



Joint Planning and Technical Committee Meeting Notice

June 4, 2009
9:00 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment
3. Minutes of April 14th, 2009 Meeting (under separate cover)
4. PACTS Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update
5. TIP Process Update
6. Information and Other Business
7. Adjourn.

Next Meeting: TBD

PACTS Joint Planning and Technical Committee Meeting
April 14th, 2009
8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford, Chair; Bill Bent, HNTB (MTA); Angela Blanchette, Saco; Bob Burns, Gorham; Mimi Cervaney, MaineDOT; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Doug Fortier, Windham; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Molly Just, Westbrook; Gary Lamb, Old Orchard Beach; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Steve Linnell, GPCOG; Jeff McEwen; FHWA; Carla Nixon, Cumberland; Maureen O'Meara, Cape Elizabeth; Al Presgraves, Freeport; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; Amanda Stearns, Falmouth; Greg Tansley, Biddeford; Gretel Varney, Portland; Jim Wendel, Scarborough.

Members Absent: Dana Anderson, So. Portland; Dan Bacon, Scarborough; Mike Bolduc, Saco; Julia Dawson, SMRPC; Sara Devlin, MTA; Connie Garber, PACTS Transit Committee Rep.; Tex Haeuser, South Portland; Bob Hough, MaineDOT; Alex Jaegerman, Portland; Deb Fossum, Gorham; Gary Guerette, South Portland; Robert Kahn, Policy Com. Appt.; Peggy Kilmer, Yarmouth; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Dale Mitchell, Policy Committee Appointee; Brooks More, Windham; Anna Price, FHWA; Peter Morelli, Saco; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC.

Staff and Guests: John Duncan, PACTS; Carl Eppich, PACTS; LaRay Hamilton, MDOT; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS.

1. **Call to Order** Jennie Franceschi, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.
2. **Public Comment:** There were no public comments expressed.
3. **Technical Committee Minutes of February 10th, 2009 Meeting**
Mary Ann Conroy made a motion for approval of the February 10th, 2009 minutes, seconded by Bob Burns. Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously accepted.

4. **Why are we doing This (a joint meeting)?**

Staff has had discussions in the past wondering if it would be beneficial for both the PACTS Technical and Planning Committees to come together to share ideas pertaining to projects, studies and goals. The Transit Committee has begun some of these combined meetings. They are now meeting on a quarterly basis and there seems to be much enthusiasm.

Discussion began about collector roads. Among comments and ideas expressed were some of the following:

- There are different philosophies on the maintenance of infrastructure.
- One of Destination Tomorrow's goals is to preserve the existing infrastructure.
- Should the focus be based on just AADT and is proper weight being given to transit?
- Hazard mitigation would say evacuation routes should be priority.
- Is enough attention being paid to people thinking in different ways as to how funding should be allocated?
- We have an opportunity to prioritize what is important such as evacuation routes. What happens to those roads? Do we make decisions that some roads just go back to gravel?
- How do we technically evaluate our transportation needs if we have to let roads go?
- If we have to let some roads go, technical evaluation of our transportation needs would need to be based on thorough evaluation with additional guidelines and criteria.

More discussion followed on whether or not to modify traditional criteria and/or technical standards. Should we maintain our roads with local funds or should it be a mix between State and Federal funding? It was noted that standards are based on safety levels for the driving public. Highway design could be a re-evaluation of those standards and lowering speed limits might provide another option. A short discussion followed on flexibility and design standards vs. design guidelines. More training and understanding is needed on the kind of flexibility that has been built into the standards. The MaineDOT came out with a design exception review team to help make the process more consistent, and to have the process happen more so designers could go to this team in

moving forward. In summary, before trying to change the standards, it is felt that people need to first apply and understand the guidelines.

A question was asked in reference to a scenario where a town is looking at rebuilding a section of a road, for instance. Jeff explained that the first step would be in the planning stage. Look at the project and the flexibility that is built in. The design team is also encouraged to do that in the planning stage of the project. At some point you have to look at that road and look at the number of crashes, which is what some of the design criteria is based on. Engineers are being encouraged to give more thought while designing a project.

