

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation June 2003 Annual Report

Welcome to PACTS

PACTS, the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee, is the federal planning organization for the Portland region. PACTS is comprised of 15 municipalities from the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), the Maine Turnpike Highway and Transit Administrations (FHWA and FTA), the Regional Transportation Authority (RTAC), the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), Southern Maine Regional Planning Council (SMRPC), public transportation agencies, and interested citizens and businesses.

During 2002, in the midst of developing the **Destination Tomorrow** plan, the PACTS region was expanded to 15 communities as a result of federal requirements. The PACTS region now includes Biddeford, Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, North Yarmouth, Old Orchard Beach, Portland, Saco, Scarborough, South Portland, Westbrook, Windham and Yarmouth. Over the next year, **Destination Tomorrow** will be expanded to include this larger area.

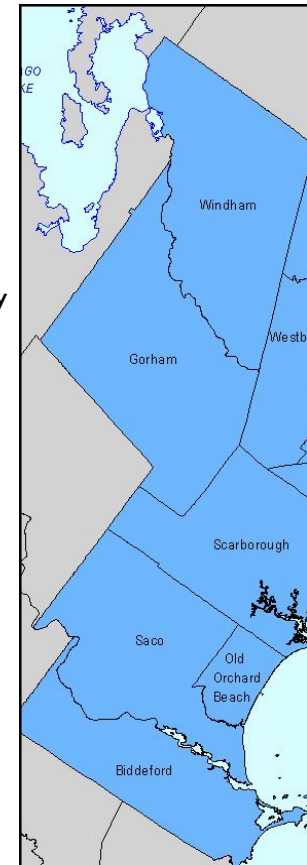
The PACTS process is focused on outcome-oriented planning within the context of broad-based community and regional concerns. PACTS provides a forum for inter-agency and inter-municipal coordination, collaborative decision making, and input into funding decisions. Agency functions include:

- Evaluation and approval of proposed transportation improvement projects;
- Sponsoring and conducting studies;
- Monitoring air quality compliance; and
- Assisting members and other planning agencies.

Destination Tomorrow

The high point of the last year for both PACTS members and staff has been the adoption of **Destination Tomorrow—Linking our Greater Portland Communities, Advancing our Region**. The long-range regional transportation plan provides a \$590 million framework for an integrated multi-modal transportation system that provides access to the entire PACTS region.

The Maine Association of Planners selected **Destination Tomorrow** as its 2003 Plan of the Year. We would like to thank all the members, GPCOG staff, consultants and others who provided their time and experience to this three-year effort.



PACTS makes capital investments in various portions of its 15 member communities.

Eric Ortman, Transportation Planner
eortman@gpcog.org



John Duncan (right) and Eric Ortman (left) proudly display the trophy awarded by the Maine Association of Planners for **Destination Tomorrow**, the 2003 Plan of the Year.

Technical Committee

- Larry Ash, Portland City Traffic Engineer
- Richard Aube, Windham Public Works Director
- Mike Bolduc, Saco Public Works Director
- Timothy Braun, Old Orchard Beach Public Works Director
- Don Chaisson, North Yarmouth Public Works Director
- Eric Dudley, Westbrook City Engineer
- Dennis Emidy, Maine Dept. of Transportation Traffic Engineer
- Jennifer Franceschi, Biddeford Planning Engineer
- Rebecca Grover, Assistant to Gov't Relations Manager, MTA
- Tony Hayes, Falmouth Public Works Director
- Dan Jellis, Yarmouth Town Engineer
- Suzanne LePage, Transportation Planner, SMRPC
- Gary Lorfano, Gorham Public Works Director
- Bob Malley, Vice-Chair, Cape Elizabeth Public Works Director
- Tom Meyers, Public Transportation, South Portland Transportation

- and Waterfront Manager
- Adam Ogden, Cumberland Public Works Director
- Albert Presgraves, Freeport Town Engineer
- Ed Reidman, Chair, South Portland City Engineer
- Jim Wendel, Scarborough Town Engineer & Assistant Planner
- David Willauer, GPCOG Land-Use & Transportation Director



Joe Ziepniewski, PACTS Planning Committee Chair

General Manager
Manager
Director
Assistant
TA
PACTS Policy Committee Chair
Community Development Director
Planning
Manager, MTA
Regional Director

and staff have participated in numerous actions and local and regional studies.

narrow— a long-range regional transportation plan.

