Getting There From Here
An Active Transportation Plan
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A long-range active transportation plan for the PACTS region, October 2018
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PACTS MEMBER COMMUNITIES
A Changing Region

People who live, work, visit, and play in the PACTS region want and need transportation choices. Like many parts of the country, the way in which we live and move around is changing. As demographics change, so do our preferences and needs. More than ever, we need a comprehensive transportation network to ensure that everybody has safe, convenient, and affordable transportation options.

Vision and Goals

Making the PACTS region safe and convenient for active transportation has far-reaching social, economic, and environmental benefits for everyone. This plan is guided by the principles of:

- **Safety.** Many people are using active transportation already and are doing so in places that need improvement.

- **Equity.** Older adults, people of color, youth, persons with disabilities, and those living in poverty are more likely to rely on walking, bicycling, wheeling (including wheelchairs, skates, and other assistance devices), and public transit for transportation.

- **Health.** Active transportation provides health and well-being benefits for individuals and the whole community. People who walk and bike are more likely to connect with other people, spend time outdoors, and get their recommended daily amount of physical activity.

- **Economic Vibrancy.** Active transportation benefits the economy by connecting people to jobs and education. Walkable, bikeable places with good access to transit tend to have stronger economies because they are great places for shopping and recreation.

- **Connectivity.** Better active transportation connections between neighborhoods, towns and cities mean more people can get where they need to go by walking, biking, and wheeling.

- **Resiliency.** Increased use of active transportation means fewer motor vehicle trips, resulting in energy savings, reduced air and water pollution, lower emissions of greenhouse gases, and reduced pressure to develop agricultural and open space.
Completing the Network

The PACTS region has the beginning of a great active transportation network but there are many gaps to fill. This plan outlines the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Network, the Regional Public Transit Network, and the Local Active Transportation Network. By framing priority links and priority centers, the plan reviews the types and locations of infrastructure that is needed.

Making It Happen

PACTS also needs a blueprint for developing the essential partnerships, policies, programs, and data. The plan outlines 13 actionable recommendations organized into six categories.

I. MAKE IT SAFE – Analyze & Improve. PACTS will set an aspirational regional safety goal, fund an initiative such as Vision Zero, and adopt innovative safety practices.

II. BUILD IT – Invest & Leverage. PACTS will integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements into other PACTS-funded projects and ensure readiness to access outside infrastructure funding.

III. PLAN AHEAD – Prepare & Strategize. PACTS will support efforts to expand and improve local and regional active transportation networks and prepare the region for rapid advances in transportation technologies and changes in weather.

IV. WORK TOGETHER – Partner & Engage. PACTS will foster input and involvement from a range of stakeholders by expanding the reach and accessibility of information and offering many channels for engagement, including an ad hoc multi-sector working group.

V. SPREAD THE WORD – Educate & Encourage. PACTS will act as a strategic partner for active transportation education and encouragement programs and support investments that make multimodal travel more visible and easier to navigate.

VI. KEEP IT FRONT AND CENTER – Map & Monitor. PACTS will help improve decision-making by maintaining a spatial database on the region’s active transportation network and regularly collecting, analyzing, and sharing data.

Next Steps

The success of this plan will require strong leadership and oversight from GPCOG staff, member municipalities, transit operators, and key stakeholders. To make implementation a reality, the Active Transportation Working Group and the PACTS Planning Committee will work together to lead the charge.
INTRODUCTION

A Changing Region

People who live, work and play in the PACTS region want and need transportation choices. Like many parts of the country, the way in which we live and move around is changing. As the population ages and the preferences of younger citizens diverge from previous generations, new demands are being placed on the transportation system. Without multimodal options, those who cannot drive or choose not to, lack mobility and the related economic and social opportunities. A comprehensive transportation network - one designed to accommodate walking, bicycling, and public transit in addition to driving - helps ensure that everybody has safe, convenient, and affordable transportation options.

Even people who primarily drive will save time and money in a region with a more comprehensive transportation network. Investing in walking, bicycling, and public transit makes our communities more space-efficient, affordable, inclusive, healthy, and energy efficient. It also reduces traffic and parking congestion, preserves roadway capacity, and lowers road maintenance costs. When many transportation options are available, everyone can choose the means of travel that best meets their needs and abilities for any given trip. By working together to improve mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users - often our most vulnerable populations - we will all benefit from economic growth, stronger communities, and improved health and environmental quality.
The share of York and Cumberland County commuters driving alone has decreased since 2000, and more people are walking and biking to work.

From 2004 to 2014, the percentage of people with a driver’s license decreased by 17% in the US and 23% in Maine.

More people are using public transit

Annual public transit ridership in the PACTS region has increased from 3.3 million in 2012 to 3.8 million in 2016.

Source: Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicle Statistics

Source: PACTS

Getting There From Here

Getting There From Here is designed to help improve and enhance active transportation across the entire PACTS region. It serves as an update to the 2009 Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Plan and as a companion to Destination 2040, the long-range transportation plan for the PACTS region. The planning process occurred over about 18 months and included visioning by the Advisory Group, input from municipal staff and leaders, public engagement with a diverse group of stakeholders, and mapping of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Destination 2040 vision for the PACTS regional transportation system is to provide a safe, fully developed, and well maintained multimodal means of travel for all people and goods as efficiently as possible. Getting There From Here provides a closer look at how to make that vision a reality by focusing on the region’s active transportation network. This plan includes a set of recommendations for PACTS to help advance regional active transportation goals by outlining strategies for investing capacity, collaboration, and funding in the region over the next decade.

To build a more complete active transportation network across the region, collaboration and partnership between many sectors and organizations is essential. Therefore, this plan is meant for a wider audience than GPCOG staff and committees. The PACTS region is fortunate to have many groups and organizations working to make commuting, shopping, and socializing without a personal automobile possible. Partnership, coalitions, and communication between the public and private sectors, including nonprofits, and educational and health institutions, will be a critical part of our collective success.
WHAT IS PACTS?

The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) plays a critical role in people's daily lives and the regional economy through the planning and programming decisions it makes. PACTS was designated in 1975 as the federally-mandated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Portland Region. The federal government established MPOs in all urbanized areas of the country in order to improve the coordination of transportation planning and investment decisions by the state, municipalities, and public transportation organizations.

The PACTS region encompasses 18 municipalities with over 275,000 residents. The region spans two counties and includes rural, suburban, and small urban communities. It is the largest urbanized area in the State of Maine and home to its largest public transit network. While Maine is losing population overall, the PACTS region is growing through an influx of immigrants, refugees, and young adults. Approximately 10% of the region's residents are non-white, compared to 5% statewide. The region is also seeing growth in the number of older residents, with people 65 and up representing 15% of the population in 2015.

PACTS is governed by a Policy Committee composed of staff and elected leaders from its 18 municipalities, MaineDOT, Maine Turnpike Authority, Federal Highway Administration, and Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, as well as representatives from PACTS standing committees. The Greater Portland Council of Governments is the organizational home for PACTS and provides staffing for its committees, as well as project management and technical assistance for its planning and studies. Through the Transit Committee, PACTS convenes the region's seven transit agencies including two demand response providers, three fixed-route bus agencies, a ferry operator, and passenger rail service. PACTS also has an Executive Committee, Planning Committee, and Technical Committee.

PACTS provides a continuing, coordinated, and comprehensive planning process for the Greater Portland urbanized area, and a forum for collaborative decision-making among members. PACTS approves the use of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for transportation investments in the PACTS area. PACTS is committed to ensuring its transportation plans and future investments comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and that its planning process and its decisions on funding transportation projects strive for equitable distribution of services, facilities, and resources within the PACTS planning area.
Vision and Goals

The transportation system gets us where we need to go – school, jobs, medical care, shopping, places of worship, and social outlets. Making the PACTS region safe and convenient for active transportation has far-reaching social, economic, and environmental benefits for everyone. How we get around impacts our opportunities and shapes our quality of life. People who walk and bike are more likely to connect with other people, spend time outdoors, and get their recommended daily amount of physical activity. Increased use of active transportation also has community-wide benefits. Walkable, bikeable places with good access to transit are great for the economy – they provide places for shopping and recreation, attract development, and create jobs. More active transportation also means fewer motor vehicle trips, resulting in energy savings, less traffic and congestion, lower maintenance costs, and reduced
pressure to develop agricultural lands and open spaces.

