

# **Transportation Stakeholders Network (TSN) Newport City & the Northeast Kingdom**

## **Background Information**

### **TOPIC: How does economic development pose new challenges and opportunities for transportation demand management in Newport and beyond?**

The Northeast Kingdom is expecting several hundred million dollars of investment over the next 5-10 years. Six hundred million of these dollars will be invested in projects scheduled to be constructed and open by 2017. Approximately 2,000 direct jobs are slated to be created when the new projects open, and thousands more indirect jobs are expected from business associated with the new developments and echo development. With a current population of 65,000 and employed labor force of 30,000, this rate and magnitude of growth is momentous in the Northeast Kingdom.

The following projects are expected to bring new residents and new visitors all in need of efficient transportation options. New trips generated by the projects mentioned here are expected to reach an estimated 3,000 at the peak afternoon hour throughout the region. Seven hundred and sixty of those peak trips will be added in the first 5 years from sites within the downtown Newport City to Derby corridor (5 mi.), and to and from the Newport State Airport four miles south of downtown Newport City.

Attached maps depict the location of proposed developments.

### **Development Timeline**

#### Construction Underway:

Louis Garneau USA – 60,000 sq. ft. outerwear factory on Rt. 5 in Derby

Jay Peak Stateside Hotel – 84 unit hotel at stateside base area at Jay Peak Ski Resort in Jay

Jay Peak Lodge & Townhouses Project – 88 unit/18 residential building project

#### Construction Starting in Spring/Early Summer 2014:

Burke Mtn. Hotel A – five story, 116 unit hotel & conference center at Burke Mtn. Ski Resort in Burke

Renaissance Block – Newport City Main St. Block demolition for four floors of new commercial and residential space

AnCBio – 90,000 sq. ft. biomedical research facility 1 mile from downtown Newport City

The Highlands Housing Project – 82 residential unit high-end apartment complex 1 mile from downtown Newport City

## Construction Starting Between end of 2014 & 2016

Newport State Airport Expansion – in Coventry, 4 miles south of Newport City w/5 year construction schedule for runway extension, new terminal, 4 hangars & 2 warehouses

Three additional Burke Mtn. Hotels similar in size to Hotel A to open by end of 2015

Newport Marina Hotel & Conference Center – 150 unit hotel, conference center & retail space at the current Rite Aid/Vista Foods Waterfront Plaza site. Construction to start late 2015.

The following developments have also been proposed, however details on timeline are not yet available:

Wal-mart Supercenter - on Rt. 5 in Derby

Bear Path Condominiums – one new condo building at Burke Mtn. Resort

Sticks & Stuff Hardware/Lumber Store – to be located in Derby

CVS Pharmacy – to be located in Derby

Maplefield Farms – gas station & convenience store in Newport City

Cumberland Farms – relocated & expanded gas station/convenience store in Lyndonville

## Context for Growth in Transportation Demand

Many partners are already working together to assess and plan for the increase in transportation demand in the region. Our regional transit provider, Rural Community Transportation (RCT), is planning to submit start-up applications to cover operating costs for two new bus routes to serve the I-91 commuter corridor and St. J to Lyndonville. Newport City Downtown Renaissance Corporation, along with other community partners, has been hosting monthly Community Commons meetings for residents and neighbors to discuss the changes happening in the community. Both Transportation Infrastructure and Housing Impact Studies are being undertaken by Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), the regional planning commission, with the input of RCT, Newport Renaissance, municipal officials, and other stakeholders.

Other factors affecting growth in transportation demand in the NEK region:

- Eight Fixed-Route Service Buses, No Fare Charged, except U.S. 2 Commuter
  - Two commuter routes, St. J-Lyndonville Rt. 5 Corridor, St. J-Montpelier Rt. 2 corridor
  - Two local daytime shuttles, running weekdays: St. J-Lyndonville, & Derby-Newport City
  - Four shopping shuttles from Island Pond, weekly & Craftsbury/Hardwick, Island Pond and Danville, bi-weekly
- 26,000 NEK residents live within a 15-minute walk of an RCT shuttle, shopper or commuter route
- Vanpool coordination services offered by Rural Community Transportation (RCT)
- Minimal intercity transit service available
- Passenger rail to White River Junction or Montpelier, 1-2 hour drive to NEK destinations

- Three completed Rail Trails (Beebe Spur: north along Lake Memphremagog from Newport City, Cross Vermont Trail: ~14 mi. in southernmost Caledonia County, Three-Rivers Path: 1.5 mi. in St. Johnsbury, Lamoille Valley Rail Trail under construction: ~15 mi. St. Johnsbury to Danville)
- Established network of on-road bicycle routes, primarily used for casual recreation to advanced cycling
- Three taxi & on-demand transport services based out of Newport City and Burke
- Intra-resort shuttle at Jay Peak Resort, and Burlington Airport & Amtrak pick up available to resort guests
- SUMMER shuttles between Burke Mountain Bike Park and East Burke/Kingdom Trails

