

PACTS Policy Board

January 27, 2022

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Municipal Members		
Arundel	VACANT	
Biddeford	Jim Bennett	✓
Cape Elizabeth	Matt Sturgis, Chair	✓
Cumberland	Bill Shane	✓
Falmouth	Hope Cahan, Vice Chair	✓
Freeport	Jake Daniele	✓
Gorham	Ephrem Paraschak	
North Yarmouth	Brian Sites	
Old Orchard Beach	Diana Asanza	
Portland	Keith Gray	✓
Portland	Roberto Rodriguez	✓
Raymond	Nathan White	
Saco	Patrick Fox	
Scarborough	Jay Chace	✓
South Portland	Kate Lewis	
Standish	Michael Delcourt	
Westbrook	Eric Dudley	✓
Windham	Barry Tibbetts	
Yarmouth	Rob Waeldner	

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	Tom Milligan	✓
BSOOB Transit	Chad Heid	✓
Casco Bay Lines	Hank Berg	✓
METRO	Greg Jordan	✓
NNEPRA	William Gayle	✓
Reg. Transp. Program	Jack DeBeradinis	
So. Portland Bus Serv.	Donna Tippett	
York Co. Comm. Action	Tom Reinauer	

Non-voting Members		
SMPDC	Stephanie Carver	
Federal Highway Admin.	Carlos Peña	
Federal Transit Admin.	Leah Sirmin	

1. Welcome

Matt Sturgis opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

2. Public Comment

No public comment was received.

3. Approval of the October 28 and November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Hope Cahan moved to approve the October 28 and November 18, 2021 meeting minutes as written; Kara Wooldrik seconded. All were in favor.

4. Chair's Report

Matt Sturgis urged the board members to subscribe to the PACTS calendar to ensure they are up-to-date on the latest meetings.

5. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Report

There was no RTAC meeting in January. At its December 2021 meeting, RTAC discussed the final allocation of the region's CARES funds, and received presentations on the region's developing complete streets policy and the Biddeford-Saco Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project.

6. Staff Report

MaineDOT announced the availability of funding under its Community Initiatives program, which will support municipalities' efforts to make improvements in downtown and village center areas. More information is available at maine.gov/mdot/pgc/cbi/.

Staff welcomed Jon Anderson and Roberto Rodriguez to the board, serving as representatives of Scarborough and Portland, respectively. Staff thanked Jay Chace, who will continue as Scarborough's alternate, and Andrew Zarro for their contributions to the board.

GPCOG's Ride With Me event will be held from March 21 to April 1. The event pairs officials and decision makers with transit riders to ride transit and discuss everyday issues and opportunities. Members of the board are encouraged to participate. More information is available at gpcog.org/543/Ride-With-Me.

In early 2021, GPCOG received 98 project submissions in response to a call for shovel-ready and shovel-worthy projects. Staff have since [compiled a document](#)¹ that bundles similar projects to facilitate cooperative purchasing and grant seeking. This document has been shared with the region's congressional delegation. Staff welcomed Belinda Ray as GPCOG's Director of Strategic Partnerships, who will oversee efforts to secure funding for these and other regional initiatives.

Work continues on Connect2045, the region's upcoming long-range transportation plan. At its November 2021 meeting, the Policy Board provided guidance on the plan's vision and goals. Staff will soon begin developing the strategies and projects to meet those goals. Staff will host meetings with each of the region's municipalities to discuss priority centers and corridors, population and employment forecasts, and major upcoming projects. These discussions will inform a set of draft strategies and performance measures. Per federal regulation, staff will also launch a call for projects to develop a financially constrained short list of regionally significant projects and a longer list should additional

¹ See gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/2206/Shovel-Ready-Worthy-Projects_Categorized_123021.

funding be identified. The Connect2045 Project Advisory Committee will develop a process to prioritize the projects submitted. The draft strategies, performance measures, and project lists will be reviewed by the Policy Board at its upcoming July meeting.

Dale Doughty noted the opportunities to coordinate long-range planning and grant-seeking efforts.

