

# PACTS

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Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

## Planning Committee Meeting Notice

January 4, 2007  
9:00 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland  
*There are surplus parking spaces available across Preble Street.*

### Agenda

**1. Call to order**

**2. Minutes of December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting**

**3. Go Maine**

An information presentation (GPCOG's Carey Kish)

**4. Access Management**

Action on a draft scope of work for PACTS staff (Eric Ortman)

**5. Public Participation and Title VI Plan**

Review of members' comments on the draft plan (Julia Dawson)

**6. Forum and Training on Context Sensitive Solutions**

Action on training location and budget (John Duncan)

**7. Status Report**

**8. Adjourn**

*Next Meeting: February 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 a.m.*

***The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland Urbanized Area***

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**Planning Committee Minutes**  
**November 13, 2006 Meeting**

**Members Present:** Donna Larson, Chair, Freeport; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Jon McNulty, Public Transportation; Sandra Mowery, Old Orchard Beach; Peter Morelli, Saco; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC; Greg Tansley, Vice-Chair, Biddeford; George Thebarga, Falmouth; David Willauer, GPCOG.

**Members Absent:** Wayne Davis, TrainRiders; Dawn Emerson, Yarmouth; Deb Fossum, Gorham; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Jonathan LaBonte, MTA; Brooks Moore, Westbrook; Carla Nixon, Cumberland; John Perry, FHWA; Joe Ziepniewski, Scarborough

**Staff and Guests:** John Duncan, PACTS; Jim Katsiaficas; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Eric Ortman, PACTS; Bruce Mattson, MaineDOT.

1. **Call to Order.** Donna Larson, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
2. **Minutes of November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 meeting**  
*Sandra Mowery moved for approval of the November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 minutes, seconded by Mike Laberge. All were in favor. The minutes were unanimously accepted.*
3. **Draft Bill regarding Control of Access** - Presentation by Jim Katsiaficas, Esq.  
Jim Katsiaficas introduced himself. He is currently representing the Maine Better Transportation Association regarding access management.

Mr. Katsiaficas provided an overview of a draft bill that would add some flexibility to the current state law on control of access and access management. He is looking for feedback and hopefully some support of the bill. After providing a brief history of the existing access management law he spoke of how controlled access relates to economic development and safety issues. He referred to the signalized intersection near the Irving Gas Station in Auburn and explained that the Irving Station shares the only entrance with an adjacent hotel. Because Irving is looking to expand, they would like a second entrance. The problem is there is no new break in access that is allowed. The proposed legislation would allow for a break of access in limited instances.

Mr. Katsiaficas said he has spoken to other groups in the Lewiston-Auburn area who support the draft legislation and would like feedback from this group. The coalition that he represents would welcome anyone who would be willing to testify in favor of the bill, once the bill gets going. They are in the process of getting sponsors on-board and have hired John Melrose as a consultant. Anyone interested in getting a copy of the draft bill in its entirety may email him for a copy. He added that in some instances, the new legislation would relieve traffic back up and noted that the draft bill would allow for some flexibility that allows for both traffic safety and economic development.

Questions and discussion followed on items such as a municipal sign-off requirement and secondary access. There was also discussion on the vagueness of the language that made reference to safety and mobility. It was noted that the Maine DOT has some established standards for access management on corridors and that it might make sense to establish simply one set of standards rather than an exception provision. Greg Tansley asked whether the exception would be limited only to businesses such as gas stations. Mr. Katsiaficas replied that it could apply to some hotels or anything that would have a link to travelers. A business would have to have a functional relationship with transportation. Alex noted that if the bill applied to all gas stations then this could end up spiraling as gas stations have a tendency to conglomerate. Mr. Katsiaficas noted that Irving was used as an example because in that particular situation it would allow for a better traffic situation and economic development. Bruce Mattson who is involved with access management at the Maine DOT spoke of his concerns

about breaking access because of problems he has seen in the past. He cautioned the coalition in being careful in how the language is crafted and said he hoped that the details could be worked out. Mr. Katsiaficas said he would present all of the issues mentioned to the draft bill's working committee. John Duncan thanked Mr. Katsiaficas for his presentation.

**4. Access Management:**

Discussion followed in reference to what the group would like to pursue in regards to access management and whether the Committee would like that to be a small task or an extensive effort.

