

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System



Linking our Communities . Advancing our Region

TIP Process Committee Meeting Notice

10:00 to 11:30
August 2, 2011

GPCOG, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Minutes of July 14th meeting**
- 3. Federal Policy on Reimbursement When Approved Project is Not Built**
Presentation by MaineDOT's Martin Rooney
- 4. The PACTS Pace in Picking Projects**
Action on staff recommendation to tweak the project picking schedule
- 5. Gorham East West Corridor Study and PACTS Funding Policy**
Presentation by MTA's Sara Devlin
- 6. Scoring of Intersection and Road Rebuild Proposals**
Staff presentation of recommended changes
- 7. Institutionalize the PACTS Credit Program**
Staff recommendation
- 8. Review progress to date and establish next meeting's agenda**
See updated Committee schedule
- 9. Adjourn**
Next meeting on September 6th at 10:00

Minutes of July 14th Meeting

In attendance: Nathan Poore, Falmouth; Dan Bacon, Scarborough; Stephanie Clark, MaineDOT; Sara Devlin, MTA; Jerry Douglass, MaineDOT; Kathi Earley, Portland; Molly Just, Westbrook; Al Presgraves, Freeport; Marty Rooney, MaineDOT; Sara Trafton, Public Transportation; Jim Wendel, Scarborough; John Duncan, PACTS; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Maddy Adams, GPCOG

1. **Call to order.** Nathan called the meeting to order at 2:37.
2. **Minutes of June 7th meeting.** *Dan Bacon made a motion to approve the June 7, 2011 minutes. Al Presgraves seconded the motion and it passed.*
3. **Federal Air Quality Conformity and the PACTS Process** - Marty Rooney.
The purpose behind this is to link transportation planning with air conformity. A conformity analysis needs to be done. Certain types of projects require conformity analysis and that analysis adds about three months to the process. Anything not on the list (handout) will require an air quality conformity analysis.

CMAQ. It is the only Federal Highway money that can be used for operating costs or start-up projects. CMAQ money was used for the Downeaster, the Island Explorer, the Brunswick Explorer, etc. In reality, about 65-70% of Maine's CMAQ money goes to fund the Downeaster. There are some stakeholder groups that have looked on that unfavorably. There is a working group (which includes the EPA, DEP, FHWA, PACTS, GoMaine, Maine Clean Communities) who go through a prioritization exercise for those projects that could benefit from CMAQ funding, and then those ideas are submitted to the Governor. Usually the projects are bike/ped, park and ride lots, etc. Requests for projects are sent out in January of every even year. In November or December the projects are prioritized. There is typically 7-8 million dollars per year in CMAQ money.

Because the PACTS TIP includes all the projects in the Greater Portland area, it includes the Downeaster which gets a big chunk of CMAQ money. Projects on the TIP that are getting CMAQ money are identified with a CM on the list.

4. **Incorporate TIP Project Efficiency Team Recommendations into our Processes.**
Recommendations for the PACTS region – page 7 of meeting packet.
#1 is just about when we advertise – go with March 1st of each year. OK
#2 is about MaineDOT's early kick-off initiative. Do we want to encourage this type of action in the future? Kathi asked at what point during the process a municipality would need to decide about doing the job as a locally administered project (LAP). Dan stated that MaineDOT could be the lead on design but a town may decide to take on LAP during the construction period. Paul noted that with an LAP, a town fronts the money. Nathan asked if we should have Joyce or Norm Baker come to one of our meetings so that we can get a better handle on the two party, three party agreement, and LAP. Marty explained that the early kick-off is not intended to put a gun to your head. He encouraged towns not to sign an agreement if they are hesitant. The group decided to it was OK to include #2.

