

PACTS Planning Committee Meeting

AGENDA

Thursday, July 23, 2020

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Remote Meeting

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87682728444?pwd=cnR1QTRhMEIxWIRzZExBcHdqWUVtUT09>

As of March 31st, 2020, PACTS and GPCOG are holding all committee meetings via [Zoom conferencing technology](#). We remain committed to full public access and participation in our meetings through remote access during the COVID-19 crisis. Remote meetings will be held in accordance with the requirements of [LD 2167, Public Law Chapter 618](#).

Both the chat and Q&A features will be turned off during PACTS and GPCOG meetings to ensure full public access to telephone participants and to avoid the confusion of side conversations.

Public comment will be taken verbally during the public comment period. Members of the public who wish to speak should “raise their hands.” Participants joining by computer or mobile app can click on the “Raise Hand” button. Participants joining by telephone can dial *9.

1. Welcome and Roll Call- Alex Jaegerman, Chairman

2. Public Comments

The public will have an open comment period with a 3-minute limit per individual to comment on any issue, including items on the agenda.

3. Acceptance of 5/14/20 Minutes (Attachment A)

4. Project Updates—15 min. (Attachment B)

The following project updates are attached:

- Transit Tomorrow – Next meeting in September
- Maine Climate Council Transportation Working Group Recommendations
- South Portland Mill Creek to Cushing’s Point Multimodal Corridor Study
- Biddeford-Saco Transit-Oriented-Development

Questions on specific projects may be addressed at this time.

Proposed Action: For information only.

5. PACTS Complete Streets Policy Discussion—30 min. (Attachment C)

The PACTS Unified Planning Work Program for 2020-2021 includes Task 4: Implement Plans and Mobility Improvements. One aspect of this task is to develop a regional complete streets policy that will consider all users when developing transportation projects. PACTS will begin developing this Complete Streets Policy later this year. A recent project in Yarmouth, a bridge at Exit 15 crossing I-295, is an example of a regionally relevant bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure project. The Town of Yarmouth submitted a letter (included as Attachment C) to MaineDOT requesting further consideration for a 10-foot multi-use pathway across the span of the bridge, which is currently in the design phase, along with other multi-modal design considerations. A multi-use path on this bridge could be utilized by bicyclists and pedestrians using the West Side Trail, the Exit 15 Park and Ride, or the East Coast Greenway.

The discussion of this project is intended to identify elements that may be considered and addressed in PACTS Complete Streets Policy, particularly in regard to regionally significant projects.

Proposed Action: For discussion only.

6. Adjourn.

Attachment A

**PACTS Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
AGENDA**

**Thursday, May 14, 2020
1:00 PM -2:30 PM
Remote Meeting**

Committee Members	Affiliation	Attendance
Tad Redway	Arundel	N
Greg Tansley	Biddeford	Y
Maureen O'Meara	Cape Elizabeth	Y
Carla Nixon	Cumberland	N
Kara Wooldrick	Portland Trails	Y
Theo Holtwijk	Falmouth	N
VACANT	Freeport	N/A
Carlos Pena	FHWA	N
Leah Sirmin	FTA	N
Carol Eyerman	Gorham	N
Chris Mann	MaineDOT	Y
Anne Lang	North Yarmouth	N
Michael Foster	Old Orchard Beach	Y
Bruce Hyman	Portland	Y
Don Willard	Raymond	N
Emily Cole-Prescott	Saco	Y
Jamel Torres, Vice Chair	Scarborough	N
Eric Sanderson	SMPDC	N
Justin Barker	South Portland	Y
Zach Mosher	Standish	N
VACANT	Transit Committee	N
Jennie Franceschi	Westbrook	N
Amanda Lessard	Windham	Y
Alex Jaegerman, Chair	Yarmouth	Y
Guests		
Tex Haeuser		
Milan Nevajda	South Portland	
For GPCOG		
Rick Harbison, Ryan Neale, Harold Spetla		

1. Welcome- Alex Jaegerman, Chair

Alex opened the meeting at 1:05 P.M.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Acceptance of 4/2/20 Meeting Minutes

Chris Mann moved to approve the 4/2/2020 minutes and the motion was seconded by Bruce Hyman; all were in favor.

