# PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

## Purpose

The purpose of this project is to address the existing and future transportation needs and create a safe and efficient transportation corridor for people, goods and services on the approximately four-mile segment of Interstate 93 from Interstate 89 in Bow to Interstate 393 in Concord. A full range of options will be considered to improve the transportation system to better serve the communities in the region.

## Need

Mobility

Interstate 93 is a principal north-south arterial Interstate highway within the State of New Hampshire and is part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. The segment of I-93 under study intersects two other Interstate highways, I-89 and I-393, providing a link for east/west travel, and passes through Concord the state capital. The interstate carries a mix of traffic including trucks, cars and buses. The corridor serves as an important link for New England wide tourist travel to the White Mountains, Lakes Region and Vermont, a regional commuting route for Concord, as well as an important local route. As one of the main arterials in the New Hampshire highway system, it is important to maintain the mobility of people, goods and services through this corridor.

Capacity

Traffic volumes on I-93 through Bow and Concord have nearly tripled since 1980. By 2003 there were on average over 70,000 vehicle trips every day on I-93 through Concord. Growth in the region is expected to continue as development moves north and will place an even greater burden on the transportation system. With an estimated XX,XXX vehicle trips per day by the year 2030, congestion and increased travel times are expected without a reduction in demand or through corridor improvements.

Regional Plans

The project is included in the State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Program and is a top long-term transportation priority for the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC). The City of Concord and the Towns of Bow and Pembroke are currently updating their respective master plans. Each of these communities recognizes that growth is inevitable and that the transportation system is an integral component of this growth.

Safety

Interstate 93 in Bow and Concord has a number of existing geometric deficiencies, including inadequate distances between entrance and exit ramps, short deceleration distances at exit ramps and short acceleration distances at entrance ramps. A review of the accident data for the period 1997 to 2002 indicates that many of the accidents occur at ramps or between ramps where deficiencies exist. As traffic volumes increase on I-93 the existing deficiencies will become more of a problem.

Transportation Choice

This project will need to consider all modes of transportation and strategies to ensure an efficient transportation system for the region. Commuter rail and high-speed rail service is a possibility in the region within the next 20 years. Bus service continues to expand in the region. Bow and Concord have extensive networks of public trails and are actively expanding their networks in an effort to complete the Heritage Trail. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as changeable message signs, video monitoring, ride sharing and incident management are being implemented by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) along the entire I-93 corridor.