

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee



Technical Committee Meeting Notice

May 15, 2007
8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. **Call to order and introduction of Paul Niehoff, Senior Transportation Planner**
2. **Minutes of April 10th meeting**
3. **Capital funding topics**
 - A. Local project administration and design standards subcommittee
 - B. Local advance funding for construction of projects in 2007
 - C. The recently released MaineDOT 2008/2009 Biennial Capital Work Plan
 - D. The proposed cuts in the PACTS 2008/2009 MPO Allocation projects list
 - E. Status of LD 1790 and other bills in the Legislature
4. **Draft 2-year PACTS planning work program**
5. **Status Reports**
6. **Other business**
7. **Adjourn.**

Next Meeting: July 10th at 8:30 a.m.

We will announce today the date for the PACTS Annual Meeting.

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Agenda Item 2 – Minutes of March 13th Meeting

Members Present: Dana Anderson, So. Portland; Bob Burns, Gorham, Chair; Mike Bolduc, Saco; Jim Carmody, Portland; Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Doug Fortier, Windham; Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford, Vice-Chair; Tony Hayes, Falmouth; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Jonathan Labonte, MTA; Dean Lessard, MaineDOT; Josh Mack, SMRPC; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Dale Mitchell, Policy Committee Appointee; Albert Presgraves, Freeport; METRO; David Willauer, GPCOG

Members Absent: Don Chaisson, No. Yarmouth; Adam Ogden, Cumberland; John Perry, FHWA; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; Jim Wendell, Scarborough

Staff and Guests: Julia Dawson, PACTS; John Duncan, PACTS; John Melrose, Maine Better Transportation Association; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Jay Reynolds, Falmouth

1. **Call to Order.** Bob Burns, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m. Bob welcomed those present and introductions were made
2. **Adoption of minutes of March 13, 2007 meeting**
Jennie Franceschi made a motion for approval of the March 13, 2007 minutes, seconded by Bob Malley. Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Update on LD 1790 – An Act to Secure Maine’s Transportation Future**

John Melrose from the Maine Better Transportation Association (MBTA) provided an update on LD 1790, “An Act to Secure Maine’s Transportation Future”. He distributed two handouts for reference. One provided a synopsis of the proposed legislation while the other showed a comparison between the current language and the proposed MBTA amended language. The proposed amendment replaces the vehicle excise tax provisions and provides several benefits.

LD 1790 attempts to get a discussion going to have performance goals that would allow the measuring of transportation goals with long-term financing. It also creates a Transportation Investment Trust fund within the Maine Municipal Bond Bank. The MBTA amendment would repeal the existing vehicle excise tax in the current language and instead establish a State-Municipal Assistance Program. The purpose of this program is to provide equitable financial assistance to communities for their use in improving state aid highways. Details of the proposed “Assistance Program” were further described and can be found in the meeting packet. The MBTA language essentially proposes that the monies stay in the communities’ hands by allowing communities to issue bonds. A controversial aspect in the amended language is the set aside being phased in over five years. Other aspects of the bill pertain to a Bridge Investment Trust Fund within the bond bank and the setting of priorities by the MaineDOT for the Extraordinary Corridor Investment Program. The DOT must also report to the Legislature’s Transportation Committee on their recommendations by January of 2008.

A summary of the comparison handout was presented. Among items noted was that the urban formula would remain unchanged while the rural formula would allow for \$2,535 per year per lane mile for all state-aid highways outside the urban compact. Urban monies could be spent for maintenance but would it be problematic for urban communities if it could only be spent for highway or local roads? In reference to matching funds, current money is not always there. Subsequently, the MBTA is seeking to fix this through the use of a bond bank where matching funds could be placed in the name of the community at the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for state-aid improvements. This would also include additional match monies from the Maine DOT for

state-aid major and minor collector improvements. Mr. Melrose also made reference to minor collector conversions and noted that the MBTA proposed amendment provides for “100% state financing of minor collector improvements to a community standard in exchange for communities agreeing to assume jurisdiction of the road after improvements.” The MBTA amendment would additionally allow communities to match up to 20% of funds in their name at the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for transit programs, which is a substantial increase above the current LD language. A discussion followed among the group pertaining to simple paving projects, unbuilt roads, state-aid roads, federal and state standards and the importance of local control. It was noted that we might never have the money that would make all these roads reach an “A” quality. Subsequently, is it not better to have many roads at “B” level vs. a lesser amount of roads at the “A” level? In past years, overlays never needed design exception. Today, overlays need design exceptions and when exception requests are submitted, they are usually denied. There is less flexibility today as compared to five years ago. Further discussion followed on this topic along with the use of URIP funds and what the process is going to be. In reference to URIP funds, Mr. Melrose said that the URIP formula would most likely not change until July 1, 2008. A discussion followed regarding capital funds only vs. maintenance funds and whether a change in the language would become an issue in regards to this aspect.

