

Section 1: Introduction

Purpose and Vision Statement of the Transportation Chapter

North Hampton is served by approximately 59 miles of streets, roads and highways which can be classified as state highways, local arterials, local connectors, residential access streets or private roads. Although the growth of the region and increased use of the Seacoast is attracting increasing traffic, the network of town roads appears adequate to serve current needs of vehicular traffic in the community without significant improvement, but may require enhancement to accommodate future growth. Additionally, the absence of a pedestrian and bicycle network is an issue that needs to be addressed. North Hampton's town roads are an important component of the town's rural character while scenic Ocean Boulevard (NH 1A) is integral to North Hampton's coastal character.

The 2010 Community Survey results identified a consistent preference for maintaining North Hampton's rural and coastal character while improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Also identified as important by many of the survey respondents was the need to pursue senior or elderly housing, which would increase the need for transit services.

As North Hampton continues to grow, the Town's ability to address the increased level of traffic and demand for transportation options will affect the impact that this growth has on the Town. Maintaining an efficient street network while improving transportation options will serve an integral role in addressing both the town's traditional character and its vision for the future.

Goal and Objectives

The Town of North Hampton should promote a multi-modal transportation system that maintains and enhances the primarily rural character of the community. The transportation system should support the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods into, around and through the town, connecting to the wider transportation network.

1. The Town should continue to diversify the transportation system as demand warrants. This includes continued support of demand responsive service and seeking future fixed route connections to the wider network and other Seacoast communities.
2. The Town should promote a pedestrian and bicycle network that is integrated with the roadway system so that people can have a safe and effective alternative to vehicular travel around North Hampton.
3. The Town should promote the use of context sensitive solutions for all roadway improvements in the community to assist in maintaining the current character of the community as it grows.

2010 Community Survey Key Issues

The recently completed (December 2010) North Hampton Community Survey identified several important issues related to growth and transportation. These included the following:

- Strong support for the town pursuing:
 - Bicycle paths off roads
 - Bicycle paths along roads
 - Public transportation
 - Crosswalks at traffic signals
 - Resident parking at the beach
 - Sidewalks (though a high level of disagreement exists)
- Majority of respondents were satisfied with:
 - Traffic on town roads
 - Quality of road maintenance
- Many respondents were dissatisfied with the appearance of Route 1 (Lafayette Road)

Section 2: Existing Transportation System

Roadway Network

This section will detail the characteristics and functions of the existing roadway portion of North Hampton's transportation network. First, the section will discuss the purpose and type of classification of the roadway system. This will be followed by a discussion of traffic volumes and growth, roadway safety, and recommendations for improvements to the transportation system in North Hampton.

Most of North Hampton's main roads were laid out along the ridges surrounding the wetlands during colonial times. They have been improved over time, but generally they are still narrow and rolling rural roads which serve as both "streets" for the many residences located along them and highways for those passing by. For many, the roads of North Hampton are part of the rural character worth of preservation.

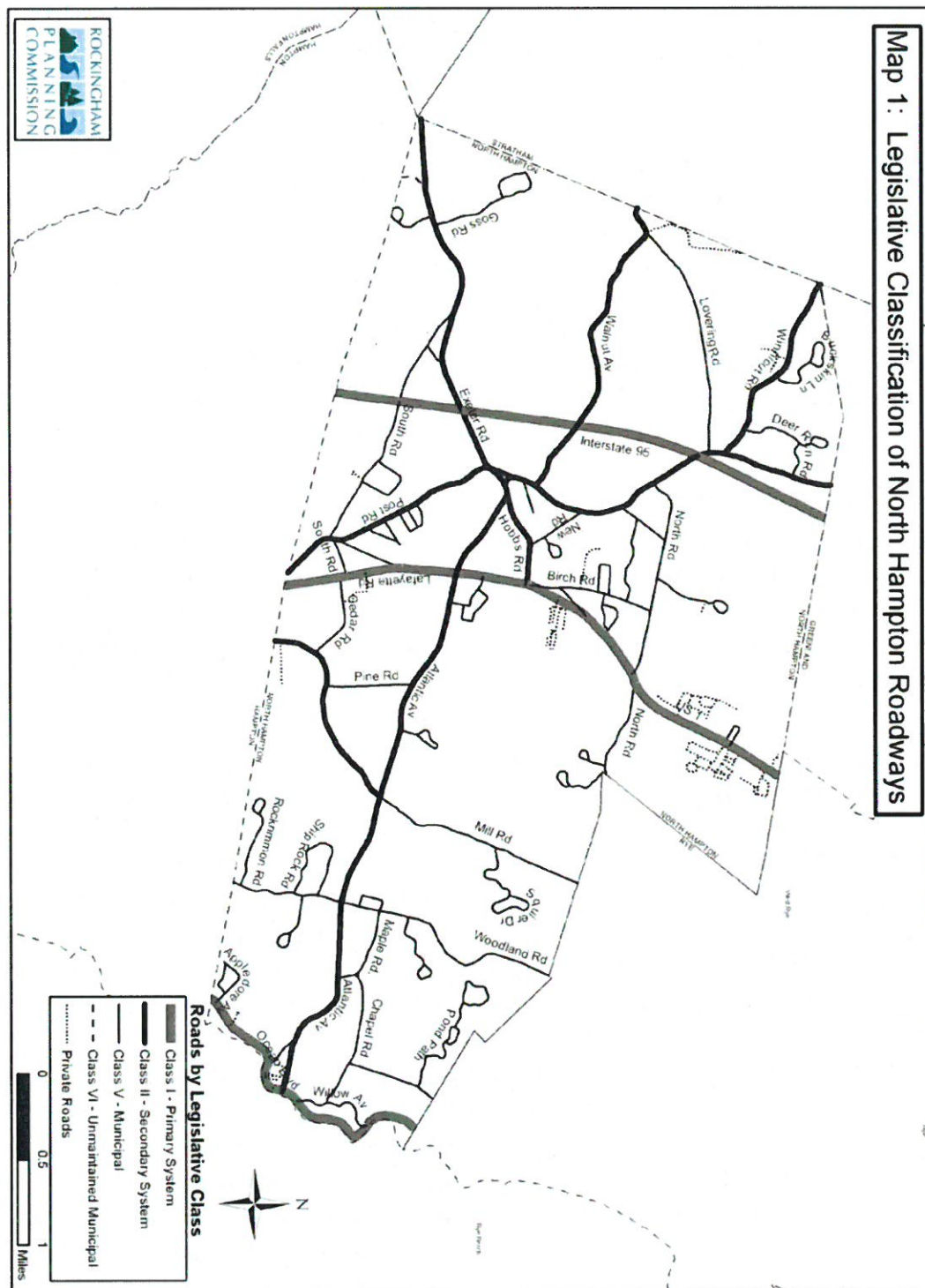
State and Federal Roadway Classification