4. Project Updates

Rick Harbison provided background on *Transit Tomorrow* upon request by Alex Jaegerman. The overview highlighted consultant AECOM's findings from the study which identified key corridor transit investments as having a greater effect on ridership than land use changes. However, compact land use paired with investments in rapid transit performed best during scenario modeling. AECOM will be presenting recommendations and strategies at the May 22nd *Transit Tomorrow* Project Advisory Committee meeting. The recommendations will be structured within different categories, including rapid transit, mobility management, and local/feeder services. PACTS also plans to solicit public engagement at the GPCOG Annual Summit on May 28th. PowerPoints will be available on the GPCOG website and members are welcome to reach out to Rick Harbison or Ryan Neale with questions.

Kara Wooldrik noted that none of the scenario modeling had shown a 30% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, which would meet the State's emission goals, so additional solutions should continue to be considered. It was mentioned that the modeling used current rate of ridership, so it is possible that alternative scenarios could result in increased ridership and greenhouse gas emission reductions through reduced single car occupancy. Rick Harbison noted that AECOM is planning to outline the ridership changes that need to happen to see the 30% in greenhouse gas emissions. Staff will be working with AECOM to explore the implications of COVID-19 on the future of transit.

At the April Policy Committee meeting, the Planning Committee's recommendations for the Maine Climate Council Transportation Working Group were modified and approved. Those recommendations were sent in a letter to the co-chairs of the Maine Climate Council on behalf of PACTS. Alex noted that this was a great example of PACTS taking fast action on a timely issue.

PACTS received proposals on April 30th from TY Lin and VHB on the Mill Creek to Cushing's Point Multimodal Priority Corridor Study. PACTS and South Portland are putting together a project selection committee. Staff will provide additional updates at study milestones and

Justin Barker will provide updates and a project summary. Milan Nevajda, new South Portland Planning and Development Director, introduced himself.

5. PACTS Transit-Oriented-Development

Rick Harbison presented on the PACTS Maine Mall Transit-Oriented-Development (TOD) plan and the Biddeford-Saco TOD plan. Rick covered the basics of TOD design, the conceptual application of TOD principles to the South Portland Maine Mall, and future application of the plan in South Portland. The Maine Mall TOD was designed with a 15-20 year horizon in mind with a project team that consisted of GPCOG staff, South Portland staff, Maine Mall management, and MainedOT staff. Many stakeholders also provided input through stakeholder meetings. This project had a \$20,000 budget. The slide's from Rick's presentation and more information on the Maine Mall TOD plan can be found by clicking [here](#).

The Biddeford-Saco TOD plan timeline is set for January 2020 to January 2021 and will focus on the shared mill district between Biddeford and Saco and this project has a \$40,000 budget. Rick noted some distinct differences between the two TOD plans—Saco-Biddeford has more built density, more land use diversity, and stronger pre-existing transit options compared to the Maine Mall. Weaknesses of the Saco-Biddeford site include a potential shortage of parking, long walking distances from the Biddeford side, and the lack of pedestrian navigation/wayfinding. The major difference between the plans is the Maine Mall plan being a large-scale redesign, while Saco-Biddeford will consist of spot improvements and redesign.

GPCOG's plan for public engagement will involve virtual participation at several levels, including steering committee meetings, stakeholder outreach, surveys, youth outreach, a virtual workshop, and a presentation to city councils toward the end of the project. Tex Haeuser shared [this link](#) as an example for virtual public participation.

6. Adjourn.

At 2:33 P.M. Bruce made a motion to adjourn; Maureen seconded; all were in favor.

Attachment B

PACTS Project Updates

Transit Tomorrow

Since the last Planning Committee meeting, the major focus for the project team has been to develop draft recommendations. Initial recommendations were developed in mid-May and presented to the Transit Tomorrow Project Advisory Committee at its May 22nd meeting. The recommendations were then refined and unveiled at the GPCOG Annual Summit on May 28th via a plenary presentation by Greg Jordan (a recording of the presentation is available [here](#)) and subsequent breakout sessions (by subregion) designed to elicit feedback on the recommendations. The project team provided additional presentations/input sessions to the Community Transportation Leaders Network and the METRO Ridership board. The draft recommendations were then presented to (and approved by) the Policy Committee at their June 25th meeting. The Policy Committee presentation is available [here](#).

