

PACTS Transit Task Force

January 13, 2023

9:00–10:30 pm

Meeting Agenda

In-Person:

*Greater Portland Council of Governments
970 Baxter Boulevard, Room 201, Portland*

Remote:

*Webinar link: us02web.zoom.us/j/87036313394
Phone: (646) 558-8656—Webinar ID: 870 3631 3394*

This meeting is being recorded and will be made available at gpcog.org/AgendaCenter.

1. Public Comment 5 minutes

Members of the public are welcome to provide up to three minutes of public comment.

2. Ridership and Service Recovery Updates 15 minutes

3. 2023 Call for Projects: Initial Transit Project Proposals 30 minutes

4. Planning for the 2023 FYCOP 30 minutes

5. ARPA Project Implementation 10 minutes

Upcoming Meetings

- Policy Board—January 26, 11:00 am–1:00 pm
- Transit Task Force—February 2, 10:30 am–12:00 pm
- Regional Transportation Advisory Committee—February 7, 9:00–11:00 am
- Executive Board—February 28, 9:00–10:30 am

Board and committee members, the public, and other stakeholders are encouraged to subscribe to the PACTS calendar at gpcog.org/Calendar.

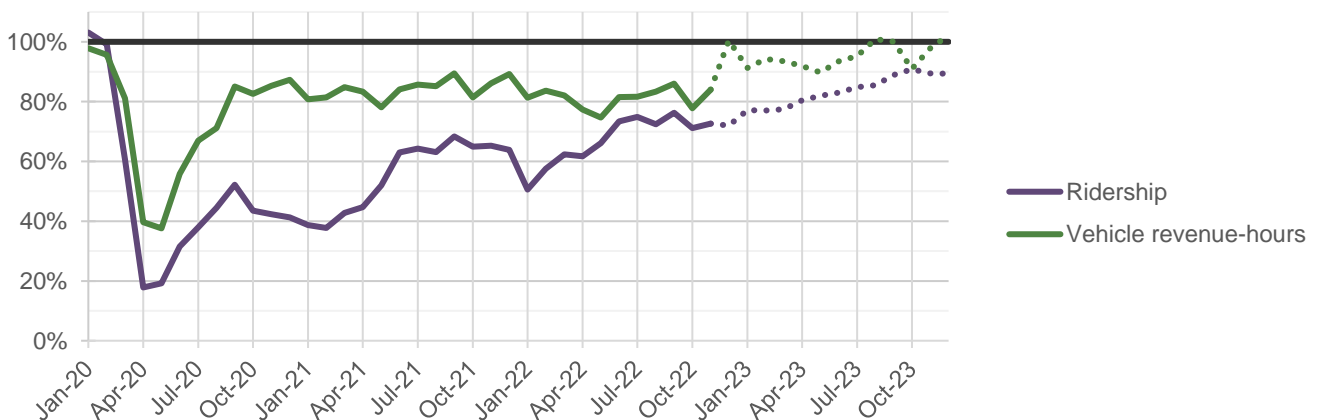
2. Ridership and Service Recovery Updates

In December 2022, staff developed a form for the region's transit agencies to input monthly ridership and service data. Regular collection of this data will help the agencies, PACTS, and staff monitor the region's efforts to recover from the pandemic and help foster a shared understanding of each agency's operational challenges and opportunities. The following tables show recent recovery data:

Ridership	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22
BSOOB Transit	20,497	71,262	56,492	18,474	12,367	10,633
Casco Bay Lines						
GP Metro	98,395	92,604	105,592	128,473	128,238	118,715
NNEPRA	42,580	52,056	51,736	45,677		
RTP—Lakes Region Explorer	566	651	786	703	536	359
RTP—Paratransit	5,063	4,709	5,438	5,524	5,251	4,988
South Portland Bus						
YCCAC	1,055	1,118	1,230	1,093	991	918
Total	168,156	170,344	169,538	154,267	147,383	135,613

Vehicle Revenue Hours	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22
BSOOB Transit	3,000	3,441	3,496	2,406	2,197	2,078
Casco Bay Lines						
GP Metro	8,418	8,034	8,666	8,246	8,554	8,263
NNEPRA						
RTP—Lakes Region Explorer	184	184	184	113	113	99
RTP—Paratransit	3,170	3,179	3,536	3,368	2,986	2,979
South Portland Bus						
YCCAC	395	407	434	418	368	372
Total	15,167	15,245	16,316	14,551	14,218	13,791

The following chart shows regional ridership and service recovery relative to a pre-pandemic baseline.



Discussion: Transit Task Force members are invited to share and discuss updates.

