

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

Planning Committee Meeting Notice

August 2, 2007
9:00 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. **Call to order, and welcome new member, Robert Kahn.**
2. **Minutes of May 3rd meeting**
3. **Rail Planning Portland North**

Anna Price (MaineDOT) and David Willauer (GPCOG) will brief the members on the scope of further study designed to produce a proposal for capital funding from the Federal Transit Administration. See GPCOG memorandum and Fact Sheet.

4. **Upcoming Reduction in the PACTS Planning/Administration Budget**

John Duncan will brief the members on the need to cut significantly our two-year planning/administration budget. A summary of the budget adopted in May and the Unified Planning Work Program document are attached.

5. **Status Reports**
6. **Adjourn**

Next Meeting: September 6th at 9:00 a.m.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland Urbanized Area
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Agenda Item 2: Minutes of May 3rd meeting

Members Present: Donna Larson, Chair, Freeport; Dan Bacon, Scarborough; Dawn Emerson, Yarmouth; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Mike Laberge, Maine DOT; Jonathan Labonte, MTA; Peter Morelli, Saco; Carla Nixon, Cumberland; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transportation; Greg Tansley, Vice-Chair, Biddeford; Steve Linnell, GPCOG; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC.

Members Absent: Wayne Davis, TrainRiders; Deb Fossum, Gorham; Gary Guerette, Policy Committee Appointee; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Amy Lamontagne, Falmouth; Brooks Moore, Westbrook; Sandra Mowery, Old Orchard Beach; John Perry, FHWA;

Staff and Guests: John Duncan, PACTS; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS

1. **Call to Order.** Donna Larson, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

John welcomed and introduced Paul Niehoff, PACTS newly hired Senior Transportation Planner. Paul has worked with MaineDOT, the City of Auburn and the City of Portland.

2. **Minutes of March 1st, 2007 meeting**

Mike Laberge moved for approval of the minutes, seconded by Tex Haeuser. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously approved.

3. **Status Reports**

Brooks More, Westbrook's City Planner, has taken a position with the Town of Windham as Town Planner. The towns of Gorham, Scarborough, South Portland and Westbrook are very interested in a spur from the turnpike west of South Portland. John made a presentation to the MTA Board and the representatives of those communities. Tex Haeuser also spoke. The Scarborough Town Council adopted a resolution in support of the Turnpike Spur. The resolution speaks to the inter-municipal land use phase. It has not been scoped out as yet. They are asking the turnpike to undertake the next step in the planning process and the resolution calls to develop a land use study. It says, "seek PACTS money." John has put an item in the budget to hire a consultant to assist with that project.

Jonathan Labonte provided an update on MTA's toll rate study. There is a plan to increase turnpike tolls by 2010. Members on the board have heard of inequities. In the long-range study for '08, they have opted to create a public advisory committee. They will look at diverse interests and look at Maine's needs. They will also be asked to brainstorm on what kind of things could be done to make it more equitable. The Board will make recommendations in '08. In response to a question, the EZpass is working well. 30% of commuters initially used TransPass. It is now over 40%. Only half are in the commuter program. There is a 50% discount for a certain number of round trips over the course of a week. The commuter program is a benefit. It is unclear as to why some commuters are not in the discount program. A more aggressive marketing program will be put in place to educate the public. The public advisory committee will be looking at that program. Any ideas can be forwarded to Jonathan's department. It is anticipated that less toll collectors will be needed within 8 to 10 years from now. Donna noted that it would be beneficial for EZPass users to get their transponders through the towns rather than through the mail.

4. Context Sensitive Solutions

Donna provided an overview of the March Context Sensitive Solutions workshop. Discussion followed pertaining to whether there should be any “follow-up” of some kind. It was thought that it might be nice if this could be developed as a model and put into practice. The site used for the workshop or someplace else could be used as part of the model. Some felt that if you were not a town planner why would this be needed. Others thought it served as an educational purpose more for the MaineDOT and FHWA than the town planners. It was felt that these agencies need to change what is considered waivable in their standards especially when it comes to downtown and/or village locations. Several options were discussed. It was noted that the standards on cost as well as design issues were being worked on by the PACTS Technical Committee.