The recommendations are grouped into the following four major themes with specific action steps for each:

1. Make Transit Easier
 - Adopt a unified mobility platform
 - Encourage employer-driven initiatives
 - Enhance first and last mile connections
 - Strengthen coordination among providers
 - Expand Travel Training
 - Improve door-to-door options
2. Expand Local Connections (see map in attached presentation)
 - Augment existing internal circulation
 - Expand to new markets
 - Feed rapid transit corridors
3. Introduce Rapid Transit (see map in attached presentation)
 - Make transit competitive with the car
 - Increase transit frequency
 - Maintain a regional perspective
4. Smart Land Use
 - Create transit-oriented development (TOD) plans for all priority centers served by transit
 - Adopt zoning and policy changes that allow for higher density walkable neighborhoods served by transit

- Target investments to priority transit centers and corridors to encourage growth and development in places where people already live, work, and visit
- Build walkable and bikeable streets to ensure safe access to transit for all users regardless of age or ability
- Protect natural resources and agricultural lands through regional conservation planning
- Reward municipalities who take actions to expand housing choices and jobs in priority centers with PACTS transit and transportation investments.

While the recommendations were approved by the Policy Committee, they are not finalized and there is some flexibility for changes as needed. If Planning Committee members have comments or suggestions (in particular for the Smart Land Use recommendations) feel free to contact Rick Harbison.

GPCOG staff are now working with AECOM to develop a draft plan which will be ready for the Project Advisory Committee to review at its next meeting in September.

Maine Climate Council Transportation Working Group Recommendations

The Transportation Working Group submitted their recommendations to the Maine Climate Council to increase Maine’s resilience to climate change impacts and to reduce Maine’s transportation related greenhouse gas emissions on June 17th. The recommended strategies included the following:

- 1) Expand Electrification of Transportation
- 2) Reduce the Emissions of Maine’s Internal Combustion Engines
- 3) Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled
- 4) Adapt Maine’s Infrastructure Critical to the State
- 5) Explore Mechanisms to Fund Transportation needs and Facilitate Emission Reduction

The entirety of the Transportation Working Group’s recommendations can be found on the Maine Climate Council website, [here](#).

South Portland Mill Creek to Cushing’s Point Multimodal Corridor Study

This study will examine potential additions/improvements to the alternative transportation network along the Mill Creek to Cushing’s Point corridor—including traffic signals, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit options. TY Lin was selected as the consultant for this study and staff are currently in contract negotiations. Next steps include a revised project management plan and schedule from the consultant, and then a project kick-off meeting between all three parties.

Biddeford-Saco Transit-Oriented-Development

The Mill District in Biddeford and the area of Saco Island in Saco has been selected as a location for a Transit-Oriented Development Concept Plan as part of PACTS' 2020-2021 work plan. The Study Area includes Saco Island and the Mill District of Biddeford, bounded by Water and Front Streets in Saco, and Main Street in Biddeford, along with Lincoln Street and Elm Street (Route 1) in Biddeford – including Springs Island.

The Biddeford/Saco TOD final plan will include a narrative documenting the study process, a description of various alternative designs, and visual renderings of conceptual designs. The project will highlight the potential to enhance transit ridership, encourage mixed-use development, and foster the growth of bike/ped connectivity within the study area. A draft plan is tentatively scheduled for review in December 2020, with a final plan scheduled for completion in January 2021.

In May 2020, the project steering committee, along with Richardson and Associates, identified focus areas for landscape architecture improvements within the project study area. In July, the project steering committee, along with the consultant and GPCOG Staff completed a site walk to review, and provide feedback on, site recommendations by the consultant. The consultant will review feedback from the steering committee and refine recommendations as needed. In the meantime, staff will be drafting a public survey about the area and mapping land use.

