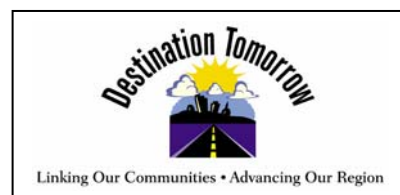


PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System



Joint Transit & Planning Committees Meeting Notice

December 8th, 2011 9:00 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment
3. Approve Joint Transit & Planning Committee Minutes of June 6th, 2011
4. Revised Draft Report: Moving Portland Towards a Transit Focused Region
5. Draft Scope: Regional Urban and Rural Land Use Pattern Technical Assistance
Gorham E-W Phase 2
6. Information and Other Business
7. Next meetings and other DATES:

Next <u>Planning Committee</u> Meeting	January 5th	at 9:00 am
Next <u>Joint</u> meeting <u>with Transit</u>	March 1st	at 9:00 am
8. Adjourn

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland Urbanized Area
68 Marginal Way • Portland, Maine 04101
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Agenda Item 3. Approve Joint Transit- Planning Committee Minutes of June 6th, 2011

PACTS Joint Planning and Transit Committee Meeting June 6, 2011 9:00 A.M.

Present: Miranda McGowan (SMRPC), Molly Just (Westbrook), Tom Poirier (Gorham), Sara Devlin (MTA), Peter Morelli (Saco), Hilary Frenkel (League of Young Voters), Steve Linnell (GPCOG), Tom Meyers (South Portland), Robert Kahn (Trainriders Northeast), Alex Jaegerman (Portland), Sue Moreau (MaineDOT), Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth), Mark Nahorney (UNE), Al Schutz (Shuttlebus Zoom), Rebecca Grover (MTA), Maureen O'Meara (Cape Elizabeth)

Staff/guests: Art Handman (consultant), Rebeccah Schaffner-Tousignant (GPCOG), Lynne Powers (GPCOG), Bill Needelman (Portland), Molly Casto (Portland), Caroline Paras (GPCOG)

1. Call to order

Carl Eppich called the meeting to order at 9:07 A.M.

2. Introduction

The committee members introduced themselves.

3. Minutes of the March 3 joint transit and planning meeting

Tom Meyers made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 3, 2011 joint Transit and Planning Committee meeting. Al Schutz seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

4. Congress Street bus priority corridor study presentation; Q&A

Bill Needelman gave a presentation on the status of Portland's Congress Street bus priority corridor study. Portland has been working with Nelson\Nygaard and Gorrill Palmer to implement recommendations from the peninsula transit study, making improvements and adjustments to make Congress Street more bus friendly, and to keep buses on schedule and improve their headways. The concept and overall study was adopted as part of the city's comprehensive plan, with the goal of increasing the use and visibility of transit in Portland.

Phase 1 of the study looked at making improvements between Elm Street and High Street. There was compilation of existing data, along with traffic, bike, and pedestrian counts at key intersections, operator and public input, modeling with forecasts to 2035 and five alternatives, and feasibility analysis. The design was chosen based on these steps and information. Portland also examined crash data, parking, and transit operations. The corridor works relatively well for a downtown core main street, with traffic only moving at around 10 mph currently, so making the recommended changes should not slow it down much further. Bill said that there were quite a few crashes but no fatalities, probably due to the low speed. The bicycle and pedestrian counts were done in March and would clearly be higher in the summer; there was a high amount of foot traffic even in the colder months.

Some of the suggestions that came out of the study included the removal of some traffic signals (to reduce travel time and possibly reduce crash rates, though this could affect pedestrian crossings), restricting left turns to buses only (which would like reduce through traffic on Congress Street, with the largest impacts to Spring Street and Cumberland Avenue). Buses currently have issues with being blocked by traffic at pullouts. One suggestion was to keep buses in the travel lane, making traffic conform to the bus rather than vice versa. The study examined the numbers of on/off boardings and alightings, and will be studying the number and

location of stops. Variability in travel time is an important issue, and the study hopes to create more predictable bus runs and keep the congestion on Congress Street from causing delays elsewhere on the route. One intersection in particular that is being looked at is the intersection between Elm Street and Federal Street.

