

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System



Linking our Communities . Advancing our Region

Public Involvement Policies and Practices

of the

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System

(PACTS)

Adopted on April 26, 2018

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland Urbanized Area
970 Baxter Boulevard, Suite 201 • Portland, Maine 04103
Telephone: (207) 774-9891 • Fax: (207) 774-7149 • www.pactsplan.org

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction	1
II. Federal and State Perspectives	3
III. Overview of PACTS Policies and Practices	6
IV. Public Comments Received	11
V. Unified Planning Work Program	12
A. Public Input to the Development of the UPWP	12
B. Public Input to PACTS Studies	13
VI. Long Range Transportation Plan Update	13
A. Public Notification of Transportation Plan Development	13
B. Public Forums/Workshops	14
C. Public Forum on Draft <i>Destination 2040</i> Update	14
D. Preparation of Final Transportation Plan Update	15
E. Significant Amendments to the Transportation Plan	15
VII. Transportation Improvement Program	15
VIII. Summary	17
 Appendices	
Appendix A: Media Email List	19
Appendix B: Meeting Packet Email Lists	20
Appendix C: Interested Parties Email List	21
Appendix D: Current members of PACTS committees	30

I. Introduction

This document outlines the public involvement processes of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS). This 2018 update of the *PACTS 2017 Public Involvement Policies and Practices* document adds several technical elements required by the federal government. In 2019 PACTS will draft additional changes to this document and seek public comment on those changes.

PACTS was designated in 1975 as the federally mandated "metropolitan planning organization" for the Portland region. The federal government established these locally controlled planning agencies in all urbanized areas of the country to ensure that our transportation taxes are spent cost-effectively. These eighteen communities comprise the PACTS region: Arundel, Biddeford, Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, North Yarmouth, Old Orchard Beach, Portland, Raymond, Saco, Scarborough, South Portland, Standish, Westbrook, Windham and Yarmouth. See the PACTS Region map on the next page, and visit www.pactsplan.org to learn more.

PACTS provides a forum for cooperation and public input into planning and funding decisions by our municipalities, seven transit operators, the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), the Maine Turnpike Authority, the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC), federal agencies, and other public and private transportation organizations. Using a multi-step strategic planning process, our focus is on outcomes within the context of broad community and regional concerns. Our responsibilities include evaluation and programming of proposed transportation improvement projects, sponsorship of transportation studies, monitoring of compliance with national air quality goals, and assistance to other planning agencies.

We work to involve the public in planning and project development for many reasons, including:

- making good decisions, and by thereby protecting the public purse,
- saving time by uncovering issues early,
- ensuring a voice for all affected persons,
- reducing conflict and litigation by allowing people to be heard,
- improving commitment, and
- fostering trust.

This public participation plan also serves as a guide for the work within the PACTS region by the GPCOG and SMPDC transportation planners. Working with and for the PACTS committees and staff, they contribute on a daily basis to the development of the region's transportation studies, plans and projects.

