



## Chapter 1. Executive Summary

### Introduction

*Destination Tomorrow* provides a vision for the transportation system of the Greater Portland region through 2030, and calls for a new level of coordination between our transportation planning and funding partners.

*Destination Tomorrow* is the long- range transportation plan for the Greater Portland metropolitan planning organization, FACTS – the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee. The Plan addresses current problems of congestion, safety, accessibility and mobility while acknowledging today’s fiscal, political and social realities. The Plan also recognizes the impacts that investments in the transportation system may have on health, social equity and the environment. Through roadway investments, innovation in public transportation and integrated land use planning, *Destination Tomorrow* will endeavor to meet the transportation needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. FACTS and its members understand that an adequate and efficient transportation system is vital to a region’s economy and believe that the Plan’s implementation will result in a stronger regional economy.

**Key Reasons for Investing in an Effective Regional Transportation Plan**

1. Substantial traffic growth in the next 25 years will bring more safety and congestion concerns.
2. Transportation funding levels have consistently been inadequate to meet existing needs, and will fall increasingly short as demand grows.
3. Transportation investments need a regional focus that addresses long-term needs.
4. Land use and transportation decisions affect one another and need to be better connected.

The *Destination Tomorrow* Plan:

- Emphasizes the planning and funding required to maintain the current transportation system.
- Provides a framework for the future that values neighborhood and community character and quality of life.
- Understands that many people rely on public transportation to satisfy their mobility needs and economic vitality, and continues to promote alternative transportation choices to the automobile to meet travel demand.

**Major *Destination Tomorrow* Elements**

- Defines a transportation vision, goals and objectives for the region;
- Assesses present day transportation and land use conditions and future trends;
- Evaluates and recommends opportunities to improve the safety, efficiency, and accessibility of the transportation system; and,
- Identifies priorities and a funding framework for the region.



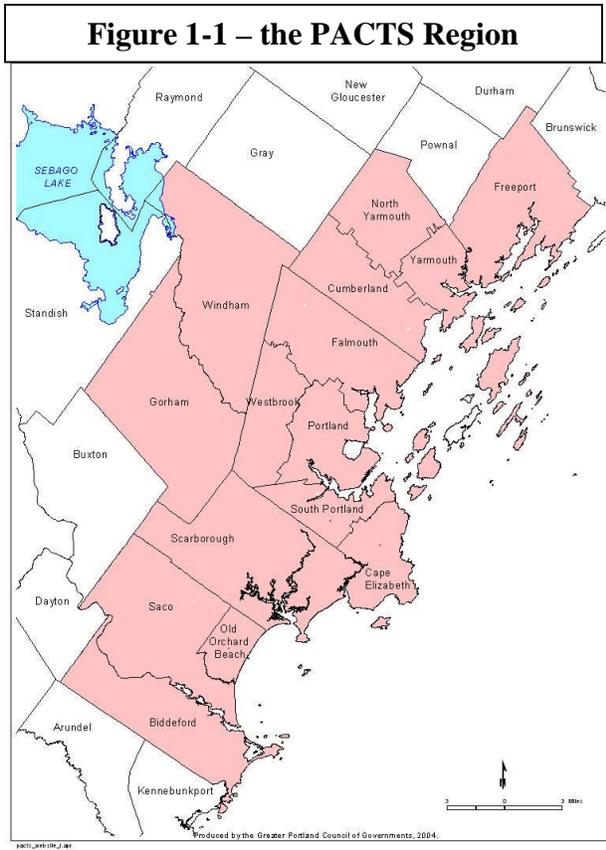
- Recognizes that land use planning is a major factor in determining where people live and where businesses locate, and recommends a strengthening of the connection between transportation and land use planning and investments.

## **PACTS – Organizational Overview**

Since 1975, PACTS has served as the regional transportation planning and federal funding organization (the federally mandated "metropolitan planning organization" or MPO) for the Greater Portland area. MPO's are formed for all urbanized areas with a core population of at least 50,000 people. PACTS is composed of municipal, state and federal officials, representatives of regional planning and transit agencies, and interested citizens and businesses. PACTS oversees transportation studies, identifies needs and sets priorities for certain federal transportation funds available to the area.

### **PACTS Functions**

1. Provides a continuous, coordinated and comprehensive transportation planning process for the greater Portland area.
2. Recommends to the MaineDOT the use of federal funding for certain road improvements, for public transportation operating subsidies and capital improvements, for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and for certain other transportation purposes in the PACTS area.
3. Performs and oversees transportation studies and policy analysis, and prepares a regional transportation plan.
4. Evaluates and approves proposed transportation improvement projects.
5. Provides a forum for interagency cooperation and collaborative decision-making, public input, the exchange of ideas and the exploration of innovative transportation concepts.
6. Monitors compliance with national air quality goals.



