for these commuter trips to be operated and funded through DTI's year round program. While Island Explorer and commuter trips will be coordinated, and while some commuters will ride Island Explorer buses for free, the Short Range Transit Plan calls for passengers to be charged a fare to ride early morning commuter buses to Bar Harbor. Commuters will also be charged a fare to ride express commuter buses from Jackson Laboratory in the afternoon.

This may upset some summer visitors who expect free Island Explorer service from Trenton to Bar Harbor in the early morning. But it will avoid the confusion of changing commuter fare policies every summer and fall. Including commuter operations in DTI's year round budget will also facilitate the use of FTA JARC funding for this service. The Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan calls for the Island Explorer partners to contribute roughly \$10,000 a year toward the operation of Route 3 commuter service.

The Island Explorer study focuses on the need for Route 3 visitor and commuter transportation between Trenton and Bar Harbor. The year round DTI study integrates these Acadia Gateway Center services with other needs in the Route 3 corridor, including

transportation for developmentally disabled adults, and commuter trips from Bar Harbor to Ellsworth.

The year round DTI study also anticipates the need for expanded links between the Island Explorer system and Ellsworth – for seasonal shoppers and for future users of the Downeast Excursion Railroad.

## **6.2 Biennial Operations Plan for Region 2**

Tom Crikelair Associates has participated in meetings of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee as the group works to plan for the future of public transportation in Hancock and Washington Counties. The comments of RPAC participants are reflected in the discussion of target markets and transportation needs in chapter seven of this report.

The consultant shared observations and findings with RPAC members regarding the need for expanded commuter service in the Ellsworth-Bar Harbor corridor. Enhanced commuter service in the corridor can provide more people with access to year-round jobs at Jackson Laboratory and seasonal employment in Bar Harbor.

The consultant took special note of two issues discussed by RPAC members. One involved transportation to medical appointments for senior citizens who are not eligible for Medicaid but who cannot afford taxis. Another is the need for increased travel choices for people with medical appointments in Ellsworth and Bangor.

The consultant told the group about service design concepts for DTI's fixed-route transit program, including possible expansion of in-town shuttle services in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, the introduction of expanded JARC-funded commuter service between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, enhanced bus service between Blue Hill and Ellsworth, midday bus service from Blue Hill and Bucksport to Bangor, and increased midday service between Bar Harbor and Bangor.

The consultant will share all draft chapters and service plans with the consultants who are developing the Biennial Operations Plan for the RPAC. Coordination between the DTI study and the Biennial Operations Plan is particularly important in 2007, because the BOP will serve as the locally developed coordinated public transit-humans services transportation plan required by the Federal Transit Administration for recipients of future JARC and New Freedom transit funding.

## **6.3 Ellsworth Bicycle Pedestrian Plan**

The Ellsworth Bicycle Pedestrian Plan is part of a larger effort to develop an integrated transportation system for the city of Ellsworth. The community desires “a multi-modal transportation system that promotes the safe, environmentally sensitive and efficient movement of people, goods and services through the city while minimizing traffic congestion and excessive strip development along its arterials.”

The Ellsworth Bicycle Pedestrian Plan will address a variety of individual transportation goals, including:

- Eliminating traffic safety hazards
- Correcting sidewalk deficiencies
- Ensuring handicapped access
- Expanding bicycle trails
- Promoting of alternative modes
- Improving pedestrian access to the waterfront
- Improving bicycle and pedestrian access to the Black House property, Birdsacre, and other open space near the downtown
- Ensuring community access to recreational facilities at area schools and the Downeast YMCA

An early draft of the project report highlights the need for public transit bus stops to allow “safe transfer of handicapped individuals.” Supporting materials for the study include an analysis of sidewalk deficiencies prepared by Ellsworth resident Thomas Stipe. This analysis shows numerous barriers to wheelchairs users in neighborhoods throughout the city of Ellsworth.

The consultant for the DTI Transit Plan will provide the Ellsworth Pedestrian Bicycle Committee early drafts of plans for an expanded in-town Ellsworth shuttle bus service. The Ellsworth Shuttle will be designed to help handicapped individuals, senior citizens, and other pedestrians to overcome some of the physical barriers that currently exist within the city. It will also focus on providing access to the commercial and recreational destinations identified by the Ellsworth Pedestrian Bicycle Committee.

The service plan concepts developed during the DTI study should assist pedestrian and bicycle planners by helping them to identify locations where bus stop improvements are needed. A major deficiency with the current arrangement is the lack of a clearly identified and accessible bus stop in downtown Ellsworth. Other locations where passenger loading areas, bus stop signs, and related amenities will likely be needed include the Ellsworth Shopping Center, the Maine Coast Mall, the Mill Mall, and doctor’s offices on Resort Way.

## Chapter 7: Market Groups and Transportation Needs

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This chapter identifies various market segments that might benefit from improved transportation links in Hancock County. It examines local travel patterns for senior citizens, people with disabilities, school children, commuters, and others. It identifies service features that will likely be required to successfully meet the transportation needs of potential user groups.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 7.1 Senior Citizens
- Section 7.2 People with Disabilities
- Section 7.3 Commuters
- Section 7.4 School Children
- Section 7.5 College Students
- Section 7.6 International Workers
- Section 7.7 Other Shoppers
- Section 7.8 Intercity Travelers
- Section 7.9 Excursion Rail Travelers

### 7.1 Senior Citizens

#### 7.1.1 Senior apartment complexes

Potential senior citizen bus users include seniors who live in subsidized senior citizen apartment complexes, seniors who live at hospital-affiliated assisted-living retirement communities, and seniors who live in individual private residences throughout DTI's service area.

Subsidized housing complexes are located in many Hancock County towns. DTI buses currently offer stops at facilities in Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, Ellsworth, Winter Harbor, Stonington, Deer Isle, Sedgwick, Blue Hill, and Bucksport.

Demand for bus service at these apartment complexes has diminished since the 1980's. This appears to be due in part to increased automobile ownership by tenants. In Bucksport, residents who do use the bus seem to be more interested in local errands than longer distance shopping trips.

Assisted-living retirement communities are located in Blue Hill and Bar Harbor. Both of these facilities provide a limited amount of transportation to residents using buses or vans

owned by the residential facility. Birch Bay Village in Bar Harbor offers morning shopping trips to Bar Harbor every Monday and Friday, and morning shopping trips to Ellsworth every other Wednesday. Parker Ridge in Blue Hill offers weekly shopping trips to Blue Hill and to Ellsworth, but only a handful of residents take advantage of the service.

Activity directors at both retirement facilities indicated that their residents might be interested in expanded travel opportunities. They agreed that there might be particular interest in weekly trips to Bangor. Birch Bay Village expressed interest in the potential for DTI to replace some of their in-house services, since this would free up resources and allow them to expand other programs.

### *7.1.2 Senior citizen lunch programs*

Much of DTI's current midday service was originally designed around providing senior citizens access to senior citizen lunch programs. For example, Tuesday and Thursday schedules on Mount Desert Island are designed to bring seniors from Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and Southwest Harbor to the Bar Harbor Meals for Me site. In the 1980's DTI regularly operated full buses for this program. In recent years, demand for transportation to Bar Harbor Meals for Me has dropped to only one or two riders.

DTI also provides a transportation link in Ellsworth between senior apartments and Meals for Me at Meadowview Apartments. But at the present time, only one or two individuals use the in-town Ellsworth bus to travel to this lunch program.

Meals for Me continues to serve lunches at group sites in Bar Harbor, Ellsworth, and elsewhere in Hancock County, but much of the emphasis on senior nutrition has changed to delivering lunches to senior citizens in their homes and apartments.

DTI should look for ways to continue providing access to congregate meal sites. But there no longer appears to be sufficient demand to justify operating a shuttle route whose primary destination is Meals for Me. Meal site transportation needs to be part of a larger set of travel choices.

### *7.1.3 Transportation for medical appointments*

Senior citizens without cars often experience difficulty getting to medical appointments. This is especially true for people without family members nearby to provide rides when they are needed.

There are three organizations in Hancock County that offer transportation to medical appointments for senior citizens and others who cannot drive themselves. WHCA uses a combination of agency buses and volunteer car drivers to provide client-based transportation, especially for low-income people who qualify for Medicaid through the

MaineCare program. Island Connections and Faith in Action Community Connections use volunteer car drivers to provide medical transportation for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

All three organizations could provide more service if they had more volunteers. WHCA is the only organization that provides cash reimbursements for miles driven. But WHCA has only limited resources available to serve people who do not qualify for Medicaid. A significant unmet need involves seniors who do not qualify for Medicaid yet who cannot afford to pay for taxis. Moreover, because of limited drivers and vehicles and a scarcity of local volunteers, WHCA provides only minimal transportation services on Mount Desert Island.

Neither Island Connections nor Community Connections has funding available to reimburse volunteer drivers. Both organizations rely on special grants to pay for office workers to coordinate rides and the delivery of other services. Neither program can meet all requests for transportation. Program directors agree that local seniors would benefit from expanded in-town shuttle services. They have also identified a need for more longer-distance bus service to hospitals and medical offices in Ellsworth and Bangor.

All three organizations recognize that regularly scheduled buses can offer only a limited number of travel choices, and that scheduled trips are likely to match only some medical appointments. There may be an opportunity, however, to combine a scheduled bus trip in one direction with a door-to-door trip in the other. This could help increase the productivity and efficiency for the door-to-door programs, by reducing deadhead miles and unproductive wait time.

#### *7.1.4 Transportation for errands and shopping*

The region's three door-to-door transportation providers focus most of their resources on medical trips. They have limited ability to provide seniors with transportation for shopping and local errands. Birch Bay Village and Parker Ridge retirement communities offer some regional shopping trips, but both organizations have indicated that residents would benefit from more service and more choices.

One of Downeast Transportation's more successful and productive midday routes is the one-day-a-week Bucksport shuttle. Each Wednesday, a DTI bus provides multiple midday trips within Bucksport, linking senior apartments with downtown stores, banks, the local supermarket, and a drug store. The bus also provides access to the senior citizen lunch program.

The Bucksport shuttle is similar to the in-town services that DTI operates in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, except the Bucksport service offers more trips and more hours of service. The Bucksport service could perhaps serve as a model for redesigning in-town services in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, as well as for possible new in-town shuttles for other communities.

DTI operates some reasonably productive longer-distance shopping trips. This includes service from Bar Harbor to Ellsworth, from Stonington to Ellsworth, and from Bar Harbor and Ellsworth to Bangor. There may be an opportunity to provide some of these services to more than one day a week. It might also be feasible to add a shopping link from Blue Hill and Bucksport to Bangor.

#### *7.1.5 Senior recreation and exercise programs*

Recreation and exercise programs and facilities are available at the MDI YMCA in Bar Harbor, the Downeast YMCA in Ellsworth, and Harbor House in Southwest Harbor. Senior citizens could benefit from improved transportation access to these locations. The best strategy is probably to offer multiple arrival and departure times. This would allow independent use of swimming pools and other facilities, as well as access to scheduled group exercise programs.

## **7.2 People with Disabilities**

There are at least four categories of transit-related needs for area residents with disabilities:

- Transportation for developmentally disabled adults to and from day programs at the Downeast Horizons facility on Route 3 in Bar Harbor
- Commuter transportation for developmentally disabled adults to and from community-based employment
- Access to medical appointments, shopping, and cultural and recreational activities for individuals in the community with a variety of physical and mental disabilities
- Daytime excursions for participants in Downeast Horizon day programs

#### *7.2.1 Transportation to and from the Downeast Horizons Day Center*

DTI currently operates two routes for the Downeast Horizons Day Center, one from Ellsworth and another from Northeast Harbor and Somesville. Downeast Horizons has indicated that they are counting on DTI to continue operating these routes. Arrival and departure times for the bus service were established when the facility operated as a sheltered workshop with set worker shifts. Start and end times at the Day Center are changing and DTI is in the process of adjusting its schedules to accommodate the new hours.

### *7.2.2 Commuter transportation to community-based job sites*

Many of the developmentally disabled adults who formerly worked at the MDI Workshop now have jobs in the community. Transportation can be a greater problem now, because individuals find jobs separately, with little opportunity for group travel. Downeast Horizons staff members who help disabled people find community-based jobs are often limited by a lack of available transportation. If regular commuter routes were available for people with disabilities, new employment opportunities would likely become available.

