

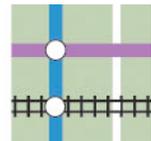
Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan

FINAL REPORT

*Prepared for
the National Park Service and
the Maine Department of Transportation*

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**ISLAND EXPLORER
SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN**

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Summary

1.1 Introduction

During 2006 and the part of 2007, Tom Crikelair Associates completed an *Island Explorer Short Range Transit Plan* for the National Park Service and the Maine Department of Transportation. An Advisory Committee provided guidance and oversight for this planning effort. The committee included representatives of Acadia National Park, Friends of Acadia, Downeast Transportation, area towns, local businesses, and MDOT.

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the study. It includes twelve chapters:

Chapter 1 Introduction and Summary

Chapter one presents a summary of the project report, including key recommendations and findings.

Chapter 2 Review of Previous Studies

Chapter two examines a number of recent studies that contain information that may be relevant for the future of the Island Explorer shuttle system. It includes a review of preliminary planning for an intermodal transportation center in Trenton.

Chapter 3 Onboard Surveys of Island Explorer Passengers

Chapter three presents the results of onboard passenger surveys carried out on Island Explorer buses in August 2005 and 2006. The analysis includes comparisons with similar surveys carried out each August during the six preceding years, beginning with the Island Explorer's first season in 1999.

Chapter 4 Evaluation of Existing Services

Chapter four presents a critical evaluation of Island Explorer routes and services. The evaluation process included four steps: (1) analysis of ridership records, (2) review of onboard survey results, (3) on-site inspections of Island Explorer bus routes, and (4) interviews with bus drivers and operating staff. The chapter describes how buses are currently being used, and it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current service design.

Chapter 5 Service Area Changes

Chapter five describes changes that have occurred in the Island Explorer service area since the shuttle service began operating in 1999. It also discusses anticipated future developments that may have an impact on demand for seasonal public transportation in the region.

Chapter 6: Public Participation

Chapter six describes efforts to inform the public about the transportation study and to obtain ideas and suggestions from community members. It includes notes from a public workshop and Advisory Committee meetings.

Chapter 7: Service Design Alternatives

Chapter eight presents service design alternatives for the Island Explorer shuttle program. It anticipates two stages of service expansion, one beginning in calendar year 2007 with the introduction of an expanded vehicle fleet, and another beginning in 2011 following construction of a new intermodal transportation center in Trenton.

Chapter 8: Cadillac Mountain Shuttle Strategies

Chapter eight discusses shuttle options for Cadillac Mountain. It looks for ways to address safety, resource protection, and visitor management issues at the summit of Cadillac Mountain and on the approaching roadway. It raises issues that will require further discussion within the National Park Service.

Chapter 9: Bus Stop Issues

Chapter nine discusses Island Explorer bus stops. It identifies locations where improvements may be needed to enhance passenger convenience and vehicle and pedestrian safety. It also looks at whether the current policy of offering stops on request needs to be amended for some routes or route segments.

Chapter 10: Summary of Recommended Service Choices

Chapter ten presents a summary of recommended service choices for individual Island Explorer bus routes. These recommendations are based on careful consideration of the alternatives described in Chapter 7, in light of ten-year financial projections for the Island Explorer project.

Chapter 11: Marketing Strategies

Chapter eleven reviews existing marketing efforts for the Island Explorer and offers suggestions for enhancing the marketing program to generate increased demand for new and revised Island Explorer services.

Chapter 12: Capital and Financial Plan

Chapter twelve presents a ten-year capital and financial plan for the Island Explorer shuttle project. It includes capital and operating cost projections for the period FY 2007 through FY 2016, along with estimates of revenues required to pay for proposed services.

1.2 Summary of Key Findings

Service Area Changes

1. Changes to the parking lot at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center have resulted in a limited surplus of parking spaces at this location. Acadia National Park hopes to address traffic patterns at Jordan Pond House, including the design of bus stops. Traffic and parking congestion remain issues on the Cadillac Mountain Road, particularly with regard to large motorcoaches that are not compatible with the geometry of the historic roadway.
2. Acadia National Park and the Maine Department of Transportation have developed plans for a new intermodal transportation facility and welcome center on Route 3 in Trenton. Day visitors will be encouraged to leave their cars at the Trenton facility and travel to Acadia National Park and its surrounding towns via the Island Explorer. The success of the new facility will depend in part on fast and direct shuttle access to Acadia National Park destinations.
3. Current plans call for the construction of a Downeast Transportation office and bus maintenance garage on the land selected for a new welcome center. The new bus garage will serve as the base of operations for seasonal Island Explorer bus service and for Downeast Transportation's year-round regional transit program. It is expected that all Island Explorer drivers will start and end their workday at this location.
4. Jackson Laboratory has more than doubled in size since Island Explorer bus service was inaugurated in 1999. Jackson Lab's transportation committee has discussed the idea of expanded bus service between Trenton and Bar Harbor to accommodate more laboratory employees. Committee members envision a choice of travel times in the morning and late afternoon – to accommodate various work shifts and researchers who sometimes work irregular hours.
5. There are two unresolved and related parking issues for the town of Bar Harbor. The community needs more parking for visitors during the summer season. This is particularly true for people who wish to park for more than two hours – including visitors who rent kayaks or bicycles and groups who go on whale watch trips. The town would also like to provide a transportation alternative for workers who currently commute to Bar Harbor via private automobile.

6. Bar Harbor's Parking Committee has suggested to Downeast Transportation that the bus program should not expect to be granted additional reserved space for buses along the town green. This means that future plans to expand the shuttle bus program will need to limit the number of buses that converge in Bar Harbor's town center at any one time.

Service Design Alternatives

7. Given the importance of intermodal links to the airport, the Campground route should continue to serve Trenton until a new Acadia Gateway route is added. This means that the Campground route should continue in its current configuration, despite the limited productivity of the Trenton segment. Once the Acadia Gateway facility opens, there will be an opportunity to shorten the Campground route, and to use other bus routes to serve Narrows Too and the Airport. Shortening the Campground route will reduce the number of buses required for this route to three instead of four.

8. The most cost-effective way to address mid-summer overcrowding on the Campground route during the near-term future appears to be to continue the current practice of adding extra buses at peak times during the busiest part of the season. These extra buses do not appear in the published timetable, which means they can be added only when they are needed.

9. The introduction of Park Loop Road buses in the summer of 2007 may reduce the need for overflow buses on the Campground route, because some Campground riders will likely get off inbound buses at the Hulls Cove Visitors Center. Hulls Cove to the Bar Harbor Village Green has traditionally been the most overcrowded segment. Once the Acadia Gateway facility is open, Gateway Express buses can be used to help with overcrowding on the Campground route.

10. Day visitors who park at a new Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton will need fast, direct, and frequent shuttle service between the Trenton facility and Acadia National Park. They will also need easy access to the Bar Harbor Village Green. Thirty-minute headways can be provided on an AGC-Hulls Cove Visitor Center-Bar Harbor route with three buses in the summer and two buses in the fall.

11. Express commuter service in the Trenton-Bar Harbor corridor should be offered as part of Downeast Transportation's year-round program. This will allow DTI to charge a fare for people who board early-morning inbound buses to Bar Harbor. It should also make it easier for DTI to qualify for FTA JARC commuter grant funding to help pay for year-round operation of the service.

12. Three buses can be used to provide 30-minute service on a combined Sand Beach / Blackwoods route. This route would offer direct links between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Blackwoods Campground in the evening. This will double the frequency of service provided to Blackwoods Campground in 2006.

13. Three buses can be used to provide 30-minute service between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor via Jordan Pond. This change will double the frequency of the 2006 service. The resulting schedule allows 10 minutes of layover time at each end of the route. There is some danger that this will be insufficient on trips when drivers must wait for large crowds to get on and off buses. One way to relieve time pressure on the route is to create a new bus stop at Bubble Pond that eliminates the need for outbound buses to travel through the congested Bubble Pond parking lot.

14. Changes in the Jordan Pond schedule will require changes in the Brown Mountain schedule, because buses will no longer interline between the two routes. The Brown Mountain route can be operated with a single bus offering 75-minute headways.

15. A 75-minute Brown Mountain schedule is less desirable because it is more difficult to remember, because it disrupts timed connections with the Southwest Harbor bus at MDI High School, and because it results in changing connection patterns at both ends of the route. It does, however, provide a reasonable level of access to carriage roads and hiking trails at the Brown Mountain Gate House. Awkward schedule times for Brown Mountain are not desirable, but they are likely to impact fewer people than an alternative restructuring of the Jordan Pond route.

16. After considering arguments for and against express service on the Southwest Harbor route, the Advisory Committee agreed that the Island Explorer should continue the Southwest Harbor service in its existing configuration. Restructuring the route creates new issues and obstacles. While the existing route is slow and somewhat inefficient, it is popular with visitors and most local residents appear to be generally satisfied with the service.

17. Once the Acadia Gateway Center has been constructed in Trenton, a new route should be added to link Southwest Harbor with the new Trenton facility. This would enable day visitors who park at the intermodal center to travel directly to Town Hill, Somesville, and Southwest Harbor. One bus could be used to provide 90-minute headways on a Trenton-Southwest Harbor route.

18. Proposed changes for bus service on the Schoodic Peninsula include (1) reducing the number of summer hours to match a reduction in ferry service, (2) extending the season for the Schoodic bus to the end of September, and (3) changing the starting and ending point to Schoodic Point.

19. A bus route around the Acadia National Park Loop Road was considered during early planning for the Island Explorer project. Implementation of this idea was postponed until the bus fleet was large enough to allow reasonably frequent service on this route. Loop Road service is now possible thanks to additional buses acquired in 2006.

20. A Loop Road route that starts at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center will appeal to many Park visitors who are not current shuttle bus users. It will also benefit people who ride the Campground bus and a future Gateway Express, because they will be able to go directly into the National Park without traveling through downtown Bar Harbor. Park interpretive rangers at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center anticipate considerable visitor interest in a Loop Road shuttle that begins in Hulls Cove.

21. The best scheduling strategy for the Loop Road appears to be to use three buses and to offer Loop Road service every 30 minutes. The resulting schedule allows time for diversions from the Loop Road for stops at Sieur de Monts, Sand Beach, and Wildwood Stables. It includes twenty minutes of layover time at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center between trips. Proposed timetables call for the Loop Road service to operate between 9:15 a.m. and 5:25 p.m. during the summer season only.

22. The new service design results in transfer opportunities at eight locations. Timetables for each route have been designed to avoid bus congestion and to offer connections that are as convenient as possible for transferring riders. Transit hubs include:

- Bar Harbor Village Green
- Hulls Cove Visitor Center
- Sieur de Monts
- Sand Beach
- Jordan Pond
- Northeast Harbor Pier
- MDI High School
- Acadia Gateway Center

Capital and Financial Plan

23. Ten-year capital and financial plans were developed for the Island Explorer project. These plans assume that modest expansion of Island Explorer service will occur in the summer of 2007, including introduction of a new bus route on the Park Loop Road. They assume that Phase 2 of the Acadia Gateway Center will open in the summer of 2013, with new routes linking the Trenton facility with Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor.

24. The capital plan includes replacement buses, upgrading of electronic departure signs, and construction of a new maintenance facility and intermodal transportation center in Trenton. It also anticipates the design and construction of bus stop improvements, both within and outside Acadia National Park. Anticipated capital expenditures are presented in Figure 1.1. Anticipated capital funding sources are presented in Figure 1.2.

25. The financial plan shows contributions from Acadia National Park for Island Explorer bus operations increasing from \$600,000 per year in FY 2008 to \$930,000 in FY 2013. Acadia National Park support increases to \$1.11 million in FY 2014, when new Acadia Gateway Center routes begin operating. By FY 2017, the park's contribution is projected to total \$1,225,000.

26. The plan shows estimated fund balances for Acadia National Park's transit fee program. If Acadia National Park contributions come exclusively from the transit fees, and if transit fee collections increase by an average of 3% per year during the 10-year planning period, the year-end transit fee fund balance should be \$453,510 in FY 2017.

27. The plan assumes that MDOT will allocate \$180,000 of FTA 5311 funding to the Island Explorer in FY 2008. This is consistent with past levels of MDOT/FTA support for the project. FTA 5311 support is increased by 3% per year through FY 2013. FTA allocations for the Island Explorer are increased by \$100,000 in FY 2014 when new bus routes are added to serve the Acadia Gateway Center. The new total is increased by 3% per year through FY 2017.

28. L.L.Bean currently provides \$200,000 per year to Friends of Acadia to support the Island Explorer project. This corporate pledge remains in effect through FY 2012. The financial plan assumes that either L.L.Bean will renew its present level of support for another five years, or another corporate sponsor will be found to offer the same level of annual funding through FY 2017.

29. The financial plan assumes that revenues collected from businesses for front door service will increase to \$61,380 beginning in FY 2009. This can be accomplished by increasing the current summer-season fee for Route 3 hotels and campgrounds by 50%, and by adding a new \$1,000 annual charge for fall service. This would result in a combined annual fee for the larger hotels and campgrounds of \$4,000 per year.

30. The financial plan increases business donations by \$10,000 per year beginning in FY 2009. This will require Downeast Transportation and its Island Explorer partners to put together a fund raising effort to generate donations from local businesses. There are many in-town inns, B&B's, restaurants, and shops that benefit from the shuttle service and that might be willing to provide financial support if asked. It will take fifty \$200 donations or twenty \$500 donations to reach a goal of \$10,000.

Figure 1.1 Island Explorer Capital Plan: Line Item Expenditures

5/15/07

ISLAND EXPLORER CAPITAL PLAN											
<i>Unit Purchases</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses											
2. 28-passenger buses	8	6	3							12	8
3. Vans and bike trailers	2						2				
4. ITS equipment				1							
5. ANP bus stops		1		1							
6. Other bus stops			8			7					
7. Maintenance facility			1								
8. Intermodal center					1	1					
9. Computers				1						1	
10. Service truck			1								
<i>Unit Costs</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. 28-passenger buses	188,000	215,000	220,375	225,884	231,531	237,320	243,253	249,334	255,567	261,957	268,506
3. Vans and bike trailers	39,168	40,147	41,151	42,180	43,234	44,315	45,423	46,558	47,722	48,915	50,138
4. ITS equipment	0	0	20,000	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. ANP bus stops	0	80,000	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Other bus stops	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0
7. Maintenance facility	0	0	12,124,818	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Intermodal center	0	0	0	0	9,676,297	3,100,000	0	0	0	0	0
9. Computers	0	0	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	0
10. Service truck	30,000	30,750	31,519	32,307	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. 28-passenger buses	1,504,000	1,290,000	661,125	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,143,479	2,148,044
3. Vans and bike trailers	78,336	0	0	0	0	0	90,846	0	0	0	0
4. ITS equipment	0	0	0	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. ANP bus stops	0	80,000	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Other bus stops	0	0	240,000	0	0	210,000	0	0	0	0	0
7. Maintenance facility	0	0	12,124,818	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Intermodal center	0	0	0	0	9,676,297	3,100,000	0	0	0	0	0
9. Computers	0	0	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	0
10. Service truck	0	0	31,519	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Capital Costs	1,582,336	1,370,000	13,057,462	1,220,000	9,676,297	3,310,000	90,846	0	0	3,168,479	2,148,044

Figure 1.2 Island Explorer Capital Plan: Funding Sources and Notes

5/15/07

ISLAND EXPLORER CAPITAL PLAN											
<i>Anticipated Capital Funding Sources</i>											
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
FTA - ATTPPL	1,496,000	1,370,000	1,692,644	1,200,000	3,000,000	3,100,000	90,846	0	0	2,514,784	1,718,435
FTA - Other	86,336	0	8,891,854	16,000	4,741,038	168,000	0	0	0	648,696	429,609
Federal Lands Highway - ATP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acadia National Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other National Park Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MDOT	0	0	2,174,964	0	1,935,259	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friends of Acadia	0	0	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Municipal / Local	0	0	48,000	0	0	42,000	0	0	0	0	0
DTI Capital Reserve	0	0	0	4,000	0	0	0	0	0	5,000	0
Total Capital Funds	1,582,336	1,370,000	13,057,462	1,220,000	9,676,297	3,310,000	90,846	0	0	3,168,479	2,148,044
NOTES											
FY 2007	8 replacement buses, two new vans and bike trailers										
FY 2008	6 replacement buses, planning funds for ANP bus stops										
FY 2009	Bus stop improvements outside Acadia National Park										
	AGC Phase 1: DTI maintenance facility										
	3 replacement buses										
	Island Explorer service truck										
	Friends of Acadia contributes the estimated value of the AGC land										
	MDOT contribution represents the remaining local match for the AGC										
FY 2010	New electronic departure signs for ANP bus stops										
	Construction of ANP bus stops, including Jordan Pond										
	DTI computer upgrade										
FY 2011	AGC Phase 2: Intermodal facility										
FY 2012	Bus stop improvements outside Acadia National Park										
	AGC Phase 3: expanded National Park facilities										
FY 2013	2 replacement vans										
FY 2016	12 replacement buses, DTI computer upgrade										
FY 2017	8 replacement buses										

Figure 1.3: Island Explorer Cost and Revenue Projections

PROJECTED COSTS - ISLAND EXPLORER

SERVICE LEVEL	CURRENT	No AGC	No AGC	No AGC	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Total hours	22,232	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	28,252	28,252	28,252	28,252
Inflation		3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Cost/hour	48.49	49.94	51.44	52.99	54.58	56.21	57.90	59.64	61.43	63.27	65.17
Hourly costs	1,078,030	1,210,360	1,246,671	1,284,071	1,322,593	1,362,271	1,403,139	1,684,853	1,735,398	1,787,460	1,841,084
Trenton commuter	0	9,000	9,315	9,641	9,978	10,328	10,689	11,063	11,451	11,851	12,207
AGC Phase 1 O&M					115,216	118,672	122,233	125,900	129,677	133,567	137,574
AGC Phase 2 O&M								126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Total costs	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422

PROJECTED REVENUES - ISLAND EXPLORER

SERVICE LEVEL	CURRENT	No AGC	No AGC	No AGC	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Total Cost	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422
Fare Box											
ANP - Island Explorer	450,000	600,000	625,000	700,000	850,000	880,000	930,000	1,110,000	1,150,000	1,185,000	1,225,000
ANP - AGC O&M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Federal Transit	367,500	180,000	185,400	190,962	196,691	202,592	208,669	314,929	324,377	334,109	344,132
FTA Prepaid ITS	0	73,673	73,673	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Federal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Municipalities	60,200	60,200	62,006	63,866	65,782	67,756	69,788	71,882	74,038	76,260	78,547
Corporate support	247,500	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000
Business direct service	34,880	34,880	61,380	63,221	65,118	67,072	69,084	71,156	73,291	75,490	77,754
Business donations	6,500	6,500	16,500	16,995	17,505	18,030	18,571	19,128	19,702	20,293	20,902
Individual donations	25,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Friends Groups	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Interest	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total revenues	1,196,580	1,193,253	1,261,959	1,273,045	1,433,096	1,473,449	1,534,112	1,951,895	2,010,011	2,063,672	2,122,892
Net revenue	118,550	-26,107	5,973	-20,667	-14,691	-17,822	-1,948	3,280	2,883	-3,728	-6,530
ISLAND EXPLORER FUND BALANCE											
Opening balance	52,106	170,656	144,549	150,522	129,855	115,164	97,342	95,393	98,673	101,556	97,828
Revenues	1,196,580	1,193,253	1,261,959	1,273,045	1,433,096	1,473,449	1,534,112	1,951,895	2,010,011	2,063,672	2,122,892
Expenses	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422
Ending balance	170,656	144,549	150,522	129,855	115,164	97,342	95,393	98,673	101,556	97,828	91,299
TRANSIT FEE FUND BALANCE		Growth after FY 2008		3%							
Opening balance	880,778	1,260,869	1,444,035	1,625,696	1,756,557	1,762,344	1,763,804	1,741,708	1,440,050	1,122,643	795,213
Revenues	870,056	824,330	849,060	874,532	900,768	927,791	955,624	984,293	1,013,822	1,044,237	1,075,564
Island Explorer	450,000	600,000	625,000	700,000	850,000	880,000	930,000	1,110,000	1,150,000	1,185,000	1,225,000
AGC O&M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Other expenses	39,965	41,164	42,399	43,671	44,981	46,330	47,720	49,152	50,626	52,145	53,710
Ending balance	1,260,869	1,444,035	1,625,696	1,756,557	1,762,344	1,763,804	1,741,708	1,440,050	1,122,643	795,213	453,510

31. Ten-year revenue and expense projections are presented in Figure 1.3. Operating costs are presented for four items:

- Island Explorer operations
- Island Explorer contributions to year-round commuter operations
- Costs to operate and maintain a new bus maintenance facility
- Costs to operate and maintain the Acadia Gateway Center intermodal facility

Revenues from Acadia National Park are presented in two separate line items, one for Island Explorer operations, and another for operation and maintenance of the Acadia Gate Center intermodal facility. They are presented separately, because these AGC costs are unlikely to be included in Acadia National Park's cooperative agreement with Downeast Transportation.

32. While 3% growth in Acadia National Park entry fee collections will provide sufficient funding through FY 2017, it should be noted that revenue and expense trends from FY 2014 through FY 2017 are not sustainable beyond FY 2018. Long-term sustainability can be achieved by an average 5% growth in transit fee collections, a 15% reduction in Island Explorer costs, or a 15% increase in total Island Explorer revenues. A more likely scenario for the longer-term future will combine some cost reductions, modest revenue increases, and more comprehensive fee collection by Acadia National Park.

Chapter 2: Review of Previous Studies

This chapter examines a number of recent studies that contain information that may be relevant for the future of the Island Explorer shuttle system. It includes a review of preliminary planning for an intermodal transportation center in Trenton.

The chapter addresses the following studies, documents, and reports:

- Section 2.1 Phase 2 Report: Seasonal Public Transportation on MDI (1997)
- Section 2.2 Visitor Center and Transportation Facility Needs (2002)
- Section 2.3 Intermodal Transportation Hub Charette (2002)
- Section 2.4 Year-round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island (2003)
- Section 2.5 Bangor-Trenton Transportation Alternatives Study (2004)
- Section 2.6 Visitor Use Management Strategy for Acadia National Park (2003)
- Section 2.7 Visitor Capacity Charrette for Acadia National Park (2002)
- Section 2.8 Acadia National Park Visitor Census Reports (2002-2003)
- Section 2.9 MDI Tomorrow Community Survey (2004)
- Section 2.10 Strategic Management Plan: Route 3 Corridor and Trenton Village (2005)

2.1 Phase 2 Report: Seasonal Public Transportation on Mount Desert Island

Tom Crikelair Associates issued a “Phase 2 Report” documenting planning activities carried out in 1997, prior to implementation of seasonal bus service on Mount Desert Island. The 1997 report presents ideas for future expansion of shuttle operations that commenced on June 23, 1999.

The 1997 report discusses the possible introduction of continuous bus service around the Park Loop Road. It suggests that buses traveling around the Loop Road might give visitors better opportunities to travel between multiple destinations within Acadia National Park.

The report projected that Loop Road service could be provided every 30 minutes with three buses or every 20 minutes with four buses. It suggests that all Loop Road buses should start and end at the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub, accessing the Loop Road at Sieur de Monts. The report also describes a possible new shuttle route that would link the Hulls Cove Visitors Center and Jordan Pond House, and a modified shuttle link between Northeast Harbor and Jordan Pond.

Island Explorer service was expanded in 2000 following a successful inaugural season. The 1997 plan for Loop Road service was considered at that time, but a decision was

made to postpone implementation because the original route design worked so well. Project partners agreed to reconsider the plan for Loop Road service sometime in the future.

2.2 Visitor Center and Transportation Facility Needs

Tom Crikelair Associates carried out an assessment of visitor center and transportation facility needs for Acadia National Park in 2002. The report examines facility needs for park visitor information, regional tourism information, intermodal transportation links, and public transit administration and maintenance.

The report identifies 33 different functions that could be addressed at a new Acadia National Park welcome center, including interpretive displays and dual theaters for film presentations. It discusses the possible inclusion of commercial tourism information in a new intermodal visitor center. And it describes facilities needed to accommodate automobile and RV travelers, local shuttles, intercity buses, and motorcoach tours, along with possible links to airport and ferry terminals.

The discussion of intermodal facilities highlights the need for adequate parking for day visitors. It also discusses the need for expanded Island Explorer bus service to Acadia National Park and MDI towns. It observes that the existing Campground service cannot be used for this purpose because Campground buses make too many stops and are already overcrowded.

The report includes modest preliminary ridership projections of up to 600 one-way passenger trips per day (300 round-trip riders) during the summer season. The study also identifies the potential for year-round park and ride commuter service between a new Trenton intermodal facility and Bar Harbor.

2.3 Intermodal Transportation Hub Charette

A weeklong workshop was held at Acadia National Park in October of 2002 to identify design alternatives for an intermodal transportation center. A team from the National Park Service Denver Service Center worked with local stakeholders to develop conceptual sketches for three possible sites, including an off-island location in Trenton.

One alternative called for development of a modest NPS and regional tourism information center in Trenton, along with construction of a new, larger visitor facility in Halls Cove. Another alternative envisioned construction of a full-scale visitor center in Trenton. Estimated space requirements for visitor facilities in Trenton ranged from 20,000 square feet to 38,400 square feet. Preliminary parking space estimates ranged from 550 to 795.

Both alternatives included special passenger loading areas for Island Explorer, motorcoach, and commuter buses. In all of the conceptual sketches, bus stops were

adjacent to the visitor center entrance and separated from vehicular parking areas. All of the Charette alternatives envisioned construction of a bus maintenance, fueling, and administrative facility in Trenton. National Park Service architects estimated that space requirements for transit facility buildings would be 16,000 square feet. This estimate assumed that indoor bus storage would be limited to year-round buses.

2.4 Year-round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island

Tom Crikelair Associates prepared a Year Round Transit Plan for Mount Desert Island in 2003. The study was carried out for Downeast Transportation, Inc. with participation and support from Jackson Laboratory, College of the Atlantic, MDI Hospital, Acadia National Park, the MDI School District, the MDI League of Towns, Harbor House, and the Maine Department of Transportation.

The study identified a number of potential year-round transit services, including

- In-town shuttle connecting Bar Harbor with COA and Jackson Lab
- Cross-island commuter service
- Subscription commuter buses to Bar Harbor from Bangor and Milbridge
- Multiple year-round commuter bus trips between a Trenton parking area and Bar Harbor
- Modified midday routes, with increased service to Ellsworth
- Limited Saturday cross-island service to support local youth programs

The study suggested that Trenton commuter service could consist of five bus trips to Bar Harbor in the morning and four or five bus trips returning to Trenton in the afternoon. It suggested that this commuter service would be operated as part of an expanded Island Explorer shuttle bus program during the summer months. The study assumed that Downeast Transportation would continue Route 3 commuter buses during the rest of the year.

There have been a few developments since the year-round study was completed in January of 2003. Most notably, subscription buses from Bangor and Cherryfield were started the following summer and are now operating at or near full capacity. A cross-island bus route was tested with Island Explorer equipment during the summer of 2003, but only a handful of local workers took advantage of the service. College of the Atlantic agreed to pay part of the cost for an in-town Bar Harbor shuttle, but Jackson Lab has not yet agreed to fund their share of the in-town shuttle.

2.5 Bangor-Trenton Transportation Alternatives Study

In September 2004, SYSTRA Consulting issued a Phase 2 Final Report for the Bangor-Trenton Transportation Alternatives Study. The purpose of the study was to explore ways to improve access to the MDI region for residents and visitors. The study focused on three alternatives for linking the Bangor / Brewer region with Mount Desert Island:

Bus Alternative	Bus service from Bangor International Airport to Bar Harbor on existing roadways
Bus Rapid Transit	Bus service from Bangor International Airport to Bar Harbor on a combination of existing roadways and dedicated bus-only right-of-way, utilizing the Calais Branch between Brewer and Ellsworth
Light Rail Transit	Light rail service from Bangor International Airport to Trenton, with connecting Island Explorer bus service between Trenton and Bar Harbor

The Transportation Alternatives Study also evaluated potential sites for a Trenton intermodal transportation facility. In addition, the consultants developed a computer model to estimate the demand for the various transportation alternatives.

The study predicted that peak season ridership in the Bangor / Bar Harbor corridor would average between 2,000 and 2,300 trips per day in 2030. The consultants suggested that nearly half of all ridership would consist of trips made between Trenton and Bar Harbor. The demand model predicted that end-point-to-end-point ridership between Bangor and Trenton would average between 319 to 419 passenger trips per day.

Capital costs for the bus alternative were estimated to be \$42 million. Capital costs for bus rapid transit were estimated to be \$222 million, while construction of the light rail alternative was estimated to cost \$271 million. These figures do not include the projected cost for a new intermodal facility in Trenton.

The consultants estimated annual operating costs of approximately \$3 million for the bus and bus rapid transit alternatives, and \$10 million for the light rail alternative. These figures do not include estimated costs to operate an expanded Island Explorer system.

Because of low demand and high costs for Bangor / Trenton alternatives, the consultants focused considerable attention on the proposed development of a new intermodal facility in Trenton. This facility could operate without a Bangor-Trenton transportation link. It would serve as a new gateway for Acadia National Park and a second hub for the Island Explorer shuttle system.

The SYSTRA consulting team discussed possible expansion of the existing Island Explorer shuttle bus system in an appendix to the main report. This document entitled *Connecting Bus Services: Trenton and Bar Harbor* “describes changes to the Island Explorer bus services that would be made to provide connections to Bangor-Trenton [bus or rail] services and to support a relocation of the Acadia National Park visitor center to Trenton.”

The SYSTRA report envisions some significant additions to the existing Island Explorer system. New services include:

- Bus service every 10 minutes on the Park Loop Road, with a route that begins and ends in Trenton
- Buses from Bar Harbor to the summit of Cadillac Mountain every 30 minutes
- Buses between Southwest Harbor and Trenton every 15 minutes
- Buses between Northeast Harbor and Trenton every 15 minutes

The study suggests that the existing Jordan Pond route should be extended to provide the Northeast Harbor-Trenton link, and that the Brown Mountain route could then be discontinued. It suggests extending the Campground route to the new Trenton hub and increasing the midday frequency from every 30 minutes to every 20 minutes. It proposes increasing the frequency of the existing Southwest Harbor-Bar Harbor service from hourly to every 15 minutes.

These proposals would significantly change the scale of the Island Explorer project, as can be seen by looking more closely at two of the proposed changes:

- The existing Bar Harbor-Southwest Harbor route operates every 60 minutes with three buses. Increasing the frequency to every 15 minutes without redesigning the route will result in a need for 12 buses to serve this one route.
- Combining a circuit of the Park Loop Road with express service between Bar Harbor and Trenton is likely to require a scheduling window of at least 150 minutes for a complete round trip. Service every 10 minutes on this route would require 15 buses.

Island Explorer schedules in 2005 involve a peak pullout of 16 buses. The SYSTRA plan appears to require a peak pullout of between 45 and 48 buses. Annual operating costs for the Island Explorer in 2005 are just under \$1 million. The SYSTRA study predicts that the annual operating budget for the Island Explorer in 2030 will increase to \$5.2 million in 2002 dollars.

The demand model created by the SYSTRA team predicts that without expansion, Island Explorer ridership will grow to a summer average of 5,402 per day by 2030. This compares to a summer average in calendar 2005 of 4,074. It predicts that ridership on an expanded Island Explorer system (with a new Trenton facility, but without connecting transportation to Bangor) will average 10,365 per day. This means that a five-fold increase in costs will yield a roughly two-fold increase in ridership.

The SYSTRA study refers to “an expansion of the existing Bar Harbor hub,” but it does not explain how additional buses would be accommodated at the Bar Harbor Village Green. The study does not suggest ways to pay for expanded Island Explorer operations.

The revised service plan and its accompanying ridership projections raise a number of questions and problems.

1. The study suggests that Southwest Harbor would be served during midday hours by eight buses per hour (15-minute headways on a route from Bar Harbor and 15-minute headways on a route from Trenton). Cadillac Mountain would have two buses per hour (30-minute headways from Bar Harbor). The two Southwest Harbor routes would generate nearly 1,500 riders per day, while Cadillac Mountain would generate 808 rides per day. Are two trips an hour adequate for Cadillac Mountain? Is there sufficient demand for travel to Southwest Harbor to support 12 buses per hour? Are resources appropriately matched with existing needs and anticipated demand?
2. The plan calls for extending the Jordan Pond bus beyond Northeast Harbor to Trenton, and decreasing the time between buses from 60 minutes to 15 minutes. It suggests that a longer route with more frequent service would generate 1,000 trips per day (compared to an average of 469 per day in 2005). How many of these projected 1,000 trips would involve the Northeast Harbor/Trenton segment? Is the demand for travel between Trenton and Northeast Harbor adequate to justify the same frequency of service provided between Northeast Harbor and Bar Harbor?
3. The plan envisions 10-minute headways on a new route on the clockwise Park Loop Road. At the same time, it calls for increasing headways on the counterclockwise Bar Harbor-Jordan Pond route to every 15 minutes. To what extent are these two routes between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond redundant? Might it perhaps be more important to add a link between Jordan Pond and the Hulls Cove Visitor Center?
4. The plan calls for extending a new Park Loop Road route to Trenton, with non-stop express service between Bar Harbor and Trenton every 10 minutes. Is there adequate demand for six buses an hour between Trenton and Bar Harbor? The report shows a ridership projection of 3,809 trips a day on a combined Loop Road/Bar Harbor-Trenton route, but it does not say how many of these trips involve travel on the Bar Harbor-Trenton segment, as opposed to multiple boardings along the Park Loop Road. It also does not provide a breakdown of commuter and visitor trips between Trenton and Bar Harbor. This information could probably be obtained from the consulting firm that created the demand model.
5. The study recommends operating every 15-minutes between Northeast Harbor and Trenton, while leaving headways between Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park's Blackwoods Campground unchanged at one bus an hour. Doesn't the Blackwoods service need to be increased to at least every 30 minutes? Is the demand for travel between Northeast Harbor and Trenton that much greater than the demand for travel between Blackwoods Campground and Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park destinations?
6. Was the demand model used to identify route segments with the greatest potential demand? With this approach, more frequent service would be offered where potential demand is stronger. Or was the model applied after the fact to previously identified routes and frequencies? Since the model recognizes frequency as an important element in customer acceptance, routes with more service will generate more demand. This

leaves unanswered the question whether frequency changes on other routes might be more productive.

7. How many people will leave their cars at the new Trenton facility and use the Island Explorer to travel into Acadia National Park? It is difficult to answer this question based on information included in the published report, because ridership projections are not provided for individual route segments.

The report appears to suggest that between 1,000 and 1,200 people a day will board buses at the Trenton facility. (It projects 349 one-way rides on a Trenton-Southwest Harbor route, which translates to 175 round-trip passengers. It does not isolate the Northeast Harbor-Trenton route segment, but Northeast Harbor might be expected to generate roughly half the demand experienced by Southwest Harbor, or 80 round trip passengers per day. If passengers on the Loop Road/Trenton bus board four times each – once in Trenton, twice along the Park Loop Road, and once in Bar Harbor – then the model’s projection of 3,809 unlinked trips translates to 952 individual people riding from Trenton to Bar Harbor each day. These three numbers added together total 1,207.)

Since it may be difficult to come up with enough money to pay for the 10 and 15-minute headways envisioned by the SYSTRA study, a projection of 1,200 people per day might be a bit high. (At the same time, it is worth remembering that special parking arrangements for the visit of the Queen Mary in the fall of 2004 generated about 1,000 extra round trips on the Island Explorer’s Campground and Eden Street routes.)

2.6 Visitor Use Management Strategy for Acadia National Park

A 2003 report from Acadia National Park staff outlines strategies for visitor management for Acadia National Park lands on Mount Desert Island. The report describes National Park Service goals and identifies core issues. It describes ongoing activities and identifies possible short-term and long-term actions that can be combined to form a coordinated strategy for managing visitor use.

The National Park Service seeks to manage visitor use (1) “to preserve park resources unimpaired for current and future generations,” and (2) “to manage crowding and congestion to ensure a high quality of visitor experiences, including those characterized by a higher degree of solitude.”

The report recognizes that some problems have as their root cause too many vehicles. These include soil and plant degradation from illegal parking, visitor frustration from congested roadways and overcrowded parking areas, and traffic-related safety issues. A related set of problems stems from too many visitors. This includes degraded soils and vegetation from excessive foot traffic and degraded visitor experiences due to crowding. The report observes that park staff is particularly concerned about the loss of solitude in low-use areas that may occur if overall use continues to increase.

Current activities include

- Planning for the expansion of the Island Explorer service
- Planning for a new intermodal transportation hub in Trenton
- Development of systems that will provide real time traffic information
- Monitoring carriage road and hiking trail use
- Studying visitor behavior on Cadillac Mountain
- Continuing hiking trail rehabilitation
- Ongoing parking enforcement
- Implementation of a Commercial Services Plan, including management of motor coach tours

The report identifies possible short-term strategies for the next 1-5 years. These include

- Developing a detailed zoning approach for desired resource conditions and recreation opportunities, identifying at-risk areas
- Developing a new entry fee structure to encourage bus use and discourage private auto use
- Establishing maximum length and height for oversize vehicles, with related implementation strategies, especially for motor coaches
- Developing a parking plan for the park

Possible longer-term ideas include:

- Limiting the number of cars allowed on the Park Loop Road per day or per hour
- Limiting the sale of park passes
- Implementing a reservation system for parts of the park
- Delivering visitors to Cadillac Mountain via public transit
- Setting visitor limits for at-risk areas

The report suggests that ongoing visitor management planning will be “guided by a preliminary set of at-risk areas identified by park staff. High use at-risk areas include

- Cadillac Mountain summit
- Jordan Pond area
- Ocean Drive (Sand Beach to Otter Point)
- Eagle Lake parking
- Acadia Mountain parking
- Route 102a corridor (Seawall to Bass Harbor Lighthouse)

Low use areas identified as at-risk include

- Hiking trails on Western Mountains
- Day Mountain-Triad
- Pemetic Mountain
- Norumbega Mountain

The report stresses that visitor use management is complex, that much time and public involvement will be needed, and that strategies will evolve as new information becomes available.

2.7 Visitor Capacity Charrette for Acadia National Park

A planning charrette was held in August of 2001 to address visitor capacity and visitor management for Acadia National Park. A group of more than 20 people worked with 10 park staff over a three-day period to develop ideas and recommendations for the Mount Desert Island portion of the national park.

Charrette organizers hoped to develop “expert-based recommendations related to desired future conditions, indicators and standards, management strategies and actions, numeric visitor capacity, science and data needs, monitoring approaches, and public education and information efforts.”

The group addressed a number of questions, including:

- What is the best approach to visitor capacity on Mount Desert Island?
- What is the appropriate role of the Island Explorer bus system in controlling use or administering capacity?

Particular attention was paid to the Jordan Pond area and the summit of Cadillac Mountain. Participants suggested reconfiguring Jordan Pond House access roads and parking facilities to separate uses and reduce confusion and congestion. They also suggested providing alternate restroom facilities for tour buses.

For Cadillac Mountain, the group identified a need for “some form of public transport” and “limits on cars, buses, and recreation vehicles” during the peak season. They also identified “an outstanding opportunity ... on the summit for interpreting the natural, cultural, and historical resources of the park and the area.”

More general suggestions included greater parking control and enforcement with “new restrictions,” adding new entrance stations, and establishing an “automobile capacity.” The group identified a number of obstacles, including geography that offers many access points and “the sheer volume of people relative to public transit capacity.”

The charrette final report includes several transportation-related suggestions.

Recommendation No. 3

Travel patterns for visitors and residents need to be better understood. A travel pattern inventory should be developed for major park intersections.

Recommendation No. 4

Transportation and design studies are suggested for Jordan Pond, Cadillac Mountain, and Ocean Drive. The report states:

Delivering people to Cadillac Mountain by public transit should be a high priority. Only through this means can the majority of visitors be educated about appropriate behaviors to protect the summit area.

Recommendation No. 5

A parking plan for Acadia National Park should address, among other things, “how oversize vehicles and tour buses use the park,” and “how parking limits should be integrated with the Island Explorer bus.”

Recommendation No. 9

The report stresses the importance of “an ongoing evaluation program” for the Island Explorer project to identify future improvements. Such a program should be developed to ensure that the bus system realizes its full potential to benefit the park and the community. Future steps should include incentives to increase visitor ridership.

Recommendation No. 10

Charrette participants suggested that a car-free test should be conducted for the Park Loop Road and Cadillac Mountain Road in an effort to establish the feasibility and cost of keeping these roadways car-free during the summer season.

2.8 Acadia National Park Visitor Census Reports

Acadia National Park monitors visitor use of the carriage road and hiking trail systems. Park staff has also done a census of the number of vehicles and visitors traveling to the summit of Cadillac Mountain.

Carriage Roads

Ongoing assessment of carriage road use is designed to determine whether a previously established “crowding standard” has been violated. According to this standard, total system-wide use for the carriage roads should not exceed 3,000 visitors per day on more than 15 days in a 150-day season.

Daily carriage road use is estimated based on census counts, data from an electronic counter, and a regression equation that was recently adjusted to take into consideration Island Explorer bus riders.

The carriage road census report for 2002 found no violation of the carriage road crowding standard. Fourteen days exceeded 2,000 carriage road users per day, with the highest at 2,663 on August 7, 2002. Nine of the fourteen days with over 2,000 users were in the first two weeks of August, including five in a row August 5-9. Use levels were similar to previous years.

Hiking Trails

A 2003 census of hiking trail use provides a count of hikers on various trails on two days in August. The census report includes a comparison with similar hiker counts carried out on sample days in 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Foggy weather appears to have limited hiker totals for 2003. Of the five years, counts were highest in 2002. On the two days evaluated in 2002, there were ten trails with more than 250 entering hikers. The Southwest Harbor bus serves four of these trails. The Sand Beach bus serves three of these trails and the Jordan Pond bus serves two.

<i>Trail</i>	<i>Hikers</i>	<i>Bus Route</i>
Bass Harbor Light	744	7 Southwest Harbor
Beehive	571	3 Sand Beach
South Bubble	528	5 Jordan Pond
Ship Harbor	401	7 Southwest Harbor
Precipice	388	3 Sand Beach
Jordan Pond East	381	5 Jordan Pond
Gorham	302	3 Sand Beach
Acadia Mountain	271	7 Southwest Harbor
Great Head: Sand Beach	270	No bus access
Wonderland	267	7 Southwest Harbor

Access to two of the four trails served by the Southwest Harbor bus is limited. Bus riders must walk from the Bass Harbor Campground to reach Bass Harbor Light. And there is no established bus stop at the Acadia Mountain trailhead.

Cadillac Mountain

Park staff counted vehicles and visitors on the Cadillac Mountain Road on August 1, 2002 to obtain a one-day snapshot of visitor access to this popular Acadia National Park destination. This followed a similar count on August 14, 2001.

An estimated 5,153 people visited the Cadillac Mountain summit on August 1, 2002. The total vehicle count was 1,700, including 1,686 cars, 8 recreational vehicles, 5 motorcoaches, and 8 local tour buses. This was about 1,000 fewer people and about 300 fewer vehicles than the one-day count in 2001.

An estimated 4,930 people arrived by car on August 1, 2002. This represents 89% of total Cadillac Mountain visitors that day. An estimated 360 individuals arrived by motorcoach or tour bus (7%), and 223 arrived by hiking trail (4%).

Visitation was strongest between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., but remained near or above 100 vehicles per hour into the evening. The busiest hour was 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, when 194 vehicles arrived at the summit. Park staff counted 120 vehicles that had traveled up the mountain for sunrise.

The report says: “There is no way to know whether the number of buses counted on this day is representative of a typical day of visitation.” The authors suggest that overall bus use could be substantially higher, particularly in the late summer and fall.

One of the purposes of the Cadillac Mountain census was to provide “data for park managers and planners interested in extending the Island Explorer bus up the mountain.”

2.9 MDI Tomorrow Community Survey

A survey of Mount Desert Island area residents was carried out at the request of MDI Tomorrow in December 2003 and January 2004. The survey was conducted by the Margaret Chase Smith Center for Public Policy and the Department of Resource Economics and Policy at the University of Maine.

MDI Tomorrow is a citizen’s forum that has worked since October 2001 to identify issues that will affect the Mount Desert Island area as a place to live and work over the next several years. The survey was designed to help identify a preferred future for the region and ways to achieve it.

The survey addressed three population groups: year-round residents who live on Mount Desert Island, year-round residents of neighboring communities, and seasonal MDI residents. Seasonal residents were defined as property taxpayers with mailing addresses outside the MDI area.

Issues addressed by survey questions included:

- Auto congestion
- Open space and land use
- Walking and biking
- Marine industries and fisheries
- Drug and alcohol use and abuse
- Healthy growth and social development of youth
- Affordable housing
- Local agricultural and foods
- Year-round economy

A number of the survey findings and recommendations pertain to transportation planning in general and to the Island Explorer project in particular.

- Sixty-eight percent of survey respondents said they “strongly support” increasing Island Explorer service as a strategy to reduce auto congestion during the summer months. Another 20% said they “somewhat support” increasing Island Explorer service.
- Forty-one percent “strongly support” establishment of a parking facility in Trenton with bus service to village centers. Another 31% said they “somewhat support” a Trenton parking facility.
- Forty-three percent “strongly support” providing year-round commuter bus service as a strategy for promoting the region’s year-round economy. Another 33% “somewhat support” establishment of year-round commuter service.
- Fifty-five percent of survey respondents “strongly support” expanding public transportation in the MDI region to provide access to after-school youth programs. Another 31% said they “somewhat support” expanding public transportation for this purpose.

2.10 Strategic Management Plan: Route 3 Corridor and Trenton Village

A 2005 Strategic Master Plan examined ways to manage transportation and land use development within Trenton’s Route 3 corridor. Among other things, the study discusses possible development of a village center for the town of Trenton. The study was carried out for the town of Trenton and the Maine Department of Transportation by Coplon Associates, with assistance from the Hancock County Planning Commission and two subcontracting consulting firms.

The planning effort sought to:

- Preserve and enhance Route 3 highway capacity
- Anticipate and accommodate alternative modes of transportation
- Enhance corridor traveler experience
- Promote Trenton as a destination
- Promote a greater sense of community for the citizens of Trenton.

The consultants suggest that the town of Trenton create a new village center west of the Trenton Marketplace. They propose a local road network that would link the Trenton Marketplace, the current Trenton town office on Route 230, and the Trenton Elementary School. This would allow Trenton residents who live west of Route 3 to access the new town center, the school, and the Trenton Marketplace without entering Route 3.

In addition, the consultants propose that Route 230 and the airport access road be realigned to intersect Route 3 at a new signalized intersection.

The consultants suggest that a network of roads that separates local traffic from the Route 3 arterial will “significantly improve local access, alleviate traffic conflicts, and create new development opportunities.”

The plan envisions a village center along the new roads west of Route 3. The report suggests that the village center could include a post office and library, along with a relocated town office and a relocated Trenton Grange. It suggests that these village uses could be organized around a common open space or village green, and that mixed commercial/residential properties could be developed on adjacent parcels.

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Chapter 3: Onboard Surveys of Island Explorer Passengers

This chapter presents the results of onboard passenger surveys carried out on Island Explorer buses in August 2005 and 2006. The analysis includes comparisons with similar surveys carried out each August during the six preceding years, beginning with the Island Explorer's first season in 1999.

A copy of the survey forms and full transcriptions of passenger comments are included as appendices to this report.

The chapter is structured as follows:

Section 3.1	Summary of Passenger Comments and Suggestions
Section 3.2	Methodology and Response
Section 3.3	Group Size and Age of Survey Respondents
Section 3.4	Residency and Overnight Lodging
Section 3.5	Trip Purpose
Section 3.6	Visitor Travel Modes
Section 3.7	Park Entry Permits
Section 3.8	Parking Locations
Section 3.9	Number of Years Utilizing the Island Explorer
Section 3.10	Service Evaluation
Section 3.11	Island Explorer Future
Section 3.12	Acadia National Park Transit Fee
Section 3.13	Use of Internet Web Sites

3.1 Summary of Passenger Comments and Suggestions

Island Explorer passengers were surveyed on August 8-9, 2005 and on August 2-4, 2006. In 2005, surveys were filled out by a total of 337 groups representing 880 individuals. The average group size was 2.6 and the median group size was 2.0. In 2006, surveys were completed by 354 groups representing 964 individuals. The average group size was 2.7 and the median group size was 2.0.

Bus riders continue to be very pleased with free Island Explorer bus service.

- One hundred percent feel it is important that the service be continued.
- Ninety-nine percent agree that drivers were friendly and helpful.
- Ninety-nine percent agree that buses were clean.
- Ninety-nine percent feel it is important to keep the service free.

A visitor from New York on the Campground bus said: “We have visited about 25 National Parks, including Yellowstone and Yosemite. This Park and the Island Explorer services are the best experience we have had. Five stars to Acadia!”

A visitor from Pennsylvania on the Eden Street bus said: “We were surprised and delighted by the service. It made our visit much more pleasant and convenient. We will likely come again.”

A family from Vermont on the Sand Beach bus said: “Excellent bus system! We come every summer, park our car at Blackwoods, and don’t drive it for a week! We bicycle, hike, and use the wonderful bus routes every day. It makes Acadia a special place.”

A visitor from Arizona on the Blackwoods bus said: “It’s been a very important part of our stay. We use it daily. It will play an important role in our decision to return in coming years. We love it! Saves on congestion and pollution in the park. Thank you!”

A visitor from Virginia on the Jordan Pond bus said: “This sets the standard for other National Parks!!”

A local resident on the Campground bus said: “I think the Island Explorer is a great service. I use it frequently because I’m a MDI resident and many of my friends visit. Thank you for doing such a great job!”

As they have in past years, passengers expressed gratitude to L.L.Bean for the corporation’s contribution to the bus system. A visitor from Pennsylvania said: “Thanks, L.L.Bean. We’ll feel even better when we purchase your products!”

A visitor from Virginia said: “Thank you! What an excellent corporate statement about the importance of preserving our National Park treasures!”

A visitor from Pennsylvania said: “Awesome! We have been occasional shoppers but now will be regular.”

Passengers stressed the importance of keeping buses free. A Maine resident said: “You should do everything possible to keep buses free. I have a vehicle but the Explorer schedule fits in perfect with my work schedule and rather than add to the pollution with my own vehicle, I opt for the bus. I wouldn’t do it if it weren’t free though, to be honest.”

A visitor from Vermont said: “The bus rides should continue to be free or people will hop in their cars and clog the roads.”

Survey respondents used the comment section to make a variety of suggestions for improving Island Explorer service. Suggestions in the 2005 and 2006 surveys included the following:

- 15-minute Eden Street service all day
- More frequent service on the Blackwoods route, at least every 30 minutes
- 30-minute service on the Jordan Pond route
- More frequent Southwest Harbor service
- Increased capacity on the Southwest Harbor route, especially between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon and between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m.
- A direct bus link between Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor
- More evening service on the Jordan Pond route, including a later bus
- Early morning and late night service
- More capacity for bicycles
- Information about the Island Explorer at off-island motels
- Bus service to Seal Cove
- Bus service to Cadillac Mountain
- Bus service to the Bar Harbor town pier
- A transfer hub at Hulls Cove Visitor Center

3.2 Methodology and Response

The onboard survey was carried out on August 8-9, 2005 and August 2-4, 2006. Surveys were distributed between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on all eight Island Explorer bus routes plus the Bicycle Express. For Mount Desert Island routes, passengers were asked to participate as they boarded buses at the Bar Harbor Village Green. The Schoodic bus driver distributed surveys to passengers on the Schoodic route.

Passengers were asked to complete one survey per group. Those who agreed to participate were given a blank form and a pencil and were asked to drop their completed form in a box at the front of the bus as they disembarked. Nearly all groups that were offered a survey form agreed to take one. In 2005, 324 surveys were distributed and 313 were returned, for a response rate of 97%. In 2006, 351 surveys were distributed and 338 were returned, for a response rate of 96%.

It is important to recognize that the survey examines Island Explorer usage (1) during the daytime only and (2) during the peak of the summer season. The distribution of trip purposes and riders by route would almost certainly have been different if the survey had included evening hours. Surveys were not distributed in the evening in part because it would have been difficult for passengers to fill out survey forms on buses in the dark.

Because the surveys are carried out during the busiest part of the summer, the percentage of usage by visitors (as opposed to local residents) may have been somewhat higher than at other times during the season.

Figure 3.1 shows bus routes utilized by survey groups in 2005. The total is greater than 313 because some respondents used more than one bus route for their trip. This figure also shows the distribution of ridership by route. Survey and ridership distribution for 2006 is presented in Figure 3.2.

FIGURE 3.1 2005 SURVEY AND RIDERSHIP DISTRIBUTION

	<i>Survey Respondents</i>	<i>Survey Distribution</i>	<i>Ridership Distribution</i>
Campground	86	20%	24%
Eden Street	52	12%	27%
Sand Beach	89	21%	13%
Blackwoods	24	6%	5%
Jordan Pond	59	14%	9%
Brown Mountain	29	7%	4%
Southwest Harbor	69	16%	14%
Schoodic	18	4%	1%
Bike Express	8	2%	2%
Total	434	100%	100%

FIGURE 3.2 2006 SURVEY AND RIDERSHIP DISTRIBUTION

	<i>Survey Respondents</i>	<i>Survey Distribution</i>	<i>Ridership Distribution</i>
Campground	110	24%	22%
Eden Street	64	14%	25%
Sand Beach	75	16%	14%
Blackwoods	31	7%	6%
Jordan Pond	52	11%	10%
Brown Mountain	28	6%	4%
Southwest Harbor	57	13%	14%
Schoodic	20	4%	1%
Bike Express	18	4%	3%
Total	455	100%	100%

The survey sample included a lower percentage of Eden Street riders when compared with the actual distribution of ridership by route for the full summer season. This results in large part from the fact that survey distribution was limited to daytime hours.

3.3 Group Size and Age of Survey Respondents

Participants were asked to identify the number of individuals in their party. In 2005, the 337 participating groups included a total of 880 individuals. In 2006, there were 354 groups and 964 individuals. The average group size was 2.6 in 2005 and 2.7 in 2006. In both years, the median group size was 2.0. The average group size has been generally consistent during the eight years of Island Explorer surveys, as shown in Figure 3.3.

FIGURE 3.3 AVERAGE GROUP SIZE

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Surveys	290	461	414	466	412	383	337	354
Average Group	2.6	2.5	3.0	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7

Figure 3.4 shows the distribution of respondents by group size for 2005 and 2006.

FIGURE 3.4 SIZE OF PARTICIPATING GROUPS IN 2005 and 2006

Group sizes	2005 Number	2005 Percent	2006 Number	2006 Percent
One	82	24%	70	20%
Two	143	42%	158	45%
Three	34	10%	35	10%
Four	41	12%	40	11%
Five	21	6%	26	7%
Six	1	0%	9	3%
Seven	4	1%	7	2%
Eight or more	11	3%	8	2%
	337	100%	353	100%

In 2005, 17% percent of group members were retired adults, 57% were non-retired adults, and 26% were children below the age of 18. Thirty-four percent of participating groups included at least one child. Children traveling without an adult made up 5% of all groups.

In 2006, 19% of group members were retired adults, 54% were non-retired adults, and 27% were children below the age of 18. Thirty-five percent of participating groups included at least one child. Children traveling without an adult made up 3% of all groups. The percentage of children traveling without an adult was 3% in 2006, 5% in 2005, 6% in 2004, 6% in 2003, 8% in 2002, and 5% in 2001.

3.4 Residency and Overnight Lodging

In 2005, a combined total of 20% of participating groups said that they are year-round or summer residents of Mount Desert Island. This includes 9% who said they were year-round residents and 11% who said that they were summer residents. In 2006, 18% of groups were year-round or summer residents. The 2006 figure included 6% year-round residents and 12% summer residents. The distribution of local residents and visitors for the eight years of Island Explorer operations is presented in Figure 3.5.

FIGURE 3.5 LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Year-round	8%	11%	10%	12%	10%	10%	9%	6%
Summer residents	8%	11%	12%	9%	9%	10%	11%	12%
Visitors	84%	78%	78%	79%	81%	80%	80%	82%

In both 2005 and 2006, the highest percentages of year-round residents occurred on the Southwest Harbor route, with 17% year-round residents in 2005 and 11% year-round residents in 2006.

Participants were asked to identify their hometown and state. The results are presented in Figure 3.6. In 2006, roughly one-third said they lived year-round in New England, while twenty-five percent came from Mid-Atlantic States. Four percent lived in Eastern Europe. The percentage of groups from Canada increased from 4% in 2005 to 8% in 2006.

