

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

Planning Committee Meeting Notice

September 6, 2007
9:00 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. **Call to order.**
2. **Minutes of August 2nd and 14th meetings**
3. **New Funding for Transportation Improvements**

Overview of the Policy Committee's interest in research into potential new funding for transportation improvements, and a discussion of the potential role of staff and the Planning Committee in the investigation into opportunities for local and regional impact fees (attachment)

4. **The Planning Committee's Year Ahead**

A discussion of potential work items (attachment)

5. **Status Reports**

6. **Adjourn**

Next Meeting: October 4th at 9:00 a.m.

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Agenda Item 2: Minutes of August 2nd and 14th meetings

August 2, 2007 Meeting

Members Present: Donna Larson, Chair, Freeport; Dan Bacon, Scarborough; Robert Kahn, Policy Committee Appointee; Mike Laberge, Maine DOT; Jonathan Labonte, MTA; Brooks Moore, Westbrook; Peter Morelli, Saco; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC; Greg Tansley, Vice-Chair, Biddeford; Steve Linnell, GPCOG.

Members Absent: Dawn Emerson, Yarmouth; Deb Fossum, Gorham; Gary Guerette, Policy Committee Appointee; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Amy Lamontagne, Falmouth; Jon McNulty, Public Transportation; Sandra Mowery, Old Orchard Beach; Carla Nixon, Cumberland; John Perry, FHWA.

Staff and Guests: Julia Dawson, PACTS; John Duncan, PACTS; Ruta Dzenis, SPO; Matti Gurney, GPCOG; Peggy Kilmer, Yarmouth resident; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Anna Price, MaineDOT; David Willauer, GPCOG.

1. **Call to Order.** Donna Larson, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:07a.m. John Duncan welcomed and introduced Robert Kahn to the meeting.

2. **Minutes of May 3rd meeting**

Peter Morelli moved for approval of the minutes, seconded by Greg Tansley. Steve Linnell noted that in the last paragraph of agenda item 5, the phrase "Maine Global Action Committee" should read: "Maine Global Warming Action Committee". ***Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes accepted as amended.***

3. **Rail Planning Portland North**

Anna Price, Project Manager at MaineDOT Office of Passenger Transportation provided an update on the Portland North Rail Study. They have begun the study for procurement of a "Small Starts" funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This will be an alternatives analysis that includes rail north of Portland extending to Yarmouth, Brunswick and Auburn. The analysis will also take a look at Bus Rapid Transit in those same areas. They are currently in the early phase of the project and are in the process of getting contracts with consultants. A public participation plan will also be included with assistance from GPCOG and AVCOG.

Among key items noted and discussed:

- DownEaster's current track route
- Corridors being considered include Brunswick, Yarmouth and Auburn.
- Some rail corridors are owned by Maine Eastern Railroad and St. Lawrence Railroad.
- A local match and operating funds are needed to qualify for funding. It must be demonstrated to the FTA that it is a viable project and viable for funding.
- Promotion of mixed land use and economic development must also be demonstrated for funding.
- Other rails services being considered include an interstate rail service, commuter rail, bus rapid transit and self-propelled cars.
- An established provider such as Amtrak is required.
- Buses are being considered as an interim but dedicated bus ways are required.
- The process to get all the required documentation to the FTA for funding could take up to two-years.
- There is a federal earmark of \$900,000 that is in the MaineDOT budget for funding of the study, consultants, etc.

- Items to be considered in the study would include a fatal flaw analysis and how density correlates to ridership
- The MaineDOT will be doing the public participation plan with assistance from GPCOG and AVCOG and consultants would be doing the ridership, forecasting, etc.

4. Upcoming Reduction in the PACTS Planning/Administration Budget

John Duncan briefed the group on the need to cut the two-year planning and administration budget. All Maine MPOs will be required to make reductions. PACTS must have a plan for cutting \$1million of the \$2.5million. The Committee discussed and considered the elimination of local projects and a 50/50 match vs. an 80/20 match. It was noted that MaineDOT would consider a proposal for cutting less than \$1million.

The Policy Committee has created a working group consisting of a representative from each of the PACTS Committees to come up with recommendations for making those cuts.

Donna Larson will be representing the Planning Committee. (A copy of the PACTS 2-year planning budget for July 2007 to June 2009 that was adopted on May 17, 2007 is included in the meeting packet for reference.) Mike Laberge spoke of unexpended money, the current financial situation, and explained the need to free up some obligation authority monies. Discussion followed on the line items in the budget and whether they had regional and/or subregional impact. The goals of Destination Tomorrow were also considered as a component in relevance to some of the projects.

There was discussion on the implement ability of some of the local studies. It was felt that the Planning Committee should be involved in the ranking of those studies but that the Policy Committee is ultimately the decision maker. The working group will be meeting next week and recommendations from that committee will be going to the Policy Committee. Any thoughts or input can be forwarded to Donna before next Tuesday.

More discussion followed pertaining to the ranking of the local studies. It was agreed that the working group's recommendations would be presented to the Planning Committee prior to going to the Policy Committee. The Planning Committee will then have the opportunity to prioritize a list and send it along to the Policy Committee with the recommendations. (Note: On August 7th Donna Larson scheduled a special Policy Committee meeting for August 14th. See the minutes of that meeting.)

