

Destination 2040: PACTS' Long-Range Transportation Plan

Chapter 2: Plan Development Context

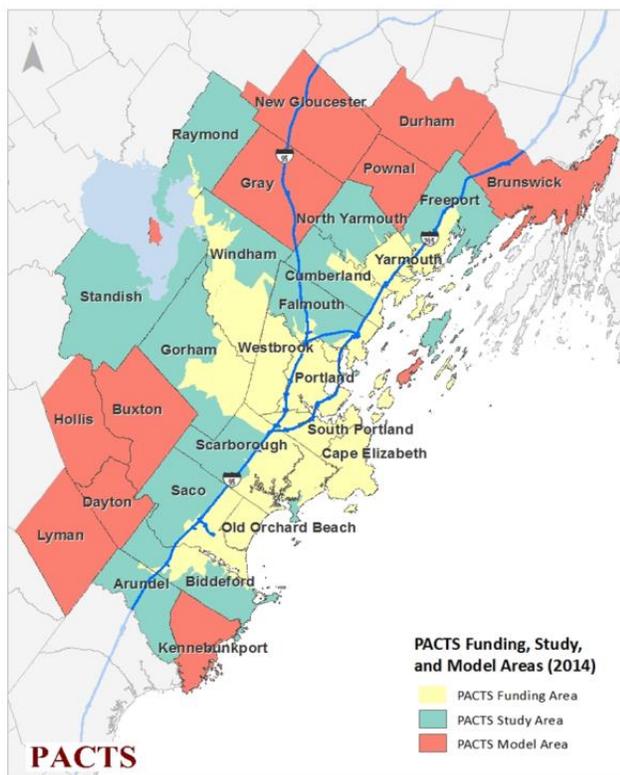
The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System or “PACTS” is the metropolitan planning organization or “MPO” for the urbanized area around and including Portland, Maine. Transportation planning is the primary function of PACTS, specifically for directing millions of dollars in transportation investments in the region. This is *regional* transportation planning across municipal boundaries while looking at the region in a statewide context and including interstate and international considerations for the future – at least 20 years. The transportation system connects people, goods, and services and enables the regional economy.

Long-Range Transportation Plans are required of each MPO through an Act of Congress. As a condition attached to federal transportation financial assistance, the Act requires that transportation projects in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population be based on a transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the states and local governments through a “continuing, comprehensive and cooperative” planning process. This process emphasizes public outreach and engagement of the PACTS membership and other stakeholders.

How the Plan is developed

Every five years PACTS is required to adopt a new or updated Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that accounts for the transportation system as it exists, and documents its deficiencies and needs based on trends and demands, and sets the policies for an investment framework. Goals and objectives are developed to guide the planning and programming needs and strategies and recommendations for implementation over the 20-year period. Recognizing that resources are limited, the framework also is intended to provide a process by which planning studies and projects are prioritized.

Destination 2040 was developed with strategic direction from the membership, a statistically significant survey of 700 citizens from the region on transportation values and priorities, and public forums before and after plan development. Trends were identified and significant implications included in the planning. Data was then gathered on existing and future conditions. The data and analysis, including tables, maps and figures, are all in Chapter 3.



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Public Outreach, Member and Stakeholder Engagement

Plans that impact public policy and funding require extensive engagement of the residents and stakeholders who will benefit from transportation investments or who will be impacted in other ways by transportation projects and service decisions. It is PACTS' membership's position to engage as many year-round residents, visitors, business owners and others who use all modes of transportation in the region and to document transportation needs in the region over the next 25 years. At the direction of our membership leaders, PACTS developed an extensive, two-year process that engaged upwards of 1,000 residents of the PACTS region:

- PACTS Membership Strategic Direction Workshop, June 2013
- 2013 email to our Interested Parties email list regarding the start of this planning process
- Public Outreach Forums (5) prior to plan development, fall 2013
- Transportation Choices and Investment priorities statistically significant public opinion survey of 700 residents in 2014
- Subregional Member Forums (4), fall 2014
- Offer sent in December 2014 (and re-sent in January) to speak to all area chambers of commerce, all area high schools, and all Rotary and Elks Clubs. Spoke at a South Portland Cape Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce meeting, and presented at Scarborough Rotary Club in April
- December 2014 news release that resulted in a January 2015 Portland Press Herald article
- Two freight stakeholder forums, winter 2015
- Progress emails sent to PACTS' Interested Parties email list spring 2015
- March 2016 public forums (4) regarding the final draft Plan and its recommendations.
- Continuous *Destination 2040* planning documents and information posted to the PACTS website



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PACTS Transportation Values and Priorities Survey, 2014

In June 2014, at the direction of the Plan Committee, PACTS commissioned a survey consulting firm to conduct a statistically significant survey of citizens of the entire PACTS region regarding their transportation choices and investment priorities for the Greater Portland metropolitan region over the next 25 years. This research consisted of a quantitative telephone survey with a stratified random sample of 600 residents in the eighteen PACTS member communities. An additional 100 residents of the PACTS Northern region were sampled in order to ensure a statistically comparable sample for this region. The results were for the PACTS region in its entirety, and comparing the results across the four PACTS subregions – the Central, Northern, Western and Southern municipalities of PACTS.

Survey Highlights: Future Transportation Related Decisions

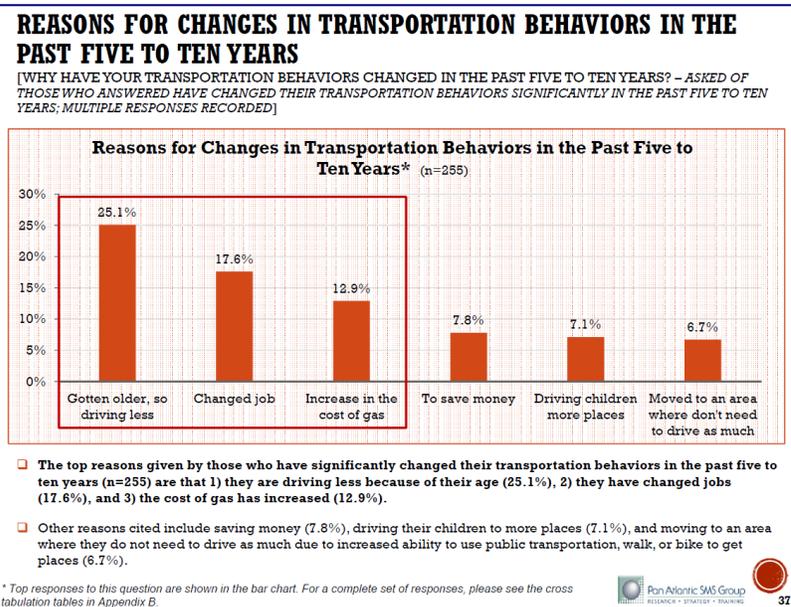
Here are the highlights from the 2014 public opinion survey: ¹

1. Fifty-one percent (51%) expect to live in a smaller house and lot near services and transit in the next five to ten years. This is a major finding and is consistent with the national and state trends to relocate in or near town and city centers. This also aligns with the trends demanding more infrastructure for safer walking and biking, and connecting to transit use.

2. Forty-three percent (43%) of survey respondents indicated that in the past 5 to 10 years they have “significantly” changed their transportation behavior. This shows people’s adaptability to change, and suggests that people will continue to change their travel behavior in the future.

3. Twenty-eight percent (28%) currently own, or might buy an alternative fueled car when they replace their current car.

4. Rates of walking and bicycling for transportation are up since our 2008 public opinion survey (and are up from other surveys).