Downeast Transportation is unlikely to be able to provide commuter alternatives for individuals who live at home in private residences. The greatest potential and perhaps the greatest need involves transportation for people who live in group homes. Downeast Horizons operates two group homes in Ellsworth, and a third on the Knox Road in Bar Harbor. All three facilities could be served by selected commuter trips operating between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor. This could give developmentally disabled adults access to job opportunities at both ends of the route.

### *7.2.3 Access to medical appointments, shopping, and other destinations*

All of Downeast Transportation's buses are fully accessible and equipped to handle wheelchairs. Moreover, DTI will deviate from its regular non-commuter routes to pick up and drop off anyone who cannot travel to a bus stop along the route. This means that travel opportunities for disabled individuals are the same as travel opportunities for the rest of the population. Transportation needs for disabled people are very similar to the needs for senior citizens and other local residents without cars.

### *7.2.4 Daytime excursions for the Downeast Horizons day program*

Downeast Horizons sometimes would like to transport groups of developmentally disabled adults for outings and activities as part of their educational day program. There might be an opportunity for DTI to help out by providing a bus and a driver for daytime excursions. This will depend on weekly work schedules for DTI drivers.

To comply with FTA charter requirements, any excursion trips would need to be publicized in advance and available for others in the community. Funding for these extra trips would need to be provided by Downeast Horizons.

## 7.3 Commuters

This section examines four commuter markets:

- Jackson Laboratory employees
- Year-round and seasonal Bar Harbor workers
- People who work in Ellsworth and Bangor
- Disabled adults with community-based employment in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor

### 7.3.1 *Jackson Laboratory employees*

The Jackson Laboratory is the region's largest employer. Over 1,200 people commute each day to jobs at this Bar Harbor research facility. DTI currently operates three subscription commuter buses designed around the Jackson Lab's 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. work shift. Buses originate in Bangor, Cherryfield, and Franklin. Many of the Franklin riders board at a park and ride lot behind the Maine Coast Mall in Ellsworth.

The existing commuter routes give Maine residents who live in outlying communities affordable access to good-paying jobs at Jackson Lab. The bus service also helps the laboratory to attract needed workers from more distant locations.

Subscription services are limited because they provide only a single morning arrival time and only one choice for an afternoon departure. People who work other shifts cannot use the service, nor can people who sometimes need to work late. A recent survey of Jackson Lab employees suggests that more people would use the service if more arrival and departure times were available.

Expanding commuter choices for Jackson Lab will benefit existing workers, and it will also provide expanded employment opportunities for Maine residents who might be hired for other work shifts. Other lab shifts include 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### 7.3.2 *Year-round and seasonal Bar Harbor workers*

As real estate prices have gone up on Mount Desert Island, housing for local workers has also become more expensive. Some year-round rental properties have been converted to weekly rentals. As a result, local employers hire an increasing number of people who live in mainland communities. This contributes to three related problems:

- Traffic congestion on Route 3
- Stress on an already limited supply of in-town parking
- Increased obstacles for employment, especially for lower paid workers who travel long distances.

The town of Bar Harbor has struggled for many years to come up with a parking strategy that accommodates commuting workers. While this is mostly a problem during the summer and fall tourist seasons, there are also year-round workers who might benefit from year-round commuter transportation.

There is a particular transportation need during the spring, summer, and fall for international workers without cars. In recent years, one Bar Harbor business has paid Downeast Transportation to transport workers from an employer owned housing complex in Trenton. Increased shuttle options in the Route 3 corridor would allow more guest workers to find apartments outside of Bar Harbor. It is worth noting that seasonal commuter services will need to operate seven days a week if they are going to accommodate the needs of the tourism workforce.

### *7.3.3 People who work in Ellsworth and in the Bangor area*

While many people commute to jobs in Ellsworth and Bangor, there does not appear to be an obvious commute pattern around clearly defined work shifts. One exception might be the University of Maine in Orono. DTI operated a subscription commuter service between Bar Harbor and Orono in the early 1990's for University students and employees. The service was discontinued because of diminishing ridership.

It is difficult to provide multiple travel choices in these longer corridors, because of the deadhead miles involved and because of the cost of operating multiple buses. DTI should work with the Go Maine Rideshare program to try to identify commute patterns that might support new subscription routes. Meanwhile, it may be possible to offer new commuter options in the Bar Harbor to Ellsworth corridor using deadheading Jackson Laboratory buses.

### *7.3.4 Disabled adults with community-based employment in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor*

Group homes for developmentally disabled adults are located in Ellsworth and near the Knox Road in Bar Harbor. Commuter buses operating between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor could provide increased employment opportunities for disabled adults in Ellsworth and Bar Harbor.

## **7.4 School Children**

Parents who send their children to private schools typically provide their own transportation. For example, there are a number of parents in the Ellsworth area who use private cars to transport their children to the Bay School in Blue Hill. There is also some private transportation provided for children who attend George Stevens Academy and the Liberty School in Blue Hill.

Children need to arrive at the Bay School within a few minutes of 8:00 a.m. The school day ends at 2:45 p.m. A spokesperson for Bay School parents suggests that at least ten or twelve families would likely take advantage of a public shuttle route between Ellsworth and Blue Hill.

Some Hancock County parents send their children to John Bapst High School in Bangor. The Headmaster reports that about a dozen Hancock County children are currently enrolled at John Bapst. The school day runs from 8:00 a.m. until 1:42 p.m. Many children remain at the school in the afternoon to work with teachers and for sports and other activities. The Headmaster suggests that variable afternoon schedules would limit the number of potential bus riders. He also said that some students from Hancock County share rides with parents who commute to jobs in Bangor.

### **7.5 College Students**

Students at Bar Harbor's College of the Atlantic might benefit from a shuttle linking the college campus with Bar Harbor's village center. There has been limited use by COA students of the Island Explorer Eden Street route during September and early October. Interest in a shuttle link would likely be greater during the colder winter months. It is worth noting that COA currently uses a college van and work/study students to offer late night rides between the campus and downtown Bar Harbor.

A different potential need involves area residents who commute to classes at the University of Maine. It might be possible to reinstitute a subscription van service between Bar Harbor and the Orono campus. Basic requirements include an available vehicle, and a driver and a back-up driver who are employed at the University.

There might be some interest on the part of some COA students for travel to the Orono library of the University of Maine. DTI experimented with a Saturday link between the two campuses in the late 1980's. While the service was reasonably popular during the winter months, demand dropped dramatically once warmer spring weather arrived.

### **7.6 International Workers**

DTI's Monday bus from Bar Harbor to Bangor is quite popular with international workers from Eastern Europe and Jamaica. Guest workers enjoy the opportunity to travel to Bangor's shopping malls. One young man from Bulgaria offered three suggestions for improving the Bar Harbor-Bangor service:

- (1) Operate more than just one day a week; offer the service every day if possible.
- (2) Change the schedule so people have more time to shop in Bangor.
- (3) Speed up the route by limiting the number of stops at off-route senior citizen apartment complexes.

International workers also use DTI buses for shopping in Ellsworth. Travel to Ellsworth would likely increase if more service days and travel choices are offered.

## **7.7 Other Shoppers**

There are a variety of local residents who do not own cars and who use Downeast Transportation for shopping trips to Ellsworth and Bangor. The strongest routes are Stonington-Ellsworth, Bar Harbor-Ellsworth, and Bar Harbor-Ellsworth-Bangor.

There is very limited demand for DTI's one-day-a-week shopping trips between Winter Harbor and Ellsworth, between Bucksport and Ellsworth, between Southwest Harbor and Ellsworth, and between Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor. Use of these routes has diminished over the years to only a handful of individuals per day.

There has been little or no promotion of these shopping trips in recent years. It is unknown whether local residents would utilize these buses if an effort were made to tell people about the service. However, the fact that these buses are not used suggests that there may be little need for the service.

Downeast Transportation's experience in Bucksport suggests that travel demands may have changed over the years. Bucksport residents who use the in-town shuttle are probably aware of the Ellsworth bus. The one-day-a-week in-town bus typically serves 15 or 20 individuals each week, while the shopping trip to Ellsworth usually carries only two or three people.

The best way for DTI to meet the shopping needs of more people may be for DTI to focus on in-town shuttles, while also increasing the days of service on routes that are currently well utilized.

## **7.8 Intercity Travelers**

DTI's Bar Harbor-Bangor bus serves some intercity travelers who are making connections with intercity buses in Bangor. While some people will continue to use the Bangor bus for this purpose, intercity travel has never been the primary focus of the route. There does not appear to be an obvious need for DTI to expand intercity links between Bar Harbor and Bangor, especially given the existence of the private Bar Harbor-Bangor Shuttle. This need should be reassessed if the private service is discontinued.

There may be some opportunity for DTI to work with Acadia National Park to provide an intercity bus or van link between the Schoodic peninsula and Young's Market in Gouldsboro. This could provide a connection with West Transportation's Calais-Bangor bus for local residents and out-of-town guests participating in programs at the Schoodic Education and Research Center.

## **7.9 Excursion Rail Travelers**

A local organization is working to institute excursion rail trips on a portion of the state-owned Calais Branch rail line. The Downeast Scenic Railroad hopes to introduce excursion trips that begin and end in Ellsworth. Organizers envision two daytime trips and a possible evening dinner run.

Downeast Transportation could help contribute to the success of the proposed rail project by transporting train riders between Bar Harbor and Ellsworth. Once the Acadia Gateway Center is completed in Trenton, the dedicated train link could probably be shortened to link the train station with the AGC. Vacationers and residents could use proposed Gateway Express buses to travel between Bar Harbor and Trenton, transferring to railway buses at the new intermodal center.

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## Chapter 8: Service Design Strategies

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This chapter discusses possible service design improvements for year-round transit services in Hancock County. It identifies possible changes to existing operations, and it discusses opportunities to add routes to meet additional needs in the community.

The proposed service plan includes the following highlights:

- Comprehensive commuter service linking Ellsworth and the Jackson Laboratory
- Improved in-town shuttle service for Ellsworth, Bucksport, Bar Harbor, and Southwest Harbor
- Continued one-day-a-week midday transportation from Stonington to Ellsworth
- Enhanced five-day-a-week midday service from Bar Harbor to Ellsworth
- Weekday transportation between Ellsworth and the Bay School in Blue Hill
- Two routes for the Downeast Horizons Day Center in Bar Harbor, including one that provides a five-day-a-week link between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor
- Two-day-a-week service between Bar Harbor and Bangor
- New one-day-a-week service between Bucksport and Bangor

The new service plan calls for elimination of a number of DTI routes that are currently used by only a handful of individuals. Routes proposed for cancellation include one-day-a-week service to Ellsworth from Winter Harbor, Otis, Bucksport, Southwest Harbor, and Northeast Harbor. The plan also calls for discontinuing one-day-a-week cross-island bus service between Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 8.1 Ellsworth-Blue Hill (Bay School)
- Section 8.2 Bucksport Shuttle
- Section 8.3 Ellsworth Shuttle
- Section 8.4 Stonington-Ellsworth
- Section 8.5 Bucksport-Bangor
- Section 8.6 Ellsworth-Bar Harbor-Jackson Lab Commuters
- Section 8.7 Downeast Horizons: Ellsworth-Bar Harbor
- Section 8.8 Downeast Horizons: Bar Harbor/Northeast Harbor/Somesville
- Section 8.9 Bar Harbor to Ellsworth Commuters and Midday Travelers
- Section 8.10 Bar Harbor Shuttle
- Section 8.11 Southwest Harbor/Bass Harbor Shuttle
- Section 8.12 Bar Harbor-Ellsworth-Bangor
- Section 8.13 Proposed Service Cancellations
- Section 8.14 Vehicle Use and Driver Assignments

**8.1 Ellsworth-Blue Hill (Bay School)**

The school day at the Bay School runs from 8:00 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. Five-day-a-week shuttle service could be provided between Ellsworth City Hall and Blue Hill to accommodate Bay School families and others wishing to travel between these two communities.

