

# Maine's Park & Ride Lots

## System Update 2007



Prepared for

**Maine Turnpike Authority**



[www.maineturnpike.com](http://www.maineturnpike.com)

and

**Maine Department of Transportation**



**MaineDOT**

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# Section 1 – Executive Summary

## OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA), in conjunction with the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), has undertaken a study of the state's Park & Ride lots. This is a follow up to the last comprehensive survey of the Park & Ride lots, which was completed in 2003.<sup>1</sup> The primary goals for this report are as follows:

1. To update the statewide inventory of the lots;
2. To help prioritize improvements to existing lots;
3. To identify areas in which new lots might be needed;
4. To reevaluate key findings and recommendations from the previous study; and
5. To compare data collected in this study with data from 2003 to highlight new issues and changes.

This study used two primary tools for gathering the data to support these purposes. The first was **on-site inspections**. MaineDOT and MTA personnel visited each lot, documenting its usage and other key characteristics such as pavement condition, lighting, and proximity to services. The second tool was a **mail-back patron survey**. During the on-site inspections, a postpaid survey card was placed on the windshield of each vehicle using the Park & Ride lots. These cards asked patrons to respond to 11 questions on a variety of Park & Ride issues, ranging from origin-destination data to trip purposes to user fees.

## KEY FINDINGS

The onsite inspection and patron surveys give a wealth of information for analysis. Some of the key findings are summarized in the bullets below:

- **Inventory of lots.** A total of 50 Park & Ride lots were identified at the beginning of the study, based on the information available from the 2003 survey. Four lots in Augusta (all privately owned) were added to the inventory, while four lots (one of which was located at a church) were removed.
- **Study results stable since 2003.** The results of this study compared with the 2003 study of the Park & Ride system show general stability in usage and lot characteristics. Few of the major findings from the previous report have changed. This suggests that the frequency of study is sufficient to monitor changes.
- **Overall lot usage.** The study found that a total of **2217** spaces were available in the 50 observed lots. A total of **1087** spaces were occupied, yielding an overall usage rate of **49%**. This is very similar to the usage rate of **46%** observed in the 2003 survey.
- **VMT savings.** The average trip made by Park & Ride patrons is 55 miles. This means that the Park & Ride lot program is responsible for removing approximately **15 million** vehicle-miles traveled per year.
- **Turnpike usage vs. non-Turnpike usage.** The number of spaces in the Park & Ride system is fairly equally divided, with 1134 spaces in the Turnpike lots and 1083 spaces in the non-Turnpike lots. However, the usage rate among Turnpike lots was significantly higher. Turnpike lot usage stood at about **60%**, compared to **37%** for the non-Turnpike lots.
- **Common destinations.** About **28%** of the vehicles using Maine's Park & Ride lots are headed to either Bath Iron Works or to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Another 22% of vehicles travel to the Greater Portland area, and about 11% are destined for Augusta.

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<sup>1</sup> In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the MTA did a survey in October 2005 to determine whether spiking fuel prices had triggered a change in Park & Ride usage. However, that survey focused solely on lots located along the Maine Turnpike.

- **Trip purpose.** Nearly **90%** of the users of the Park & Ride system park for work-related travel. This can be attributed in part to the fact that all surveys were conducted on weekdays, when recreational travel tends to make up a smaller share of total trips.
- **Connecting vehicles.** As one would expect, the most common type of connection taking place at the Park & Ride lots is the **carpool**. These accounted for **57%** of all connections. Another **22%** of the connections were to vanpools, and **16%** were to buses. The significance of this was that *large vehicles (i.e. vans, buses, trains) account for almost half (40%-44%) of the connections made at Maine's Park & Ride lots.* Thus, Park & Ride lots are proving to be an efficient means of reducing trips, in that they provide a convenient venue for three or more vehicles to consolidate into a single, larger vehicle. About 40% of all Park & Ride users connect to vehicles carrying 5 or more passengers.
- **Lots to watch.** The site inspections and mailback surveys identified 12 lots that appear to be approaching capacity. The following lots (listed in alphabetical order) all exceeded 75% of their capacity during the survey:
  - **Biddeford** – Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111 (155 spaces – 118 vehicles – 76% usage)
  - **Gardiner** – I-295 Exit 49, on US-201 (11 spaces – 9 vehicles – 82% usage)
  - **Gray-1** – Me Tpk Exit 63 on Route 202 (74 spaces – 74 vehicles – 100% usage)
  - **Lewiston-1** – Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy (62 spaces – 50 vehicles – 81% usage)
  - **Mechanic Falls** – Rte. 121, W. of Rtes. 11, 121, and 124 ( 10 spaces – 14 vehicles – 140% usage)
  - **Randolph-2** – S. of Route 226 on 126 (35 spaces – 33 vehicles – 94% usage)
  - **Scarborough** – Me Tpk exit 42, adjacent to toll plaza (23 spaces – 25 vehicles – 109% usage)
  - **W. Falmouth** – Me Tpk Exit 53, adjacent to toll plaza (19 spaces – 16 vehicles – 84% usage)
  - **W. Gardiner** – Me Tpk Exit 102, near Route 126 (54 spaces – 44 vehicles – 81% usage)
  - **W. Peru** – Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd. (12 spaces – 15 vehicles – 125% usage)
  - **Yarmouth** – I-295 Exit 17 at Information Center (30 spaces – 39 vehicles – 130% usage)
  - **York** – Chases Pond Rd.,US-1 Connector (26 spaces – 26 vehicles – 100% usage)
- **Security concerns.** Park & Ride lot security is a concern for many patrons. Several patrons requested that the police patrol the lots more frequently. There were eight lots at which more than 50% of the respondents rated security as “below average”. These lots include, in alphabetical order:
  - **Bath** – Old Bath Road
  - **Gardiner** – I-295 Exit 49, on US-201
  - **Lewiston-1** – Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy\*
  - **Lewiston-2** – Me Tpk Exit 80 SB, on Plourde Pkwy
  - **Randolph-2** – South of Routes 226, on 126\*
  - **Sabattus** – Route 126 & Sawyer Rd.
  - **Saco** – I-295 Exit 36, on Industrial Park Rd.\*
  - **S. Portland** – Me Tpk Exit 45, on Route 703

*\*Also noted as security concern in 2003 survey*
- **User fees.** As part of the survey, patrons were asked: “Would you be willing to pay a small fee to use this lot to help fund expansions and improvements?” The overwhelming response (**81%**) was “no”. Many comments emphasis that patrons want the system to remain free.
- **Frequency of usage.** Half of respondents to the survey indicated that they use the Park & Ride lots “5 or more” times per week. About 24% of the respondents indicated that they are “occasional” users—that is, they use the lots one or fewer times per week.
- **Overnight parking.** Over 25% of lot users expressed a need for overnight parking.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of results from lot inspections and patron surveys indicate that some changes may help better support users and result in expansion of the system. These recommendations are as follows:

1. **Develop a formal Park & Ride policy.** The Maine Turnpike Authority and the Maine Department of Transportation should consider developing a uniform policy governing the usage of Maine's Park & Ride lots. The coordination of this policy should also involve input from Go MAINE and other

transit service providers who have a stake in the Park & Ride system. This policy should address such issues as:

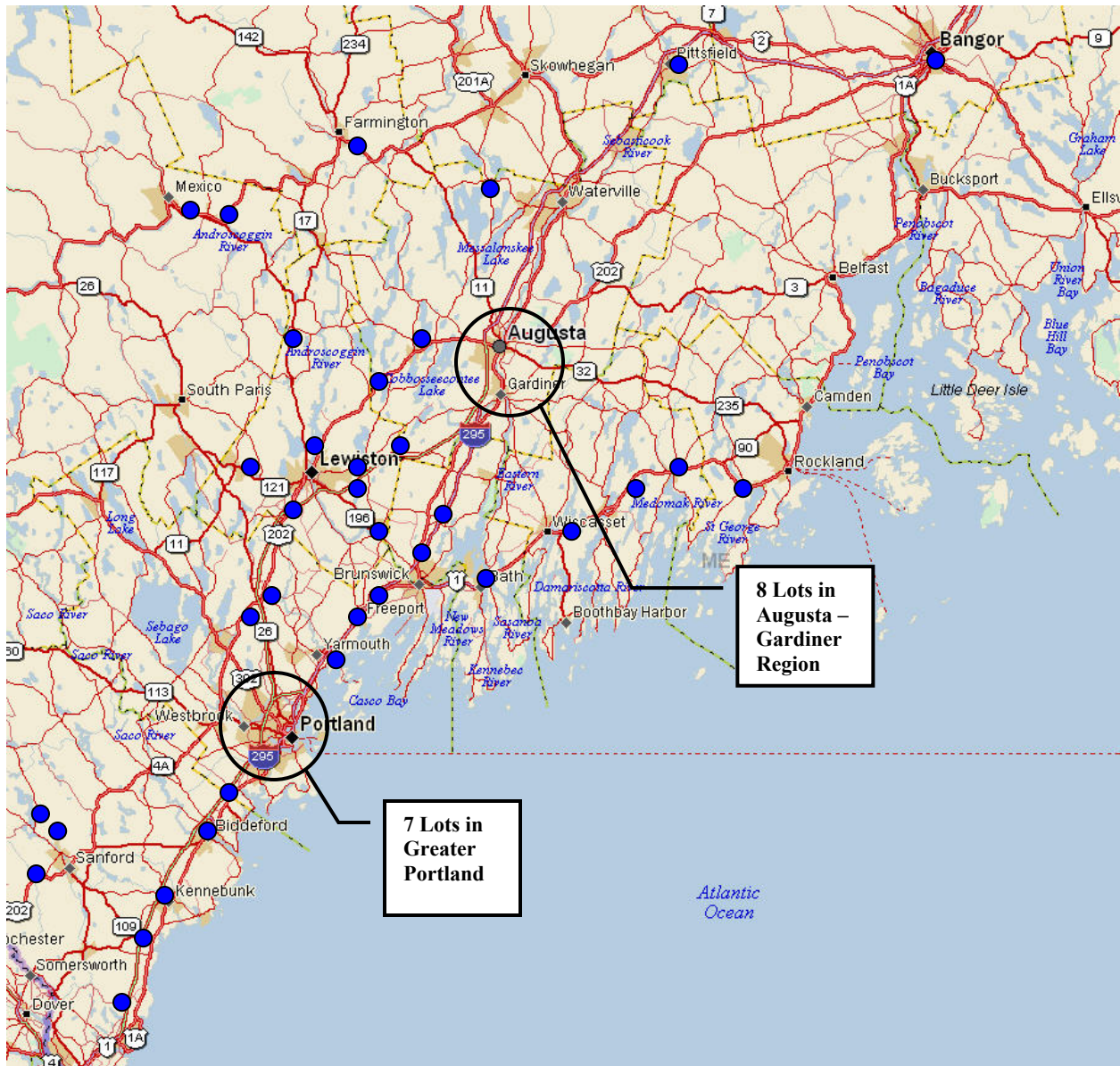
- a. **Duration of stay.** No consistent policy exists concerning how long patrons may park at the Park & Ride lots. In some instances, the lots are signed “No Overnight Parking”. At other lots, the policy simply restricts parking to less than 24 hours. The Marginal Way lot restricts parking to 72 hours or less. Such conflicting policies can be confusing to patrons. It is important to develop some level of consistency on a statewide basis.
  - b. **Types of trips.** There has been discussion concerning whether the Park & Ride lots are strictly “commuter lots”, or whether they should be allowed for recreational purposes as well. A statewide policy should address the role that the Park & Ride lots are intended to play in supporting Maine’s transportation system.
  - c. **Usage by private parties.** This point is related to the previous point. It is very common for private parties (such as bus companies making trips to Connecticut casinos) to use the Park & Ride lots as a pick-up point for their customers. A joint MTA-MaineDOT policy should consider whether the Park & Ride program will expressly support recreational trips.
2. **Observe busiest lots more frequently.** This report identifies 12 lots that should be observed more closely because they appear to be at or approaching capacity. More frequent observation of these lots (identified by Question 6 in Section 6) is needed in order to confirm this.
  3. **Install trash cans.** Many comments in the patron surveys request cleaner Park & Ride lots. The MTA and MaineDOT should consider installing trash cans in lots, if funding and maintenance support are available.
  4. **Improve lot security.** Survey feedback from patrons of the Park & Ride lots show that security is a concern for many people. This is particularly true for lots that are remotely located (i.e. not in close proximity to a toll plaza, business, etc.). This report recommends that MaineDOT and MTA should discuss Park & Ride security with local law enforcement, particularly at the eight lots where patrons expressed security concerns.
  5. **Investigate weekend usage.** Anecdotally, it has been observed that Park & Ride lots are often nearly filled during weekends. Therefore, it may be appropriate in the future to conduct a weekend survey of Park & Ride lot usage. This would shed some light on the extent to which Park & Ride lots are used to support recreational and shopping trips, which are more prevalent on weekends.
  6. **Investigate seasonal usage.** To date, all Park & Ride surveys have been conducted in the late summer and early fall. A winter survey would highlight the extent to which Park & Ride lots are used to support winter recreational activities.
  7. **Investigate hourly usage.** Some of the analysis in this report has been based on the assumption that all Park & Ride lot users stay for less than 24 hours. However, this assumption has not been confirmed by observation. It would be appropriate at some of the busier lots to trace how usage of the lot varies by hour. This would indicate the peak periods of lot usage, and it would indicate the percentage of vehicles that stay longer than 24 hours.
  8. **Proactively seek public-private partnerships (PPP’s) as a means of expanding the Park & Ride lot program.** As property costs rise, the MTA and MaineDOT should continue partnering with developers in the creation of “shared use spaces” that are available to both Park & Ride lot patrons and to shoppers. This practice is currently being employed with the Cabela’s development in Scarborough, in which the developer has agreed to create 40 shared-use spaces. The shared-use concept is founded on the assumption that peak periods at a typical Park & Ride lot differ from peak periods at a typical commercial development. Therefore, these spaces would be available to commuters during weekdays and to shoppers during evenings and weekends.