FIGURE 3.6 YEAR-ROUND RESIDENCE BY REGION

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Mid Atlantic	30%	29%	29%	29%	31%	29%	26%	25%
Maine	16%	16%	15%	20%	17%	18%	13%	14%
Other New England	23%	18%	19%	18%	21%	19%	24%	19%
Midwest	9%	10%	13%	10%	10%	11%	10%	9%
Southeast	10%	11%	8%	8%	10%	9%	10%	10%
West	5%	5%	7%	8%	7%	3%	6%	6%
Canada	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%	5%	4%	8%
Other international	5%	7%	6%	6%	4%	6%	9%	8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Combined New England	39%	34%	34%	39%	38%	37%	37%	34%
Eastern Europe						3%	4%	4%

Survey participants were asked: “What town will you stay in tonight?” In 2006, 90% of bus riders said they planned to stay overnight on Mount Desert Island or in Trenton. Three percent were staying in the Schoodic region. Six percent were day visitors staying elsewhere in Maine. This mix of day-use has remained largely unchanged in recent years. Town-by-town results for 2001 through 2006 are presented in Figure 3.7.

FIGURE 3.7 LOCATION OF OVERNIGHT LODGING

Town	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Bar Harbor	64%	68%	65%	65%	62%	59%
Mount Desert	17%	13%	13%	11%	13%	16%
Southwest Harbor	6%	7%	7%	7%	10%	9%
Other Hancock County	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	2%
Other Maine	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Tremont	4%	2%	4%	2%	3%	2%
Trenton	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%
Schoodic area	0%	0%	1%	4%	3%	3%
Nova Scotia	0%	0%	0.5%	0.3%	1%	0.3%
Local Islands	1%	1%	0.5%	0.3%	1%	0%
	100%	100%	101%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 3.8 shows distribution of overnight lodging by type of accommodation each year from 1999 through 2006.

FIGURE 3.8 TYPE OF OVERNIGHT LODGING

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Campground	36%	35%	36%	29%	27%	31%	30%	37%
Motel, Inn, B&B	36%	35%	31%	36%	41%	36%	32%	31%
Year-round residence	14%	14%	13%	14%	12%	14%	11%	10%
Summer residence	7%	5%	7%	7%	7%	5%	14%	10%
Short-term rental	2%	6%	6%	5%	6%	8%	6%	7%
Sailboat or Yacht	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Other	1%	1%	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	101%	100%	100%	100%

The 2005 and 2006 surveys asked groups: “Is your overnight lodging within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green?” In 2005, 29% of participating groups said they were staying overnight in a hotel, B&B, or residence located within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor transit hub. In 2006, 16% said they could easily walk from their lodging to the Bar Harbor Village Green.

3.5 Trip Purpose

Survey respondents were asked to identify the primary purpose of their bus trip. The largest category in 2006 was “sightseeing,” with 38% of total responses. Hiking was the next most popular trip purpose with 15%, followed by shopping with 14% and biking with 10%. Five percent were using the bus to travel to or from work. The combined total for various recreational purposes (hiking, biking, swimming, and boating) was 34%.

FIGURE 3.9 TRIP PURPOSE

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Work	5%	7%	6%	8%	9%	9%	9%	5%
Hiking	12%	17%	15%	17%	20%	25%	20%	15%
Biking	13%	4%	7%	7%	5%	5%	11%	10%
Swimming	1%	4%	7%	3%	1%	6%	4%	7%
Boating	4%	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Shopping	12%	11%	15%	15%	10%	11%	10%	14%
Dining	7%	11%	5%	8%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Sightseeing	37%	35%	33%	32%	38%	33%	29%	38%
Other	9%	8%	8%	9%	9%	4%	8%	5%
Multiple							2%	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.6 Visitor Travel Modes

Just over half of visitors in 2006 said they traveled to the region in an automobile without an attached trailer. Twenty-five percent arrived in a recreational vehicle or with a trailer. Sixteen percent arrived in the region by airplane. Six percent arrived by intercity bus and 5% arrived by private sailboat.

FIGURE 3.10 VISITOR TRAVEL MODES

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Car	56%	57%	55%	60%	49%	52%
RV or trailer	26%	20%	20%	20%	21%	25%
Airplane	7%	9%	12%	9%	16%	13%
Sailboat	5%	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%
Intercity bus	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%	2%
Tour bus	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Other	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%

3.7 Park Entry Permits

Over the last eight years, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of bus riders who say that they purchased an Acadia National Park entry permit. In 1999, 39% said they bought a permit, while 61% did not. In 2006, 68% said they bought permits, while 32% did not.

FIGURE 3.11 DID YOU PURCHASE A PARK ENTRY PERMIT?

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
YES	39%	37%	42%	51%	52%	62%	69%	68%
NO	61%	63%	58%	49%	48%	38%	31%	32%

Figure 3.12 shows entry permit purchases for various user groups. In 2006, Park permits were held by 40% percent of bus riders who are year-round residents, compared with 15% of year-round residents with permits in 1999.

Fifty-nine percent of participating groups said they were visiting Acadia National Park on their bus ride. Eighty-two percent of those traveling to the Park had a permit. Forty-two percent said they were not going into the national park. Fifty-five percent of these individuals had a Park permit.

The highest percentage of pass holders involved groups that traveled to the area in a recreational vehicle. Eighty-nine percent of RV travelers had a permit, compared with 68% overall. In 2006, 79% of the people who visited the Acadia National Park web site had permits. Eighty-nine percent of ANP web site visitors had permits in 2005.

FIGURE 3.12 PERCENT OF USER GROUPS WITH PARK ENTRY PERMITS

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Year-round residents	15%	25%	14%	30%	46%	40%
Summer residents	38%	30%	29%	42%	41%	54%
Visitors	45%	56%	59%	68%	75%	72%

	2004	2005	2006
Groups visiting ANP on this trip	74%	78%	82%
Groups that will not visit ANP on this trip	40%	53%	55%
Groups that visited the ANP web site	86%	89%	79%
Groups that arrived in a recreational vehicle	78%	75%	89%
Groups that arrived by sailboat	43%	56%	50%

Figure 3.13 shows permit ownership by type of lodging. It suggests that those least likely to have a permit are people staying in summer and year-round residences.

FIGURE 3.13 PERCENT WITH PARK PERMITS BY LODGING TYPE

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Campgrounds	59%	66%	62%	73%	81%	81%
Hotels	40%	56%	59%	66%	81%	64%
B & B				83%	84%	75%
Short-term rental	35%	37%	65%	62%	70%	78%
Summer residence	29%	23%	35%	47%	38%	40%
Sailboat			30%	47%	50%	63%
Year-round residence	16%	27%	17%	27%	41%	40%

Figures 3.14 shows where bus riders purchased their Park entry permits. Figure 3.15 shows a breakdown of permit types held by Island Explorer bus riders.

FIGURE 3.14 WHERE DID YOU PURCHASE YOUR PARK ENTRY PERMIT?

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Village Green	21%	32%	45%	44%	37%	32%
Loop Road	24%	20%	16%	18%	15%	12%
Visitor Center	29%	30%	22%	21%	26%	24%
ANP Campground	15%	10%	5%	7%	7%	12%
Thompson Island						7%
Other	12%	8%	12%	11%	16%	14%

FIGURE 3.15 TYPES OF ENTRY PERMITS

	2004	2005	2006
One-week	62%	56%	63%
Full Season	7%	9%	12%
National Parks Pass	9%	9%	11%
Golden Age	19%	21%	20%
Golden Access	1%	2%	1%
Golden Eagle	2%	2%	3%

3.8 Parking Locations

Participants were asked where they parked their cars or recreational vehicles. In 2005, 66% said that their vehicle was parked at their hotel, campground, or private residence, and 2% said that someone else was using it. Twenty-one percent said they did not have a car or RV available locally. Twelve percent of surveyed groups indicated that they used a private vehicle to reach the bus.

In 2006, 63% parked at their hotel, campground, or private residence, and 3% said someone else was using their vehicle. Nineteen percent had no car available. Eleven percent used a private vehicle to reach the bus.

The number of groups who said they parked their cars in public parking spaces in Bar Harbor increased from 5.4% in 2005 to 6.7% in 2006. The Hulls Cove Visitor Center was used by 3.7% of Island Explorer groups in 2005 and 2.5% in 2006. The Trenton IGA accounted for 0.3% in 2005 and 1.6% in 2006. The Winter Harbor ferry lot accounted for 0.7% in 2005 and 1.6% in 2006. For 2005 and 2006, there were no groups who said they parked their cars in Northeast Harbor or Southwest Harbor.

FIGURE 3.16 WHERE IS YOUR CAR NOW?

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Lodging	66%	58%	60%	58%	53%	55%
Residence	10%	12%	8%	13%	13%	8%
Someone else is using it	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
No car	11%	20%	19%	15%	21%	19%
Hulls Cove Visitor Center		3%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Other ANP		1%	1%	3%	1%	1%
Trenton IGA		2%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Bar Harbor public parking		3%	4%	4%	5%	7%
Northeast Harbor		0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Southwest Harbor		1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Tremont		0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Repair shop		0%	1%	0%	0%	0.3%
Winter Harbor ferry		0%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Other	10%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	100%	102%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.9 Number of Years Utilizing the Island Explorer

Groups were asked how many years they have used the Island Explorer. In 2005, 62% were first-year users, while in 2006, 66% were first-year users. Between 9% and 10% of bus riders said they have used the system for five or more years.

FIGURE 3.17 HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU USED THE ISLAND EXPLORER?

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1st year	78%	70%	71%	66%	62%	66%
2nd year	10%	14%	13%	13%	14%	10%
3rd year	12%	7%	7%	8%	11%	9%
4th year		9%	3%	3%	4%	5%
5 or more			6%	10%	9%	10%

In 2005, 33% of year-round residents said they were first-year Island Explorer users. In 2006, 23% of year-round residents surveyed on the system were first-year users. In 2005, 22% of year-round residents said they had ridden for four or more years. In 2006, 32% of year-round residents said they had used the system for four or more years.

3.10 Service Evaluation

Passengers were asked to evaluate the quality of service provided by the Island Explorer. They were asked to rate the cleanliness of buses and the friendliness and helpfulness of drivers. They were asked whether seats were readily available, whether buses ran on time, if bus schedules were easy to find, and if schedules were easy to understand. Riders were also asked to comment on the frequency of service and whether the right destinations are served.

The results of service evaluations for 2005 and 2006 are presented in Figures 3.18 and 3.19.

FIGURE 3.18 EVALUATION OF SERVICE QUALITY FOR 2005

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Buses are clean	85%	15%	0%	0%
Drivers are friendly and helpful	84%	16%	1%	0%
It is easy to find a seat	63%	26%	9%	2%
Buses are on time	78%	16%	3%	2%
Bus schedules are easy to find	81%	17%	1%	1%
Bus schedules are easy to understand	78%	18%	3%	1%
The frequency of service is convenient	69%	25%	5%	1%
The right destinations are served	76%	22%	0%	1%

FIGURE 3.19 EVALUATION OF SERVICE QUALITY FOR 2006

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Buses are clean	78%	20%	1%	0%
Drivers are friendly and helpful	86%	13%	1%	0%
It is easy to find a seat	67%	25%	8%	0%
Buses are on time	76%	21%	2%	1%
Bus schedules are easy to find	81%	16%	3%	0%
Bus schedules are easy to understand	75%	22%	2%	1%
The frequency of service is convenient	75%	21%	3%	1%
The right destinations are served	80%	20%	0%	0%

The biggest service quality issue continues to be the ability to find a seat. In 2005, 11% gave this a “fair” or “poor” rating. In 2006, 8% rated the ability to find a seat as “fair” or “poor.” These concerns were most prevalent on the Southwest Harbor and Campground routes. In 2006, 15% of groups on the Southwest Harbor bus said seat availability was “fair” or “poor,” while 10% of groups on the Campground route said seat availability was “fair.”

The greatest concerns about frequency of service were expressed on the Southwest Harbor and Sand Beach routes, where 9% said service frequency was “fair” or “poor.”

3.11 Island Explorer Future

Passengers were asked three questions about the future of Island Explorer service. Groups were asked to rate each item as “very important,” “somewhat important,” or “unimportant.”

Passengers were asked:

- Should we continue to provide this service?
- Should we continue to offer free service?
- Should we add more buses to increase seating capacity and service frequency?

Responses to the three questions are summarized in Figures 3.20 and 3.21.

FIGURE 3.20 ISLAND EXPLORER FUTURE (2005 ONBOARD SURVEY)

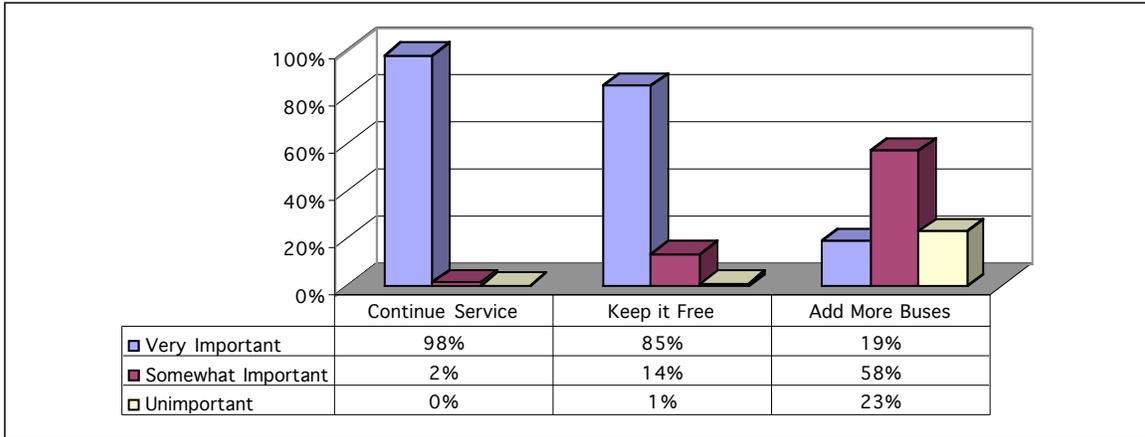
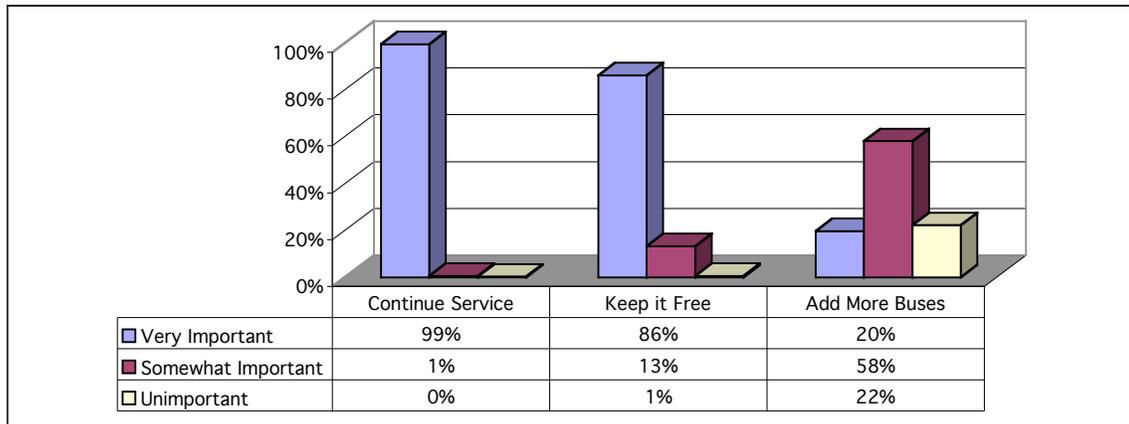


FIGURE 3.21 ISLAND EXPLORER FUTURE (2006 ONBOARD SURVEY)



There continues to be very strong support for continuing the Island Explorer, with 98-99% of survey respondents agreeing that this is very important. Between 85% and 86% of participating groups agreed that it is very important to keep the service free, while an additional 13-14% see this as somewhat important.

Between 19% and 20% feel it is “very important” to add buses to increase seating capacity and service frequency. Fifty-eight percent said this was “somewhat important” and 22-23% said unimportant.

3.12 Acadia National Park Transit Fee

Passengers were asked how they feel about the increase in Acadia National Park entry fees to help pay for expanded Island Explorer bus service. In 2005, 82% of bus users said they agree with this new fee, 16% said they were neutral, and 2% said they disagree. In 2006, 83% agreed with the fee, 15% were neutral, and 2% disagreed.

FIGURE 3.22 SUPPORT FOR ACADIA NATIONAL PARK TRANSIT FEE

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Strongly agree	30%	44%	51%	46%
Agree	37%	31%	31%	37%
Neutral	25%	21%	16%	15%
Disagree	6%	2%	1%	1%
Strongly disagree	3%	1%	1%	1%

Disagreement with the fee decreased from 9% in 2003 to 2% in 2005 and 2006.

Among all Island Explorer survey participants, there was no opposition to the transit fee in 2005 or 2006 expressed by groups who had purchased a park entry permit.

In 2005, 78% of year-round residents said they either “agree” or “strongly agree” with the transit fee. Seventy-six percent of year-round residents expressed support for the transit fee in 2006. This compares with 48% of year-round residents who supported the transit fee in 2003 and 72% who expressed support in 2004.

3.13 Use of Internet Web Sites

During the three most recent surveys, Island Explorer riders were asked two questions about their use of the Internet.

- Did you use the Acadia National Park web site to plan your trip?
- Have you visited the Island Explorer web site?

Less than a quarter of Island Explorer riders said that they had visited the Acadia National Park web site. The Island Explorer web site had been visited by only 11-15% of bus users. The results are summarized in Figure 3.23.

FIGURE 3.23 HAVE YOU VISITED ANP AND ISLAND EXPLORER WEB SITES?

	2004	2005	2006
ANP web site	22%	23%	24%
Island Explorer web site	15%	11%	12%

Low usage of the Island Explorer Internet site may be due in part to the absence of Island Explorer links on web sites for campgrounds and lodging establishments in the Acadia region. This issue is discussed in Chapter 11 of this report.

Chapter 4: Evaluation of Existing Services

This chapter presents a critical evaluation of Island Explorer routes and services. The evaluation process included four steps: (1) analysis of ridership records, (2) review of onboard survey results, (3) on-site inspections of Island Explorer bus routes, and (4) interviews with bus drivers and operating staff. The chapter describes how buses are currently being used, and it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current service design.

This effort is important in part because it provides a basis for future improvement strategies. It is also important to help ensure that any proposed changes do not undermine the strengths of existing services.

The consultant spent time riding Island Explorer buses at different times of the day. This was done to gain a first-hand understanding of who is riding and how buses are being used. The consultant looked for strengths in service design and service delivery. And he looked for inconveniences, inefficiencies, obstacles, and other issues that might discourage use or reduce customer satisfaction.

The chapter introduction includes an overview of system-wide ridership. Each of the sections that follow addresses an individual Island Explorer bus route. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 4.1 Campgrounds
- Section 4.2 Eden Street
- Section 4.3 Sand Beach
- Section 4.4 Blackwoods
- Section 4.5 Jordan Pond
- Section 4.6 Brown Mountain
- Section 4.7 Southwest Harbor
- Section 4.8 Schoodic
- Section 4.9 Bicycle Express

During the summer of 2006, Island Explorer buses carried 288,401 riders. The summer average in 2006 was 4,120 riders per day. During the fall of 2006, Island Explorer buses carried 44,619 riders, with a daily average of 1,144. Comparisons with previous years are presented in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 ISLAND EXPLORER SUMMER AND FALL RIDERSHIP

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Summer Riders</i>	<i>Average Daily Summer Riders</i>	<i>Summer One-day Peak</i>	<i>Total Fall Riders</i>	<i>Average Daily Fall Riders</i>	<i>Fall One-day Peak</i>
2006	288,401	4,120	6,435	44,619	1,144	2,204
2005	285,212	4,074	5,904	47,357	1,184	2,938
2004	265,374	3,738	5,647	47,021	1,176	3,618
2003	294,289	4,145	5,928	46,047	1,096	1,549
2002	281,142	3,905	5,697			
2001	239,971	3,287	5,016			
2000	193,057	2,609	4,004			
1999	140,931	1,854	3,329			

Relative performance for individual routes in 2005 is presented in Figure 2. During the summer season, Island Explorer buses carried an average of 22.6 riders per scheduled service hour and 28.0 passengers per scheduled round trip. This means that the average usage per round trip was equal to the seating capacity of the buses. It should be remembered, however, that many buses carry different groups of passengers on inbound and outbound segments.

FIGURE 2 ISLAND EXPLORER 2005 PERFORMANCE BY ROUTE

	<i>Route</i>	<i>Summer Riders</i>	<i>Summer Riders per Hour</i>	<i>Summer Riders per Round Trip</i>	<i>Fall Riders</i>	<i>Fall Riders per Hour</i>	<i>Fall Riders per Round Trip</i>
1	Campground	68,846	19.7	39.3	10,379	11.3	22.6
2	Eden Street	78,226	47.6	23.8	13,083	26.2	13.1
3	Sand Beach	37,427	31.5	31.5	6,852	21.4	21.4
4	Blackwoods	13,913	14.2	14.2	2,815	5.4	5.4
5	Jordan Pond	32,822	19.5	39.1	10,463	19.4	29.1
6	Brown Mt.	11,407	17.2	17.2	0	0.0	0.0
7	SWH	38,920	15.9	39.7	3,544	7.9	19.7
8	Schoodic	3,651	7.5	7.5	221	6.3	6.3
	Total	281,561	22.6	28.0	47,357	14	16.6

4.1 Campgrounds

The Campground route links private campgrounds on Route 3 in Bar Harbor with the Bar Harbor Village Green. It also serves Acadia National Park's Hulls Cove Visitor Center, the Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport, and various motels and residences located along the route.

During the summer, daytime service operates every 30 minutes. Campground buses operate hourly in the evening after 7:30 p.m. Four buses are used during the middle of the day to maintain 30-minute headways. A fifth bus is sometimes used to accommodate overflow demand at peak times during the busiest part of the summer season.

In the fall, two buses are used to maintain 60-minute headways on the Campground route. During the summer the last bus departs the Bar Harbor Village Green at 11:10 p.m. The last bus in the fall leaves downtown Bar Harbor at 8:30 p.m.

The Campground route carried 68,846 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of riders during the summer was 984 per day, and the one-day peak was 1,858. Summer Campground buses generated an average of 19.7 riders per hour and 39.3 riders per scheduled round trip.

The Campground route carried 10,379 riders during the fall of 2005. The average number of riders during the fall was 259 per day, and the one-day peak was 704. Fall Campground buses generated an average of 11.3 riders per hour and 22.6 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

The route was designed primarily to link private campgrounds located along Route 3 with the Island Explorer transit hub at the Bar Harbor Village Green. But the route is also used by a variety of others. According to the 2005 onboard survey, roughly a quarter of Campground route riders are year-round or summer residents. Twelve percent of Campground route riders were staying in motels, 27% were staying in year-round or summer residences, and 57% were staying at campgrounds.

Eighteen percent of Campground route riders said they were traveling to or from work. Twenty-six percent identified shopping or dining as their primary trip purpose. Twenty-four percent said they were sightseeing. Thirty percent transferred to or from another Island Explorer bus route at the Bar Harbor Village Green.

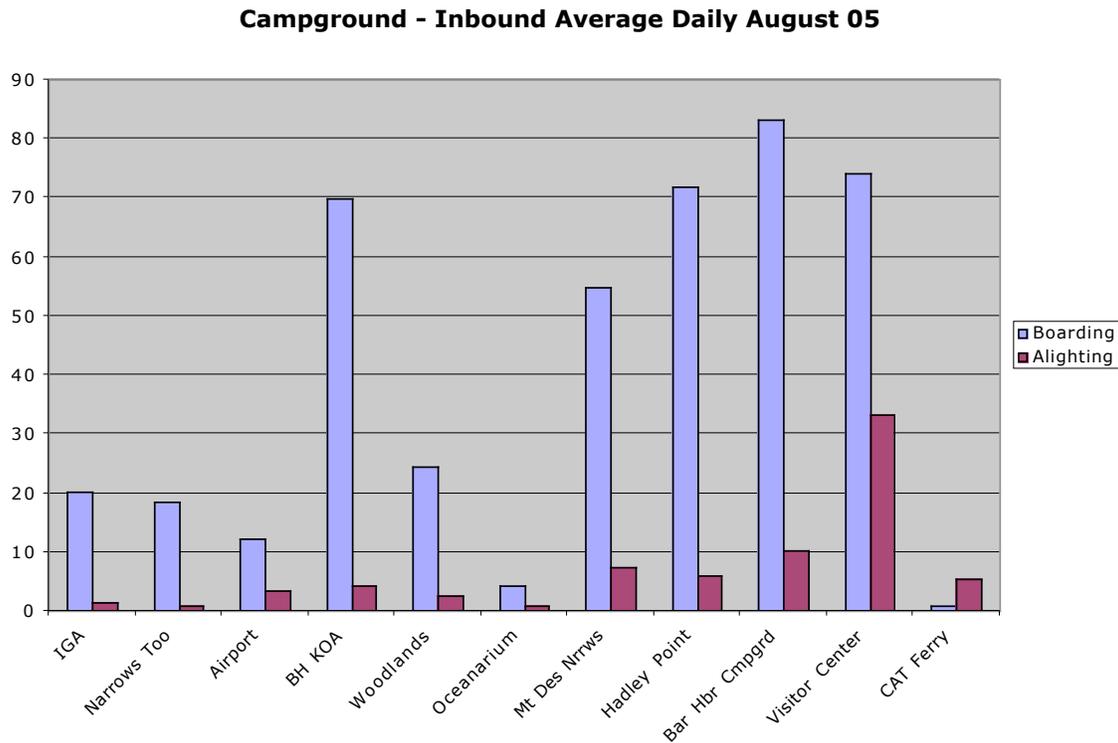
Most Campground route riders travel from campgrounds, motels, or residences to the Bar Harbor Village Green. However, some visitors get off the bus at the Hulls Cove Visitors Center. In addition, some people park their cars at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and use the Campground bus as a parking lot shuttle to reach downtown Bar Harbor.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

Figure 3 shows the average number of passengers boarding and alighting inbound Campground buses at stops outside of downtown Bar Harbor during August of 2005. The route can be divided roughly in half at Mount Desert Narrows Campground. The segment from Mount Desert Narrows to Bar Harbor requires two of the route's four buses, and accounts for two-thirds of the boardings on the Campground route.

The route segment serving Woodlands KOA and Bar Harbor KOA Campgrounds requires a third bus and accounts for 22% of the boardings on the route. The segment from the Trenton Bridge to Trenton Marketplace requires a fourth bus to maintain 30-minute headways. This Trenton route segment generates 11% of the boardings on the Campground route.

FIGURE 3 RIDERS BY STOP ON THE CAMPGROUND ROUTE, AUGUST 2005



The busiest inbound Campground trips depart Trenton between 8:50 a.m. and 12:20 p.m. Most of these inbound trips averaged between 20 and 25 daily riders in August 2005. This does not include people who boarded the Campground overflow bus. In the afternoon, most Campground buses averaged between 14 and 16 riders per inbound trip. The first inbound trip of the day averaged 18 daily riders. Most of these early morning passengers were hotel workers who boarded the bus at the former Days Inn in Trenton.

FIGURE 4 CAMPGROUND INBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP

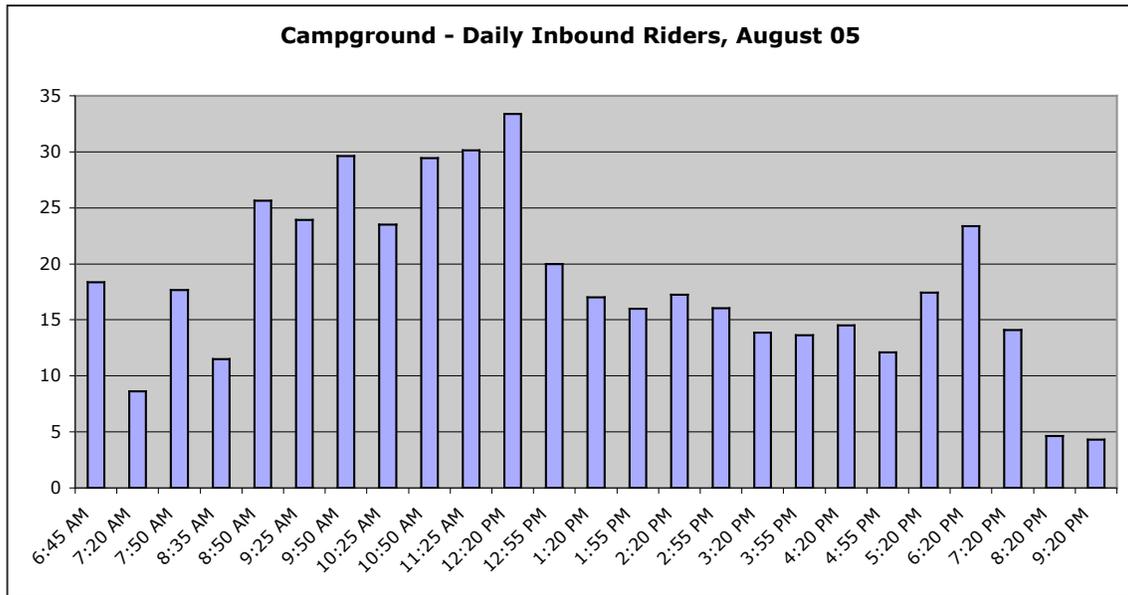
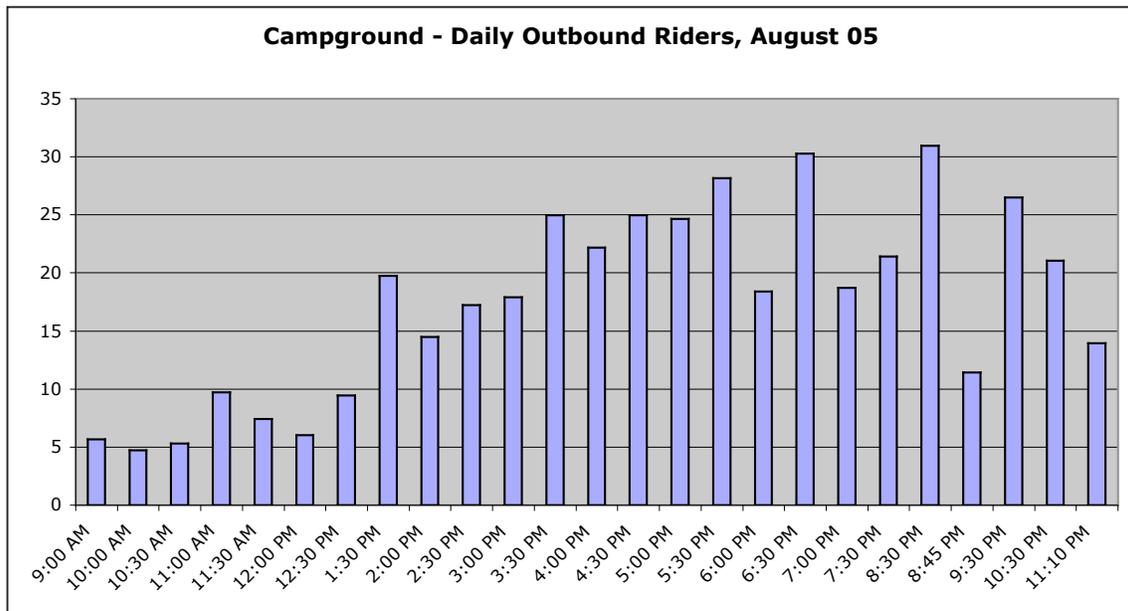


FIGURE 5 CAMPGROUND OUTBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP



In the morning and during the noon hour, outbound Campground buses averaged between 5 and 10 riders per trip. Outbound passenger counts began to pick up at 1:00 p.m. The busiest period of the day for outbound buses was from 3:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., when most trips averaged 20 or more riders. In August 2005 the busiest outbound trips left the Bar Harbor Village Green at 8:30 p.m. (with an average of 31 rides per trip), 6:30 p.m. (30 riders), 5:30 p.m. (28 riders), and 9:30 p.m. (27 riders.) The last trip of the day left the Village Green at 11:10 p.m. and carried an average of 14 riders per day.

Service Design Issues

1. Overcrowding and overflow strategies

Campground buses are sometimes overcrowded, with standees on some trips and passengers occasionally turned away due to overfull buses. Problems are most likely to occur during the last two weeks of July and the first two weeks of August – on inbound buses on weekday mornings and outbound buses in the late afternoon and early evening. Problems on inbound buses can be particularly acute at the last two regular inbound stops – Bar Harbor Campground and the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.

It is important to note that overcrowding on the route can be somewhat unpredictable. Because Island Explorer buses have only 28 seats, a single large group boarding at any of the route's six campgrounds can fill a significant percentage of the available seats.

A variety of approaches have been tried to address this situation. Empty buses that deadhead between Trenton and Bar Harbor for service on other routes are used to supplement the Campground route's regular four buses. A spare overflow bus and driver is sometimes scheduled to standby to handle overflow demand between Mount Desert Narrows Campground and the Village Green.

Problems with these arrangements can sometimes develop.

- Deadheading outbound buses are sometimes allowed to depart the Village Green before regularly scheduled Campground buses. This can result in empty seats on the deadhead bus while riders on the regular bus are required to stand. Deadheading buses should be required to wait until regular buses have departed. Dispatchers need to make sure that standees are switched to the bus with available seats.
- In 2005, overflow drivers were given straight eight-hour shifts that included morning, midday, and early afternoon hours. The result was excess capacity during the middle of the day when there is little demand for extra seats, and no extra capacity available for peak outbound trips in the early evening. Overflow drivers did not keep manual passenger counts during most of 2005, so it is hard to measure the degree of inefficiency that resulted. However, it seems evident that overflow assignments need to be split between morning and evening peak periods. There also appears to be a need for greater flexibility in scheduling these extra drivers to ensure that overflow drivers are not working on days when they are unlikely to be needed. It is worth noting, however, that it can be difficult to fill shifts on a last-minute basis. Split shifts can also be harder to fill.

The best approach is probably to create one or two regular split shifts to provide peak-hour capacity on weekdays in July and August. Extra buses could perhaps be limited to the route segment between Mount Desert Narrows and the Bar Harbor Village Green.

2. Visitor Center passenger counts

Some people park their cars at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and use the Campground bus as a park-and-ride shuttle to reach the Village Green transit hub. It is difficult to judge just how many people do this, because passenger counts at the Visitor Center are often overstated on busy days. Overstated counts occur when there are standees on the bus that must get off to let other passengers disembark at the Visitor Center stop and who then reboard. Bus drivers are supposed to manually override the passenger count when this happens, but few if any drivers appear to follow this procedure.

3. Left hand turns against traffic

Campground buses are often delayed waiting for breaks in traffic as they try to reenter busy Route 3 traffic. This is particularly true when buses must turn left against the traffic flow, because it means they must wait for simultaneous breaks in both travel directions. This situation occurs in a number of locations:

- Inbound stops at the Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport and Narrows Too Campground
- Inbound stops at Mount Desert Narrows Campground
- Inbound stops at Hadley's Point Campground
- Inbound stops at Bar Harbor Campground
- Outbound departures from the Hulls Cove Visitor Center

There may be opportunities to minimize left-hand turns in some locations. The most obvious candidates are the Narrows Too driveway and the Airport Road, where stops could be limited to outbound buses only. If this is done, passengers boarding at the airport and at Narrows Too would be required to ride outbound to the Trenton Marketplace before beginning their trip to Bar Harbor.

4. Other bus stop issues

There are some locations where buses cannot offer stops because of roadway and driveway configurations. Examples include the Salisbury Cove Post Office and the Best Western Motel. Buses don't use the Old Bar Harbor Road through Salisbury Cove because it would be difficult for inbound buses to turn left onto Route 3. Buses can't stop at the Best Western inbound because there are too many travel lanes and because buses are getting ready to turn left into Bar Harbor Campground. They can't stop outbound because they cannot turn safely across three lanes of speeding traffic.

Because of crowded conditions and relatively high travel speeds along Route 3, an argument could be made for limiting stops to designated locations along the Campground route. This might improve vehicle and pedestrian safety, and it might reduce confusion about where buses are unable to stop because of safety concerns. Switching to

designated bus stops on Route 3 would require the installation of bus stop signs at various intermediate sites along the existing route.

5. Productivity by route segment

If the Campground route could be shortened to end at the Trenton bridge, it would be possible to cut back from four to three buses, while accommodating 89% of the demand on the route. The Trenton segment accounts for nearly a quarter of the cost of the route, while generating only 11% of passenger boardings. Service planners may want to look for alternate ways to serve Narrows Too Campground, the airport, and Trenton Marketplace in the future, in an effort to reduce the cost and improve the efficiency of Campground route service.

4.2 Eden Street

The Eden Street route links six major Bar Harbor hotels with the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub. It also serves the CAT ferry terminal operated by Bay Ferries, the College of the Atlantic, and various residences and smaller motels located along the route.

During the summer, daytime service operates every 30 minutes with one bus. During the late afternoon and evening, two Eden Street buses are used to provide service every 15 minutes. Summer season service operates from 6:45 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. In the fall, one bus provides 30-minute service between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15 p.m.

The Eden Street route carried 78,226 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of riders during the summer was 1,118 per day, and the one-day peak was 1,749. Summer Eden Street buses generated an average of 47.6 riders per hour and 23.8 riders per scheduled round trip.

The Eden Street route carried 13,083 riders during the fall of 2005. The average number of riders during the fall was 327 per day, and the one-day peak was 828. Fall Eden Street buses generated an average of 26.2 riders per hour and 13.1 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

The route was designed primarily to link Eden Street hotels, the CAT terminal, and the College of the Atlantic with the Island Explorer transit hub at the Bar Harbor Village Green.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 23% of daytime Eden Street riders used the bus to travel to or from work. Sixteen percent were sightseeing, while 18% said their primary trip purpose was shopping and 18% said their primary purpose was dining. Ninety-one percent said they did not plan to transfer to another bus to complete their trip. Seven

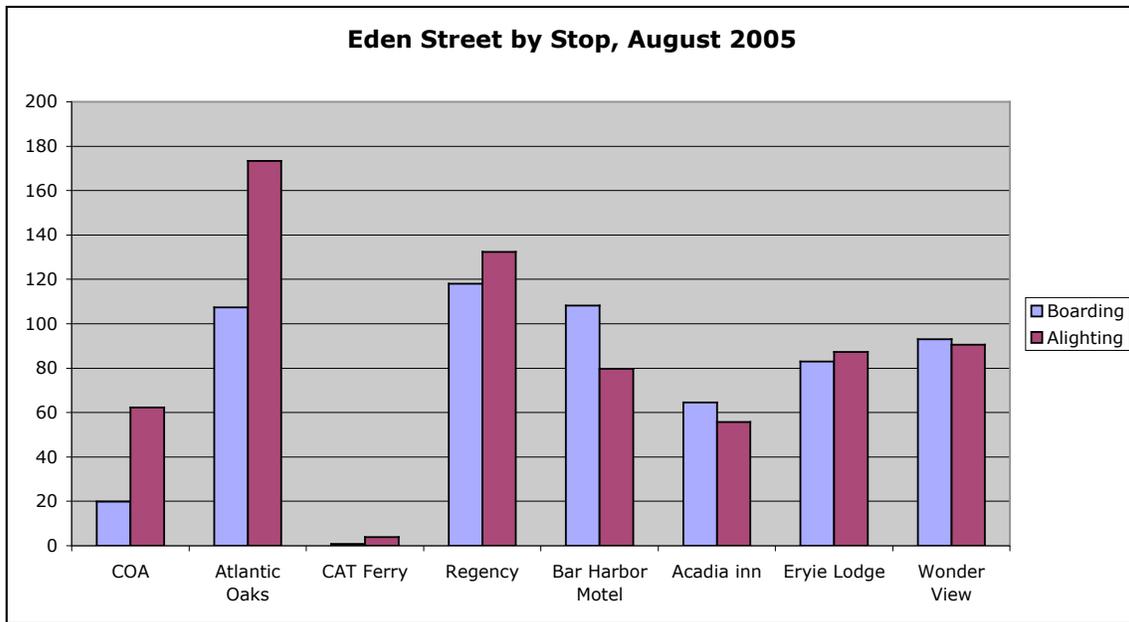
percent listed “boating” as their primary trip purpose. No one on the Eden Street route said they were going hiking, biking, or swimming.

Sixty-four percent of Eden Street route riders were staying in motels, 5% were staying in B&B’s, and 23% were staying in year-round or summer residences. Ninety-three percent were staying overnight in Bar Harbor. The remaining 7% were planning to leave the area before the end of the day.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

Figure 6 shows the number of Eden Street passengers boarding and alighting by stop during August of 2005. Ridership is fairly well distributed along the route, except that there is only limited activity at the Bay Ferries terminal. Ferry terminal stops are made on request only. (It may be possible to establish a bus stop for the ferry terminal at the exit to the Regency driveway – so Eden Street buses are not required to turn in and out of Route 3 traffic at the ferry terminal.)

FIGURE 6 RIDERS BY STOP ON THE EDEN STREET ROUTE, AUGUST 2005

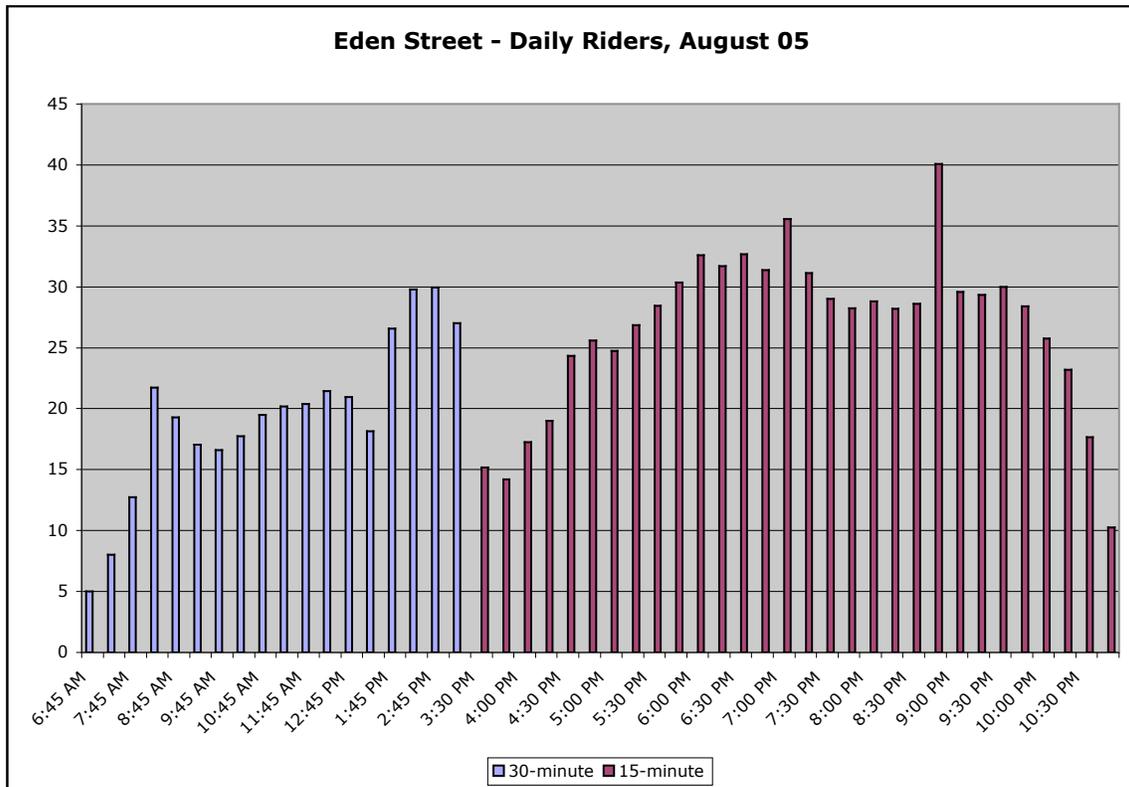


There are higher alighting counts for the outbound portion of the Eden Street loop and higher boarding counts on the inbound route segment. At least some of this difference may result from people who cross the street to avoid riding the full one-way loop and to shorten the amount of time they spend on the bus.

It should be noted that counts for Eryie Lodge include passengers who get on and off Eden Street buses near the corner of Eden Street and Cleftstone Road.

Most morning Eden Street trips averaged between 15 and 20 daily riders in August 2005. In the early afternoon, just before the switch to 15-minute service, the daily average increased to between 25 and 30 per trip. By late afternoon and into the evening, most Eden Street buses carried an average of between 25 and 30 riders, with a new trip starting every 15 minutes.

FIGURE 7 EDEN STREET RIDERS BY TRIP[



Service Design Issues

1. Daytime service frequency

One bus serves the Eden Street every 30 minutes during the morning and early afternoon. A second bus is added to the route to provide 15-minute service in the late afternoon and early evening. While demand is greater late in the day, it is not clear how much of the increased demand results from the increased convenience and appeal of more frequent service. It may be appropriate at some point in the future to experiment with all-day 15-minute service on the Eden Street route.

2. On-time performance and Eryie Lodge and Wonder View stops

Most Island Explorer bus routes include 10 or 15-minute Village Green layovers between trips. The exception is the Eden Street route, where timetables allow a layover of only four minutes. When traffic moves slowly, this can result in little or no layover time.

This places extra demands on Eden Street drivers who work under more steady pressure than drivers on other routes. But the service has worked well for six years, and it may continue to do so – provided traffic conditions on Eden Street and Mount Desert Street do not deteriorate.

One of the things that slows down the Eden Street bus are the front door stops at the Eryie Lodge and Wonder View Motel. These stops require the bus to leave Eden Street, adding several minutes to the Eden Street schedule. It may be possible to move the Wonder View bus stop to the lower end of the motel near Eden Street. This would mean no longer running through the motel courtyard, a change that would result in reduced convenience for some Wonder View guests.

It is more difficult to streamline Island Explorer service to the Eryie Lodge. If the stop is moved to the corner of Eden Street and Cleftstone Road, it is unlikely that many Eryie Lodge guests would continue to utilize the shuttle service.

There are at least three reasons to consider eliminating the Eryie Lodge front door stop:

1. It will save several minutes of schedule time, reducing on-time pressure on the route.
2. It might increase the appeal of the service for passengers who board at other stops, because it would shorten the route and reduce the amount of time they must spend on the bus.
3. It would benefit homeowners who live near the Eryie Lodge, especially late in the evening, because Island Explorer buses would no longer make noise as they climb the hill to reach this motel.

Eryie Lodge accounts for about 7% of passenger activity on the Eden Street route. However, the Eryie Lodge counts include people who get on and off the bus at the corner of Eden Street and Cleftstone Road.

A related issue involves the route that Eden Street buses follow when they travel from Eryie Lodge to the Wonder View. When the Eden Street route was first designed, buses traveled through the Summit House parking lot, but the owner of the Summit House closed this “short cut” several years ago. This shorter route may become available again following redevelopment of the Summit House property.

3. Other Eden Street bus stops

An argument could be made for moving several bus stops on the Eden Street route to the side of the roadway. This would require construction of bus stop turnouts similar to the privately funded Island Explorer bus stop in front of the Bar Harbor Motel.

While this change would result in decreased convenience for some hotel guests, it would speed up the route overall, reducing on-time pressure and reducing the amount of time that Eden Street passengers are required to remain on the bus. There are at least three locations where roadside stops could be developed: College of the Atlantic, Atlantic Oaks, and Acadia Inn. Buses would continue to use the Regency driveway to reverse directions.

The Eden Street route would also benefit from introducing designated bus stops elsewhere along the route. This might mean no longer offering stops on demand anywhere along the route. In some locations, new roadside turnouts and bus stops could be designed and constructed. This issue needs to be addressed by MDOT traffic engineers with assistance from Island Explorer officials and a qualified landscape architect.

4. Use of the route by guests at non-participating motels

The Island Explorer has negotiated subsidy agreements with six hotels along the Eden Street route. The College of the Atlantic and Bay Ferries also contribute to the service. There are a number of other lodging establishments along the route that benefit from the shuttle service but who provide no financial support. These other businesses should be asked to help pay for Eden Street operations. It will be particularly important to address this issue when bus stop policies are clarified and when improved bus stop facilities are developed.

4.3 Sand Beach

The Sand Beach route links the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub with a portion of the Acadia National Park Loop Road. It serves key destinations in Acadia National Park, including

- North Ridge trail on Cadillac Mountain
- Sieur de Monts
- Precipice Trail
- Sand Beach
- Beehive Trail
- Ocean Drive and Thunder Hole
- Otter Point
- Fabri Picnic Area

The bus also serves residences along the Otter Cliff Road and a Route 3 turn out near the Tarn. Outbound buses depart Bar Harbor via Mount Desert Street and the Eagle Lake Road. Inbound Sand Beach buses return to Bar Harbor via Jackson Laboratory and Lower Main Street.

During the summer, two buses are used to provide Sand Beach service every 30 minutes between 9:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. In the fall, one bus operates every 60 minutes between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. An extra bus is sometimes added to the route in the fall to accommodate cruise ship passengers who use the Island Explorer to visit Acadia National Park.

The Sand Beach route carried 37,427 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of riders during the summer was 535 per day, and the one-day peak was 986. Summer Sand Beach buses generated an average of 31.5 riders per hour and 31.5 riders per scheduled round trip.

The Sand Beach route carried 6,852 riders during the fall of 2005. The average number of riders during the fall was 171 per day, and the one-day peak was 746. The fall Sand Beach bus generated an average of 21.4 riders per hour and 21.4 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

The Sand Beach bus is used by many people to gain access to recreational opportunities at Sand Beach and elsewhere along the Park Loop Road between Cadillac North Ridge and Fabri Picnic Area. Others use the Sand Beach bus for sightseeing and a general introduction to Acadia National Park.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 49% of Sand Beach bus riders used the bus for recreational activities (hiking 31%, biking 6%, boating 0%, swimming 12%). Forty-two percent identified “sightseeing” as their primary trip purpose.

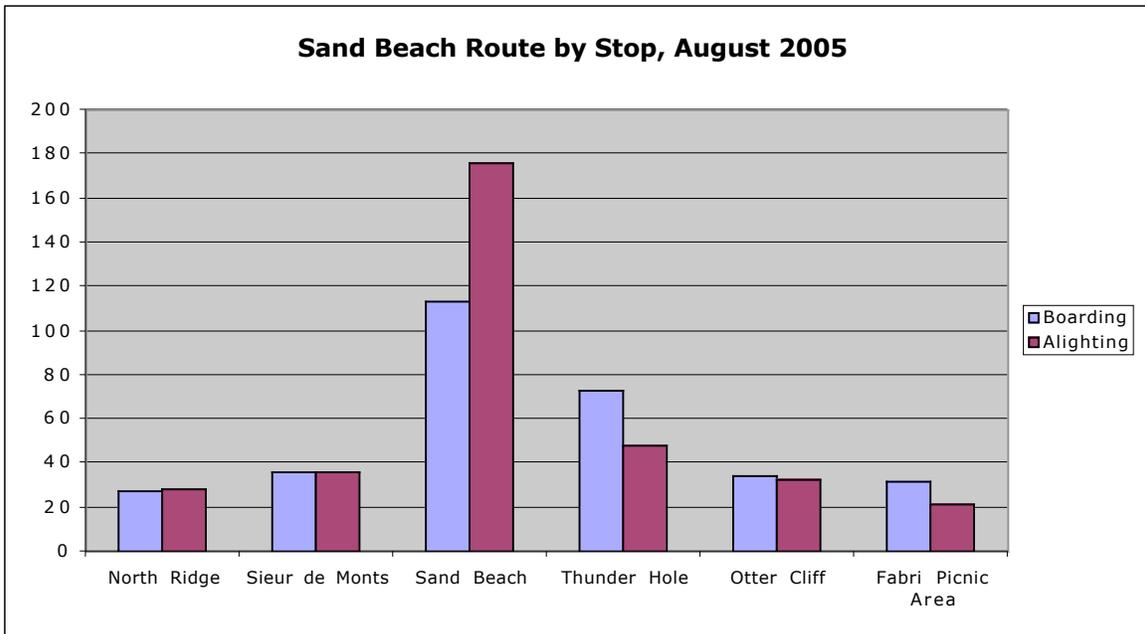
Forty-four percent transferred from another Island Explorer bus route to reach the Sand Beach bus. Thirty-one percent said their local lodging was within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green.

Thirty-one percent of Sand Beach riders were staying in campgrounds, 30% were staying in motels, 7% were staying in B&B's, and 17% were staying in summer residences. Four percent said they were year-round local residents.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

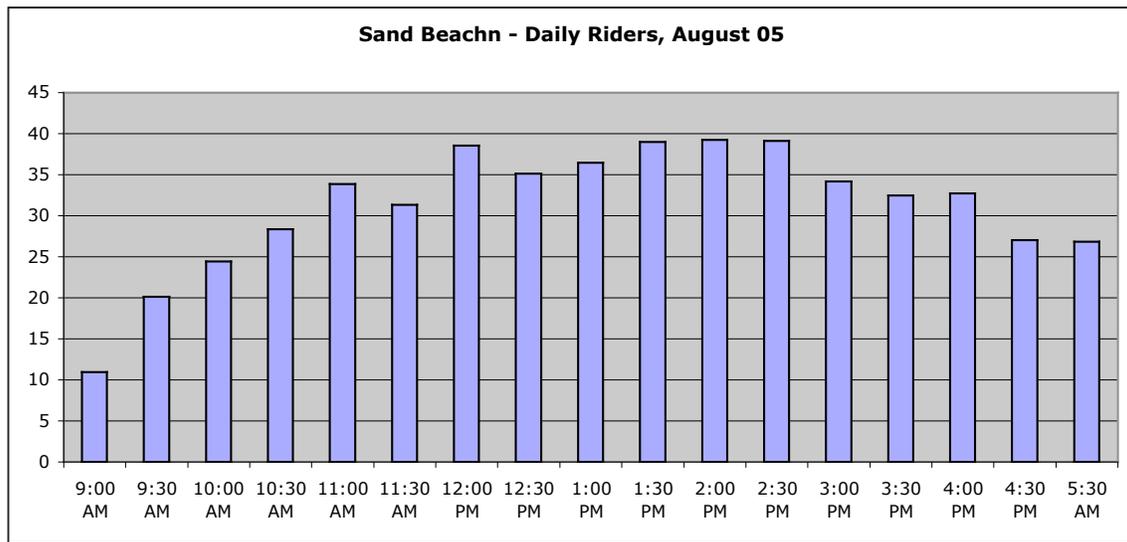
Figure 8 shows the number of Sand Beach passengers boarding and alighting by stop during August of 2005. These figures suggest that the majority of riders on this route are heading to Sand Beach and nearby Thunder Hole. The distribution of boarding and alighting suggests that some riders get off the bus at Sand Beach and then walk along the Ocean Drive path to reboard at Thunder Hole, Otter Cliff or Fabri Picnic Area.

FIGURE 8 RIDERS BY STOP ON THE SAND BEACH ROUTE, AUGUST 2005



Eight percent of the people who got off the Sand Beach bus outside of downtown Bar Harbor did so at the trailhead for the North Ridge of Cadillac Mountain. Another 10% got off the Sand Beach bus at Sieur de Monts.

FIGURE 9 AVERAGE SAND BEACH RIDERS PER TRIP



Sand Beach buses are quite busy throughout the day. In August 2005, every scheduled trip from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. averaged more than 25 daily riders. Trips between 12:00 noon and 2:30 p.m. averaged more than 35 riders each. The most lightly used trip departed Bar Harbor at 9:00 a.m. and carried an average of 11 riders per day.

Service Design Issues

1. Service frequency

The Sand Beach route operates every 30 minutes and is a candidate for more frequent service. A third bus could be added to the route in its current configuration, which would allow the service to operate every 20 minutes. This should help avoid problems with standees on the route. At the same time, more frequent service is likely to attract more riders to the route.

Questions about service frequency should be considered together with possible changes to the existing figure-8 design of the route. Among other things, increased Sand Beach frequency may create congestion problems at the Bar Harbor Village Green, unless adjustments are made elsewhere in the Island Explorer system.

2. Current configuration versus Park Loop Road service

The Sand Beach route does more than link downtown Bar Harbor with the Village Green. In fact, Sand Beach buses leave Bar Harbor heading in the opposite direction on Route 233. This allows them to provide car-free hiker access to the North Ridge of Cadillac Mountain.

The Sand Beach and Jordan Pond buses serve major portions of the Park Loop Road. It may be possible to combine these two routes and to offer frequent and continuous service around the Park Loop Road. Issues and trade-offs will need to be carefully considered before deciding whether to combine these routes or to continue two separate routes.

3. Connections with the Blackwoods bus

2005 timetables allow Blackwoods campers to transfer from the Blackwoods bus to the Sand Beach bus at Sieur de Monts to reach Sand Beach. Inbound Blackwoods buses were scheduled to arrive at Sieur de Monts at 42 minutes past the hour. Sand Beach buses were scheduled to depart Sieur de Monts at 45 minutes past the hour. The usual practice was for Blackwoods bus drivers to radio to Sand Beach drivers to let them know to expect a transfer.

