

Downtown Vision Transportation Subgroup Update and Request
Presentation at December 5 Council (will include visuals)
November 29, 2023

Team Members:

Ed Bradley, Town council; Kelly Edwards, Executive Director, Visit Freeport; Tawni Whitney, Executive Director, Freeport Chamber of Commerce; Jay Paulus, Owner, British Goods; Peter Milholland, Seacoast Tours of Freeport; Kathy Smith, Freeport resident; Mary Davis, Chair, Downtown Vision

Original Purpose and Goals: (Original Charter Attached)

Consider a transportation system that would connect the Freeport Train Station and Metro BREEZ to hotels, businesses, and attractions both in town and places of interest a short distance away.

Goals/Benefits:

- Provide connection within downtown to a rich variety of outdoor, cultural, historic, activities and attractions.
- Symbolize the change in Freeport from shopping-only to “a rich cultural, historical and outdoor destination with activities for everyone to do”. So much to do you have to stay overnight!
- Bring trains, buses, and businesses together in a connected, mobility-supported transportation system.
- Support the “park once” goal and sustainability goals of utilizing public transportation (Downeaster, BREEZ, etc.).
- Support the businesses and attractions within and outside town center.
- Provide greater access to our offerings for visitors and residents.

What has occurred:

- Researched: Bath, Boothbay, Bar Harbor trolleys, Cruise transport offerings,
- Brought businesses and experts together to discuss (L. L. Bean, Blue Lobster, Ducktours of Portland, Visit Freeport, Wolfe’s Neck Woods State Park, Wolfe’s Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment, Desert of Maine, Freeport Historical Society , Meetinghouse Arts, others!)
- Heard from Downeaster/Patricia Quinn at GPCOG forum
- Met with Mike Trembley from Metro/BREEZ to review a proposed 2024 transport service
- Visit Freeport trialed a shuttle for Fall Festival, good ridership
- Determined there are two needs: One is up/down Main Street/Train station to deliver passengers within downtown. Second is transport to “outside” downtown resources: Wolfe’s Neck Woods State Park and Wolfe’s Neck Center, Pettengill Farm, Desert of Maine, Maine Beer, Goodfire, and access to lobster, fishing and recreational opportunities on the water out of South Freeport, and there are so many more!
- Examined the need for a business plan to support full, ongoing service in downtown and beyond with public and private support.

Moving forward with TRY IT!

December 2023 FREE Hop On/Hop Off Event Shuttle:

Supporting Donors that said YES!! 100% Supported by local businesses and organizations.

These businesses plus private donations fully funded the December service for Freeport visitors and residents. This is NOT a small spend for our businesses.....

-Visit Freeport

-Bridgham & Cook, The British Store

-Maine Beer Co.

-L.L.Bean

- Freeport Village Station

-Freeport Antiques & Heirlooms Showcase

-Wilbur's of Maine Chocolate Confections

- Hampton Inn

-Goodfire Brewing Company

Hop On/Hop Off Shuttle December 9/10, 16/17, 23/24, & 30/31 from 11am - 8pm. Atlantic

Limousine Maine: Visit Freeport contracted one Hop-On-Hop-Off forward facing 14 passenger shuttle bus with wheelchair lifts. **Fully ADA Accessible/Wheelchair Accessible Van**

Route on Main Street/Rte. 1 Corridor (map to be shown at Council meeting) along Main Street/Route 1 from northern end (Visit Freeport/British Store) to southern end (Maine Beer Co. and Goodfire Brewing Company) in a loop. Shuttle will stop at Amtrak Downeaster Train Station on Northbound arrival times. Shuttle stop signage will be at stop locations.

Marketing:

- Visit Freeport e-blast, Sparkle Celebration landing page, social media and events calendar. We will also share in the various Freeport, Maine FB groups.
- Chamber of Commerce e-blast and social.
- Branding on the bus to identify both the service and the logos of the contributors.
- Handouts with a map of the route.
- Flyers for the windows of Freeport businesses.
- Sandwich board signs for each stop.
- We are also looking at large banner placement, and the digital sign at Public Safety.

Try it, Measure it, Adjust

This is meant to be a measured “Try It!” event to assess how the shuttle might work in the future. We know this is a short trial, as all experts told us, and we may have a few bumps. We are trying to raise awareness of the possibilities, measure ridership, talk to passengers and businesses on outcomes, and review outcomes. Principle in our Downtown Visioning process always says, do a little, then do a little more and keep on taking steps toward implementation of the bigger vision. So, here we go!!

This is what the Downtown Vision is all about.....

Our Request to the council:

Allow the \$10,000 funds that were identified in the ARPA funds during the 2023/2024 budget season be used for gathering information in the form of a study as well as in the form of pilots/ testing trials. Outcomes will be reported to the Downtown Vision Steering Group and Council.

Consider broader plan when this subcommittee comes back to the Council.



Downtown Vision Plan Project Charter

1. General Project Information			
Project Name:	Transportation	Date:	1/17/2023
Project Lead:	TBD....	Committee Name	Transportation
Project Facilitator:	Mary Davis	Target Project End Date	trial summer 23

2. Project Team Members and Stakeholders				
Name	Committee / Group	Role	Telephone	E-mail
Tawni Whitney	business input			
Kathy Smith	Resident/experience			
Ed Bradley	Council			
Mary Davis	econ input			

3. Project Elements
<p>A. Project Purpose / Goals / Impact</p> <p>Consider a transportation system that would connect the train station/Breeze drop to hotels, businesses, attractions both in town and places of interest a short distance away.</p> <p>Goals/Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide connection within downtown and to a rich variety of outdoor, cultural, historic, activity attractions. -Symbolize the change in Freeport from shopping only to “do” in Freeport -Bring train, bus, businesses together in a connected, mobility supported transportation system -Support the “park once” goal and sustainability goals of utilizing public transportation (Downeaster, Breeze, etc.) -Support businesses and attractions within and outside town center. -Provide a greater access to our offerings for visitors and residents.
<p>B. Deliverables <i>Briefly list the items needed to support and advance the project (e.g., study, report, mapping, costs, etc.)</i></p> <p>Initially, bring a consultant and group of interested parties together to describe a business plan that outlines key stakeholders, lessons learned from other communities, cost estimates with operational and capital expenses, number of routes envisioned, implementation plan, and owner.</p>
<p>C. Scope <i>List what the project will and will not address (include both in-scope and out-of-scope items)</i></p> <p>In-scope: Trolley or bus system that services moving people from train/bus to other locations. scope could be main street, to adjacent business areas, to surrounding “outdoor” locations. Connections to existing public transportation</p> <p>Out-of-scope: tbd</p>
<p>D. Project Milestones <i>Propose start and end dates for Project Phases (e.g., Kick-off, Planning, Design, Construction, Delivery) and other significant milestones</i></p>



Downtown Vision Plan Project Charter

3. Project Elements

Phase I: Spring 2023: Plan and proposal for project(s) with involvement of key stakeholders.

Phase II: Plan TBD

E. Budget *List what resources are needed in the short term (through 6/30/2024) and what might be needed in the long term.*

Phase I: fund an expert to help define a business plan. Estimate \$10,000.

Phase II: Implementation \$ TBD

4. Endorsement

	Name	Signature	Date
Project Lead	TBD		
Project Facilitator	Mary Davis		
Town Manager / Town Staff	TBD		