The study is currently in the modeling stage, with the results just starting to come in. Portland will be presenting these results at a public meeting on June 7. The meeting is in the Portland Public Library auditorium, with an open house at 4:30 and presentations at 5:30. The study goes before Portland's transportation committee on June 21, where a specific alternative will be presented as feasible for design and will hopefully receive the committee's endorsement.

Bill said, in response to questions, that there are more bus stops in Portland than would be found on a comparable system in other cities. Carl added that there is a bus every two minutes on this corridor, which is in line with some of the most heavily transitted routes nationwide. Alex Jaegerman said that property owners along the corridor were the most skeptical when it came to measures like eliminating left-hand turns; he theorized that if the number of on-street parking spots can be increased by eliminating bus pullouts, it would be a benefit to local businesses. Tom M. said that the two Congress Street stops are among the most heavily used on the South Portland bus system, and he expressed concern about parking the bus in the travel lane due to the length of time that it takes to help disabled customers on and off the bus. He will provide South Portland's data on handicapped customers to Alex.

5. Transforming Forest Avenue – integrated transportation and land use presentation; Q&A

Molly Casto spoke about the Transforming Forest Avenue study, which is a FHWA-funded study of the Forest Avenue corridor starting between the intersection of Forest Avenue and Park Street and ending just beyond Woodford Corner. The goal is to develop an integrated transportation/land use plan, leveraging public investments and improvements to the roadway, and to improve the safety and appeal of alternate modes of transportation along the corridor without compromising motorist access. Portland would like to provide quality public space and high quality parking, and to design for architectural quality.

The project began in February with an original timeline that ran through December 2011, but staff are trying to finish it by June 30 due to the limits of carryover funding. The project initiation, land use and zoning assessment, and first public advisory committee meeting have all been completed, with the second meeting coming up in June. Alternatives will be presented at that meeting, and then the draft concept plan and recommended alternatives will be submitted. Enhanced project scoping has been requested in three areas, and it is likely that report finalizing and closure to the public process will happen after the June 30 deadline.

The area has potential as a transit-supportive corridor but presents certain challenges in achieving the principles. Those challenges include the fact that the zoning (with R3 and R5 the most common) promotes strip-style development. Complete streets, which are designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe access for all users, are a priority. This study coincides with MaineDOT looking at redesigning some of the on/off ramps to I-295 that connect to Forest Avenue, due to high crash volume. MaineDOT has postponed its work until the results of this study are known.

Currently, the sidewalk widths are seven to nine feet and street furniture is minimal. The quality and frequency of pedestrian crossings are stronger in some segments of the corridor

than others, and on-street parking provides a buffer between traffic and pedestrians in some places, but little landscaping. The frequency of buses runs at about 20 minutes currently, which makes it one of the best served areas in Portland. While multi-modal, with acceptable facilities for bicycles and pedestrians, Forest Avenue is primarily a car-dominated corridor. There are few amenities for people using other forms of transportation, and the 295 interchange makes it difficult for bikes and pedestrians to maneuver. Staff are currently waiting to receive alternatives from consultants. The intent is to have a final report with well-developed recommendations, and then be in a strong position to implement and get the necessary funding.

Committee members noted that there has been surprisingly little redevelopment in the corridor. Alex said that the city receives several calls per month from people who are interested in the area. There is market potential in the corridor, but it is a tired strip and needs to be freshened up; there are upgrades that can happen to improve the comfort and convenience factor, and the city can come up with a prescription for the types of improvements that are needed, when it comes to new development. Molly added that there has been real desire expressed, in the public process portion of the study, to see the area branded as its own neighborhood or distinct place. Interested parties can view both the presentation on this study and the one on the Congress Street project on the city of Portland's website, under the Planning and Urban Development section.

6. Updates on other transit and planning projects

The Southern Maine Partnership for Sustainable Development (funded by a HUD grant) is currently moving forward. On another subject, Carl has an early report from the Transit Focused Region project, which will eventually be a brief report meant for public consumption. He also mentioned that planners have until tomorrow to register for the Maine Association of Planners annual meeting, which will take place on June 17.

