

SIPCRES Listing of Project and Activity Proposals for the Kennebec Valley District

Prioritized in order within each corridor and category . . .

Corridor Priorities in the Lower Kennebec Corridor:

The Lower Kennebec Corridor extends from Fairfield southward through Waterville, Augusta, and Gardiner. With six of the eight largest communities in the region, and the lion's share of economic activity and development, the chief needs in the corridor are associated with mobility and management. The existing transportation system is well-developed for the region, with the region's only passenger air service and public bus system, rail connections and the Interstate highway.

Capital Needs:

- LK-1 Route 201 Hallowell to Gardiner mobility improvements – Route 201, which is the main artery for Hallowell, Farmingdale, and Gardiner, carries over 20,000 AADT. Gardiner and Hallowell downtowns are traditional congestion points, particularly in Gardiner where large trucks are common. Farmingdale, despite the highway being partially reconstructed, has multiple access issues. This project would combine multiple access and intersection improvements with improvements to parallel alternate modes. Individual components of this project have been requested from multiple sources.
- LK-2 Rail Corridor Upgrade – The “Lower Road” state-owned trackage extends from Augusta southward along the river. This trackage is still functional, but would not support heavy use. A succession of regional reports have recommended the eventual extension of passenger service along this line. This project would provide the necessary improvements to support passenger rail at a future date.
- LK-3 Transportation Hub at I-95, Route 3 Interchange – The newly-opened interchange and Cushnoc Crossing bridge north of Augusta provides a prime opportunity for traffic management to serve Route 3 commuters as well as north- and south-bound I-95 traffic. At its simplest, a park-and-ride lot could be installed to serve this hub. As Augusta's bike network and the East Coast Greenway are developed (see #5, below), they could be linked and facilities provided for bike access. It has also been suggested that the rail line passing underneath the bridge's east side approach poses an opportunity to provide a link to future passenger service if properly oriented. This project is endorsed by Augusta's comprehensive planning.

- LK-4 Link Routes 3 and 17 in East Augusta – Route 17 carries traffic from Augusta to Rockland, but in order to access it over the new bridge from the south and west, traffic must move through Augusta’s east side congestion or take local roads. A new connector would significantly reduce the impacts in these areas. Depending on its alignment, this would consist of approximately 2.5 km of new roadway. This project was identified and preliminary planning done during the engineering phase of the new bridge.
- LK-5 East Coast Greenway – The East Coast Greenway Bike Trail identifies the lower Kennebec corridor as part of its “inland branch” through Maine. Development of the Greenway within this corridor can consist of two phases: 1) completion of the partially-constructed Augusta-Gardiner Rail Trail and Messalonskee Multi-use Trail (Waterville Area), and 2) construction of linkage from Gardiner south, from Augusta to Waterville, and from Fairfield east. This project is the combination of several individual bicycle transportation planning efforts.
- LK-6 Link Routes 3, 27, and I-95 – The new interchange links Route 3 and I-95, while Exit 112, a mile to the south, links Route 27. This project would extend the Route 3 interchange approximately 500 m westward to intersect Route 27. This would alleviate some existing congestion at Exit 112. This project was suggested and endorsed during the Augusta comprehensive planning process.
- LK-7 New I-95 Interchange south of Augusta – A new interchange for I-95/Maine Turnpike has been suggested between Exits 103 and 109. This interchange would be located in either Farmingdale or Hallowell and would change traffic patterns and possibly alleviate congestion along parallel Route 201. This project has been advocated in both the Farmingdale and Hallowell comprehensive planning processes as a means of reducing congestion and opening up areas for development.
- LK-8 New I-95 Interchange in Southern Waterville – A new interchange for I-95 has been suggested for southern Waterville, south of existing Exit 127. An interchange onto one of Waterville’s local roads would open up land for economic development adjacent or nearby the airport. This project has been discussed and proposed for many years by the City of Waterville.

