



Issue Paper #4

Draft for Public Comment
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Linking Our Communities • Advancing Our Region

Linking Land Use and Transportation

Key Recommendations

1. Develop incentives that promote compact land use.
2. Employ access management and site development practices that enhance mobility and accessibility.
3. Develop at appropriate densities in order to optimize transportation and land use benefits.



Island View Apartments on Munjoy Hill in Portland

In southern Maine, and throughout the country, there is a consensus that a significant disconnect exists between transportation and land use development policies, responsibilities and funding. This disconnect occurs despite our understanding that how we travel is affected by where we choose to live, work and shop; and that these choices are, in turn, shaped to some degree by our transportation system.



With new homes and jobs spreading into suburban and rural communities, our region is growing faster than the transportation system that supports it.

Strengthening the link between land use and transportation policies is one of the most difficult and important public policy challenges facing local governments, PACTS members and the State.

Destination Tomorrow includes 20 recommendations designed to improve this connection. Several of the potential benefits to strengthening this coordination include:

1. Maximizing the benefits of limited transportation funds.
2. Ensuring that development occurs in locations where it is supported by an adequate transportation system.
3. Reduced congestion and improved safety.

The 20 recommendations include incentives for coordinating land use and transportation plans and projects, and are provided for the consideration of municipal officials and other decision makers. Several examples are provided verbatim on pages 2-4 and are listed with the objectives that they were designed to address. In all, *Destination Tomorrow* contains 84 recommendations.

This issue paper is one of nine prepared by the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee (PACTS) for the *Destination Tomorrow* regional transportation plan. *Destination Tomorrow* provides a transportation vision and plan for the PACTS region for 2004 to 2025. The Plan will be implemented by the Maine Department of Transportation, the PACTS Policy Committee, the region's municipalities and public transit providers, the Greater Portland Council of Governments and the Maine Turnpike Authority.

PACTS members oversee transportation studies and allocate federal transportation funds for the PACTS region. In 2004, PACTS members will prepare an addendum to this Plan in response to the addition of eight municipalities in 2002 that increased the size of the PACTS area from seven to fifteen municipalities. In order to learn more about PACTS and this Plan, go to www.pactsplan.org, or call John Duncan at 207-774-9891.

Recommendations to Increase Coordination Between Land Use Plans and Transportation Plans

In addition to the benefits listed on page one, coordinating land use and transportation planning will also help to strengthen regional collaboration, one of the underlying principles of the Plan.

Objective - To formulate a planning and design process that effectively coordinates land use and transportation decisions and spans jurisdictional boundaries.

Strategy 48. Provide technical assistance, information and data to planning boards regarding the *cumulative impacts* of their decisions upon the level of safety and mobility of the region's arterial highways.



The Maine Turnpike Exit 7B Interchange and developable land nearby — during early construction.

Strategy 49. Develop master plans for areas around new highway interchanges.

Objective - To encourage the creation of regional, sub-regional and local land use plans that recommend regional connectivity and mobility in support of land development patterns.

Strategy 46. Create regional images meant to inspire municipalities and others *to create and use regional, sub-regional and local plans.*

Strategy 47. Support, when appropriate, the MaineDOT and the State Planning Office in their development of new *transportation requirements for local comprehensive plans.*

Objective - To protect neighborhoods and community integrity by creating community-sensitive transportation facilities.

Strategy 58. Based on the transportation and other benefits of schools locating in activity centers, support efforts to revise the State's *site location requirements for new schools* and for funding the construction/rehabilitation of existing schools.

Strategy 59. Employ principles during the design of arterial roadway improvements that balance the *competing demands upon the roadway* of vehicles, pedestrians and others.



South Portland High School and Community Center near the Stanwood Park neighborhood.

Access Management and Site Development

As growth and development in the region continue, maintaining access to land uses while simultaneously maintaining the traffic capacity of a highway becomes ever more challenging. This is because highways serve two purposes: (1) getting people from place to place (mobility), and (2) getting people to a specific location (access). Access management is an effective method to maintain this balance. Site development practices influence how development looks and functions. (See *Issue Paper 7*.) While many communities already employ access management practices and site development review, *Destination Tomorrow* contains several recommendations to further promote the use of these two valuable tools at the local and regional level.

A key finding of a 1999 PACTS survey of the region's residents revealed that a very high priority should be placed on spending to improve regional mobility, and a general preference to preserve both rural character and urban neighborhoods.

Objective - To manage access along major arteries in order to reduce delay and crashes.

Strategy 60. Require an access management plan for any proposed new highway as a *pre-requisite for the programming of federal funds*.

Strategy 61. Support the MaineDOT commitment to make all new arterial roads *limited access*.



Use of a median to control access by prohibiting left turns—Gorham Road near the Maine Mall.

Objective - To promote site development and infrastructure that provides for and encourages access and on-site circulation by pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes.

Strategy 56. Support *residential zoning along principal arterials* throughout the PACTS region.

Strategy 57. Study the potential applications of *parking policies* as incentives for vehicle trip reduction.



The area near the proposed compact, mixed-use development at Dunstan Corner in Scarborough.

Combining Development Density, Design and Diversity to Realize Transportation and Land Use Benefits

Important land use development characteristics that influence our travel choices include the 3 “D’s”:

- Diversity — the different types of land uses;
- Design — how tailored development is to meeting the needs of automobiles, bus service, and bicyclists and pedestrians; and
- Density — the number of housing units or commercial buildings per acre.



The density of development is one of the most important indicators of how efficient a transportation system can be made to serve automobiles, transit (public transportation), and pedestrians and bicyclists. At higher densities, serving an area with transit becomes more feasible. The number of trips made by walking may also increase, as destinations are closer together. Greater use of public transportation and walking is another action that can be taken to manage the expected growth in traffic and congestion.

The PACTS Planning Committee evaluated the benefits and impacts of four transportation and land use development scenarios that included: expanding (1) the interstate highways, (2) major, non-interstate roads (arterials), (3) bus and passenger rail service, and (4) focusing more of the region’s forecasted growth in existing centers. The analyses showed modest benefits to the transportation system in each of these scenarios when measured by parameters such as the total number of miles driven. PACTS recommends combining appropriate land use development and transportation scenarios as an additional measure to managing future growth in traffic and congestion.

Objective - To foster compact development patterns that promote efficient transportation services and systems that reduce sprawl.

Strategy 53. Establish a *reduced local match requirement policy* for transportation investments in “Transportation Investment Areas”.

Strategy 54. Establish *flexible MaineDOT and municipal thresholds* for acceptable level-of-service for the off-site traffic impacts of proposed developments in urban centers.

Objective - To balance the needs for increased network connectivity and reduced cut-through traffic on residential streets.

Strategy 63. Build future *short connector roads as collectors* rather than as arterials because they are less costly and would receive more public/political support.

Strategy 64. Plan for and implement *street interconnectivity studies* in each community in order to identify collector and sub-collector street networks.

Transportation and Land Use Planning Case Studies

The PACTS Planning Committee prepared three case studies for the *Destination Tomorrow* Plan. The case studies demonstrate the principles of integrated land use and transportation planning. Case studies were prepared for:

1. The area surrounding the new Maine Turnpike Interchange (Exit 7B Rand Road, Westbrook).
2. An urban arterial with increasing congestion and numerous conflicts between through traffic and turning and stopping traffic (Forest Avenue, Portland).
3. Regional compact land use (Dunstan Corner, Scarborough).

The case studies will be presented to planning boards and to the general public for consideration in future planning decisions.