- #3. Match policy. For this year, it will be the construction phase only; next year it will be all phases. Keep this one in also.
- #4. Once a decision is made regarding local match and there is a state/federal agreement, MaineDOT cannot change the local match. It was suggested that perhaps we should include a footnote about this in our document. Molly suggested having the project begin with the signing of the three-party agreement. Marty explained that some staff won't be able to charge time to a project if the three-party agreement isn't yet signed even though they may already be working on the project.

Recommendations relevant to all MPO's

- #1 – OK
- #2 – OK – continue with the status quo.
- #3 – John thought it was premature to act on this. The FHWA representative brought this up at the eleventh hour. It really needs more work. There was no face to face communication on this one. **Consensus to table this item.**
- #4 – This enhances better communication. Change as follows: PACTS Action: PACTS staff will participate in the meetings and communicate, when needed, with our member municipalities **before and** after the meetings, as necessary.

Next year's incentive/disincentive plan will have a December deadline whereas this year's is different. Paul was concerned because there are so many variables.

- #5 – John explained that last year when we were estimating costs for road projects, we didn't know if MaineDOT would give us a design exception, so we programmed the amount higher than we would've if we had a design exception. Marty suggested that when folks are out in the field reviewing projects, questions should be asked of the field review people and one of the questions should be should this project be considered for design exception. Dan suggested adding the following sentence: **This shall not preclude any opportunities for design exception considerations later in the process.** There were no objections to this recommendation.
- #6 – This is in there because local staff probably know local residents better than MaineDOT staff. OK

Recommendations Relevant Statewide.

- #1. No objections

There were no objections to the remainder of the recommendations.

5. Local Project Administration.

Recommendations.

- #2. Do we want to encourage the use of LAPs? Marty suggested the following addition: Staff to continue to encourage our members to consider doing PACTS projects as locally administered projects, **where applicable.**

Dan noted that as more towns choose to do LAPs, it would be really nice to have PACTS or the communities document those projects with a timeline, cost, etc. After a handful of years, we'll be able to understand whether LAPs are significantly less or not. Track the performance. Paul said that MaineDOT has all those numbers.

Both recommendations under number 5 are ok with addition of **where applicable** to the end of #2.

6. PACTS Two-biennia project policy and project cap policy.

There is no change here. Just as long as it's understood that if the projects don't move forward, then the federal money would have to be paid back, in accordance with FHWA policy and the three-party agreement.

7. The PACTS Pace in Picking Projects.

Paul and John have discussed this and they think it's working fine. For instance, next year we will start evaluating proposals for projects in January and adopt a final list in October. October is when MaineDOT must have the list. Then a year later, the federal funds will become available (except for early kick-off). If we start reviewing proposals in June for making decisions by October, it won't happen.

We can table this until John hears back from Mike McGovern. Marty explained that MaineDOT uses a much more streamlined approach. Dan said he'd be curious about the schedules of the other MPOs.

Paul said PACTS staff put themselves in a position where we assist our municipalities with their applications if there is missing data, etc. Nathan thought it was a good idea to have PACTS review the applications (others agreed).

8. Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities. Marty thought it was necessary to engage Peter Coughlan in this discussion. Paul will be drafting a letter to Bruce Van Note on this item on behalf of all four MPOs.

Gorham East/West Study recommendations will be discussed at the next meeting.
Upcoming meetings: August 2nd and September 6th.

9. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Agenda Item 3: Federal Policy on Reimbursement When Project is Not Built

Recommendation: Receive report from MaineDOT's Martin Rooney

Background

Marty will provide us with an overview regarding a 2011 FHWA memorandum regarding requirements for Transportation Planning and Air Quality Conformity regulations and the timing of certain National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions by FHWA.

John's understanding is that the FHWA will require reimbursement by MaineDOT and/or a municipality for the expenses incurred during the federally-funded planning of major projects that ultimately do not get built.

Agenda Item 4: The PACTS Pace in Picking Projects

Staff: John Duncan and Paul Niehoff

Recommendation: Accept report on this work in progress.

