

Agenda Item 3. Approve Planning Committee Minutes of October 6th, 2011

PACTS Planning Committee October 6th 2011

Present: Dan Bacon (Scarborough), David Galbraith (Gorham), Tom Poirier (Gorham), Robert Kahn (TrainRiders), Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth), Brooks More (Windham), Tex Haeuser (South Portland), Peggy Kilmer (Yarmouth), Sara Devlin (Maine Turnpike Authority), Carla Nixon (Cumberland), Vanessa Farr (Yarmouth)

Staff/guests: Carl Eppich (PACTS), Retta Choate (GPCOG), Steph Carver (GPCOG), Steve Linnell (GPCOG), John Duncan (PACTS), Paul Niehoff (PACTS)

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Brooks More called meeting to order as Dan Bacon had a conflicting appointment and would be late.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approve Planning Committee Minutes of September 1, 2011

Tom Poirier made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 1, 2011 Planning Committee meeting and Tex Haeuser seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. a. Corridor Planning and Placemaking: Complete Streets and Contest Sensitive Design Falmouth Route 1 Corridor – Theo Holtwijk

Theo Holtwijk delivered a presentation on the Falmouth Route One South Infrastructure project. The plan is intended to coordinate improvements in a 1.5 mile Route One corridor from the Route 88 intersection to the Turnpike Connector ramps. In 2011 the Council endorsed some key design concepts for Route 1. These are being translated into formal zoning ordinance amendments.

The vision for Route 1 is a dynamic area with diverse uses and is a destination for many people. It would have sidewalks and encourage pedestrians, multi-purpose trips, and have residential uses. The attractive landscaping would appeal to businesses and shoppers. For more details, the presentation can be found on the Town of Falmouth website.

b. Scoring of Intersection and Road Rebuild Proposals: The TIP process subcommittee did some work on the roadway scoring formula and the Technical Committee made some changes. They changed the regional focus and economic development categories to 7.5 each. Staff recommended the changes to simplify the formula.

The formula now includes bonus points for projects that cross municipal lines and rewards projects that score well. The scoring mechanism changes but the outcome is about the same. This item will go to the Policy Committee in November.

5. Information and other business

Last month Carl Eppich represented Northern New England APA at the national policy briefing in Washington DC.

Paul Niehoff said we are close to signing the contract plan for the bike coalition. A big component is law enforcement and we are working with local police departments to co-sign a letter to the town of Westbrook concerning a bicyclist who was hit on Rt. 302. The Town of Westbrook did not issue a citation to the driver who hit the bicyclist even though he violated the 3' passing law. Paul also met with the safety people at MaineDOT to work on acquiring better data on bicycle accidents.

Scopes are nearing completion for Gorham EW land use technical assistance. The Franklin Street Corridor Feasibility and Intersections Design project will go out to RFP in late October.

MaineDOT is about to make several staffing changes. Sara Devlin said the Maine Turnpike Authority recently had a board retreat and will be deciding what direction to move in.

6. Next meetings and other Dates

Next Planning Committee Meeting: November 3, 9:00 a.m. We will open the meeting to another community presentation. A joint meeting of the PACTS Planning Committee and Transit Committees is scheduled for December 8.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Agenda Item 4. Corridor planning and Placemaking: Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Design: A 21st Century Plan for Downtown (North Windham) – Brooks More

