

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

Planning Committee Meeting Notice

August 7, 2008
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

GPCOG, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Public Comments**
- 3. Minutes of June 12th meeting**
- 4. MaineDOT's Handbook for Local and Inter-Community Transportation Planning**

Presentation of this draft report by MaineDOT's Tracy Perez, and description of links to the PACTS "land use policy" draft framework by Carl Eppich
- 5. Review of June 12th Joint Meeting with the Transit Committee**

Review purpose and summary of the meeting.
- 6. The Year Ahead for the Planning Committee – Brainstorming and Project Setting**
- 7. Status Reports**
- 8. Next Meeting Date**

Our scheduled September 4th meeting is when NNECAPA meets in Vermont.
- 9. Adjourn**

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Minutes of June 12th Meeting

Members Present: Donna Larson, Chair, Freeport; Dan Bacon, Scarborough; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Molly Just, Westbrook; Robert Kahn, Policy Committee Appointee; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Steve Linnell, GPCOG; Peter Morelli, Saco; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC; Amanda Stearns, Falmouth.

Members Absent: Bill Bent, HNTB (for Maine Turnpike Authority); Dawn Emerson, Yarmouth ; Deb Fossum, Gorham; Gary Guerette, Policy Committee Appointee; Gary Lamb, Old Orchard Beach;; Brooks Moore, Windham; Carla Nixon, Cumberland;. Greg Tansley, Vice-Chair, Biddeford

Staff and Guests: Kevin Donoghue, Portland City Council; Sarah Devlin, Freeport Intern; John Duncan, PACTS; Carl Eppich, PACTS; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG.

1. **Call to Order.** Donna Larson, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.
2. **Minutes of May 1st, 2008 meeting**
Alex Jaegerman moved for approval of the May 1st, 2008 meeting minutes, seconded by Peter Morelli. It was noted that Tex Haeuser should have been listed as "absent". *Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were accepted as amended.*
4. **Ranking of 2010/2011 Bicycle/Pedestrian Proposals** – (Taken out of order).

John provided an overview of the seven proposals that were submitted for the PACTS Bike/Ped Set Aside Funding for 2010/2011. Scores are shown in detail in the meeting packet as well as a brief summary of each of the proposals. PACTS staff is recommending funding for the first three proposals listed on the scoring sheet on page 6 of the meeting packet.

John spoke of the Portland study to improve bicycle access across Tukey's Bridge. If this study is funded by PACTS, the funds would become available in July of next year. This is planning money and comes sooner.

Staff is recommending that Enhanced Project Scoping be done and to work with the Maine DOT and towns involved, sometime this summer, coming back to this Committee in September. With 25% contingency added to cost estimates, the total would come to \$413,000. This is higher than what we have, which is \$385,000.

Discussions have taken place with Dan Stewart with regards to the Trail Connect at I-295 Exit 7 for the Back Cove Trail. Dan has been talking with the DOT Project Manager who is designing the improvements at Exit 7.

Talks have also taken place with issues pertaining to Tukey's Bridge in terms of bike access at that location. Ideas are being considered as to what could be done in the short term.

In reference to the two projects that had been deferred in 2006, one includes a project for Main Street in Biddeford, while the other is for Saco Avenue in Old Orchard Beach. Those will be funded because they have already been approved. The PACTS contribution to those projects has been capped. John explained that total funding for the Bike/Ped program for 2010/2011 biennium comes to \$714,112. Kevin Donoghue asked if there was a way that towns could make up the contingencies with John replying that it is feasible.

Mike Laberge described MaineDOT's recommendations with respect to Tukey's Bridge. He noted that the study would be looking at long term improvements. In the meantime, DOT's recommendation could provide a short term solution. They are recommending that the sidewalks, which are currently six-foot wide, be increased to ten feet to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians, along with signage to not access the "on ramp". Mike felt that this

would provide a good short term solution. With respect to the Exit 7, Back Cove Trail, there are potentially complicated issues associated with that project. A current plan for the I-295 off-ramp at Exit 7 is for the ramp to be constructed to emerge onto Franklin Arterial. There is a question of safety for cyclists crossing the off-ramp. DOT is reviewing whether there could be some bike/ped access that would eliminate the safety issue. They are recommending funding for the sidewalks on Tukey's Bridge and the Washington Avenue Overpass but would like to see further review for bike/ped access at Exit 7 with regards to safety. Discussion followed pertaining to cost estimates for sidewalks.