Eric Ortman recently attended a course provided by the MaineDOT on this subject and directed the group to a meeting packet attachment for Access Management. The attachment provided a brief summary and review of excerpted literature primarily taken from the Florida and Iowa DOTs. Much of this literature is based on case studies in numerous states.

Eric noted that access management as a set of tools works well but needs to be looked at in its entirety. The literature indicates that it is a positive for most businesses. The more done up front in the process the better. It is more costly if done retrofit. Collaboration and cooperation is needed between all parties, such as local government, state government, businesses and stakeholders. He added that access management generally is more effective on a corridor level rather than at an isolated location. Eric asked the group what they would like from staff in regards to this topic. He also said he wasn't sure what the Committees collectively wanted. Now the topic has arisen again. Alex Jaegerman said that access management lends itself to technical training and best practices and referred to Marginal Way and the potential sharing of access points specifically from Franklin Arterial to Forest Avenue. Portland is rewriting their site ordinance and Alex said it can be done on a site basis but ideally it would be multi-site. He felt he could use a refresher course on the topic. Discussion followed pertaining to what the group was interested in. Alex said he would be interested on a local level and from site to corridor such as when a corridor crosses to another city. Something on a best practices level but not limiting. He felt there are opportunities in the site plan ordinance and spoke of opportunities to coordinate access.

George Theborge said he would advocate for the opposite direction. He felt that the Planning Committee should give input to the Policy Committee. He made reference to Destination Tomorrow and said he felt that access management is achievable. He would recommend starting at the regional level and take the long-range look. George also referred to the "hidden aspect" and spoke of Falmouth's subdivision ordinance. He noted that when a subdivision proposal comes in, Falmouth controls the access. Tom Reinauer agreed with beginning with the top-down. He spoke of how he started about eight years ago doing education and that it took about two years. He did presentations, went out to the community, did basics with councils and planning boards, etc. He worked with the towns on language for access management and did several workshops. He noted that most towns in his area have site management in their ordinance. It can be a very specific ordinance review and it can also mean getting the standards up to the MaineDOT standards. He made reference to Sanford and how he took a model of the MaineDOT standard and took it a step further. SMRPC then helped them develop an access plan for Sanford's Route 109. He agreed with developing the education part first and then going to the Policy Committee. He noted that each town might have different access management concerns and spoke of other methods used for training. Most towns do want some control over access.

George Theborge said that the number one request from people is for addressing traffic problems and referred to a recent survey done with businesses. He felt this might provide a political basis for addressing this issue.

Tom said that a key thing that had worked well for him was having a good relationship with the MDOT State Engineer. He felt it would be helpful for them to come to do some training and spoke of issues from a regional perspective and a developer's perspective.

Peter Morelli noted that some good progress could be made with a workbook and referred to traffic being the issue. He said he wouldn't be surprised if this wasn't the number one issue with many towns. If communities are concerned about traffic volume, access management is one thing that could be done to relieve the traffic. Further discussion followed pertaining to whether access management should be approached from the top-down and whether the group would like this to be a big effort or small effort. A need for hands-on assistance was expressed. There is a need for help when something comes up. It would be nice to have someone else lending technical advice. It was noted that there are many toolboxes out there on the Internet and that there might not be a need for a book, per se. A discussion ensued regarding whether staff should provide hands-on technical assistance to communities either on a planning level or development level. George said that research should look at implementation strategies and how you can get towns to implement that. Not just the standards but implementation mechanisms. More discussion followed regarding standards. Various other options were considered such as providing every community with a good book on access management and then have some communities get a review of their ordinance. Staff could express their opinion on where they could do better. A one-day training session was considered. Eric said it would be easier to make a "reader's digest" version of access management tools and then provide a condensed primer course for those communities who felt the need to have one.

A need to start with something first and then bring it to the Policy Committee was discussed. David Willauer spoke of a recent case with Tom Reinauer and the MaineDOT. The group had given a presentation to all municipalities and had promoted access management. The town of Raymond was going to get a level 1 resurfacing on Route 302 and eventually a level 3 was advocated. The group met with business owners and convinced them on access management. The towns appreciated the help. David noted that the group might want to consider the DOT projects that are pending and focus also on those areas.

