



2013 Transit Mobility Plan for the Merrimack Valley

March 2013



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Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
160 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01830
978-374-0519
www.mvpc.org

Merrimack Valley Regional Transit
Authority
85 Railroad Avenue
Haverhill, MA 01835
978-469-6878
www.mvrta.com

Cover Photo: Merrimack River in downtown Haverhill,
by Jeff Normandin

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Introduction

The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) jointly prepared the 2012 Transit Mobility Plan. The Mobility Plan combines and updates three previous plans — the Elderly Transportation Plan, the Disabled Transportation Plan and the Coordinated Human Service Public Transportation Plan — into a single coordinated plan.

Through this planning process, the public has provided input into gaps in transit service and needs. These gaps and needs were then prioritized. The result is an action plan that provides direction for future funding investments.

Plans for Action

The intent of the Mobility Plan is that it be a plan for implementation when funding is available. This was also the case with the previous plans. Both MVPC and the MVRTA took the recommendations within the three

plans (Coordinated, Elderly, and Disabled) and applied for funding through the federal New Freedom and Jobs Access and Reverse Commute grant programs. This was the result:

The intent of this current plan is to ensure that we are prepared with the needs and goals for our region so that (1) we are prepared when new funding sources become available, and (2) our advocates have a better idea of our service needs.

Transportation for Who?

In short, we are looking at needs of current and potential customers of transit and that includes elderly, disabled, youth and commuters as well as those who might choose transit because they don't have access to cars, it is a more 'green' mode of transportation or because it saves them money. Whatever the reason, the purpose of this study is to look at what service changes will make transit an even more convenient choice.

Recommendations from Previous Plans

| Gap/Need Identified | Service Initiated |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase Geographic area of service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Medi-Ride, January 2011 ☑ Rockingham Mall/Rte. 28 (under design) ☑ Salisbury Fixed Bus Route 54, June 2011 ☑ River Road Employment Route 76, September 2012 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve frequency and hours of service | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broader/better communication about service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ MVRTA is implementing mobile communications options |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replacement of old vehicles/maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Coordinated replacement vans for Councils on Aging ☑ Continued replacement program for MVRTA buses and vans ☑ Installation of shared value Tap & Ride (Charlie Card) payment system |

GreenDOT Policy

In June 2010, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation adopted new policy, GreenDOT, which is “a comprehensive environmental responsibility and sustainability initiative...”. The goals are:

- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- Promote the healthy transportation options of walking, bicycling, and public transit
- Support smart growth development.

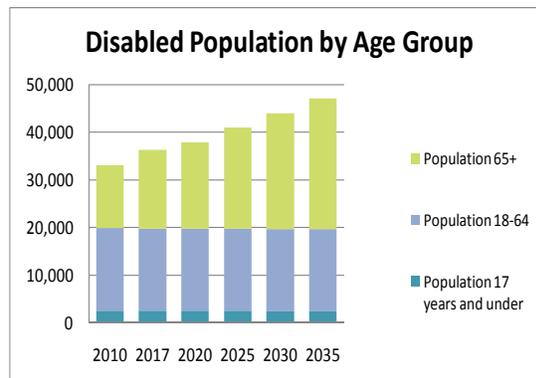
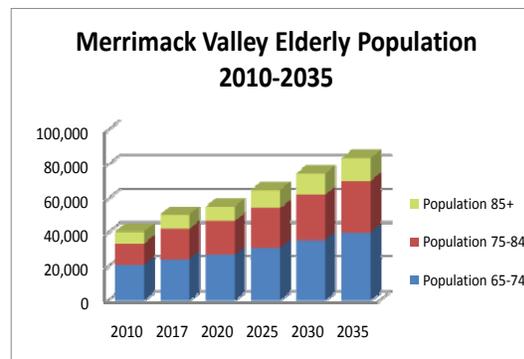
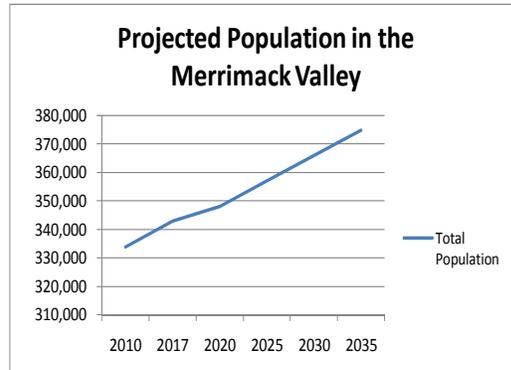
To reach their GHG reduction goals, in October 2012, MassDOT set a goal of tripling the mode share of transit, bicycling and walking. The Merrimack Valley Transit Mobility Plan provides guidance on what can be done that will contribute to achieving the Commonwealth’s goals. For more information about GreenDOT go to <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/GreenDOT/GreenDOTImplementationPlan.aspx>.