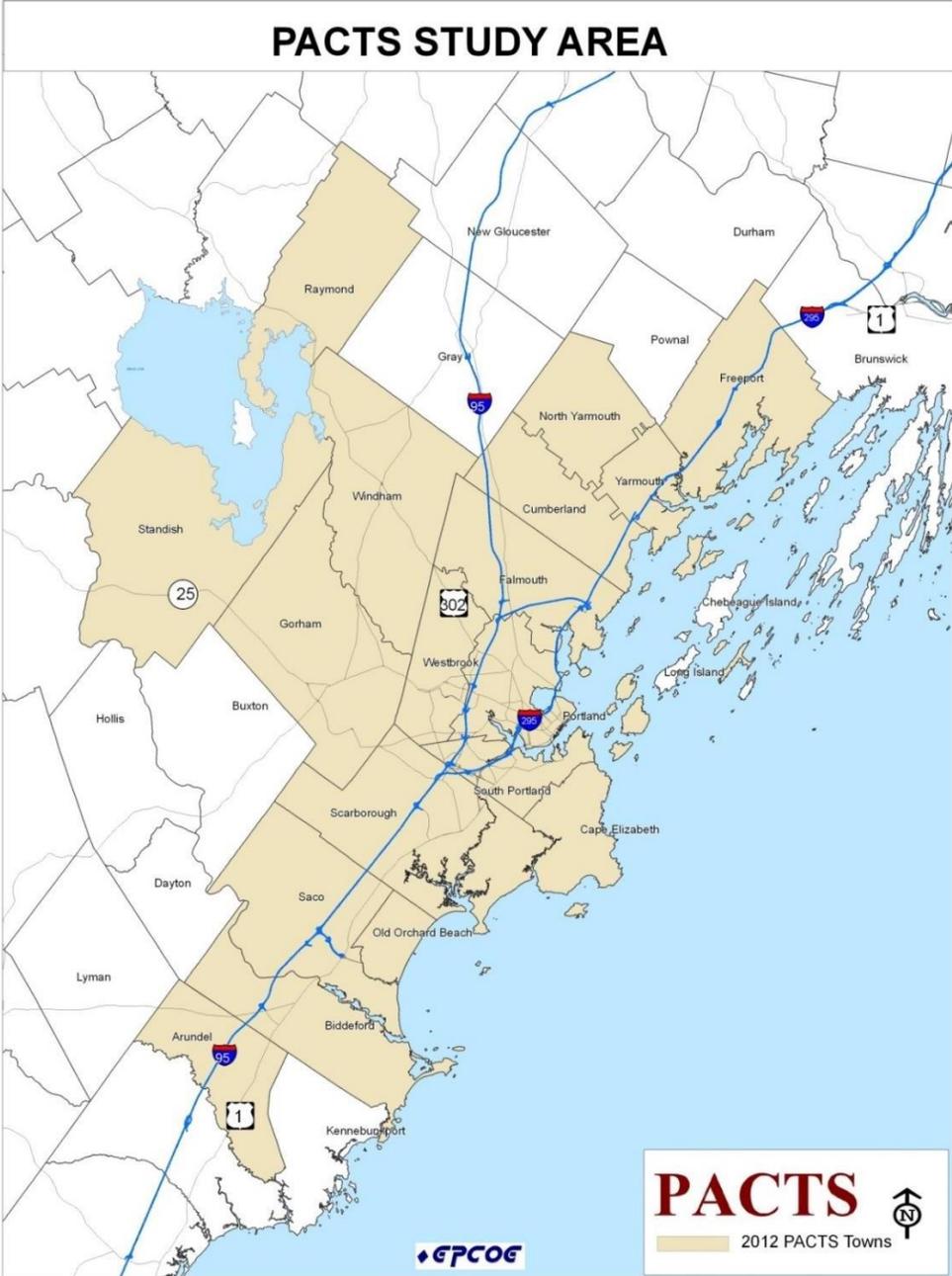
Public participation is essential to the success of any public planning process or project. As a small organization serving a large and diverse region, PACTS strives to identify and address the concerns of everyone – community leaders and citizens – with an interest in

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland Urbanized Area

**970 Baxter Boulevard, 2nd Floor • Portland, Maine 04103
Telephone: (207) 774-9891 • Fax: (207) 774-7149 • www.pactsplan.org**

transportation decisions. Given limited PACTS resources, the participants broadly share the responsibilities for soliciting and applying public input to the region’s transportation systems. The PACTS committee members and staff use the basic tenet of the region’s Institute for Civic Leadership as a guide in our public involvement work:

“If you bring the appropriate people together in constructive ways with good information, they will create authentic visions and sustainable responses to issues and opportunities within their communities and organizations.”



Produced by the Greater Portland Council of Governments - May 2, 2013

II. Federal and State Perspectives

As the federally mandated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Portland region, PACTS must follow certain federal and state rules and regulations. Similarly, Maine's Sensible Transportation Policy Act (STPA) requires the state's four metropolitan planning organizations to establish and follow public participation processes that are effective, timely, and efficient. The following pages outline these federal and state policies, rules and regulations.

The United States Department of Transportation's Metropolitan Planning Regulations are found in Title 23 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 450. The regulations require that all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) develop a Public Involvement Process for the development and update of Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). CFR Section 450.316 (b) mandates that the public involvement programs of metropolitan planning processes must allow for multiple, accessible participation formats, including electronic and in person, and shall include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and transportation improvement programs (TIPs) and meets the requirements and criteria specified below. See more information at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/public-involvement-outreach>.

- (i) Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised;
- (ii) Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects (including but not limited to local jurisdictions);
- (iii) Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;
- (iv) Require adequate notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs;
- (v) Demonstrate explicit consideration of and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes;
- (vi) Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households in an effort to ensure that the requirements of Title VI and Environmental Justice have been met during the planning and project process;

- (vii) When significant written and oral comments are received on a draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. EPA's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;
- (viii) If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available;
- (ix) Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;
- (x) These procedures will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration during certification reviews for transportation management areas, and as otherwise necessary for all MPOs, to assure that full and open access is provided to the MPO decision-making processes;
- (xi) Metropolitan public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.