Mr. Melrose encouraged the group to read the bill’s entire text along with the information provided in the handouts pertaining to the proposed amended language. He noted that the proposed amendment gives towns a seat at the table and encourages towns to express how they would like to see the management structure play into that. He spoke of the importance of attending the Legislative work sessions and the importance of writing letters to representatives expressing views on the proposed legislation. Bob Malley thanked John Melrose for his presentation.

Dale Mitchell noted that he is Co-chair on one of the committees of the American Council of Engineering Companies in Maine (ACEC). It is a working group that also works with the Department of Transportation. They are currently putting together a program for the coming year and are trying to set up a local department. He encouraged the group to provide him with a list of items of concern for discussion in the administration of this local project.

4. Update on capital projects funding and bidding **MDOT’s current cash flow situation**

Julia Dawson provided an overview of the PACTS staff’s meeting with MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner, Greg Nadeau, and Maine DOT’s Acting Planning Director, Dale Doughty, along with the Vice-Chair of the PACTS Policy Committee regarding MaineDOT’s current cash flow situation.

This meeting was followed by a presentation by MDOT to the entire PACTS Policy Committee. Serious problems were noted. The cash flow situation has developed in part because of rising construction costs. Construction costs have seen a 35% increase since 2005. Subsequently, MDOT will only advertise \$75 million of projects out of the \$215 million worth of projects that would have normally gone forward.

PACTS has \$20 million worth of PACTS MPO Allocation projects that are ready to advertise, or could be ready to advertise in 2007. However, because of reductions in funding as well as rising construction costs, the DOT has informed PACTS that only \$2.8 million worth of projects can be built in 2007. It is hoped that the bonds that are going out in June and November will provide some financial relief. In the meantime, PACTS staff along with MaineDOT staff will be compiling a list of recommended projects for the \$2.8 million to be advertised this year

Work underway to select \$2.8 million in projects to bid in 2007.

The MaineDOT has requested PACTS to come up with a priority list to spend the \$2.8 million. They have provided their own recommendations for consideration. They include making the list as soon as possible, making it longer than the monies available and avoid “front-loading” of paving projects. PACTS staff along with Rick Michaud and Mike Bobinsky of the Policy Committee have also been working on what process should be used in compiling the priority list. They included the suggestions made by MDOT and also ranking projects based on advertised date, PCR of the road, traffic counts, and the regional implications. The \$2.8M does not touch the 08/09 projects and pertains to everything that is currently on the books. The “PACTS Project Ranking, Advertised Dates and Funding April 2007” list was used as reference for deciding on priorities. The group considered and discussed projects that were suggested by MDOT and followed the PACTS recommended approach in compiling the list. The group discussed projects that have been on the books for a very long time and discussed projects that were ready to go but are now sitting on the shelf. Julia spoke of the LAP projects as well. She also noted that 2/3 of the projects pertain to ¾” overlays and they cannot be done after September 15th, 2007. 1 ¾” surface paving can be done until October 15th, 2007. The group also discussed the implication of members making solicitation to MDOT for the construction of existing projects (with PIN’s) with local funds. It was also noted that the town of Freeport has offered to postpone their project since L.L. Bean will be starting construction on the initial phase of their own development plan.

Bob Malley made a motion to approve that the projects ranked as number 1 as described in the “PACTS Project Ranking, Advertised Dates and Funding April 2007” list go toward the \$2.8 million, seconded by Dana Anderson. Discussion followed. Vote taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.

5. Update on development of the next PACTS planning/administration work plan

The PACTS Policy Committee is going to adopt a 2-year PACTS work plan in May. A handout showing the final results of the tasks scoring from the work priorities workshop was distributed for reference. Most of these are staff oriented tasks and some could develop into consultant studies. Julia directed the group to page 11 of the meeting packet and noted that this included a draft budget submitted to staff by towns and that it looked like the studies would be endorsed. A discussion followed pertaining to scoring of regional and individual projects. It was noted that the group had been requested to think “regionally” when listing priorities, as regional-oriented projects would most likely score better. Josh spoke of ways of bringing in private investment and incorporating that into the planning process when considering future studies. Julia said it is something that staff would be working on.

