



Technical Committee Meeting Notice

October 14, 2008
8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Minutes of September 9th Meeting**
- 4. Collector Road Paving Ranking and Final List**
- 5. Appointments to Planning, Transit and TIP Process Committees (again)**
- 6. TIP Process Committee**
- 7. Potential for MPO Hired LAP Project Manager**
- 8. Information and Other Business**
- 9. Adjourn.**

Next Meeting: T B D

PACTS Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
September 9th, 2008 – 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford, Chair; Bob Burns, Gorham; Jim Carmody, Portland; Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Sara Devlin, Maine Turnpike Authority; Doug Fortier, Windham; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Jeff McEwen; FHWA; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; Jim Wendel, Scarborough.

Absent: Dana Anderson, So. Portland; Mike Bolduc, Saco; Julia Dawson, SMRPC; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Bob Hough, MaineDOT; Dale Mitchell, Al Presgraves, Freeport; Policy Committee Appointee; Anna Price, FHWA; Mimi Cerveny, MDOT; Steve Linnell, GPCOG. Skip Varney, Falmouth.

Staff and Guests: John Duncan, PACTS; Tom Gorrill, Gorrill-Palmer Associates; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Ralph Norwood, Gorrill-Palmer Associates.

Call to Order Jennie Franceschi, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

1. **Public Comment:** There were no public comments expressed.

2. **Adoption of minutes of August 12th 2008 meeting**

Jim Wendel made a motion for approval of the August 12th, 2008 minutes, seconded by Dan Jellis. Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously accepted.

3. **Collector Road Paving Ranking**

Paul Niehoff distributed a list of collector road projects some of which were highlighted in green, some in yellow, while others without any shading. He noted that the title of the list should have said “Meets Standards List”. The green shaded items reflect current or recent projects while the yellow shaded items are roads with questions, or road segments that are much too short in length to be done for a stand-alone project. The road projects that do not have any shading at all are reflected in a separate handout entitled “Preliminary Rankings Reconstruction List” (note: title is a misnomer), which is the “short list” of projects recommended by staff.

The “Meets Standards List” reflects roads for simple overlay with modern design standards for \$5 million. Paul reviewed each road and/or segment of road to determine whether it met criteria. Where possible, he tried to combine road segments that were in close proximity to each other into one project. Paul said he questioned the PCR value on some of the road segments and wondered whether they should be taken off the list and looked at in the next biennium. His reason for this is because if a road is a good overlay candidate and is only three or four years old, but the PCR value is a 3.2, for instance, then he said he would have concerns as to why the PCR is a 3.2. Another item to think about is if there are roads in this list that get on the short list but might have development projects scheduled for the future that involve things such as utilities, sewers, etc. Paul would like to know that ahead of time. For instance, if the town says the gas line needs to be updated and they know of a project scheduled to be done on that road, then what would be the most prudent and efficient way to do it? Should it be done in conjunction with another project?

John Duncan directed the group to the “Preliminary Rankings Reconstruction List”, (staff’s short list), and pointed out that this is a recommendation sheet. He made reference to the column located 2/3 of the way across the sheet, entitled “2008 Preliminary Opinion of Probably Construction Cost”. Those 15 or 20 projects are the projects that are being recommended and total \$5 million. The short list ends with the Ocean Street project in South Portland. The expected allocation with or without the 25% contingency is \$5.2 million. The total at the bottom of that column shows a total of \$6.2 million but might not reach that \$6 million figure due to the dropping of one project or

picking another up. Whatever lists of recommendations the group comes up with today, staff will go out and do field reviews and make their decision next month.

Discussion followed about older projects such as those on the 08/09 list. Mike Laberge explained that as far as MaineDOT is concerned the 08/09 projects are funded but they could not be put up for bid because MaineDOT did not have the monies to back them up. With respect to those that might have fallen off the list, Paul explained that in looking at the 08/09 collector road projects that had PIN numbers they had to cut the North Road project to fund 06/07 projects. PACTS made the decision to cut the one at the bottom of the list. Portland also withdrew the Congress St. project to fund other projects. Some decisions were made for different reasons. But if a town withdraws a particular project, that project cannot be submitted for next biennium. Collector roads are different and are viewed from a region wide standpoint.

