

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

2009 High Priority Projects Committee Meeting Notice

July 25, 2007
1:30 p.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Action on notes from May 30th meeting
3. Status reports on national commissions at work, our three FY 2008 earmark submissions, MaineDOT's draft Connecting Maine plan, MaineDOT's final report for the I-295 Corridor Study, relevant actions taken during the recent Legislative session, and the MaineDOT's upcoming Central York County Transportation Study
4. Potential action items
 - A. Decide to submit lists of large and small projects.
 - B. Adopt a list of candidate projects (7-page attachment)
 - C. Adopt a set of selection criteria (on page 11)
5. Next Steps
6. Adjourn

Potential Attendance

John Bubier, Dale Doughty, Dave Cole, John Duncan, Dan Jellis, Mike McGovern, Tom Meyers, Rick Michaud, Paul Niehoff and Gary Williams

Donna Larson and Mike Bobinsky are unable to attend.

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Notes from May 30, 2007 Meeting

The following people attended: Mike Bobinsky, Dale Doughty, Dan Jellis, Mike McGovern, Tom Milligan, Donna Larson, Tom Meyers, Rick Michaud, Paul Niehoff, Gary Williams (MaineDOT) and John Duncan.

John gave an overview of the Committee's charge and work done so far. Discussion followed. Gary advised that Congressmen generally encourage their district constituents to develop larger ticket proposals than Senators do because Senators' have more constituents from entire states.

Gary gave an update on 2009 federal reauthorization topics. He described two commissions currently at work to advise Congress on direction for the 2009 federal reauthorization policy and funding decisions. One will finish its work in December 2007, and the other has just started. He noted that he and Greg Nadeau are serving on AASHTO committees.

Dale spoke about federal obligation limitations and Congressional continuing resolutions. He also discussed and handed out materials from MaineDOT's *Connecting Maine* plan and *Biennial Capital Work Plan*. He said that MaineDOT will soon release the second part of the *Connecting Maine* plan which will show regional details – which could be useful in our High Priority Projects work. Dale also discussed the June 12th bond package, and MaineDOT's new “cash flow” model. Mike commented on a recent MaineDOT Cape Elizabeth project communication problem.

Here are some other notes from the meeting:

- Donna asked if we should coordinate our work with the other MPO's. Gary said yes, and that MaineDOT would.
- Dale encouraged PACTS to coordinate with our nearby rural corridor committees.
- Dale spoke of the importance of good cost estimates for HPP proposals.
- We briefly discussed the preliminary list of HPP ideas compiled last fall. Donna asked that MaineDOT review and comment on it. Tom asked about the fairness of considering new proposals. John agreed to write for the members a short description of all the ideas on the preliminary list.
- Mike suggested that the country might be headed toward a 2009 reauthorization that is significantly more environmentally oriented.
- The members voted to make Rick Michaud the Chair of the Committee.
- Rick said that it looks like we need to get our final projects list to the Delegation by February 2009, that we should follow the work of the two commissions that Gary described, that perhaps the successor of SAFETEA will be GreenTEA, and that perhaps the Technical Committee could use the PACTS TIP Formula scoring procedures to rank the concepts in the regional chapter of *Connecting Maine*.

The consensus was to meet next in late July.

A PACTS Staff Working List of 2009 High Priority Project Candidates
Revised in preparation for the July 25th meeting

No order of priority is meant or implied in these lists.

All concepts below were submitted in November 2006 by a municipality or the
Transit Committee, except those with a #.

Remember that in 2005 Southern Maine got \$50 million in SAFETEA “earmarks” (including match). At
our 2006 annual meeting Congressman Michaud told us that the best way for Southern Maine to get more
in 2009 is to work to increase the overall federal authorization for transportation.

Project Candidates \$10 million and over (\$325 million total)

\$30,000,000	Widen I-295 in Portland #
\$50,000,000	Other I-295 capital improvements per recent MaineDOT Study #
\$35,000,000	Build Phase II of the Gorham Bypass
\$20,000,000	Build new Interchange at Route 1, Cascade Road & Scarborough town line
\$10,000,000	Purchase replacement transit busses and paratransit vehicles
\$60,000,000	Rebuild two large bridges #
\$80,000,000	Capital improvements for extension of passenger rail to Brunswick #
\$10,000,000	Build Philbrook Road area improvement in South Portland
\$30,000,000	Build two interchanges and a connector road in Biddeford

Projects Candidates Under \$10 million (\$40 million total)

