

Rural Intercity Program Consultation Process

Meeting #1

June 20, 2018

Overview of Meetings

- ① Discussion of policies/goals, needs and markets (June)
- ② Concepts for statewide network (August)
- ③ Revised concepts for statewide network and presentation of draft solicitation (October)
- ④ (If necessary) Questions on bidding process and requested alterations in proposed network (November)

Draft Policy – Definitions

■ Intercity bus service

- Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.

■ Commuter service

- Route intended to serve daily or frequent trips between residential areas and employment centers. Local commuting area defined as 20-mile radius around employment center.

Definitions continued

- Rural vs. urban
 - An urbanized area as “an area encompassing a population of not less than fifty thousand people that has been defined and designated in the most recent decennial census as an ‘urbanized area’ by the secretary of Commerce.” A rural area is any area that is not part of an urbanized area
- Feeder service
 - Can be operated by public transit agency
 - Can be fixed route or demand responsive
 - Can be marketing and extended hours to connect with intercity
 - Must make “meaningful connection” to intercity service
- Meaningful connections
 - Intentional schedule coordination with longer intercity routes
 - Does not need to connect to every scheduled intercity trip

Definitions continued

- Subrecipients vs. contractors
 - Subrecipient: a state or local governmental authority, a nonprofit organization, or operator of public transportation or intercity bus service that receives federal transit program grant funds indirectly through a recipient
 - Contractor: a public, private or non-profit entity that operates a service or builds a project that is specified by the state (or a subrecipient)
 - Regulatory requirements very different for the two possible relationships to the grantor

Definitions continued

■ Eligible activities

- Planning and marketing for intercity bus transportation
- Capital grants for intercity bus shelters
- Joint-use stops and depots
- Operating grants through purchase-of-service agreements
- User-side subsidies and demonstration projects
- Coordination of connections between small rural transit operations and intercity carriers

■ Consultation

- One party confers with another identified party in accordance with an established process and, before taking action(s), considers that party's views and periodically informs that party about action(s) taken.

Policy Objectives

■ Federal regulations

- Support connection between rural areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service
- Support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in rural areas
- Support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities

■ Priority projects

- Preservation of worthy existing intercity bus services
- Implementation of new services
- Provision of necessary and appropriate capital facilities and equipment

Existing Conditions

- Subsidized routes (Concord Coach)
 - Berlin-North Conway-Concord (7,162 boardings in 2017)
 - Littleton-Concord (9,026 boardings in 2017)
 - Total subsidy in FY2017: \$292,500
- Unsubsidized routes
 - Greyhound (I-89, I-95, Nashua-Keene, Brattleboro-Keene-WRJ with destinations in Boston, NYC and national network)
 - Concord Coach (Concord-Manchester-Boston, Concord-Nashua-NYC)
 - Dartmouth Coach (Hanover/Lebanon to Boston and NYC)
 - C&J (Dover/Portsmouth to Boston and NYC)
 - Coach Company (Portsmouth to Foxwoods)

NHDOT P&R Lots with ICB Service

Location	Intercity Carrier(s)	Spaces
Concord (Stickney Ave)	Concord Coach, Greyhound	580
Dover (Rte. 16)	C&J Bus Lines	414
Portsmouth (PTC)	C&J Bus Lines, The Coach Co.	1,248
Exit 2 Salem	Boston Express, Concord Coach	476
Exit 4 Londonderry	Boston Express	452
Exit 5 Londonderry	Boston Express, Concord Coach	728
Exit 8 Nashua	Boston Express, Concord Coach, Greyhound	377
New London	Dartmouth Coach	132