As changes are considered for the future, efforts should be made to facilitate access between Sand Beach and Blackwoods Campground.

4. Early morning National Park Service programs

For the last two summers, Acadia National Park has offered ranger-led programs early in the morning at Sand Beach. In the 2004 passenger survey, riders asked for an earlier Island Explorer bus to Sand Beach that would allow people to arrive at the beach in time for the National Park Service program.

4.4 Blackwoods

The Blackwoods route links Acadia National Park's Blackwoods Campground with the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub. The route also serves the village of Otter Creek, Sieur de Monts, the Jackson Laboratory, and Bar Harbor's lower Main Street.

One bus is used to provide service on the Blackwoods route every 60 minutes. The first morning bus departs Bar Harbor at 8:00 a.m. and Blackwoods Campground at 8:30 a.m. In the summer, the last bus departs Bar Harbor at 9:00 p.m. This bus offers service to Northeast Harbor on request. During the fall, the last bus departs Bar Harbor at 8:00 p.m. and returns to the Bar Harbor Village Green at 8:40 p.m.

The Blackwoods route carried 13,913 riders during the summer of 2005. In 2004, the summer total for the Blackwoods route was 16,392. A portion of Blackwoods Campground was closed for renovations during 2005.

The average number of riders during the summer of 2005 was 199 per day. The average in 2004 was 231 per day. The one-day peaks were 429 in 2005 and 432 in 2004. In the summer of 2005, Blackwoods buses generated an average of 14.2 riders per hour and 14.2 riders per scheduled round trip.

The Blackwoods route carried 2,815 riders during the fall of 2005 and 3,426 riders during the fall of 2004. The average number of riders during the fall was 70 per day in 2005 and 86 per day in 2004. One-day fall peaks were 149 in 2005 and 197 in 2004. During the fall of 2005, the Blackwoods bus generated an average of 5.4 riders per hour and 5.4 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

Blackwoods campers use the Blackwoods bus to gain access to downtown Bar Harbor and to a variety of destinations in Acadia National Park. Some Blackwoods campers transfer to the Sand Beach bus at Sieur de Monts. They reach other Acadia National Park destinations by transferring to the Jordan Pond, Brown Mountain, and Southwest Harbor routes at the Bar Harbor Village Green.

Visitors and residents use the Blackwoods route to gain access to the trailhead for the South Ridge of Cadillac Mountain and to Acadia National Park hiking trails that begin at Sieur de Mont. Hikers can walk the full length of Cadillac Mountain by using the Sand Beach bus to reach the North Ridge trail and by catching the Blackwoods bus at the end of the South Ridge trail.

Residents of Otter Creek use the Blackwoods bus to travel to Bar Harbor for a variety of trip purposes. Some Jackson Laboratory employees use the Blackwoods bus to commute to and from work.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, just over half of Blackwoods bus riders used the bus for recreational activities, mostly for hiking. Twelve percent of Blackwoods riders were commuting to or from work, 12% were sightseeing, and 18% were going shopping.

Forty-four percent stayed overnight in the town of Mount Desert, while 31% stayed in Bar Harbor, and 19% stayed in Southwest Harbor. Forty-four percent of Blackwoods riders were staying in campgrounds, 25% were staying in motels, and 19% were staying in year-round or summer residences.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

Ridership data for 2005 suggest that approximately 70% of trips on the Blackwoods route involved travel to or from Blackwoods Campground. Fifteen percent of passengers boarding the Blackwoods bus at the Bar Harbor Village Green traveled to Sieur de Mont, while 18% of people boarding at Blackwoods Campground got off at Sieur de Mont.

Most inbound Blackwoods buses in 2005 carried between 7 and 8 riders per trip. The busiest inbound trips left Blackwoods at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. These buses carried an average of 9 and 10 riders respectively. The last three evening inbound trips from Blackwoods carried an average of only one or two riders a day.

The busiest outbound buses to Blackwoods left Bar Harbor at 4:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., and 6:00 p.m. These three trips averaged between 9 and 11 riders each in August 2005. Other afternoon outbound buses averaged between 7 and 8 riders per trip. Most morning outbound buses averaged about 4 riders per day.

Service Design Issues

1. Service frequency

Bus service for Blackwoods Campground needs to operate more frequently than every 60 minutes. Usage on the Campground route increased dramatically when headways were reduced from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. The Blackwoods bus should likewise become much more appealing to campers if the amount of time that people must wait between buses is decreased.

2. Non-productive driver time

Blackwoods bus drivers spend a third of their time waiting at each end of their bus route. Ten-minute layovers are scheduled at the Village Green and at Blackwoods Campground. While this schedule fails to make efficient use of available driver time, it allows the Blackwoods bus to follow an easy-to-understand hourly pattern.

The alternative would be to schedule Blackwoods service every 45 or 50 minutes. The resulting timetable would be difficult to understand and remember. It would also result in Blackwoods buses interfering with Bicycle Express vans and trailers at the Village Green.

It might be possible to extend the Blackwoods route to Seal Harbor while staying within the existing 60-minute scheduling window. It is not clear, however, that there is sufficient demand to justify the additional miles and operating costs that would result.

Another possibility might be to turn Blackwoods buses at Sieur de Monts. This would mean that Blackwoods campers would need to transfer at Sieur de Monts to frequent Park Loop Road buses to reach downtown Bar Harbor. This should allow Blackwoods to be served every 30 minutes with one bus, or every 15 minutes with two buses. Direct service between Blackwoods and Bar Harbor could be offered in the evening.

3. Links to Sand Beach

Transfers at Sieur de Monts from the Blackwoods bus to the Sand Beach bus were discussed in the previous section. Return trips from Sand Beach to Blackwoods are another issue. Currently, Blackwoods campers must return to the Village Green and transfer to an outbound Blackwoods bus. As future options are considered, service planners should look for ways to facilitate travel from Sand Beach and Ocean Drive to Blackwoods.

4.5 Jordan Pond

The Jordan Pond route links the town of Bar Harbor and the Village of Northeast Harbor with popular destinations in Acadia National Park, including Jordan Pond, Wildwood Stables, and Bubble Pond. It also offers a stop adjacent to the beach in Seal Harbor. It offers two stops in Northeast Harbor, on Main Street and at the Northeast Harbor pier.

In 2005, Jordan Pond buses operated every 60 minutes. During the summer, Jordan Pond service begins at 8:15 a.m. and continues until 8:40 p.m. In the fall, Jordan Pond buses operate from 9:15 a.m. until 7:05 p.m.

During the summer, three buses are used to operate the Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain routes. Buses that operate outbound on the Jordan Pond route return on the Brown Mountain route. Outbound Brown Mountain buses return on the Jordan Pond route. While this arrangement can add an element of confusion for some passengers, it allows Jordan Pond buses to avoid overcrowding the Village Green and it helps the Brown Mountain route maintain 60-minute headways.

A portion of the Jordan Pond route is served by the Bicycle Express, a service added in 2005 to handle overflow demand from cyclists traveling between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond. The Bicycle Express replaced a 28-passenger bus that was added in the past to handle peak afternoon demand at Jordan Pond.

The Jordan Pond route carried a total of 32,822 riders during the summer of 2005. This includes 5,891 Bicycle Express passengers. Use of the Bicycle Express is discussed separately in Section 4.9

The average number of Jordan Pond riders during the summer of 2005 was 469 per day and the one-day peak was 753. In the summer of 2005, Jordan Pond buses generated an average of 19.5 riders per hour and 39.1 riders per scheduled round trip.

The Jordan Pond route carried 10,463 riders during the fall of 2005. The average number of fall riders 262 per day and the one-day peak was 625. During the fall of 2005, the Jordan Pond bus generated an average of 19.4 riders per hour and 29.1 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

Many Jordan Pond route passengers board the bus in Bar Harbor and get off at Jordan Pond. Others stay on the bus and ride through to Northeast Harbor or Seal Harbor. Some vacationers ride outbound on the Jordan Pond bus and return inbound on Brown Mountain, combining these two routes for a scenic tour. In addition, people staying overnight in Northeast Harbor and Seal Harbor use the Jordan Pond bus for access to Jordan Pond, Bubble Pond, and downtown Bar Harbor.

The Jordan Pond bus provides access to trailheads at Bubble Pond, Bubble Rock, and Jordan Pond. Hikers use these trails to reach Cadillac Mountain, Pemetic Mountain, the Bubbles, Sargent Mountain, the Triad, and other parts of the national park. The Jordan Pond bus also provides access to the carriage road system at Bubble Pond, Jordan Pond, and Long Pond.

The Jordan Pond bus provides diners car-free access to the Jordan Pond House restaurant. The bus stop at the Northeast Harbor pier serves people transferring to and from the Cranberry Isles mail boat, as well as private sailboat owners who moor their boats in Northeast Harbor.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 55% of Jordan Pond bus riders used the bus for recreational activities (hiking 21%, biking 26%, swimming 0%, boating 8%). Eighteen percent of Jordan Pond riders were sightseeing, 11% said dining was their main trip purpose, and 5% were going shopping. Three percent were commuting to or from work.

Forty-three percent stayed overnight in the town of Bar Harbor, while 41% stayed in Mount Desert. Five percent stayed in Southwest Harbor and 5% stayed in Tremont.

Thirty-two percent of Jordan Pond riders were staying in campgrounds, 13% were staying in motels, 8% were staying in B&B's, and 21% were staying on private sailboats. Eleven percent stayed in year-round residences, 11% in summer residences, and 5% in short-term rentals.

Twenty-six percent of Jordan Pond passengers said they did not plan to visit Acadia National Park on their bus ride, which suggests that roughly a quarter of Jordan Pond riders use the route for travel between Northeast Harbor and Bar Harbor.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

According to ridership data from August 2005, 60% of outbound Jordan Pond riders board at the Bar Harbor Village Green, while 21% board at Jordan Pond. Forty percent of outbound riders get off at Jordan Pond and 38% get off in Northeast Harbor.

Roughly one-third of inbound riders board in Northeast Harbor, while 40% board at Jordan Pond. Thirteen percent of inbound riders get off at Jordan Pond, while 69% get off in Bar Harbor.

FIGURE 10 JORDAN POND OUTBOUND RIDERS BY STOP

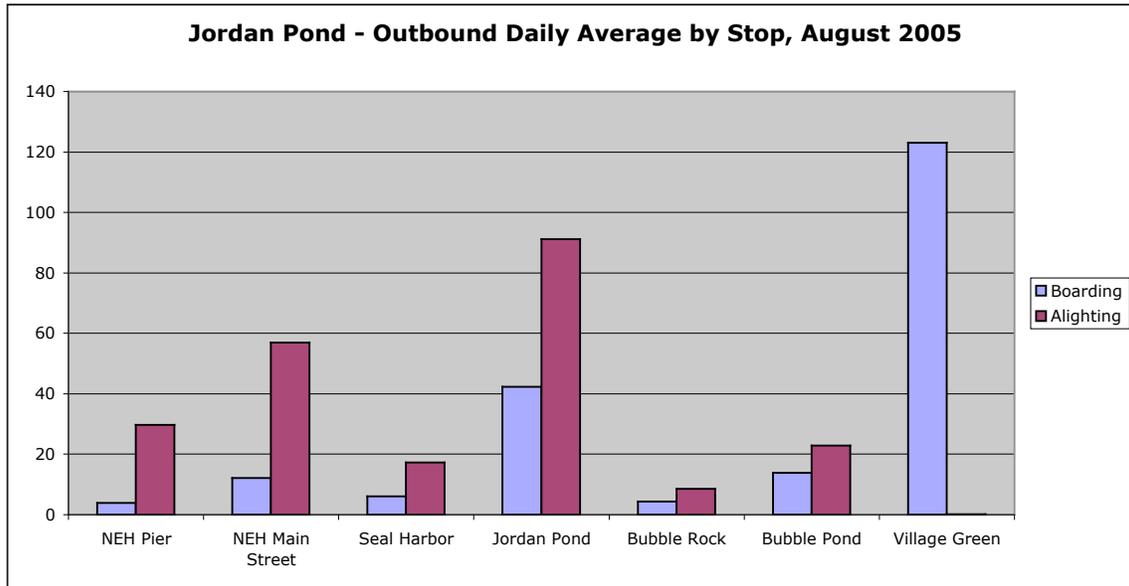
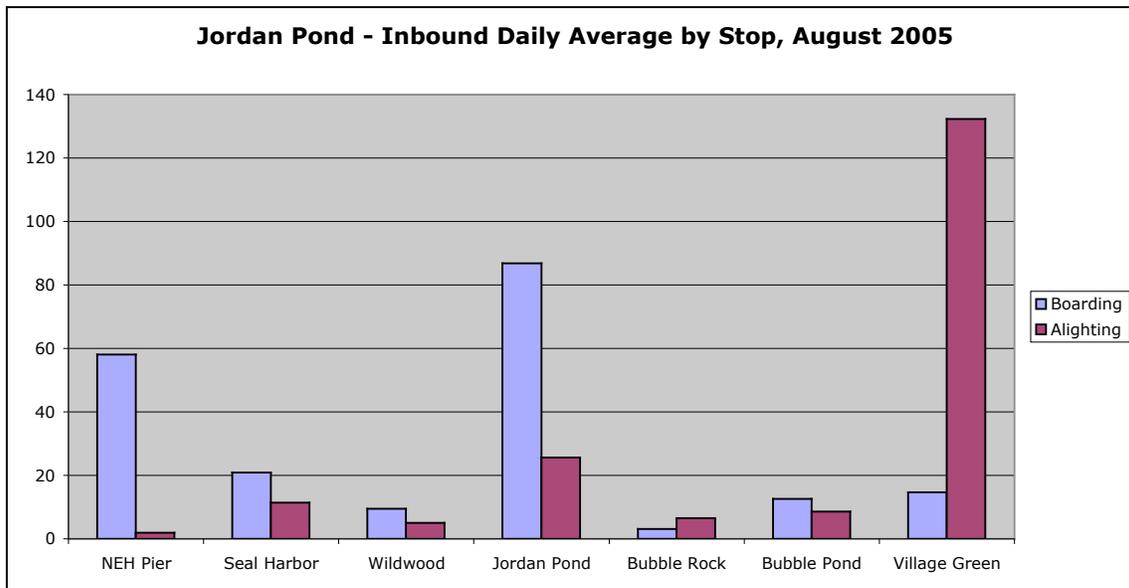


FIGURE 11 JORDAN POND INBOUND RIDERS BY STOP



Outbound Jordan Pond buses to Northeast Harbor are busiest throughout the middle of the day, with most trips between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. averaging 20 or more riders per day. The busiest two outbound trips in August 2005 left Bar Harbor at 12:15 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. In August 2005 these two trips averaged 27 riders each per day.

FIGURE 12 JORDAN POND OUTBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP

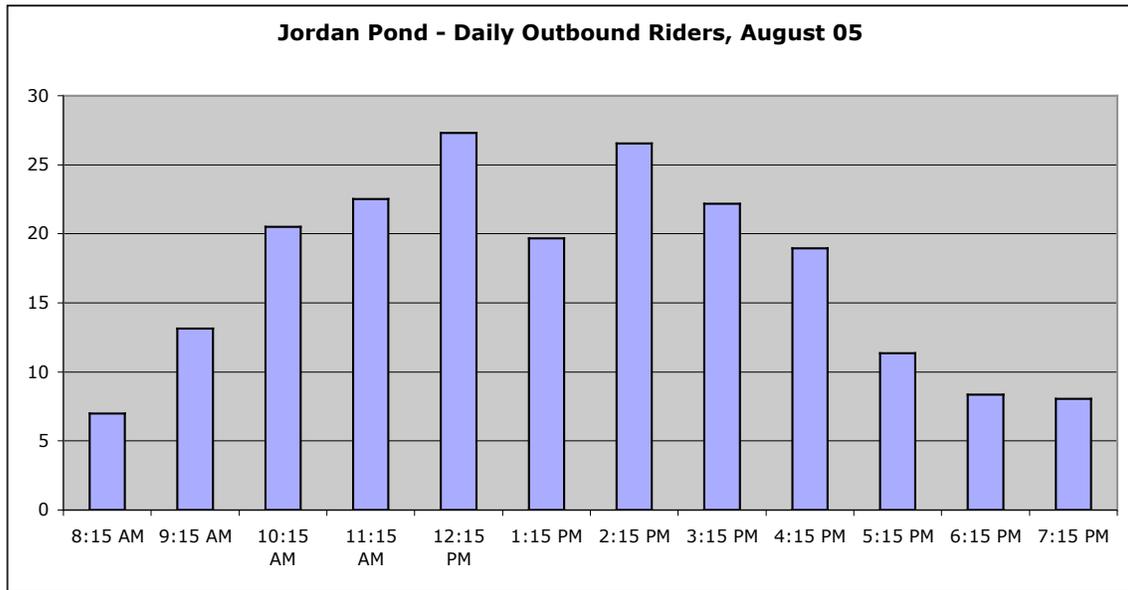
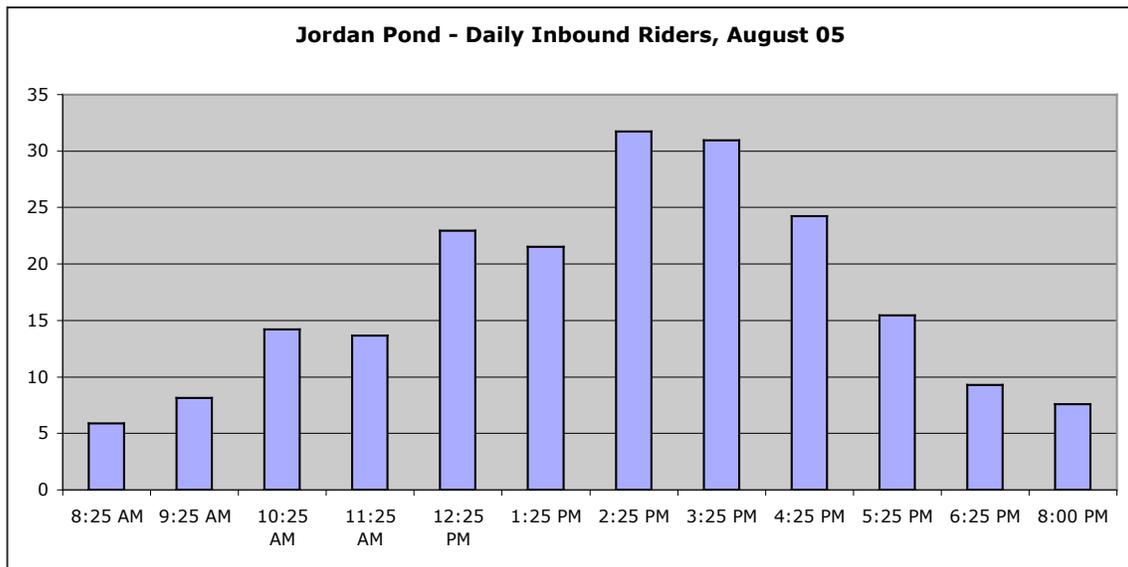


FIGURE 13 JORDAN POND INBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP



The busiest inbound trips were Jordan Pond buses scheduled to depart Northeast Harbor between 12:25 p.m. and 4:25 p.m. The 2:25 p.m. departure from Northeast Harbor averaged 32 riders per day in August 2005. The 3:25 p.m. departure from Northeast Harbor averaged 31 per day.

Jordan Pond buses in the evening averaged 8 riders per outbound trip and 8 or 9 riders per inbound trip.

Service Design Issues

1. Service frequency and passenger carrying capacity

While Jordan Pond buses are well utilized, the number of Acadia National Park visitors that the route can serve is limited by the frequency of service and the limited seating capacity of Island Explorer buses. The current hourly service means that the Island Explorer offers only 28 seats per hour between the Bar Harbor transit hub and Jordan Pond.

During August of 2005, Jordan Pond buses were often full. Yet they carried an average of only 91 people per day from Bar Harbor to Jordan Pond.

To accommodate a higher percentage of Acadia National Park visitors, more frequent service is needed, particularly on the Bar Harbor – Jordan Pond route segment. This could be accomplished by adding more buses to the existing Jordan Pond route, or by offering frequent service around the Loop Road.

It is not clear whether increased service is needed on the Jordan Pond – Northeast Harbor segment. It should be noted that buses from Northeast Harbor to Bar Harbor currently operate roughly every 30 minutes – with Jordan Pond departures at 25 minutes past the hour and Brown Mountain departures at the top of the hour.

2. Access to Wildwood Stables

In 2005, inbound Jordan Pond buses offered scheduled stops at Wildwood Stables, while outbound buses stopped at Wildwood on request only. Some outbound bus drivers dropped off Wildwood passengers at the start of the access road and told them to flag down the inbound bus that was scheduled to come along a few minutes later. On at least one occasion, outbound passengers were dropped off after the inbound bus had past, which meant that the passengers had to walk the full length of the access road to reach the stables.

Access to Wildwood Stables for people traveling from Bar Harbor should be improved to avoid future confusion. The best approach is probably to offer scheduled stops at Wildwood Stables that are clearly shown in the printed timetable.

3. Congestion at Jordan Pond

Bus drivers sometimes have difficulty operating through the circle in front of the Jordan Pond House. Problems arise when cars wait in the circle to pick up passengers. Tour and charter buses can also cause delays in this crowded area. Driveways and bus stops at Jordan Pond need to be redesigned to better accommodate the various kinds of vehicles that travel to this location.

4. Congestion at the Bar Harbor Village Green

In 2005, Jordan Pond headways were changed from every 45 minutes to every 60 minutes to avoid having too many buses at the same time at the Bar Harbor Village Green. The current arrangement limits Jordan Pond buses and supporting Bicycle Express shuttles to either 15 minutes after the hour or 45 minutes after the hour. Jordan Pond buses are interlined with the Brown Mountain route to avoid Village Green crowding and to help improve on-time performance on the Brown Mountain route.

While this system worked well in 2005, the resulting timetable can be confusing for some passengers. It also creates some excess layover time in Northeast Harbor. While there may be ways to improve this situation, revised plans need to pay attention to potential bus congestion at the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub.

5. Bus stop issues

There are a number of places along the route of the Jordan Pond bus where bus stop facilities are less than desirable. This includes the following:

- Buses often have difficulty maneuvering through the parking lot at Bubble Pond. The ideal solution would be to design a bus stop on the Park Loop Road, so buses do not have to operate through the parking area.
- There is no place for inbound buses to stop at the trailhead to Bubble Rock other than the parking lot on the west side of the road. This lot is often full, leaving no place for buses to turn in.
- There is no obvious place for buses to stop at Little Long Pond. This is particularly true for inbound buses.
- Visitors to Thuya Gardens might benefit from a designated bus stop near the start of the Thuya Gardens trail.

6. Evening service to Jordan Pond House and Northeast Harbor

A number of respondents to the 2005 passenger survey requested more frequent evening service on the Jordan Pond route, along with a later evening bus. Currently, the last bus to Bar Harbor departs Northeast Harbor at 8:00 p.m.

4.6 Brown Mountain

The Brown Mountain bus operates between the town of Bar Harbor and the Village of Northeast Harbor via Eagle Lake, MDI High School, and Brown Mountain Gate House. It makes two stops in Northeast Harbor, on Main Street and at the Northeast Harbor pier. The Brown Mountain bus offers a timed connection with the Southwest Harbor bus at MDI High School for people traveling between Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor.

Brown Mountain service operates every 60 minutes during the summer only. In 2005, the first bus departed Northeast Harbor at 9:00 a.m. The last bus left Northeast Harbor for Bar Harbor at 6:00 p.m.

Three buses are used to operate the Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain routes during the summer. Buses that operate outbound on the Jordan Pond route return on the Brown Mountain route. Outbound Brown Mountain buses return on the Jordan Pond route. This arrangement helps bus drivers maintain 60-minute headways on the Brown Mountain route, which in turn facilitates reliable connections between Brown Mountain and Southwest Harbor buses.

The Brown Mountain route carried a total of 11,407 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of Brown Mountain riders during the summer of 2005 was 163 per day and the one-day peak was 309. In 2005, Brown Mountain buses generated an average of 17.2 riders per hour and 17.2 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

Brown Mountain buses provide car-free access to carriage roads at Eagle Lake and Brown Mountain Gate House. They also provide a direct link between Northeast Harbor and Bar Harbor. In 2005, Brown Mountain buses departed Northeast Harbor for Bar Harbor at the top of each hour, while Jordan Pond buses departed Northeast Harbor for Bar Harbor at 25 minutes past the hour.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 58% of Brown Mountain bus riders used the bus for recreational activities (hiking 23%, biking 27%, swimming 0%, boating 8%). Twenty-seven percent of Brown Mountain riders were sightseeing. The survey found no shoppers or commuting workers on the Brown Mountain bus.

Sixty-nine percent of Brown Mountain riders stayed overnight in the town of Bar Harbor, while 12% stayed in Mount Desert. Five percent stayed in Southwest Harbor and 5% stayed in Tremont.

Twenty-three percent of Brown Mountain riders were staying in campgrounds, 31% were staying in motels, 12% were staying in B&B's, and 8% were staying on private sailboats. Twelve percent stayed in year-round residences, 4% in summer residences, and 12% in short-term rentals.

Forty-six percent of groups surveyed on the Brown Mountain route said their lodging was within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green. Twenty-three percent of Brown Mountain route passengers said they did not plan to visit Acadia National Park on their bus ride.

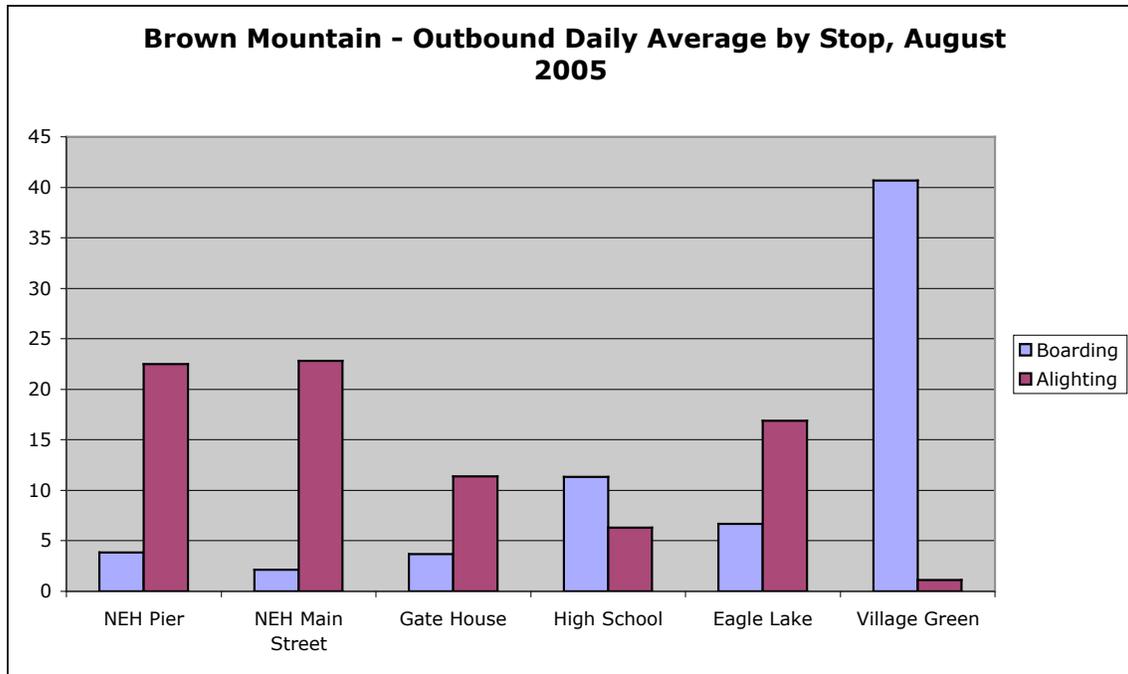
The Brown Mountain route had the highest transfer rate of any Island Explorer bus route, with 58% saying they would use two different routes to complete their bus ride. Most transfers involved either the Jordan Pond or Southwest Harbor routes. Eighteen percent of Brown Mountain groups transferred to or from the Jordan Pond route. Thirteen percent transferred to or from the Southwest Harbor route.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

On inbound Brown Mountain buses, two-thirds of the passengers get off in Bar Harbor and nineteen percent get off at MDI High School. Brown Mountain Gate House and Eagle Lake each account for 7% of inbound destinations.

On outbound buses, 59% of the passengers board in Bar Harbor, 17% board at MDI High School, 10% board at Eagle Lake, and 5% board at the Gate House. Fifty-six percent of outbound riders get off in Northeast Harbor. Seventeen percent get off at Eagle Lake, 8% get off at the High School, and 14% get off at the Gate House.

FIGURE 14 BROWN MOUNTAIN OUTBOUND RIDERS BY STOP



The busiest Brown Mountain buses inbound from Northeast Harbor to Bar Harbor were the trips scheduled to depart Northeast Harbor between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. In

August 2005 these trips each carried between 8 and 12 people a day. The most lightly used buses from Northeast Harbor to Bar harbor were the first two morning trips with 4 and 5 riders per day, and the last evening trip with 5 riders per day.

Brown Mountain buses heading to Northeast Harbor carried an average of between seven and nine riders per trip, with the exception of the last 5:35 p.m. outbound trip that averaged 4 riders per day.

Service Design Issues

1. Limited demand, but important destinations

While the Brown Mountain bus is one of the more lightly used routes in the Island Explorer system, it does provide access to some important destinations.

- It provides car-free access to hiking trails and carriage roads that begin near the Brown Mountain Gate House.
- It offers bicyclists a link between the Bar Harbor Village Green and carriage roads at Eagle Lake.
- Thanks to a connection with the Southwest Harbor bus at the MDI High School, the Brown Mountain bus allows people to travel car free between Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor.

Although Brown Mountain buses operate hourly, they combine with Jordan Pond to provide links between Northeast Harbor and Bar Harbor every 30 minutes.

2. On-time performance

In past years, Brown Mountain buses were scheduled to complete a roundtrip every 60 minutes, in part to maintain connections with hourly Southwest Harbor buses. Experience has shown that it is nearly impossible to stay on schedule with only a 60-minute scheduling window for the Brown Mountain route.

The solution to this problem in 2005 was to interline Brown Mountain and Jordan Pond buses. Buses that left the Bar Harbor Village Green outbound as Brown Mountain buses returned on the Jordan Pond route. Buses that left Bar Harbor outbound on the Jordan Pond route returned on the Brown Mountain route. Slack time available on the Jordan Pond segment allowed Brown Mountain buses to provide much better on-time performance. While this arrangement worked fairly well, it created some driver inefficiencies and a measure of confusion for some passengers.

3. MDI High School bus stop

An improved bus stop is needed at the MDI High School that includes a designated stop location and waiting area and a clearly marked path for buses to follow. It would save time for Brown Mountain and Southwest Harbor buses if a bus stop could be created closer to Route 233.

4. Eagle Lake bus stop

Some confusion can develop at Eagle Lake, because inbound and outbound buses stop at different locations. Outbound buses travel through the circle near the boat ramp at Eagle Lake. Inbound buses stop along Route 233 near the boat ramp driveway.

4.7 Southwest Harbor

The Southwest Harbor bus links Tremont, Southwest Harbor, and Somesville with downtown Bar Harbor. Stops in Tremont include Bass Harbor and Bernard. This route provides car-free access to a number of Acadia National Park destinations, including Eagle Lake, Echo Lake, Wonderland, and Ship Harbor.

The Southwest Harbor bus serves Acadia National Park's Seawall Campground, plus four private campgrounds: Mount Desert Campground, Smuggler's Den Campground, Bass Harbor Campground, and the Quightside Campground. The Southwest Harbor bus provides access to the Cranberry Cove Ferry in Southwest Harbor and Manset and the Swans Island Ferry in Bass Harbor.

During the summer, three buses are used to provide hourly service on the Southwest Harbor route. The first bus to Bar Harbor departs the Tremont School at 7:30 a.m. The first departure from Bar Harbor is at 7:10 a.m. The last outbound bus departs Bar Harbor at 9:10 p.m. The last inbound bus departs the Tremont School at 7:33 p.m.

Fall service on the Southwest Harbor route consists of four and a half round trips per day. First and last outbound departures from Bar Harbor are 8:10 a.m. and 8:10 p.m. Headways between fall buses are three hours.

The Southwest Harbor route carried a total of 38,920 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of Southwest Harbor riders during the summer of 2005 was 556 per day and the one-day peak was 887. In the summer of 2005, Southwest Harbor buses generated an average of 15.9 riders per hour and 39.7 riders per scheduled round trip.

Southwest Harbor ridership in the fall of 2005 totaled 3,544, with a daily average of 89 and a one-day peak of 176. During the fall of 2005, Southwest Harbor buses generated an average of 7.9 riders per hour and 19.7 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

Southwest Harbor buses serve a wide variety of locations as they cross Mount Desert Island between Bar Harbor and Tremont. The route serves visitors with lodging in Bar Harbor, campers staying at five campgrounds along the route, boaters staying on sailboats anchored in Somesville and Southwest Harbor, motel and B&B guests in Southwest Harbor and Tremont, and year-round and summer residents in Bernard, Bass Harbor, Manset, Southwest Harbor, Somesville, and Bar Harbor.

Destinations include

- Acadia National Park Carriage Roads at Eagle Lake
- A bookstore and library in Somesville
- Hiking trails at Acadia Mountain and Echo Lake
- Swimming at Echo Lake Beach
- Shopping and restaurants in Southwest Harbor
- Ferry rides, seafood, and waterfront activities in Southwest Harbor and Manset
- The Seawall picnic area and hiking trails at Wonderland and Ship Harbor
- The access road to Bass Harbor lighthouse
- Swans Island ferry
- Restaurants in Bass Harbor and Bernard

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 27% of groups on the Southwest Harbor route used the bus for recreational activities (hiking 21%, biking 4%, swimming 2%, boating 0%). Twenty-six percent of Southwest Harbor groups said they were sightseeing. Eleven percent traveled to or from work, 17% were going shopping, and 6% cited dining as their main trip purpose.

Forty-three percent of Southwest Harbor riders stayed overnight in the town of Bar Harbor, 35% stayed in Southwest Harbor, 6% stayed in Tremont or Swans Island, and 12% stayed in the town of Mount Desert.

Thirty-one percent of Southwest Harbor groups were staying in campgrounds, 15% were staying in motels or B&B's, and 6% were staying on private sailboats. Twenty-eight percent stayed in year-round residences, 13% in summer residences, and 6% in short-term rentals.

Twenty-six percent of groups surveyed on the Southwest Harbor route said their lodging was within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green. Fifty-one percent of Southwest Harbor route passengers said they planned to visit Acadia National Park on their bus ride. Roughly a quarter of the groups on the Southwest Harbor bus said they would use two different routes to complete their bus ride.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

The locations that generate the most boardings for inbound Southwest Harbor buses are the Southwest Harbor Post Office (21% of inbound boardings), Smugglers Den Campground (13%), Seawall Campground (11%), Somesville (8%), and Bas Harbor Campground (7%). The remaining boardings are fairly evenly spread out along the full Southwest Harbor route. Tremont School, Quietside Campground, and Bernard together account for just 4% of inbound boardings.

Fifty-nine percent of inbound riders get off at the Bar Harbor Village Green. The next most popular inbound destination is the Southwest Harbor Post Office with 8%, followed by MDI High School with 6%.

The Bar Harbor Village Green accounts for 50% of outbound boardings, followed by the High School with 10%, Southwest Harbor Post Office with 8%, Echo Lake with 7%, and Seawall Campground with 5%.

Roughly one-third of outbound riders get off between Smugglers Den and the SWH Post Office, and another third get off along the Manset Road and in Bass Harbor. Ten percent of outbound riders get off at Echo Lake, while MD High School, Mount Desert Campground, and Somesville together account for another 17%.

Passenger activity for inbound and outbound buses in August of 2005 is presented in Figures 15-16.

FIGURE 15 SW HARBOR INBOUND RIDERS BY STOP

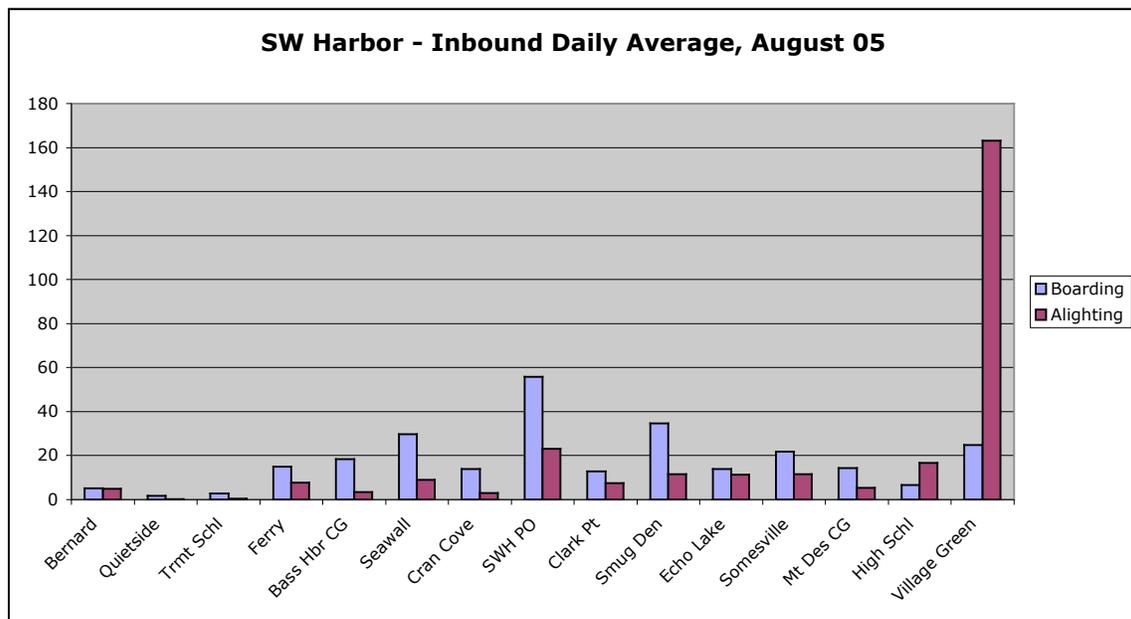
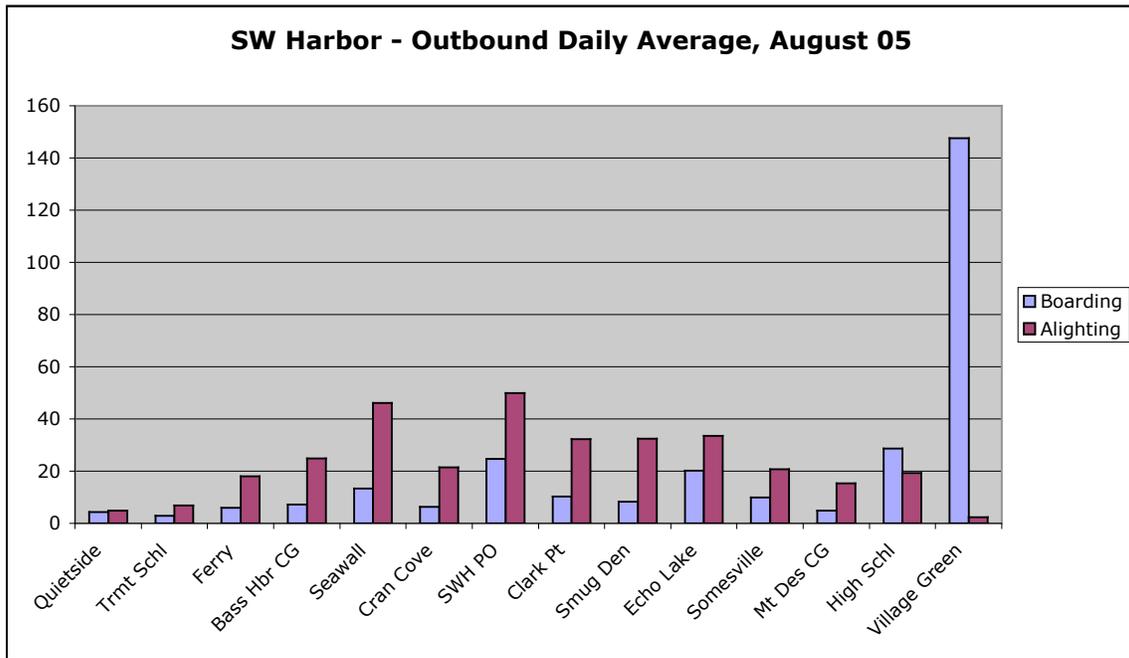


FIGURE 16 SW HARBOR OUTBOUND RIDERS BY STOP



The busiest inbound trips to Bar Harbor are the buses scheduled to pass through Southwest Harbor at 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. During August 2005 these two trips had an average of 37 and 34 boardings respectively, which means that standing-room-only was a common occurrence at these times of the day. The first early morning inbound trip carried an average of 8 riders per day.

FIGURE 17 SOUTHWEST HARBOR INBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP

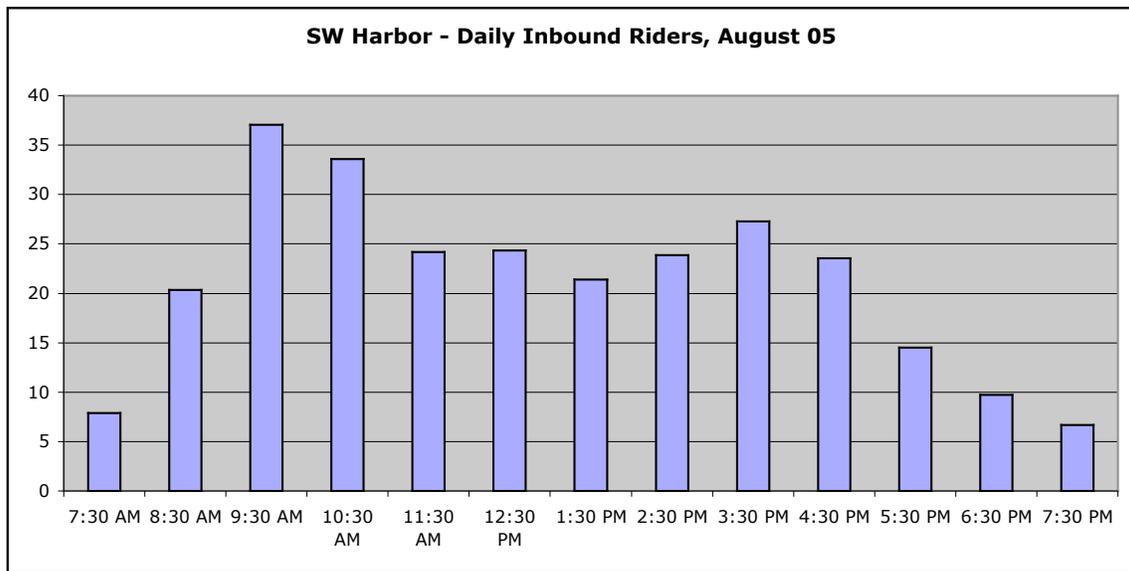
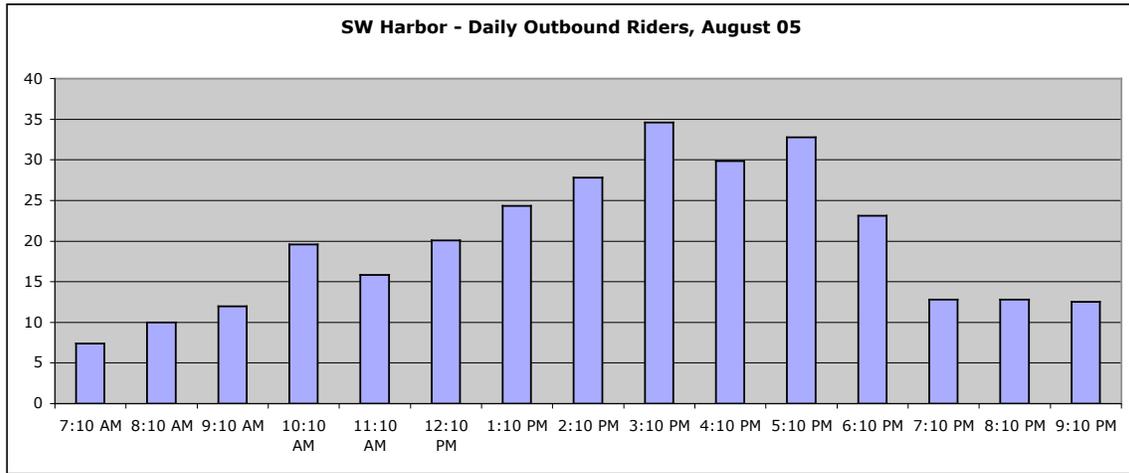


FIGURE 18 SOUTHWEST HARBOR OUTBOUND RIDERS BY TRIP



Outbound Southwest Harbor buses were the most crowded between 1:10 p.m. and 6:10 p.m. The busiest trip was the bus scheduled to depart Bar Harbor at 3:10 p.m. This trip had an August 2005 average of 35 boardings per day. The next busiest trips were the buses that depart Bar Harbor at 5:10 p.m. (33 per day) and 4:10 p.m. (30 per day).

Service Design Issues

1. Slow and inefficient service resulting from time-consuming route diversions

When onboard surveys are distributed each year, local residents on the Southwest Harbor bus often ask for “faster service.” The service is perceived as slow because of several time-consuming route diversions. Current schedules require three buses to provide hourly service. It may be possible to offer faster express service with just two buses, using the third bus to provide local Southwest Harbor stops. Route diversions include:

Echo Lake Beach – It might be possible to serve Echo Lake Beach with a local bus, allowing regular Bar Harbor-Southwest Harbor buses to remain on the main highway.

Smugglers Den Campground – Buses must cross several speed bumps as they proceed through the grounds of this private campground. The bus stop should be moved to the turnout adjacent to the main highway.

Clark Point – Outbound and inbound buses offer stops at Clark Point. Regular Bar Harbor-Southwest Harbor service could be speeded up if Clark Point is served instead by a local Southwest Harbor bus.

Bass Harbor Ferry Terminal – Buses travel a dead-end road to reach the ferry terminal, and then are forced to make a three-point turn in a gravel driveway. Congestion at the ferry terminal also slows down Island Explorer buses. It should be possible to move the Bass Harbor stop closer to the former sardine canning facility, requiring transferring ferry passengers to walk a moderate distance to and from the bus.

2. Southwest Harbor bus stop location and design

Improvements are needed for the main bus stop in downtown Southwest Harbor. The best solution would be to move the stop to the village green in front of the Pemetie School. Federal Transit Administration funding might be available for sidewalk, lighting, benches, and related improvements at this site.

If the stop remains at the Post Office on the Clark Point Road, stop locations should be clarified and appropriate signage and amenities should be added. This is needed especially on the south side of Clark Point Road for buses headed toward Bar Harbor.

3. Bus stops at MDI High School and in Somesville

A designated bus stop is needed near the high school, as described in the discussion of the Brown Mountain route.

A designated bus stop is also needed in the village of Somesville. There is no obvious place for people to get on and off the bus in Somesville. Development of an appropriate stop is likely to require input from the community, along with funding from MDOT for design and construction.

4. Other bus stop issues

There are a variety of other bus stop issues along the Southwest Harbor route:

- The black and white bus stop signs in Manset and on the Clark Point Road need to be removed and replaced with bus stop signs that use the appropriate blue and green colors.
- Bass Harbor Campground needs a designated stop and bus stop sign for inbound buses.
- The bus stop sign at Manset Dock should probably be removed, as this stop was moved at the town's request to the Cranberry Cove location.
- It would be best if Southwest Harbor buses do not offer stops at Eagle Lake. Buses are typically filled with standees when they pass this location. Passengers would need to be notified in the printed timetable that SW Harbor buses will not stop at Eagle Lake. This will avoid time-consuming bicycle loading at Eagle Lake. This will be particularly important if faster express service is offered on the Southwest Harbor route.

5. Bus stop announcements

There were at least two easily corrected problems with bus stop announcements in 2005:

- The announcement for outbound buses approaching MDI High School should not refer to Northeast Harbor transfers. This announcement is confusing and inappropriate for outbound buses, because the connection is only relevant for passengers traveling on the inbound Southwest Harbor and the inbound Brown Mountain bus.
- For outbound buses, the announcement at the Upper Town Dock should be made when the bus first passes this location, not when the bus returns from Clark Point. The announcement is set up correctly for inbound buses.

6. Operation via the Rich Town Road

Downeast Transportation added the Rich Town Road to the route of the Southwest Harbor bus in 2005 to avoid making turns through Quietside Campground. It is not clear that this time-consuming maneuver generated any meaningful ridership. Alternatives include

- Reversing direction at the campground as has been done in the past
- Discontinuing the dead-end segment between the road to Bernard and Quietside Campground
- Continuing past the campground to a different turn around location in West Tremont

4.8 Schoodic

The Schoodic route consists of a one-way loop that links the Winter Harbor ferry terminal with the Schoodic section of Acadia National Park. It also serves the villages of Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, and Winter Harbor.

The Schoodic bus operates hourly between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and involves seven round trips per day. Service begins on June 23 and continues through Labor Day. The bus meets ferryboats that arrive from Bar Harbor at 8:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and 2:45 p.m. The Schoodic bus delivers passengers to ferries that depart Winter Harbor for Bar Harbor at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m.

The bus offers scheduled stops at Frazer Point and Schoodic Point in Acadia National Park. Flag stops are available at trailheads, at the Schoodic Education and Research Center, and elsewhere along the one-way national park roadway.

The Schoodic bus carried a total of 3,872 riders during the summer of 2005. The average number of Schoodic bus riders during the summer of 2005 was 52 per day and the one-day peak was 110. In the summer of 2005, the Schoodic bus generated an average of 7.5 riders per hour and 7.5 riders per scheduled round trip.

Market Segments

Many Schoodic bus riders transfer from the Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor ferry. They use the Schoodic bus for a scenic tour of the Schoodic peninsula. Some ferry riders include a stop in the village of Winter Harbor before riding to the ferry terminal for the return boat ride to Bar Harbor.

Some cyclists bicycle through the park and then put their bicycles on the bus in Birch Harbor to avoid the narrow two-way roadway between Birch Harbor and Winter Harbor. Some Schoodic area residents use the bus for local transportation between Prospect Harbor and Winter Harbor.

According to the 2005 onboard survey, 82% of Schoodic groups said their primary trip purpose was sightseeing. Twelve percent were going hiking and 6% were bicycling.

Forty-four percent of Schoodic bus riders stayed overnight in the town of Bar Harbor. One quarter of the groups on the Schoodic bus stayed overnight in Winter Harbor. Thirty percent said they lived either year-round (12%) or seasonally (18%) in the Mount Desert Island region. More than a third of the groups surveyed on the Schoodic route said their lodging was within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

During August of 2005, an average of 18 people a day boarded the Schoodic bus at the Winter Harbor ferry terminal. An average of 15 people a day got off the bus at Schoodic Point. An average of 9 people a day got off in the Village of Winter Harbor, while 8 people a day got off at Frazer Point. Birch Harbor and Prospect Harbor generated between 5 and 6 riders a day.

The Schoodic service includes seven daily round trips. During August of 2005, the three round trips scheduled between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. accounted for 59% of Schoodic boardings. The first two morning round trips generated 20% of boardings, while the last two trips accounted for 19% of boardings.

Service Design Issues

1. Interruption of service for driver lunch break

The Schoodic timetable includes a driver lunch break between 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. During this one-hour period the bus remains at Schoodic Point. This arrangement allows Schoodic service to be operated by one driver throughout the entire service day. The layover was scheduled for Schoodic Point to permit the bus to pick up passengers from the ferry that arrives in Winter Harbor at 10:45 a.m. and to deliver passengers to the ferry that departs Winter Harbor at 1:00 p.m.

This arrangement works reasonably well for bus passengers who have consulted the timetable before their trip and who realize that there are no restaurants at Schoodic Point. However, some ferry passengers arrive in Winter Harbor at 10:45 a.m. and then board the bus without focusing on the fact that they will remain at Schoodic Point for an hour before the bus returns to Winter Harbor.

A crew member on the ferry usually explains this situation to ferry passengers during the trip across Frenchman's Bay. Sometimes the bus driver makes a special stop in Winter Harbor to allow people to pick up sandwiches before the 11:00 a.m. bus departs Winter Harbor for Schoodic Point.

There are a number of possible solutions. The simplest response would be to provide clearer information and a warning in the published timetable. Other possible strategies involve splitting the driver shift into two half days, looking for an extra driver willing to work during the lunch hour, or shortening the number of hours the bus operates to avoid the need for a lunch break. These changes would probably make it more difficult to find drivers for the Schoodic service.

2. Anticipated delays during roadway construction

MDOT has plans to widen Route 186 between Birch Harbor and Winter Harbor, adding bicycle lanes to this road segment. This anticipated construction may result in schedule delays for the Schoodic bus. The challenge will be to reduce bus travel times elsewhere along the route during construction – so the Schoodic bus can continue to operate within a one-hour schedule window. This may require either eliminating service temporarily to Prospect Harbor, or perhaps limiting Prospect Harbor to pick-ups and drop-offs on demand only during the construction project.

3. Fall service

Some people have expressed an interest in seeing Schoodic bus service continue into the fall. It might be possible to operate this service on a reduced schedule in the fall season. For example, this might involve cutting back the number of roundtrips to four per day and operating the bus from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. This would allow ferry passengers from Bar Harbor to arrive in Winter Harbor at 10:45 a.m. or 12:45 p.m. and to depart at 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. This assumes that the ferry service would operate regular service between 10:00 a.m. (departing Bar Harbor) and 3:45 p.m. (arriving Bar Harbor).

4. Summer service hours

There are ways to reduce the cost Schoodic bus operations during the summer season. This would involve reducing service hours and the number of round trips. The possible candidates for service cutbacks are the last two bus trips of the day (3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.), the first two trips of the day (9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.), or both.

4.9 Bicycle Express

In 2005, the Bicycle Express used a 12-passenger van and a bicycle trailer to provide hourly daytime service between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Jordan Pond House. This service was designed to increase the bike carrying capacity of the Jordan Pond bus route. The route was changed in 2006 to operate between the Village Green and Eagle Lake. This allowed vans and trailers to complete two round trips an hour, instead of one.

On busy weekdays during the summer, two vans and trailers were needed to accommodate the demand for Bicycle Express service.

Bicycle Express vans made no intermediate stops between the Village Green and Jordan Pond or Eagle Lake. Passengers without bicycles were permitted to ride if seats were available after all cyclists had boarded. The bike trailers had room for 16 bicycles. On occasion, the number of bicycles exceeded the number of riders. This typically involved cyclists who sent their bikes with a member of their group and then followed on a regular Jordan Pond or Brown Mountain bus.

Between June 23 and September 3, 2005, the Bicycle Express carried a total of 5,821 passengers and 5,408 bicycles. Vans and trailers carried an average of 82 riders per day and 76 bicycles per day.

During the summer of 2006, the Bicycle Express carried a total of 11,870 bicycles and 11,818 passengers. The average passenger count was 144 per day.

Market Segments

A small number of Bicycle Express riders were included in the 2005 onboard survey sample. All groups on the Bicycle Express identified cycling as their primary trip purpose. None of the groups surveyed were local year-round or summer residents.

All Bicycle Express groups were staying overnight in Bar Harbor or Trenton. Half said their lodging was within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green. All Bicycle Express users acknowledged that they would visit Acadia National Park. Four out of five Bicycle Express groups said they had purchased a park entry permit.

No counts were taken of rental bikes versus privately owned bicycles, but there appeared to be a fairly consistent pattern that involved multiple groups of bike renters arriving at the Village Green on weekday mornings between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Riders by Stop, Route Segment, and Time of Day

In 2005, the number of inbound bicycles (to the Bar Harbor Village Green) exceeded the number of outbound bicycles. Vans carried 3,021 bikes from Jordan Pond to Bar Harbor and 2,387 bikes from Bar Harbor to Jordan Pond.

In 2006, outbound bikes exceeded inbound traffic, with 4,635 inbound from Eagle Lake to Bar Harbor and 7,235 outbound from Bar Harbor to Eagle Lake.

Total bicycle counts by weekday were:

	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>
Sunday	516	1,326
Monday	560	1,570
Tuesday	917	1,785
Wednesday	1,039	2,247
Thursday	1,080	1,848
Friday	760	1,639
<u>Saturday</u>	<u>546</u>	<u>1,455</u>
Total	5,408	11,870

Not surprisingly, bike and passenger counts show a clear and consistent pattern of heavy outbound traffic in the morning, and heavy return traffic to Bar Harbor in the afternoon.