New Hampshire State law adopted in the 1940s serves as the basis for the State Road System Classification that is still in use today. This classification scheme has eight categories of public roads; each roadway is grouped based on the role of the roadway as well as on the entity responsible for its maintenance. North Hampton is served by State-classified Class I, II, V, VI and Private roadways, as shown in **Table 1** and **Map 1**.

TABLE 1: ROAD MILEAGE BY STATE CLASSIFICATION

STATE CLASS	2010
Class I (State-maintained)	8.06
Class II (State-maintained)	14.78
Class V (Town-maintained)	29.15
Class VI (Non-maintained)	0.16
Private (Privately-maintained)	6.99
TOTAL	59.13

Class I roads are State-maintained trunk line or primary highways. In North Hampton, Class I roads are comprised primarily of Ocean Boulevard (NH 1A) along the coast, Lafayette Road (US 1), and I-95. Class II roads are State-maintained secondary highways and include Atlantic Avenue (NH 111), Mill Road (south of its intersection with Atlantic Ave.), Post Road (NH 151), Walnut Avenue and Winnicut Road. The most predominant class of road in North Hampton is Class V, or town owned and maintained roads. In North Hampton this represents the largest percentage of the Town's roadway network (roughly 49% of mileage). This is made up of the bulk of North Hampton roadways such as Birch Road, Mill Road (north of its intersection with Atlantic Ave.), North Road, South Road, Woodland Road and many others. New residential subdivision streets that are turned over to the Town become Class V roads once they become public.



Subdivision roads that are not accepted by the Town remain privately owned and maintained. Class VI roads, of which there is just a small length and subject to gates and bars, are non-maintained roadways belonging to the Town.

In addition to the State classification scheme, there is a Federal Classification system. The Federal system consists of 4 primary types of roads which are described below and illustrated in **Table 2** and **Map 2**. In the Federal scheme, each roadway is classified based on the type of service that it provides, its traffic capacity, and volumes attributed to the road. The system is hierarchical in its organization and

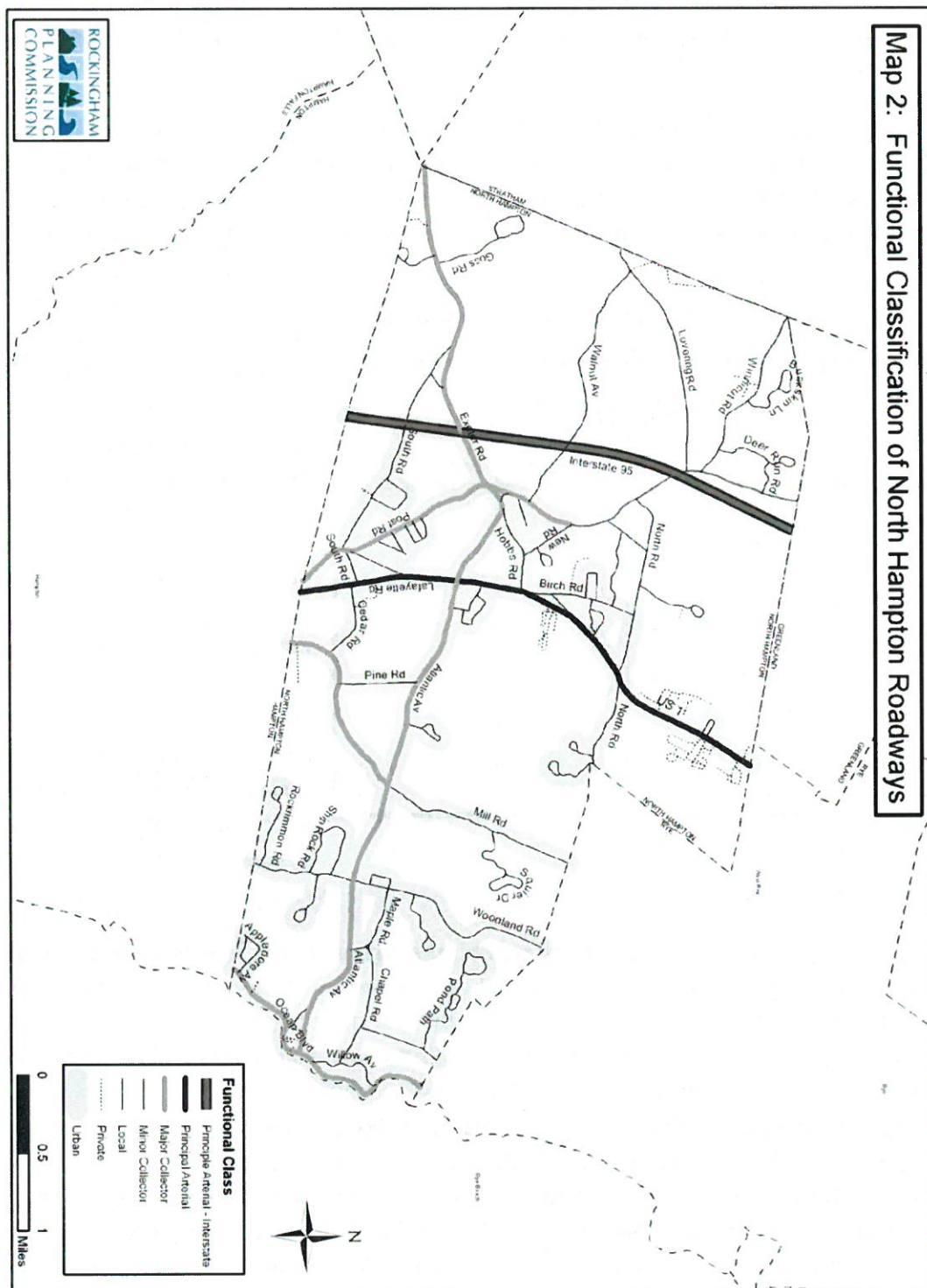
TABLE 2: FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION EXAMPLES

