

Agency and Public Comments on Draft Transit Tomorrow

Topics:

1 0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
General Comments	
Existing Conditions	7
Planning in the face of Uncertainty and Projecting Forward	8
Goal 1: Make Transit Easier	8
Goal 2: Create Frequent Connections	10
Goal 3: Improve Rapid Transit	12
Goal 4: Create Transit-Friendly Places	15
Implementing the Plan	15
Funding	17
Public Involvement	17
Additional Comments	19
Text- and Granhic-hased Changes	21

Comment	Response
General Comments	
The plan states "Our vision is that by 2050 using our region's public transportation is faster and more affordable than driving a car" Public transportation should be fast and affordable but shouldn't compete with car.	This is the language in the vision statement that was adopted by the Project Advisory Committee in the summer of 2019.
Similarly, public transportation should be competitive with auto, not better than the auto as suggested on page 21.	This paragraph is summarizing the key themes and sentiments that emerged from the transit boards workshop.
The plan should describe a practical, phased approach to implementation of the rapid transit recommendations. Right now this phasing is presented almost exclusively in the context of how increased frequency for existing fixed route transit can help build the demand for rapid transit, but there are actually a number of incremental steps (related to both transportation and land use) that would/could lay the groundwork for rapid transit. For instance, the plan could use a hypothetical to show how service improvements and land use changes could layer to create an environment where rapid transit can be successful. Especially when many identified investments are in the tens and hundreds of millions and even billions of dollars, it would be helpful to describe how these larger ticket items could be realized over time	More detailed planning, including on phasing, is needed before implementing the rapid transit recommendation. Doing this in this study would require more resources than available. However, the <i>Transit Together</i> study, coupled with the alternatives analysis for rapid transit, will ensure a systematic and integrated approach to public transportation in the region.
This is primarily a bus-oriented plan with little to no consideration of the passenger ferry service	Ferry service is an integral component of the regional transit system and Transit Tomorrow's recommendations apply to ferry service in many different ways. For example, in improving frequency, the plan states that the "Casco Bay ferry terminal and Downeaster station (current or future) stand out as focus areas for more frequent connections." Enhanced bus frequency to/from the ferry terminal will benefit islanders, visitors, and ferry staff who may depend on public transportation. Additionally, the plan's "Make Transit Easier" recommendations for enhanced customer service technologies and strong coordination among transit providers are designed to improve transit users' experience in the region, which includes islanders who desire seamless connections from ferry to bus service (and vice versa).

The Draft Report deals almost exclusively with commuter use of transit. This ignores tourists and other who are not commuters, but who could and should use transit. For example, "car free vacations" have been promoted in the travel industry for several years, where tourists can leave their cars behind when traveling. This is of particular importance for the Downeaster, since most of its ridership consists of non-commuters, a portion of whom want local transit connections between the Downeaster and their ultimate destinations. Non-commuter use of transit should be discussed and quantified in the final Report.

The major market connections envisioned for rapid transit are common commuting connections, but they are also the same connections needed to get to common services and destinations (e.g. healthcare, shopping, schools, recreation, tourist attractions, etc.). Furthermore, the improvements envisioned in the plan (service every 10-30 min. 18-ish hours per day every day on all corridors and in every community by 2050) go well beyond what is typically thought of as commuter service.

The Plan does not contain any specific recommendations or any real discussion as to what physical infrastructure improvements are necessary to ensure that intermodal transfers are enabled were operationally required. The final version of the Report should include discussion of such infrastructure and estimate the cost of the same.

The focus of Transit Tomorrow is to identify broad strategies for how to expand the region's transit system over the next 30 years. The specific infrastructure improvements needed at major transit hubs or transfer points will need to be identified in future plans and studies.

The draft plan, does not provide an adequate analysis or discussion of the existing network or transit ridership in context to depict the challenges the region is facing and how the recommendations would build on current efforts to reach the goals

The Moving Southern Maine Forward (2018-2023) short-range transit plan provided much of this information and context (existing conditions of the transit network, ridership, etc.). Additional analysis is provided in the "Recent Plans and Studies" section of the appendix in Transit Tomorrow in which AECOM prepared a comprehensive review of all plans and studies related to transit in the last decade as well as a comparison to four peer regions. The upcoming Transit Together study will reexamine the existing network in more detail order to identify opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.

The Plan attributes seemingly equal viability to the three rapid transit service options (BRT, commuter rail and light rail) on three of the four corridors. It screens out light rail from the Windham-Portland corridor (but it isn't stated why). It is understood that there will be follow-on feasibility studies, but there should be some additional recognition of future viability or the conditions that would need to be satisfied for the various service options to be considered truly 'feasible'.

At the direction of the Project Advisory Committee, cost estimates were prepared for all three modes (bus rapid transit, light rail, and commuter rail) in places where rail infrastructure exists. For corridors with no rail infrastructure in place, the plan only includes estimates for bus rapid transit. Ultimately, the feasibility of potential route and mode options will be determined in an alternatives analysis. Additional text has been added (page 72) to provide more clarity.

