

# PACTS Transit Task Force

July 6, 2023  
10:30 am–12:00 pm  
Meeting Agenda

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***In-Person:***

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

***Remote:***

*Webinar link: [us02web.zoom.us/j/87036313394](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87036313394)  
Phone: (646) 558-8656 | Webinar ID: 870 3631 3394  
Phone participants: \*9 to raise hand; \*6 to unmute*

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This meeting is being recorded and will be made available at [gpcog.org/AgendaCenter](https://gpcog.org/AgendaCenter).

**1. Public Comment 5 minutes**

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

**2. 2023 Community Transportation Leaders Presentations—  
Summary of Recommendations 30 minutes**

**3. Research Requested by the Funding Framework Task Force Update 45 minutes**

**4. Information Sharing 5 minutes**

**5. Future Agenda Items and Other Business 5 minutes**

## Upcoming Meetings

- Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC)—July 11, 9:00–11:00 am
- Policy Board—July 27, 11:00 am–1:00 pm
- Transit Task Force—August 3, 10:30 am–12:00 pm

Board and committee members, the public, and other stakeholders are encouraged to subscribe to the PACTS calendar at [gpcog.org/Calendar](https://gpcog.org/Calendar).

## 2. 2023 Community Transportation Leaders Presentations—Summary of Recommendations

GPCOG's Community Transportation Leaders program is intended to advance the inclusion of older adults, people with disabilities, young adults, and people of color. This spring, both the Executive Board and RTAC heard presentations by GPCOG's Community Transportation Leaders about their top transportation concerns and opportunities as summarized below. Staff invite the transit agencies to review and provide any updates.

Recommendation	Related Plan or Program	Status	Funding
<b>Increase Bus Frequency and Service Hours in Priority Areas</b>			
Increase frequency on BSOOB Transit's Route 60 (Green Line) to improve access to the Maine Medical Partners Scarborough Campus.	<b>Transit Together</b> recommends increasing frequency from 2.5 hours to 1 hour on this route.		Resource-neutral
Increase hours of operation and add Sunday service on GP Metro's Route 4 to improve access to major employers on Bradley and Eisenhower Drive in Westbrook.	<b>Transit Together</b> recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhancing weekday service with a simplified Route 4 schedule, and</li> <li>• beginning service 15 minutes earlier and ending 5 minutes earlier on Saturdays.</li> </ul> Due to resource-neutral constraints, Transit Together recommends beginning weekday service 15 minutes later and ending 10 minutes earlier. It also recommends decreasing frequency from 30 minutes to 45 minutes on Saturdays. Transit Together does not recommend adding Sunday service.		Resource-neutral

Recommendation	Related Plan or Program	Status	Funding
<b>Improve Information Access for People with Limited English Proficiency</b>			
Provide on-board automatic voice announcements in multiple languages.	<p>GPCOG's <b>Bus Ambassadors Program</b> aims to help new riders with Limited English Proficiency in Portland, South Portland, and Westbrook to learn how to use public transportation in our region. The program connects interested individuals and families to a Bus Ambassador who can provide support in their preferred language.</p>		TBD
Integrate brightly colored multilingual signage and/or pictograms with on-board automatic voice announcements.			
Provide multilingual leaflets inside buses and at stops.			
Translate bus schedules into multiple languages.			
Translate and publish Language Access Plans.	<p>PACTS' Language Access Plan is outlined in its Civil Rights Plan, available at: <a href="http://gpcog.org/223/Civil-RightsTitle-VI">gpcog.org/223/Civil-RightsTitle-VI</a></p> <p>Executive Order 13166 requires recipients of federal funding ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by people with limited English proficiency.</p> <p>Staff recommend PACTS and the agencies publish their Language Access Plans in English and make translations available upon request, or utilize third-party tools.</p>		

Recommendation	Related Plan or Program	Status	Funding
<b>Improve Transportation Options to Portland's Homeless Services Center</b>			
Divert GP Metro's Route 2 inbound trips onto Riverside St during early morning, midday, and evening (3 times per day).	The center opened in 2022 and has not yet been incorporated into regional planning work.		TBD
<b>Extend Hours of Operation on GP Metro's Route 8</b>			
Extend service until 10:00PM on weekdays, 7:30PM on Saturdays and 6:00PM on Sundays.	<b>Transit Together</b> recommends extending service until 10:00PM on weekdays, 7:30PM on Saturdays and 6:00PM on Sundays.		Resource-neutral
Run bi-directional routes to avoid overcrowding.	<b>Transit Together</b> recommends running bidirectional routes 8A and 8B (new) to avoid overcrowding.		
<b>Expand Micromobility Options for People Without the Means or Ability to Drive</b>			
Pilot or expand an e-bike program.	<p><b>Connect 2045</b> recommends providing equitable access by investing in traditionally underserved communities and expanding choices for first/last mile connections.</p> <p><b>Transit Tomorrow</b> recommends pursuing pilots of feeder services, including shared mobility services like bike share and scooter-share.</p>	From April-November, Portland operates an e-bike rental program.	TBD