Chapter 5: Service Area Changes

This chapter describes changes that have occurred in the Island Explorer service area since the shuttle service began operating in 1999. It also discusses anticipated future developments that may have an impact on demand for seasonal public transportation in the region.

The first section describes changes and developments for Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island. A proposed National Park intermodal welcome center is addressed in Section 2, as part of the discussion of possible developments in the town of Trenton. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 5.1 Acadia National Park (Mount Desert Island)
 - 5.1.1 Hulls Cove Visitor Center
 - 5.1.2 Jordan Pond House
 - 5.1.3 Cadillac Mountain
 - 5.1.4 Blackwoods and Seawall Campgrounds
 - 5.1.5 Wildwood Stables
 - 5.1.6 Sand Beach
 - 5.1.7 Sieur de Monts
- 5.2 Trenton
 - 5.2.1 National Park Welcome Center
 - 5.2.2 Downeast Transportation bus garage
 - 5.2.3 Jackson Laboratory parking
 - 5.2.4 Trenton Village Center
 - 5.2.5 Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce
 - 5.2.6 Employee housing
- 5.3 Mount Desert Island towns
 - 5.3.1 Parking strategies
 - 5.3.2 Bar Harbor Village Green
 - 5.3.3 Hotel and campground developments
- 5.4 Intermodal Transportation Services
 - 5.4.1 Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport
 - 5.4.2 International ferry service
 - 5.4.3 Local ferry services
 - 5.4.4 Cruise ships
 - 5.4.5 Local bus programs
- 5.5 Other Hancock County Developments
 - 5.5.1 Downeast Scenic Railroad
 - 5.5.2 Schoodic Education and Research Center

5.1 Acadia National Park (Mount Desert Island)

5.1.1 Hulls Cove Visitor Center

When Island Explorer operations began in 1999, Acadia National Park officials knew that improvements were needed at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center to accommodate Island Explorer buses and passengers. A new shelter and bus stop has been constructed adjacent to the parking lot. The lot itself was expanded, nearly doubling the number of parking spaces. This was accomplished without changing the overall footprint of the site.

An electronic departure sign has been added to the bus stop, showing the departure times for inbound and outbound Campground route buses. Electronic parking lot monitors have been installed to keep track of traffic volumes and traffic patterns. New exhibits were added along the stairway between the parking lot and the main building. Other improvements at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center include an elevator and upgrades to heating and air conditioning systems.

The Hulls Cove facility is likely to remain the primary source of information for Acadia National Park visitors who have already arrived at their lodging on Mount Desert Island. The building is relatively small, with limited restroom facilities and audiovisual capabilities. There are no current plans to expand the Hulls Cove facility.

The expanded parking lot has been adequate to handle current peak season demand. While some residents and visitors leave their cars in the lot and ride the Island Explorer into town, neither the Park nor Downeast Transportation have promoted this Hulls Cove location as a “park and ride” site because the resulting demand could easily exceed the available supply of parking spaces.

5.1.2 Jordan Pond House

Various improvements have been made to landscaping around the Jordan Pond House to manage visitor behavior and to reduce negative impacts on vegetation. This includes improved trails and new bicycle racks. Transit improvements include a bus stop and installation of an electronic departure sign that shows estimated times for the next Jordan Pond buses to Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor. Electronic parking lot monitors have also been installed at this location.

In the spring of 2005, Island Explorer planners and operators met with officials from Acadia National Park and the Acadia Corporation to talk about how to handle bicycle trailers in the crowded traffic circle in front of the Jordan Pond House. Jordan Pond buses and Bicycle Express trailers were carefully scheduled to avoid conflicts at this location. However, the area sometimes becomes overcrowded with a mixture of automobile traffic, local tour buses, out-of-state motorcoaches, cruise ship tour buses, and Island Explorer buses and vans.

Acadia National Park has obtained funding for a design charrette to address traffic flow at Jordan Pond. Because of demands on staff time, this charrette is unlikely to be scheduled until after the 2006 summer season. There are currently no construction dollars programmed for traffic-related improvements at Jordan Pond.

While park officials have had some success in limiting illegal parking near Jordan Pond, there continue to be problems caused by too many automobiles converging on this location on peak summer days.

5.1.3 Cadillac Mountain

Recent improvements on Cadillac Mountain include reconstruction of the power line and a partial shift from retail sales to interpretive exhibits in the Cadillac Mountain gift shop. Acadia National Park continues to look for ways to reduce the negative impacts of high volume visitor traffic on sub alpine vegetation at the summit of Cadillac Mountain.

Traffic and parking congestion remain issues on the Cadillac Mountain Road, particularly with regard to large motorcoaches that are not compatible with the geometry of the historic roadway. There have been several accidents in recent years involving oversized vehicles. These incidents have resulted in extensive traffic backups and delays.

The increase in cruise ship traffic in Bar Harbor has had a direct impact on Cadillac Mountain, since many passengers sign up for bus tours that include a visit to the top of the mountain. Traffic monitors have recently been added to the roadway to allow park officials to better understand traffic volumes and patterns.

Acadia National Park currently has no plans to limit automobile or bus traffic on the Cadillac Mountain Road, although issues and problems with oversized vehicles continue to be closely monitored.

5.1.4 Blackwoods and Seawall Campgrounds

Blackwoods and Seawall Campgrounds have recently been fully rehabilitated by the National Park Service. Restrooms and utilities have been rebuilt, campsites have been restored, vegetation has been replanted, and roadways have been repaved. Island Explorer bus stops have been constructed at both campgrounds. This includes shelters, benches, and map and schedule displays.

Additional improvements are planned for the entry area at Blackwoods Campground. This should improve the traffic flow for buses entering and departing the Blackwoods bus stop.

While there are no plans to expand the number of sites at either campground, there may be significant opportunity to increase shuttle ridership by increasing the frequency of Island Explorer bus service at both facilities. Headways at both sites are currently one hour.

5.1.5 Wildwood Stables

Improvements have been made to horse stables and related facilities at Wildwood Stables. Accessible carriages were added several years ago to accommodate people in wheelchairs. No significant changes are anticipated in the carriage ride programs offered to visitors at Wildwood Stables.

The Wildwood concessionaire has expressed an interest in improved Island Explorer service to Wildwood Stables. In 2005, outbound Jordan Pond buses stopped at Wildwood on request only. This arrangement sometimes resulted in confusion for passengers and bus drivers.

5.1.6 Sand Beach

Acadia National Park has constructed new changing rooms and improved restrooms at Sand Beach, along with a new bus stop and passenger shelter. Electronic traffic monitors have recently been added. Future plans call for installation of a camera to monitor automobile and bus passenger crowding at the Sand Beach bus stop and parking lot.

A Ranger program has been added at Sand Beach that may be relevant for future bus planning. The fee-based program called “Beyond the Beach” sometimes attracts more than a hundred visitors at a time. It is scheduled in the early morning to avoid conflicts with other beach users and to minimize impacts on traffic.

In the past, Island Explorer service to Sand Beach has started too late in the day for this early morning activity. It may be appropriate to consider adding earlier trips to deliver visitors to Sand Beach in time for this popular Ranger program.

5.1.7 Sieur de Monts

Acadia National Park has redesigned the landscaping around Sieur de Monts. Construction was started in the fall of 2005 and is currently underway. Changes include an improved Island Explorer bus stop, plus loading areas for tour buses.

5.2 Trenton

5.2.1 National Park Welcome Center

Acadia National Park and the Maine Department of Transportation are in the midst of plans to develop a new intermodal transportation facility and welcome center on Route 3 in the town of Trenton. A consulting firm has been hired to carry out environmental assessment and to design facilities for the Trenton site.

Conceptual plans envision construction of a new National Park Welcome Center that feature year-round restrooms, interpretive exhibits, and a Ranger information desk. Regional tourism information may also be available.

The new facility would offer easy access to Island Explorer shuttle buses. Day visitors will be encouraged to leave their cars at the Trenton facility and travel to Acadia National Park and its surrounding towns without their cars.

The success of the new facility will depend in part on fast and direct shuttle access to key Acadia National Park destinations. Shuttle access to Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, and Northeast Harbor will also need to be addressed. The design of these routes and the optimum headways will be addressed in the service design portion of this study.

5.2.2 Downeast Transportation bus garage

Current plans call for the construction of a Downeast Transportation office and bus maintenance garage on the land selected for a new welcome center. This bus garage is likely to be located out of sight of visitor-related facilities.

The new bus garage would serve as the base of operations for seasonal Island Explorer bus service and for Downeast Transportation's year-round regional transit program. It will include a propane fueling station and overnight parking for Island Explorer buses.

It is expected that all Island Explorer drivers will start and end their workday at this location. Future service plans should make maximum use of vehicles that would otherwise deadhead between Trenton and the start of their assigned bus routes.

5.2.3 Jackson Laboratory parking

Jackson Laboratory has nearly doubled in size since Island Explorer bus service was inaugurated in 1999. During this time, employment at the research center grew from 600 employees to over 1,200 employees. The Lab expects to add another 200 employees to its workforce in the near future.

Jackson Lab's transportation committee has discussed the idea of expanded bus service between Trenton and Bar Harbor to accommodate more laboratory employees. Committee members envision a choice of travel times in the morning and late afternoon – to accommodate various work shifts and researchers who sometimes work irregular hours. They discussed using Lab-owned property at the former Design Concepts site as an interim park and ride site while plans for a Trenton intermodal facility are developed.

5.2.4 Trenton Village Center

MDOT and the town of Trenton recently developed a village master plan that calls for the creation of a new village center for the town. Under the plan, new village streets would be created to give residents easier and safer access to town facilities, including the grammar school and the local supermarket.

The authors of the village plan envision Island Explorer bus stops in the new village center. At the beginning this could be limited to just the existing Trenton-Bar Harbor bus route. It should be expanded to include buses operating to and from an intermodal welcome center proposed for north of the village center.

Southbound buses could enter the new village area via a new roadway near the Trenton Marketplace. They would continue through the village to the current town office site on the Oak Point Road, where they would turn left and proceed to a signalized intersection with Route 3. Northbound buses would likely need to follow this same route, to avoid turning left against Route 3 traffic at the Trenton Marketplace. It may be possible to offer some northbound stops on request only to avoid schedule delays for express welcome center buses.

5.2.5 Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce

The Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce recently purchased the visitor information building located on Route 3 in Trenton between the Oak Point Road and the bridge to Mount Desert Island. In addition to providing a source for visitor information, this facility will become the new administrative office for the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce.

There is no obvious need for a visitor-related transit link to the Chamber office, since nearly all the visitors who stop here will likely be arriving via private automobile or RV. The Chamber does not anticipate offering long-term parking at this location. However, there may be an occasional need for employees and others to get on or off the bus near the new Chamber building. The best approach will probably be to offer stops at this site on request only.

5.2.6 Employee Housing

During the summer of 2005, the owners of the Regency and Harborside hotels maintained employee housing in Trenton, at the site of the former Days Inn Motel. Following discussions between Island Explorer and hotel managers, special arrangements were made to allow commuting workers to use Island Explorer buses for rides to and from work.

Campground buses did not stop at the Days Inn site during times of the day when they are overcrowded with regular riders. Deadheading buses offered special inbound pick-ups at the Trenton facility in the morning. And a special outbound trip was made available to hotel workers in the late afternoon. The hotels made a financial contribution to the Island Explorer project to help offset the cost of this commuter service.

Hotel officials have not yet indicated whether employees will be housed in Trenton in future years. However, the Island Explorer project should anticipate potential demand for similar services in the future, in addition to demand from commuters who park at a new Trenton intermodal center.

One challenge will be to come up with a strategy for offsetting the anticipated cost of expanded commuter operations. It may be difficult to charge a fare during the summer and fall, because other Island Explorer rides will be free. While employers might be expected to contribute, it may prove difficult to identify individual employers, since commuter trips are likely to be available for anyone to ride.

5.3 Mount Desert Island Towns

5.3.1 Parking Strategies

The town of Bar Harbor has struggled to come up with a politically acceptable strategy for managing parking in the village center. A local committee recommended the introduction of paid parking for town owned parking lots. The committee's recommendations were not implemented, in part due to a lack of public support.

The committee's strategy was to begin collecting revenue from paid parking, and to use this money in the future to develop new satellite parking and related shuttles. One of the problems with this approach appears to be the fact that it imposed a burden on residents and visitors without doing anything to reduce traffic volumes or provide additional parking. While the committee said that it intended to add parking in the future, no clear plans were presented suggesting just where that parking would be located.

Several years ago, Bar Harbor considered joining with the local Chamber of Commerce to develop a satellite parking lot for local employees at the site of the Log Cabin Restaurant. Bar Harbor voters at a special town meeting blocked the town from participating in the proposed land acquisition.

As a result, there are two unresolved and related parking issues for the town of Bar Harbor. The community needs more parking for visitors during the summer season. This is particularly true for people who wish to park for more than two hours – including visitors who rent kayaks or bicycles and groups who go on whale watch trips. The town would also like to provide an alternative for workers who commute to Bar Harbor via private automobile.

The town of Southwest Harbor added parking spaces behind the town office several years ago for short-term and long-term parking. The town has had some success convincing employees of downtown businesses to park in these lots to free up spaces along Main Street for residents and visitors. The construction of parking for Cranberry Island residents in Manset has relieved some pressure on town-owned parking at the Upper Town Dock.

Despite these improvements, parking remains a concern in the village center during the busy summer season. The community has not identified a strategy for addressing parking. However, this issue is likely to be addressed by the town's Comprehensive Planning Committee as it begins to develop a new Comprehensive Plan for Southwest Harbor.

Island Explorer buses have helped relieve parking pressures in Northeast Harbor by allowing visitors to travel to the village center and the town pier without their cars. The town of Mount Desert has looked at other options for improving the parking situation near the Northeast Harbor town pier.

Students at the University of Maine developed a range of options for redesigning the pier area. One strategy called for changing roadway and reconfiguring parking spaces, resulting in a 40% increase in green space and an 88% increase in available parking, from 173 spaces to 325 spaces. The town is currently investigating options for how to pay for possible improvements. This project may be a candidate for intermodal funding from the Federal Transit Administration and MDOT.

The town of Tremont owns parking lots adjacent to the town office and above the town dock in Bernard. Some Island Explorer passengers leave their cars in the parking lot by the town office. There has typically been adequate space for people to do this. Parking is more limited at the Bernard lot. The shuttle program provides an alternative to parking in this lot by allowing residents and visitors to travel to Bernard without their cars.

5.3.2 Bar Harbor Village Green

The Island Explorer currently utilizes the west side of the Bar Harbor Village Green, plus two bus assigned parking spots on Firefly Lane. This provides space for a total of six buses at a time. The town's Parking Committee has suggested to Downeast Transportation that the bus program should not expect to be granted additional reserved space for buses along the town green. This means that future plans to expand the shuttle

bus program will need to limit the number of bus routes operating in and out of Bar Harbor's town center.

Controlling the number of buses at the Bar Harbor Village Green is particularly important because the transit hub is located directly in front of the Bar Harbor Fire Station. Bus operators have assured the Fire Chief that under no circumstances will buses be allowed to double park or otherwise obstruct emergency vehicles.

The west side of the Village Green is currently used to accommodate buses serving five different routes. Campground, Sand Beach, and Blackwoods buses depart the Village Green at the top of each hour. At half past the hour, departures include the Campground, Sand Beach, and Brown Mountain routes. A second bus is sometimes needed for the Campground route, which means all four slots are required on the hour and half hour for current operations.

Jordan Pond buses and Bicycle Express vans and trailers are scheduled to depart the west side of the Village Green at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour. Eden Street and Southwest Harbor buses utilize the two reserved bus slots on Firefly Lane.

This situation suggests that it may not be possible to increase the frequency of existing routes without consolidating services to reduce the total number of routes. This will be especially true if a new route is added to connect Bar Harbor with the proposed intermodal facility in Trenton.

5.3.3 Hotel and Campground Developments

In recent years, most new hotel development on Mount Desert Island has taken place in downtown Bar Harbor. The biggest additions were the new Grand Hotel on lower Main Street and the Harborside Hotel on West Street near the Bar Harbor town pier.

The Island Explorer does not operate buses to the town pier. Bus routes were designed to avoid this part of town because of potential traffic bottlenecks and delays. The hotel on lower Main Street is served by the Blackwoods bus and by inbound Sand Beach buses. Both of the new hotels are located within reasonable walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green.

Several of the large campgrounds on Route 3 have changed owners in recent years. While there have been some changes in bus ridership from individual campgrounds, it is not clear whether these changes are related to changes in campground management.

Downeast Transportation has received several requests in past years for Island Explorer service from a private campground on the Hall Quarry Road. Planners have been unable to come up with a way to serve this location that does not disrupt service on the already overcrowded Southwest Harbor route. The Hall Quarry campground closed temporarily, but reportedly will be reopened by new managers.

5.4 Intermodal Transportation Services

5.4.1 Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport

The Island Explorer's Campground route offers regularly scheduled stops at the Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport. Buses are used by commercial air travelers, by passengers on private airplanes, and by people picking up and dropping off rental cars.

While the frequency of service to the airport could be probably be reduced, the Island Explorer should continue to provide free shuttle access to the county-owned airport.

It will be easier in the future to serve the airport, if a proposed traffic signal is added to enable cars and buses to turn left from the airport road to Route 3. Until this happens, Island Explorer buses should probably limit stops at the airport to outbound buses only. This would eliminate the need to turn left onto Route 3 against heavy summer traffic. Passengers who board at the airport would be required to wait at the Trenton Marketplace for the next scheduled inbound departure.

5.4.2 International ferry service

Beginning in 2007, ferry service on the CAT between Bar Harbor and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia will be limited to Monday through Wednesday. Thursday through Sunday, the CAT will operate between Yarmouth and Portland. The CAT will offer two daily roundtrips on Mondays and Tuesdays, and a single morning round trip on Wednesdays.

Island Explorer schedules provide car-free access to the international ferry terminal for people with overnight lodging along the Campground and Eden Street routes, and for people staying in downtown Bar Harbor.

5.4.3 Local ferry services

The Island Explorer provides schedule information and connecting bus transportation for four local ferry services:

- Cranberry Isles Mail Boat Northeast Harbor - Cranberry Isles
- Cranberry Cove Ferry Southwest Harbor / Manset - Cranberry Isles
- Swans Island Ferry Bass Harbor - Swans Island
- Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor Ferry

Island Explorer routes and schedules provide reasonably good connections with the two Cranberry Isles ferry services. Connections with the Swans Island Ferry have varied over the years. Recent changes to Southwest Harbor schedule times resulted in less convenient transfer times between the bus and the ferry in Bass Harbor.

The Island Explorer's Schoodic bus provides timed connections with the Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor ferry in Winter Harbor. The bus picks up and drops off passengers on the pier at the ferry terminal.

The owner of the Winter Harbor ferry has expressed interest in a possible extension of the operating season for the Schoodic bus. He would like to see continuation of some Schoodic bus service beyond Labor Day.

5.4.4 Cruise ships

One of the big changes since the start of Island Explorer bus service in 1999 has been an increase in the number of cruise ships visiting Bar Harbor. Recent seasons have included more than 80 cruise ship visits per year. The town's harbormaster reports that nearly 100,000 cruise ship passengers visited the town in 2005.

The schedule for 2006 included three visits for the Queen Mary 2 (July 5, October 9, October 21) and one visit for the Queen Elizabeth 2 (September 22). In the past, these ships have drawn large crowds of onlookers who come to town to see the huge vessels.

In an effort to avoid overwhelming the waterfront and the downtown, the town has limited the number of large ships in port at any one time to two. The fall season remains the busiest time of year for cruise ships in Bar Harbor.

Cruise ships can have a significant impact on the Island Explorer, because some cruise ship passengers walk to the Village Green to take free rides on the Island Explorer instead of paying for official bus tours. During the fall, the Island Explorer sometimes operates an additional Sand Beach bus to handle overflow demand from cruise ship passengers.

Island Explorer and National Park Service staff do their best to inform cruise ship passengers that they should purchase a park entry permit before riding free Island Explorer buses through Acadia National Park.

When the Queen Mary 2 made her first visit to Bar Harbor in the fall of 2004, the Island Explorer operated increased service, shuttling an estimated 700 people between a temporary parking area in Hulls Cove and downtown Bar Harbor. Additional shuttle service was offered from the Regency Hotel, where some overflow parking was also made available. Special arrangements for increased shuttle service may be needed for future visits from these popular ships.

Some Bar Harbor residents have suggested that cruise ships passengers should walk ashore at the Bar Ferries terminal, instead of arriving by tenders at the downtown pier. Among other things, this would eliminate congestion and conflicts at the town pier caused by large numbers of charter motor coaches.

Such a change is probably unlikely, given the appeal to passengers and local businesses of easy pedestrian access to downtown shops. But Island Explorer partners should be alert to the implications that such a change would have for the local shuttle project. Although charter tours would still be available from the Bay Ferries terminal, additional buses would be needed to give shoppers access to downtown Bar Harbor. If each bus could complete three round trips an hour between the Bay Ferries terminal and downtown, and if 1,000 people come ashore per hour, it might require a dozen 28-passenger buses to provide the necessary downtown shuttle link. The number of vehicles could be reduced somewhat by using larger leased buses.

5.4.5 Local bus programs

In addition to the Island Explorer fleet, buses operating during the summer and fall on Mount Desert Island include:

- Year-round Downeast Transportation services
- Local trolley tours
- Out-of-state motor coach tours
- Cruise ship motor coach tours

Downeast Transportation is getting ready to reevaluate and redesign its year-round bus program. DTI may consider revising its daytime service on Mount Desert Island during the summer to ensure coordination with free seasonal buses. One possibility might be to expand summer-season service to Ellsworth and Bangor to accommodate guest workers from Eastern Europe and others.

In the future, the Island Explorer project may be expanded to include seasonal commuter service to Bar Harbor via Route 3. If these commuter trips serve Jackson Laboratory employees, this will have implications for DTI's year-round program, because the Laboratory and its bus riders will almost certainly expect commuter services to continue year round.

The Island Explorer does not offer guided tours through Acadia National Park. Also, the Island Explorer does not offer bus rides to the summit of Cadillac Mountain. Island Explorer employees and national park rangers consistently refer requests for guided tours and rides to Cadillac Mountain to the region's two private trolley bus companies. The private tours are also highlighted in the Island Explorer's tabloid publication under the heading "Car-free on Cadillac Mountain."

There is little interaction between Island Explorer buses and motor coach tour buses. Occasionally, a tour bus will try to stop at the Village Green transit hub. And sometimes coaches compete with Island Explorer buses for space at Jordan Pond and Sieur de Monts.

While tour buses create few if any problems for Island Explorer operations, they present bigger challenges to Acadia National Park. The biggest concerns are oversized vehicles maneuvering narrow hairpin turns on the Cadillac Mountain Road, and large bus groups overcrowding limited restroom facilities at Jordan Pond House, the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, and elsewhere.

5.5 Other Hancock County Developments

5.5.1 Downeast Scenic Railroad

The Downeast Rail Heritage Preservation Trust recently signed a lease agreement with the MDOT that will allow operation of a Downeast Scenic Railroad offering 24-mile roundtrip excursions between Ellsworth and Green Lake. Plans also call for development of a rail depot museum in Ellsworth, along with an Ellsworth maintenance facility.

Area residents who are leading the Downeast Scenic Railroad project have expressed an interest in a car-free transportation link with the Island Explorer shuttle system. They would like people who use the Island Explorer to be able to travel to Ellsworth for scenic train rides without using a car. Among other things, this would provide access to the rail project for visitors who travel to the MDI region without private automobiles.

The best way to provide a link to the rail project might be to offer scheduled service between Ellsworth and a new Trenton intermodal facility. While this could be provided with Island Explorer equipment, it will probably be more appropriate to operate an Ellsworth link as part of Downeast Transportation's regular countywide transit program.

Service frequency and scheduling will depend in part on service frequency and schedules for excursion rail service. Downeast Transportation will likely want to combine rail links with expanded seasonal access to Ellsworth shopping destinations.

5.5.2 Schoodic Education and Research Center

The Schoodic Education and Research Center is currently served by the Island Explorer's Schoodic bus. The Schoodic bus connects the national park with Winter Harbor, offering time connections with the ferry to and from Bar Harbor. The new National Park Service facility at Schoodic Point may need additional roadway transportation through the neighboring towns of eastern Hancock County.

The Schoodic Education and Research Center was created to facilitate education and research programs that enhance the understanding and protection of national park resources. The project uses the former Schoodic Navy base is managed by the nonprofit organization, Acadia Partners for Science and Learning.

The mission for Acadia Partners is to expand the use of Schoodic facilities as a research and education center. Target users include:

- University researchers
- Government scientists
- Artists
- Senior citizens
- Grade school students
- College students on internships
- University classes exploring resource issues
- Non-governmental organizations

Transportation needs for the Schoodic facility will come into clearer focus as programs are developed and expanded. The most immediate need will likely involve groups arriving and departing airports in Bangor and Trenton. Some transportation may be needed for groups traveling within the immediate Schoodic area. And there may be a future need for land-based links between the Schoodic peninsula and Mount Desert Island, particularly during the months when ferry service is not available.

While transportation links to Schoodic could be provided by the Island Explorer project, it might be more appropriate to treat this service as part of Downeast Transportation's countywide year-round transit program.

Another approach might be for DTI to lease an older Island Explorer bus to Acadia Partners, and to allow Acadia Partners to hire its own drivers to provide transportation within the Schoodic area and to regional airports. Transportation planning for the Schoodic Education and Research Center is separate from regular Island Explorer planning, and as such lies outside the scope of this Short Range Transit Plan.

Chapter 6: Public Participation

This chapter describes efforts to inform members of the public about this transportation study and to obtain ideas and suggestions from community members. The first section describes Advisory Committee meetings held throughout the course of the study project. The second section presents findings from a public workshop held in Bar Harbor on February 16, 2006 to discuss the future of the Island Explorer project.

6.1 Advisory Committee Meetings

An Advisory Committee was formed to provide ideas, recommendations, and oversight for this Short Range Transit Plan. The committee includes representatives from

- Acadia National Park
- Friends of Acadia
- Downeast Transportation
- MDI League of Towns
- Town of Bar Harbor
- Town of Trenton
- Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce
- Maine Department of Transportation

The Advisory Committee met at various stages during the planning effort to discuss the goals of the project, to review draft materials, and to provide guidance to the consultant on future steps.

November 30, 2005

At this introductory meeting, the Advisory Committee reviewed the project scope of work and discussed the various tasks to be completed. The group provided comments on two draft chapters, Chapter 2: Review of Previous Studies and Chapter 3: Onboard Survey of Island Explorer Passengers.

Committee members suggested that Chapter 2 should include discussion of the 2004 MDI tomorrow Community Survey and the 2005 Trenton Village study. The committee then discussed changes in the region that may be relevant for the future of the Island Explorer, including development of an intermodal transportation facility in Trenton. The group agreed with the consultant's suggestion that a public workshop to discuss the future of the Island Explorer be held in Bar Harbor during February 2006.

February 15, 2006

The Advisory Committee reviewed two draft chapters, Chapter 4: Evaluation of Existing Services and Chapter 5: Service Area Changes. The group also discussed the agenda for a public workshop scheduled for the evening of February 16, 2006 in Bar Harbor.

The consultant presented the Committee with some preliminary ideas for service design changes. The Committee discussed strategies to increase the capacity of the Jordan Pond route and to add new bus service to the Park Loop Road. The group also considered arguments for and against streamlining bus service between Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor to provide faster and more efficient service on this route.

March 29, 2006

On March 29 the consultant reviewed service design concepts with members of the Advisory Committee and with various Acadia National Park staff members. Much of the discussion focused on proposed new bus service for the Park Loop Road.

The discussion focused on a number of related questions:

- Should the Loop Road route begin and end at the Bar Harbor Village Green, or should it serve the Hulls Cove Visitor Center instead?
- Can Loop Road service be added to the Village Green without overloading the Bar Harbor transit hub with too many buses?
- If the Loop Road route includes a stop at the Village Green, can it replace the Sand Beach bus – requiring beachgoers to return to Bar Harbor via the Loop Road?
- If the Loop Road route includes a stop at the Village Green, can it replace the Jordan Pond bus – requiring people headed to Jordan Pond to travel via Sand Beach?
- What is the best way to link the Hulls Cove Visitor Center with the Loop Road route?
- Should a new route connect the Visitor Center and Jordan Pond?

The consultant suggested that the main argument for starting the Loop Road route at the Bar Harbor Village Green is the fact that nearly all Island Explorer riders currently travel through this Bar Harbor hub. Serving the existing hub might be the best way to ensure full utilization of the route. Moreover, this might provide an opportunity to cut back or eliminate duplicative service on the Sand Beach and Jordan Pond routes.

Park staff members suggested that more could be gained by starting Loop Road service at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. They pointed out that many people who pass through the Visitor Center ask about direct bus access to Loop Road destinations. They said many visitors decide against using the Island Explorer when they discover that they must travel into Bar Harbor and transfer to another bus.

Advisory Committee members were also concerned about the idea of using Loop Road buses to replace Sand Beach and Jordan Pond service. They were worried about asking people to travel roundabout routes – from Sand Beach to Bar Harbor via Jordan Pond, and from Bar Harbor to Jordan Pond via Sand Beach.

After considerable discussion, the consultant suggested that the best way to introduce Loop Road service would be to begin the route at the Visitor Center. Loop Road schedules should provide timed connections with Campground route buses. A streamlined Sand Beach route would provide two-way access between Bar Harbor and Sand Beach. Jordan Pond route buses would continue to provide direct two-way access between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond.

This approach is likely to appeal to new groups of visitors, and should result in increased use of the shuttle program. It will also facilitate movement of day visitors to key Acadia National Park destinations once a new intermodal facility opens in Trenton. Day visitors will be able to ride express buses from the Gateway Center to Hulls Cove, and then transfer to Park Loop Road buses without traveling into the center of Bar Harbor.

A potential drawback recognized by the Advisory Committee is increased demand for parking at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.

The consultant will develop detailed service plans and timetables for the preferred service ideas discussed by the committee.

October 17, 2006

The Advisory Committee reviewed three draft chapters, Chapter 7: Service Design Alternatives, Chapter 8: Cadillac Mountain Shuttle Strategies, and Chapter 9: Bus Stop Issues. The group also discussed preliminary financial projections for the 10-year planning horizon.

Most of the discussion focused on service design strategies for individual bus routes. The committee gave preliminary endorsement to the following interim recommendations:

Campground – Add year-round CMAQ funded commuter service to the Route 3 corridor when funding becomes available. Charge commuter fares for early morning commuter trips. Keep the Campground route service the same until the Acadia Gateway Center opens. Consider shortening the route when Gateway Express service is added.

Eden Street – Continue the current level of service. Add more frequent morning service only if hotel owners are willing to pay for expanded service.

Sand Beach – Streamline the route by letting Loop road buses serve Cadillac Mountain North Ridge. Add a Sieur de Monts stop inbound. Continue operating 30-minute service with two buses.

Blackwoods – Shorten the route during the daytime so buses turn at Sieur de Monts, and increase the frequency to every 30 minutes.

Jordan Pond – Add a third bus to the route and provide service every 30 minutes.

Brown Mountain – Keep just one bus on this route, and adjust the headways to every 75 minutes.

Southwest Harbor – Continue with the existing service design, with minor adjustments to reduce operating costs.

Schoodic – Eliminate the early morning service to match changes in the ferry schedule. Begin and end at the Schoodic Education and Research Center. Add limited midday service during September.

Loop Road – Operate three buses and provide 30-minute headways during the summer season. Defer decisions about fall Loop Road service until the demand for summer service has been evaluated.

Gateway Express – Add express service to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and the Bar Harbor Village Green when the Acadia Gateway Center opens. Continue the Gateway Express in the fall.

Quietside – Add a new summer-season bus route linking the Acadia Gateway Center and Southwest Harbor, using one bus to provide service every 90 minutes.

Bicycle Express – Defer addition of a second route until additional funding becomes available. Continue operating a single van and trailer on the Eagle Lake route through the month of September.

The Committee agreed that additional meetings were needed to discuss recommended bus stop improvements and 10-year financial projections.

February 16, 2007

The Advisory Committee reviewed the full set of draft chapters. Much of the meeting was devoted to discussing Chapter 9: Bus Stop Issues and Chapter 11: Marketing Strategies.

In his draft bus stop chapter, the consultant said that stops on some route should perhaps be limited to established bus stops. DTI's general manager pointed out that stops on request is one of the very popular features of the Island Explorer project. The consultant replied that one way to improve safety while preserving the current policy would be to clarify for bus drivers and for passengers locations and route segments where buses cannot stop due to safety concerns.

Acadia National Park representatives suggested a number of additions to the consultant's list of needed bus stop improvements. Suggested additions included:

- Parkman Mountain
- Bubble Pond
- Bubble Rock
- Thunder Hole

They suggested that efforts should be made to establish safe bus stops in both directions at Parkman Mountain, Bubble Pond, and Bubble Rock. They suggested that Thunder Hole should be examined in part to assess the interaction of Island Explorer buses, motor coaches, and tour buses at this location.

A committee member questioned whether roadside turnouts were needed at Atlantic Oakes and the College of the Atlantic. She pointed out that Atlantic Oakes had recently constructed a new bus stop near their conference center. DTI's general manager agreed that off-road stops at Atlantic Oakes and COA work fairly well. At the same time, he agreed that the Acadia Inn stop should be moved to a curbside turnout, to avoid conflicts with motorcoaches under the Acadia Inn portico.

A committee member suggested that the consultant add to the bus stop chapter a summary checklist of locations where new bus stop signs are needed.

A committee member suggested that a special marketing campaign will be needed to ensure the success of the future Acadia Gateway Center. The consultant will add to the marketing chapter a discussion of the need for a future Acadia Gateway Center marketing plan.

The consultant will distribute amended versions of the bus stop and marketing chapters, along with an executive summary for the full report. Committee members agreed that an additional meeting was not needed. After receiving comments on new and revised materials, the consultant will distribute a Draft Final Report in electronic format. A Final Report will be printed after committee members have had a chance to review and comment on the Draft Final Report.

The committee agreed that the results of the study should be addressed in two public settings. This should include a brief report to the MDI League of Towns, and a more extensive presentation at an "Eggs and Issues" forum hosted by the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce. The director of the Bar Harbor chamber indicated that this could be scheduled for April or May, and that other area chambers of commerce would be invited.

6.2 Public Workshop – February 16, 2006

A public workshop to discuss the future of the Island Explorer project was held at the Bar Harbor Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 16, 2006. The workshop was publicized via notices to the Bar Harbor Times, the Mount Desert Islander, and the

Bangor Daily News. Meeting announcements were also distributed via email to people on the MDI Tomorrow contact list.

About a dozen people attended the meeting. Most were either Advisory Committee members or newspaper reporters. One member of the public participated in the discussion. One of her primary suggestions was to add bus service between Town Hill and Somesville. Most of the public workshop was devoted to explaining the ongoing planning effort and to answering questions from reporters. There was some discussion of service design choices, including possible Loop Road service, Gateway Express service, and a future bus link between Trenton and Southwest Harbor.

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Chapter 7: Service Design Alternatives

This chapter discusses service design alternatives for the Island Explorer shuttle program. It anticipates two stages of service expansion, one beginning in calendar year 2007 with the implementation of an expanded vehicle fleet, and another beginning in 2011 following construction of a new intermodal transportation center in Trenton. Strategies for providing car-free access to the summit of Cadillac Mountain are discussed in Chapter 8.

The chapter includes detailed consideration of a few strategies that were ultimately rejected by the consultant. A summary of recommended service design changes is presented in Chapter 10.

The first eight sections address existing Island Explorer bus routes. Section 7.1 includes a discussion of visitor and commuter links between a proposed intermodal facility in Trenton and Bar Harbor. Section 7.7 includes a discussion of transit links between Southwest Harbor and Trenton.

Section 7.9 looks at the future of the Bicycle Express. Section 7.10 discusses possible new service for the Acadia National Park Loop Road. Section 7.11 examines bus activity and connecting times at new and existing transit hubs. Section 7.12 discusses a possible future in-town Bar Harbor shuttle.

The chapter is structured as follows:

Section 7.1	Route 3 Corridor (Trenton-Bar Harbor)
Section 7.2	Eden Street
Section 7.3	Sand Beach
Section 7.4	Blackwoods Campground
Section 7.5	Jordan Pond
Section 7.6	Northeast Harbor
Section 7.7	Southwest Harbor and Tremont
Section 7.8	Schoodic Peninsula
Section 7.9	Bicycle Express
Section 7.10	Loop Road
Section 7.11	Transit Hub Connections
Section 7.12	In-town Bar Harbor Shuttle

7.1 Route 3 Corridor (Trenton-Bar Harbor)

This section discusses shuttle options for three different markets in the Route 3 corridor between Trenton and Bar Harbor. Target user groups include

- Campers and residents who use the existing Island Explorer Campground route
- Day visitors who will park their cars at a new Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton
- Seasonal and year-round commuters

It is not feasible to use existing Campground route buses to meet the needs of day visitors and commuters who park their cars in Trenton. Campground buses make multiple stops at private campgrounds along the route. The resulting trip takes too long for park and ride customers. Moreover, Campground buses regularly fill up with local campers. These buses do not have seats available during peak times for commuters and day visitors.

7.1.1 Campground Route

There are at least three design issues for the existing Campground route.

1. The route is lightly used beyond the Trenton Bridge. Campground buses make three scheduled stops in Trenton: Narrows Too Campground, the Airport, and Trenton Marketplace. These Trenton stops require the operation of one additional bus on the Campground route.
2. Overcrowding occurs during the peak season, especially on the segment between Bar Harbor Campground and the Bar Harbor Village Green. People who ride between the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and the Village Green cause some of this overcrowding.
3. Passengers sometimes request stops in marginally unsafe locations. Portions of the roadway are narrow, with limited opportunity to pull out of the travel lane.

Given the importance of intermodal links to the airport, the Campground route should continue to serve Trenton until a new Acadia Gateway route is added. This means that the Campground route should continue in its current configuration, despite the limited productivity of the Trenton segment.

Once the Acadia Gateway facility opens, there will be an opportunity to shorten the Campground route, and to use other bus routes to serve Narrows Too and the Airport. Shortening the Campground route will reduce the number of buses required for this route to three instead of four.

Bus stops at Narrows Too Campground and the Airport could be included on a new bus route linking the Trenton intermodal center with Somesville and Southwest Harbor. Passengers traveling to Bar Harbor could transfer to Gateway buses at the Trenton facility. A new express route linking the Trenton intermodal facility with Bar Harbor could offer outbound stops at the airport and Narrows Too on request only. Express buses from the Acadia Gateway can include stops on request at the Trenton Marketplace.

Once new routes are added in Trenton, the Campground route can be reconfigured so it no longer crosses the Trenton Bridge. The shortened route would include a one-way counterclockwise loop at the end of the route, with buses making stops at Mount Desert Narrows Campground, Bar Harbor KOA Campground, and Woodlands KOA Campground before returning to Mount Desert Campground via the Knox Road.

A draft timetable for a reconfigured Campground route is presented in Figure 7.1. This timetable includes consistent 30-minute service throughout the evening, instead of switching to hourly service. The net impact of these proposed changes is a 14% reduction in summer season service hours for the Campground route.

Fall service can operate with three buses and 30-minute headways, or two buses and 60-minute headways. The two-bus alternative is less expensive, but it is also less efficient, because it includes 40-minute layovers between trips at the Village Green. The three-bus option involves 35 service hours per fall day, while the two-bus option involves 27.5 hours a day. A timetable for the two-bus alternative is presented in Figure 7.2. The three-bus fall schedule would be the same as the summer schedule, except service starts at 8:10 a.m. and ends at 9:35 p.m. There may not be enough money or sufficient demand in the fall to justify the operation of three buses and 30-minute service.

The most cost-effective way to address mid-summer overcrowding during the near-term future appears to be to continue the current practice of adding extra buses at peak times during the busiest part of the season. These extra buses do not appear in the published timetable, which means they can be added only when they are needed. Extra buses are sometimes needed on sunny weekdays during the last two weeks of July and the first three weeks of August.

The introduction of Park Loop Road buses in the summer of 2007 may reduce the need for overflow buses on the Campground route, because some Campground riders will likely get off inbound buses at the Hulls Cove Visitors Center. Hulls Cove to the Bar Harbor Village Green has traditionally been the most overcrowded segment.

Once the Acadia Gateway facility is open, Gateway Express buses can be used to help with overcrowding on the Campground route. Dispatchers will be able to direct Gateway buses to carry overflow groups to and from individual campgrounds as needed.

Island Explorer partners should consider the creation of designated bus stops along the Campground route. Bus stops on Route 3 are discussed in Chapter 9.

Figure 7.1 Restructured Campground Route Timetable – Summer 2011

H	F	E	D	C	B	A	A	B	C	D	E	F	
BAR- CADIA	WOOD- LANDS	MT DES NRRWS	HADLY POINT	BR HBR CMPGRD	VISITR CENT	VILLAGE GREEN	VILLAGE GREEN	VISITR CENT	BR HBR CMPGRD	HADLY POINT	MT DES NRRWS	BAR- CADIA	WOOD- LANDS
6:40	6:45	6:50	6:55	7:03	7:10	7:20	7:30	7:40	7:45	7:50	7:55	8:05	8:15
8:10	8:15	8:20	8:25	8:33	8:40	8:50	9:00	9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:35	9:45
8:40	8:45	8:50	8:55	9:03	9:10	9:20	9:30	9:40	9:45	9:50	9:55	10:05	10:10
9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:33	9:40	9:50	10:00	10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:35	10:40
9:40	9:45	9:50	9:55	10:03	10:10	10:20	10:30	10:40	10:45	10:50	10:55	11:05	11:15
10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:33	10:40	10:50	11:00	11:10	11:15	11:20	11:25	11:35	11:40
10:40	10:45	10:50	10:55	11:03	11:10	11:20	11:30	11:40	11:45	11:50	11:55	12:05	12:10
11:10	11:15	11:20	11:25	11:33	11:40	11:50	12:00	12:10	12:15	12:20	12:25	12:35	12:45
11:40	11:45	11:50	11:55	12:03	12:10	12:20	12:30	12:40	12:45	12:50	12:55	1:05	1:10
12:10	12:15	12:20	12:25	12:33	12:40	12:50	1:00	1:10	1:15	1:20	1:25	1:35	1:40
12:40	12:45	12:50	12:55	1:03	1:10	1:20	1:30	1:40	1:45	1:50	1:55	2:05	2:15
1:10	1:15	1:20	1:25	1:33	1:40	1:50	2:00	2:10	2:15	2:20	2:25	2:35	2:40
1:40	1:45	1:50	1:55	2:03	2:10	2:20	2:30	2:40	2:45	2:50	2:55	3:05	3:10
2:10	2:15	2:20	2:25	2:33	2:40	2:50	3:00	3:10	3:15	3:20	3:25	3:35	3:45
2:40	2:45	2:50	2:55	3:03	3:10	3:20	3:30	3:40	3:45	3:50	3:55	4:05	4:10
3:10	3:15	3:20	3:25	3:33	3:40	3:50	4:00	4:10	4:15	4:20	4:25	4:35	4:40
3:40	3:45	3:50	3:55	4:03	4:10	4:20	4:30	4:40	4:45	4:50	4:55	5:05	5:15
4:10	4:15	4:20	4:25	4:33	4:40	4:50	5:00	5:10	5:15	5:20	5:25	5:35	5:40
4:40	4:45	4:50	4:55	5:03	5:10	5:20	5:30	5:40	5:45	5:50	5:55	6:05	6:10
5:10	5:15	5:20	5:25	5:33	5:40	5:50	6:00	6:10	6:15	6:20	6:25	6:35	6:45
5:40	5:45	5:50	5:55	6:03	6:10	6:20	6:30	6:40	6:45	6:50	6:55	7:05	7:10
6:10	6:15	6:20	6:25	6:33	6:40	6:50	7:00	7:10	7:15	7:20	7:25	7:35	7:40
6:40	6:45	6:50	6:55	7:03	7:10	7:20	7:30	7:40	7:45	7:50	7:55	8:05	8:15
7:10	7:15	7:20	7:25	7:33	7:40	7:50	8:00	8:10	8:15	8:20	8:25	8:35	8:40
7:40	7:45	7:50	7:55	8:03	8:10	8:20	8:30	8:40	8:45	8:50	8:55	9:05	9:10
8:10	8:15	8:20	8:25	8:33	8:40	8:50	9:00	9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:35	9:45
8:40	8:45	8:50	8:55	9:03	9:10	9:20	9:30	9:40	9:45	9:50	9:55	10:05	10:10
9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:33	9:40	9:50	10:00	10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:35	
9:40	9:45	9:50	9:55	10:03	10:10	10:20	10:30	10:40	10:45	10:50	10:55	11:05	
10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:33	10:40	10:50	11:00	11:10	11:15	11:20	11:25	11:35	

This timetable assumes operation of separate buses to serve a new intermodal facility and other locations in Trenton.

Figure 7.2 Restructured Campground Route Timetable – Fall 2011

TWO-BUS OPTION WITH 60-MINUTE HEADWAYS

H	F	E	D	C	B	A	A	B	C	D	E	F			
BAR- CADIA	WOOD- LANDS	DES NRRWS	HADLY POINT	BR CMPGRD	HBR CENT	VISITR FERRY	CAT GREEN	VILLAGE GREEN	CAT FERRY	VISITR CENT	BR CMPGRD	HBR POINT	DES NRRWS	BAR- CADIA	WOOD- LANDS
8:10	8:15	8:20	8:25	8:33	8:40	-	8:50	9:00	-	9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:35	9:45
9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:33	9:40	-	9:50	10:00	-	10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:35	10:40
9:40	9:45	9:50	9:55	10:03	10:10	-	10:20	11:00	-	11:10	11:15	11:20	11:25	11:35	11:45
10:40	10:45	10:50	10:55	11:03	11:10	-	11:20	12:00	-	12:10	12:15	12:20	12:25	12:35	12:40 p
11:40	11:45	11:50	11:55	12:03	12:10	-	12:20	1:00	-	1:10	1:15	1:20	1:25	1:35	1:45 p
12:40	12:45	12:50	12:55	1:03	1:10	-	1:20	2:00	-	2:10	2:15	2:20	2:25	2:35	2:40 p
1:40	1:45	1:50	1:55	2:03	2:10	2:15	2:20	3:00	-	3:10	3:15	3:20	3:25	3:35	3:45 p
2:40	2:45	2:50	2:55	3:03	3:10	3:15	3:20	4:00	4:05	4:10	4:15	4:20	4:25	4:35	4:40 p
3:40	3:45	3:50	3:55	4:03	4:10	-	4:20	5:00	-	5:10	5:15	5:20	5:25	5:35	5:45 p
4:40	4:45	4:50	4:55	5:03	5:10	-	5:20	6:00	-	6:10	6:15	6:20	6:25	6:35	6:40 p
5:40	5:45	5:50	5:55	6:03	6:10	-	6:20	7:00	-	7:10	7:15	7:20	7:25	7:35	7:45 p
6:40	6:45	6:50	6:55	7:03	7:10	-	7:20	8:00	-	8:10	8:15	8:20	8:25	8:35	
7:40	7:45	7:50	7:55	8:03	8:10	-	8:20	9:00	-	9:10	9:15	9:20	9:25	9:35	

This timetable assumes operation of separate buses to serve a new intermodal facility and other locations in Trenton.

7.1.2 Day Visitors

Day visitors who park at a new Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton will need fast, direct, and frequent shuttle service between the Trenton facility and the Bar Harbor Village Green. They will also need easy access to destinations in Acadia National Park. Car-free links between Trenton and Southwest Harbor and Northeast Harbor are discussed in Sections 7.6 and 7.7.

Figure 7.3 presents a draft timetable for express shuttle service between the gateway center and Bar Harbor. This schedule uses three buses to provide 30-minute headways. Because of reduced traffic congestion in the fall, it should be possible to offer the same 30-minute headways in September and October with just two buses. Draft fall timetables are presented in Figure 7.4. With both timetables, the frequency of service varies somewhat during evening commute hours.

Figure 7.3 Gateway Express – Summer 2011

A	B	C	D	E	F	D	C	B	A
ACADIA	TRENTON	HULLS	VLLG	arrive	depart	VLLG	HULLS	TRENTON	ACADIA
GATEWAY	IGA	COVE	GREEN	JAX	JAX	GREEN	COVE	IGA	GATEWAY
				LAB	LAB				
6:20 a	6:23 a	-	6:40 a	6:45 a	6:45 a	6:50 a	-	-	7:10 a
6:50 a	6:53 a	-	7:10 a	7:15 a	7:15 a	7:20 a	-	-	7:40 a
7:20 a	7:23 a	-	7:40 a	7:45 a	7:45 a	7:50 a	-	-	8:10 a
8:00 a	8:03 a	-	8:20 a	8:25 a	8:25 a	8:30 a	-	-	8:50 a
8:20 a	8:23 a	8:40 a	8:50 a	-	-	9:00 a	9:10 a	9:25 a	9:30 a
8:50 a	8:53 a	9:10 a	9:20 a	-	-	9:30 a	9:40 a	9:55 a	10:00 a
9:20 a	9:23 a	9:40 a	9:50 a	-	-	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:25 a	10:30 a
9:50 a	9:53 a	10:10 a	10:20 a	-	-	10:30 a	10:40 a	10:55 a	11:00 a
10:20 a	10:23 a	10:40 a	10:50 a	-	-	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:25 a	11:30 a
10:50 a	10:53 a	11:10 a	11:20 a	-	-	11:30 a	11:40 a	11:55 a	12:00 p
11:20 a	11:23 a	11:40 a	11:50 a	-	-	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:25 p	12:30 p
11:50 a	11:53 a	12:10 p	12:20 p	-	-	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:55 p	1:00 p
12:20 p	12:23 p	12:40 p	12:50 p	-	-	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:25 p	1:30 p
12:50 p	12:53 p	1:10 p	1:20 p	-	-	1:30 p	1:40 p	1:55 p	2:00 p
1:20 p	1:23 p	1:40 p	1:50 p	-	-	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:25 p	2:30 p
1:50 p	1:53 p	2:10 p	2:20 p	-	-	2:30 p	2:40 p	2:55 p	3:00 p
2:20 p	2:23 p	2:40 p	2:50 p	-	-	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:30 p	3:35 p
					3:05 p	-	-	R	3:40 p
2:50 p	2:53 p	3:10 p	3:20 p	-	-	3:30 p	3:40 p	4:00 p	4:05 p
					3:35 p	-	-	R	4:10 p
3:20 p	3:23 p	3:40 p	3:50 p	-	-	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:25 p	4:30 p
					4:10 p	-	-	R	4:45 p
3:50 p	3:53 p	4:10 p	4:20 p	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:50 p	5:10 p	5:15 p
4:20 p	4:23 p	4:40 p	4:50 p	4:55 p	5:00 p	5:10 p	5:20 p	5:40 p	5:45 p
4:50 p	4:53 p	5:10 p	5:20 p	5:25 p	5:30 p	5:40 p	5:50 p	6:10 p	6:15 p
5:20 p	5:23 p	5:40 p	5:50 p	-	-	6:00 p	6:10 p	6:25 p	6:30 p
5:50 p	5:53 p	6:10 p	6:20 p	-	-	6:30 p	6:40 p	6:55 p	7:00 p
6:20 p	6:23 p	6:40 p	6:50 p	-	-	7:00 p	7:10 p	7:25 p	7:30 p
6:50 p	6:53 p	7:10 p	7:20 p	-	-	7:30 p	7:40 p	7:55 p	8:00 p
7:20 p	7:23 p	7:40 p	7:50 p	-	-	8:00 p	8:10 p	8:25 p	8:30 p
7:50 p	7:53 p	8:10 p	8:20 p	-	-	8:30 p	8:40 p	8:55 p	9:00 p
8:20 p	8:23 p	8:40 p	8:50 p	-	-	9:00 p	9:10 p	9:30 p	9:35 p
8:50 p	8:53 p	9:10 p	9:20 p	-	-	9:30 p	9:40 p	10:00 p	10:05 p

The first four inbound trips in the morning would be available for fare-paying commuters only.

Figure 7.4 Gateway Express – Fall 2011

A	B	C	D	E	F	D	C	B	A
ACADIA	TRENTON	HULLS	VLLG	arrive	depart	VLLG	HULLS	TRENTON	ACADIA
GATEWAY	IGA	COVE	GREEN	JAX	JAX	GREEN	COVE	IGA	GATEWAY
				LAB	LAB				
6:20 a	6:23 a	-	6:40 a	6:45 a	6:45 a	6:50 a	-	-	7:10 a
6:50 a	6:53 a	-	7:10 a	7:15 a	7:15 a	7:20 a	-	-	7:40 a
7:20 a	7:23 a	-	7:40 a	7:45 a	7:45 a	7:50 a	-	-	8:10 a
8:00 a	8:03 a	-	8:20 a	8:25 a	8:25 a	8:30 a	-	-	8:50 a
8:30 a	R	8:45 a	8:55 a	-	-	9:00 a	9:10 a	R	9:25 a
9:00 a	R	9:15 a	9:25 a	-	-	9:30 a	9:40 a	R	9:55 a
9:30 a	R	9:45 a	9:55 a	-	-	10:00 a	10:10 a	R	10:25 a
10:00 a	R	10:15 a	10:25 a	-	-	10:30 a	10:40 a	R	10:55 a
10:30 a	R	10:45 a	10:55 a	-	-	11:00 a	11:10 a	R	11:25 a
11:00 a	R	11:15 a	11:25 a	-	-	11:30 a	11:40 a	R	11:55 a
11:30 a	R	11:45 a	11:55 a	-	-	12:00 p	12:10 p	R	12:25 p
12:00 p	R	12:15 p	12:25 p	-	-	12:30 p	12:40 p	R	12:55 p
12:30 p	R	12:45 p	12:55 p	-	-	1:00 p	1:10 p	R	1:25 p
1:00 p	R	1:15 p	1:25 p	-	-	1:30 p	1:40 p	R	1:55 p
1:30 p	R	1:45 p	1:55 p	-	-	2:00 p	2:10 p	R	2:25 p
2:00 p	R	2:15 p	2:25 p	-	-	2:30 p	2:40 p	R	2:55 p
2:30 p	R	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:00 p	3:05 p	3:10 p	3:20 p	R	3:35 p
3:00 p	R	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:40 p	-	R	4:05 p
3:40 p	R	3:55 p	4:05 p	4:10 p	4:15 p	4:20 p	-	R	4:45 p
4:15 p	R	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:45 p	4:50 p	4:55 p	5:05 p	R	5:20 p
4:55 p	R	5:10 p	5:20 p	5:25 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:45 p	R	6:00 p
5:30 p	R	5:45 p	5:55 p	6:00 p	6:00 p	6:05 p	6:15 p	R	6:30 p
6:10 p	R	6:25 p	6:35 p	6:40 p	6:40 p	6:45 p	6:55 p	R	7:10 p

The first four inbound buses in the morning would be available for fare-paying commuters only.

These draft timetables show summer service operating between 8:20 a.m. and 10:05 p.m., with the last outbound bus departing Bar Harbor at 9:30 p.m. People traveling to the Gateway facility after 9:30 p.m. would be able to board Campground route buses. The fall timetable shows the last evening departure from Bar Harbor at 6:35 p.m. Campground route departures in the fall would also be available at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Four early morning trips between Trenton and Bar Harbor would be reserved for fare-paying commuters, as described in the following section.

7.1.3 Park and Ride Commuters

Potential users of a Trenton-Bar Harbor commuter service include Jackson Lab employees, seasonal workers who travel to Bar Harbor for tourist-related employment, and others who work in Bar Harbor throughout the winter. There may also be some demand from workers who live in employer-owned housing located along the route of the bus.

The main incentives for commuting by bus during the summer season are the limited availability of in-town parking and the high cost of gasoline. Inconvenient parking arrangements at Jackson Lab also provide reasons for people to switch to a shuttle service.

It may be possible to initiate limited commuter park and ride service before construction of a commuter parking lot at the Trenton intermodal site. One possibility would be to use parking spaces at the nearby Display Concepts building, which is currently leased by Jackson Laboratory. Commuter parking could move to a new Downeast Transportation maintenance facility, and then eventually to the Acadia Gateway Center. When the gateway center is open, commuters will have the added benefit of additional midday trips during the summer and fall.

A draft timetable for year-round commuter service between Trenton and Bar Harbor is presented in Figure 7.5.