## **Opportunities & Challenges**

The increase in new employees, visitors and overall business and leisure activity affords an excellent opportunity to encourage travelers to improve the efficiency of their driving and utilize alternative modes of transport. From experience and community input, however, partners are expecting challenges under the following topic areas:

Topic A: Affordable and practical transportation options for the anticipated influx of new employees commuting to work

Challenges:

- Many jobs created may not provide a wage that is adequate for financing a long SOV commute
- Buy in & ongoing commitment from targeted employee commuters
- Inadequate designated Park & Rides

Topic B: Alternative transportation options for non-work trips, including both residents & visitors

Challenges:

- Low population density
- Transportation off-resort to existing business & community centers such as Jay Village, Newport, North Troy, Barton, East & West Burke, Lyndonville & St. Johnsbury

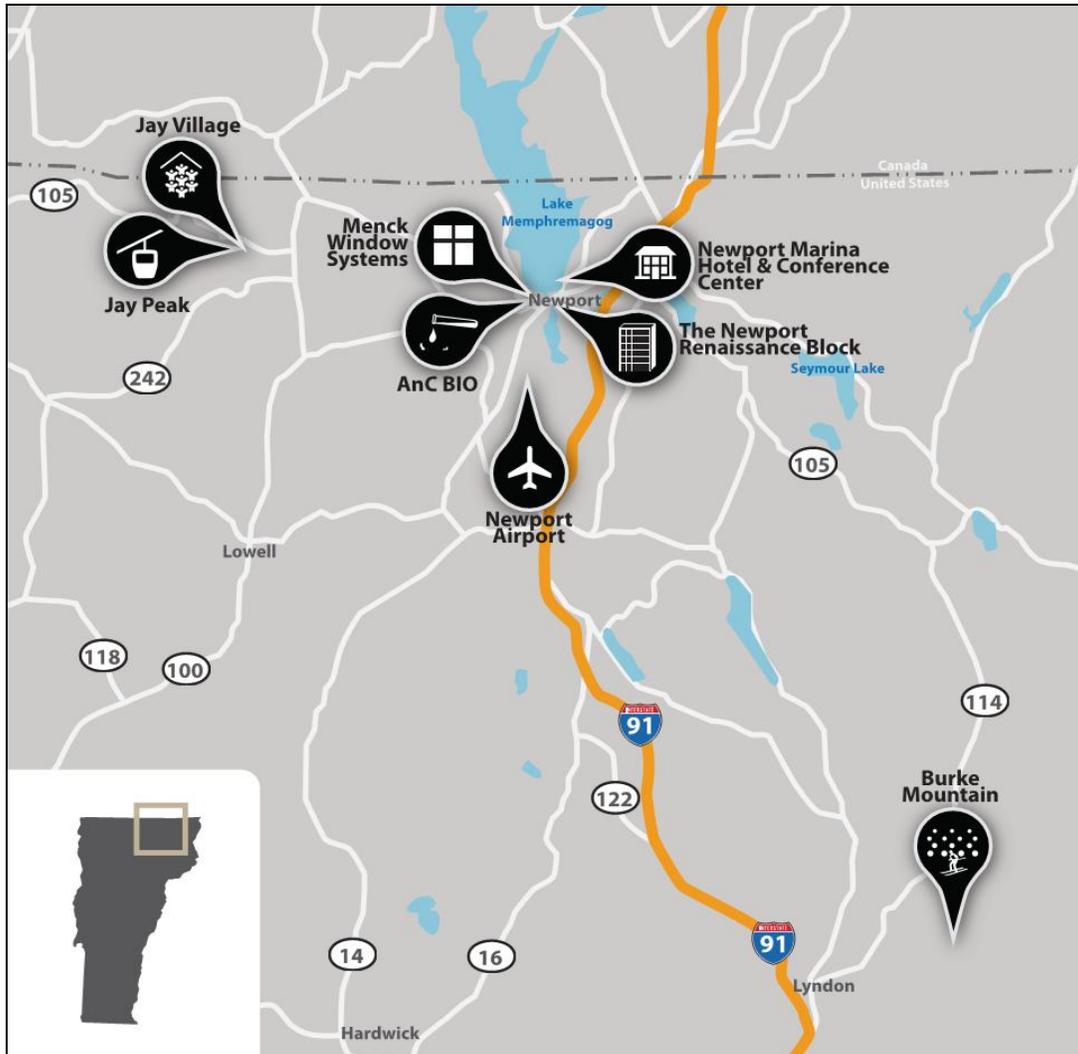
Topic C: Integrating transportation strategies into broader expansion/development efforts

Challenges:

- Engaging residents, as taxpayers, on the payoffs of investing in alternative transportation facilities

## Maps

The following figure depicts development projects under the Vermont EB-5 Regional Center's Investment Visa Program. These projects are scheduled to be developed by 2017. Some projects listed above are not depicted individually.



This map depicts Newport City and the nearby communities of Derby (to the northeast) and Coventry (to the south). Major developments are labeled.