**Discussion: What updates can your agency provide with regard to the recommendations listed above?**

### 3. Research Requested by the Funding Framework Task Force Update

The Funding Framework Task Force recommended that staff investigate the following concerns:

- **Transit agencies are inadequately represented on RTAC and the Policy Board.**
- **The roles and responsibilities of the Policy Board versus those of the Executive Board are not clearly articulated.**

#### Transit Agency Representation

Staff consulted national resources and publications related to MPO governance. Key findings include:

- 50 percent of MPO governing bodies include at least one transit representative.<sup>1</sup>
- Of MPOs with at least one transit representative, transit represents no more than 10 percent of the total board composition.<sup>1</sup>
- 13 percent of MPO governing bodies allow for weighted voting.<sup>2</sup>

Staff identified several peer MPOs based on regional population and number of transit agencies:

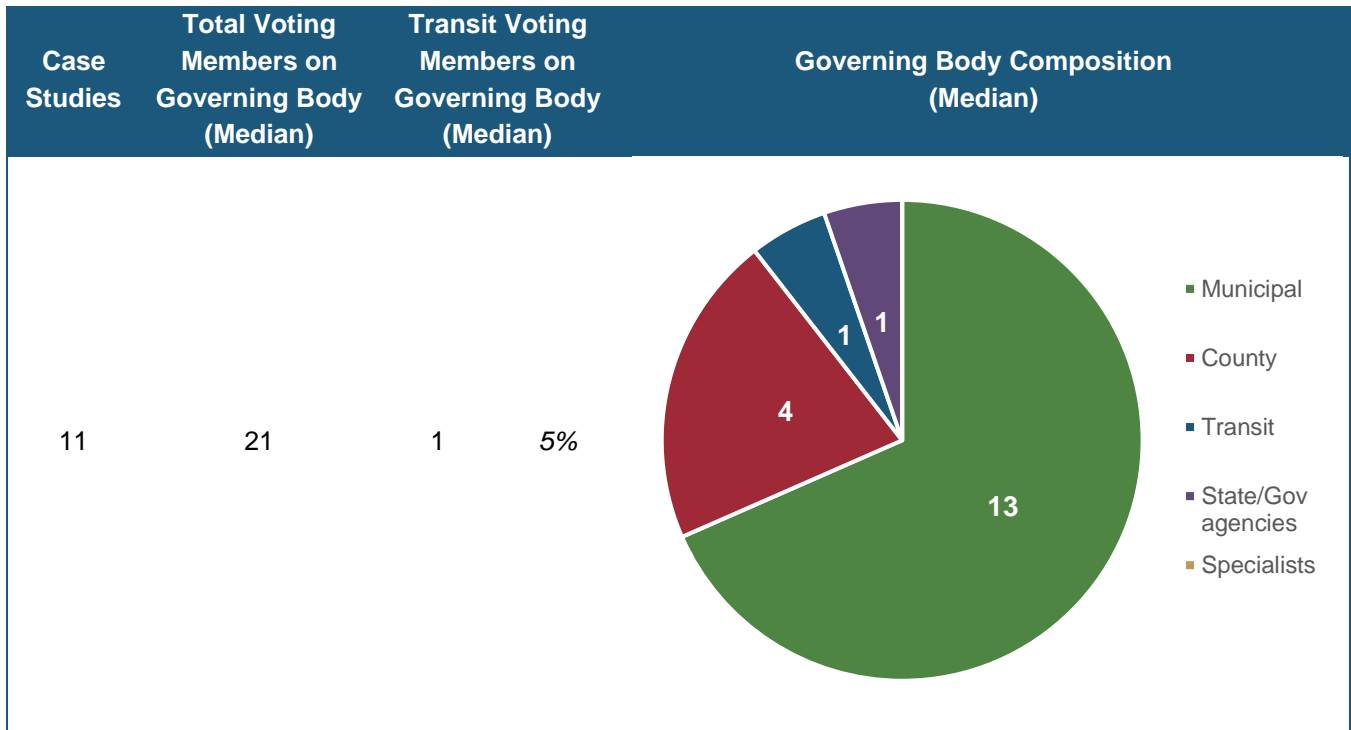
1. San Joaquin COG, Stockton, CA
2. Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization, Knoxville, TN
3. South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, Vineland, NJ
4. Mountainland Association of Governments, Orem, UT
5. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Peoria, IL
6. Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, Manchester, NH
7. Central Lane MPO, Eugene, OR
8. Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, WA
9. Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta, GA
10. Metropolitan Washington COG, Washington, DC
11. Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA

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<sup>1</sup> *Representing Public Transportation Providers in Metropolitan Planning*, University of Texas at Austin, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> *MPO Staffing and Organizational Structures*, FHWA, 2017.