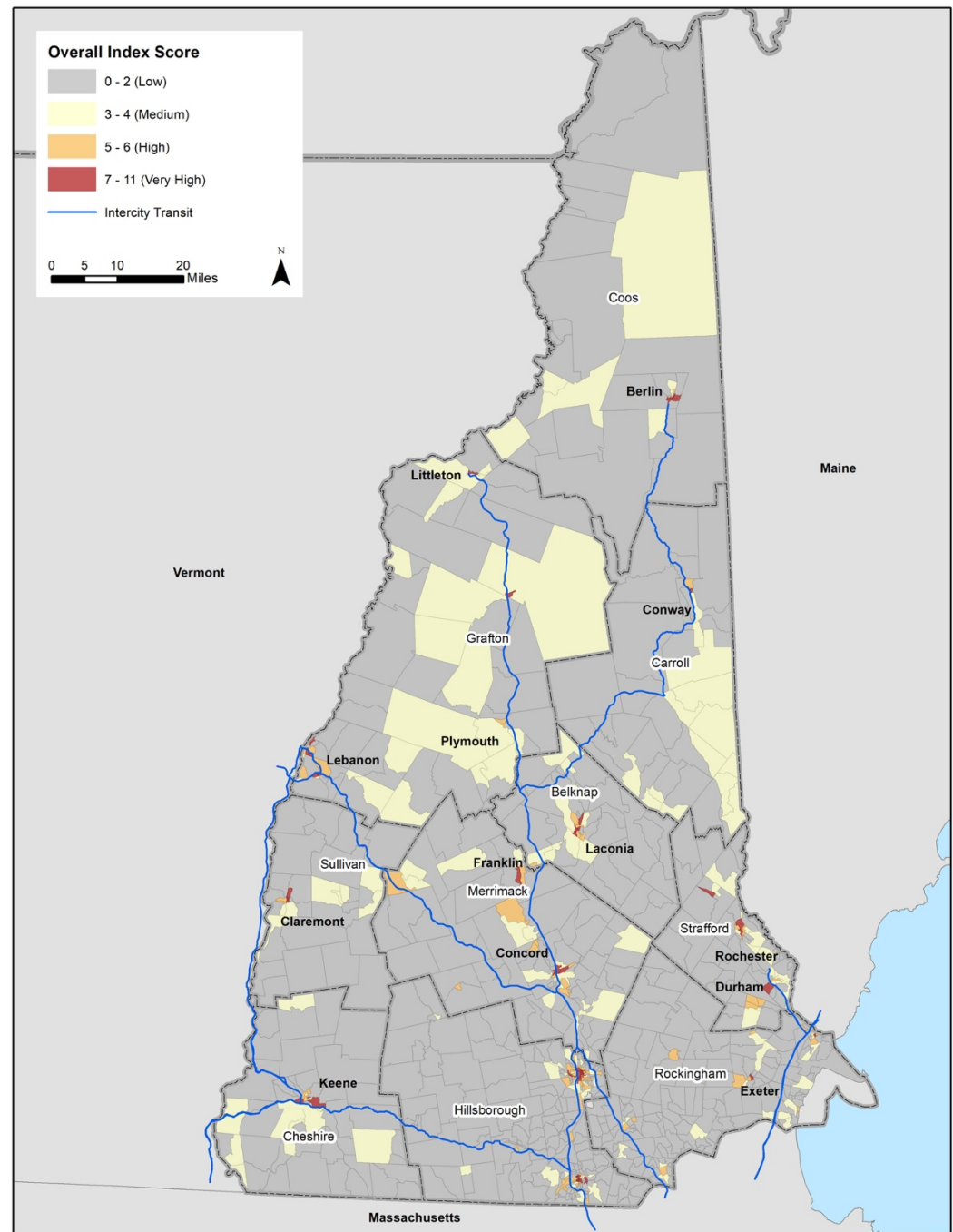
Needs Analysis

- Park & Ride report (in progress) identified parts of the state without good access to park & ride lots
- Statewide needs analysis identifies areas with higher expected need for transit, including intercity
 - Areas with concentrations of transit propensity indicators
 - Population over age 80
 - People with disabilities
 - People in poverty
 - Households with no automobiles
 - Areas with moderate to high population density
 - Colleges and universities

Transit Propensity

- For each indicator, classified census block groups into four categories
 - Low – at or below state average (0 points)
 - Medium – from state average to double (1 point)
 - High – from double to triple the state average (2 points)
 - Very High – more than triple the state average (3 points)
- Added points together to form composite measure
- Any block group in a very high category for at least one measure was considered at least “high” overall