The committee members went around the room and discussed what they are currently working on. Molly Just said that Westbrook is working on its comprehensive plan. Tom Poirier shared that in Gorham, sidewalks are being reconstructed downtown as part of CDBG grant funds; this work started last week and will continue all summer. Sara Devlin is working on the Gorham East-West Corridor Phase II MOU, and should have something finalized for municipalities to sign by July. Sue Moreau contributed that MaineDOT's Portland North study is currently in draft form and is expected to be finalized within the next week. The Lewiston Auburn inner city study is also in draft form. Steve Linnell is looking into a sign and shelter project with transit providers, and is working on a study on the feasibility of combining maintenance facilities for several operators. Art Handman just submitted the regional routes study, which will be available to read. Theo Holtwijk is updating Falmouth's comprehensive plan, and working on an RFP for landscape architecture and engineering services along Route 1.

Maureen O'Meara shared that Cape Elizabeth is moving ahead with the Shore Road path funding, and that the town will soon be hiring a consultant to do a public opinion survey and a cost benefit analysis of purchasing open space vs. allowing the public to sell land for development. Tom M. was working with South Portland's comprehensive plan revision committee, and mentioned that the group should pay attention to the changes happening in MaineCare, Manage Care, and non-emergency medical transportation. Al Schutz is working on the southern Maine regional coordination study, and is analyzing ShuttlebusZOOM's routes and service levels to be sure that they are providing cost-effective service at the levels necessary. Rebecca Grover said that the origin destination study is almost finished and she will let the committee know when it is up on the MTA website. The town council in Gorham has

been looking at incorporating form-based zoning, according to John Pressey. Bob Kahn reported that the Downeaster has been doing well with receiving the federal money that Florida rejected, and that in Brunswick, some neighbors are concerned about the proposed layover facility, have hired lawyers, and will be bringing it to a public forum.

Rebecca Schaffner-Tousignant gave an update on the Lakes Region Comprehensive Plan, which is gearing up to finish Phase I and involved seven towns. The team is developing a scope of work which will include a quarter management plan for Route 302 from Windham through Bridgton, and will hopefully integrate some of the transit conversation along the corridor. Phase II, development of the plan, won't begin until the fall. The large regional group that successfully applied for a HUD grant last met in May and will next meet on June 16. They have submitted the work plan to HUD, but have not yet received the blessing to move forward, though it is expected at any time. The group is working toward a final consortium agreement, which has become more complex than the original. There is some concern about the logic model that HUD is issuing. Rebecca has been told, though, that this will not interfere with the July 1 start date. The partnership has elected its chairs, Gordy Billington and Gerry Mylroie. The executive committee will be next, and she requested that any consortium members in the room submit their nominations. The partnership is open to municipalities, private and non-profit organizations, and educational institutions between Kittery and Brunswick. Anyone who is interested should contact Rebecca.

7. Public Comments

There was no public comment.

8. Next Meeting Date(s):

- a. Next joint transit + planning September 1
- b. Next planning meeting: July 7
- c. Next transit meeting: a date in June

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:47 A.M.

Agenda Item 4. Revised Draft Report:
Moving Portland Towards a Transit Focused Region (TFR)

Well it only took four months, but last week the consultants sent PACTS a revised report summary per our request in August. The Planning Committee reviewed the Draft TFR report in August and felt that much that had been asked for was not included. In general, the report did not go into the economic benefits of investing in transit.

The Study team reconvened and came up with a list for direction on what the report should be.

In general this list looked like this:

0. Captivating cover
1. Regional Vision statements
CREATING CHOICES, SAVING MONEY, GENERATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY,
BUILDING COMMUNITY
2. ECONOMIC BENEFITS upfront. Must be supported by economic arguments 2-3 pages
 - a. Business case for TOD form
 - b. Mention benefits to urban AND rural areas
 - c. Development potential
 - i. TOD investment typology
 - d. Cost avoidance opportunity
 - i. Language from SROI
3. Strategies customized for our REGION
ASSETS and OPPORTUNITIES
4. Identification of ingredients for OUR region's success 2-3 pages
5. Prioritizing and Phasing recommendations 2-3 pages
6. Goals with Images of successes, what it would look and feel like - 3-5 pages

The report still needs massaging for finalization. This is your opportunity to comment on the CONTENT of the report

[Report not attached, due to technical difficulties (It was huge – trying to shrink). Hopefully coming soon, or will be distributed at meeting]