MaineDOT has successfully partnered with numerous entities in providing Park & Ride lots for its patrons. Of the 35 Park & Ride lots evaluated in this report *not* located along the Turnpike, 14 are provided by leases with other agencies (6 with municipalities, 2 with other state agencies, 2 with churches, and 4 with private entities).

## Section 2 – Purpose and Overview

The Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA), in conjunction with the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), has undertaken a major review of the state's Park & Ride lots. This is the first complete review of the system since 2003. The locations of these lots are illustrated graphically in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Park & Ride Lot Overview



This study of the state's Park & Ride system has five primary purposes:

1. To update the statewide inventory of the lots;
2. To help prioritize improvements to existing lots;
3. To identify areas in which new lots might be needed;
4. To reevaluate key findings and recommendations from the previous study; and
5. To compare data collected in this study with data from 2003 to highlight new issues and changes.

One of the primary purposes of the initial study was to begin a process for ongoing periodic evaluation of the Park & Ride system. In keeping with this, a major component of this report is to compare current data with that from the 2003 study, highlighting any significant changes. All the key findings and recommendations from 2003 are also revisited. Of course, it is important to remember that the data in this report represents only a snapshot of the usage of the system. Hourly, daily, and monthly variations in lot usage are not addressed in any substantive way, and could be a topic for future study. Moreover, seasonal issues (such as plowing) may be overlooked because of the time period in which data was collected. Nevertheless, this second systemwide study moves toward the goal, stated in the 2003 report, of understanding how the Park & Ride lot program fits into the fabric of the state's transportation system. This in turn will assist the MTA, MaineDOT, MPO's, and municipalities in targeting future improvements and service expansions.

This report is presented as follows:

- Section 3 will describe the conduct of the study.
- Section 4 will provide a summary of the condition of the lots. It will include an updated inventory of active Park & Ride lots, provide an overview of lot usage, and summarize the key characteristics and amenities associated with each lot.
- Section 5 will summarize the key origin-destination trip patterns of Park & Ride users, as revealed by the mailback survey.
- Section 6 will review the responses of Park & Ride patrons to eight different questions posed by the mailback survey. These questions cover a diverse range of topics, from trip purposes to parking frequency to user fees.
- Section 7 will present a series of recommendations.

The report concludes with two appendices:

- Appendix A will review the status and the recommendations made in the 2003 report.
- Appendix B will discuss locations where new lots are planned. It will also highlight locations where new lots are needed.



## Section 3 – Conduct of the Study

The planning of the initial study (completed in 2003) involved extensive input from the regional planning agencies in the area. The 2006 survey was conducted in a similar manner. HNTB Corporation, the MTA's engineering consultant, has analyzed the data and created the report.

The main sources of data collection used in the study are the on-site inspection and the mailback survey. Details are as follows:

- The first method was an on-site inventory, where an inspector visited each lot, noted its physical condition, and identified the number of vehicles using it.
- The second method was a mailback survey. This survey consisted of a postcard containing several questions of interest to the agencies. These postcards were distributed on each vehicle's windshield during the on-site inventory, and they prompted the patron to respond to the questions and mail the card back.

The content of the survey cards was only slightly revised from 2003 to 2006. One question was added, but the rest remained the same, so that responses could be readily compared. Figure 2 on the following page shows the survey format agreed to by the agencies and distributed to Park & Ride patrons.

Lot inspections were completed by personnel from the MTA and MaineDOT. During these inventories, the surveyor conducted physical research at each lot. This consisted of five basic tasks:

- First, the number of parking spaces available were verified, as well as the number of spaces occupied.
- Second, the different physical features of each lot were identified. These characteristics included bike racks, telephone booths and any alternative transportation mode pickups that may take place there.
- Third, survey cards were placed on the windshield of each vehicle parked in the lot. Each card has a unique ID number. The ranges of ID numbers distributed at each lot were documented for correlation with returned survey cards.
- Fourth, digital photos were taken of each lot, documenting its condition, aesthetics and overall occupancy.
- Fifth, any final observations were written down regarding overall impressions or problems identified during the inspection process.

Answered surveys were sent to Maine Turnpike Headquarters at 430 Riverside Street, Portland, Maine. They were subsequently entered in a database and sent to the consultant, HNTB Corporation, for analysis.

**Figure 2 – Mailback Survey Format**

<p><b>Mail Back Questionnaire</b></p> <p>0001</p> <p>1 <u>Where did your trip begin this morning?</u> Street / Origin: City / State:</p> <p>2 <u>Where were you headed to when you parked at the Park 'n Ride lot?</u> Street / Destination: City / State:</p> <p>3 <u>For what purpose did you park at the Park 'n Ride lot? (check one)</u>  <input type="checkbox"/> Parking for commute to/from work  <input type="checkbox"/> Parking for business  <input type="checkbox"/> Parking for shopping trip  <input type="checkbox"/> Parking for recreation  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____</p> <p>4 <u>What connection do you typically make at this lot? (check one)</u>  <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool                      <input type="checkbox"/> Charter bus  <input type="checkbox"/> Vanpool                         <input type="checkbox"/> Transit bus  <input type="checkbox"/> Train                               <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>	<p>Dear Motorist:                      This survey is part of a joint effort by the Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Turnpike Authority. The study's goal is to identify ways to improve the state's Park 'n Ride lot system. Please take a few moments to respond to the questions listed below, and return at your earliest convenience. Your input is an important element of this study. THANK YOU!</p> <p>5 <u>How many people (including yourself) rode in the vehicle to which you connected? (circle one)</u>                  2                      4                      6                  3                      5                      more than 6</p> <p>6 <u>How full is this Park 'n Ride lot when you use it? (circle one)</u>                  Nearly empty                      75% full                  25% full                              Nearly 100% full                  50% full</p> <p>7 <u>How would you rate this lot in terms of access, signing, lighting, and security? Please specify by circling the appropriate rating below. (A rating of "1" is poor, "5" is good, and "n/a" is not applicable.)</u></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>Poor</th> <th>Average</th> <th>Good</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Access</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>1</td> <td>2 3 4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signing</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>1</td> <td>2 3 4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lighting</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>1</td> <td>2 3 4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Security</td> <td>n/a</td> <td>1</td> <td>2 3 4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Poor	Average	Good	Access	n/a	1	2 3 4	5	Signing	n/a	1	2 3 4	5	Lighting	n/a	1	2 3 4	5	Security	n/a	1	2 3 4	5	<p>8 <u>Would you be willing to pay a small fee to use this lot to help fund expansions and improvements?</u>                  _____ Yes                      _____ No</p> <p>9 <u>How many times do you use this Park 'n Ride lot each week? (circle one)</u>                  Seldom                      2                      4                  1                                      3                                      5 or more</p> <p>10 <u>Do you ever have a need to park at this lot overnight or on weekends?</u>                  _____ Yes--overnight                      _____ No--I don't use the lot overnight or weekends                  _____ Yes--weekends</p> <p>11 <u>If this lot were served by a commuter bus service, how frequently would you use it (check one)?</u>                  ___ Daily                      ___ Monthly                      ___ Not at all                  ___ Weekly                      ___ Seldom</p> <p>Comments                  _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Thank you.</p>
		Poor	Average	Good																							
Access	n/a	1	2 3 4	5																							
Signing	n/a	1	2 3 4	5																							
Lighting	n/a	1	2 3 4	5																							
Security	n/a	1	2 3 4	5																							

## Section 4 – Condition of the Lots

The on-site surveys provided some important information concerning the physical condition of the state's Park & Ride lots. The following sections provide some summary data revealed by the survey

### ACTIVE LOTS

The study performed in 2003 considered 50 official Park & Ride lots, of which 48 were surveyed. In this study, four additional lots have been added to the system. These include:

- **Augusta-1**– *Civic Center, near exit 112.*
- **Augusta-2**– *CMP Lot, near exit 109-A.*
- **Augusta-3**– *Edwards Mill Lot, near intersection of Bond St. and Route 104.*
- **Augusta-4**– *Piggery Lot, on Piggery St. near Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).*

Four lots included in the inventory in 2003 are no longer active.