Each of the implementation sections in the four recommendations	Because the Create Frequent Connections and Improve Rapid Transit
would benefit from a more explicit and visible identification of	sections are focused on service-based improvements to the transit
priorities. Text boxes highlighting priorities or similar would be	network, the project team prioritized these recommendations based
helpful in each section. They can currently get "lost" among the	on input received through the public process. The Make Transit Easier
other material Presented	and Create Transit-Friendly Places sections, on the other hand, include
	recommendations that vary widely, involve rapidly advancing
	technology, and are potentially eligible for numerous funding sources.
	By not prioritizing these recommendations, the region retains the
	flexibility to respond to opportunities as they arise.
It seems important that the selection and prioritization criteria also	This suggestion is beyond what we are able to accomplish with existing
look at each of the corridors' existing transportation challenges, such	funding and time constraints. Since <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> is largely
as safety issues, congestion, physical limitations, etc.	route/mode agnostic, emphasis was given to prioritize the corridors
	broadly based on their length and strength of market connection (as
	well as other key characteristics described on page 64). An alternatives
	analysis is needed to provide more in-depth review of existing
	transportation challenges for each corridor.
The PACTS Transit Committee was eliminated, but since then	The PACTS Transit Committee, Technical Committee, and Planning
multiple subcommittees have been added. Can we reinstate the	Committee were consolidated into the Regional Transportation
Transit Committee so we have fewer meetings to discuss all the very	Advisory Committee (RTAC). The RTAC is intended to be more
important transit related issues?	inclusive, in nature, bringing many different perspectives on public
	transportation, and the PACTS governing bodies are excited about the
	prospect of improved collaboration between transit agencies, transit
	users, municipalities, and other regional/state agencies. The concept
	behind convening a Local Coordination Working Group is to provide a
	venue for pursuing and monitoring coordination across the continuum
	of public transportation services, including community transportation
	providers such as volunteer driver programs and small paratransit
	programs – as well as emerging mobility providers.
How does this plan play with the other PACTS/GPCOG plans like	GPCOG has worked for years to establish shared priorities and
Destination 2040?	practices across the region's transportation stakeholders. <i>Transit</i>
	Tomorrow is primarily built upon two key planning efforts. The first,
	Destination 2040, is the metropolitan transportation plan for the
	PACTS region, which identified the essential role that public
	transportation plays in meeting numerous regional goals, such as
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What is the timeline for extending bus service to Gray, Standish and Bridgeton? How does this affect funding for existing routes given the "ambitious" goals for very expensive BRT? What "local frequency" gets priority? The most populated areas, highest ridership stops, regionally significant stops, the "10 selected high-capacity routes" the BRT from Gorham to Portland? Please define "local frequency and service" that you state as highest priority. The highest priority for the passenger ferry system is safety and maintaining state of good repair is critical to this yet there is no mention of this in the plan	environment, equity, and land use. This was followed up with the short-range public transportation plan Moving Southern Maine Forward, which focused on the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of the transit system. As the next step in building this regional transportation vision, Transit Tomorrow brought together numerous stakeholders to further define the long-term regional vision for public transportation. Both Moving Southern Maine Forward and Transit Tomorrow will inform the next update to Destination 2040. In the implementation table, the plan sets a goal of adding one new local connection per decade (leveraging additional funding sources). Transit Tomorrow is a high-level strategic plan, the details regarding route design and which routes to prioritize for frequency improvements will be considered more thoroughly in the Transit Together study. Text has been added to pages 34, 43, and 53 acknowledging the importance of maintaining a state of good repair in general (page 43) and for the ferry system in particular (pages 34 and 53).
Passenger ferry system was not included in the scenario modeling making the modeling incomplete	As stated in the plan (page 40), "For this analysis, the region's ferry system was not included as its routes are not coded into the PACTS model." However, the exercise is largely intended to get a broad perspective of the relative impacts of changes in land use and transit service. The results found that compact land use combined with either improving transit everywhere or targeting transit investments on specific corridors perform the best on a variety of metrics related to ridership and social/environmental impacts. These big picture findings would likely not change significantly with ferry routes included in the analysis.
The draft plan does not discuss opportunities to improve and/or increase mobility with existing assets or existing agency plans, or how improvements are inter-related	The short-range transit plan for the region, Moving Southern Maine Forward, lays out recommendations that would increase mobility with relatively low-cost opportunities within the existing system. Individual intermodal connections will be a key focus in theupcoming Transit Together study. The focus of Transit Tomorrow is to identify broad

While commuter volume within our region is important, a critical element of achieving the goals in Transit Tomorrow also relies on mitigating travel from single occupancy automobile travel from people outside GPCOG's region. This is a market element not addressed in the report.	strategies for how to expand the region's transit system over the next 30 years. The primary focus, and scope of work, for <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> is internal travel within the GPCOG/PACTS region. However, the plan does mention further possibilities of intrastate travel on the train and includes Brunswick in the rapid transit corridor analysis.
The Transit Tomorrow study is a recommended action under Goal #2 to Make Transit Easier, but not in Goal #3 related to Rapid Transit which discusses an alternatives analysis. How are these efforts connected?	The <i>Transit Together</i> study is mentioned as a next step in both the Make Transit Easier section (for exploring microtransit options) and in the Create Frequent Connections section (for pursuing a network redesign and efficiency improvements). The alternatives analysis is scoped as a separate study. The timeframes for the studies will likely overlap, so the region can think about them together.
There is agreement in principle that the four goals/strategies will enhance transit in the region. However, it might be more helpful if the recommendations were more specific such that they could lead to actionable project development. For Example: Instead of an Action Step to "Develop Welcoming Stops" consider an action to Fund and complete the Transit Stop Access Project in 2022 and apply those principles to any new stops added	To the extent possible the project team actively tried to use reader-friendly language to make sure this plan was understandable for the general public. The team also sought to develop action steps that have relevance across all modes and have a timeframe of five or more years. The Transit Stop Access Project for example is both shorter-term and narrower in scope than the vision laid out in the "Develop Welcoming Stops" recommendation. Still, the description does reference the Transit Stop Access Project which is already funded and scheduled for construction in 2022.
Intermodal connections will require stations where transfers between modes can occur. While the Draft Report does mention a new Portland station for the Downeaster, it does not discuss the intermodal connections that this station would permit	In improving frequency, the plan states that the "Casco Bay ferry terminal and Downeaster station (current or future) stand out as focus areas for more frequent connections." The connections, themselves, will depend on coordination between providers and the upcoming <i>Transit Together</i> study, which affords the unique opportunity to explore (and implement) better connections and conduct the first-ever regional network design of the region's transit system.
In regard to land use planning, many multiples of the current population and employment density will need to be present in the transit priority centers to make light rail or commuter rail feasible. The Plan touches on zoning, etc., but there's an opportunity to more	Improving land use is critical to the success of <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> . Municipalities and the transit agencies in the region will need to work closely together to create the conditions that support the feasibility of rapid transit. The <i>Transit Together</i> , coupled with the alternatives