Roadway	FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION		
	Arterial	Collector	Local
I-95	√		
Lafayette Rd (US1)	√		
Ocean Blvd (NH 1A)		√	
Atlantic Ave (NH 111)		√	
Post Rd (NH 151)		√	
North Rd			√
Cedar Rd			√

is divided into rural and urban systems. Higher order roadways (arterials) are oriented toward moving traffic while lower order roadways (collectors and local streets) are oriented toward providing access to land uses adjacent to the roadway. This classification system is significant, as it is used to determine how Federal highway funds may be utilized. Only roads classified as Collector or higher are eligible for Federal highway funds. In addition, understanding the function of each roadway is important in setting policy and in designing improvements. The

four categories are:

- **Principal Arterial**: Serve major centers of activity, the highest traffic volume corridors, and the longest routes. In addition, they generally carry the major portion of traffic entering and exiting the community. Route 1 (Lafayette Road) performs that function through North Hampton and is connected directly to the town via Atlantic Avenue, North Road and several others. This highway provides connections to Interstate 95 and the Spaulding Turnpike.
- **Minor Arterial**: Links and supports the principal arterial system. Minor arterials are roads which place a greater emphasis on land access than the principal arterial and therefore offer a lower level of mobility. They serve as links between larger and smaller towns or as connections between collectors and the primary arterials. These routes can also serve as commercial corridors with a wide variety of businesses along their lengths. No roads in North Hampton are classified as Minor Arterials.



- **Collector:** Provides access to land uses along the roadway, and circulation to residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. It differs from the arterial system in that the facilities on the collector system may penetrate residential neighborhoods. Conversely, the collectors also collect traffic from the local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it into the arterial system. This classification can be further divided into major and minor collectors. Outside of urban compact areas, those routes that serve as arterials become collectors. Atlantic Avenue (NH 111) is the longest collector in North Hampton. While most collectors in town are considered "Major Collectors," the stretch of Post Road (NH 151) north of its intersection with New Road is the Town's only "Minor Collector." Minor Collector's typically serve a lower population density and connect local roads to Major Collectors where there is not one nearby
- **Local Roads:** Comprise all facilities not on any of the three systems described above. Their function is to primarily provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order systems. They offer the lowest level of mobility, and service to through traffic movement is usually discouraged. Local roads are generally not eligible for federal funding for improvements or maintenance. In North Hampton, these local roadways account for over 49% of the total roadway miles. North Road, Walnut Avenue, Lovering Road, Cedar Road and Woodland Road are all examples of Local Roads.

Route 1A/1B Scenic Byway

North Hampton is home to one of the State's fourteen Scenic & Cultural Byways designated through the NH Office of State Planning's Scenic & Cultural Byways Program. The Program was established in 1992 under RSA 238:19 to "promote retention of rural and urban scenic byways, support the cultural, recreational and historic attributes along these byways and expose the unique elements of the state's beauty, culture and history". Designation does not preempt local planning and zoning authority, and does not bind the municipality. Scenic byways should not be confused with the local specification of "scenic roads" under New Hampshire law (RSA 231:157), in which municipalities designate selected Class IV, V or VI highways by town vote. The primary effect of the local "scenic road" designation is that the Planning Board (or other designated municipal body) must approve the removal of trees or stone walls by the municipality itself or a public utility.

Routes 1A, from Seabrook to Portsmouth, were identified as a scenic byway in the 1974 New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Scenic Roads Study. In 1976 the road was designated as part of the New Hampshire Yankee Trail. It was formally designated as a Scenic and Cultural Byway in 1994 by the New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways Council.

In 1995, the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council applied for and was awarded funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to develop a Corridor Management Plan for Routes 1A and 1B. The Scenic & Cultural Byways Program, part of the NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP), contracted with the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) to develop the plan and conduct a community participation

process that would assist in developing the plan and establishing community support for the designation. The Management Plan for the Corridor has five Goals:

1. Develop recommendations that enhance the livability of the corridor.
2. Ensure that the scenic and cultural qualities of the road are protected and managed appropriately in the future.
3. Protect industries which are economically very important to the area.
4. Examine existing and future traffic conditions and (develop) management options.
5. Develop recommendations that communities can implement to directly address locally and regionally identified concerns and opportunities.