- **Lyman** – Lyman Community Church, on Route 35. This lot was surveyed but is no longer active.
- **South Berwick** – This lot, identified late in the 2003 study, was never surveyed
- **Wiscasset** – This lot, identified late in the 2003 study, was never surveyed
- **Lewiston-3** – This lot, which used to be co-located with the Marden's lot on US-202, is no longer active.

The Park & Ride lot in **Gray** was displaced to accommodate construction at exit 63. The lot was moved to the opposite side of the Turnpike. No other lots have been substantially changed since the 2003 survey.

In summary, the state possesses **50** Park & Ride lots. Fifteen of these 50 lots are located along the Turnpike corridor, while the remaining 35 are located on other interstate, state, and local routes. The 50 lots are listed (in alphabetical order) in Table 1. The top half of the table represents lots located along the Maine Turnpike, while the bottom half represents lots located on other state and local routes. The table also identifies the owner of each lot and key usage characteristics.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that, since this survey was performed, two Park & Ride lots in Augusta were closed. These were the lots labeled Augusta-2 (CMP Lot, Exit 109A) and Augusta-3 (Edwards Mill). A third lot (labeled Randolph-1, at the intersection of Routes 27 and 226) will be closed in January 2008.

**Table 1 – Summary of Active Park & Ride Lots**

Type	Lot#	Town	Location	Owner	Spaces	Vehicles	%Full	Note
Lots Located Along Maine Turnpike	1	Auburn	Me Tpk Exit 75, on US-202	MTA	137	78	57%	
	2	Biddeford	Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111	MTA	155	118	76%	
	3	Gray-1	Me Tpk Exit 63, on US-202	MTA	74	74	100%	
	4	Kennebunk	Me Tpk Exit 25 SB, on Route 35	MTA	52	21	40%	
	5	Lewiston-1	Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy	MTA	62	50	81%	
	6	Lewiston-2	Me Tpk Exit 80 SB, on Plourde Pkwy	MTA	27	19	70%	
	7	Portland-1	Me Tpk Exit 46 SB, adj. to toll plaza	MTA	68	33	49%	
	8	Saco	I-195 Exit 1, on Industrial Park Rd.	MaineDOT	135	79	59%	
	9	Scarborough	Me Tpk Exit 42, adj. to toll plaza	MTA	23	25	109%	
	10	So. Portland	Me Tpk Exit 45, on Route 703	MaineDOT	111	22	20%	
	11	W. Falmouth	Me Tpk Exit 53, adj. to toll plaza	MTA	19	16	84%	
	12	W. Gardiner	Me Tpk Exit 102, near Route 126	MTA	54	44	81%	
	13	Wells	Me Tpk Exit 19, adj. to Wells Trans. Ctr.	MTA	100	28	28%	
	14	Westbrook-1	Larrabee Rd., near Me Tpk Exit 47	MaineDOT	91	50	55%	1
	15	York	Chases Pond Rd. / US-1 Connector	MaineDOT	26	26	100%	
Lots Located Along State and Local Routes	16	Augusta-1	Civic Center, Exit 112	Municipal	20	3	15%	2
	17	Augusta-2	CMP Lot, Exit 109A	Private	45	8	18%	2, 4
	18	Augusta-3	Edwards Mill	Private	30	0	0%	2, 4
	19	Augusta-4	Piggery lot by DMV	State	25	0	0%	2
	20	Bangor	Off I-95 Exit 182B	MaineDOT	50	22	44%	
	21	Bath	Old Bath Rd.	MaineDOT	50	25	50%	
	22	Bowdoinham	Off I-295 Exit 37, on Routes 125 / 138	MaineDOT	24	10	42%	
	23	Buckfield	Routes 117 & 140	MaineDOT	15	6	40%	
	24	Dixfield	US-2, near Town Office	Municipal	10	3	30%	
	25	E. Lebanon	US-202 & Little River Rd.	MaineDOT	50	3	6%	
	26	Edgecomb	US-1 and Dodge Rd.	MaineDOT	30	1	3%	
	27	Farmington	Rtes. 2 & 4, and Intervale Rd.	MaineDOT	49	9	18%	
	28	Freeport-1	I-295 Exit 20, 0.2 mi. S. of Desert Rd.	MaineDOT	22	10	45%	
	29	Freeport-2	I-295 Exit 20, 1.7 mi. S. of Desert Rd.	MaineDOT	50	5	10%	
	30	Gardiner	I-295 Exit 49, on US-201	MaineDOT	11	9	82%	1
	31	Gray-2	Route 26, at Gray Shopping Plaza	Private	10	7	70%	
	32	Lisbon Falls	Route 196	MaineDOT	30	2	7%	
	33	Mechanic Falls	Route 121, W. of Routes 11 / 121 / 124	Municipal	10	14	140%	3
	34	Monmouth	US-202, next to Fish & Game	State	8	0	0%	
	35	Nobleboro	US-1, next to Town Office	Municipal	25	9	36%	
	36	Pittsfield	I-95 Exit 150 (Somerset Plaza)	Private	60	19	32%	
	37	Portland-2	I-295 Exit 7, Marginal Way @ Franklin Arterial	MaineDOT	200	103	52%	
	38	Randolph-1	Intersection of Routes 27 & 226	MaineDOT	20	1	5%	4
	39	Randolph-2	S. of Route 226 on 126	MaineDOT	35	33	94%	1
	40	Rome	Routes 27 & 225	MaineDOT	10	0	0%	
	41	Sabattus	Route 126 & Sawyer Rd.	Church	29	17	59%	
	42	Shapleigh-1	Next to Town Hall	Municipal	8	0	0%	
	43	Shapleigh-2	Across from Fire Hall	Municipal	8	0	0%	
	44	Thomaston	US-1, behind business block	MaineDOT	25	7	28%	
	45	Topsham	I-295 Exit 31 (Near Topsham Fair Mall)	Private	27	18	67%	3
	46	Waldoboro	US-1, south of town	MaineDOT	20	0	0%	
	47	Westbrook-2	US-302, at Prides Corner	Private	25	2	8%	
	48	W. Peru	Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd.	MaineDOT	12	15	125%	
	49	Winthrop	10 Lake St.	Church	10	4	40%	
	50	Yarmouth	I-295 Exit 17 (at Information Center)	MaineDOT	30	39	130%	3

Notes

- 1 – “Spaces” count updated from previous (2003) study.
- 2 – Augusta lots are observed in this study for the first time.
- 3 – This Park & Ride lot is part of a larger lot. (This enables the lot to exceed its capacity, in periods of peak demand.)
- 4 – Lots 17 & 18 (in Augusta) have been closed; Lot 38 (Randolph) will be closed in early 2008.

## LOT USAGE

One of the primary purposes of the study is to identify the extent to which these lots are being used. The following subsections will summarize the overall usage rate, and they will identify some of the most heavily-used and lightly-used lots. The results are subdivided into two categories—lots that are located along the Turnpike, and those that are located elsewhere.

### *Turnpike Lots*

The following statistics summarize usage characteristics of the 15 lots located along the Maine Turnpike (numbered 1 through 15 in Table 1):

#### **1. Overall Turnpike lot usage**

- a. Total number of parking spaces available – 1134
- b. Total number of vehicles observed – 683
- c. Overall occupation rate – 60%

#### **2. Most frequently used lots**

- a. Biddeford (Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111) – 118 vehicles
- b. Saco (I-195 Exit 1, on Industrial Park Rd.) – 79 vehicles
- c. Auburn (Me Tpk Exit 75, on US-202) – 78 vehicles
- d. Gray-1 (Me Tpk Exit 63, on US 202) – 74 vehicles

#### **3. Lots with highest percentage usage ( $\geq 75\%$ )**

- a. Scarborough (Me Tpk Exit 42, adj. to toll plaza) – 109%
- b. Gray-1 (Me Tpk Exit 63, on US-202) – 100%
- c. York (Chases Pond Rd. / US-1 Connector) – 100%
- d. W. Falmouth (Me Tpk Exit 53, adj. to toll plaza) – 84%
- e. W. Gardiner (Me Tpk Exit 102, near Route 126) – 81%
- f. Lewiston-1 (Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Parkway) – 81%
- g. Biddeford (Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111) – 76%

#### **4. Least-used lots**

- a. So. Portland (Me Tpk Exit 45, on Route 703) – 20% (22 vehicles)
- b. Wells (Me Tpk Exit 19, adj. to Wells Transportation Center) – 28% (28 vehicles)
- c. Portland-1 (Me Tpk Exit 46 SB, adj. to toll plaza) – 40% (21 vehicles)

### *Non-Turnpike Lots*

The following statistics summarize usage characteristics of the 35 observed lots **not** located along the Maine Turnpike (numbered 16 through 50 in Table 1):

#### **1. Overall lot usage**

- a. Total number of parking spaces available – 1121
- b. Total number of vehicles observed – 404
- c. Overall occupation rate – 36%

#### **2. Most frequently used lots**

- a. Portland-2 (I-295 Exit 7, Marginal Way @ Franklin Arterial) – 103 vehicles
- b. Yarmouth (I-295 Exit 17 at Information Center) – 39 vehicles
- c. Randolph-2 (S. of Route 226 on 126) – 33 vehicles
- d. Bath (Old Bath Rd.) – 25 vehicles

#### **3. Lots with highest percentage usage ( $\geq 75\%$ )**

- a. Mechanic Falls (Route 121, W. of Rtes 11/121/124) – 140%
- b. Yarmouth (I-295 Exit 17 at Information Center) – 130%
- c. W. Peru (Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd.) – 125%
- d. Randolph-2 (S. of Route 226 on 126) – 94%
- e. Gardiner (I-295 Exit 49, on US-201) – 82%

#### 4. Least-used lots

- a. Augusta-3 (Edwards Lot) – 0 vehicles
- b. Augusta-4 (Piggery Lot near DMV) – 0 vehicles
- c. Monmouth (US-202, next to Fish & Game) – 0 vehicles
- d. Rome (Routes 27 & 225) – 0 vehicles
- e. Shapleigh-1 (Across from Fire Hall) – 0 vehicles
- f. Shapleigh-2 (Next to Town Hall) – 0 vehicles
- g. Waldoboro (US-1 top of South hill) – 0 vehicles

#### *Changes from 2003*

Since the last major study in 2003 some changes in lot usage have occurred.

1. The number of available spaces has increased, based on updated counts and the addition of the Augusta lots.
2. Overall usage has increased at both the Turnpike lots (up 12%, from 610 vehicles to 683 vehicles) and the non-Turnpike lots (up 7%, from 379 vehicles to 404 vehicles).
3. There are more lots at or approaching capacity than in 2003.