closely tie rapid transit and the density-growth patterns discussions	analysis for rapid transit, will provide more opportunities for
together as necessary complementary elements for implementation	discussions related to growth patterns and rapid transit opportunities.
There doesn't seem to be any mention of the Moving Maine	Language has been added to the plan to reflect connections to the
Network in the report. I think it would be worth pointing out -	Moving Maine Network.
particularly in the mobility management and technology platform	
sections, since Moving Maine is currently working on these and will	
most likely be a key partner moving forward	
Existing Conditions	
I am not sure that the language describing services provided by	Language in the plan has been edited to better reflect the challenges.
RTP/YCCAC, in terms of being difficult to use, is the right language to	
use here. Not sure it is also an accurate portrayal of the service	
provided. The nature of the trips are much different than flex/fixed	
route services.	
In Table 2, it should also recognize that Transit Oriented TIF districts	Table 2 has been updated as suggested to include Transit Oriented TIF
are available for 'Innovative Transit Funding' by all municipalities	districts
and they are utilized by both Portland and South Portland	
What is the funding structure for the peer agencies? Do they receive	This is more detail than we are able to provide in this section.
more money from local/state?	
The frequency chart for some of the routes are somewhat	The issue of overlapping routes applies to most service providers. We
misleading since the two routes do provide overlapping service for	have included a statement on the page noting this point. Even though
most stops serviced by these two routes	the visual can't capture all the details, the chart and maps illustrate
	the need for more frequency in the region.
Unclear how the frequency table was compiled. In addition, the	The frequency table has been updated and more descriptive text has
Downeaster frequency table needs to be updated to include late	been added that explains how the calculation is made. The
train that will return post-pandemic	Downeaster frequency has been updated to reflect non-pandemic
	operating schedules. Here's an example of the calculation: If someone
	in Portland wanted to take a southbound train, they have the options
	(pre-covid) of trains at 5:20, 8:20 am, noon, 2:20, or 6:15 pm. This is
	generally 3 hours or greater between trains. Similarly, if someone in
	Portland wanted to take a northbound train, they have options of
	11:40 am, 3:40, 7:30, 8:55, and 12:55 (train gets into Brunswick at
	1:40am). Again, trains in this direction are generally >3 hours in
	between each. There are some trains that come more frequently in

Islanders should be included in the "Transit – Reliant Population Group." The passenger ferry system is the lifeline for this group and arguably one of the most important transit roles in the area yet there was no mention or consideration of this and the importance of keeping the service running.	one direction (i.e., 7:30 pm and 8:55 pm northbound) but combine that with southbound times and it still would roughly be 3 hours between trains that someone would need to wait at any given time. This is similar calculations for inbound/outbound buses and the ferries. Text has been added to the "Transit-Reliant Populations" section to highlight this point.	
Planning in the face of Uncertainty and Projec	ting Forward	
Since effective COVID vaccines are now available, the Team may wish to revisit these scenarios in light of these changes	This section documents the efforts that were taken this summer to better understand the potential impacts of the pandemic. While some of the scenarios are now dated, the insights and recommendations in the full report (available in the appendix) remain relevant.	
The "Targeted Transit" scenario excludes improvement to the most transit-dependent areas of South Portland, such as Redbank and Brick Hill	These scenarios were developed purely for hypothetical modeling purposes. They have no bearing on the plan's actual recommendations or priorities.	
Goal 1: Make Transit Easier		
The introduction does not reference the several recently instituted projects that have made transit ridership "easier" in the region, including Dirigo Fare Card, AVL work and PIDS. The recommendations in the Plan should be informed by the experiences of what has been accomplished in the region and should also discuss the benefits associated with projects agencies have in the pipeline.	The region has made important progress in recent years. Language has been added to the plan to reflect this input and specifically mention AVL and PIDS.	
Recommendations associated with enhancing first and last mile connections do not include improving connectivity/coordination between modes and providers, i.e. transit busses service to rail stations and the ferry terminal.	Moving Southern Maine Forward also made this important recommendation that more connectivity is needed between the region's transit routes and schedules, and the relationship to first/last mile connections. Connectivity/coordination between modes and providers will be reviewed in more detail in the upcoming Transit Together study.	
The Dirigo TouchPass platform is not a multi-agency platform and should not be the goal for all. Recommend rewording the section so	The DiriGo TouchPass is noted as an example of current efforts toward coordinated technology. However, the intention is not to suggest that	

integrated data is the goal and not a specific solution such as TouchPass. Expectations and a plans in the future might involve adding new agencies to the platform	the TouchPass platform will become the region's unified mobility platform. Rather, the idea is that a process needs to be undertaken to establish a system for management, coordination, and communication and then to determine the technology needed. As the section notes: "The backdrop of swift and ongoing innovations in technology and mobility means that the region's unified mobility platform will need to be adjusted and expanded over time to incorporate new services, technologies, and forms of mobility. Thus, developing and maintaining the platform will require adaptability and ongoing communication among stakeholders, along with a commitment to universal design and open data standards."
Will the TMA or Mobility Management Program be run out of GPCOG? Would positions or funding as part of these programs compete with municipalities?	TMAs and mobility management programs are run by different types of entities in different regions. Much more scoping and regional discussion is needed to get to this level of implementation detail. This is more than can be provided in a long-range public transportation plan. The 20-21 Unified Planning Work Program includes work to scope the TMA.
Who will manage the mobility platform? It is unclear based on the write up. The two examples used show two transit agencies and a private app company	Management of the platform will be determined through the implementation process.
Would there be any level of enforcement given to the Mobility Manager or the local coordination working group to see that their initiatives or findings are followed through with?	Another good question on implementation. These details will need be determined as the initiative is further scoped.
There is no discussion of parking in the plan. Is the expectation/goal that all riders will walk or bike to the station and is that realistic?	The action steps under "Enhance First and Last Mile Connections" are meant to be inclusive of all origins and destinations, including park-and-rides. Language has been added to reflect this. Parking is also a key issue that will be addressed by the Transportation Management Association and in subsequent transit-oriented development plans and related projects.
Recommended improvements should reflect existing plans such as the pedestrian bridge connecting Saco and Biddeford as well as those in the <i>Getting There From Here: An Active Transportation Plan</i> for prioritizing walking, biking, and rolling to transit.	Under "Enhance First and Last Mile Connections," the action step "Prioritize walking, biking, and rolling to transit" directs PACTS to "pursue implementation of transit-supportive recommendations in Getting There From Here: An Active Transportation Plan."

