

# Complete Streets Subcommittee

Thursday, November 4, 2022

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Meeting Agenda

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**Remote:**

Webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84163915924>

Phone: +1 719 359 4580 — Webinar ID: 841 6391 5924

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This meeting is being recorded and will be made available at [gpcog.org/AgendaCenter](https://gpcog.org/AgendaCenter).

**1. Public Comment 5 minutes**

Members of the public are welcome to provide up to three minutes of public comment on items *not* on this agenda. (For items *on* this agenda, additional opportunity for public comment will be provided after the item's staff report, before subcommittee discussion begins.)

**2. Introductions 10 minutes**

Introductions by subcommittee members and project staff.

**3. Complete Streets Draft Policy Background 15 minutes**

Background on the PACTS Complete Streets policy and a summary of the drafting process.

**4. Policy Board Comments on Draft Policy 10 minutes**

Presentation by project staff on the comments made by Policy Board at their September 22, 2022 meeting to establish subcommittee. See attachment A: September 22, 2022 Policy Board Meeting Minutes.

**5. Subcommittee Roles and Responsibilities 35 minutes**

Discussion on role of the Complete Streets Subcommittee and next steps. At its September meeting, the Policy Board formed the Complete Streets Subcommittee to review the policies and procedures for applying the Regional Complete Streets policy to PACTS Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) and Collector Paving Projects. In addition, the subcommittee is charged with clarifying the makeup and role of the Complete Streets Advisory Team.

**6. Review of Initial Input & Preview of Next Meeting** **15 minutes**

Review of initial input and feedback. Preview of discussion topics for next meeting including:

- Policy and procedures for applying Regional Complete Streets Policy to PACTS MPI projects
- Policy and procedures for applying Regional Complete Streets Policy to PACTS Collector Paving Projects
- Makeup and role of Complete Streets Advisory Team

**Upcoming Meetings**

- Policy Board—November 15, 9:00–10:30 am
- Transit Task Force- December 1, 10:30 am- 12:00 pm
- RTAC- December 6, 9:00-11:00 am

Board and committee members, the public, and other stakeholders are encouraged to subscribe to the PACTS calendar at [gpcog.org/Calendar](http://gpcog.org/Calendar).



## PACTS Policy Board

September 22, 2022

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Municipal Members		
Arundel	VACANT	
Biddeford	Jim Bennett	
Cape Elizabeth	Matt Sturgis	
Cumberland	Bill Shane	
Falmouth	Hope Cahan, chair	
Freeport	Jake Daniele	
Gorham	Ephrem Paraschak	✓
North Yarmouth	Diane Barnes	✓
Old Orchard Beach	Diana Asanza	
Portland	Keith Gray	✓
Portland	Nell Donaldson	✓
Raymond	Nathan White	
Saco	Patrick Fox, vice chair	✓
Scarborough	Angela Blanchette	
South Portland	Kate Lewis	✓
Standish	Michael Delcourt	
Westbrook	Eric Dudley	
Windham	Barry Tibbetts	
Yarmouth	Scott LaFlamme	✓

Non-municipal Members		
MaineDOT	Dale Doughty	✓
Maine Turnpike Auth.	Erin Courtney	✓
Active Transp. Specialist	Kara Wooldrik	✓
Environmental Specialist	Allen Armstrong	✓
Transp. Equity Specialist	Andrew Blunt	
Transp. Equity Specialist	Yura Yasui	✓
RTAC Liaison	Tom Milligan	✓
BSOOB Transit	Chad Heid	✓
Casco Bay Lines	Hank Berg	✓
METRO	Greg Jordan	✓
NNEPRA	Patricia Quinn	✓
Reg. Transp. Program	Jack DeBeradinis	
So. Portland Bus Serv.	Donna Tippet	✓
York Co. Comm. Action	Tom Reinauer	✓

Non-voting Members		
SMPDC	Stephanie Carver	
Federal Highway Admin.	Rachel Levee	
Federal Transit Admin.	Leah Sirmin	

### 1. Welcome

Pat Fox opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

### 2. Public Comment

Todd Morse expressed his support for the Regional Complete Streets Policy.

Myles Smith of Portland expressed his support for the Regional Complete Streets Policy and encouraged the board to continue to support multimodal safety and connectivity.