Attachment C



Alexander Jaegerman, FAICP
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TOWN OF YARMOUTH
200 Main Street, Yarmouth, Maine 04096

June 5, 2020

Leanne R. Timberlake, P.E.
Senior Project Manager
Bridge Program
Maine Department of Transportation
16 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Via Email

Dear Leanne,

We are writing on behalf of the Route 295 Exit 15 Bridge Committee in follow up to the public meeting that MDOT held on April 8, 2020. We appreciated the update you and your team provided and are encouraged by the prospect of replacing the existing bridge and the possibilities that it brings for achieving the goal of accommodating all user groups, a process that MDOT started back in 2011 with the on and off ramp improvement project.

During the meeting, we had asked for additional information on several topics and wanted to circle back with you to verify that you came away with the same understanding and expectations that we did. We've also had a chance to talk amongst ourselves and with some of the other stakeholders who participated in the meeting (including representatives from the Bike Coalition of Maine, East Coast Greenway and the Casco Bay Trail Alliance) and would like to share some of our bridge committee's thoughts and concerns with the current replacement design. The information requests, thoughts and concerns fall basically into two categories; accommodation of all user groups and cyclists' ability to safely traverse the northbound exit merge lane.

Accommodating All Users

We are curious what information/forecasts have been developed to estimate future bicycle and pedestrian traffic along this section of Route One that parallel the forecasted vehicular traffic increases? There has been significant growth along Route One in the last 30 years (virtually no development at the beginning of that period), in Yarmouth and even more so in Cumberland, which has seen explosive mixed use growth along its entire frontage on Route One. There is still much undeveloped and underdeveloped land along this section of the road and, in combination with evolving trends in transportation, with it will come increased demand for safe walking and riding routes. We would like to know how that has factored into the design analysis.

The nature of the Exit 15/Route One interchange as it exists now is such that it discourages all pedestrian use and limits bicycle traffic to only experienced, confident cyclists. In fact it is one of the reasons that the East Coast Greenway has been routed around this section of Route One. The proposed replacement bridge design provides no accommodation for cyclists for whom traffic separation is necessary for their safe travel. For example, one of our

"Our Latchstring Always Out"

committee members who works at Tyler Technologies has said that she would love to be able to cycle from her home in Yarmouth to her office on the south side of the interchange but would not be comfortable without a separated pathway. We believe that this is a widely held view and in large part explains why there is currently low bicycle traffic volume through the interchange.

Additional sources of increased future bicycle traffic will be generated by the convergence of multiple regionally and nationally significant bikeways, including the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway, West Side Trail and the recently envisioned Casco Bay Trail, the Portland to Yarmouth rail/trail corridor, which could become a reality within the next 5-10 years). The Exit 15 interchange represents a rare and significant convergence of on and off-road trails that has economic benefits to the region.

As mentioned above, current conditions at this location are only suitable for riders who are Highly or Somewhat Confident according to the typology of riders described in the FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide, (https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/docs/fhwasa18077.pdf) --about 16% of ridership in any area. When considering updates to bicycle facilities, FHWA recommends that the designers keep in mind the majority of riders, referred to in the FHWA guidance as “Interested but Concerned,” who constitute up to 56% of the riders in any area. These “Interested but Concerned” riders have a desire to use bicycles more for recreation and transportation, but they also have concerns about safety that prevent them from riding more often. Such a rider often has limited bicycle handling skills and experience, limited experience and confidence with traffic situations, limited physical abilities, and a general perception that they would ride more were it not for having to share the road with motor vehicle traffic. We are concerned that the proposed bicycle accommodations on the Exit 15 bridge do not meet the best practice recommendations for a location like this.

The FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide selection matrix (p. 23) shows that for a roadway that has an AADT over 8000 and a posted speed of 40, a physically separated facility is the recommended option. The bicycle accommodations in the Preliminary Design Report for this location, however, shows only 5-foot bike lanes (without any separation). A 6 foot sidewalk is also currently planned, but this facility will be too small to accommodate the mixture of walkers and bike riders that can be expected to use this facility now and in the future (and sidewalk bicycle riding has its own problems!).

We are curious as to what were the considerations that drove this design decision (our understanding is that there is no bike/ped count data), and we would like to urge that a more robust accommodation be incorporated into the bridge.

The MaineDOT Complete Streets policy must also come into play here. We urge you to honor the spirit of Complete Streets, as well as the MaineDOT’s commitment to multi-modal transportation, by incorporating a multi-use pathway (MUP) with a physical barrier from the travel lanes into the bridge design.