(Sample page from survey)

¹ The complete Survey can be found here:

<http://www.pactsplan.org/long-range-transportation-planning/the-2015-update-process-status-report/public-opinion-survey/>

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5. Survey respondents indicated a strong desire for more frequent transit service and expanding service to more of the PACTS region.
6. More respondents would ride buses if there were more service geographically, more frequent service and real time passenger information on their smart phones.
7. Strong support for additional funding for transportation: Seventy-two percent (72%) would increase funding for major roads, 64% for sidewalks/paths/bike lanes, and 57% for public transportation.
8. There was no consensus on how to pay for better transportation system.

State Regulatory Context

Passed in 1991 and updated several times in the intervening years, the [Maine Sensible Transportation Policy Act](#) (23 MRSA §73 and 73-A) has become even more meaningful for transportation and land use planning. The Act requires coordinated land use and transportation planning in order to protect highway safety, mobility, and to enhance economic opportunity, community livability, and environmental quality. The law directs MaineDOT to develop incentives for communities that adopt and implement plans that reduce reliance on the state highway system. Before undertaking such projects, MPOs may consider or recommend land use strategies that preserve corridor capacity, manage corridor mobility, protect public investments in Maine's transportation system, and reduce the costs of sprawl by promoting transportation-efficient land uses along transportation corridors. The Maine Sensible Transportation Policy Act requires a process for transportation planning, capital investment and project decisions that will:

1. Minimize harmful environmental impacts of transportation. Evaluate the full range of reasonable transportation alternatives for all significant highway construction or reconstruction projects.
2. Give preference to transportation system management, transportation demand management, and improvements to the existing system and other modes before increasing highway capacity through road building activities.
3. Repair and improve roads and bridges to provide a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network.
4. Reduce reliance on foreign oil.
5. Increase reliance on energy-efficient forms of transportation.
6. Meet the mobility needs of rural and urban residents and the unique needs of the elderly and disabled.
7. Be consistent with the purposes, goals, and policies of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act.
8. Incorporate a participation process for local government and the public.

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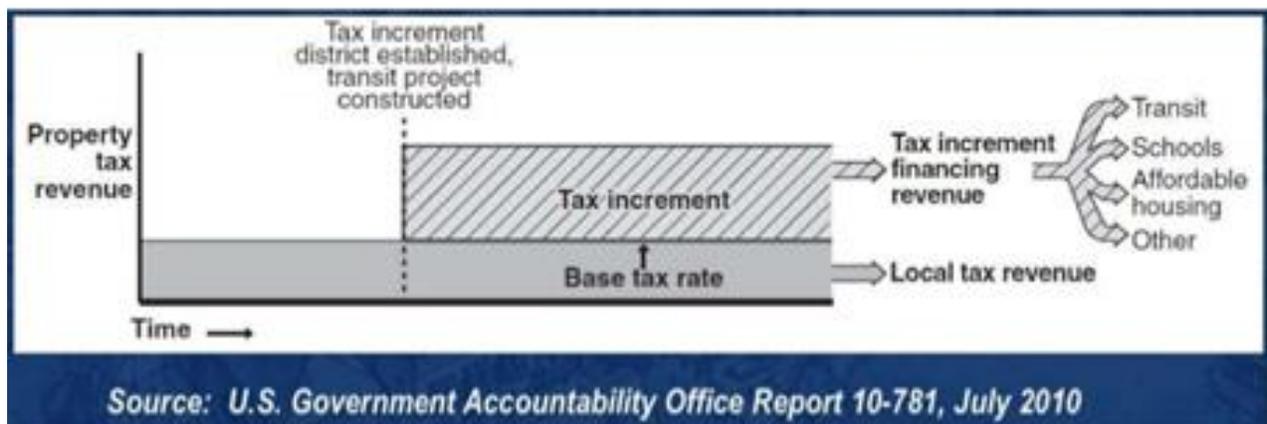
The Act has also been amended to include performance goals stipulating that MaineDOT include the following performance measures as part of its capital improvement plans and program delivery:

- A. By 2022, improve all Priority 1 and Priority 2 corridors so that their safety, condition, and serviceability Customer Service Level (CSL) equals 'fair' or better;
- B. By 2027, improve all Priority 3 corridors so that their safety, condition and serviceability CSL equals 'fair' or better;
- C. By 2017, implement a pavement program for all Priority 4 corridors that maintains their ride quality CSL at 'fair' or better
- D. Continue the light capital paving program on a 7-year cycle for Priority 5 corridors outside compact areas as defined in section 754; and
- E. By 2015, develop and implement a similar asset priority and CSL system of measurement for all major freight and passenger transportation assets owned or supported by the department, including capital goals.