Mike Laberge felt that MDOT and FHWA are trying to move in the direction of CSS. However, they will not compromise on safety. If they can make a change that does not compromise safety, they are willing to take a look at that. As an example, he referenced the Camden project. MDOT is moving in the direction of being more flexible. It was noted that there were many people from DOT attending the workshop and that this was a good sign. It is a huge step forward. Mike thought that perhaps DOT could work with PACTS with a model where they could do a CSS.

The group decided not to take any more action on CSS. It was agreed that this item should be brought to the PACTS Technical Committee for further review.

5. The Next Two Years at PACTS

John provided an overview of PACTS two-year plan highlighting certain efforts. Not all study proposals are listed in the meeting packet but PACTS is in a position to fund all of those. The Policy Committee will adopt the budget in a couple of weeks. In reference to the Regional Land Use Plan listed on page 3, and as he had read from the Scarborough resolution, there is a similar toll highway study for transportation improvements for the Biddeford/Sanford area. The DOT has been working on a scope of how they would do that study. Jonathan noted that it is a very broad study and that he didn't think it should be labeled as a “toll study”. They are looking at those two corridors as something similar to the Gateway 1 approach.

One item of interest to the Policy Committee is the Regional Impact Fees effort. \$25,000 has been budgeted towards a consultant for the work plan. In reference to the Context Sensitive Solution work, \$20,000 had been put in for this effort but will now be removed. A proposal to update the 1995 Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan did not score well at the Policy Committee level. But, it was felt that putting together an effort on this would be worthwhile. It doesn't necessarily have to be a regional plan as was done in 1995. The remainder of the items as listed on page 3 were further described.

John directed the group to page 4 of the meeting packet and spoke of climate change. He noted that this is something that the Planning Committee is free to pursue. The consensus at the Policy Committee level is that the Committees are free to set their own priorities but if it calls for funding, the item must be brought to the Policy Committee. Staff will advise as to what is realistic. In reference to access management, Eric Ortman had worked on the scope of work for that. Eric is gone, Julia is out and Paul is new. It was suggested that the Committee wait at least six months before delving into this effort. Donna said she felt that if the group did not do something about access management that it would become a crisis in the next five to ten years. However, she also felt it was not an immediate scope because of the news on funding. The funding crisis has now become high priority. Discussion followed on designated dollars and

federal rules pertaining to planning monies. Mike Laberge noted that he would be researching clarification on the federal rules regarding the use of planning funds and would report back to John. He noted that planning money could not be used for PE. Further discussion followed on the use of those funds and how to meet those requirements.

Reference was made to the potential on a regional impact fee. Donna noted that the more we have impact fees and the more consistent they are throughout the region, the easier it is. But, we could take “regional” off of that and it could still help with the cost of building roads. Tex felt that Scarborough’s impact fees seem to be working better. Dan explained that Scarborough has two different impact fees. One is tied to standards and site plan but it is difficult to consistently enforce those and that sometimes inequity is involved. They have been collecting a fair amount of money but not for all improvements. Tom spoke of the political structure in reference to land use planning and said communities could develop something similar and have some type of municipal M.O.U. or, one town could hold the funds. Further discussion continued on this topic.

The group decided to include CSS under transit-oriented zoning. Reference was made to number one on page 5 of the meeting packet which speaks of “a regional education process”. Consideration was given to providing a line item in the budget for general education activities and possibly travel and training.

In reference to climate change, Steve spoke about some of the work being done by Clean Communities with alternative fuels, strategies and looking at products that reduce emissions. He noted that MaineDOT is charged with working on the Maine Action Plan. Steve is on a subcommittee that is working at reducing VMT for air toxics. It is a brainstorming group with a diverse membership. Steve spoke of the importance of looking at this issue regionally especially when talking about transit and spoke of the importance of educating the public. The Maine Global Action Committee is looking at the REGGI process and is trying to bring in the transportation aspect. Tex said he would be interested in doing more with the transit-oriented aspect if it included South Portland. More density allows more potential for transit. John added that there is an item in the budget for that as well and said that staff would move forward with suggestions made.