Northbound Cyclist Conflict

We would like to better understand the traffic analysis that supports the continued need for the merge lane from the northbound exit ramp onto Route One. It would be helpful to understand the traffic load at this intersection in comparison to the nearby northbound exits in Falmouth and Freeport so that we have context for why a merge lane is warranted at this location. We would also appreciate a better explanation of the traffic movement analysis that was sent to us, the underlying traffic counts supporting it and the basis for the forecasted traffic increases that were used in the analysis. As we noted above, the design report does not include any discussion of current and future bicycle traffic through this interchange, and we therefore cannot understand the basis for the claim that the low bike traffic counts relative to the high vehicle traffic volumes do not justify any accommodation beyond tightening the exit ramp radius onto the merge lane.

We would also like to see an analysis of queuing with reconfiguration of the northbound exit to bring exiting traffic to a full stop sign at the off ramp onto the merge lane. This is not a new idea, as elimination of the current free-right conflict was raised by Greg Bakos MDOT’s consultant in a memo to Brian Keezer dated March 14, 2017. The exchange, which recognizes the potential for “producing undesirable operations” was part of an evaluation of interim measures to improve bicycle safety at the interchange in its current configuration. For your convenience, a copy of the memo is attached to this letter. We are simply asking that the full stop condition be analyzed and shared with our committee.

We would also ask that consideration be given to further tightening the radius of the ramp onto the merge lane to further reduce vehicle speed. Our concern is that a 100' radius with a design speed of 25 mph will allow exit speeds much higher. Essentially, we are asking for a design that will result in a reasonably expected speed of 25 mph or less if the free-right condition is maintained.

In summary, we offer the above feedback to assist you in your assessment of how the design meets the community's needs. We would be happy to meet with you to further discuss our concerns in advance of your completing your design analysis. We think it might be useful to convene a meeting of the Bridge Advisory Group to continue the conversation and to provide MaineDOT with more formal feedback from the BAG on the current PDR bridge design.

Respectfully,



Alexander Jaegerman, FAICP
Director of Planning & Development
Town of Yarmouth

and



Dan Ostrye
Yarmouth Bike-Ped Committee
Exit 15 Bridge Advisory Group Member

CC:

Nathan J. Tupper, Yarmouth Town Manager
Steve Johnson, Town Engineer
Erik Street, Director of Public Works
Exit 15 Bridge Advisory Group Members



Memorandum

To: Mr. Brian Keezer

Date: March 14, 2017

State of Maine
Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Project #: 52424.00

From: Greg Bakos

Re: Yarmouth / Bike Lanes; MaineDOT - WIN 018874.00
Responses to Local Review Comments

Following are responses to local review comments on the preliminary submission for the above project. These accompany the updated plans, quantities and estimate that are also provided on this date.

Town of Yarmouth comments

1. The exit 15 N Bound off Ramp – where this merges into the two-lane section of RT 1 heading North. Would it be possible to use a solid white line instead of a dashed line so you merge into a dedicated lane for a short distance, then go to dash? I have watched people stop at the top of the ramp, thinking that N. Bound RT 1 traffic will immediately cut over into the right lane at that location. We have the same thing on the York Street Ramp onto RT 1 – just extended a while line to separate the lanes for a distance – before allowing traffic to cross over – makes people more comfortable.

Response: VHB added a short length of white line separating the two lanes as suggested.

2. As you are coming off 295 on the North Bound exit and approaching the Merge onto RT 1 – You have proposed some Share the road signage – before you get to the new crossing. The new signage is located on right side of the travel way – but the concern is that motorist will be looking left to merge into RT 1 and not see the new signage. The question was raised if signs could be placed on both sides or perhaps the existing Merge sign and new sign be pushed back further down the ramp – before motorist start to look left.

Response: The plans show the existing Bike Crossing sign moving closer to the lane guidance sign, and now the SHARE THE ROAD sign will be replaced by an AHEAD sign. We did not add another sign on the left side of the ramp. Our thought is that for approximately 200 feet on the ramp there is good visibility of cyclists (and cars) converging from the left as motorists enter Rte 1.