The Route 1A/1B Scenic Byway management plan identifies a number of recommendations regarding transportation in the corridor. The most relevant of these to the Master Plan Transportation Chapter are:

- All areas should have 4' wide paved shoulder, appropriate signage and roadway stripes designating shoulder as bike/pedestrian facility. Areas identified as heavy in pedestrian traffic should have crosswalk improvements.
- Conduct feasibility study to identify strategies for developing bike/pedestrian facility along stretches of Route 1A/1B where 4 foot shoulders are not feasible.
- Install bike racks and benches at key points in corridor, i.e., state parks, beaches, scenic overlooks, Hampton Beach, etc.
- Explore possibility of developing and printing a Seacoast bicycle map, to tie into any future statewide bicycle map. Also show walking trails.
- Install signs, sheltered waiting areas and benches at key stops along existing transit routes (Pursue private and/or federal transportation funds). Utilize existing publicly-owned parking areas (i.e., schools, municipal lots), and pursue the cooperation of private sector in allowing a portion of their parking lot to be used for seasonal Park & Ride or stop for trolley service.
- Pursue consistent enforcement of posted speed limits.
- Identify areas with severe safety problems and/or demonstrated parking shortages and develop plan for expanding or relocating parking while minimizing impact on character of area.
- Work with towns to locate possible sites for satellite parking and identify potential funding sources.

As the State's Byways program is tied directly to the National Scenic Byways Program, the byways are eligible for federal Byways Program funds for projects such as interpretive centers, scenic overlooks, safety improvements and marketing materials. Support and involvement from the Town of North Hampton, as well as the other byway communities, has been and will continue to be a key to implementing the Management Plan's recommendations.

Traffic Flow and Travel Patterns

Location	AADT 2003	AADT 2005	AADT 2008
US 1 (Lafayette Rd) north of North RD	17,903	15,869	16,764
NH 1A (Ocean Blvd) north of NH 111 (Atlantic Ave)	5,800	5,000	5,200
NH 111 (Exeter Rd) east of NH 151 (Post Rd)*	8,800	8,400	5,700
NH 151 (Post Rd) at Greenland Townline	5,200	4,100	3,500
NH 151 (Post Rd) south of NH 111 **	3,400	3,000	3,200

*statistic shown under 2005 column taken in 2006

** statistic shown under 2003 column taken in 2002

The NHDOT's Bureau of Transportation monitors traffic growth throughout New Hampshire and publishes monthly Automatic Traffic Recorder Reports for many locations. In addition, NHDOT and the Rockingham Planning Commission conduct traffic counts during the summer months at supplemental locations responding to community requests. Over the years, traffic volumes have been monitored at approximately 16 locations within North Hampton (several listed in **Table 3**) although most of these locations have been monitored infrequently. The most recent counts from some of these locations are shown in the table below. The volumes are shown in Annualized Average Daily Traffic or AADT. AADT is an average daily traffic that has been adjusted to eliminate seasonal fluctuations.

The traffic patterns in Table 3 reinforce the functional classifications of North Hampton's Roads. NH 111, NH 151 both serve as collectors in support of North Hampton's only (accessible) arterial, US 1. NH 1A, also a collector, connects arterials and adjacent communities to beaches.

As with many communities in the region, North Hampton has experienced significant fluctuations in traffic in some areas. While the sparse and inconsistent traffic count data makes it difficult to determine the root causes of these changes, they can be attributed to several different general issues:

- Diversion to alternative routes - This could be congestion either within North Hampton, or in other travel corridors outside of North Hampton. For instance, during the summer of 2003, the NH DOT conducted a One-Way Toll Study on I95. In its report, **One-Way Toll Report (August 22 – November 1, 2003)** dated March 10, 2004, NH DOT reported the effects a northbound *only* toll (free passage southbound) had on US1. Four lanes in the southbound direction on I95 were designated for toll free passage while eleven lanes were available in the northbound direction with a doubled toll rate. A major aspect of the study was to evaluate the impact of one-way tolling on revenue while reducing traffic backups at the Hampton Toll Plaza. The study resulted in traffic diversion in the northbound direction along US1, including through North Hampton. This may in part explain the significant spike in US1 trips in 2003 as shown in Table 3.

- Changing work commute patterns – Commuting is a major influence on travel behavior. Changes in where people work can have significant impacts on traffic counts. Beginning in 2002, a major employer with offices along NH 111 in Stratham underwent significant restructuring, which possibly contributed to the decrease in traffic seen at the western points of access into and out of North Hampton. Other changes in employment in areas such as Portsmouth and the Pease Tradeport may have also played a role in the changing traffic patterns. Another factor to consider in explaining the reduction in traffic is the growing trend of telecommuting.
- Count errors. If a traffic volume count occurred during a week where travel was higher or lower due to some external factor, or a malfunction occurred then counts can be significantly affected.

Commuting Patterns

According to the 2000 Census, of the 2,260 employed individuals living in North Hampton, over 20% work in town while over 50% commute to another community within Rockingham County. The remaining North Hampton commuters travel to other New Hampshire counties, Massachusetts and Maine.

Of those individuals that work in North Hampton, nearly 25% come from within town while over 50% come from the other communities in Rockingham County. The majority of these commuters come from the Seacoast Region, particularly from Hampton and Portsmouth. The remaining workers travel from other counties of New Hampshire, as well as from Maine and Massachusetts.

The vast majority of North Hampton residents commute via single-occupancy vehicles 89.4%. Carpooling is used by some (2.5%), however the extent of common employment destinations suggests great potential for carpooling opportunities. Transit use is also minimally used for commuting due to the fact that there is no fixed route transit servicing destinations within North Hampton. The small number of commuters indicating their use of public transit may likely be attributed to those who drive to transit centers such as C&J Trailways in Portsmouth, or the MBTA station in Newburyport.