Agenda Item 5. Draft Scope: Regional Urban and Rural Land Use Pattern Technical Assistance Gorham E-W Phase 2

PACTS DRAFT Scope (December 5, 2011):

Regional Urban And Rural Land Use Pattern Technical Assistance SCOPE

Introduction

The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) and its member municipalities of Gorham, Portland, Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook seek proposals for technical assistance in developing an recommendations to further the development of the recommended “Urban and Rural Form” land use scenario. This land use form was identified in the 2011 Gorham East-West Corridor Feasibility Study— herein referred to as simply “Gorham E-W”. Gorham E-W identified the “Urban and Rural Form” land use scenario as a critical component to relieve motor vehicle traffic congestion, to strengthen existing municipalities’ character and quality of life, to strengthen traditional downtowns and village centers, to preserve rural resource based economies and life styles, and to more efficiently support regional growth and economic viability. Coordinated with roadway and transit improvements, the “Urban and Rural Form” land use scenario is intended to prioritize and attract federal, state, and local financial resources for infrastructure improvements and to avoid or minimize costs associated with inefficient low density development.

Purpose and Need

The member municipalities and their funding partners seek to foster land use patterns that benefit transportation efficiency and avoid increased municipal costs. The historical pattern and trend, caused by consumptive land development practices leads to congestion, destroys community character, and threatens economic development. The purpose of this study is to identify regionally coordinated land use strategies and mechanisms for each of the member municipalities, which incentivize and promote the preferred “Urban and Rural Form.” Additionally the growth areas and their forms must be transit supportive and connectable with buses or fixed guideways.

Background

Division of the Study Area

For purposes of describing alternative regional patterns of development, the PACTS Model Area¹ was divided as follows: **Bold face** municipalities represent the four core municipalities in Phase 1 of the Gorham E-W, plus Portland, the geography in which this phase 2 effort is focused.

- Urban municipalities: **Portland, South Portland, Westbrook**
- Inner suburbs: Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, **Gorham, Scarborough**, Windham, Yarmouth
- Outer suburbs: Buxton, Gray, Hollis, New Gloucester, North Yarmouth, Pownal, Raymond, Standish, plus the rural southwestern portion of Brunswick
- Rest of Model Area: Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Durham, Kennebunkport, Lyman, Old Orchard Beach, Saco

Our Starting Point – the existing trend of a Low Density Form:

¹ The “PACTS Model” is a travel demand traffic simulation program which covers the geography of PACTS’ member communities AND adjacent communities.

The current trend of development is characterized in the Phase 1 study as the “Low Density” pattern, a product 65 years of population and job decentralization from the core urban areas of the metropolitan area (Portland, South Portland and Westbrook) to suburbs and exurbs causing the metropolitan boundaries themselves to expand. The decentralization results in low residential densities of development and low commercial intensities, dependence on the automobile as the virtually exclusive transportation mode needed between destinations whether for work, shopping, services, or recreation, and as a supplement to school busing.

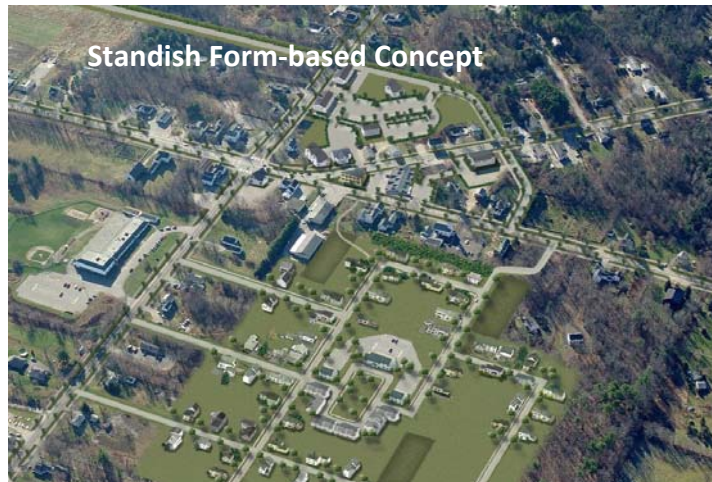
Benefits of the Urban and Rural Form land use pattern

From the Gorham East-West Corridor Feasibility Study:

In the Urban and Rural Form land use scenario the core urban municipalities of Portland, South Portland and Westbrook retain their high shares of regional employment and begin to reverse – or at least significantly slow down -- a long-term trend toward lost shares of the region’s population and housing units. This modest reversal of declining growth in urban municipalities will be supported by older and younger segments of the population who are interested in moving into more walkable, urban environments with low transportation costs, reliable transportation service and job proximity. It will also take some of the housing pressure off the fast-growing inner suburbs. As in the Transit Oriented Corridor (TOC) form also considered, the inner suburban municipalities also retain a significant proportion of jobs, population and housing units, much of which would be organized into denser, walkable and connected TOC-nodes including town and village centers that include open space and public land use. These TOCs exist with specific goal of enabling and taking advantage of transit opportunities.

Complementary, rural preservation afforded by the pattern will provide opportunities for traditional rural resource based living and economic opportunities, such as farming, forestry, tourism, and other complementary commercial support opportunities.

In the more rural outer suburbs, population, housing unit and job growth slows down, with an emphasis on placing the new residential and commercial development in close proximity to each other to reduce the need for long-distance travel. This increases the opportunities for a mixed variety of housing and access to employment or educational opportunities. An example of this form has been adopted by Standish, enabled by the form-based planning model shown above. This form combines characteristics from Urban Preservation, Community-Centered Corridor and Transit-Oriented Corridor (TOC) forms described in the original paper, “Thoughts on Alternative Patterns of Development” produced for the Gorham E-W Feasibility Study.

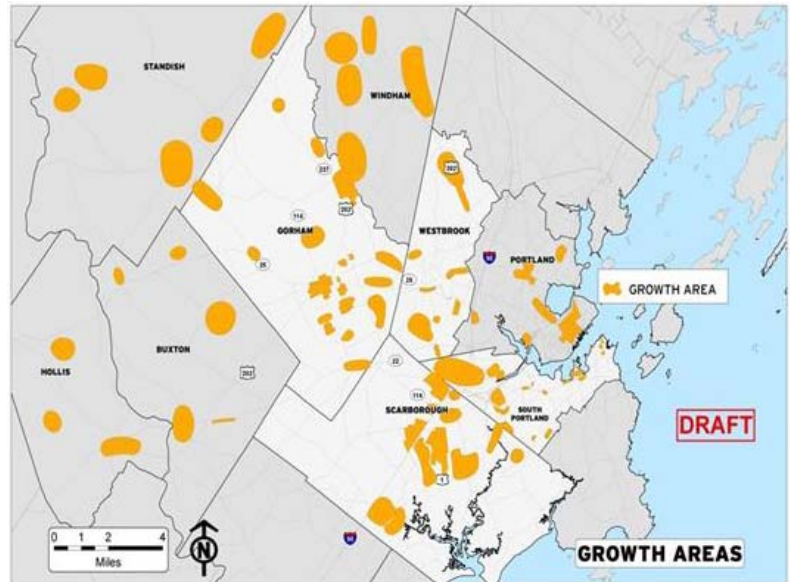


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Land Use Technical Assistance Tasks:

1. Evaluate and refine future growth areas and criteria for success:

Future growth areas or “communities of opportunity” are the locations where the majority of a municipality’s growth will be directed. These economic growth areas will include a mix of residential and commercial uses within walking distance from each other and be located along transit oriented corridors (TOCs). Where transit services do not currently exist, transitional mechanisms that facilitate ride sharing, car and/or van pooling may be considered. In such cases, a village-supportive form and location should be identified. These future growth areas must be highly attractive to both residential and commercial development placing jobs and housing in close proximity, reducing travel distances and costs throughout the region, and providing training and educational opportunities as well. These incentivized growth areas must attract desired growth while simultaneously deflecting undesired growth from low density and rural areas.



With each municipality’s planning staff:

- a. Review and refine the previously identified future growth areas or “communities of opportunity” and identify as “priority growth areas”.
- b. Develop criteria for targeted housing opportunities and employment types, medical, commercial and academic centers, etc.
- c. Define target housing and job densities, and mixed use areas within each municipality’s priority growth area(s). Using PACTS established compact planning area typologies² or another agreed upon form, characterize growth areas across the five municipalities for a common development playing field
- d. With municipality planning staff assistance, and within each municipality’s priority growth area(s):
 - i. Identify necessary changes to the zoning ordinance and Comprehensive Plan to support desired forms in priority growth areas.
 - ii. Compile and inventory existing and needed infrastructure within priority growth areas to support [transit](#).

