



# CHAPTER VIII

## TRANSPORTATION & REGIONAL CONCERNS

### A. INTRODUCTION

The 1991 Moultonborough Master Plan began the transportation section stating: “A town’s transportation system is one of the most critical factors in shaping its overall growth”. This link between land use planning and transportation planning remains a basic part of the foundation for the Master Plan. The highway system in Moultonborough is a combination of state, town and private roads. Public transit is not available, and mobility for residents who do not drive is limited and must be provided by volunteers:-friends, family or civic organizations. Maps relating to this section can be found in Appendix H.

### B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Moultonborough has about 90 miles in its public road network; of this, just about 32 miles are state-maintained so-called Class I and Class II highways.<sup>1</sup> Just over one mile of the town-owned roads are not Town-maintained – a very low incidence of Class VI road. As for the surface type, the Class V roads are just about evenly split between paved surfaces and graveled. The few Class VI roads are unpaved.

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<sup>1</sup> The Department of Transportation uses a classification system for roads, which are classified from Class I to Class VI. Classes I & II are state or federal highways and funding and maintenance standards are tied to the classification; Class III are recreational roads; Class IV are Town and City (Urban Compact) roads; and Classes V and VI are town roads, Class V being those that are maintained by the town, and Class VI being those roads that still legally exist as roads but for a variety of reasons are no longer maintained by the town.

In addition to the Town and State roads there are, according to the Lakes Region Planning Commission, approximately 100 miles of privately owned roads. Although these roads are the legal responsibility of the homeowners who live on the roads, the Town does maintain them for winter use, which raises questions of liability that should be examined by the Road Agent and Selectmen. The development of these private roads, with or without any winter maintenance, has an effect on Town services because emergency services vehicles use these roads to respond to calls.

## 1. Average Daily Traffic

Both of the two past Master Plans have identified traffic as a major issue for Moultonborough; and that concern is not different for this current Master Plan. Moultonborough's role as a summer destination and the existence of a major regional highway running directly through town bring a great deal of non-local traffic along the corridor through the center of Moultonborough. In order to get a sense of the volume of traffic and how it has changed over time, reference is made to the information collected by the NH Department of Transportation (DOT).

The DOT routinely collects traffic count data around the state, by region, every year from May to October. Some locations have permanent traffic counters in the roadbeds, and other locations are counted on a rotating schedule every several years. Counts are generally taken for one week, and even though every effort is made to annualize the numbers, there will always be some inconsistencies. The available data for Moultonborough from 1994 to 2007 are presented in the table following. Of the eleven locations where traffic was counted over the 13 years, certain locations were counted six or seven times, and other locations only four times; no location was counted every year.

According to the DOT data, Route 25, westbound, carries a significantly higher traffic volume than any other road in Town, although the volume has not dramatically changed from 1996 to 2006, the last year a count was taken; nevertheless, having upwards of what is now probably closer to 16,000 vehicles a day driving through a town the size of Moultonborough has a significant impact.

The section of Route 25 at the Red Hill River Bridge (Sheridan Road) saw a 2,000-vehicle increase, making it the second highest traffic-volume section in Town. NH Route 109 south of Bodge Hill Road experienced the greatest increase in absolute numbers, with 2400 additional average daily vehicles between 1994 and 2007.

**Table #16:  
Average Daily Traffic Counts for Moultonborough, 1994 – 2007**

<b>Location</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
1. Route 109 south of Bodge Hill Road	3300				4300			4500			4800			5700
2. Route 109 at Shannon Brook	1900				2600		2200				3400	3300		
3. Moultonborough Neck Road south of Route 25			6400		6000			5000			4900			
4. Route 109 at Sandwich TL		790		1200		880		780		780			780	
5. Route 25 at Sandwich TL		4500		4900	4800		4800	4700		4900			4800	
6. Route 25 at Red Hill River		9000		9200			9900			9400			11000	
7. Route 109 west of Route 171			3800		3700		3600			4400			3900	
8. Route 25 west of Moultonborough Neck Road			13000		13000	14000			12000			14000		
9. Moultonborough Neck Road east of Kona Farm Road			3200			3300			2300			3700		
10. Moultonborough Neck Road ½ mile south of Winaukee Road				1400			790			610			950	
11. Ossipee Mountain Road over Halfway Brook			170			460			390			370		