6. Adjourn

It was decided to not meet in July and to reconvene in August. The next meeting will be held August 2nd, 2007. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Agenda Item 3

July 17, 2007

Sent on GPCOG letterhead.

To: Municipal Officials, Councilors, Selectmen, Interested Parties
Auburn, Brunswick, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Portland, New Gloucester,
North Yarmouth, Yarmouth
From: David Willauer, GPCOG Planning Director
Subject: Rail Planning Portland North

The MaineDOT Office of Passenger Transportation is beginning the FTA “Small Starts” planning process to include the cities and towns between Portland and Brunswick and between Portland and Auburn in August, 2007. A consultant has been selected and the outreach meetings will begin this fall.

MaineDOT had begun an Environmental Assessment (EA) that looked at extending passenger rail service to Brunswick and has completed other engineering, cost and ridership analyses in both the Portland to Auburn and Portland to Brunswick corridors. GPCOG and AVCOG have been invited to assist MaineDOT with the public outreach process and other planning tasks as appropriate.

In order to qualify as a “Small Start,” the total project cost must be less than \$250 million, with no greater than \$75 million in requested FTA Section 5309 Capital Investment Grant funding. This is a competitive funding process where Maine will compete with other projects nationwide. All funding will require a State and/or Local match of 50-20% of the project cost. In addition, the project must meet one of the following guideway criteria:

1. Be a fixed guideway for at least 50% of the project length in the peak period and/or
2. Be a corridor-based bus project with the following minimum elements:
 - Substantial Transit Stations
 - Signal Priority/Pre-emption (for Bus/LRT)
 - Low Floor / Level Boarding Vehicles
 - Special Branding of Service
 - Frequent Service - 10 min peak/15 min off peak
 - Service offered at least 14 hours per day

To learn more about the RFP and what MaineDOT is planning along these rail corridors, go to <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/aco/acohome.php> and view the following documents.

- ***Portland North Alts Review (pdf - 11.4mb)***
- ***Cost Feasibility Study (pdf - 2.6mb)***
- ***Portland North EA (pdf - 0.9mb) Portland North EA Graphics (pdf - 4.5mb)***
- ***DE Business Plan Compiled (pdf - 7.0mb)***
- ***AIPC FONSI EA 03-19-07 (pdf - 12.9mb)***

Please call me or Project Manager Anna Price 624-3246 with questions.