PACTS considers the requirements and criteria above when periodically reviewing our public involvement process to determine the effectiveness in providing transportation stakeholders and other interested parties with full and open access to the work of PACTS staff and committees.

The Federal FAST Act and federal Metropolitan Planning Regulations (refer to this site for more details: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/metropolitanplanningfs.pdf>.) also list the following transportation stakeholders (which are generally referred to in this document as the general public) which must have an opportunity to participate in the MPO public involvement process:

- Citizens
- Affected public agencies
- Representatives of users of public transportation
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Freight shippers
- Providers of freight transportation
- Privately owned passenger transportation providers
- Representatives of pedestrians and bicyclists
- Representatives of people with disabilities

- Public ports and certain private providers of transportation, including intercity bus operators and employer-based commuting programs (such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program).

The STPA requires MaineDOT and MPO's to establish and follow a public participation process that is effective, timely, and efficient. MaineDOT partners with Regional Planning Organizations (RPO's) and the state's MPO's to develop public outreach strategies that:

- are tailored specifically to their region,
- are consistent with the requirements of the STPA,
- encourage stronger regional partnerships,
- increase grassroots and local government involvement, and
- develop a more consistent statewide approach.

PACTS works with MaineDOT, the Maine Turnpike Authority and the RPO's in the development and execution of the PACTS public involvement process. Where a project has yet to be classified and where the project affects PACTS and the RPO, findings of Significant Highway Projects defined in Subchapter 1, Section 3(k) and Substantial Public Interest Projects described in Subchapter 1, Section 7 of the STPA rule will be determined cooperatively with the RPO and MaineDOT. The PACTS public involvement process envelops all STPA public participation requirements.

Here is a useful list of public involvement tools for MPO's like PACTS to use to develop long-range plans, studies and transportation improvement programs.

1. Meetings: Although meetings tend to be the first approach, keep in mind that many people often are too busy with other demands or have conflicts with scheduled times. MPOs, therefore, should develop contact lists of interested people.
2. Website and social media: MPOs should consider using their websites to obtain feedback from the public about plans and programs, as well as using social media for that purpose
3. News releases and commentaries: MPOs are encouraged to send news releases to media outlets to promote important meetings, transportation plans and other activities. MPOs should consider submitting letters to the editor and opinion pieces to local newspapers to raise awareness of transportation-related issues.
4. Brochures and other mass-distribution materials: Brochures and handouts are relatively inexpensive tools for providing information about policies, programs and other, more specific topics.
5. Newsletters: Some MPOs regularly publish newsletters to inform citizens, communities, the news media and other interested groups about their activities.
6. Presentations: Some MPO staffs make presentations to civic and professional groups to raise awareness about their activities.

7. Workshops, forums and open houses: MPOs occasionally hold workshops, forums and open houses to provide information to the public and/or to obtain a sense of public priorities.
8. Public opinion surveys: Surveys can be used occasionally to obtain specific information. PACTS, for example, once funded a statistically valid telephone survey to gauge the level of support for proposed regionally significant projects.
9. Databases of interested parties: Databases identifying potentially interested parties can enhance public involvement activities. The databases should include information such as mailing addresses, affiliations, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and websites.
10. Visual displays: MPOs should consider using maps, charts and other displays to present information about their plans and programs.
11. Public notices: Notices about meetings, MPO draft plans and programs, or high-profile studies should be posted to MPO websites.

III. Overview of PACTS Policies and Practices

The region's general public has many opportunities to participate in the transportation planning and programming work of PACTS and of the other organizations that have transportation decision-making responsibility. Those many organizations share the responsibilities for soliciting and responding to public input to the planning of the region's transportation systems. The participants in the PACTS process bring the results of their organizations' public outreach to bear in the decisions of PACTS.

Here are examples of opportunities that may provide for the public to participate in the transportation work of other organizations in our region:

- Participate in the work of a non-profit advocacy group.
- Serve on a transit system board or committee.
- Serve on a municipal transportation study committee, including a committee working on a study funded via PACTS, or otherwise provide input to the local study committee.
- Serve on a standing municipal board involved in transportation planning, or otherwise provide input to such a board.
- Participate in special public forums such as

PACTS, GPCOG and SMPDC staff closely monitor and often participate in the work of the other organizations mentioned above. A 2016 example of learning for the first time of other organizations at work on transportation topics is the connection made by GPCOG staff with the Portland Disability Advisory Committee. GPCOG staff will meet with that group to get their input on our Regional Transit Stop Improvement Project.

