

# PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee



## **Technical Committee Meeting**

November 9, 2010 8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

### **Agenda**

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Approve Minutes of the Technical Committees meeting, October 12, 2010**
- 4. MaineDOT and MTA 2011 Construction Project Review**
- 5. 12/13 UTIP in Total**
- 6. Collector Update Subcommittee Discussion for the Next Assessment**
- 7. Information and Other Business**
- 8. Adjourn**

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**PACTS Technical Committee Minutes**  
**Meeting of October 12, 2010**  
**8:30 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Dan Jellis, Chair, Yarmouth; Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford; Doug Fortier, Windham; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Dale Mitchell, MaineDOT; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transportation; Elizabeth Roberts (for Sara Devlin); Jim Wendel, Scarborough

**Members Absent:** Dana Anderson, South Portland; Darryl Belz; MaineDOT; Angela Blanchette, Saco; Chris Bolduc, Cumberland; Bob Burns, Gorham; Don Chaisson, North Yarmouth; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Tom Errico, Exec. Com. Appt.; Eben Marsh, GPCOG; Myranda McGowen, SMRPC; Al Presgraves, Freeport; Jay Reynolds, Falmouth; Bill Robertson, OOB; Gretel Varney, Portland

**Staff and Guests:** Maddy Adams/Lynne Powers, GPCOG; Carl Eppich, PACTS; Bob Hough; Jeff McEwen, FHWA; Paul Niehoff, PACTS

1. **Call to Order.** Dan Jellis opened the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Introductions were made.
2. **Public Comment.** None.
3. **Minutes of September 14, 2010 Meeting.** *Bob Malley made a motion to approve the September 14, 2010 minutes, seconded by Jim Wendel. All were in favor.*
4. **Collector Set Aside Review and Recommendation to Policy Committee.** Paul explained that a section of North Road was added along with a section of Buxton Road to fill in the gap. Bedford Street came off the list after the meeting because Portland notified Paul that a section was overlaid when USM did their site plan improvements. Eastern Prom and Highland were added (or left on). There is some money in the Holding PIN and some of these projects could be done sooner than 2012-13 with money from the Holding PIN. That decision will be made by the Policy Committee with a recommendation from staff. The ones that meet monetary requirements will be recommended. There is \$8.9 million in the set-aside for 2012-13. Paul hasn't received any comments from any of the communities that aren't present today.

Dave R. mentioned that Fore Street–Downtown/Old Port section is a transit route (Route 8A). Paul said he would double check that. Fore Street from India to Eastern Promenade would be done first and then in 12-13 we are looking to do the next section. Fore Street 1 is India to the Eastern Prom; Fore Street 2 is in the downtown area. India and Fore are also transit routes. PACTS typically submits a list that includes more projects than there is money to cover. Jennie noted that there are three Portland projects that aren't moving. She said we shouldn't be putting pressure on the municipality if they do not have the money to do the project. Paul said that Portland is facing fiscal constraints; we will need to continue our discussion with Portland regarding match. Portland didn't have the money to Capisic Street in 2010/11 so the money went back in the pot. We don't have commitments from any of the towns yet because these projects were slated for 12/13. Bob suggested that a time limit be set regarding a commitment from a municipality and, if a decision doesn't get made, then the money would be put to another project. Jeff asked if PACTS speaks to the Council about the importance of the project. The PACTS Committee member (not PACTS staff) or someone from the Public Works Department would be the person to speak to the council about the importance of the project. Jeff noted that the costs go up exponentially each year that a project is put off. Dan J. agreed that we should give the municipality a certain amount of time to bring back a commitment letter. If they do not, then the money would become available for the next project on the list. Caveat: the deadline would depend on the government of each community as some municipalities only have an annual meeting to make that kind of decision. The Policy Committee needs to be made aware of this discussion. *Jim Wendel moved approval and Bob Malley seconded the motion to recommend approval of the projects listed up to the green line (\$9,844,894) on the PACTS Collector Road Study Preliminary Rankings spreadsheet (dated July 20, 2010). All were in favor.*

5. **Credit Program Update.** Paul explained that the threshold for the credit was lowered from \$500,000 to \$400,000 which allowed Cape Elizabeth to be eligible. Paul will need to talk to the towns very specifically regarding where and how they want to use their credit. If a project has been obligated then we have to remove it from the TIP and reinsert it with the new numbers. The money can be applied to a 2012/13 project if they have one, or it can be applied to a current project. We are only talking about collectors. There was a discussion about two Biddeford projects and design exceptions.
6. **Executive Meeting Holding PIN Funding Recommendations.** Paul is working with Mike Laberge to come up with more finite numbers but Mike has changed jobs so he has been having trouble accessing his old files. We are talking federal/state money. The “ready to go” projects category is the one that is in flux; those dollar figures will change somewhat. The idea is to use the money in the set-aside categories now for projects that we would be doing in 2012/13. We need about \$15,000 to fully fund the 2012-13 bike/ped set-aside. What we are going to do is take \$15,000 out of the collector set-aside to fully fund the bike/ped category in 12/13. But then we will take \$15,000 out of the Holding PIN now from bike/ped and it will go to collectors as “ready to go” projects. Paul explained Note #1.
7. **Collector Road Update Discussion for Next Assessment.** In the last Technical Committee meeting, the group held a discussion of the ranking/rating system for collector roads. Dan J. thought that the committee should start reevaluating the system for the next biennium. The ideas of having either the committee as a whole or a special subcommittee work on the project were both mentioned. Jennie recommended that Gorrill Palmer be involved either way, and Jeff suggested seeking a MaineDOT representative who can discuss FWD values.