#### *General Observations*

In reviewing the usage characteristics, two key observations stand out.

1. The Maine Turnpike lots tend to be more heavily used. Though the MTA and MaineDOT own virtually the same amount of parking spots, the MTA's lots serve an average of 280 more vehicles per day.
2. All but 4 of the Turnpike lots served 25 or more parked vehicles per day. By comparison, all but 4 of the MaineDOT lots served *less than* 25 parked vehicles per day.
3. The minimum number of parked vehicles at an MTA lot was 16. By contrast, over 20% of the non-Turnpike lots (8 out of 36) were not used at all on the day in which the survey was conducted.

#### LOT AMENITIES

Another goal of the on-site surveys was to provide an overview of each lot's amenities. The inspectors addressed the following eight questions during their site visits to each lot:

- Is the lot paved?
- Is the lot lit?
- Is the lot striped?
- How close are services such as food, gas, or phone?
- Are the services visible from the lot?
- Are there bike racks at the lot?
- Are there any shelters in the lot?
- Are telephones available at the lot?

Some lot improvements were made to the Westbrook lot in late 2006, but were not captured in this survey data. No other lots were substantially improved since the 2003 survey; therefore, there is nothing new to report regarding lot amenities.

## Section 5 – Origin-Destination Patterns

The previous section of this report is based on information gathered during the on-site inspections performed by MTA and MaineDOT personnel. These inspections provided important information on the physical condition of each lot, and they provided a snapshot of lot usage. However, in order to understand **how** the lots are being used, it is necessary to augment the inspections with a patron survey. As noted in Section 2, this took the form of a mailback survey card that was placed on the windshield of each vehicle parked in the Park & Ride lots.

### SURVEY RESPONSE SUMMARY

Overall, a total of 1087 cards were distributed, and a total of 225 cards were returned. This represents a response rate of about **21%**, which is the same response rate as the 2003 survey. The response from the MaineDOT lots was higher than the MTA lots at 24% and 19%, respectively. Table 2 provides a lot-by-lot summary of the number of cards distributed and the number of cards returned. If a “0” appears in the “#Distributed” column, it indicates that no vehicles were parked in the lot on the day in which the surveys were distributed.

**Table 2 – Survey Response Summary**

**Turnpike Lots**

Lot#	Town	Location	Survey Response Info.		
			#Distributed	#Responses	%Response
1	Auburn	Me Tpk Exit 75, on US-202	78	11	14.1%
2	Biddeford	Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111	118	29	24.6%
3	Gray-1	Me Tpk Exit 63, on US-202	74	14	18.9%
4	Kennebunk	Me Tpk Exit 25 SB, on Route 35	21	7	33.3%
5	Lewiston-1	Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy	50	12	24.0%
6	Lewiston-2	Me Tpk Exit 80 SB, on Plourde Pkwy	19	5	26.3%
7	Portland-1	Me Tpk Exit 46 SB, adj. to toll plaza	33	2	6.1%
8	Saco	I-195 Exit 1, on Industrial Park Rd.	79	19	24.1%
9	Scarborough	Me Tpk Exit 42, adj. to toll plaza	25	7	28.0%
10	So. Portland	Me Tpk Exit 45, on Route 703	22	3	13.6%
11	W. Falmouth	Me Tpk Exit 53, adj. to toll plaza	16	4	25.0%
12	W. Gardiner	Me Tpk Exit 102, near Route 126	44	6	13.6%
13	Wells	Me Tpk Exit 19, adj. to Wells Trans. Ctr.	28	4	14.3%
14	Westbrook-1	Larrabee Rd., near Me Tpk Exit 47	50	1	2.0%
15	York	Chases Pond Rd. / US-1 Connector	26	6	23.1%

Turnpike Totals: 683 130 19.0%

**Non-Turnpike Lots**

Lot#	Town	Location	Survey Response Info.		
			#Distributed	#Responses	%Response
16	Augusta-1	Civic Center, Exit 112	3	0	0.0%
17	Augusta-2	CMP Lot, Exit 109A	8	1	12.5%
18	Augusta-3	Edwards Mill	0	0	0.0%
19	Augusta-4	Piggery lot by DMV	0	0	0.0%
20	Bangor	Off I-95 Exit 182B	22	9	40.9%
21	Bath	Old Bath Rd.	25	5	20.0%
22	Bowdoinham	Off I-295 Exit 37, on Routes 125 / 138	10	2	20.0%
23	Buckfield	Routes 117 & 140	6	3	50.0%
24	Dixfield	US-2, near Town Office	3	0	0.0%
25	E. Lebanon	US-202 & Little River Rd.	3	1	33.3%
26	Edgecomb	US-1 and Dodge Rd.	1	0	0.0%
27	Farmington	Rtes. 2 & 4, and Intervale Rd.	9	2	22.2%
28	Freeport-1	I-295 Exit 20, 0.2 mi. S. of Desert Rd.	10	5	50.0%
29	Freeport-2	I-295 Exit 20, 1.7 mi. S. of Desert Rd.	5	1	20.0%
30	Gardiner	I-295 Exit 49, on US-201	9	3	33.3%
31	Gray-2	Route 26, at Gray Shopping Plaza	7	1	14.3%
32	Lisbon Falls	Route 196	2	0	0.0%
33	Mechanic Falls	Route 121, W. of Routes 11 / 121 / 124	14	1	7.1%
34	Monmouth	US-202, next to Fish & Game	0	0	0.0%
35	Nobleboro	US-1, next to Town Office	9	5	55.6%
36	Pittsfield	I-95 Exit 150 (Somerset Plaza)	19	0	0.0%
37	Portland-2	I-295 Exit 7, Marginal Way @ Franklin Arterial	103	19	18.4%
38	Randolph-1	Intersection of Routes 27 & 226	1	0	0.0%
39	Randolph-2	S. of Route 226 on 126	33	6	18.2%
40	Rome	Routes 27 & 225	0	0	0.0%
41	Sabattus	Route 126 & Sawyer Rd.	17	6	35.3%
42	Shapleigh-1	Next to Town Hall	0	0	0.0%
43	Shapleigh-2	Across from Fire Hall	0	0	0.0%
44	Thomaston	US-1, behind business block	7	3	42.9%
45	Topsham	I-295 Exit 31 (Near Topsham Fair Mall)	18	7	38.9%
46	Waldoboro	US-1, across from Moody's Diner	0	0	0.0%
47	Westbrook-2	US-302, at Prides Corner	2	1	50.0%
48	W. Peru	Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd.	15	0	0.0%
49	Winthrop	10 Lake St.	4	4	100.0%
50	Yarmouth	I-295 Exit 17 (at Information Center)	39	10	25.6%

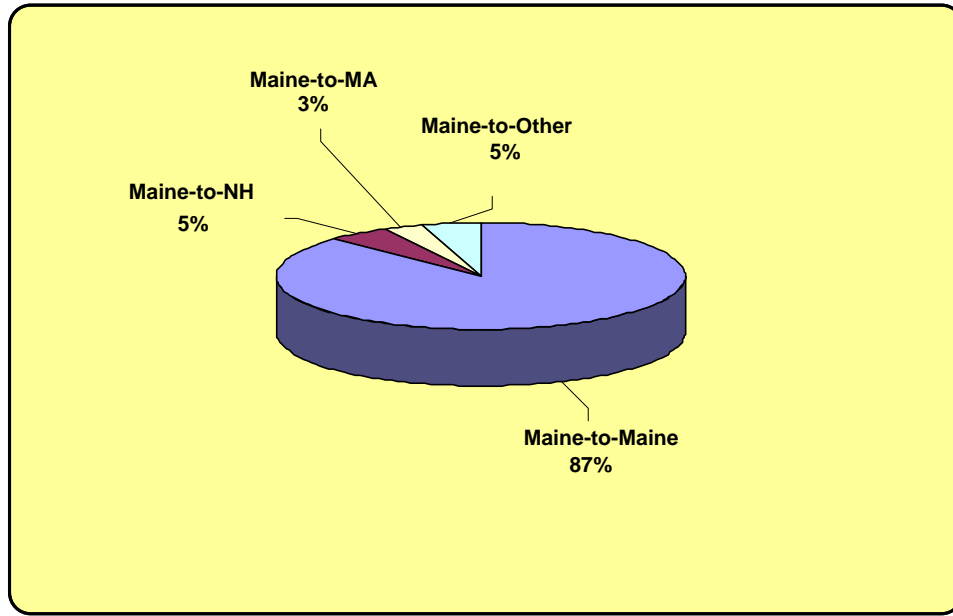
Non-Turnpike Totals: 404 95 23.5%



## TRIP PATTERNS

The first two questions posed to the Park & Ride patrons concerned their points of origin and points of destination. Figure 3 provides an overview of the trip patterns exhibited by Park & Ride patrons.

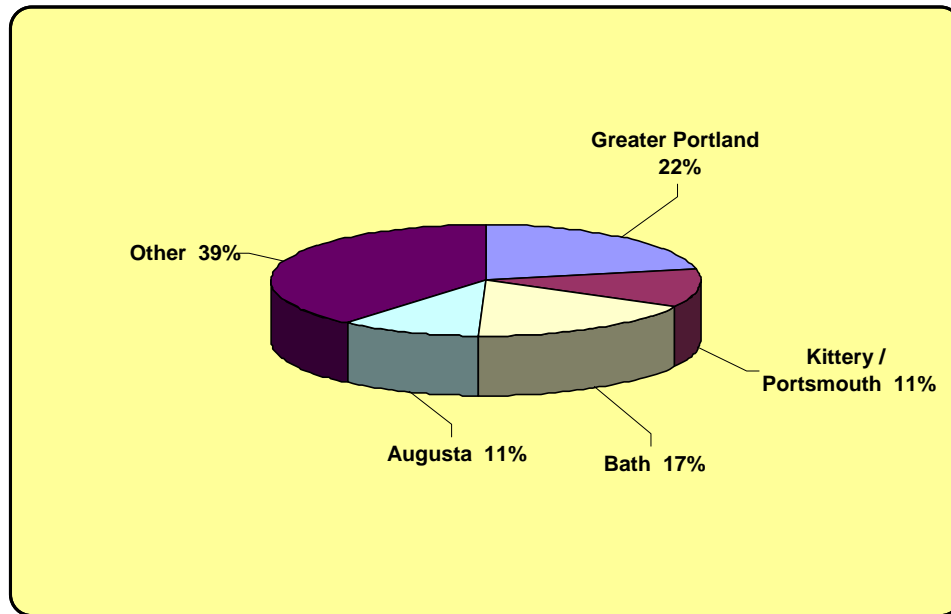
**Figure 3 – Trip Patterns of Turnpike Patrons**



As Figure 3 illustrates, Park & Ride lots are primarily used to support in-state trips. The share of trips within the state grew from 82% in 2003 to 87% in the current survey. Only 13% of vehicles using these lots have a destination that is outside the state. And only 5% of vehicles have a destination that is outside of New England (which is identical to the results of the 2003 survey).