**ELLSWORTH - BAY SCHOOL**

*Monday through Friday, school year only*

	read down	read up
<b>Ellsworth</b>		
City Hall	7:20 a	3:25 p
<b>Blue Hill</b>		
Town Hall	7:40 a	3:05 p
Bay School	7:50 a	2:55 p

This schedule leaves adequate time to schedule other midday services between the morning drop-off and the afternoon pick-up at the Bay School. The service plan calls for this bus to link Bucksport and Bangor on Mondays, to provide in-town Ellsworth shuttle service on Tuesdays and Thursdays, to operate the Bucksport Shuttle on Wednesdays, and to link Stonington and Ellsworth on Fridays.

**8.2 Bucksport Shuttle**

The Bucksport Shuttle currently operates every Wednesday between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. providing an in-town circuit every 30 minutes. The new service plan calls for the Bucksport Shuttle to operate between 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Half-hour service would continue uninterrupted throughout the noon hour.

**BUCKSPORT SHUTTLE**

*Wednesdays*

	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down
Bucksport Sq	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	1:00
Bucksprt Apts	9:36	10:06	10:36	11:06	11:36	12:06	12:36	1:06
Main Street	9:41	10:11	10:41	11:11	11:41	12:11	12:41	1:11
Hannaford	9:45	10:15	10:45	11:15	11:45	12:15	12:45	1:15
Rite Aid	9:50	10:20	10:50	11:20	11:50	12:20	12:50	1:20
Bucksport Sq	9:55	10:25	10:55	11:25	11:55	12:25	12:55	1:25

During the school year, people would be able to ride on Wednesdays from Blue Hill to Bucksport in the morning, and from Bucksport to Blue Hill in the afternoon. The bus would depart Blue Hill at 8:00 a.m. It would depart Bucksport for Blue Hill at 1:30 p.m. or 2:00 p.m.

### 8.3 Ellsworth Shuttle

Downeast Transportation currently provides limited five-day-a-week shuttle service in Ellsworth, linking senior apartment complexes with downtown and High Street shopping malls. The existing service consists of three trips between downtown and the malls, with only one pick-up and one drop-off at Meadowview Apartments. It does not include service to the Mill Mall or medical offices on Resort Way.

The new service plan calls for expanded in-town shuttle service for Ellsworth two days a week. It would consist of four and one-half round trips operating on 60-minute headways. An extended route includes the Mill Mall and Resort Way. Each round trip would include service to Meadowview Apartments and the Maine Coast Hospital.

#### ELLSWORTH IN-TOWN SHUTTLE

*Tuesdays and Thursdays*

	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down
Main Street	9:00 a	10:00 a	11:00 a	12:00 p	1:00 p
Meadowview	9:05 a	10:05 a	11:05 a	12:05 p	1:05 p
Mill Mall	9:15 a	10:15 a	11:15 a	12:15 p	1:15 p
Main Street	9:25 a	10:25 a	11:25 a	12:25 p	1:25 p
Shaws	9:30 a	10:30 a	11:30 a	12:30 p	
Mall	9:35 a	10:35 a	11:35 a	12:35 p	
Resort Way	9:37 a	10:37 a	11:37 a	12:37 p	
Wal-Mart	9:40 a	10:40 a	11:40 a	12:40 p	
Union River	9:45 a	10:45 a	11:45 a	12:45 p	
Riverview	R	R	R	R	
Main Street	9:50 a	10:50 a	11:50 a	12:50 p	

The proposed route consists of two loops that begin and end in downtown Ellsworth. The bus would depart downtown and head to Meadowview Apartments. It would continue via Oak Street to the Mill Mall and Downeast YMCA, and then return to Main Street via State Street. The bus would then depart Main Street and head via High Street to Shaws, the Maine Coast Mall, Resort Way, and Wal-Mart. It would return to Main Street via Water Street, Union River Estates, and Riverview Apartments.

This redesigned Ellsworth in-town service assumes that a new downtown bus stop will be created on Main Street in front of the Citgo service station. This will require changes to the curbing to allow buses to pull out of the travel way after they pass through the Main Street/Franklin Street intersection.

In-town Ellsworth shuttle service could be expanded in the future to include more days of the week. This would likely require an increase in local funding from the city of Ellsworth. It will also depend on the availability of a part-time driver.

## 8.4 Stonington-Ellsworth

DTI operates bus service between Stonington and Ellsworth every Friday. The new service plan calls for continuation of the same service, with a slight alteration in travel times to accommodate starting and ending times at the Bay School.

The 9:22 a.m. departure from Stonington shifts 40 minutes earlier to 8:42 a.m. This results in a morning arrival in Ellsworth at 10:20 a.m. The 1:50 p.m. departure from Ellsworth moves an hour earlier to 12:45 p.m. This shortens the amount of time spent in Ellsworth to two hours and twenty-five minutes instead of two hours and 50 minutes.

### STONINGTON-ELLSWORTH

*Fridays*

	read down	read up	read down	read up
<b>Ellsworth</b>				
Wal-Mart		10:25 a	12:35 p	
Main Street		10:10 a	12:45 p	
<b>Blue Hill</b>				
Hospital		9:46 a	1:05 p	
Town Hall		9:44 a	1:07 p	
Bay School	7:50 a			2:35 p
<b>Brooklin</b>				
N. Brooklin		9:27 a	1:17 p	
General Store		9:20 a	1:23 p	
<b>Sedgwick</b>				
Bnj Riv Apts		9:09 a	1:35 p	
Sargentville PO		9:02 a	1:40 p	
<b>Deer Isle</b>				
Gross's Store	8:05 a	8:56 a	1:45 p	2:18 p
Nursing Home		8:53 a	1:48 p	
Deer Run Apts		8:47 a	1:53 p	
Hardy's Store	8:16 a		1:55 p	
<b>Sunset</b>				
Eaton's Plumbing	8:20 a		1:58 p	
<b>Stonington</b>				
Burnt Cove	8:24 a		2:01 p	
Ron's Mobil		8:37 a		2:08 p
Penb. Bay Press	8:32 a		2:05 p	

The Stonington bus will need to offer multiple stops in Ellsworth, plus midday in-town trips for riders who wish to shop in more than one location.

**MIDDAY ELLSWORTH SERVICE**

*Fridays*

City Hall	10:10 a	11:10 a	12:20 p
Shaws	10:15 a	11:15 a	12:25 p
Mall	10:20 a	11:20 a	12:30 p
Wal-Mart	10:25 a	11:25 a	12:35 p
Main Street	10:35 a	11:35 a	12:45 p

Many current riders are likely to see the revised schedule as an improvement. With the current schedule, Stonington route riders sometimes board the bus in Ellsworth a full hour before they are scheduled to depart for their return trip.

**8.5 Bucksport-Bangor**

Bucksport community members have expressed an interest in bus service to Bangor. The service plan includes Monday bus service from Blue Hill and Bucksport to Bangor. After dropping off at the Bay School, the bus would continue to the Parker Ridge retirement community. It would return to downtown Blue Hill and then proceed via Route 15 and Route 3 to Bucksport. Scheduled stops could be included in the town of Orland.

In Bucksport the bus would make stops at Bucksport Square Apartments, Wen Belle Apartments, and Bucksport Apartments before continuing via the River Road to Brewer and Bangor.

**BUCKSPORT-BANGOR**

*Mondays*

	read down	read up
<b>Blue Hill</b>		
Parker Ridge	8:30 a	2:30 p
Town Hall	8:40 a	2:20 p
<b>Bucksport</b>		
Bucksport Square	9:10 a	1:50 p
Bucksport Apts	9:15 a	1:45 p
<b>Bangor</b>		
Pickering Square	9:50 a	1:10 p
EMHC Union Street	10:00 a	1:00 p
Bangor Mall	10:10 a	12:50 p
EMMC	10:20 a	12:40 p

In Bangor, the bus could offer drops-offs at the downtown BAT terminal, at the Eastern Maine Healthcare Mall on Union Street, and at the Bangor Mall. Stops at Eastern Maine Medical Center could be available on request. On-request stops could be offered at Concord Trailways and Bangor International Airport, and at other Bangor medical offices.

### 8.6 Ellsworth-Bar Harbor-Jackson Lab Commuters

Jackson Laboratory employees would benefit from an expanded choice of travel times. The current commuter bus program offers only a single morning arrival and a single afternoon departure. Some work shifts start and end at different times. In other cases, people need back up departures for days when they work late.

Three buses could be used to provide four daily trips in the morning from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor and the Jackson Laboratory. The same three buses could provide four afternoon return trips. Schedules were designed to accommodate workers commuting to other job sites in Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, as well as people traveling to the Downeast Horizons Day Center on Route 3 in Bar Harbor.

#### ELLSWORTH-BAR HARBOR COMMUTER SERVICE

*Monday through Friday*

	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down
<b>Ellsworth</b>									
City Hall				8:00				3:00	4:20
Me Coast Mall	6:00	6:30	7:05	8:10				-	-
<b>Bar Harbor</b>									
DE Horizons	-	-	7:20	8:25				-	-
Village Green	6:35	7:05	7:40	8:45				3:45	4:55
Jackson Lab	6:40	7:10	7:45	8:50				3:50	5:00
<b>Bar Harbor</b>									
Jackson Lab		7:10				3:05	3:35	4:05	5:05
Village Green		7:15				3:10	3:40	4:10	5:10
DE Horizons		-			2:15		-	-	-
<b>Ellsworth</b>									
Me Coast Mall		7:50				3:45	4:10	4:40	5:40
City Hall		7:55			3:00		4:20	R	R

The bus that departs Ellsworth at 6:00 a.m. would remain at the Laboratory throughout the day, and then depart the Lab at 3:05 p.m. DTI will need to recruit a Jackson Lab employee to drive this round trip.

The bus that departs Ellsworth at 6:30 a.m. would make two morning roundtrips. The second inbound bus would include pick-ups at Downeast Horizons group homes in Ellsworth.

The bus that departs Downeast Horizons at 2:15 p.m. would return to Bar Harbor, departing the Lab at 4:05 p.m. The bus that departs the Lab at 3:05 p.m. would offer a single northbound trip. The bus that departs the Lab at 3:35 p.m. would travel to Ellsworth and then return to the Lab for a final departure at 5:05 p.m. This same bus will have departed Downeast Horizons at 2:15 p.m. for the Knox Road, Somesville, Northeast Harbor, and Bar Harbor, returning to the Lab in time for the scheduled 3:35 p.m. departure.

The service plan assumes that DTI will receive a 50% operating subsidy from the FTA Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program for this new comprehensive commuter service. The program will allow low-income families to gain access to jobs in Bar Harbor without needing to purchase an automobile for each working member of the family. The commuter service will benefit people who find seasonal jobs in Bar Harbor, as well as those who are hired for year-round positions at Jackson Lab. The commuter program will also provide increased flexibility for residents of Downeast Horizons group homes who need transportation to community-based employment.

The plan anticipates a reduction in the fare for DTI's existing commuter subscription services. It calls for DTI's long-distance subscription fares to drop from \$27.50 and \$24.50 a week to \$15 a week for participating employers. It envisions an Ellsworth-Bar Harbor subscription fare of \$15 a week.

The plan calls upon Jackson Lab to increase its financial support from \$15,000 a year to \$50,000 a year. Other Bar Harbor employers should be asked to contribute at least \$30 per month per participating employee to help underwrite the cost of the service.

DTI may need to limit the sale of Ellsworth-Bar Harbor subscriptions to ensure that seats are available for participating commuters. Single rides could be offered to non-subscribers on a space available basis, after all subscribers are seated. The single-ride fare should be at least \$5 per day. This one-day fare should apply for one-way rides as well as for single-day round trips.

For buses from Bangor, Cherryfield, and Franklin, the single-ride fare could be as high as \$7 to \$10. Non-subscribers should be allowed to ride on a space-available basis only, and they should board only after regular subscribers have been seated.

A lower fare could be available for short rides between the Jackson Lab and Bar Harbor. Short-distance riders should be allowed to ride only if space is available. DTI should make sure that short-distance riders do not occupy seats needed for subscribers.

**8.7 Downeast Horizons: Ellsworth-Bar Harbor**

The commuter timetable presented in the previous section includes morning and afternoon transportation between Ellsworth and the Downeast Horizons Day Center on Route 3 in Bar Harbor. Downeast Horizons clients would ride with regular commuters in the morning. Pick-ups at Ellsworth group homes would occur between 7:50 and 8:10 a.m. This bus would arrive at the Day Center at 8:25 a.m. and in downtown Bar Harbor at 8:45 a.m.