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Gorham

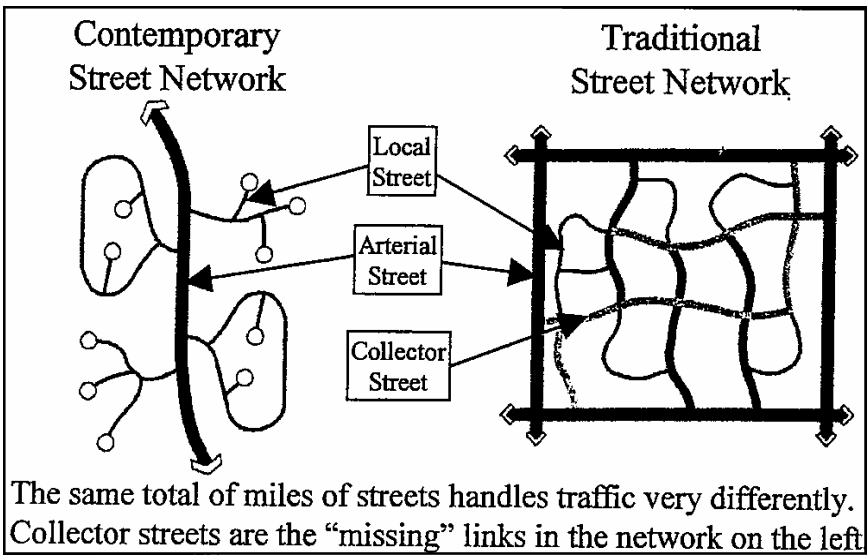
affic

rnatives.

on-call

veral years, has performed all of the agency's travel demand modeling needs.

aff has taken travel demand modeling courses and now assist the consultant and member communities.



The same total of miles of streets handles traffic very differently. Collector streets are the "missing" links in the network on the left

In December, Wilbur Smith Associates completed the Street Interconnectivity Analysis for PACTS and the Town of Falmouth. Low density subdivisions as well as rivers, rail lines, and highways, pose constraints to connecting the street network in Falmouth.

PACTS Studies

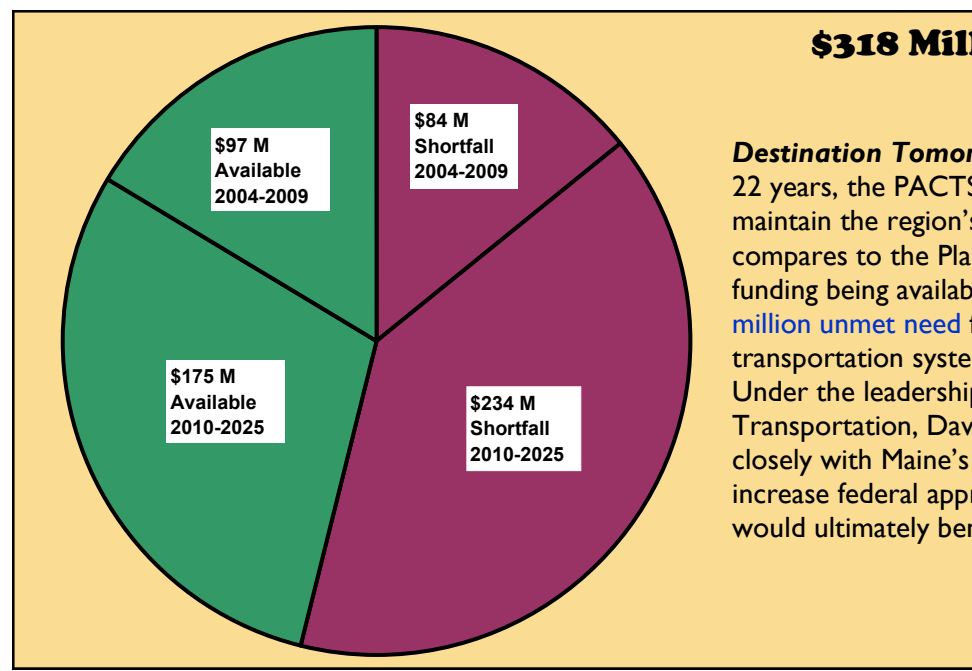
pted a new evaluation process for selecting transportation study proposals. The e of the Technical Committee. The subcommittee's broad-based work yielded 11 "guiding policies" of **Destination Tomorrow** (see page 4). The other two reward , growth area or transportation investment area, as well as rewarding proposals oposals are to be scored using the same set of criteria but they only compete for same category. The five categories of studies are:

- nd intersection studies).
- ading bicycle/pedestrian, transit and rail studies).
- agement and streetscape studies).
- g freight and tourism studies).
- s, town/city-wide plans and other topics not listed above).

ed in July 2003 for selecting the studies to be done during the next two years.

Over the last six years, funding for much of America's transportation system has been cut. The Administration's proposed reauthorization legislation—the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). With TEA-21 expiring this year, the Administration's proposal increases funding over the six-year period from \$207 billion to \$247 billion.

A broad-based, bi-partisan coalition contends that the transportation needs of the country require more funding than proposed by the Administration. While significant modifications in the formula for allocating funds to the states are not anticipated at this time, the issue is emerging as a major obstacle to reauthorization. The House and Senate are debating whether to raise the gas tax or implement an indexing plan. Given this debate, it is quite possible that the reauthorization bill this year. In that case, transportation funding would most likely



News From Augusta

The state fuel tax provides an important revenue source for financing transportation projects. Last year, the Maine Legislature voted to keep the indexing of the state fuel tax to the annual rate of inflation. Thank you to the Legislature for your continued support of our transportation infrastructure!

MaineDOT and the State Planning Office are drafting rules (LD 463, 2002) that will: (1) promote investment incentives for communities that adopt and implement land use plans that minimize over-reliance on the state highway network, and (2) establish linkages between transportation plans and comprehensive plans. The draft rules will be available for comment later this year.

David Cole, Maine's new Commissioner of Transportation, was formerly the Executive Director of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Research and Development.



On April 17, 2003, the PACTS Policy Committee proudly adopted **Destination Tomorrow**, a major new long-range regional transportation plan for the PACTS region. **Destination Tomorrow** provides a \$590 million framework for an integrated multi-modal transportation system that provides access to the entire PACTS region over the next 22 years. The Maine Department of Transportation and regional and local officials are using it to advise our Congressional delegation of our region's compelling transportation needs, and to set capital investment and policy priorities for the next six years.



Over the next year, **Destination Tomorrow** will be expanded to encompass the eight new communities in the expanded PACTS region. The expansion will include the transportation issues and perspectives of these communities, and will continue evaluation of a regional toll system on the Turnpike, rail service to Brunswick, new highway access points, east-west linkages, and bus service to suburban areas. PACTS will continue its extensive outreach efforts with public forums, resident surveys, council presentations, and web site updates.

In 2000 and 2001, MaineDOT, MTA, and PACTS each studied the I-295 and I-95 corridors. In 2004, MaineDOT will lead a more in-depth study of the two corridors between Portland and Brunswick. Potential topics include:

- large current traffic volumes on Tukey's Bridge in Portland;
- significant traffic growth on I-95 north of Portland;
- potential diversion of I-295 traffic to the Turnpike;
- the impact of passenger rail service on traffic in the corridor; and
- municipalities' interest in additional access points to both interstates.



Tukey's Bridge in Portland (below).



Linking Land-Use and Transportation Policy

"Build it, and they will come," is a common phrase that can be used to describe the relationship between transportation and land use. While new travel lanes and roadways may initially attract development, land quickly becomes attractive to new development, which generates additional traffic. To address this cycle, the PACTS Policy Committee established the following policy in **Destination Tomorrow**.

Any arterial corridor roadway project, that by itself or as part of a program of transportation improvements, reduces commuter travel times between an urbanized and a non-urbanized area, must be designed and implemented in a way that preserves the arterial's capacity, protects its mobility function and minimizes sprawl.

