

Chapter 3: Service Area Characteristics

This chapter describes a number of relevant changes in the Bangor/Old Town service area that have occurred since the 1996 BACTS transit study.

It examines 2000 U.S. Census figures for municipalities served by The Bus and for towns that border the current service area. It looks at changes in enrollment at the Orono campus of the University of Maine. And it identifies a number of new or planned developments that may have an impact on traffic patterns and future demand for bus service in the region.

The chapter includes eight subsections:

- Section 3.1 US Census Data for 2000
- Section 3.2 University of Maine Enrollment
- Section 3.3 Commercial Development
- Section 3.4 Medical Services
- Section 3.5 Cultural Facilities
- Section 3.6 Residential Development
- Section 3.7 Lodging Facilities
- Section 3.8 Employment Centers

3.1 U.S. Census Data for 2000

Towns Served by The Bus

Recently released data from the 2000 US census show modest shifts in population for communities served by The Bus. Population in Bangor decreased by 5%, while levels in Veazie and Hampden increased by 7% and 8% respectively. Orono experienced a 14% reduction, but this appears to be primarily a result of decreased enrollment at the University of Maine.

POPULATION IN TOWNS SERVED BY THE BUS

	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Change</i>	
Bangor	33,181	31,473	-1,708	-5%
Brewer	9,021	8,987	-34	0%
Hampden	5,843	6,327	484	8%
Old Town	8,252	8,130	-122	-1%
Orono	10,570	9,112	-1,458	-14%
Veazie	1,636	1,744	108	7%
Total	70,493	67,773	-2,720	-4%

Between 1990 and 2000, the biggest increases in median income levels occurred in the towns of Hampden and Veazie. These two communities started with the highest income levels in 1990. The median income in Hampden increased by 64% between 1990 and 2000, while Veazie increased 49%. The smallest increase was Orono with 10%, followed by Bangor with a 21% increase.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN TOWNS SERVED BY THE BUS

	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Bangor	24,674	\$ 29,740	\$ 5,066	21%
Brewer	28,065	\$ 36,949	\$ 8,884	32%
Hampden	32,595	\$ 53,377	\$ 20,782	64%
Old Town	22,890	\$ 29,886	\$ 6,996	31%
Orono	27,922	\$ 30,619	\$ 2,697	10%
Veazie	29,917	\$ 44,519	\$ 14,602	49%

Three sets of numbers from the 2000 census reflect the large presence of University students in Orono. According to the 2000 census:

- 33% of Orono residents lived in non-institutional group housing
- 49% of Orono residents were enrolled in college
- 50% of Orono residents were between the ages of 15 and 24

Census data also suggest that a significant number of University of Maine students live in the neighboring community of Old Town.

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT ACCORDING TO THE 2000 CENSUS

	<i>2000</i>	<i>Enrolled in college</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Bangor	31,473	2,675	8%
Brewer	8,987	452	5%
Hampden	6,327	247	4%
Old Town	8,130	1,333	16%
Orono	9,112	4,450	49%
Veazie	1,744	106	6%

At least 25% of the households in Bangor and Old Town reported incomes of under \$15,000 per year. A similar rate for Orono most likely reflects the high percentage of university students who live in this community.

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES UNDER \$15,000

	<i>Households</i>	<i>Incomes under 15,000</i>	
Bangor	13,738	3,432	25%
Brewer	3,879	785	20%
Hampden	2,438	214	9%
Old Town	3,397	965	28%
Orono	2,698	756	28%
Veazie	721	102	14%

Between 77% and 87% of the workforce in the Bangor region commutes to work by driving alone. Roughly 10% of area workers travel to job sites in carpools. The highest levels of transit commuting occurred in Bangor and Old Town, with 2% of the workforce reporting that they travel to work by bus.

2000 CENSUS WORKFORCE COMMUTE MODES

	<i>Drive alone</i>	<i>Carpool</i>	<i>Transit</i>
Bangor	77%	10%	2%
Brewer	85%	10%	1%
Hampden	84%	10%	0%
Old Town	78%	12%	2%
Orono	60%	11%	1%
Veazie	87%	6%	1%

These population figures suggest a number of factors that are important for transit planning in the region.

