
**MaineDOT Locally
Coordinated Transit Plan
Region 7**

Community Concepts

FY 2013 - 2017

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COMMUNITY CONCEPTS CCI

Description

Note: The information included in this locally coordinated transit plan reflects services and procedures that were in place prior to August 1, 2013. On that date, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services implemented a brokerage system for MaineCare riders. This resulted in numerous changes which are not reflected in this document.

Rural transit provider

Provider: Community Concepts, Inc. (CCI)
Contact person: Glenn Gordon
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Email: ggordon@community-concepts.org
Website: www.community-concepts.org

Service

Service area: Androscoggin, Oxford, Franklin Counties
Type of service: Demand response, volunteers, contracts

Geographic area

Community Concepts, Inc. provides door to door specialized transportation services for the residents of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties to medical appointments, child development programs, radiation, and dialysis, as well as other important destinations.

Community Concepts Transportation Department Overview

Community Concepts, Inc. (CCI) Transportation Department has been providing low-cost, door-to-door demand response special needs transportation services since 1984. Transportation services are provided by volunteers, mini-vans, wheelchair accessible, and family self-driven vehicles. Along with agency staff drivers, CCI maintains several hundred volunteer drivers who are trained and certified by the Maine Driving Dynamics Defensive



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Driving course, and trained by the Children’s Transportation Workshop. Operating hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with dispatch service available for emergencies during evenings and weekends. CCI provides transportation service 365 days a year, including holidays.

CCI provides service for over 50 organizations including Maine Department of Health and Human Services, MaineCare, regional school systems, Head Start, ASPIRE/TANF, and many more. CCI works in conjunction with MaineDOT regional providers to ensure maximum coverage for clients in rural areas

How service is provided

Community Concepts, Inc. provides transportation services by volunteers in private vehicles (this is the primary mode utilized by CCI). Rides are also provided by agency vehicles, Citylink fixed route public transit (through distribution of bus passes to MaineCare-eligible recipients) in Lewiston and Auburn, Friend and Family imbursement program, and local taxi service. Volunteer transportation is available to all MaineCare, DHHS and other contracted social service agencies (depending upon funding source limitations). CCI does not as a rule provide general public service. CCI serves primarily as a social service transportation provider.

CCI passengers

CCI serves seniors, low-income customers and people with disabilities and other residents of Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties including customers of MaineCare, Maine Department of Health and Human Services, as well as many other social service agencies. MaineCare customers need to have MaineCare covered appointments; other riders must meet the requirements of other funding sources to qualify for transportation.

How services are documented for different funding streams

CCI utilizes proprietary software to track all trips from intake to dispatch and billing. At the point of intake when an appointment is scheduled, a staff member determines which funding source the rider is eligible for and assigns the trip appropriately. Trip data is entered into the computer system which generates payment to volunteer drivers. The transportation scheduling software connects to the agency’s financial software for billing and reimbursement.

Dispatching

CCI divides its service area into three regions and assigns dispatchers to one of the three regions:

- Lewiston/Auburn and Androscoggin County;
- Jay/Livermore Falls, Rumford/Mexico and Franklin County; and
- South Paris, Oxford Hills and Western Oxford County.

At the time of intake, a primary mode of transportation is assigned to a client—usually based upon geography. Dispatchers then assign an agency vehicle or volunteer driver. Trip manifests are

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printed and shipped to drivers electronically although some drivers stop by to pick up their manifests in person at one of the three offices.

Transit provider contributors

- MaineDOT
- Federal Transit Administration
- MaineCare
- DHHS special and regular contracts
- United Way of Androscoggin and Oxford Counties
- School Districts
- Over 50 organizations and businesses

Major Transit Services

General public service

The importance of general public service in a rural area cannot be measured simply by the number of trips and miles. Without basic access to accessible transportation, seniors, low-income customers and people with disabilities may find it difficult to obtain food and medical care that are necessary to maintaining a basic quality of life.

CCI does not, as a general rule, offer general public transportation, but does offer the following:

Seniors. CCI serves senior citizens primarily through the Elder Rides program. This service allows individuals to access medical appointments and other services. It assists seniors with staying in their own homes while accessing necessary medical and non-medical services.

Education. CCI contracts with various school districts to transport children to alternative education sites. Family members can maintain employment when transportation services are available. CCI transports children five days per week to Sweetser, the Collaborative School, Spurwink and Baxter School for the Deaf among others.