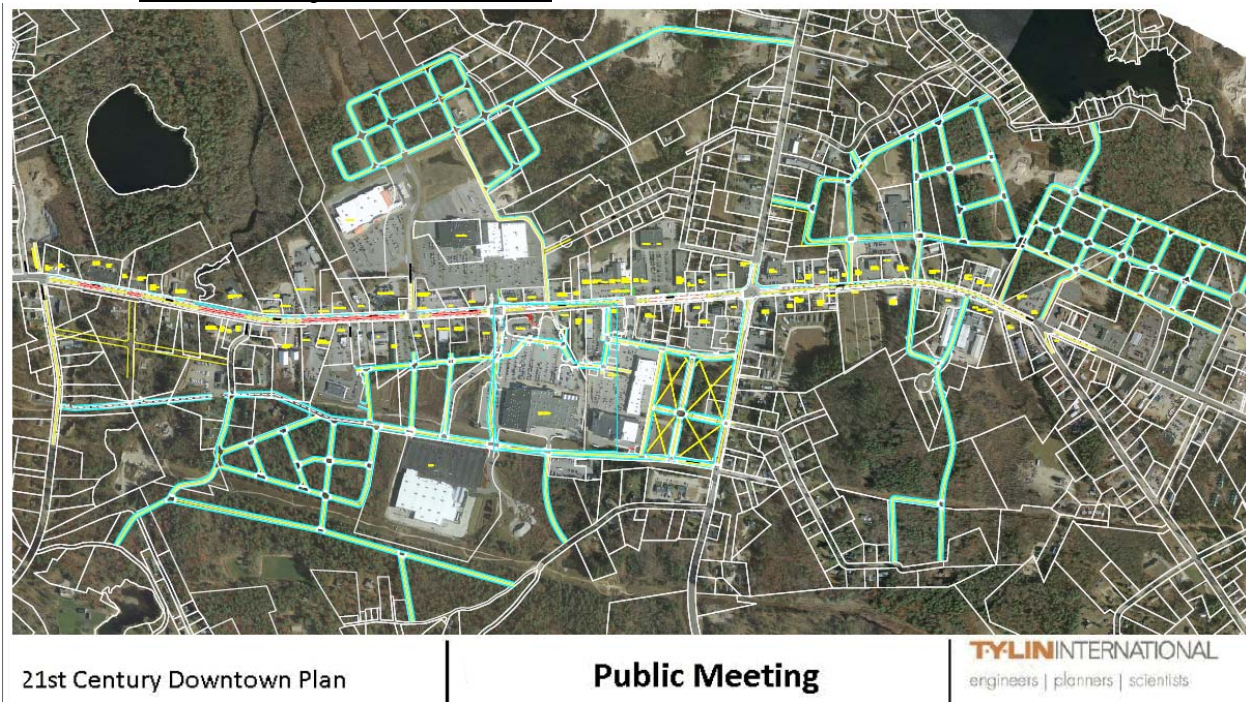
The Town of Windham with assistance from PACTS has for the past 10 months been developing a transportation plan with consultants from TY LIN and MRLD. This plan is for the commercial corridor on US Route 302 in North Windham, focusing in the area along from the intersection of Page Road to White’s Bridge Road

Like other commercial strip areas in the PACTS region, the North Windham commercial area serves as one of the retail, office and service centers for the Lakes Region area. Located in this commercial area are banks, restaurants, retail centers (including, “big box” stores), offices, and service businesses.

Over the past 10 years the Town, business community, and Maine DOT have made improvements including lateral roads, signal coordination, center turn lanes, and sidewalks. To build upon this work, the North Windham transportation plan is taking a comprehensive approach to prioritizing future transportation improvements in a way that improves both the efficiency of the system and the commercial district’s sense of place. This effort is now known as “A 21st Century Plan for Downtown Windham”

The plan seeks to achieve the following goals:

- Incorporate concepts from the “Complete Streets” movement. This includes access management, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, intersection improvements and improved landscaping among other appropriate treatments as determined.
- Balance the dual function of Route 302 as both an inter-state travel corridor and a local commercial and industrial center.
- Develop an integrated transportation system that coordinates the use of parallel service roads and connections between retail center parking lots.
- Develop a capital improvement plan for transportation infrastructure.
- Identify funding sources and guide future public and private investments in transportation improvements.
- Develop a plan that takes into account and incorporates as much as possible the methodologies in the Maine DOT’s *Sensible Transportation Handbook*.



Here's a link to Windham's project website:

http://mobile.windhamweb.com/planning_department/mobile_index.shtml

Here's a link to an article on the project:

http://www.pressherald.com/news/windham-group-seeks-more-cohesive-downtown_2011-05-12.html

Agenda Item 5. Municipal Partnership Initiative

(PACTS has recently become aware of this DOT competitive funding initiative):

Purposes of the Initiative

The MaineDOT's Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) is intended to be a demand response program, which can rapidly react to Municipal requests, such as responding to changing local transportation needs on State and State-Aid highways, developing economic opportunities, and safety concerns on or adjacent to these highways.