Table 4: Commuter Flows

Destination of commuters living in North Hampton

Total Workers Living in North Hampton		2,260
New Hampshire		
	North Hampton	499
	Rest of Rockingham County	1,230
	Strafford County	69
	Merrimack County	6
	Hillsborough County	62
	<i>SubTotal (NH)</i>	<i>1,866</i>
Massachusetts		350
Maine		44

Origin of commuters to North Hampton

Total Working in North Hampton		2,081
New Hampshire		
	North Hampton	499
	Rest of Rockingham County	1,112
	Strafford County	206
	Rest of NH	75
	<i>SubTotal (NH)</i>	<i>1,892</i>
Massachusetts		80
Maine		109

source: 2000 US Census

Table 5: Means of Transportation - Commuting

Drove alone	89.4%
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Additionally, just over 1% walk, or use “other” means of transportation such as bicycling. A trend that has been showing up in many Seacoast communities, and across the nation, is the prevalence of people working from home. The 2000 Census reports that nearly 7% of employed North Hampton residents work from home. This trend is expected to continue with the proliferation of broadband internet access, rising energy costs and increasingly flexible workplaces.

Carpool	2.5%
Public Transportation	0.3%
Walk	0.6%
Other	0.5%
Work at home	6.7%

source: 2000 US Census

Public Safety

Vehicular accident data furnished by the North Hampton Police Department provides valuable insight into the location and severity of accidents in town. This data may be used to evaluate the need for roadway improvements, traffic calming measures and signage. The following text is based upon accidents occurring between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2010.

As might be expected in New England, the fluctuation in accidents coincides with the change of seasons (see **Table 5** below). Given North Hampton’s location along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, it is no surprise that traffic increases during summer months. Increased traffic to beaches, through-traffic on Lafayette Rd connecting other seacoast communities, and tourism (drivers unfamiliar with the area) may all contribute to the increase in vehicular accidents.

As snow begins to fall in the winter months, the number of accidents goes up. December typically has the largest percentage of accidents of any month. Winter road conditions, rather than an increase in traffic, are the likely perpetrator of this trend.

Table 5: Accidents by Month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
75	50	65	51	70	82	86	83	37	54	66	108	827
9.1%	6.0%	7.9%	6.2%	8.5%	9.9%	10.4%	10.0%	4.5%	6.5%	8.0%	13.1%	100.0%

source: North Hampton Police Department

More accidents occur on Lafayette Road (Route 1) than any other street in North Hampton, with 431 accidents out of the 827 recorded between 2005 and 2010 (over 50%). Atlantic Avenue (80), and Post Road (73) follow with nearly 10% of all accidents occurring on each of these streets. Accordingly, the intersection of Lafayette Rd and Atlantic Ave has the highest occurrence of accidents in North Hampton. Lafayette’s intersection with Hobbs Road has tallied the second most accidents along Route 1. One measure the Town has taken to increase safety at intersections is to “T” them, or realigns the intersecting roads to be perpendicular to one another. This improves visibility and has a traffic calming effect – that is, the physical nature of the road alignment reduces approaching speeds and encourages a

full stop rather than a rolling yield. The intersection of Lafayette Road and Hobbs Road is an example of an intersection that has been realigned to a "T." The other intersections that have been redesigned this way include: Post Rd and North Rd; Birch Rd and North Rd; Cherry Rd and North Rd; and Maple Rd and Woodland Rd. The Police Department has noticed a significant reduction in accidents at these intersections since their redesign. The Police Department also indicated that the intersection of Exeter Rd (Route 111) and Post Rd (Route 151) might also see a safety benefit from this type of realignment.

Lastly, the *One-Way Toll Report (August 22 – November 1, 2003)* by NH DOT mentioned earlier, revealed that the diversion in traffic caused by a one-way toll led to a 16% increase in traffic accidents in North Hampton. The negative effects of this study (increased traffic and accidents) led to significant opposition to a one-way toll from Route 1 communities. This opposition, as well as the successful implementation of the E-Z Pass electronic toll collection system in 2005, and change in leadership in the Governor's office, all combined to stop further experiments with a one-way Hampton Toll.

US1 Corridor Study

The **US1 Corridor study** was proposed in 2000 by the Route 1 Coastal Communities Corridor Advisory Committee (a subcommittee of the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization), and is intended to replace and improve upon the improvement plan completed in 1989. The plan, currently in draft form, is a joint-effort between NH DOT, the Rockingham Planning Commission and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. The plan presents a corridor study and management plan for US Route 1, locally known as Lafayette Road, in coastal New Hampshire. The study incorporates approximately 13 miles of roadway through 6 communities: Seabrook, Hampton Falls, Hampton, North Hampton, Rye and Portsmouth. The objectives of this plan include:

- Identify and quantify the extent of existing deficiencies
- Identify conceptual roadway improvements
- Identify locations where Access Management techniques can be implemented
- Integrate planning for all modes of travel
- Identify sources of traffic diversion to local roadways and changes to reduce it
- Identify potential land use zoning changes that can help manage the growth of traffic along the corridor

In North Hampton, Route 1 plays a vital role in the community as both an arterial highway and as a "Main Street" serving all of the commercially zoned land in town. In consideration of future improvements along Route 1, it is important to achieve balance between its two roles. As the draft recommendations currently exist, three aspects stand out:

- The volume of traffic along Route 1 between Atlantic Ave and the North Hampton-Hampton border warrants a widening to 5 lanes (2 in each direction, 1 two-way turn lane). This area could also benefit both functionally and aesthetically from a raised median.
- Access points along Route 1 should be focused, and to the extent possible, focused to signalized intersections. This may be achieved through access management techniques such as driveway consolidation and cross-lot connections. The plan also recommends the reconfiguration and possible signalization of several skewed intersections in town, including the following:
 - Reconfigure the intersection at the Home Depot, to provide direct, perpendicular access from Fern Rd
 - Eliminate the skewed Elm Rd/Route 1 intersection in favor of a direct, perpendicular, signalized intersection. This recommendation also calls the closure of the Route 1/Hobbs Road/Elm Road intersection in favor of a connection to the proposed Elm Rd signal.
 - Reconfigure the two off-set North Rd intersections, away from the horizontal curve that currently restricts sight lines. Realignment and signalization would improve safety at these points of access.
- The streetscape along Route 1 will require active support from the town, through landscape and design guidelines. Zoning changes can be effective in transforming the streetscape of Route 1 into an attractive and pedestrian friendly environment while also serving its role as an arterial highway.