The Maine Transit Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Law

Passed in 2009, this change to the State TIF law added new language that enables municipalities to designate Transit TIF districts and corridors in which a portion of new development values may be used for transit capital and operating expenses. The corridors are limited to one-quarter mile from a transit hub or 500 feet on either side of a transit corridor, either existing or planned. The municipality captures a portion of the new value created by the economic development adjacent to transit, or within planned hubs, and uses a portion of the funds to augment that service for further economic development and or to use Transit TIF funds as an incentive for private development that is oriented to and supports transit. <http://www.cdfa.net/cdfa/cdfaweb.nsf/ordredirect.html?open&id=mainetif2009changes.html>

Tax Increment Financing

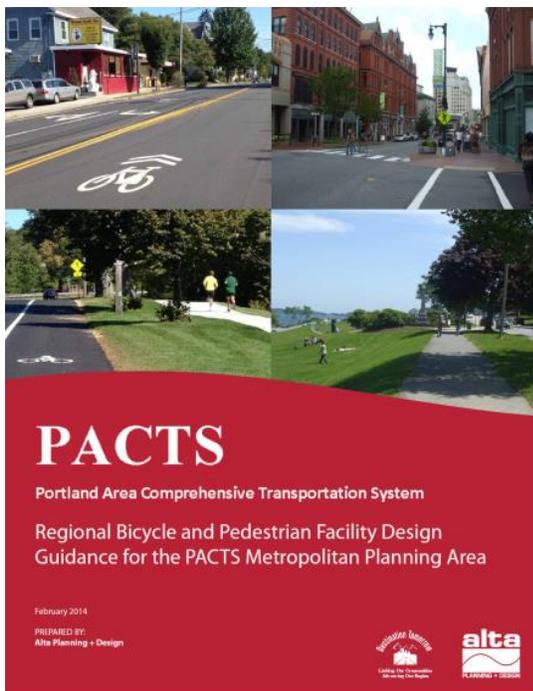


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MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy

The MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy, developed in 2013 and 2014, and formally approved in June, 2014 outlines how MaineDOT and its project partners will consider the needs of all users when planning and developing projects. MaineDOT strongly supports a multimodal transportation system, and recognizes that pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, separated facilities, transit stops, ADA-accessible routes, etc., are crucial elements of the transportation system. In addition, a safe, multi-modal, and vibrant transportation system is vital to Maine's economy, and to the community environments which are such an important component to our transportation system. PACTS has integrated the intent of this policy into the *Destination 2040* Plan and recommendations.

The Policy and more information can be found here: <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/completestreets/>



PACTS developed Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines in conjunction with MaineDOT in 2014

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Federal Regulatory context and Legislation: "MAP-21" and Performance Based Planning

With the passage of new Federal transportation legislation in 2012, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, known as "MAP-21", strengthened the federal government's growing focus on using performance-based approaches in transportation planning within transportation agencies processes. MAP-21 established national goals and calls for the use of performance-based approaches within metropolitan transportation planning and statewide and nonmetropolitan transportation planning to support those national goals. It also requires that agencies set targets in relation to a set of national performance measures, and calls for coordination of target-setting between States and MPOs to ensure consistency.

