

Project Update #1 for GPCOG/Southern Maine RTDP

Southern Maine Short-Term Regional Transit Development Plan / GPCOG et al.

Date/Time: April 6, 2017 / 1:00 PM
Place: Casco Bay Room, GPCOG, 970 Baxter Blvd., Portland, ME
Next Meeting: May 11, 2017
Attendees: Stephanie Carver (GPCOG); Art Handman (So. Portland Transit); Ben Lake (GPCOG); Gregory Jordan (METRO); Hank Berg (Casco Bay Lines); John Duncan (PACTS); Kristina Egan (GPCOG); Tom Reinauer (SMPDC); Jack DeBeradinis (RTP); Al Schutz (Shuttle Bus Zoom); Marina Douglass (NNEPRA)
Stantec: Adam Catherine, Sasha Pejic, Graeme Masterton, David Verbich
Absentees: No regrets
Distribution: Broad

1. Updates since last meeting

Stantec met with NNEPRA, RTP, and Shuttle Bus Zoom, has begun to review background data provided by operators, developed a project management plan, and a stakeholder engagement plan. We have also performed an overview origin-destination analysis based on AirSage cell phone data. Importantly, task 10, the financial prioritization and framework analysis, will be moved up to assist with current SYCOP discussions among operators in May 2017. This work will be finalized with community input through our stakeholder engagement process identified earlier.

Major themes we have heard from all operators is the need to coordinate services and connectivity, but perhaps a lack of willingness to do so. We will focus, for the short-term plan, on the rider's perspective and how to efficiently transport people from A to B, and provide a seamless and comfortable journey, regardless of mode or provider.

2. Origin-Destination Analysis

Using cell phone data (AirSage data) provided by PACTS's sub-consultant, Stantec analyzed trips in the PACTS region from July to August 2013 (from Tuesdays to Thursdays). Data were provided already aggregated by Maine origin-destination district (ODD). Over 60% of trips in the region are internal trips within zones (Portland to/from Portland, Arundel to/from Arundel, etc.). Very few trips (as a percent of the total trips in the region) occur between zones or districts beyond adjacent zones. Two typologies are apparent: towns closer to Portland generate a larger proportion of trips to/from Portland and adjacent municipalities, while towns more peripheral generate mainly internal trips. Communities with intramunicipal trips are largely connected by the existing transit networks. Nevertheless, there are caveats to this data, particularly the summer period of data acquisition. Stantec will follow up with Kevin Hooper if more details are available. This analysis will lay the groundwork for the analysis of the transit network and stakeholder engagement regarding available transit in the region.

3. Project Management Plan

Stantec provided a project management plan, and reviewed salient comments provided by GPCOG et al. Below are some highlights:

- Stantec's job is to identify needs and how to prioritize funding and projects

Design with community in mind

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- Stantec needs to identify low-hanging fruit for recommendations for short-term plan
- We also need manage expectations of riders by not promising plans that are undeliverable
- The focus of this short-term plan is riders, but we must also consider non-riders because they have the potential to become transit users. Therefore, the idea is to remove barriers and make transit use across the region as easy as possible
- TransTracker is an example dashboard used by LA Metro to report KPIs from the regional agencies in LA
- With regard to barriers, there are lots of barriers for riders of RTP:
 - Eligibility for riders
 - The way RTP can use money is a constraint because of the type of operating entity it is
- Model (financial and transit) results will be provided, but there is a danger in giving a model to PACTS because of the set of assumptions it will be built upon make it difficult to use to extrapolate for future scenarios, etc.
- Hank Berg expressed concerned about Stantec considering all modes
 - Graeme Masterton explained that the goal is to provide a plan to move people efficiently across the region
 - Mr. Masterton explained that each mode or agency is a layer or piece of the same puzzle
 - All modes and connectivity between modes and services will be considered. **Stantec to revise project management plan by inserting explicit reference to ferry and rail (NNEPRA)**
- **Stantec will review any statewide plans that may impact RTP and YCCAC, since they are responsive to MaineDOT**

4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Morris Communications and Stantec developed a stakeholder engagement plan and received feedback from GPCOG et al. Amendments will be made to address comments. Stakeholder engagement, and specifically rider surveys, will be developed with input from each agency to ensure that particularities for each mode/agency are considered. Employers in the region will also be consulted. Morris Comm will develop a more detailed strategy to target underserved populations, as well as a feedback loop for obtaining input from riders, and then providing the riders with information of how their input will shape the RTDP.

5. Financial Planning and Prioritization

GPCOG/PACTS would like to fast-track task 10 from the RFP given that current grant applications exceed limited federal transit funding. Essentially, there are more projects than budget. Below are bullet points detailing the ensuing discussion:

- John Gobis described how he has previously worked with regions across the United States to develop frameworks/evaluation criteria to prioritize/rank projects based on:
 - Significance
 - Service integration
 - First-mile/last-mile solutions
 - Cost-benefit analysis

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- Local match funds available
- Land use and other planning principles
- FTA state of good repair
- Tourism needs
- Evaluation/ranking is not based on one criterion
- Examples of such work is now uploaded for all to review in the Google Drive
- GPCOG/agencies need a process and timeframe to decide what projects will go forward and which won't
- FTA funding is administered through MaineDOT
- Stantec shouldn't reinvent the wheel, and should look at PACTS's existing funding priority documents (provided in the Google Drive) as well as well consult with the transit agencies
- Stantec needs to develop a priority and ranking process that is robust and predictable
- Essentially, GPCOG needs a critical way to evaluate "expansion" projects (like new routes, more service, new terminal, etc.) in a way similar to "state of good repair" projects
- We need to help produce a feasible 6-year financial plan
 - This task will be moved up
 - Can help inform the remainder of the short-term transit plan
- Kristina Egan summed up the critical tasks for Stantec as follows:
 1. Review PACTS evaluation criteria
 - a. TIP Policy Doc Final Sept 2016
 - b. PACTS Transit Expansion Enhancement...
 - c. Other financial information provided
 2. Discuss with Ben Lake to understand the projects currently in and not in this year's split letter
 3. Develop a draft of criteria to evaluate and prioritize projects

Stantec will provide a draft memo that provides background on financial needs, draft criteria and process, how to weight different features, and focus on immediate challenges. Stantec will provide this memo by May 4th for GPCOG and agencies to discuss a week later at the scheduled May 11th meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Stantec to follow up with Kevin Hooper re: AirSage data
2. Stantec to review project management plan to explicitly include all modes in the region
3. Morris Comm/Stantec to revise and update stakeholder engagement plan
4. Stantec will review MaineDOT plans that may be relevant for YCCAC and RTP
 - a. **GPCOG/YCCAC/RTP could aid in this process by uploading relevant documents to the Google Drive**
5. Stantec will consult with Ben Lake and draft a memo re: financial plan and evaluation/ranking criteria for May 4, 2017

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM



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The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

Stantec Consulting Ltd.