Can the plan prioritize ADA improvements and access in the short term while waiting on the development of a strategic plan? What about an action step that promotes /educates / helps those	Under the "Enhance First and Last Mile Connections," short-term gains for ADA and access are prioritized in both the "Develop welcoming stops" and "Prioritize walking, biking, and rolling to transit" action steps. Access is also a priority under "Improve Door-to-Door Rides." Having affordable housing closer to services and transit routes is an
who need greater accessibility identify different options for living arrangements? Such as assisting in finding housing that brings them closer to the services they need.	important element in improving quality of life for residents and supporting the long-term viability of public transit. While this suggestion is outside the scope of <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> , work to educate residents about housing options could potentially fall under the purview of a Mobility Manager.
Goal 2: Create Frequent Connections	
The goal title does not adequately depict the goal recommendations which include creating additional routes in addition to increasing frequencies on existing routes	The goal titles are intended to be bold, succinct, and easily understood. The Create Frequent Connections title underscores the main priority of this goal to increase frequency and span of service. While the title does not perfectly encapsulate the three recommendations identified in the section, it reflects the main intent.
Since this section is primarily applicable to bus transit routes, suggest rewording goal to "Improve Frequency and Access to Bus Transit Service." The Recommendation to improve frequency to 10-20 minutes over an 18-hour day would likely not be achieved with passenger rail and the recommendation to add circulator routes and the three new routes do not apply to existing rail or ferry services	Additional text has been added in the "Implementation" section (page 53) to acknowledge that this goal primarily refers to the local bus network. The goal titles are intended to be bold, succinct, and easily understood.
It is recommended to "improve frequency in the most populated urban areas." How are "most populated urban areas" defined? This should include designated growth areas as well with a potential future density that would warrant transit improvements.	Text has been changed to say "target resources to the existing routes <u>already</u> serving our most populated urban areas <u>and areas designated</u> <u>for growth</u> ." We do not define "most populated urban areas" here and believe this is more detail than is needed in the recommendation. The emphasis in the sentence is to target resources to routes <u>that are already</u> serving the region's most populated urban areas.
There are no local circulators recommended in South Portland. We see a potential for a circulator that travels from Redbank to the Mall and Scarborough Gallery commercial area and from Redbank to Mill Creek and/or Portland.	The intent of the local circulator in Scarborough is to serve both Scarborough and the west end of South Portland (including Redbank, Maine Mall, etc). The location of the circulator symbol has been

	changed on the map to reflect this and more specific text has also been added to the table in this section as well.
When recommending to "Create new connections to suburban and rural communities," should there be an emphasis on those areas that have changed or modified land use to create density centers?	Per the Create Transit-Friendly Places recommendations and the PACTS funding framework communities that have taken steps to implement transit-supportive land use policies would be more likely to receive funding to implement future transit service.
As part of Table 6, it would be good to have more info on where internal circular routes work in similarly sized towns and context - given the other options such as microtransit, are these the most [cost] effective?	This information is forthcoming in the <i>Transit Together</i> study.
On page 54, in the second paragraph, stating that the "existing network" as identified in priority 1 on p 53., are those routes that support BRT? If that is the case, are the South Portland routes that service Redbank and Brick Hill not priorities?	This paragraph has been revised to provide more clarity.
The Plan's depiction of the Transit Together initiative does not appear to reflect the draft scope of work for Transit Together	Text has been edited for clarity to reflect the scope of work for Transit Together
Suggest indicating how the new and improved services will connect to each other, to transit hubs. and to other modes. For instance, will the recommended Portland circulator connect to the train station and ferry service?	This action step shows the conceptual locations where market demand exists for local circulators. Route planning for each circulator would need to be determined by each municipality or transit agency and through a more intensive public process.
Table 8 and Table 9 seems like unrealistic service levels and hence costs; why not something similar to the 25%/50%/75% for Freq Improvements	The intent is for the circulators to operate very short routes in the densest areas of the region at high frequencies. Since they do not currently exist it would not be possible to provide 25%/50% etc. improvement costs. They are meant to be long term, aspirational estimates
Discuss potential extension(s) to L/A? The L/A travel market seems to be missing.	This is outside the scope of <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> , although it is mentioned in a few places as a possible connection.
There is little or no mention of existing agency plans to increase/improve existing service and how they interface with recommended service increases. For example, BSOOB recently added service to Mercy Hospital and is adding circulator service in Saco/Biddeford; Additional Downeaster frequency is being improved/increased; METRO is redesigning their circulator bus route.	The region has been steadily adding new service. "Upcoming Transit Projects" section of the appendix provides a list of all projects ongoing or upcoming for each transit agency. <i>Transit Together</i> will provide more detailed analysis of these planned transit enhancements.

Goal 3: Improve Rapid Transit	
The objectives of this section are unclear. As the term is defined, Rapid Transit can only be "improved" on the Downeaster corridor, yet the introduction talks about developing a new network of high-capacity corridors. Further, the section discusses developing rapid transit along the Downeaster corridor, where it already exists. Does this goal apply to new service, improving existing service or both?	While the Downeaster may include elements of rapid transit, there are additional opportunities to improve frequency and reduce overall travel times. For example, the typical travel time on the Downeaster between Freeport and Portland is 30-40 minutes, which is longer than driving. The intent is to explore all rapid transit possibilities for each corridor, identifying the opportunities, costs, challenges, and threats of each alternative. In this fashion, the region can be more competitive for Federal discretionary funding opportunities.
The recommendation and the implementation actions should be more clearly defined. The potential investments that will be needed based on the results of the alternative analysis will need clear steps to meet the goal. Should the goal be to Develop a Regional Rapid Transit Along High-Capacity Corridors? As such, consider recommendations tied to the proposed next steps which include conducting an analysis to review the capacity corridors identified in the study to evaluate the improvements and investments which would be needed to achieve the rapid transportation goal and an alternatives analysis to determine which option(s) to pursue. The implementation phase could then include the selection(s) of preferred alternative(s) for each corridor and securing local, state and regional resources and funding necessary to apply for federal construction funding	The alternatives analysis, funded by CARES, provides the opportunity to evaluate the top priority corridor, as recommended in <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> . The alternatives analysis will culminate in what is referred to by the Federal Transit Administration as a "locally preferred alternative" - a specific mode and alignment for rapid transit.
The information on Commuter Rail contains inaccuracies and needs to be revised	Text within the section has been revised based on language provided by NNEPRA
Recommend replacing the term 'commuter rail' with 'passenger rail' rail service. 'Passenger rail' can also serve the commuter market, but is more expansive and representative of the overall goal	Text was changed throughout the document to specify Passenger Rail.
Rather than appear as an 'all or nothing' approach, the Plan should more fully describe the opportunities to build in 'rapid transit' qualities incrementally into portions of the identified corridors, or into other corridors such as BRT-lite.	The action step "Implement infrastructure improvements on major bus corridors" (page 71) states, "Actions to improve the frequency and reliability of the bus network can also begin immediately. While full build out of a bus rapid transit network requires comprehensive street