- Households with incomes below \$15,000 are less likely to own multiple cars and more likely to need transit. In much of the service area, roughly 25% of households fall into this category of likely higher need for transit. This is particularly true in Bangor and Old Town.
- While incomes may be higher in Veazie and Hampden, these communities have also experienced the most overall population growth. Transit needs that are not income related may increase in these towns. This may be true for some commuters, as well as for elderly persons and local residents with disabilities.
- Student populations are an important part of the population mix. This is especially true in Orono, where nearly half the population is enrolled in college.
- Significant student populations in Old Town and Bangor suggest continued need for transportation links to Orono and the University of Maine.

Surrounding Communities

Population levels in surrounding towns were assessed in an effort to identify potential markets for possible new bus routes. The town-by-town totals that are currently available provide only a preliminary indication of market potential, because they do not show whether towns have pockets of higher population density. Block-group data with this level of detail are not yet available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

2000 POPULATION OF SURROUNDING TOWNS

Hermon	4,437
Milford	2,950
Holden	2,827
Eddington	2,052
Orrington	3,526
Kenduskeag	1,171
Charleston	1,397
Bradley	1,242
Carmel	2,416

Based just on town-by-town totals, the community with the highest potential for bus service appears to be the town of Hermon. Total 2000 population in Hermon totaled 4,437. This compares with a total for Hampden of 5,843.

Income levels in Hermon were examined to see if they indicated any noticeable likelihood of higher transit need. Only 10% of Hermon households reported annual incomes below \$15,000. This is similar to Hampden's level of 9%. These figures suggest lower transit needs than other municipalities served by The Bus where 25% or more of their households reported lower income levels.

While census information does not suggest a high demand for transit services in neighboring towns, there may be other factors in particular areas that reflect a need for service. Neighboring communities will be examined in more detail in a service design chapter.

3.2 University of Maine Enrollment

Between 1991 and 1997, student enrollment on the Orono campus of the University of Maine decreased from a high of 12,804 students to a low of 9,231. This represents a decrease of 28% during this six-year period. This downward trend was reversed beginning in 1998. The past four years have seen a steady increase in total enrollment on the Orono campus. Total enrollment in September of 2001 was 10,698, which is 16% higher than in 1997. The 2001 total remains 16% below the level experienced in 1991.

FALL ENROLLMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE IN ORONO

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
On Campus Undergrad	3,816	3,272	3,169	2,876	2,785	2,668	2,607	2,853	3,115	3,283	3,453
Off Campus Undergrad	5,687	5,680	5,119	5,097	4,052	4,119	3,844	3,719	3,821	3,903	4,031
Graduate	2,076	2,107	2,182	2,317	2,266	2,078	1,955	2,034	2,063	2,062	2,187
Non-Degree	1,225	1,254	873	711	642	1,063	807	845	946	1,034	1,027
Total Enrollment	12,804	12,313	11,343	11,001	9,745	9,928	9,213	9,451	9,945	10,282	10,698

Total enrollment figures are presented in Figure 3.1. Trends for different types of students can be seen more clearly in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1: Total Fall Enrollment at the University of Maine

