

**PACTS Policy Board**

January 26, 2023

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Municipal Members		
Arundel	VACANT	
Biddeford	Jim Bennett	
Cape Elizabeth	Matt Sturgis	
Cumberland	Bill Shane	
Falmouth	Hope Cahan, chair	
Freeport	Jake Daniele	✓
Gorham	Ephrem Paraschak	
North Yarmouth	Diane Barnes	
Old Orchard Beach	Diana Asanza	
Portland	Keith Gray	✓
Portland	Christine Grimando	✓
Raymond	Nathan White	
Saco	Patrick Fox, vice chair	✓
Scarborough	Angela Blanchette	✓
South Portland	Kate Lewis	✓
Standish	VACANT	
Westbrook	Eric Dudley	✓
Windham	Barry Tibbetts	
Yarmouth	Scott LaFlamme	

Non-municipal Members		
MaineDOT	Ryan Neale	✓
Maine Turnpike Auth.	Erin Courtney	✓
Active Transp. Specialist	Kara Wooldrik	✓
Environmental Specialist	Allen Armstrong	✓
Transp. Equity Specialist	Andrew Blunt	✓
Transp. Equity Specialist	Yura Yasui	
RTAC Liaison	Tom Milligan	✓
BSOOB Transit	Chad Heid	✓
Casco Bay Lines	Hank Berg	
GP Metro	Greg Jordan	✓
NNEPRA	Patricia Quinn	✓
Reg. Transp. Program	Jack DeBeradinis	
So. Portland Bus Serv.	Donna Tippet	✓
York Co. Comm. Action	Tom Reinauer	✓

Non-voting Members		
SMPDC	Stephanie Carver	✓
Federal Highway Admin.	Rachel Levee	
Federal Transit Admin.	Leah Sirmin	

**1. Welcome**

Patrick Fox opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no comment from the public.

**3. Approval of the December 15 Policy Board Meeting Minutes**

Kate Lewis moved to approve the December 15 meeting minutes as presented; Tom Milligan seconded. Allen Armstrong abstained. All others were in favor. (Weighted vote: 45–0; standard vote: 12–0)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Per PACTS Bylaws, Policy Board votes are weighted by municipal population.

#### **4. Chair's Report**

There was no report from the chair.

#### **5. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Report**

At its January meeting, RTAC discussed the anticipated additional UPWP funding and provided feedback and suggestions for today's Policy Board presentation. The group also discussed roadway safety performance targets and final recommendations for Transit Together.

#### **6. Staff Report**

MaineDOT's Family of Plans—including the statewide long-range transportation plan, active transportation plan, transit plan, and rail plan—is open for public comment until January 30.

The 2022–2023 Call for Projects received initial project proposals for seven Complex projects and five Transit System Enhancement projects. Materials can be viewed at [gpcog.org/587/Call-for-Projects-2022-2023](https://gpcog.org/587/Call-for-Projects-2022-2023). Full applications are due January 31.

The US Census Bureau announced new geographies for urban and urbanized areas as a result of the 2020 census. Staff will work with federal and state partners to understand any impacts to PACTS' boundaries and responsibilities.

Staff anticipate presenting a draft Vision Zero Action Plan to the Policy Board in March or April for feedback.

#### **7. Approval of 2023 MPI Crack Sealing Projects**

PACTS MPI program includes a \$50,000 set-aside for crack sealing. The program does not require local match and the funds are transferred to MaineDOT Region 1 to bundle with their crack sealing program for cost efficiencies. According PACTS' MPI policy, roadway segments from two subregions are selected each year. This year, segments from the Western and Southern subregions are scheduled for treatment. Segments are chosen based on the following criteria:

- Pavement Condition Index (PCI)
- Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)
- Total Road segment mileage is approximately 10 miles

A list of prioritized road segments was reviewed and approved by the Collector Paving Working Group at its December 2022 meeting. This list is included as Attachment 7-A.

Tom Milligan moved to approve the 2023 MPI Crack Sealing Projects. Tom Reinauer seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 49–0; standard vote: 15–0)

## **8. Adoption of a Regional Complete Streets Policy and Complete Streets Subcommittee Recommendations**

At its September 2022 meeting, the Policy Board established to Complete Street Subcommittee to discuss how the Regional Complete Streets Policy would impact PACTS' MPI, Collector Paving, and Complex Projects programs. Over the course of several meetings, the group reviewed and revised the draft policy to incorporate additional guidance and clarification.

Kara Wooldrik asked how the Complete Streets Policy and Vision Zero Action Plan will work together. Staff noted that throughout implementation and in advance of the 2023–2024 Call for Projects, staff will ensure the Complete Streets Policy is consistent with PACTS' other policies and programs.

Angela Blanchette asked what resources would be available to municipalities Complete Streets implementation. Staff anticipate conducting orientation and training for municipalities, and seeks feedback on how to effectively provide this. Staff noted that municipalities can reach out if there are any immediate needs.

Patrick Fox noted the policy will not go into effect until the 2023–2024 Call for Projects, so it will not apply to projects currently in the queue.

Allen Armstrong moved to adopt the Regional Complete Streets Policy and Complete Streets Subcommittee Recommendations; Christine Grimando seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 49–0; standard vote: 15–0)

## **9. Adoption of Transit Together Final Recommendations**

Transit Together studied increased coordination and integration in the region's transit network to improve efficiency and cultivate a cohesive system for riders. final report and recommendations were informed by four agency workshops, five project advisory group meetings, 10 pop-up events, and several RTAC, Executive Board, and Policy Board meetings.