Planning Activities:

- LK-9 Augusta Congestion Mitigation – As a major commuter hub and seat of state government, downtown Augusta has suffered from long-term congestion. Project-oriented planning studies have recommended piecemeal changes to the Cony Circle, Memorial Circle, Western Ave., Water Street and feeder roads. This planning project would integrate comprehensive improvements with demand management and system management within the urban area.

Policy Issues:

LK-10 Expand KVCAP General Transit – Kennebec Valley Community Action Program administers both general transit and demand-response transit services in both the Augusta and Waterville areas. Over the years, opportunities for expansion of routes and ridership have been eschewed, primarily for lack of funding. Expansion of public transit has been recommended by several regional planning studies and reports.

Corridor Priorities in the Augusta Southwest:

The Augusta Southwest Corridor is the second-highest priority corridor in the Kennebec Region, and carries the second-highest traffic loads. It is essentially an intercity highway corridor between Augusta and the Lewiston-Auburn area, with Arterial Route 202 paralleling the Maine Turnpike. With service centers at either end, much of the development on the corridor consists of suburban residential, and traffic is composed of intercity freight and commuters.

Capital Needs:

SW-1 Route 202 Widening – Route 202 between western Augusta and Manchester carries some 25,000 AADT and is consistently congested in the morning and evening peak hours. The apparent cause of the congestion is the narrowing of four lanes to two in a 2 km stretch over Pelton Hill. This project consists of a widening with improvements (such as shoulders adequate for bicycle use) and has been engineered and placed on the BTIP one more than one occasion over the past decade. ***Augusta, Manchester***

SW-2 Park-and-ride Lot at Exit 109 – I-95 Exit 109 of I-95/Maine Turnpike has traditionally been one of the major access points for commuters north- and south-bound, and Western Avenue is a major commuter artery. A park-and-ride lot located near this interchange, either on new land or utilizing existing facilities, would alleviate some turnpike traffic. If combined with access to Augusta’s bicycle network and city bus service route, it could also alleviate some traffic on Western Avenue. The Augusta comprehensive planning process evaluated all three I-95 interchanges serving the city and rated this one as the most likely to have good utilization of park-and-ride. ***Augusta***

SW-3 Improvement to Route 135, Monmouth-to-Wales – As a consequence of construction of the Sabattus Interchange onto the Maine Turnpike, Route 135 through Wales and Monmouth is predicted to quadruple in traffic by 2025. This major collector is currently “unbuilt” and several portions are load-restricted during the spring. Improved proximity to the south and large undeveloped blocks of land will stimulate development. This project will improve this road to “built” standard. This project

was recommended by a DOT-funded analysis of the impacts of the Sabattus Interchange on local transportation and land use in 2003. *Monmouth, Wales*

SW-4 Park-and-ride Lot in Monmouth area – Route 202 in Monmouth carries heavy commuter flows in both directions. In addition, Route 135 will increase in commuter volume south with increased use of the Sabattus interchange. This unusual confluence of commuter flows suggests utilization of a park-and-ride facility located in the immediate vicinity of the Route 202/135 intersection. A park-and-ride already exists in Winthrop. *Monmouth*

Policy Issues:

SW-5 Route 202 Development Controls – The Route 202 corridor towns of Manchester, Winthrop, Monmouth, Leeds, and Greene are likely to see accelerated development as a result of improved economic conditions in the L-A and Augusta areas, increased sprawl, and the new Sabattus Interchange. While much of the towns’ growth will be residential in nature, new development along the highway is more likely to be of the “roadside commerce” variety. It will be important to corridor mobility for towns to be able to manage this form of development. This initiative would help towns to coordinate their development controls with those of their neighbors and the Department. *Manchester, Winthrop, Monmouth, Leeds, Greene*

Corridor Priorities in the Upper Kennebec:

The Upper Kennebec Corridor links Canadian Quebec with I-95 at Fairfield, carrying Canadian commerce and tourists as well as being the economic lifeline to economically stagnant Somerset County. Route 201 is the principal transportation means throughout the corridor; Skowhegan is the only commercial center.