*Destination Tomorrow* 2006 is an update of the Plan adopted in 2003 for the original seven PACTS communities. In response to federal regulations, PACTS expanded to include eight new member communities in 2002. This update is for the fifteen communities that now comprise PACTS: Biddeford, Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, North Yarmouth, Old Orchard Beach, Portland, Saco, Scarborough, South Portland, Westbrook, Windham and Yarmouth. (See Figure 1-1.)

**Vision Statement, Goals and Guiding Policies**

The development of *Destination Tomorrow* followed a performance-based transportation planning process. The cornerstones of this process are:

- Identifying a desired end state – a Vision – and goals for the transportation system.
- Identifying needs and potential alternatives.
- Evaluating alternatives to meet those needs based on a set of performance measures.
- Selecting courses of action that best meet the needs in conformance with the established Vision.

***Destination Tomorrow* Vision Statement**

The PACTS Regional Transportation System will:

- Provide efficient and cost-effective travel for the region’s citizens and goods;
- Provide access to the entire PACTS region through a fully developed and well maintained multi-modal transportation system;
- Promote public safety;
- Protect environmental quality and quality of life;
- Actively complement land use decisions that promote compact development, preserve community character and retain open space; and
- Reflect the policies and values of the PACTS communities.



The Vision Statement provided the foundation for the development of *Destination Tomorrow's* Goals and Guiding Policies. Each Goal is associated with a number of Objectives that identify measurable implementation steps in achieving the Plan's vision. The Guiding Policies underpinned the development of the Plan's strategies and recommendations. The Guiding Policies also play an instrumental role in the decisions regarding which transportation projects are funded by PACTS. The *Destination Tomorrow* Goals and Guiding Policies are listed in the two boxes that follow.

***Destination Tomorrow Goals***

1. Economic Development – Enhance regional prosperity through support for the economic vitality of existing business and for economic development opportunities encouraged by local and regional plans.
2. Mobility, Safety & Accessibility – Improve the mobility, safety and accessibility of people throughout the region, and the movement of goods.
3. Energy Conservation – Conserve and efficiently use non-renewable energy resources.
4. Land Use – Support land use plans and development patterns that promote efficient transportation services and systems.
5. Environmental Quality – Protect and improve quality of life and the human and natural environments including natural and cultural resources, air and water quality.
6. Regional Focus – Reflect a regional approach to transportation and land use planning and decision making founded on effective communication and management of regional resources.



***Destination Tomorrow Guiding Policies***

1. Maintain and preserve the existing transportation systems as the highest priority.
2. Make roadway improvements at critical intersections a higher priority than roadway capacity improvements.
3. Strategically expand the transportation system while continuing to meet current demands.
4. Avoid building major new highways, to the extent possible, with a preference for adding capacity to existing streets first, where feasible and appropriate.
5. Strengthen the link between transportation investments and land use policies, and decisions to preserve public investments and promote efficient land use patterns.
6. Implement access management measures to preserve access to land uses, to preserve arterial roadway capacity and to promote safety.
7. Enhance, maintain and, where appropriate, expand passenger transportation services to increase their accessibility and attractiveness to a larger number of people.
8. Promote community and neighborhood livability and economic redevelopment as a goal of transportation investments.

## Key Findings: Present Conditions and Past/Future Trends Analysis

Several key findings emerged from the analysis of present conditions related to transportation and land use as well as their past and future trends. In conjunction with the Vision Statement and Goals, these findings helped to guide the development of the Plan's recommendations and strategies.

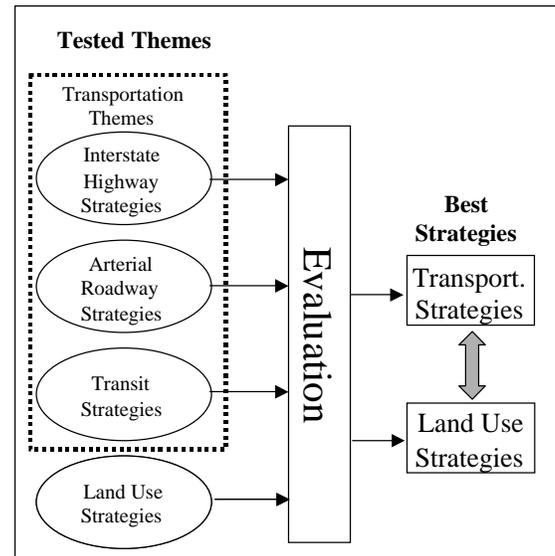
### Key Findings

- Significant traffic congestion and safety problems currently exist and will worsen if current development patterns and practices, and current investment trends continue.
- Transportation issues are regional in nature and will require a concerted and coordinated multi-jurisdictional response to resolve.
- The gap between transportation needs and available funding resources is large and is widening.
- There are mixed trends in passenger transportation use and service. Ridership is increasing on inter-city bus, demand-response bus and air transportation services, and after years of decline is also increasing on local bus service. Passenger transportation still accounts for a small percentage of all trips made. Many areas in PACTS are not accessible by passenger transportation.
- While important to the regional economy, existing land use development patterns, heavy traffic volumes and the design of many of the region's arterials have negative impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Land use development patterns and practices are reinforcing dependency on the automobile for travel in the region.