Why Focus on Active Transportation

Safety Benefits

Many people are using active transportation already and are doing so in places that need safety improvements. Older adults, people of color, youth, persons with disabilities, and those living in poverty are more likely to rely on walking, bicycling, wheeling (including wheelchairs, skates, and other assistance devices), and public transit for transportation.

Health and Well-Being Benefits

Active transportation provides health and well-being benefits for individuals and the whole community. People who walk and bike are more likely to connect with other people, spend time outdoors, and get their recommended daily amount of physical activity.

Environmental Benefits

Increased use of active transportation means fewer motor vehicle trips, resulting in energy savings, reduced air and water pollution, lower emissions of greenhouse gases, and reduced pressure to develop agricultural lands and open spaces.

Economic Benefits

Active transportation benefits the economy by connecting people to jobs and education. Walkable, bikeable places with good access to transit tend to have stronger economies because they are great places for shopping and recreation.
VISION

“The PACTS Region will have a complete network of accessible trails, paths, ways, and modes, serving all people and places, promoting a culture of healthy living and a vibrant economy.”
GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

Safety
Advance innovations, infrastructure, and policies that improve safety and comfort for people who walk, bicycle, wheel, and use public transit.

Equity
Increase access to safe, comfortable, and convenient walking, bicycling, wheeling, and public transit for people who experience transportation barriers because of income, disability, age, language, race/ethnicity, or location.

Health
Emphasize the health and societal benefits of increased opportunities for walking, bicycling, wheeling, and public transit use in day-to-day travel and recreation.

Economic Vibrancy
Create more vibrant, livable places and enhance connections between residential areas and centers of employment, education, and commerce.

Connectivity
Close gaps in trail, bikeway, sidewalk, and public transit networks, improving connections between modes, neighborhoods, towns, and cities.

Resiliency
Reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles and incorporate low impact design and stormwater features into the active transportation network.
WHAT WE HEARD

» Stakeholder Input
» Public Engagement
WHAT WE HEARD

Creation of Getting There From Here required gathering feedback that represents the region’s diverse geography which spans cities, suburban towns, villages, and rural communities. To do this, the project team relied heavily on community engagement, stakeholder input, and past planning efforts.

Stakeholder Input

Key stakeholder groups were involved throughout the planning process. These included elected officials, staff from PACTS communities, and local non-profits. Stakeholder input, particularly from the Advisory Group, also provided the project team with an opportunity to get more detailed and comprehensive feedback on an ongoing basis.

PACTS Subregional Kick-Off Meetings

In March 2017, the planning process for Getting There From Here kicked off with meetings in each of the four PACTS subregions. The kick-off meetings aimed to introduce the project to PACTS member municipalities and to gather information on local conditions, plans, desires, and needs related to active modes of transportation. Using large format maps of the subregion, participants gave feedback on what has changed or been built since 2009, what is planned but not yet built, and what “desires and needs” the community envisions. The kick-off meetings lasted two hours each and were attended by municipal planners, engineers, and public officials.
works staff, as well as residents, and representatives from regional organizations.

Central - Held in South Portland on March 16th, 2017. Participants included staff from Cape Elizabeth, Portland, and South Portland, as well as representatives from Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Portland Trails, and South Portland Bus Service.

Northern - Held in Yarmouth on March 2nd, 2017. Participants included staff from Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, North Yarmouth, and Yarmouth, as well as representatives from the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Freeport Active Living Committee.

Southern - Held in Saco on March 1st, 2017. Participants included staff from Biddeford, Old Orchard Beach, Saco, and Scarborough, as well as representatives from Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission.

Western - Held in Windham on April 6th, 2017. Participants included staff from Gorham, Standish, Westbrook, and Windham, as well as residents from Standish.
2018, the Advisory Group convened to give feedback that was incorporated into the final plan.

Key Stakeholder Conversations

The project team interviewed staff from regional organizations with a stake in advancing active transportation. Topics discussed varied depending on the participants, and all feedback informed the recommendations in this plan. Participating organizations included: AARP Maine, Alpha One, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, and Portland Trails.

Themes from the conversations included:

- Public education is needed around the economic development benefits of walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly communities
- Transit oriented development has benefits for a broad range of stakeholders, especially aging adults and people with disabilities
- Active transportation projects should contribute to carbon reduction and hazard mitigation through green infrastructure
- Wayfinding between modes is key to encouraging use of transit
- Safety for bicyclists and pedestrians is an important issue with a real financial impact

Advisory Group

In May 2017, the project team convened an ad hoc Advisory Group to provide ongoing feedback throughout the project. The committee included municipal staff, representatives of regional organizations, and local residents. The Group worked closely with the project team to develop the vision and goals, determine the audience, develop frameworks for recommendations in the plan, and inform public engagement. When a draft of the plan was developed in summer 2017, the Advisory Group provided feedback that was incorporated into the final plan.
Feedback on the Draft Plan

In August and September of 2018, the project team collected feedback on the draft plan document from a range of stakeholders. This included in-person presentations and discussions of the plan with the Active Transportation Plan Advisory Group, PACTS Transit Committee, PACTS Policy Committee, PACTS Technical Committee, PACTS Planning Committee, and PACTS Executive Committee. The draft plan was posted on the GPCOG website and a feedback request was emailed out to all PACTS members, including the link to an online feedback survey.

Public Engagement

To maximize input from the public, the project team developed and implemented a multidimensional engagement strategy comprised of both traditional and nontraditional outreach activities, including a roundtable, targeted focus groups, and online surveys. The project team also partnered with healthcare and social service organizations to hear from hard-to-reach segments of the community.

Transportation and Community Well-Being Roundtable

Held on May 23rd, 2017 at the GPCOG Conference Center in Portland, this event was attended by 25 staff and volunteers from healthcare providers, community and social service agencies, public health organizations, and MaineDOT. The three-hour event included a round robin on transportation barriers, three break-outs to collect input on specific projects, and a closing activity asking participants what they hope will
Since 2009, when the current PACTS Bicycle Pedestrian Plan was adopted, active transportation has become a growing priority across the region. Many plans and studies – ranging from comprehensive and neighborhood plans to multi-community bicycle and pedestrian plans and regional transit plans – emphasize the community-led desire for a complete transportation network. This body of planning work provides an enormous amount of information regarding the region’s desires for active transportation and served as a foundation for Getting There From Here. Plans and studies reviewed as a part of this process included:

- Destination 2040
- Moving Southern Maine Forward
- Transit Stop Access Project: Phase I
- Sustain Southern Maine
- Municipal comprehensive plans
- Municipal and regional bicycle and pedestrian plans

Destination 2040

In 2018, PACTS adopted its long-range transportation plan Destination 2040. The plan sets regional goals and objectives for safe and efficient multimodal transportation, and requires collaboration between MaineDOT, local municipalities, regional transit agencies, and GPCOG. With a regional focus, Destination 2040 prioritizes the mobility of people and goods throughout the region for financial and environmental sustainability.

Moving Southern Maine Forward

Moving Southern Maine Forward was adopted in 2017 and is a short-range plan for public transit and mobility, focused on improving the efficiency of public transit operations, while growing the attractiveness and utility of transit in Southern Maine. It identifies a vision and short-term goals for public transit agencies throughout Southern Maine.
happen next regarding transportation for the populations they work with. Participants at the roundtable were engaged in a mapping activity in which they were asked to identify difficult or unsafe areas. Key active transportation themes included barriers to accessing public transportation - such as cost and lack of availability, the problem of stigma around using public transportation, and safe walking and bicycling for people with disabilities.

Older Adults Focus Group

On September 27th, 2017 the project team partnered with the Scarborough Senior Program to host a discussion with people in their seventies and eighties. The group included 17 older adults from Scarborough, one from Westbrook, and one from Gorham. The participants attended a lunch and bingo game prior to the focus group.