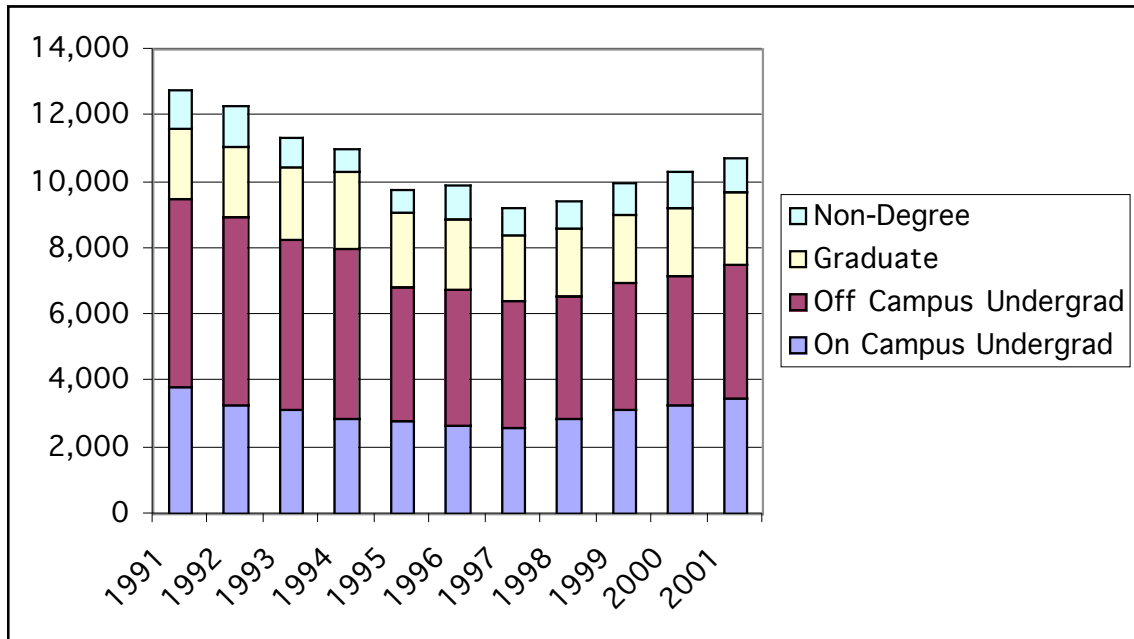


Figure 3.2: University of Maine Fall Enrollment by Student Type

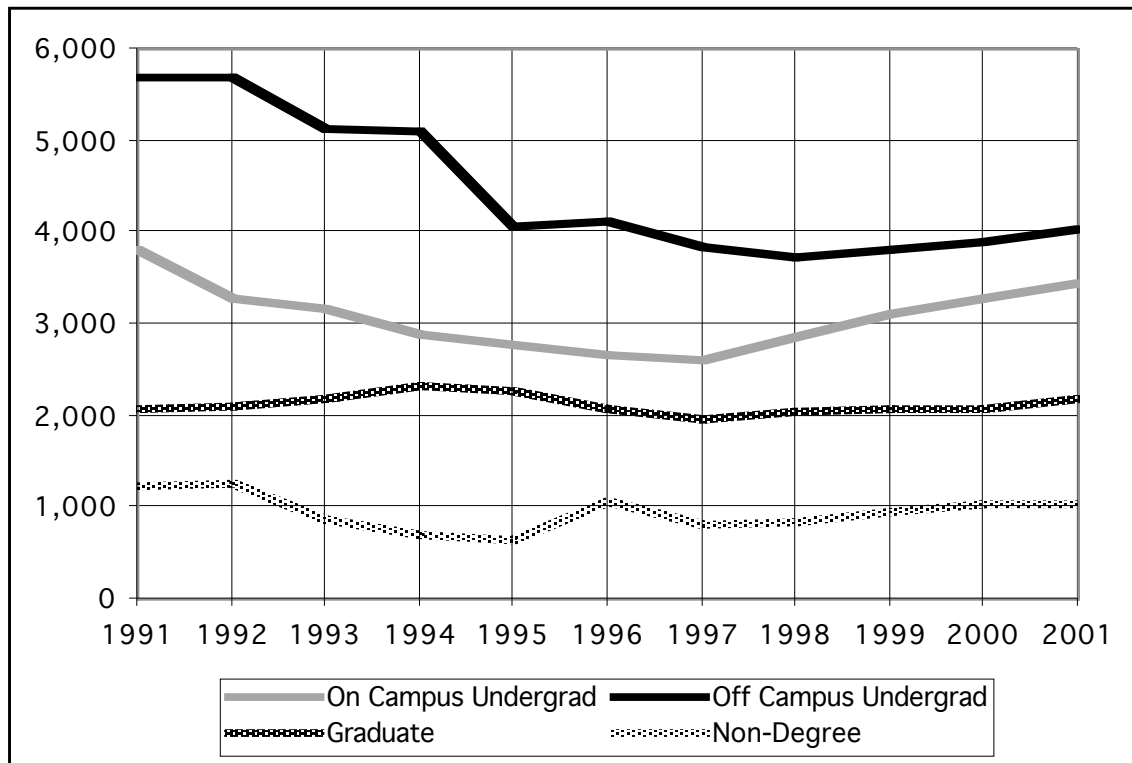


Figure 3.2 suggests that a significant portion of the decrease experienced between 1991 and 1997 involved off-campus undergraduates. On-campus enrollment also declined during this time period. Since 1998, totals for both types of undergraduates have increased steadily. The chart also suggests that on-campus enrollments have increased at a faster rate than off-campus registrations. Figure 3.3 also shows an increase in graduate enrollment between 2000 and 2001.