Donna summarized Mike's suggestion. DOT recommends that the \$98,000 anticipated cost for the Portland-Back Cove Trail/Peninsula Connection and the estimated cost of \$40,000 for the Tukey's Bridge proposal be combined, and that \$120,000 of that funding be directed towards rebuilding sidewalks in those areas. The remaining funds could be directed towards studying long term solutions. This would essentially provide a short term solution. Discussion followed pertaining to the bike/ped trail and funding. Mike said he was suggesting that PACTS should use planning funds for planning and that it might be better to fund the study through planning. The next couple of months could be spent to review the details. We could have suggestions coming back for September. Decisions do not have to be made today. Staff is recommending that the Committee do more thinking on these proposals and that any recommendations for funding be made in September.

Alex Jaegerman made a motion that PACTS Planning Committee move forward with staff recommendations to fund the first three projects listed in the scoring sheet as described in the meeting packet with the caveat that PACTS also explore possible solutions for bike/ped access with regards to Exit 7, as recommended by Mike Laberge, and to combine funding of the estimated cost of \$98,000 and \$40,000, seconded by Peter Morelli. Discussion followed. Peter asked if the money was construction money. Mike replied yes that he was talking about construction funds for 2010/2011. Vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. **Report on Leveraging Increased Transportation Funding** - Taken out of order.
John Duncan directed the group to page 18 of the meeting packet where a copy of the final draft report that was prepared by John Melrose and Mark Eyerman was included. John noted that some details had been added to the report since our last meeting in May and that a uniform report format had been established. A summary matrix has been added to the report as well. In reference to estimating the cost of these ideas for the next few years, this is a work in progress. The substance of the report is summarized in the "Table of Contents. Staff is looking for a recommendation from the Planning Committee to send this report to the Policy Committee for acceptance.

Alex Jaegerman made a motion to send the draft report to the Policy Committee for acceptance with the caveat that the matrix in the report and in correlation with the statute on the previous page, be clarified, seconded by Tex Haeuser. Discussion followed. Vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. **Election of new officers and representative to the Policy Committee.**
Peter Morelli made a motion to nominate Greg Tansley as the PACTS Planning Committee Chairperson and Dan Bacon as the PACTS Planning Committee Vice-Chair, seconded by Amanda Stearns. Vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

Greg, as the incoming Chair, will occupy a seat on the new PACTS Executive Committee. A seat is now open for a delegate from this Committee to sit on the PACTS Policy Committee.
Tex Haeuser made a motion to nominate Dan Bacon to sit on the PACTS Policy Committee

as a representative of the Planning Committee, seconded by Maureen O'Hara. Vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried. Dan will serve on the Policy Committee.

Dan Bacon made a motion to nominate Alex Jaegerman to occupy a seat on the PACTS Transit Committee as a delegate of the Planning Committee, seconded by Steve Linnell. Discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Alex Jaegerman made a motion to nominate Mike Laberge to PACTS Technical Committee meetings as a delegate of the PACTS Planning Committee, seconded by Amanda Stearns. Vote taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

6. Status Report

The status report was accepted as detailed in the meeting packet.

7. Joint Session with the Transit Committee at 9:30 a.m.

Donna directed the group to a checklist at the top of page 10 of the meeting packet referring to the combined meeting of the PACTS Transit Committee and the PACTS Planning Committee scheduled to take place at 9:30 a.m. following this meeting.

John provided a brief overview of the PACTS funding process. There is STP funding that is allocated to PACTS and 7% of that funding is set aside and totals approximately \$490,000. FTA funding allocated to PACTS is \$5 million. Subsequently, PACTS transit is \$5 million plus the small amount that is set aside. John explained the PACTS planning funding as well.