Many participants expressed that they would walk more if there were more sidewalks and longer pedestrian crossing signals. Many reported feeling unsafe because of the volume and speed of traffic in their neighborhoods and on the main roads. Almost all said they are still driving and worry about what they will do when they cannot drive any more. The sentiment was they rely on themselves and do not know how much longer they can drive. Not one participant said they use the bus service or RTP (paratransit) but they expressed interest in having a shuttle service for shopping and medical appointments.

Immigrant and Refugee Focus Groups

PACTS partnered with the Maine Access Immigrant Network (MAIN) in June 2017 to conduct three focus groups about walking, bicycling, and taking the bus with community members who have limited English proficiency. These focus groups were conducted in French, Arabic and Somali and included 20 residents of the Greater Portland region. Each focus group consisted of participants speaking the same language who were recruited by MAIN Community Health Workers to participate. Participants ranged in age from 20-65 years and their countries of origin included the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Angola, Rwanda, Somalia, Iraq, and Syria. Each focus group was facilitated by a MAIN Community
Health Worker and notes were recorded by a second Community Health Worker. Most participants attend a MAIN-based peer support group regularly. This is where most of the recruitment was performed. Hannaford gift cards in the amount of $10 were provided to participants as small honorariums for their participation.

Most participants reported walking, bicycling, and the bus as their main modes of transportation. Safety, health, and distance from destinations were mentioned as barriers to walking, while concerns about biking in traffic were raised. Buses running late and lack of frequency were concerns regarding bus travel. Overall, cold weather and snow were mentioned as making active transportation difficult.

Community Survey

The online survey was launched in September 2017 and kept open for two months. The survey focused on how to improve opportunities for walking, biking, wheeling (i.e. wheelchairs, skateboards, scooters), and accessing public transportation. Hosted at Gettingthereme.org, the survey page also included a crowdsourcing map, where respondents could upload photos of active transportation assets and challenges in the region.

The survey was promoted through hundreds of email announcements sent to a full range of advocacy groups, social service agencies, healthcare providers, and PACTS member municipalities. The survey was also featured in local media and on the GPCOG Facebook page and the PACTS website. A GPCOG intern promoted the survey in person through Portland Adult Education. GPCOG partnered with Community Health Outreach Workers from the Maine Access Immigrant Network to collect just over 50 responses from non-native English speakers in Westbrook and Portland. Overall, the survey received 235 responses.

We heard that people appreciate recent expansions in trails, bike facilities, and transit service, and value the health, community, and economic benefits they bring. Still, respondents would like to see more off-road paths, separated bike facilities, and sidewalks across the region. Many respondents expressed concerns about safety...
when biking and walking, and would like to see traffic calming, better enforcement of distracted driving laws, and lighting on trails and at bus stops. Likewise, many shared the desire for walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly community design that offers convenient connections between local and regional destinations. Some respondents raised concerns about equity, noting differences in the geographic distribution of facilities and maintenance, as well as concerns about the affordability of public transportation for people with limited or no income. Respondents also discussed the need to diffuse the tension between drivers and non-motorists through education on all sides, along with increased capacity across the transportation system.

Workplace Support for Alternative Transportation Survey

This online survey about alternative transportation targeted employers throughout the PACTS region. The survey sought information on how employers are currently promoting active transportation. The survey included 19 questions, covering policies, programs, and activities to promote walking, biking, and transit use, challenges faced in doing so, and interest in helping with future efforts. The survey was promoted through emails to GPCOG and PACTS contact lists, as well as by GoMaine. We received 59 responses from employers large and small. Three out of five employers reported offering
supports to encourage active commuting among employees – including infrastructure like bike parking and showers. Still, the percentage of employees commuting by walking or biking averaged out to 10%. Noted barriers to active commuting included lack of sidewalks and bike infrastructure, and the distance between home and work.

2017 PACTS Public Opinion Survey

In September, PACTS contracted Pan Atlantic Research to conduct a quantitative survey with a stratified random sample of 660 residents in the 18 PACTS municipalities. A similar survey was conducted by Pan Atlantic Research for PACTS in 2014. The survey sought to gauge both current and future transportation behaviors and choices of residents in the PACTS region. Questions focused on topics such as transportation modes, usage patterns and attitudes towards public bus transit, potential effectiveness of specific incentives to use public bus transit, and perceptions of road safety.

Nearly one in ten respondents (9%) reported walking three or more days a week for transportation. Frequent use of public transportation was fairly low, but 10% of respondents reported taking the bus at least once per month and monthly use of transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft has surpassed use of taxis (9.4% vs. 6.5%). One out of three respondents indicated that they value walkability. The top two suggestions to improve road safety were “More/wider bike lanes,” and “More/better-maintained sidewalks.”
WHAT WE HEARD

Walking, biking and wheeling should be a priority of our society as these alternatives are good for the environment and our well-being and health. They also promote a sense of community and knowing your neighbors.

We need to make it easier and safer for all.

The thing that would make it easier to get around the region would be a focus on developing downtowns/commercial centers as neighborhood business centers. If people can live, work, and purchase the goods they need in a downtown, they don’t need to jump in their car every time they need anything.

Portland has a great trail system! Let’s keep working towards making it even better.

At the same time bike/pedestrian infrastructure is improved, the motor vehicle infrastructure needs to increase significantly to keep up with regional growth.

I wish I felt safer biking in local traffic. I don’t trust drivers when I am on a bike.

Source: Getting There From Here Survey
COMPLETING THE NETWORK

» Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Network
» Regional Public Transit Network
» Local Active Transportation Network
COMPLETING THE NETWORK

A strong regional active transportation network is one that prioritizes mobility within centers and regional links between communities and key destinations. Priority centers – as identified in Destination 2040 – include urban centers, suburban districts, and town and village centers where growth is happening and expected to continue. These centers are the glue supporting the regional network. Getting There From Here adds a set of priority active transportation links. These are the connective tissue of the active transportation network, including shared use paths, enhanced shoulders, and transit routes. Together, the priority links and priority centers work hand in hand to allow for safe and efficient multimodal travel for all and to position the region for economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental resilience.

By highlighting gaps in the priority links and identifying enhancements needed at priority centers, this plan outlines where we need to focus infrastructure investments in the PACTS region. The solutions for each of these settings will vary, ranging from sidewalks and enhanced crossings, to separated bicycle facilities and transit mini-hubs, and must be filled in incrementally, over time. This plan also highlights the need for land use and development patterns to support walking, biking, and viable public transit.
COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

Complete Streets is a term that defines a growing national movement to amend transportation policy to emphasize the importance of safe access on the roadways for all users. Instituting a Complete Streets policy formalizes a community’s intent to plan, design, operate, and maintain streets so they are safe not just for vehicles, but also for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, regardless of age or ability.

Although there is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets – each street is unique and responds to its community context – roadways that are planned and designed using a Complete Streets approach include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, accessible transit stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, and roundabouts, among other design options.

While many communities in the PACTS region recognize the importance of walking and bicycling to the sustainability of the transportation system, at this time only a handful of municipalities have adopted a Complete Streets policy.
A PRIMER ON REGIONAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Based on the region’s variety of traffic patterns, land use, and distances between destinations, we need a range of context-sensitive bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure. To determine the facility type with the most benefits for each setting, we must consider compatibility with rural aesthetics, potential environmental impacts, safety, comfort level, and accessibility. What follows are descriptions of key active transportation facilities.

Bike Lanes

Bike lanes are designated bikeways that have stenciled bicycle symbol pavement markings and often have accompanying roadside signs. Bike lanes are designated for exclusive or preferential use by bicycles. They may be located on streets with or without on-street parking. On streets with parking, the lanes are placed between the travel lane and the parking.

