

December 1st Draft
Resolution in Support of the PACTS “High Priority Project” Candidates

Whereas the Policy Committee of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) has been the primary regional transportation priority setting body for the Greater Portland region since 1975, and

Whereas in 2010 the United States Congress is scheduled to authorize the next multi-year federal transportation funding and policy legislation which is likely to include high priority projects throughout the country, and

Whereas a PACTS High Priority Projects Committee has worked closely with the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) for two years to develop a list of high priority projects for submission to our Congressional Delegation, and

Whereas the PACTS High Priority Projects Committee solicited proposals from our region’s municipalities and transit systems, considered the PACTS regional transportation plan called *Destination Tomorrow* and other regionally significant transportation plans and studies, and sought input from the general public at several public forums and through a statistically significant regional telephone survey, and

Whereas the PACTS Policy Committee has directed PACTS staff to seek support from our region’s city and town councils and transit system boards for the three proposals listed below (and described further on the next page), and

Whereas the _____ (organization) _____ has reviewed the proposals listed below,

Now therefore the _____ (organization) _____ wholeheartedly encourages the PACTS Policy Committee to submit the following proposals to our Congressional Delegation, and that we encourage the Delegation to work hard to secure federal High Priority Project funding for them in the next multi-year federal transportation authorization bill:

- The new Portland-South-Portland Veterans Bridge if MaineDOT needs additional financing (current cost estimate at \$56,000,000). We also encourage MaineDOT to design the new bridge to serve the area’s transit, pedestrian and bicycling needs of the next 100 years.
- Purchase 61 vehicles for our region’s transit systems: a passenger ferry, 29 buses (19 replacements and 10 additional ones) and 31 paratransit vans and buses (17 replacements and 14 additional ones) at a cost estimate of \$25,000,000.
- Make commuter service capital investments such as “bus rapid transit” or “commuter rail” in the corridor between Portland and Brunswick at \$90,000,000 (a rough MaineDOT estimate). MaineDOT is currently studying potential options for new services in this “Portland North” corridor.

The 2009 PACTS Region High Priority Project Candidates

Veterans Bridge Replacement

The MaineDOT has determined that the replacement of the Portland-South-Portland Veterans Bridge is a state priority. The MaineDOT has put this project on a fast track schedule which involves the start of a “design-build” process in late 2009 and a target construction completion in 2012.

The MaineDOT’s current cost estimate for this project is \$56,000,000. The MaineDOT will commit \$25,000,000 to the project in their 2009 statewide transportation capital improvement program. The PACTS Policy Committee will seek High Priority Project funding for this project in 2009 if the MaineDOT is unable to commit full financing for the project by other means.

We also encourage MaineDOT to design the new bridge to serve the area’s transit, pedestrian and bicycling needs of the next 100 years. The MaineDOT is currently working with Portland, South Portland, PACTS and the public on a fast track planning process in this regard.

Purchase 61 Public Transportation Vehicles

Purchase 61 vehicles for our region’s transit systems: a passenger ferry, 29 buses (19 replacements and 10 additional ones) and 31 paratransit vans and buses (17 replacements and 14 additional ones). The “additional” vehicles will enable our transit systems to provide more service in response to the need for our region and our nation to become more energy independent and to reduce global warming.

The vehicles will be operated by the Casco Bay Island Transit District, the Greater Portland Transit District (METRO), the York County Community Action Program, the Region Transportation Program, the Shuttlebus/Zoom and the South Portland Bus Service.

Make Commuter Service Improvements in the “Portland North” Corridor

Make commuter service capital investments such as “bus rapid transit” or “commuter rail” in the corridor between Portland and Brunswick at \$90,000,000 (a rough MaineDOT estimate). MaineDOT is currently studying potential options for new services in this “Portland North” corridor. Bus rapid transit is express service which runs on dedicated rights-of-way (such as abandoned rail lines). Commuter rail service is train service for commuters as opposed to long distance service like the Boston-Portland Downeaster service. (This new service would be in addition to the anticipated 2010 extension to Brunswick of the existing Downeaster service.)