3. Of all the crossings in this segment, the 295 N. Bound Off Ramp / RT 1 intersection is the most concerning. We realize that this project has limited funds and is primarily paint work, but we float an idea that perhaps VHD could comment on. If we had the funds – would it make sense to extend the two N. Bound RT 1 lanes from this intersection back to the entrance to Tyler? Something similar was done in Topsham (see attachment). We all agree that we need to do something now to improve bicycle traffic, but if this idea has some merit, we may consider it as a future project. As we feel it would be safer if the bike lane could stay in the shoulder.

Response: Presumably the biggest safety benefit would result from eliminating the free right that currently exists from the Yarmouth NB off ramp. The Topsham intersection is signalized and there is no free right, so bike/car conflicts should be minimal. To replicate this configuration it may be as simple as eliminating the free right, bringing that right turn lane straight into the intersection, signalizing the intersection, and developing the second northbound Rte 1 through lane north of the intersection. This may all produce undesirable operations (delay) for motorists, so the traffic impacts would need to be studied. But it appears that cyclists would benefit from the elimination of the current free right conflict at the end of the NB off ramp.

4. No Green.

Response: Per the Town's concerns about maintenance we did not propose green bike lane colorization.

Comments from Jim Tasse and paul Niehoff (combined):

1. Lane widths appear to use 11 ft travel lanes here. Spec them at 10.5, or even 10, to create a bit more shoulder room and improve speed compliance (what is the posted speed here? 35?) It looks like 5 ft lanes are spec'd on the bridge? That's not bad, but given the speeds of traffic, wider would be safer, and also provide a space for peds. (Paul: I would suggest 10.5 given Rte. One. Ten may be possible. I would also suggest a 6" BL edge line not 4" as shown.)

Response: MaineDOT has expressed that 11.0' is the minimum for this corridor.

2. No sign warning of bikes ahead on SB off ramp. That's needed. (Paul: OK especially given there's one exiting the park and ride that hardly anyone parks in.)

Response: We concur and the W11-1 and W16-9P signs have been added on the ramp.

3. I don't like how the bikelane cuts across the NB off ramp--seems like it should be tapered more to reflect how riders will actually cross that intersection. And I would recommend a word legend "Yield to Bicycles" sign replace the "share the road" sign. (Paul: Me either, too direct and not a normal movement. I would suggest a Yield to Bikes sign (new) on the off-ramp and a "Motorist Share the Road" sign replacing the existing STR sign. I would also suggest adding either a "Begin Right turn yield to bikes" or "Begin Bike Lane" south of the Tyler Drive entrance. Similar to the northern end of the project.)

Responses: The bike lane crossing angle has been flattened and the striping is now solid instead of dashed. We also eliminated both Share the Road signs at this intersection. The two W11-1 signs (one with AHEAD and one with downward arrow) provide the warning necessary, and Yield to Bikes is considered redundant. The bikes are in fact required to yield before crossing the lane if there is oncoming ramp traffic. (It is not the same as for pedestrians crossing.)

4. BCM does not endorse the "share the road" sign (on the NB off ramp and eastbound on Rt. 1) which MUTCD feels makes operational responsibility for sharing unclear (just found another place in the manual where they say exactly that!). Suggest removing and replace with a custom "Yield to Bicycles" word-only sign on the NB offramp (MUTCD is fine with text only signs). Probably can't use a triangular yield sign there because of the slip lane, but that would be a question for Landry. Probably would make the sign yellow, although §2057 10 and 10A might argue for a white regulatory sign. (PACTS doesn't endorse the Old STR signs either.)

Response: See the responses to item 3 above.

Replace "Share the Road" with Three Foot Minimum sign on Rt. 1. MaineDOT may be willing to make that change anyway.

Response: We concur and the change is now shown on the plans.

5. Green paint on the conflict areas Dan mentions is recommended. (Paul: I think green too, but know Erik has concerns, well founded as we're seen, with continued maintenance of green lanes. Give my background in public works, if pressed I'd say don't do green until we have a product and a process for them to remain over the course of at least a few seasons. Other states do it....)

Response: The plans do not include green bike lane highlights at the conflict areas because of the Town's concerns with maintenance.