The principles contained in the draft recommendations of this study mirror that of not only smart growth principles, but also those of the North Hampton Police Department. The Police Department has seen significant decreases in traffic accidents following the reconfiguration of some intersections, as discussed in the previous section. The recommendations above promote safety for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

Although Route 1 currently has a highway-commercial appearance, zoning can still create a pedestrian-friendly New England village character. Landscaping standards for streets and parking areas are effective in softening the streetscape. Also, changing building siting requirements can revert the architectural environment from one that is "strip-mall" to one that is commonly associated with New England villages. As part of this, it is important to identify "nodes" where pedestrian linkage opportunities are prevalent. For example, the post office and adjacent bank form a potential anchor for pedestrian activity. These are services frequented by nearby residential neighborhoods. Establishing linkages among business and to residential neighborhoods would enhance the walkability of North Hampton. Through the use of zoning techniques such as Form-Based Code, architectural and building siting requirements can lead the way in improving the look and feel of Route 1. As property is

redeveloped, the town may want to consider requiring buildings to be brought towards the street and move parking to the rear. Form-Based Codes could be established as districts in areas identified as activity nodes to create safe, walkable, attractive centers along Route 1.

Public Transportation

Regional Transit Providers

COAST

The Seacoast region has a public fixed-route transportation service provided by the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST), a non-profit transportation provider of public bus service throughout the seacoast region. Unfortunately, there is not a full time fixed-route COAST stop in North Hampton.

In addition to its regional public transit services, COAST provides complimentary para-transit services to approximately 100 ADA qualifying individuals. Sixteen of COAST's vehicles are wheelchair accessible. In conjunction with Lamprey Health Care, COAST also provides community-based route bus service within portions of the region, primarily to and from shopping destinations. Exeter Hospital and Seacoast Mental Health Center are also fixed stops. The buses always service the stops named in the schedules, and they can divert off-route up to one and one-half miles to provide more flexible community-based service as needed. These routes run one day per week, in North Hampton it runs on Fridays and stops at the Village Shopping Center and Shell AI Mobile Estates.

Lamprey Health Care

Lamprey Health Care is a private non-profit organization located in Newmarket. It provides primary health care services throughout the seacoast region. Through their Senior Transportation program, Lamprey provides rides to shopping and medical appointments to seniors aged 55 and over and those with disabilities in 32 towns across Rockingham and Strafford Counties. Scheduled weekly trips occur Monday through Friday, and door-to-door service is provided for individuals who need it. Weekly shopping trips include stops at the grocery, pharmacy, bank, mall or post office as requested. There are also monthly daylong outings for each of the towns, usually involving visits to seasonal points of interest such as viewing foliage or attending a craft fair. A donation of \$3.00 is requested for the weekly trips and \$5.00 for the monthly recreational trip, however, no one is denied service for lack of ability to pay. Medical appointments, such as rides to hospitals, labs and doctors' offices, are arranged as part of the weekly outing when possible, or at other times if needed. Arrangements to be picked up for these appointments must be made several weeks in advance to guarantee a van's availability that day. The agency has five sixteen passenger wheelchair equipped buses funded under the FTA 5310 program.

TASC (Transportation Assistance for Seacoast Citizens)

Transportation Assistance for Seacoast Citizens (TASC) is a volunteer-based community organization

designed to mobilize and coordinate volunteers to provide rides that help transportation dependent individuals in our region live independently at home while remaining involved in their communities.

TASC provides transportation to eligible residents of eight Seacoast Communities: Exeter, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Rye, Stratham, and Seabrook. Rides are available for medical and social service appointments, grocery shopping and other basic needs. Eligible residents include senior citizens and individuals with disabilities that prevent them from driving.

In calendar year 2010 TASC volunteer drivers provided 4,897 trips, driving over 50,000 miles. Since TASC's inception in 2006 the program has provided more than 14,000 trips.

Elderly Population in North Hampton

As the elderly population (65+) grows in North Hampton, so will the need for public transportation. In 2000, of the 609 persons over the age of 65, nearly 30% (179) were considered disabled. In addition to that, over 6% of elderly persons were living below the federal poverty level. The 2010 North Hampton Community Survey indicated a desire by many residents for the pursuit of senior housing. As the population ages, many current residents would like the opportunity to remain in North Hampton. Enhanced transportation options, (including transit service and walkable communities) maybe necessary to support this type of development.

East-West (NH101) Bus

An East-West transit service connecting the Seacoast with the Merrimack Valley has long been identified as a need in the Long Range Transportation Plans on the MPO's serving both urbanized areas, and in the NHDOT's 2003 Statewide Intermodal Transportation Planning Study. In particular, connections to Manchester Boston Regional Airport (MBRA) and Downtown Manchester are recognized priorities. At present, traveling from Portsmouth to Manchester by transit requires a connection in Boston.

In 2008 the Rockingham Planning Commission and Southern NH Planning Commission completed a feasibility study for such a service, with a focus on travelers to Manchester-Boston Regional Airport. The study identified demand for such a service among airport travelers, though concluded that the relatively low cost of parking and ease of access to MBRA from the Seacoast would make it difficult to charge a fare high enough to support the service out of farebox revenue as is done with intercity bus services in the I-93 and I-95 corridors. The study recommended interlining a Park & Ride-based transit service with an existing door to door airport shuttle service. In this way premium fares for door to door service could support lower fares for park and ride users.