John will put together the final draft of the work plan and will bring it back to this Committee.

6. Status Report

An update on filling Eric Ortman’s position was provided. The list has been narrowed down to two candidates.

Julia thanked everyone who participated in the Context Sensitive Solutions Workshop and spoke of the positive feedback received. It is hoped that this will be used to encourage the Department in Augusta to re-think its flexible design standards and that it may provide the impetus for positive dialogue.

The Policy Committee will adopt the Regional Transit Coordination Study at their June annual meeting.

David provided an update on MaineDOT's 20-Year Long Range Transportation Plan. Many public meetings and hearings will be held. A handout listing the times and dates was distributed.

It was also noted that a copy of the Quarterly Project Report would be sent out to everyone.

7. Other Business:

Dale Mitchell said that ACEC meets quarterly and that their next meeting is scheduled for May. Anyone with suggestions for this group may send them to Julia who will compile a list and forward to Dale. A discussion pertaining to design standards, safety and flexibility followed. Dale noted that his group is looking for ways to better serve the state through the regions or through Augusta. It was decided that this would be a good time to get a Subcommittee together to explore this issue and to work with the MaineDOT. Discussion followed. Members of the Subcommittee will include Jay Reynolds, MaryAnn Conroy, Dan Jellis and Mike Bolduc. They will meet once a month and will provide their first update at the next meeting. Dale will provide a copy of the Vermont guidelines to the group for reference.

8. Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Agenda Item 3 – Capital funding topics

A. Local project administration and design standards subcommittee

John Duncan has been unable to convene the subcommittee. Dale Mitchell might have some update from his industry group.

B. Local advance funding for construction of projects in 2007

This is an item on the Policy Committee agenda on Thursday. Julia Dawson sent you all an email on this on April 27th. We will discuss.

C. The recently released MaineDOT 2008/2009 Biennial Capital Work Plan

Staff will give a brief update on this.

D. The proposed cuts in the PACTS 2008/2009 MPO Allocation projects list

On Thursday the Policy Committee will act on a staff proposal for how to cut back from a \$14 million list to a \$10 million list. See Table 1 on the next page. It includes cutting our \$6 million list of collector paving projects down to \$3,500,000. Staff will present the collector list at your meeting.

E. Status of LD 1790 and other bills in the Legislature

Staff will report.

Table 1**Recommendations for Reducing the 2008/2009 PACTS MPO Allocation List to \$10,250,000**

<u>Town</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Total Project Cost Est</u>	<u>08/09 Purpose</u>	<u>October '06 Amounts</u>	<u>Results of February Revisions</u>	<u>Results of May Revisions</u>	<u>Rationales</u>	<u>10/11 \$\$ CE/CON</u>
<u>Intersections</u>								
Portland	Forest: Stevens to Bell	\$1,366,650	PE/ROW	\$204,998	\$204,998	\$0	Developer will do.	\$0
Portland	Franklin/295/Marginal/Fox	\$7,300,000	PE/ROW	\$486,000 ¹	\$486,000	\$486,000	High ranking	NA
Old Orchard	Halfway Rotary	\$1,188,800	PE/ROW	\$328,320	\$328,320	\$328,320	Meet Set Aside goal	\$860,480
Westbrook	Cumberland Mills	\$1,151,750	PE/ROW	\$257,763	\$257,763	\$0		\$0
<u>Rebuild Road</u>								
Portland	06/07 Deferral Forest Ave. Reconstruction		CE/CON	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$0	Ptld proposes defer to 2010/2011	\$1,300,000
Westbrook	William Clarke Drive	\$3,208,180	CE/CON	\$3,208,180	\$3,208,180	\$3,208,180	Is ready to build. Safety concern	NA
<u>Widen Road</u>								
Biddeford	Route 1: Beaudoin to Grayson	\$2,454,000	CE/CON	\$368,000	\$368,000	\$368,000		\$2,086,000
<u>Collector Paving</u>								
New projects				\$6,059,284	\$5,277,437	\$3,500,000		NA
Cover cost increases in 06/07 collector paving projects (per Feb. estimate)				\$0	\$1,320,000	\$1,320,000	Per February vote	NA
Cover possible future cost increases in 06/07 collector paving projects				\$0	\$0	\$200,000		NA
<u>Bike/Ped</u>								
Two projects in Biddeford and Old Orchard Beach				\$329,112	\$329,112	\$0	Make up in 2010/2011	NA
<u>Transit</u>								
CBITD	06/07 Deferral Passenger Ferry			\$500,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	An 06/07 deferral	\$300,000
South Portland	06/07 Deferral Bus Garage			\$238,153	\$0	\$0	Feb. '07 deferral to 10/11	\$238,153
New projects (2)				<u>\$804,436</u>	<u>\$804,436</u>	<u>\$600,000</u>	Make up in 2010/2011	NA
				\$14,084,246	\$14,084,246	\$10,210,500		\$4,784,633