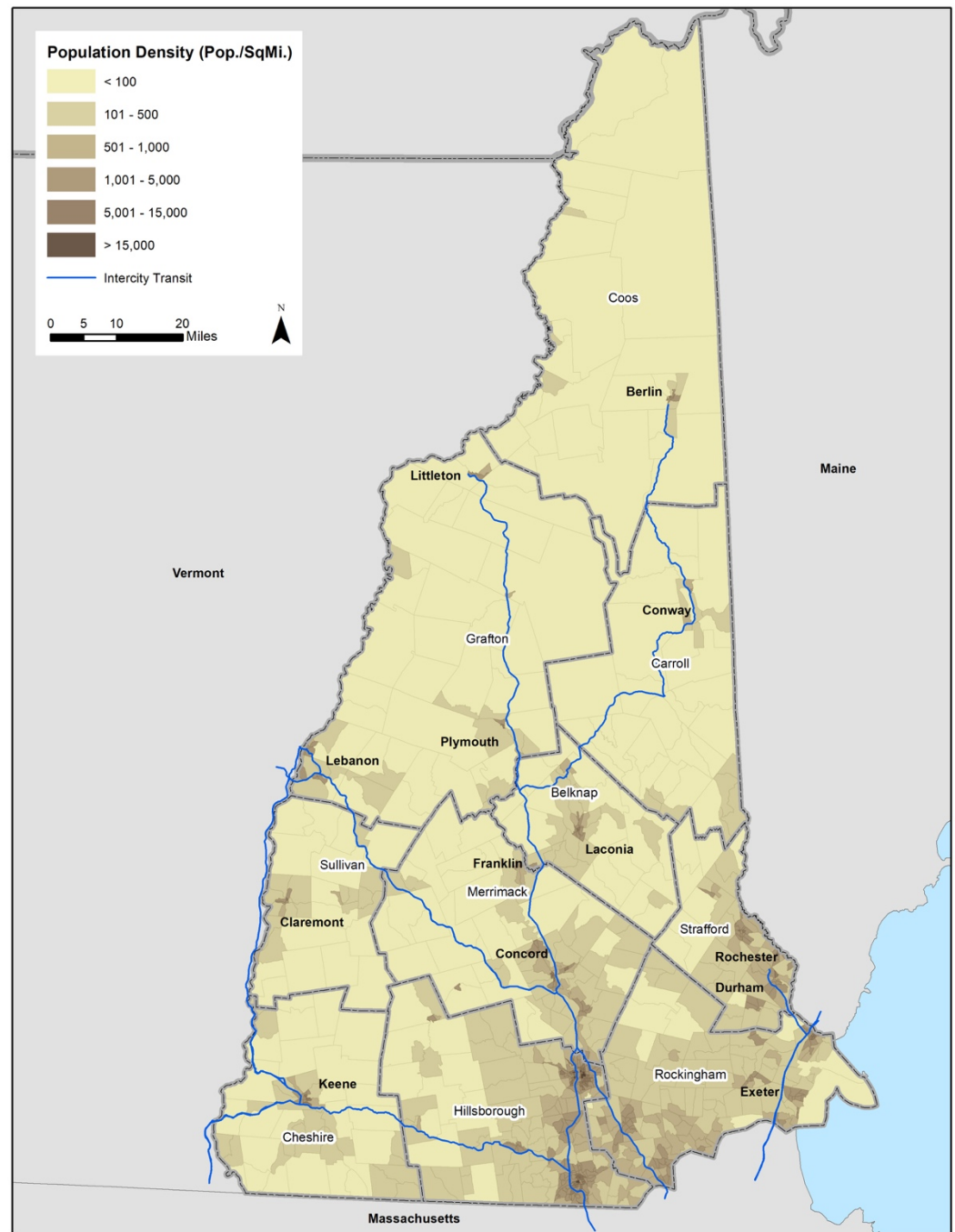
Propensity Map



Population Density

- Transit services always more efficient and successful when they serve areas of higher population density
- Urban densities (5,000 ppl/sq. mi.) mostly restricted to southeastern portion of the state
- Most of the northern half of the state has very low density (<100 ppl/sq. mi.)
- Almost all of the areas with moderate density or higher are already connected to the intercity network. Exceptions:
 - Laconia
 - Claremont
 - Rochester (part of Dover-Rochester UZA)
 - Plaistow (part of Boston UZA)
 - Exeter (part of Portsmouth UZA)