Over the next year, the PACTS Planning Committee will work with the Maine Department of Transportation and the State Planning Office to draft procedures to implement this policy. Implementation measures as access management, master planning and zoning as well as non-traditional

funding program used to disburse
 BTIP links the planning of
 as an integral part of the PACTS
 biennium, over \$40 million will be
 region, including \$7.3 million
 will be invested in the original
 include the following improvements:
 sections

ads
 seven bridges
 at Exit 3 of I-295
 on Exits 3 & 4 on I-295
 , including a new trail in Portland's

ations and improvements.
 l service to Brunswick
 ering.

front page of the Portland Press Herald, one of several articles written about the



Experiencing regular peak-hour congestion, the intersection of Washington Avenue and Allen Avenue in Portland is scheduled for widening improvements in 2004-2005.

Portland Press Herald
 www.pressherald.com
 60 CENTS
 46 PAGES
 Volume 141 Number 130
 1862
Portland takes aim at gridlock
 ● A new report identifies Greater Portland's worst bottlenecks and sets the stage for long-range solutions.
 By DAVID CONNERTY-MARIN
 Staff Writer
 A regional transportation planning agency will release a list of 25 troubling intersections today, and a list of 10 other intersections that it expects will be troubling by 2010.
 The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee report also predicts that commuting times will increase by 20 percent to 30 percent during peak hours.
 Some of the worst intersections in the Portland area are Dunstan Corner in Scarborough, Payne Road at Maine Turnpike Exit 6 in Scarborough, and Washington Avenue at Allen Avenue in Portland. According to the report, traffic at these intersections during peak hours is as much as 20 percent above levels considered safe and efficient.
 The solution, according to transportation planners, is fixing existing roads, not building new ones.
 "We need to figure out a way to regionally prioritize these chokepoints and get the greatest bang for the buck," said Jeffrey Jordan, South Portland's city manager and chairman of the PACTS policy committee.
 The release of the list coincides with the near completion of "Destination Tomorrow," a 25-year plan that PACTS has developed to guide transportation planning in the coming quarter-century.
 "The agency will hold a series of public meetings with municipal officials in the coming weeks to seek comment and explain the long-range plan."
 The plan marks a change from past transportation planning, which focused on individual problems and

Corridor Coalitions: Convened three regional coalitions of municipalities designed to serve as forums for coordinating land-use and transportation policies, public services, and capital investments.

Central Corridor (Cumberland, Gray, New Gloucester, North Yarmouth, Pownal, Raymond, Windham): Focused on the identification of common principles to guide development, creation of a generalized zoning map of the region, and prioritization of capital projects.

Coastal Corridor (Cumberland Falmouth, Freeport, Yarmouth): Focused on the development of Route One, restoration of passenger rail service, and the consolidation of public safety services.



Following eight years of planning for the Mountain Division Trail, local and state officials break ground on October 22, 2002.

Western Corridor (Scarborough, Baldwin, Naples): Focused on the Route 114 corridor, including the coordination of land-use

Go Maine: Launched state and information to employ transportation options, including rail, bicycling, walking, and

Kids and Transportation: teachers in Greater Portland presentations, and curriculum transportation alternatives.

Maine Clean Communities: Facilitated the use of alternative fuels through pilot program with L.L. Bean and the design and permitting of a Compressed Natural Gas Greater Portland METRO.

Intelligent Transportation Systems: Following up on the introduction of computer monitors with arrival and departure information at the Maine Mall, Portland terminals, and major hotels.

Portland Explorer: Completed inaugural run of new express bus service connecting transportation terminals and hotels.

for a New Era

tttee of the past 10 years may be the TIP Process Committee whose members are es for allocating federal funds. Led by Nat Tupper, Yarmouth Town Manager, this of the wide range of participants in the PACTS process.

t the PACTS funding allocation processes to reflect the goals and intent of dition of new members in 2002. A primary focus of their work is the importance to each member municipality. Committee members are also looking at ways to are consistent with **Destination Tomorrow**, including strategies to reduce the committee will present their proposals to the Policy Committee in late 2003; for use

GPCOG Transportation and Land Use Staff (774-98

- David Willauer, Transportation and Land Use Director
- Steve Linnell, Senior Transportation Planner
- Rick Seeley, Senior Land Use Planner
- Carey Kish, Go Maine Manager
- Muriel White, Vanpool Database Administrator
- Erik Hermann, Kids & Transportation Coordinator
- Daniel Stewart, Transportation and Land Use Planner