In addition to planning factors, MAP-21 establishes broad national goals in seven performance areas [23 USC § 150(b)]:

- ▶ **Safety** – To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
- ▶ **Infrastructure Condition** – To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
- ▶ **Congestion Reduction** – To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
- ▶ **System Reliability** – To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
- ▶ **Freight Movement and Economic Vitality** – To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development.
- ▶ **Environmental Sustainability** – To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- ▶ **Reduced Project Delivery Delays** – To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices

Federal Requirements for Performance-Based Planning

Metropolitan transportation planning: "[MPOs]..., in cooperation with the State and public transportation operators, shall develop long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs through a performance-driven, outcome-based approach to planning." 23 USC § 134(c)(1); 49 USC § 5303(c)(1). "The metropolitan transportation planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals...." 23 USC §134(h)(2); 49 USC § 5303(h)(2).

Statewide and nonmetropolitan transportation planning: "The statewide transportation planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals...and the general purposes [of the public transportation program]. The performance measures and targets established [in relation to national performance measures] shall be considered by a State when developing policies, programs, and investment priorities reflected in the statewide transportation plan and statewide transportation improvement program." 23 USC § 135(d)(2); 49 USC § 5304(d)(2).

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Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP)

Destination 2040 is the first PACTS regional transportation plan to be developed in accordance with the guidance from MAP-21 and FHWA that outlines a federal process for developing “performance-based plans”. As a strategic document that lays out a vision for the future, the Plan is by design intended to communicate key transportation issues to the public. But it is also a technical document to be followed by officials to improve the performance of the regional transportation system in a manner which can be measured against existing conditions. Over time, adjustment can be made depending on outcomes. A performance-based transportation plan plays a key role in a performance-based planning and programming process, as shown in Figure 2-1 below.

A performance-based transportation plan should include the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baseline information on the transportation system 2. Goals and objectives 3. Performance measures 4. Preferred Trends and Targets | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. System Performance Report 6. Forecasts of Future Conditions and Needs 7. Strategies and Investments 8. Financial plan |
|---|---|

Figure 2-1 Performance-based Planning and Programming



Source: FHWA Performance-based Planning and Programming Guidebook, Page iv.

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Metropolitan Transportation Planning Eight (8) Federally Required Planning Factors

The *Destination 2040* Plan is intended to direct the planning and project activities PACTS and the region will undertake to develop eligible projects for PACTS' Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The regional TIP is then included in the statewide plans of the Maine DOT. Federal law requires all MPOs to consider each of the eight factors² to the right in the Plan's development.

While these are required factors, the LRTP Committee included other considerations in developing the plan such as regional and national trends, public health and transportation, climate change adaptation, emergency response, workforce development, housing and transportation costs, and planning for economic competitiveness.³



Falmouth/I-295 in the foreground with Portland in the distance

Metropolitan transportation planning must consider the following eight (8) federally required planning factors:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

² Source: 23 Code of the Federal Regulations Section 450.306

³ Source: 23 Code of the Federal Regulations Section 450.306

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Six Principles of Livability from USDOT

Fostering livable communities—places where coordinated transportation, housing, and commercial development gives people access to affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation — is a transformational policy shift for the USDOT.

Over the last 50 years, transportation spending has often been poorly coordinated with other infrastructure investments resulting in auto-dependent residential communities where access to job opportunities and key amenities is inadequate and expensive. The Livable Communities initiative addresses these and other related issues to show how USDOT and its partners pursue coordinated, place-based policies and investments that increase transportation choices and access to public transportation services. The PACTS membership and residents believe these Six Principles are relevant here and have incorporated them into the Plan in Goals and Strategies of Chapter 4.

1. Provide more transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our dependence on oil, improve air quality and promote public health.
2. Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
3. Improve economic competitiveness of neighborhoods by giving people reliable access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs.
4. Target federal funding toward existing communities – through transit-oriented and land recycling – to revitalize communities, reduce public works costs, and safeguard rural landscapes.
5. Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the effectiveness of programs to plan for future growth.
6. Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods, whether rural, urban or suburban.