Reference was made to number 5 in the background materials list at the top of page 10, "\$10 Gasoline and Rising Inflation, The Trend of the Future". It was noted that funding percentages are decided and allocated by the PACTS Policy Committee who are assisted in this decision-making by the PACTS TIP Process Committee.

Discussion followed pertaining to sidewalks and buses in relation to eligibility for that 7% funding. It was noted that the recent bond referendum had passed and that there might be additional funding for transit in that. The group considered if any other items could be added to the list. Tex spoke of fixed guide way transit, such as streetcars, at least in the core communities. This could link the cities. When you have the fixed routes it is more likely to get investment in development and TOD. This would provide intermediate steps toward our goals. Alex made reference to a recent study that had laid out some framework with respect to bus rapid transit. Mike added that given the rise in gas prices and in giving people options with transit the Committee might want to consider increasing the bike/ped set aside from the current 10% to 12-15%. This generated discussion about density to support it. There is a need to communicate to municipalities the benefits in encouraging higher density. There are currently approximately five municipalities that already have the density. But, it was felt that we could do more.

With reference to goals such as streetcars, what steps along the way on both the transportation side and the planning side, should we be taking to achieve these goals? Alex wondered if there was something that we could do to reflect that sentiment.

Robert Kahn made reference to when Tom Allen was mayor of Portland and that these discussions had taken place. Talks on density have been ongoing for a long time. The University of Maine has been doing studies on Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Those TODs are supposed to be conducted on a fixed-type system. Development gets more interesting when they know it will be there for awhile and increase economics. Robert said he would support adding this to the check list and suggested the group take time to review Anna

Price's study on regional transit in relation to this discussion. The study takes a look at the Auburn and Brunswick rail lines going into Portland and the possibility of commuter rail between Brunswick and Portland. There is a lot of language in Anna's study about being multi-modal and there is no parking at the moment for that upcoming station in Brunswick. The closest parking area is the Brunswick Downeaster stop platform which is about the equivalent of four football fields away. Neighbors in that area are worried about on-street parking. The Brunswick Planning Board will be taking a final vote on June 24th. They are ready to pass this with no parking.

In view of this, Peter spoke of potential transit routes and opportunities. He proposed that the Planning Committee get a study going. Donna agreed. It was decided that this item will be followed-up at the next meeting.

8. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

**Agenda Item 4 – MaineDOT's Handbook for Local and Inter-Community
Transportation Planning**

MaineDOT's Tracy Perez will provide an overview of this important planning document.

Last Friday we mailed the 14 available copies of the document to our 14 municipal members.

Carl Eppich will brief us on how the handbook is linked to the work we did in 2005 and 2006 on linking land use and transportation more within the PACTS region.

Agenda Item 5 – Review of June 12th Meeting with the Transit Committee

Twenty seven (27) people attended this one-hour meeting. The motivation for this meeting was to discuss ways for these two PACTS committees to work together to address issues related to climate change and rising oil prices.

Connie Garber facilitated a lively discussion of issues and opportunities. The discussion focused on these staff suggestions listed in the meeting packet:

- Reduce vehicle miles of travel and single occupant vehicle travel
- Increase transit options
- Integrate transit into municipal land use policy
- Develop a regional approach to transit oriented development
- Prioritize funding for transit

The meeting concluded with consensus on these next steps:

1. To convene the two committees again in October and to set some goals and action steps at that meeting.

Status: Not scheduled yet. Do on October 9th before the regular Transit Committee meeting?

2. To convene a meeting before October at which staff will present an overview of past planning efforts targeted at the topics listed above. This decision was based on the logic that we not “reinvent the wheel”.

Status: Not scheduled yet. Carl Eppich has drafted a list of past studies (see next page).

3. To accelerate the rate at which we are learning what the impacts will be in 2012 when PACTS (probably) becomes a “transportation management area” (TMA) and we thereby lose the authority to use federal funds for transit operations.

Status: John Duncan is working to get some FHWA people to come to Augusta to meet with MaineDOT and PACTS staff – as suggested by Kat Fuller (MaineDOT).

