

6. Summary/Implementation

This study has made an effort to quantify current and future transportation and land use pressures on the NH Route 104 corridor between the Bristol town line and US Route 3 in Meredith. The corridor is one of the most heavily traveled corridors in the Lakes Region, with traffic counts expected to continue to increase in the future. Conflicts between through traffic and numerous access points along the corridor, especially in the area between the Exit 23 interchange at I-93 and Chase Road in Meredith, impede both safety and traffic flow.

The information contained within this study emphasizes the need to use a variety of approaches to improve safety and ensure that the NH Route 104 corridor continues to operate in a relatively efficient manner in the future. Implementation recommendations range from key safety improvements and acquiring access rights for specific parcels along the corridor, to changes in land use regulations and zoning. In addition, a key issue is that of improved communication between local planning boards and NHDOT. A step in this direction is the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding between NHDOT District 3 and each community regarding highway access management.

Key issues discussed in the *NH Route 104 Access Management Study*:

- Key access management issues were identified by New Hampton town officials, commercial property owners, and the NHDOT in the area east of the Exit 23 interchange with I-93 and Drake Road in New Hampton. The group proposed a conceptual interconnecting looped roadway system, which would ultimately connect properties north and south of NH Route 104. Such a system in this area would reduce congestion, reduce traffic delay, and increase safety.
- Land uses vary widely, from relatively dense highway commercial to very rural. The differences in zoning are also notable, with considerable differences between the business and mixed commercial uses allowed in New Hampton to the more rural uses allowed in much of the corridor in Meredith.
- The differences in land use patterns and zoning are further emphasized by a much denser pattern of access points in New Hampton east of Exit 23 to Chase Road in Meredith. These changes are due in large part to the standard right-of-way classification found in this section of the corridor. Limited access or controlled access, as found in much of the remainder of the corridor, is a more restrictive classification.
- An analysis of full buildout provides a noteworthy look at what the corridor could look like if developed to its highest potential density. Also, the potential trips generated by that development were estimated. LRPC staff, with guidance from the NH Route 104 Study Committee and representatives from New Hampton and Meredith, completed the analysis of potential buildout by compiling parcel based data for each community (including information on land uses, zoning, and environmental constraints), and developing a method to estimate the extent of future residential and commercial growth along the corridor under current zoning. These figures were then used to estimate the number of potential trips.

While the buildout is strictly a planning tool, and a number of assumptions were necessary during the process (see Appendix D), the results may be used to gain insight into what might possibly occur along the corridor in the future. The results highlight the potential for 777 more lots in New Hampton and 228 in Meredith along the corridor, with both towns having a combined potential to develop approximately 3.2 million square feet of commercial property. The number of trips that could then be generated in a full buildout condition would total 155,082, dramatically higher than the estimated 19,763 trips that currently exist.

- Key safety issues were also identified by the NH Route 104 Study Committee and representatives of local businesses (see *Map 2.1, Identified Safety Concerns and Appendix B, NH Route 104 Business Survey Comments*). The identification of issues and work undertaken by the project's consultant Fay Spofford and Thorndike, Inc. resulted in conceptual plans for short and mid-term improvements at the following locations along the corridor:
 1. Residential/Commercial Area (Bobby's Girl Diner) at NH Route 104 (New Hampton)
 2. Meredith Woods/Clearwater Campgrounds Crossings (Meredith)
 3. NH Route 104 at Shingle Camp Road and I-93 Off-Ramp (New Hampton)
 4. Chase and Meredith Center Roads at NH Route 104 (Meredith)
 5. Town House Road (east) at NH Route 104 (New Hampton)
 6. Main Street at NH Route 104 (New Hampton)

In summary, current and future projected traffic flows, safety issues, existing patterns of access and potential development pressures as outlined in the buildout analysis reveal that the NH Route 104 corridor is an appropriate candidate for a variety of access management implementation strategies. This study of the corridor has shown that a shared approach to implement access management and safety strategies between the communities, NHDOT, and local property owners promise effective long-term results.

Implementation Strategies

The following is a summary of the implementation strategies as described throughout the NH Route 104 Access Management Study.

- The towns of Meredith and New Hampton should work closely with NHDOT District 3 and local property owners to move towards the implementation of the short and medium-term safety improvements as outlined in Chapter 4, and Appendix E of this study.
- Revise Subdivision and Site Plan Review Regulations in both communities to incorporate access management-related language pertaining to the maximum number of driveways per lot, interconnecting driveways, shared driveways, access to lots with multiple frontages and driveway width as described in Chapter 5, Access Management Strategies.
- The town of New Hampton should consider the adoption of zoning incentives related to access management as found in Chapter 5, Access Management Strategies.
- Foster improved communications between NHDOT District 3 and local planning boards/planning staff through the adoption Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A draft MOU can be found in Appendix A.

- The town of New Hampton, in conjunction with NHDOT and local property owners, should continue the development of the phased *NH 104 Access Management and Interconnection Plan* for the area of NH Route 104 between the Exit 23 interchange at Interstate 93 and Drake Road. The recently completed Plan is included in its entirety in Chapter 1, Introduction.
- Improved access for communities to NHDOT driveway permit records for parcels along NH Route 104, as well as other state highways, would serve to simplify the driveway permitting process at the planning board level and clarify the availability and limits on access for property owners. The NHDOT should work to institute a streamlined recordkeeping procedure to automate this process in the future.
- Continue to monitor the progress of the State of New Hampshire Transportation Improvement Plan (10 Year Plan) project to reconstruct NH Route 104 from I-93 east to Meredith Center Road (approximately four miles) to improve horizontal and vertical alignment and to widen shoulders. With the ever-increasing demand on funding transportation projects in New Hampshire, emphasis should continue to be placed on retaining funding for future improvements to NH Route 104 in the regional Transportation Improvement Program and future editions of the State 10 Year Improvement Program. Options to prioritize the timing of improvements identified in this study should also be explored at the regional and state levels.
- In addition to monitoring the progress of the NH Route 104 improvements in the 10 Year Plan, the consideration of future purchase of access rights along NH Route 104 as a precursor to the project should continue as described in Chapter 5, Access Management Strategies.
- With NH Route 104 not scheduled for reconstruction until 2015, Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) may be an appropriate means of defining corridor problems and screening alternative solutions at the point in time that project design is initiated. The CSS approach is currently being used in the US 3/NH 25 Improvements Transportation Planning Study. CSS attempts to illustrate the breadth of balance required in the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, and environmental corridor resources, as well as the need for further linkages between land-use and transportation. The CSS planning process would further this study by “using place making tools to identify strong felt community values and special places for protection in the project development process.”