Task 1 Product:

A Technical Report that includes a conceptual map, list, and narrative on locations, acreage, densities, composition and layout of priority growth areas. The report will also include action items for each municipality with a brief narrative on necessary actions to be taken within ordinances and Comprehensive plans to develop priority growth areas. Finally, a summary of the existing and needed infrastructure within priority growth areas to support [transit](#).

² See attached map graphic. Categorize prioritized growth areas based on destination type and transit gravity criteria including but not limited to linkages to multiple activity centers, spectrum of housing types, employment

2. Develop model ordinance provisions that include model infrastructure and development form guidance for municipalities' priority growth areas:

Leveling the development playing field within the municipalities' priority growth areas is the goal of this task. This means that municipality specific incentives to attract growth must be equalized appropriately in the municipalities in favor of regional incentives. These provisions must streamline permitting, identify attractors and other incentives that bring about the desired development forms and uses, while calling out barriers to development attraction. For example on attractors: growth areas that may receive priority funding through a mechanism such as PACTS' Transportation Investment Areas, funding amenities as an incremental infrastructure cost savings to developers

(e.g. sidewalks, paths, public parking, and modern transit shelters, etc.).

- a. Develop one set of unified ordinance provisions acceptable to all municipalities that codify neighborhood development forms; context-responsive thoroughfare types (model infrastructure); village-supportive shared parking forms supporting car and van pooling, and/or located near existing, planned, or possible transit; best practices; and framework for inter-municipal agreement templates
- b. Make recommendations to adjust each municipality's existing ordinances to accommodate the model ordinance, and to enable its incentives and to eliminate barriers.
- c. Make recommendations of appropriate Neighborhood and Context Responsive Thoroughfare assembly types using graphic and narrative descriptions. Include use-mixes, housing diversity and density parameters, and appropriate Complete Street infrastructure recommendations.

Task 2 Product:

A Technical Report that includes a narrative with corresponding development form examples and samples, (conceptual drawings, photographs, and model ordinance language), AND a narrative that includes how incentives are intended to attract desired growth and streamline municipal processes, with model language examples.

3. Evaluate existing zoning in priority growth areas within each municipality for its responsiveness to the goal of attracting desired development growth and make recommendations for improving attractiveness for desired development growth:

This task is for developing a baseline understanding of where each municipality stands as compared to the regional goals and then the steps each community must take to be on par with the other communities.

- a. Evaluate existing zoning within each community's priority growth area and develop recommendations for consistency across the municipalities.
- b. Identify language within each municipality's zoning and other ordinances that contradict the goals of the recommended land use pattern, and make recommendations on where to adjust language across all municipalities to create a more uniform and consistent development process.
- c. Identify and recommend development-related ordinance language and where it can be incorporated into municipalities' codes.

Task 3 Product:

A Technical Report that identifies and documents strengths and opportunities of each community's existing ordinance provisions, and makes recommendations for each community that furthers the goals of the regional development pattern. Model or suggested ordinance language for each municipality must be included that enables a uniform and consistent development process in the Priority Growth areas.

4. Evaluate, develop, and recommend range of fiscal tools to make development in the priority growth areas attract preferred development pattern/form.

In addition to the incentives afforded by streamlining and a predictable permitting process within the priority growth areas, a complementary financial incentive plan will be attached to these areas that benefit the municipalities, its developers, and the region:

- a. Identify existing state and local enabled fiscal tools, as well as external innovative financing tools that may be used under current law.
- b. Evaluate potential for Transit Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to generate municipal revenues within each municipality to help pay for qualifying transit related and supportive infrastructure, and operating expenses to service priority growth areas.
- c. Develop model language for inter-municipal agreements on model fiscal/TIFS crossing boundaries.
- d. Evaluate existing municipal Impact fee systems (if in place or planned) for regional implementation and recommendations for how it could work across all priority growth areas.