Figure 3.3: Old Town Route Ridership and University of Maine Enrollment

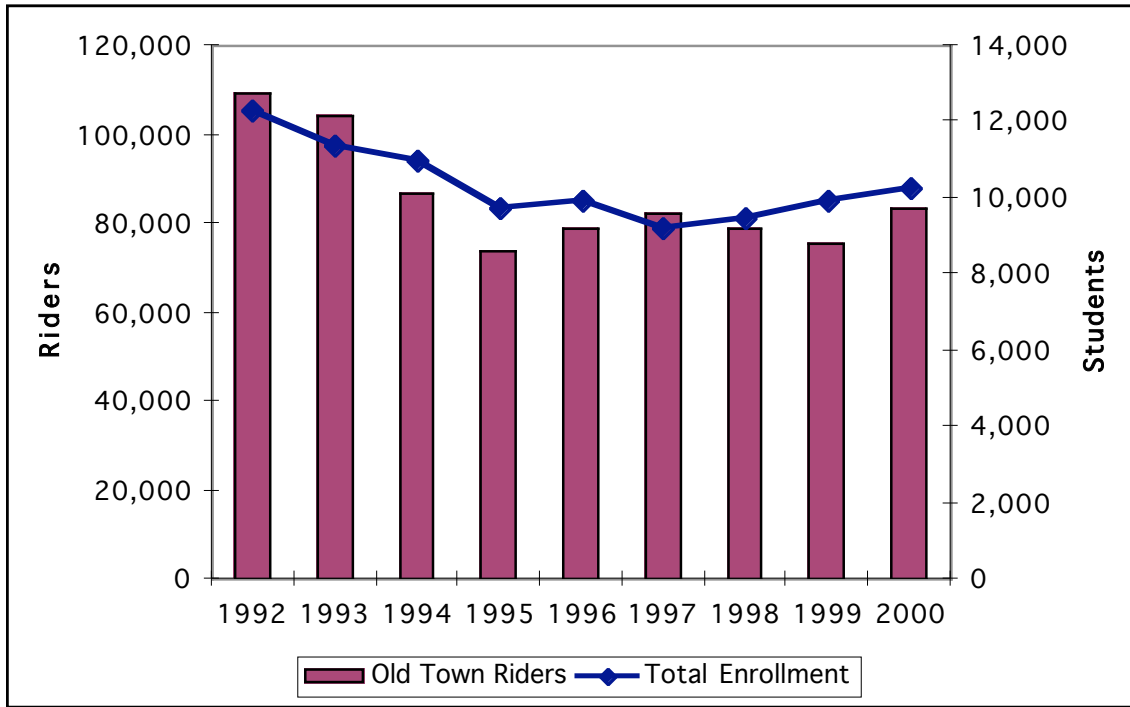


Figure 3.3 suggests a correlation between dropping student enrollments and decreased use of the Old Town bus route between 1992 and 1995. However, between 1997 and 1999, student enrollments increased, while use of the Old Town bus declined. This can be partially explained by the fact that a larger percentage of the growth in student enrollments involved on-campus students who do not commute to the campus. It also suggests, however, a decreasing relevance or a decreasing awareness of The Bus among University students during these years.