Trends

Population

Between the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, the population in the Merrimack Valley rose by 5% with the region’s largest community, Lawrence, exceeding expectations and growing by 6% to 76,377. Projections for future total population show a regional growth of 12% by 2035.

What is far more interesting is the expected growth in the region’s elderly population. While the total population is projected to grow only by 12% by 2035, the elderly population is expected to more than double. Likewise, the disabled population is expected to grow, with the most remarkable increases occurring within the 65+ age



Note: Data for the above tables comes from the 2010 U.S. Census and projections were created by MVPC using a REMI model.

range. This increase has the potential to impact transit service needs as more elderly stop driving and/or become disabled and qualify for ADA service. These transit services are more costly and will have a greater impact on available resources. The MVRTA will further analyze these impacts in the upcoming 2013 Strategic Plan.

Low Income and Minority Communities

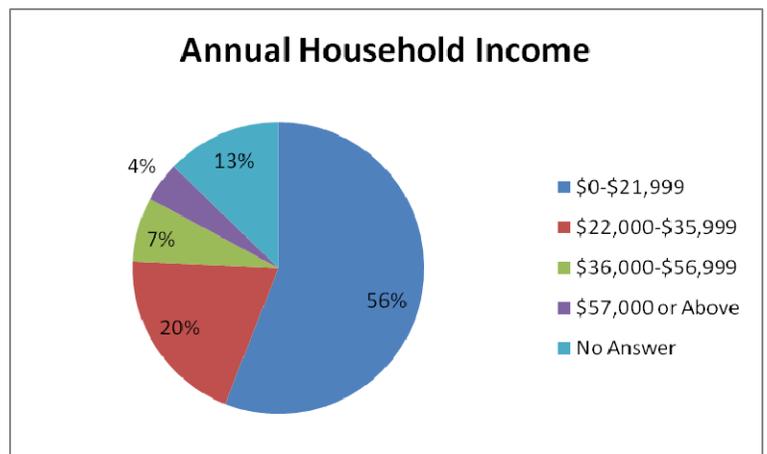
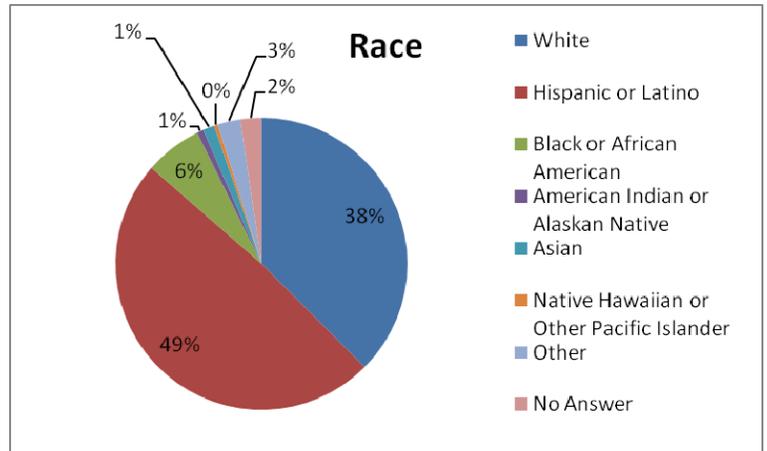
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Both the MVMPO and the MVRTA work to ensure that, for all programs and projects receiving federal funding, it is done in a fair manner without excluding or discriminating against minority or low income individuals or communities.

Based on the findings of the MVMPO Title VI program, those communities with Census tracts that are predominantly minority and/or low income include Haverhill, Methuen, North Andover and the entire City of Lawrence. This is important to know not only to prevent discrimination in allocating transportation resources, but also to ensure that transit services are provided to transit dependent populations.

According to the MVRTA’s October 2012 ridership survey, nearly 50% of riders identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino and 56% have an annual income of less than \$22,000 per year.