DHHS sponsored service

- **Medical.** MaineCare is the primary funding source for this service. Service is provided in agency vehicles, by volunteers in private vehicles, bus passes utilized on Citylink in Lewiston and Auburn and through friends and family reimbursement.
- **Low income.** Based on proof of monthly income, customers may be eligible for CCI's low income program. This program provides for transportation to grocery stores and medical appointments if the person is not receiving MaineCare assistance. An application process must be completed and proof of income must be verified.

- **MaineCare Bus Pass Program.** CCI provides MaineCare-eligible persons with passes to ride Citylink, and the cost per ride is much cheaper than if CCI were providing the transportation service. If a recipient lives in Lewiston or Auburn and is within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of a bus route, CCI can issue a no-cost (to the rider) bus pass. The client must have a minimum of three medical appointments covered by MaineCare per month, and must have verification from these appointments to obtain a pass for the following month. The State of Maine realizes substantial savings through the use of these passes.

Importance of CCI Transportation Program to the Region and its Economy

Public and social service transportation services benefits and supports more than the riders. The economy benefits at a variety of levels through residents accessing local supermarkets, shopping centers and “Main Street” businesses. Another example is that preventive and other healthcare can more easily be obtained—helping in reducing overall medical costs and expensive visits to emergency rooms.

CCI Transportation Department supports the local economy in a variety of ways.

- **Medical providers.** CCI provides over 380,000 patient trips annually to the medical providers located primarily in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties such as:
 - Hospitals in Lewiston, Farmington, Norway and Rumford
 - Physicians located throughout the three-county region
 - Mental health providers located throughout the three-county region
 - Dental services located through the three-county region
 - Methadone clinics
 - Pharmacies
- **Merchants and other vendors.** Merchants and other vendors benefit from riders, such as those using the Elder Rides program, who frequent their businesses such as:
 - Grocery stores
 - Shopping centers
 - Retail outlets
 - Hairdressers

As well as:

- Local taxi companies who provide transportation on referral from CCI
- Citylink through the purchase of bus passes by CCI
- **Education.** Facilities offering alternate education programs for school students such as:
 - Sweetser

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- The Collaborative School
- Spurwink
- Baxter School for the Deaf

Accomplishments

Operations

- Received a \$25,000 grant to assist veterans with transportation.
- Received an FTA New Freedoms grant for a mobility manager whose primary function is to provide ridership training for those individuals who have anxiety about using a fixed route system. The mobility manager will work with Citylink, Tri-County Mental Health, and the Somali community.
- Applied for and received a wide variety of grants to assist target groups with transportation services.

Improved efficiencies

- Streamlined operations by centralizing functions, cross-training staff, upgraded communications and software enhancements.
- Relocated to a new corporate office in Lewiston that has enhanced the centralizing of operations and staff.
- Received a Maine DOT 5311 capital grant to integrate mapping with the software that is currently in use. This will allow auto-routing of some volunteer trips based on geography and will assist dispatchers by giving more precise estimates of miles involved when scheduling drivers to a particular trip.
- Implemented the purchase of MaineCare-funded bus passes for rides on Citylink —issuing 40 to 50 bus passes per month.
- Merged dispatch staff from outlying offices to the central office. This has made the assignments of drivers and agency vehicles to trips more efficient as CCI staff no longer work in “silos” in outlying offices. Communication and sharing of information has improved and there is greater flexibility in how staff members are utilized.

Service Gaps

- **Geographic.** CCI has volunteers located throughout its service area - Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties. The number of volunteer drivers has declined in the past year due to increased gasoline prices.
- **Time of day/weekends** CCI volunteers provide transportation 365 days a year. Typically, transportation is available Monday through Friday 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The hours between 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. are high demand appointment or scheduling hours for medical and other providers, and not every request for service can be accommodated. The off-peak hours offer greater flexibility for transportation when scheduling an appointment.

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Occasionally, there are requests for late night emergency room pickups which CCI is challenged to provide.

- **Clients.** CCI makes every effort to accommodate seniors through the Elder Rides program and DHHS low-income contract funds but medical services transportation is given highest priority, so not every request for service can be accommodated.
- **Service quality.** There do not appear to be any service quality issues at this time.