A special afternoon northbound trip would depart the Day Center at 2:15 p.m. For people with community-based jobs, buses that depart Bar Harbor at 3:40 p.m., 4:10 p.m., and 5:10 p.m. would offer drop-offs on request at Downeast Horizons group homes.

**8.8 Downeast Horizons: Bar Harbor/Northeast Harbor/Somesville**

The service plan includes two round trips a day on a route that links downtown Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, Somesville, and the Downeast Horizons Day Center, before returning on request to downtown Bar Harbor. The schedule calls for this bus to arrive at Downeast Horizons at 8:45 a.m. and to depart at 2:15 p.m. It would include pick-ups at client residences in Northeast Harbor and Somesville, as well as at the Downeast Horizons group home on the Knox Road.

**BAR HARBOR-NORTHEAST HARBOR-SOMESVILLE-BAR HARBOR**

*Monday through Friday*

	read down	read up
Bar Harbor Village Green	7:40 a	3:15 p
Northeast Harbor	8:10 a	2:50 p
Somesville	8:30 a	2:30 p
Knox Road	8:40 a	2:20 p
DE Horizons	8:45 a	2:15 p
Bar Harbor Village Green	R	2:00 p

R indicates stops on request.

While this service is designed primarily for clients of Downeast Horizons, it would be available for anyone traveling between Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and Somesville. It could also provide five-day-a-week on-request service to Bar Harbor from Town Hill, Salisbury Cove, and Hulls Cove.

## 8.9 Bar Harbor to Ellsworth Commuters and Midday Travelers

The Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter service described in Section 8.6 includes a single morning commuter trip from Bar Harbor to Ellsworth, and two afternoon commuter trips from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor. The northbound bus departs Bar Harbor at 7:15 a.m. and arrives in downtown Ellsworth at 7:55 a.m. The southbound trips depart Ellsworth City Hall at 3:00 p.m. and 4:20 p.m.

The service plan calls for DTI to increase its Bar Harbor-Ellsworth midday service to five days a week. A bus would begin picking up passengers in Bar Harbor at 9:00 a.m. It would include scheduled stops at Hannaford, Malvern-Belmont, Rodick-Lorraine, and Birch Bay, and on request pick-ups at Harbor Hill and elsewhere in downtown Bar Harbor.

The bus would arrive Wal-Mart at 9:35 a.m. and downtown Ellsworth at 9:45 a.m. A return trip would depart downtown Ellsworth at 1:20 p.m. Individuals who wish to spend more time in Ellsworth could return to Bar Harbor on southbound commuter buses that depart Ellsworth at 3:00 p.m. and 4:20 p.m.

### BAR HARBOR-ELLSWORTH MIDDAY SERVICE

*Monday through Friday*

	read down	read up
<b>Bar Harbor</b>		
Rodick-Lorraine	9:02 a	R
Malvern-Belmont	9:05 a	R
Hannaford	9:10 a	1:55 p
Birch Bay	9:20 a	1:45 p
<b>Ellsworth</b>		
Wal-Mart	9:35 a	1:30 p
City Hall	9:45 a	1:20 p

R indicates stops on request.

In-town Ellsworth shuttle service would be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with additional in-town trips provided on Fridays by the Stonington bus.

## 8.10 Bar Harbor Shuttle

A midday shuttle for Bar Harbor could connect Birch Bay Village, Harbor Hill, Rodick-Lorraine, and Malvern-Belmont with Main and Cottage Street businesses, MDI Hospital, and the MDI YMCA. Hourly trips could begin and end at the Hannaford supermarket.

If the Bar Harbor shuttle operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays, trips from Bar Harbor to Bangor could be offered on Mondays and Fridays. Alternatively, the in-town service could operate on Mondays and Fridays, with Bar Harbor-Bangor service provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Proposed schedules call for the in-town service to operate between 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

### BAR-HARBOR SHUTTLE

*Tuesdays and Thursdays*

	read down	read down	read down	read down	read down
Hannaford	9:30 a	10:30 a	11:30 a	12:30 p	1:30 p
Birch Bay	9:40 a	10:40 a	11:40 a	12:40 p	R
Harbor Hill	9:48 a	10:48 a	11:48 a	12:48 p	R
Rodick-Lorraine	9:53 a	10:53 a	11:53 a	12:53 p	R
Malvern-Belmont	9:55 a	10:55 a	11:55 a	12:55 p	R
Hannaford	9:58 a	10:58 a	11:58 a	12:58 p	
Hospital	10:03 a	11:03 a	12:03 p	1:03 p	
YMCA	10:05 a	11:05 a	12:05 p	1:05 p	
Hannaford	10:15 a	11:15 a	12:15 p	1:15 p	

The route would consist of two loops that start and end at Hannaford. One loop would serve four senior citizen housing complexes, while the other would provide access to shopping destinations, the hospital, and the YMCA. This configuration would give seniors direct rides to and from the local supermarket, and reasonably direct service to other in-town destinations.

The in-town schedule is designed so it can be operated by one of the Ellsworth-Jackson Laboratory commuter buses. If a separate bus is used for the Bar Harbor shuttle, it would be possible to extend the service later in the afternoon. A longer service day might be of some interest to the College of the Atlantic. To serve the needs of the college community, the in-town shuttle would probably need to operate five days a week when classes are in session.

### 8.11 Southwest Harbor/Bass Harbor Shuttle

Residents of Southwest Harbor and Tremont have shown little interest in recent years in bus service to Bar Harbor and Ellsworth. A shuttle that provides improved access to local destinations might do a better job of serving senior citizens and other local residents.

A local shuttle route could consist of two loops that start and end at the Southwest Harbor Library. One loop would serve Bass Harbor and Manset. The other would serve local senior apartment complexes, the Southwest Harbor Medical Center, and the Southwest Harbor Food Mart.

#### SOUTHWEST HARBOR/BASS HARBOR SHUTTLE

*Wednesdays*

	read down	read down	read down	read down
SWH Library	10:00 a		12:00 p	1:00 p
Bass Harbor PO	10:10 a		12:10 p	1:10 p
Birchwood Apts	10:12 a		12:12 p	1:12 p
Manset: Double J	10:22 a		12:22 p	1:22 p
SWH Library	10:28 a		12:28 p	1:28 p
Ridge Apts	10:30 a	11:30 a	12:30 p	1:30 p
SWH Library	10:31 a	11:31 a	12:31 p	
SWH Medical Center	10:34 a	11:34 a	12:34 p	
Norwood Cove Apts	10:36 a	11:36 a	12:36 p	
Arrive SWH Food Mart	10:39 a	11:39 a	12:39 p	
Depart SWH Food Mart	10:50 a	11:50 a	12:50 p	
Kozy Cove Restaurant	10:52 a	11:52 a	12:52 p	
Norwood Cove Apts	10:54 a	11:54 a	12:54 p	
SWH Library	11:00 a	12:00 p	1:00 p	
Ridge Apts	11:01 a	12:01 p	1:01 p	

There is adequate time in the proposed schedule to allow on-request stops at off-route locations in Bernard, as well at East Ridge Apartments. The service is designed to operate one day a week. Additional days could be added in the future if the community is interested and if demand warrants.

## **8.12 Bar Harbor-Ellsworth-Bangor**

DTI currently provides one-day-a-week bus service from Bar Harbor and Ellsworth to Bangor. This service provides senior citizens and others with low-cost transportation to medical appointments in Bangor, along with access to Bangor shopping destinations. It also provides limited connections for intercity travelers.

The consultants looked for ways to increase the availability of low-cost bus service to Bangor to five days a week to meet a need for improved senior citizen access to medical services. They considered a number of options, including a possible five-day-a-week service from Ellsworth to Bangor via Bucksport. The consultants found that Downeast Transportation does not have adequate resources to pay for five-day-a-week service to Bangor. Even if additional FTA 5311 funding could be made available for this purpose, local municipalities are unlikely to provide the required 50% local funding.

One possible source of local dollars for scheduled five-day-a-week bus service might be the Maine Care program. Medicaid dollars available through Maine Care can be used to match FTA public transportation grants. This would require a consolidation of services provided by Downeast Transportation and WHCA.

DTI could transport Maine Care clients for WHCA, with the Medicaid program charged for the actual cost of the Maine Care trip. This could be determined by dividing the fully allocated cost of a round trip by the number of riders on any given day. The cost for Medicaid would be equal to the resulting cost per rider multiplied by the number of Maine Care passengers.

Alternatively, DTI could provide a portion of its 5311 subsidies to WHCA for WHCA operation of a scheduled public bus route. Either approach should include coordination with Island Connections, Community Connections, and MDOT's intercity bus service provided by West Transportation.

Service plan recommendations in this study are limited to modest adjustments in DTI's current Bangor service:

1. Increase Bar Harbor-Bangor service from one day a week to two days a week.
2. Provide the Bar Harbor-Ellsworth northbound segment in the morning with the regular five-day-a-week Bar Harbor-Ellsworth bus. Depending on how drivers and vehicles are assigned, this may require a morning transfer between buses in Ellsworth.
3. Provide round-trip travelers with some additional time in Bangor.
4. Offer stops at Ellsworth senior apartment complexes on request only.
5. Provide scheduled stops at the Eastern Maine Healthcare Mall on Union Street, and change airport and Concord Trailways stops to on-request only.

DTI should continue to offer on-request midday drop-offs and pick-ups at the Eastern Maine Medical Center and at other Bangor medical offices.

	read down	read up
<b>Bar Harbor</b>		
Rodick-Lorraine	9:02 a	4:32 p
Malvern-Belmont	9:05 a	4:28 p
Hannaford	9:10 a	4:25 p
Birch Bay	9:20 a	4:15 p
<b>Ellsworth</b>		
Wal-Mart	9:40 a	3:55 p
Union River*	R	R
Riverview*	R	R
Meadows*	R	R
Meadowview*	R	R
City Hall	9:50 a	3:45 p
<b>Bangor</b>		
Vermont Transit	10:25 a	3:10 p
EMHC Mall	10:35 a	3:00 p
Bangor Mall	10:45 a	2:50 p
EMMC	R	R

R indicates stops on request.

There are different ways to assign drivers and vehicles to the Bangor service. One approach would be to extend the workday for one of the regular Ellsworth-Bar Harbor drivers, having this individual continue to Bangor two days a week, with a late morning deadhead return to Ellsworth. A separate driver would operate an afternoon deadhead trip to Bangor, followed by a southbound trip from Bangor to Bar Harbor.

Alternatively, a separate driver could be used for the northbound segment from Ellsworth to Bangor. With this approach, the driver would remain in Bangor until it is time to return to Ellsworth in the afternoon. The latter approach is somewhat less efficient, but provides more flexibility for on-request drop-offs and pick-ups in Bangor. The choice is likely to depend on how weekly work assignments are assembled for full-time and part-time drivers.

### **8.13 Proposed Service Cancellations**

The proposed service plan involves canceling a number of lightly utilized DTI routes. Services proposed for elimination include the following:

- One-day-a-week service between Winter Harbor and Ellsworth
- One-day-a-week service between Otis and Ellsworth
- One-day-a-week service between Bucksport and Ellsworth
- One-day-a-week service between Southwest Harbor and Ellsworth
- One-day-a-week service between Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor
- One-day-a-week service between Northeast Harbor and Ellsworth

It may be possible to preserve a link between Winter Harbor and Ellsworth by operating a one-day-a-week link from Prospect Harbor and Winter Harbor to Young's Store in Gouldsboro. This service could be timed to coincide with West Transportation's scheduled service between Young's Store and Ellsworth.

DTI could perhaps provide an older Island Explorer bus to the National Park Service for use by Schoodic Education and Research Center. This bus could provide the one-day-a-week Winter Harbor link. DTI could contract with SERC to operate this bus with a SERC employee. Or a part-time DTI driver based in the Winter Harbor area could operate the one-day-a-week service.

### **8.14 Vehicle Use and Driver Assignments**

This section looks at possible scenarios for utilizing vehicles and assigning drivers to operate the services described in this chapter. Vehicle and driver assignments are operating decisions that will need to be made by Downeast Transportation managers. This discussion is intended merely to highlight some of the choices that will be available.