Four destinations (Augusta, Greater Portland, Bath, and Kittery/Portsmouth) account for **61%** of vehicles surveyed, as illustrated in Figure 4. By comparison, these same destinations accounted for 64% of the vehicles surveyed in the 2003 survey.

**Figure 4 – Common Destinations for Park & Ride Patrons**



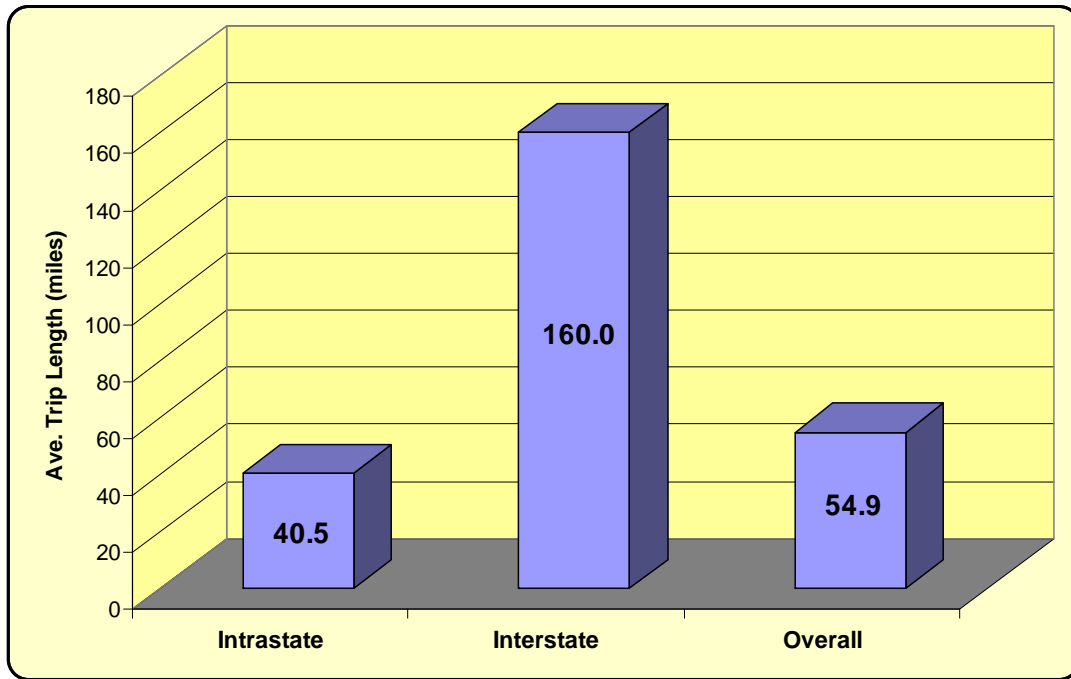
Three important observations may be drawn from Figure 4:

1. It appears that over 28% of the vehicles using Maine's Park & Ride lots are headed to either Bath Iron Works or Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.
2. The Greater Portland area is home to 25% of the state's population; similarly, it accounts for about one in four Park & Ride destinations.
3. Augusta accounts for about 1 in 9 users of Park & Ride lots.

In short, Maine's Park & Ride lots primarily serve in-state trips, and the majority of these trips are destined for Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Bath Iron Works, or various destinations in Augusta or Greater Portland.

Figure 5 provides an overview of the average length of trip taken by Park & Ride patrons.

**Figure 5 – Average Trip Length**



It is interesting to note that the Park & Ride lot program tends to support very lengthy trips. While the average trip taken in the United States is slightly less than 10 miles in length, the average trip supported by Maine’s Park & Ride lots is nearly 55 miles in length.<sup>3</sup>

This suggests that the Park & Ride lot program is an effective means of reducing vehicle-miles traveled. As Section 4 noted, a total of 1087 vehicles were observed using the state’s 50 Park & Ride lots. If this total were sustained over all 250 weekdays during the year, then one could assume that the Park & Ride lots support approximately **272,000** trips per year. In other words, over the course of a single year, approximately 272,000 vehicles park at one of the lots and combine their journeys with another party (such as a bus, a carpool, or a vanpool). If each of these trips represents an average of 55 miles (as indicated in Figure 5), then one could conclude that approximately **15 million** vehicle-miles of travel are removed by the Park & Ride lot program.<sup>4</sup>

The next section will review answers to specific questions posed by the mailback survey.

<sup>3</sup> Trip lengths derived from 2000 Census data, available from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics at [www.bts.gov](http://www.bts.gov).

<sup>4</sup> 1087 vehicles/weekday \* 250 weekdays/year = 271,950 vehicles/year using the Park & Ride lots. If this is multiplied by 55 miles/vehicles in the lot, then the total estimate of vehicle-miles saved is 14,946,250.

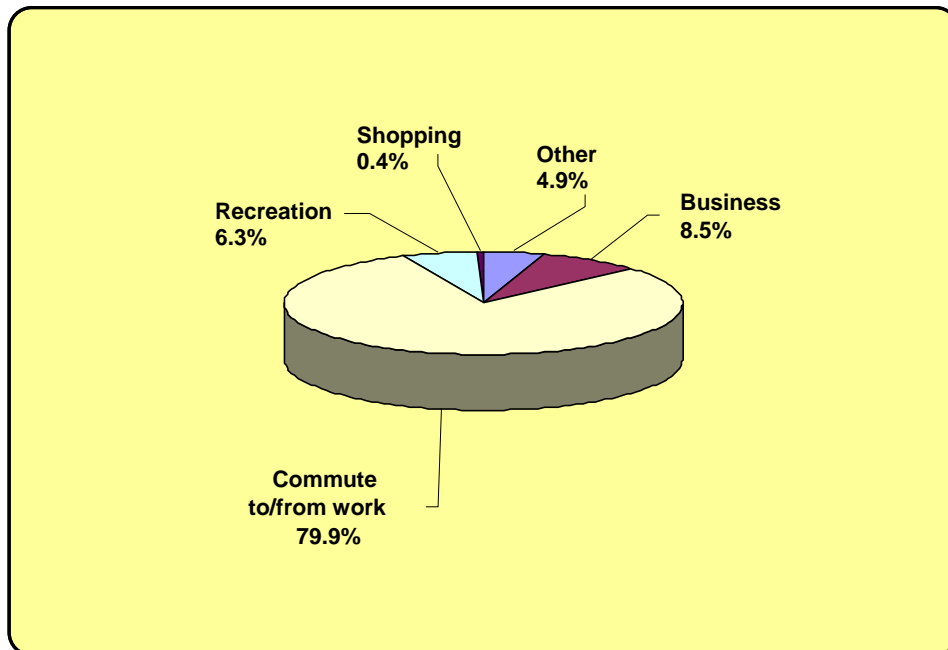
## Section 6 – Survey Responses

As the survey card depicted in Figure 2 illustrates, patrons were presented with 11 specific questions concerning various aspects of their experience with the Park & Ride lots. The subsections which follow will present an overview of the responses to each of these questions.

### QUESTION 3 – TRIP PURPOSE

This question asked patrons to identify the purpose for which they used the Park & Ride lots. Patrons were given five options: commute to work, business, shopping trip, recreation, or other. Their responses are summarized in Figure 6.

**Figure 6 – Trip Purposes**



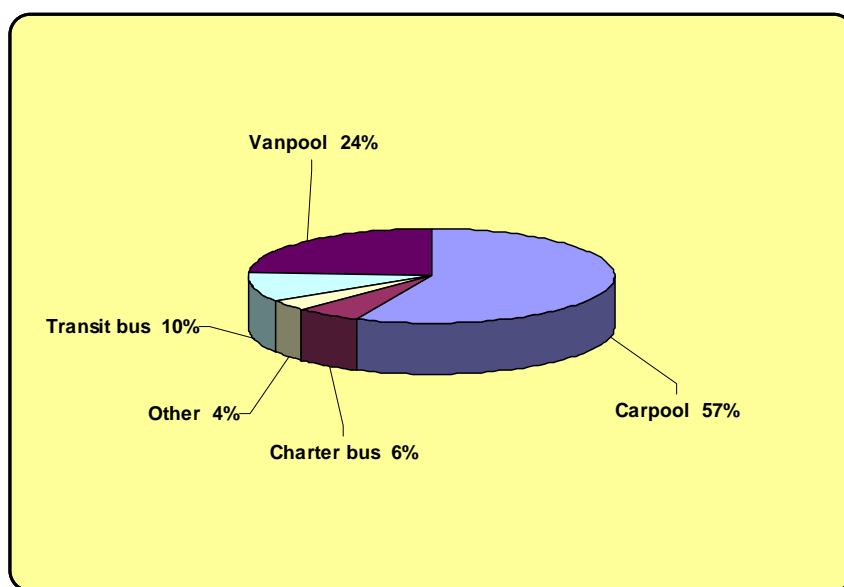
As Figure 6 illustrates, four out of every five Park & Ride patrons use the lots to support work-related trips. This represents a slight increase from the 2003 survey. Most of these are simply commuting trips to work, but a proportion of patrons also use the Park & Ride lots to support longer, business-related trips.

It is evident that the Park & Ride lots support a modest percentage of non-work trips. Shopping and recreation account for only about 7% of Park & Ride users, down from about 12% in 2003.

#### QUESTION 4 – CONNECTION TYPES

This question asked patrons to identify the type of connection that they typically make at the lot. Six different options were presented—carpool, charter bus, transit bus, train, vanpool, and other. Figure 7 summarizes the responses to this question.

**Figure 7 – Connection Types**



As Figure 7 illustrates, the state's Park & Ride lots support a variety of connections.

- The most common type of connection is the **carpool**, which serves over half of users.
- The share of carpool users increased by 15% from 2003.
- The second most common type of connection is the **vanpool**, serving 24% of Park & Ride users. These vanpools tend to serve large employers, such as BIW, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, or the state offices in Augusta.
- The third most common type of connection is the **bus**. Only 16% of patrons reported connections to buses, down from 30% in 2003. These buses serve a variety of functions. Some patrons connect to the ZOOM buses, which serve various destinations in Greater Portland. Other patrons connect to buses that serve specific places of employment, such as Bath Iron Works or Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

The responses to Question 4 suggest that the traditional carpool is increasingly popular among Park & Ride users. There has been a substantial increase in this since 2003.

**QUESTION 5 – NUMBER OF PASSENGERS IN CONNECTING VEHICLE**

This question asked the patron to identify the number of people (including themselves) that rode in the vehicle to which they connected. The responses are summarized in Figure 8.