MVRTA Ridership Survey

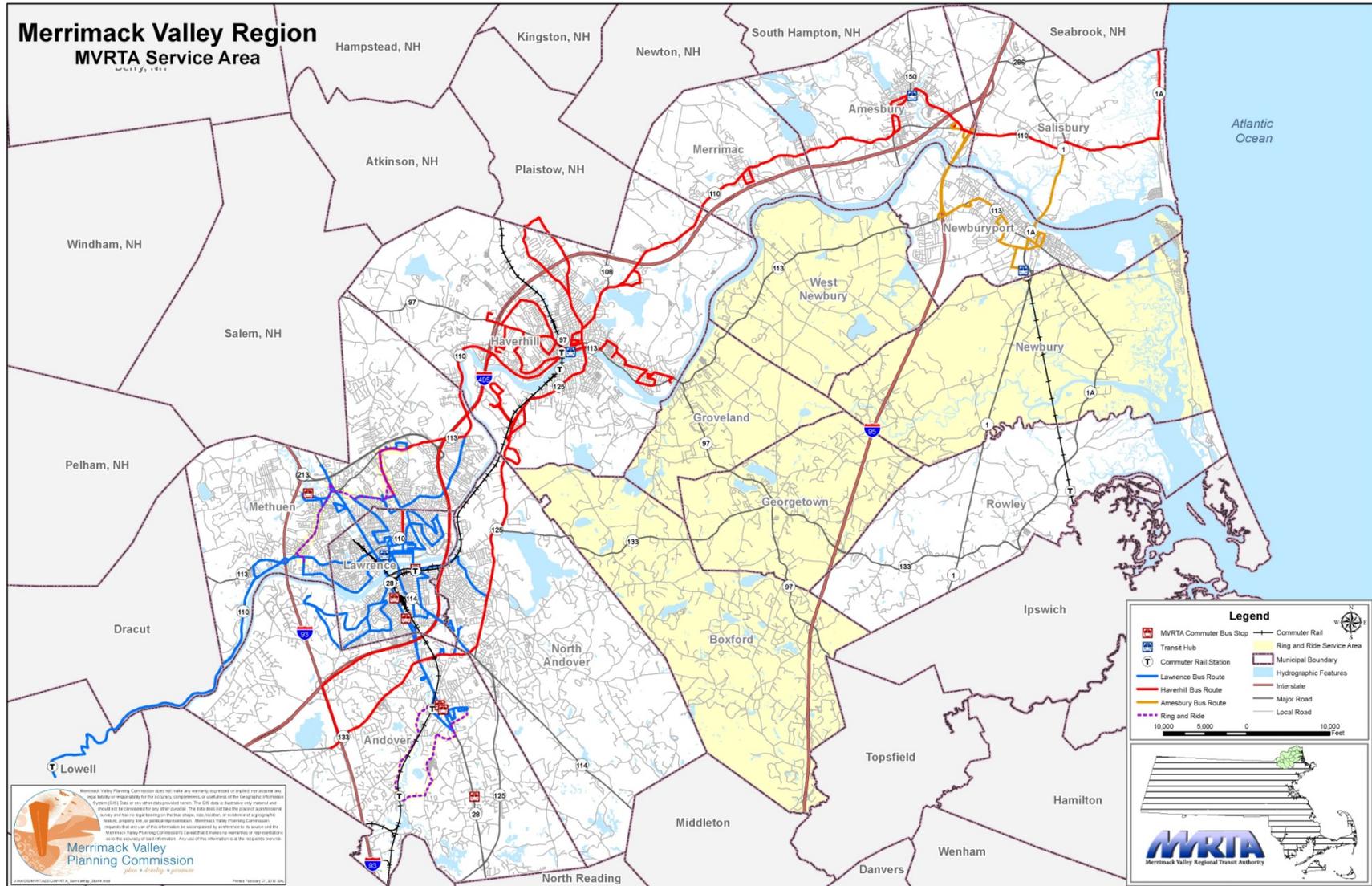
In October 2012, the MVRTA conducted a ridership survey. 1000 surveys were distributed in English and Spanish at the transportation centers. 910 were collected (91% return rate). The charts below show the responses from two questions from the MVRTA’s ridership survey.



Looking at mileage only, 56% of the MVRTA's fixed route bus miles pass through low-income areas and 36% pass through minority areas. The Authority's largest transit center is in downtown Lawrence and it provides more frequent service in downtown Lawrence, which also serves low income and minority populations in Methuen and North Andover. The MVRTA has also sought out new services for these communities, such as a new employment route from Lawrence to River Road in Andover and a new route under design from Lawrence to Salem, NH.

The MVRTA also seeks to break down barriers to the use of its service. Spanish is the second most frequently spoken language in the region, especially by those who do not speak English well or at all. As a result, the MVRTA works to ensure that its services may be easily used by both English and Spanish speakers. 35% of its bus operators as well as clerks and managers speak both languages. Written information may be found in both languages also. The MVRTA advertises in the bilingual newspaper, *Rumbo*. More information about the Title VI work may be provided by contacting the MVMPO or the MVRTA.