Paved Shoulders

Paved shoulders are located to the right of the outside travel lane and delineated by a white pavement stripe. They are not designated specifically for use by bicycles, but are available for bicycle, walking, and wheeled use and provide room for separation from motor vehicle traffic. Paved shoulders are located on roads with and without curbing.
Shared Lanes

Shared lanes are roadway travel lanes shared by motorists and bicyclists. They are often used where the roadway is not wide enough to provide another facility such as a bike lane. Shared lane pavement markings, often called “Sharrows,” may be appropriate if the shared lane is part of a designated bicycle route. “Share the Road” signs are often placed along roads where an on-road bicycle facility may transition, due to reduced pavement width, from a bike lane or paved shoulder to a shared lane.

Multi-Use Paths

Multi-use paths are intended for multiple types of path users including bicyclists and pedestrians. They have a firm, compacted surface (paved, stone dust, etc.) that serves road bicycles well.

Trails

Trails are intended primarily for pedestrians and mountain bikers. They are distinct from pathways by surface type and width, often with a dirt surface and narrower width. The surface is not generally good for road bicycles, but most trails can be used by mountain bikes. Trails primarily serve recreation purposes, such as loop trails through conservation lands. However, trails can also serve a transportation function when they connect one area to another.
The PACTS region is currently home to a significant network of bicycle and pedestrian paths, trails, and routes. Still, the network has many gaps yet to be filled. Through the plan process, the project team catalogued the network and outlined the community’s vision of what a complete network will look like. The accompanying map – available online at www.gpcog.org/active-transportation – contains the most current inventory of the existing and desired network. The network map is intended as both a snapshot of where we are now and a blueprint for where we are headed.

The projects described in the following pages demonstrate the types of improvements needed to fill in priority links and build upon our existing bicycle and pedestrian network. They were identified through outreach to municipal leaders, decision-makers, stakeholders, and the public. They are highlighted here because they serve as examples of the types of projects that are needed in many communities to address challenging, and often unsafe, conditions. In many cases, the projects have potential to make a major regional impact by addressing critical gaps in the active transportation network or connecting multiple communities. While some projects are currently underway, others are mere visions of what could be and have considerably longer time horizons and budgets.

The projects included in the following pages are examples only, and not to be interpreted as priority funding projects. PACTS has an existing process and scoring system for allocating state and federal funds.
FOR MORE DETAIL VISIT THE ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP:
www.gpcog.org/active-transportation
Mountain Division Trail – Windham to Portland

Background: The Maine Mountain Division Rail-with-Trail project is an ongoing effort to develop a 52 mile multi-use path from Portland to Fryeburg along the Mountain Division rail line.

Regional Impact: Completion of the southern portion of the project would provide a continuous 16 mile off-road active transportation corridor connecting Standish, Gorham, Windham, Westbrook, and Portland.

Status: A six mile stretch has been completed from South Windham to Otter Ponds in Standish. To connect this completed section to Portland, the project will require approximately four miles of trail in Windham, three miles of trail in Westbrook, and two and a half miles of trail in Portland. MaineDOT purchased the rail line in 1997 and has completed a preliminary design for the segment from Windham to Westbrook, but the project needs construction funding to move forward. The section of rail between Westbrook and Portland is owned by Pan Am Railways.
**Regional Impact:** Extending the Beth Condon Trail across the Cousins River would connect the communities of Yarmouth and Freeport and fill a critical gap in the bicycle and pedestrian network. Route 88 and South Freeport Road are popular routes for biking (and part of both the East Coast Greenway and U.S. Bike Route 1 national initiatives) but connecting them requires riding on Route 1 for approximately one mile through the on/off ramps of I-295 alongside fast moving traffic.

**Status:** The PACTS preliminary design review will be conducted in 2018-2019. The current estimate for completing the trail to the visitors center/rest area is $625,000.
St Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-with-Trail – Portland to Yarmouth

Background: In 2017, at the request of the municipalities, GPCOG led a short, five month public facilitation process to gauge interest in building a nine mile rail-with-trail along the corridor from Portland to Yarmouth. This process was accompanied by a preliminary feasibility study by VHB, commissioned by PACTS. MaineDOT currently owns the rail right-of-way. A freight operator, Genessee and Wyoming, holds an operator easement, but is not currently using the line.

Regional Impact: This trail would provide a continuous nine mile off-road route connecting Yarmouth, Cumberland, Falmouth, and Portland.

Status: The next steps for the project are on hold pending the completion of a passenger rail feasibility study for this track. This is scheduled for Fall 2018.
Off-Road Multi-Use Path – Along Route 35, Standish

Background: The completed portion of the Mountain Division Trail in Windham and Standish ends at the parking lot for Otter Ponds in Standish off Route 35. A multi-use path along Route 35 would not only extend the Mountain Division Trail another half mile, it would connect the trail to two major destinations – Sebago Lake Village and the public boat launch and beach.

Regional Impact: The completed portion of the Mountain Division Trail is the backbone of an emerging bicycle and pedestrian network for the communities west of Portland. A short, half mile connection on Route 35 would connect the trail to a lakeside village and one of Sebago Lake’s few public beaches. It would also connect homes around Sebago Lake Village to Johnson Field, which features many recreational facilities.

Status: Preliminary concept renderings have been completed by VHB.
Separated Bike Lane – Park Avenue, Portland

**Background:** Park Avenue is a flat corridor that serves as a neighborhood connector for cyclists, but it lacks consistent bicycle infrastructure. It borders Deering Oaks Park, intersects Forest Avenue, High Street and State Street and serves as a direct link from the Libbytown, St. John/Valley and Parkside neighborhoods into the heart of Downtown Portland, connecting many residences, businesses, educational centers and recreational facilities along the way.

**Regional Impact:** As the largest city in the region, Portland is often an early adopter of innovative transportation design solutions and in many ways acts as a test case for other communities in the region to follow. If a parking separated bike lane works in this location, it could also work in many other places throughout the region, from urban city centers to downtown villages and main streets.

**Status:** The City identified the stretch from Valley Street to Forest Avenue as an ideal location to pilot a parking separated bike lane. This project, completed in the summer of 2018, connects to the City’s ever-growing bike network that currently includes bike lanes on Portland Street to the east and bike lanes on the remainder of Park Avenue and St. John Street to the west.
Separated Bike Lane – Mallett Drive/Exit 22, Freeport

**Background:** Mallett Drive currently serves as the primary east/west route over I-295 connecting Freeport Village to the homes and businesses west of I-295. Mallett Drive experiences high traffic volumes with vehicles turning and yielding. It does not feel safe for walking or biking, and MaineDOT has identified the interchange as a “high crash location”. Freeport Middle School and High School are on the east side of I-295, so those who live west of I-295 cannot safely walk or bike to school, and kids at school cannot safely access the town athletic fields west of the highway.

**Regional Impact:** Improving the conditions along Mallett Drive would enhance the larger network. Freeport Village is a major destination for bicyclists and is on the U.S. Bike Route 1 and East Coast Greenway routes. Since Mallett Drive is the only I-295 crossing in the area, it is unavoidable for anyone wanting to connect to Bradbury State Park, Pineland Farms, or other popular destinations west of Freeport Village.

**Status:** The Town is evaluating options for improving the visibility and safety of walking and biking on Mallett Drive, including sidewalks, a buffered bike lane, and possibly an off-road multi-use path.
Regional Impact: This project has a local, regional, and national impact. The 16 miles of uninterrupted off-road trail run through four communities, and the Eastern Trail contributes to several national initiatives – the East Coast Greenway and U.S. Bike Route 1.

Status: In 2017, the Eastern Trail Alliance reached its $4.1 million fundraising goal for its "Close the Gap" campaign. MaineDOT contributed $2.05 million, PACTS pledged over $1.1 million, and the balance of funding was raised from private donors, as well as municipalities, corporate and non-profit partners. Additional funding may still be needed based on final construction estimates.
**Eastern Trail – Biddeford**

**Background:** The other major gap in the Eastern Trail is the downtown area of Biddeford/Saco. The current on-road route wends its way through a network of highly trafficked roads, including Route 1 across the Saco River. To close this gap and provide a safer, more comfortable experience for users, an approximate 3 mile section of trail would be needed. While the exact route has not been determined, the most likely option would be to follow the old Pan Am railroad corridor – from Thornton Academy in Saco across the Saco River to the Southern Maine Health Care facility in Biddeford.