John sent recent PACTS and GPCOG staff research materials on this to Mike Laberge for his use in compiling a TMA paper at MaineDOT.

Carl Eppich and GPCOG staff are doing a detailed population forecast that will help us to foresee if we will cross the 200,000 population threshold in 2010.

Regional, Regionalism, and Regional Corridor Studies

1. Destination Tomorrow – PACTS (2006)
2. Southern Maine Corridors Committee Regional Transportation Assessment (2005)
3. Portland Task Force on Regionalism Report (2004)
4. Central Corridor Coalition – Phase 1 (2003)
5. Coastal Corridor Coalition – Phase 1 (2003)
6. Route 114 Corridor Report (2003)
7. Destination Tomorrow – PACTS (2003)
8. Route 22/114 Overview Study – Final Report (2001)
9. Greater Portland Maine – ITS Architecture (2001)
10. Maine Mall Transportation Plan (2001)
11. Transportation Planning for the Maine Mall Area (2001)
12. Technical Memorandum 1: Data Collection Maine Mall Signal Study
13. Transportation Issues Affecting The Greater Portland Region: Report of a Survey of Portland Area Residents (1999)
14. Mountain Division Feasibility Study (1999)
15. Cumberland County Park & Ride Lot Report (1999)
16. RTAC 6 Truck Report (1999)
17. Brighton Avenue/Main Street Corridor Traffic and Streetscape Study (1999)
18. Cumberland County Regional Trails Plan (1997)
19. Advanced Traveler Information Systems (ATIS) Briefing Paper (1997)
20. Advanced Public Transportation Systems (APTS) Briefing Paper #2 (1997)
21. Gorham/Portland Corridor Alternatives Analysis (1997)
22. Greater Portland Goods Movement Study: Report of Findings
23. TDM Handbook: An Illustrative Guide to Travel Demand Management for Portland Employers (1996)
24. PACTS Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan (1995)
25. Conquering the Strip – A Handbook for Highway Corridor Planning (1991)

Transit Relevant Studies

1. USM Bus Study (2007)
2. PACTS Regional Transit Coordination Study (2007)
3. Bus Rapid Transit & Light Rail Transit – Technical Memorandum (2004)
4. Windham Commuter Bus Study (2001)
5. Gorham/Portland Corridor Alternatives Analysis (1997)
6. Alternative Modes Feasibility Study (1996)
7. Cumberland County Commuter Bus Study (1996)
8. A Time of Change: Portland Transportation Plan (1993)

Agenda Item 6 – The Year Ahead for the Planning Committee

During the past year the members were briefed or worked on the following:

- Adjusting the PACTS 2-year studies budget (August)
- The Rail Planning Portland North process (August)
- Planning Committee work priorities for the year (September)
- New funding opportunities for transportation improvements – and the Eyerman/Melrose financing report (September, October, November, January, May and June)
- The PACTS High Priority Project planning process (October)
- Land use topics in the PACTS Regional Transit Coordination Study (January)
- The PACTS organizational process review (January)
- Ranking of 2010/2011 bike/ped improvement proposals (June)
- Climate change and the rising cost of fuel (June with the Transit Committee)

It is now time to discuss our priorities for the coming year. Here are some prospects to consider:

- Review progress to implement our *Destination Tomorrow* Plan (2006). See attachment.
- Participate in the development of our 2-year planning/studies work program next spring.
- Organize an update of *Destination Tomorrow* in 2010, as required by our federal partners.
- Coordination of land use and transportation.
- Parking requirements (vehicle and bicycle)
- Land use and transit.
- Corridor zoning consistency.
- Aerial photographs.
- Pursue certain aspects of the Eyerman/Melrose report.
- Participate in a discussion of PACTS sticking with our existing policy of funding a wide variety of projects throughout the region – rather than funding a very small number of projects that are determined to be very regionally significant.
- Participate, and/or get briefed on, some of the major regional studies listed at the end of this meeting packet.
- Get briefed on the MaineDOT's current review of the Traffic Movement Permit process.
- In October the Committee will finalize a recommendation to the Policy Committee for funding of bike/ped projects in the 2010/2011 biennium.