Future Priorities and Projects

The future priorities and projects shown below reflect future investments that were first identified by Community Concepts and subsequently modified and prioritized by the public at a MaineDOT-sponsored Regional Transit Summit that was held at the Auburn Public Library in Auburn on December 10, 2013. Attendees were provided the opportunity to add a potential project or identify an issue for consideration at any time during the meeting.

In order to ensure maximum participation, MaineDOT sent an invitational letter, an agenda, and a list of potential priorities and projects to riders, social service agencies, healthcare facilities, chambers of commerce, private businesses, other transit operators in the region, members of the general public who had previously expressed an interest in transportation issues, and area legislators. Invitees unable to attend were afforded the opportunity to e-mail MaineDOT and make comments and recommendations both prior to, and following the meeting—these comments were included when compiling the ratings for each identified project.

A representative of MaineDOT provided an outline of the purpose and need for public input in this planning process to attendees and encouraged their full participation. A representative from each transit agency in attendance provided a brief history of their services and fielded questions from attendees. A facilitator presented the provider-identified future projects to the group and invited discussion which gave them with an opportunity to add to the list of potential projects. Attendees were provided with scoring sheets and rated each project. This process was repeated for each FTA/MaineDOT funded transit agency in the region.

The results of the Regional Transit Summit are reflected in two tables on the following pages. The first table shows the number of people who identified each of the priorities/projects as very important, somewhat important, not important, and no opinion. The second table shows the percentage ranking of the various priorities and projects in priority order.

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NUMERICAL RATING OF PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS
Community Concepts

Future Priorities and Potential Projects	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Little Importance	No Opinion
A. Volunteers - Volunteer recruitment, training and quality control.	7	5	2	1
B. Mobility management - Continued work with Citylink on mobility management.	8	5	0	2
C. MaineCare brokerage - Adapting to the new MaineCare brokerage model.	7	4	3	1
D. Additional resources - Identifying additional resources to allow for greater flexibility to consumers.	9	5	1	0
E. Computers - Computer upgrades.	4	9	5	1

PERCENTAGE RATING OF PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS
Community Concepts

Future Priorities and Potential Projects	Very Important to Somewhat Important	Little Importance to No Opinion
D. Additional resources - Identifying additional resources to allow for greater flexibility to consumers.	93%	7%
B. Mobility management - Continued work with Citylink on mobility management.	87%	13%
E. Computers - Computer upgrades.	87%	13%
A. Volunteers - Volunteer recruitment, training and quality control.	80%	20%
C. MaineCare brokerage - Adapting to the new MaineCare brokerage model.	73%	27%

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COMMUNITY CONCEPTS, INC		
Annual Report – Past Two Years		
	FY 2011	FY 2012
Volunteer Resources		
Volunteer Drivers	300	225
Vehicles		
Number of Active Vehicles in Fleet	4	3
Number of Inactive Vehicles in Fleet	1	1
Number of Spare Vehicles in Fleet		
Number of Vehicles Disposed		
Number of Vehicles Sold		1
Number of ADA Accessible Vehicles		
Annual Operating Expenses		
Annual Transit Operating Expenses		
Annual Social Services Operating Expenses	\$6,069,816	\$5,914,495
Annual Administrative Expenses		
Annual Transit Administrative Expenses		
Annual Social Services Administrative Expenses	\$827,430	\$709,739
Annual Operating Revenues		
Fare Revenues		
Transit Contract Revenues		
Social Service Contract Revenues	\$6,806,623	\$6,007,709
FTA-Federal Operating Assistance		
MaineDOT – State Operating Assistance		
Local Operating Funds	\$324,935	\$393,468
Total Annual Operating Revenues	\$7,131,558	\$6,432,256
FTA-Sources of Capital Funds		
FTA-Federal Capital Assistance		\$31,079
MaineDOT-State Capital Assistance		
Local Capital Funds		
Total Capital Funds		\$31,079
Annual Miles		
Annual Transit Miles (vehicle miles)		
Annual Social Service Miles (passenger miles)	13,122,245	11,371,002

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		FY 2011	FY 2012
Annual Vehicle Hours			
Annual Passenger Trips			
	Annual Transit Passenger Trips		
	Annual Social Services Passenger Trips	404,696	383,566
Safety			
	Fatalities	0	0
	Major Incidents	0	0
	Major Injuries	0	0

CAPITAL PLAN 2012-2018

- Replacement/Upgrade for six dispatch computer work stations - \$24,000
- Purchase additional server - \$20,000
- Software development - \$50,000