The service plan could be implemented with three full-time buses, plus two part-time vehicles. One of the part-time buses would be used to provide two-day-a-week service to Bangor. The second part-time vehicle would provide a single morning trip to the Jackson Laboratory and a single afternoon return to Ellsworth. The driver would work at the Lab during the day.

A different part-time driver could use this Lab bus to provide in-town shuttle service in Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor. Or in-town shuttles could be provided with one of the regular Ellsworth-Bar Harbor buses. Vehicle usage will depend in part on how driver assignments are assembled.

POSSIBLE VEHICLE UTILIZATION

	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School
Bus 1 16 seats	Bucksport-BGR	Ellsworth shuttle	Bucksport shuttle	Ellsworth shuttle	Stonington
	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School	Bay School

	Lab 6am	Lab 6am	Lab 6am	Lab 6am	Lab 6am
Bus 2 16 or 28 seats		Bar Harbor shuttle	SW Harbor shuttle	Bar Harbor shuttle	
	Lab 3pm	Lab 3pm	Lab 3pm	Lab 3pm	Lab 3pm

	Lab 7am	Lab 7am	Lab 7am	Lab 7am	Lab 7am
	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI
Bus 3 16 or 28 seats	ELLS to BH	ELLS to BH	ELLS to BH	ELLS to BH	ELLS to BH
	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI	DEH/MDI
	Lab 3:35pm	Lab 3:35pm	Lab 3:35pm	Lab 3:35pm	Lab 3:35pm
	Lab 5:05pm	Lab 5:05pm	Lab 5:05pm	Lab 5:05pm	Lab 5:05pm

	Lab 6:30am	Lab 6:30am	Lab 6:30am	Lab 6:30am	Lab 6:30am
	DEH/Lab 8am	DEH/Lab 8am	DEH/Lab 8am	DEH/Lab 8am	DEH/Lab 8am
Bus 4 16 or 28 seats	BH to ELLS	BH to ELLS	BH to ELLS	BH to ELLS	BH to ELLS
	DEH/ELLS	DEH/ELLS	DEH/ELLS	DEH/ELLS	DEH/ELLS
	Lab 4:05p	Lab 4:05p	Lab 4:05p	Lab 4:05p	Lab 4:05p

Bus 5 16 or 28 seats	Bangor				Bangor
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There are different ways to assign trips to drivers. One scenario includes the following:

- One full-time driver could operate the services shown for Bus 1 in the above table. This would involve an uninterrupted 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. shift five days a week.
- The commuter trip shown for Bus 2 will require a driver employed at the Laboratory.
- The services shown for Bus 3 require a full-time driver operating a split shift. The workday would run roughly from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., and from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Bus 4 could be covered by a full-time split-shift driver, working from roughly 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The same driver could also operate in-town Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor shuttles, but this would result in 11-hour workdays. This would probably require splitting the Bus 4 week into full-time and part-time assignments.
- Midday shuttle services in Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor could be operated by a part-time driver. The same part-time driver could operate two trips a week to Bangor. This would result in a combined 30-hour-a-week assignment. Note, however, that different vehicles will be needed. Bangor service cannot be provided with the Jackson Lab commuter bus, because the bus from Bangor returns to Bar Harbor too late in the day.

## Chapter 9: Marketing Strategy

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This chapter discusses a possible marketing strategy for Hancock County’s year-round transit program. It identifies target markets, and suggests a short list of outreach efforts designed to ensure public awareness of the bus system and the opportunities it provides for area residents.

Downeast Transportation has made only minimal effort in recent years to promote its year-round bus service. This has resulted in part from the demands of the seasonal Island Explorer project, and in part from the knowledge that year-round services were likely to change. DTI management has postponed community outreach work pending development of an updated service plan.

Marketing efforts will be needed if the new service plan is to be successful. While area residents see Downeast Transportation buses operating in their communities, relatively few people know what the service is, whom it serves, or where it goes. Public awareness is essential for the transit program – to generate riders, to ensure support from municipal taxpayers, and to convince areas businesses to contribute advertising dollars.

A successful marketing program requires consistent effort over an extended period of time. It is typical among small transit programs for marketing efforts to become lost among other day-to-day management issues and concerns. The consultant recommends that the Downeast Transportation Board of Directors create a “Marketing Subcommittee” to meet with DTI management on a regular basis to review and assess ongoing marketing efforts.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 9.1 Marketing Strategy Statement
- Section 9.2 Tabloid Riders Guide
- Section 9.3 Bus Stop Signs and Map and Timetable Displays
- Section 9.4 Newspaper Display Ads and Bulletin Board Flyers
- Section 9.5 Press Releases
- Section 9.6 Internet Information
- Section 9.7 Multiple-ride Tickets

## 9.1 Marketing Strategy Statement

Transit marketing efforts should be guided by a clearly stated marketing strategy. This marketing strategy should include:

- 1) A clear statement of the purpose of the marketing program
- 2) A statement summarizing how this purpose will be accomplished
- 3) A brief description of target audiences
- 4) A list of individual marketing efforts to be employed
- 5) A statement of the transit program's market position
- 6) A description of the resources that will be devoted to the marketing effort

### **DRAFT DTI MARKETING STRATEGY**

**The purpose** of the DTI marketing program will be to inform area residents about available year-round transit services, to show people where buses operate and how they can use the service, to generate increased ridership, and to ensure that local taxpayers and potential business supporters understand how area residents benefit from the transit program.

**This will be accomplished** by developing and distributing a new tabloid Riders Guide, by installing bus stop and information signage at key locations, by developing and implementing an annual program of display advertising, by issuing press releases informing the public about service developments, and by posting route and schedule information on the Internet.

**Target audiences** include

- (1) Senior citizens without cars, especially residents of senior apartment complexes,
- (2) Senior citizens and others who can drive themselves, but who might benefit from car-free access to in-town and regional shopping centers and to medical appointments, especially during the winter months,
- (3) Family members who want to help their elderly parents or grandparents who have limited ability to drive themselves,
- (4) Commuters who work in Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, especially entry-level workers impacted by the high cost of gasoline,
- (5) Bar Harbor and Ellsworth employers, especially those with recruitment and parking problems,
- (6) Seasonal workers without cars who want to shop in Ellsworth and Bangor,
- (7) Developmentally disabled adults and their family members, case workers, and supporters,
- (8) College students and others interested in intercity connections in Ellsworth and Bangor,
- (9) Families that drive their children to private schools in Blue Hill,
- (10) Municipal taxpayers who approve annual subsidies for community programs
- (11) Area businesses interested in demonstrating their support for community services.

**Marketing vehicles** to be employed include:

- ❑ A full color tabloid Riders Guide
- ❑ A Riders Guide distribution plan
- ❑ Riders Guide insertions in local newspapers
- ❑ Installation of bus stop signs and information displays at key destinations
- ❑ Newspaper display ads
- ❑ Flyers posted on senior apartment and community bulletin boards
- ❑ Press releases
- ❑ Year-round route and schedule information on the Internet
- ❑ Multiple-ride tickets

**The Downeast Transportation market position** will be: A community transportation program that provides environmentally-friendly, low-cost transportation for commuters, shoppers, and disabled adults, helping area residents lead active and productive lives without needing a car and a parking space for every occasion and activity.

**The marketing budget** will be approximately \$20,000 per year for designing and printing schedules, display advertising, and other ongoing marketing expenses. DTI management will devote approximately four days a month to outreach efforts. The Marketing Subcommittee of the DTI Board of Directors will meet quarterly to review community outreach efforts.

## **9.2 Tabloid Riders Guide**

Hancock County residents need more information about local transit services. A Riders Guide can help community members gain a better understanding of where buses operate and how different people benefit from the service.

One of the best ways to provide information about local transit services is with a single-sheet full-color tabloid publication. A key advantage of this approach is the ability to produce high-quality color graphics in large quantities for a very low unit cost. The low cost is made possible by the use of a newspaper Web press.

A single sheet yields four pages measuring 11.5 by 16 inches, with a final document that folds in half to 11.5 by 8 inches. The centerfold provides ample space for a detailed full-color map of the service area, plus timetables for individual routes.

The front and back covers can be used to provide supporting articles about the bus service. This could include, for example, an article about energy and environmental benefits of expanded Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter service. It might include articles based on interviews with senior citizen bus riders in Bar Harbor and Bucksport, along with selected comments from the recent passenger survey.

A tabloid format also provides space for basic information about the transit program, including fares, multiple-ride tickets, service days, ADA policies, bicycle racks, and special promotions.

### *Distribution Plan*

A written distribution plan should identify locations throughout the DTI service area where tabloid bus schedules will be available for members of the public. The distribution plan should identify who is responsible for checking the available supply at each location, and how often this will be done. DTI bus drivers should be able to handle schedule distribution at most outlying locations along regular bus routes.

Bus schedules should be available at all senior citizen apartment complexes served by DTI buses, at supermarket customer service desks, and at convenience stores in selected communities. Tabloid Riders Guides should also be available in municipal offices.

A checklist could be developed to ensure that schedule supplies are checked at each location on a regular basis.

### *Newspaper Inserts*

Although they may see DTI buses operating in their towns, many Hancock County residents are unfamiliar with where and how DTI buses operate, and whom they serve. One way to educate a much wider audience is to insert tabloid Riders Guides in local newspapers. This type of extensive distribution is possible thanks to the low cost of Web press printing.

Ideally, DTI would insert tabloid schedules two times each year in the Bar Harbor Times, the Ellsworth American, the Enterprise (Bucksport), the Island Ad-Vantages (Stonington), and the Weekly Packet (Blue Hill). This could be done in the early spring and in the fall.

If DTI prints 40,000 schedules for a six-month period, this would allow for 30,000 newspaper insertions, plus 10,000 copies for regular distribution. The cost for printing and the fee for insertions should total less than \$5,000. For two press runs per year with newspaper insertions, a budget figure of \$10,000 should be more than adequate.

As with all other marketing efforts, the key to successfully using newspaper insertions will be to establish and follow a written plan. The plan should specify what newspapers will be involved and when insertions will be made.

### **9.3 Bus Stop Signs and Map and Timetable Displays**

DTI should install bus stop signs at selected locations throughout its service area. While these signs will identify bus stop locations for current bus riders, they will also remind other community members about the existence of the bus service and the locations people can travel to without automobiles. Candidate locations include

- Senior citizen apartment complexes
- Supermarkets and shopping centers
- Convenience stores
- A new downtown Ellsworth bus stop

For many locations, a simple DTI bus stop sign should be sufficient. It may be possible to display a laminated print of the Riders Guide centerfold at some apartment complexes and shopping destinations. In some locations, it may be worthwhile to consider installing a permanent sign frame, either wall-mounted or an all-weather frame similar to the Island Explorer sign on the Bar Harbor Village Green. While permanent signs will be more expensive, they should be eligible for 80% FTA capital funding.

Possible locations for permanent signs include the Hannaford stores in Bar Harbor and Ellsworth, Wal-Mart in Ellsworth, and the Maine Coast Mall. A permanent outdoor display would also be a good feature for a downtown Ellsworth bus stop, if sufficient space is available.

### **9.4 Newspaper Display Ads and Bulletin Board Flyers**

DTI should consider making arrangements to run monthly display advertisements in weekly newspapers. Small ads could be placed in the Enterprise, the Weekly Packet, and the Island Ad-Vantages, with larger ads in the Ellsworth American, the Islander, and the Bar Harbor Times. For this type of advertising effort, DTI should probably budget about \$500 a month, or \$6,000 per year.

The transit agency could mix and combine three different approaches to newspaper advertising. One would be to design a small general information display ad that encourages seniors and other to stay active in their communities by using the bus. (“Don’t sit home, ride with us.”) Another would be to design ads that feature the full timetable for an individual bus route. For example, the Stonington-Ellsworth timetable could be printed in the Island Ad-Vantages. The Enterprise and the Weekly Packet could feature the Blue Hill-Bucksport-Bangor timetable.