\$5,500,000	Replace a Casco Bay Island Ferryboat
\$5,000,000	Build Eastern Trail connections #
\$1,300,000	Reconstruction of North Main Street in Freeport
\$9,000,000	Upgrade Exit 20, Bridge Replacement in Freeport
\$ 175,000	Purchase five vanpool vans for the GO MAINE program
\$ 500,000	Ocean Park & Smithwheel Road improvements in Old Orchard Beach *
\$5,000,000	Build Franklin Street Arterial Improvements
\$ 70,000	Do Feasibility Study for Regional Traffic Control System Program
\$ 250,000	Install an Electronic Message Board on I-295
\$ 500,000	Coordination/interconnection of four signals in Portland *
\$ fill in...	Widen 2+ miles of Route 1 in northern Saco
\$1,500,000	Improvements to Industrial Park Road in Saco
\$3,000,000	Dunstan Corner and Payne Road at Route 1
\$3,500,000	Build an I-295 Exit 4 southbound on-ramp in South Portland
\$1,700,000	Build a Sound Barrier along northbound I-295 in South Portland
\$ 720,000	Broadway Traffic Signal Coordination in South Portland *
\$4,500,000	Reconstruct a section of Bill Clark Drive in Westbrook

* A February 2007 PACTS submission for FY 2008 Congressional annual earmark

The next seven pages describe the 26 candidate projects in more detail than in past meeting packets, and offer comments and questions from PACTS staff. There is more information on all the candidates in the November 2006 High Priority Project submissions to PACTS and/or other reports.

Project Candidates at \$10,000,000 and Above

1. Widen I-295 in Portland

Project scope: To widen I-295 to six lanes from Congress Street to just north of Franklin Arterial.

Cost estimate: \$30,000,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT's 2006 Corridor Study

Comment: The primary purpose of this widening is to address the unsafe conditions on the highway at the Forest Avenue interchange. MaineDOT is finishing the corridor study report.

2. Make I-295 corridor improvements in Falmouth, Yarmouth and Freeport

Project scope: To widen and lengthen on-ramps and off-ramps in Falmouth, Yarmouth and Freeport (\$7,000,000), and add ramps in Falmouth at the Spur (\$35,000,000).

Cost estimate: \$50,000,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT's 2006 Corridor Study, plus inflation.

Comment: The MaineDOT has already programmed several other Corridor Study improvements recommended for South Portland, Portland and Yarmouth.

3. Build Phase II of the Gorham Bypass

Project scope: To build the 4-mile northerly bypass of Gorham Village recommended in MaineDOT's 2003 Environmental Assessment.

Cost estimate: \$35,000,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT (\$30,000,000) plus inflation.

Comment: MaineDOT and the Turnpike Authority will soon start a study of a proposed "Westerly Access Road" from the southerly Gorham bypass to the turnpike. This highway (anticipated as a toll facility) would obviate the need for a northerly Gorham bypass?

4. Build new Turnpike interchange in Northern Saco

Project scope: To build a new interchange on the Turnpike in northern Saco or southern Scarborough.

Cost estimate: \$20,000,000

Cost estimate source: John Duncan

Comment: Local officials met with Turnpike officials on this concept in 2006. *We should drop this as a High Priority Project idea because Turnpike interchanges are financed with toll revenues rather than federal funds?*

5. Purchase replacement buses and paratransit vehicles

Project scope: To replace 19 large transit buses and 17 paratransit vans or buses for the Shuttlebus/Zoom, South Portland Bus Service, Greater Portland Transit District, Regional Transportation Program, and York County Community Action Corporation.

Cost estimate: \$10,000,000

Cost estimate source: PACTS Transit Committee's \$9,300,000 estimate plus inflation.

Comment: Need to confirm that this proposal includes the current MaineDOT earmark request to the Federal Transit Administration for the \$4,000,000 share of the \$5,000,000 cost for 13 compressed natural gas buses for the METRO (which would replace existing diesel buses).

6. Rebuild two large bridges

Project scope: To perform major rehabilitations of the Veterans Bridge and Martin's Point Bridge in Portland.

Cost estimate: \$60,000,000 – based on \$25,000,000 for Martin's Point and \$30,000,000 for the Veterans Bridge.

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT, plus inflation

Comment: I have a call into Jim Foster on this.

7. Make capital investments for passenger rail to Brunswick

Project scope: To purchase rolling stock and make additional track improvements necessary to provide intercity and commuter rail in the corridor

Cost estimate: \$80,000,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT's \$73,000,000 estimate in January 2006 "Portland North" business plan (less \$12,000,000 "in hand"...plus inflation)

Comment: It appears that the Legislature and Governor Baldacci have decided to support the future operations of the existing Downeaster (after the September 2009 end of the CMAQ operations funds) with General Fund dollars. A formal action by the Legislature and the Governor will happen during the next session. Will that action include funding for operations for the Portland North service? (The FHWA has said that CMAQ funds may not be used for the Portland North capital and operations.) Another detail is that MaineDOT will soon start a \$1,700,000 study of the "Portland North" corridor.

