

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee



Technical Committee Meeting

October 12, 2010 8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Approve Minutes of the Technical Committees meeting, September 14, 2010**
- 4. Collector Set Aside Review and Recommendation to Policy Committee**
- 5. Credit program Update (from Executive Meeting)**
- 6. Executive Meeting Holding PIN Funding Recommendations (from Executive Meeting)**
- 7. Collector Update Discussion for the Next Assessment**
- 8. Highway Simplification Study Update**
- 9. Information and Other Business**
- 10. Adjourn**

Technical Committee Meeting
September 14
8:30 A.M.

Members: Dan Jellis, Chair (Yarmouth); Angela Blanchette (Saco); Bob Burns (Gorham); Eric Dudley (Westbrook); Tom Errico (Executive Com. Appt.); Sara Devlin (MTA); Jeff McEwen (FHWA); Jenni Franceschi (Biddeford), Bob Hough (MaineDOT); Bob Malley (Cape Elizabeth); Al Presgraves (Freeport); Dave Redlefsen (Public Transportation); Jay Reynolds (Falmouth); Gretel Varney (Portland); Jim Wendel (Scarborough)

Staff/guests: John Duncan (PACTS); Paul Niehoff (PACTS); Ralph Norwood (Gorrill Palmer); Lynne Powers (GPCOG)

- **Call to Order**

Dan Jellis called the meeting to order at 8:40 A.M.

- **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

- **Minutes from the August 10 Joint Planning/Technical Committee Meeting**

Bob Malley made a motion to approve minutes from the August 10th, 2010 joint Planning/Technical Committee meeting. Eric Dudley seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- ***Collector Roads Set Aside Review and Recommendations***

In the last meeting, the group decided that the rankings for the collector roads set aside had some strange elements and agreed to go over it again. Paul said that the current way that the falling weight deflectometer score is incorporated skews the overall point system. He reiterated the importance of having the best information possible and updated dates for when work was last done on these roads. Paul took the "meets standards," "substantially meets standards," and the "design exception" lists and ranked them numerically, then removed anything that was less than a quarter of a mile. Several people suggested reviewing the rating system for the next time that collector road set aside funds are allocated.

Dan pointed out that a three-party agreement to fund the project for next year was just signed for Yarmouth North Road 4, so it could be removed. Angela Blanchette said that Buxton Road had been chopped up into quarter-mile pieces and suggested that Buxton Roads 1 and 2 be combined; she also said that Ocean Park Road had been worked on in 2001 and could move down on the list. The group discussed several more specific projects that wound up on the deleted list. Al Presgraves suggested setting aside the road sections that were too short and then, when working on a road that is nearby, adding them into that bid.

Bob Burns asked about the rationale of pulling Libby Avenue 2 off the paving list and putting it in the deleted. Paul said that with a 4.36 PCR, and having been paved in 2002, it was too early to pave the road again. Bob B. disagreed that the age of the reconstruction work or the road is as important as the physical state of the road. **Bob made a motion to add Libby Avenue and South Freeport Road back onto the list. Al Presgraves amended the motion to remove Freeport Road. The motion to add Libby Avenue onto the list of projects slated for paving was seconded by Dan Jellis.**

- The committee held a discussion of the meeting. Several people wanted to know if projects would be bumped off the list if Libby Avenue was added back to it; the answer to the question was yes. Jennie Franceschi said that if the use of the current formula for the paving list continues, the projects at the top are just going to keep being paved because the FWD ratings will not improve. Jim suggested continuing with the current approach, recognizing that the rating system needs some work and that the Technical Committee could put together a subcommittee to go over it. After the discussion, ***the committee voted down the motion to add Libby Avenue to the paving list, with Bob B., Jay Reynolds, and Jim voting in favor.***

Bob B. stated that he wants to see more time and effort put into this, as it is important and makes up the lion's share of the PACTS budget. The PCR data is updated every two years, and the committee wanted to be sure that it received the data for review sooner the next time that the subject is coming for a vote. Dan brought up Route 1, Section 4, saying that he wanted to see the last section of it paved, and that the listed PCR of 5 is not current; it is actually 3.24. He stated that the FWD value is skewed because the road has a concrete base. ***Dan made a motion to add Route 1, Section 4 to the list. Bob B. seconded the motion. The motion was voted down, with Dan and Bob B. voting in favor.***

There was a request to frame a future agenda item around design exceptions, as there were several high-ranking projects that had the "design exception" designation on them. That meant that Gorrill Palmer had looked at them and thought that they would need a design exception and that one would be achievable. The committee discussed trouble with getting design exceptions for projects being funded by municipalities, as MaineDOT currently does not consider them.

Bob B. made a motion to pass the collector road set aside list with the note that there are concerns with the formula and the FWD and PCR rankings, and that the group is looking to correct it for future biennia. The changes that were made to the list during the meeting are as follows: moving Yarmouth North Road 4 off the list, Westbrook East Bridge Street having a shorter scope than was presented, Saco Buxton Road 1 being combined with Buxton Road 2 and the adjacent short unfinished section of North Road, and several projects (Biddeford Adams Street, Yarmouth Prince's Point Road, and Portland Bate Street) being removed from the list and set aside in a small project pool. ***Angela seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.***

Credit Program Update

Paul said that staff is discussing whether to lower the threshold necessary for projects to qualify for the PACTS credit program. The threshold currently sits at \$500,000. Bob M. said that he wanted to see consistency in the process.