redesign and many years of planning, bus priority treatments, such as

	transit signal priority and queue jump lanes at intersections, can be pursued in the short term especially on major corridors where multiple routes overlap."
The cost of BRT is very high and will make it difficult to achieve many other goals relating to increased frequency on existing routes and transit stop improvements	One of the advantages of bus rapid transit (BRT) is that it is scalable. At the low end, BRT treatments can be implemented for select portions of a route, or for a few key intersections at a much lower cost. BRT projects can become eligible for funding sources (e.g. Section 5337) that are not currently available to traditional bus service. Regions across the country have maintained/enhanced existing services while also introducing BRT.
Light rail is not feasible. The operating costs of light rail systems are very high and projected user goals are seldom met	Light rail examples and cost estimates were included in the plan at the request of the Project Advisory Committee. Ultimately, an alternatives analysis will determine the most appropriate route/mode for each corridor.
How will the Gorham-Portland corridor take into account the planned Turnpike Gorham Connector? Should at least be mentioned as something that could affect demand/planning for this particular corridor.	Suggested changes have been made and text revised.
Suggest reviewing the language used in the justification of each Tier and greater discussion on how they were prioritized. Perhaps develop a graphic highlighting criterion that certain high-capacity corridors meet. The justification seems to be largely based on Figures 24 & 25 that show existing population and density, however does not consider what the trend is for the future in these areas. Educational anchor institutions in the region that the Downeaster connects such as USM, UNE, Bowdoin and soon Roux are not reflected in any of the Tiers.	As discussed in the plan, the corridors were prioritized based on the following elements: corridor length, population and employment density, existing land use, commute patterns, travel to Portland, social equity, major destinations and existing/planned developments, existing/planned transit service and infrastructure. Educational institutions and major planned developments are considered in the "major destinations and existing/planned developments" category. Additional text has been added to Table 11 and the narrative for several of the tiers to highlight the role of educational anchor institutions.
Tier 2: The Biddeford-Saco-Portland corridor is described as the most significant regional connection in the Greater Portland region, yet is not the first priority. Should it be Tier 1? UNE is not included as an educational anchor institution in this corridor. Service improvements in this corridor will further support/benefit initiatives	The section describes the Biddeford/Saco to Portland corridor as having the most significant trip generation; however, this was one metric used in prioritizing the rapid transit readiness of each corridor. As discussed in the section, other major elements include the length of the corridor, land use (existing and planned), existing and planned transit service, and social equity considerations. Suggested deletion

planned by NNEPRA. Please remove "Additionally, at the time of this	has been made; additional text has been added to recognize the role
writing, the track is currently for sale by Pan Am Rail Lines."	of educational institutions along the corridor.
Tier 4 should include Bowdoin College, the planned Roux Institute	Text describing service to equitable target areas has been changed.
	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
and Veteran's Hospital in Portland as additional anchors institutions.	Additional text has been added that highlights major destinations
The description in Tier 4 notes that "rapid transit solutions along	along the corridor. Figures 24 and 25 present the most up-to-date
the corridor would not especially benefit those in the region who	population, employment, and demographic data available at the time
most rely on public transportation" which seems to contradict its	of publication. Major planned developments are considered in the
designation as a priority high-capacity corridor. Consider updating	analysis.
Fig. 24 & 25 to include the projected future impacts to support the	
designation.	
It is not clear why the Amtrak initiatives for the Biddeford-Saco-	Those corridors are included in the process and recommended for
Portland and Brunswick- Portland corridors seem not to be	rapid transit. Initiatives to improve the frequency of the Downeaster
considered as part of the rapid transit corridor feasibility studies but	(e.g., installing double track, relocating the Portland Transportation
are assumed outside of the process	Center) were considered in the prioritization of the rapid transit
	corridors and included in the discussion (Pages 69-70).
Cannot the 'commuter' service be done outside the framework of	Possibly yes. This would be determined in an alternatives analysis.
'Amtrak' but possibly still by NNEPRA to reduce equipment and	
operating costs?	
In Table 13, do the cost estimates include the rail going to WComm	These numbers are just for a new mainline station.
St or just to the proposed new rail station	,
It is unclear what the timeline is for the alternative analysis studies.	That is correct, however, the region's ability to fund these plans
If it is one study every five years, it will be 20 years before the	(whether sooner or later) depends on additional funding sources. The
Brunswick to Portland Tier 4 study is complete	implementation table provides rough benchmarks for how to guide
	our efforts in order to achieve everything in the plan over the next 30
	years. However, as mentioned in the implementation strategy, <i>Transit</i>
	Tomorrow should be revisited every 10 years to understand the impact
	of the previous decade and to ensure that the priorities of the next 10
	years align with the region's vision.
Why is this State-owned railway corridor located on India Street	At the time of this publication, the Lewiston-Portland corridor was still
corridor not under consideration as a viable corridor? It connects all	·
	being evaluated at the state level. For more detail, see that study.
the commuter towns from Portland to Lewiston.	