##### **5. Public Participation and Title VI Plan**

Julia Dawson provided an overview of the Public Participation and Title VI draft plan as described in the attachment included in the meeting packet. She spoke of how the two-part plan was developed in compliance with federal regulations, which require MPOs to develop a Public Involvement Process. A Planning Committee recommendation for adoption of the plan by the Policy Committee is advised. The Public Participation segment of the plan identifies, among other items, methods used for public notification such as mailings, the Internet, workshops, etc. It also describes the process utilized in arriving at decisions pertaining to long-range transportation plans. The second segment, known as the Title VI Plan, identifies various populations in the communities. Once the communities are identified, the information can be incorporated in the planning process so that there is no arbitrary discrimination. Julia noted that there is a procedures section that explains the process for filing a complaint if anyone feels they have been discriminated against. The comment period is 45 days.

A "Transportation Public Forum" was held on the previous evening at the Portland Public Library for local residents to inform them of the Committee's structure, what they do, and how they can get involved. There were about 17 people in attendance. One of the questions asked at the meeting was why there were no elected officials on the Policy Committee. Julia explained to those in attendance at the forum that if towns want to send someone they are welcomed to do so. It was noted that additional membership had been sought and it had generated a small response and an even smaller attendance.

George Theborge commented that the purpose of the federal regulations is to also make sure that there is fair representation within transit. David Willauer added that it must be demonstrated that there is no discrimination in reference to project selection and process. A discussion followed on this topic. Greg Tansley said most people want someone local to talk to about these issues such as a conduit, so to speak. In reference to availability, maybe more needs to be done on a local level. Julia noted that multiple forums had been used to get the word out for the public forum held on the previous night and that only a few people attended. Many didn't know that PACTS or COG existed or what they do. The meeting was used as a starting point and how citizens can get involved. A discussion on public hearings followed. Donna thanked Julia and it was noted that the Public Participation and Title VI Plan is available on the website for review.

## **6. Status Report**

John Duncan provided an overview of the Status Report. Among items mentioned were:

- A Destination Tomorrow Summary will be ready in January.
- The Annual Intelligent Transportation Systems meeting is scheduled to meet at GPCOG on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 25 people have signed up and lunch is included.

The Annual Maine Transportation Conference will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006 in Augusta.

- There is a transportation forum for State legislators and local elected officials scheduled for December 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in Westbrook.
- In January, Carey Kish from Go Maine will talk about the Rideshare Program.
- In reference to the Context Sensitive Solutions Workshop and Training, one possible training location would be Dunstan Corners in Scarborough. The training could be held on the second floor and then the case study could be that intersection. Another possible meeting location could be Oak Hill in Scarborough. John is working on an evening session to be held on the previous night. Rather than a registration fee, there could be a contribution of \$300 or \$400 by each community. The DOT, MTA and MAP have already agreed to contribute. A discussion followed regarding how many people the workshop could accommodate.

## **7. Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

## **Agenda Item 3: Go Maine**

Two GPCOG staff members run the statewide Go Maine ridesharing promotion and matching service. Carey Kish, the Program Director, will give an informational overview of this important program.

## **Agenda Item 4: Access Management (Eric Ortman)**

My notes from your last meeting indicate twelve items of Committee interest – listed below and divided into groups. While no Committee member said that any of the items lacked merit there was not clear consensus of how the Committee as a whole would like staff to proceed. This memo outlines a scope of work that includes all eleven items and would represent a significant staff effort.

Per the Policy Committee, *Destination Tomorrow* Strategy #60 is a top priority strategy and says that PACTS, GPCOG and others should provide technical assistance to municipalities in developing and refining smart growth ordinances and policies. The strategy is listed under the Plan’s Land Use Goal and under the Objective to foster compact development patterns and promote efficient transportation services and systems that reduce sprawl.

Group I – Producing a “manual” based on existing material

1. Best management practices
2. Tool box
3. Workbook(s) e.g., condensed access management workbook
4. Success stories of implemented programs/actions

Group II – Providing technical assistance

5. Draft standards
6. Site review language, general ordinance language
7. Technical “hands-on” assistance
8. Presentations to Planning Boards et al

Group III – Miscellaneous items

9. Top-down (regional-local-site specific) approach
10. Both site specific and corridor level
11. Any policies/principles must be institutionalized to be successful
12. Some members want this to be a big priority

Proposed Scope of Work

1. Staff will develop a condensed access management handbook that compiles the existing literature and that will include: a tool box, best management practices, and success stories of implemented actions/programs. The tool box and best management practices will rely, in large part, on either providing links/references to existing material or excerpting said material. The success stories will be an in depth analysis of why certain approaches/methods did/did not work in various circumstances. I believe this approach will provide greater value to you. (Any of you can easily get collect what the tools and BMPs are. What is of greater import is the why, what and where of how this tools may be best used.) This effort will focus on locations as similar to southern Maine as possible. This will be the first step in staff’s effort and will include items #9-11 in Group III.
2. Staff will provide Committee members with draft standards applicable to a set of various land types, uses and levels of development which are represented by combining the items listed in the table below.

