

# PACTS

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Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

## Technical Committee Meeting Notice

August 14, 2007  
8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

### Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Minutes of July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting
3. Pavement Condition Ratings and Highway Adequacy Index Update
4. Collector Road Project Report and Fund Transfers
5. Information Items and Other Business
6. Adjourn.

Next Meeting: September 11th at 8:30 a.m.

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**PACTS Technical Committee Minutes**  
**July 10, 2007 Meeting -- 8:30 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Bob Burns, Gorham, Chair; Jack Burnham, Policy Committee Appointee; Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Kathi Earley, Portland; Doug Fortier, Windham; Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford, Vice-Chair; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Dean Lessard, MaineDOT; Jonathan Labonte, MTA; Dale Mitchell, Policy Committee Appointee; John Perry, FHWA; Albert Presgraves, Freeport; Jim Wendel, Scarborough.

**Members Absent:** Mike Bolduc, Saco; Dana Anderson, So. Portland; Jim Carmody, Portland; Don Chaisson, No. Yarmouth; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Tony Hayes, Falmouth; Josh Mack, SMRPC; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Adam Ogden, Cumberland; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; David Willauer, GPCOG.

**Staff and Guests:** Kyle Hall, MaineDOT/Region I; Julia Dawson, PACTS; John Duncan, PACTS; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Britta Stein, FHWA; David Willauer, GPCOG.

1. **Call to Order.** Bob Burns, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and welcomed those present.
2. **Adoption of minutes of June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 meeting**  
*Jenni Franceschi made a motion for approval of the June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 minutes, seconded by Kathi Earley. Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously approved.*
3. **Scheduling of PACTS/MPO Projects** (Item tabled until after Status Reports)
4. **Status Reports** (Item taken out of order)
  - Paul Niehoff said that the MaineDOT is in the process of rating roads by using the Highway Adequacy Index, which is a change from the current “built/unbuilt” definition. Generally the new index rates the road condition, alignment and how adequately the road functions. Currently DOT is collecting structural data using the Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD). The FWD determines what the road base is and combines that information with the ARAN data system.

Urban roads function differently than rural roads. What is used for parameters is different than what is used for urban arterials and collectors. In addition, they haven’t yet determined what those parameters are going to be. Reference was made to the Highway Adequacy Interim Report of 2006. Mike Laberge will bring copies of the report to the next PACTS Technical Committee meeting. It was noted that this is a work in progress and that they are simply gathering data at the moment. They expect to be completed on rural roads by September. This is being completed primarily on rural arterials (this policy is under review). It also looks at the horizontal and vertical alignment and assesses adequacy of that particular road. The DOT does not have as much information on the urban collectors because communities are responsible to repair and maintain these roads and the DOT is sometimes unaware of those actions. It was noted that PACTS staff might have to look at collector roads in the field to see what the adequacy index is using the MDOT data that is available to them. Julia said she was not aware that the data collected in urban compact areas was not as in depth and said she would look into it further. The MaineDOT has asked PACTS if they would like MaineDOT to focus on particular arterials. Following some discussion, there was consensus among the group to have a projects priority list compiled by the PACTS Technical Committee and then forwarded to the MaineDOT Pavement Management Division.
  - John Duncan provided an overview of the PACTS Annual Meeting. The meeting was well attended with congressional delegation staff attending in full force. Highlights of the meeting included an update by the Paul Violette Executive Director of the Maine Turnpike Authority and endorsement of the PACTS Regional Transit Study by the PACTS Policy Committee, an important milestone. It was noted that the PACTS Transit Study is a good action plan for the transit systems in our region. Another highlight of the meeting included the election of Mike Bobinsky to serve as the Chairperson of the PACTS Policy Committee and Bill Shane, elected to serve as Vice-Chair.
  - The UPWP for the next two years was approved last May. Because federal funding availability has shrunk, it is likely that the PACTS Technical Committee may become involved with the reduction of the

UPWP funding allocation. Studies may need to be cut from the work plan. Discussion followed pertaining to the procedure that had been established for ranking study proposals. Dan Jellis volunteered to work on the ranking subcommittee.