Background

At the April Policy Committee meeting the members also added this topic to the TIP Process Committee's work list. The premise is that we collectively spend too much effort picking projects and that we do it over too long a period of time. For instance, the argument can be made that the project cost estimates developed in late 2011, for instance, are to be used for PACTS projects (if funded) that are built in 2014 or 2015 – and that the cost estimates get outdated in the interim.

We are sending this packet out incomplete on this item in hopes that you will have enough time to read it before our meeting. At our meeting staff will:

- Provide more background on this based on a conversation with Mike McGovern (Policy Committee member who offered the suggestion in April). *John will speak with Mike before our meeting.*
- Describe to you the anticipated project selection schedule for 2012.
- Ask for your perspectives on this subject.

We tabled this item at our last meeting pending John's conversation with Mike McGovern.

Agenda Item 5: Gorham E-W Corridor Study and PACTS Funding Policy

Presentation by MTA's Sara Devlin

Background

The Gorham East West Corridor Study Phase I final report will be completed in the near future. We have briefed most PACTS committees on the progress of this important regional study during the past two years. Phase II of the study will begin this fall or winter.

We have budgeted \$50,000 for land use planning work in Gorham, South Portland, Scarborough, Portland and Westbrook based on the Phase I recommendations.

Sara Devlin will outline the study's recommendations, and will describe the recommendation that PACTS consider rewarding proactive land use municipalities through our TIP and UPWP by providing bonus points in TIP project scoring.

The Study is perhaps the most important transportation study in our region this decade.

Agenda Item 6: Scoring of Intersection and Road Rebuild Proposals

Staff: John Duncan

Recommendation: Provide guidance to staff in response to today's proposal

Background

We use formulas to rank all proposals for PACTS programming. During the next two months:

- Staff and the TIP Process Committee will review the formulas for the Intersections, Rebuild Roads and Bike/Ped set asides.
- At our September meeting, Steve Linnell will brief us on the formulas that staff and the Transit Committee use in ranking proposals for Transit Capital set aside funding, and also the FTA 5307 formula – but we will defer to the Transit Committee to review those formulas at their discretion.
- At our October meeting Paul Niehoff will brief us on the changes being considered our Collector Paving set aside proposals by the Technical Committee.

Today, staff will offer recommendations for changes to the Intersection and Rebuild Roads formulas. In September we will finalize the changes to those formulas, and consider changes to our Bike/Ped scoring formula, and also review revisions to the proposal application forms.

We score Intersection and Rebuild Road proposals using two formulas – the Roadway Formula and the Destination Tomorrow Formula. Here is a brief history:

- The Roadway Formula was created in the 1980's by the Technical Committee and MaineDOT. We have tweaked it many times.
- The Destination Tomorrow Formula was created in 2003 in order to explicitly incorporate Destination Tomorrow into our ranking of proposals.
- In 2003, 2005 and 2007 the Roadway Formula had an 80 percent weight and the Destination Tomorrow Formula had a 20 percent weight. In 2009 we made the formulas of equal weight (50-50) in the scoring of Intersection and Road Rebuild proposals.
- We can provide the narrative descriptions of the two formulas if requested. The narrative was included in our TIP Policies and Procedures documents until 2009 when we decided to remove them and other items for the sake of making the document more user friendly.

At our meeting staff will explain the Roadway and Destination Tomorrow Formulas and the proposed changes. See the table on the next page. The changes will simplify the scoring process by:

- Eliminating several staff calculations needed to reach the 50-50 equal weight of the two formulas. This is done by having the sum of each factor's maximum possible score be 50 for both formulas.
- Reflecting the 2010 Destination Tomorrow change to five "policies" from eight "guiding policies". The D. T. Formula currently has eight factors – we recommend reducing to five.
- Removing some Roadway Formula factors that do not work well and/or are of minimal value. Here is our reasoning.