Figure 7.5 Year-round Trenton-Bar Harbor Commuter Timetable

A	B	C	D	E	F	D	C	B	A
ACADIA	TRENTON	HULLS	VLLG	arrive	depart	VLLG	HULLS	TRENTON	ACADIA
GATEWAY	IGA	COVE	GREEN	JAX	JAX	GREEN	COVE	IGA	GATEWAY
				LAB	LAB				
6:20 a	6:23 a	-	6:40 a	6:45 a	6:45 a	6:50 a	-	-	7:10 a
6:50 a	6:53 a	-	7:10 a	7:15 a	7:15 a	7:20 a	-	-	7:40 a
7:20 a	7:23 a	-	7:40 a	7:45 a	7:45 a	7:50 a	-	-	8:10 a
8:00 a	8:03 a	-	8:20 a	8:25 a	8:25 a	8:30 a	-	-	8:50 a
2:25 p	-	-	2:50 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:10 p	-	R	3:30 p
3:00 p	-	-	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:40 p	-	R	4:00 p
3:30 p	-	-	3:55 p	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:15 p	-	R	4:35 p
4:00 p	-	-	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:45 p	-	R	5:05 p
4:35 p	-	-	5:00 p	5:05 p	5:15 p	5:20 p	-	R	5:40 p

R Stops on request

Downeast Transportation operates free seasonal Island Explorer buses, plus a variety of regular year-round transit services. There are a number of reasons why express commuter services should be offered as part of the transit agency's year-round program.

Most importantly, this will allow DTI to charge a fare for people who board early-morning inbound buses to Bar Harbor. Receipts from monthly passes and multiple-ride commuter tickets will be needed to support the operation of a year-round commuter service.

The fare policy for commuter service should be consistent throughout the calendar year. This will avoid the confusion of switching from free service in the summer and fall to fare service in the winter and spring.

Monthly passes and subscription fares can also help ensure participation from local employers. Business owners may choose to underwrite commuter costs for their employees. Without a fee structure, employers might be tempted to take a "free ride," relying on the National Park Service and Jackson Lab to cover the cost of transporting their workers.

Structuring Trenton commuter service as a program separate from the seasonal Island Explorer should also make it easier for DTI to qualify for FTA JARC commuter grant funding to help pay for operation of the service.

Inbound commuter trips will operate before most visitors arrive for day trips to the area. Inbound commuters who board later in the day will be able to ride for free. No attempt should be made to collect fares from workers who ride Island Explorer buses during the rest of the day. A possible exception might be buses that make special afternoon stops at Jackson Laboratory.

It should be noted that separate commuter buses are likely to be needed for the afternoon peak period during the summer months, even when Gateway shuttle service has been added. Seats on regular Gateway Express buses will be needed for visitors returning to Trenton.

7.1.4 Funding Strategy for Commuter Operations

If commuter operations were to begin in FY 2008, the annual cost to operate this service would equal roughly \$90,000. If the service is used by an average of 60 people a day paying a fare of \$15 per week, fare box receipts should total about \$45,000 per year.

Half of the resulting \$45,000 deficit could be covered by an FTA grant from the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program. The remaining \$23,000 could be provided by year-round businesses (\$16,000) and Island Explorer partners (\$8,000).

Prior to completion of the Trenton intermodal facility, commuter trips could be operated using buses from the expanded Island Explorer fleet. Some additional year-round equipment may be needed when a Gateway Express shuttle is added to serve a new Trenton intermodal facility in FY 2011.

7.2 Eden Street

The Eden Street route provides productive and efficient service in its current configuration. Eden Street buses often carry more than 1,400 riders a day during the summer season. During the summer of 2005, they generated an average of 48 rides per service hour. There are, however, a few service issues that could be addressed to improve the Eden Street service.

1. Eden Street buses operate every 30 minutes during the morning and early afternoon. Fifteen-minute headways are offered after 3:15 p.m. The service would attract more riders if it operated every 15 minutes throughout the day.
2. Because the route is configured as a one-way loop, some passengers spend extra time on the bus waiting to get to their stop. This situation could be addressed by developing bus stops on both sides of Eden Street.
3. The Eden Street timetable allows only four minutes of layover at the Village Green between trips. Traffic delays and passenger boardings can place significant pressure on bus drivers. Much of this scheduling pressure is caused by diversions to serve the Eyrie Lodge and the main courtyard of the Wonder View Motel.
4. Guests staying at Eden Street hotels must travel to the Bar Harbor Village Green and transfer to other routes to reach Acadia National Park. If the route could be extended to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, this would give Eden Street riders more direct access to the National Park.

7.2.1 All-day 15-minute Service

All-day 15-minute Eden Street service could be offered simply by adding a second bus to the route during the morning and early afternoon. The first bus starts at 6:45 a.m. The second bus could be added at 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. This would add between seven and eight hours of service per day, or between 490 and 560 hours for the summer season.

The main obstacle to making this change is cost and the question of who would pay for this increased service. The cost to operate a second morning bus would equal roughly \$28,000 per year. The six hotels that receive front-door service on this route currently provide \$12,000 a year in direct financial support. Contributions from individual hotels would need to more than triple to offset the cost of increased morning service.

While some hotel guests would benefit from more frequent daytime service, there may not be sufficient motivation for hotel owners to pay for additional morning trips.

7.2.2 New Eden Street Bus Stops

One of the strengths of the Eden Street route is the fact that these buses offer front-door stops at individual hotels. While this increases customer convenience, it causes some delay as buses exit and enter traffic on Eden Street. It also results in a one-way loop configuration in part because of a need to minimize left-hand turns against heavy traffic.

This situation could be improved by developing new bus stop turnouts in key locations along the Eden Street route. The privately funded bus stop at the Bar Harbor Motel provides a good example of how these stops could be designed. Bus stops on both sides of Eden Street would be essential if the route is ever to be extended to Hulls Cove, as discussed below.

The first priority should be the addition of a bus stop turnout in front of the Acadia Inn. Eden Street buses often experience delays trying to fit under the canopy at this hotel. A turnout is also needed near the intersection of Eden Street and Cleftstone Road. This stop could also serve the Eyrie Lodge, if a decision is made to eliminate this off-route diversion.

It might also be possible to develop bus stop turnouts in front of the College of the Atlantic and the Atlantic Oakes. Landscaping in these locations may present significant challenges. Bus stop issues are discussed more fully in Chapter 9.

7.2.3 Streamlined Eden Street Service

The Eden Street route includes a major diversion to serve the Eyrie Lodge and the main courtyard of the Wonder View Motel. While this configuration has worked in the past, it places considerable pressure on bus drivers who struggle to maintain consistent on-time service, especially when traffic and passenger loads are heavy.

The Eden Street route could be streamlined by eliminating front-door stops at the Eyrie Lodge and the Wonder View Motel. Eyrie Lodge guests could be served by a bus stop near the intersection of Eden Street and Cleftstone Road, although many motel guests will be reluctant to walk to this location because of the distance and the steep grade.

Wonder View guests could be served by adding a stop for inbound riders in the triangular turnout at the Wonder View driveway entrance. Outbound Eden Street buses could perhaps offer a stop at the crosswalk across from the motel entrance. This would require stopping in the main roadway to let off riders, something that is sometimes requested currently by Eden Street bus riders.

7.2.4 *Extending the Eden Street Route to Hulls Cove*

Extending the Eden Street route to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center would give hotel guests more direct access to some Acadia National Park destinations. This change might become more relevant if the Visitor Center becomes a hub for bus routes to the Park Loop Road and Cadillac Mountain. Extending the Eden Street route to Hulls Cove might also reduce some of the overcrowding on Campground buses caused by people traveling between Hulls Cove and the Village Green.

There are a number of arguments against this change.

1. It would result in increased cost. Two buses would be needed to maintain 30-minute service on the route, and three buses would be required for 15-minute service. During the evening the route could be shortened, with two buses continuing to provide 15-minute service on the existing route segment.
2. The Hulls Cove link might be somewhat redundant once Trenton Gateway Express buses have been added. Gateway buses will provide extra capacity between the Bar Harbor Village Green and the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.
3. An extended route would require that all Eden Street bus stops be moved curbside.

7.3 Sand Beach

Sand Beach is another very productive bus route. The service averages more than 30 riders per hour and more than 500 riders per day. There are a number of service design questions for the future of the service:

1. What is the best way to handle extra demand? Should the frequency of the service be increased to every 20 minutes? Or should the operators continue the current practice of running extra buses on the 30-minute schedule on the days they are needed?
2. If a new bus route is added to the Park Loop Road, can changes be made to streamline the bus route between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Ocean Drive? Can the trailhead for Cadillac Mountain North Ridge be eliminated from the Sand Beach route and be served instead by Loop Road buses?
3. Can Sand Beach and Blackwoods buses meet at Sieur de Monts? Can daytime Blackwoods riders transfer to the Sand Beach bus to reach the Bar Harbor Village Green?
4. Could the Sand Beach route be extended to include stops at Blackwoods Campground?

There are at least three arguments against switching to 20-minute service on the Sand Beach route:

1. Scheduled 20-minute service will add extra cost every day throughout the summer season. The current practice involves adding unscheduled buses only on the days they are needed.
2. Twenty-minute service may cause congestion problems at the Bar Harbor Village Green. There is room for no more than four buses at a time along Kennebec Place. With 30-minute headways, it is easier to schedule buses to avoid overcrowding.
3. With 30-minute service it is easier to use Sieur de Monts as a mini transit hub and to provide timed connections with Blackwoods buses that operate every 30 minutes.
4. While there has been some overcrowding of Sand Beach buses in the past, two proposed changes may relieve some of that pressure. Some Campground route riders will likely switch to Loop Road buses at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center to reach Sand Beach. And some Blackwoods campers will likely use the Loop Road bus to return to their campsites from Sand Beach.

There are a number of arguments for and against extending the Sand Beach bus to Blackwoods Campground. This idea introduces two potential problems:

1. It will take Sand Beach riders about eighteen minutes longer to travel from Sand Beach to the Village Green.
2. There is some risk that Sand Beach buses will already be full when they depart the Fabri picnic area, leaving no room for Blackwoods campers to board in Otter Creek. This potential problem could be addressed by keeping an extra bus available for overflow demand.

At the same time, including Blackwoods Campground on the Sand Beach route offers some compelling features:

1. It avoids the need for Blackwoods passengers to transfer at Sieur de Mont for daytime trips to and from downtown Bar Harbor.
2. It avoids bus congestion at Sieur de Monts that would otherwise occur when Blackwoods, inbound Sand Beach, and outbound Sand Beach buses converge at this location.
3. It avoids problems in the fall that would result if Blackwoods and Sand Beach buses operate with different headways.
4. It results in consistent 30-minute service on the Sand Beach route throughout the fall season, which will make it easier to accommodate demand from cruise ship passengers.
5. It results in consistent 30-minute service for Blackwoods Campground throughout the summer and fall.

6. It results in a direct ride for people traveling from Sand Beach to Blackwoods Campground, and a 10-minute transfer at Sieur de Mont for people heading from Blackwoods to Sand Beach.

Figure 7.6 presents a draft Sand Beach timetable that uses three buses to provide 30-minute service on a combined Sand Beach / Blackwoods route. The proposed service no longer serves the Cadillac Mountain North Ridge trailhead, leaving this for Park Loop Road buses. Instead, the revised route adds an inbound stop at Sieur de Monts Springs.

Figure 7.6 shows Sand Beach service beginning with an 8:05 a.m. departure from the Bar Harbor Village Green and an 8:25 arrival at Sand Beach. There may be an argument for starting this service earlier in the morning. This will depend in part on the scheduling of ranger programs at Sand Beach. If the National Park Service offers a 7:30 a.m. ranger program, then the Sand Beach bus could begin at 7:05 a.m. This may present some work shift issues, with a possible need to divide one of the shifts to avoid a ten and a half hour workday.

This route would offer direct links between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Blackwoods Campground in the evening. A timetable for fall service is presented in Figure 7.7.

7.4 Blackwoods Campground

Current schedules use one bus to provide hourly service on the Blackwoods route. The service is relatively inefficient because it includes ten minutes of layover time at both ends of the route. The route was designed this way to offer a consistent, easy-to-remember schedule. It became clear during the initial 1999 Island Explorer season that it is not possible to use one bus to provide reliable round trip service to Blackwoods Campground within a 30-minute schedule window.

The Blackwoods route needs more frequent service. People who stay at Blackwoods Campground currently must wait 60 minutes between buses. Ridership on Route 1 Campground buses increased significantly when service was increased from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes. Blackwoods service likewise needs to increase to every 30 minutes to provide improved convenience for people staying at the National Park campground.

If Sand Beach buses can provide both inbound and outbound stops at Sieur de Monts Springs, then it should be possible for Blackwoods riders to transfer to Sand Beach buses at Sieur de Mont for travel to Bar Harbor and to Sand Beach. If Blackwoods buses turn at Sieur de Mont without continuing into Bar Harbor, then the frequency of Blackwoods service can be increased to every 30 minutes without adding a second bus.

A better alternative, as discussed above, might be to extend the route of the Sand Beach route to include a stop at Blackwoods Campground. Trade-offs for this option are discussed in Section 7.3.

Figure 7.6 Combined Sand Beach /Blackwoods Summer Service

VILLAGE GREEN	SR DE MONTS	SAND BEACH	FABRI PICNIC	BLACK- WOODS	SR DE MONTS	VILLAGE GREEN
8:05 a	8:15 a	8:25 a	8:35 a	8:50 a	9:05 a	9:13 a
9:05 a	9:15 a	9:25 a	9:35 a	9:50 a	10:05 a	10:13 a
9:35 a	9:45 a	9:55 a	10:05 a	10:20 a	10:35 a	10:43 a
10:05 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a	10:50 a	11:05 a	11:13 a
10:35 a	10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a	11:20 a	11:35 a	11:43 a
11:05 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a	11:50 a	12:05 p	12:13 p
11:35 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p	12:20 p	12:35 p	12:43 p
12:05 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p	12:50 p	1:05 p	1:13 p
12:35 p	12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p	1:20 p	1:35 p	1:43 p
1:05 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p	1:50 p	2:05 p	2:13 p
1:35 p	1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p	2:20 p	2:35 p	2:43 p
2:05 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p	2:50 p	3:05 p	3:13 p
2:35 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:20 p	3:35 p	3:43 p
3:05 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p	3:50 p	4:05 p	4:13 p
3:35 p	3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p	4:20 p	4:35 p	4:43 p
4:05 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p	4:50 p	5:05 p	5:13 p
4:35 p	4:45 p	4:55 p	5:05 p	5:20 p	5:35 p	5:43 p
5:05 p	5:15 p	5:25 p	5:35 p	5:50 p	6:05 p	6:13 p
5:35 p	5:45 p	5:55 p	6:05 p	6:20 p	6:35 p	6:43 p
6:30 p	-	-	-	6:50 p	-	7:05 p
7:15 p	-	-	-	7:35 p	-	7:50 p
8:00 p	-	-	-	8:20 p	-	8:35 p
8:45 p	-	-	-	9:05 p	-	9:20 p

Figure 7.7 Combined Sand Beach / Blackwoods Fall Service

VILLAGE GREEN	SR DE MONTS	SAND BEACH	FABRI PICNIC	BLACK-WOODS	SR DE MONTS	VILLAGE GREEN
9:05 a	9:15 a	9:25 a	9:35 a	9:50 a	10:05 a	10:13 a
9:35 a	9:45 a	9:55 a	10:05 a	10:20 a	10:35 a	10:43 a
10:05 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a	10:50 a	11:05 a	11:13 a
10:35 a	10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a	11:20 a	11:35 a	11:43 a
11:05 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a	11:50 a	12:05 p	12:13 p
11:35 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p	12:20 p	12:35 p	12:43 p
12:05 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p	12:50 p	1:05 p	1:13 p
12:35 p	12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p	1:20 p	1:35 p	1:43 p
1:05 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p	1:50 p	2:05 p	2:13 p
1:35 p	1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p	2:20 p	2:35 p	2:43 p
2:05 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p	2:50 p	3:05 p	3:13 p
2:35 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:20 p	3:35 p	3:43 p
3:05 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p	3:50 p	4:05 p	4:13 p
3:35 p	3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p	4:20 p	4:35 p	4:43 p
4:05 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p	4:50 p	5:05 p	5:13 p
5:05 p	5:15 p	5:25 p	5:35 p	5:50 p	6:05 p	6:13 p
6:30 p	-	-	-	6:50 p	-	7:05 p
7:15 p	-	-	-	7:35 p	-	7:50 p
8:00 p	-	-	-	8:20 p	-	8:35 p

As indicated earlier, bus operators will need to be alert to potential overcrowding on Sand Beach buses. On sunny weekdays in early August, there may not be enough room on Sand Beach buses for people who wish to board at Blackwoods and elsewhere in Otter Creek.

7.5 Jordan Pond

Jordan Pond buses currently provide hourly service between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor via Jordan Pond House. The Jordan Pond-Bar Harbor segment is supplemented by a van and bike trailer as needed in the afternoon to transport bicycles that will not fit on Island Explorer bike racks.

During 2005 and 2006, three buses were used to operate Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain routes. Buses that departed the Bar Harbor Village Green on the Jordan Pond route returned to Bar Harbor via Brown Mountain. Buses that departed Bar Harbor on the Brown Mountain route returned to Bar Harbor via Jordan Pond. This interline arrangement allowed excess time available in Jordan Pond schedules to be shared with Brown Mountain, where schedules were especially tight.

The main problem with this arrangement is that it results in limited hourly service between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond House. Jordan Pond is a key destination in Acadia National Park. The current arrangement provides only 28 seats per hour for people traveling between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond. A revised service plan is needed to increase the seating capacity for travel between these two locations.

The most straightforward solution is to use three buses to provide 30-minute service between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor. This requires changes in the Brown Mountain schedule. A single bus cannot provide reliable on-time Brown Mountain service within a 60-minute schedule window. The Brown Mountain bus might need to operate every 75 minutes. The resulting schedule will be more difficult to remember, and it will disrupt timed connections with the Southwest Harbor bus at MDI High School.

An alternate strategy would be to separate Bar Harbor-Jordan Pond service from Jordan Pond-Northeast Harbor. Two buses could be used to provide 30-minute service between Bar Harbor and Jordan Pond. These buses would have ten minutes of layover time at both ends of the route. Two different buses could be used to provide hourly service linking Northeast Harbor with Jordan Pond and with Bar Harbor via the Brown Mountain route.

Figure 7.8 presents a draft timetable for 30-minute bus service on the existing Jordan Pond route linking Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor. This schedule allows 10 minutes of layover time at each end of the route. There is some danger that this will be insufficient on trips when drivers must wait for large crowds to get on and off buses. One way to relieve time pressure on the route is to create a new bus stop at Bubble Pond that eliminates the need for outbound buses to travel through the congested bubble Pond parking lot.

Figure 7.9 shows 30-minute headways between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Jordan Pond. The main argument against this approach is the resulting disruption of through travel between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor. The current Jordan Pond route configuration is popular with visitors and residents and is quite productive.

Figure 7.8 Existing Jordan Pond Route with Three Buses

JORDAN POND - summer

VILLAGE GREEN	BUBBLE ROCK	JORDAN POND	SEAL HARBOR	NEH PIER	NEH PIER	SEAL HARBOR	JORDAN POND	BUBBLE POND	VILLAGE GREEN
9:15 a	9:25 a	9:35 a	9:40 a	9:50 a	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a
9:45 a	9:55 a	10:05 a	10:10 a	10:20 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a
10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a	10:40 a	10:50 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a
10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a	11:10 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p
11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a	11:40 a	11:50 a	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p
11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p	12:10 p	12:20 p	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p
12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p	12:40 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p
12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p	1:10 p	1:20 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p
1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p	1:40 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p
1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p	2:10 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p
2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p	2:40 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p
2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:10 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p
3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p	3:40 p	3:50 p	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p
3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p	4:10 p	4:20 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:45 p	4:55 p	5:05 p
4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p	4:40 p	4:50 p	5:00 p	5:10 p	5:15 p	5:25 p	5:35 p
4:45 p	4:55 p	5:05 p	5:10 p	5:20 p	5:30 p	5:40 p	5:45 p	5:55 p	6:05 p
5:15 p	5:25 p	5:35 p	5:40 p	5:50 p	6:00 p	6:10 p	6:15 p	6:25 p	6:35 p
5:45 p	5:55 p	6:05 p	6:10 p	6:20 p	6:30 p	6:40 p	6:45 p	6:55 p	7:05 p
6:15 p	6:25 p	6:35 p	6:40 p	6:50 p	7:00 p	7:10 p	7:15 p	7:25 p	7:35 p
7:45 p	7:55 p	8:05 p	8:10 p	8:20 p	8:30 p	8:40 p	8:45 p	8:55 p	9:05 p
9:15 p	9:25 p	9:35 p	9:40 p	9:50 p					

JORDAN POND - fall

VILLAGE GREEN	BUBBLE ROCK	JORDAN POND	SEAL HARBOR	NEH PIER	NEH PIER	SEAL HARBOR	JORDAN POND	BUBBLE POND	VILLAGE GREEN
9:15 a	9:25 a	9:35 a	9:40 a	9:50 a	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a
9:45 a	9:55 a	10:05 a	10:10 a	10:20 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a
10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a	10:40 a	10:50 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a
10:45 a	10:55 a	11:05 a	11:10 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p
11:15 a	11:25 a	11:35 a	11:40 a	11:50 a	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p
11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p	12:10 p	12:20 p	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p
12:15 p	12:25 p	12:35 p	12:40 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p
12:45 p	12:55 p	1:05 p	1:10 p	1:20 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p
1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p	1:40 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p
1:45 p	1:55 p	2:05 p	2:10 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p
2:15 p	2:25 p	2:35 p	2:40 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p
2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:10 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p
3:15 p	3:25 p	3:35 p	3:40 p	3:50 p	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p
3:45 p	3:55 p	4:05 p	4:10 p	4:20 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:45 p	4:55 p	5:05 p
4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p	4:40 p	4:50 p	5:00 p	5:10 p	5:15 p	5:25 p	5:35 p
4:45 p	4:55 p	5:05 p	5:10 p	5:20 p	5:30 p	5:40 p	5:45 p	5:55 p	6:05 p

Figure 7.9 Shortened Jordan Pond Route with Two Buses

JORDAN POND - summer

VILLAGE GREEN	BUBBLE POND	BUBBLE ROCK	JORDAN POND	JORDAN POND	BUBBLE ROCK	BUBBLE POND	VILLAGE GREEN
9:15 a	9:25 a	9:30 a	9:35 a	9:45 a	9:49 a	9:55 a	10:05 a
9:45 a	9:55 a	10:00 a	10:05 a	10:15 a	10:19 a	10:25 a	10:35 a
10:15 a	10:25 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:45 a	10:49 a	10:55 a	11:05 a
10:45 a	10:55 a	11:00 a	11:05 a	11:15 a	11:19 a	11:25 a	11:35 a
11:15 a	11:25 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:45 a	11:49 a	11:55 a	12:05 p
11:45 a	11:55 a	12:00 p	12:05 p	12:15 p	12:19 p	12:25 p	12:35 p
12:15 p	12:25 p	12:30 p	12:35 p	12:45 p	12:49 p	12:55 p	1:05 p
12:45 p	12:55 p	1:00 p	1:05 p	1:15 p	1:19 p	1:25 p	1:35 p
1:15 p	1:25 p	1:30 p	1:35 p	1:45 p	1:49 p	1:55 p	2:05 p
1:45 p	1:55 p	2:00 p	2:05 p	2:15 p	2:19 p	2:25 p	2:35 p
2:15 p	2:25 p	2:30 p	2:35 p	2:45 p	2:49 p	2:55 p	3:05 p
2:45 p	2:55 p	3:00 p	3:05 p	3:15 p	3:19 p	3:25 p	3:35 p
3:15 p	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:45 p	3:49 p	3:55 p	4:05 p
3:45 p	3:55 p	4:00 p	4:05 p	4:15 p	4:19 p	4:25 p	4:35 p
4:15 p	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:35 p	4:45 p	4:49 p	4:55 p	5:05 p
4:45 p	4:55 p	5:00 p	5:05 p	5:15 p	5:19 p	5:25 p	5:35 p
5:15 p	5:25 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:45 p	5:49 p	5:55 p	6:05 p
5:45 p	5:55 p	6:00 p	6:05 p	6:15 p	6:19 p	6:25 p	6:35 p
6:15 p	6:25 p	6:30 p	6:35 p	6:45 p	6:49 p	6:55 p	7:05 p
6:45 p	6:55 p	7:00 p	7:05 p	7:15 p	7:19 p	7:25 p	7:35 p
7:15 p	7:25 p	7:30 p	7:35 p	7:45 p	7:49 p	7:55 p	8:05 p
7:45 p	7:55 p	8:00 p	8:05 p	8:15 p	8:19 p	8:25 p	8:35 p

JORDAN POND - fall

VILLAGE GREEN	BUBBLE POND	BUBBLE ROCK	JORDAN POND	JORDAN POND	BUBBLE ROCK	BUBBLE POND	VILLAGE GREEN
9:15 a	9:25 a	9:30 a	9:35 a	9:45 a	9:49 a	9:55 a	10:05 a
10:15 a	10:25 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:45 a	10:49 a	10:55 a	11:05 a
11:15 a	11:25 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:45 a	11:49 a	11:55 a	12:05 p
12:15 p	12:25 p	12:30 p	12:35 p	12:45 p	12:49 p	12:55 p	1:05 p
1:15 p	1:25 p	1:30 p	1:35 p	1:45 p	1:49 p	1:55 p	2:05 p
2:15 p	2:25 p	2:30 p	2:35 p	2:45 p	2:49 p	2:55 p	3:05 p
3:15 p	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:45 p	3:49 p	3:55 p	4:05 p
4:15 p	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:35 p	4:45 p	4:49 p	4:55 p	5:05 p
5:15 p	5:25 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:45 p	5:49 p	5:55 p	6:05 p

Attention needs to be paid to the timing of buses at Jordan Pond – to avoid having multiple buses converge on this location at the same time. Timing at transit hubs is discussed in Section 7.11.

The configuration of bus stops at Bubble Pond needs to be addressed. Problems continue to arise when buses traveling outbound from Bar Harbor to Jordan Pond attempt to maneuver through the congested Bubble Pond parking area. There are two possible solutions to this problem: (1) Design and construct a bus stop for outbound buses adjacent to the Loop Road, so outbound buses no longer need to turn into the parking area; or (2) limit bus stops at Bubble Pond to inbound Jordan Pond trips only. Note that Loop Road buses will also stop at Bubble Pond, but they will not need to travel through the parking area.

7.6 Northeast Harbor

7.6.1 Links between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor

Two bus routes currently serve Northeast Harbor, Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain. If the Jordan Pond route is redesigned to operate with three buses, there will no longer be an opportunity to interline equipment between the two routes. This will require adjustments to the Brown Mountain timetable to ensure on-time performance.

If the Jordan Pond route is shortened to include just the Bar Harbor-Jordan Pond House segment, then a new strategy will be needed for linking Jordan Pond and Northeast Harbor. This change would likewise have implications for the Brown Mountain timetable.

Figure 7.9 presents a draft timetable for Brown Mountain service with a single bus and 75 minute headways. Past experience has shown that reliable round-trip service cannot be provided on this route within a sixty-minute schedule window.

A 75-minute schedule is less desirable because it is more difficult to remember, because it disrupts timed connections with the Southwest Harbor bus at MDI High School, and because it results in changing connection patterns at both ends of the route. It does, however, provide a reasonable level of access to carriage roads and hiking trails at the Brown Mountain Gate House.

Figure 7.9 Brown Mountain – One Bus and 75-minute Headways

VILLAGE GREEN	EAGLE LAKE	HIGH SCHOOL	GATE HOUSE	NEH PIER	NEH PIER	GATE HOUSE	HIGH SCHOOL	EAGLE LAKE	VILLAGE GREEN
9:15 a	9:22 a	9:30 a	9:38 a	9:45 a	10:00 a	10:05 a	10:15 a	10:20 a	10:25 a
10:30 a	10:37 a	10:45 a	10:53 a	11:00 a	11:15 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:40 a
11:45 a	11:52 a	12:00 p	12:08 p	12:15 p	12:30 p	12:35 p	12:45 p	12:50 p	12:55 p
1:00 p	1:07 p	1:15 p	1:23 p	1:30 p	1:45 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:05 p	2:10 p
2:15 p	2:22 p	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:45 p	3:00 p	3:05 p	3:15 p	3:20 p	3:25 p
3:30 p	3:37 p	3:45 p	3:53 p	4:00 p	4:15 p	4:20 p	4:30 p	4:35 p	4:40 p
4:45 p	4:52 p	5:00 p	5:08 p	5:15 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:45 p	5:50 p	5:55 p
6:00 p	6:07 p	6:15 p	6:23 p	6:30 p	6:45 p	6:50 p	7:00 p	7:05 p	7:10 p
7:15 p	7:22 p	7:30 p	7:38 p	7:45 p	8:00 p	8:05 p	8:15 p	8:20 p	8:25 p

If the Jordan Pond route is shortened, then two buses can be used to provide hourly service on a combined Bar Harbor-Gate House-Northeast Harbor-Jordan Pond route. Figure 7.10 presents draft timetables that allow forty-five minutes for a round trip between Northeast Harbor and Jordan Pond and one hour and fifteen minutes for a round trip between Northeast Harbor and Bar Harbor.

This approach preserves hourly service from Northeast Harbor to Jordan Pond and hourly service direct to Bar Harbor via the Brown Mountain Gate House. It would no longer provide direct service between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor via Jordan Pond.

As suggested earlier, it is probably better to preserve through service between Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor, given the popularity and productivity of the existing Jordan Pond route. Demand for rides on the Brown Mountain route is significantly lower. Awkward schedule times for Brown Mountain are not desirable, but they are likely to impact fewer people than a major restructuring of the Jordan Pond route.

7.6.2 Links between Northeast Harbor and Trenton

There are at least three alternate approaches to linking a new Trenton Intermodal Center with Northeast Harbor:

1. Operate a separate bus on a new route between the Trenton facility and Northeast Harbor.
2. Design the Brown Mountain route so that it meets the Trenton-Southwest Harbor “Quietside” route in Somesville, allowing Northeast Harbor passengers to transfer to and from the Southwest Harbor bus.
3. Provide links between Trenton and Northeast Harbor via Bar Harbor, utilizing a new Gateway Express between Bar Harbor and Trenton.

Figure 7.10 Northeast Harbor Timetables – if Jordan Pond Route is Shortened

NORTHEAST HARBOR - JORDAN POND

	arrive		depart			
NEH PIER	SEAL HARBOR	JORDAN POND	JORDAN POND	SEAL HARBOR	NEH MAIN ST	NEH PIER
9:05 a	9:15 a	9:20 a	9:25 a	9:30 a	9:38 a	9:40 a
10:05 a	10:15 a	10:20 a	10:25 a	10:30 a	10:38 a	10:40 a
11:05 a	11:15 a	11:20 a	11:25 a	11:30 a	11:38 a	11:40 a
12:05 p	12:15 p	12:20 p	12:25 p	12:30 p	12:38 p	12:40 p
1:05 p	1:15 p	1:20 p	1:25 p	1:30 p	1:38 p	1:40 p
2:05 p	2:15 p	2:20 p	2:25 p	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:40 p
3:05 p	3:15 p	3:20 p	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:38 p	3:40 p
4:05 p	4:15 p	4:20 p	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:38 p	4:40 p
5:05 p	5:15 p	5:20 p	5:25 p	5:30 p	5:38 p	5:40 p

NORTHEAST HARBOR - BROWN MOUNTAIN - BAR HARBOR

	arrive				depart					
NEH PIER	GATE HOUSE	HIGH SCHOOL	EAGLE LAKE	VILLAGE GREEN	VILLAGE GREEN	EAGLE LAKE	HIGH SCHOOL	GATE HOUSE	NEH SEA ST	NEH PIER
9:50 a	9:53 a	10:05 a	10:12 a	10:20 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:43 a	10:50 a	10:55 a	10:57 a
10:50 a	10:53 a	11:05 a	11:12 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:43 a	11:50 a	11:55 a	11:57 a
11:50 a	11:53 a	12:05 p	12:12 p	12:20 p	12:30 p	12:35 p	12:43 p	12:50 p	12:55 p	12:57 p
12:50 p	12:53 p	1:05 p	1:12 p	1:20 p	1:30 p	1:35 p	1:43 p	1:50 p	1:55 p	1:57 p
1:50 p	1:53 p	2:05 p	2:12 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:35 p	2:43 p	2:50 p	2:55 p	2:57 p
2:50 p	2:53 p	3:05 p	3:12 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:43 p	3:50 p	3:55 p	3:57 p
3:50 p	3:53 p	4:05 p	4:12 p	4:20 p	4:30 p	4:35 p	4:43 p	4:50 p	4:55 p	4:57 p
4:50 p	4:53 p	5:05 p	5:12 p	5:20 p	5:30 p	5:35 p	5:43 p	5:50 p	5:55 p	5:57 p
5:50 p	5:53 p	6:05 p	6:12 p	6:20 p	6:30 p	-	6:40 p	-	6:50 p	6:52 p
7:00 p	-	7:10 p	-	7:20 p	7:30 p	-	7:40 p	-	7:50 p	7:52 p
8:00 p	-	8:10 p	-	8:20 p	8:30 p	-	8:40 p	-	8:50 p	8:52 p
9:00 p	-	9:10 p	-	9:20 p	9:30 p	-	9:40 p	-	9:50 p	9:52 p

Adding a separate route between Northeast Harbor and Trenton provides the greatest level of customer convenience, but adds significant capital and operating costs. A draft timetable for Northeast Harbor-Trenton service is presented in Figure 7.11.

Figure 7.11 Possible Northeast Harbor-Trenton Bus Link

			arrive	depart					
ANP	TOWN	SOMES	NEH	NEH	SOMES	TOWN		ANP	
GATEWAY	HILL	VILLE	PIER	PIER	VILLE	HILL	AIRPORT	GATEWAY	
8:00 a	8:15 a	8:20 a	8:35 a	8:45 a	9:00 a	9:05 a	9:15 a	9:20 a	
9:30 a	9:45 a	9:50 a	10:05 a	10:15 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:45 a	10:50 a	
11:00 a	11:15 a	11:20 a	11:35 a	11:45 a	12:00 p	12:05 p	12:15 p	12:20 p	
1:00 p	1:15 p	1:20 p	1:35 p	1:45 p	2:00 p	2:05 p	2:15 p	2:20 p	
2:30 p	2:45 p	2:50 p	3:05 p	3:15 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:45 p	3:50 p	
4:00 p	4:15 p	4:20 p	4:35 p	4:45 p	5:00 p	5:05 p	5:15 p	5:20 p	
5:30 p	5:45 p	5:50 p	6:05 p	6:15 p	6:30 p	6:35 p	6:45 p	6:50 p	

Option two is problematic, because it adds a detour to the Brown Mountain route, and because transfer times between the two routes do not work well. Good connections northbound result in poor connections southbound. Good southbound connections result in poor northbound connections.

The preferred approach appears to be to link Northeast Harbor and Trenton via the Bar Harbor Village Green. While a route through Bar Harbor is somewhat longer than via Somesville, express service between Trenton and Bar Harbor will result in reasonably fast service for day visitors and others whose primary destination is Northeast Harbor.

7.7 Southwest Harbor and Tremont

The 2006 Island Explorer timetable utilizes three buses to provide hourly service on a route linking Bar Harbor with Southwest Harbor and Tremont. There are three main service design issues for the existing Southwest Harbor route.

- The route offers slow service for some origin/destination pairs, especially when compared with automobile travel. This results from offering stops at locations that require buses to leave the main roadway. The most time consuming diversions are Echo Lake Beach and Clark Point Road.
- All Southwest Harbor buses offer stops in Bernard and West Tremont. These stops are time-consuming, and they generate relatively few riders.
- The route experiences some overcrowding on mid-morning trips to Bar Harbor and late afternoon return trips to Southwest Harbor.

There may be opportunities to offer faster, more direct service from Bar Harbor to Southwest Harbor, Manset, and Bass Harbor. This would reduce the amount of time that most Southwest Harbor passengers are required to spend on the bus, while also increasing the productivity and efficiency of the service. A separate local “Quietside” bus route could serve off-route stops on a more limited basis.

For the longer-term future, there will need to be a shuttle link between Southwest Harbor/Tremont and the proposed intermodal center in Trenton. Day visitors should be able to reach Acadia National Park destinations on the west side of Mount Desert Island by shuttle bus without traveling through Bar Harbor.

A direct route between Trenton and Southwest Harbor would provide two other missing links in the Island Explorer system. It would give travelers direct car-free transportation between Southwest Harbor and the Airport. It would also provide opportunities for shuttle rides between Town Hill and Somesville.

7.7.1 *Arguments for and against a Southwest Harbor Express*

Beginning in the summer of 2007, a faster “express” route could link Bar Harbor with Southwest Harbor and Tremont. The service would need to be designed to fit within a two-hour schedule window. This should include between 10 and 15 minutes of layover time at the Bar Harbor end of the route. If a full round-trip with layover can be completed in 120 minutes, then it would be possible to operate the Bar harbor-Southwest Harbor route with two buses, instead of the current three.

There are a number of steps that need to be taken to get the round-trip time under 2 hours.

1. Buses will need to bypass Echo Lake. This stop adds more than 10 minutes to the roundtrip travel time. Echo Lake could be served instead by a local “Quietside” bus.
2. The bus stop at Smugglers Den Campground should be moved closer to the main roadway. Buses lose several minutes traveling over speed bumps located within this private campground.
3. Buses traveling between Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor can save another 10 minutes per round trip if they are not diverted to Clark Point.
4. A bus stop will be needed on Main Street in Southwest Harbor. The best location is in front of the grammar school. The community will need to agree to give up two parking spaces, one on each side of Main Street.
5. Buses should travel a one-way loop through Manset. They would proceed directly from downtown Southwest Harbor to Bass Harbor via Route 102, without serving the Tremont School, the Quietside Campground, or Bernard. A local “Quietside” bus would serve these locations.
6. Buses would no longer stop at the Bass Harbor Ferry Terminal. The ferry terminal bus stop should be moved to a location between the waterfront and the Bass Harbor Post Office. Ferry passengers would be required to walk a short distance along the stub-end roadway to reach the ferry terminal.
7. Buses should continue to offer stops at Bass Harbor Campground, Seawall Campground, and the Cranberry Cove dock in Manset. Buses that stop at these locations would operate via a counter-clockwise loop through Manset.

A draft timetable for the resulting Southwest Harbor service is presented in Figure 7.12. This schedule allows 120 minutes for a complete round trip, and includes 14 minutes of layover at the Bar Harbor Village Green.

In addition to faster trips for most riders, a key advantage of this strategy is that it allows additional buses to be added to the Southwest Harbor route in the future at one-third the cost of the existing service. Additional buses may be needed to address overcrowding during peak mid-morning and late afternoon travel times.

A local “Quietside” route could link downtown Southwest Harbor with Echo Lake Beach, Bernard, and portions of West Tremont. This bus would include stops at Smugglers Den Campground and at the parking lot adjacent to the Tremont School.

Figure 7.13 presents a draft timetable that provides hourly service on a “Quietside” route with one bus. The proposed schedule shows this local service beginning at 9:20 a.m. and ending at 4:10 p.m. To connect with the last afternoon bus to Tremont, passengers would need to board a Southwest Harbor bus in Bar Harbor by 3:05 p.m. It would be possible to extend the hours of “Quietside” service one hour later in the afternoon. If this is done, someone traveling from Bar Harbor to Bernard could board a 4:05 p.m. bus in Bar Harbor and connect with a 5:00 p.m. Quietside bus in Southwest Harbor.

Figure 7.12 Express Southwest Harbor Route

SUMMER SERVICE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	E	D	C	B	A
BAR	HIGH	MT DES	SMUG DEN	SWH MAIN ST	BASS HBR	BASS HBR CMPGD	SEAWL CMPGD	MANST DOCK	SWH MAIN ST	SMUG DEN	MT DES CMPGD	HIGH SCHOOL	BAR HRBR
					7:50	7:53	8:00	8:05	8:15	8:20	8:33	8:36	8:46
8:05	8:15	8:20	8:35	8:42	8:50	8:53	9:00	9:05	9:15	9:20	9:33	9:36	9:46
9:05	9:15	9:20	9:35	9:42	9:50	9:53	10:00	10:05	10:15	10:20	10:33	10:36	10:46
10:05	10:15	10:20	10:35	10:42	10:50	10:53	11:00	11:05	11:15	11:20	11:33	11:36	11:46
11:05	11:15	11:20	11:35	11:42	11:50	11:53	12:00	12:05	12:15	12:20	12:33	12:36	12:46
12:05	12:15	12:20	12:35	12:42	12:50	12:53	1:00	1:05	1:15	1:20	1:33	1:36	1:46
1:05	1:15	1:20	1:35	1:42	1:50	1:53	2:00	2:05	2:15	2:20	2:33	2:36	2:46
2:05	2:15	2:20	2:35	2:42	2:50	2:53	3:00	3:05	3:15	3:20	3:33	3:36	3:46
3:05	3:15	3:20	3:35	3:42	3:50	3:53	4:00	4:05	4:15	4:20	4:33	4:36	4:46
4:05	4:15	4:20	4:35	4:42	4:50	4:53	5:00	5:05	5:15	5:20	5:33	5:36	5:46
5:05	5:15	5:20	5:35	5:42	5:50	5:53	6:00	6:05	6:15	6:20	6:33	6:36	6:46
6:05	6:15	6:20	6:35	6:42	6:50	6:53	7:00	7:05	7:15	7:20	7:33	7:36	7:46
7:05	7:15	7:20	7:35	7:42	7:50	7:53	8:00	8:05	8:15	8:20	8:33	8:36	8:46
8:05	8:15	8:20	8:35	8:42	8:50	8:53	9:00	9:05	9:15				
9:05	9:15	9:20	9:35	9:42	9:50	9:53	10:00	10:05	10:15				

FALL SERVICE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	E	D	C	B	A
BAR	HIGH	MT DES	SMUG DEN	SWH MAIN ST	BASS HBR	BASS HBR CMPGD	SEAWL CMPGD	MANST DOCK	SWH MAIN ST	SMUG DEN	MT DES CMPGD	HIGH SCHOOL	BAR HRBR
10:05	10:15	10:20	10:35	10:42	10:50	10:53	11:00	11:05	11:15	11:20	11:33	11:36	11:46
12:05	12:15	12:20	12:35	12:42	12:50	12:53	1:00	1:05	1:15	1:20	1:33	1:36	1:46
2:05	2:15	2:20	2:35	2:42	2:50	2:53	3:00	3:05	3:15	3:20	3:33	3:36	3:46
4:05	4:15	4:20	4:35	4:42	4:50	4:53	5:00	5:05	5:15	5:20	5:33	5:36	5:46

Figure 7.13 Quietside Route – Beginning in 2007

SUMMER ONLY

			arrive	depart				
TREMONT	SWH	SMUG	ECHO	ECHO	SMUG	SWH	TREMONT	
SCHOOL	MAIN ST	DEN	LAKE	LAKE	DEN	MAIN ST	SCHOOL	BERNARD
9:20 a	9:30 a	9:35 a	9:40 a	9:50 a	9:55 a	10:00 a	10:05 a	10:10 a
10:20 a	10:30 a	10:35 a	10:40 a	10:50 a	10:55 a	11:00 a	11:05 a	11:10 a
11:20 a	11:30 a	11:35 a	11:40 a	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	12:50 p	12:55 p	1:00 p	1:05 p	1:10 p
1:20 p	1:30 p	1:35 p	1:40 p	1:50 p	1:55 p	2:00 p	2:05 p	2:10 p
2:20 p	2:30 p	2:35 p	2:40 p	2:50 p	2:55 p	3:00 p	3:05 p	3:10 p
3:20 p	3:30 p	3:35 p	3:40 p	3:50 p	3:55 p	4:00 p	4:05 p	4:10 p

Prior to the opening of the Trenton transportation center, Southwest Harbor and Quietside buses would operate a combined total of 38.7 hours per day during the summer season. This compares with 46.7 hours for Southwest Harbor buses in 2006. The proposed change represents a reduction of 17% from the 2006 service level.

While splitting the route results in faster trips and reduced operating costs, there are arguments against changing the existing service design. Factors that argue for continuing the existing 2006 service pattern include the following:

1. The route is very well used. It has operated near capacity for several years. Ridership in 2006 increased 4% when compared with 2005.
2. The Express/Local strategy will result in complicated choices for people from Bar Harbor who are trying to reach Echo Lake.
3. Smugglers Den Campground has indicated that it is opposed to moving its bus stop closer to the highway.
4. The town of Southwest Harbor will be reluctant to give up parking spaces on Main Street.
5. Some residents and businesses can be expected to argue for continued service on the Clark Point Road.
6. The town prefers that bus passengers utilize the Upper Town Dock on the Clark Point Road to reach the Cranberry Cove Ferry, instead of the dock in Manset.
7. Some Tremont residents are likely to object to the loss of direct bus service to Bar Harbor.

When weighed against each other, the pros and cons suggest that the Island Explorer should probably continue the Southwest Harbor service in its existing configuration. While the existing route is slow and somewhat inefficient, it is popular with visitors and most local residents appear to be generally satisfied with the service.

7.7.2 *Links between Southwest Harbor and Trenton*

Once the Acadia Gateway Center has been constructed in Trenton, a new route should be added to link Southwest Harbor with the new Trenton facility. This would enable day visitors who park at the intermodal center to travel directly to Town Hill, Somesville, and Southwest Harbor. This bus would include stops at Echo Lake Beach.

Figure 7.13 presents a Trenton-Southwest Harbor timetable that uses one bus to provide 90-minute headways. More frequent 45-minute service could be offered by adding a second bus to the route. This route design requires passengers to transfer to a Southwest Harbor bus in Southwest Harbor to reach Bass Harbor and the Seawall region of Acadia National Park.

If Southwest Harbor Express service is introduced, then Trenton could be served by lengthening the route of the Quietside bus to include both Tremont and Trenton. As shown in Figure 7.14, two buses would be needed to provide hourly service on a Trenton-Southwest Harbor-Tremont Quietside route.

Both Southwest Harbor-Trenton route alternatives include northbound stops at Narrows Too Campground and at the airport in Trenton. It may be possible to add southbound stops at these locations once a traffic signal has been added to the Route 2/230 intersection.

Both alternatives are designed for operation during the summer season only. Depending on the level of summer ridership, it may be appropriate to add fall service at some point in the future.

Figure 7.13 Quietside Route without SWH Express – Beginning in 2011

ANP GATEWAY	BAR HBR KOA	SOMES VILLE	ECHO LAKE	SWH MAIN ST	ECHO LAKE	SOMES VILLE	BAR HBR KOA	NARROWS TOO	AIRPORT	ANP GATEWAY
6:40 a	6:50 a	7:00 a	7:08 a	7:15 a	7:25 a	7:35 a	7:45 a	7:50 a	7:53 a	8:00 a
8:10 a	8:20 a	8:30 a	8:38 a	8:45 a	8:55 a	9:05 a	9:15 a	9:20 a	9:23 a	9:30 a
9:40 a	9:50 a	10:00 a	10:08 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:35 a	10:45 a	10:50 a	10:53 a	11:00 a
11:10 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:38 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:05 p	12:15 p	12:20 p	12:23 p	12:30 p
12:40 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:08 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:35 p	1:45 p	1:50 p	1:53 p	2:00 p
2:10 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:05 p	3:15 p	3:20 p	3:23 p	3:30 p
3:40 p	3:50 p	4:00 p	4:08 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:35 p	4:45 p	4:50 p	4:53 p	5:00 p
5:10 p	5:20 p	5:30 p	5:38 p	5:45 p	5:55 p	6:05 p	6:15 p	6:20 p	6:23 p	6:30 p

Figure 7.14 Quietside Route with SWH Express – Beginning in 2011

SUMMER ONLY

TREMONT SCHOOL	SWH MAIN ST	ECHO LAKE	SOMES VILLE	arrive ANP GATEWAY	depart ANP GATEWAY	SOMES VILLE	ECHO LAKE	SWH MAIN ST	TREMONT SCHOOL	BERNARD
					8:25 a	8:45 a	8:53 a	9:00 a	9:05 a	9:10 a
					9:25 a	9:45 a	9:53 a	10:00 a	10:05 a	10:10 a
9:20 a	9:30 a	9:40 a	9:50 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:45 a	10:53 a	11:00 a	11:05 a	11:10 a
10:20 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	10:50 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:45 a	11:53 a	12:00 p	12:05 p	12:10 p
11:20 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	11:50 a	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:45 p	12:53 p	1:00 p	1:05 p	1:10 p
12:20 p	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:50 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:45 p	1:53 p	2:00 p	2:05 p	2:10 p
1:20 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	1:50 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:45 p	2:53 p	3:00 p	3:05 p	3:10 p
2:20 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	2:50 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:45 p	3:53 p	4:00 p	4:05 p	4:10 p
3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:50 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:45 p	4:53 p	5:00 p	5:05 p	5:10 p
4:20 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	4:50 p	5:15 p	5:25 p	5:45 p	5:53 p	6:00 p	6:05 p	6:10 p
5:20 p	5:30 p	5:40 p	5:50 p	6:15 p						
6:20 p	6:30 p	6:40 p	6:50 p	7:15 p						

This bus would include stops at Town Hill, Bar Harbor KOA Campground, Narrows Too Campground (northbound only), and the Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport (northbound only).

7.8 Schoodic Peninsula

Possible changes for bus service on the Schoodic Peninsula include (1) reducing the number of summer season hours to match a possible reduction in ferry service, (2) extending the season for the Schoodic bus beyond Labor Day, and (3) changing the starting and ending point to Schoodic Point.

The owner of the Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor Ferry has expressed possible interest in eliminating early morning ferry trips, and in continuing ferry operations after Labor Day. He has inquired about the possibility of extending the bus service until the end of September so ferry passengers can continue to reach Schoodic Point and other locations within the National Park.

If the 8:00 ferry from Bar Harbor to Winter Harbor is eliminated, then the first departure from the Winter Harbor ferry terminal should be delayed until 11:00 a.m. This would allow the bus to meet the first ferry due to arrive in Winter Harbor at 10:45 a.m.

If the bus is parked overnight at the Schoodic Education and Research Center at Schoodic Point, it would begin at 10:25 a.m. This would allow people who are staying at the Schoodic Point facility to reach the 11:00 a.m. ferry to Bar Harbor. Returning the bus to Schoodic Point at the end of the day would allow them to return from Bar Harbor on the ferry that departs Bar Harbor at 4:00 p.m.

If the bus begins at 10:25 a.m., it should be possible to do away with the scheduled driver lunch break between 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. This will eliminate problems that have arisen in the past with passengers who have been stranded at Schoodic Point at 11:15 a.m. with no lunch.

This change would result in 7.5 service hours per day for the Schoodic bus, compared to the current 8.5 hours per day.

Experimental fall bus and ferry service could be limited to the middle hours of the day, as shown in Figure 7.17. This would result in a bus driver work shift of roughly 5.25 hours per day. This assumes that the last ferry will depart Winter Harbor for Bar Harbor at 3:00 p.m.

Eliminating early morning bus service will save about 70 service hours per year. Adding midday service in September will add about 158 hours. If both changes are instituted, this is likely to result in a net increase of roughly 88 hours per season.

Figure 7.17 Proposed Schoodic Bus and Ferry Service

SCHOODIC - summer

BR HBR INN	WH FERRY	WH FERRY	WNTR HBR	FRAZER PONT	SCHOODIC POINT	BIRCH HBR	PROSPT HBR	WNTR HBR	WH FERRY	WH FERRY	BR HBR INN
					10:25 a	10:35 a	-	-	10:50 a		
10:00 a	10:45 a	11:00 a	R	11:05 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:30 a	11:45 a	11:50 a		
		12:00 p	R	12:05 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:30 p	12:45 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:45 p
12:00 p	12:45 p	1:00 p	R	1:05 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:30 p	1:45 p	1:50 p		
		2:00 p	R	2:05 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:30 p	2:45 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:45 p
2:00 p	2:45 p	3:00 p	R	3:05 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:30 p	3:45 p	3:50 p		
		4:00 p	R	4:05 p	4:15 p	4:25 p	4:30 p	4:45 p	4:50 p	5:00 p	5:45 p
4:00 p	4:45 p	4:50 p	R	4:55 p	5:05 p						

SCHOODIC - fall Day after Labor Day through September 30

BR HBR INN	WH FERRY	WH FERRY	WNTR HBR	FRAZER PONT	SCHOODIC POINT	BIRCH HBR	PROSPT HBR	WNTR HBR	WH FERRY	WH FERRY	BR HBR INN
					10:25 a	10:35 a	-	-	10:50 a		
10:00 a	10:45 a	11:00 a	R	11:05 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:30 a	11:45 a	11:50 a		
		12:00 p	R	12:05 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:30 p	12:45 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:45 p
12:00 p	12:45 p	1:00 p	R	1:05 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:30 p	1:45 p	1:50 p		
		2:00 p	R	2:05 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:30 p	2:45 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:45 p
2:00 p	2:45 p	2:50 p	R	2:55 p	3:05 p						

7.9 Bicycle Express

The Bicycle Express was revised in 2006 to provide a link every 30 minutes between the Bar Harbor Village Green and the carriage road system at Eagle Lake. One van and trailer provides seven-day-a-week scheduled service from June 23 through Labor Day. A back-up van and trailer is used as needed to accommodate excess demand. The overflow van is used in three different ways, depending on where it is needed. It provides:

- Extra capacity for the scheduled Bicycle Express between the Village Green and Eagle Lake
- Overflow capacity for inbound Jordan Pond buses in the afternoon
- Overflow capacity for Campground buses, inbound in the morning and outbound in the late afternoon

Until additional equipment is available, the current arrangement is probably the best way to utilize the project’s two vans and trailers. Acadia National Park has applied for grant funding to purchase two additional bike vans and trailers. There are at least four different service design alternatives that could be considered when this extra equipment arrives.

- Operate scheduled Bicycle Express service on a portion of the Campground route
- Operate scheduled Bicycle Express service between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Jordan Pond
- Create a new bicycle shuttle route between the MDI High School and Eagle Lake
- Create a new bicycle shuttle route between the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and Eagle Lake

With each of these alternatives, the best strategy will be to schedule one of the new vans and trailers, and hold the other in reserve to accommodate excess demand on peak days.

Strengths and weaknesses of the proposed alternatives are summarized in Figure 7.16. The best choices appear to be option 1, providing scheduled service along the existing Campground route, and option 3 or 4, providing a new link to Eagle Lake from either the high school or the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.

A printed schedule could offer hourly trips along the Campground route segment beginning with an 8:45 a.m. inbound departure from Mount Desert Narrows Campground and ending with a 5:15 p.m. outbound departure from the Village Green. The current Eagle Lake shuttle driver could provide the first and last trip of the day. This means the additional van and trailer would operate between 9:45 a.m. and 4:45 p.m.

If service is added instead between Eagle Lake and either Hulls Cove or the high school, the timetable could be similar to the current Eagle Lake/Bar Harbor schedule, with trips provided every half hour between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Whichever strategy is selected, bus stops need to be designed to accommodate high levels of bicycle activity. In particular, attention needs to be paid to the Village Green, the Eagle Lake turnaround, and any new bike shuttle stop at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, Jordan Pond, or the MDI High School.

At these locations, bike racks are needed that can facilitate queuing for cyclists who are waiting for the next van. With this approach, people would place their bicycles in the rack in the order that they arrive. This would reduce confusion and allow drivers to ensure that they are serving customers on a first-come-first-served basis. This will require funding for design and construction.

The biggest challenge may be at the Bar Harbor Village Green. It may be possible to obtain permission to utilize the unimproved area along the side of the Reel Pizza building. The town of Bar Harbor, the cinema owner, and MDOT would need to participate in any attempt to develop a bike loading area in this location.

Figure 7.13: Strengths and Weaknesses of Bicycle Express Expansion Alternatives

	<i>Route</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
1	Mount Desert Narrows Campground, Hadley Point Campground, and Bar Harbor Campground to the Bar Harbor Village Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Serves an existing market where demand sometimes exceeds the capacity of bike racks on buses •Provides potential overflow capacity for riders without bikes, limiting the need to schedule additional daytime bus drivers during the peak season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is time for only one round trip per hour, resulting in limited productivity. •There may be limited demand during the middle of the day.
2	Jordan Pond to Bar Harbor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Serves a proven market segment with strong demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is time for only one round trip per hour, resulting in limited productivity. •A Jordan Pond route will compete with the Eagle Lake shuttle. •Demand may exceed the capacity of two vans and trailers. •There is limited room at Jordan Pond for bike activity. •Carriage Road access at Jordan Pond can be confusing.
3	High School to Eagle Lake, with no parking allowed on the Eagle Lake Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •30-minute service can be provided with one van, 15-minute service with two vans •Allows unsafe parking to be eliminated from the state highway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This serves a market segment that is separate from the rest of the Island Explorer system. •Passengers may be unhappy about parking restrictions and feel they are being forced to ride. •A designated bus stop and loading zone will be needed at the high school
4	Visitor Center to Eagle Lake, with no parking allowed on the Eagle Lake Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Takes advantage of available parking and infrastructure at the Visitor Center •Allows unsafe parking to be eliminated along the state highway •Allows possible transfers to and from the Campground route and a future Gateway Express route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •While it should be possible to provide two round trips an hour with one van, scheduling might be a bit tight when demand is high. There is probably not enough time to offer a stop at Duck Brook Bridge. •Passengers may be unhappy about parking restrictions and feel they are being forced to ride. •Parking may become an issue in the future as new bus routes are added at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.