Task 4 Product:

A Technical Report documenting existing and potential financial incentives, mechanisms, and tools throughout the municipalities. The report must include recommendations for how they could be deployed uniformly to incentivize development in the priority growth areas of each municipality. Document how the benefits accrue to the region as well. Model inter-municipal agreement language for corridors that cross boundaries will be included.

5. Evaluate, develop, and recommend Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs appropriate for the region, and a preferred solution.

Determine feasibility and recommend mechanics for a TDR system in the region that will provide incentive for retaining traditional rural resource based economic benefits while preserving rural character and ways of life in the region.

- a. Evaluate existing TDR programs within the municipalities for their effectiveness on the intended goals of their programs.
- b. Develop recommendations for a "best practices" version of TDR that could be used for municipalities without TDR provisions
- c. Evaluate existing regional TDR programs mechanics and feasibility that would be most appropriate and feasible for this region.
- d. Make recommendations for programs that would be most appropriate and feasible at providing incentives to retain traditional resource uses in rural areas.

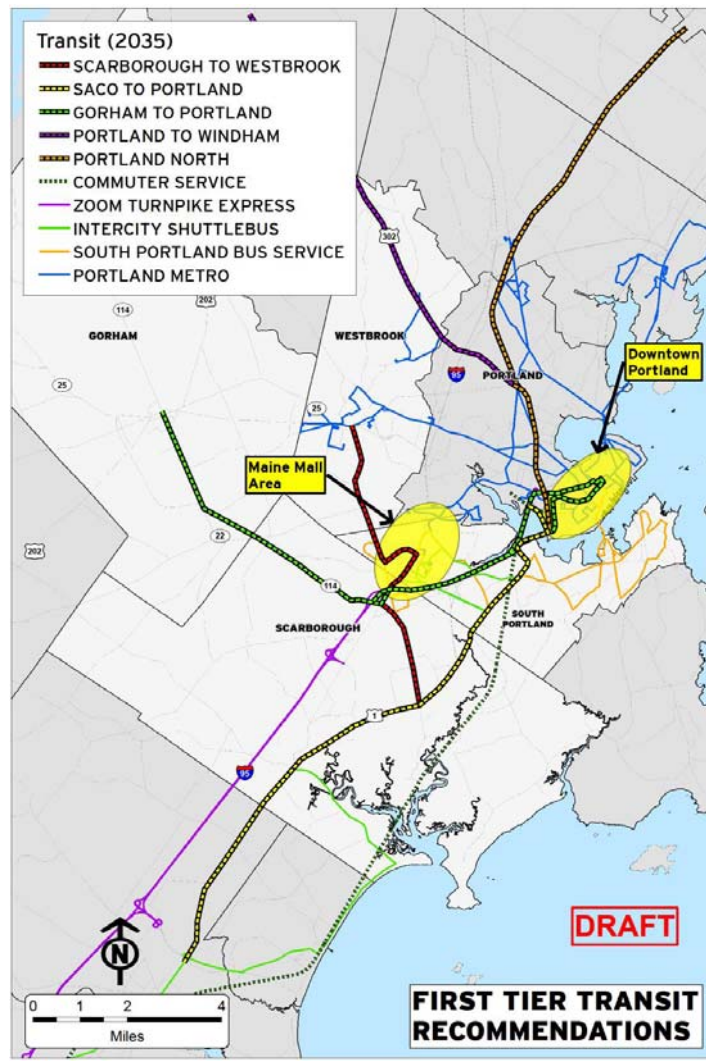
Task 5 Product:

A Technical Report on existing TDR programs within and external to the region, and recommendations based on an alternatives evaluation with a preferred alternative.

6. Evaluate and refine the “first tier” recommendations from the Gorham East-West Feasibility Study (Phase 1) for transit expansion:

With regard to the priority growth areas, the Full Transit Scenario presented in Phase 1 requires further evaluation to determine viability of new transit service, prioritization, and funding potential. In this task, the 1st Tier recommended routes/corridors and services for more detailed analysis will be identified

- a. Validate prioritize and schedule implementation of transit improvements
- b. Identify priority growth areas (and others along transit corridors) suitable for Transit-Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing Districts
- c. Identify inter-modal connection locations and other infrastructure potential.



Agenda Item 6. Information Sharing