Agenda Item 4

Adopted on May 17, 2007

PACTS 2-Year Planning Budget for July 2007 to June 2009

<u>Line Items</u>	<u>08+09 Budget</u>	<u>Fed.</u>	<u>Match</u>	<u>Sources of Match</u>
PACTS Staff and GPCOG Support	\$950,000	\$760,000	\$190,000	Dues + MDOT
PACTS Model Consultant	\$100,000	\$80,000	\$20,000	Dues/Municipals
Maine Clean Communities	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	GPCOG
SMRPC Planning Services	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000	SMRPC
GPCOG Planning Services	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$10,000	GPCOG
Reserve Account	<u>\$295,000</u>	<u>\$236,000</u>	<u>\$59,000</u>	Municipalities
Subtotal 1	\$1,450,000	\$1,160,000	\$290,000	
<i>New consultant studies</i>				
Cape E. Sidewalk/Bikeway Plan	\$35,000	\$28,000	\$7,000	Cape Elizabeth
Falmouth Town Transpo. Plan	\$70,000	\$56,000	\$14,000	Falmouth
Freeport School St Extension	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	Freeport
PACTS Regional Bike/Ped Plan	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$10,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Freight Planning	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Transit Oriented Zoning	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$1,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Electronic Fare Collection	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$4,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Regional Ride Guide	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Regional Bus Route Study	\$60,000	\$48,000	\$12,000	GPCOG
GPCOG Bus On/Off Survey	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000	Transit Providers
Impact Fees	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	Dues
Old Orchard Beach Downtown	\$60,000	\$48,000	\$12,000	Old Orchard Beach
Portland Transpo Center Expansion	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$2,000	Portland
Regional Education and Training	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$4,000	Dues
Regional Enhanced Project Scoping	\$40,000	\$32,000	\$8,000	Municipalities
Regional High Priority Projects	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$10,000	Dues
Regional (subregion) Land Use Plan	\$100,000	\$80,000	\$20,000	Municipalities
Regional PACTS Process Review	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$2,000	Dues
Regional Signal Coordination	\$100,000	\$80,000	\$20,000	Municipalities
Saco Area Regional Transpo Study	\$80,000	\$64,000	\$16,000	Municipalities
Scarborough Running Hill Road	\$40,000	\$32,000	\$8,000	Scarborough
Westbrook Downtown Streetscape	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000	Westbrook
Yarmouth Route 1 Phase II	<u>\$35,000</u>	<u>\$28,000</u>	<u>\$7,000</u>	Yarmouth
Subtotal 2	\$950,000	\$760,000	\$190,000	
Subtotals 1 plus 2	\$2,400,000	\$1,920,000	\$480,000	
<i>Carryover from 2006/2007 biennium</i>				
Portland Peninsula Alt. Modes	\$75,000	\$60,000	\$15,000	Portland
Portland Eastern Waterfront	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$1,000	Portland
Portland Libbytown Trail	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$2,000	Portland
Portland Wayfinding Plan	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	Portland
Portland Woodford's Corner	\$40,000	\$32,000	\$8,000	Portland
Stormwater User Fee Structure	<u>\$14,150</u>	<u>\$11,320</u>	<u>\$2,830</u>	Municipalities
Subtotal 3	\$169,150	\$135,320	\$33,830	
FHWA-Based Total	\$2,569,150	\$2,055,320	\$513,830	
FTA-Based Total	<u>\$469,000</u>	<u>\$375,200</u>	<u>\$93,800</u>	See FTA-based details in UPWP.
May 17th PACTS Grand Total	\$3,038,150	\$2,430,520	\$607,630	

Agenda Item 5: Status Reports

John Duncan and others will brief the members on the following efforts:

- An October Policy Committee retreat for PACTS “process/organizational review”.
- The High Priority Projects Committee met in May and July to continue work on recommendations for special funding in 2009 from Congress. The group will meet again in September. Donna Larson is a member.
- MaineDOT and the Turnpike Authority have drafted a scope of work for “Central York County Transportation Study” (the Biddeford-Sanford-Wells area). PACTS staff met recently with MaineDOT and Turnpike Authority staff to coordinate the start of that study with the start of the PACTS-funded Saco Area Regional Transportation Study.
- The Managers of Gorham, Scarborough, South Portland and Westbrook have drafted council resolutions to encourage the Turnpike Authority to begin a detailed study of a turnpike spur west from South Portland.
- A high priority of the Policy Committee this year is for staff to investigate potential new sources of transportation funding, and to brief the members.
- We need to submit our FY 2010/2011 list of PACTS TIP projects next fall (2008). Therefore, we will solicit your TIP proposals late this fall or early in the winter.
- The Turnpike recently held a kickoff meeting with a toll rate public advisory committee.
- MaineDOT and the Turnpike Authority will soon begin an I-295 truck diversion study.

Westbrook’s new City Planning Director will be Molly Just. She starts next week. She comes here from a planning position in Arlington County, Virginia. Sandra Mowery has left Old Orchard Beach to become the Kittery Planning Director.

Recent Committee Meetings

Policy Committee:

- Cut more projects from the PACTS 2008/2009 capital projects list due to reduced available funds.
- Adopted our two-year planning/administration work program (UPWP).
- Adopted the Regional Transit Coordination Study at our Annual Meeting. See Steve Linnell or Tom Reinauer for a copy of the report.

Technical Committee:

- Established subcommittee on flexible application of MaineDOT design standards.

Transit Committee:

- Worked on the new UPWP, and finished work on the Regional Transit Coordination Study.