

REGION 8 REVIEW

Official Newsletter of the
**Southern New Hampshire
Regional Coordinating Council
for Community Transportation**

Ben Herbert,
Regional Mobility Manager, Region 8



Looking Back on 2025

2025 was a standout year for Region 8 marked by growth, momentum, and community impact. As we turn the page to 2026, let's look back on how the Southern NH Regional Coordinating Council continued its goal of making transportation accessible for all.

At a Glance

Trips provided
by RCC-
funded
services

11,022

Miles
travelled by
RCC-funded
services

72,982

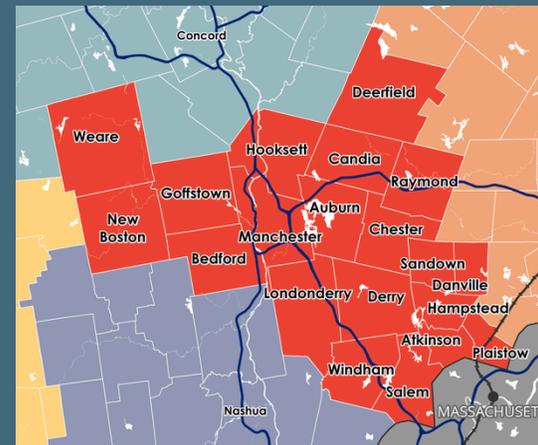
Customers
helped with
finding
transportation

113

Success Stories

- In July, [Community Volunteer Transportation Company](#) expanded their service area to cover Weare and New Boston. With this expansion of service, every community in Region 8 is now served by a demand-response/volunteer driver program!
- Ridership for [ReadyRides](#) in Deerfield significantly increased in 2025. Starting in 2024, the service was averaging 3 rides a month. In 2025, the average was 28 rides a month.

PROVIDERS



[Atkinson Elder Services](#)

[CART](#)

[The CareGivers](#)

[Community Caregivers of Greater Derry](#)

[Community Volunteer Transportation Company](#)

[Easterseals NH](#)

[Greater Salem Caregivers](#)

[Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County](#)

[Meals on Wheels of Rockingham County](#)

[Manchester Transit Authority](#)

[Ready Rides](#)

[Sandown Senior Affairs Transportation Program](#)

Provider Update

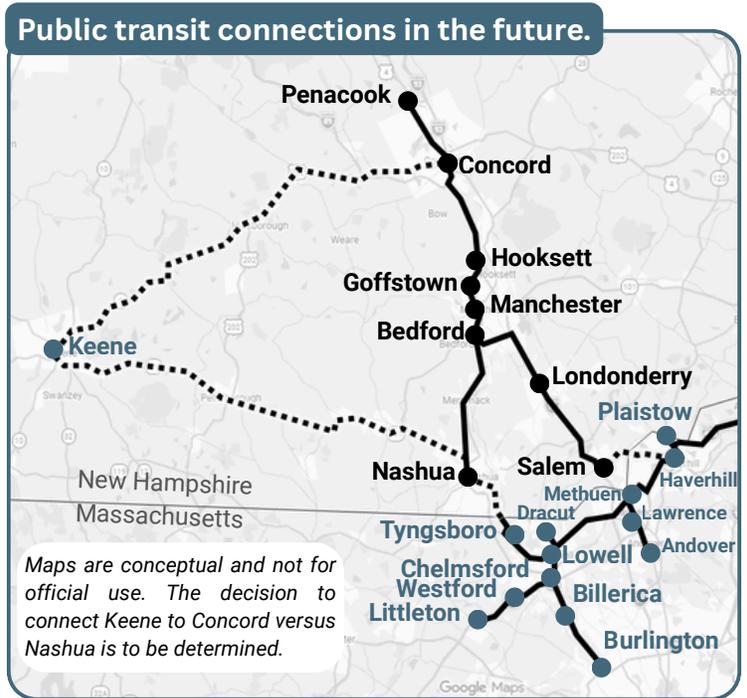
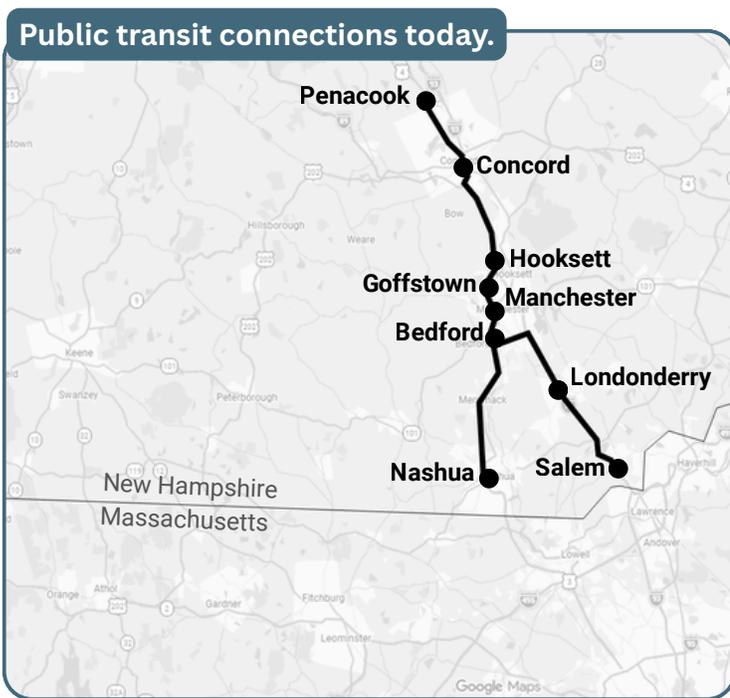
CONNECTIONS ARE COMING!