Project Notes

1. No guarantee of future PACTS funding for construction (per October 2006 vote)
2. The Transit Committee will develop a \$600,000 list of projects this summer, and then seek Policy Committee approval.
The Committee did not have enough time nor enough project information to revise their \$804,000 list down to \$600,000 this month.

Agenda Item 4 – Draft 2-year PACTS planning work program

John Duncan and David Willauer will give a brief overview of the draft 2-year planning/administration work plan that the Policy Committee will act upon on Thursday.

1. PACTS Staff Work Summary

As shown in Table 1, several of these efforts will involve GPCOG, SMRPC and consultants.

1. Lead a regional education process related to transportation needs and funding options. This will involve public speaking to town and city councils, planning boards, service clubs, chambers of commerce and other interested groups. *An April 2007 Policy Committee Priority 1.*
2. Organize and oversee the development of concept plans for High Priority Project proposals to be submitted by PACTS to our Congressional Delegation in 2008. *Policy Committee Priority 2*
3. Perform a review of the effectiveness of the current organizational structure and policies of PACTS, and make changes to improve the decision-making process. *Policy Committee Priority 1*
4. Improve several aspects of our capital improvement processes, including:
 - Revise the PACTS TIP priority setting process with the TIP Process Committee. *Policy Committee Priority 1*
 - Work closely with MaineDOT on ways to improve the Locally Administered Projects process. *Policy Committee Priority 1*
 - Improve the collector paving priority-setting and management processes, as outlined in a recently prepared scope of work. *Policy Committee Priority 1*
 - Consider the creation of a more sophisticated PACTS capital projects accounting system. *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
5. Implement the improvements listed in Item 4 above, plus lead the overall TIP priority setting process for the 2010/2011 biennium. This will include a new round of enhanced project scoping work. *Policy Committee Priority 1*
6. Participate with the other MPO's and MaineDOT in the completion of an "MPO Administrative Guide" being drafted by MaineDOT. *Not a Policy Committee priority*
7. Coordinate with the work of the GPCOG and SMRPC corridor committees. *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
8. Maintain the PACTS website, and prepare a PACTS annual report. *Not a Policy Committee priority*

9. Organize and administer 33 local and regional studies funded through PACTS.

Regional and State Studies, and Other Planning Efforts by Members and Staff

Staff and committee members will participate in these activities during the next two years. The likely leaders are listed in parentheses.

1. Regional land use plan related to the next item (PACTS and others) *Policy Committee Priority 3*
2. “Westerly Access Road” from South Portland to Gorham (MaineDOT and Turnpike) *Policy Committee Priority 2*
3. East-west transportation study for Wells to Biddeford to Sanford (MaineDOT and Turnpike) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
4. Coordination with MaineDOT during the completion of the MaineDOT’s *Connecting Maine* long range plan *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
5. Revisions to the MaineDOT Rule for the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (MaineDOT and Turnpike) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
6. Investigate opportunities for new impact fees (PACTS) *Policy Committee Priority 1*
7. Continue our recent work begun to promote the incorporation of Context Sensitive Solutions into the transportation planning/design processes of MaineDOT and our member municipalities (PACTS and others) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
8. Implementation of the Regional Transit Coordination Study (Transit Providers, GPCOG and SMRPC) *Policy Committee Priority 1*
9. Support of the Maine Clean Communities work (GPCOG and others) *Policy Committee Priority 4*
10. Extension of passenger rail service to Brunswick (MaineDOT) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
11. Turnpike widening (Turnpike) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
12. Turnpike toll policy public input process (Turnpike) *Policy Committee Priority 3*
13. Diversion of trucks from I-295 to the turnpike (MaineDOT and Turnpike) *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
14. Update of our 1995 Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (GPCOG and PACTS. *Not a Policy Committee Priority*
15. Transit oriented development overlay zone (GPCOG) ...see item on next page. *Policy Committee Priority 3*
16. Maintain, use and update the PACTS Regional Travel Demand Model (PACTS staff, consultant, MaineDOT and Turnpike Authority)