Goal 4: Create Transit-Friendly Places	
Suggest renaming Priority Transit Center 11 Portland Transportation Center to Portland Train Station.	"Portland Transportation Center" is the official name of the facility and reflects its multimodal use as well as a major goal of <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> to provide more seamless intermodal connections.
Target Investments to zoning: This should be expanded to include existing land use and/or comprehensive and other plans that demonstrate a communities contribution to higher density housing and transit oriented development	Existing land use is addressed in the identification of priority centers and corridors. Text has been changed to say, "Prioritize places with transit-supportive <u>policies</u> : Update the PACTS funding framework to prioritize projects in places where zoning (or related transit-supportive <u>policies</u> and commitments) support the effective use of public transportation."
Priority Corridors and Centers – Is a priority center a point in the GIS layer or a polygon? Can you share these layers so we can assess the area that is within 1/4 mile of a center? We feel scoring points should not be limited to ¼ mile proximity to priority corridors and centers if we can demonstrate the project is in a location as worthy of a transit improvement as these somewhat arbitrary dots or blobs on the map.	Priority centers are currently points. They are meant to be conceptual, however, since there is obviously no true center to any of the priority centers. In the PACTS funding framework, it is up to the applicant to make the case in the narrative that a project is within a ¼ mile of a center or a corridor.
the Priority Transit Centers map —Big gaps seem to remain along such corridors as Route 302 between Portland and Windham (see the Pride's Corner area in Westbrook and the 'rotary area' in Windham, where there appear to be the 'bones' for increased population and employment in a village center form). Nodal development in these areas could contribute to the success of transit in that corridor.	The Priority Transit Centers map is a refined version of the corridors and centers included in Destination 2040 (the PACTS metropolitan transportation plan). The priority transit centers (and select corridor connections) in <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> are places in the region that have <i>the highest</i> existing population/employment densities and play the most critical role in supporting public transportation. As such, not all centers (or potential centers) are included, and difficult choices needed to be made. In the update to Destination 2040 PACTS will revisit the centers and corridors as well as the overall strategy of selecting criteria for targeting resources geographically.
Implementing the Plan	
The plan does not address the mandate in the One Climate Future Plan to convert our bus fleets to battery electric buses or the need for EV charging infrastructure in the region. This too will compete with BRT for limited dollars.	While a detailed exploration of electrification was not included in the scope of this plan, which is primarily oriented towards service improvements, the <i>Transit Together</i> study will explore and evaluate opportunities for electrifying the region's transit system, coordinating

Equitable Access – Could you provide a map that shows where the increased equitable access is occurring? Is this based on the 10 priority routes? If so, will equity increase in those areas but decrease for areas like Redbank/Brick Hill?	with transit agencies on their respective electrification goals. Text has been added on page 56 to highlight that estimated vehicle costs assume the likely use of electric vehicles. The following text has also been added to page 82: "To meet the ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 45% by 2030, the Greater Portland region will need to embrace the full suite of strategies outlined in Maine Won't Wait: A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action, such as transitioning to electric vehicles (including electric transit vehicles), modernizing buildings, reducing carbon emissions in the energy and industrial sectors, and growing Maine's clean energy economy. There are federal discretionary grants specific to procuring electric transit vehicles, and METRO and BSOOB have already successfully won this funding for 4 new buses. The access benefits (which are high level estimates) are calculated for the entire network envisioned for 2050 including the eventual expansion of service to places like Gray and Standish. As stated in the text, the real improvement in equitable access is between the frequency of what exists now and that proposed in Transit Tomorrow. The 10 priority routes were picked solely for hypothetical modeling purposes as part of the scenario planning exercise. Since these are such high level estimates we do not feel a map is necessary here. As currently written, the recommendation in the plan would be to increase frequency in the Redbank/Brick Hill area to eventually get to 10-min peak and 20-min non peak and expanding service hours to 6 a.m. to midnight seven days per week.
What consideration has been given to VMT reduction over time due to increased work from home?	Additional text has been added to clarify this point
Part of the annual municipal budget should be a conversation around public transportation and budgets should reflect some level of contribution. The areas that have TODs could also become Transit TIFs or Downtown TIFs to help encourage development and funding for public transportation.	Additional text has been added discussing this topic

Funding	
How do you plan to fund all this? The plan seems unrealistic, unaffordable, unwanted and too expensive.	The plan is intended to be bold and visionary and acknowledges that additional funding is needed. The aspirations of the plan are based on extensive public input.
The cost of some of the recommendations is very high. Is there a cost/benefit analysis?	A cost/benefit analysis for rapid transit would be part of an alternatives analysis, which would be conducted for each proposed rapid transit corridor.
What is the expected return on these investments if these improvements are made? IE - Assumed percentage increase on ridership	Detailed return on investment is outside the scope of this plan but should be addressed before the implementation of new or improved service.
Could future PACTS funding be tied to communities that have had their elected officials accept this document in resolution? Could PACTS funding in a municipality also be contingent on that municipality having a complete street policy	Not at this time. Incentives are currently in place in the PACTS funding framework for projects with complete streets considerations.
The Federal funding options outlined are comprehensive, however the report does not include adequate discussion of state and local funding options/strategies required to access the federal funds. Federal funding is contingent on a non-federal match and the funding discussion needs to address availability of resources at the state and local level	A few additional examples have been added to the local funding discussion (page 86). <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> is not intended to be a fiscally constrained plan, meaning that the plan's recommendations depend on additional funding above and beyond PACTS' anticipated annual allocations.
Complete Streets is a great idea that we support, but this too will compete for project funding. We could easily add \$250k to a pedestrian project by adding transit stop improvements along a corridor. Again, this is good, but how does that compete with BRT, service to Gray, frequency, etc. How does building to complete street standards in the existing service area rank compared to extending service to Gray and BRT?	Decisions on how best to allocate transportation resources in the region are made by the PACTS Policy Board, which considers competing priorities between modal projects and between transit projects. New funding sources will be needed to implement the recommendations in <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> . For example, BRT can become eligible for funding sources (e.g. Section 5337) that are not currently available to traditional bus service. Thus, BRT and traditional fixed-route service may benefit from different federal funding sources.
Public Involvement	
This plan has not had significant public viewing and should be submitted to the voters for approval since it impacts the pockets of	This plan was available for public viewing and comment. This plan incorporated the feedback of those who use transit throughout the

so many people who are already in survival mode. Make sure to	course of the planning process. These efforts are outlined in the Public
involve those who use public transportation in the project.	Engagement section.
More attention needs to be given to the private sector (developers	The project advisory committee included all seven transit agencies
or transit providers). The Plan would have been stronger with more	along with private sector representatives from housing to economic
input from these players and perhaps could have developed	development.
implementation strategies that involved them more directly.	
Concern with the statement by GPCOG that the plan has already	Last July, the overall recommendations of the plan were approved by
been approved by PACTS and that their feedback is being requested	the PACTS Policy Committee as a mid-point check-in on the direction
after the fact. Public process for getting feedback should have been	of the plan, allowing for more detail to be developed. Public input was
planned in advance so the public was included throughout, not just	gathered before that point and after that point. Here is a summary of
PACTS members and other officials.	the community engagement process:
	The planning process for <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> has been guided by a
	Project Advisory Committee, which consisted of representatives from
	the seven transit agencies, municipal officials, the state, community
	organizations (including fair housing advocates, age-friendly
	community organizations, and advocates for people with disabilities),
	developers, and the business community. Public feedback has been a
	central part of the planning process and has shaped every aspect of
	the plan's development. The public engagement portion of the plan
	highlights the efforts the project team has made over past year and a
	half to engage residents of Greater Portland including two pop-up
	events in South Portland, a special City Council workshop in South
	Portland, and an online survey with over 1,000 responses, among
	other activities. Edits to the plan have continued through the end of
	February 2021, so long as they are consistent with the plan's vision
	and the input we have received over the last year and a half.
Support for a discussion of programs to present the benefits,	While mode-specific marketing initiatives are beyond the scope of
comfort, and ease-of-use of transit service to the public at large as	Transit Tomorrow and its recommendations, GPCOG is coordinating
part of the final Report in order to overcome a prejudice which has	with the region's transit agencies (including NNEPRA) on marketing
been years in the making and will, despite these recent attitude	efforts to rebuild ridership after the pandemic. Additionally, the
changes in the margin, probably take years to unravel. This would	Transportation Management Association action step would elevate
include, for example, public service announcements as well as	the visibility of transit considerably in key geographic areas.
educational programs, all of which could be presented at low cost,	