**Figure 8 – Numbers of Passengers in Connecting Vehicle**

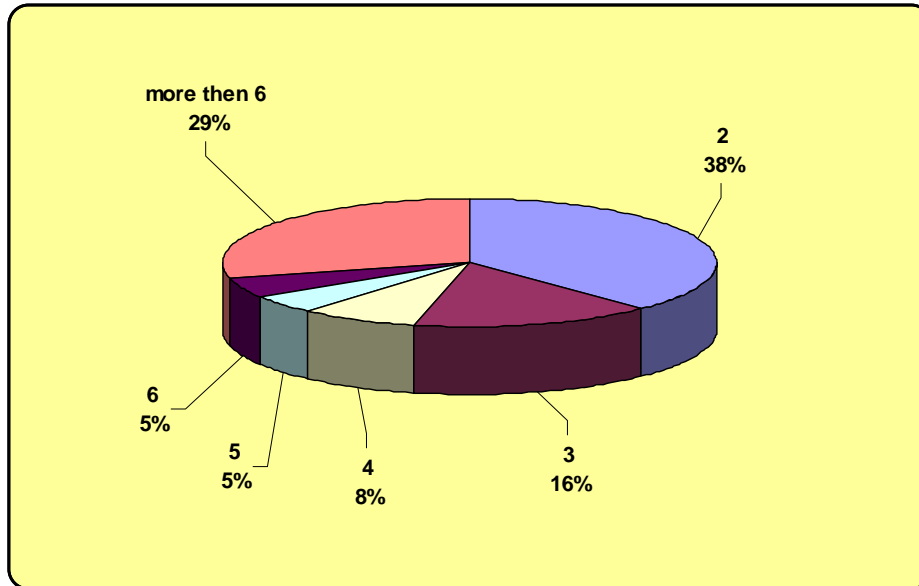


Figure 8 shows the same shift as the previous section – that Park & Ride lots are increasingly being used for smaller connections than in 2003. Connections with 5 or more people fell from about 50% in 2003 to about 40% in 2006.

A total of 73 patrons reported that they connected to a vehicle carrying “6 or more” passengers. Half of these patrons were concentrated in four different high-volume lots. The lots that provided the most support for “6 or more” passenger vehicles are summarized in Figure 9.

**Figure 9 – Lots Supporting Connections to Vehicles Carrying 6 or more Passengers**

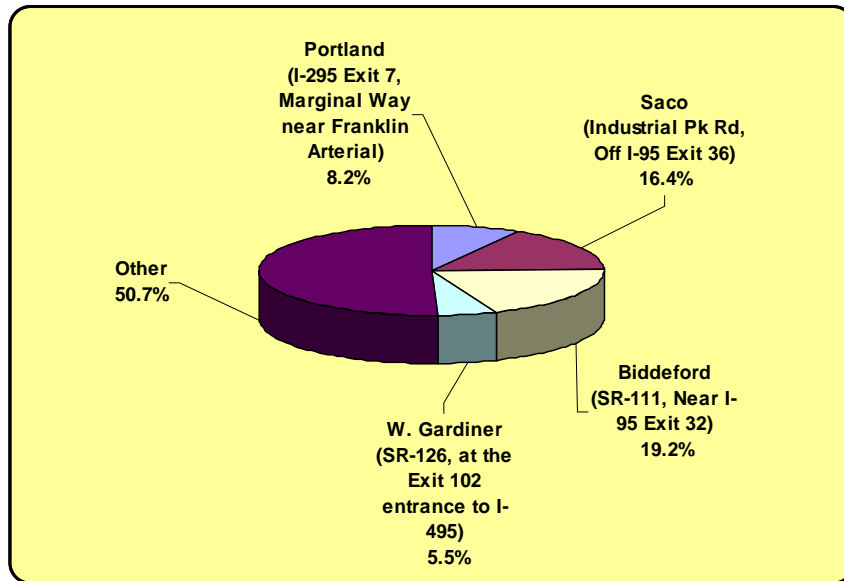


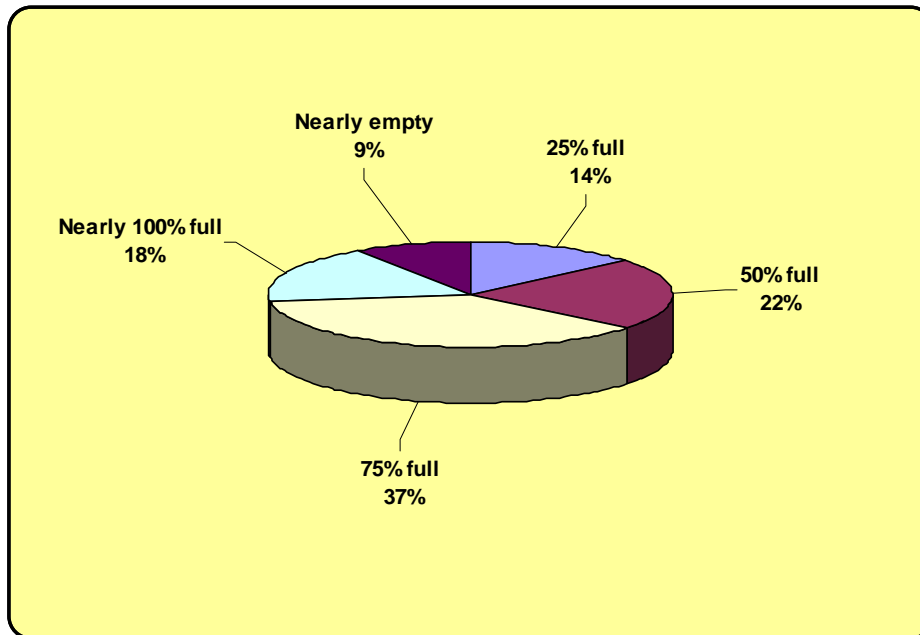
Figure 9 illustrates that patrons connecting to high-passenger vehicles (such as buses and vanpools) tend to be concentrated at selected lots. The Park & Ride lots off the Maine Turnpike in Biddeford and Saco were the most common points of connection for high-passenger vehicles, both in 2003 and in 2006. This may be attributed to the fact that the ZOOM buses serve both of these lots.

#### QUESTION 6 – LOT USAGE

This question asked patrons to estimate how full the Park & Ride lot is when they typically use it. The purpose of the question was compare our “snapshot” view of lot usage (documented in Section 4 of this report) with the level of usage perceived by the patrons.

Figure 10 provides a summary of the responses to question 6.

**Figure 10 – Lot Usage, as Reported by Patrons**



It is interesting to compare Figure 10 with the lot usage statistics reported in Section 4. The lot inspection process indicated that the lots, on average, were just under half full. More specifically, in the 50 observed Park & Ride lots, a total of 1087 total vehicles were parked in the 2217 available spaces—an occupation rate of 49%. By contrast, the vast majority of patrons who responded to the survey indicated that the lots were *at least* 50% full at the time that they parked their vehicle. Both the observed usage and the perceived usage of the lots are close to that reported in the 2003 survey.

Three observations follow from this apparent discrepancy between perceived and actual usage:

- Usage likely varies from day to day, and a one-day “snapshot” may not be a good representation of the degree to which certain lots are used. When asked about the lot capacity, patrons probably tend to report the capacity at the peak times of their typical usage.
- The activity that goes on in a Park & Ride lot may give patrons the impression that the lot is more highly used than it actually is. In the morning, for every vehicle that enters the lot, there is another vehicle that must enter the lot and provide a connection. Therefore, the number of *parked* vehicles makes up only a portion of the total number of vehicles that actually use the lot.
- The significance of this is that Park & Ride lots must do more than simply provide a sufficient number of parking spaces; they must also provide adequate maneuvering room for both parking and connecting vehicles.



Overall, a total of 13 lots were observed to be operating at **least 75% capacity**.<sup>5</sup> These lots include, in alphabetical order:

- **Biddeford** – Me Tpk Exit 32, on Route 111 (155 spaces – 118 vehicles – 76% usage)
- **Gardiner** – I-295 Exit 49, on US-201 (11 spaces – 9 vehicles – 82% usage)
- **Gray-1** – Me Tpk Exit 63 on Route 202 (74 spaces – 74 vehicles – 100% usage)
- **Lewiston-1** – Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy (62 spaces – 50 vehicles – 81% usage)
- **Mechanic Falls** – Rte. 121, W. of Rtes. 11, 121, and 124 ( 10 spaces – 14 vehicles – 140% usage)
- **Randolph-2** – S. of Route 226 on 126 (35 spaces – 33 vehicles – 94% usage)
- **Scarborough** – Me Tpk exit 42, adjacent to toll plaza (23 spaces – 25 vehicles – 109% usage)
- **W. Falmouth** – Me Tpk Exit 53, adjacent to toll plaza (19 spaces – 16 vehicles – 84% usage)
- **W. Gardiner** – Me Tpk Exit 102, near Route 126 (54 spaces – 44 vehicles – 81% usage)
- **W. Peru** – Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd. (12 spaces – 15 vehicles – 125% usage)
- **Yarmouth** – I-295 Exit 17 at Information Center (30 spaces – 39 vehicles – 130% usage)
- **York** – Chases Pond Rd.,US-1 Connector (26 spaces – 26 vehicles – 100% usage)

The Mechanic Falls lot is a designated section of a larger parking lot used for other purposes. Since there was only one response from this lot it is unclear how many of the cars were using the lot for Park & Ride. All of the above lots should be monitored on a more frequent basis to see if these capacity shortfalls are chronic.<sup>6</sup>

#### QUESTION 7 – RATINGS ON ACCESS, SIGNING, LIGHTING, AND SECURITY

Question 7 asked patrons to rate their Park & Ride lot in terms of access, signing, lighting, and security. Patrons were prompted to rate each of these characteristics on a scale of 1 to 5. A rating of 1 indicated “poor”, a rating of 3 indicated “average”, and a rating of 5 indicated “good”.

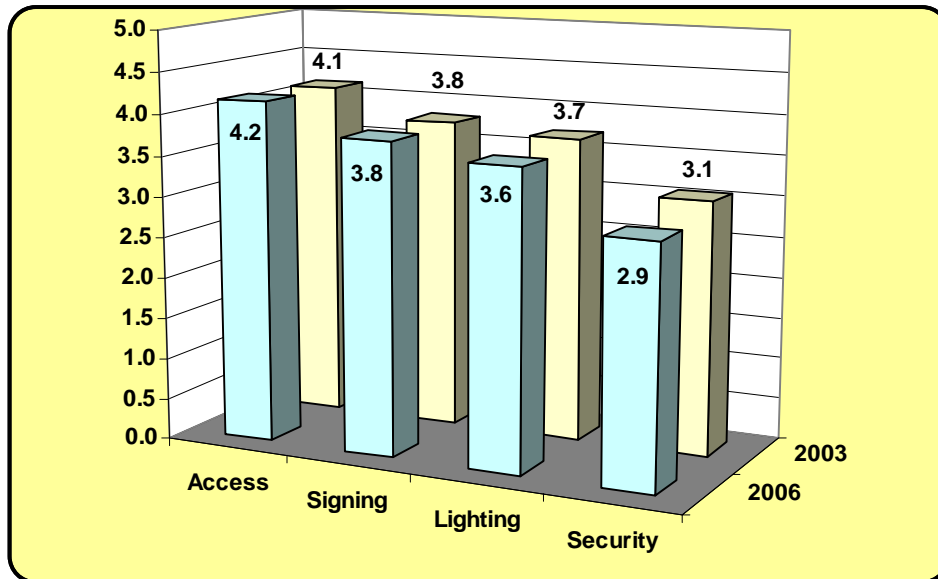
Figure 11 summarizes the average rating that each characteristic received. It also shows the results for this question from the 2003 survey.