The downward trend in Old Town bus ridership was reversed in 2000. Analysis of ridership data suggests that this change is a direct result of introduction of the Maine Card program that allows University students and staff to ride the Old Town route for free. This program was introduced in September of 2000.

3.3 Commercial Development

A number of commercial developments are highlighted in this subsection. These new and planned facilities are discussed here because of their potential relevance for current and prospective bus riders.

Shop 'n Save in Hampden Hampden Route buses began offering front-door stops at a new Hampden supermarket in June of 2002. This new store is located on a one-way loop segment. Two-way service may be needed to allow more Hampden residents to utilize The Bus for travel to and from this location.

Broadway Shopping Center Activity at the Broadway Shopping Center has increased significantly, following the recent addition of a new TJ Max store. Other businesses have moved into this shopping plaza, and shopping and bus ridership has increased accordingly.

Bangor Mall/Hogan Road A number of new retail centers have been added in the Bangor Mall area since the 1996 transit study. This includes Borders, Staples, and a Circuit City store on Stillwater Avenue. Like past developments in the Bangor Mall area, these new businesses include little or no accommodations for bus circulation or for pedestrian access between shopping locations.

Super Wal-Mart in Brewer A new Super Wal-Mart has been proposed for outer Wilson Street in Brewer. The existing Brewer bus schedules do not include enough time to serve this location. Additions or revisions to Brewer bus service will be needed if this new store is to be served by public transportation.

Super Wal-Mart in Bangor Wal-Mart has also proposed to build a new Super store on Stillwater Avenue in Bangor. This new facility could be served by the same buses that link downtown Bangor with the Bangor Mall. It may be necessary to offer direct outbound service on Stillwater Avenue to improve transit access to this new facility.

3.4 Medical Services

Eastern Maine Healthcare

Eastern Maine Healthcare (EMH) is an organization of hospitals, doctor's offices, and other medical programs providing healthcare services in northern, central, and eastern

Maine. EMH has a number of existing healthcare centers in the Bangor region, and plans are in place for new and expanded facilities.

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|------------------------------|---|
| Eastern Maine Medical Center | EMMC is a 411-bed comprehensive medical center with a staff of nearly 300 physicians. EMMC provides primary and intensive care services for Bangor area residents and for people throughout the northern two-thirds of Maine. EMMC is one of three designated trauma centers in the Maine Trauma System. |
| Webber III Doctor's Offices | Eastern Maine Healthcare will expand the number of doctor's offices on the EMMC campus by constructing a new building known as Webber III. This five-floor structure will add an estimated 90,000 square feet of physician-owned medical office space. |
| Patient and Visitor Access | At EMMC, visitors and patients in automobiles are directed to a parking garage on the EMMC campus. This parking facility did not exist when the 1996 transit study was carried out. Employee parking continues to be provided on the west side of State Street. Parking lot shuttle service formerly provided by a private contractor is now operated directly by the Medical Center. Passengers on the regular public transit system who wish to reach EMMC must walk from a bus stop on State Street. The Bus does not provide front-door access to any EMMC entrance. |
| Brewer Professional Center | Eastern Maine Healthcare plans to establish a 220,000 square foot corporate office and outpatient care facility on outer Wilson Street, just north of Interstate-395. EMH offices will be part of a larger Brewer Professional Center planned for this location. Although the South Loop Brewer bus serves a portion of outer Wilson Street, the new EMH facility is located several miles beyond the end of the current South Loop. There is no time available in the current schedule to add service to this location. Even if the route were extended, the loop via South Main Street would likely be too indirect and time-consuming for most potential bus riders. There will likely be a need for a new direct route linking outer Wilson Street with downtown Bangor and, possibly, with Eastern Maine Medical Center. |

Acadia Hospital

The Acadia Hospital provides comprehensive information and treatment of mental illness, behavioral disorders, and chemical dependency. Acadia Hospital specializes in short-term, focused care for acutely ill children, adolescents and adults. The hospital provides both inpatient and outpatient services. The latter include group therapy, individual counseling, diagnostic services, medication clinics, and chemical dependency programs. Acadia Hospital is located on Stillwater Avenue on the inbound portion of the Mount Hope bus route.