*Bob Malley moved that PACTS staff put together a draft subcommittee structure with a timeframe for these revisions, and that the committee votes on it at the next Technical Committee meeting. Jennie Franceschi seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

8. **MaineDOT Highway Simplification Study Update.** John talked about a Thursday morning meeting where 75-100 people went to the Maine Municipal Association to hear a presentation from MaineDOT and the simplification study policy working group. One of the subcommittees added a budgeting number for the fix and swap of urban collector roads, as the previous number had come from rural collectors; this new number was substantially higher.

There was a proposal to reduce municipal planning organizations' allocations. The logic was that, if MaineDOT is going to fix and swap minor collectors throughout the state, then that will include MPO areas and MPOs will thus not need capital money to put into their collector roads. John however, said that the suggestion appears to have been withdrawn after objections. The entire simplification plan is currently on a timeline for presentation to the Legislature in January.

The group discussed the 10-year standard that roads are supposed to be brought to before they will be turned over to municipalities. There were some questions, and cost & standards subcommittee member Dale Mitchell detailed the process for reaching that standard. There would be a meeting between MaineDOT and the municipality so that they reach an agreement on what constitutes a 10-year standard for a particular road, and if an agreement cannot be reached, a five-member committee would be part of the appeal process.

9. **Information and Other Business.** Committee members gave updates on in-progress projects. Dave Redlefsen said that Metro is due to receive a number of new vehicles at the end of March. Jennie updated the group on Biddeford's Main Street sidewalk project, which will wrap up within the next two weeks, and said that the Elm Street/Route 1 widening project will go to construction in spring 2011. John told the committee that the information that municipal members had provided about the local money that they have been spending on state roads has been very helpful. In Scarborough, the Route 1 intersection project was awarded, but Jim said that there will be no construction until spring, and that in the meantime, utility relocation will be sorted out. Dan J. said that the approved section of Route 88 in Yarmouth has been

finished, and he is working on the last phase of a Route 1 corridor study.

10. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 9:45 A.M.

#### **Agenda Item 4. MaineDOT and MTA 2011 Construction Project Review**

Peter Merfield of the Maine Turnpike Authority and Brad Foley of the MaineDOT will be giving us an overview of the 2011 project schedule with the focus on the turnpike and I-295 corridors.

#### **Agenda Item 5. 12/13 UTIP in Total**

You should have received previously two tables/spreadsheets with our 12/13 projects listed with various informational items as well as project estimates and local match figures. The condensed table includes our Holding Pin projects. Project ID forms will be coming soon. We can discuss if warranted. There are a couple clarifications or caveats we will review during the meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 6. Collector Update Subcommittee Discussion for the Next Assessment**

*(From prior meeting)* As we have found when we have utilized our study for the purposes of funding pavement preservation the method of numerically ranking our collectors has not worked as well as we would have liked. However, the reports have certainly met the need and the intent of the initial study by ranking all of our collectors. Over the past two months many discussions have taken place to modify our criteria to better enable us to program our pavement preservation projects. If time permits we can begin the discussion to determine how we would like to proceed with the next update. It has been suggested a small subcommittee be formed to work out the details.

We have begun looking into the schedule and what may need to be completed for us the begin programming the collector roads for the 14/14 Work Program. We need to decide on a subcommittee which some of you have shown an interest. MaineDOT will be involved and I have contacted them. For discussion purposes the draft schedule looks like we would begin the report update possibly in the fall of 2011 and work on it using project data for the 2011 construction season and begin assessing the DOT data around the same time. Field work would take place the spring of 2012 with the report available say March/April for programming projects in September 2012 for the 14/15 work program. A couple reasons for this schedule are, we will be receiving our final update report soon (once we work with DOT and G-P to resolve a few recently found inconsistencies) and the other major reason being we do not need to program collectors again until late summer 2012. That gives us time to work out some of the questions and concerns recently raised for the 12/13 program.

Somewhat related to this topic but something that could be implemented sooner would be opening discussions about what to do with short sections of viable paving candidates or how we could possibly “partner” with DOT to complete longer sections of road paving if the community completes some of the work which may not meet current standards or completes work on an adjacent section to extend the length of a paving project.

## **Agenda Item 8. Information and Other Business**

1. MaineDOT has just come out with a map viewer with all kinds of information, drawing simple drawing capabilities, measuring tools and a pdf converter. You can check it out here: <http://maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer/> (don't forget the last forward slash). I've invited Nate Kane of DOT to show us an overview of the site during a joint Planning/Technical meeting most likely in January.
2. Not many details at this point but COG has been communicating with USGS and MIGIS about a statewide base flyover during "leaf off" in spring 2012. They would like to present to us in a future meeting, most likely the same meeting as noted above.
3. Taking suggestions for areas or corridors for a spring/summer traffic count program. Any interest in bike/pedestrian counts?