### 3. Approval of the July 28 Policy Board Meeting Minutes

Allen Armstrong moved to approve the July 28 meeting minutes as written; Scott LaFlamme seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 46–0; standard vote: 17–0)<sup>1</sup>

### 4. Chair's Report

There was no report from the chair.

### 5. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Report

Tom Milligan noted that RTAC has recently received presentations on Collector Paving projects, the Regional Complete Streets Policy, the Ride with Me event, and a Transit Together project update.

### 6. Staff Report

Competitive grant programs available through FHWA are shown at [fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/grant\\_programs.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/grant_programs.cfm). Staff recently submitted a grant application under the [Safe Streets for All](#) program to support the development of a Regional Vision Zero Policy. Staff also created a video to highlight the human impacts of car crashes. View the video at [vimeo.com/745505384](https://vimeo.com/745505384).

### 7. Funding Deficit for South Portland Projects

In Summer 2019, PACTS assessed funding deficits in the 2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and allocated funding to several projects to cover anticipated deficits. South Portland's Cottage Road Sidewalk Project, which did not have a known deficit at the time, did not receive additional funding. The project has also been delayed a year. The project now has a funding deficit of \$388,150. South Portland's Cottage Road Paving Project—now delayed because the sidewalk project was delayed—has a funding deficit estimated to be \$329,700. The total requested additional federal funds for the two projects is \$377,764. Meeting this request for would require PACTS Holding WIN balance to go below the minimum reserve.

Staff has developed the following recommendations:

- Allocate \$388,150 in capital funding—of which 75 percent (\$291,112) will come from the Holding WIN and 25 percent (\$97,038) will be local match—to the South Portland Cottage Road Sidewalk Project (WIN 24101)

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<sup>1</sup> Per PACTS Bylaws, Policy Board votes are weighted by municipal population.

- Allocate \$115,536 in capital funding—of which 75 percent (\$86,652) will come from the Holding WIN and 25 percent (\$28,884) will be local match—to the South Portland Cottage Road Paving Project (WIN 24585)

Pat Fox asked for public comment. Justin Gove, South Portland engineer, stated that the City has done extensive utility work within the corridor and has made efforts to reduce the scope for this project. He added that the funding—though initially sufficient for the project several years ago—now will not be enough given higher construction costs. Pat closed the public comment period.

Kate Lewis commented that this corridor is a priority for the city given its use by children to get to school and as a gateway to Fort Williams Park in Cape Elizabeth.

Allen Armstrong asked what the ramifications of going below the MaineDOT-recommended minimum Holding WIN balance would be. Staff answered that PACTS would need the approval of MaineDOT to proceed. Dale Doughty indicated that MaineDOT would grant this approval.

Kate Lewis moved to approve the funding allocations as presented; Patricia Quinn seconded. All were in favor (Weighted vote: 47–0; standard vote: 18–0)

## **8. Approval of Complex Projects Task Force Recommendations**

At its July 28 meeting, the Policy Board reviewed the recommendations from the Complex Projects Task Force. The board directed staff to reconvene the task force to discuss 1) the proposed 50 percent local match requirement on any cost overrun funding and 2) the possibility of rewarding municipalities that fund PDR locally. The task force met in August and unanimously reaffirmed their recommendations:

- Regarding a 50 percent local match on construction overrun funding, the recommendation is intended to stretch PACTS' funding further.
- Regarding the possibility of rewarding municipalities that fund PDR locally, the group discussed incentivizing or requiring municipalities to fund their own PDRs. However, the group agreed these options would put smaller municipalities at a disadvantage. The group recommended instead that, beginning with the Fall 2023 call for projects, all applicants be required to complete preliminary Horizontal/Vertical Alignment Compete (HVAC)—at approximately 25 percent design—before applying for PACTS funding.

Pat Fox asked for public comment. Eamonn Dundon, a member of the Complex Projects Task Force, stated that cost overruns are not guaranteed to be funded by PACTS. The recommendations ensure that this process is more equitable for municipalities and that there is funding available for municipalities when there are overruns.

Ken Capron of Portland suggested sharing equipment between municipalities to combat cost overruns. He also suggested that bulk purchasing could help bring down costs. Staff noted that GPCOG facilitates cooperative purchasing for paving projects and other items. Pat closed the public comment period.