but would supplement the more structural changes discussed in the	
Draft Report.	
Additional Comments	
Would like to see more in the plan addressing transit service to parks and beaches. This seems to be a commuter-oriented plan and for people to give up cars they need to be able to get to recreation sites by bus as well	In the market analysis of local connections beaches and parks were included as major destinations and were factored into the demand analysis for additional local service (as well as population and employment density, commuter patterns, demographic characteristics, and equity). The <i>Transit Together</i> study will consider specific routing of local services in more detail. The major market connections envisioned for rapid transit are common commuting connections, but they are also the same connections needed to get to common services (e.g. healthcare, shopping, schools, recreation, etc.). Furthermore, the improvements envisioned in the plan (service every 10-30 min. 18-ish hours per day every day on all corridors and in every community by 2050) go well beyond commuter service.
Strong disapproval of partnering with Uber or Lyft. These companies should not be named in the plan	Under the "Enhance First and Last Mile Connections" recommendation, one action step directs PACTS to "Pursue pilots of feeder services" which entails partnering with "emerging mobility providers" to conduct targeted pilots that provide "feeder trips." The specific brand names of Lyft and Uber have been removed from the language in this action step. Uber and Lyft are mentioned elsewhere in the plan to provide common examples of emerging mobility providers.
Request to provide service at certain locations	The upcoming <i>Transit Together</i> study will include a regionwide network redesign which will provide more detailed route planning recommendations.
Additional emphasis should be placed on promoting attractive and visible transit amenities.	The Make Transit Easier section emphasizes the opportunity to provide attractive and visible transit amenities.
Make safety another focus as well.	Transit Tomorrow primarily focuses on improvements to and expansion of the transit system over the next 30-years. The plan does discuss in several places improvements that would make it safer to walk and bike to access transit. Safety will always remain a top priority for the transit agencies, especially during the pandemic.

Make sure there is a plan for connecting green spaces, redeveloping arterials to be more walkable/bikeable and provide a clear knowledge on the flow of power structures to make sure that it actually happens Perhaps add a checklist of items to work on to get "your" location on the transit center list	These elements are largely addressed in <i>Transit Tomorrow</i> . The update to <i>Destination 2040</i> will provide a more comprehensive and multifaceted approach to long-range transportation planning in the region. This idea, and others related to the PACTS priority centers and corridors, will be explored in more detail in the update to <i>Destination 2040</i> .
Is there any reference to the excellent move Metro made to provide HS student transportation?	No, but the upcoming <i>Transit Together</i> study may consider additional opportunities for linking public transit to the needs of high school/college students.
Would like to see more hubs in South Portland for transfer connections and more frequent service to Redbank and Brick Hill going to Maine Mall, Walmart and also over to Mill Creek and downtown Portland	Improving frequency of the existing transit network to eventually get to 10-min service for most of the day and 20-min service for when demand is lower is a key recommendation in this plan (as well as expanding service hours to 6 a.m. to midnight seven days per week). The upcoming <i>Transit Together</i> study will identify opportunities for increasing the efficiency and integration of the region's transit routes.
This works as a 30-year plan, but you can't force property owners to redevelop their property	The intent of the "Create Transit-Friendly Places" recommendations in Transit Tomorrow is to help municipalities create the conditions and incentives that might encourage future development, or redevelopment, that supports transit.
Draft Report shows its highway orientation by including route numbers for roads and excluding any reference to existing or projected rail lines. This downplays the possible role of the Downeaster in providing connections between West Falmouth and Portland along a line that it currently utilizes to transport passengers to and from Brunswick and Freeport.	The centers and corridors shown in Figure 4 are from the already-published <i>Destination 2040</i> . Adding rail lines to this figure would be factually inaccurate.
Statements on the reduction of greenhouse gases which will result from transit use, while certainly true now, must be carefully used, since the growth of electric vehicle use will presumably result in a substantial reduction in such emissions whether or not transit use increase.	Text has been added in the footnote to address this point.
Move Complete Streets up in the report/ mention sooner, because people need to be able to walk or bike to get to the public transit locations	The plan is organized so that each goal category builds on the previous one to create <i>Transit Tomorrow's</i> 30-year vision.

In printed version, the light text for captions is too faint to read. The implementation table has the same problem and as laid out in letter sized format the text is VERY small. Presume laid out for larger format paper where it may be accessed more frequently after the plan is approved but very hard to read in this document. what was included in the emissions reduction calculations? - prior estimates in the plan were ~2.5%	Thank you for this observation. Report designs will reflect this requested improvement in the future. Prior estimates were for the scenario modeling exercise.
Text- and Graphic-based Changes	
Photo caption should include mention of it having been taken pre- COVID19. Should that be the case for other photos with people without masks?	A disclaimer has been added at the beginning of the plan. "All photos of people not wearing masks were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic."
When referencing the four key elements of the study (Making Transit Easier, Create Frequent Connections, etc.) reference them as goals, recommendations, or strategies consistently throughout the report	Text revised for consistency as suggested
It is unclear if the Estimated Cost for the "Conduct alternative analysis studies" is per study or the estimated cost to complete all four studies. If it is per study suggest revising cost to $3M$ ($750k$ per study x 4 tiers = $3M$).	Suggested change made
Page 6. Add bike share, and change bike path to "shared use path"	Suggested change made
Page 7: Suggest replacing the term "bus" with something that is more multimodal/agnostic in nature (i.e. your ride, reliable public transportation)	Suggested change made
At page 7, the Draft Report states that "We envision a future where you can walk out the door knowing that a bus will come soon and take you where you want to go." The phrase "or connect you to another transit services that will" should be added to the end of the sentence	Suggested change has been made. (The "Create Frequent Connections" section primarily refers to improvements to the fixed-route bus network. Additional text to clarify this point has been added to the section).
Page 7: Add "and Span of Service to first paragraph	Suggested change made
Page 7: Add "over time" to span of service paragraph	Suggested change made
Page 7: Phase in - not all or nothing: 15 peak/30 off peak (now 30/60 mostly)	Added 'over time'