Healthcare Mall

A significant change since the 1996 transit plan is the transformation of the former Westgate Shopping Center into a complex of Eastern Maine Healthcare medical offices. This facility is located on the route of the Capehart bus. Driveways are arranged to accommodate buses, which allows bus drivers to turn off the main roadway and offer a convenient bus stop that is away from the heavy traffic on Union Street.

St. Joseph's Healthcare Park

After completion of the 1996 transit study, St. Joseph's Hospital opened a new satellite facility on outer Broadway, about one mile north of the Broadway/Interstate 95 interchange. Outpatient programs at this Broadway location include:

- Regional Breast Care Center
- Home Health and Hospice offices
- Outpatient Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Asthma Center
- Diabetes Education
- Nutritional Therapy of St. Joseph
- Outpatient Physical/Occupational Therapy

Although the Center Street bus serves a portion of outer Broadway, the route does not extend to the St. Joseph Healthcare Park. St. Joseph's officials requested bus service to this site when it was first opened. There is not enough time in the current 30-minute schedule to serve this location with the Center Street bus. Changes in the Center Street route and schedule will be needed to make this possible.

Oak Ridge Business Park

A number of medical facilities are located in a new business park north of the intersection of Stillwater Avenue and the Hogan Road. Tenants at the Oak Ridge Business Park include:

- VisionCare of Maine – a medical and surgical ophthalmology center
- Good Samaritan Agency – a non-profit adoption agency and maternal care facility
- Strom-Eaton Medical Office Building.

The Mount Hope bus operates relatively near to the entrance to this business park as it travels from Kmart to Wal-Mart. While the Mount Hope route could be extended to operate through this site, this would add even more time to the already slow and circuitous Mount Hope bus schedule.

Union Street Medical Offices

A new complex of doctor's offices recently opened on the west side of Union Street opposite the Eastern Maine Healthcare Mall. This facility reportedly hopes to offer services for low-income patients. However, no provisions have been made to accommodate buses at this location.

3.5 Cultural Facilities

Bangor Public Library

Since the previous transit plan was completed in 1996, the Bangor Public Library has completed an extensive expansion program. Use of the Bangor library has increased significantly over the course of the past 10 years. Overall circulation has gone up 20%, while activity in the children's department has increased 50%. According to the Bangor Comprehensive Plan, the Bangor Public Library has the highest per capita circulation of any library in any metropolitan area of the United States. The library is located on the route of the Center Street bus. However, Center Street buses pass the library on Harlow Street outbound only. The nearest stop on inbound buses is near City Hall, about two blocks away.

Maine Discovery Museum

The Maine Discovery Museum is located in the former Freese's Building in downtown Bangor. This new facility features educational exhibits for children and adults addressing topics such as nature, geography, music, arts, science, and children's literature. The museum is located roughly one and a half blocks from the Pickering Square bus depot.

Visual Arts Center	The University of Maine plans to establish a Visual Arts Center in downtown Bangor. This new art museum and gallery will be located on Harlow Street across from City Hall. Steps may need to be taken to ensure that conveniently-located bus stops are available for people traveling to and from this location.
Waterfront Amphitheater	Bangor's Penobscot Riverfront Development Program calls for development of an amphitheater on the banks of the Penobscot River adjacent to the downtown center. This facility would be used for concerts and stage events, including the Maine Shakespeare Festival. Initial sketches show a facility with room for up to 1,000 spectators.
Bangor Auditorium	The city of Bangor is currently seeking funding to replace the Bangor Auditorium. This facility is located on lower Main Street along with the municipally owned Bass Park racetrack and golf course. A new facility may be able to take advantage of the expanded downtown parking garage for evening events. This would require operation of a shuttle to link the new auditorium with Pickering Square.