A third would be to use display ads to highlight special promotions offered through partnerships with local businesses. For example, a bank or credit union in Bucksport might be willing to sponsor free rides on the Wednesday Bucksport Shuttle during February and March. The availability of free rides and the bank’s role could be featured

in a display ad that would run in the Enterprise every week during the two-month arrangement.

Display ad messages could also be presented in a flyer or poster format for display on bulletin boards at senior citizen apartment complexes and elsewhere. This low-cost strategy will directly target one of DTI’s key market segments.

DTI may want to create a table that shows targeted marketing efforts for six different service centers. This would provide an annual (or quarterly) grid to keep track of what is being done to promote each year-round service component.

**SAMPLE ADVERTISING AND INSERTION SCHEDULE**

	Jan.-March	April-June	July-Sept.	Oct. – Dec.
Deer Isle	Timetable ads	Timetable ads Tabloid insert	Timetable ads	Timetable ads Tabloid insert
Blue Hill	Timetable ads	Timetable ads Tabloid insert	Timetable ads	Timetable ads Tabloid insert
Bucksport	Business partner promotion	Timetable ads Tabloid insert	Timetable ads	Timetable ads Tabloid insert
Ellsworth	Timetable ads	Business partner promotion Tabloid insert	Timetable ads	Business partner promotion Tabloid insert
MDI midday	Business partner promotion	Timetable ads Tabloid insert		Business partner promotion Tabloid insert
Commuters		Timetable ads	Timetable ads	

**9.5 Press Releases**

For many businesses, it can be difficult to generate free newspaper coverage by issuing press releases. Newspaper editors look for news. They are reluctant to print self-serving promotional messages for free. However, the situation is quite different for public transit systems. Editors understand that transit programs are supported by public dollars. This alone makes transit agency performance relevant for newspaper readers. Editors are also receptive to schedule and service updates and announcements, because they realize that this provides an important service to some of their customers.

DTI should look for opportunities to increase the visibility of the transit program through free press coverage. Possibilities include:

- Occasional announcements of ridership milestones
- Introduction of new equipment
- Announcements of special partnerships and promotions
- Route or schedule changes
- Service reminders (e.g., spring reminder about commuter transportation to seasonal jobs in Bar Harbor)

The value of free newspaper coverage should not be underestimated. It may be worthwhile, for example, to offer special monthly fare reductions just for the newspaper exposure that is likely to result.

## **9.6 Internet Information**

There is some DTI schedule information available at the MDOT Explore Maine Internet site. The pages posted on the MDOT site could be upgraded to reflect the new year-round service plan. Graphic elements developed for the tabloid Riders Guide could be used in the MDOT web pages. This includes maps, timetables, photographs, and supporting stories.

Perhaps a better alternative would be to design a year-round transit section for the Island Explorer web site. The Island Explorer navigation bar could include a prominent link to year-round transit information. The MDOT Explore Maine site could link computer users directly to the year-round pages.

Downeast Transportation may want to register a separate domain name for the year-round program. Possibilities include [downeastbus.com](http://downeastbus.com) or [downeasttransportation.com](http://downeasttransportation.com). This domain name could bring Internet users to the Island Explorer site, where they would see an obvious link to year-round DTI information. Or Downeast Transportation could create a separate web site for the year-round service, so people who enter the new domain name would be go directly to DTI's year-round web pages.

## **9.7 Multiple-ride Tickets**

DTI currently sells books of five tickets that provide a fare discount for regular riders. Individual bus riders purchase these books of tickets from bus drivers. Sometimes people stop at the DTI office to purchase books of tickets for family members.

DTI should continue to offer a discounted multiple-ride fare medium. The company could continue to print and assemble ticket books. A less time-consuming approach might be to offer a multiple-ride punch ticket. Newspaper display ads in November and December could suggest multiple-ride tickets as a holiday present for parents or grandparents.

## **Chapter 10: Capital and Financial Plan**

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This chapter presents a five-year capital and financial plan for year-round transit services operated by Downeast Transportation. It includes new and expanded services recommended in Chapter 8. It presents capital and operating cost projections for the period FY 2008 through FY 2012, along with estimates of revenues required to pay for proposed services.

Financial projections are based on a computer cost model developed to reflect anticipated costs and revenues for existing and proposed transit services.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 10.1 Capital Plan
- Section 10.2 Service Hours and Operating Costs
- Section 10.3 Ridership and Fare Box Projections
- Section 10.4 Marketing
- Section 10.5 Other Revenues
- Section 10.6 Five-year Budget Projections

### **10.1 Capital Plan**

Downeast Transportation anticipates buying two light-duty 20-passenger buses in FY 2008 to replace older vehicles in its year-round bus fleet. In the new service plan, one of these buses would serve Blue Hill, Bucksport, Stonington, and Ellsworth. The other would operate between Bar Harbor and Bangor.

DTI also hopes to purchase two large heavy-duty buses in FY 2008 for use on its Cherryfield and Bangor subscription commuter routes. The capital plan calls for DTI to purchase a 44-passenger motorcoach commuter vehicle for its Bangor-Bar Harbor route, and a 40-passenger transit bus for the Cherryfield-Bar Harbor route.

The Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee is currently developing specifications for a motorcoach commuter bus for its ZOOM Turnpike Express route between Biddeford and Portland. BSSOB is budgeting \$350,000 for this heavy-duty vehicle. BSOOB also expects to purchase a heavy-duty transit bus for use on its local Biddeford-Old Orchard Beach-Portland route, with a budgeted price tag of \$250,000.

The DTI capital plan includes an additional heavy-duty 40-passenger transit bus in FY 2009 for use between Franklin and Jackson Laboratory. The bus currently used on the

Franklin route would be maintained as a spare vehicle shared by an expanded Bar Harbor / Jackson Laboratory commuter program.

The capital plan suggests that DTI will acquire three medium-duty 28-passenger buses in FY 2010. These buses would be used for expanded year-round commuter and midday bus service between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, for local Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor shuttles, and for continued service for Downeast Horizons. The service plan suggests that these year-round MDI services will be provided with three Island Explorer buses prior to the opening of the Acadia Gateway Center in FY 2011. The three Island Explorer buses will be needed for new Gateway Center routes once the new intermodal facility opens.

**Figure 10.1 Proposed Capital Expenditures**

<b>Unit Purchases</b>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
1. 44-pax motor coaches	1				
2. Heavy-duty 40-pax buses	1	1			
3. Medium-duty 28-pax buses			3		
4. Light-duty 20-pax buses	2				
5. Bus stop signs	25				
6. Bus stop improvements		1			

<b>Unit Costs</b>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
1. 44-pax motor coaches	350,000	358,750	367,719	376,912	386,335
2. Heavy-duty 40-pax buses	250,000	256,250	262,656		
3. Medium-duty 28-pax buses	190,000	194,750	199,619		
4. Light-duty 20-pax buses	61,500	63,038	64,613	66,229	67,884
5. Bus stop signs	75				
6. Bus stop improvements		10,000			

<b>Expenditures</b>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
1. 44-pax motor coaches	350,000	0	0	0	0
2. Heavy-duty 40-pax buses	250,000	256,250	0	0	0
3. Medium-duty 28-pax buses	0	0	598,856	0	0
4. Light-duty 20-pax buses	123,000	0	0	0	0
5. Bus stop signs	1,875	0	0	0	0
6. Bus stop improvements	0	10,000	0	0	0
<b>Total Capital Costs</b>	<b>724,875</b>	<b>266,250</b>	<b>598,856</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Figure 10.2 Anticipated Capital Revenues**

	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
Federal Transit Administration	579,900	213,000	479,085	0	0
State - MDOT	108,450	38,438	89,828	0	0
Jackson Laboratory	30,000	12,813	14,971	0	0
City of Ellsworth	0	2,000	0	0	0
Local capital reserve	6,525	0	14,971	0	0
<b>Total Capital Funds</b>	<b>724,875</b>	<b>266,250</b>	<b>598,856</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The capital plan also anticipates the purchase and installation in FY 2008 of 25 bus stop signs at commercial centers and other key locations served by year-round DTI buses. It includes \$10,000 in FY 2009 for construction of a new bus stop on the corner of Main and Franklin Streets in downtown Ellsworth.

The capital plan suggests that Federal Transit Administration funds will be used to cover 80% of bus purchases and related infrastructure improvements. It suggests that MDOT transportation bonds will cover 15% of the cost of new buses. Local capital reserve funds will cover the remaining 5% for the two year-round buses to be purchased in FY 2008. The plan anticipates that Jackson Laboratory will provide the 5% local match for Jackson Lab subscription buses. It divides the 5% local match for MDI commuter and midday buses in FY 2010 between Jackson Lab and DTI’s local capital reserve fund.

The plan calls for local capital reserve funds to cover 20% of the cost of purchasing and installing bus stop signs. It anticipates that the city of Ellsworth would cover 20% of the cost of constructing a new bus stop in downtown Ellsworth.

**Figure 10.3 Projected DTI Capital Reserve Fund Balances**

	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
Opening Balance	9,000	13,000	10,475	14,475	3,504	7,504
Additions	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Withdrawals	0	6,525	0	14,971	0	0
Ending Balance	13,000	10,475	14,475	3,504	7,504	11,504

Proposed capital expenditures are shown in Figure 10.1. Anticipated capital revenues are presented in Figure 10.2. The capital plan calls for DTI to contribute \$4,000 a year to the company’s capital reserve fund. Anticipated capital reserve fund balances are shown in Figure 10.3.

## 10.2 Service Hours and Operating Costs

The new DTI service plan includes a total of 11,825 service hours per year. This is a 37% increase over the current total of 8,425 annual service hours. Subtotals for three types of service are presented in Figure 10.4, along with comparisons with FY 2007 service hour estimates.

**Figure 10.4** *New Service Hour Subtotals and Comparisons with FY 2007*

	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>Increase</i>
Bar Harbor/Lab commuters	3,084	5,950	48%
Downeast Horizons	1,500	1,025	-46%
Midday year-round	3,676	4,850	24%
Total hours	8,260	11,825	30%

The reduction in service hours for Downeast Horizons results in part from more efficient scheduling of local Mount Desert Island Service, and in part from merging the morning Downeast Horizons trip from Ellsworth with an expanded Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter program.

Service hour projections for individual service components are presented in Figure 10.5.

A cost model developed for DTI's year-round and Island Explorer FY 2008 budget projects unit operating costs of \$48.93 for the Island Explorer program, \$37.30 for the Bar Harbor / Jackson Lab commuter program, and \$37.18 for midday year-round service. The commuter and midday unit costs were increased by 2.5% per year for inflation. These adjusted cost estimates were used to project DTI operating costs for the period FY 2008 through FY 2012. Unit cost projections are shown in Figure 10.6. Annual operating cost projections are presented in Figure 10.7.