Dale Doughty noted that, regardless of PACTS' local match policies, MaineDOT maintains a fixed federal-local split over the life of a project, so variable local percentages can create challenges.

Nell Donaldson asked whether the task force considered deterrents against municipalities requesting construction overage funding too often. Staff replied that PACTS will not fund any scope creep and that requiring HVAC should result in better cost estimates.

Tom Milligan stated that the task force voted unanimously with the understanding that this process can be reviewed and revised as necessary.

Keith Gray moved to approve the recommendations from the Complex Projects Task Force, except to maintain PACTS' current policy of 25 percent local match for construction overage funding; Diane Barnes seconded. Tom Milligan was opposed, all others were in favor. (Weighted vote: 47–1; standard vote: 18–1)

## **9. Adoption of a Regional Complete Streets Policy**

In July 2019, the former Policy Committee directed staff to develop a Regional Complete Streets Policy to increase bicycle and pedestrian safety across the region. Staff began work on this policy in Summer 2021. The policy is intended to serve as a uniform guide for PACTS investments and as a model for member municipalities. The policy does not prescribe specific design choices, but rather acknowledges that Complete Streets accommodations will vary by context. Staff are prepared to provide technical assistance to project sponsors in determining appropriate treatments. Additionally, adopting a Complete Streets policy will unlock new funding opportunities for the region.

The policy as proposed applies to PACTS-funded projects beginning with the Fall 2023 call for projects. In the interim, staff will provide orientation and trainings to municipalities, and develop implementation guidance and a regional database for benchmarking and reporting on progress.

Pat Fox asked for public comment.

- Mireille Kabongo, GPCOG Community Transportation Leader and a member of RTAC, expressed that not all places in the region are accessible due to her disability. She acknowledged a Complete Streets approach can be one way to help make streets more accessible and safe.
- Ken Capron, Portland, encouraged continued investment in ADA compliance.

- Josh Caldwell, National Resource Council of Maine (NRCM), highlighted the benefits of Complete Streets for Maine’s environment and economy. Pat closed the public comment period.
- Written comment (see Attachment 1) was provided by Sarah Cushman of Portland, Tom Lane of Portland, and Keenan Weischedel of Disability Rights Maine.

The group was generally supportive of the proposed policy. Many noted the potential impacts of the policy on PACTS MPI and Collector Paving programs, particularly increased costs and delays, and felt the policy should not apply to those programs. Several others, however, felt there were costs associated with not adopting a comprehensive approach, including increased maintenance costs from continued wear-and-tear of vehicular traffic and safety concerns.

Staff noted that additional implementation work remained to be done—including identifying impacts to other PACTS programs and policies, refining the composition and role of the advisory team, etc.—but the adoption of the policy was a critical first step.

The group discussed the importance of gaining a better understanding of the implementation of the policy.

Scott LaFlamme moved to postpone approval of the Regional Complete Streets Policy, to establish a working group as appointed by the Chair and Vice-Chair, and to refer to the working group the issues related to implementation of the policy; Tom Milligan seconded. With no objection, the motion carried.

**10. Update: GPCOG's Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit Study and MTA's Proposed Gorham Connector**

With no objection, this item was postponed.

**11. Other Business**

There was no other business discussed.

**12. Adjourn**

Patricia Quinn moved to adjourn; Scott Laflamme seconded. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

**PACTS Policy Board**

September 22, 2022

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Written Public Comment

**9. Adoption of a Regional Complete Streets Policy**

**Sarah Cushman, Portland**

Good morning. Thanks very much for your work on the Complete Streets Policy for the region and the opportunity for us to share some thoughts. My name is Sarah Cushman and I'm a resident of Portland. I'm a walker, bus rider, and year-round bike commuter. I'm also a transportation planning consultant specializing in pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation projects.

In my experience, Complete Streets is about equal access to opportunity - for our local workforce and economy, and for our own quality of life. It's a basic fairness issue. For example, just before the pandemic, I was riding my bike in the cold pre-dawn hours to catch a bus at the Portland Transportation Center. I was on West Commercial Street and crossing over to the Fore River Parkway when I came across several other bicyclists emerging from the end of their shift at Tyson/Barber Foods on St. John Street. It was dark and I was grateful we were all able to ride on the bike paths near there. But as folks split off in their various directions, I thought about how their vulnerability increased, with the surrounding high traffic areas and minimal or no bike facilities, and poor lighting, etc.