8. Build Philbrook Road area improvements in South Portland

Project scope: To do the following: (1) to combine Philbrook Road with the Turnpike Spur westbound on- and off-ramps, and (2) to build a bridge over the Turnpike Spur to enable eastbound traffic to access the spur from the Mall and Philbrook Road. (MaineDOT staff refers to this spur as "Route 703".)

Cost estimate: \$10,000,000

Cost estimate source: The 2001 Maine Mall Area Traffic Study and 2003 Preliminary Design Report of MaineDOT...need to check this.

Comment: This scored highly in the 2005 PACTS project selection process, but was too expensive for us to fund from the PACTS MPO Allocation.

9. Build Two Interchanges and a Connector Roadway in Biddeford

Project scope: To build a roadway connection from South Street to Route 111 in an area west of the Maine Turnpike. It would begin on South Street west of the turnpike overpass in the vicinity of the Biddeford Saco Water Company treatment facility and end on Andrews Road/Route 111 southwesterly of the current exit 32.

A second component of the proposed project, the Exit 32 South interchange, will provide an interchange to the turnpike southerly of the current Exit 32 with a connector road to Route 111 (from the interchange) that would begin/end at the Route 111/Andrews Road intersection.

A third component of the project will be to provide a turnpike interchange and associated roadway improvements at South Street as well as additional improvements to South Street and Route 1 that will be required in order to accommodate traffic from these areas that would be expected to utilize this interchange.

Cost estimate: \$30,000,000

Cost estimate source: Based on a \$27,500,000 estimate from Tom Milligan, Biddeford's City Engineer

Comment: I sent Tom an email with some questions about this last Thursday. Pending further information from Tom, the \$30,000,000 might turn out to be a conservative estimate.

Project Candidates Under \$10,000,000

1. Replace a Casco Bay Island Ferryboat

Project scope: To replace the Casco Bay Island Transit District's 33-year-old ferryboat Island Romance.

Cost estimate: \$5,500,000

Cost estimate source: CBITD

Comment: PACTS recently programmed \$200,000 for preliminary design of the vessel, and made an internal commitment for an additional \$300,000 toward the purchase of the vessel with 2010/2011 funds.

The funding to replace the three CBITD other vessels during the past fifteen years has come through FTA and State of Maine grants, along with CBITD borrowing and limited municipal funds.

2. Build Eastern Trail Connections

Project scope: To build trails in Scarborough, Old Orchard Beach, Biddeford, Saco and South Portland outlined in the Eastern Trail Management District's 2006 Work Plan

Cost estimate: \$5,000,000

Cost estimate source: Eastern Trail Management District

Comment: I have a call (July 18th) into Larry Silly, the new staff (?) to the E. T. Mgt District. Note that we estimated \$16,000,000 in an earlier list.

3. Reconstruction of North Main Street in Freeport

Project scope: To reconstruct the existing road to a uniform pavement width of about 32 feet with granite curbs and sidewalks *between Mallet Drive and Kendall Lane?* The existing drainage system with open steep ditches will be replaced with under-drains, catch basins, culverts, and related structures as required.

Cost estimate: \$1,263,000

Cost estimate source: PACTS Enhanced Project Scoping in 2006

Comment: PACTS funded this proposal two years ago when we were working with an \$18 million MPO Allocation estimate, and then we cut it and many other proposals when the estimate was reduced. In 2006 we submitted this to our Congressional Delegation for FY 2007 earmark funding. It did not get funded, and we did not resubmit it for FY 2008 funding.

4. Upgrade Exit 20 of I-295 in Freeport

Project scope: To do the following: (1) to replace the Desert Road bridge with a four-lane bridge, (2) to reconfigure the southbound exit ramp and merge it into Hunter Road, and (3) to build a dedicated lane turning south from the north end of the northbound exit.

Cost estimate: \$9,000,000

Cost estimate source: Albert Presgraves, Freeport Town Engineer, added a 5-year inflation factor to a \$7,000,000 estimate in order to get this amount.

Comment: The existing bridge was built in 1957 for two lanes of traffic. It is currently being used with three lanes, and almost no shoulders. Note that this proposal is in addition to the MaineDOT's Corridor Study recommendations for other ramp work at Exit 20.