3.6 Residential Development

The region has experienced a wide range of residential developments in recent years. Three examples that may have some relevance for transit planning include:

Senior Apartments	New senior citizen apartments have been developed in the former Freese's building on Main Street in downtown Bangor. The entrance to this facility is located approximately one block from the Pickering Square bus depot.
Broadway Subdivision	A fairly extensive residential subdivision has been developed on outer Broadway just beyond the Bangor High School athletic fields. This complex of single-family homes is located roughly three-quarters of a mile beyond the end of the current Center Street route.

Student Apartments

A student housing project is planned for development just north of the University of Maine campus. These apartments will be built along Park Street between Route 2 and the Penobscot River. The project developer anticipates that the facility will eventually provide “living space for upwards of 492 undergraduates, graduate students and junior faculty.” The developer has expressed an interest in a shuttle bus link to the University of Maine campus.

3.7 Lodging Facilities

Most of the region’s overnight lodging establishments are located in Bangor or in Orono. Most of Bangor’s hotel rooms are located along the Odlin Road just west of the airport or on lower Main Street. Since the 1996 transit study, a new small hotel, the Phoenix Inn, opened in Bangor’s downtown center. Major new hotels are envisioned as part of the proposed Penobscot Riverfront Development Program adjacent to downtown Bangor. This project also calls for a new conference center and a waterfront intermodal center, plus offices and shops – as described more fully in Chapter 2.

State and regional officials have identified a need to link existing and proposed hotels with the area’s transportation terminals and with Bangor’s downtown center.

The Black Bear Inn and Conference Center is located in Orono near the Stillwater Interstate-95 interchange. Although the Old Town bus serves the nearby University Shopping Plaza, this bus does not offer a stop at the hotel complex. There is no convenient pedestrian access between the bus stop and the hotel. A second older motel in Orono is located along the Old Town bus route near the downtown center.

3.8 Employment Centers

Maine Technology Park

Since the 1996 transit study, there has been significant expansion and development at the Maine Technology Park in Orono. This facility is located near the Stillwater Avenue/Interstate 95 interchange. Employers in the Technology Park include MBNA, Sensor Research and Development (SRD), and Microdyne. It is also the site of a U.S. Post Office distribution center.

A recent addition to Orono’s Maine Technology Park is the Target Research Center developed by the non-profit Bangor Target Development Corporation. The \$1.5 million facility is the result of a partnership that includes the town of Orono, the State of Maine, and the University of Maine. The purpose of the new Target Research Center is “to foster interactions among University of Maine graduate students, scientists and businesses leading to economic growth.”

The Research and Development Park is not served by public buses. The nearest bus stop is located at the University Shopping Center on Stillwater Avenue. There are no pedestrian walkways linking these two locations.

Hampden Industrial Park

A new industrial park is currently being developed on Route 202 in Hampden near the Hampden/Bangor town line. This site is being developed in two stages, and will eventually include as many as 37 commercial lots using a total of roughly 130 acres. The current Hampden bus route does not serve this Route 202 location. Instead, buses between Bangor and Hampden operate through residential neighborhoods on Main Road and Old County Road.

Other Regional Employers

The largest employer in the region continues to be Eastern Maine Healthcare. Developments for EMH are described above in Section 3.4. Another key employer is the University of Maine, served by the Old Town route.

The majority of the region's professional offices are located in Bangor's downtown center. All bus routes converge in downtown Bangor at Pickering Square. It appears, however, that only a limited number of downtown office workers currently use public buses for their daily commutes.

A number of industrial facilities are located in Bangor along Farm Road and outer Hammond Street. Public bus service is not currently available for these locations. Brewer industrial sites include Eastern Fine Paper and the Brewer Industrial Park. Eastern Fine Paper is located on the route of the Brewer South Loop. Industrial sites in Old Town include the James River Paper Mill and Old Town Canoe, both of which are served by the Old Town bus.