Capital Needs:

UK-1 Route 201 Truck Lanes – Past studies have demonstrated that one of the principal threats to safety and mobility in the upper Route 201 segment is the conflict between heavy freight and recreational traffic. One aspect of this conflict is the differential driving behavior on hilly, winding portions of the highway. This project would target additional road segments between Bingham and the Canadian border for installation of climbing/passing lanes. Addition of these lanes was recommended in a DOT-funded Route 201 Corridor Study (1991), the Old Canada Road Scenic Byway Management Plan (1999) and subsequent regional plans. *Bingham, Moscow, West Forks, unorganized territory.*

UK-2 Skowhegan Second Bridge – The addition of a second Kennebec River bridge in the Skowhegan area has been proposed as a means of increasing corridor mobility and

- reducing congestion through Skowhegan. Planning studies for an alignment are currently well advanced, with considerable advocacy from the Town of Skowhegan. This project includes both the bridge and new linkages to Route 201 north and south of Skowhegan. *Skowhegan, Madison*
- UK-3 Route 201, Jackman Traffic Calming – Route 201 bisects Jackman and, due to alignment and road design, does not encourage traffic to slow down to appropriate in-town speeds. The addition of landscaping, bumpouts, and other traffic calming devices in the urban area would enhance traffic and pedestrian safety and promote commerce in the downtown area. This project has been suggested by the Old Canada Road Management Plan and the Jackman Comprehensive Plan. *Jackman*
- UK-4 Jackman Visitor Center – Although the Route 201 border crossing is 12 miles to the north, Jackman is the first major town encountered by Canadian tourists and the northern gateway to the Old Canada Road. A visitor’s center in Jackman would serve as an entry point and an interpretive center for the byway. A location in downtown Jackman would enhance local commerce. Planning for this project is already underway, and it has been endorsed by Jackman’s Comprehensive Plan. *Jackman*
- UK-5 Route 6/15 Reconstruction – Route 6/15 extends from Jackman to Moosehead Lake at Rockwood. It’s primary economic use is movement of logs and other resource products, with a smaller component of recreational use. It has been proposed for consideration as a scenic byway. This project would bring the road up to a “built” standard to eliminate spring weight restrictions on heavy hauls. *Jackman, Rockwood, unorganized territory*
- UK-6 Park-and-ride Lot at I-95/Route 201 interchange – Exit 133 from I-95 provides access to the majority of Somerset County commercial traffic. Due to high unemployment in Somerset County, an increasing number of residents are working to the south. A park-and-ride at the Exit 133 interchange would serve commuters from Fairfield, Skowhegan, and smaller towns who wish to carpool to Augusta or Bangor. With additional planning, it could also connect with a bike network being planned for the Waterville area. *Fairfield*
- UK-7 Route 43 Reconstruction – The segment of Route 43 in Madison connects Route 201 with downtown Madison. It is not a heavy haul truck route because it is posted seasonally. It carries primarily farm and forest products, including produce from a major new greenhouse operation. This project would improve the road to a “built” standard. This project was added to the list on recommendation of the Madison selectmen. *Madison*
- UK-8 Route 16 Truck Escape Ramp – Route 16 immediately to the east of its intersection with Route 201 in Bingham comes off of a long, moderate grade. On multiple occasions in recent years, heavy trucks have failed to negotiate the grade, resulting in serious crashes. The Bingham selectmen have requested that the Department

consider installation of an escape ramp for the use of trucks in emergency situations.
Bingham, Moscow

Planning Activities:

UK-9 Corridor-length Bicycle Trail – A long-distance bicycle trail, utilizing both off-road and on-road alignment, would serve as an alternative to motor vehicle travel for both transportation and recreation use. A new trail would connect the planned East Coast Greenway in Fairfield with the existing Bingham-to-Solon Multi-use trail and extend along the Old Canada Road. The Town of Skowhegan, which would be served by this trail, has submitted BTIP requests for planning a complementary bike network within the town. ***Fairfield, Skowhegan, Madison, Solon, Bingham, Moscow, Caratunk, Jackman, unorganized territory.***

Policy Issues:

UK-10 Route 201 Access Management – Although it is a NHS arterial, Route 201 north of Skowhegan is not a mobility arterial under the Department’s Access Management Rules. This is not an issue south of Bingham, but unregulated roadside development, primarily linked to recreation, is beginning to accelerate along the Old Canada Road. The Scenic Byway management has identified this as a threat to the byway, but local towns have no regulatory capacity to limit development. Extending a higher classification DOT Access management makes sense both from a system management perspective and as a land use tool. ***Fairfield, Skowhegan, Madison, Solon, Bingham, Moscow, Caratunk, Jackman, unorganized territory.***

UK-11 Snowmobile/ATV Enhancements – The recreational use of snowmobiles and ATVs in the corridor has mushroomed and become a major economic development catalyst. Although there is an extensive off-road network for these vehicles, they share highway space in many critical locations. Perhaps most critical is on bridges. Conflicts between snowmobiles and autos/trucks are becoming more common and creating safety issues. This activity would examine design standards for bridges and trail crossings to reduce the potential for conflicts. This has been included at the request of the Somerset Economic Development Corp. ***Corridor-wide***

Corridor Priorities in the Augusta Midcoast:

The corridor between Augusta and the mid-coast region consists of multiple highways radiating out from Augusta easterly. Highway travel is currently the exclusive mode. As the mid-coast develops, however, the Augusta State Airport could become attractive as the most accessible for passenger service.

Capital Needs:

AM-1 Route 3 Traffic Flow Improvements in China – Route 3 is a principal arterial linking Augusta with the Belfast/Searsport area. Where it passes through China, it intersects Route 202, and Route 32 and separates South China village from south China and the local high school, creating significant cross-traffic. This project would consist of several, relatively-minor roadway intersection improvements recommended by the Route 3 Corridor Master Plan (2003) and endorsed by China’s comprehensive planning. **China**

AM-2 Link Routes 3 and 17 in East Augusta – This project is the same as that listed for the Lower Kennebec Corridor. Its role in the Augusta-Midcoast Corridor would be to connect the primary highway elements east of the Augusta urban area, to alleviate in-town congestion and increase utilization of the new Route 3 bridge. **Augusta**

AM-3 Park-and-ride Lot in South China – The eastern Kennebec/western Waldo County areas are gaining importance as part of the commuter shed for Augusta and other urban centers. Traffic on Route 3 has been growing at about 3 percent per year. The intersection of Route 3 with Route 202 in South China sees a large increase in traffic headed west. A park-and-ride lot at or near this point in the future could be warranted. This project was suggested by the China Comprehensive planning process. **China**

Planning Activities:

AM-4 Bicycle Network in Augusta – The City of Augusta is seeking to expand its bicycle network on the east side, to connect park areas, government buildings, the new Cony High School, and other destinations. Planning for this project should seek to alleviate congestion in the Augusta urban area, increase alternatives and access within Augusta, and connect to long-distance bike trails. Elements of a city-wide bicycle network have been recommended in several city planning documents and submitted as BTIP project requests. **Augusta**

AM-5 Improve connectivity to Augusta State Airport – The airport could play a significant role in the economic development of this corridor, with the most accessible passenger service and freight service. However, it is located on the western side of Augusta. This planning activity would examine alternative routes for getting corridor traffic to the airport and support the preferred alternative with routing improvements. **Augusta**

Policy Issues:

AM-5 Route 3 Development Controls – Route 3 is a mobility corridor, carrying AADT of 10-12,000 in the rural segment east of Augusta, and anticipating significant increases partly due to the new bridge in Augusta. The highway and adjacent lands will become increasingly attractive for commercial and subdivision development. The Route 3 Corridor Plan described several strategies for municipal/DOT cooperation in managing development along the road. This project would support Augusta,

Vassalboro, and China to develop improved development controls, as recommended in the plan. *Augusta, Vassalboro, China*

Corridor Priorities in the East-West Somerset Corridor:

The existing east-to-west flow of traffic through Somerset County gained prominence through the East-west Corridor Study and gubernatorial recommendations for upgrading portions of the route. I-95 provides the principal flow in the eastern half of the county, while Routes 2 and 139 pick up the flow to the west and the MMA rail line through Jackman provides a rail alternative. Skowhegan is the principal urban center and congestion point. Capital improvement priorities will be affected by executive decisions regarding the “east-west highway.”