5. To Purchase Five Vans for the GO MAINE vanpool program

Project scope: To purchase five vans for the GO MAINE vanpool program.

Cost estimate: \$175,000

Cost estimate source: GO MAINE staff and MaineDOT

Comment: GO MAINE, the statewide commuter service administered by the Greater Portland Council of Governments, currently manages a commuter vanpool fleet consisting of nine vehicles and several spares. Seven vanpool routes operate between Greater Portland and the Augusta area, while two vanpools operate between Lewiston-Auburn and the Augusta area. Each vanpool carries one driver and eleven riders for a total of

108 in the GO MAINE program. MaineDOT is expanding the GO MAINE vanpool fleet with the purchase of 10 new vehicles in early 2007. Of these, 3 will replace older vehicles while the remaining 7 will provide service on newly created routes and increasing existing service. Data from a public vanpool interest survey (2006) indicates strong demand from service to and from Greater Portland, to and from Lewiston-Auburn, to and from Augusta, to and from Bangor, and from York County north. *The new vehicles will help meet a portion of this growing demand for economical, efficient and comfortable commuter vanpool service, but will leave considerable unmet demand.* Five additional vehicles would, therefore, be a significant addition to the fleet. Capital for the purchase of five vehicles would provide the needed “jump-start”, once a vehicle is purchased, vanpool passenger fares typically pay to operate, maintain and replace the vehicle.

We will check in with GO MAINE staff before our meeting.

6. Ocean Park and Smithwheel Road Improvements in Old Orchard Beach

Project scope: To do the following: (1) build a right turn lane from Smithwheel Road to Ocean Park Road, (2) re-stripe existing eastbound Ocean Park Road to create a 300 ft long left turn lane onto Smithwheel Road, (3) build a transition lane from the end of existing median island to the beginning of the left turn lane, (4) rebuild the existing eastbound merge lane of Ocean Park with the terminal lane of eastbound interstate I-195, (5) reconfigure the eastbound Ocean Park Road approach, and (6) do some minor widening of westbound Ocean Park Road/I-195 along the existing island.

Cost estimate: \$500,000

Cost estimate source: Consultant study done in 2006

Comment: This is one of our three February 2007 submissions for a FY 2008 Annual Appropriations Earmark from Congress.

7. Build Franklin Street Arterial Improvements

Project scope: To do the following: (1) to widen Franklin Arterial from I-295 to south of Somerset /Fox Streets in order to match the I-295 Exit 7 ramp improvements (PIN 15634), (2) to widen Marginal Way west of Franklin Arterial, and (3) to widen Fox Street east of Franklin Arterial.

Cost estimate: \$5,000,000

Cost estimate source: The \$3,240,000 estimate in the draft Portland Peninsula Traffic Study report. That estimate does not include the purchase of right of way. (PACTS has programmed \$486,000 for design work. That design work can start in the new fed fiscal year.)

Comment: There is debate within the Portland City Council and the citizens involved in the Portland Peninsula transportation planning process on the merits of this proposal?

8. Perform a Feasibility Study for Regional Traffic Control System Program

Project scope: The project involves evaluating the feasibility of implementing a region wide traffic control program that provides improved synchronization between the cities within the Greater Portland area. The work will incorporate an existing systems study and recommendations for how combining traffic control operations will improve the traffic flow between communities within the Greater Portland area. Communities within the Greater Portland Area will participate in the study. The study conclusions will provide guidance as to the relative value and outcome of combining traffic control operations among the various agency communities, its cost effectiveness and value on addressing traffic calming and speed control among the neighboring communities.

Cost estimate: \$50,000 to \$70,000

Cost estimate source: City of Portland

Comment: We have a \$100,000 study for this purpose in our planning work program adopted in May. However, we are about to reduce our overall budget, as discussed at the July 19th Policy Committee meeting.

9. Install an Electronic Message Board on I-295

Project scope: To purchase and install electronic message boards along I-295. The message boards can provide a wide range of information to the traveling public ranging from accident alerts, weather forecast and driving hazard conditions, Amber Alerts, and other emergencies.

Cost estimate: \$250,000 for one board

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT's I-295 Corridor Study

Comment: The Corridor Study recommends two boards, and MaineDOT has already programmed one?

10. Coordination and interconnection of four traffic signals in Portland

Project scope: To coordinate and interconnect four signals in Portland at intersections that currently don't have coordination. The project would include controllers, system detectors, fiber optic cable and software. This project will also include limited maintenance/upgrading of an intersection that is currently coordinated

Cost estimate: \$500,000

Cost estimate source: PACTS staff based on a PACTS staff study

Comment: This is one of our three February 2007 submissions for a FY 2008 Annual Appropriations Earmark from Congress.