**Regional Impact:** This project would connect a nine mile section of uninterrupted off-road trail to the north to a six mile section of uninterrupted off-road trail to the south, ultimately creating 18 miles of off-road multi-use path from Kennebunk to Scarborough. If this project is completed in conjunction with the “Close the Gap” project in Scarborough, it would create roughly 24 miles of uninterrupted multi-use path from Kennebunk all the way to South Portland.

**Status:** This section of trail has been reviewed closely by Eastern Trail Alliance staff, local officials, PACTS, and stakeholders, but at the time of this writing no major planning or design work has taken place.
Paved Shoulders – Route 302 Westbrook

Background: Route 302 is a major arterial and the primary east-west corridor connecting Portland to the communities west of Portland and ultimately New Hampshire. The entire length of Route 302 in Maine is designed to modern engineering standards with paved shoulders, with the exception of an approximately four and a half mile section in Westbrook.

Regional Impact: Reconstructing this section would fill the gap in the Route 302 corridor and benefit all users. There are many examples of gaps in the paved shoulder network throughout the region, but this section of Route 302 stands out because it is such a highly traveled arterial, and a high priority roadway for MaineDOT and the communities it serves.

Status: This section of Route 302 was repaved by MaineDOT in 2017 with an “ultra-thin bonded wearing surface” at a cost of roughly $900,000. While this treatment improves the quality of the pavement, it does not bring the section of roadway to modern highway standards and did not add paved shoulders.
Sebago to the Sea – Saint Joseph’s College Standish

**Background:** The 28 mile Sebago to the Sea Trail is a contiguous, hiking/multi-use trail from Sebago Lake to Casco Bay connecting Standish, Windham, Gorham, Westbrook, Portland, and Falmouth. The initiative was developed as part of a visioning session of the Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition (PRWC) and is now facilitated by the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust (PRLT).

**Regional Impact:** The trail is essentially complete, with the exception of a five mile section between South Windham and Westbrook (this section is currently a paddling and pedestrian route only along the Presumpscot River; pedestrians can walk along the adjacent rail bed, though bicyclists will want to avoid the section).

**Status:** In 2017, GPCOG worked with Saint Joseph’s College and a trails subcommittee comprised of the Towns of Standish, Windham, and the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, to explore the feasibility of extending the northern terminus of the trail approximately two and a half miles to the Saint Joseph’s College campus.
The PACTS region is home to Maine’s largest public transit network, with seven transit agencies including two demand response providers, three fixed-route bus agencies, a ferry operator, and passenger rail service. To grow and sustain a transit network that supports active transportation in our region, we must approach service as door-to-door, not just stop-to-stop.

Walking offers a crucial connection to public transportation. Most transit riders start or end their trip on foot or using a wheelchair (or other assistive device). Likewise, bicycling provides the opportunity to further increase the reach of transit. A strong public transit network supports multimodal trips, promotes rider health, alleviates congestion, and reduces motor vehicle pollutants.

The projects described in this section demonstrate the types of projects that are needed to improve the multimodal connectivity of the region’s transit network. They were identified through the Moving Southern Maine Forward Plan, the Transit Stop Access Project, the Sign and Shelter Project, and outreach conducted by individual operators. In some cases, the projects are already under way, while in others, they are still in need of funding.
FOR MORE DETAIL VISIT THE ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP:
www.gpcog.org/active-transportation
Operated by Greater Portland Transit District
aka: Greater Portland METRO
2016 ridership: 1,810,825

Ten local bus routes, including the Husky Line
between University of Southern Maine’s Gorham and
Portland campuses, provide service to seven PACTS
communities.

Operated by City of South Portland
aka: SPBS
2016 ridership: 246,931

Three local bus routes serve South Portland and
Portland, including connections to Southern Maine
Community College.

Operated by Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach
Transit Committee
aka: Sh-ZOOM or BSOOB
2016 ridership: 188,944

Two local bus routes, seasonal service to UNE, and
summer trolley service. ShuttleBus-ZOOM also
operates the Zoom Turnpike Express with commuter
service between Biddeford and Portland.
Operated by RTP
2016 ridership: 8,800
Weekday service between Bridgton and Portland with stops in PACTS communities along Route 302.

Operated by Casco Bay Island Transit District
aka: CBITD or CBL
2016 ridership: 1,097,561
Year-round ferry service to six islands (seven in summer).

Operated by Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
aka: NNEPRA
2016 ridership: 473,923
Daily service between Boston and Portland and from Portland to Freeport and Brunswick.

Operated by RTP and York County Community Action Corporation
aka: RTP and YCCAC
ADA Paratransit provides rides to people with disabilities who cannot otherwise use transit. RTP provides service to Cumberland County and YCCAC serves York County.
Transit Mini-Hubs

Background: Transit mini-hubs are envisioned as places where riders can access services or amenities as they transfer between buses or modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, or driving. They require a higher standard of design, function, and maintenance than a typical bus stop. Mini-hubs would be located where different bus routes converge and ridership is high, offering a safe, secure waiting area for riders. In 2017, 22 potential transit mini-hub locations were identified through Phase I of the Transit Stop Access Project.

Regional Impact: Transit mini-hubs will support regional multi-modal travel by providing connection points for travelers linking between trails, bike routes, and transit. Offering more comfort and amenities than a typical bus stop, transit mini-hubs will also create a positive image for multi-modal travel.

Status: In Phase II of the Transit Stop Access Project (2018-2019) PACTS will work with a consultant to create conceptual designs for transit mini-hubs throughout the region. Metro, ShuttleBus-ZOOM, South Portland Bus Service, along with municipal staff and residents in the relevant communities, will be part of this process.
Bicycle Parking at Transit Stops

Background: Secure bicycle parking is a key component to combining bicycling and transit. A range of options – from covered bicycle parking to bicycle cages to bike lockers – are being explored for the PACTS region. The PACTS Transit Stop Access Project includes Federal Transit Administration funding that may be used to install bicycle parking at key locations. In 2017, Phase I of the Transit Stop Access Project collected input about what kind of parking is needed and where. In many cases, bicycle parking exists but the amount or style is inadequate. Suggestions included grocery stores such as Walmart and Whole Foods, the Portland Transportation Center, and the Exit 32 Park and Ride.

Regional Impact: Secure and convenient bicycle parking at bus stops extends the distance people are able to travel to access transit from an average of half a mile on foot to two miles. Adding secure bicycle parking at key transportation hubs in the PACTS region will also increase the ease of combining bicycling with transit use for commuting. With more access to secure bike parking, riders can count on leaving their bikes at their home stop and trusting that it will be safe.

Status: In Phase II of the Transit Stop Access Project, PACTS will work with a consultant to determine whether and where to install bicycle parking at bus stops in the PACTS region.
Bus Shelters

Background: Between 2016-2017, Federal Transit Administration funding through PACTS helped Metro install 13 new bus shelters, providing more riders with protection from the elements and a place to rest. These include several locations on Congress Street in Portland (pictured here) and at Portland’s high schools, including the stops that serve Deering, Casco Bay, and Portland Arts and Technology. Installations will continue – including on the ShuttleBus-ZOOM route – in 2018 and 2019.

Regional Impact:
Protection from the rain and snow and a place to sit rank at the top of riders’ wishes for bus stops. Bus shelters make multi-modal travel easier by giving travelers a place to rest and regroup along their routes.

Status: Metro, South Portland Bus Service, and ShuttleBus-ZOOM will continue to install new shelters across their service areas in 2018 and 2019.
Multi-Modal Wayfinding

**Background:** In outreach for this plan, wayfinding emerged as an important topic. Stakeholders are eager to bring simple and easy-to-follow signage to the PACTS region that directs people on how to connect between transit modes, and from transit to walking and biking routes. For instance, signage could point travelers to the closest bus stop and Portland Trails trailhead with mileage and travel time estimates for key destinations. Wayfinding signage could also be integrated into online resources like Southern Maine Transit Tracker and Google Transit.