Page 8 – visual should have P – SP – S –SB (In part to encourage the Town of Scarborough to be a greater contributor to public transit) Westbrook should be included on North Windham Route	Suggested change made
Page 9: Role of Maine DOT is key on most of these routes	Suggested change made
Page 9: Add "and Maine DOT"	Suggested change made
Page 12 & 84: Table 1b & 18a Implementation Table; "Implement	Suggested changes have been made
Downeaster frequency and station improvements between	
Brunswick and Wells" unclear. Change to:	
 Increase Downeaster frequency. 	
 Relocate and/or add Downeaster stations. 	
 Eliminate funding estimates as those were provided for 	
discussion purposes only.	
Page 17: Says highest "commute rates are in Portland". Please clarify	Text has been added to provide more clarity. This section is
if this means TO Portland or WITHIN Portland. Does this support	summarizing (not providing discussion of) the major findings from the
development of other routes?	Moving Southern Maine Forward plan.
Page 18: Under "Public Transportation services need to be	Suggested change made
expanded" change "upgrade rail infrastructure" to "increase and	
expand Downeaster passenger rail service"	
Page 21: Need to address that common branding is not necessarily	Text has been added to provide more clarity.
applicable to all modes	
Page 24: NNEPRA does not operate the Downeaster. Suggest	Suggested change made
changing to "manages the operation of the Downeaster."	
Page 24: Existing Conditions – SPBS also serves Scarborough	Suggested change made
Page 25 - the YCCAC service area is all of York County, but on the	Suggested change made
map it shows only a small portion of the County	
Page 28: Round numbers in table	Suggested change made
Page 29: wording is a little hard	Suggested change made
Page 35: Add citation to first paragraph	Suggested change made
Page 39: And immigrant/international community	Suggested change made
Page 44: Add bike share, and change bike path to "shared use path"	Suggested change made
Page 46 Hudson TMA – "provided them to commuters" should say	Suggested change made
"provided to commuters"	7 11 1 11 11 12 15 15 15
Page 46 Action step – establish a TMA, don't some of the example	Text has been added to page 46 identifying this opportunity.
elements already exist here <u>www.gomaine.org</u>	

Page 47: emphasis that a high quality, pedestrian-oriented	No change due to formatting
environment is a pre-condition for the success of most transit	
service	
Page 47: Add ", poor or non-existent street crossings"	Suggested change made
Page 47: change cuts to ramps	Suggested change made
Page 47: & comfort/convenience elements	Suggested change made
One missing word noticed on page 50, last sentence of regular text:	Suggested change made
"These microtransit plans WILL be designed to"	
Page 52: Frequency recommendations need to be more nuanced	Added "over time"
Page 52: Add "and utilization of"	Suggested change made
Page 53: Insert "and span"	Suggested change made
Page 53: when discussing 10 to 20 min frequency, it needs more	No change made here. Similar changes made in other paragraphs for
nuanced: 15 peak; 30 off-peak	clarity
Page 54: Change commuting to travel within table	Suggested change made
Page 54: Insert"of the Rt 1/Turnpike corridor"	Suggested change made
Page 55: two distinct tasks that don't seem reflected in the TT RFP	Suggested change made
Page 56: Add Service House/Spans" to Table 7	No change made
Page 58: Update graphic with same changes as those on page 8	This graphic is deliberately meant to be conceptual emphasizing the
color code the connecting lines to denote which ones have more	market connections with as little detail given to route/mode as possible.
viability (for instance, No Windham would get coded for BRT and	
possibly passenger rail only, not lite rail)	
Page 58: Add "where feasible" to first bullet in Rapid Transit box	No change – unable to fit with formatting
Page 59; Change table title to Potential Rapid Transit Corridors	Suggested change made
Page 60: Add "where feasible"	Suggested change made
On page 61, remove the "Currently funded and beginning in 2024"	Suggested change made
from the first bullet point	
Page 61: Downeaster doesn't go to Portsmouth	Removed Portsmouth from text
Page 64: do one alternatives analysis for the highest priority - not do	As stated in the previous page, the first step is Transit Tomorrow, the
one for each of the four? or re-state as "the first step" rather than	next step is to conduct an alternatives analysis for each corridor.
"next step"	,
Page 66: Add greater instruction on how to interpret graphic	No change made – legend included
Page 67: Add greater instruction on how to interpret graphic	No change made – legend included

Page 68: Remove "unused" from "existing unused rail tracks" as that is not correct. Consider saying there is an existing railroad corridor in place	Suggested change made
Page 69: Eliminate references to sale of Pan Am Railways and uncertainty around ownership. This is an evolving situation and may not be relevant	Suggested change made
Page 70: Deering Jct, while a possible rail stop, is not one currently under consideration by NNEPRA	Suggested change made
Page 71: Update last sentence as such: Support improvement what will "increase levels of service to and within the Greater Portland region.	Suggested change made
Page 73. Second paragraph. Second sentence "The table below" is to the right. This should refer to table 13 instead. Last sentence – Change "The table below" to "Table 14 below"	Suggested change made
Page 74: Change title to "Create Transit Ready or Oriented Places"	Text not changed
Page 74. First sentence – part in parathesis should specify where the reader should note this (Table 15).	Suggested change made
Page 74: Second bullet- change 'support' to "create the preconditions for successful"	Text not added. Trying to keep recommendation language as concise as possible and use body text to describe more fully.
Page 75: Insert "and MaineDOT" after PACTS	Text added in parentheses
Page 75. End of fourth paragraph is missing a period.	Suggested change made
Page 76: Add "critical masses of"	Suggested change made
Page 86: Add "TOD, Impact Fees	Suggested change made