7.10 Loop Road

A bus route around the Acadia National Park Loop Road was considered during early planning for the Island Explorer project. The idea was postponed until the bus fleet was large enough to allow reasonably frequent service on this route. Loop Road service is now possible thanks to additional buses acquired in 2006.

The important service design question for Loop Road service is whether this route should begin at the Bar Harbor Village Green or the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. A route that includes stops at the Village Green might provide greater convenience for current Island Explorer bus riders. Most current bus users travel through the Village Green transit hub.

A route that starts at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center will appeal to many Park visitors who are not current shuttle bus users. It will also benefit people who ride the Campground bus and a future Gateway Express, because they will be able to go directly into the National Park without traveling through downtown Bar Harbor. Park interpretive rangers at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center anticipate considerable visitor interest in a Loop Road shuttle that begins in Hulls Cove.

Campground route riders who transfer to the Loop Road bus at Hulls Cove will relieve some of the overcrowding on the Campground route between Hulls Cove and the Village Green. This transfer activity may also reduce the overcrowding that sometimes occurs on the Sand Beach route.

Some people will likely want to leave their cars at Hulls Cove while they ride through the Park on the Loop Road bus. There appears to be enough parking at Hulls Cove to accommodate some car/bus transfers, although problems could develop on peak summer days in the future, depending on future visitation trends, the level of demand for the new shuttle route, and other possible developments at the Hulls Cove site.

Other bus routes would provide access to the Loop Road route via transfers at Sieur de Monts, Sand Beach, and Jordan Pond:

- People who start in downtown Bar Harbor could transfer to Loop Road buses at Sieur de Monts, Precipice Trail, or Sand Beach.
- People who start at Blackwoods Campground could transfer to the Loop Road bus at Sieur de Monts, or they could walk to the Loop Road via a gravel access road.
- Bus riders in Northeast Harbor and Seal Harbor could transfer to the Loop Road bus at Jordan Pond.
- People on the Loop Road bus who wish to return to downtown Bar Harbor could transfer to the Jordan Pond bus at Jordan Pond, or to the inbound Sand Beach bus at Sieur de Monts.

A roundtrip that starts and ends at the Hulls Cove Visitor center should take approximately 70 minutes. This includes time for diversions from the Loop Road for stops at Sieur de Monts, Sand Beach, and Wildwood Stables. The route should include at

least 15 minutes of dwell time at Hulls Cove to allow for traffic delays, heavy passenger loads, and restroom breaks for bus drivers. The best scheduling strategy appears to be to use three buses and to offer Loop Road shuttle service every 30 minutes.

A timetable presented in Figure 7.14 shows Loop Road service operating between 9:15 a.m. and 5:25 p.m. With this timetable, the last Loop Road departure from Sand Beach would be at 4:40 p.m. This schedule can be operated using two 9-hour driver shifts and one 7.5-hour shift. A 5:10 p.m. Sand Beach departure could be added by having all three drivers work nine hours a day.

Fall service could continue to operate every 30 minutes with three buses, every 40 minutes with two buses, or it could be limited to a single bus operating once every hour and a half.

The main argument against continuing 30-minute Loop Road in the fall is cost. Thirty-minute headways are preferable, because this will give fall visitors a full range of choices while preserving consistent connections with Campground and Gateway Express buses. If three buses are in service, the last fall departure from Hulls Cove could be at 3:15 p.m. with the last stop at Sand Beach at 3:40 p.m.

Forty-minute headways could be provided with two buses by reducing the layover time at the Visitor Center to ten minutes. The main drawback with this approach is that it results in irregular departure times, a schedule that is more difficult to remember, and missed connections with Campground and Gateway Express buses that operate with 30-minute headways.

Loop Road service that operates every 90 minutes is the most affordable, since it requires only one bus and a single driver shift. It results in five scheduled departure times during the course of the day. This service will be useful for people who board once for a complete round trip. It offers limited convenience for people who wish to make stops along the way, because of the long wait times between buses. A possible schedule for fall service with one bus is presented in Figure 7.14.

Figure 7.14 Summer Loop Road Service with Three Buses

A VISITOR CENTER	B NORTH RIDGE	C SR DE MONTS	D SAND BEACH	E WILD WOOD	F JORDAN POND	G BUBBLE POND	A VISITOR CENTER
9:15 a	9:20 a	9:30 a	9:40 a	10:02 a	10:07 a	10:17 a	10:27 a
9:45 a	9:50 a	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:32 a	10:37 a	10:47 a	10:57 a
10:15 a	10:20 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	11:02 a	11:07 a	11:17 a	11:27 a
10:45 a	10:50 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:32 a	11:37 a	11:47 a	11:57 a
11:15 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	12:02 p	12:07 p	12:17 p	12:27 p
11:45 a	11:50 a	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:32 p	12:37 p	12:47 p	12:57 p
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12:45 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:32 p	1:37 p	1:47 p	1:57 p
1:15 p	1:20 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	2:02 p	2:07 p	2:17 p	2:27 p
1:45 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:32 p	2:37 p	2:47 p	2:57 p
2:15 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	3:02 p	3:07 p	3:17 p	3:27 p
2:45 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:32 p	3:37 p	3:47 p	3:57 p
3:15 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	4:02 p	4:07 p	4:17 p	4:27 p
3:45 p	3:50 p	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:32 p	4:37 p	4:47 p	4:57 p
4:15 p	4:20 p	4:30 p	4:40 p	5:02 p	5:07 p	5:17 p	5:27 p

Figure 7.15 Alternate Fall Loop Road Schedules

ONE BUS

A VISITOR CENTER	B NORTH RIDGE	C SR DE MONTS	D SAND BEACH	E WILD WOOD	F JORDAN POND	G BUBBLE POND	A VISITOR CENTER
9:15 a	9:20 a	9:30 a	9:40 a	10:02 a	10:07 a	10:17 a	10:27 a
10:45 a	10:50 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:32 a	11:37 a	11:47 a	11:57 a
12:15 p	12:20 p	12:30 p	12:40 p	1:02 p	1:07 p	1:17 p	1:27 p
1:45 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:32 p	2:37 p	2:47 p	2:57 p
3:15 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	4:02 p	4:07 p	4:17 p	4:27 p

THREE BUSES

A VISITOR CENTER	B NORTH RIDGE	C SR DE MONTS	D SAND BEACH	E WILD WOOD	F JORDAN POND	G BUBBLE POND	A VISITOR CENTER
9:15 a	9:20 a	9:30 a	9:40 a	10:02 a	10:07 a	10:17 a	10:27 a
9:45 a	9:50 a	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:32 a	10:37 a	10:47 a	10:57 a
10:15 a	10:20 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	11:02 a	11:07 a	11:17 a	11:27 a
10:45 a	10:50 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:32 a	11:37 a	11:47 a	11:57 a
11:15 a	11:20 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	12:02 p	12:07 p	12:17 p	12:27 p
11:45 a	11:50 a	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:32 p	12:37 p	12:47 p	12:57 p
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12:45 p	12:50 p	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:32 p	1:37 p	1:47 p	1:57 p
1:15 p	1:20 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	2:02 p	2:07 p	2:17 p	2:27 p
1:45 p	1:50 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:32 p	2:37 p	2:47 p	2:57 p
2:15 p	2:20 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	3:02 p	3:07 p	3:17 p	3:27 p
2:45 p	2:50 p	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:32 p	3:37 p	3:47 p	3:57 p
3:15 p	3:20 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	4:02 p	4:07 p	4:17 p	4:27 p

7.11 Transit Hub Connections

This proposed service plan introduces a number of new transit hubs for the Island Explorer project. For the first eight years, all buses on Mount Desert Island met at the Bar Harbor Village Green. During the summer of 2006, connections between bus routes were also available at the MDI High, the Northeast Harbor pier, and Sieur de Monts. Timetables for 2006 placed only one bus at a time in each of these locations.

MDI High School	Schedules were designed to offer timed connections between Brown Mountain and Southwest Harbor for travel between Southwest Harbor and Northeast Harbor
Northeast Harbor	Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain buses departed the Northeast Harbor pier roughly every 30 minutes
Sieur de Monts	People traveling from Blackwoods Campground could transfer at Sieur de Mont to reach Sand Beach

The new service design creates transit hubs at eight locations, including the Bar Harbor Village Green. This section examines bus activity at each new hub. Timetables for each route have been designed to avoid bus congestion and to offer connections that are as convenient as possible for transferring riders.

Transit hubs include:

- 7.11.1 Bar Harbor Village Green
- 7.11.2 Hulls Cove Visitor Center
- 7.11.3 Sieur de Monts
- 7.11.4 Sand Beach
- 7.11.5 Jordan Pond
- 7.11.6 Northeast Harbor Pier
- 7.11.7 MDI High School
- 7.11.8 Acadia Gateway Center

7.11.1 Bar Harbor Village Green

The key at the Village Green is to avoid more than four buses on Kennebec Place at any one time and to leave room for bike vans and trailers at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour. The following tables assume that Southwest Harbor and Eden Street buses would continue to stop on Firefly Lane. They include Gateway Express buses scheduled to begin operating following the opening of the Acadia Gateway Center.

Three scenarios were analyzed:

(1) 30-MINUTE SERVICE ON THE CURRENT JORDAN POND ROUTE, 75-MINUTE BROWN MOUNTAIN SERVICE, 30-MINUTE SAND BEACH SERVICE

	Camp ground	Sand Beach	Jordan Pond	Brwn Mtn	Gate-way		SWH	Eden
:00 - :05							depart	
:05 - :10								
:10 - :15				varies				
:15 - :20								
:20 - :25								
:25 - :30				varies				
:30 - :35								
:35 - :40								
:40 - :45				varies				
:45 - :50							arrive	
:50 - :55								
:55 - :00				varies				

Because the Brown Mountain schedule varies, this results in four occasions where two buses will be scheduled at the Village Green at quarter to or quarter past the hour.

(2) 30-MINUTE SERVICE ON A SHORTENED JORDAN POND-BAR HARBOR BUS ROUTE, 60-MINUTE BROWN MOUNTAIN SERVICE, AND 30-MINUTE SAND BEACH SERVICE

	Camp ground	Sand Beach	Jordan Pond	Brwn Mtn	Gate-way		SWH	Eden
:00 - :05							depart	
:05 - :10								
:10 - :15								
:15 - :20								
:20 - :25								
:25 - :30								
:30 - :35								
:35 - :40								
:40 - :45								
:45 - :50							arrive	
:50 - :55								
:55 - :00								

This results in three buses on Kennebec Place at the top and bottom of the hour, and only one scheduled bus (not including the Bicycle Express) at quarter past and quarter to the hour.

(3) 30-MINUTE SERVICE ON THE CURRENT JORDAN POND ROUTE, 75-MINUTE BROWN MOUNTAIN SERVICE, 20-MINUTE SAND BEACH SERVICE

	Camp ground	Sand Beach	Jordan Pond	Brwn Mtn	Gate-way		SWH	Eden
:00 - :05							depart	
:05 - :10								
:10 - :15				varies				
:15 - :20								
:20 - :25								
:25 - :30				varies				
:30 - :35								
:35 - :40								
:40 - :45				varies				
:45 - :50							arrive	
:50 - :55								
:55 - :00				varies				

This results in two occasions where three buses would be on Kennebec Place at fifteen minutes past the hour: 9:15 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. Both spaces on Firefly Lane are also occupied at this time. This provides only limited space to accommodate bike vans and trailers at these times.

7.11.2 Hulls Cove Visitor Center

An effort has been made to ensure connections to and from the Park Loop Road bus for people using both the Campground route and the future Gateway Express. This means that inbound and outbound buses for both connecting routes must pass through the Visitor Center lot while Loop Road buses are waiting between trips.

This creates a scenario in which there could be as many as five buses at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center at the same time. The best way to avoid this situation would probably be to adjust schedule times so that outbound buses pass through the Visitor Center parking lot before inbound buses are scheduled to arrive.

HULLS COVE VISITOR CENTER

	Campground IN	Campground OUT	Loop Road	Gateway IN	Gateway OUT
:00 - :05					
:05 - :10					
:10 - :15			depart		
:15 - :20					
:20 - :25					
:25 - :30			arrive		
:30 - :35					
:35 - :40					
:40 - :45			depart		
:45 - :50					
:50 - :55					
:55 - :00			arrive		

7.11.3 *Sieur de Monts*

If the Sand Beach route is extended to include Blackwoods Campground, there should be no problems with multiple buses at *Sieur de Monts*. Outbound Sand Beach buses would stop at *Sieur de Monts* at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour. Inbound Sand Beach buses would stop there at 5 and 35 minutes past the hour. Loop Road buses would pass through *Sieur de Monts* on the hour and half-hour.

Issues may arise if Sand Beach and Blackwoods routes operate separately. Under this scenario, three routes would serve *Sieur de Mont*: Sand Beach, Loop Road, and Blackwoods. With this approach, it will be important to provide convenient connections for Blackwoods campers traveling to and from Bar Harbor. Two options were analyzed: (1) 30-minute Sand Beach service and (2) 20-minute Sand Beach service.

SIEUR DE MONTS WITH 30-MINUTE SAND BEACH SERVICE

	Sand Beach IN	Sand Beach OUT	Black- woods	Loop Road
:00 - :05				
:05 - :10				
:10 - :15				
:15 - :20				
:20 - :25				
:25 - :30				
:30 - :35				
:35 - :40				
:40 - :45				
:45 - :50				
:50 - :55				
:55 - :00				

This creates a situation where there could be three buses at Sieur de Monts at the same time. This could be kept to no more than two buses at a time by having the Blackwoods bus travel around the Sieur de Monts circle after dropping off arriving passengers. It would return to the bus stop after both Sand Beach buses have arrived and departed.

A better alternative would be to create a special location for Blackwoods buses to wait near the Sand Beach bus stop.

SIEUR DE MONTS WITH 20-MINUTE SAND BEACH SERVICE

	Sand Beach IN	Sand Beach OUT	Black- woods	Loop Road
:00 - :05				
:05 - :10				
:10 - :15				
:15 - :20				
:20 - :25				
:25 - :30				
:30 - :35				
:35 - :40				
:40 - :45				
:45 - :50				
:50 - :55				
:55 - :00				

If Sand Beach buses operate every 20 minutes, connections with Blackwoods buses will be somewhat irregular, but Blackwoods campers should encounter less difficulty finding a seat. With this scenario, schedules do not call for more than two Island Explorer buses at Sieur de Mont at the same time.

7.11.4 Sand Beach

With 30-minute Sand Beach service on a combined Sand Beach / Blackwoods route, buses would pull through the Sand Beach parking area every 15 minutes. If Sand Beach buses operate every 20 minutes, there is one time each hour when there may both a Sand Beach bus and a Loop Road bus at the Sand Beach bus stop.

30-minute Sand Beach

	Sand Beach	Loop Road
:00 - :05		
:05 - :10		
:10 - :15		
:15 - :20		
:20 - :25		
:25 - :30		
:30 - :35		
:35 - :40		
:40 - :45		
:45 - :50		
:50 - :55		
:55 - :00		

20-minute Sand Beach

	Sand Beach	Loop Road
:00 - :05		
:05 - :10		
:10 - :15		
:15 - :20		
:20 - :25		
:25 - :30		
:30 - :35		
:35 - :40		
:40 - :45		
:45 - :50		
:50 - :55		
:55 - :00		

7.11.5 Jordan Pond

The situation at Jordan Pond will depend on whether Jordan Pond buses turn at Jordan Pond and return to Bar Harbor, or whether Jordan Pond buses continue to Northeast Harbor as they do now. If the Jordan Pond route is shortened, a separate bus will be needed to link Jordan Pond and Northeast Harbor, creating new transfer issues.

(1) JORDAN POND WITH THROUGH JORDAN POND SERVICE TO NORTHEAST HARBOR

	Jordan Pond out	Jordan Pond in	Loop Road
:00 - :05			
:05 - :10			
:10 - :15			
:15 - :20			
:20 - :25			
:25 - :30			
:30 - :35			
:35 - :40			
:40 - :45			
:45 - :50			
:50 - :55			
:55 - :00			

In this scenario, overcrowding at Jordan Pond is avoided by delaying the Loop Road bus at Wildwood Stables for two minutes to ensure that outbound Jordan Pond buses have departed Jordan Pond. It would be better to allow Loop Road buses to arrive at Jordan Pond in time for people transferring to reach Northeast Harbor. But this would require enough space at Jordan Pond for two Island Explorer buses at the same time.

(2) JORDAN POND WITH A SEPARATE BUS TO NORTHEAST HARBOR

	Jordan Pond	NE Harbor	Loop Road
:00 - :05			
:05 - :10			
:10 - :15			
:15 - :20			
:20 - :25			
:25 - :30			
:30 - :35			
:35 - :40			
:40 - :45			
:45 - :50			
:50 - :55			
:55 - :00			

If Jordan Pond and Northeast Harbor are linked by a separate bus, Jordan Pond buses would reverse direction at Jordan Pond. This avoids bus congestion at Jordan Pond House, but it results in some inconvenient connections for people transferring to and from the Northeast Harbor bus.

7.11.6 Northeast Harbor Pier

There are two scenarios for Northeast Harbor. One involves shortening the Jordan Pond route to include just the Bar Harbor-Jordan Pond segment, and using two separate buses to link Jordan Pond, Northeast Harbor, Brown Mountain, and the Bar Harbor Village Green. With this approach, a bus heading to Jordan Pond would be at the pier between 40 and 50 minutes past the hour, while a bus heading to Brown Mountain would be at the pier between the top of the hour and five minutes past the hour.

The alternate scenario involves using three buses on the existing Jordan Pond route, and using a fourth bus to serve the existing Brown Mountain route every 75 minutes. This results in varying departure times for Brown Mountain service.

(2) NORTHEAST HARBOR WITH 30-MINUTE SERVICE ON THE CURRENT JORDAN POND ROUTE

	Jordan Pond	Brown Mtn
:00 - :05		
:05 - :10		
:10 - :15		varies
:15 - :20		
:20 - :25		
:25 - :30		varies
:30 - :35		
:35 - :40		
:40 - :45		varies
:45 - :50		
:50 - :55		
:55 - :00		varies

With this approach transfers from the Jordan Pond bus to the Brown Mountain bus will vary from 10 minutes to 45 minutes. Connections from Jordan Pond buses to the Brown Mountain will vary between 10 and 25 minutes.

7.11.7 MDI High School

If Brown Mountain service changes to every 75 minutes, there will no longer be hourly timed connections for trips between Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor. Instead there will be a handful of times per day when these connections work reasonably well.

7.11.8 Intermodal Gateway Center

Gateway Express buses would depart the Trenton facility at twenty and fifty minutes past the hour. Quietside buses would depart at ten or forty minutes past the hour. In either case, there would be opportunities for people to transfer between the two routes. While there should be limited demand for such transfers, some people who board outbound Quietside buses at Narrows Too or the Airport might want to transfer to inbound Gateway Express buses to Bar Harbor. Draft timetables allow between fifteen and twenty minutes of layover time for these transfers.

7.12 In-town Bar Harbor Shuttle

While discussing cruise ship management issues during the winter of 2006-07, a number of community members identified a need for an in-town Bar Harbor shuttle service to improve pedestrian access throughout the downtown center. Island Explorer officials developed a plan for an in-town Bar Harbor shuttle in 1997. No steps were taken to implement this route, because the town of Bar Harbor offered no indications that the municipality was ready to raise the funding necessary to pay for the service.

Cruise ship activity in Bar Harbor has grown dramatically in recent years. Many cruise ship passengers would benefit from a shuttle link between the town pier and downtown shopping destinations. Fees collected from cruise ships could be used to cover the cost of an in-town shuttle service.

The in-town shuttle could start and end at the YMCA on Park Street. Buses would operate the full length of Main Street from the YMCA to West Street. They would turn left on West Street and continue to Holland Avenue. They would turn left on Holland Avenue and left on Cottage Street. Buses would continue on Cottage to Main Street, where they would turn right and then return to the YMCA.

This route would give cruise ship passengers access to all of Bar Harbor's downtown commercial districts. It would benefit visitors and residents who drive to the village center, by increasing the relevance and convenience of outlying parking spaces. Residents and in-town employees would likely use the shuttle for in-town errands.

With minimal traffic congestion, the proposed route requires about twelve minutes for a complete round trip. The best approach is probably to allow twenty minutes for each round trip. If two buses are used, service could operate every 10 minutes.

The route could be limited initially to the fall season only, when cruise ship visitation is strongest. If two buses offer departures from the YMCA every 10 minutes, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., this will result in 15.1 vehicle hours per day. If the service operates from September 1 through October 12, this results in 633 service hours for the season. At \$50 per hour, the annual cost for a fall in-town shuttle comes to \$31,640.

Summer season service could be added, using two buses to provide 10-minute service between 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and a single bus to provide 15-minute headways between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. This results in 22.8 service hours per day, or 1,597 hours for a 70-day season that runs from June 23 through August 31. At \$50 per hour, the projected cost for summer service comes to approximately \$80,000.

Town officials will need to agree on bus stop locations along the proposed shuttle route. This may be particularly challenging along Main Street, where some existing parking spaces may need to be eliminated.

Chapter 8: Cadillac Mountain Shuttle Strategies

This chapter discusses shuttle options for Cadillac Mountain. It does not offer a detailed implementation plan, but instead presents a preliminary analysis of conceptual alternatives. It looks for ways to address safety, resource protection, and visitor management issues at the summit of Cadillac Mountain and on the approaching roadway. It raises issues that will require further discussion within the National Park Service.

The first section identifies problems that a Cadillac Mountain shuttle might help to address. The second section considers who should own and operate a Cadillac Mountain shuttle service. Section three examines route alternatives. Section four describes two service design strategies, while the final section looks briefly at related capital improvements. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 8.1 Issues and Problems on Cadillac Mountain
- Section 8.2 Ownership and Operation of Cadillac Shuttles
- Section 8.3 Cadillac Mountain Shuttle Route Alternatives
- Section 8.4 Service Design Strategies
- Section 8.5 Infrastructure Requirements

8.1 Issues and Problems on Cadillac Mountain

The Cadillac Mountain summit and approaching roadway have traditionally been the most congested areas of Acadia National Park. Crowding occurs on Cadillac Mountain because a large percentage of visitors include at least one trip to the summit during their stay in the area. Despite the obvious congestion on Cadillac Mountain, no attempt has been made to serve this location with Island Explorer buses.

During the 1980's, National Park Service planners looked at the feasibility of limiting automobile access to Cadillac Mountain and directing visitors instead to buses. They identified daunting obstacles, including the lack of a suitable staging area and the need for a very large fleet of buses to accommodate visitor demand. For many years, obstacles to Cadillac Mountain bus service helped obscure the potential for shuttles elsewhere in Acadia National Park.

While many people now use the Island Explorer for at least part of their visit to Acadia, there remain major obstacles to a transit plan that would limit auto access to Cadillac Mountain. On a single day in August of 2002, Park staff counted than 5,000 visitors to the Cadillac summit, with visitation strongest between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. To transport 5,000 people with 28-seat buses would require more than 175 bus trips.

If demand were evenly distributed throughout a ten-hour day, this would require a fleet of 18 buses for the Cadillac Mountain Road alone.

Most of the previously identified obstacles have been based on the assumption that all auto visitors would be moved to buses. There may, however, be less sweeping ways to address transportation-related problems on Cadillac Mountain. Less dramatic strategies might be able to provide partial solutions to some of the key issues identified in the past.

Perhaps the most significant issues involve large vehicles and roadway safety:

- Motorcoaches are too big for the geometry of the Cadillac Mountain Road. This is especially true in one location where large buses need both lanes to navigate a hairpin turn.
- Accidents involving buses and recreational vehicles have caused gridlock and extensive travel delays on the winding mountain roadway.

Another set of issues results from the large numbers of people who travel to the summit:

- The demand for parking spaces at the Cadillac Mountain summit and at the Blue Hill overlook often exceeds the available supply, creating back-ups and congestion.
- Visitors who do not remain on designated trails at the summit damage plant life and degrade the natural resource.

A third set of issues involves visitor confusion and visitor experience:

- An increasing number of visitors travel to the region without cars, and many would like a way to experience the Cadillac Mountain Road.
- Many RV owners and some visitors with cars might prefer to visit Cadillac without driving.
- Due to misinformation or confusion, some visitors hike one-way on Cadillac Mountain trails expecting to ride back on a bus.

The first two items could be addressed by banning oversize vehicles from the Cadillac Mountain Road. The National Park Service will need to decide whether it is important to offer a “small bus” alternative for motorcoach tour groups. This possibility is discussed below.

The middle set of issues is the most difficult because it involves the large volume of visitation. A voluntary shuttle alternative can relieve some of the pressure on parking, but the impact is likely to be limited, given the high volume of auto traffic. A shuttle could include an interpretive component to better educate some people about visitor impacts at the summit.

The third set of issues can be addressed by the operation of an advance-reservation shuttle service to supplement guided tour bus excursions that currently include the Cadillac summit.

8.2 Ownership and Operation of Cadillac Shuttles

There are a number of reasons to avoid using the fare-free Island Explorer system to serve Cadillac Mountain. A better alternative might be to rely instead on a private concessionaire to operate a Cadillac Mountain shuttle program:

- The Island Explorer has tried to avoid competing with private tour bus concessionaires. Island Explorer personnel direct visitors who want car-free access to Cadillac Mountain to the private tour bus companies.
- Buses in the current Island Explorer fleet are not equipped with the engines, drive trains, and brakes appropriate for the Cadillac Mountain Road. A separate fleet of buses would be needed for a Cadillac shuttle.
- While transit fee revenues collected by Acadia National Park cover a large percentage of Island Explorer costs, there is not enough transit fee revenue to add reasonably frequent shuttle service on Cadillac Mountain.
- Acadia National Park visitors pay a transit fee when they purchase their entry permits. The combined fee entitles them to visit the Park, and includes free Island Explorer bus rides. Charging visitors an additional fee to access Cadillac Mountain conflicts with National Park Service policy. This does not prohibit a private bus operator from charging a fee for rides on the Cadillac Mountain Road.
- Visitors are more likely to pay a fare for a transportation service focused on a specific popular destination. At the same time, a passenger fare may limit demand for Cadillac Mountain service, which can help control the size and cost of a new Cadillac shuttle program.
- Some mechanism will be needed to collect money from cruise ships and motorcoach tour operators that want to transfer their groups to smaller Cadillac Mountain buses. This will be difficult to accomplish if Cadillac bus rides are free.

The capital cost for new buses is likely to be a major obstacle for a private bus company, especially since the smaller buses required for the Cadillac Mountain Road will be less suited for private charter service during the off season. It might be possible for the National Park Service to purchase the required vehicles and to lease this equipment to a private operator through a competitive bid process.

8.3 Cadillac Mountain Shuttle Route Alternatives

Buses to the Cadillac Mountain summit could begin at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, or they could begin at the Bar Harbor Village Green. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to develop any alternative staging areas that provide reasonably direct access to the Cadillac Mountain Road.

The Bar Harbor Village Green would offer direct access to people with in-town lodging, and convenient transfers for Island Explorer bus riders. But there are several reasons against this choice.

- There is no available parking near the Village Green.
- There is limited space for buses at the Village Green, and the town is unlikely to give up additional parking spaces to make room for more buses.
- Some confusion may result if fares are collected from people boarding buses at or next to the Island Explorer transit hub.

Arguments in favor of the Hulls Cove site include the following:

- There is some excess parking currently available at this location.
- The Hulls Cove site appears to have enough space to develop a separate loading area for concessionaire buses.
- It provides reasonably direct access to the Cadillac Mountain road. The segment from the visitor center to the start of the mountain roadway requires about eight minutes, and involves no turns onto state or municipal roadways.
- Easy transfers will be available for Island Explorer bus passengers who arrive on Campground, Loop Road, or Gateway Express buses. This includes direct links to and from the Bar Harbor Village Green.
- The Hulls Cove site may provide an opportunity for the National Park Service to construct an orientation center to educate Cadillac Mountain visitors before they board their bus.
- There may also be room for restrooms that can accommodate motorcoach groups traveling through Acadia National Park. A restroom facility at the base of the stairway might also help do away with long lines the Visitor Center building.

The main argument against using the Hulls Cove Visitor Center is a potential shortage of parking for short-term users. This could be addressed in part, by designating a supply of one-hour parking spaces for people seeking general park information.

Another negative factor is the likely need for new restrooms to be constructed across the parking lot from the stairway entrance. This will result in increased pedestrian movement across the parking area.

8.4 Service Design Strategies

A concessionaire shuttle program on Cadillac Mountain could consist of two components, regularly scheduled service, supplemented by charter operations for out-of-town and cruise ship motorcoach tours. One way to avoid situations where tour groups overwhelm scheduled buses would be to require advance reservations for all rides to the summit.

8.4.1 Scheduled Service

A draft timetable for scheduled service with fifteen-minute headways is presented in Figure 8.1. This service would require the operation of four buses.

Figure 8.1 Fifteen-minute Cadillac Mountain Service with Four Buses

	Hulls Cove	Loop Road	arrive Cadillac Summit	depart Cadillac Summit	Loop Road	Hulls Cove
1	9:30 a	9:38 a	9:48 a	10:00 a	10:10 a	10:18 a
2	9:45 a	9:53 a	10:03 a	10:15 a	10:25 a	10:33 a
3	10:00 a	10:08 a	10:18 a	10:30 a	10:40 a	10:48 a
4	10:15 a	10:23 a	10:33 a	10:45 a	10:55 a	11:03 a
5	10:30 a	10:38 a	10:48 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:18 a
6	10:45 a	10:53 a	11:03 a	11:15 a	11:25 a	11:33 a
7	11:00 a	11:08 a	11:18 a	11:30 a	11:40 a	11:48 a
8	11:15 a	11:23 a	11:33 a	11:45 a	11:55 a	12:03 p
9	11:30 a	11:38 a	11:48 a	12:00 p	12:10 p	12:18 p
10	11:45 a	11:53 a	12:03 p	12:15 p	12:25 p	12:33 p
11	12:00 p	12:08 p	12:18 p	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:48 p
12	12:15 p	12:23 p	12:33 p	12:45 p	12:55 p	1:03 p
13	12:30 p	12:38 p	12:48 p	1:00 p	1:10 p	1:18 p
14	12:45 p	12:53 p	1:03 p	1:15 p	1:25 p	1:33 p
15	1:00 p	1:08 p	1:18 p	1:30 p	1:40 p	1:48 p
16	1:15 p	1:23 p	1:33 p	1:45 p	1:55 p	2:03 p
17	1:30 p	1:38 p	1:48 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:18 p
18	1:45 p	1:53 p	2:03 p	2:15 p	2:25 p	2:33 p
19	2:00 p	2:08 p	2:18 p	2:30 p	2:40 p	2:48 p
20	2:15 p	2:23 p	2:33 p	2:45 p	2:55 p	3:03 p
21	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:48 p	3:00 p	3:10 p	3:18 p
22	2:45 p	2:53 p	3:03 p	3:15 p	3:25 p	3:33 p
23	3:00 p	3:08 p	3:18 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:48 p
24	3:15 p	3:23 p	3:33 p	3:45 p	3:55 p	4:03 p
25	3:30 p	3:38 p	3:48 p	4:00 p	4:10 p	4:18 p

This service includes twenty-five roundtrips per day. It includes three 7-hour work shifts and one 8-hour shift, for a total of 28 service hours per day. This includes a half hour of deadhead time at the start and end of each day. If it runs for 70 days at \$40 an hour, the total operating cost will be roughly \$79,000.

If the roundtrip fare is five dollars and buses average ten riders per round trip, the service will generate \$87,500 in fare box receipts. If the fare is five dollars and buses average fourteen riders per round trip, they will generate fare box revenue totaling \$122,500. These preliminary estimates suggest that to break even with a \$5 round trip fare, buses will need to average nine riders per round trip.

8.4.2 Charter Service

In most instances, it will require two smaller buses to accommodate passengers from a single motorcoach. A single pair of smaller buses could provide roundtrip service to Cadillac Mountain for at least four different motorcoaches per day. The timetable presented in Figure 8.2 includes layovers at the Cadillac Mountain summit of 42 minutes. If the layover is shorter, it may be possible to offer more trips per day.

Figure 8.2 *Cadillac Charter Schedule for a Single Pair of Buses*

	Hulls Cove	Loop Road	arrive Cadillac Summit	depart Cadillac Summit	Loop Road	Hulls Cove
1	10:00 a	10:08 a	10:18 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:18 a
	10:00 a	10:08 a	10:18 a	11:00 a	11:10 a	11:18 a
2	11:30 a	11:38 a	11:48 a	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:48 p
	11:30 a	11:38 a	11:48 a	12:30 p	12:40 p	12:48 p
3	1:00 p	1:08 p	1:18 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:18 p
	1:00 p	1:08 p	1:18 p	2:00 p	2:10 p	2:18 p
4	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:48 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:48 p
	2:30 p	2:38 p	2:48 p	3:30 p	3:40 p	3:48 p

This involves roughly 6.8 hours of bus service per day for each bus. If a single bus provides this service for fifty days during the season at a cost of \$40 per hour, the total operating expense comes to \$13,600. If each bus carries an average of 16 riders per round trip and charges five dollars per person, total revenues for fifty days of service will equal \$16,000. If buses average 20 riders per trip and charge five dollars per person, total revenue per bus for fifty days comes to \$20,000.

Revenues will be lower if demand for charter service is intermittent during the course of a day. Costs may be marginally lower because of fewer miles operated, but labor costs are likely to remain the same.

The number of buses required will depend on the level of demand from cruise ship and motorcoach tour operators. Four pairs of buses would be able to accommodate between 16 and 20 motorcoaches per day. Additional groups could be handled on days when demand is heavy by keeping buses moving, having different bus drivers drop off and pick up groups at the summit.

Private bus operators might also schedule sunrise and sunset trips as well.

These projections are intended as rough estimates only. They are provided here to show that it may be possible for a private company to operate a profitable Cadillac Mountain service. They also suggest that a concession contract might provide for an operator to keep all revenue up to a predetermined amount, with any excess revenues divided between the Park and the operator.

8.5 Infrastructure Requirements

There are four possible sets of infrastructure improvements that are likely to be required by the Cadillac Mountain service envisioned in Section 8.4. They include:

- A fleet of small buses, owned by the National Park Service and leased to a private concessionaire
- A Cadillac Mountain bus stop and loading area adjacent to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center parking lot
- A new Hulls Cove restroom facility for motorcoach groups and other Cadillac Mountain bus riders
- A small amphitheater for pre-trip orientation and education

The proposed service could require a fleet of up to fourteen buses. This includes four buses for scheduled fifteen-minute service, eight buses providing charter service for motorcoach tours, and two spare buses.

Proposed improvements at Hulls Cove will depend on the availability of funding for design and construction, and on geographic and design constraints due to ledge and the location of existing facilities.

Chapter 9: Bus Stop Issues

This chapter discusses Island Explorer bus stops. It identifies locations where improvements may be needed to enhance passenger convenience and vehicle and pedestrian safety. It also considers whether the current policy of offering stops on request needs to be amended for some locations.

The current policy calls for bus drivers to stop anywhere outside of village centers where it is safe to stop. This creates some confusion because bus drivers and passengers do not always agree about where buses can safely stop. It can be especially troublesome when passengers are waiting to be picked up along the side of the road. Bus drivers do not like to drive past people who are waiting to ride their bus. It is also worth noting that different bus drivers do not always agree about where it is safe to stop.

On some route segments it may be appropriate to limit bus stops to designated locations only. If this is done, bus stop signs will need to be installed along public roadways, and information will need to be included in printed schedules to clearly explain the new rules.

Many of the findings in this chapter are summarized in Figures 9.1 and 9.2. These tables identify bus stop locations that are candidates for infrastructure improvements. The first figure lists locations within Acadia National Park. The second identifies locations outside of Acadia National Park that are candidates for MDOT funding. A map is presented in Figure 9.3.

The chapter is structured by route:

Section 9.1	Campground
Section 9.2	Eden Street
Section 9.3	Sand Beach
Section 9.4	Blackwoods
Section 9.5	Jordan Pond
Section 9.6	Brown Mountain
Section 9.7	Southwest Harbor
Section 9.8	Schoodic
Section 9.9	Loop Road
Section 9.10	Gateway Express
Section 9.11	Quietside
Section 9.12	Bicycle Express

Figure 9.1 Bus Stop Improvements in Acadia National Park

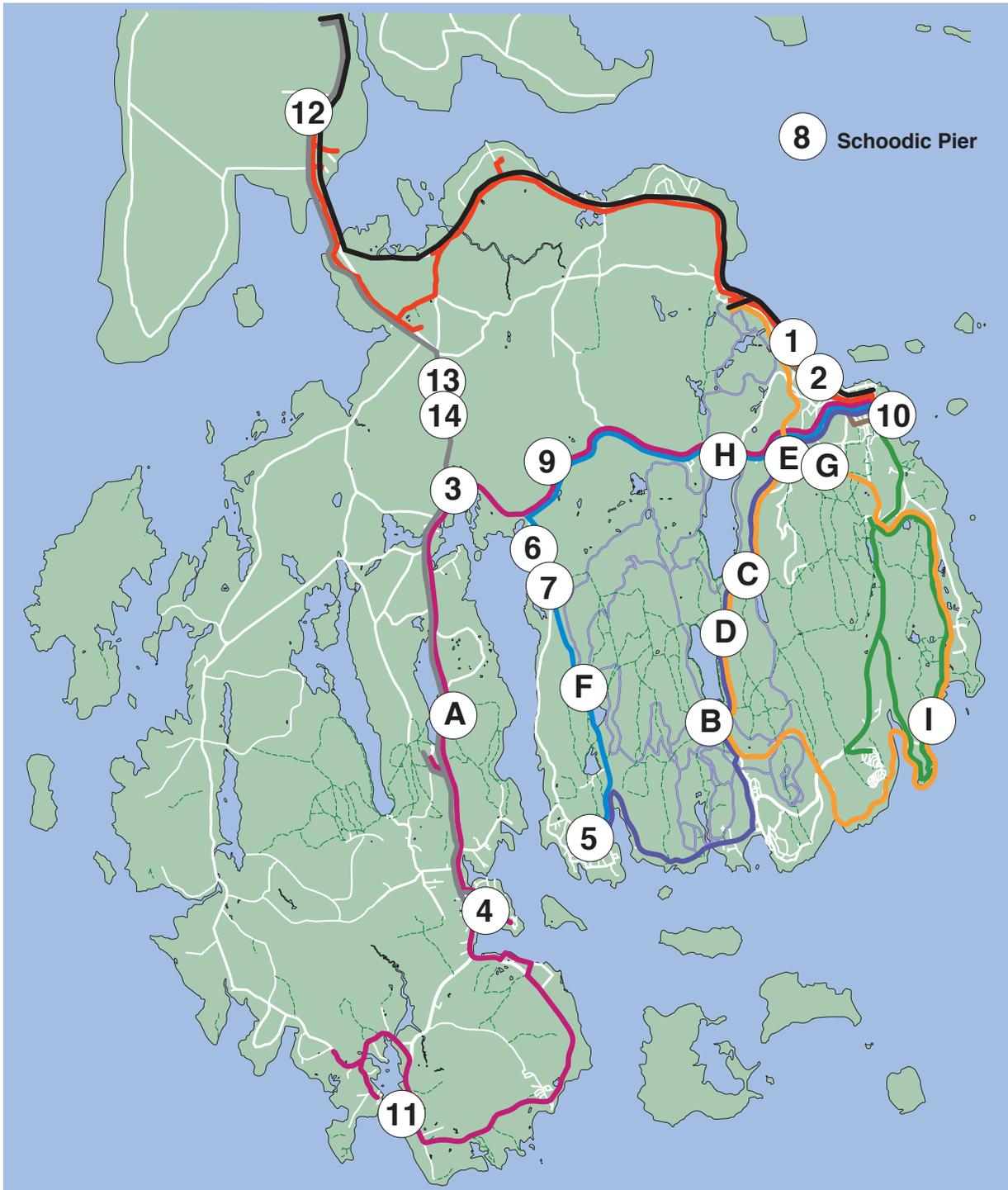
	<i>Route</i>	<i>Stop</i>	<i>Comments</i>
A	Southwest Harbor	Acadia Mountain Inbound	A new turnout needed to allow buses to stop safely at this popular trailhead.
B	Jordan Pond	Jordan Pond House	This is part of a major redesign of driveways and parking at Jordan Pond.
C	Jordan Pond	Bubble Pond	A new turnout is needed for outbound buses.
D	Jordan Pond, Loop road	Bubble Rock	A new turnout is needed for inbound buses.
E	Jordan Pond	Paradise Hill near Loop Road	A new stop will allow people to transfer between Jordan Pond and Loop Road buses.
F	Brown Mountain	Parkman Mountain	Buses cannot stop safely at this popular location.
G	Loop Road	Relocated North Ridge trail	This would provide a safer bus stop location.
H	Bicycle Express	Eagle Lake bike racks	There are sometimes crowds of cyclists waiting for the bicycle shuttle.
I	Sand Beach, Loop Rd	Thunder Hole	Designated loading areas may be needed for different types of buses.

Figure 9.2 Bus Stop Improvements outside Acadia National Park

	<i>Route</i>	<i>Stop</i>
1	Eden Street	Acadia Inn
2	Eden Street	Highbrook Road
3	SW Harbor	Somesville Inbound
4	SW Harbor	SWH Post Office
5	Jordan Pond	NE Harbor Main Street
6	Brown Mt	Sound Museum
7	Brown Mt	Giant Slide Trail
8	Schoodic	Winter Harbor ferry pier
9	Brown Mt / SWH	MDI High School
10	Bicycle Express	Bar Harbor Village Green
11	SW Harbor	New Bass Harbor stop location
12	Gateway Express	Trenton Village Center
13	Quietside	Town Hill: Pine Heath Road
14	Quietside	Town Hill Kittredge Brook Road

Shaded items are high priority improvements needed for current operations.

Figure 9.3 Map of Proposed Bus Stop Improvements



Acadia National Park locations are identified by letters A - F, in descending priority.
MDOT locations are identified by numbers 1-16, in descending priority.

9.1 Campground

The majority of on/off activity along the Campground route occurs at the six private campgrounds located along the route and at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. At each of these locations, buses turn off the main roadway and pick up and drop off passengers in safe, clearly identified locations.

There are a number of places along Route 3, however, where additional stops are sometimes requested. Route 3 is a heavily traveled roadway. The segment between the Bar Harbor Campground and Hulls Cove is narrow, with minimal shoulders. There are few locations along this route segment where buses can safely stop.

Island Explorer partners should consider limiting Campground route bus stops between Hulls Cove and Bar Harbor Campground to designated locations only. Related improvements include:

- Establish a designated stop location in Hulls Cove for inbound and outbound buses. The existing bus stop sign on the porch of the pizza restaurant should probably be moved closer to the Hulls Cove store.
- Offer bus stops in the vicinity of the Hulls Cove Episcopal church only if safe turnouts can be established.
- Install bus stop signs at the foot of Ireson Hill, using available paved areas to allow buses to turn off the main highway.
- Offer an outbound stop at the High Seas Motel. An inbound stop across from High Seas will require improvements to the roadway shoulder. Until this is done, an inbound stop should probably be located at the Log Cabin Restaurant.

Campground buses could add a stop at or near the Salisbury Cove Post Office, as well as near the entrance to the MDI Biological Laboratory. This will require adjustments to inbound and outbound routes. Inbound buses could turn left onto the Old Bar Harbor Road, right on Norway Drive, and then left onto Route 3. Outbound buses could turn right onto Sand Point Road after exiting the Bar Harbor Campground. They could turn left onto Old Bar Harbor Road and continue until it rejoins Route 3 just past the Bio Lab.

Designated bus stops may be needed adjacent to the employee housing complex located just north of the Trenton bridge. The outbound stop can use the former motel driveway. The inbound stop may need to be closer to the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce office.

9.2 Eden Street

There are a number of locations along the Eden Street route where new bus stop turnouts are needed. This will require MDOT participation in the design, funding, and construction of new bus stops.

The Island Explorer bus stop in front of the Bar Harbor Motel on Eden Street provides an example of a simple, low-cost, and effective bus stop design. This stop could serve as a model for other Eden Street locations. Coplon Associates of Bar Harbor designed the stop. The Bar Harbor Motel paid for design and construction.

There are two important candidates for new bus stop turnouts:

- In front of the Acadia Inn, so buses no longer travel through the congested hotel driveway
- Near the intersection with Highbrook Road, to accommodate people staying at the Blue Nose Inn and other nearby motels

Motels near the Highbrook Road intersection should be asked to contribute to the bus project before this new stop is added.

Downeast Transportation should work with MDOT and the town of Bar Harbor to determine if designated bus stops can be added near the intersection of Cottage and Eden Streets, as well as on Mount Desert Street near the Malvern-Belmont senior apartment complex. There may be no alternative in either location to stopping in the main travel way at existing crosswalks.

It should be noted that the Mount Desert Street location is relevant for many other Island Explorer bus routes. Some bus drivers allow on-request stops near Malvern-Belmont, while others do not.

Stops along the Route 3 portion of the Eden Street route should probably be limited to designated locations only. The motel across from the Bay Ferries terminal might be a candidate for a designated stop. The motel owner should be asked to join other motels in subsidizing the bus project before this stop is added.

9.3 Sand Beach

Downeast Transportation should work with Acadia National Park officials to determine the best way for various types of buses to serve Thunder Hole. In the past, Island Explorer buses have turned into the gift shop parking area. An Island Explorer bus stop sign is located near the parking lot restrooms.

It may be more efficient for Island Explorer buses to stop on the Loop Road without entering the adjacent parking area. This will depend in part on how motor coaches and tour buses will serve the Thunder Hole area. A coordinated strategy should assign passenger loading areas for each type of bus service.

9.4 Blackwoods

Beginning in 2007, Blackwoods Campground will be added to the route of the Sand Beach bus. It may be a good idea to design a designated bus stop near the intersection of Route 3 and the Blackwoods Campground access road to accommodate hikers heading to and from the Cadillac Mountain South Ridge trail.

9.5 Jordan Pond

Portions of the Jordan Pond bus could be limited to designated stops only. The route serves busy two-way roadways that are narrow with limited shoulders. This includes the two-way segment of the Park Loop Road and the Stanley Brook Road. Bus stop suggestions include the following:

- Establish a bus stop near the intersection of the Paradise Hill Road and the Park Loop Road to accommodate people transferring between Jordan Pond and Loop Road buses.
- Design and construct a turnout to allow outbound buses to stop at Bubble Pond without entering the Bubble Pond parking area. Outbound buses currently face too many obstacles and delays at this location. Inbound buses can stop at Bubble Pond without traveling through the parking area.
- Design better strategies to allow inbound and outbound buses to stop at the Bubble Rock trailhead. This may require the design and construction of designated bus loading areas on both sides of the Park Loop Road.
- The entire bus loading area at Jordan Pond should be redesigned to do away with the congestion that occurs in the circle near the Jordan Pond House entrance. Auto traffic should not be routed through the bus loading area. Space for additional buses is needed, especially if private tour buses and motorcoaches are going to continue to share Jordan Pond access with the Island Explorer. The bus loading area does not need to be adjacent to the Jordan Pond House entrance.

Buses should be able to stop near Little Long Pond, but there is limited opportunity for them to do this without stopping in the travel lane.

Buses often stop near the Asticou Inn for people traveling to and from Thuya Garden. There does not appear to be any opportunity for buses to turn out of the main travel way to make these stops.

The bus stop on Main Street in Northeast Harbor needs to be properly designed, with appropriate striping and a relocated Island Explorer bus stop sign.

Bus stops at Seal Harbor beach and the Northeast Harbor pier work reasonably well. The Northeast Harbor pier location could be improved by adding a sign showing scheduled departure times.

9.6 Brown Mountain

Most of the Brown Mountain route consists of a busy highway with little or no shoulders. The bus stop at Eagle Lake appears to work fairly well, as does the designated stop at the Brown Mountain Gatehouse parking area. There are a number of bus stop issues for the route:

- Passengers sometimes want to get on or off buses in the vicinity of Norway Drive. The only obvious way to stop here safely would be for buses to travel around the small triangle at the Norway Drive intersection. There is insufficient demand to justify doing this on a regular basis.
- Bus service to MDI High School could be improved by designing a dedicated bus stop and passenger waiting area near the high school, and by allowing buses to travel to and from this bus stop without traveling over speed bumps.
- Bus stops are needed for people trying to reach the Sound School House Museum and the Giant Slide trail. There is no obvious way to accomplish this safely without designing and constructing bus turnouts.
- There are no designated bus turnouts adjacent to the Parkman Mountain parking area. Traffic passes this highway location at a relatively high rate of speed. Roadway shoulders are limited. DTI should work with Acadia National Park and MDOT to determine if improvements can be made to allow buses to stop safely at this popular carriage road and hiking trail access point.

Jordan Pond and Brown Mountain buses have problems with the current bus stop on Main Street in Northeast Harbor. There is usually a private car or truck parked adjacent to the existing bus stop sign. The stop needs to be redesigned, with appropriate striping and signage.

9.7 Southwest Harbor

There are a number of bus stop concerns for the Southwest Harbor route.

- Printed schedules should probably indicate that Southwest Harbor buses do not stop at Eagle Lake. This is particularly important for outbound buses that cannot stop safely at Eagle Lake without traveling around the circle near the boat landing.
- Stop issues for MDI High School are the same as for the Brown Mountain route.
- Designated bus stops are needed in Somesville. The best approach would be to construct a turnout for inbound buses on the south side of the roadway opposite Higgins Store. This will require finding out who owns the property along the right-of-way and looking into the possibility of a land purchase or lease. Grant funding will be needed for design and construction of an appropriate turnout.
- Buses can continue to stop at the crosswalk near the driveway that leads to the harbor in Somesville. A bus stop sign should be added at this location. This stop is needed for bus riders who have sailboats moored in the harbor.
- There is currently no safe way for inbound buses to stop near the Acadia Mountain trailhead. A turnout could be constructed on the east side of the road, just north of the Acadia Mountain parking area. Design and construction dollars will be needed for this site.
- Residents and visitors could benefit from new bus stops on Main Street in Southwest Harbor. The best location is in front of Pemetie School. To accomplish this the town would need to eliminate two parking spaces: the single space located between the school entrance and exit, and the first parking space on Main Street south of the driveway leading to the library and town office. Because of limited in-town parking, local residents and businesses may be reluctant to give up these two parking spaces.
- Improvements are needed for the bus stop on the south side of the Clark Pont Road opposite the Southwest Harbor Post Office. This will be especially important if new bus stops are not added on Main Street. This location needs a designated place for inbound buses to stop, along with a bus stop sign that shows people where they can board buses traveling toward Bar Harbor.
- Bus stop enhancements could be designed for the Cranberry Cove dock to improve intermodal transfers at this site.
- Buses should continue to offer stops at Wonderland and Ship Harbor trailheads. It may be appropriate to add bus stop signs at these locations.
- The bus stop at the Bass Harbor ferry terminal could be moved so buses are not required to travel the dead-end road segment. This would mean that ferry passengers would need to walk a short distance to reach the bus. Turnouts and waiting areas would be needed at the new stop location.

9.8 Schoodic

The policy of offering stops on request appears to work fairly well along the Schoodic route. The Schoodic bus could benefit from infrastructure improvements at the privately owned pier in Winter Harbor. This site could use general landscaping improvements, along with better signage, pedestrian walkways, lighting, and parking. It may be possible for the town of Winter Harbor and MDOT to make arrangements for improved public access to this privately owned pier facility.

9.9 Loop Road

A key bus stop improvement for new Loop Road service is construction of a bus stop on the Paradise Hill Road near the intersection with the Loop Road. This will enable people on outbound Jordan Pond buses to transfer to Loop Road buses at the start of the one-way segment. This will give hikers continued access from Bar Harbor to the Cadillac Mountain North Ridge trail.

Loop Road buses would benefit if the North Ridge trailhead could be moved to a new location closer to the Paradise Hill Road intersection. This would require construction of a new hiking trail segment. This would allow buses to transport hikers to and from the North Ridge trail without stopping on the inside of the curve by the current trailhead parking area.

Loop Road buses turn off the main roadway to offer bus stops at Sieur de Monts, Sand Beach, Wildwood Stables, and Jordan Pond. All four locations are currently served by existing Island Explorer bus routes. The prime candidate for long-term improvements is Jordan Pond, as discussed above in Section 9.5.

A bus stop sign may be needed on the Loop Road at the Fabri picnic area.

9.10 Gateway Express

Buses from a new Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton should offer stops at designated locations only. These should probably be limited to

- Acadia Gateway Center
- Trenton Marketplace or Trenton Village Center
- Hulls Cove Visitor Center
- Bar Harbor Village Green

Gateway buses could perhaps offer stops on request at the Bar Harbor-Hancock County Airport. This would ensure continued direct access between Bar Harbor and the Airport once the Campground route is shortened. The alternative will be for airport travelers to transfer between Quightside and Gateway Express buses at the intermodal center.

Inbound buses should not stop at the airport unless a traffic signal is installed at the Airport Road/Route 3 intersection. Until this is done, airport stops should be limited to outbound buses only.

Gateway buses should be able to help out with the crowding that sometimes occurs on the regular Campground route. Campground stops should be made only at the direction of the Island Explorer dispatcher. Also, commuter buses and regular Gateway Express buses may need to offer special stops at the former Days Inn to accommodate seasonal workers who live at this location.

Infrastructure improvements will be needed to ensure a safe and convenient bus stop near the Trenton Marketplace. New roadways for a proposed Village Center should incorporate a bus stop and passenger waiting area to accommodate Trenton residents. Until the Village Center project moves forward, a temporary bus stop should be established at the Trenton Marketplace.

9.11 Quietside

The proposed Quietside bus may have difficulty offering stops on request between Town Hill and Somesville. Because of potential safety problems, this segment may be a candidate for designated stops only.

Southbound buses should be able to stop in the new bank parking lot in Town Hill. A turnout may be needed on the opposite side of the highway for northbound buses. Turnouts may also be needed for people traveling to and from two subdivisions located east of the main roadway between Town Hill and Somesville. Designated stops may also be needed near the intersections of Route 3/Oak Point Road and Route 3/Gilbert Farm Road.

9.12 Bicycle Express

The Bicycle Express needs improved staging facilities at the start and end of the route. This should include bicycle racks for cyclists to use when they are waiting for the shuttle. Bike racks would reduce confusion and clutter in the loading areas. Cyclists could place their bikes in the rack in the order in which they arrive. When large groups are waiting for the shuttle service, there is currently no way for drivers to know who is first in line.

It might be possible to develop an improved bicycle loading area alongside the Reel Pizza cinema in Bar Harbor. Island Explorer partners should work with MDOT, the town of Bar Harbor, and the cinema owner to explore design possibilities for this area. Sidewalks and curbs adjacent to the movie theater are currently in poor condition.

Acadia National Park should take steps to design and construct bike racks and related improvements at the bus circle near the Eagle Lake boat launch. Other needed bus stop improvements will depend on whether a new route is selected for expanded Bicycle

Express service. Possible candidates for bicycle loading areas are MDI High School and the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.

Figure 9.4 Locations Where New Bus Stop Signs are Needed

<i>Bur Route</i>	<i>Stop Location</i>
Campground	Hulls Cove (relocate inbound sign)
	Foot of Ireson Hill
	High Seas Motel/Log Cabin Restaurant
	Salisbury Cove Post Office
	MDI Biological Laboratory
Eden Street	Mount Desert Street near Malvern-Belmont
	Days Inn across from Bay Ferries
	New stop near Eden Street/Highbrook Road intersection
Sand Beach	
Jordan Pond	Paradise Hill Road/Loop Road intersection
	Redesigned Bubble Pond stop
	Redesigned Bubble Rock stop
	Redesigned Northeast Harbor Main Street stop
Brown Mountain	Redesigned MDI High School stop
	New stops at Sound School House Museum, Giant Slide Trail, and Parkman Mountain
Southwest Harbor	Redesigned Somesville stop
	Driveway to Somesville harbor
	New Acadia Mountain stop
	Southwest Harbor Main Street – INBOUND
	Ship Harbor and Wonderland trailheads
	Relocated Bass Harbor stop
	Relocated inbound Bass Harbor Campground stop
Schoodic	Improved ferry terminal stop
Loop Road	Paradise Hill Road/Loop Road intersection
	Fabri picnic area
Gateway Express	Trenton Village Center / Trenton Marketplace
Quietside	New turnouts between Town Hill and Somesville

Bus stop signs should be added to shaded locations after improvements are completed. Other locations are candidates for immediate attention.