MVRTA System Map



Existing Transit Options

MVRTA

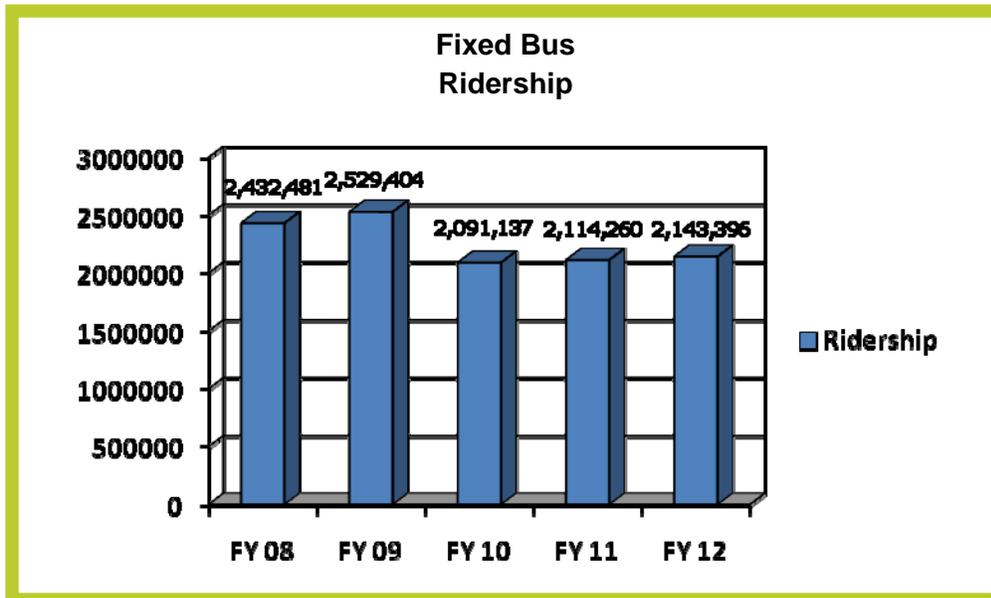
Averaging 6,873 rides per day, the MVRTA is the primary provider of public transit service in the Merrimack Valley. In FY 2012, the MVRTA provided a total of 2,266,943 rides through their fixed route service.

The MVRTA provides the bulk of the organized public transportation services in the Merrimack Valley region. The MVRTA provides year-round local **fixed route bus service** to the communities of Amesbury, Andover, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Methuen, Newburyport, North Andover and Salisbury. Seasonal service to Salisbury Beach and Hampton Beach is provided during July and August. One route (Route 41) goes beyond the region between Lawrence and Lowell.

The fixed route bus service operates on a Monday through Saturday schedule, with no service provided on Sundays or on holidays. The hours of operation vary by type of route and location. Lawrence-based routes

weekdays with service ending at 8:00 PM. Saturday bus service in Lawrence begins at 7:00 AM and operates until 7:00 PM. The five local Haverhill-based routes and Route 54 begin operation at 5:30 AM on weekdays and end at 6:30 PM. Saturday service in Haverhill begins at 8:00 AM and runs until 5:00 PM. The frequency of service also varies by route. All Lawrence-based routes operate every 30 minutes during peak hours (60 minutes non-peak) on weekdays and every 60 minutes on Saturdays. Haverhill-based routes operate every 90 minutes on the weekdays and on Saturdays.

New in 2011, the Fixed Bus Route 54 connects the coastal communities of Amesbury, Newburyport and Salisbury. The route replaced the popular Salisbury Ring & Ride service and combined it with part of the Route 51, which now ends in Amesbury. Route 54 has been very successful having provided 50,113 rides within the first 11 months of service.



typically begin operation at 5:00 AM on

Boston Commuter Bus

The Boston Commuter bus has been a successful venture that started in 2004 and has steadily grown. The service started with two inbound to Boston and two outbound times. In FY2006, two additional times were added and in FY2011, two more trips were added to address increasing ridership. 52,175 commuters used the service in FY 2012.

Special Services

EZTrans is the MVRTA’s special transportation service for the disabled and elderly in the Merrimack Region. It is provided by the MVRTA as well as Assist Medical and Andover Livery as subcontractors to MVRTA. The ADA EZTrans service is available to those people with disabilities, either physical or cognitive, which prevent them from using the fixed route bus system. The disability must conform to the definition outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All customers wishing to take advantage of this service must apply to be ADA certified by the MVRTA. One-way fare is \$2.00 and reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance. The service is provided within three-quarters of a mile from any fixed bus route and only available during the fixed bus route hours of operation.

