

Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility *Statement of Purpose and Need*

The purpose of the Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility is to create an integrated, multimodal passenger transportation hub that increases mobility and accessibility for those who live, work, study and recreate in the Upper Valley by helping to meet the region's growing demand for public transportation. The benefits of the facility also include improvements to the environment, quality of life, and economic vitality of the Upper Valley.

The need for the Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility is demonstrated in three key areas: Increasing Access to and Diversity of Transportation, Maintaining the Regional Environment, and Sustaining Economic Vitality. The following sections describe the need for the facility in each of these three areas.

Increasing Access to and Diversity of Transportation:

The need for the Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility in the area of *Increasing Access to and Diversity of Transportation* is demonstrated in the following ways:

- The Upper Valley Region is served by a number of intercity transportation providers, local public transit providers, as well as human service transportation providers and private for-profit transportation providers. However, the region lacks an integrated transportation hub to improve the connectivity of these services. The proposed Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility would create such a hub, enhancing connections across and between transportation modes.
- The Upper Valley Region has demonstrated a commitment to public transportation, which is demonstrated by consistent increases in ridership of the region's local and intercity transit systems. However, the absence of a central coordinated hub complicates seamless transportation connections and perpetuates reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. The proposed Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility would help eliminate barriers to transportation access and encourage the continued growth and development of the region's intercity and local public transportation services.
- Upper Valley businesses have increasingly seen the need for efficient public transportation systems as housing imbalances have expanded commuting patterns throughout the region. Increased access to a coordinated multiple transportation options may assist businesses in retaining valued employees.
- Current capacity is not adequate to meet the demands within the region, specifically, there is a lack of park & ride facilities and current bus parking is overflowing.

Maintaining the Regional Environment:

The need for the Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility in the area of *Maintaining the Regional Environment* is demonstrated in the following ways:

- Although the Upper Valley region has a successful public transportation system, emergent congestion and continued reliance on single-occupancy vehicles will place increasing

demands on the natural, cultural and social environments void of parallel efforts to increase capacity for coordinated transportation options. The proposed Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility would enhance the environment by promoting energy conservation and reducing emissions by facilitating increased utilization of the region's public transportation services.

- The traffic congestion, emissions, and noise associated with the high reliance on private vehicle use have a negative impact on the environment of the Upper Valley region. Further developing road networks to mitigate increasing congestion can put pressure on undeveloped and unfragmented parcels of land, impacting the natural systems of the region. The proposed Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility would help sustain the natural environments that attract citizens to this region by reducing reliance on private vehicles and promoting alternative modes of transportation.
- The Upper Valley is rich in social capital. Increased traffic congestion and travel times to extracurricular activities could threaten the social and cultural environment. The Intermodal Facility could help alleviate stresses associated with growth and development.

Sustaining Economic Vitality:

The need for the Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility in the area of *Sustaining Economic Vitality* is demonstrated in the following ways:

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- Enhanced intercity public transportation services can play a key role in attracting new businesses to the region, and improving the competitiveness of existing businesses and institutions by providing efficient access to intercity travel. For example improved bus service to New York and Boston can increase the attractiveness to highly qualified students and new faculty members of Dartmouth College, the attractiveness of new medical personnel to area hospitals, and of highly qualified business executives to relocate to the region.
- There are few locations in the Upper Valley where business travelers and tourists can obtain information about local businesses and tourism destinations. The proposed Upper Valley Intermodal Transportation Facility would provide an easily accessible, centralized location to promote the region and provide a clearinghouse of transportation options as well as education on the region's commitment to alternative modes of transportation.

Other Goals for the Project:

- Supports the goals of SAFETEA-LU, the New Hampshire Public Transportation Programs State Management Plan, the Vermont Public Transportation Policy Plan, the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Plan, the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Plan, and the Master Plans of affected communities in the Upper Valley.
- Create an attractive gateway to the Upper Valley that attracts visitors and serves the needs of those who live, work, study, and recreate in the region.
- Develop a facility that will accommodate taxi services and demand-response human service transportation providers for elderly and disabled residents.
- Potential for a facility that accommodates a regional transit dispatch center that was recommended in the NH Plan for Coordination of Community Transportation Services, the

Grafton County Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan, and the Sullivan County Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan.

- Provide a centralized location that allows for the connection of the intercity and local transit network to rail and/or air transportation.
- Provide a centralized location for residents of the Upper Valley to leave their automobiles and take another means of transportation to employment sites, including Dartmouth College and the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.
- Provide a centralized location for residents of the Upper Valley to leave their automobiles and take another means of transportation to destinations in Southern New Hampshire, Boston, New York City, Vermont, and the Greater Eastern Seaboard.
- Provide accommodations for bike access.

References:

Ossipee Transportation Center Feasibility Study, December 2004.