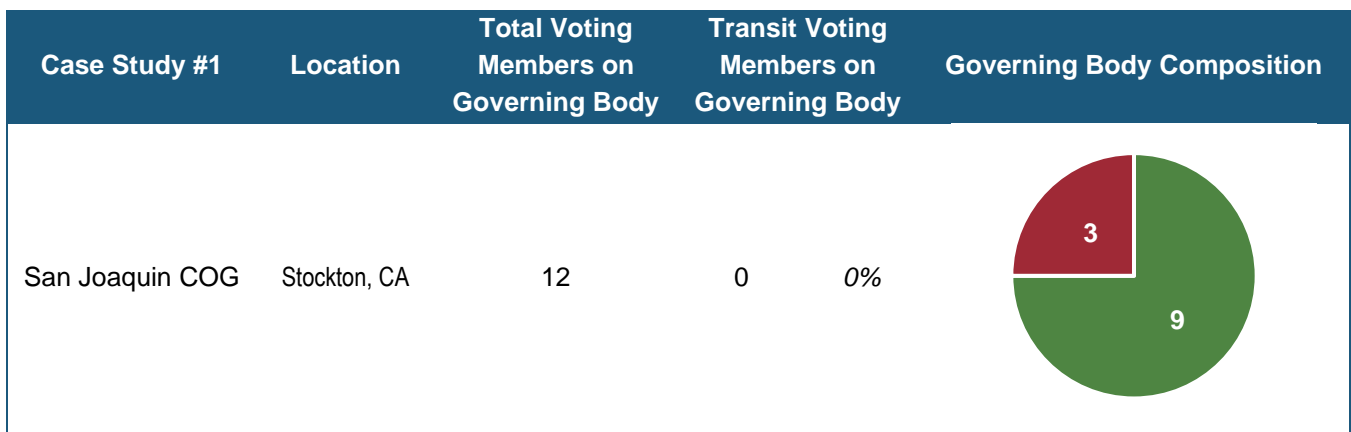
**Summary of Findings**



**Transit representation:** Of the case studies summarized, the median number of transit agencies per region is 2.

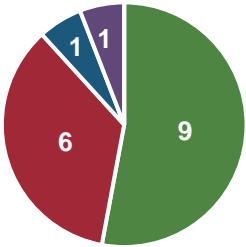
**Committees:** Generally, MPOs have a Policy Board or other formal decision making body, which is often informed by one or more technical committees.

**Case Study Findings**



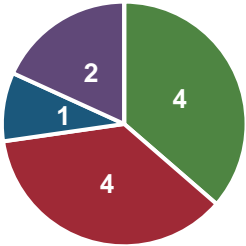
**Transit representation:** 0 of 2 of the region's transit agencies vote on the governing body. San Joaquin Regional Transit District is a non-voting member.

**Committees:** Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, Interagency Transit Committee, and Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

Case Study #2	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body		Governing Body Composition
Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization	Knoxville, TN	19	1	5%	

**Transit representation:** 1 of 3 of the region's transit agencies votes on the governing body. The voting member is based on FTA designated recipient status.

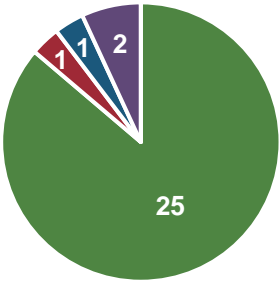
**Committees:** Technical Committee

Case Study #3	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body		Governing Body Composition
South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization	Vineland, NJ	11	1	9%	

**Transit representation:** 1 of 3 of the region's transit agencies votes on the governing body.

**Committees:** Technical Advisory Committee, Community Outreach and Engagement Committee, Freight Advisory Committee

Case Study #4	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Mountainland Association of Governments	Orem, UT	31	1	3%

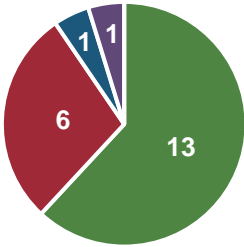


A pie chart illustrating the composition of the governing body for the Mountainland Association of Governments. The chart is divided into four segments: a large green segment representing 25 members, a purple segment representing 2 members, a blue segment representing 1 member, and a red segment representing 1 member.

**Transit representation:** 1 of 1 of the region's agencies votes on the governing body.

**Committees:** Technical Advisory Committee, MPO Finance Committee

Case Study #5	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission	Peoria, IL	21	1	5%

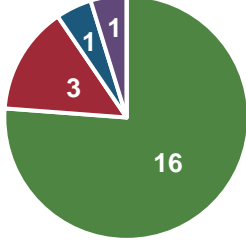


A pie chart illustrating the composition of the governing body for the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. The chart is divided into four segments: a large green segment representing 13 members, a red segment representing 6 members, a blue segment representing 1 member, and a purple segment representing 1 member.