**Regional Impact:** Effective multi-modal wayfinding systems have numerous regional benefits: they improve the ease of connecting between modes; they reduce use of personal vehicles by increasing the likelihood of people using active transportation; and they enhance community character and sense of place.

**Status:** The need for multi-modal wayfinding in the PACTS region was also identified in Moving Southern Maine Forward. PACTS will work with its Transit Committee and member municipalities to determine how best to implement these recommendations.
The local bicycle, pedestrian, and transit networks - those within neighborhood villages, urban centers, and downtowns - play an essential role in supporting the greater regional network. Land use and transportation policies that support transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities mean people do not have to use a car for every trip.

Connected and compact neighborhoods and centers with a mix of uses - where shops, civic services, jobs, and transit are within walking distance - help preserve open space, support transit, reduce automobile congestion, and support affordable housing options.

Walking, biking, transit, and the personal or shared automobile can be combined to meet daily needs. At the regional scale, a network of mixed-use centers promotes affordability for working families, is cost-effective for businesses and government, and is environmentally responsible.

GPCOG and PACTS have already laid the foundation for creating this network of vibrant centers throughout the region. In 2012, GPCOG led Sustain Southern Maine, a regional planning initiative focused on developing strategies for sustainable growth by integrating planning for housing, land use, economic and workforce development, and transportation and infrastructure.

One of the outcomes of this multi-year process was the identification of “centers of opportunity” throughout the region to help focus investments in existing villages and neighborhoods.

Destination 2040 built on this strategy and adopted “priority centers.” These areas were designed to strategically focus resources into existing and emerging centers. Now that these priority centers have been identified, partnerships between PACTS and local governments - as well as non-profits, employers, and developers - will help ensure success and guide local transportation and land use policies and decisions.

Within these centers, the goals are the same - to safely and conveniently connect people to where they want to go by walking, biking, or taking public transit. However, there are often challenges along the way. Some common examples are described in the pages that follow.
FOR MORE DETAIL VISIT THE ONLINE INTERACTIVE MAP:
www.gpcog.org/active-transportation
Road Crossings at Intersections – North Deering Priority Center

Background: The most common barrier preventing both pedestrians and bicyclists from safely and conveniently getting to where they want to go within priority centers are major road crossings and intersections. A grocery store, school, or other destination may be within a short distance of a neighborhood, but if getting there requires crossing one or more intimidating, highly trafficked intersections, the likelihood people will walk or bike to these destinations is low.

Example Location: Allen’s Corner (the intersection of Routes 26 and 100) in Portland is a large, intimidating intersection to cross. Although there are neighborhoods, schools, and a shopping center in close proximity, walking and biking is not common due to the area’s auto-dependent design.

Potential Fixes: The PACTS Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines provides many examples for making crossings safer for walking and biking. For instance, minimizing the number of lanes, or the width of lanes, is a common practice to free up more space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and balance the needs of all users. Other improvements include median refuge islands, minimizing curb radii, curb extensions, and ADA compliant curb ramps, among others.
**Sidewalks – North Windham Priority Center**

**Background:** In many priority centers there are critical, missing gaps in the sidewalk network. These gaps, often marked by ‘desire paths’ (a dirt path created by foot traffic), are major obstacles for getting around on foot or in a wheelchair.

**Example Location:** In North Windham, the singular focus on providing vehicle access has reduced the overall sense of place in the center. Even in the most heavily developed area of North Windham, sidewalks exist only on one side of Route 302. As a result, shoppers are more likely to get in their vehicles to cross the street rather than walk.

**Potential Fixes:** The Town of Windham is proactively working to enhance the walking and biking environment in North Windham. In 2013, the Town Council adopted the 21st Century Downtown Plan and has been working towards implementing many of its recommendations. The typical process for developing a complete sidewalk network is identifying the gaps, prioritizing segments, and developing a funding plan to construct them.
Accessibility to Transit Stops – Maine Mall Priority Center

**Background:** The roads most suitable for transit are often those designed to carry the most traffic. From a community livability standpoint, this can be challenging. Wide, heavily trafficked roads can be loud, difficult to cross, and uncomfortable or dangerous to walk or bike along. This is particularly true when there are missing sidewalks, no buffer provided between fast moving traffic and pedestrians, little or no road shoulders, and unprotected crossings.

**Example Location:** This bus stop, and several others on Maine Mall Road, serves METRO’s Route 5. On this side of Maine Mall Road there are no sidewalks, no crosswalks, and no amenities at the stop (i.e., landing pad, place to sit, shelter, etc.).

**Potential Fixes:** PACTS is currently working with the region’s transit agencies and other stakeholders to improve the accessibility of transit stops regionwide. In November 2017, PACTS completed Phase I of its Transit Stop Access Project. Phase I identified high priority bus stops for accessibility improvements. Phase II will include final prioritization of bus stops, site design, engineering, and development of project bid and construction documents. Phase III entails the selection of contractors and completion of construction.
Land Use – Oak Hill Priority Center

Background: If destinations are far away and hard to get to people are less likely to walk or bike, and public transit is less viable. Neighborhoods with poor street connectivity (i.e., many dead-ends or culs-de-sac) are also difficult to navigate since they have limited options for direct routes. Ideally, priority centers are designed in a compact manner, with a mix of land uses, and a well-connected and walkable street network.

Example Location: Oak Hill is a residential neighborhood and retail center located on Route 1 about one mile from the Scarborough High School. Historically an auto-oriented area, Oak Hill’s proximity to the High School, to the Eastern Trail, to Hannaford Supermarket, and to the new residential and commercial development underway at Scarborough Downs, make it a logical place to encourage compact development and pedestrian scale design.

Potential Fixes: The Town of Scarborough is actively working to remake Oak Hill. In 2014, the Town drafted the Oak Hill Pedestrian Plan and is now implementing many of its recommendations to encourage more compact development and incorporate streetscape improvements for a more walk and bike friendly environment.
ADA Accessibility – Downtown Saco Priority Center

Background: The intent of the ADA is to give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in the mainstream of public life offered to all Americans. Under the ADA, any modifications to facilities that existed prior to January 26th, 1992 (the effective date), and any new construction, alterations, or additions, must comply with ADA Standards.

Example Location: The picture to the right, taken at the intersection of Main Street/Route 1 and the Hannaford’s entrance/exit in Saco, shows how the City is retrofitting existing curb ramps at this intersection by installing ADA compliant tactile warning devices, known as truncated domes, to alert people with visual impairments of the crossing ahead. As the picture shows, additional improvements can be made here, and in other places along Route 1, to improve the walking and biking experience.

Potential Fixes: The first step is to conduct an ADA self evaluation. For example, PACTS is currently evaluating the ADA compliance of all curb ramps on state-owned roadways in the region. Municipalities will need to evaluate ADA compliance on local roadways, as well as for public facilities and programs.
**Space for Bikes – Freeport Village Priority Center**

**Background:** Many priority centers are located along state roadways built to favor high-speed motorized traffic, resulting in a system that makes biking less safe and less comfortable. In most instances, these roadways can be retrofitted and redesigned over time to provide a transportation network that better serves the safety, health, and economic interests of the community.

**Example Location:** Freeport’s Main Street (Route 1) has millions of visitors each year. In addition to the traffic generated by the outlet stores, Route 1 is a major thoroughfare. In 2018, PACTS invested in a project to repave Route 1 from the Yarmouth/Freeport town line approximately four miles to the intersection of West Street. As part of this project, lane widths were narrowed, and bike lanes were added. Where bike lanes could not fit, shared lane markings and “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs were installed.