In September 2016 PACTS updated the PACTS Title VI Plan which outlines efforts taken by PACTS staff and members to reach out proactively to the region's transportation

disadvantaged community. The Title VI Plan is posted on the PACTS website at <http://www.pactsplan.org/about-pacts/public-participation/>. The multi-year plan includes an annual work plan for federal fiscal year 2017 which involves fourteen actions. Perhaps the key action in the annual work plan is for PACTS and GPCOG staff to convene a forum during FFY 2017 of representatives of transportation disadvantaged people and transportation providers in order to consider their suggestions for how PACTS, GPCOG and the region's transportation providers can improve our outreach to the general public and to the transportation disadvantaged people of our region. PACTS and GPCOG staff will communicate a response to forum participants on the recommendations generated at the forum. We will start our organizing of this forum by communicating with local groups (including Catholic Charities, United Way, and Opportunity Alliance) who represent these populations, and talk to them about their thoughts on the potential format and value of such a session.

The balance of this chapter is an overview of the PACTS public involvement policies and practices (subsequent chapters provide additional details). This chapter is organized around the eleven public involvement tools listed on two pages above.

As noted earlier, PACTS works closely with SMPDC and GPCOG staff in the development of the region's transportation studies, plans and projects. GPCOG is the host agency that houses the PACTS staff. The scope of GPCOG services extend far beyond the geographic and subject area of PACTS in Cumberland County, and staff enjoys close working relationships with elected and appointed officials and volunteers in each of its member communities. GPCOG strives to reach out to all area citizens in the execution of its projects and programs, some of which are targeted to individuals. Illustrative of GPCOG's efforts are the adoption of Sustainability Principles which value community and cultural diversity.

PACTS holds their committee meetings, workshops, forums and open houses at convenient and accessible locations and times.

1. PACTS Committee Meetings

The general public has several ways to participate in the meetings of PACTS Committees. Here are some details about the committees, and ways that the public may participate in the committees' work.

- All meetings of PACTS committees (Policy, Executive, Technical, Transit and Planning Committees) are open to the public, and the agendas include an agenda item for public comment. Other procedures and protocol for PACTS committee meetings can be reviewed by obtaining a copy of the PACTS Bylaws which are available on our website. See Appendix D for a list of the current members of the PACTS permanent committees. Visit the PACTS website, www.pactsplan.org, to read the PACTS Bylaws which outline the purposes of the several PACTS committees.
- The PACTS Technical, Planning and Transit Committees each have two general public voting members who are appointed by the Executive Committee. Appointees serve for three-year terms, and may serve for

successive terms at the discretion of the Executive Committee. The individuals are selected from a pool developed by various means, including a memorandum sent to individuals known to be interested in transportation affairs and a memorandum sent to the current PACTS committee members.

- Appendix B lists the non-member people and organizations who currently receive Policy Committee meeting packets and agendas via email. The meeting packet distribution lists for the other four standing committees are different based on our knowledge of people interested in receiving the meeting materials. Agencies and individuals wishing to be added to these email distribution lists are added upon request.
2. PACTS Website and Social Media : The PACTS website, www.pactsplan.org, provides public access to many committee documents, containing both policy and technical information used in the transportation decision-making process. The site also contains information relating to the Transportation Improvement Program, current studies, and other relevant transportation issues. It also includes links to the GPCOG and SMPDC websites. It allows public review and promotes public comment on *Destination 2040*, the PACTS long range transportation plan. We recently improved the website by adding a message at the top of our upcoming meetings page encouraging people to attend our meetings and telling them how to contact us to offer to serve on one of our standing committees.

Several years ago PACTS developed the following Face Book page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Portland-Area-Comprehensive-Transportation-System-159510817448779/>. We used it for some notices about our updated Bicycle/Pedestrian Design Guide, and a related post was its use for the South Portland bike lane demonstration project. Overall we have used the PACTS Face Book page sparingly, but are going to post more to it in the future. We also plan to optimize the process for searching for the PACTS Face Book page so that people can get there by simply typing “PACTS” rather than spelling out the entire Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System name.