3. 2023 Call for Projects: Initial Transit System Enhancement Project Proposals

Under the 2023 Call for Projects, PACTS received the following Initial Project Proposals for Transit System Enhancement projects:

Type	Project	Sponsor	Cost
Capital	Regional Microtransit Capital, Branding, and Implementation	BSOOB Transit and SPBS	\$300,000–\$500,000
Capital	Transit Signal Priority for Brighton Avenue and Congress St	GP Metro	\$170,000
Capital	TSAP -- Additional Funding Support for METRO stops	GP Metro	\$850,000
Capital	Onboard Technology Enhancements	SPBS	\$150,000
Capital and Operating	Comprehensive Service Improvements	SPBS	\$700,000
		Total	\$2,170,000–\$2,370,000

Per PACTS' Transportation Funding Framework, the Transit Task Force conducts a non-binding review of initial transit project proposals to identify opportunities for regional coordination.

Discussion: Are there opportunities for regional coordination on the above projects?

Additional Project Information

Name	Regional Microtransit Capital, Branding, and Implementation
Sponsor	BSOOB Transit, with South Portland Bus Service
Description	This project will address the unfunded elements of the Transit Together Study, with specific regard to the microtransit zones identified in the BSOOB and SPBS networks. The project will fund the fleet, software, hardware, and professional services necessary to bring a microtransit system to the implementation phase.
Readiness	This project is ready for final design and implementation.
Estimated Costs	The preliminary costs are scalable, and we've identified between \$300,000-\$500,000 being the necessary requirement.

Name	Transit Signal Priority for Brighton Avenue and Congress Street
Sponsor	Greater Portland METRO
Description	In partnership with the City of Portland, METRO is applying for funding to install Transit Signal Priority (TSP) equipment on traffic signals on Brighton Avenue and Congress Street in Portland. Transit Signal Priority will help buses move through these congested corridors, each of which host multiple bus routes, more quickly, reducing travel times for passengers and allowing more schedule efficiency for bus routes on each corridor. This project will significantly help METRO achieve its goal of having TSP equipment installed at every signal along METRO routes. This funding would augment the ARPA funds allocated to METRO in 2022.
Readiness	This project is, with the exception of some intersections, ready for installation. Some intersections are awaiting upgrades that will make them TSP-ready in 2023 or 2024, but the bulk of the locations are already TSP-ready. Sebago Technics (STI) included each corridor in their TSP Readiness Study, which was substantially completed in 2022 (needs to be finalized with adjusted costs in 2023).
Estimated Costs	STI estimates that the shortfall in funding is approximately \$170,000 ; this number will be reexamined in January 2023, ahead of the final submission of this application. This request is scalable; with equipment costs per intersection ranging from about \$8,500 to \$14,500. If partially funded, the funds would be prioritized based on cost-benefit analysis and the readiness of the signal equipment.

Name	Transit Stop Access Project -- Additional Funding Support for METRO stops
Sponsor	Greater Portland METRO
Description	METRO is applying for additional funding support for the Transit Stop Access Project (TSAP). TSAP has undergone rigorous planning and design since 2017, with a focus on accessibility, equity, and cost. The result of TSAP Phase 2 is a robust list of over 60 stop locations in the METRO network alone. Unfortunately, many locations cannot proceed due to limited funding, even after the ARPA funding allocated to the project in 2022. GPCOG's consultant, Stantec, estimates that the construction funding shortfall is about \$742,245 as of December 2022. This estimate does not include several factors which are likely to increase this shortfall before the project is ultimately bid in 2023, including the need to budget for construction engineering and inspection, a critical need for zero-tolerance ADA work.
Readiness	This project is ready for construction pending ROW process for some locations. TSAP construction is expected in 2023 and 2024.
Estimated Costs	METRO requests up to \$850,000 to help construct the balance of the bus stops in our TSAP project list. This request is extremely scalable; a partial award would help METRO include more stops, if not the whole list. Some stops currently unfunded are estimated to cost less than \$10,000; others cost over \$100,000.

Onboard Technology Enhancements	
Name	
Sponsor	South Portland Bus Service
Description	SPBS is in the process of procuring a replacement for its CAD/AVL, RTPi system. We have \$75,000 of CARES funding for this project, but that amount falls short of the amount needed for the base system and the addition of Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) and interior next-stop displays and automatic voice announcements. The addition of APC will assist with fine-tuning and planning our route enhancements as well as track the success of our Comprehensive Service Improvements project. The next stop signage will be ADA compliant and will greatly assist all riders, but especially our visual and hearing-impaired riders.
Readiness	SPBS expects to be under contract with a new AVL vendor in February 2022. We will be ready to deploy the system upgrades and execute options for APC and interior ADA signs for next stop displays and announcements as soon as the 5307 Enhancement funding is available.
Estimated Costs	\$150,000 (\$120,000 Federal and \$30,000 Local) for hardware, software, installation, maintenance, warranty and support.