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<sup>5</sup> By comparison, only 3 of the lots (Bath, Lewiston-2, and W. Falmouth) were at 75% of capacity (or greater) in the 2003 survey.

<sup>6</sup> The Scarborough lot will be expanded as part of the Cabela's development, thus relieving the perpetually strained capacity at that location.

**Figure 11 – Average Rating for Selected Characteristics**



Three observations may be drawn from Figure 11.

- The results are virtually identical to that collected in 2003. This is as expected since few changes have been made to the Park & Ride lots.
- All four characteristics (with the exception of “Security” in 2006) had an average rating above 3.0. This suggests that, *on the whole*, patrons are satisfied with the access, signing, lighting, and security provided by the state’s Park & Ride lots.
- However, one characteristic—security—scored noticeably lower than the others. This indicates that security may be one of the foremost concerns of Park & Ride lot users.

It is interesting to note that, in both the 2003 survey and the 2006 survey, there were eight lots at which **more than 50% of the respondents** rated security as below average. These lots are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3 – Lots Identified as Security Issues**

2003	2006
E. Lebanon - US-202 & Little River Rd.	Bath – Old Bath Road
Lewiston-1 – Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy	Gardiner – I-295 Exit 49, on US-201
Lewiston-3 – US-202, at Mardens	Lewiston-1 – Me Tpk Exit 80 NB, on Plourde Pkwy
Nobleboro - US-1, next to Town Office	Lewiston-2 – Me Tpk Exit 80 SB, on Plourde Pkwy
Randolph-2 – South of Routes 226, on 126	Randolph-2 – South of Routes 226, on 126
Saco – I-295 Exit 36, on Industrial Park Rd.	Sabattus – Route 126 & Sawyer Rd.
W. Peru - Route 108 & Hammond Ferry Rd.	Saco – I-295 Exit 36, on Industrial Park Rd.
York - Chases Pond Rd. / US-1 Connector	S. Portland – Me Tpk Exit 45, on Route 703

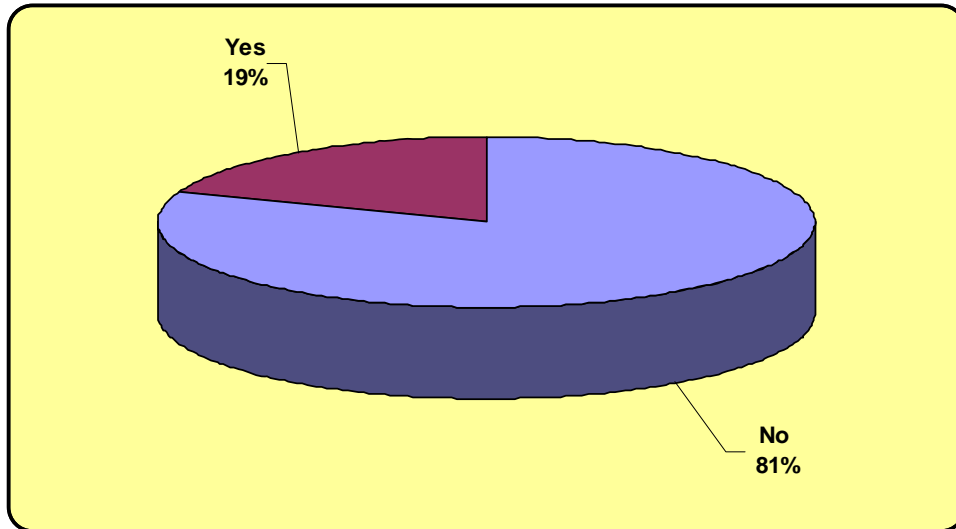
As Table 3 indicates, 3 lots (Lewiston-1, Randolph-2, and Saco) were common to both surveys. These should receive priority in efforts to improve security.

### QUESTION 8 – USER FEES

This question asked patrons if they would be willing to pay a small fee to use the Park & Ride lots, as a means of funding expansions and improvements. Currently, no fees are charged at any of the 50 observed Park & Ride lots.

Figure 12 summarizes the response to this question:

**Figure 12 – Willingness to Pay a Fee to Use Park & Ride Lots**

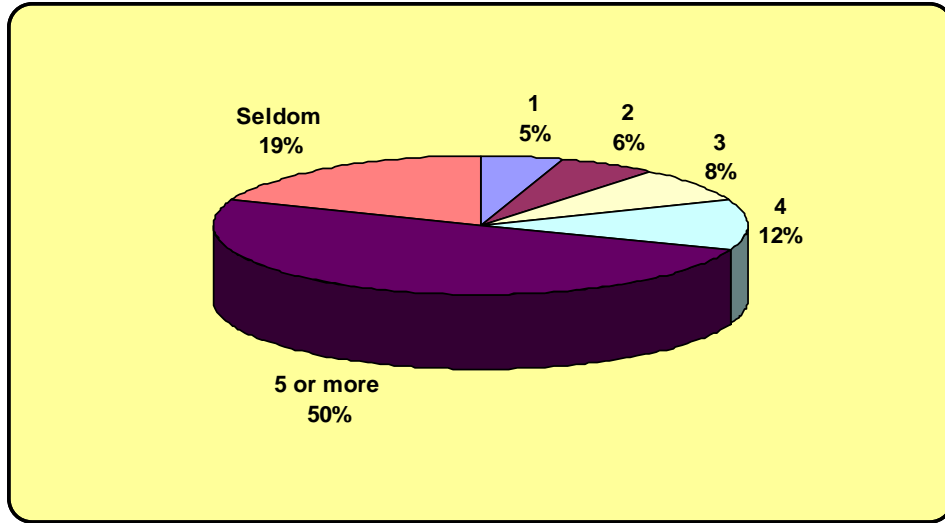


As Figure 12 illustrates, only one out of every 5 patrons expressed a willingness to pay a user fee. The response to a user fee was nearly the same in 2003 with 83% against the fee. There were many comments recorded by patrons regarding a fee, almost all negative. Of the 28 comments responding to a fee only two were not strongly opposed.

### QUESTION 9 – FREQUENCY OF LOT USAGE

This question asked patrons to identify the frequency with which they used the Park & Ride system. The overall response to this question is summarized in Figure 13.

**Figure 13 – Frequency of Park & Ride Lot Usage**

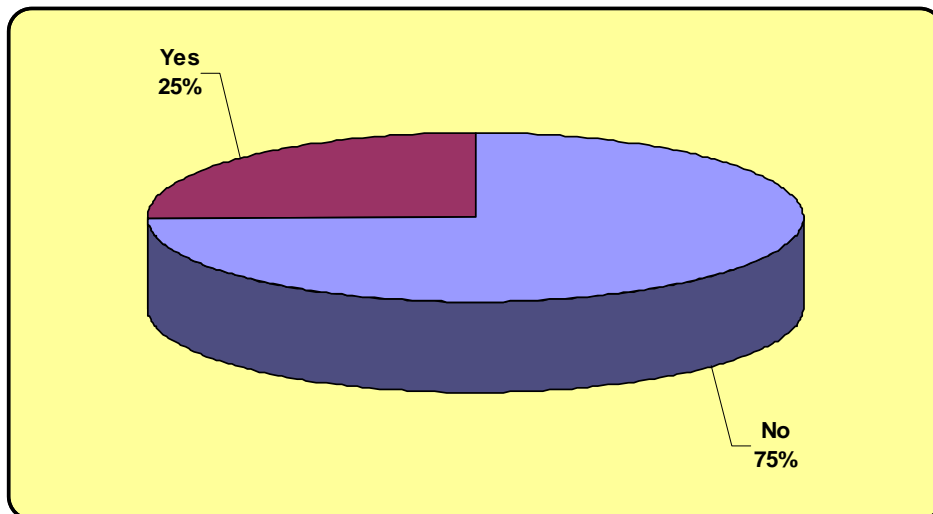


The frequency of use for Park & Ride lots is the same as when surveyed in 2003. Almost three quarters of patrons park there more than three times a week. This is consistent with commuter versus recreational use, as documented in the discussion of Question 3 – Trip Purpose.

**QUESTION 10 – OVERNIGHT PARKING**

Currently Park & Ride policy prohibits vehicles from parking for over 24 consecutive hours. This accommodates overnight parking if needed. Question 10 gauges the need for overnight parking at the state’s Park & Ride lots. The overall response is summarized in Figure 14:

**Figure 14 – Expressed Need for Overnight Parking**

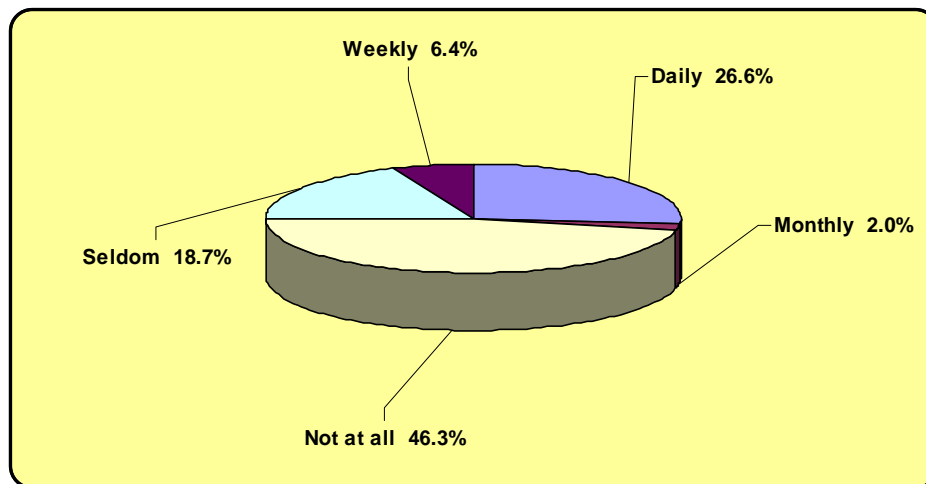


This breakdown is similar to 2003. It appears from Figure 14 that the majority of Park & Ride patrons have no need for overnight parking. This is consistent with commuter parking patterns. Nevertheless, it is significant that one in four patrons do have a need for overnight parking. It should be noted that because the survey was distributed during the day, those working third-shift are likely under-represented. With the data available, it is clear that a big enough demand exists for overnight parking that the policy should continue to allow it in order to support all patrons.