- **Executive Meeting: Holding PIN Funding Recommendations**

There was discussion about putting funds into 2012/13 selection round; they didn't want to do that, as money is available now, not in the future. Money will become available for projects that need the money; basically, those that have gone through the process and are ready to go, but need the extra funds.

- **Highway Simplification Study Update**

Several committee members expressed that the targeted small meetings (of clusters of geographically close municipalities) were not as productive as they had hoped, and that the meetings felt like a rehash of the Augusta MMA meeting. The group held a brief discussion of

the fact that some of the cost estimates were being based on a project from Aroostook County. John D. said that he had attended a meeting where that issue was brought up and a recommendation had already been submitted for an urban collector number to be put together and used.

- **Information and Other Business**

Bob B. reminded the group of the culvert law that will place a huge cost burden on municipalities if it passes as it currently stands. He asked the group to read the e-mails that are being disseminated and to push back against the law. He pointed out that there is also a strong movement from the Department of Environmental Protection to restrict or ban the use of salt on roads, and that, as the next cheapest product is roughly five times the cost of salt, it would be very expensive.

Jenny suggested reopening the discussion on standards for small projects, in the future.

- **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

Agenda Item 4. Collector Set Aside Review and Recommendations

See the September meeting minutes for discussion overview. Since the last meeting staff has discussed the method of ranking system with Gorrill-Palmer and others and have incorporated comments from the September meeting. The revised list was emailed on October 4 and again with this meeting packet. Comments between those dates and this meeting will be discussed and resolved today and recommendations made for funding the projects for the Policy Committee meeting on October 21.

Agenda Item 5. Credit program Update

Staff has been working with a number of communities on scope and cost figures. The Executive was updated on this topic on October 5th. The following is from that meeting packet:

Recommendation: Recommend that the Policy Committee reduce the \$500,000 local expenditures threshold to \$400,000, and program the amounts described below and shown on the table several pages below.

Background

Paul has been working with various communities which have completed projects on PACTS eligible roads including arterials. As is indicated below most towns which we have been working with have reached or exceeded the current \$500,000 minimum threshold. However, Cape Elizabeth has also expended a considerable amount on Route 77 but is below the \$500,000 minimum. Please note two other towns which we have been working with have not been able to meet the requirements of the current policy either because of not meeting design standards or coming close to even a suggested \$400,000 minimum as follows. Given the Cape Elizabeth request noted in the July meeting packet above, staff is requesting the threshold be lowered to \$400,000. It is important to note the \$500,000 minimum was established to enable PACTS staff and MaineDOT to avoid administering small credits on small projects. Plus, the

10% amount on projects of lesser amounts wouldn't, at least in theory amount to much additional funding. The program amounts and funding figures outlined below includes this recommendation.

Based on the discussions and information currently available the following credit program update is as follows:

Falmouth

While reviewing the entire credit program and receiving updated and detailed project information related to Falmouth it appears they are eligible for an additional credit amount of \$30,793 which is a combination of leftover original credit dollars, a PACTS staff math error and new project cost data for the Johnson Road and Middle Road reconstruction projects.

Biddeford

Biddeford completed work on Hill Street, Landry Street and Elm Street (RT 1, an arterial) for a total cost of \$581,728. Work ranged from milling the existing pavement and repaving (i.e. pavement rehabilitation) to full depth reclamation with cement stabilization. Biddeford credit: \$58,173.

Cape Elizabeth

Cape Elizabeth completed two projects on adjacent sections of Rt 77 with the work including milling the existing pavement and repaving for a total cost of \$400,850. Cape credit (if the \$500,000 threshold is reduced): \$40,085.

Portland

Portland has, or will be completing soon, two reconstruction projects on Read Street and Allen Avenue. These projects are substantial full depth reconstruction projects totaling an estimated \$1,076,300. Portland Credit: \$107,630.

Cumberland

Cumberland is under contact for the rehabilitation of most of Rt 88. Anticipated cost is upwards of \$4,500,000. This project includes adding five foot shoulders to the existing roadway. Cumberland Credit: \$250,000 (maximum allowed).

PACTS staff has been working with Cumberland to determine the best use of the credit on the Tuttle Road sidewalk project. As mentioned previously Falmouth utilized their credit for the Allen Avenue collector project and the Rt 88 sidewalk project both currently have three party agreements based on this.

Paul has sent emails requesting the other towns submit projects for consideration based on the current program policies. The parameters are: the project can be currently funded but unobligated (there is a work around for this), has a potential for 12/13 funding or for a project which has been submitted for 12/13, ranked but not being considered for funding either

because the project didn't rank high enough or there are no funds available. We may have more information about the program and its potential uses by our meeting on Tuesday.