In 2010 NHDOT conducted a procurement process to select a contract for a pilot service, and in early 2011 secured three years of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for the project. Service is scheduled to commence in the summer of 2011.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Travel

East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway, often referred to as an 'urban Appalachian Trail', is envisioned as an all-season, multi-use trail extending 2,900 miles from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida, and connecting major cities along the Eastern Seaboard.

During 2007-2008, the Rockingham Planning Commission headed up development of a Conceptual Design and Implementation Plan for the New Hampshire segment of the Greenway, known as the NH Seacoast Greenway (NHSG). In late 2008 an interim on-road route for the Greenway, following NH Routes 1A and 1B, was designated and signed.

Work to implement the NHSG is overseen with a regional advisory committee composed of appointed representatives from corridor communities, Rockingham Planning Commission, NHDOT, Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes (SABR), the East Coast Greenway Alliance, and neighboring trail groups in Maine and Massachusetts.

Current implementation work is focused on building a pilot section of off-road trail in Seabrook on the State-owned Hampton Branch rail corridor. A local trail committee, the Seabrook Rail Trail Alliance, is consolidating town support for the project, developing a trail management agreement with NHDOT and planning a capital campaign to generate matching funding needed to apply for federal Transportation Enhancement funds for trail construction. Work to build local support has been aided by the opening in mid-2010 of sections of the ECG in Newburyport and Salisbury, which have sparked local interest in trail development. The target for completion of the pilot section of trail is 2014.

Necessary for trail development in Seabrook and communities to the north, the Advisory Committee is currently refining cost estimates and identifying environmental permitting issues for trail construction, particularly in the Hampton Marsh segment; conducting outreach in corridor communities, building local coalitions to support trail development; and completing an assessment of return on investment for trail construction in terms of economic development, public health benefits, and other community impacts.

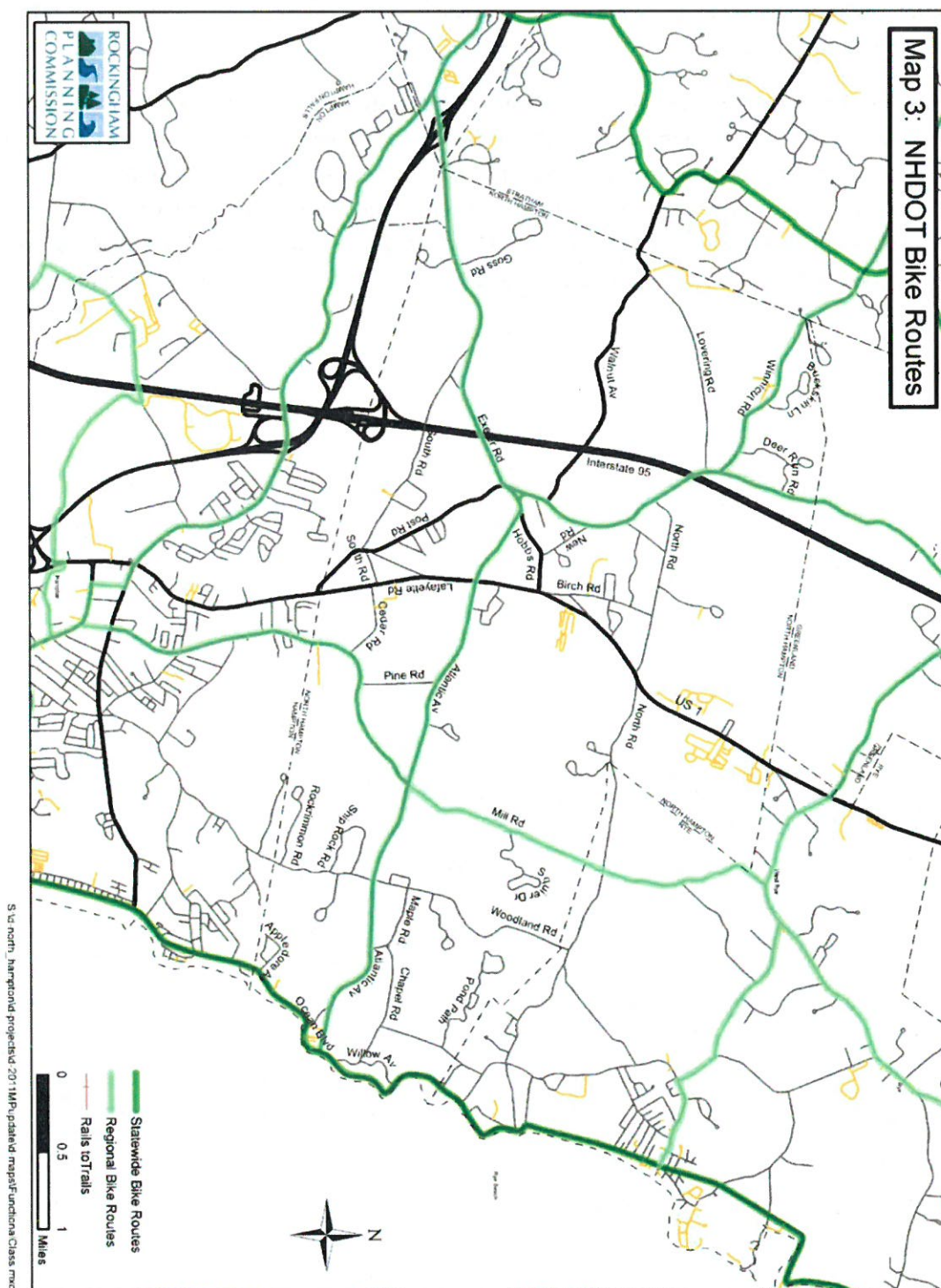
In 2009, the NHSG Advisory Committee also partnered with NHDOT on a proposal for Transportation Enhancement funding to widen shoulders on a key segment of NH1A near Odiorne Point, and construct interpretive kiosks at three points along the route. Additional improvements to the on-road route will likely be identified through the proposed update to the Route 1A/1B Corridor Management Plan, the management plan for the NH Coastal Byway.