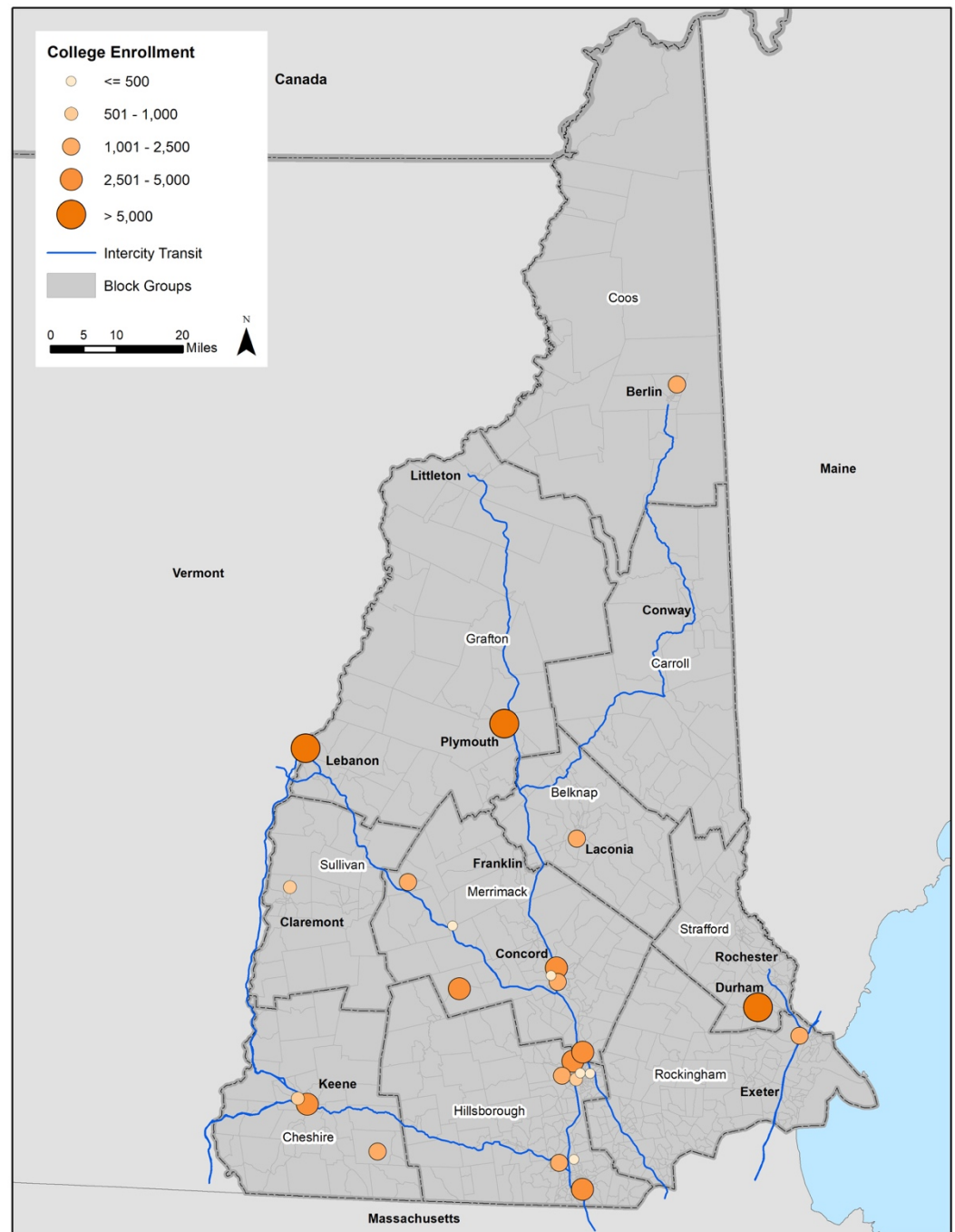
Density map



College Students

- Traditionally an important market for intercity bus services
 - Travel demand mostly at semester breaks and vacations
- All colleges and universities in New Hampshire mapped
- Total on-campus enrollment estimated at 64,500
 - Will distinguish between resident students (more likely to use intercity service) and commuters

College Map



Needs Identified by RPCs

- Met with every RPC during summer 2017
- Among many topics, discussed needs for intercity transportation in their regions
- Some needs in the urban regions of the state would not be eligible for Section 5311(f) funding

Key Themes

- Intra-state connections not well served by current network
 - Upper Valley – New London – Concord
 - Keene – Concord
 - Keene – Manchester/Manchester Airport
 - Keene – Nashua (beyond current weekend service)
 - Route 16 corridor to Dover and coast
 - Concord/Manchester to coast
- Better connections to Montreal desired

Critical Change in Process

- Past solicitations have sought proposals from public and private entities to build projects or operate services
 - NHDOT has thus far treated these grantees as contractors even though the “project” was not specified by the State
 - Guidance from FTA indicates that grantees in this manner are subrecipients, not contractors
 - Subrecipients are subject to full slate of federal regulations including Title VI, DBE, and EEO as well as requirements to open books to federal audits and state compliance reviews
- In new solicitation, NHDOT intends to ensure that grantees are contractors, not subrecipients

Implications of Change

- NHDOT will specify which projects (services and facilities) it wants to implement
- Entities will be requested to submit bids/proposals to operate or build those projects according to the specifications
- Details of project selection process and bidder evaluation process are yet to be worked out
- Consultation process is essential to making this workable for all parties

Discussion

- Next steps
 - Continue analysis
 - Develop initial set of projects to be presented in August
- Process – initial comments on change from subrecipient to contractor model
- Needs – comments on initial analysis and RPC themes
- Suggestions – what do you think needs to be done in NH?
 - Services
 - Capital projects