**Figure 10.5 Service Hour Projections for Individual Service Components**

	<i>Hours/day</i>	<i>Days/year</i>	<i>Hours/year</i>
<b>BAR HARBOR/LAB COMMUTERS</b>			
Bangor	4	250	1,000
Cherryfield	5	250	1,250
Franklin	3	250	750
Ellsworth	12	250	2,950
	250		5,950
<b>DOWNEAST HORIZONS</b>			
DEH-MDI	3	250	625
DEH-ELLS	2	250	400
			1,025
<b>MIDDAY TRANSIT</b>			
Bay School	2	250	500
Stonington	6	50	300
Bucksport	6	100	600
Ellsworth	6	100	600
SW Harbor shuttle	6	50	300
Bar Harbor shuttle	6	100	600
Ellsworth-Bar Harbor	3	250	750
Bangor	8	100	800
			4,450

**Figure 10.6 Projected Cost per Hour**

	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
Inflation		2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Bar Harbor/Lab	37.30	38.23	39.19	40.17	41.17
Downeast Horizons	37.18	38.11	39.06	40.04	41.04
Midday	37.18	38.11	39.06	40.04	41.04

**Figure 10.7 Projected Five-year Operating Costs**

	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
Bar Hbr/Lab	221,935	227,483	233,170	239,000	244,975
DE Horizons	38,110	39,062	40,039	41,040	42,066
Midday	180,323	184,831	189,452	194,188	199,043
Total cost	440,368	451,377	462,661	474,228	486,083

### 10.3 Ridership and Fare Box Projections

The financial plan includes anticipated fares and ridership projections for individual DTI service components. These underlying assumptions and projections are summarized in the following tables:

#### BAR HARBOR / JACKSON LAB COMMUTER SERVICE

<i>Service</i>	<i>Anticipated Fare</i>	<i>Ridership Projection</i>
Bangor	\$15 per week	35 subscribers, 70 one-way rides per day
Cherryfield	\$15 per week	22 subscribers, 44 one-way rides per day
Franklin	\$15 per week	26 subscribers, 52 one-way rides per day
Ellsworth	\$15 per week	42 subscribers, 84 one-way rides per day

#### DOWNEAST HORIZONS

<i>Service</i>	<i>Anticipated Fare</i>	<i>Ridership Projection</i>
Mount Desert Island	No fee for DEH clients	3 individuals, 6 one-way rides per day
Ellsworth	No fee for DEH clients	5 individuals, 10 one-way rides per day

#### MIDDAY TRANSIT SERVICE

<i>Service</i>	<i>Anticipated Fare</i>	<i>Ridership Projection</i>
Bay School	\$5 per individual round trip, \$20 per week for subscribers	10 subscribers and one daily regular rider during the school year, three cash riders per day during the summer. This results in an average of 18 one-way rides per day.
Stonington	\$5 one-way, \$5 round trip	8 individuals per day, 16 one-way rides
Bucksport shuttle	\$1 per day	15 individuals per day, 30 one-way rides
Bucksport-Bangor	\$8 one-way, \$8 round trip	6 individuals per day, 12 one-way rides
Ellsworth shuttle	\$1 one-way, \$2 round trip	15 individuals per day, 30 one-way rides
SW Harbor shuttle	\$1 per day	6 individuals per day, 12 one-way rides
Bar Harbor shuttle	\$1 per day	8 individuals per day, 16 one-way rides
Bar Harbor-Ellsworth	\$5 one-way, \$5 round trip	3 individuals per day in the winter, 4 individuals per day in SEP and JUN, 6 individuals per day in JUL and AUG, for an average of 8 one-way trips per day
Bar Harbor-Bangor	\$10 one-way, \$10 round trip	5 individuals per day during the winter, 10 individuals per day during SEP, OCT, JUNE 20 individuals per day during JUL and AUG, for an average of 9 one-way rides per day

Based on these assumptions, the cost model projects a ridership total of 81,900 one-way trips per year. Fare box receipts are projected to total \$128,284.

Ridership projections for individual service components are presented in Figure 10.8. Ridership totals and projected fare box receipts are summarized in Figure 10.9.

**Figure 10.8 Ridership Projections for Individual Service Components**

	<i>Riders/day</i>	<i>Days/year</i>	<i>Riders/year</i>
<b>BAR HBR / LAB</b>			
Bangor	70	250	17,500
Cherryfield	44	250	11,000
Franklin	52	250	13,000
Ellsworth	84	250	21,000
	250		62,500
<b>DOWNEAST HORIZONS</b>			
DEH-MDI	6	250	1,500
DEH-ELLS	10	250	2,500
			4,000
<b>MIDDAY</b>			
Bay School	18	250	4,500
Stonington	16	50	800
Bucksport	20	100	2,000
Ellsworth	30	100	3,000
SW Harbor shuttle	12	50	600
Bar Harbor shuttle	16	100	1,600
ELLS-Bar Harbor	8	500	2,000
Bangor	9	100	900
			15,400

**Figure 10.9 Projected Ridership and Fare Box Receipts**

	<i>Riders/year</i>	<i>Fares</i>	<i>Avg fare</i>
Bar Hbr/Lab	62,500	97,917	1.57
DE Horizons	4,000	0	0.00
Midday	15,400	30,367	1.97
Total riders	81,900	128,284	

The cost model projects a ridership increase of 2.5% per year for regular midday and Bar Harbor / Jackson Lab commuter services. It includes no anticipated increase in Downeast Horizons ridership. The resulting five-year ridership and fare box projections are presented in Figures 10.10 and 10.11.

**Figure 10.10 Five-year Ridership Projections**

	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Bar Hbr/Lab	62,500	64,063	65,664	67,306	68,988
DE Horizons	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Midday	15,400	15,785	16,180	16,584	16,999
<b>Total Riders</b>	<b>81,900</b>	<b>83,848</b>	<b>85,844</b>	<b>87,890</b>	<b>89,987</b>

**Figure 10.11 Five-year Fare Box Projections**

	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Bar Hbr/Lab	98,125	100,578	103,093	105,670	108,312
DE Horizons	0	0	0	0	0
Midday	30,338	31,096	31,874	32,671	33,487
<b>Total Fares</b>	<b>128,463</b>	<b>131,675</b>	<b>134,966</b>	<b>138,341</b>	<b>141,799</b>

#### 10.4 Marketing

The financial plan includes \$20,000 per year for marketing expenses. It anticipates 100% grant funding from the Maine Department of Transportation to cover marketing costs.

The suggested marketing budget includes \$4,800 to print a new tabloid Riders Guide. This should be enough to pay for two press runs a year of 40,000 copies each. Roughly 30,000 of each run would be used for newspaper inserts, while the remaining 10,000 would be available for other community and day-to-day distribution.

Newspaper inserts in the Ellsworth American, the Mount Desert Islander, the Bar Harbor Times, the Weekly Packet, the Island Ad-Vantages, and the Enterprise are likely to cost about \$2,500. Two sets of insertions a year would cost roughly \$5,000.

DTI should anticipate spending about \$450 per month on display advertising. This will be enough to purchase \$150-a-month ads in the Ellsworth American/ Mount Desert Islander and the Bar Harbor Times, plus \$50-a-month ads in the three smaller papers. The annual total comes to \$5,400. The remaining \$4,800 could be used for graphic design – of the Riders Guide, display ads, and related marketing materials.

## 10.5 Other Revenues

Other revenues are addressed separately for the Bar Harbor / Jackson Lab commuter program, for Downeast Horizons, and for regular midday year-round transit services.

### *Bar Harbor / Jackson Lab Commuter Program*

The financial plan assumes that the Federal Transit Administration will pay 50% of the operating deficit for Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter services, either through the JARC program or through the Section 5311 rural public transit program. It anticipates that the project will qualify for \$63,197 of FTA funding in FY 2008. It increases this amount by 2.5% per year, resulting in a fiscal year 2012 FTA total of \$69,758.

The plan calls upon Jackson Laboratory to increase its subsidy for commuter services from \$15,000 a year to \$50,000 a year in FY 2008. It increases the Lab's contribution by 2.5% per year, resulting in an FY 2012 total of \$55,191. Initial projections suggest that 127 Lab employees will take advantage of the commuter program. A \$50,000 annual contribution means an estimated cost to the Laboratory of \$395 per year for each participating employee, or \$33 per month. If 14 additional Laboratory employees sign up for the service, the Lab's annual subsidy could decrease to \$45,000, while the annual cost per employee would drop to \$319 per year and \$27 per month.

The financial plan includes a \$9,000 per year contribution to the year-round commuter program from Acadia National Park. This will help offset the cost of commuter operations during the months when these services are integrated with the Island Explorer shuttle program.

The plan anticipates that participation from other local employers will generate an additional \$3,000 per year in local support.

### *Transportation for Downeast Horizons*

Bus service for the Downeast Horizons Day Center is projected to cost \$38,110 during FY 2008. This includes a morning and an afternoon round trip on Mount Desert Island, and a single trip to Ellsworth in the mid afternoon. Morning bus service from Ellsworth to Downeast Horizons is included in a comprehensive Ellsworth-Bar Harbor commuter bus program.

The financial plan assumes that DTI's contract with WHCA for Downeast Horizons bus service would be adjusted to cover the full cost of this service. This contract amount is increased by 2.5% per year through FY 2012.

### *Midday Year-round Transit Services*

The financial plan assumes that FTA support from the Section 5311 rural transit program will increase to \$111,928 in FY 2008. It increases the FTA contribution by 2.5% per year through the end of the five-year planning period. The FTA 5311 share represents 80% of administrative costs and 50% of anticipated operating deficits.

State funding provided by MDOT is projected to remain unchanged at \$15,482 throughout the five-year period. The plan also assumes that municipal appropriations would remain unchanged at \$14,307 for FY 2008 through FY 2012.

The financial plan anticipates \$7,200 per year in private business support. This includes a \$500 per month contribution from Birch Bay Village in Bar Harbor for two-day-a-week transportation to Bar Harbor, five-day-a-week transportation to Ellsworth, and two-day-a-week transportation to Bangor. It anticipates a \$100 per month contribution from the Parker Ridge retirement community in Blue Hill for one-day-a-week transportation to Bangor. These private contributions are increased by 2.5% per year through FY 2012.

The financial plan includes \$4,800 per year in advertising revenue. It envisions that DTI will once again make an effort to sell advertising space on the backs of year-round buses. Advertising can also be sold in DTI's published timetable. DTI received advertising income from both sources in the past, but has not generated any advertising income in recent years. The plan assumes that advertising income will increase by 2.5% per year, for a total of \$5,298 by FY 2012.

*Figure 10.12 Projected Five-year Revenues and Expenses*

<b>BAR HARBOR / JACKSON LAB COMMUTER PROGRAM</b>					
	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Fare box	98,125	100,578	103,093	105,670	108,312
Acadia National Park	9,000	9,225	9,456	9,692	9,934
Federal Transit	63,197	64,777	66,396	68,056	69,758
MDOT	0	0	0	0	0
Municipalities	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson Laboratory	50,000	51,250	52,531	53,845	55,191
Other Employers	3,000	3,075	3,152	3,231	3,311
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>223,322</b>	<b>228,905</b>	<b>234,628</b>	<b>240,493</b>	<b>246,506</b>
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>221,935</b>	<b>227,483</b>	<b>233,170</b>	<b>239,000</b>	<b>244,975</b>
<b>NET REVENUES</b>	<b>1,387</b>	<b>1,422</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,494</b>	<b>1,531</b>
<b>DOWNEAST HORIZONS</b>					
	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Fare box	0	0	0	0	0
WHCA	38,110	39,063	40,039	41,040	42,066
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>38,110</b>	<b>39,063</b>	<b>40,039</b>	<b>41,040</b>	<b>42,066</b>
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>38,110</b>	<b>39,062</b>	<b>40,039</b>	<b>41,040</b>	<b>42,066</b>
<b>NET REVENUES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>MIDDAY TRANSIT</b>					
	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
Fare box	30,338	31,096	31,874	32,671	33,487
Acadia National Park	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Transit	111,928	114,726	117,594	120,534	123,548
MDOT	15,482	15,482	15,482	15,482	15,482
Other Federal	1,740	1,784	1,828	1,874	1,921
Municipalities	14,307	14,307	14,307	14,307	14,307
Jackson Laboratory	0	0	0	0	0
Other Businesses	7,200	7,380	7,565	7,754	7,947
WHCA	0	0	0	0	0
Other contracts	0	0	0	0	0
Advertising	4,800	4,920	5,043	5,169	5,298
<b>Total YR revenues</b>	<b>185,795</b>	<b>189,695</b>	<b>193,693</b>	<b>197,790</b>	<b>201,990</b>
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>180,323</b>	<b>184,831</b>	<b>189,452</b>	<b>194,188</b>	<b>199,043</b>
<b>NET REVENUES</b>	<b>5,472</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>4,241</b>	<b>3,602</b>	<b>2,948</b>

## 10.6 Five-year Budget Projections

Five-year revenues and operating expenses for the three types of service are presented in Figure 10.12. Revenues and expenses are summarized in Figure 10.13. Revenues are projected to equal or exceed expenses during each year of the plan. Figure 10.13 shows a \$4,000 per year contribution to DTI's capital reserve fund, along with projected operating fund and capital reserve fund balances.