5. Status Reports

The status reports were accepted as described on page 7 of the meeting packet.

6. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2007. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

August 14, 2007 Meeting

Attendees: Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Dawn Emerson, Yarmouth; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Donna Larson, Freeport; Jonathan Labonte, MTA; Molly Just, Westbrook; Donna Larson, Freeport; Josh Mack, SMRPC; Jon McNulty, Public Transportation; Peter Morelli, Saco; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Bill Shane, Cumberland; David Willauer, GPCOG.

Staff: John Duncan, PACTS; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG.

Donna Larson called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

The MaineDOT has requested that PACTS make a reduction in their planning and administration budget for the next two years. Subsequently, the Policy Committee assigned a member from each of the PACTS

Committees to come together as a working group to develop recommendations to the Policy Committee for those cuts. Representatives in the working group have reviewed the projects and have developed a worksheet (distributed for reference) that describes their recommendations along with staff's budget cut recommendations of \$860,000. Staff recommendations included cutting all consultant "local" studies except two in Portland. The working group is also recommending \$235,000 in additional cuts. They did not review the local studies. (One page reports of the local studies were also distributed.)

Discussion and review ensued of the line items in the worksheet. It was decided to recommend to the Policy Committee that SMRPC planning services be funded at \$24,000.

Further discussion and review followed pertaining to the local studies and whether some of these might have regional impacts. Members provided overviews of their respective studies. Consideration was given to a 50/50 match in comparison to an 80/20 match. Following further review and discussion it was decided that the local studies be ranked in order of priority in the event that MaineDOT is unable to obligate funds for all ten, and to request that the studies be funded at the 80/20 federal/local split.

The members ranked the local studies as follows:

1. Portland Woodford's Corner \$40,000
2. Yarmouth Route 1 Phase II \$35,000
3. Freeport School St., Extension \$25,000
4. Cape E. Sidewalk/Bikeway Plan \$35,000
5. Westbrook Downtown Streetscape \$30,000
6. Portland Libbytown Trail \$10,000
7. Portland Eastern Waterfront \$ 5,000
8. Falmouth Town Transportation Plan \$70,000
9. Scarborough Running Hill Road \$40,000
10. Old Orchard Beach Downtown \$60,000

(The recommendations described above were presented to the Policy Committee two days later.)

Meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Agenda Item 3 – New Funding for Transportation Improvements

As highway improvement costs continue to increase, the need to pursue alternative transportation funding has become apparent. The PACTS Policy Committee has asked staff to explore the potential benefits of using impact fees as a way to fund transportation improvements in our region.

Staff recently surveyed Planning Committee members relating to how traffic impact fees are currently being employed in the region. Staff also asked for any suggestions or comments on the subject. Nine members responded.

The following list highlights the responses we received:

- Only two member communities currently have some kind of transportation impact fee/ordinance in place (Scarborough and Freeport);

- Revenues can be generated for site improvements on a case by case basis in Biddeford and Saco.
- The potential for developing a fee was positively received by most of the communities. Concern on how to implement such a fee was cited. There are a handful of municipalities that feel there is not much opportunity or political will at this time;
- The potential for developing a regional fee was also positively received; however the logistics of municipal boundaries and implementation were issues of concern. Other concerns were:
 - Disincentive for business investment in the region.
 - Reducing the State's transportation costs without changing municipal costs.
 - Reduction in contributions by larger developers, without reducing municipal costs.
 - Political boundaries.
 - Administration, enforcement and equitable apportionment of fees.

Tom Reinauer will be available to describe how SMRPC has helped towns, like Sanford, to develop impact fee ordinances. Also, SMRPC is currently working with three towns along the Route 236 corridor on the possibility of a regional impact fee.

SMRPC held a Transportation Impact Fee Workshop in February, where they explained how a community can set up and calculate an impact fee. Representative from Brewer, Scarborough and Topsham, towns that have instituted transportation impact fees, were also available to provide real accounts of impact fee practices and experiences. Some items to consider were:

- Development must benefit from the project;
- Fee cannot be used to replace existing infrastructure;
- Transportation impact fees are the most complex kind;
- Have good legal counsel as you develop an ordinance; and
- Impact fee requires all developments to pay, even small projects that don't trip the state's traffic off-site process.

Agenda Item 4: The Planning Committee's Year Ahead

Donna Larson and Greg Tansley met recently with Paul Niehoff and John Duncan to brainstorm topics for the Planning Committee's work during the coming year. Here are some of the ideas that came up.