## Alternatives Explored

Three different transportation alternatives or “themes” were analyzed relative to the Plan’s Goals. These themes were called: Interstate Highway, Arterial Roadway, and Transit. Each theme tested a combination of changes to the physical infrastructure of the transportation system and/or the provision of transportation services. The purposes of the theme analyses were:

- To identify potential benefits and impacts to the transportation system;
- To identify individual infrastructure and/or service changes that could yield the greatest benefits when combined with the “best” infrastructure or service changes from the other themes; and
- To identify long-term needs of the transportation system.



## Destination Tomorrow Strategies

*Destination Tomorrow* includes a comprehensive set of 88 strategies that respond to the many transportation challenges facing the PACTS region. Many of the Plan’s strategies are recommendations for action by member transportation agencies and municipalities. Each strategy identifies the organizations responsible for its implementation as well as outlining a broad timeframe for work on the strategies.

Development of the strategies was guided by the realization that future decisions about transportation investments and policies need to be considered in a larger context, and that the current PACTS approach to planning could be broadened and improved upon. The PACTS members, in using the Vision Statement, Goals and Guiding Policies to develop the Plan’s strategies, realized that their lack of mutual exclusivity would require trade-offs amongst the policies during the implementation of *Destination Tomorrow*.

In collaboration with the MaineDOT and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, an air conformity analysis was performed for the *Destination Tomorrow* Plan. The inputs were provided by PACTS. The air conformity analysis was conducted by the MaineDEP and the MaineDOT. The analysis was performed for a target out-year of 2030. The results of the analysis are published in a separate document as an addendum to this Plan.



## Implementation

Implementation of the myriad *Destination Tomorrow* strategies will require a new level of regional coordination and collaboration by PACTS members, the FHWA and FTA, and funding partners such as the MaineDOT and the Maine Turnpike Authority. In each community, the city and town councils, planning boards, planning and engineering staff, businesses and residents will need to be active participants in the process. The implementation of *Destination Tomorrow* will be one of many steps toward answering these five persistent questions that face our region:

- How can communities best address regional transportation problems in a collaborative manner?
- What is the proper level of investment and role of transit in the region; how can PACTS meet this level and role?
- What is the optimum investment balance to mitigate existing problems while proactively meeting tomorrow's needs?
- What is the role of PACTS in developing appropriate responses to the issues that arise from the intersection of transportation investment and land use planning policy?
- What are the best short and long-term approaches to managing congestion without exacerbating sprawl?

Securing the funds needed to meet the region's identified transportation needs may be the biggest challenge facing local, regional, state and federal decision-makers as *Destination Tomorrow* is implemented. Figure 1-2 highlights the extent of this challenge – a 20-year potential \$523 million gap between the Plan's identified needs of \$1.024 billion and anticipated funding of \$501 million. The total amount of anticipated funding is less than half the total amount needed to fully realize the Vision of *Destination Tomorrow*.

In light of this funding situation, a special PACTS subcommittee was formed in early 2006 to work with the Legislature, the Maine Congressional Delegation, the MaineDOT and the Maine Turnpike Authority to seek additional necessary funding to implement *Destination Tomorrow*. The subcommittee has begun its work with a focus on major earmarks in the Year 2009 Reauthorization of federal transportation legislation. With nearly 20 percent of Maine's population living in the PACTS region, PACTS members should have a strong voice in Augusta and in Washington when seeking the funds necessary to fully implement *Destination Tomorrow*.