**Figure 10.13 Summary of Revenues, Expenses, and Fund Balances**

	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Bar Harbor/Jackson Lab					
Commuters	221,935	227,483	233,170	239,000	244,975
Downeast Horizons	38,110	39,062	40,039	41,040	42,066
Midday Transit	180,323	184,831	189,452	194,188	199,043
Marketing	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Contribution to Capital Reserve	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>464,368</b>	<b>475,377</b>	<b>486,661</b>	<b>498,228</b>	<b>510,083</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Bar Harbor/Jackson Lab					
Commuters	223,322	228,905	234,628	240,493	246,506
Downeast Horizons	38,110	39,063	40,039	41,040	42,066
Midday Transit	185,795	189,695	193,693	197,790	201,990
Marketing (MDOT)	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>467,227</b>	<b>477,663</b>	<b>488,360</b>	<b>499,324</b>	<b>510,562</b>
<b>Net Revenues</b>	<b>2,860</b>	<b>2,286</b>	<b>1,699</b>	<b>1,096</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>OPERATING FUND</b>					
<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	
Opening Balance	20,036	22,896	25,182	26,880	27,977
Net Revenues	2,860	2,286	1,699	1,096	479
Ending Balance	22,896	25,182	26,880	27,977	28,456
<b>CAPIAL RESERVE FUND</b>					
<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	
Opening Balance	13,000	10,475	14,475	3,504	7,504
Contributions	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Withdrawals	6,525	0	14,971	0	0
Ending Balance	10,475	14,475	3,504	7,504	11,504

# Downeast Transportation Passenger Survey

Please take a few minutes to fill out this quick and easy survey. If you want to add additional comments, you can take the survey form with you and turn it in the next time you ride. Thank you for your help.

1. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

2. What town do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you live in a single family home or in an apartment complex?

- Single family home
- Apartment complex \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Where are you traveling to on the bus today?

Town \_\_\_\_\_

5. Why are you making this bus trip? (Please check ALL THAT APPLY) To or from ...

- Work       Shopping       School or College       Just getting out
- Medical       Recreation       Visit Friends       Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the MAIN purpose of this trip? (Please check ONLY ONE) To or from ...

- Work       Shopping       School or College       Just getting out
- Medical       Recreation       Visit Friends       Other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you have a drivers license?       Yes       No

8. Do you have a car available for your use?       Yes       No       Sometimes, but not today

8. Does anyone in your household own a car?       Yes       No

9. Where do you usually do your grocery shopping?

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Store \_\_\_\_\_

10. How do you usually get to the grocery store?

- Drive myself       Family member takes me       Friends drive me       Housing bus or van
- DTI bus       Island Connections       Community Connections       WHCA       Other

11. How do you usually travel to medical appointments?

- Drive myself       Family member takes me       Friends drive me       Housing bus or van
- DTI bus       Island Connections       Community Connections       WHCA       Other

How often do you usually use Downeast Transportation?

- 13. Commuting to and from work       Daily       Weekly       Monthly       Occasionally       Never
- 14. In-town shopping and errands       Daily       Weekly       Monthly       Occasionally       Never
- 15. Trips to Ellsworth       Daily       Weekly       Monthly       Occasionally       Never
- 16. Trips to Bar Harbor       Daily       Weekly       Monthly       Occasionally       Never
- 17. Trips to Bangor       Daily       Weekly       Monthly       Occasionally       Never

Thank you for completing both sides of this survey.

How often are these statements about Downeast Transportation true?

	Nearly Always	Usually	Some- times	Almost Never
18. Buses are clean.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Buses are comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. It is easy to find a seat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Drivers are polite and helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Drivers are safe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Buses are on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Bus schedules are easy to find.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Bus schedules are easy to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. Are you male or female?       Male       Female

27. What is your age?  
 17 or younger       18-25       26-40       41-65       Over 65

28. What is your employment status?  
 Full-time       Part-time       Retired       Student       Unemployed

29. Do you require use of Downeast Transportation's wheelchair lift?       Yes       No

30. Are their destinations you have difficulty reaching because of a lack of transportation?

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31. What do you like about Downeast Transportation bus service? What can we do to improve the service?

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Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Subscription Commuters

<i>Bus</i>	<i>What do you like?</i>	<i>What can we improve?</i>
Bangor	Saves me gas.	
Bangor		A newer, warmer bus in winter would be appreciated, as would A/C in the summer. It's a long haul from Brewer to Jackson Lab.
Bangor	The fact that this service is available and the new Bangor bus.	Try to fix the heat.
Bangor		Keep the buses running.
Bangor	It's available to public.	Bus fare should go down when gas goes down... not the antithesis.
Bangor		Keep the bus CLEAN, inside and outside.
Bangor	Safe transportation to and from work. I am very happy with it.	
Bangor	It saves me money.	
Bangor	If not for this bus, I would not be at Jackson Lab. I cannot drive that far daily. I fall asleep too easily.	Lowering the fare when gas prices go back down. Sure wish we had a potty! The reading lights on the new bus are nice, especially in winter.
Franklin	I like the fact that service is available to ride to work and home again.	
Franklin		Very unhappy Franklin time was changed for one person!!
Franklin		I wish we could leave Marden's parking lot at 6:30 a.m. sharp.
Franklin	Our bus driver	
Franklin	Bus picks me up at home.	I'd like to see the Lab pay some or all of the fare.
Franklin	Ride to and from work.	
Franklin		I like the past schedule. We are leaving five minutes later now, I have had to change things I do at work.
Franklin		Better buses, more comfortable seats.
Franklin		I have no complaints except when they changed the time to pick up Ellsworth people from 6:30 a.m. to 6:35 a.m., just to accommodate one person.
Franklin		Other employees always are late to ride the bus in the afternoon. They are not respectful. People prefer a single seat. The bus needs more seats.

Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Subscription Commuters

Franklin	Reliable.	
Franklin		Pick up in Blue Hill. Lower cost for Ellsworth compared to Bangor and Downeast.
Franklin	Very convenient and economical.	
Franklin	I feel safe.	
Franklin	It is always friendly.	
Franklin	Larry's abilities make for a comforting ride.	I've had problems fitting in an aisle seat when another passenger is seated in the window seat, and I'm very thin.
Franklin	My driver is very dependable and safe, and is better in the snow than I am. The commute allows me to rest to and from work.	Prices are reasonable, but could be lower.
Franklin	Saves me money on gas. I have four children. I am always struggling to make ends meet. The bus helps me save money!	
Franklin	I have found the service very safe and reliable.	
Franklin		Lower rates and a Bucksport bus or transportation to Ellsworth from Bucksport.
Franklin	I get to work safely and on time and save gas and miles on my car.	I'd like to see the cost of the bus back @ \$17 for Ellsworth again.
Franklin	I get to work.	Lower cost.
Franklin		Have buses that go down Bayside Road from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor for people who live on Bayside that work in Ellsworth or Bar Harbor that don't have vehicles.
Cherryfield	It saves on wear on my car.	Better buses.
Cherryfield	It usually runs.	Proactive regular maintenance and cleaning, but not on passenger time please. Lumbar support for seating. More frequent community runs. A bus that starts and keeps running even in cold weather would be better than what we have. Bus tickets (in addition to cash fare).
Cherryfield		Maintain buses mechanically.

Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Subscription Commuters

Cherryfield	The bus is essential to my ability to work at Jackson Labs, and I very much appreciate the service.	However, the buses we ride were clearly not meant to be used regularly for such long hauls, and they are not comfortable enough to spend 2+ hours per day on. Maintenance could also be improved, as we've seen in the last week.
Cherryfield		Fixing bus.
Cherryfield	A good asset for lab employees.	
Cherryfield	Convenient.	In the last month we've swapped out four buses. They break down easily.
Cherryfield	Brad and Dan.	Bus not breaking down.
Cherryfield		1. Have a bus that doesn't break down. 2. A bus that starts up on a cold morning. 3. Bus rates that don't go up again.
Cherryfield	They are good drivers.	But you need to have better a better bus. Maybe you should have gas buses for the winter time.
Cherryfield	Inexpensive bus fare, convenience of a pick up in my home town, travel regardless of the weather.	
Cherryfield	Good drivers.	Buses that don't break down.
Cherryfield	I don't have to drive.	To improve service, fix the buses so they don't break down!
Cherryfield	Convenience, saves gas.	

Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Midday Riders

<i>Bus</i>	<i>What do you like?</i>	<i>What can we improve?</i>
MDI		You do okay.
MDI	I like just about everything about the DTI service, and depend on it as my PRIMARY means of transportation (other than walking, and except when the Island Explorer is running).	How about putting the connection with West's Bus (about 4 pm in Ellsworth going Downeast) on your next schedule. Also midday going from Ellsworth to Bangor. Also, the connection with Concord Trailways in Bangor on Mondays (or Wednesdays) is too tight - not workable, and since the Coastal departure is now 11:00 a.m., not an option.
MDI	The driver! She is so helpful to all, helps us all off and on the bus, carries groceries to our door when needed. I hope she is getting enough money to keep her for a long time. She's a keeper! She learns the name of everyone and calls them by name.	
MDI	The service runs very well.	
MDI		We could use service more times a day (like two maybe).
MDI	Flexible service, responsible drivers, economical fare.	
MDI		Old Town bingo trips.
MDI	Gets me where I want to go, reliable.	Not much.
MDI	It's convenient for my job.	
MDI	Friendly driver, helpful with schedule and groceries. Keeps us jolly.	
MDI	It's good with regular drivers!	
MDI	Service is very good for me.	Some don't ride because they find it difficult to step up in. A small stool might be helpful to some.
MDI	An alternative for a number of residents. Fills in for their transportation needs.	The drivers have seen need to give service to places not usually on their schedule, though the routes go to quite a few locations with many of the stores and other outlets, offices, etc. that link to small towns like Northeast Harbor.
County	Inexpensive, convenient, friendly and good-humored drivers	The bus used to go Tuesday and Friday when I first moved here in 1981. Now I'm glad to have it at all. Getting old. Thanks.
County	Stops at most places I need to go, has hand rails to help you get on the bus. If they didn't, I could not get on the bus. Drivers are so helpful.	
County	Everything.	

Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Midday Riders

County	A way to get to Bangor.	
County	Dependable.	
County	I don't have to take the car. I don't have to drive. I might not go if I had to drive myself. Drivers are wonderful. Bus is clean and comfortable.	
County	It's a good way for me to get groceries and other items.	
County	Buses are dependable, drivers are pleasant and very helpful.	I would like more trips to Bangor.
County		
County	A lot of fun. Nice people, nice to be able to go to stores and be independent and to be able to get medicine at Wal-Mart when I need it.	
County	I love your service! It's the best. I know you can't give me all the connections I want, but could you at least add the Mill Mall to the Ellsworth in-town schedule?	To get to Boston by concord Trailways, I can get the Friday noon connection at Mike's Country Store, but the return in 4:00 p.m. so too late.
County	I like the friends, the ride, the drivers, getting out, the route, the passing countryside.	I only wish the bus ran more.
County	Comes to my door. It's on time. Good Driver. Nice people aboard.	
County	Just to know you'll be here.	It's fine.
County	All drivers are polite and friendly.	Less talk from driver. More attention to schedule - on time.
Bucksport	Permanent drivers are nice, courteous, friendly. Buses are comfortable.	More buses to more places. Price is unbeatable, but would pay more.
Bucksport		More often, and go to Bangor monthly.
Bucksport	I like that it's here.	We need it more than one day a week. We need a bus to Bangor.
Bucksport	I like it a lot because it allows me to get out and about on my own.	

Downeast Transportation Passenger Comments - Midday Unmet Needs

<i>Bus</i>	<i>Unmet needs</i>
MDI	1.I can't get to Belfast by public transportation. (Of course this is outside your area.) 2. Since I often get up late in the morning (due to sleep problems), I often miss the A.M. bus departures, and would probably use the bus more often if there were late-morning or midday departures.
MDI	Yes, swimming at the YMCA. It's too far to walk.
MDI	Rite Aid, Resort Way doctors offices.
MDI	Mill Mall in Ellsworth.
County	Sometimes.
County	Togus V.A.
County	Keep it running.
County	Home Depot hardware.
County	Yes, medical appointments in Bangor, Belfast, and Ellsworth. I stopped going to the Ellsworth dental clinic because I can only get there Fridays. The eye doctor at the hospital has a long lunch hour. The optometrist near the Mill Mall is a long walk from Main Street.
County	Mill Mall, Home Depot, Blue Hill for one-half hour.
County	Mill Mall and my eye doctor (Dr. Albert)
Bucksport	Everywhere except Bucksport and Ellsworth once a week each.
Bucksport	Anywhere not in Bucksport.
Bucksport	Bangor