Non-ADA EZTrans service beyond the eligible three-quarters of a mile restriction is also available to those customers who are certified as ADA and to those who are 60 years or older. Reservations must be made at least two days in advance. Rates for this service vary from \$3.00 to \$9.00 depending on the trip origin and destination points. This service is available Monday thru Friday

Boston Commuter Bus Ridership
Passengers



Special Services Ridership

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| ADA | 36,960 | 38,122 | 41,054 | 41,755 | 47,640 |
| Non ADA | 11,498 | 12,123 | 13,249 | 13,401 | 13,653 |
| Ring & Ride | 3,793 | 4,589 | 6,988 | 8,144 | 10,079 |

from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The MVRTA initiated the **Medi-Ride** in 2011 in response to the need highlighted in the 2007 Coordinated Plan. Elderly and disabled customers may use the Medi-Ride service to go to doctor’s appointments in Boston and in Peabody. A one-way ride is \$8.

Ring & Ride is a shared ride, origin to destination or curb-to-curb service available primarily in those Merrimack Valley communities that do not receive fixed bus route service. To increase ridership, the MVRTA recently overhauled the service to make it simpler and more convenient. Residents in Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, West Newbury and Newbury may

now travel anywhere in these communities. Rides are \$2.00 per ride, except for Georgetown residents who ride for free.

MVRTA Multi-Modal Center Development

The MVRTA has contributed to improving sustainable transportation and promoting community economic development through the development of new intermodal centers. Projects that have been completed or are under construction include:

- McGovern Transportation Center, Lawrence
- Costello Transportation Center, Amesbury
- Gateway Surface Parking, Lawrence
- Haverhill Intermodal Parking Facility

In addition to these projects, the MVRTA is working with the City of Haverhill to move the current Washington Square bus terminal closer to the MBTA train station. It is also working with the City of Newburyport to develop a downtown intermodal facility that will provide parking as well as bus operations for commuter and local bus service.

Other Providers

MBTA

The MBTA provides service from seven commuter rail stations along two different rail lines within the Merrimack Valley. To the east, the 27.7-mile Newburyport line operates between Boston's North Station and Newburyport, with stops in Rowley and Newburyport (the terminus). During weekdays, the MBTA operates 13 trains between Newburyport and Boston between 5:22 a.m. (first departure from Newburyport) and 10:45 p.m. (last departure). On Saturday and Sundays, the MBTA operates 6 trains with the first train leaving

Newburyport at 8:48 pm and the last train arriving at Newburyport at 11:16 p.m.

On the west, the 32.9-mile Haverhill Line runs between Boston's North Station and Haverhill. In the Merrimack Valley, two stations are located in Andover (Ballardvale and Village Center), one in Lawrence and two in Haverhill (Bradford and downtown Haverhill), with Haverhill serving as the terminus of the line.

During weekdays, the MBTA operates 13 trains between Haverhill and North Station between the hours of 5:05 a.m. (first departure from Haverhill) and 10:15 a.m. (last train to depart). Six inbound trains run on weekends between 7:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.

Total commuter rail ridership in the Merrimack Valley fluctuates, which can be attributed to the economy and the price of gasoline. Improvements to the system within the Merrimack Valley include double tracking the Haverhill Line between Lawrence and Andover. Double tracking the entire corridor used by the MBTA will allow for more frequent service. Currently midday trains on the Haverhill branch run every two hours, making it a less attractive option.



Figure 3 Passenger exit the commuter rail train at Lawrence station. MVRTA buses provide local connecting service.

Private Commuter Bus Carriers

C&J motor coach company operates service from Newburyport to Logan Airport as well as commuter service to Boston. Hours of operation are from 3:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. with seven buses that comprise the commuter buses from 5:30 – 8 am (and an evening reverse). A 10-ride commuter pass costs \$88.

The Coach Company also runs commuter bus service from Newburyport with six scheduled stops between 6:00 and 7:50 a.m. and the evening reverse. A one-way ride is \$13 and a 10 ride commuter pas is \$82.

The Coach Company runs a second commuter service in the Merrimack Valley with stops at the Rivers Edge (Haverhill), Tea Garden Restaurant (Groveland), Georgetown Park & Ride and Boxford Center. Two buses operate this route. The cost is \$11 one-way and \$79 for a 10-ride pass.



Figure 2 Newburyport Park & Ride on Storey Avenue.