### **3. Scheduling of PACTS/MPO Projects**

Mike Laberge said that he had attended a meeting with the Lewiston-Auburn and Bangor MPOs and was now meeting with Portland. MaineDOT would like to have input in the scheduling of projects based on local priorities. He directed the group to a couple of handouts he distributed for reference. The “vertical formatted” handout is basically all projects that have not gone out yet. The “horizontal formatted” handout lists new projects. The projects listed at the top of this latter sheet whose PIN number begins with “130...” have been funded by PACTS. It was noted that MaineDOT has limited cash resources and limited staff. They would like to hear from the communities on what the priorities are. A question was asked about funding limits. Mike replied that there was no clear direction on that.

Discussion followed. It was felt that the projects that are the oldest are the ones that should go to the top of the list. Kyle Hall noted that when projects are bundled it also provides an opportunity to get better prices. They are still handled separately. Division is doing the collectors and Augusta is doing the larger projects. Mary Ann spoke of those projects listed in the vertical format that shows a need for supplemental funding. Mike replied that it is up to PACTS and the City/Town to see how to fund those.

Kathi Early asked if there is a new message that there might be some money to advertise in this calendar year. Mike replied that with the Transportation Bond passing and with the acquisition of the Garvey Fund, MaineDOT would restart the “conveyor belt” on projects. Projects will start to move forward on a regular schedule. Those projects that are re-scheduled for 2007 and ready to go will go out. Kyle noted that the DOT has just about lost this entire season and have many projects on the shelf. They have not hired any consultant or field staff so it will probably take the rest of this year to get back on track for next year. The next step will be the bidding process. Discussion followed with the group expressing their frustration with the paving community and their bids. Al Presgraves stated his support to allow that projects be completed in the order that they get approved. In reference to the under-funded projects, it might have to be a PACTS Policy Committee decision. Another discussion followed pertaining to whether this process would affect or change the scope. Julia replied that one could decrease the scope without change. If you have to shorten the scope it is not a problem, if you extend the scope, then it would be a problem. Further discussion followed pertaining to cost overages, LAPs, collectors, etc. Paul made reference to a collector list that was split based on the funding and was numbered 1 thru 20. Bob asked if the group should keep the projects in the general PIN order and then have PACTS staff prioritize the 13000 series. This list could then be forwarded to MaineDOT with a request that they package them as they see fit. In reference to the 13000 series, Julia noted that the group would have to decide if the collectors would get priority over bike/ped, etc. projects. Further discussion followed pertaining to intersections. Kathi spoke of PIN #13104 that pertains to a signal on Auburn Street that is ready to go right now and that Portland would like to get that done before the school year begins. Other discussions continued regarding whether PACTS would be willing to cover cost overages on paving projects if the overage had to do with the pricing and not the scope and if the additional funding could be reallocated. Dan questioned whether the Policy Committee had already voted on that issue for the 06/07 funding. It was noted that if construction costs keep increasing it might get to a point that this policy might need to be reevaluated. Al felt that to some degree the communities should look to the DOT to take the projects that are on the “shelf” and just get them out. There was some agreement to this. Further discussion continued on the prioritization process, the 13000 PIN series and how to handle the re-disbursing of funds on non-collector overlays. Jenni added that if the priorities are already listed that whatever resources are available to the DOT, they could be utilized in that fashion. Julia noted that PACTS staff already has a sort of prioritized list that was looked at that was given to them by the DOT. Dean explained that the list that had been put together included three categories. Those listed as “no. 1”, should go out. The “no. 2s” were the ones that could go, that were either started or ready to start. The “no. 3s”, were projects where not much had been done yet. Dean added that the list was not itemized in any prioritized order and that is where the DOT would like some direction from the communities. It was decided to revisit the list. Copies were made and distributed for reference. Discussion continued and consideration was

given to whether some projects could be removed from the list. Dale Mitchell felt that some projects from a regional perspective should go as “number 1” projects. Dan noted that he would be supportive of the idea that earlier projects could be done first with the caveat that some are ready to go as number 1 as described on the list referred to by Dean Lessard. With that in mind those projects that are earlier than 13000 and that are on Dean Lessard’s list should be ready to go. Mike added that the list had been approved in April for Fiscal ’07 and beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, the MaineDot is moving forward. Julia noted that the first nine projects had been approved and sent to the DOT. Those are going. The focus should now be on PIN #13117 down. The DOT comments still stand. Following further discussion, the group reviewed the remaining projects.