### QUESTIONS 11 – COMMUTER BUS SERVICE

Questions 11 asks patrons if they would use a commuter bus service if one were available. Figure 15 shows the responses to this question.

**Figure 15 – Would use Commuter Bus Service if available**



Just under half of those surveyed said they would not use this service. Two thirds of patrons would use this service seldom or not at all. Of the 35% who say they would use this service at least once a month, some already use a bus service. Eliminating users who made connections to buses in question 4, about 28% of users who do not currently connect to a bus would start if the service became available.

It is important to note that this question did not list specific routes or times during which this service would operate. Several patrons expressed (in the Comments section) that they were unsure whether they would use this service without knowing these variables.

### QUESTIONS 12 – COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Question 12 was an open-ended question, asking patrons to provide general comments and suggestions for improving the lots. The most common trends in patron feedback are noted in the following bullets.

- **Lot usage fee (28 comments).** Many patrons responded strongly to the suggestion of a fee for using the Park & Ride lots. Only four comments were either neutral or positive about a fee, but these stated that they would expect substantial improvements or a guaranteed space to be willing to pay the fee. The other 24 comments were against a fee. Most cited the state's high taxes or the tolls they already pay as their reason.
- **Cleaner lots (12 comments).** There were some complaints about trash in the Park & Ride lots. Users commonly requested trash cans or frequent trash pickups.

- **Improve lot intersection (12 comments).** Some users requested improvements in the access to and intersections surrounding the Park & Ride lot. These comments are from users of many different lots.
- **Improve lot surface (9 comments).** Several patrons requested repainting of the lines in the Marginal Way, Portland lot. One user asks for repair of a “large hole” at the Gardiner lot entrance. Another user requested pavement of the entrance to the Randolph lot to minimize pot holes.
- **Install bathroom facilities (4 comments).** Some patrons requested either portable or permanent bathroom facilities for isolated lots.
- **Improve lot security (3 comments).** Only three patrons expressed security concerns. The results of Question 7 show that security is a concern for many users; however few patrons identified specific concerns in the comments area.

## Section 7 – Recommendations

In light of the observations made in the previous sections, this report makes the following recommendations:

1. **Develop a formal Park & Ride policy.** The Maine Turnpike Authority and the Maine Department of Transportation should consider developing a uniform policy governing the usage of Maine’s Park & Ride lots. The coordination of this policy should also involve input from Go MAINE and other transit service providers who have a stake in the Park & Ride system. The policy should address such issues as:
  - a. **Duration of stay.** No consistent policy exists concerning how long patrons may park at the Park & Ride lots. In some instances, the lots are signed “No Overnight Parking”. At other lots, the policy simply restricts parking to less than 24 hours. The Marginal Way lot restricts parking to 72 hours or less. Such conflicting policies can be confusing to patrons. It is important to develop some level of consistency on a statewide basis.
  - b. **Types of trips.** There has been discussion concerning whether the Park & Ride lots are strictly “commuter lots”, or whether they should be allowed for recreational purposes as well. A statewide policy should address the role that the Park & Ride lots are intended to play in supporting Maine’s transportation system.
  - c. **Usage by private parties.** This point is related to the previous point. It is very common for private parties (such as bus companies making trips to Connecticut casinos) to use the Park & Ride lots as a pick-up point for their customers. A joint MTA- MaineDOT policy should consider whether the Park & Ride program will expressly support recreational trips.
2. **Observe busiest lots more frequently.** This report identifies 12 lots that should be observed more closely because they appear to be at or approaching capacity. More frequent observation of these lots (identified by Question 6 in Section 6) is needed in order to confirm this.
3. **Install trash cans.** Many comments in the patron surveys request cleaner Park & Ride lots. The MTA and MaineDOT should consider installing trash cans in lots, if funding and maintenance support are available.
4. **Improve lot surface.** The lot inspection, as well as several patrons’ comments, indicates that the lines at the *Marginal Way Portland lot* should be repainted. **The parking spaces have since been repainted.**
5. **Improve lot security.** Survey feedback from patrons of the Park & Ride lots show that security is a concern for many people. This is particularly true for lots that are remotely located (i.e. not in close proximity to a toll plaza, business, etc.). This report recommends that MaineDOT and MTA should discuss Park & Ride security with local law enforcement, particularly at the eight lots where patrons expressed security concerns.
6. **Investigate weekend usage.** Anecdotally, it has been observed that Park & Ride lots are often nearly filled during weekends. Therefore, it may be appropriate in the future to conduct a weekend survey of Park & Ride lot usage. This would shed some light on the extent to which Park & Ride lots are used to support recreational and shopping trips, which are more prevalent on weekends.

7. **Investigate seasonal usage.** To date, all Park & Ride surveys have been conducted in the late summer and early fall. A winter survey would highlight the extent to which Park & Ride lots are used to support winter recreational activities.
8. **Investigate hourly usage.** Some of the analysis in this report has been based on the assumption that all Park & Ride lot users stay for less than 24 hours. However, this assumption has not been confirmed by observation. It would be appropriate at some of the busier lots to trace how usage of the lot varies by hour. This would indicate the peak periods of lot usage, and it would indicate the percentage of vehicles that stay longer than 24 hours.
9. **Proactively seek public-private partnerships as a means of expanding the Park & Ride lot program.** As property costs rise, the MTA and MaineDOT should continue partnering with developers in the creation of “shared use spaces” that are available to both Park & Ride lot patrons and to shoppers. This practice is currently being employed with the Cabela’s development in Scarborough, in which the developer has agreed to create 40 shared-use spaces. The shared-use concept is founded on the assumption that peak periods at a typical Park & Ride lot differ from peak periods at a typical commercial development. Therefore, these spaces would be available to commuters during weekdays and to shoppers during evenings and weekends.

MaineDOT has successfully partnered with numerous entities in providing Park & Ride lots for its patrons. Of the 35 Park & Ride lots evaluated in this report *not* located along the Turnpike, 14 are provided by leases with other agencies (6 with municipalities, 2 with other state agencies, 2 with churches, and 4 with private entities). These 14 lots serve about 25% of the patrons that use these non-Turnpike lots. Moreover, MaineDOT is currently working with authorities at the Maine Mall to create shared-use spaces in a portion of their parking lot. These partnerships have proven to be an effective way of helping meet the parking needs of the development while simultaneously adding capacity to the Park & Ride lot program.



## Appendix A – Review of 2003 Recommendations

Consistent with one of the primary goals of creating an ongoing process for reviewing the Park & Ride system, the following is a review of the recommendations from the 2003 survey with an update on their status:

1. **Survey the lots on a regular basis.** This study is the second major survey of all lots since 2003. The MTA lots have been surveyed since then.
2. **Monitor the busier lots more closely.** The recommended “Lots to watch from 2003” from a capacity standpoint are still heavily used. There are several additional lots that are at or near capacity.
3. **Improve signage at the low-usage lots.** No additional signage has been added to these low usage lots from 2003.
4. **Consider closing one of the Shapleigh lots.** Shapleigh still has two lots that appear to have low usage.
5. **Pave selected lots.** No pavement improvements have been done to the lots in the inventory.
6. **Contact key employers to find out about other possible needs.** Status unknown.
7. **Contact local and county law enforcement officials regarding patrolling the lots.** Status unknown.
8. **Establish a policy governing overnight parking.** A policy has been adopted allowing patrons to use a lot for 24 hours.
9. **Place garbage cans in the lots.** Status unknown.
10. **Improve the intersection of the Exit 32 Park & Ride and Route 111.** Status unknown.
11. **Provide incentives for private parties to join the Park & Ride system.** No new incentive programs have been offered to lot owners.
12. **Explore the possibility of incorporating church parking lots into the system.** No church lots have been added to the lot inventory.
13. **Consider creating new Park & Ride lots in the following locations:**
  - a. **On Route 4 (between Auburn and Wilton) and Route 26 (between Oxford and Bethel).** MaineDOT is working on developing a lot in Bethel. They plan to coordinate its location with the Mountain Explorer, a free shuttle service operating between Bethel Village and Sunday River Ski Resort.
  - b. **In the Bangor area.** MaineDOT is working with a developer to designate a portion of the new Wal\*Mart parking area as a shared-use Park & Ride lot. This will be located near the intersection of Stillwater Ave. and Hogan Rd.
  - c. **In Gorham.** MaineDOT has acquired land (as part of the Gorham bypass project) to be used as a Park & Ride lot. This will be located at the intersection of the Gorham bypass and Route 114.
  - d. **In the Sanford area.** MaineDOT has plans to create a new Park & Ride lot in Sanford.
  - e. **In the region to the west of Greater Portland.** MaineDOT has plans to create a new lot in New Gloucester.

## Appendix B – New Lots: Plans and Needs

### PLANNED LOTS

The previous section outlined some locations where MaineDOT plans to add Park & Ride lots, including Bethel, Bangor, Gorham, Sanford, and New Gloucester. Additionally, MaineDOT has plans to add lots in the following locations:

- **Brunswick.** MaineDOT has plans to acquire a gravel lot in Brunswick for use as a Park & Ride lot. The lot will be owned and maintained by MaineDOT.
- **Medway.** MaineDOT is in negotiations with Irving to lease some spaces in their service station parking lot.
- **South Portland.** MaineDOT has worked out an agreement to acquire some shared use spaces in the Maine Mall parking lot. Through a lease agreement, MaineDOT will be able to designate a lightly-used portion of the parking area as a Park & Ride lot.
- **Skowhegan.** A Park & Ride lot is currently under construction in Skowhegan. The lot will be leased by MaineDOT from the municipality.

### NEEDED LOTS

The Maine Turnpike is relatively well served by the Park & Ride system. Of the Turnpike's 18 interchanges, only three (Exits 44, 48, and 52) do not have a Park & Ride lot within 2 miles of the exit ramps. However, MaineDOT has identified several locations statewide that have a need for a Park & Ride lot. These locations include:

- **Wells.** MaineDOT would like to have a lot that coordinates with the Shoreline Explorer, a transit service based in southern York County.
- **Mount Desert Island.** This is an area with many tourists yet no formal Park & Ride lots.
- **Mid-Coast Route 1.** MaineDOT would like to provide a Park & Ride lot on Route 1 between Rockland and Bucksport. Currently, there are no Route 1 Park & Ride lots north of Thomaston.
- **Lewiston-Auburn.** The Park & Ride lots in these communities at present are all located along the Turnpike. An additional lot is needed to coordinate with the regional transit system.

MaineDOT has also identified the need for more (or improved) lots for Bath Iron Works employees.

The MTA and MaineDOT should actively seek partnerships with other public and private entities in order to provide new lots in heavily-traveled commuting and recreational corridors.