Trips, Passenger Miles by Agency				
Social Service Agency/Program	One-Way Trips		Passenger Miles	
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2011	FY 2012
General Public				
MaineCare	359,569	340,964	12,151,347	10,358,140
DHHS Other	11,491	13,035	357,151	424,023
Other	33637	29567	613,747	588,839
Total	404,697	383,566	13,122,245	11,371,002

Trips, Passenger Miles by Mode				
Mode	One-Way Trips		Passenger Miles	
	FY 2011	FY 2012		FY 2012
Agency Vehicles	23,171	17,556	49,906	39,272
Volunteers	275,523	252,377	9,722,653	8,636,989
Friends and Family	102,200	94,609	3,343,512	2,665,341
Subcontracted Providers	3,803	18,375	6,174	29,400
Other		589		
Total	404,697	383,566	13,122,245	11,371,002

*Total may differ from sum of elderly

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COMMUNITY CONCEPTS		
Revenues And Expenses – Past Two Years		
	FY 2011	FY 2012
REVENUES		
State (non-capital, administered by MaineDOT)		
Other State (e.g. Maine Department of Labor)		
FTA:		
5307 (small urban area systems)		
5309 (capital assistance)		
5310 (elderly, disabled)		
5311 (rural area systems)		\$31,078
5316 (job access, reverse commute)		
5317 (new freedom)		
Grants (other than FTA)		
Local Match		
Fares		
Other (Foundation Grants, Donations, etc.)	\$79,362	\$159,853
School Transportation	\$249,627	\$235,624
MaineCare	\$6,579,737	\$5,712,831
DHHS non-MaineCare	\$228,834	\$292,871
TOTAL	\$7,131,559	\$6,432,257
EXPENSES		
Salaries	\$805,801	\$747,555
Fringe	\$277,157	\$248,110
Contractor/Consultant	\$291,494	\$325,801
Other Direct Expenses	\$355,288	\$196,770
Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement	\$4,657,718	\$3,943,515
Volunteer Expenses	\$29,392	\$25,113
Capital Expenditures	\$657	\$31,079
Allocated Exp (Occupancy, Phones, ICR, etc.)	\$477,738	\$396,558
TOTAL	\$6,895,245	\$5,914,495

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COMMUNITY CONCEPTS Budget for FY 2013 and 2014		
	FY 2013	FY 2014
REVENUES		
State (non-capital, administered by MaineDOT)		
Other State (e.g. Maine Department of Labor)		
FTA:		
5307 (small urban area systems)		
5309 (capital assistance)		
5310 (elderly, disabled)		
5311 (rural area systems)		
5316 (job access, reverse commute)		
5317 (new freedom)	\$178,013	
Grants (other than FTA)		
Local Match		
Fares		
Other (Foundation Grants, Donations, etc.)	\$77,039	\$80,000
School Transportation	\$218,997	\$22,5000
MaineCare	\$5,828,289	\$4,954,045
DHHS non-MaineCare	\$219,708	\$215,000
TOTAL	\$6,522,046	\$5,474,045
EXPENSES		
Salaries	\$603,221	\$505,999
Fringe	\$186,638	\$167,975
Contractor/Consultant	\$139,569	\$12,5600
Other Direct Expenses	\$281,796	\$178,415
Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement	\$4,668,640	\$3,968,344
Volunteer Expenses	\$41,800	\$40,000
Capital Expenditures		
Allocated Exp (Occupancy, Phones, ICR, etc.)	\$267,332	\$247,096
ICR	\$185,271	\$135,020
TOTAL	\$6,374,267	\$5,368,449

APPENDIX

Volunteer Organizations

Rural Community Action Ministry (serving some communities in both Androscoggin and Kennebec Counties) and Lake Region Senior Services, Inc. in Bridgton.

Veterans' Transportation

CCI received a \$25,000 grant to assist veterans with transportation. Area veterans are using these funds to access Maine VA Medical Center (Togus) in Augusta and Community Based Clinics in Rumford, Lewiston, Portland and Saco. A veterans' facility in South Paris and an American Legion Hall in Rumford are used for CCI driver meetings. This presence in both locations has contributed to veterans becoming aware of this transportation service. Locally, CCI management is working with our congressional office to assure Veteran needs are addressed.

Surveys

CCI does yearly surveys assessing timeliness, safety, customer service, etc. for DHHS. CCI has also completed an agency survey sent to 7000 individuals on the same topics with expanded questions.