*Source: NH Department of Transportation*

## C. THE REGIONAL NETWORK

As mentioned previously, many of Moultonborough's traffic issues are the result of its location within the Lakes Region, its attractiveness as a vacation and second home destination, and that a major regional highway (NH Route 25) traverses it. The Lakes Region Planning Commission published a Transportation Plan for the region<sup>2</sup> that provides a great deal of detail on the regional transportation issues. This Plan warns against land use strategies that encourage sprawl-type patterns of development and which will further adversely impact the capacity of the roads and highways. The Study strongly encourages an approach that integrates land use planning and transportation concerns so as not to further overburden the existing transportation network.

In addition to the Transportation Plan, the LRPC prepared a specific corridor study for Route 25<sup>3</sup> through Center Harbor and Moultonborough. The focus of this study was an identification of existing conditions and safety concerns, which resulted in very specific recommendations for improvements in various segments of the highway. A build-out analysis was also generated for this study, which concluded that there is rather significant potential for development of residential and non-residential uses along and adjacent to Route 25 – again underscoring the importance of linking land use planning and transportation. Maps illustrating this information are included in Appendix H.

## D. EXISTING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Developments built on private roads have had the secondary and cumulative effect of creating additional pressure on the town and state highways with which the private roads connect. Moultonborough's development has continued to be scattered, leading to approximately 100 miles +/- of rural private roads. Congestion on Route 25 remains a major concern, as indicated by the Master Plan survey responses. The maintenance of the town roads accounts for a significant expenditure of the Town budget. The residents living on private roads generally use post office boxes rather than home mail delivery. This generates two trips a day for six days if residents get their mail daily. Private and town road mileage has increased since the 1991 Master Plan, but there have been no accompanying changes in the transportation system.

The pattern of scattered development has resulted in Moultonborough residents' dependence on automobiles. Recent trends show there are more requests for rides from organizations like the Community Caregivers, the Fifty Plus Club and church programs. According to data from the Community Caregivers, requests for services increased 67% between 2006 and 2007 – from 586

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<sup>2</sup> Lakes Region Transportation Plan 2008; Lakes Region Planning Commission, Meredith, NH; January 28, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> NH Route 25 Corridor Study; Lakes Region Planning Commission, Meredith, NH; April 2008.

requests in 2006, to 981 requests in 2007. The forecasted demographics for Moultonborough and the region indicate an aging population that will increase the need for transportation options.

Route 25, Route 109, Moultonborough Neck and Bean Roads are major state highways in the Town. The Lakes Region Planning Commission studied the Route 25 corridor and issued a report in 2008. Access management was identified as a need along the Route 25 corridor for safety and capacity preservation<sup>4</sup>. This Master Plan supports the actions of the Select Board regarding Access Management Standards and the execution of a Memo of Understanding with the DOT to further assist the Town in dealing with issues along State Routes 25 and 109.

Several trails exist within Moultonborough, but a comprehensive inventory does not exist. On the highways, pedestrians and bicyclists use the shoulders where they exist.

Moultonborough has scenic vistas along the highways in town. Future enhancement or expansion of scenic vistas is an opportunity to preserve the community's rural character and sense of place. Within the village, the current speeds and traffic volumes on Route 25 discourage pedestrian movements. As the Route 25 corridor study concluded, driveways introduce conflicting traffic movements when mixed with through traffic.

## E. CONCLUSIONS

Population growth, predicted increases in aging and retirement populations, and rising transportation costs represent challenges to residents' mobility. Transportation options are needed. There are recommendations in other sections of this plan that are important from a transportation perspective. A study to look at the potential to develop a village center, or multiple village/ neighborhood centers has positive transportation implications. This would encourage pedestrian activity, density to promote public transit, and reduction in travel on congested corridors.