Typical Weekday Inbound Boardings

(Data from MBTA Ridership & Service Statistics 13th Editon, 2010 and from 2010, 2011 and 2012 MBTA Audits)

| Commuter Rail Station | Feb-03 | Feb-04 | Feb-05 | Apr-06 | Jun-07 | Feb-08 | Feb-09 | Mar-10 | May-11 | Feb-12 |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Haverhill | 507 | 568 | 469 | 516 | 479 | 583 | 536 | 487 | 479 | 734 |
| Bradford | 324 | 381 | 340 | 372 | 365 | 480 | 391 | 378 | 307 | 411 |
| Lawrence | 524 | 665 | 594 | 596 | 602 | 738 | 780 | 756 | 587 | 841 |
| Andover | 638 | 763 | 614 | 493 | 562 | 553 | 557 | 638 | 486 | 605 |
| Ballardvale | 303 | 377 | 295 | 264 | 307 | 292 | 234 | 303 | 232 | 279 |
| <i>Hav. Line Tot.</i> | <i>2,296</i> | <i>2,379</i> | <i>2,515</i> | <i>2,568</i> | <i>2,315</i> | <i>2,646</i> | <i>2,498</i> | <i>2,562</i> | <i>2,091</i> | <i>2,870</i> |
| Newburyport | 741 | 604 | 464 | 683 | 610 | 497 | 568 | 607 | 544 | 784 |
| Rowley | 156 | 136 | 120 | 189 | 156 | 167 | 164 | 168 | 130 | 225 |
| <i>Nbprt. Line Tot.</i> | <i>897</i> | <i>939</i> | <i>759</i> | <i>852</i> | <i>766</i> | <i>664</i> | <i>732</i> | <i>775</i> | <i>674</i> | <i>1,009</i> |
| Total Boardings | 3,318 | 3,318 | 3,274 | 3,420 | 3,081 | 3,310 | 3,230 | 3,337 | 2,765 | 3,879 |

Councils on Aging

Every community in the Merrimack Valley has a senior center and/or Council on Aging. The transportation services provided by these agencies vary from community to community. Most communities provide rides to medical appointments as well as grocery shopping and limited recreational activities. The table below outlines the services provided by each Council on Aging that responded to the request for information.

| | Average Rides/ Month | Total Rides/ Year | Days/ Week Van in Use | Home Meal Delivery Trips/ Month | Number of Vehicles |
|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Andover | 276 | Unavailable | 5 | 1,750 | 2 cars; 1 bus; 1 van |
| Newbury | 56 | 72 | 1 | 680 | 1 |
| North Andover | 326 | 3,912 | 5 | | 2 |
| Georgetown | 60 | 720 | 2 | | 1 shared |
| Salisbury | 208 | 2,496 | 3 | 740* | 1 shared |
| Groveland | 173 | 2,076 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Newburyport | 64 | 768 | 2 | | 1 shared |
| Rowley | 425 | 5,100 | 3 to 5 | | 1** |
| Merrimac | 44 | Unavailable | 2 | 0 | 1 shared |

* Meals on Wheels are delivered by volunteers with their own vehicles.
 ** Rowley shared a van with Newbury July 2011-April 2012.

| Town | Round Trips | Medical | Shopping | Hair | COA | Other |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Amesbury | 86 | 86 | | | | |
| Boxford | 69 | 69 | | | | |
| Georgetown | 100 | 100 | | | | |
| Groveland | 114 | 114 | | | | |
| Haverhill | 52 | 44 | | | | 8 |
| Lawrence | 45 | 45 | | | | |
| Merrimac | 203 | 174 | 1 | 2 | 26 | |
| Methuen | 154 | 154 | | | | |
| Newbury | 186 | 185 | 1 | | | |
| Newburyport | 223 | 223 | | | | |
| North Andover | 339 | 339 | | | | |
| Rowley | 94 | 94 | | | | |
| Salisbury | 16 | 16 | | | | |
| West Newbury | 21 | 21 | | | | |
| 2012 Total Trips | 1702 | 1664 | 2 | 2 | 26 | 8 |

Northern Essex Elder Transport (NEET)

NEET provides transportation to the elderly by utilizing volunteer drivers, who are often elderly themselves. The program is designed for elders and may have some crossover in providing transportation to people with disabilities, however NEET does not breakdown the number of trips by customer ability (i.e. cane, walker, vision impaired). In general, their customers must be somewhat mobile in order to participate in the program. During FY 2012, NEET provided 1,702 in our region.