The program is designed to promote partnerships between MaineDOT and municipalities, public utilities, private businesses and other entities by leveraging additional resources on a voluntary basis to match limited state resources. It will make improvements to State and State-Aid highways often utilizing more flexible project delivery methods when the nature of the highway and project allow.

MPI Grant Requirements

In order to be eligible, each project must meet the following criteria:

- √ *Professional Engineer Certified:* Unless waived by MaineDOT's Chief Engineer, all projects must be designed by an engineer licensed in Maine and once constructed, the engineer of record must certify that the project was constructed in accordance with the plans and specifications.
- √ *10-Year Useful Life:* Unless waived by MaineDOT's Chief Engineer, the work must have a minimum 10-Year useful life.
- √ *Deliverability:* Usually construction will be administered by the municipality, when this is the case the municipality must demonstrate to MaineDOT that they have the ability or can obtain the ability to administer the project. Construction must commence within twelve (12) months and construction must be certified complete in twenty four (24) months from when a Cooperative Agreement is signed. If timelines are not met MaineDOT may reallocate funding to other eligible projects in other communities.
- √ *Public Involvement:* The municipality is responsible to lead the public involvement process consistent with all laws, including Maine's Sensible Transportation Policy Act. The value and extent of documented community support will be considered a project benefit.
- √ *Betterment to the State Transportation System:* The work covered must be betterment to the state transportation system above and beyond the requirement of any law or permit condition. For instance, investments must be improvements above and beyond mitigation for a traffic movement permit or above and beyond the legal requirements of a highway opening permit.
- √ *Multiple Party Agreements:* The municipality and all involved parties must be willing to enter into an agreement whereby the MPI Grant amount is capped based on project estimates prior to construction. This agreement will also list future maintenance responsibilities.
- √ *Right-of-Way Acquisition:* MPI grants will only reimburse for the right of way required for the transportation betterment. Most projects are expected to be within existing right of way, however, the municipality may be asked to secure any needed property rights in accordance with all applicable State and Federal Law.

Funding

Unless waived by the Commissioner, the MaineDOT MPI funding contribution for a project will be capped at \$500,000. If a MPI project is an add-on to an existing MaineDOT project (other than Maintenance Surface Treatment) the MPI funding portion will only count as MaineDOT's additional contribution beyond what was previously programmed.

State funding for the MPI is limited by available state funding, which is impacted by revenue projections, Legislative budget deliberations, bid prices, and the severity of winter weather. For the FY-12-13 biennium, MaineDOT anticipates having about \$7 million for the MPI. Funding shares will be negotiated on a case by case basis, depending on the extent of regional or statewide benefits. Generally, MaineDOT's share will be capped at 50% or less. Consideration will be given to the impact a project has on eliminating the need for current and future projects and maintenance needs. Municipalities may propose shifting long-term maintenance responsibilities as part of their share.

Project Selection

MaineDOT will continuously accept project applications and eligible projects will be selected on a first come first serve basis. Additional project selection factors include the following:

- *Safety*: The improvement will impact a direct safety need such as infrastructure improvements that address an area with a high crash history or potential for hazardous conditions.
- *Economic Development & Job Creation*: Preference will be given to projects that allow for job growth and facilitate economic development.
- *Degree of Betterment*: Projects that provide a greater infrastructure benefit than others such as reducing maintenance costs, ride quality, or increasing mobility will be given a higher priority.
- *Percentage of Local Match*: The greater the percentage of non-state funding, the greater the likelihood the project will be selected.
- *Record of Requests*: The proposed project is something that the municipality has requested MaineDOT to improve over a number of years but State transportation resources have not been sufficient to make the improvement.
- *Customer Benefit*: Preference will be given to projects based on the amount and degree of benefit that travelers will realize from the benefit.
- *Prior MPI Awards*: MaineDOT will seek to fund eligible projects in all interested municipalities prior to issuing multiple grants to the same one.