Chapter 10: Summary of Recommended Service Choices

This chapter presents a summary of recommended service choices for individual Island Explorer bus routes. These recommendations are based on careful consideration of the alternatives described in Chapter 7 in light of ten-year financial projections for the Island Explorer project. The Advisory Committee assisted in the evaluation of service design alternatives.

Recommendations are provided for two levels of Island Explorer service, one beginning in calendar year 2007 with the introduction of an expanded vehicle fleet, and another beginning in calendar year 2010 following the opening of a new intermodal transportation center in Trenton.

The impact on daily Island Explorer service hours is reflected in Figure 10.1.

10.1 Summer of 2007 through 2009

10.1.1 Campground

Continue the Campground route as operated in the summer of 2006, with minor adjustments to reflect changes in the availability of deadheading equipment for extra trips. This includes 30-minute headways throughout most of the day during the summer, and hourly headways in the fall.

Add year-round commuter service between Trenton and Bar Harbor when Phase 1 of the Acadia Gateway Center is complete. Phase 1 includes construction of a bus maintenance facility and commuter parking area. Year-round commuter service would be part of Downeast Transportation's year-round transit program.

10.1.2 Eden Street

Continue Eden Street service as operated in 2006, with 30-minute headways in the morning and early afternoon, and 15-minute headways in the late afternoon and evening.

Continue 30-minute Eden Street service in the fall.

Figure 10.3 Daily Island Explorer Service Hour Projections

SUMMER

Route	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2011
Campground	57.0	53.9	48.7
Eden Street	27.2	27.2	27.2
Sand Beach	17.9	33.3	33.3
Blackwoods	15.6	0.0	0.0
Jordan Pond	33.3	34.1	34.1
Brown Mtn.	0.0	9.7	9.7
SWH	46.9	40.6	40.6
Schoodic	8.5	7.2	7.2
Loop Road	0.0	24.6	24.6
Gateway	0.0	0.0	39.2
Quietside	0.0	0.0	12.3
Bicycle Express	15.0	15.0	15.0
Spare	8.0	8.0	8.0
Extra 1	8.0	8.0	8.0
Extra 2	8.0	8.0	8.0
Total Summer	245.4	269.6	315.9

FALL

Route	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2011
Campground	25.6	24.0	27.5
Eden Street	15.8	15.8	15.8
Sand Beach	9.3	28.9	28.9
Blackwoods	15.2	0.0	0.0
Jordan Pond	19.0	26.5	26.5
Brown Mtn.	0.0	0.0	0.0
SWH	15.5	14.2	14.2
Schoodic	0.0	3.8	3.8
Loop Road	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gateway	0.0	0.0	15.8
Quietside	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bicycle Express	0.0	5.7	5.7
Spare	8.0	8.0	8.0
Extra 1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Extra 2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Fall	108.4	126.8	146.1

10.1.3 Sand Beach

Combine the Sand Beach and Blackwoods routes by extending the Sand Beach route to Otter Creek. Operate daytime buses directly from the Bar Harbor Village Green to Sieur de Monts, without serving the North Ridge of Cadillac Mountain. Include inbound stops at Sieur de Monts. Evening service should operate directly between Blackwoods Campground and downtown Bar Harbor.

Increase the frequency of Sand Beach service in the fall from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes.

10.1.4 Blackwoods

Serve Blackwoods Campground and Otter Creek by extending the Sand Beach route, as noted above. This will increase the frequency of Blackwoods service from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes. Provide direct service between Blackwoods Campground and the Bar Harbor Village Green in the evening.

Continue operating three buses on the extended Sand Beach route in the fall, resulting in 30-minute fall headways for both Sand Beach and Blackwoods Campground.

10.1.5 Jordan Pond

Add a third bus to the Jordan Pond route, doubling the frequency from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes. Do not send Jordan Pond buses to Wildwood Stables. Limit stops at Bubble Pond to inbound buses only.

Continue 30-minute Jordan Pond service in the fall.

10.1.6 Brown Mountain

Lengthen Brown Mountain headways from every 60 minutes to every 75 minutes. Use one bus dedicated to the Brown Mountain route, instead of interlining equipment with the Jordan Pond route as was done in 2004 and 2005.

Brown Mountain service does not operate in the fall.

10.1.7 Southwest Harbor

Continue providing hourly service with three buses as in past years. Make adjustments to trips at the start and end of the service day to reduce costs.

Provide four and one-half round trips during the fall, adjusted to match summer changes.

10.1.8 Schoodic

Eliminate the 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. departures from Winter Harbor to reflect reductions in available ferry service. Begin service at the Schoodic Education and Research Center at 10:25 a.m. End the day at SERC at 5:05 p.m.

During September, begin service at SERC at 10:25 a.m. and end at SERC at 3:05 p.m. Meet ferry boats in Winter Harbor at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. The ferry and the Schoodic bus will not operate in October.

10.1.9 Loop Road

Use three buses to provide 30-minute headways on a route that begins and ends at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. The first bus departs Hulls Cove at 9:15 a.m. and the last bus around the Loop Road departs Hulls Cove at 4:15 p.m.

No Loop Road service will be provided in the fall.

10.1.10 Bicycle Express

Continue the Bar Harbor-Eagle Lake Bicycle Express with two vans and trailers as needed during the summer. Add extended service from September 1 through September 30 using one van and trailer.

Postpone implementation of additional Bicycle Express routes until additional funding has been secured from bicycle shops or other private sources.

10.2 Summer of 2010 through 2016

10.2.1 Campground

Shorten the Campground route when Gateway Express buses are added. Provide 30-minute headways with three buses. The shortened route will no longer include stops in Trenton.

In the fall, provide hourly service on the shortened Campground route with two buses.

10.2.2 Eden Street

Continue the current level of Eden Street service for the summer and the fall.

10.2.3 Sand Beach

Continue providing combined Sand Beach / Blackwoods service every 30 minutes with three buses during the summer and the fall.

10.2.4 Blackwoods

Serve Blackwoods Campground every 30 minutes with Sand Beach buses.

10.2.5 Jordan Pond

Maintain 30-minute headways on Jordan Pond in the summer and fall.

10.2.6 Brown Mountain

Continue 75-minute headways on Brown Mountain in the summer, with no service in the fall.

10.2.7 Southwest Harbor

Continue hourly Southwest Harbor service with three buses in the summer, and limited service with one bus in the fall.

10.2.8 Schoodic

Continue hourly service with one bus. Continue limited fall bus service if 2007 ridership justifies continuation of the privately funded ferry service.

10.2.9 Loop Road

Continue 30-minute headways with three buses. Consider extending this service into the fall if demand justifies and if additional dollars become available to pay for it.

10.2.10 Gateway Express

Introduce express service between the Acadia Gateway Center and Bar Harbor. Provide 30-minute service with three buses in the summer, and 30-minute service with two buses in the fall.

10.2.11 Quietside

Add a new route linking the Acadia Gateway Center with Southwest Harbor. Include stops at Acadia Mountain and Echo Lake Beach. Operate every 90 minutes with one bus during the summer season only.

10.2.12 Bicycle Express

Continue the Bicycle Express between Bar Harbor and Eagle Lake. Expand the service to provide additional links when additional funding becomes available for this purpose.

Chapter 11: Marketing Strategies

This chapter reviews the Island Explorer marketing program and identifies opportunities for improving community outreach efforts. It examines printed materials, web-based information, outdoor signs and displays, display ads, and TV and radio promotions. Separate sections discuss the potential for information sharing with local businesses and strategies to increase passenger donations. It also identifies the need for a separate marketing plan to promote the new Acadia Gateway Center scheduled for completion in 2014.

The chapter includes eight sections:

- Section 11.1 Tabloid Map and Schedule
- Section 11.2 Internet Site: www.exploreacadia.com
- Section 11.3 Outdoor Signs and Displays
- Section 11.4 Display Ads
- Section 11.5 TV and Radio Promotions
- Section 11.6 Information Sharing with Individual Businesses
- Section 11.7 Passenger Donations
- Section 11.8 Acadia Gateway Center Marketing Plan

11.1 Tabloid Riders Guide

The key component of the Island Explorer's marketing program is a single-sheet tabloid Riders Guide. The centerfold presents a full-color map of Mount Desert Island bus routes with color-coded timetables for individual routes. The front cover features news about the transit project, along with suggestions for using island shuttles. The back cover presents the Schoodic bus schedule, a listing of Island Explorer boat connections, and other information about the project.

The tabloid publication is printed on a Web-style newspaper press, resulting in a low per-item cost of approximately \$.05 per copy. In recent years, Downeast Transportation has printed 160,000 copies of the tabloid schedule for distribution on Mount Desert Island. The National Park Service has printed an additional 50,000 as the center sheet of Acadia National Park's summer visitor guide, the *Beaver Log*. DTI reimburses the National Park Service for the cost of printing the *Beaver Log* inserts.

Distribution strategies include the following:

- Tabloid schedules are available on all Island Explorer buses, as well as in the information building at the Bar Harbor Village Green.
- A local firm is hired to each year to distribute bus schedules to hotels, campgrounds, and related businesses, ensuring that they have ample supplies to hand out to their guests throughout the summer and fall season.
- The bus schedule has been included in Acadia National Park *Beaver Log*, providing shuttle information to all visitors who read the park's summer guide.
- Stand-alone copies of bus schedule are also available at the Hulls Cove and Thompson Island visitor centers.
- Bus schedules are available in an outdoor newspaper vending machine at the Bar Harbor Village Green transit hub.
- Downeast Transportation mails individual copies of the Island Explorer tabloid to people that telephone looking for information about the shuttle project.

The arrangement with the Beaver Log may not continue beyond the 2006 summer season. The park's graphic designers would like to develop a new centerfold that features ranger programs. The bus schedule interferes with their strategy, because it requires people to first remove the Island Explorer publication before they can see the centerfold design. Acadia National Park interpretive staff would prefer to hand out two separate publications – a copy of the *Beaver Log* and a copy of the bus schedule. If this is done, DTI will need to increase the quantity of its press run.

Additional Opportunities

The Ellsworth American publishes a tabloid visitor guide known as *Out and About*. It might be possible to include the Island Explorer schedule as the center page in this publication.

The Island Explorer project cannot afford to purchase this type of exposure. This idea will work only if the Ellsworth American views the inclusion of bus schedules as an important enhancement to the *Out and About* publication. DTI could perhaps reimburse the Ellsworth American for the cost of printing the Island Explorer sheet. Even this may be too expensive for the bus project. This will depend on the quantity printed.

Another opportunity for improving bus schedule distribution would be to purchase additional outdoor newspaper vending machines for busy bus stop locations. An additional vending machine will be needed for the Acadia Gateway Center when it opens. Other candidate locations include:

- Hulls Cove Visitor Center (next to the electronic departure sign)
- Blackwoods and Seawall Campground bus stops
- Jordan Pond and Sand Beach bus stops
- Bus stops at private campgrounds
- Bus stops in front of major hotels

Private campgrounds and hotels may agree to share the cost of vending machines placed at their businesses. Honor-rack machines for distribution of free tabloids are likely to cost approximately \$200 each. Any decision to acquire additional vending machines needs to be accompanied by an expanded distribution plan to ensure that adequate supplies are available in each location.

11.2 Internet Site: www.exploreacadia.com

Information about the Island Explorer project is available at www.exploreacadia.com. The Island Explorer web site provides:

- General information about the shuttle project
- Route maps and timetables
- A travel guide for getting to Acadia without a car, including links to intercity transportation providers
- Suggested “Ways to Explore” using Island Explorer shuttles
- Access to a “Satellite View” showing the current location of project buses
- News releases
- Planning updates, including draft chapters in PDF format
- Transcriptions of passenger comments from annual onboard surveys
- Links to the web sites of Island Explorer partners

Access to the Island Explorer web site is available via the Acadia National Park web site. This information is not available on the Acadia home page. Visitors to the National Park Service site can find an Island Explorer link by going first to “Plan Your Visit,” then to “Things to Know Before You Come,” then to “Getting Around,” and then to “Bus.” An Island Explorer link is provided at the bottom of the “Bus” page.

Two alternative pathways are available. Site visitors can go from the Acadia Home page to “Directions,” then to “Traffic and Travel Tips,” and then click on a link for “Island Explorer buses.” This brings users to the “Bus” page, with an Island Explorer link at the bottom. Or they can go from the Home page to “Directions,” then to “Public Transportation,” then “Getting Around,” then “Bus.”

Access to the Island Explorer web site is also available via the Friends of Acadia web site. Visitors to the FOA site must go first to “Projects” to find an Island Explorer link.

There are no links to the Island Explorer available on the web site of the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce. In fact, there appears to be no mention of the free shuttle service, with the exception of references to “shuttles” in the description of a small handful of individual Bar Harbor businesses. Some campground web sites say that shuttles are available. The Hadley Point site mentions the Island Explorer by name, but none of the campground sites appear to offer links to the Island Explorer site.

The same appears to be true for Bar Harbor hotels, including those that pay for front-door stops on the Eden Street route. The Acadia Inn site lists the Island Explorer under “Special Amenities.” It includes a few descriptive sentences, but no link. The Atlantic Eryie Lodge web site informs guests about free shuttle service without mentioning the Island Explorer by name or providing any links for additional information.

The web site for the Bar Harbor Motel includes a picture of an Island Explorer bus with the caption: “Scheduled stop of free Island Explorer transportation (in season).” There is no link to the Island Explorer site. The web site for the Regency includes a page showing “Maine Attractions & Links.” A variety of non-profit organizations are included on the list, but the Island Explorer is not one of them.

Indirect access via the Acadia National Park and Friends of Acadia sites, and the absence of Island Explorer links on lodging establishment web sites helps explain why only a small percentage of Island Explorer passengers indicate in onboard surveys that they have visited the Island Explorer web site.

Additional Opportunities

The Island Explorer web site needs to be made more accessible to vision-impaired computer users. The most important step will be to include timetables in a table format that can be read by screen readers. Timetables on the current site are presented as graphic images that provide only title information to disabled users. It should be possible to provide a choice of formats, allowing people without disabilities to continue to use the more visually appealing graphic versions.

When accessibility improvements are made, it should also be possible to enhance the appearance of the navigation system, to improve the visual layout of map and timetable pages, and to update the formatting of the site with cascading style sheets.

Steps need to be taken to share links with campgrounds and other lodging establishments in the Acadia region. Businesses should be given Island Explorer graphics elements and they should be encouraged to use them to create links on their visitor web sites. It might even be possible to create timetable pages that are custom designed for individual hotels and campgrounds, as discussed below in Section 11.6.

A page of links for local business and non-profit supporters could be added to the Island Explorer web site. This could be done as part of a fund raising effort aimed at local businesses that do not currently contribute to the shuttle project. Businesses that already purchase front-door stops should also be included on the links page, along with businesses like Jeff Dobbs Productions that provide free publicity for the shuttle project.

11.3 Outdoor Signs and Displays

Accessible metal frames and fiberglass embedded signs are used to display enlarged versions of the Island Explorer map and timetables at two locations: the Bar Harbor Village Green and the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. The Visitor Center sign is part of the canopied display adjacent to the bus stop.

Smaller versions of the map and timetables are displayed at Blackwoods and Seawall Campgrounds. At these locations, laminated prints of the tabloid centerfold are displayed on bulletin boards in glass-enclosed cases.

Electronic departure signs are installed at four locations to show visitors when next buses are expected to depart. The signs are located at:

- Bar Harbor Village Green
- Hulls Cove Visitor Center
- Sand Beach
- Jordan Pond

Island Explorer bus stop signs are displayed at a wide variety of bus stop locations in Acadia National Park. Bus stop signs also identify stop locations at private campgrounds on the Campground route and at major hotels on the Eden Street route. Bus stop signs are also used in village centers and in a handful of other locations to clarify where people should wait to board Island Explorer buses.

In past years, a limited number of small signs were produced that displayed a route map and timetable for a single bus route. This information was printed on vinyl adhesive applied to a blank bus stop sign. These signs were displayed at private campgrounds on Route 3 and at a number of bus stops along the Jordan Pond route. Use of these signs was discontinued in part because of the need to take down old signs and reinstall new signs each year.

Additional Opportunities

Permanent metal sign frames and enlarged fiberglass-embedded maps and timetables could be added at more bus stops. These might be particularly relevant for village centers and at new transit hub locations. It should be remembered that it costs several hundred dollars each year to for each updated fiberglass-embedded sign. There will be additional one-time costs to purchase and install metal sign frames.

The most likely candidate locations include:

- Acadia Gateway Center
- Northeast Harbor Pier
- Southwest Harbor near the Post Office
- Jordan Pond
- Sieur de Monts
- Sand Beach

A new electronic departure sign will be needed at the Acadia gateway Center. A new electronic departure sign will also be needed at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center before the Acadia Gateway Center opens. The current sign displays times for two buses: inbound Campground and outbound Campground. Beginning in 2007, the sign will need to add departure times for a new Park Loop Road shuttle route. For the time being, the existing sign can flash between Campground and Loop Road times. This will no longer be sufficient when Gateway Express buses are added to the Hulls Cove site following completion of the Acadia Gateway Center.

The Jordan Pond electronic sign will need to display three different departure times: outbound Jordan Pond, inbound Jordan Pond, and Loop Road. In the near term future, this can be handled by flashing between Jordan Pond and Loop Road times.

Sieur de Monts might be a candidate for an additional electronic departure sign in the future. Buses serving this location include outbound Sand Beach buses, inbound Sand beach buses, and Park Loop Road buses.

11.4 Display Ads

Downeast Transportation has not paid for display advertisements in local newspapers or other print media because Island Explorer buses typically run at capacity during the middle of the summer season. Project officials have tried to increase public awareness through free publicity.

A two-page display of Island Explorer information has appeared for several years in the *Acadia Weekly*. The publisher of this regional visitor guide has donated this space to the shuttle project. The *Acadia Weekly* sells some advertising space to businesses that sponsor the Island Explorer pages. Tom Crikelair Associates provides the publishers with an updated system map each year, along with related artwork and information.

The publisher of a regional telephone directory has donated a full-page color display to the Island Explorer project. The display ad was designed by Tom Crikelair Associates, and features a map of the Island Explorer system with a logo, bus graphic, and summary information.

A local publisher displays Island Explorer bus routes on regional tourist maps, along with general information about the service. There is no charge to Downeast Transportation for

this service. The publisher checks with the Island Explorer planner each year to make sure that route displays are current.

Additional Opportunities

One place where information about the Island Explorer is conspicuously absent is the visitor book published annually by the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce. These books are mailed to many visitors before they travel to Mount Desert Island. It would help further the goals of Acadia National Park, MDOT, and the Island Explorer project if prospective visitors were informed about free shuttle service while they are planning their trips. This information may help some car-free vacationers decide to travel to the Acadia region.

An Island Explorer display ad would be designed to benefit the larger community, and would not generate any income for the shuttle project. For this reason, Downeast Transportation should ask the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce to consider including shuttle information at no cost to the bus project, or at a reduced rate. At the same time, DTI should recognize that the Chamber has a policy of limiting visitor book advertising to Chamber members. This suggests that Downeast Transportation should join the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce as a non-profit member.

A Chamber of Commerce display ad could be similar to the full-page ad designed for the local telephone directory. This ad featured a system map, a bus graphic and logo, a headline announcing that the service is free, and summary information about the shuttle project. The Island Explorer telephone number and web site are prominently displayed.

In addition, Acadia National Park officials should consider contacting publishers of hiking and travel guides to suggest that their publications highlight and encourage use of Island Explorer shuttles. DTI should continue to provide information, maps, and related graphic elements to map guide book publishers.

11.5 TV and Radio Promotions

Jeff Dobbs Productions developed high-quality television advertisements for the Island Explorer project in 1999. These video spots have been updated to include information about the partnership between Friends of Acadia and L.L.Bean. The ads appear on the local cable TV station twelve times each day throughout the summer season. The ads are sponsored by Bay Ferries and appear at no cost to Downeast Transportation.

Z Studio developed six radio advertisements for the Island Explorer in 1999. Downeast Transportation paid for these ads to run on local radio stations during the Island Explorer's first season in 1999. The project has not paid for radio advertising since that first year, in part because the project has limited ability to accommodate increased demand.

Additional Opportunities

DTI should encourage Jeff Dobbs Productions to continue running free cable TV ads for the Island Explorer. Jeff Dobbs Productions should be included in any future lists of local businesses that support the Island Explorer project.

The Island Explorer does not appear to need to buy radio advertising, given the high level of local awareness of the shuttle service. Some radio stations may agree, however, to run some free spots for the non-profit shuttle project. Copies of the radio ads produced in 1999 could be distributed to local radio stations, along with a request for donated time. Participating radio stations could be included in a future listing of local business supporters.

11.6 Information Sharing with Individual Businesses

Downeast Transportation supplies area hotels and campgrounds with tabloid bus schedules for distribution to their guests. There has been little effort to provide additional information resources to local businesses.

In past years, customized timetable information has been produced for Mount Desert Narrows Campground. The private campground wanted a simplified timetable that limits its focus to pick up and drop times at Mount Desert Narrows and the Bar Harbor Village Green. The campground included this information in a printed flyer distributed to campers. Mount Desert Narrows has not requested this type of customized information in recent years.

The Atlantic Oakes hotel sometimes produces its own one-page flyer showing bus stop times at their Eden Street location. These flyers are not professionally designed, and do not include the Island Explorer logo or any related graphic elements.

Local businesses that receive front door service could display bus locations and expected arrival times via a computer connected to the Internet. There do not appear to be any businesses that take advantage of this opportunity.

As discussed above, there do not appear to be any local businesses that include links to the Island Explorer on their web sites. The Island Explorer site includes some local business links. These include Friends of Acadia, L.L.Bean, intercity transportation providers (Concord Trailways, Vermont Transit, Bay Ferries, Bangor International Airport, the Bar Harbor-Bangor Shuttle), Acadia National Park concessionaires (Wildwood Stables, National Park Tours, Ollie's Trolley), and local museums and educational programs. With the exception of Friends of Acadia, none of these organizations appear to include a link to the Island Explorer site.

Additional Opportunities

Downeast Transportation should consider two strategies to improve information sharing with local businesses. The first requires an outreach effort to provide hotels, campgrounds, inns, and B&B's with graphic elements and links for use on lodging establishment Internet sites.

A package for web masters could include the Island Explorer logo, a graphic image of a bus, photographs, and a few sentences summarizing the available service. The best way to distribute this information might be through a membership in the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce.

The second strategy involves designing customized flyers for individual hotels and campgrounds that receive front door service. DTI could provide individual hotels and campgrounds with an 8.5 by 11 inch black-and-white flyer showing pick up and drop off times for their location. Because it would be up to local lodging establishments to print copies for their guests, costs to DTI for this effort would be minimal. A single template could be designed for this effort, with different timetables inserted for different businesses.

Similar information could be made available for use on web sites. This would involve designing a Web page template with different timetables for individual business locations. These could be made available in display and print formats on hotel and campground web sites.

11.7 Passenger Donations

During the summer of 2006, the Island Explorer project received approximately \$25,000 in passenger donations. Donation boxes are located on each bus. Small signs say: "Help keep me free. Donations appreciated."

The donation boxes are not very visible, and the signs are not prominently displayed. Despite limited visibility, many passengers contribute to the shuttle project. It is likely that more people would contribute if they were more aware of the opportunity to do so.

Additional Opportunities

Downeast Transportation should consider purchasing fare boxes that can be mounted in a conspicuous location at the entrance to its new Eldorado buses. The best approach would be to use fare boxes with windows that allow cash to be visible to bus riders as they board. Visible cash will attract people's attention. It will also help suggest to riders that they should join others who have already contributed.

Signs encouraging passenger donations should be displayed on the panel above the driver's head, so they are visible to passengers when they are seated on the bus.

Another supporting strategy might be to design comment cards and to place these in dispensers onboard buses. Riders could be instructed to place their completed comment cards in the donation box. This will help call attention to the opportunity to contribute to the project. Whether this comment card idea will be feasible will depend on the design of donation boxes. This won't work unless comment cards can pass easily into the donation box.

11.8 Acadia Gateway Center Marketing Plan

Special efforts will be needed to encourage Acadia National Park visitors and regional commuters to take advantage of the new Acadia Gateway Center scheduled for completion in 2014. A separate marketing strategy and marketing plan will need to be developed for this purpose.

A marketing plan for the Acadia Gateway Center Marketing should address:

- Pre-trip traveler information, including Acadia National Park and Island Explorer web sites, and Internet and print materials distributed by area chambers of commerce and private businesses
- Printed materials distributed to off-island lodging establishments and tourism information centers
- Signage on roadways approaching the Acadia Gateway Center designed to motivate visitors to stop at the Trenton intermodal facility
- Outreach to Eastern Maine residents via newspaper ads, radio ads, and direct mail
- Outreach to area businesses and residents highlighting the availability of car-free commuter transportation to jobs in Bar Harbor

All of these items assume that project partners will agree on clear and consistent messages about the Acadia Gateway Center and the benefits it provides to visitors and commuters. These materials should be developed with input from regional stakeholders, including Acadia National Park, Chambers of Commerce, MDOT, the Maine Office of Tourism, local municipalities, and area employers.

Chapter 12: Capital and Financial Plan

This chapter presents a ten-year capital and financial plan for the Island Explorer shuttle program. It includes capital and operating cost projections for the period FY 2008 through FY 2017, along with estimates of revenues required to pay for the service.

The plan assumes that modest expansion of Island Explorer service will occur in the summer of 2007, including introduction of a new bus route on the Park Loop Road. It assumes that Phase 2 of the Acadia Gateway Center will open in the summer of 2013, with new routes linking the Trenton facility with Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor.

It should be noted that Downeast Transportation's fiscal year matches MDOT's fiscal year, beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30. This means, for example, that the majority of bus service provided by DTI in fiscal year 2008 occurs during calendar year 2007. The bus company's FY 2008 budget includes Island Explorer operations from July 1, 2007 through October 8, 2007, plus June 23, 2008 through June 30, 2008.

Acadia National Park follows the federal fiscal year, from October 1 through September 30. Island Explorer funding in Acadia National Park's FY 2007 budget appears in DTI's FY 2008 budget. Most of these dollars are spent by DTI during the summer of 2007.

The chapter includes six sections:

- Section 12.1 Capital Plan
- Section 12.2 Service Hours
- Section 12.3 Operating Costs
- Section 12.4 Acadia Gateway Center Maintenance Costs
- Section 12.5 Anticipated Operating Revenues
- Section 12.6 Ten-year Budget Projections

12.1 Capital Plan

Anticipated capital expenditures for the Island Explorer project are presented in Figure 12.1. Anticipated funding sources are presented in Figure 12.2.

The capital plan includes revenues and expenses for Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton. It addresses replacement buses and vans for the Island Explorer project. It anticipates expansion and upgrading of electronic departure signs, and periodic upgrading of DTI's computer equipment. It calls for acquisition of an Island Explorer service truck.

The plan also anticipates expenditures for the design and construction of bus stop improvements, both within and outside Acadia National Park.

Replacement Vehicles

The plan anticipates the purchase of replacement buses at the beginning and at the end of the ten-year planning period. It calls for purchasing eight 28-passenger buses in FY 2007, replacing buses acquired in FY 1999. It includes six 28-passenger buses in FY 2008 and three 28-passenger buses in FY 2009, replacing nine buses purchased in FY 2000.

Buses purchased in fiscal years 2006 and 2007 would be replaced in fiscal years 2016 and 2017. The plan includes twelve 28-passenger buses in FY 2016 and eight 28-passenger buses in FY 2017.

The existing fleet includes 29 buses. This should be adequate for the services anticipated in this Short Range Transit Plan, provided two or three of the buses due to be replaced in FY 2008 are retained as spares. The service plan anticipates a peak pullout of 20 buses beginning in FY 2008 and 25 buses in FY 2014. The project should maintain one spare bus on the Schoodic peninsula and at least five spare buses for operations on Mount Desert Island.

The plan anticipates that replacement buses in FY 2007, 2008, and 2009 would be purchased with FTA-ATTPL funds. It divides the cost of replacement buses in FY 2015 - FY 2017 between FTA-ATTPL (80%) and regular Maine FTA capital grants (20%).

The plan includes two replacement vans for the Bicycle Express in FY 2013, using funding from the FTA-ATTPL program.

ITS and Computer Equipment

The plan includes \$200,000 for upgrading and expanding Island Explorer electronic departure signs. This includes upgrading signs at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center and Jordan Pond, and installation of a new sign at Sieur de Mont. It suggests that funding for these technology upgrades will come from the FTA-ATTPL program in FY 2010. The

plan assumes that a new electronic departure sign for the Acadia Gateway Center is included in the estimated cost for Phase 2 of the Acadia Gateway Center project.

The plan includes \$20,000 to upgrade Downeast Transportation computers in FY 2010, and \$25,000 to upgrade computers again in FY 2016. It anticipates that 80% of this cost would be covered by regular FTA capital grants. It assumes that the 20% local share would come from Downeast Transportation's capital reserve fund.

Bus Stop Improvements

The capital plan includes separate line items for bus stop improvements within and outside Acadia National Park. It uses FTA-ATTPL funds for design and construction inside the national park. It uses FTA funding for 80% of the cost of bus stop improvements outside the park, and contributions from municipalities and local businesses for the remaining 20%.

The plan includes \$80,000 in FY 2008 for planning and design work within Acadia National Park. It includes \$1 million in FY 2010 for construction of these Acadia National Park bus stop improvements. This includes a major redesign of vehicle access to the Jordan Pond House. Other improvements include a new bus stop near the Acadia Mountain trailhead, a new bus stop near the Paradise Hill Road/Loop Road intersection, a relocated trail and bus stop for the North Ridge of Cadillac Mountain, and enhancements to the Bicycle Express stop at Eagle Lake.

The plan includes an additional \$450,000 for bus stop improvements along state highways and other locations outside of Acadia National Park. \$240,000 appears in FY 2009, and \$210,000 is included in FY 2012. This will cover design and construction for fifteen locations at an average cost of \$30,000 per bus stop. Some of these sites may involve minor improvements to the road shoulder. Others may require more extensive construction, along with acquisition of land adjacent to the state-owned right-of-way.

Acadia Gateway Center

The Island Explorer capital plan includes costs and revenues for Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the proposed Acadia Gateway Center. It uses estimates from the recent Acadia Gateway Center Business Plan for the construction of a bus maintenance facility (Phase 1), an intermodal welcome center (Phase 2), and expanded National Park Service interpretive facilities (Phase 3).

The Island Explorer capital plan assumes that FTA earmarks would cover 80% of the bus facility and the intermodal center. The value of land donated by Friends of Acadia would cover a portion of the 20% local match for Phase 1, with the balance provided by MDOT. The capital plan relies on FTA-ATTPL funding to cover 100% of the cost of constructing Phases 2 and 3.

Figure 12.1 Island Explorer Capital Plan: Line Item Expenditures

4/30/07

ISLAND EXPLORER CAPITAL PLAN											
<i>Unit Purchases</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses											
2. 28-passenger buses	8	6	3							12	8
3. Vans and bike trailers	2						2				
4. ITS equipment				1							
5. ANP bus stops		1		1							
6. Other bus stops			8			7					
7. Maintenance facility			1								
8. Intermodal center					1	1					
9. Computers				1						1	
10. Service truck			1								
<i>Unit Costs</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. 28-passenger buses	188,000	215,000	220,375	225,884	231,531	237,320	243,253	249,334	255,567	261,957	268,506
3. Vans and bike trailers	39,168	40,147	41,151	42,180	43,234	44,315	45,423	46,558	47,722	48,915	50,138
4. ITS equipment	0	0	20,000	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. ANP bus stops	0	80,000	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Other bus stops	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0
7. Maintenance facility	0	0	12,124,818	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Intermodal center	0	0	0	0	9,676,297	3,100,000	0	0	0	0	0
9. Computers	0	0	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	0
10. Service truck	30,000	30,750	31,519	32,307	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>	<i>FY 2010</i>	<i>FY 2011</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>	<i>FY 2015</i>	<i>FY 2016</i>	<i>FY 2017</i>
1. 40-passenger buses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. 28-passenger buses	1,504,000	1,290,000	661,125	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,143,479	2,148,044
3. Vans and bike trailers	78,336	0	0	0	0	0	90,846	0	0	0	0
4. ITS equipment	0	0	0	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. ANP bus stops	0	80,000	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Other bus stops	0	0	240,000	0	0	210,000	0	0	0	0	0
7. Maintenance facility	0	0	12,124,818	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Intermodal center	0	0	0	0	9,676,297	3,100,000	0	0	0	0	0
9. Computers	0	0	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	0
10. Service truck	0	0	31,519	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Capital Costs	1,582,336	1,370,000	13,057,462	1,220,000	9,676,297	3,310,000	90,846	0	0	3,168,479	2,148,044

Figure 12.2 Island Explorer Capital Plan: Funding Sources and Notes

4/30/07

ISLAND EXPLORER CAPITAL PLAN											
<i>Anticipated Capital Funding Sources</i>											
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
FTA - ATTPPL	1,496,000	1,370,000	1,692,644	1,200,000	3,000,000	3,100,000	90,846	0	0	2,514,784	1,718,435
FTA - Other	86,336	0	8,891,854	16,000	4,741,038	168,000	0	0	0	648,696	429,609
Federal Lands Highway - ATP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acadia National Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other National Park Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MDOT	0	0	2,174,964	0	1,935,259	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friends of Acadia	0	0	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Municipal / Local	0	0	48,000	0	0	42,000	0	0	0	0	0
DTI Capital Reserve	0	0	0	4,000	0	0	0	0	0	5,000	0
Total Capital Funds	1,582,336	1,370,000	13,057,462	1,220,000	9,676,297	3,310,000	90,846	0	0	3,168,479	2,148,044
NOTES											
FY 2007	8 replacement buses, two new vans and bike trailers										
FY 2008	6 replacement buses, planning funds for ANP bus stops										
FY 2009	Bus stop improvements outside Acadia National Park										
	AGC Phase 1: DTI maintenance facility										
	3 replacement buses										
	Island Explorer service truck										
	Friends of Acadia contributes the estimated value of the AGC land										
	MDOT contribution represents the remaining local match for the AGC										
FY 2010	New electronic departure signs for ANP bus stops										
	Construction of ANP bus stops, including Jordan Pond										
	DTI computer upgrade										
FY 2011	AGC Phase 2: Intermodal facility										
FY 2012	Bus stop improvements outside Acadia National Park										
	AGC Phase 3: expanded National Park facilities										
FY 2013	2 replacement vans										
FY 2016	12 replacement buses, DTI computer upgrade										
FY 2017	8 replacement buses										

Service Truck

The capital plan includes \$31,500 to purchase an Island Explorer service truck in FY 2009. This would replace a worn out and rusted van that is currently used by DTI's maintenance supervisor.

12.2 Service Hours

In FY 2007, Island Explorer buses operated approximately 245 hours per day during the summer season and 108 hours a day during the fall. These daily totals include deadhead time and hours for spare drivers, as well as regularly scheduled service hours. Service hours in FY 2007 totaled approximately 22,232.

Beginning in FY 2008, service hours are projected to increase to 270 hours per day during the summer, and 127 hours per day in the fall. The projected annual total is 24,234. Once the Acadia Gateway Center opens in FY 2014, Island Explorer service hours are expected to increase to 316 hours per day in the summer, and 146 hours per day in the fall, for an annual total of 28,252.

The FY 2008 total represents a 9% increase above the FY 2007 level. The projected total for FY 2014 is 27% greater than FY 2007. Daily service hour projections for individual bus routes are presented in Figure 12.3.

12.3 Island Explorer Operating Costs

The unit cost for Island Explorer operations in FY 2006 was \$43.42 per hour. The projected unit cost for FY 2007 is \$48.49. Unit costs for fiscal years 2008 through 2017 were estimated by adding 3% per year to the FY2007 projection. This results in a unit cost for FY 2008 of \$49.94. By FY 2017, inflation increases this cost to \$65.17 per hour.

Operating cost estimates were calculated by multiplying projected service hours by projected hourly costs. The projected annual Island Explorer operating cost for FY 2007 is \$1.08 million. This increases in FY 2008 to \$1.21 million. When Phase 2 of the Acadia Gateway Center opens in FY 2014, Island Explorer annual operating costs are expected to total \$1.68 million. By FY 2017, this is projected to increase to \$1.84 million.

These estimates do not include annual Island Explorer contributions of between \$9,000 and \$12,000 per year for DTI's operation of year-round commuter service in the Route 3 corridor. This year-round service between the Acadia Gateway Center and Bar Harbor will be integrated with regular Gateway Express service beginning in FY 2014, but is expected to be funded separately through the FTA JARC commuter program.

Also, these estimates do not include Acadia Gateway Center operating and maintenance costs. AGC operating and maintenance costs are addressed in Section 12.4.

Figure 12.3 Service Hour Projections for Individual Island Explorer Routes

SUMMER

<i>Route</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>
Campground	57.0	53.9	48.7
Eden Street	27.2	27.2	27.2
Sand Beach	17.9	33.3	33.3
Blackwoods	15.6	0.0	0.0
Jordan Pond	33.3	34.1	34.1
Brown Mountain.	0.0	9.7	9.7
SW Harbor	46.9	40.6	40.6
Schoodic	8.5	7.2	7.2
Loop Road	0.0	24.6	24.6
Gateway	0.0	0.0	39.2
Quietside	0.0	0.0	12.3
Bicycle Express	15.0	15.0	15.0
Extras and spares	24.0	24.0	24.0
Total Summer	245.4	269.6	315.9

FALL

<i>Route</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>
<i>Route</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2011</i>
Campground	25.6	24.0	27.5
Eden Street	15.8	15.8	15.8
Sand Beach	9.3	28.9	28.9
Blackwoods	15.2	0.0	0.0
Jordan Pond	19.0	26.5	26.5
Brown Mountain.	0.0	0.0	0.0
SW Harbor	15.5	14.2	14.2
Schoodic	0.0	3.8	3.8
Loop Road	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gateway	0.0	0.0	15.8
Quietside	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bicycle Express	0.0	5.7	5.7
Extras and spares	8.0	8.0	8.0
Total Fall	108.4	126.8	146.1

12.4 Acadia Gateway Center Maintenance Costs

Costs to operate and maintain a new Island Explorer maintenance facility in Trenton are not included in the Island Explorer unit cost projections. Costs for snow plowing and building maintenance need to be added on top of projected operating costs.

The Business Plan for the Acadia Gateway Center projects that operating and maintenance costs for Phase 1 of the Acadia Gateway project will total \$147,000 per year in FY 2010. This will be partially offset from savings when DTI moves to the new facility. Anticipated cost reductions include:

- \$6,000 per year in rent for DTI's Ellsworth office
- \$10,000 per year in rent for the Trenton IGA fueling site
- \$10,647 per year in insurance costs for the propane pump and tanks
- \$2,000 per year in budgeted propane facility repairs
- \$440 per year in utility costs at the propane facility

Anticipated cost reductions in FY 2007 dollars total \$29,087. If these costs are inflated by 3% per year, the total savings in FY 2010 should total \$31,784. This results in a projected net cost for facility operations and maintenance of \$115,216 per year. This amount is added to Island Explorer operating cost projections for FY 2010. The financial plan adds 3% per year to these operations and maintenance costs through FY 2017.

The AGC Business Plan suggests that Downeast Transportation will be responsible for maintenance costs associated with Phase 2 of the Acadia Gateway Center project during the months when the Island Explorer is operating. It suggests that the National Park Service would fund Intermodal Center maintenance costs during the off-season. It projects that annual operations and maintenance costs for the intermodal center will total \$148,515 in FY 2014 dollars.

This Island Explorer financial plan includes the year-round cost to operate and maintain the AGC Phase 2 intermodal center. It does not attempt to divide these costs between DTI and Acadia National Park. The plan does not assume that DTI employees would carry out these maintenance tasks. It is more likely that Acadia National Park employees will do this work.

Costs to operate and maintain the new visitor facility will be partially offset by savings resulting from closing the Thompson Island information building. Thompson Island operations and maintenance costs totaled \$17,656 in FY 2007. If this increases 3% per year, the annual savings from closing Thompson Island in FY 2014 should total \$21,715.

This results in a net estimated FY 2014 operations and maintenance cost for the AGC intermodal center of \$126,800. The financial plan increases that amount by 3% per year through FY 2017.

12.5 Anticipated Operating Revenues

Acadia National Park

The financial plan shows contributions from Acadia National Park for Island Explorer bus operations increasing from \$600,000 per year in FY 2008 to \$930,000 in FY 2013. Acadia National Park support increases to \$1.11 million in FY 2014, when new Acadia Gateway Center routes begin operating. By FY 2017, the park's contribution is projected to total \$1,225,000.

The plan shows Acadia National Park's share of project revenues totaling 50% in FY 2008. This increases to 62% by FY 2017.

The plan includes a separate line item for Acadia National Park's contribution toward operations and maintenance of the Acadia Gateway Center intermodal facility. These amounts are shown separately, in part because these are expenses that may be paid directly by the National Park Service, without passing through Downeast Transportation.

The plan shows estimated fund balances for Acadia National Park's transit fee program. If Acadia National Park contributions come exclusively from the transit fees, and if transit fee collections increase by an average of 3% per year during the 10-year planning period, the year-end transit fee fund balance should be \$453,510 in FY 2017.

Federal Transit Administration

The plan assumes that MDOT will allocate \$180,000 of FTA 5311 funding to the Island Explorer in FY 2008. This is consistent with past levels of MDOT/FTA support for the project. FTA 5311 support is increased by 3% per year through FY 2013.

FTA allocations for the Island Explorer are increased by \$100,000 in FY 2014 when new bus routes are added to serve the Acadia Gateway Center. The new total is increased by 3% per year through FY 2017.

These amounts do not include FTA JARC funding anticipated for year-round commuter operations in the Trenton-Bar Harbor corridor. JARC funding is included instead in Downeast Transportation's year round operating budget. JARC funding is expected to total roughly \$51,000 per year beginning in FY 2008 or 2009.

Municipal Appropriations

Funding for the Island Explorer from local municipalities totaled \$60,200 in FY 2007. The financial plan assumes that this amount will increase by 3% per year beginning in FY 2009 to offset the impact of inflation.

Half of the Island Explorer's municipal support comes from the town of Bar Harbor, where cost of living increases are regularly added for the Island Explorer in the town's annual budget.

Other municipalities have typically provided level funding for the project, without any allowances for inflation. DTI should request inflation increases from these towns during the municipal budget process. The amount at issue will equal roughly \$1,000 per year in FY 2009. By FY 2017, this will amount to about \$2,000 per year.

Corporate Support

L.L.Bean currently provides \$200,000 per year to Friends of Acadia to support the Island Explorer project. This corporate pledge remains in effect through FY 2012. The financial plan includes \$198,000 per year from L.L.Bean through FY 2012. It includes the same level of corporate support through FY 2017.

The financial plan assumes that either L.L.Bean will renew its present level of support for another five years, or another corporate sponsor will be found to offer the same level of annual funding. Friends of Acadia will need to continue working closely with L.L.Bean to ensure that enough lead time is available to find a new sponsor, should L.L.Bean decide against renewing its agreement.

Business Direct Service

Hotels and campgrounds that receive front door service pay annual fees to Downeast Transportation. DTI mails invoices to these businesses at the start of each summer. Fees for direct service are also paid by Bay Ferries, the Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor Ferry, and the College of the Atlantic.

In FY 2007 revenues from direct business fees totaled \$34,880. The amount that these businesses are charged has not changed since FY 2001, despite the extension of service from Labor Day through Columbus Day. The cost for fall service was covered largely by L.L.Bean's \$250,000 contribution. However, L.L.Bean's support for the Island Explorer project will change in FY 2008 to \$200,000 per year.

The financial plan assumes that revenues collected by DTI for direct front door service will increase to \$61,380 beginning in FY 2009. This can be accomplished by increasing the current summer-season fee for Route 3 hotels and campgrounds by 50%, and by adding a new \$1,000 annual charge for fall service. This would result in a combined annual fee for the larger hotels and campgrounds of \$4,000 per year.

The plan adds new \$1,000 per year annual fees for five motels and non-profit organizations that utilize the service without providing any financial support. There may be other businesses that may be candidates for this list of new supporters. Suggested fees for individual businesses are detailed in Figure 12.4.

Figure 12.4 Suggested Fee Increases for Front Door Service

	Current	Future Summer	Future Fall	Future Total
Narrows Too	2,000	2,000	0	2,000
Barcadia	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Spruce Valley	1,000	1,500	0	1,500
Mount Desert Narrows	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Hadley Point	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Bar Harbor Campground	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Mount Desert Campground	400	400	0	400
Smugglers Den	740	740	0	740
Bass Harbor Campground	740	740	0	740
Atlantic Oakes	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Regency	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Bar Harbor Motel	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Acadia Inn	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Eyrie Lodge	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Wonder View	2,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
Bay Ferries	5,000	5,000	0	5,000
Winter Harbor Ferry	4,000	3,000	1,000	4,000
College of the Atlantic	1,000	1,500	500	2,000
Highbrook Motel	0	750	250	1,000
High Seas Motel	0	750	250	1,000
Days Inn	0	750	250	1,000
MDI Biological Lab	0	750	250	1,000
Jackson Lab	0	750	250	1,000
	34,880	48,630	12,750	61,380

Business Donations

The Acadia Corporation makes an annual \$5,000 donation to DTI for the Island Explorer. In the past, businesses on the Schoodic peninsula have provided up to \$1,500 to support the Schoodic bus route. A number of other businesses responded to a Friends of Acadia funding request several years ago, but no attempt has been made in recent years to obtain voluntary financial support from local businesses.

The financial plan increases business donations by \$10,000 per year beginning in FY 2009. This will require Downeast Transportation and its Island Explorer partners to put together a fund raising effort to generate donations from local businesses. There are many in-town inns, B&B's, restaurants, and shops that benefit from the shuttle service and that might be willing to provide financial support if asked. It will take fifty \$200 donations or twenty \$500 donations to reach a goal of \$10,000.

The fund drive could offer recognition for participating businesses that contribute a minimum of \$200. This could include:

- A sign or decal that identifies the business as an Island Explorer supporter
- Recognition on the Island Explorer web site, including business links
- A printed flyer available on Island Explorer buses that includes two or three sentences about each business supporter

12.6 Ten-year Budget Projections

Ten-year revenues and expenses projections are presented in Figure 12.5. Operating costs are presented for four items:

- Island Explorer operations
- Island Explorer contributions to year-round commuter operations
- Costs to operate and maintain a new bus maintenance facility
- Costs to operate and maintain the Acadia Gateway Center intermodal facility

Revenues from Acadia National Park are presented in two separate line items, one for Island Explorer operations, and another for operations and maintenance of the Acadia Gate Center intermodal facility. They are presented separately, because these AGC costs are unlikely to be included in Acadia National Park's cooperative agreement with Downeast Transportation.

While expenses exceed anticipated revenues for some years, the financial plan projects a DTI year-end fund balance of approximately \$90,000 or more throughout the ten-year planning period.

Figure 12.5 includes projected fund balances for Acadia National Park's transit fee program. The plan assumes annual growth in fee collections of 3% per year. The ten-year projections show an ending fund balance of nearly half a million dollars.

Figure 12.5: Island Explorer Cost and Revenue Projections

PROJECTED COSTS - ISLAND EXPLORER

SERVICE LEVEL	CURRENT	No AGC	No AGC	No AGC	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Total hours	22,232	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	24,234	28,252	28,252	28,252	28,252
Inflation		3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Cost/hour	48.49	49.94	51.44	52.99	54.58	56.21	57.90	59.64	61.43	63.27	65.17
Hourly costs	1,078,030	1,210,360	1,246,671	1,284,071	1,322,593	1,362,271	1,403,139	1,684,853	1,735,398	1,787,460	1,841,084
Trenton commuter	0	9,000	9,315	9,641	9,978	10,328	10,689	11,063	11,451	11,851	12,207
AGC Phase 1 O&M					115,216	118,672	122,233	125,900	129,677	133,567	137,574
AGC Phase 2 O&M								126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Total costs	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422

PROJECTED REVENUES - ISLAND EXPLORER

SERVICE LEVEL	CURRENT	No AGC	No AGC	No AGC	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2	Phase 2
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Total Cost	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422
Fare Box											
ANP - Island Explorer	450,000	600,000	625,000	700,000	850,000	880,000	930,000	1,110,000	1,150,000	1,185,000	1,225,000
ANP - AGC O&M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Federal Transit	367,500	180,000	185,400	190,962	196,691	202,592	208,669	314,929	324,377	334,109	344,132
FTA Prepaid ITS	0	73,673	73,673	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Federal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Municipalities	60,200	60,200	62,006	63,866	65,782	67,756	69,788	71,882	74,038	76,260	78,547
Corporate support	247,500	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000	198,000
Business direct service	34,880	34,880	61,380	63,221	65,118	67,072	69,084	71,156	73,291	75,490	77,754
Business donations	6,500	6,500	16,500	16,995	17,505	18,030	18,571	19,128	19,702	20,293	20,902
Individual donations	25,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Friends Groups	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Interest	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total revenues	1,196,580	1,193,253	1,261,959	1,273,045	1,433,096	1,473,449	1,534,112	1,951,895	2,010,011	2,063,672	2,122,892
Net revenue	118,550	-26,107	5,973	-20,667	-14,691	-17,822	-1,948	3,280	2,883	-3,728	-6,530
ISLAND EXPLORER FUND BALANCE											
Opening balance	52,106	170,656	144,549	150,522	129,855	115,164	97,342	95,393	98,673	101,556	97,828
Revenues	1,196,580	1,193,253	1,261,959	1,273,045	1,433,096	1,473,449	1,534,112	1,951,895	2,010,011	2,063,672	2,122,892
Expenses	1,078,030	1,219,360	1,255,986	1,293,712	1,447,787	1,491,271	1,536,061	1,948,615	2,007,128	2,067,400	2,129,422
Ending balance	170,656	144,549	150,522	129,855	115,164	97,342	95,393	98,673	101,556	97,828	91,299
TRANSIT FEE FUND BALANCE											
		Growth after FY 2008		3%							
Opening balance	880,778	1,260,869	1,444,035	1,625,696	1,756,557	1,762,344	1,763,804	1,741,708	1,440,050	1,122,643	795,213
Revenues	870,056	824,330	849,060	874,532	900,768	927,791	955,624	984,293	1,013,822	1,044,237	1,075,564
Island Explorer	450,000	600,000	625,000	700,000	850,000	880,000	930,000	1,110,000	1,150,000	1,185,000	1,225,000
AGC O&M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	126,799	130,603	134,521	138,557
Other expenses	39,965	41,164	42,399	43,671	44,981	46,330	47,720	49,152	50,626	52,145	53,710
Ending balance	1,260,869	1,444,035	1,625,696	1,756,557	1,762,344	1,763,804	1,741,708	1,440,050	1,122,643	795,213	453,510

While 3% growth in fee collections will provide sufficient funding through FY 2017, it should be noted that revenue and expense trends from FY 2014 through FY 2017 are not sustainable beyond FY 2018. Long-term sustainability can be achieved by an average 5% growth in transit fee collections, a 15% reduction in Island Explorer costs, or a 15% increase in total Island Explorer revenues. A more likely scenario for the longer-term future will combine selected cost reductions, modest revenue increases, and more comprehensive fee collection by Acadia National Park.

Other possibilities for the longer-term futures include:

- Introduction by Congress of FTA operating subsidies for alternate transportation projects in national parks
- A National Park Service decision to follow the FTA urban program by treating major bus repairs as capital expenses, making these costs eligible for FTA-ATTPL: funding
- A restructuring of Island Explorer vehicle insurance costs, based on future changes in laws regarding public transit liability

Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2005

PLEASE FILL OUT ONE SURVEY PER FAMILY OR GROUP

1. DATE _____ 2. TIME _____

Number in your party _____
 3. Retired adults _____
 4. Other adults _____
 5. Children (under 18) _____

6. WHAT BUS ROUTE ARE YOU ON NOW? (Please check only one) (1) Campground
 (2) Eden Street (3) Sand Beach (4) Blackwoods (5) Jordan Pond
 (6) Brown Mountain (7) Southwest Harbor (8) Schoodic (9) Bike Express

7. WILL YOUR BUS RIDE INVOLVE TWO DIFFERENT ROUTES? YES No

8. IF yes, please check the other route used for this ride. (1) Campground
 (2) Eden Street (3) Sand Beach (4) Blackwoods (5) Jordan Pond
 (6) Brown Mountain (7) Southwest Harbor (8) Schoodic (9) Bike Express

9. What is the PRIMARY purpose of this bus trip? (Please check only one) To or from
 (1) Work (2) Hiking (3) Biking (4) Swimming
 (5) Boating (6) Shopping (7) Dining (8) Sightseeing
 (9) Other _____

10. Are you a year-round MDI or Schoodic resident? Yes No

11. Are you a summer resident of MDI or Schoodic? Yes No

12. What town will you stay in tonight? _____

13. Are you staying at (1) Campground-----
 (2) Motel or Inn-----
 (3) B & B-----
 (4) Year-round residence-----
 (5) Summer residence-----
 (6) Short-term rental-----
 (7) Sailboat-----
 (8) Other_____

14. Is your overnight lodging within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green?
 Yes No

15. What is your home town and state? _____

16. If you are not an MDI or Schoodic resident, how did you travel to the region?

(1) Car or truck without trailer----- (7) Commercial airplane-----
 (2) Car or truck with trailer----- (8) Private airplane-----
 (3) Recreational vehicle----- (9) Tour bus-----
 (4) CAT ferry with car----- (10) Sailboat or yacht-----
 (5) CAT ferry without car----- (11) Cruise Ship-----
 (6) Intercity bus or van----- (12) Other_____

17. On this bus ride will you visit Acadia National Park? Yes No

18. Have you purchased a National Park entry permit for your group? Yes No

19. If yes, where did you purchase your entry permit? Village Green Loop Road
 Hulls Cove Visitor Center ANP Campground Other_____

20. What type of entry permit do you have? One-week Full season
 National Parks Pass Golden Age Golden Access Golden Eagle

Thank you for completing both sides!

Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2005

21. How many years have you used the Island Explorer?

- This year only 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 - 7 years

22. If you have a car or RV available locally, where is this vehicle parked now?

- Private residence Hotel, campground, B&B Someone else is using it
 No local car or RV Other (where?) _____

THIS IS THE SEVENTH YEAR FOR THE ISLAND EXPLORER. HOW ARE WE DOING?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
23. Buses are clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Drivers are friendly and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. It is easy to find a seat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Buses are on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Bus schedules are easy to find	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Bus schedules are easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. The frequency of service is convenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. The right destinations are served	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. Should we continue to provide this service?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

32. Should we continue to offer free service?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

33. Should we add more buses to increase seating capacity and service frequency?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

34. In 2003 Acadia National Park increased the park 7-day entrance fee from \$10 to \$20 (per group) to help pay for Island Explorer bus service. The \$10 increase can only be used for public transportation. How do you feel about this change?

- Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

35. Did you use the Acadia National Park web site to plan your trip?

- YES No

36. Have you visited the Island Explorer web site?

- YES No

37. Do you have any comments about the Island Explorer, or suggestions for improving the service? *Comments and suggestions will be posted at www.exploreacadia.com*

38. L.L. Bean has pledged one million dollars over four years to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. Do you have any comments about the L.L. Bean contribution?

Thank you for completing both sides!

Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2006

PLEASE FILL OUT ONE SURVEY PER FAMILY OR GROUP

1. DATE _____ 2. TIME _____

Number in your party _____
 3. Retired adults _____
 4. Other adults _____
 5. Children (under 18) _____

6. WHAT BUS ROUTE ARE YOU ON NOW? (Please check only one) (1) Campground
 (2) Eden Street (3) Sand Beach (4) Blackwoods (5) Jordan Pond
 (6) Brown Mountain (7) Southwest Harbor (8) Schoodic (9) Bike Express

7. WILL YOUR BUS RIDE INVOLVE TWO DIFFERENT ROUTES? YES No

8. IF yes, please check the other route used for this ride. (1) Campground
 (2) Eden Street (3) Sand Beach (4) Blackwoods (5) Jordan Pond
 (6) Brown Mountain (7) Southwest Harbor (8) Schoodic (9) Bike Express

9. What is the PRIMARY purpose of this bus trip? (Please check only one) To or from
 (1) Work (2) Hiking (3) Biking (4) Swimming
 (5) Boating (6) Shopping (7) Dining (8) Sightseeing
 (9) Other _____

10. Are you a year-round MDI or Schoodic resident? Yes No

11. Are you a summer resident of MDI or Schoodic? Yes No

12. What town will you stay in tonight? _____

13. Are you staying at (1) Campground-----
 (2) Motel or Inn-----
 (3) B & B-----
 (4) Year-round residence-----
 (5) Summer residence-----
 (6) Short-term rental-----
 (7) Sailboat-----
 (8) Other_____

14. Is your overnight lodging within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green?
 Yes No

15. What is your home town and state? _____

16. If you are not an MDI or Schoodic resident, how did you travel to the region?

(1) Car or truck without trailer----- (7) Commercial airplane-----
 (2) Car or truck with trailer----- (8) Private airplane-----
 (3) Recreational vehicle----- (9) Tour bus-----
 (4) CAT ferry with car----- (10) Sailboat or yacht-----
 (5) CAT ferry without car----- (11) Cruise Ship-----
 (6) Intercity bus or van----- (12) Other_____

17. On this bus ride will you visit Acadia National Park? Yes No

18. Have you purchased a National Park entry permit for your group? Yes No

19. If yes, where did you purchase your entry permit? Village Green Loop Road
 Hulls Cove Visitor Center ANP Campground Other_____

20. What type of entry permit do you have? One-week Full season
 National Parks Pass Golden Age Golden Access Golden Eagle

Thank you for completing both sides!

Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2006

21. How many years have you used the Island Explorer?

- This year only 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 - 8 years

22. If you have a car or RV available locally, where is this vehicle parked now?

- Private residence Hotel, campground, B&B Someone else is using it
 No local car or RV Other (where?) _____

THIS IS THE EIGHTH YEAR FOR THE ISLAND EXPLORER. HOW ARE WE DOING?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
23. Buses are clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Drivers are friendly and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. It is easy to find a seat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Buses are on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Bus schedules are easy to find	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Bus schedules are easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. The frequency of service is convenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. The right destinations are served	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. Should we continue to provide this service?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

32. Should we continue to offer free service?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

33. Should we add more buses to increase seating capacity and service frequency?

- Very important Somewhat important Unimportant

34. In 2003 Acadia National Park increased the park 7-day entrance fee from \$10 to \$20 (per group) to help pay for Island Explorer bus service. The \$10 increase can only be used for public transportation. How do you feel about this change?

- Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

35. Did you use the Acadia National Park web site to plan your trip?

- YES No

36. Have you visited the Island Explorer web site?

- YES No

37. Do you have any comments about the Island Explorer, or suggestions for improving the service? *Comments and suggestions will be posted at www.exploreacadia.com*

38. L.L.Bean has given one million dollars to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. L.L.Bean recently pledged another one million dollars over the next five years. Do you have any comments about the L.L.Bean contribution?

Thank you for completing both sides!

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

Do you have any comments about the Island Explorer, or suggestions for improving the service?

L.L.Bean has pledged one million dollars over four years to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. Do you have any comments about the L.L.Bean contribution?

<i>Route</i>	<i>Local Resident</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Bus Service Comment</i>	<i>L.L.Bean Comment</i>
1	No	MA	There should be extra buses at night leaving from the Village Green to Campgrounds. There was a large group last night that showed up for the 10:30 p.m. bus and because there was limited seating, about 25 people waited until 11:10 and it was getting cool and windy.	Keep it coming!
1	No	OK	Fantastic!	Thank you very much.
1	No	Belarus	Thank you very much for your service! It is wonderful that Island Explorer exists!	I really appreciate it.
1	No	New Brun	Love the service. Recommend it highly. Please continue!	Keep doing it!
1	No	NY	We have visited about 25 National Parks, including Yellowstone and Yosemite. This Park and the Island Explorer services are the best experience we have had. Five stars to Acadia! I believe that people should have to show their Park pass to use the Island Explorer shuttle system. So many people use the system to avoid purchasing an entry pass.	Way to go, L.L.Bean. Excellent contribution!
1	Yes	ME	It's great!	Thank you!
1	No	NH	Convenient. Do not have to worry about parking.	Awesome.
1	No	NJ	I think it's great, more people should use it.	I think that is wonderful.
1	No	Ontario	Thank you.	Wonderful.
1	No	FL	Great way to avoid traffic congestion.	It's great to see some money used to benefit the public. Great service! Thanks!
1	No	MD	I think it is wonderful that this service is provided, especially since it helps the park and the environment.	Terrific!
1	No	MA	Wish the bus only stopped on the return trip to only those places that are on the bus, thereby shortening the ride back.	Very supportive, kudos to L.L.Bean.
1	No	MA	You are doing OK without my help. Thanks.	I think it is a great idea.
1	No	TX		Thank you, thank you.
1	Yes	ME	Very helpful for someone without license.	Awesome.
1	No	MA	It's a great service. You can get it anywhere and even flag it down. It is very convenient and helps some people discover Maine.	Thanks!
1	No		It is really VERY impressive.	It's wonderful and we visited and spent
1	No	Quebec	Just great.	Excellent! Thank you.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

1	No	ME	I love this service and would be willing to purchase a pass to ride.	That's L.L.Bean and that is one reason we purchase a lot of products there.
1	No	ME	I think the shuttle service is wonderful! It is quite beneficial to the area. I have heard several positive comments from people traveling from out of state. Keep up the great work!	Makes me want to spend my money there. Thanks, L.L.Bean!
1	No	FL		Very much appreciated. Thank you.
1	No	FL	Campground and Town Hill (Woodlands KOA) is underserved. Too much time between buses (1 or 1.5 hours).	Great way to invest in the community.
1	No	NY	It's a great idea.	That was very nice of them.
1	No	MA	Very satisfied.	Worthwhile effort toward the environment! L.L.Bean has a great name. Now I have even more respect for their company! Thank you!
1	No	PA	Very handy.	Very nice.
1	No	NJ		Very generous, very appreciated!
1	No	ME		Thank you. Its for a worthy cause, our environment!
1	No	NY		Yahoo!
1	No	CT		Great!
1	No	MA	This is a very good service. The drivers are patient and helpful. I have taken many routes and they were all timely and clean.	L.L.Bean gets a lot of credit but I'm sure Friends of Acadia raises a lot more than 250 k per year.
1	Yes	ME	I think the Island Explorer is a great service. I use it frequently because I'm an MDI resident and many of my friends visit. Thank you for doing such a great job!	I think that contribution has helped a lot and I greatly appreciate it. Hopefully they will give more. But if not, the contribution has helped.
1	No	MA		Go Beanie!!
1	Yes	ME	Bus stop at MDI Bio Lab, earlier Campground to Trenton service, limited year round service. You are doing great! Love taking the bus and not having to drive.	Fantastic!
1	No	FL	Very good way to provide transportation! Add more! We will encourage Sarasota, FL to do the same! Thank you!	Yes! Good!
1	No	MA	Bus driver Heather was so informative and helpful.	
1	No	MA	Great idea, please continue!!	Monumental.
2	No	Romania	The results of this survey are not going to be accurate if you choose just specific hours trips when some categories are missing. Besides that, you're doing a great job.	Keep the environment clean.
2	No	MO	Great job.	Just want to thank them.
2	No	IN		Very beneficial!
2	No	Ontario		Congratulations.
2	No	VA		We think that this is a worthwhile contribution. Can't imagine all the traffic without the bus service.
2	No	England	Excellent!	
2	No	MO	We utilize the service frequently.	Great! I'll shop at L.L.Bean.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

2	No			Great! Let the public know so they can support by buying LLB products.
2	No	MA		Thanks, L.L.Bean!
2	No	PA	Very good service.	They should increase their pledge!
2	Yes	ME	Yesterday I waited 45 minutes in Northeast Harbor when I thought I would be on time at the bus station and wouldn't have to wait.	Thank you for your great contribution to the quality of life experience and the environment here.
2	No	SC	I think this bus service is great both in getting back and forth to work as well as visiting other towns and is probably one of the reasons I decided to stay for the season and get a job. Thanks.	Thanks - also pleased it is more environmentally friendly.
2	No	CT		Way to go!
2	No	MA	You guys are doing OK by me.	I'd have to say that I am a pretty big fan.
2	No		Keep up the good work.	
2	No	NY		If this contribution puts a corporate logo on the buses but helps provide this service, I am all for it.
2	No	OK	I think the free buses are a good idea, and the execution works, because using the buses is pretty straight-forward.	It's helpful, I suppose.
2	No	IL		Good. Thanks.
2	No	PA		Good corporate citizen.
2	No	OH		Tremendous civic gesture.
2	No	NY		Excellent.
2	Yes	ME	As a resident and year-round supporter of ANP, I think drivers should be more amenable and accommodating. It seems as if some drivers are less accommodating to residents than visitors.	It's great. A model for business support of public resources.
2	No	NH	Very convenient and easy.	
2	No	PA	Very good for tourism.	Great service.
2	Yes	ME	I think the buses should start running sooner than June 23rd. Sometime in May would be good, but I understand most of the drivers work for schools.	
2	No	PA		How great of them!
2	No	NY	Very convenient, reduces traffic in town.	It was nice of them.
2	No	TX	This is one of the best ways to get around Bar Harbor.	They should give more money!
2	No	IL	As an avid supporter of public transportation in Chicago, I would like to say that this service makes our stay incredibly enjoyable. We don't have to worry about parking and it preserves the air quality by decreasing the number of cars on the road.	Any community should be proud of such a commitment and L.L.Bean should be commended. Hopefully they can continue this donation to perpetuate this service.
2	No	RI	The bus drivers are very friendly. Island Explorer makes traveling within the island very easy; an excellent alternative to driving in a car.	It is a wonderful and generous contribution.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

2	No	PA	We were surprised and delighted by the service. It made our visit much more pleasant and convenient. We will likely come again.	Thank you. We're already fans of L.L.Bean and more so now.
2	No	MA	The service is great.	It was extremely wonderful of them to do so!
2	No	MA	Increased flexibility to accommodate Jordan Pond Express bike overages would be nice.	
2	No	MA		Good thing to do.
3	No	TX		I will buy more L.L.Bean products.
3	No	ME	Maybe you should offer a one-day vehicle pass for \$10.00?	Love L.L. - wonderful idea! Thank you!
3	No	VA		Great!
3	No	ME	You are doing a great job. You should do everything possible to keep buses free. I have a vehicle but the Explorer schedule fits in perfect with my work schedule and rather than add to the pollution with my own vehicle, I opt for the bus. I wouldn't do it if it weren't free though, to be honest.	As a Maine based company focused on the outdoors, it's good for that image and important that they give back to the state through projects like the Explorer.
3	No	MA		It is a shame that we rely on private money. However, if this is the only way to support the bus, good.
3	No	MN	Saw lots of bikes waiting for service.	
3	No	PA		Keep free.
3	No	IL	Fabulous way to provide access to the Park. Employees wonderfully friendly and helpful.	Wonderful example of corporate involvement and helpfulness.
3	No	IL		Very nice and thankful! Makes us want to support L.L.Bean.
3	No	FL		Good idea.
3	No	MN	Continue to provide this invaluable community building service.	An appropriate gesture. Hopefully this model will result in similar corporate contributions.
3	No	NJ		Thank you, L.L.Bean!
3	No	NH	Very convenient. Nice not having to worry about car, traffic, and parking while enjoying the Park.	Great that the company puts back some \$ where its headquarters are.
3	No	Holland		Fantastic!
3	No	NY	Buses are nice, but it would be nice to have other buses on different rotation, instead of 3 campgrounds etc. Very good service and bus drivers very personable.	Thank you.
3	No	WA		L.L.Bean is very cool.
3	No	CA		Great company for supporting the preservation of our National Parks.
3	No	Czech Rep		They're great to do it.
3	No	VA	We summer in Blue Hill and plan our trips to Mt. Desert such that we use the bus instead of driving. We have used the buses every year since the buses first started.	Yeah!

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

3	No	ME		Thank you, L.L.Bean!
3	No	NY		Excellent!
3	No	SC		Wonderful! Typical of such an organization!
3	No	VT		I think it's great.
3	No	MO		Great!
3	Yes	ME	I like what you are doing.	Great thanks to L.L.Bean.
3	No	Ontario		Awesome.
3	No	NH		Thanks.
3	No	PA	Great help!	Great!
3	No	PA		I'll be more likely to buy their stuff now.
3	No	Ontario	Very important - convenient. Great for sightseeing. Safer for sightseeing.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!!
3	No	VT	Excellent bus system! We come every summer, park our car at Blackwoods and don't drive it for a week! We bicycle, hike, and use the wonderful bus routes every day. It makes Acadia a special place!	Excellent investment. Thank you!
3	No	VT	I love the Island Explorer. It's pretty comfy, but they get hot sometimes. Air conditioning, TV's, and a wet bar would be nice. Just kidding! Oh yeah, the breeze on the buses is very nice. PS My mom thinks the buses are the best thing to happen to Acadia since lobsters and carriage roads.	Thanks. I really like Acadia and the buses.
3	No	VT	We love the bus system. We come here year after year and love leaving our car parked once we arrive. The buses allow you incredible flexibility to hike, bike, swim, and get good food every day. The bus rides should continue to be free or people will hop in their cars and clog the roads. I'd happily pay a higher entrance fee to keep the buses going.	Great way to use their corporate dollars and a great commercial for them.
3	No	FL	Need to explain parking and services more clearly.	
3	No	MA		Very kind.
3	No	MA		Keep it coming! It's great to have a local company support things like this.
3	No	MA		Terrific ! Thanks.
3	No	NJ		This is a great support of community.
3	No	MI	This is our first visit to Bar Harbor and what an enjoyable visit it has been! Beautiful scenery, friendly people, and a shuttle service that has been very useful and "right on"! We'll be back!	We purchase L.L.Bean products for their good quality. Bravo for its support of Acadia National Park. More big companies should follow suite.
3	No	CO		Wise investment, very wise.
3	No	MS	When the time comes to buy new buses, buy fuel cell buses from Chattanooga Bus Company in TN - Clean - Quiet - Fast.	Nice socks!
3	No	NY		Excellent. Keep it up!
3	No	OH		Good for L.L.Bean!

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3	No	NY	If Ranger had suggested it, we would have taken bus to North Ridge trailhead yesterday instead of driving. Didn't know it was a bus stop till we got to the trailhead, but had talked to Ranger at Visitor Center earlier in the day about our plans.	Keep doing it.!
3	No	NH		Wow!
3	No	England	Mini buses seem to have more spaces for the bikes than people! Not very convenient.	Very good!
3	No	NJ	We were here for our first time in the first year the buses started. We were and are very impressed with this service. We always plan our trip (we have come every year since) each year to utilize the Island Explorer.	We appreciate their commitment to help keep this amazing area as it is far into the future.
3	No	FL	Keep up the good service!	Wonderful!!
3	No	MA		Thank you, L.L.Bean.
3	No	MD	Buses were convenient and on time. This is an excellent FREE service.	
3	No	MD	Island Explorer is great. However there are too many cars that slow down the service. Limit the number of passes for the cars.	Thank you, L.L.Bean.
3	No	MA	Keep up the good work!	Thank you, L.L.Bean! Please continue after four years - We need you!!
3	No	IL	We were very pleased to learn about this service. It is important for Parks to do this to cut down on traffic emissions, etc. Keep up the good work.	That's a good Bean!
3	No	MA	Please keep up the great job you are doing.	Nice job. Very pleased we can bring our canine friends on the bus. Coco says, "Thanks very much!"
3	No	PA	It's a valuable service. Keep up the good work.	Generous and appreciated.
3	No	MA	Wish the Blackwoods bus was every half hour from 12 noon to 5 pm. Also sorry you changed the Blackwoods bus to leave the Village Green every hour on the hour from on the half hour.	Fantastic and I will remember this when shopping.
3	Yes	ME	Excellent service to the community. The buses should start earlier in the season. There are enough people around in June to be worth it. Keep the buses off fossil fuel.	It's great. I hope they pledge more money. I am more likely to buy a L.L.Bean product knowing that.
3	No	CA	We had an old schedule - would have to wait one-half hour to get closer to Champlain trail.	Thank you very much!
3	No	OH		Good job. It shows corporate responsibility and involvement in the community. It seems to fit well with L.L.Bean's image.

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3	No	RI	I strongly support the bus service. It reduces the pollution and cars on the road. It's quite accessible as a cyclist which is a pleasure. I did not realize that \$10 of each entrance goes to Explorer - perhaps better to have travelers purchase an Explorer pass or pay per ride? It is great that the money can only be used for transportation, although maybe there is a way to make the park pass more affordable and subsidize transportation separately?	Awesome! Good work.
3	No	Ontario	Friendly drivers, helpful and efficient service. A great idea to reduce pollution and traffic.	Keep it up! Why not more?
3	No	NH	No noticeable changes suggested. GREAT and convenient service!	Very thankful to L.L.Bean as a supporter to protect and keep Acadia accessible for tourists.
3	Yes	Quebec	Very satisfied. Will suggest Quebec National Parks to do the same and also old Quebec City.	We congratulate L.L.Bean for their involvement in nature conservation.
3	No	NJ	More commentary on trips.	Keep it up.
3	No	Germany		It is very good that they have done this.
3	No	PA	Wonderful service! I wish other parks were so concerned for the adverse effects of vehicle emissions on the environment. This was extremely easy to understand and take advantage of efficiently. Easy to find, use, and appreciate.	I am very happy for their generosity and hope they will consider a new pledge as this one ends. They are helping to provide a much needed and much appreciated service. Thank you L.L.Bean!
3	No	PA	Make sure buses run scheduled times and routes.	Excellent.
4	No	AZ	It's been a very important part of our stay. We use it daily. It will play an important role in our decision to return in coming years. We love it! Saves on congestion and pollution in the park. Thank you!	Thank you, L.L.Bean! We will patronize this store because of this pledge!
4	No	MD	Bar Harbor needs a better public restroom and drinking fountain!	Great!
4	No	NH	Seawall didn't have a route map at their bus stop until I intervened in July. BIG oversight.	Hip hip hooray. I buy lots there!
4	No	NJ	Run later buses for day hikers.	Put some toward restoring abandoned trails and historic spots.
4	No	NY	I love the Island Explorer. I use it almost every day. It would be great if they ran longer, though. Like through the winter.	You rock! Thank you so much.
4	No	RI	Nice touch. Makes Acadia nice.	Thanks.
4	No	NJ	A couple more buses between 9 - 11.	
4	No	VT		Thank you for continued support of this incredible resource.
4	No	FL	Would be helpful if hotels had the info. We are staying on a budget on the "fringes" and they had no info. For a first time visitor it would have been helpful.	Great cause! As a consumer I appreciate that commitment.
4	No	Quebec	Continue your good work.	It's good.

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4	Yes	ME	Allowing Friends of Acadia to decide how to use the money is the best idea.	
4	No	NC		Fabulous!
5	No	MO		Way to go! Continue to support this endeavor.
5	No	PA	Excellent Bike Express van.	Thank you. Great way to keep vehicles out by utilizing buses / vans.
5	No	MA		It is good to see a local company give back to a local community!
5	No	NH	Wonderful service. It keeps traffic down and helps the environment.	Very generous. Many thanks to L.L.Bean.
5	No	ME	It is difficult to eat in S.W. Harbor and get back to N.E. in the evening.	Yahoo! Yippie!! Thanks.
5	No	TN		Thank you!
5	No	ME	It is terrific!	Thanks!
5	No	MA	You could use a later bus.	Great! Thanks.
5	No	MI	Excellent idea. Good example for other communities. Suggestion: Close off downtown area to vehicular traffic, other than buses, bicycles, small moped/scooters.	Will continue to support L.L.Bean.
5	No	ME	Very wonderful service.	Very good of them.
5	No	FL		Wonderful company.
5	No	CT	Occasional seat belt doesn't work, otherwise WONDERFUL! We like friendly, talkative drivers who tell us about the area.	Thank you. I'll shop at L.L.Bean more! We do drop a buck in the bucket on the bus. Bumps!
5	No	PA	This is a great service. Adding more buses in the evening would be great.	
5	No	PA	More buses at night.	Give more money to the Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park.
5	No	MA	Keep up the good work.	People should be made aware of the fact that many other organizations and individuals contribute!!
5	No	MD		It should continue.
5	No	ME		It was a great thing to do!
5	No	Nova Scotia		Great idea!! Nice to see a company contributing in such a way.
5	No	VA	The bike racks were a great idea.	It's nice to see a company take an active role in preserving our National Parks. It would make me more willing to buy from L.L.Bean over another company.
5	No	NH	It's very convenient. Increase service to Blackwoods (every 30 minutes). Bike shuttle via Jordan Pond is excellent.	It's excellent. L.L.Bean represents what it means to be a Mainer.
5	No	PA	Anything that limits vehicles in the park is a positive change.	Thanks, L.L.Bean. We'll feel even better when we purchase your products!
5	No	MD	Direct connection between Blackwoods Campground and Jordan pond so people can easily get to the restaurant without driving.	Excellent use of money.
5	No	MD	Great service. Keep up the good work. We love it! Thank you.	Great job!

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5	No	MA	Absolutely perfect. Spread the word - wish we had service this efficient and convenient at home.	They should be pleased and proud.
5	Yes	ME		Thanks.
5	No	VA	This service sets the standard for other National Parks!!	I think it's a great idea!! More corporations should follow L.L.Bean's lead.
5	No	CT		Excellent deed.
5	No	MA		Very generous.
5	No	NJ	I love the transportation. Everyone's so friendly. FREE!!	Sounds good.
6	No	PA		Thank you!
6	No	OH		God bless them.
6	No	MA	Great as is. We appreciate this survey. Recycle bus route info sheets.	That's great.
6	No	VA	No dogs on seats please!	Excellent.
6	No	TX	We enjoyed it when the bus driver told us about places we passed - historic info, etc. Need more bike racks on buses.	We think it is the best way they could have put their contribution to use. Having the buses be free encourages use and keeps traffic to a minimum.
6	No	CA	Work towards hybrid or better yet all electric buses!	Thank you!
6	No	MI	Very nice!	Great!!!
6	No	PA	It is a great service and helpful for the tourists and beneficial to the environment.	Thank you.
6	Yes	ME	Quiet music? Classical or jazz or something?	Yay free money, boo to corporations!
6	No	NJ		Thank you.
6	No	CT		Keep on! Good job! And many thanks!
6	No		It cuts down on cars and it's a good thing. Kayak racks possibly??	
6	No	FL	Great idea.	Well done.
6	No	PA		Thank you.
6	No	NY		Wonderful. It's important to give back, especially to a beautiful cause. Thank you.
6	No	MA	We love the new express bike vans. They have been very helpful for Jordan Pond House trip.	Wonderful - seems like a natural partnership!
6	No	NY		Great idea, great service, great program.
6	No	CO	Thank you.	Thank you.
6	No	GA	I think this is a very important asset to keep the traffic flowing. The convenience of riding the bus to different locations is indeed an important service. It will be one reason to visit this area again.	The contribution to this service surely makes this service work. I hope they will continue this service.
6	No	MD	Run earlier to certain spots. Eagle Lake for instance.	I think it's great. Kudos to L.L.Bean.
6	No	PA	We enjoy the service and the fact that we don't have to drive.	Wonderful!!

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6	No	NH	Excellent service for people visiting via yacht.	Thank you L.L.Bean! We gave a small donation on the other buses we took earlier. You could charge \$1 per person and it would be fine too. Or \$.50 per connection. Or a \$4 day pass.
7	No	MA		Very impressed with L.L.Bean.
7	No	NH	We love it. Keeps traffic down, eco-friendly!	It's wonderful! This is our second year of supporting Friends of Acadia and we have learned a lot about the Park from them.
7	No	Czech Rep		Keep it up!
7	No	MD	A wonderful service - especially to keep traffic and pollution down in this lovely part of the country.	Thank you! What an excellent corporate statement about the importance of preserving our National Park treasures!
7	No	MD	The #7 SW Harbor needs a larger bus or have an additional bus during late morning (10-12) and late evening (4-5). We have standing room only at these times. I think the bus drivers are more aware of the times than I am. Ask them!	Great. If money is needed, offer a 7-day bus pass at \$5.00 per pass. The bus is important to us. We park our car and ride the bus, always. The bus is a main reason for visiting Acadia National Park. Thank you for the service. A Seawall camper.
7	No	MD		Fabulous. So important to cut down on traffic.
7	No	MA	Great service. Made our trip to Acadia National Park interesting and relaxing. We will come back because of the great experience we had.	We think that it is marvelous that they are supporting this Park. We feel good about it as we shop at L.L.Bean.
7	No	NH	Fantastic, very impressed, love having shuttle service and no need for car.	Thank you. Another reason to support L.L.Bean. Keep it up!
7	No	NY	We feel this is a great service! It was a pleasure riding with you. After seeing the traffic downtown this is a much nicer way to go!	It's nice of them to donate to this service to help keep it going.
7	No	MA		Terrific!
7	No	VA	Storage for camping equipment or picnic supplies?	It's fantastic that L.L.Bean uses some of its corporate profits to fund a public conservationist project.
7	Yes	ME	Should not charge Mainers to enter Park.	
7	No	OH	Great job. Very nice service.	Keep up the good funding... We need to keep our nature the way it is.
7	No	England	Bus timetables displayed at stops and more frequent service please.	Keep going.
7	No	NH		My dad works there. It is the best company in Maine. Thank you for this service.
7	No	MI		Wish more large organizations would follow suite.
7	No	SC	Service could extend to Seal Cove.	Thanks L.L.Bean!
7	No	NJ		I'm impressed. I knew they sold great products, and this adds much to my admiration of the company.

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7	No	MA	Having free and convenient bus service makes a big difference in my willingness to travel around to different places. I hate traffic and finding parking places!	Thank you!
7	No	PA		Hope they continue to support this wonderful service.
7	No	PA		Very generous.
7	No	NY	Keep it free!	It's super. Thanks for asking!
7	No	MA		Great! Thank you L.L.Bean.
7	No	MA	Perhaps in future subsidize entrance fee for poorer visitors.	Wonderful corporate citizenship.
7	No	CT		Congratulations to you!
7	No	PA	Increase capacity on Bike Express! We had to send our bikes and then wait for the next bus. The drivers are extremely nice and helpful. We had a party with seven bikes and drivers were so helpful putting bikes on the bus since we had more than the 4 that fit in the carriers. Also, Bike Express drivers put small kids bikes in back since they didn't fit on the trailer.	Awesome! We have been occasional shoppers but now will be regular.
7	Yes	ME	Yes, I live in Tremont and there really aren't many stops there. I realize it is a Park bus, but an extra Tremont bus would be nice. It could stop at the Seal Cove Auto Museum and Pretty Marsh picnic area, etc.	They are very generous. I think donations and fund raisers are other great ways to make money.
7	No	CA	It is a great service, it should be used in more parks around the country.	I'm sure it is a large help in keeping the system going and to offset costs. It would be nice if more companies did the same.
7	Yes	ME	Excellent service and I'm very pleased that dogs are allowed on the buses. Keep up the great work!	Kudos to L.L.Bean.
7	Yes	ME	They need to stick to the schedule. I rely on them for work. They should never be early or late.	
7	No	CT	Great experience.	Very commendable.
7	Yes	ME	Very good program.	Thanks!
7	Yes	ME	Would like it year round to help school kids get around on their own - cut down on teen driving and accidents and deaths - more access to fun things to do.	Thank you!!!
7	No	NY		Great company.
8	Yes	ME	Buses are a wonderful part of the Acadia experience. Our driver, Jack, was very helpful and courteous.	It's a great thing.
8	No	PA	Jack was a great driver.	
8	No	England	Very friendly and helpful service.	The bus service is excellent and money well spent.
8	No	CT	Excellent service for sightseeing tourists. Very helpful with transportation. Good that Island Explorer is environmentally conscious.	I think the way L.L.Bean's name is advertised on all the buses is unnecessary.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 8–9, 2005

8	No	CT	It's a good service for the Schoodic area.	L.L.Bean has their name on twenty-two buses and all of the drivers' uniforms, which is too much for the money they paid.
8	No	NY	Very convenient.	Thank you, L.L.Bean.
8	No	PA		Keep up the great work. It's awesome.
8	No	RI		It's a win-win for L.L.Bean. They help out and get free advertising. Excellent public relations.
8	No	MA	Awesome service.	Yay L.L.Bean!!
8	No	TX	I like it. It made my trip to Winter Harbor a highlight.	All they are paying is for their advertising. It is a profit-free bus so they can write it off. The people's donations help.
8	Yes	ME	It is very fun.	Thank you for what you have done.
8	No	MA		Way to go L.L.Bean!
8	No	NY		
8	No	MA	Excellent experience.	Thanks for a great effort.
8	No	RI	Great that it meets the boat to Schoodic. I travel to Bar Harbor by boat, then use bus to Sand Beach.	I think it is an important investment in the community and in public relations.
8	No	England		Generous
8	No	NY	Make it clearer that people can flag down a bus (in a safe spot). Lots more people will use them!	With all the advertising they get for doing this, MDI gives them back just as much. How much did the CEO make last year? Ten million?
8	No	ME		Fantastic!
8	No	MO		Keep it up!
8	No	MD	Personable driver, local information due to local hire - well informed and pleasant.	I am thankful that a business has decided to be part of the Maine environment. Find more outside moneyed investors.
8	No	MA	Very helpful.	It's great.
9	No	NY	Bus left many people behind at stop due to overcrowding. Families were split apart which is not fun. Communication errors.	Great.
9	No	VA	More Bike Express service - both capacity (number of trips that accommodate bikes) and destinations (add more).	Wonderful!! A tremendous service! Further cements our brand loyalty.
9	No	MA	The overflow bus should have bike racks. Maybe add more overflow so from Narrows Campground buses don't have to stop when they are full. Takes a long time for no benefit.	Thank you! It's great to lead the way of the future to consider cars a tool and not live to service them. If we slow down because of change to walk and use transport and increase our health and improve environment, so be it.
9	No	NH		Wonderful.
			Caught it "by accident" after a beautiful bike ride of 12 miles. Loved the "lift."	Love L.L.Bean too...
			I had a good time.	Keep on giving out the free money.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

Do you have any comments about the Island Explorer, or suggestions for improving the service?

L.L.Bean has given one million dollars to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. L.L.Bean recently pledged another one million dollars over the next five years.

Do you have any comments about L.L.Bean's contribution?

<i>Route</i>	<i>Local Resident</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Bus Service Comment</i>	<i>L.L.Bean Comment</i>
1	No	MD	This is a marvelous service - especially for RV-ers who don't tow a car. We also think it's an important way to preserve Acadia by keeping cars and emissions out of the park.	What a terrific corporate response for a company selling outdoor gear.
1	Yes	ME	Gordon is the best!!	
1	No	MD	Wonderful idea. Our family can go to several different destinations without using a car! I can easily find my way to all of our activities. Thank you for making our vacation even better.	I have always held L.L.Bean in high regard. I will continue to support the company.
1	No	NY	Use this bus service! It is easier than navigating the park by RV and the buses hit all the highlights with convenient stops.	It was very nice of them. Thank you!
1	No	MA		Impressed. Love the lifetime warranties on their products - but should have more practical sales.
1	No	Quebec	Best park I have seen. Good system for bicycles.	Thanks very much!
1	No	NJ	We shopped, dined and went on tours. Not possible without shuttle service. Island Explorer is great for the survival of the merchants in town. Keep it going. Thanks.	We will continue to support L.L.Bean, because of their generosity.
1	No	New Brun		Thank you very much.
1	No	Quebec	That is a good initiative to keep.	It is important to have this contribution to keep the free service.
1	No	MA	Need better air-conditioning.	
1	No	Alaska	Great service. Small fee is reasonable.	Best company of its type in U.S. Just check our closets!!
1	No	CT	It's awesome.	It's very nice of them to do.
1	No	CA	The buses were not very easy to use with strollers and young children.	Rock on!
1	No	VA	Wonderful system. Very pleased with service. Makes it possible for us to get around more easily.	Very thankful. I buy from L.L.Bean and will continue to in the future.
1	No	New Brun		Great friend to the environment. That is why we shop there.
1	No	MA	Great idea. Don't stop.	Excellent
1	No	OH		We think this is wonderful.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

1	No	PA	Perhaps have a trip go up to Cadillac Mountain (great hiking from there)	L.L.Bean's contribution toward minimizing the traffic in Acadia National Park will go a long way towards improving the environment and minimizing human impacts on the park. Thank you for your contribution to this important and timely effort.
1	No	MA		Good idea
1	No	ME		It was very nice.
1	No	PA	Leave destination display lights on at all times, instead of showing "out of service" when parked. Service is very helpful! Please keep it free so people will use it!	Very generous.
1	No	ME	Wonderful. More direct Bangor to Trenton.	Very generous - Thank you.
1	No	ME	Excellent service. Great asset to the region.	Thank you.
1	No	NY		Thank you, L.L.Bean.
1	No	NY	Great job!	Excellent idea!
1	No	MA	This is a wonderful and important service. Thank you!	I think it is awesome and commendable. L.L.Bean is doing so much to protect the Acadian environment. Keep it up!
1	No	FL		Great!
1	No	RI		At least now I know where all the money my husband spends at L.L.Bean is going!!
1	No	Quebec	More signage about you before visitor centers.	I shop there often. Good citizenship!
1	No	OH		Way to go L.L.Bean
1	No	ME		Very, very considerate. It will be remembered and appreciated.
1	No	New FndInd		Excellent
1	No	TX		Thank you
1	No	MI	Drivers are very helpful!	Great patriotic service.
1	No	GA	Have enjoyed using all buses, especially Sue's and Stan's, both very friendly and informative.	Good for them, continue the support.
1	No	CT	Expand your services even more to keep cars off the road and keep MDI clean and beautiful for ages to come. Still too many cars for comfortable and safe bicycling.	L.L.Bean should be proud to support such an excellent service that is environment friendly as well as being a big bonus for tourism. Thank you, L.L.Bean! You are a good corporate citizen! (Great for PR too)
1	No	NC		As a member of the community, LLB is showing exemplary public service.
1	No	PA	Good job.	Thanks for the commitment.
1	Yes	ME	You should get TV's or radio.	
1	No	NH		Wonderful.
1	No	MD		Thank you!
1	No	MD	Good idea. Turn on the A/C.	Very nice.
1	No	VT	A great help!	Generous and for a very useful service.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

1	No	ME	Great.	Great.
1	Yes	ME		Great.
1	No	NY	Excellent service.	
1	No	NY	We love it!! Keep it up! Yes! Wonderful!!	Thank you! Fabulous!
1	No	NJ	Came first year it started. Glad to see you've been able to continue this service. Great to see how you've grown.	It's extremely generous and beneficial.
1	Yes	ME	I think these buses are great. My husband and I live above Trenton Marketplace and we are unable to afford a car. With the buses I can take my daughter to do things. Swim. Playground, etc. It's hard to get a stroller and 2 year old on bus alone. I think the bus drivers should be more helpful when it comes to a mom and young child with a stroller.	I think it's wonderful. The best idea ever.
1	No	MD	It's a great and convenient service! I use it everyday.	
1	No	NY	Keep up the good work.	Strong corporate leadership!
1	No	MA		Thank you to L.L.Bean.
1	No	NJ	Your service is wonderful. The idea is terrific. It would be wonderful if all states and towns would have this service. How wonderful for the environment!	Good job L.L.Bean.
1	No	MI	The service is wonderful. Not only is it better for the environment, it's very convenient for anyone wishing to ride. And so prompt! I've never seen a public transportation system as well organized and executed as this one.	It is very refreshing to see a company do something this helpful (on many levels) with some of their profits.
1	No	NC	Honestly, I wouldn't know what to do without the Island Explorer! If y'all ever do ask for payment, you should have a cheap summer bus pass for island workers!	THANK YOU!
1	No	PA	The service is excellent and you are very good about being on time.	
1	Yes	ME	Cold beer service, peanuts, live entertainment.	That is very nice.
1	No	FL	Very convenient.	Very generous to benefit middle-class America.
1	No	PA		Thank you!!
1	No	NH	It's great!! (Don't follow diesel buses so close.)	L.L.Bean is a great neighbor.
1	No	ME	Very good service. Friendly drivers. Convenient.	Thank you.
2	No	Ontario	Great service!!	
2	No	PA		Great!
2	No	ME		Great
2	Yes	ME	The bus drivers are very polite, helpful, kind.	
2	No	NJ	A great service.	Wonderful. Will shop L.L.Bean.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

2	No	IN		Thanks.
2	No	IL		It's wonderful.
2	No	OH		Thank you!
2	No	IL	The Eden Street bus should come every 15 minutes before 3:00 p.m. as it does after 3:00 p.m. Air conditioning.	
2	No	NJ	Don't do surveys on full buses with no AC on days with 90 degree temperature and high humidity. Bus was parked in sun with no air conditioning running.	Good thing!
2	No	RI	More cities and towns should offer such services - very useful and eco-friendly.	Contributions necessary in order to provide valuable transportation and protect the immeasurable treasure of wildlife at Acadia Park.
2	No	NJ	Signs to show location.	I purchase L.L.Bean products.
2	No	NH	Great service - thanks.	Very responsible!
2	No	GA	Great service!! Especially for a larger group of bicyclists!	
2	No	ME	Very convenient and one reason we come back every year.	Very generous and should continue. One reason we support and purchase items from Beans.
2	No	DE		Great!
2	No	AZ		Brilliant job!
2	No	PA	Drivers exceptionally nice. Great service. Our three young children loved it.	Thank you.
2	Yes	ME		It's a wonderful contribution to our community and to visitors to our island and park. We have used this service often instead of driving even though we live in Bar Harbor.
2	No	MA	People would not be able to get around without these services. They are so accommodating.	They are wonderful people.
2	No	England	Superb. Will be using it again and again. Very friendly and pleasant driver.	Commendable.
2	No	MA		Great job L.L.Bean.
2	No	NY		Very good idea.
2	No	NJ	The greatest since sliced bread. Cindy the driver is terrific - courteous and obliging and friendly.	L.L.Bean uber alles.
2	No	NH		Good PR for L.L.Bean.
2	No	Romania	The Eden Street bus should go from 7:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. every fifteen minutes.	That's fantastic. It helps a lot of people and the Park administration too. Thank you for that.
2	No	OR	Bus drivers are all nice, welcoming, and willing to help. One driver even told us about features and places we were passing. That was neat.	Thanks!
2	No	NH		Thank you!
2	No	Romania	Good job!!!	It is an extraordinary thing to do.
2	No	FL		L.L.Bean is an awesome company!

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3	No	DE	It's a wonderful addition because we don't have to worry about traffic or increasing gas prices.	It's environmentally friendly, so it's definitely worth it in every possible way.
3	No	Russia	Everything is excellent!	
3	No	Poland	Sorry, I'm here only for two weeks.	
3	No	Quebec		Thanks a lot to L.L.Bean
3	No	Quebec	This service is a great improvement!	Wow!
3	Yes	ME	It would be excellent if the season is longer. A night service - after bars close, one bus to each of the towns - could be a paid service.	It's excellent. Others should follow the same example.
3	No	England	The service is excellent.	Really good
3	No	NY	Rides are too long, but it is a big park.	Well used money.
3	3	Quebec		I am a tourist. This is not important for me.
3	No	VA	Impose a toll on cars in the park to subsidize more frequent bus service.	Go L.L.Bean!
3	No	MA		Thanks L.L.Bean.
3	No	PA	More buses to help with enough seating and transfers.	Excellent! It's great that billion dollar companies share the wealth to keep the National Parks beautiful.
3	No	Russia	Well, maybe increasing the number of bus drivers, because I know that most of them are school bus drivers, therefore the bus service starts in late June. But it would have been great to start it earlier.	It's great because there are way too many cars around and it's a National Park. And it's great that the bus is free.
3	No	CT	This trip contributed to a most relaxing time. Thank you!! Will return next year for a longer stay. Keep Maine safe and clean!!	Great company.
3	No	NY		Thanks to L.L.Bean. It's nice to see a company giving to the community and it makes it likelier that I will purchase from them.
3	No	IL	This is an easy public transit system - good for the environment and the pocket book. The website for this service was not obvious to a first-time user. Definitely could use more marketing - this is a good thing.	Wonderful! Keep up the good work.
3	No	MA	Great way to keep less cars in park. Think about service to more trailheads for a means to again decrease cars in the park. Sometimes we have a difficult time parking at trailhead lots. We have been coming to the area since 1995 and still LOVE IT!	FABULOUS!
3	No	England	Great idea, keep it up.	Thank you.
3	No	NJ	More room for bikes.	
3	No	NJ		Much appreciated. Keeps cars off the roads.

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

3	No	PA	We think they're great!!	The involvement of L.L.Bean and the support shown for the National Park is wonderful and should be an inspiration to other corporations in other national park areas nationwide.
3	Yes	ME	We really like this service - easy to use.	Thank you L.L.Bean.
3	No	FL		It makes me inclined to purchase L.L.Bean merchandise. Thank you L.L.Bean.
3	No	Ontario		Thank you!!
3	No	NH	Start bus service @ 8:00 a.m.	Excellent corporate citizens. We shop there frequently and also do 75% of our Christmas shopping with their catalog.
3	No	DE	Valuable service to ANP. Best ride in town.	Way to go!
3	No	Argentina	Strongly recommend more frequency of service.	Their contribution is very valuable.
3	No	NJ		We love L.L.Bean! It is the best run company in America. Great service, great products. We appreciate their support of this beautiful park.
3	No	NH		Awesome.
3	No	OH	The day we used service there was a woman present to help people understand the system. This was very helpful to get us started.	It's a great way to put "their money where their mouth is." Keep up the great contribution. I'll be visiting their website more often!
3	No	ME	Very happy.	Good job.
3	No	PA	For my purposes it is fine as it is now.	Thank you.
3	No	NJ	Fun!	Nice!
3	No	PA		Thanks!
3	No	MI	Loved the bus in Zion, made good use of them in Grand Canyon. We think they should be almost everywhere.	THANKS A LOT!! I'll keep this in mind when shopping for outdoor products.
3	No	NH		Thank you.
3	No	Germany	Please add more buses. Especially add the one at 12:40 from Hulls Cove VC to Village Green.	Thanks for keeping this wonderful park in great condition.
3	No	VT		Excellent partnership.
3	No	VA	Excellent alternative to driving an RV in Bar Harbor and MDI.	Hats off to L.L.Bean.
3	No	MI	We have appreciated the convenience, but also feel donations are important to keep the service running so well. We hope other patrons feel the same way.	It's wonderful. We are regular L.L.Bean shoppers and are glad they are using funds, by choice, to support this national treasure.
3	No	Scotland	It should have seat belts.	Pleased about it. Social and environmental responsibility makes for good business. Keep it up L.L.Bean. I'd like to know more about L.L.Bean - wages for workers in developing nations, for instance.

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3	No	Scotland	I think it is an excellent service that is eco-friendly and fun for the kids.	It will make me shop at L.L.Bean.
3	No	PA		It's great! Thank you. I like that they are propane-powered.
4	No	KS		Thank you. You really make a difference to the people who live here and who visit here.
4	No	ME	More schedules available at pick up spots.	Very generous and quite necessary.
4	No		We think it is great!	Great! Everybody who comes here hits them up first. It's good!
4	No	FL	Super quality service. Keep it.	Very well-directed donation - super service.
4	No	CA		Wonderful
4	No	MI	Thank you.	Wonderful. Thank you.
4	No	NJ	Lost one hour of time because a bus left before scheduled departure time.	It's wonderful.
4	No	RI	We were very impressed with the reliability, cleanliness, and convenience of this bus line. We had no idea that this service existed previous to our arrival, but it has been a great benefit to us from the moment we arrived.	It seems a kindly and generous act.
4	No	Russia	Very good and clean.	
4	Yes	ME	Many have to use cabs due to early or late hours. Extra bus could fill in those missing hours.	God bless and thank you! Also - thank all connected with Island Explorer!
4	No	NH	More options for the Bike Express (i.e. a route from Blackwoods Campground) or more room for bikes on each bus.	We will continue to shop at L.L.Bean! Thanks.
5	No	CA	Great service.	It is a wonderful thing for them to do.
5	No	TX	Great service from day 1! Keep it up.	Hooray for L.L.Bean!
5	No	OH	I wasn't aware we were supposed to buy entry passes if we use the shuttle. Are we? If so, this needs to be better publicized.	I continue to support L.L.Bean in part because of this.
5	No	Quebec		Great! Thanks.
5	No	CT		Thank you L.L.Bean.
5	No			I like the company. I think it is money well spent.
5	No		Pivotal, perfect and pet friendly. Thank you.	An awesome example of corporate civic mindedness.
5	No	MD	Why not go to the summit of Cadillac Mountain??	I think it's great. It makes me think well of L.L.Bean.

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5	No	TN	The colors that label the times confused us because we didn't realize the numbers were more important than the colors. Also, the previous bus driver was pretty crotchety. He could have been a little more friendly. Why we like it: We miscalculated the distance and strenuous nature of our hike up the west face of Cadillac Mountain and then over to Door and down to Bubble Pond. We were too worn out to retrace our steps, so we hopped on the shuttle to ride back to our car. Without the shuttle we'd be dead (from exhaustion).	THANK YOU!!!
5	No	VA	Bus to top of Cadillac Mountain!	Yeah!
5	No	MI	This is our first ride, but it appears well organized.	I appreciate their generosity.
5	No	MI	More commentary from drivers would be appreciated.	I would consider purchasing from L.L.Bean.
5	Yes	ME	The bus is neat cause you can go for free.	
5	No	TX	Just a great way to get to work and also really enjoyable. Great way to meet people.	That's a great thing that they did, because it gives people great opportunities to go places and also for bikers.
5	No	CT		Good job.
5	No	NY		It is worthwhile.
5	No	VA	Buses are too loud (mechanically).	Thanks L.L.Bean! How about funding for quieter buses?
5	No	NY	Service is great - saves gas, parking can be troublesome. Maybe add later times on weekends to campgrounds.	Thanks!!
5	No	VT	Keep up the good work.	Good, but send out less catalogs and put that savings toward the bus system (and save a lot of trees).
5	No	VA		Good for them!! If only our national and state governments would follow such enlightened policies.
5	No	New Brun		Most generous of L.L.Bean.
5	No	MT	I am an out of state seasonal employee and find the Island Explorer bus service a true gift, worth patterning for other National Parks.	Thanks, and hi to Les.
5	No	NC	Thank you for offering this helpful service. We prefer to use public transit!	Thanks to L.L.Bean for being excellent corporate citizens and stewards of Acadia National Park. We plan to stop at your store in Freeport to show our support for your corporate citizenship!
5	No	MI	It would be nice to see dancing crabs wearing top hats lining the aiseways. (See picture at right, visualize more pizzaaa and glitter.)	The best givers are anonymous ones. Harr! Harr!

Island Explorer Passenger Comments – Onboard Survey August 2–4, 2006

5	No	VA		Fabulous philanthropy! Keep it up!
5	No	VA	Explorer is big reason we come to Bar Harbor because we do not have to drive our 25 ft motorhome around the island.	Outstanding way for LLB to advertise!
5	No	WY	I used the Bike Express twice - it worked great. Buses can be crowded at night.	Good service, great idea. Buses make the park easier to access.
5	No	VT		Keep it up. Get other companies to help.
5	No	IN	Great service!	Thank you. Will look at buying merchandise from L.L.Bean in the future!
5	No	VA		Good. Keep up the good work!
5	No	Quebec	For me it's excellent.	Bravo!
5	No	Quebec		I would like to have a L.L.Bean's at home!
5	No	PA	First time user.	Very nice of them!!
5	No	OR	Well-run system. Environmentally pro-active.	This is an important service to visitors and to help the environment.
5	Yes	ME		Great. I will continue to be a L.L.Bean customer.
5	No	PA	Just do entrance to Smuggler's Den Campground - waste of time.	
5	No	MD	We think that the frequency of service (every 30 minutes) would make the buses much more convenient.	We think it's great and that more corporations should follow suit.
5	No	NH		It's a great investment for Bean. We are Bean customers.
5	No	UT	Helpful if shuttle info was in all hotels.	
6	No	MD		Great!
6	No	PA	Very good. Yeah propane, but have you considered veggie oil for some? Maybe just for an experiment. I'm sure some restaurants would love you to take it.	Yay! Good for L.L.L.Bean
6	No	Ottawa		Very Supportive.
6	No	MD	Buses are a bit crowded in evenings. Could frequencies be increased in these peak times?	Thanks! Good investment in L.L.Bean 's image.
6	No	VA	It's wonderful. Keep as is. We love it.	Kudos! Thanks a million.
6	No	NC	An invaluable service! Great for the economy and the environment.	We have always loved L.L.Bean - now even more!
6	Yes	ME	I'm hoping for eventual year-round service.	Grateful for their generosity.
6	No	PA	Increase the number of buses to Eden Street in the evening.	Good corporate neighbor!! Good for them.
6	No	CT	An express from Northeast Harbor to Southwest Harbor.	Thank you L.L.Bean We have a summer family cottage in S. Freeport and buy from Bean's regularly. I'm pleased they are giving back to the community.
6	No	Russia	Perfect.	Good man!!!

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6	No	CT	Any hybrid vehicles in the future? Clean fuel alternatives? Intown traffic should be strongly discouraged. If necessary, nominal fee of \$.50 for adults July and August may not be unreasonable for certain rides.	Very responsible corporate responsibility. Others should be encouraged to contribute what they can.
6	No	FL	The bus service has made our stay much more enjoyable. We can see the island and visit points of interest easily. Free makes it much better.	Fantastic.
6	No	NJ	I appreciate the free service. I wish last carriage road stop came later than 5:00.	It's good for L.L.Bean and good for the island.
6	No	MA	Thank you!	HOORAY! Our money is helping!
6	No	CA	Perhaps limit, if possible, the conversations between drivers, their Bar Harbor neighbors/regulars while driving??	What a gift!! Thank you, thank you, thank you, L.L.Bean for your active community membership and contributions. It's gratifying to see that you consider and conduct yourself as a community member.
6	No	NY	More frequent buses.	Do it again.
6	No	CT		Thank you L.L.Bean.
7	No	TX		Highly commendable
7	No	ME		Very appreciated
7	No	MA	Love it.	Makes we want to give business to L.L.Bean.
7	No	NH		Thanks a million.
7	No	ME	Pass out forms so they can be filled out when bus is not moving.	Good for L.L.Bean. I buy from them.
7	No	WI		Thank you.
7	No	ME		Thank you!
7	No	CA		Very nice
7	No	Germany		It's great.
7	No	MD		Good for them!
7	No		Morning express run on #7 needs to run earlier so it arrives on Village Green at 7:50 a.m. and be on time, because generally it is not arriving until 8:10 a.m. Schedules should be adhered to.	Bravo for them!!
7	No	NY	Buses should either start early enough (7:50 a.m.) to get to work on time or at least arrive at the Village Green at 7:50 and be on time. Or start a shuttle service for employees.	I think it is wonderful.
7	No	WI		Great!
7	No	GA	Absolutely great - we could do hikes which we would otherwise have found difficult. We didn't need to use our car. The buses are a great idea! Hope all National Parks get them.	Keep it up!

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7	No	SC	Do away with cars parking against the Village Green and across Main Street where the buses have to turn. Also prevent traffic on the streets where the buses park. It would also ease the exit of emergency equipment from the police and fire stations. Also, another bus from Blackwoods so those of us at other campgrounds can enjoy the nightly interpretive programs. Right now the Blackwoods bus gets to the Village Green at 9:35 p.m., right after the Campground bus leaves at 9:30, so we have to wait until 10:30 for a Campground bus (too late). Call it the 'Campfire Talk Special.'	Wonderful!! A true civic service (and environmental).
7	No	PA		A worthwhile contribution! Should help to limit the number of cars traveling around the area.
7	No	NJ		Great idea for companies to give back in a meaningful way.
7	Yes	ME	An excellent service to the public. Good for environment and wallet.	Very generous.
7	No	Quebec	Maybe more place for bicycles would be a good idea...	We're very happy about it since it gives us the chance to travel everywhere without using the car. Thanks, L.L.Bean!
7	Yes	ME	Drivers are very friendly. I bike 16 miles to work and take the shuttle home at night. A couple of times I have not been able to put my bike on, but for 99% of the time, it is great. I enjoy chatting with people from all over the world. Announcement at the high school is very confusing - SWH/NEH connection. I've seen folks get off the SWH bus unknowingly.	This contribution enables me to be more environmentally sensitive by leaving my car at home from June 24th to Columbus Day weekend. While I bike from SWH to the Jackson Lab every morning, get my workout. Then take the shuttle home. Thank you FOA & L.L.Bean for making that possible.
7	Yes	ME	Given environmental concerns, this service is crucial.	Wonderful - very much encourages me to patronize company.
7	No	South Africa	Increase bicycle capacity from 4 to 6 or 8? A great way to reduce traffic congestion and parking problems!! And to help save the beautiful environment.	Well done and thank you.
7	No	ME	I don't know that I would visit Bar Harbor without this service. It makes getting around very accessible.	Thank you very very much.
7	No	MN	Drivers could double as tour guides, telling about the area's history - present and past.	It's nice that they support nature and culture in their home state!
7	No	ME	More seats.	Good job.
7	No	PA	Drivers are all sociable, polite and highly knowledgeable.	Excellent idea, great innovation.
7	No	CT	Doing a great job!	

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7	No	CT	Get a couple more buses and use them more frequently.	Very good of them. PROTECT WILDLIFE!
7	No	CT		Wonderful service. Easy to use.
7	No	NJ		I think it's great.
7	Yes	ME	Thanks to Explorer staff and drivers. It makes it possible for someone without a vehicle to hold a summer job.	Thanks to L.L.Bean thousands can ride and explore the island in the comfort of AC. Thanks!
7	No	NY		Others should follow their example.
7	No	PA		Wonderful!!
8	No	CT	The bus driver's knowledge and kindness help many tourists as they come to visit. They always make sure every one gets picked up and dropped of at the right place. The drivers are the best.	I appreciate L.L.Bean's contribution, but they are over advertising and the focus on the bus is more about L.L.Bean than Island Explorer.
8	No	MA	Good job.	Keep doing it.
8	No		The service is excellent.	L.L.Bean is the advertiser on the bus. The bus should get other advertisers to add to the bus.
8	No	ME	Very important service.	Fabulous! I will buy more L.L.Bean stuff.
8	No	ME	Almost no Schoodic passengers today.	Bless them!
8	No	ME	Great!	
8	No	NH	Great service - thanks.	Awesome - thanks.
8	No	RI	I think the Island Explorer is very convenient and the bus drivers are friendly. It is a great way to explore the area and is a wonderful learning experience.	I appreciate L.L.Bean's support towards the Island Explorer, but it's a little over-advertised on the bus.
8	No	MD	Our driver, Jack, was extremely friendly and helpful. He really looks out for his passengers. He made it a very enjoyable trip.	
8	No	CT	As a summer resident, the Island Explorer exceeds all the facets of our transportation requirements. I would gladly pay for the service. Wish I had discovered the service sooner! Ultimate in convenience; well thought-out routes and times.	I am definitely more apt to purchase from L.L.Bean as a way to contribute to safeguarding Acadia.
8	No	VA	We have no vehicle available and the bus was a great service to us. We never would have gotten to see the beauty of the park otherwise.	
8	No	MD	It is an excellent service and should be publicized and encouraged more.	Very admirable and I hope they continue. But they should insist that dogs be banned from park or no \$!!
8	No	MD	A very useful and beautiful service to the public. Thank you.	Thank you L.L.Bean for your philanthropy and generosity to keep Maine beautiful and accessible to all. Please do not allow dogs in the park.

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8	No	NH	The Island Explorer is a great service and is very convenient. The drivers are friendly and helpful.	
8	No	NJ	You need a stop at the waterfront pier.	It's nice to see a company giving something back and helping so many to see this beautiful area.
8	No	FL	It's a great service. I wish the bus service in Winter Harbor (Schoodic) would extend into October. People taking the ferry over from Bar Harbor have no way to get to Schoodic or other parts of town. Please consider this. Thank you. Both Schoodic drivers are great! Very accommodating.	I think it's wonderful!
9	No	ME	Alternative fuel buses would be good but it is of great benefit to the environment if many people take these buses.	Of course, that is very generous and wonderful!
9	No	NY	Bus is beautiful and very clean.	Great
9	No	NC		Thank you L.L.Bean!
9	No	NY	A hub at the visitor center into the park would improve park access for those not staying in town.	Terrific!
9	No	WI		Excellent!
9	No	NC	Very nice to have transportation. Happy to pay for service (via Park fee).	Will remember their generosity.
9	No	CO	Bus is great but parking for visitors and locals seems very difficult; not enough spots, hard to find a spot for longer than 2 hours (for example when renting bikes and kayaks for a long time).	It rocks!
9	No	PA	Great service. Bar Harbor wouldn't be the same without it.	Very grateful.
9	No	CA	It's great.	Should be more!
9	No	PA	Cape Cod is now using similar "flex" buses - inspired but not as well done as I.Ex. Very important for serious hikes that do not end where they begin.	Fabulous. We buy there on purpose.
9	No	KS	It's a pleasure not to have to drive everywhere.	A very generous gift to support L.L.Bean's home state.
			It was a great help to us. We drove our RV and didn't tow a car.	How wonderful of them to do such a nice thing. Thank you!!
			Great service! Keep up the good work! On hot days the bus is too hot.	I will support L.L.Bean because of their generous commitment.