Dan asked if the 08/09 projects that were approved by the Policy Committee were covered and funded. John replied that he didn't think so. He noted that the projects at the bottom of the list would get cut if more money were needed. Mike also pointed out that a totally different tool is being utilized now to rank the projects. Paul explained that the only project that was cut was the North Road project because it was at the bottom of the list. But if that segment of North Road shows up in the short list then it should be funded again under the new criteria.

Discussion then focused on the FWD and the PCR columns and where the data came from. Jim Carmody spoke of the overlay of Baxter Boulevard and Presumpscot Street and noted that one segment was done in 2001 and one was done in 2004. Tom Gorrill pointed out that this is the kind of information they are looking for to help finalize their report and welcomed any additional information from other towns. Another item noted was the International Parkway roadway that is believed to be part of the Portland Jetport property. Mike said he would follow-up on that project noting that it might be listed on the National Highway System. Questions followed about the rankings. Mary Ann said she wanted it noted that the Union Avenue project is not a priority over the other OOB projects and that they all meet standards. John clarified that the green and yellow list is a "Meets Standards List" and that the rankings are shown in the farther right column. The "white list" (no highlighted items) in comparison is a list showing staff's recommendations. Paul added that the "Meets Standards List" shows rankings from 1 to 58 at the farther right hand column. All of these include either a simple overlay with a few that require a mill and fill overlay. The only additional one where a design exception is needed is the Rumery Street project in South Portland.

Further clarification followed by Tom Gorrill regarding how the PCR value is derived and how the FWD ratings as well as the history of each road come into play. He explained how the total points had been calculated in conjunction with the new Collector Priority Index (CPI) process. He spoke of the service index noting that the total score is now at 30. They dropped the AADT score to 20 and added 5 points for truck route and 5 points for transit. They reduced the importance of the AADT keeping it at a 20 point maximum. Even though the PCR and FWD total points are both at 35, they gave a little more weight to the PCR. Jeff McEwen asked if there was a way to know what percent of trucks were included in achieving the AADT score with Tom replying "no". Jeff pointed out that for longevity in regards to the FWD rating, that trucks would make the biggest impact. Tom agreed saying that is why they have information on truck routes in there. Jeff felt that if you could get a percentage reflecting truck use that it would give a more realistic view and that if you have a high FWD from a long-range planning percentage, the FWD would carry more weight in regards to trucks on the road. Tom pointed out that the Committees had agreed that transit would be 5% and that truck routes would be 5%. Mike added that a recommendation from a study in 2001 was provided to staff and included some information on what routes should be used for the bigger truckloads.

It was noted that there is a discrepancy with the total points listed in the white sheet as compared to the total points on the highlighted "Meets Standards List" list. Paul clarified that the highlighted sheet is correct. No secondary sorting was done with those projects whose total points are tied with another project. They are listed in alphabetical order by town. In reference to the rankings, Dave

Redlefsen pointed out that Falmouth's ranking might drop down if a decision is made in October by Falmouth to discontinue transit service. Falmouth would lose those 5 transit points.

Jennie referred to those projects that had tied in total points with others and said she would tend to look at the PCR more. The FWD is a great tool but it's not a replacement for using judgment. Aside from the ranking order, Paul noted that he was of the opinion that if the point spread is different you may still want to consider doing both projects because they are close in proximity. A short discussion followed on how to reduce the number of tied projects in the future. Jeff suggested that the use of a sliding scale on all of them would minimize the projects.

Discussion began with reference to the tier process and whether the group should consider looking at the other categories' lists. The Policy Committee had discussed different categories and those other lists have projects that have a higher total amount of points. John pointed out that at the last meeting the decision was to develop parallel analyses and that this only does one analysis. This list is just simple overlays. Jennie also wondered if the group should be looking at the "substantially meets standards" list and "design exceptions" list. What if a project only needs to move a utility pole, for instance? Tom explained that in some cases some poles could be moved back but typically when a utility pole is involved it is a utility pole that doesn't meet set-back criteria. And, then it becomes a timing issue. You may have property impact. Many times when you move one pole it might involve the purchase of a right-of-way, which in turn could become very expensive. MaryAnn wanted it noted that she thought the "Meets Standards List" should also include Cascade Road in OOB.