Finite credits have been apportioned to Falmouth. Portland and Cumberland are expected to receive credits and staff has been working with Cape Elizabeth, Scarborough and Biddeford on potential credit proposals. Staff may after detailed discussions, recommend lowering the current \$500K minimum project total policy to something less than that given the outcome of further review of the three communities listed above.

The recommendation to lower the threshold has been endorsed by the Executive Committee.

Agenda Item 6. Executive Meeting Holding PIN Funding Recommendations (from Ex Com)

For purposes of tracking and utilizing the Holding Pin for project substitutions, supplemental funding, project withdrawals and the credit program only the federal and state allocations (dollar figures) can be considered.

We discovered when utilizing the policy of funding 06/07 collectors and in additionally funding projects under the project substitution policy, that direct project to project transfers could not be completed because the funding ratios did not match in most cases. For example a 75-5-20 ratio could not be combined and/or supplemented with a 65-10-25 ratio. We then began making only direct federal and state dollar for dollar transfers. Keep in mind that the holding PIN as well as our total allocation never includes real local dollars.

When the Collector Credit Program was enacted it became even more evident that only dollar for dollar transfers could be made especially so based on the FHWA policy of utilizing a minimum of 50% and a maximum of 80% federal funds in a project. This does not include non-participating amounts in a project. Case in point, when the credit program was used for two projects in Falmouth the federal amounts for both projects were set at 80% and the state amounts resulted in 15% and 14% with the corresponding local match. This situation resulted in approximately \$1,550 dollars of fed/state funds "on the table" i.e., in the Holding PIN.

Notes for the table on the next page

On September 16th the Policy Committee endorsed the funding of the Riverside at Warren and the AVL projects shown on the next page.

The Policy Committee also recommended that the remainder after funding those two projects and the Credit Program be programmed to our six Set Asides according to the percentages in our policy.

The amount for the Set Asides – for "ready to go" projects – is less than the \$1,000,000 we estimated at that time. The difference is due to an increase in the amount to be used in the Credit Program and a reduction in the total amount available in the Holding PIN.

Holding PIN worksheet for Policy Committee meeting October 21st

Fed plus State

Available fed+state funds (1)	\$1,816,963
Credit Program (2)	\$486,681
Riverside at Warren	\$735,912
AVL project	\$200,000
Ready to go projects	<u>\$394,370</u>
Total uses	\$1,816,963

1. Based on MaineDOT records October 1st.
2. This amount is greater than estimated at the September Policy Committee meeting. This reduces the ready-to-go \$\$.

Credit Program Projects **Fed plus State**

Falmouth project *	\$30,793
Cumberland sidewalk	\$250,000
Portland project	\$107,630
Cape Elizabeth project	\$40,085
Biddeford project	<u>\$58,173</u>
Credit Program subtotal	\$486,681

* In addition to allocation last April.

Ready to go projects **Fed plus State** **Local** **Total Cost** **Set Aside %**

Collectors	\$224,791	\$74,930	\$299,721	57%
Staff will recommend a collector project(s) on Tuesday.				
Intersections				
Cumberland Mills PE	\$78,874	\$26,291	\$105,165	20%
Transit Capital				
To be determined	\$35,493	\$11,831	\$47,324	9%
Bike/Ped	\$15,775	\$5,258	\$21,033	4%
Rebuild Roads				
Cummings Road PE	<u>\$39,437</u>	<u>\$13,146</u>	<u>\$52,583</u>	<u>10%</u>
Ready to go subtotal	\$394,370	\$131,457	\$525,827	100%

Staff will explain on Tuesday the following suggestions:

1. The Cumberland Mills intersection project for PE. MaineDOT and Westbrook ask that we fund this intersection project. A Westbrook letter is coming. MaineDOT would like to do a nearby bridge project in coordination with this.
We almost funded this project two years ago. However, it ranked lower than a Scarborough intersection at that time which we did also did not fund. John Duncan met on this with Dan Bacon and Tom Hall last week. John will contact Dan on Monday. Dan will not be with us today.
A commitment to fund this PE needs to come with a commitment to build with 14/15 money.
2. Staff proposes that we use some of the Bike/Ped money for a 12/13 biennium project that needs \$15,000 to complete its funding.
3. Staff will also explain the Cummings Road proposal, and an idea for the Transit project.

Agenda Item 7. Collector Update Discussion for the Next Assessment

As we have found when we have utilized our study for the purposes of funding pavement preservation the method of numerically ranking our collectors has not worked as well as we would have liked. However, the reports have certainly met the need and the intent of the initial study by ranking all of our collectors. Over the past two months many discussions have taken place to modify our criteria to better enable us to program our pavement preservation projects. If time permits we can begin the discussion to determine how we would like to proceed with the next update. It has been suggested a small subcommittee be formed to work out the details.

Agenda Item 8. Highway Simplification Study Update

Four PACTS community meetings have been held in Yarmouth, Biddeford, Westbrook and South Portland with very interesting discussions taking place. Time permitting John and Paul will give an overview...

Agenda Item 9. Information and Other Business

TBD