**Potential Fixes:** The next step is to continue this bike route through Freeport Village itself (a short-term priority project in the “Portland Area North Bicycle and Pedestrian Implementation Plan”). The picture above shows where the newly installed bike route ends just shy of Freeport Village at the intersection of West Street.
Making It Happen

» Make It Safe
» Build It
» Plan Ahead
» Work Together
» Spread The Word
» Keep It Front and Center
MAKING IT HAPPEN

Just as identifying the gaps in infrastructure is critical to completing the active transportation network, PACTS also needs a blueprint for developing the essential partnerships, policy, programs, and data. This section of the plan provides recommended actions for PACTS that will enable building on the region’s strengths, maximizing its resources, and charting a multi-modal course for the future. The 13 recommendations are organized into six interconnected categories with concrete strategies for achieving a more walkable and bikeable region.
RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

I. MAKE IT SAFE – Analyze & Improve

1. Focus on Safety
2. Adopt Innovative Safety Practices

II. BUILD IT – Invest & Leverage

3. Maximize Current Funding
4. Leverage Outside Funding

III. PLAN AHEAD – Prepare & Strategize

5. Plan for Active Transportation
6. Assist Communities with Adapting to Change

IV. WORK TOGETHER – Partner & Engage

7. Build Engagement
8. Convene Key Stakeholders
9. Strengthen Communication

V. SPREAD THE WORD – Educate & Encourage

10. Amplify Education and Encouragement Efforts
11. Increase Access and Visibility

VI. KEEP IT FRONT AND CENTER – Map & Monitor

12. Map the Network
13. Track Progress
Making the PACTS region safe for active transportation is a priority with cross-cutting benefits. Preventing crashes not only saves lives and reduces injuries, it also improves the perception of safety – which means more people will choose active transportation. As the transportation planning organization for the region, PACTS is positioned to convene partners at the state and local level to collaborate and take action on this important issue.

1. **Focus on Safety**

   Expand regional safety initiatives in partnership with the MaineDOT, FHWA, FTA, and PACTS member municipalities.

   - Work with state and local partners to set specific regional safety goals and create a plan for tracking.
   - Adopt a Vision Zero plan for the region that integrates performance management into improving safety outcomes in the region.
   - Continue to analyze “high crash location” data from MaineDOT to target safety improvements.

2. **Adopt Innovative Safety Practices**

   Implement policies and practices that enable PACTS to address bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns.

   - Develop a process to fast-track solutions that address pressing bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns.
   - Allow PACTS funding to be used for formally sanctioned and approved low cost demonstration projects prior to the design and engineering phase.
   - Incorporate a Multimodal Level of Service evaluation into project development to help ensure safety and accessibility for all users.
MULTIMODAL LEVEL OF SERVICE

Traditionally, the performance of our streets and roads has been assessed using a “Level of Service” metric based on private vehicle operations. By focusing on vehicles rather than people, we have lacked a full picture of how the transportation system performs for passengers, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Using a Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS) metric means tracking delays for all modes, not just automobiles. This ensures that decision-makers and public stakeholders have more information about the consequences and trade-offs of decisions.

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Demonstration projects are becoming an increasingly popular tool for improving the active transportation network. These projects involve temporary low-cost solutions, such as creating a bicycle lane with flagging and cones, or a crosswalk, pedestrian island, or parklets near the street. This testing ground provides an opportunity to alleviate community concerns, demonstrate value, or to address any design problems before final construction. The Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) recently developed a toolkit called Imagine People Here that is available for free on their website. BCM is also working on developing a “lending library” of materials for demonstration projects such as stencils and bollards.
Completing the active transportation network will require full utilization of all available funding tools. Through incrementalism and a commitment to coordination, PACTS can help the region make the most of its limited funds. Likewise, PACTS can bring additional funding to active transportation projects by building strong partnerships and being ready with plans that capture every opportunity.

II. BUILD IT
Invest & Leverage

3 Maximize Current Funding
Integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements into other PACTS-funded projects.

a Incorporate the PACTS Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines into the PACTS project development process to take full advantage of active transportation.

b Coordinate with MaineDOT and PACTS municipalities to develop a process for flagging opportunities and incorporating active transportation elements into paving, resurfacing, and other road projects.

4 Leverage Outside Funding
Ensure readiness to access infrastructure funding by maintaining the project plans and relationships needed to develop funding proposals.

a Maintain an inventory of shovel-ready projects that can be used to seek funding as it becomes available from sources outside of PACTS – including U.S. DOT BUILD grants.

b Cultivate a strong network of strategic partnerships with anchor institutions, trails and land trust organizations, and others with a common interest in funding the active transportation network.
The PACTS Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guide is intended to assist the cities and towns in the PACTS region in the selection and design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Guide complements and extends the principles and design guidance provided by other state and national resources, and is intended to be a simple, “one stop” resource for the region.

The Guide’s design recommendations are not intended to impose standards, but rather offer guidance for what can sometimes be a complicated process. The chapters are filled with visual aids and pull together best practices by facility type from public agencies and municipalities nationwide.
Creating walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly places requires robust and ongoing planning. PACTS has an integral role in regional and local active transportation plans and will serve as a resource, convener, and partner to help cities and towns plan for changes in technology and travel behavior.

Support efforts to expand and improve local and regional active transportation networks.

Help PACTS cities and towns to create and implement detailed active transportation plans.

Work with PACTS member communities to develop tools for transit-supportive land use at key locations.

Encourage smart growth by reviewing and refining PACTS priority centers for appropriateness and feasibility of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit investments.

Prepare the region for rapid advances in transportation technologies and changes in climate by working with municipalities on approaches that maximize benefits while avoiding problems.

Develop educational resources about bikeshare programs, autonomous vehicles, rideshare companies, and other shared mobility technologies.

Encourage the integration of sustainable infrastructure into PACTS project development.
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Transit oriented development (TOD) is a type of development that maximizes the amount of residential, commercial, and community space within walking distance of public transit. In doing so, TOD aims to increase transit ridership by reducing the use of private cars and promoting sustainable urban growth. This form of development can provide a range of benefits to all across many sectors of a community, including economic, environmental, and quality of life benefits.

TOD sites are typically centered around a transit stop, such as a train station or bus stop, and are designed to be more walkable, through using smaller block sizes and reducing the land area dedicated to automobiles. Common characteristics include a well-connected street grid designed for all users, a mix of land uses, and building design scaled to pedestrians. A wide range of locations can take advantage of TOD, including traditional villages, commercial corridors, and city centers.

Transit Oriented Development Concept Plan, Freetown, MA (from South Coast Rail Corridor Plan, June 2009)
The PACTS region is fortunate to have a wealth of stakeholders interested in making it possible for people to commute, shop, and play without always depending on a personal automobile. While PACTS has historically used a mix of approaches to gather input from these stakeholders, there are numerous groups and approaches still to be tapped. Recent PACTS planning efforts have been successful in engaging older adults, people with disabilities, and racial/ethnic minorities, as well as representatives from anchor institutions and large employers. PACTS is committed to continuing on this path toward more inclusive planning efforts and expanded partnerships.
7 Build Engagement

Foster input and involvement in PACTS projects from a range of stakeholders by offering many different channels for engagement.

a Cultivate a high-quality public engagement approach that ensures diverse and equitable engagement for PACTS-funded projects by including under-represented groups through tailored outreach, use of interpreters, and connections with local non-profits, advocacy groups, and community organizations.

b Provide accessible and interactive events that bring stakeholders together to celebrate accomplishments, discuss projects and concerns, and build relationships and partnerships.

c Develop meaningful channels for participation by anchor organizations across the region (such as health care, educational institutions, and other major employers) that lay the foundation for future partnerships.

8 Convene Key Stakeholders

Form an ad hoc multi-sector working group to drive implementation of this plan by forming partnerships, pursuing funding opportunities, and providing feedback on projects and policies.

a Establish an Active Transportation Working Group appointed by the PACTS Policy Committee. This working group should have a balanced representation including municipal engineers and planners, advocacy groups, non-profits, health care, businesses, and users of active transportation - especially people with disabilities and other under-represented groups.
Expand the reach and accessibility of information about the work of PACTS.