3. News Releases, Conferences and Commentaries: PACTS staff distributes news releases to media outlets to promote important meetings, transportation plans and other activities. Recent news releases were:
- February 2016 regarding the PACTS \$650,000 contribution to the construction of two bridges on the Eastern Trail in Scarborough and a \$350,000 contribution to the construction of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations centered around the replacement of the Route 1 bridge over Main Street in Yarmouth.
 - August 2016 regarding the PACTS adoption of the MPO Allocation projects list in July 2016
 - October 2016 regarding the start of our 2020 and 2021 capital projects solicitation process

PACTS staff also submits letters to the Maine Voices section of the Portland Press Herald in order to raise awareness of transportation-related issues, and periodically attends newspaper editorial board meetings for that same purpose.

4. Videos and Brochures: PACTS produces videos and brochures for mass distribution.

PACTS produced five videos during 2010 and 2011 which were posted on the PACTS website, blog and the PACTS YouTube account, and shown on twelve local access television stations, and will continue in the future.

PACTS also produces informational brochures periodically and distributes them widely. In 2003 we wrote and distributed nine 4-page “issue papers” and an 8-page summary of the 2003 *Destination Tomorrow* Plan. In 2009 and 2010 we produced three more information brochures and distributed them widely. In 2013 we produced a 4-page brochure entitled “23 Essential Transportation Investments by 2023 with the Power to Transform Our Region”. We also created display boards for this brochure and displayed them in fourteen city and town halls during 2013 and 2014.

In late 2016 we are developing a 25-page Destination 2040 Summary Plan which we will distribute widely.

5. Annual Reports: PACTS produces an annual report in order to inform citizens, communities, the news media and other interested parties. It outlines the planning and programming work done during the past year and anticipated to be done in the coming year. Copies are made available to the public through distribution at our public forums, at our website, and through the mail to people upon request. The GPCOG and SMPDC organizations also produce similar annual reports which highlight similar transportation topics.

6. Presentations: PACTS staff make presentations to civic and professional groups to raise awareness about the work of PACTS and in order to learn of the groups’ transportation interests. Recent examples include presentations made at:

- 2013 and 2014 displays in the front lobbies of fourteen town/city halls of the PACTS report “23 Essential Transportation Investments By 2023 With The Power To Transform Our Region”.
- Meetings of the Maine Association of Planners and the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association
- The 2015 Bike/Walk Summit regarding the PACTS *Regional Wayfinding Plan*
- Freeport Active Living Complete Streets public meeting/forum presentation.
- The Portland City Council (2016)
- The Scarborough Transportation Committee (2016)
- The South Portland Planning Board (2016)
- The Grow Smart Maine Annual meeting (2016)

7. Workshops, Forums and Open Houses: PACTS holds workshops, forums and open houses to provide information to the public and to obtain a sense of public priorities.

- Eight public forums between 2013 and 2015 regarding Destination

2040 regional transportation plan update – during plan development and after the draft plan was available

- 2016 presentations at classes at the Portland High School
- PACTS study advisory committees, such as the 2015 forums held as part of the PACTS-funded Portland Bayside Transportation Master Plan planning process.

8. Public Opinion Surveys: In 2000, 2008 and 2014 PACTS funded statistically valid regional public opinion telephone surveys. The surveys asked people about their travel behavior. The highlights and detailed report for the 2014 survey are available at the PACTS website at this specific address: <http://www.pactsplan.org/long-range-transportation-planning/the-2015-update-process-status-report/public-opinion-survey/>. We will perform our next public opinion survey in 2017.
9. Interested Parties Email Distribution List: PACTS maintains an “Interested Parties” email distribution list. The list (Appendix C) currently includes 325 individuals. Informational emails are sent to the people on the list for these purposes:
 - To solicit input into substantial changes in the PACTS Public Involvement Plan
 - To solicit input into the development every other year of our 2-year planning and administration work program, called the Unified Planning Work Program (see details in Chapter V)
 - Invitations to PACTS forums, including those related to the update of *Destination 2040* (see details in Chapter VI)
 - Notice of the start every other year of our review of our TIP project selection process (see details in Chapter VII)
 - To solicit input into the endorsement every year of our capital work plan, called the Transportation Improvement Program (see details in Chapter VII)
10. Visual Displays: PACTS uses maps, charts and other displays to present information about plans and programs. These displays are prepared by GPCOG staff and PACTS consultants.
11. Public Notices: PACTS staff sends notices about committee meetings, draft plans and programs, and studies to committee members, the media and/or interested parties by email. PACTS staff also posts these notices on the PACTS website. Periodically, PACTS staff also notifies the general public of major plans and forums via display ads in local newspapers.