Discussion then focused on keeping an open mind and looking at other ways to lessen impact on our roads. Bob pointed out that in the end, alternative modes of transportation such as buses, etc., would still have to use these same roads. Dan noted that in regards to the standards, it might make sense now for the Committees to look at the same list and apply some of the other factors such as standards, guardrails, etc. Jennie noted that the groups had looked at design exceptions. It was noted that there is a need for more qualitative items.

Bob explained that in the end, the roads are falling apart. A few years back, we didn't understand what all the roads were that were in our infrastructure and then about four years ago, the MaineDOT did a reclassification. Only last year did we receive a list of roads that are either built or unbuilt. Now we find that we don't have enough money to maintain the roads we have. Bob said he preferred that we focus on that issue because the reality is that we are not doing what it takes to maintain our road system. It was noted that there had been a consensus to not remove any roads from the collector road pavement list.

The group then discussed ways to encourage towns to do some of the maintenance preservation on local roads. Several ideas such as impact fees, bills in the legislature, etc., were considered. The group also discussed the maintenance chart; the funding alternatives chart, and, the brochure summarizing the PACTS Collector Road report by Gorrill-Palmer as well as incentives, such as a grant of 20% or 30% for towns to overlay and/or maintain some of the roads. This generated a short discussion on federal standards and the need for some kind of assistance from the MaineDOT. We may be able to do some design exceptions but this is not going to change the bottom line that there is not enough funding to do all of the roads. It was pointed out that the smaller towns do not have the same amount of staff to manage local projects, or the same ability to raise funds. Smaller communities would be put at a disadvantage. There is a need to find a way for equitable funding for all communities.

In answer to a question asked earlier about Aroostook County, Mike replied that they are just as concerned about funding as everyone else but the people in Aroostook County think regionally. In times such as these with the lack of funding we should try to think of what is important to our region and think about regional decisions. We should not forget that it is just as important to get people to and from work as well as moving trucks. A comment was made that other states have a different model of funding whereas the state funds the maintenance of interstate and major arterials and the counties fund all the collector roads and bridges. The towns do not have to compete for funds. Counties provide more of a regional type of road maintenance. Greg agreed that there needs to be more focus on regional priorities vs. local issues. Discussion continued on what to do right now as well as where would we like to be in the long-term as well as what recommendations we should make to the Policy Committee that these are the best projects for PACTS. A short discussion followed pertaining to rail and freight. It was noted that it costs a lot to put in rail and infrastructure. Staff was asked to come up with a process with the list of ideas mentioned. It was suggested that members of both Committees provide some feedback to staff either through a survey or both groups could meet again in May with feedback on items discussed today. John pointed out that the PACTS TIP Process Committee is working on the 2010 projects. Their work needs to be done by the end of this year. Maybe there is more time for inter-committee input. It was decided that another meeting with both committees would be held on May 12th, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. It was also suggested that the group could invite the PACTS Transit Committee to participate as well.

5. **Regional View(s) of Study and Project Selection (Tabled until next meeting).**
6. **Traffic Counts for PACTS Model Update (Tabled until next meeting).**
7. **Aerial Flights**
Discussion took place pertaining to costs and town budgets. Unless federal funding became available, there was general consensus among the group to not do aerial flights this year due to economic budget constraints.
8. **Information and Other Business**
The Long-Range Planning Committee will be convening on May 1st, 2009. They could use another PACTS Technical Committee member to serve on this Committee.
9. **Adjourn**
The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Agenda Item 4. PACTS Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update

PACTS has recently hired Bruce Hyman Planning to update the original PACTS 1995 “Bicycle and Interim Pedestrian Plan” as outlined in the scope below:

The purpose of this study is to conduct an update of the PACTS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The last PACTS Bike Ped Plan was published in 1995 as a “Bicycle and Interim Pedestrian Plan” for seven PACTS municipalities. Since 2002 PACTS area has expanded to 15 municipalities. Many PACTS municipalities have developed their own Bike/Ped plans and completed infrastructure improvements.