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Sustain Southern Maine

In 2010, the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) was awarded a \$1.6 million, 3-year Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. This grant funded the initial planning phase of the Sustain Southern Maine program, and a Partnership of over 40 communities, organizations, and businesses. The work spanned a geography that encompassed the modeling and planning areas of PACTS, and the MPO for the urbanized area around Kittery known as the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System or KACTS.

The inter-related approach resulted in a suite of regionally applicable strategies and actions related to transportation, housing, infrastructure, economic development, natural resources, and social equity aimed at creating a more prosperous region.



PACTS & Sustain Southern Maine

PACTS is one of the original Sustain Southern Maine Partnership members. During the planning phase, PACTS' and KACTS' long range transportation plans served as the foundation for SSM's Multimodal Transportation Plan. That Plan was endorsed by the executive committees of both metropolitan planning organizations.

Moving Sustain Southern Maine Ahead: *Destination 2040* Visionary Plan

As Sustain Southern Maine transitions to implementation, PACTS plays a critical role in shaping the region and in seeing the vision for a prosperous region through to fruition. The integration of shared goals, strategies, and actions into *Destination 2040* creates an effective and visionary long range plan better able to respond to the region's needs and aligned with other regional goals related to housing, jobs, equity, and resilience.

The alternative growth projections previously generated through the regionally relevant Gorham East-West Corridor Study provided the foundation on which these collective goals, strategies and actions were built and refined. The choice to build on these alternative growth projections moves the PACTS region away from reactive planning to proactively planning for a region of thriving centers; Centers of Opportunity, tested through the SSM pilot projects created a context sensitive process resulting in alternative scenarios for more robust centers. Adoption of this concept and process into the PACTS planning and decision-making framework further cements the concept and focuses limited transportation dollars in a more efficient manner. The combined action of aligning goals and focusing investments through a centers based approach will strengthen the region's economy by moving us toward an accessible and expanded transit system, increasing the region's housing affordability, expanding employment options, and attracting business.

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For more than 30 years, PACTS has worked with its membership, interested parties, the public, the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT, the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA), and Federal agencies in the development of this regional long-range plan. In previous processes and again through this process, the Plan includes an evaluation of the eight federally required Planning Factors, and includes other factors pertaining to the Greater Portland area, that stakeholders and the public asked to be included, taking into consideration the uniqueness of the area, including our coastal and inland geography, economic and sociological issues facing the region. These additional purposes round out the needs of the regional transportation system for the upcoming 25 years.

MaineDEP regulations, and to be consistent with MaineDOT's long-range plan, PACTS, in collaboration with the FHWA, the MaineDEP and the MaineDOT has developed this plan to extend its long-range transportation planning horizon to the Year 2040. PACTS' Goals, Objectives and Strategies are consistent with Maine DOT's Goals and Objectives from its current statewide transportation plan, Connecting Maine:

- Address congestion and safety at key intersections
- Address mobility and congestion
- Increase the use of public transportation
- Provide passenger rail service and or transit from Portland to Brunswick
- Pursue Access Management, Transportation System Management, and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and techniques strategies. Additionally, the PACTS membership has articulated in each Plan update the major purposes for the plan in addition to the Federal Factors, or that provide more specificity in planning for the PACTS region. These are reviewed each time the plan is updated and reflect the needs and concerns in 2015 looking out to 2040.

The *Destination 2040 Plan* also includes major purposes identified in the previous plan which are still relevant. These are:

- 1. Maintain and further Increase a Regional Approach**
- 2. Manage potential growth in Travel Demand and Congestion**
- 3. Fully integrate Land Use and Transportation Policies and Decisions**
- 4. Plan for combined household housing and transportation costs**
- 5. Increase the use of Transit options**
- 6. Address the transportation needs of an Aging Population**
- 7. Develop strategies for adapting to Climate Change**
- 8. A need for a tighter link between PACTS studies/plans and its funding decision**
- 9. Prioritize the increasingly inadequate Federal, State and local transportation funding**
- 10. Rising energy and fuel price**

These factors will be expanded on in Chapter 3 and 4.