The Recommended Service Plan outlines a network that best matches the demand for transit with the provision of transit service. Several proposed Regional Initiatives provide opportunities to improve the rider experience or to increase administrative efficiencies through cross-agency collaboration. Implementation is expected to involve individual agencies actions, cross-agency collaboration, regional and statewide coordination.

The recommended service plan is resource-neutral, but the project team has identified high-level cost estimates for frequency upgrades, extended hours of service, implementation of microtransit service, and a new bus route.

Pat Fox asked for public comment. Ken Capron of Portland stated that this plan was made without the input of MicroRail. He believes that MicroRail will exceed the metrics put in place in Transit Together. Pat closed the public comment period.

Several transit agency members noted that additional work will need to be completed before the recommendations can be implemented. Staff noted the report includes high-level next steps for the agencies.

Several members urged staff and the transit agencies to coordinate on any press release to set adequate expectations for the implementation timeline.

Greg Jordan moved to adopt the Transit Together final report and recommendations; Chad Heid seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 49–0; standard vote: 15–0)

## **10. Additional UPWP Funding (2022-2023)**

Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are required to develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) documenting the planning priorities and activities to be carried out by its staff within a certain time period. PACTS' current UPWP covers 2022–2023. PACTS' planning work includes ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements, coordinating with partners, staffing boards and committees, providing data services and analysis, and conducting other planning work in accordance with the Policy Board's priorities. Design, engineering, or construction costs are not eligible. The UPWP is funded through Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding. This federal funding requires a 20 percent local match, which is contributed by MaineDOT and the region's municipalities.

The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provided an infusion of planning funds to state DOTs for MPOs' UPWPs. Staff estimate approximately \$1.2 million in additional funding. Procedurally, the funding for Maine's MPOs flows to MaineDOT, which is responsible for suballocating the funding to the MPOs in the state subject to their agreement. Because PACTS is halfway through the current UPWP cycle, and that the additional funding is significant, staff anticipate carrying over a portion of the funding to the next UPWP.

To utilize this new funding, staff developed recommendations to adjust the existing project budgets in the UPWP according to several priorities, including: an emphasis at the federal level climate, equity, and housing planning; state-level planning such as Maine Won't Wait and MaineDOT's Family of Plans; and regional priorities as outlined in Connect 2045. Staff have also identified a need for additional resources to support regional transit coordination, plan implementation, technical assistance, and

project delivery. The recommendations also consider current budget surpluses and deficits, and anticipated new work, consultants, and services.

At its January meeting, RTAC voted to recommend approval of staff's recommendations as presented. Key feedback from RTAC included:

- Addressing the relationship between the UPWP funding and other funding sources (for example, CARES, or GPCOG's FTA "Access and Mobility" grant)
- Clarifying the distribution of funding between staff, direct expenses, and consultants
- Highlighting the value that the funding brings to the region
- Clarifying whether or not the funds can be used by municipalities for municipal staffing or hiring. (It cannot. Per FTA guidance, only DOTs and MPOs are eligible.)
- Determining impacts to local match. Staff estimate that the additional local match will range between \$2,046 and \$91,180 depending on MaineDOT's contribution, which is yet to be determined.

Pat Fox asked for public comment. Ken Capron of Portland expressed his disappointment that MicroRail was not included in the UPWP budgeting process. Pat closed the public comment period.

The board discussed the following:

- **Impacts to local match**—The federal funding requires a 20 percent non-federal match. In the past, MaineDOT has provided the majority of this, with the remainder assessed to the region's municipalities based on population and other metrics. Because MaineDOT's contribution is as yet undetermined, the municipal portion is also unknown. In January 2022, staff communicated with municipal managers urging them to prepare for potentially increased local match requirements.
- **Flexing FHWA funding to transit planning**—PACTS receives relatively less FTA planning funding compared to the FTA capital and operating funding it programs. Conversely, PACTS receives relatively more FHWA planning funding compared to the FHWA capital funding it programs. This often creates deficits in transit planning project budgets, and limits the amount of new transit planning staff can take on. However, there is opportunity to flex FHWA funding to transit planning in some circumstances.
- **Shifting existing projects' funding streams**—There may be opportunities to shift existing projects' funding streams, for example from the UPWP to CARES and vice versa, to support Transit Together implementation.
- **Project delivery**—Some members expressed a need to simplify funding applications and shorten project delivery.

- **Flexibility**—The UPWP is flexible, and can be adjusted via amendment or administrative modification at any time. Staff seek high-level guidance that the board's general priorities are well represented.
- **Practicality**—The board is too large to review and approve funding on a project-by-project basis.

The board suggested advancing the line items that were time-sensitive in nature.

Chad Heid moved to approve the funding adjustment of the elements that were time-sensitive in nature (142501, 142504, 142605, 142606, 142801, and 142802) as presented in Table 10-4, and to postpone approval of the remaining adjustment to the March meeting; Kate Lewis seconded the motion. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 39–0; standard vote: 10–0)

**11. Project Update: Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit Study**

With no objection, this item was postponed to the March meeting.

**12. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

**13. Adjourn**

With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.