

7. NEXT STEPS

7.1 KEYS TO SUCCESS

This Cape Cod Five-Year Public Transportation Plan provides a foundation for limiting congestion, improving public transportation services, and achieving greater integration among public transportation modes. Implementation of the recommendations contained in this plan is an important tactical step in shaping the overall direction of public transportation strategy on the Cape. Capturing public feedback is also critical to reaching a consensus and maintaining momentum for continued improvements in public transportation services. Evaluation of the recommendations contained in this report, as well as maintaining the dialogue for continual improvements of Cape public transportation strategy, should be a basis for staging future Transit Summits. The proposed private/public Coordinating Council will be responsible for facilitating the coordination of all of the elements of public transportation to ensure a truly unified, regional public transportation system. In this way, the actions and impacts of one transportation provider will have efficient, effective and equitable benefits with the other transportation modes, and the traveling public at large.

Besides considering the numerous improvements identified in the plan, important implementation elements include: developing and adopting a comprehensive marketing plan, hiring staff to coordinate and advocate for Cape Cod public transportation services and improvements, and considering the institutional changes that are needed to provide an “acceptable level” of public transportation services. This includes developing funding and implementation strategies to make the recommendations included in this report sustainable over the long-term.

While this plan is the seminal product of the Cape Cod Transit Task Force, its work should not end here. Finding ways to ensure the ongoing viability of the Task Force should be a key policy objective of senior officials at every level of government, and in the private sector. This can lead the way to the important next step of initiating and assembling substantial funding for the commencement of a long-range Cape Cod public transportation plan.

7.2 DEVELOPMENT OF A LONG RANGE CAPE COD PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The development of a long-range plan will be based on a 10-20 year horizon and build upon the recommendations contained in, and developed concurrent with the implementation of this 5-year plan. It is expected to address: demographic trends already in evidence; an increasingly transit-dependent population; expectations of increasing traffic congestion; development of alternate modes of travel, and implementation of a dedicated, reliable funding source for transportation improvements in the region.

It is necessary to develop new and better tools to make informed choices. At the present time, the process for developing and implementing the long-range plan should include the following elements:

- **Development of population and demographic projections**, with a focus on the more transit dependant segments of the Cape. This will include coordination with the efforts to update the existing regional transportation model, and identification of target environmental justice communities. A revised transportation model will be developed using this data. At the present time, it is difficult to estimate transit ridership on Cape Cod, especially for proposed new routes. A “mode split” feature to determine transit market share unique to Cape Cod and the Islands will be incorporated into the regional transportation model, which will better predict success of new and/or enhanced transit route improvements.
- **Identification of future needs**, based on these projections.
- **Development of an identification and prioritization process for potential major public transportation projects and initiatives.** The identification of potential elements is expected to include the use of existing public rights of way, definition of new routes and services, improvement of service through technology, and continued development of Human Service transportation. Recognizing that priorities change over time, flexibility will be incorporated in the planning process as to which studies and projects are to advance. Development of safety and security elements will be incorporated into the process.

The recommendations of the Plan should include Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies. Both vehicle on-board and wayside systems are now or will be available to enable efficient operations; this is especially important in the light of the dramatic seasonal variations in ridership. With a regional plan, up-to-the-minute information can be input into a database that is then posted on a web site. Visitors and residents alike could then access this information and use it to plan their travel.

The plan must address the ingress/egress of visitors and residents on the Cape. Automobile access to the Cape is restricted to the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges, both of which experience significant traffic delays during peak times, and a single rail line, which is restricted by a drawbridge over the Cape Cod Canal. Visitor surveys can identify those visitors to the Cape who would be able to leave their vehicles at home and experience the Cape completely, without fear that their experience would be unsatisfactory due to an inefficient or ineffective public transportation system.

Year-round service for residents should include elderly, medical, dial-a-ride and other on-demand service. This provision of service must be tailored to be

effective during the widely disparate seasonal operations imposed by Cape Cod visitors. The plan will be designed and operated to provide access to jobs that support the Cape businesses those visitors and residents access.

- **Evaluation of potential projects.** Long-range goals and objectives to address the trends identified for the Cape and Islands need to be developed through a public process. Subjective and objective measures that assess the proposals in terms of their effectiveness in meeting the goals and objectives will then be applied to the proposals.
- **Establish a regional action agenda for transportation using a broad-based consensus of public and private interests.** The agenda will reflect the collective direction of policy makers and concerned parties representing diverse interests. The highly successful Cape Cod Transit Task Force format should be considered and built upon. A concerted public relations approach to disseminate vital information in timely, efficient and effective ways will be pursued.
- **Identification and development of preferred projects with an implementation timeline.** The goal is to develop a long-range public transportation plan that reduces the need for single occupant vehicle transportation and demonstrates environmental sensitivity. Based on the project evaluations and the expected evolution of public transportation needs, a 25-year plan of projects will be derived. This plan will be unconstrained with respect to funding; however, it is expected that the evaluation criteria will include cost/benefit elements.
- **Development of a long-range fleet plan.** Based on the needs identified by the 25-year plan, a detailed fleet plan that will project capital, maintenance, and operating needs will be developed. The recommendations must take advantage of new vehicle technologies that will attract riders. Such amenities as low-floor bus access and vehicle and station designs amenable to a “typical” Cape Cod visitor with picnic basket, bicycle and other encumbrances will ensure increased ridership. The Plan recommendations should include alternative fuel vehicle designs as appropriate. Any long-range solution will of necessity include these new technologies in a sustainable transportation system. Environmental benefits to be gained by the use of these new technologies will be numerous. Reductions in criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases are of paramount importance.
- **Exploration of funding potential.** Traditional sources will be evaluated and, if appropriate, extended into the future on a level-funding basis. Required operating and capital costs will be developed based on the 25-year plan. Additional funding requirements will be identified and a sustainable source of funding will be proposed and steps to secure this funding identified.



Potentially, this may include sales, gasoline, and room tax revenues collected on the Cape but not used to address Cape transportation needs.

A process will be initiated to secure the necessary funding to support the 25-year plan and begin implementation. Projects that can be funded will be incorporated into the fiscally constrained Regional Transportation Plan, which identifies public transportation and highway needs for the region. The plan will be revisited every three years as part of the Regional Transportation Plan MPO process and priorities re-evaluated based on changes in the trends and demographic projections and identification of new needs. The annual process of reviewing Cape public transportation needs and coordination by the Cape Cod Public Transportation Coordinating Council will supplement these three-year updates.

A planning effort is a journey. Conditions change, priorities shift, and opportunities arise during the development of any long-range planning effort. Given this dynamic environment, it is critical that we maintain our momentum. This vigilance will help us make our vision a reality: **a comprehensive, accessible, and integrated public transportation system that allows the traveler to say “I CAN get there from here...WHEN I want to go!”**