Mike Laberge said he would like to list the 08/09 projects because the STIP has to be made. Julia said that the priorities for 08/09 had already been given. She asked how the group wanted to prioritize the capital improvement projects. Should they come before or after the collector road projects? It was thought that those had already been prioritized and could be provided to the DOT following the meeting. Discussion focused on whether the group should adhere to the original policy where collectors go out first. It was decided to stick to the original plans in regards to collectors. Jenni said she felt that the group should stick to the dollar amount and that each category should be allocated their percentage. She didn’t want to see everything go to simply one category. Jack Burnham said that as a former traffic engineer, he felt that a collector project should get priority over an intersection. Bob noted that a larger percentage had been originally allocated to pavement overlays because it had been a major concern.

David spoke of the STIP set asides in reference to transit and spoke of the PACTS ranking process. Julia noted that the ranking process had been a combination of both PACTS and DOT efforts. David said it was good to go back to the original formula and that regardless of the number of projects you always have a methodology.

Jim Wendel felt that this typical process and the priority list of identifying projects is a multi-month process. He felt it unrealistic to expect the group to re-prioritize these projects on a one meeting basis. He suggested that the PACTS Technical Committee let staff take this list and consolidate it and then put together a list based on percentages. The list could then be given back to members of the Technical Committee where they in turn could get it out to their respective communities. This would allow the group to see how much of a buy-in they could get from the communities.

After further discussion, the group agreed to have staff compile the data and bring their list back to the Committee. It will then be forwarded to the Policy Committee for approval. Mike explained DOT’s need to have a draft STIP and the need for a PACTS TIP for public comment. The STIP is needed to comply with Federal Highway Administration requirements. Julia said that two lists would be prepared. One will refer to projects for 08/09 and another separate list for projects before that date. The projects priority list will be finalized by August 18<sup>th</sup> to accommodate the STIP and TIP.

#### **5. Other Business:**

A discussion on the lack of competition in the bidding process ensued. John Perry noted that there had been group meetings on the federal level on how to spur competition. He will invite a representative from FHWA to attend the next meeting.

Further discussion followed on the paving specs. Jim spoke of an example in Scarborough where during exceptional conditions last year, the batch did not meet the specs in some areas. Kyle noted that the specs had been heavily modified and had really put the risk on the State. The group agreed that something would need to be done to encourage more competition.

#### **6. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

### **Agenda Item 3 - Pavement Condition Ratings and Highway Adequacy Index Update**

Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planning Specialist and Bob Skehan, PE, Pavement Management Engineer for the MaineDOT will give a short presentation and overview of the Highway Adequacy Index program and the various pavement condition data management tools and suggested pavement preservation techniques.

### **Agenda Item 4- PACTS 2006/2007 Collector Road Paving Project Report**

Following the current PACTS Policies and Procedures which states; "PACTS will fully fund the 2006-2007 collector paving projects through the MPO Allocation", approximately \$1.32 million was set aside from the 08/09 allocation to fund the 06-07 projects. To date, fund transfers to cover 06/07 collector road projects total approximately \$1.13 million leaving a balance of approximately \$414,458 available to cover future transfers.

### **Agenda Item 5- Information Items and Other Business**

A two day training course on Road Safety Audits (or Assessments) was hosted by PACTS on July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>. The two day course consisting of both class and field review was conducted by the Federal Highway Administration through the MaineDOT. The RSA is a process by which a multidisciplinary team reviews all aspects of existing safety conditions or proposed improvements to a roadway (including bicyclists and pedestrian amenities). The review is conducted in the field utilizing best practices and methods to determine safety issues and recommended improvements.

Work continues collectively with PACTS, MaineDOT GPCOG and the Planning Committee on the UPWP funding revisions needed to pare the program by approximately \$1 million from \$2,569,150 to approximately \$1,570,000.

Molly Just has started as Westbrook's new Planner and she will be a member of the PACTS Planning Committee.

PACTS is working on a MPO map which will show all MPO projects. A draft is expected to be available at Tuesday's meeting.