1. Work with staff on the research into new sources of funding for transportation, such as impact fees and other developer extractions. (We have started.)
2. Continue to work with staff on the land use transportation connection policy – such as get involved in the Westerly Access corridor study that the Turnpike Authority is going to start this fall regarding connecting the Gorham bypass to the Maine Turnpike, or the similar study in the Biddeford-Sanford corridor.
3. Work with PACTS and MaineDOT staff to lower the traffic level of service standard in compact areas from LOS D to E, for instance.
4. Give staff some direction in organizing some regional bike/ped planning work. (We have a \$20,000 budget for consultant assistance.) See Status Report item regarding recent meeting with Portland Trails.
5. Revisit the access management scope of work drafted by staff with the members last winter.
6. Decide on experts to invite to come speak (per our \$20,000 two-year Education and Training budget).
7. As the Committee has done in the past, rank bike/ped improvement proposals in 2008 for PACTS "MPO Allocation" capital funding.
8. Rank new proposals for PACTS study funding in the spring of 2009 instead of having the Technical Committee do it, or in collaboration with the Technical Committee.
9. Weigh in on the Turnpike's toll fairness study (underway), and on the Turnpike's Portland area widening alternatives analysis (might start this fall).

Agenda Item 5: Status Reports

Recent Committee Meetings

Policy Committee:

- Revised our two-year planning/administration work program. The final work program reflects many of the August 14th recommendations from the Planning Committee. See the summary on the next page.
- Reconvened a TIP Process Committee whose charge is to work with staff to make a variety of improvements to how we program the federal capital funds in our “MPO Allocation”. The group will meet monthly this fall. We need a Planning Committee representative.

Technical Committee:

- Discussed pavement condition ratings and a “highway adequacy index” with MaineDOT.

Transit Committee:

- Worked on federal funding topics.

2009 High Priority Projects Committee:

- Met again yesterday. Donna Larson is a member.

Other Topics

Nan Cummings of Portland Trails met last week with Paul Niehoff and David Willauer to propose the development of a regional vision plan for connecting alternative modes of transportation. She described a nationwide effort to use these vision plans to approach Congress for a major increase in federal funding.

The Policy Committee will hold a half-day retreat on October 19th. The Chairs of the Planning, Transit and Technical Committees will also participate. One topic will be alternative models for the structure of the Policy Committee

MaineDOT will soon send us a copy of their draft I-295 Corridor Study report, and will lead a public input process on it this fall.

PACTS and Portland staff will review consultant proposals this month for assistance with the Portland Peninsula Transit Study.

Portland staff is reviewing consultant proposals for a PACTS-funded Wayfinding Study.

The Turnpike recently held a kickoff meeting with a toll rate equity public advisory committee.

MaineDOT and the Turnpike Authority will soon begin an I-295 truck diversion study.

**August 16, 2007 Changes Made By The PACTS Policy Committee
To The FHWA-Based Part Of The 2008-2009 Planning Work Program**

<u>Line Items</u>	<u>Original Budget</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>
<i>Regional Staff Efforts</i>		
PACTS Staff and GPCOG Support	\$950,000	\$980,000
Maine Clean Communities	\$25,000	\$25,000
SMRPC Planning Services	\$30,000	\$25,000
GPCOG Planning Services	\$50,000	\$40,000
 <i>Regional Consultant Efforts</i>		
PACTS Model Consultant	\$100,000	\$50,000
Portland Transpo Center Expansion	\$10,000	\$0
Portland Wayfinding Plan	\$25,000	\$25,000
Regional Bike/Ped Planning	\$50,000	\$20,000
Regional Education and Training	\$20,000	\$20,000
Regional Enhanced Project Scoping	\$40,000	\$40,000
Regional Freight Planning	\$30,000	\$0
Regional High Priority Projects	\$50,000	\$20,000
Regional Impact Fees	\$25,000	\$20,000
Regional Land Use and Transpo	\$100,000	\$0
Regional PACTS Process Review	\$10,000	\$10,000
Regional Signal Coordination	\$100,000	\$75,000
Reserve Account	\$295,000	\$20,000
Saco Area Regional Transpo Study	\$80,000	\$80,000
Stormwater User Fee Structure	\$14,150	\$0
Transit Study Portland Peninsula	\$75,000	\$75,000
Transit Bus Route Study	\$60,000	\$30,000
Transit Electronic Fare Collection	\$20,000	\$0
Transit On/Off Survey	\$30,000	\$0
Transit Oriented Zoning	\$5,000	\$0
Transit Regional Ride Guide	<u>\$25,000</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>
	<i>\$2,219,150</i>	<i>\$1,570,000</i>

The following nine local studies are not funded. We have asked the MaineDOT to find "obligation authority" to fund the 80% federal share for them.

<i>Local Studies</i>			Rank*
Portland Woodford's Corner	\$40,000	\$40,000	1
Yarmouth Route 1 Phase II	\$35,000	\$35,000	2
Freeport School St Extension	\$25,000	\$25,000	3
Cape E. Sidewalk/Bikeway Plan	\$35,000	\$35,000	4
Westbrook Downtown Streetscape	\$30,000	\$30,000	5
Portland Libbytown Trail	\$10,000	\$10,000	6
Portland Eastern Waterfront	\$5,000	\$5,000	7
Falmouth Town Transpo. Plan	\$70,000	\$70,000	8
Scarborough Running Hill Road	<u>\$40,000</u>	<u>\$40,000</u>	9
Subtotal	\$290,000	\$290,000	
Total	\$2,509,150	\$1,860,000	

* These proposed studies are listed in priority order in the event that MaineDOT is unable to find enough obligation authority to finance all nine studies.