

## Project Update #3 for GPCOG/Southern Maine RTDP

Southern Maine Short-Term Regional Transit Development Plan / GPCOG

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Date/Time: June 27, 2017 / 12:30 PM  
Place: Casco Bay Room, GPCOG, 970 Baxter Blvd., Portland, ME  
Next Meeting: TBD  
Attendees: Stephanie Carver (GPCOG); Art Handman (So. Portland Transit); Ben Lake (GPCOG); Gregory Jordan (METRO); Hank Berg (Casco Bay Lines); John Duncan (PACTS); Kristina Egan (GPCOG); Marina Douglass (NNEPRA); Amy Geren (Portland Downtown);  
Stantec: Sasha Pejic, John Gobis, David Verbich, Graeme Masterton, Brian Putre  
Absentees: Al Schutz, Robert Currie  
Distribution: Stantec and GPCOG, PACTS, et al.

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### 1. Updates on Task 3 – Stakeholder Engagement

Stantec has conducted three main stakeholder engagement tasks: regional employer interviews, GPCOG transportation round table, and an online survey of riders and non-riders. The main objectives of all tasks is to understand travel behavior and patterns, transit use, and barriers to transit use.

The employer survey has revealed that transportation is not a large concern. All employers contacted provide ample free employee parking, and transit use is minimal. One caveat is that Stantec contacted large employers, and employee transport behavior at smaller firms, particularly located in urban areas of the region, like downtown Portland, may result in different findings. USM has a recent travel survey that is worth reviewing by all providers.

The round table reinforced the notion that vulnerable populations rely heavily on transit and that certain improvements, such as increased frequency and minimized transfer times, are desired.

The survey closed Monday June 19 with 414 responses. Preliminary findings suggest that overall, most respondents are satisfied with transit service, but want improved transfers and frequency.

Stantec will now analyze the survey results in detail and cross-reference findings with employer interviews and round table findings. Further tasks will involve outreach to local policy makers and councils.

### 2. Update on Task 4 – Background Analysis

Stantec is assembling a detailed background analysis to lay the foundation for recommendations and needs assessment. Stantec presented some salient findings and invited a discussion, particularly related to understanding recent ridership changes and farebox recovery ratio.

Operators provided valuable feedback that will help Stantec improve our analysis. Also, Stantec will address concern over service/study area, certain statistics and figures, and provide peer comparisons where appropriate.

Related to MaineCare trips and decreasing ridership of RTP and YCCAC:

**Design with community in mind**

**Project Update #3 for GPCOG/Southern Maine RTDP**

Page 2 of 3

- The increased ridership or “dumping” from LogistiCare should be apparent with 2016 figures
- If the downward trend is true, then Stantec should try to investigate where these rides are dumped to: taxi, dial-a-ride service, etc.
- A good place to get some background is the Strategic Plan of the State of Maine

Stantec will continue working on this task, and include a narrative of all stakeholder engagement results. A draft is expected to be submitted at the end of July.

**3. Update on Task 5 – Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures**

Stantec developed goals, objectives and performance measures aimed at guiding the development and success of the regional transit plan, as well as transit both at the regional level and at the operator level. These criteria are also meant to feed into the evaluation criteria from Task 10 – Prioritization Framework.

Feedback from participants include:

- Safety needs to be a separate goal
- We should investigate how the strategy fits with FTA's Performance-Based Planning
- Sustainability, financial and environmental, are two separate goals
- Increasing accessibility, or the ability to reach different destinations and opportunities by transit, for Title VI populations could be an objective
- We can consider defining goals more broadly and regionally:
  - o Connectivity
  - o Accessibility
  - o Financial suitability

Stantec will reach out to the various operators to develop specific criteria, that will then help inform regional criteria. Stantec may also wish to consider recommending criteria not only for the region or an area, but for a corridor too. Whether data disaggregated at that level is available may be a limited factor.

**4. Update on Task 10 – Evaluation Criteria**

Stantec drafted evaluation criteria, along with background and rationale, for capital projects and for state of good repair projects. Stantec has also provided material from LA Metro's Call for Projects to demonstrate a best practices example of how to competitively evaluate regional projects.

Stantec then provided scoring examples for one capital project and for one state of good repair project. Stantec is now done with this task.

**5. MaineCare and Non-emergency medical transportation**

Stantec reviewed the thorny issue of MaineCare and non-emergency medical transportation. This nationwide problem is growing. Stantec provided a background on the topic and examples of ways to address the growing and costly problem of patient dumping on ADA transit service providers.

Essentially, trip by trip eligibility, together with improving accessibility of conventional transit and its promotion, can help move non-emergency medical trips (from MaineCare) from specialized to conventional transit.

**6. Approaches to homeless and transit**

Given the prevalence of homeless loiterers that Stantec observed during its public outreach activities, we were asked to provide some guidance on the prevalent social issue. We highlighted CTA in Chicago, but the main takeaway is to be creative, and to team with social service partners to address this issue. Enforcement for law-breaking is important, but social and mental health services should help provide crucial services related to housing, jobs, mental health and drug counselling. Partnerships are essential, as transit agencies cannot and should not tackle this social problem alone.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. Stantec will revise and update working drafts for Tasks 4 and 5
2. Stantec will execute a detailed analysis of the online survey data
3. Stantec will begin Tasks 6 and 7
4. A next meeting, likely in August, will be coordinated with GPCOG

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

**Stantec Consulting Services Inc.**