Comprehensive Service Improvements																					
Name																					
Sponsor	South Portland Bus Service																				
Description	<p>This project will increase the frequency and service options of SBPS for a trial period of two years. This will provide greatly needed service improvements for our transit-dependent and new-Mainer populations, while also providing the frequency needed to attract new riders. Attracting new riders is required to meet the state and the region’s climate and emission reduction goals that are associated with shifting commute mode to public transit. This project will implement recommendations identified through the Transit Together Planning Process as well as Transit Tomorrow and Connect 2045.</p> <p>As part of this project, SPBS will request funding to overhaul its two 2011 35’ Gillig low-floor diesel buses and 2 Ford cutaways. These fleet improvements will allow us to add one 35’ and one cutaway (circulator bus) to our weekday fixed route schedule for both am and pm service increases. In addition to the capital funding to extend the life of our older vehicles, we will request operating funds for fuel, two full-time drivers, and two part-time drivers.</p>																				
Readiness	This project can be implemented within 3 to 6 months of receiving funds, leaving time for vehicle repairs, schedule preparation and driver recruitment.																				
Estimated Costs	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total for 2 Years</th> <th>Federal</th> <th>Local</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Capital - Overhaul of Older Vehicles</td> <td>\$150,000</td> <td>\$120,000</td> <td>\$30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating - 2 FT & 2 PT Driver Wages & Benefits for 2 Years</td> <td>\$350,000</td> <td>\$175,000</td> <td>\$175,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating - Fuel for 2 Years</td> <td>\$200,000</td> <td>\$100,000</td> <td>\$100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Capital & Operating 2-Year Pilot</td> <td>\$700,000</td> <td>\$395,000</td> <td>\$305,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Total for 2 Years	Federal	Local	Capital - Overhaul of Older Vehicles	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$30,000	Operating - 2 FT & 2 PT Driver Wages & Benefits for 2 Years	\$350,000	\$175,000	\$175,000	Operating - Fuel for 2 Years	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	Total Capital & Operating 2-Year Pilot	\$700,000	\$395,000	\$305,000
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Total Capital & Operating 2-Year Pilot	\$700,000	\$395,000	\$305,000																		

4. Planning for the 2023 FYCOP

The Policy Board is slated to approve the 2023 Five-Year Capital and Operating Plan (FYCOP) at its May meeting. The following table shows estimated regional apportionments by funding program:

Program	FY 2022 Appr	FY 2023 Appr (Est)
Section 5307 , Urbanized Area Formula Grants	\$13,883,171	\$14,160,834
Section 5310 , Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Grants	\$309,684	\$315,878
Section 5337 , State of Good Repair Formula Grants	\$13,213,697	\$13,213,697
Section 5339 , Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants	\$291,815	\$297,651

PACTS' Transportation Funding Framework requires a portion of the region's Section 5307 funding be set aside for Transit System Enhancement projects, ranging from 12 percent (as a policy) to 20 percent (as a goal). The Framework also requires the development of a criteria-based approach for allocating operating funds to be implemented beginning in 2023. These changes do not apply to capital and preventive maintenance funding. To that end, the agencies should begin identifying capital and preventive maintenance needs for 2023. This amount and the amount set aside for Transit System Enhancement projects will inform how much funding is available for operating funding. Staff recommend the Transit Task Force prepare for two scenarios:

	Scenario 1: 12 percent to TSE projects	Scenario 2: Fund all TSE projects
Section 5307 Apportionment	\$14,160,834	\$14,160,834
less... TSE Project Set-aside	\$1,699,300	\$2,832,167
less... Capital and PM	TBD	TBD
equals... Operating Funding	TBD	TBD

At the November 2022 task force meeting, staff presented several metrics by which operating funding could be allocated. Staff welcome additional discussion and guidance to develop this new process.

Additional UPWP Funding—Staff anticipate a significant increase in funding for PACTS’ 2022-2023 UPWP, a federally required document that details the MPO's planning work. [At its January meeting](#), RTAC reviewed recommendations for this new funding that align with federal guidance and requirements and advance regional goals and priorities. Later this month, the Policy Board will make a final approval.

Discussion:

- **What information would be helpful in developing a metrics-based process for allocating operating funds?**
- **What challenges or concerns should the group be aware of?**

5. ARPA Project Implementation

In December 2022, staff transmitted the executed ARPA split letter to FTA, authorizing funding to advance the following projects:

Project	Partners
Transit Signal Priority	GP Metro
Service Redesign, Routes 1 and 111, Biddeford	BSOOB Transit
Comprehensive Service Improvements	GP Metro
Southern Maine Connector Service Expansion	YCCAC
Promotional Half-Price Fare Initiative	BSOOB Transit Casco Bay Lines GP Metro SPBS
Regional Multi-modal Passenger Information System	BSOOB Transit Casco Bay Lines SPBS
Transit Stop Access Project	BSOOB Transit GP Metro SPBS
Holiday Service Expansion	SPBS

Implementation of these projects will require near-, medium-, and longer-term actions that individual agencies can undertake, and actions that may require coordination between agencies or regional and statewide coordination.

Discussion: Transit Task Force members are invited to share and discuss anticipated next steps and opportunities for cross-agency, regional, or statewide coordination in the implementation of these projects.