The "future growth" factor

It is the estimated 20-year traffic growth rate for the project location. We want to remove the factor because the estimated rate (taken from the PACTS traffic model) is unreliable, and because it has such a small maximum potential score (only 2.5).

The pavement condition factor in the Intersection formula

It is irrelevant to determining the importance of an intersection proposal – so remove it.

The "geometric standards" factor

It is designed as a reward for proposing to fix a location with an existing substandard geometry. This factor routinely scores negligibly because towns fail to provide the needed data and because the proposals rarely propose to bring a substandard situation up to standard – so remove it.

The delay/V/C factor in the Road Rebuild formula

It is irrelevant to determining the importance of a Road Rebuild proposal – so remove it. The Road Rebuild proposals never add measureable capacity to a roadway.

Staff Proposal for Scoring Factor Changes and Factors' New Maximum Scores for Intersection and Road Rebuild Proposals

Total potential scores remain the same for the Roadway Formula (50 points) and the Destination Tomorrow Formula (50 points).

	Roadway Formula					Destination Tomorrow Formula									
	Current Traffic	Future Traffic	Pavement Condition	Geometric Standards	Safety	Delay or V/C Ratio	Multi-Modal	Cost Effective	Regional Focus	Maintain/ Transform	Eco Devo	Trans-Land-Use	Enviro + Energy	Total *	
<u>Intersections:</u>															
<i>Proposal</i>	10	<i>Remove</i>	<i>Remove</i>	<i>Remove</i>	15	10	10	5	10	20	5	10	5	100	
Existing **	7.5	2.5	0	2.5	10	12.5	10	5	6 **	19 **	6 **	13 **	6 **	100	
<u>Road Rebuild:</u>															
<i>Proposal</i>	15	<i>Remove</i>	10	<i>Remove</i>	10	<i>Remove</i>	10	5	10	20	5	10	5	100	
Existing **	7.5	2.5	10	2.5	10	5	7.5	5	6 **	19 **	6 **	13 **	6 **	100	

* The bonus points for public/private partnerships (up to 5 points) and for multi-municipality proposals (up to 5 points) get added to this total.

** The existing Destination Tomorrow factors maximum points shown here are rough approximations taken from the existing eight Destination Tomorrow formula factors and converted to these five factors.

Agenda Item 7: Institutionalize the PACTS Credit Program

Staff: Paul Niehoff

Recommendation: To create a Credit Program Set Aside with a \$250,000 biennial budget

Background

Our members responded favorably to the 2010 pilot Credit Program, and decided to offer it again in 2011. While only one community has been able to submit an eligible request for 2011 Credit Program funding, staff recommends that we continue this program at \$250,000 per biennium.

Your TIP Process Committee 3-ring notebook includes three items (topics 15, 16 and 17) on the Credit Program.

Topics and Dates for TIP Process Review Meetings

As revised in July

June 7 July 14 Aug 2 Sept 6 Oct 4

TIP Process Topics

1	Review scope of the committee's work to do	Done				
2	Incorporate Project Efficiencies Team proposals (such as local match policy changes)	95% done				X
3	MaineDOT briefings on CMAQ and NEPA policies	Done	X			
4	Exec Committee role in tracking projects status Per suggestion at recent Exec meeting	Done				
5	New local project administration function	Done				
6	Shorten time spent picking projects **		X			
7	Review our 2-biennia project policy **	Done				
8	Revisit our project cap policy	Done				
9	Consider Gorham E-W Study recommendation to reward communities with transportation funding in return for certain land use plans		X		X	
10	Institutionalize Credit Program **		X			
11	Receive report from Technical Committee on changes to the Collectors ranking procedure					X
12	Briefing on transit funding processes				X	
13	Tweak Road Formula factors and weights and Tweak Dest. Tomorrow Formula factors and weights, and Bike/Ped scoring process		X		X	
14	Revise project application requirements and application forms				X	
15	Review staff's TIP Process Document					X

** Topic from April Policy Committee meeting