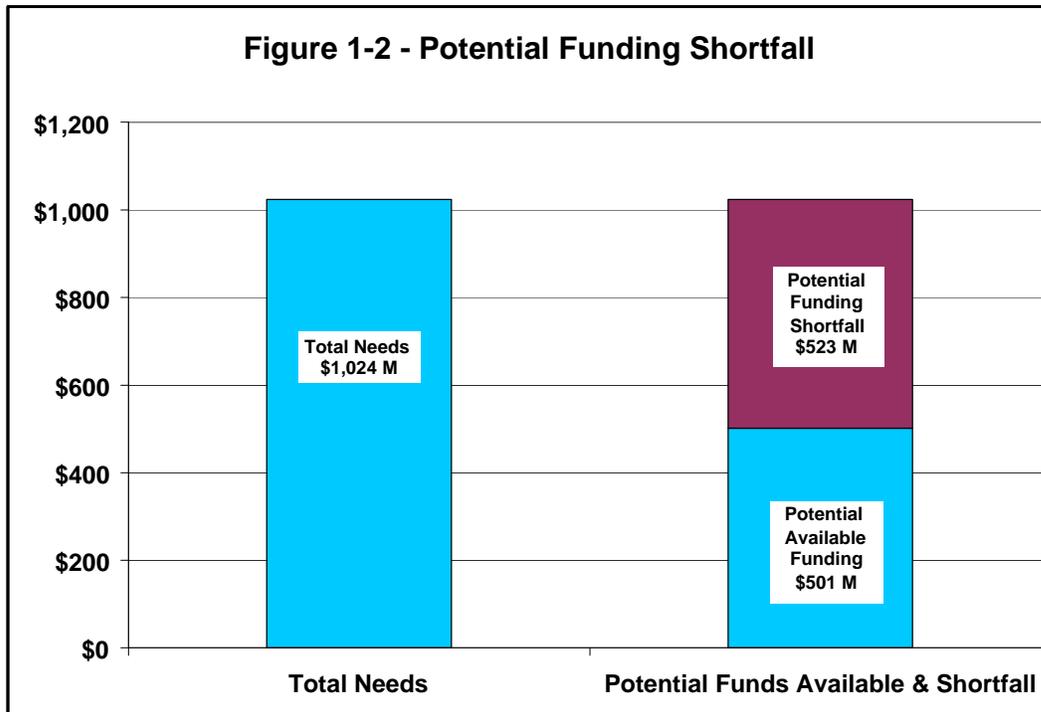


Table 1-1 presents a summary of the *Destination Tomorrow* 20-year needs analysis and investment priorities. The table is organized according to three concepts that are based on *Destination Tomorrow*'s Eight Guiding Policies: maintaining the existing system; enhancing the system for the purposes of community and economic development/redevelopment; and new capacity. The new capacity needs are those that are needed to maintain a safe, efficient transportation system amid continued economic growth and increasing transportation demand. See Chapter 6 for details on this table.

**Table 1-1**  
**20-Year Needs Analysis for 2006 to 2025**

(In millions of 2005 dollars)

<u>Principles</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Maintain	Maintain existing highways and bridges	\$235
Maintain	Maintain existing public transportation	\$140
Maintain	Address critical intersections	\$60
Maintain	Improve access management	\$10
Maintain	Maintain Turnpike bridges and build climbing lane	\$25
Maintain	I-295 MaineDOT near term recommendations	\$21
Maintain	Turnpike regional toll system *	\$31
Maintain	Electronics (ITS) strategies	\$17
Community	Arterial investment/enhancement	\$50
Community	Bicycle and pedestrian systems	\$15
Add capacity	Phase I of Gorham bypass	\$20
Add capacity	Phase II of Gorham bypass	\$30
Add capacity	Other major regional highway corridors	\$75
Add capacity	More buses for increased service frequency and for bus service area expansion	\$15
Add capacity	Passenger rail services to Brunswick and Yarmouth	\$80
Add capacity	I-295 MaineDOT long term recommendations	\$35
Add capacity	Turnpike widen to 6 lanes Exits 44 to 53	\$65
Add capacity	Turnpike add interchanges (if warranted) *	\$30
Add capacity	New connector streets	\$40
Add capacity	Freight system investments	<u>\$30</u>
	Total	\$1,024

\* The Maine Turnpike Authority continues to study a regional toll system but has no plans to construct one at this time. The Authority will also consider additional interchange proposals, but has no plans to construct any new interchanges at this time.



The box below highlights key components of the *Destination Tomorrow* Implementation Plan in Chapter 7. Many of these components, as well as many of the Plan’s Guiding Policies and Objectives, overlap each other reflecting the close relationships that exist between transportation, land use and economic development.

**Implementation Plan**

1. Implement key plan policies, including:
  - maintain the existing highway, transit and freight transportation systems;
  - address critical intersections;
  - increase the use and viability of public transportation;
  - continue development and refinement of the PACTS Transportation Project Land Use implementation guidelines.
2. Work on the Tier 1 strategies of *Destination Tomorrow* (See p. 5-7 for the list.)
3. Work with the MaineDOT, the Maine Turnpike Authority, the Congressional Delegation, the Maine Legislature and public transportation agencies and municipal officials to secure additional transportation funding for the region.
4. Continue support of MaineDOT and Maine Turnpike Authority efforts to:
  - make necessary investments to provide safe and efficient transportation service on the interstates through the year 2025; and
  - maintain I-295 as the primary route for intra-regional traffic and the Maine Turnpike as the major route for traffic traveling through the region.