**a** Update and modernize the PACTS website and develop a social media presence.

**b** Develop and implement a best practices communication strategy around PACTS’ role in active transportation that targets the full range of stakeholders represented by PACTS, including considerations for age, disability, language, and geography.
INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

In 2017, PACTS began several efforts to broaden feedback and involvement in the regional transportation planning process. The Transportation and Community Well-Being Roundtable, held in May 2017, included representatives from community and social service agencies, medical providers, public health organizations, and transportation agencies. As a result, PACTS launched the Transportation & Community Well-Being Network with funding support from the National Center for Mobility Management. Also, in 2017, PACTS began regularly convening stakeholders from a range of sectors through the Transit Advisors Group. This group has offered a channel for meaningful and ongoing planning input from stakeholders representing sectors including community and social services, medical providers, downtown and economic development groups, environmental organizations, housing, and higher education.
Building a robust active transportation network only makes sense if the sidewalks, trails, paths and transit lines are being used. Many people have grown accustomed to hopping into their automobile for all trips. Change in travel behavior rarely occurs overnight, but much can be done to educate and encourage individuals to take advantage of active transportation options. Educational programs and materials can help people feel more confident walking, biking, and navigating public transit. Targeted programs and resources can also help open up the active transportation network to traditionally underserved populations, such as new immigrants and refugees, seniors and children, individuals with disabilities, and those without a car. Seemingly small things like clear wayfinding, employee incentive programs, and bus shelters with real time information can make a big difference in increasing the accessibility of transportation options.
10 Amplify Education and Encouragement Efforts

Act as a strategic partner for active transportation education and encouragement programs in the region.

a Use the PACTS network to help promote education and encouragement messages targeting the general public.

b Provide in-kind support for leveraging additional funding for education and encouragement efforts in the PACTS region through letters of support and grant-writing assistance.

c Offer funding for education and encouragement programs at local organizations with the capacity to reach residents throughout the PACTS region.

11 Increase Access and Visibility

Support investments that make multimodal travel more visible and easier to navigate, such as wayfinding and marketing campaigns.

a Encourage creative placemaking and public art to elevate the prominence of the active transportation network.

b Implement recommendations from Moving Southern Maine Forward that advance the transit rider experience, such as a unified brand, electronic fare collection, and real-time information for all services.

c Support transportation demand management innovations in the region, including the effort to establish a Transportation Management Association for Greater Portland and initiatives by anchor institutions and employers.
TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

Transportation demand management (TDM) refers to a set of strategies designed to encourage smarter travel options so people can get around more easily without a car. The intent is to shift more typical car dependent travel practices to other modes by creating a safe and accessible active transportation network for all, as well as providing education, awareness, and incentives to travelers. These choices are better for the environment, reduce congestion, make it safer and easier to bike, walk, or take transit, and improve the overall efficiency of our transportation network. TDM strategies include improving bicycling and walking conditions, bikeshare programs, subsidized transit passes, mixed-use development, telecommuting, carpooling and car sharing programs, and adjusting parking pricing and availability. This suite of strategies can be implemented by local governments, individual employers, non-profits and advocacy groups, and Transportation Management Associations with public and private partners.

University of New England Bikeshare, Biddeford
GO MAINE

GO MAINE is a collaboration of the Maine Turnpike Authority and the MaineDOT which promotes healthy, economical, and eco-friendly modes of travel by: providing ride matching for commuters; assisting employers and employees with commuter options; and working with planning agencies, businesses, advocacy groups, and other partners to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles in Maine. GO MAINE rewards commuters with various discounts at local businesses, and it is free to join!

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Creative placemaking incorporates art and local culture into the built environment to make or rejuvenate public spaces. These efforts are often community-driven and - through partnerships, community engagement, and stewardship - help deepen a sense of place and community pride. The creative placemaking approach can be applied to parks, public spaces, and our transportation network. PACTS is currently partnering with Portland Trails, Portland Public Schools, the City of Portland, and Greater Portland Metro to create a pocket park at the Metro stop serving students from Casco Bay and Portland Arts and Technology High Schools. Making transit more appealing and engaging will increase and broaden the demographics of transit ridership. When more people are using transit, the system will improve for all, and especially benefit those who need it most.
In order to grow and enhance our active transportation network as efficiently and equitably as possible, we need to have a firm understanding of what is working or not working, and who is using it. Monitoring and measuring the network helps identify service gaps and quantify social equity by measuring access to key services such as schools, grocery stores, and health care providers. Collecting this data can drive local and regional planning efforts and inform policy in an iterative and ongoing manner. Tracking performance is essential to measuring success and developing effective plans for overcoming barriers.

## Map & Monitor

*Map the Network*

Maintain a spatial database of the region’s active transportation network to use in conjunction with other spatial data to help improve decision-making.

- Maintain a web-based interactive map that shows the current infrastructure and the gaps in the network, as a tool for local communities to use in making decisions about future planning and implementation projects.

*Track Progress*

Regularly collect, analyze, and share data relating to the active transportation network that can be used to inform data-driven decision-making at the local and regional level.

- Establish a permanent bicycle and pedestrian count program that tracks activity in key areas and enables PACTS to observe and respond to trends.
- Develop and maintain an online transportation dashboard to track performance across different metrics and to advise local and regional planning and project development.
- Develop a system for monitoring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, and Environmental Justice.
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COUNT PROGRAMS

There is an abundance of data for how motorized vehicle traffic moves throughout our transportation network, collected over the span of decades. By comparison, there is little information on where, and how often, people walk or bike. As more people choose to walk or bike for recreation, or as their primary means of transportation, it is important to collect this information to assist with infrastructure improvements and the prioritization of projects.

Many cities, MPOs, and state DOTs across the country have developed bicycle and pedestrian count programs. Typically, these programs consist of permanent bicycle and pedestrian counters installed at key locations throughout the region. The data from these counters can then be used to track trends in usage over time, and to quantify demand for walking and biking. Some have installed counters with digital readout displays, which generate excitement about the ever-increasing number of cyclists and pedestrians that go by. In San Francisco, for example, a counter that recorded its one millionth cycle trip made the front page of the local newspaper.

Digital bicycle and pedestrian counter, San Francisco CA
NEXT STEPS

» Establish Working Group
» Implement and Evaluate
**NEXT STEPS**

Getting There From Here was developed to provide a blueprint for enhancing active transportation across the entire PACTS region. The plan includes visioning by the Advisory Group, input from municipal staff and leaders, public engagement with a diverse group of stakeholders, and mapping of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This plan outlines strategies that PACTS and its partners can use to advance regional active transportation goals over the next decade. Achieving the plan’s vision of a complete active transportation network across the region will require an ongoing commitment to incremental improvements, collaborations, and innovative investments.

The success of this plan will require strong leadership and oversight from GPCOG staff, member municipalities, transit operators, and key stakeholders. It will also require cooperation with Cumberland and York County governments, MaineDOT, Federal Transit Authority, Federal Highway Administration, and Maine Turnpike Authority. Clear metrics with reliable tracking will help guide the plan’s implementation and assist with the prioritization of future projects. To ensure an effective process, PACTS is committed to the following monitoring, oversight, and engagement activities.

**Establish Working Group**

As described in the “Making It Happen” section, an ad hoc Working Group will be convened to assist with and champion implementation of the plan. This multi-sector group will be staffed by GPCOG and report to the PACTS Planning Committee. The Working Group will include a diverse set of key municipal and community stakeholders with the expertise, connections, and knowledge required to ensure successful implementation. The Working Group will assist with the following activities:

» Forming partnerships with organizations and institutions necessary to advance recommendations in this plan.

» Pursuing and preparing for opportunities to capitalize on public and private funding opportunities to complete active transportation infrastructure projects.

» Making recommendations to PACTS Committees on issues related to active transportation and this plan’s implementation.
Implement and Evaluate

The PACTS Planning Committee will play a lead role in determining priorities and monitoring implementation of this plan. GPCOG staff will work with the Planning Committee to develop an Implementation Plan and tracking table. The Implementation Plan will include metrics to measure progress toward the plan’s goals – including increased safety – and assist in monitoring successful implementation of the plan. Input on prioritization and metrics will be collected from the Working Group, as well as from PACTS members.
Getting There
From Here

A long-range active transportation plan for the PACTS region, October 2018