Traffic congestion, especially summer congestion, makes traveling an issue, especially east-west. There are steps a town can take to help smooth traffic flow and mitigate traffic impacts on the complete highway system, even if the highways are not under town control. For example, developments on private roads can be designed to preserve/mitigate impacts to town road capacity, safety, and storm water systems. The effect of increasingly year-round traffic on road conditions needs to be evaluated as redevelopment proposals are considered.

In terms of transportation efficiency, smaller connections are preferable to larger connections (except for driveways where consolidated driveway access is generally preferred). This applies to street and pedestrian networks, connections between neighborhoods and connections between adjacent developments.

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<sup>4</sup> White paper, Rose Marie Philips, Transportation & Regional Concerns Meeting Minutes March 11, 2008.

Transportation and land use planning have to be directly integrated, as noted in the 1991 Master Plan and the two documents referenced in Section C of this chapter. Implementation of measures to effectively link them is critical for future mobility. Transportation is a community asset that can provide mobility options, preserve the natural and cultural environment and improve quality of life. However, unless transportation and land planning are linked, transportation will be inefficient and expensive, and it will not meet mobility needs.

The traditional conflicts between land use and transportation are that improved roads lead to increased usage that results in deteriorating conditions, which then result in necessary improvements, and the cycle begins again. A primary concern of this Master Plan is to stop this cycle by acknowledging that building one's way out of congestion is not the answer; we must do a better job of managing the traffic and the land uses along the roadways.

# VISION, GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS

**VISION:** *Moultonborough envisions a future that relies less on automobiles and more on inter-modal forms of transportation that will reduce overall pressure on the regional highways and contribute to a healthier lifestyle.*

**Goal #1:** To continue to cooperate with appropriate local, county, regional, state and private entities to further the availability of public transportation.

## **Action Items:**

1. Continue to work on the Carroll County Transit System.
2. Consult with Easter Seals regarding a regional Transportation Resource and Access Coordination Program that they have developed.
3. Work with Lakes Region Planning Commission on public transportation opportunities, including research on successful models from other communities.

**Goal #2:** Enhance existing and create new pedestrian connections in and adjacent to the Village areas.

## **Action Items:**

1. Consolidate municipal parking area in the village.
2. Construct sidewalks on Route 25 in village, at least on the north side.
3. Construct a crosswalk from Blake Road to the north side of Route 25 to connect schools to village.
4. Establish a pedestrian connection within the civic complex with a connection to commercial buildings in village.



**Goals #3:** Work with the NH DOT and the Lakes Region Planning Commission to ensure the safety and efficiency of Route 25 while allowing Route 25 to serve as Moultonborough's Main Street.

**Action Items:**

1. Develop a green space regulation to buffer commercial development and preserve rural character, with parking in the back or the side.
2. Continue to implement access management in conjunction with NH DOT.
3. Consider increasing minimum frontage on Route 25 outside of village to 500 feet.
4. Implement intersection improvements as identified in the LRPC 2008 Route 25 Corridor Study.
5. Improve pedestrian safety including village crossing, connection to trail network and ties to housing.
6. Study the concept of the development of a village center road behind the commercial businesses on the north side of Route 25.
7. Explore the concept of village or neighborhood centers within Moultonborough with mixed use.

**Goal #4:** Maintain a local network of roads, sidewalks, and trails that meets the vehicular and non-vehicular needs of Moultonborough's residents that does not conflict with the Town's place in the regional transportation system.

**Action Items:**

1. Implement connections or access roads between town and private roads to mitigate traffic congestion and reduce traffic on major state and local highways.
2. Reconsider the current standards subdivision roads must meet in order to be accepted by the Town as Town roads.
3. Formalize a capital improvement plan including pavement management for town owned/maintained roads and bridges.
4. Review plowing policy on private roads and revise as appropriate to limit town expenditures and formalize any agreements on road maintenance between public/private responsibilities.
5. Develop an environmental management plan for deicing chemical use and storage. Coordinate with DOT and adjoining communities.
6. Develop appropriate zoning to accommodate the use of the airport while protecting sensitive resources and the existing adjacent land uses.



7. Designate specific town roads as scenic highways and develop regulations for their protection.
8. Establish a revolving fund to replace overhead utility lines with underground lines, with priority for scenic vista areas.