Gaps in Service

Public input was sought through different venues. A formal public meeting was held on August 23rd in Lawrence. Staff members also attended meetings for the Methuen Arlington Neighborhood, Inc. Board, the Lawrence Mayor's Health Task Force, and the Haverhill Senior Center. Surveys were distributed at all the above meetings and also to the MVPC transportation committee and through the Lawrence Senior Center (in Spanish). In addition, comments received through the MassDOT visioning process were included.

The most frequent gap in service identified related to the frequency of the fixed bus services. In particular, comments specified the need for more frequent service in the middle of the day, especially on overcrowded routes such as the 01 midday. Comments also pointed to more frequent service on the commuter rail. Evening (to 9 pm) service was noted as a need for people trying to get home from jobs or from the commuter rail. Sunday service is also desired.

In terms of geographic needs, those who provided comments pointed to the need for the Route 33 to access the doctors' offices at Chestnut Green on Turnpike Street (Route 114) and the Stop & Shop in North Andover. Turnpike Street is a high-volume and higher speed road with no sidewalks and no lights, making it a very dangerous place for people to access. Currently, only those who qualify for EZTrans can access those doctors' offices with public transit.

Many comments also noted the need for service into New Hampshire for jobs and for shopping. The MVRTA has received a Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Grant to

design and operate a new service into Salem, NH.

With regard to communication, most people said that the public found out about the bus by word of mouth. In summary, a well-rounded and more substantial approach was viewed as helping to get the word out about transit. Suggestions for increased communication included using social media and other electronic communication methods, more posters at more locations and more outreach especially in the Spanish-speaking communities and at the councils on aging.

A few comments focused on the challenges of the flag system. These people felt that the flag system caused the buses to be late, because of frequent stopping. Also, people noted the desire for more bus stops.

Public Comments

The following is a list of the comments received from members of the public who responded to the questionnaire that was distributed.

Are there places that you need to go to but can't easily get there or at all using public transportation?

North Andover:

- Turnpike Street for Chestnut Green, doctors' offices and Stop & Shop
- Past 200 Sutton Street,

Andover

- Commuter rush hours shuttle service between Ballardvale and P&G/Pfizer (Lowell Junction)
- Shuttle service between Ballardvale Street and North Wilmington would be useful for students at ITT Technical Institute,

employees at Charles River Labs and other companies along Ballardvale Street.

New Hampshire:

- Salem, NH (Rockingham Mall and to the plazas on Route 28)
- Walmart and Kmart in NH
- Shopping areas on Route 125 in Plaistow and Route 1 in Seabrook

Methuen:

- Bring back Route 42
- Route 40 should go to the Village Mall all day every day

Newburyport

- Doctor's offices at Towle Building
- Later evening service to train station to pick up passengers coming from Boston

Salisbury

- Elm Street – perhaps have the Route 83 stop on Elm during the summer months.

Haverhill

- Farther up Broadway
- Route 51 is not timed to meet with 01 in Haverhill. Route 51 should run the same schedule on Saturdays and Sundays.

Medical Centers (add to Medi-Ride Service)

- Lahey in Burlington
- Beverly Hospital
- Mass General in Danvers
- Portsmouth Hospital
- North Shore Cancer
- Peabody

Other

A few comments were received regarding sidewalk needs in order to access transit.

These include sidewalks:

- Along Route 114
- In Methuen (specifics not provided)
- Near the Rowley commuter rail station

How do people get to places named above?

- Friends
- Family
- NEET volunteers
- Several buses, as in the case of Lahey Burlington via Lowell

Temporal Needs:

- More frequent bus service system wide.
- Run buses later in the evening.
- Buses are crowded on midday runs, especially the 01.
- Sunday service in order to get to work.
- Early Saturday morning run is not early enough to catch for work.
- Route 41 should run every half hour.

Commuting to Boston

- Need an additional commuter bus in the morning and afternoon.
- Dedicated bus lane on I-93 for HOV/Buses to make carpooling/van pooling/commuter bus more efficient.
- Commuter bus on select holidays including MLK, President's Day, Columbus Day and Veterans Day.
- Extend the HOV lane to Montvale Avenue interchange.
- Earlier bus in the evening (4 p.m.)
- Change the morning inbound schedule to run about 10 minutes earlier to accommodate increased inbound traffic in the morning.
- Establish quiet bus policy.
- Increase frequency of Haverhill commuter rail line (MBTA)

How do you think people find out about transit services?

- Primarily word of mouth
- Councils on Aging/Elder Services
- Web site
- Seeing bus
- Newspaper/Cable TV
- Many are unaware that transit exists and how they might use it.