Methodology (A-priority, B- secondary if time allows)

- A: Inventory bicycle and pedestrian facilities and plans in the 15 PACTS municipalities
- A: Contact and work with PACTS’ communities to gather information, plans, and priority areas or corridors
- B: Photo archive existing infrastructure and areas of deficiencies
- A: Map activity centers, schools, shopping centers and major employers
- B: Develop consistent bicycle and pedestrian design guidelines to meet ASSHTO and ADA
- A: Map bicycle routes and determine gaps and deficiencies in network
- A: Determine the top ten most cost and time efficient areas of potential improvement(s)
- A: Determine the top ten areas of most concern for needed improvement(s)
- A: Compile and map all bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the PACTS region since 2000
- A: Compile and map PACTS bicycle and pedestrian projects including the 10/11 projects
- B: Develop methodology for prioritizing PACTS bike/ped projects
- A: Produce final plan document including maps and recommendations for regional bike/ped priorities both on a community basis and for regional significance.
- A: The deliverables shall consist of 6 paper copies and a digital copy of the final plan including maps, technical details and recommendations. It is the intent of PACTS to make this study a dynamic study to be continually update via a web based format. As such the final product should include a comprehensive PDF of the entire document. Attachments can be separate PDF files if needed. Included with this should also be the supporting GIS, JPEG, etc. formatted image files, NOT converted to PDF, which will be used to populate an online data library. The information does not need to be uploaded to the database.

As pertains to this joint group, an important aspect of this plan update will be a web based component which will allow contributors to post updates to keep the plan constantly up to date. For this concept to work well it will be extremely important for PACTS member towns to contribute to the plan when updates are warranted. More information about this will be forthcoming as the site is developed.

Agenda Item 5. TIP Process Update (excerpted from May Policy meeting)

The TIP Process Committee’s job is to review our TIP priority setting and administration policies and procedures in preparation for the FY 2012/2013 biennium, and to submit a final set of recommendations to the Policy Committee by next September.

They have met six times, and gave updates at the December, February and March meetings of the Policy Committee. They will meet at least once again.

Consensus at Past Meetings of the TIP Process Committee

1. Stick with our policy to guarantee PACTS funding for 125% of the cost estimates of “one biennium” projects (except transit) at the time of programming by the Policy Committee, and that we provide no additional funding if subsequent cost estimates exceed the 125% amount.
2. Stick with our similar policy on our “two biennia” projects.
3. Stick with our policy to fund our STP-funded projects (except transit) at 25% local, 10% state and 65% federal.
4. Make our TIP Policies Document more user-friendly by shortening it a lot.
5. **May 8th meeting:** Keep our existing “Languishing Projects” reporting policy, and direct staff to administer it.
6. **May 8th meeting:** Use our Collector Roads Set Aside funding to preserve the 83 miles in good shape, and rely on our municipalities to rehabilitate and/or reconstruct the other 121 miles of collector roads in our region.
7. **May 8th meeting:** Change our Set Aside funding policy as follows:

	Existing Policy	May 8th Consensus	May 8th Consensus	Notes *
Collectors	40%	57%	\$8,550,000	A major increase in response to Collector Study.
Intersections	20%	20%	\$3,000,000	Primarily to relieve bottlenecks. Urban oriented.
Rebuild Arterials	10%	10%	\$1,500,000	Arterial paving is done by MaineDOT.
Transit	7%	10%	\$1,500,000	A statement for sustainable transportation policy.
Bike/Ped	3%	3%	\$450,000	A statement for sustainable transportation policy.
Widen Roads	<u>20%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>\$0</u>	A statement for sustainable transportation policy.
Total	100%	100%	\$15,000,000	Staff estimate for 2012/2013 biennium

* We will revisit this in June per staff review of our existing 2012/2013 commitments for Intersection projects.

Upcoming Topics for the TIP Process Committee

1. Review and comment on MaineDOT's new 3-Party Agreement for projects funded through the PACTS MPO Allocation.
2. Finish discussion of ideas to increase regional emphasis in PACTS project selection.
3. Review our Project Substitution and Withdrawal policies.
4. Recommend a policy on how we use federal funds unspent in projects funded via PACTS.

Agenda Item 6. Information, Planning and Transit Updates and Other Business

1. Long Range Plan (Destination Tomorrow) Update.
2. Second meeting of the Preferred Alternative Mode(s) of Transportation Group.
3. 08/09 TIP Amendment adding sections of North Road (Yarmouth), Baxter Boulevard (Portland) and Pleasant Hill Road (Scarborough) to the work program.
4. Planning Studies Update.
5. Overview of "Policy Research and Analysis on Urban Transportation Finance and Jurisdictional Responsibilities". This is a John Melrose study funded by the four MPO's with an emphasis on URIP and urban areas.
6. Other items and open discussion(s).