The table below presents the public comment periods and notification processes for each of the PACTS policy, plan and program areas for which public input is sought by public notice. In all cases, the public comment periods in the table are calendar

days and are the *minimum* that PACTS will use. In situations when additional time or another extra effort at public outreach is necessary, then PACTS staff and committees will undertake an extra effort.

<u>PACTS Public Input Periods and Notification Processes</u>		
	<u>Public Comment Periods</u>	<u>Notification Processes</u>
Start of Long-Range Plan Update Process	30 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, post on website
Draft Long-Range Plan Update	30 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, post on website
Draft Update of Public Involvement Plan	45 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, and post on website
Solicit public input into development of Unified Planning Work Program early in every odd-numbered year	30 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, and post on website
Start of PACTS biennial review of PACTS process for development and administration of Transportation Improvement Program projects	30 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, and post on website
Draft PACTS Transportation Improvement Program every year	10 calendardays from receipt of notice	Email to Interested Parties, and post on website
Proposed TIP amendments	10 calendardays	Post on website

IV. Public Comments Received

On April 2, 2018 PACTS staff began the required 45-day public comment period on a draft of this Public Involvement Plan Update. Staff distributed copies of the draft document to all PACTS members, to people on the PACTS Interested Parties email list and to other MaineDOT staff people involved in the work of PACTS.

The only comment received was a suggestion to update the Appendix D list of PACTS committee members in this document. This has been done.

V. Unified Planning Work Program

As mentioned above, the region's general public has opportunities to participate in the

PACTS transportation planning work which is outlined in our Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The opportunities described below are organized around the development of the UPWP every two years, and during the performance of the planning work itself.

A. Public Input to the Development of the UPWP

PACTS staff and committees develop the 2-year UPWP during the summer and fall of each odd-numbered year. See the table on page 10 regarding public input periods and notification processes. Here are the public input opportunities and other details on the process:

1. Members of the public serve on standing municipal boards involved in transportation planning, or otherwise provide input to such a board. This participation is relevant here for municipal boards that submit study proposals for funding in the UPWP.
2. PACTS staff sends an email to the Interested and Affected Parties list soliciting input to the development of the UPWP every other year. Appendix C is an update of the email distribution list used in June 2015. A request for public input is also posted on the PACTS website. Public comments and staff responses are shared with all Committees.
3. Copies of the draft final UPWP and approved UPWP are available to the general public upon request.
4. Members of the public are encouraged to speak at PACTS committee meetings during the public comment agenda item (as described above).
5. Members of the public serve on PACTS standing committees (as described above).

B. Public Input to PACTS Studies

The public input opportunities during the performance of studies funded in the UPWP, and other details on the process, are presented here. See later sections of this report for public input opportunities during the development of the long range transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program.

1. Members of the public serve on municipal transportation study committees (such as committees working on studies funded via PACTS), or provide input to local study committees in other ways.
2. Members of the public serve on municipal boards involved in transportation planning, and otherwise provide input to such boards.
3. Members of the public are encouraged to speak at PACTS public forums or public hearings (as noted earlier).

4. Members of the public are encouraged to speak at PACTS committee meetings during the public comment agenda item (as noted earlier).
5. Members of the public serve on PACTS standing committees (as noted earlier).

VI. Long Range Transportation Plan Update (*Destination 2040*)

This chapter provides more details about the general public's opportunities to participate in the development of updates to the PACTS long range plan which is known as *Destination 2040*.

A. Public Notification of Transportation Plan Update Development

As described in the Overview chapter, PACTS staff provides notice every four years to the public of the intent to update *Destination 2040*. This notice shall be posted on the PACTS website and sent to those interested groups and agencies on the email list of *Interested Parties*. The updated Plan will also be posted on the PACTS website. PACTS shall also attempt to reach additional persons interested in the Plan's development by using various public outreach strategies which may include, but are not limited to: newsletters, news releases, newspaper inserts, bulletin boards, and public service advertisements.

The public notice shall include at least the following information:

- a description specifying what changes were made from the original plan,
- a brief description of the planning process tied to a schedule of when decisions will be made,
- how the Plan may affect the region,
- what opportunities exist for public participation, and
- PACTS contact for obtaining further information.