Bob Burns made a motion to adopt Paul's "Meets Standards List" and to forward it to the PACTS Policy Committee as our collector road overlay projects, seconded by Mike Laberge.

Discussion. It was suggested that the proper way to do this might be to do a field review before sending the list to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee is scheduled to take action on this item six weeks from now. *(No vote taken.)*

Bob Burns amended his motion to include "contingent upon this list meeting MaineDOT field studies," Mike Laberge seconded Bob Burns' amended motion. Discussion followed. Dan Jellis said he would like to look at the segment on U.S. Route 1, which is listed in the "Substantially Meets Standards" category. MaryAnn said that West Grand Avenue is in the 08/09 list and that East Grand Avenue should be on the new list whereas Walnut Street should be deleted. Other comments included the need to have information on the costs associated with those projects that need to be brought up to standards. Bob proposed that the group discuss the roads listed in the "Substantially Meets Standards" list at the next meeting and that as part of the field review, that those roads are looked at and discussed with Gorrill-Palmer. Another suggestion included whether the list should have a cut-off point by not looking at anything that is ranked below a certain number. The group could then look at what the other projects need to be brought up to standards. *(No vote taken on the amended motion).*

Bob Burns made a motion to take a look at those roads that are at the top 20 Substantially Meets Standards candidates list and that Gorrill-Palmer come up with a cost associated with bringing up to standard those top 20 Substantially Meets Standards candidates as well as all the design exceptions list, seconded by Mike Laberge. Discussion. Paul re-iterated the motion, that the list include the top candidates in the top three categories and that the group is combining all three lists based on the estimate of \$6 million and the 25% contingency for field review. Jeff suggested making only one rank list and color code it. ***Vote taken. All in favor except one opposed. Motion carried.***

Paul requested that members send an email to him prior to the next meeting to let him know if a town would like to forgo one of the projects on the list. John applauded the committee and staff for all their hard work. He will update the PACTS Planning Committee on the group's recommendations.

Jim Wendel added that he would suggest that the process arrived at today be compiled in some sort of manual so that all members could have it available to them as reference on the analysis method used today and then subsequently build upon it. This could have the potential of becoming a long-term functional manual

5. Appointments to Planning and Transit Committees

Mike Laberge is currently the PACTS Planning Committee member representing Planning at the PACTS Technical meetings and Dave Redlefsen is on the PACTS Transit Committee. There was consensus that there is no need to have a specific representative on these other Committees. Of course, anyone else who would like to attend the other meetings is welcomed to do so.

6. Information and Other Business

1. Jeff McEwen did a PowerPoint presentation on flexibility in designs for the MPO Project Innovations Working Group and talked about having training for all different entities such as MPOs, consultants, etc. to understand the process. All of the flexibilities are already in the standards but it's how to apply that flexibility.
Discussions focused on clear zones, speed limits and design requirements in relation to minor collectors, urban and rural collectors. A report will be compiled. The next meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2008.
2. In view of recent discussions that have taken place on the current set-asides and whether they are realistic and/or work with Destination Tomorrow, a new TIP Process Committee may be convening in November. At our next meeting in October, we will need to select someone from the Technical Committee to participate.

7. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Agenda Item 4. Collector Road Rankings and Final List.

During our September meeting we reviewed our draft list of proposed collector paving projects. The initial list consisted of only collectors that were on the "Meets Standards" list. During that meeting it was discussed that in considering only those roads which met standards we may be jeopardizing roads that were close to meeting standards with minimal improvements needed or those that required design exceptions. The consensus was we should consider all three categories for a revised draft list. That revised list was developed with consideration as noted above, but with an emphasis on those that "met standards". The revised list was emailed to the Committee on September 16 for review and comment. After receiving constructive comments from a number of members and rethinking our approach a third list was developed.