Capital Needs:

- EW-1 Route 2, Skowhegan to Canaan – Existing Route 2 is a mobility corridor. Portions of the highway route are experienced structural failure and should be reconstructed. In addition, a number of hill sections have been identified as candidates for slow vehicle climbing lanes to improve overall flow. This project has been recommended by various regional plans and reports, the Route 2 Corridor Committee, and the Town of Skowhegan. ***Skowhegan, Canaan***
- EW-2 New East-west Alignment – An alignment to be determined roughly between Pittsfield and Norridgewack was proposed as part of Governor King’s Plan for the east-west highway. Such a project would create 30 km or more of new arterial highway roughly parallel to existing Route 2. ***Corridor-wide***
- EW-3 Route 2: Improvements for Heavy Haul Traffic – Route 2 through Somerset County carries a significant volume of heavy trucks in both local and interstate commerce. It is part of the heavy haul network. The Route 2 corridor committee has identified improvements to support heavy haul trucks, including redesign of the rest area at Pittsfield, construction of a new rest area west of Skowhegan, and congestion improvements in Skowhegan. ***Pittsfield, Skowhegan, Norridgewock***
- EW-4 Skowhegan Second Bridge – This is the same project identified for the Upper Kennebec Corridor. It is prioritized here for its ability to link east-west traffic flows to bypass Skowhegan and improve mobility. ***Skowhegan***
- EW-5 Skowhegan Route 201/2 Bypass – The second bridge approach would intersect Route 201 south of Skowhegan, leaving still a portion of congested urban area to traverse to the west. This project contemplates a new alignment linking the approach as designed directly with Route 2 west of town. This could consist of 3 km or more of new roadway, depending on design. The need for this project would be greatly reduced is Item #2, above, is built. ***Skowhegan, Norridgewock***

Policy Issues:

EW-6 Equalize Truck Weight Limits – This is a high priority item region-wide, included in this corridor because I-95 parallels Route 2. “equalize weight limits” refers to a policy limiting truck weights on interstate highways to a different extent than state highways, forcing truck commerce to make artificial routing decisions to the detriment of road quality and safety. This policy has been advocated by all regional transportation reports over the past several years. ***Corridor-wide***

Corridor Priorities in the Lakes and Mountains:

The Lakes and Mountains Corridor is situated to the west of Augusta and Waterville. It is not associated with a specific highway, because it consists more of a network of interconnected roads serving a dispersed population.

Capital Needs:

LM-1 Belgrade lakes Village Congestion Mitigation – Belgrade Lakes Village is an historical tourist mecca as well as a long-time bottleneck and congestion point on Route 27, a mobility corridor. Route 27 carries in excess of 6,000 AADT, with a significant proportion of heavy trucks, through a pedestrian-oriented village. This project would make several improvements within the existing alignment to alleviate congestion and improve pedestrian safety. This project has been endorsed by RTAC reports and Belgrade’s comprehensive plan. ***Belgrade***

LM-2 Route 27 (Mt. Vernon Ave.) Augusta Capacity Improvements – Mt. Vernon Ave. in Augusta is a high-traffic, constrained area, impeding development and traffic safety along the link between the downtown and its most rapidly-developing area. The City of Augusta has developed plans and proposed changes to the configuration of the road through this neighborhood. ***Augusta***

Policy Issues:

LM-3 Collector Road backlog – This corridor is criss-crossed with major and minor collector roads, forming an economic network which carries basic commerce, commuters, and raw materials. These roads are almost entirely unbuilt, and several are posted in spring. Individually, none of them rise to a priority, but together they serve a crucial economic niche. The policy issue regards a means to improve this network of roads without waiting for each one to be improved in its turn. ***Corridor-wide***