B. Public Forums/Workshops

PACTS will hold public forums to discuss the various components of the *Destination 2040* at the beginning of the quadrennial Plan Update and then again after the completion of a Draft Plan Update (as noted below).

Public notices for these meetings shall be posted on the PACTS website, and shall be sent to those interested groups and agencies included on the list of *Interested Parties* at least ten days prior to the meeting. PACTS shall endeavor to identify neighborhoods affected by system deficiencies and attempt to involve them as an "interested party."

PACTS provides, upon request, access to technical and policy information/assumptions underlying the planning and emissions models used in transportation decision-making and air quality conformity determinations.

PACTS holds their workshops, forums and open houses at convenient and accessible locations and times.

C. Public Forums on Draft *Destination 2040* Update

Upon completion of the Draft Plan Update, PACTS shall schedule a public forum regarding the document. Individuals and organizations identified on the *Interested Parties* email list shall be notified and offered the opportunity to participate in and/or offer comment. The purpose of the forum will be primarily for PACTS to collect comments regarding the content of the Draft Plan Update.

A public notice shall be posted on the PACTS website and will encourage submission of written comments by those unable to attend the hearing. A comment period of 30 days beginning from the date of the hearing notice (and at least 10 days beginning from the date of the forum) shall be provided during which comments may be submitted for consideration by the PACTS Policy Committee. The Draft Plan Update shall be made available for inspection at the time of the forum notice. Copies of the update shall be made available at the PACTS office, website, and at the Town and City Offices of the PACTS communities. . At the forum, PACTS staff shall present pertinent information contained in the Draft Plan and receive comments from the public.

A summary document of the Transportation Plan will be made available to the attendees at the forum. All substantive comments received during the proceedings will be documented by PACTS staff.

D. Preparation of Final Transportation Plan Update

PACTS will prepare the Final Transportation Plan Update after considering all of the comments and input received from the public process. All relevant written or oral comments received on the Draft Plan will be included in the Final Plan.

If the Final Plan contains substantive changes from the one which was made available for public comment, or raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, then PACTS shall provide an additional duly noticed public comment period on the revised Draft Plan of not less than ten days.

The Final Transportation Plan shall contain PACTS responses to all substantive comments received on the Draft and, if necessary, the Final Plan. PACTS shall provide at least one copy of the Final Transportation Plan to each Town or City Hall and municipal library in the PACTS area. As the Plan is updated, so shall these copies be updated.

E. Significant Amendments to the Transportation Plan Update

While the Transportation Plan is updated every four years, the USDOT's Metropolitan Planning Regulations also state that the Plan might be "amended" between updates. This has never happened during the 45 years of the PACTS process. Nevertheless, there is a process for public input in the event of need for a significant amendment to the Plan, as described here.

PACTS will publish the proposed amendment to the Plan with a brief description or

summary of the amendment(s) included. All technical analysis in support of the amendment including any air quality/conformity analysis will be referenced in the public notice and made available to the public for review and comment. A comment period of 30 days beginning from the date of the public notice will be provided during which comments may be submitted to PACTS staff for consideration.

An exemption from the public involvement process may be granted only where proposed projects are determined to be exempt from air quality conformity determination under the provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 and 40 CFR 93.134. For purposes of the Transportation Plan or TIP, these exempt projects would be considered minor in nature. PACTS will consult FHWA and EPA in the determination as to whether an amendment requires public involvement.

VII. Transportation Improvement Program

In January of every year the PACTS Policy Committee endorses a list of federally funded transportation projects for the PACTS Federal Urbanized Area for submission to FHWA, FTA and MaineDOT. This list, and the report in which it is located, is the PACTS Transportation Improvement Program, referred to as the TIP.

The PACTS TIP includes federally funded projects that the PACTS participants have selected for funding and other federally funded projects selected by the MaineDOT. The adoption of the TIP constitutes a formal statement of support by the Policy Committee for the projects in the document that were initiated by MaineDOT. The process of selecting projects is complex due to the many federal programs, state requirements and PACTS rules and guidelines. Interested parties should refer to [the PACTS Transportation Improvement Program Policies and Procedures for 2017 and 2018](#) adopted in September 2016. In the document PACTS encourages the general public to identify problems, to propose possible solutions, and to be involved in municipal and transit provider decision-making processes during the development of projects to be funded via PACTS and MaineDOT.

The PACTS public involvement process for TIP project priority setting is a combination of contacts with member organizations and the general public, as outlined below.