NHDOT-defined Bicycle Route Network

The seacoast region of New Hampshire boasts some of the most scenic and sought after cycling in the state and along the Atlantic Seaboard. The terrain is generally flat to rolling with coastal views. With

most vehicular traffic relegated to highways such as I-95 and Route 1, many of the country roads offer an excellent cycling atmosphere.

As shown on **Map 3**, the state has defined a bicycle network throughout North Hampton in a grid-like pattern, travelling both east-west and north-south. While there has been some desire expressed for bicycle routes along Route 1, the **US Route 1 Corridor Study** draft has indicated a lack of necessary shoulder space along some segments in town, while other shoulder segments are adequate. This inconsistency does not bode well for the installation of dedicated bike lanes. Fortunately, there are routes running parallel to Route 1 on lower speed, more bicycle friendly streets, such as Mill Road.



Safe Routes to School

The goal of SRTS is to encourage a greater percentage of elementary and middle school (K-8) students to bike and walk to school, and to ensure that they can do so safely. Beyond safety, broader goals include promoting healthy physical activity, reducing traffic congestion, saving energy, improving air quality, etc.

The program is designed around an integrated approach summarized as “the 5Es” – Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation. The point is that just building sidewalks won't get kids to walk and bike. The education component focuses on building kids' skills for safe biking/walking and public awareness on safe sharing of the road; encouragement on creating activities that introduce biking/walking as fun; enforcement on mitigating other safety concerns like speeding in school zones, distracted driving, etc; and evaluation on gathering baseline data on mode split, road hazards, parents concerns, etc., so you can track the effectiveness of the program.

SRTS funding is federal, and is passed through NHDOT. Towns or School Districts can access SRTS Start-Up grants of up to \$5,000, with applications accepted on a rolling basis; and Travel Plan grants of up to \$15,000 per school. This is a reimbursement program, though requires no matching funding. Once a Town completes a travel plan, they are eligible to access Project Grants of up to \$250,000.

The project grants are competitive, and getting more so as more SRTS programs are being developed by towns and cities around the state. However, they're not yet as difficult to secure as Transportation Enhancement funding.

Existing SRTS initiatives in the RPC region include Hampton, Newfields, Plaistow, Portsmouth and Rye.

North Hampton once had an initiative to build a sidewalk between the school and the library. To build on this, the first step involves outreach and assembling a local committee. These typically include reps from the town (selectmen, planning board, public works, police); the school (principle, school nurse, interested teachers); PTA/PTO rep, and other interested parents. There's more info on the NHDOT's Safe Routes to School program page: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/srts/>

Section 3: Recommendations

Policy Recommendations

1. The North Hampton transportation planning process should complement the development patterns and principles set forth in the Master Plan.
2. Town road projects should be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts on water quality and sensitive environmental areas and considers aesthetics.
3. New development should occur only where existing transportation facilities are adequate or where necessary improvements will be made as part of the development project.
4. The Planning Board should increase their involvement with NHDOT District 6, relative to the issuance of State Driveway Permits. The NHDOT has recently agreed to work cooperatively in this role with municipalities; however, the Planning Board needs to make a concerted effort to ensure that the Town's interests are appropriately considered, through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and NHDOT.
5. Serious and potentially serious intersections identified in the forthcoming **US Route 1 Corridor Study** should be upgraded utilizing its intersection recommendations.
6. The town should consider design alternatives when considering intersection improvements. For example, consider a roundabout instead of a signalized intersection.
8. Where a traffic impact study reveals new development will provide an unacceptable level of service for a transportation network, traffic calming measures, access management and/or other methods of mitigating its impact should be required.
9. North Hampton should establish a Capital Improvement Program for Town road maintenance and improvements that fully considers financing options available for such improvements. This Program should prescribe a methodology for prioritizing projects, using as a basis a Road Surface Management System (which can be completed by UNH) which emphasizes the importance of maintaining the existing roadway system as well as intersection upgrades.
10. Any Capital Improvement Plan for Town roadway maintenance and improvement should consider consistency with the Master Plan as an element of project prioritization.
11. Any Capital Improvement Program for Town roadway maintenance should consider funding for alternative transportation mode projects including facilities for bicycles and transit.
12. The Police and the Board of Selectmen should consider the purchase, or cooperative purchase with adjoining towns, of portable scales to enable enforcement of truck load limits throughout

town.

13. The town should consider adopting a supplemental vehicle registration fee of up to \$5.00 that the state allows to generate funding for transportation projects.
14. If the town should decide to pursue more elderly/senior housing development as advised by the Community Survey, a concerted exploration of transit options should be undertaken.
15. The town should investigate the viability of COAST service along Route 1.
16. The town should appoint a North Hampton resident to the New Hampshire Seacoast Greenway Advisory Council.
17. The town should assemble a local committee to pursue Safe Routes to School funding.
18. Accident-prone intersections should be evaluated for potential realignment.

Regulatory Recommendations

1. The Planning Board should review access management tools, such as those available from NH DES, and incorporate those that would improve, mitigate or prevent traffic congestion on all roads, where appropriate.
2. The Planning Board should consider adopting site plan regulations that promote cross lot connection and minimization of access points along Route 1.
3. The Planning Board should consider enhancing landscape regulations along Route 1.
4. The Planning Board should investigate the merits and possible benefits of establishing Form-Based Codes at possible pedestrian and vehicular nodes along Route 1.