Suggestions for improving communication:

- Utilize e-mail and social media
- More posters, maps and brochures should be available at more locations.
- Training and outreach to new customers, especially the Spanish-speaking community.
- Use designated stops.
- More information in newspapers.
- More outreach at senior centers, schools, etc.

- More surveys and public hearings.
- Use more pamphlets and the electric signs on buses.
- Post information at the City offices and where people shop.
- Make schedules available at hospitals, shopping centers and other places where potential customers congregate.
- Print, television, radio, web, telephone applications.
- Educate social workers, Elder Services of Merrimack Valley case managers, medical office managers.
- Within 5 years, most people will be using smart phones. Children will want to use their phones to make reservations for their parents.



Prioritization of Gaps and Needs

Any new service requires new sources of funding. As a result, the gaps and needs have been categorized and then ranked in terms of high, medium and low. If funding were to become available, then those services/needs ranked as a higher priority would be addressed first.

Many of the services found in the table address MVRTA transit service, but a few pertain to the MBTA or connections to transit.

| Service | Prioritization | | |
|--|----------------|--------|-----|
| | High | Medium | Low |
| General | | | |
| State of Good Repair/Vehicle Replacement. | | | |
| New Service | | | |
| Increase frequency of Lawrence and Haverhill routes. | | | |
| Holiday Service: MLK, Veterans, Columbus Day and Presidents' Day. | | | |
| Institute Sunday Service. | | | |
| Commuter Service | | | |
| Increase commuter rail frequency (MBTA). | | | |
| Increase frequency of buses to Boston. | | | |
| Bus on Shoulder/HOV lane on I-93 | | | |
| Holiday service MLK, Veterans, Columbus and Presidents' Days. | | | |
| Disabled and Elderly | | | |
| Determine additional future need and demand for service to Elderly and Disabled. | | | |
| Other | | | |
| Determine need to coordinate transit service and bicycle accommodation on bus routes and at stations and intermodal centers with ongoing bicycle planning. | | | |
| Review locations for potential bus stops and route marker signs. | | | |
| Increased capacity to promote MVRTA transit services. | | | |
| Other New Service Requests - to be reviewed for need/prioritization | | | |
| Additional Medical Service out of region. | | | |
| North Andover: Additional service on Route 114. | | | |
| New Hampshire: Route 28/Rockingham Mall. | | | |
| New Hampshire: Plaistow and Seabrook. | | | |
| Newburyport: Towle Building. | | | |
| Methuen: Reinstitute 42 & Route 40 to Village Mall all day. | | | |
| Salisbury: Route 83 stop on Elm Street. | | | |
| Rowley: Ring & Ride Service. | | | |
| Andover: Ballardvale Street service. | | | |
| Sidewalk improvements in Methuen, on Route 114 and around Rowley train station. | | | |

Comments from Public Review Period

From Charles Boddy, Lawrence:

“On page 5 you might consider adding that we advertise and post announcements in local bilingual newspaper (Spanish/English).”

Response: This was included in the document.

Comments from Karen Pearson, MassDOT:

1. The charts on page 4 suggest that while the disabled elderly population will be growing, all other age groups are at level in the next twenty-five years; There also are no citations for this data;

Response: Citations were added. The populations for all other age categories did not change dramatically, which is why those changes do not show up in the chart. The overall population changes by 12%, whereas the elderly population changes by 106%. This was the dramatic change that we were trying to demonstrate.

2. There should be web site addresses in the narrative for both the 2013 Strategic Plan and the Title VI Plan;

Response: These MVRTA documents are not available on-line, but can be requested from the MVRTA. Contact information was added to the beginning of the document.

3. How was the October ridership survey conducted: by phone; mail; on-site surveys; how many surveys were

developed; how many were successful;

Response: Additional descriptive information was added to the text.

4. Shouldn't there be numbers affixed to each bus route to gauge ridership;

Response: The intent was to show overall ridership and not specific performance measures for each route.

5. More individual bus routes maps

Response: Individual bus route maps were not added as they only show where the buses go rather than describe gaps in service.

6. Page 8 – *ring-and-ride* – what ridership; what fares ; maps of new ITCs

Response: Ridership was included in the table on page 9. Additional information on fares was added.

7. Page 9 – commuter rail route maps; ridership numbers.

Response: MBTA commuter rail ridership numbers were added.

8. Page 11 – outreach for public input did not appear to include all the MVPC communities

Response: Outreach was to all communities, but additional meetings were added to ensure that our Title VI communities were included.

9. Other than a few mention of fares, there was no financial data found (budgets; shortfalls)

Response: This plan replaces the Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan. The purpose is to identify gaps and needs in service and/or opportunities for better coordination. No financial data is included in this plan.