This new list is a compilation of the 3 lists ("meets", "substantially meets" and "design exceptions") in ranked order with no consideration as to what category the road was in. Short segments were not considered as well as recent or current projects. The revised list includes an additional one mile of paving for approximately the same dollar amount as the previous list. Roads in two additional towns (8 towns vs. 6 towns) are also included in the revised list. This list was emailed to everyone on September 26th. Minimal comment was received.

The total cost estimate for the revised list is similar to the original list. We have field review the list with MaineDOT representatives and town representatives. Some town reps were not able to make the field review but have been contacted to discuss any concerns. Gorrill Palmer has updated

the cost estimates using recent DOT unit costs and DOT's input. The list has been modified slightly considering everyone's comments. There are some project specific issues that must be resolved before the project are "programmed" for our 10/11 UTIP. This "final" list for review on Tuesday is included with this agenda. Our final recommendation must go to the Policy Committee on October 16th, two days after our Tech Meeting.

Agenda Item 5. Appointments to Planning and Transit Committees

We should "revisit" the current request to have a Technical Committee representative to both the Planning and Transit Committee. They have made the decision to appoint one member of their respect committee to represent them on the other PACTS committee. We should strongly consider having similar representation given recent discussions pertaining to having a more holistic or all inclusive approach to transportation.

Agenda Item 6. TIP Process Committee

Although no date has been set we will soon be convening a new TIP Process committee to revise and update our process for the 12/13 work plan. Yes, 12/13. Although no decision is required at today's meeting we could come to consensus as to whom we would as the Tech Rep for that Committee.

Agenda Item 7. Potential for MPO Hired LAP Project Manager

During discussions at the MPO/DOT quarterly meeting the subject was raised in respect to getting projects through the process quicker with the idea of getting projects completed in a timelier manner. Simply put MaineDOT is unable to hire more PM's and designers, some towns have a resource shortage that impacts LAP's and some towns believe the process is too complicated. One alternative is for a MPO to hire a project manager to manage specific LAP's for the entire MPO region. This item is open for discussion.

Agenda Item 8. Information, Potential Future Agenda Items and Other Business

1. Prior to our quarterly MPO/DOT meeting held last week, a survey was conducted to determine areas where the MPO and MaineDOT might improve :the process". A summary of those results are on the following page. The main focus of the morning of the meeting pertained to the survey results and how to improve communications and to streamline "the process" and head off sometimes negative of adversarial comments or discussions. During the afternoon we discussed primarily project development and the project ID form.
2. PACTS staff and the Planning Committee has recommended funding the Old Orchard Beach sidewalk project and the Falmouth RT 88 sidewalk project, as well as the Portland Transportation bike/ped access project.
3. PACTS staff is recommending intersection funding of the following three projects:
 - PE for the Dunstan Corner improvements
 - Construction of the Forest Ave/Newton Street signal
 - Upgrade of the Old Orchard Beach traffic signals
4. Other items

Summary of MaineDOT-MPO Survey Responses

I. Background

- MaineDOT received a total of 11 completed surveys (out of 24 sent):
 - ✓ Six from MaineDOT staff.
 - ✓ Consolidated responses from three of the MPOs (ATRC, BACTS, PACTS)
 - ✓ Two from FHWA.

II. Overall themes

- There is a greater need to improve communication between MaineDOT project managers, MPO staffs and municipalities during the project development process.
- MPOs and municipalities need to be brought into the process early on and kept in the loop. MPOs and municipalities should be invited to project team meetings.
- Roles and responsibilities of MaineDOT, the MPO and municipality during the project development process need to be better defined – especially during public meetings – so that all parties understand what is expected of them and frustration is reduced.
- There is a need for better education and training of MPO and municipal staffs regarding the required steps in the project development process.
- There is a need for better project scopes and cost estimates from MPOs and municipalities, to reduce the time project managers must spend on remedial tasks.
- MPOs need to think more regionally and reduce parochialism in the MPO project selection process.