Staff stressed the importance of subscribing to the PACTS calendar for the latest updates to meeting schedules, which will improve public access and reduce the administrative burden on staff. A full list of upcoming meetings is always available at gpcog.org/Calendar.

7. MaineDOT Amendments to the 2021–2024 TIP

All federally funded projects must be included in the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and MaineDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). MaineDOT has requested amendments to allow three projects to move forward: a bridge replacement on Bucknam Road over I-295 in Falmouth, a bridge replacement on Johnson Road over I-295 in Falmouth, and a mill-and-fill pavement preservation on I-295 northbound between Scarborough and Falmouth. Staff released the three TIP amendments for a 10-day public comment period; no public comment was received.

Bill Shane moved to approve the amendments as presented; Andrew Blunt seconded. All were in favor.

8. Approval of Projects for UPWP and RPO Municipal Planning Funds

In October 2021, staff notified the region's municipalities of two funding opportunities: approximately \$45,000 through GPCOG's Regional Planning Organization (RPO) planning funds, requiring no municipal match; and approximately \$75,000 through PACTS' Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) planning funds, requiring a minimum 5 percent local match. Staff received the following project submissions:

Sponsor	Project	Funding Request	Proposed Local Match
BSOOB Transit	Transit Network Analytics and Mapping	\$36,000	\$2,000
Falmouth	Falmouth Corners Intersection Assessment	\$25,000	\$10,000
Freeport	Mallet Drive Safe Routes to School	\$20,000	\$10,000
Freeport	Route 1 South Multiuse Path	\$20,000	\$5,000
Gorham	Cross-Town Trail Section 4	\$26,900	\$3,100–\$4,600
Portland	Forest Avenue Phase 4	\$40,000	\$20,000

Staff recommend Falmouth's Falmouth Corners Intersection Assessment and Freeport's Mallet Drive Safe Routes to School projects for RPO planning funding; and Freeport's Route 1 South Multiuse Path, Gorham's Cross-Town Trail Section 4, and Portland's Forest Avenue Phase 4 projects for UPWP planning funding.

The initial funding requests for these projects exceeded total available funding. The municipalities agreed to increase the local match, and staff identified supplementary funding through other UPWP tasks.

Jim Bennett asked for an estimated total construction cost of the five projects, and questioned whether it would be wise to begin planning new projects given the current construction backlog. Staff estimated total construction to be in the several millions, and noted that there is no precedent or formal policy that would prioritize these projects for construction funding.

Chad Heid shared that BSOOB Transit has since moved forward with its project, and has entered into a three-year contract with a transportation planning vendor to provide mapping and analytics support.

Bill Shane urged the group to be prepared for future funding opportunities by beginning the planning phase. He moved to approve funding for the three UPWP planning fund projects as presented; Hope Cahan seconded; Tom Milligan amended the motion to specify that approval did not guarantee future construction funding.

Matt Sturgis noted that municipalities may request planning funds to help initiate a project, but often fund construction locally.

On the motion, all were in favor.

9. Approval of Projects for MPI Crack Sealing

Crack sealing is a method to prolong the life of pavement in good condition. Per PACTS' Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) policy, \$50,000 is set aside annually for this purpose. In 2022, roadway segments from the Central and Southern subregions are scheduled for treatment. Staff developed a list of segments totaling approximately 10 miles in length, based on pavement conditions scores and annual average daily traffic. The Collector Paving Working Group reviewed and revised the list at its December 2020 meeting, removing segments due to construction in the next five years and grouping nearby segments for better efficiency. The MPI funds are transferred to MaineDOT and administered as part of their crack sealing program.

Jim Bennett moved to approve the list of roadway segments for treatment and the transfer of funds to MaineDOT as presented; Tom Milligan seconded. All were in favor.