Southern New Hampshire is about to get a lot more connected. **Starting later this year, new transit routes will connect the region to Keene and Northern Massachusetts.**

[NHDOT](#) recently received internal approval to move forward with a new transit service connecting Keene to either Nashua or Concord. This new service is anticipating a 7/1/26 start. The provider of this service has not been announced yet.

Across the border, the [Lowell Regional Transit Authority \(LRTA\)](#) has partnered with the [Nashua Transit System \(NTS\)](#) and [Manchester Transit Authority \(MTA\)](#) to connect the cities of Lowell and Nashua. LRTA will operate a new route that stops at the Nashua Transit Center, connecting passengers to the NTS system and MTA routes to Manchester and Concord.

The MTA has also partnered with [Merrimack Valley Transit \(MeVa\)](#) and the Town of Salem to connect Tuscan Village in Salem to MeVa's service area in Haverhill, including the [MBTA Commuter Rail](#). MeVa will operate the new route and MTA will align its Salem services to facilitate connections between the MTA and MeVa networks.



These changes will allow riders to access all these services using transit.



Transforming Rural Health

New Hampshire's plan to address healthcare access for rural communities

In late December, 2025, [a press release by DHHS](#) announced that **New Hampshire was awarded over \$204 million annually for five years** by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of the federal [Rural Health Transformation Program \(RHTP\)](#). This reward is the largest among New England states.

Governor Kelly Ayotte established the [Governor's Office of New Opportunities & Rural Transformational Health \(GO-NORTH\)](#) to oversee implementation of the program in New Hampshire. New Hampshire's application was submitted in November with input from more than 300 stakeholders, including hospitals, rural health care providers, community health centers, and direct feedback from Granite Staters.

State	\$ Awarded Annually
New Hampshire	\$204,000,000
Vermont	\$195,000,000
Maine	\$190,000,000
Massachusetts	\$162,000,000
Rhode Island	\$156,000,000
Connecticut	\$154,000,000

CMS outlined five Strategic Goals the RHTP seeks to address:

- 1 Support rural health innovations and new access points to promote preventative health and address root causes of diseases.
- 2 Help rural providers become long-term access points for care by improving efficiency and sustainability.
- 3 Attract and retain a high-skilled health care workforce by strengthening recruitment and retention of healthcare providers in rural communities.
- 4 Spark the growth of innovative care models to improve health outcomes, coordinate care, and promote flexible care arrangements.
- 5 Foster use of innovative technologies that promote efficient care delivery, data security, and access to digital health tools by rural facilities, providers, and patients.

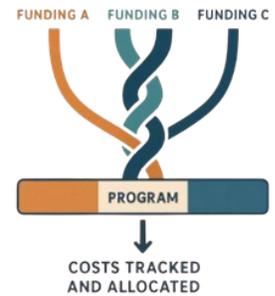
Potential Use of Funds

[In a narrative published by DHHS](#), over 40 potential uses of funding were outlined addressing the five strategic goals outlined by CMS. **Below are three potential uses that directly address transportation.**

Coordinated Rides: Strengthening Non- Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)



Expand the role of the [State Coordinating Council \(SCC\)](#) for Community Transportation to improve and sustain NEMT for rural residents by coordinating braided funding. Braided funding involves combining two or more sources of funding to support a program or activity while separately tracking and reporting on each source of funding.



Additional Workforce Development Activities



Based on stakeholder feedback, access to reliable childcare in rural areas is a significant barrier to growing the rural workforce. RHTP funds will be used, based on local need, to

- Create on-site childcare facilities at provider facilities through capital investments and minor renovations of existing space.
- Establish a maternal health learning and improvement system and doula cooperative training program.
- **Expand the volunteer driver network through training and supports to increase access to needed transportation to health care and preventative supports.**
- Provide technical assistance to strengthen financial sustainability, reduce costs, and improve performance.
- Establish CME (including required nutrition and healthy lifestyle training) and staff training resources for rural providers.

One Tap to Care:



Develop a unified ride-share application to streamline scheduling of non-emergency medical transportation and health-related rides.