Agenda Item 7 – Status Reports

We regret to report that David Willauer is leaving GPCOG after 15 years, and is moving on to a career in emergency management planning with a national consulting firm in North Carolina. He has been an ever positive force for good planning for us all. During his years here he developed a very wide range of skills that he applied productively and innovatively for the municipalities and transit systems throughout Greater Portland and Cumberland County, and, in a number of cases, for statewide topics and programs. We will all miss him big time.

Twenty-eight (28) people attended the July 17th workshop on the Melrose/Eyerman report. John is going to meet in Augusta with MaineDOT, Melrose and Eyerman on August 22nd. It is great that MaineDOT staff want to contribute to putting some of the ideas in the report to work.

The Center for Clean Air Policy is doing a “Southern Maine Smart Growth Greenhouse Gas Analysis”. See Steve Linnell for more info.

PACTS and GPCOG staff met recently with Tex Haeuser and Tom Meyers to discuss Tex’s ideas for a transit oriented development study.

GPCOG and PACTS recently held a brainstorming session on land use policy and transportation planning.

Status of our High Priority Projects work:

- Our regional telephone survey began on July 25th. Carl has worked closely with our consultant on this \$20,000 effort. The survey process is going very well. We are looking forward to the draft report late this month.
- MaineDOT is “fast tracking” the design and build of the Veterans Bridge – currently our top ranking HPP candidate.
- John Duncan signed a letter of support for the Campaign for Active Transportation – the Portland-Trails-led \$50,000,000 vision for Portland, Westbrook, South Portland and Falmouth. Portland Trails has submitted it to the national Rails to Trails Conservancy, as have other groups from 39 metro areas around the country.
- John and Carl visited the Buxton Selectmen on July 30th in response to their letter to us. It went well. Buxton residents put up with a lot of congestion on Route 22 almost every day.

PACTS outreach/visibility work:

- Paul organized and led a successful “Sandwich Symposium” on July 25th on bicycling topics. Sixteen (16) people plus staff attended.
- We intend to hold more “sandwich symposia”. Do you have any topics to suggest?
- We have sent out seven news releases sent in last two months.
- We are going to start distributing by email a PACTS “quarterly newsletter” to our 100+ “interested parties” people.

Steve Linnell (as chair of the subcommittee on passenger transportation to the Governor's Working Group on the High Cost of Transportation Fuels which is part of the Governor's Pre-Emergency Task Force on Energy) recently completed and submitted their report.

GPCOG has prepared DVD's of Charlie Stephens's presentation, *Toward a Sustainable Energy Future*. See Steve Linnell for more information

GPCOG Executive Committee has developed three sub-committees to pursue sustainability initiatives on Community, Economy and Environment.

The Policy Committee last met in May, and will meet next in September. The Executive Committee held its first meeting in July, and its second meeting earlier this week. Greg Tansley represents the Planning Committee on it.

Technical Committee

- Paul Niehoff has initiated a Technical Committee working group to review and develop innovate and streamlined ways to develop and complete projects, including new partnerships...and maybe lobby for revising federal guidelines and/or standards. MaineDOT and the other MPO's are also interested, and have joined in the discussion.
- Draft report due for Regional Collector Road Study
- Working on methodology to select collector paving projects to fund this fall.

Transit Committee

- Too few Lakes Region municipalities committed funds to operate the proposed bus service.
- Automatic transit vehicle location systems (PACTS funded) – evolving into less regional an approach than envisioned earlier.
- Other work to implement Regional Transit Coordination Study.

Noteworthy Transportation Studies Underway, About to Start or Proposed

- MaineDOT's I-295 Corridor Study
- MaineDOT's "Small Starts" passenger rail study
- MaineDOT et al review of Traffic Movement Permit process
- Turnpike Widening Alternatives Analysis
- Turnpike Authority's Gorham Connector Study
- PACTS Portland Peninsula Transit Study
- PACTS Collector Roads Assessment Study
- PACTS Regional Signal Coordination Study
- PACTS Franklin Arterial Corridor Study
- PACTS Portland Peninsula Wayfinding Study