Project Administration

Project administration will be project specific and detailed in the Cooperative Agreements. In general, projects are intended to be administered by a municipality, as a grant, with MaineDOT reviewing products at key milestones such as completion of design and construction. The focus of MaineDOT's review will be insuring that the project will achieve the benefits listed in the above bullets and will not degrade safety. MaineDOT will reimburse entities once the work is complete to the satisfaction of MaineDOT. For large projects and subject to available funding, MaineDOT will consider partial payments based on project progress.

Application Process

To apply for a grant simply:

- √ Review the program criteria in this guide.
- √ Be prepared to discuss each item at some detail, and
- √ Contact the Region Engineer or Region Manager in your local field office (see http://www.maine.gov/mdot/aboutmainedot/pdf/Region_page_2010a.pdf or call (207)624-3600 for contact information)

Agenda Item 6. Overview of the PACTS Organizational Review study

PACTS is requesting proposals from firms to perform a comprehensive organizational structure analysis. PACTS is a “metropolitan planning organization” which has existed in accordance with federal regulations since 1975. In that capacity, we program federal transportation funds available to Greater Portland, we study the region’s transportation needs and proposed solutions (primarily highway, public transportation and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure), we assist our partners in implementing the region’s transportation plans, and we serve as a regional forum on transportation for the public and for decision makers. Our primary partner is the Maine Department of Transportation.

We are doing this analysis for four reasons:

- The members generally feel that the PACTS process is too complicated.
- We want the PACTS process organized in a way that maximizes our ability to react to change and still maintain our effectiveness.
- The PACTS structure has changed little in 35 years.
- We want the PACTS staff and committees composition to best meet the needs of the organization.

We are seeking consultant assistance that will include but not be limited to:

- PACTS organizational analysis (review of current operations, structure, efficiencies, staffing, workload, methodologies, etc)
- Benchmarking and/or comparative analysis with similar MPO agencies (reviewing cost efficiency, budget, productivity, organizational structure, operational procedures, member satisfaction, etc)
- Member satisfaction survey (value of services received in the region and by community, expectations, customer service, efficiency, performance, relations with other agencies and entities, etc)
- Cost benefit analysis of alternative structures:
 - Staffing and consulting structure
 - Privatization
 - Consolidation with other nearby MPO
 - Alternative means of funding distribution (ie – State distribution directly to communities)
 - Advantages, disadvantages of keeping current structure or modifying structure
- Recommendations that could improve, if deemed necessary: member satisfaction/value; efficiency and productivity, project management; process; communication; regional impact; improved transportation systems; and administration.

The selected firm/team will start in December. We aim to complete the process in April.

FULL RFP is an attachment

Agenda Item 7. PACTS region truck route or truck priority network

The PACTS Area Collector Road Assessment (2010 Update) consists of about 200 miles of roads in the PACTS region which PACTS has prioritized for “Preservation Paving”. Oversight is provided by the Technical Committee to the Policy Committee. This prioritization is based on factors including the Collector Priority Index., Condition Index, Service Index, and Safety Index.

The **Service Index** it is intended to include a component that speaks to whether or not the roadway is used by trucks and/or transit vehicles. While this index has included a transit factor – routes are mapped easily identifying roads that are heavily traveled by buses. However, neither the Maine DOT nor PACTS has truck route data available.

Transit and Truck Routes are both allocated up to 5 points out of 30 points. (The remaining 70 points are within the Condition Index)

Options:

The Technical Committee has been trying to come up with a solution, but Planning Committee members may have an idea of how this could be handled. Ideas include:

- We could hire someone to come up with parameters or do it at the Technical Committee level. Gorrill Palmer will research truck route data. There are no standards but we could start by looking at town traffic counts.

This could take some time and in the end be overly or unnecessarily quantitative.

- We could look at a map of all our Collector Roads and have each town identify routes that trucks are more likely to travel.

This may not be quantitative enough. However, it may be sufficient for identifying

- We could work with a trucking organization such as Maine Motor Transport Association (MMTA) to identify what they would call priority truck routes.

Regardless, we (or punt to the Technical Committee) must decide what to do with 35% of the Service Index Score. Last month, Technical voted to give 70% of the score to the Condition Index, unless It is decided at this meeting what to call the truck route and make a recommendation to the Policy Committee. Paul would need the truck routes resolved by December 1st.