- All feasibility studies funded by PACTS (which often produce funding proposals for capital improvement projects from MaineDOT and/or PACTS) include a public outreach component. Our Enhanced Project Scoping process also includes a public input component. Together, these feasibility studies and project scoping efforts are designed to provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement in regional transportation planning and funding.
- We maintain at all times an up-to-date TIP section on our website, www.pactsplan.org. Comments may be made via the info@pactsplan.org at any time.

- At the beginning of the project selection process we send an email to our municipal, state, transit, other regional organizations (and to our Interested Parties email list participants) advising of the deadlines for submitting MPO Allocation proposals. See the *PACTS Transportation Improvement Program Policies and Procedures for 2017 and 2018* for more on the MPO Allocation.)
- We ask that city/town councils, municipal officers and transit system boards submit written endorsements of their TIP proposals submitted to PACTS. We also ask for written endorsement to PACTS for the projects from their municipality that the Policy Committee votes to include in each biennial MPO Allocation list

Any substantive change in PACTS' TIP project selection criteria or formula is also subject to public review and comment. Amendments to the TIP selection criteria and formula shall be accomplished before the initiation of the biennial TIP development process. PACTS shall notify the public of its intent to update the TIP selection criteria and/or formula and make said material available to the public for comment.

Program of Projects

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires that each recipient of a Section 5307 grant shall develop, publish, afford an opportunity for a public hearing on, and submit for approval a Program of Projects (POP). FTA allows a grantee to rely on the locally adopted public participation requirements for the PACTS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in lieu of the process required in the development of the POP if the grantee has coordinated with the MPO and ensured that the public is aware that the TIP development process is being used to satisfy the POP Public Participation requirements.

The PACTS public participation process satisfies the POP participation process requirements for all these FTA Direct Recipients in the PACTS region:

- Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee
- Casco Bay Island Transit District
- Greater Portland Transit District
- Maine Department of Transportation
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
- South Portland Bus Service

PACTS' public notices for the TIP have an explicit statement that public notice of public involvement activities and time established for public review of any comments on the TIP will satisfy the POP requirements.

Amendments to the TIP

The PACTS Policy Committee periodically needs to amend the TIP. An amendment is either the addition or deletion of a project, a major change in a funded project's budget, or a major change in the design or scope of a project that alters the intent of a project.

Before the Policy Committee makes an amendment, PACTS staff posts to the website the proposed amendment to the TIP for public comment. All technical analysis in support of the amendment including any air quality/conformity analysis will be made available to the public for review and comment. A comment period of 10 days beginning from the date of the posting will be provided during which comments may be submitted to PACTS for consideration.

This PACTS TIP amendment process satisfies the POP participation process requirements for all these FTA Direct Recipients in the PACTS region:

- Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee
- Casco Bay Island Transit District
- Greater Portland Transit District
- Maine Department of Transportation
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
- South Portland Bus Service

An exemption from the public involvement process may be granted only where proposed projects are determined to be exempt from air quality conformity determination under the provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 and 40 CFR 93.134. For purposes of the TIP, these exempt projects would be considered minor in nature. PACTS will consult FHWA and EPA in the determination as to whether an amendment requires public involvement.

PACTS and MaineDOT make administrative modifications for relatively minor changes that do not require a public comment period. Adjustments cover the following:

- A moderate change in the total cost of a project
- Combining or separating projects that are part of an approved TIP
- Combining or separating phases of a project that are part of an approved TIP
- Adding a new phase to an existing project that does not have a substantial cost associated with it
- Creating a lineage PIN that does not have a substantial cost associated with it
- Making a minor change in the scope of a project, including an insignificant change in the termini and/or
- Making a change to the project termini with no change in overall project cost.

VIII. Summary

This document has outlined the public involvement processes of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) as updated in 2018. In 2019 PACTS will draft additional changes to this document and seek public comment on those changes.

Public participation is essential to the success of any public planning process or project. The region's general public has many opportunities to participate in the transportation planning and programming work of PACTS and of the other organizations that have transportation decision-making responsibility. Those many organizations share the

responsibilities for soliciting and responding to public input to the planning of the region's transportation systems. The regular participants in the PACTS process bring the results of their organizations' public outreach to bear in the decisions of PACTS. Between the direct involvement of the general public in regional transportation planning and the involvement of their elected and appointed representatives, we all strive to make the PACTS transportation planning and programming process a meaningful contributor to the health, economy and quality of life in our great region.