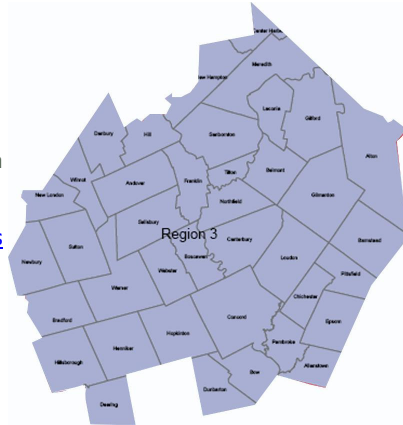


# First Meeting a Big Success

## Presentations from DHHS and DOT Officials

The first step in updating the existing Coordinated Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Belknap County and Central NH area was to hold a regional forum in January to gather input from interested parties and stakeholders. Organizers of the meeting from the [Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission](#) and [Lakes Region Planning Commission](#) deemed the first meeting a big success after more than 70 stakeholders attended and provided critical feedback on how to improve the plan and transportation in the region.



Patrick Herlihy from the [NH Department of Health & Human Services](#) and Kit Morgan from the [NH Department of Transportation](#) led the first half of the meeting.

Herlihy and Morgan began by explaining the alphabet soup of the coordinated transportation process, such as what are the [Statewide Coordinating Council](#) (SCC), Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) and Regional Transportation Coordinators (RTC). They then outlined the current situations with transit and human services transportation in the state and the biggest obstacles providers face. Two of the toughest issues providers face are "stovepipe funding" that can only be applied to specific groups or situations and a confusing array of programs.

The goal of coordination, Herlihy and Morgan said, is to make better use of resources to improve services. The Coordinated Plan's goal is to set the framework for coordination among diverse transit and transportation service providers, health and senior care providers, employers and users.

Herlihy and Morgan continued by explaining the recommended structure for moving ahead was to update the existing Coordinated Plan, then form an RCC for the region that would serve as an advisory committee to the regional planning commissions. The RCC would be comprised of regional providers, local sponsors, regional planning commission staff and other stakeholders.

The benefits of coordination include:

- \* Builds upon existing regional efforts
- \* Streamlines state contract management
- \* Combines scheduling and dispatch services to improve efficiency
- \* Cost effective: maximizes transportation, Medicaid and other human service funding
- \* Improves mobility of people with disabilities and other non-driving population
- \* Lowered emission rates

## Facilitated Small Group Discussions

The last hour of the meeting was devoted to gathering information from the stakeholders. People broke into facilitated small group discussions around the following questions:

### Transportation Needs Update

Responses included:

- Medical appointments
- Employment
- Social services
- Shopping and social events/activities
- Educational opportunities
- Religious services
- State correctional facilities/services



Where do you need to go using public transportation?

Responses included:

*Locally*

- Employers
- State agencies
- Welfare offices
- Hospitals and medical offices
- Retail centers
- Unemployment offices

*Regionally*

- Concord hub corridor
- Franklin hub corridor
- Laconia hub corridor

What do you consider to be the personal/client physical needs when it comes to transportation?

Responses included:

- Drivers
  - \* Education
  - \* Helpers for drivers
- Vehicles
  - \* Ramps
  - \* Wheelchair tie-downs
- Facilities
  - \* Shelters
  - \* More information
- Communication
  - \* Maps and schedules
  - \* Appropriate accommodations
- System
  - \* Call center
  - \* Door-to-door service
- Operating funding
  - \* Lack of funds for providers
  - \* Lack of funds for users



Real & Perceived Obstacles to Transportation/Coordination

Responses included:

- Stovepipe funding
- Flexibility of system
- Insurance
- Lack of coordination
- Perception of transit

How is coordination or lack of, a benefit/obstacle to your current transportation needs?

Answers included:

- Existing fleet capacity not being fully utilized
- Multiple carriers for same locations

How do you think transit providers in the region should increase coordination? What are the

tools/technologies that could help them to achieve better coordination?

Responses included:

- GPS
- Common call center
- Computerized schedule and dispatch
- Swipe cards
- TTDY services
- Internet trip planning

Key Players & Their Responsibilities

Responses included:

- Local and county governments
- Major retailers and employers
- Health centers
- Charities
- Senior centers

How else can we address the concerns you have about the coordination of transit and human services in the region?

Responses included:

- Plan for expanding services
- Greater public relations
- Reserve local funds to serve as match to federal funds

Complete preliminary results of the facilitated group discussions can be found here <add link>.