Implementation planning is underway, with initial investments expected to support rural providers and communities beginning this year. More information on the delivery of these funds will be available in the coming months by DHHS and GO-NORTH. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/medicaid/rural-health-transformation-program>

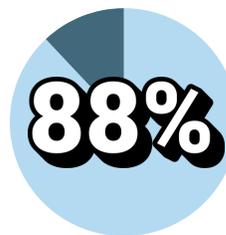
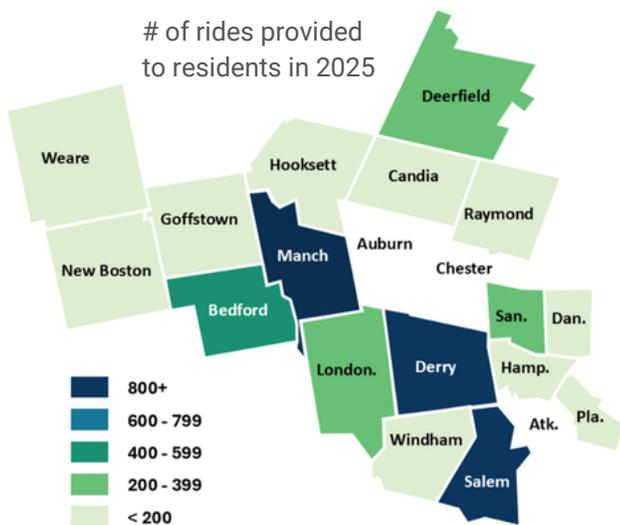
The Impact of Volunteer Driver Programs in 2025

Volunteer driver programs have always been an essential pillar in the transportation network, and that was no different in 2025. Check out this snapshot of data from these volunteer driver programs that serve our region:

- [The CareGivers](#)
- [Community Volunteer Transportation Company](#)
- [Greater Salem Caregivers](#)
- [Community Caregivers of Greater Derry](#)
- [Future in Sight](#)
- [Ready Rides](#)
- [Sandown Senior Affairs Transit Program](#)

In 2025, VDPs in Region 8 provided **Over 8,000** one-way trips.

In 2025, rides were provided to residents in **17 out of the 20 communities** in Region 8. Manchester, Derry, and Salem had the most frequent use of volunteer drivers.



of trips were provided for **medical purposes**, such as appointments, prescription pickups, and dialysis treatment.

240 volunteers

dedicated their time to helping people get to where they need to go.

That's enough people to staff two drivers for every city bus route in **Los Angeles, California!**



Volunteers for Community Caregivers of Greater Derry, ReadyRides, and Sandown Senior Affairs Transportation Program drove

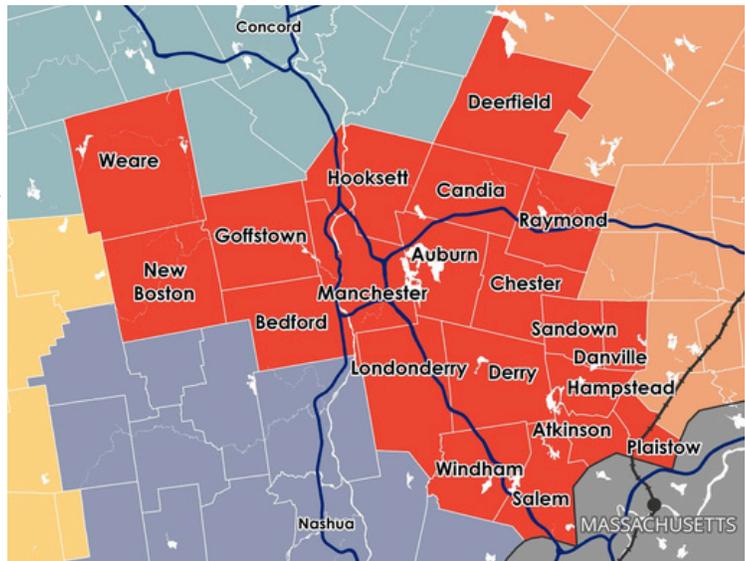
26,000 miles.

That's enough distance to make four round trips between Portsmouth NH and Seattle WA, with 1,200 miles to spare!



ABOUT THE REGION

The Region 8 Coordinating Council serves 350,000+ New Hampshire residents throughout areas of Hillsborough, Rockingham, and Merrimack Counties. Municipalities in this region include: **Atkinson, Auburn, Bedford, Candia, Chester, Danville, Deerfield, Derry, Goffstown, Hampstead, Hooksett, Londonderry, Manchester, New Boston, Plaistow, Raymond, Salem, Sandown, Weare, and Windham.**



Next RCC Meeting:

Tuesday, March 17th, 2026 | 12:30pm - 2:00pm

The RCC meets at SNHPC in the William G. Herman Conference Room. These meetings are open to the public and you can attend in-person or virtually. Visit snhpc.org for more information.

RCC meetings are open to the public, and all are encouraged to participate in building a coordinated, accessible transportation network.

More Resources:



[Keep NH Moving](#)



SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE
Regional Coordinating Council
FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION

[Region 8 RCC Webpage](#)



[I Need a Ride!](#)

Ben Herbert, Regional Mobility Manager | bherbert@snhpc.org | 603.669.4664