

Coordinated Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Region 3

Press Release

Plan Aims to Improve Coordination of Transportation Services in Region

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Transportation, or lack of, is consistently identified as a major barrier for successful independent living among populations most at risk in the region. This is a particularly imminent concern given that approximately 1-in-4 New Hampshire residents of driving age do not drive and that rate is climbing.

To address this critical issue, the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC), with cooperation from the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC), are launching a planning effort with a **kickoff public meeting on Jan. 13, 2pm, at Community Conference Room of Horseshoe Pond Place, 26 Commercial Street, Concord.** The goal of this meeting is to gather input from interested parties and stakeholders.

The planning commissions are strongly encouraging citizens, transportation providers and social service providers of the 39-community region to attend the meeting and future meetings.

Topics will be discussed in working groups and will include: Transportation Needs Update, Obstacles to Coordination of Transportation Services, Key Players and Responsibilities. Future meetings will prioritize recommendations and goals for implementing a coordinated transportation system. Representatives from the NH Department of Transportation and Department of Health and Human Services will also be making presentations at the meeting.

A website has also been set up to serve as a clearinghouse of information for meetings, current and future planning activities and a survey soliciting input from citizens. The website address is: <http://cnhrpc.org/transportation/CoordinatedTrans.html>.

A plan was developed two years ago to begin the process and this meeting will begin the process of updating the Coordinated Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan for Belknap County and the Central NH Region. The existing Coordinated Plan has been in place since June 2008. It is now time to update this plan to ensure that evolving transit and human services needs are continually met by the appropriate federal transit funding.

The updated plan will meet SAFETEA-LU's federal planning requirement for the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities), Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute -- JARC) and Section 5317 (New Freedom) Programs of developing a locally coordinated public transit - human services transportation plan. This plan will be used by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to review applications for the Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom grants. Projects must come from this coordinated plan to be considered eligible for federal funding under

these two programs.

The study area currently includes the communities of: Allenstown, Alton, Andover, Barnstead, Belmont, Boscawen, Bow, Bradford, Canterbury, Center Harbor, Chichester, Concord, Danbury, Deering, Dunbarton, Epsom, Franklin, Gilford, Gilmanton, Henniker, Hill, Hillsborough, Hopkinton, Laconia, Loudon, Meredith, New Hampton, New London, Newbury, Northfield, Pembroke, Pittsfield, Salisbury, Sanbornton, Sutton, Tilton, Warner, Webster and Wilmot.

CNHRPC and LRPC are two of nine regional planning commissions in New Hampshire. Both are non-profit organizations comprised of municipalities staffed by professional planners.

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