Another time, I was participating in a South Portland site walk out by Pape Chevrolet. Specifically, we were looking at safety barriers for kids who live in Brick Hill and Redbank, who were walking back and forth across Exit 3 to Skillin Elementary and Memorial Middle School. While we were there, we talked with adults passing by on foot, who work at the Mall and other nearby locations. They mentioned how some parts of their walk have no sidewalks or pedestrian crossing signals. I drove by a few months later and saw snow heaped on several of those sidewalks, and imagined folks having to walk sections of those busy arterial streets, out in traffic.

On a more personal level, I think about Complete Streets as my 15 year-old daughter bikes to her job. I think about it as I ride in the front passenger seat, now that she has her permit, and I realize how hard it is for her to see pedestrians crossing the road at night because of poor lighting. I also think about my mother-in-law, who died this spring after a 10-year battle with Parkinson's disease, who struggled to use her walker or her wheelchair to access services, get around her neighborhood, ride the bus, and participate in social activities. And how, if we're all fortunate to live long enough, mobility devices will be a part of our own futures. I think of myself and other parents trying to navigate the world on foot with our strollers. Complete Streets infrastructure is fundamental for accessing opportunity and maintaining quality of life in our communities.

Thank you for listening.

**Mireille Kabongo, GPCOG Community Transportation Leader and RTAC**

I'm Mireille Kabongo. I am a Community Transportation Leader and a member of the PACTS Regional Transportation Advisory Committee. I'm a person with a disability.

I'm here today in front of the PACTS Policy Committee, because you are the ones who will be making this decision about the Complete Streets Policy and who can make all the people safe when they are outside. As a person with a disability, most of the time when I want to go outside, first of all I have to check on Google Maps to see if it's a place that's accessible. If the location is not accessible, I will not go. Or I will have to ask someone for help, to walk with me, to prevent me from falling, if the location is not safe for me.

I'm writing this and speaking with you today because this is the opportunity to make change. There are older people, people who are blind, people who are driving - all of us need to be safe when we are walking, crossing the street, driving, and then entering and exiting vehicles.

This is not just for today, this is also for the future. We want access to the street, to work, to all daily activities. We want access that can stop crashes and injuries and deaths when we are traveling outside of a vehicle - like walking, using mobility devices, getting in and out of vehicles, etc.

Here are two examples from my experience. One is that my bank is not far from where I live - it's just one block away and across Forest Avenue. But in winter, especially, I'm not able to walk there. I ask for a ride to go just this one block to the bank. But if I were feeling safe, I could just go and walk. However, in the winter, the sidewalk is not clear for a person with a disability to navigate.

Another example is that I also do not generally ride the bus because I can't stand for long periods of time. Good, safe access to any bus stop includes having a bench and a clear sidewalk and ramps, etc.

The last thing I want to say is this - today PACTS has the authority to change this. The safety of all of our communities depends on you. You can make us safer, or we can continue with the problems we have now. Thank you for your consideration.

**Tom Lane, Portland**

My name is Tom Lane. I am a resident of Portland and an architect. I support the adoption of complete streets policy. Portland is growing and we need to grow intelligently with more modes of transportation and human centered urban design, including off the peninsula.

**Keenan Weischedel, Disability Rights Maine**

My name is Keenan Weischedel and I am an advocate with Disability Rights Maine and also an individual with a disability. Before my accident, I always wanted to be able to commute to work on my

bike. That all changed when I lost the ability to use my legs. Transportation is something that I took for granted and I never noticed all of the barriers that I have to go through. I have written a blog about this for Disability Rights Maine. The blog post is available at this link: <https://drme.org/blog/2022-07-19>

Getting around in a wheelchair is more difficult than walking because you need a sidewalk or wide shoulder that can accommodate a wheelchair safely. Adopting a Complete Streets policy would expand opportunities for people with disabilities through safer corridors and more ADA compliance in future road construction.

I would still love to be able to commute to work or other events on my handcycle. Complete Streets could make this dream a reality. Having safer streets for all community members is so important. Many people with disabilities don't have access to driving a vehicle. We need to make sure that we continue to improve all modes of transportation, including walkers and rollers. A regional Complete Streets is a way to ensure that all individuals have access to their communities in a safe manner.

Keenan Weischedel  
Disability Rights Maine  
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