10. Safety Performance Targets and UPWP Amendment

PACTS is required to adopt safety performance targets annually, and to incorporate these targets into its planning processes (for example, the TIP). These targets include the total and rate of roadway fatalities, the total and rate of serious injuries, and the total non-motorized fatalities and injuries. MaineDOT annually provides safety data and suggested safety targets for the above. Based on feedback from the former Policy Committee's guidance regarding 2021 roadway safety targets, staff have revised the suggested targets to be below their five-year averages, and have rounded down non-rate targets to the nearest whole number.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires transit agencies adopt as part of their Agency Safety Plan safety targets for the following measures: the total and rate of fatalities, the total and rate of injuries, the total and rate of safety events, and system reliability. Based on the targets in use in the region, PACTS is required to develop regional transit safety targets and incorporate them into its planning processes. Staff asked for guidance from the board and recommended further discussion be taken up by the Transit Task Force.

Staff presented national, statewide, and regional statistics showing recent roadway safety trends, and recommended PACTS pursue a regional Vision Zero policy. Vision Zero is a transportation safety paradigm that works to actively reduce safety risks to users of the transportation system. This can be done through roadway design improvements and investments in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure. The Safe Streets and Roads for All program under the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act makes funding available to MPOs and municipalities for such treatments, but they must have a Vision Zero policy in place to be eligible.

Jim Bennett supported the concept of pursuing a Vision Zero policy, but urged the group to consider any implications it may have on existing policies. Staff noted action today would only start the process of developing a Vision Zero policy; there will be additional opportunity for the board to get involved.

Greg Jordan suggested developing roadway and transit safety targets comprehensively to better inform planning and funding decisions. He noted a transit rider was ten-times less likely to suffer an injury or fatality compared to a driver. He was supportive of pursuing a Vision Zero policy.

Kara Wooldrik supported pursuing a Vision Zero policy and the opportunity to examine its implications to existing policies.

Jay Chace felt the proposed UPWP amendment language—to "seek adoption" of a Vision Zero policy—was too strong. He asked what the outcomes of the Bicycle Network Level of Traffic Stress project was intended to accomplish. Staff noted the level of stress analysis would help evaluate and identify gaps in the bicycle network. However, Vision Zero is broader, and would focus on the safety of the entire transportation network. Greg Jordan suggested revising the proposed language as follows:

~~Seek adoption~~ Consideration of Vision Zero Policy ~~from by~~ PACTS Policy Board.

Greg Jordan moved to amend the UPWP to develop a Vision Zero policy as presented, subject to the above revision; and to direct staff to develop comprehensive roadway and transit safety performance targets for review by the board at a later date. Hope Cahan seconded. All were in favor.

11. 2021–2024 TIP Amendment—Projects

PACTS is projected to adopt its TIP in March; MaineDOT is projected to adopt its STIP in May. Because of this gap, MaineDOT provides a list of projects that will be included in its upcoming STIP to PACTS for interim inclusion in its current TIP. This will allow work on those projects to continue.

Jim Bennett moved to approve the amendment as presented; Tom Milligan seconded.

Tom Milligan noted the recent trend of rising construction costs. Dale Doughty said MaineDOT has recently reviewed project costs to better account for that.

On the motion, all were in favor.

12. Transit Together Project Update

Staff provided an update on the Transit Together project:

- Transit Together is studying increased coordination and integration in the region's transit network to improve efficiency and cultivate a cohesive and unified system.
- The project includes four main tasks, including a regional network design, microtransit analysis, review of opportunities for increased operational efficiencies, and stakeholder engagement.
- The project is guided by a project advisory group.
- The project is rooted in extensive past public feedback, including a desire for faster service with fewer stops and more frequent service.
- The project team is compiling background information (demographics and travel patterns, service characteristics, and past, present, and future interagency collaboration efforts) in a State of the System report.
- Next steps include a public outreach effort, the technical analyses, additional public outreach and feedback, and development of recommendations.
- A public meeting is scheduled for February 17 from 5:30–7:00 pm, the board is welcome to attend and stay involved by visiting transittogether.org/overview or contacting project staff with comments or feedback.

Erin Courtney asked how Transit Together fits with the timeline of the Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit study. Staff consider Transit Together to be short- to medium-term in nature, while the rapid transit study is long-term. The rapid transit study will be kicking off soon.

13. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

14. Adjourn

With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.