**Transit representation:** 1 of 1 of the region's agencies votes on the governing body.

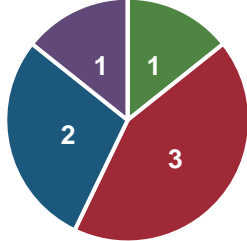
**Committees:** Technical Committee



Case Study #6	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body		Governing Body Composition
Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission	Manchester, NH	22	1	5%	

**Transit representation:** 1 of 1 of the region's transit agencies votes on the governing body.

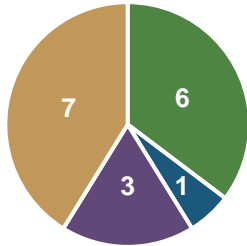
**Committees:** Technical Advisory Committee (not active)

Case Study #7	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body		Governing Body Composition
Central Lane MPO	Eugene, OR	10	2	20%	

**Transit representation:** 1 of 2 of the region's transit agencies (Lane Transit District) has two voting members.

**Committees:** Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Committee, Transportation Planning Committee

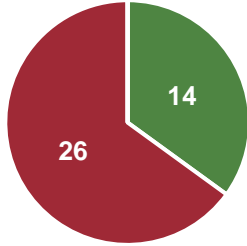
Case Study #8	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Thurston Regional Planning Council	Olympia, WA	17	1	6%



**Transit representation:** 1 of 2 of the region's transit agencies (Intercity Transit) votes on the governing body.

**Committees:** Transportation Policy Board, Technical Advisory Committee

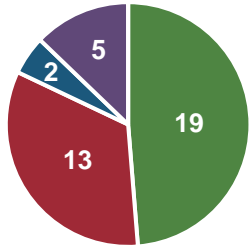
Case Study #9	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Atlanta Regional Commission	Atlanta, GA	40	0	0%



**Transit representation:** 0 of 18 of the region's transit agencies vote on the governing body. Four fixed-route agencies serve on the Transportation & Air Quality Committee (non-governing body).

**Committees:** Transportation & Air Quality Committee, Transportation Coordinating Committee, Transportation Demand Management Coordinating Committee

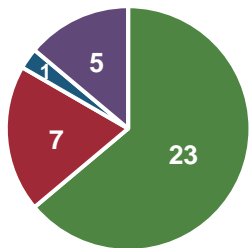
Case Study #10	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Metropolitan Washington COG	Washington, DC	38	2	5%



**Transit representation:** 2 of 16 of the region's transit agencies vote on the governing body.

**Committees:** Access for All Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, Technical Committee

Case Study #11	Location	Total Voting Members on Governing Body	Transit Voting Members on Governing Body	Governing Body Composition
Puget Sound Regional Council	Seattle, WA	38	1	3%



**Transit representation:** 1 of 6 of the agencies (Washington State DOT) vote on the governing body.

**Committees:** Transportation Policy Board, Transportation Operators Committee, Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Equity Advisory Committee, Freight Advisory Committee, Regional FTA Caucus, Regional Project Evaluation Committee, Regional Traffic Operators Committee, Regional Transit-Oriented Development Committee

## Weighted Voting

Per PACTS bylaws, Policy Board votes are weighted based on municipal population. Of the case studies presented above, three of eleven allow for weighted voting. One of these three always employs weighted voting; the two others have mechanisms in place where one or more voting members of their governing bodies can request the use of weighted voting on any item.

## The Roles and Responsibilities of the Policy and Executive Boards

Approved in April 2021, a restructuring of PACTS' committees continued the notion of two PACTS governing bodies:

- **A Policy Board** to serve as the formal decision-making authority of the MPO, responsible for conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive regional transportation planning process
- **An Executive Board**—a subset of the Policy Board—serving as a decision-making authority on items that are administrative or time-sensitive in nature.

Prior to this restructuring, the former Policy Committee met three to four times per year and the former Executive Committee met monthly. After this restructuring and in response to feedback from board members, the Policy and Executive Boards generally meet every other month. However, often major project milestones and other significant topics of discussion result in Executive Board meetings being cancelled in favor of additional Policy Board meetings, resulting in long periods between Executive Board meetings.

Due to the Policy Board meeting more frequently, the advantage of a separate body dedicated to items that are administrative or time-sensitive in nature may be diminished. Further, the relatively arbitrary distinction between items which are administrative or time-sensitive in nature and those which are not can lead to confusion over the roles and responsibilities of the two bodies. This lack of clarity has been noted by board members and was highlighted by the Funding Framework Task Force and recommended for further consideration. At this time, staff recommend further analysis of the MPO's processes in practice and the ways in which PACTS' bylaws may have become outdated or obsolete.