11. Improvements to Industrial Park Road and its intersection with North Road in Saco

Project scope: To add turning lanes and address intersection deficiencies on Industrial Park Road (___ distance) and at its intersection with North Road

Cost estimate: \$1,500,000

Cost estimate source: Consultant traffic study

Comment: The study report provides detailed recommendations.

12. Widen 2+ miles of Route 1 for in Northern Saco

Project scope: To widen Route 1 from 650 feet north of I-195 to the intersection with Cascade Road (Route 98)

Cost estimate: *Will find out before the July 25th meeting*

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT cost estimating done two years ago

Comment: Is MaineDOT working on this again? PACTS staff will check.

13. Make roadway and intersection improvements at Dunstan Corner and the intersection of Payne Road and Route 1 in Scarborough

Project scope: To do the following: (1) to relocate the intersection of Payne Road and Route 1, (2) to reconfigure the nearby Harlow/Payne intersection with Route 1, (3) to widen the intersection of Broadturn/Pine Point Road with Route 1, and (4) to rebuild sidewalks in the area.

Cost estimate: \$3,000,000 (of a total project cost of \$6,000,000 per the Town's November 2006 submission to PACTS)

Cost estimate source: Scarborough's Town Transportation Plan (2006?)

Comment: The Town is finishing a Dunstan Corner traffic master plan. We need to learn what it says.

14. Build an I-295 Exit 4 Southbound On-Ramp in South Portland

Project scope: To modify the existing Exit 4 interchange in order to enable traffic from the Lincoln/Main Streets area to access I-295 southbound there.

Cost estimate: \$3,500,000

Cost estimate source: A 2005 MaineDOT construction cost estimate of \$1,500,000, plus inflation/contingency, engineering and right-of-way.

Comment: We have a sketch of this prepared by MaineDOT during their 2006 I-295 Corridor Study.

15. Build a Sound Barrier along Northbound I-295 in South Portland from Exit 3 to 4

Project scope: To build a sound barrier from Exit 3 to 4 between the highway and the Broadway area neighborhood.

Cost estimate: \$1,700,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT \$1,200,000 estimate plus inflation/contingency

Comment: No comment.

16. Broadway Traffic Signal Coordination in South Portland

Project scope: Alternative 1: To coordinate and interconnect the intersections of Cottage/Highland, Waterman/Market and Ocean/Highland Avenue. Upgrading controllers, system detectors, fiber optic cable and software.

Alternative 2: To coordinate and interconnect seven intersections (including

the three above) at Anthoine/Broadway, GE Erskine/Waterman, Waterman/Market, Ocean/Market, Ocean/ Highland, Broadway/Mussey and Cottage/Highland Avenue. Upgrading controllers, system detectors, fiber optic cable and software.

Cost estimate: Alternative 1: \$720,000 (Alternative 2: \$837,480)

Cost estimate source: Julia will be able to explain the alternatives on 7/25.

Comment: *This is one of our three February 2007 submissions for a FY 2008 Annual Appropriations Earmark from Congress. Did MaineDOT fund this with Hazard Elimination Funds? We will learn before the 7/25 meeting.*

17. Reconstruct Bill Clark Drive between Spring Street and Saco Street

Project scope: To widen Bill Clarke Drive between Spring Street and Saco Street to a four-lane divided corridor with a landscaped median and left turn pockets at all major intersections. This proposal is for Phases 3 and 4 of a four phase project in Downtown Westbrook. Phases 1 and 2 are done and/or funded.

Cost estimate: \$4,500,000

Cost estimate source: MaineDOT approved the final design for this project in 2005(?). On July 19th Westbrook's Eric Dudley advised on the budget for the final two phases.

Comment: The City's proposal also describes sidewalks, a new architectural roadway lighting system, landscaping and signing, a new closed loop traffic signal system, and pedestrian crossings strategically located and specially designed for user safety.

Our draft September 2006 set of guidelines for developing a list of proposals for 2009

1. Projects with a minimum cost of \$5 million.
2. Projects that would get financed only with special funding.
3. Regionally significant projects – particularly key intersections (a high priority of *D. Tomorrow*).
4. Projects for which a need/feasibility study has been done.
5. Projects related to the environment (such as alternative fuels).
6. Projects that support economic growth.
7. Projects that benefit multiple towns.
8. Projects financed in partnerships with, for example, the Turnpike and developers.
9. Projects that enhance intermunicipal collaboration (such as a multi-municipal public works garage).