GPCOG FTA 5303 Transit Planning Budget FY 2008-2009

David Willauer, GPCOG Planning Director

Transit Planning & Support

• Administration	\$40,000
• PACTS Committee Support	\$40,000
• Transit Coordination Study Implementation Tasks	\$60,000
• Maine Clean Communities	\$50,000
• Regional Corridor Planning with Coalitions	\$40,000
• State & federal technical assistance	\$10,000
• Welfare to Work planning	\$5,000
• Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Planning	\$40,000
• METRO Downtown Transportation Center	\$10,000
• Maine Mall Transit Center	\$20,000
• Traveler Information	\$40,000
• Portland Explorer administration	\$15,000

Technical Support

• Databases, Training	\$30,000
• Mapping & GIS Support	\$24,000

Total 5303 FTA Planning Budget **\$424,000**

Local Match (GPCOG & SMRPC) \$84,800

GPCOG PACTS “PL” Proposals FY 2008-2009

GPCOG / PACTS / SMRPC Planning Studies

• Maine Clean Communities	\$25,000
• METRO/SP Bus On/Off Surveys	\$30,000
• PACTS Bike/Ped Study	\$50,000
• Regional Bus Route Study	\$60,000
• Freight Planning	\$30,000
• Model Transit Oriented Development Overlay Zones	\$5,000
• Bus Electronic Fare Collection Study	\$20,000
• Regional Ride Guide	\$25,000

Total PACTS PL Proposals **\$245,000**

Local Match (GPCOG, METRO, SPBS, municipalities) \$49,000

GPCOG 3rd Quarter Status Report Jan -Mar 2007

David Willauer, GPCOG Planning Director

CDBG (Paras, Willauer)

- Cumberland County CDBG Entitlement Status planning
- CDBG Affordable Hsg Study
- Application/scoring process, CEDS

Evacuation/ Haz Mat Planning (Willauer)

- Phase II Emergency Evacuation & Detour Plan started
- Haz Mat Tracking Project with MaineDOT Office of Freight and Maine Emergency Mgmt Agency.

GO Maine Program (Kish, White)

- New TV Campaign w/MaineDOT
- Vanpool program expansion
- Commute Another Way WEEK

Kids and Transportation (West, Cook)

- Class presentations on alternative fuels, bicycle and bus safety
- Statewide Exploremaine.org Map
- Safe Routes to Schools planning
- Rail Outreach to schools
- Bicycle helmet distribution to schools

Land Use Plans (Paras, Willauer, Gurney)

- Long Island Comp Plan survey
- Mapping technical assistance
- Regional Plan Inventory

Maine Clean Communities Program (Linnell)

- Hydrogen fuel committee meetings
- Fleet Managers & Committee meetings
- Special Energy Forums
- Hydrogen Energy Center project

Mapping (Gurney)

- Aerial sales, program maps, town maps
- Internet Mapping System (IMS) pilots

Corridor Planning (Willauer, Paras, Allen)

- Coastal Corridor: Strategic Investments
- Central Corridor: transportation project priorities, Gray Connector
- Lakes Region: transportation project priorities, proposed transit options
- MaineDOT 20-year Plan
- Route 113 Study (CDBG Study)

Safe Kids Maine (Cook, Willauer)

- Statewide Car Seat Checkup Events
- Monthly car seat fitting stations
- Monthly car seat voucher site, Portland
- CPS training, bus drivers, child care
- CPS - EMS transport in ambulances
- Statewide seat belt use survey, BHS

Southern Maine Economic Development

District – SMEDD (Paras, Allen, Willauer)

- Assisted Cumberland County CDBG application for Entitlement status
- EDA town eligibility assistance
- SMEDD restructuring concept
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS)

Transit Planning (Linnell, Willauer)

- Regional Transit Coordination Study
- METRO Route Study
- AVL/TIDS Pilot for USM Bus System
- Portland Explorer 2007 Planning
- Meetings with Hotels & Transportation Information Display System (TIDS) partners (15 locations)
- USM Bus Study
- Lakes Region Transit Study
- METRO DTC design & planning