<b>Land Type</b>	<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Level of Development</b>
Urban	Residential	Relatively undeveloped
Rural	Commercial	Moderately developed
	Industrial	Fully developed
	Mixed Use	

3. Staff will review the ordinances of a municipality with a narrow focus on providing recommendations on how the municipality’s access management policy could be strengthened or otherwise improved. A timely review of the ordinances of all 15 member municipalities is not possible given the current staff level and demands on staff. Depending on the collective interest of individual municipalities a mechanism will have to be developed for selecting which municipal ordinances are reviewed.
4. Staff will provide limited technical assistance to municipalities that will include providing recommendations for implementing various access management measures on a case-by-case basis that may be either locations specific or corridor level. Depending on the collective interest of individual municipalities a mechanism will have to be developed to determine the allocation of staff time.

Please note that we will likely require a 20% local match for the cost of staff time for this work devoted directed to each municipality.

**Agenda Item 5: Public Participation and Title VI Plan**

Julia Dawson will update the members on the status of this draft document since her presentation in December. We encourage members to review it at [www.pactsplan.org](http://www.pactsplan.org), and to offer their comments. We expect the Policy Committee to adopt it in February.

**Agenda Item 6: Context Sensitive Solutions**

We are going to hold the forum and day-long training session in late March or April. Here is a status report:

- Julia Dawson is managing this project. She is working with our consultant to set the dates.
- The evening forum will be held in USM’s Hannaford Hall.
- We have not picked a location for the training session. Sandra Mowery is proposing that the training be held in Old Orchard Beach. She will offer some details at your meeting. We have also discussed holding it at the Dunstan School Restaurant.

The Policy Committee needs to endorse a budget for this effort. Staff proposes that the funds offered by MAP and MaineDOT serve as the local match for FHWA funds available through PACTS. Here is a draft budget:

\$ 700	USM Hall and technical support
\$16,150	Consultant (Project for Public Spaces)
\$ 1,300	Training location and food
<u>\$ 1,925</u>	Other (including possible speaker from NHDOT and other costs)
\$20,000	Total

## **Agenda Item 7: Status Report**

### Development of 2-Year PACTS Work Plan

We will adopt a 2-year PACTS “Unified Planning Work Program” in May. The steps involved will be:

1. Staff develops recommendations for work to be done to implement Destination Tomorrow during the next two years. Our committees weigh in on staff recommendations in a to-be-determined way.
2. Staff solicits proposals for local/other “consultant” studies from our members. Staff and the Technical Committee ranks the proposals using the ranking system developed four years ago. The Planning Committee comments on the draft rankings.
3. The Policy Committee adopts a 2-year “Unified Planning Work Program”.

We are going to write a PACTS Studies Policy and Procedures manual during the next few months.

### Destination Tomorrow Brochure

Almost done. Will be ready for distribution at the Policy Committee meeting.

### Recent Transportation Funding Forum

Fifty (50) legislators, local elected officials, municipal representatives and others attended, including a Congressman Allen staff member. State Representative Boyd Marley led the Q&A after the presentations. There was a strong consensus that our transportation financing system is broken, and that the Legislature needs to act boldly to address it.

### Regional Traffic Signal Coordination Study

Julia Dawson is almost done with a recommendation for opportunities to improve traffic signal coordination throughout the PACTS region.

### Passenger Rail Planning and Financing

MaineDOT and NNEPRA staff will brief the Policy Committee this month.

### The PACTS Transportation Project Land Use Policy Guidelines

John Duncan, Donna Larson and Tex Haeuser are in communication with MaineDOT’s Dale Doughty and Kathy Fuller, and with Conrad Welzel (Turnpike Authority) regarding MaineDOT’s current effort to incorporate our “TPLU” Guidelines into MaineDOT’s policies for studies of major corridor projects. MaineDOT advises that land use and transportation is a high priority at MaineDOT.