

PACTS Planning Study Proposals

FY 2014/2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Application: Falmouth Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Update

Section 1: Proposal and Supporting Information

PART I – PACTS MEMBER INFORMATION

1. **Applicant Organization(s):** Town of Falmouth
2. **Contact person(s):** Theo Holtwijk, Director of Long Range Planning
3. **Contact person(s) phone number:** 699-5340
4. **Contact person(s) email:** tholtwijk@town.falmouth.me.us

5. **Endorsement(s):**

Date of Endorsement:

Committee Endorsement : A formal endorsement will be sought on February 28, 2013 from the Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC). LPAC is currently updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The draft plan contains a high-priority recommendation to update Falmouth's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

ACE Team Endorsement: ACE Team endorsement will be sought.

Other Endorsements: Endorsement will also be sought from the Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee (FEIC), Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC) and Falmouth Land Management Team (LMT).

6. **Official** Municipal or Transit Board Endorsement: Town Council endorsement is anticipated on February 11, 2013.

PART II – GENERAL PLANNING STUDY INFORMATION

7. **Planning Study Title:** Falmouth Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Update
8. **Geographic Area:** Falmouth (town-wide)
9. **Relevant Study or Plan – Please attach relevant excerpt description.** Community-wide study area.

PART III – OVERALL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following questions address the study's purpose and anticipated methods and work to be accomplished by the effort.

10. Study Purpose and Need Statement:

The Purpose and Need Statement must address the critical deficiencies that the study will examine and goals that will be addressed in the development of a plan. The statement must be in sufficient detail so that PACTS staff can use it to determine the study's merits. (Please attach supplemental information if needed.)

A: Building on *2010 Destination Tomorrow* and the *2009 PACTS Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update* and the numerous physical improvements that have been made over the last decade throughout Falmouth, the proposed study will update and integrate into a single, comprehensive document two existing plans: the *2003 Falmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* and the *2002 Falmouth Trails Master Plan*. As a demonstration of the enormously successful implementation of these plans, the Town has acquired several hundred acres of open space, increased its trail network from 4 to over 35 miles, and added over 5 miles of sidewalks and over 7 miles of bicycle facilities. The Town wants to bring the planning of all on and off road bicycle and pedestrian facilities together to provide a comprehensive look at ALL facilities available to people traveling and recreating using walking and biking.

The proposed study will provide a clear direction of the work that remains to be accomplished over the next 10 years to make Falmouth an even more transit-oriented, bicycle and pedestrian-friendly community. Specifically, the Town-wide study will provide:

1. An analysis of current conditions for walking and bicycling.
2. Recommendations for a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network.
3. Updated standards and guidelines for the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
The study will leverage the soon-to-be-updated regional bicycle and pedestrian guidelines that Alta Planning + Design is currently developing for PACTS.
4. A prioritized list of recommended strategies and low-cost improvements.
5. Integration of bicycle and pedestrian policy into Falmouth's Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance.
6. Recommendations for programming, safety education, maintenance and funding.

11. Study Methodology Outline and Proposed Scope of Work

The Study Methodology and Proposed Scope of Work must be in sufficient detail for PACTS staff and the MaineDOT to verify the cost estimate for the planning study. For example, if significant modeling or graphics renderings is anticipated, or survey work is required, the estimates should be called out in line-item format in the proposed budget, which accompanies this application. Maps and sketches relevant to the study area must be included with this submittal. (Attach supplemental information if needed.)

A: A Steering Committee will be established to oversee the study process. The committee is expected to meet 3-5 times to review study progress. The study will have the following components:

1. Collect GIS base data, crash data, and maps.
2. Conduct detailed field inventory.
3. Conduct policy and program review.
4. Prepare draft bike/pedestrian network plan.
5. Refine plan and recommendations based on feedback received. A written report is envisioned, including maps and cross section graphics of key improvement areas.
6. Conduct public outreach throughout all phases of the study (including workshops and an on-line survey).

Network objectives will include, but are not limited to, creating community-wide connectivity linking important destinations and region-wide networks, overcoming physical barriers, and providing ADA accessibility and safety.

12. Is the proposal for Bicycle and/or Pedestrian transportation planning?

Depending on region wide demand for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, a portion of the total PACTS Planning budget will set-aside specifically for bicycle and pedestrian planning.

A: Yes.

PART IV – PLANNING

Please attach a brief scope of work and cost estimate including as much detail as possible for PACTS staff to determine if the proposed budget is in line with similar past planning study efforts.

13. Anticipated Scope of Work

A: The scope of work will include the following tasks:

1. Collect GIS base data, crash data, and maps.
2. Conduct detailed field inventory.
3. Conduct policy and program review.
4. Prepare draft bike/pedestrian network plan.
5. Refine plan and recommendations based on feedback received.

6. Conduct public outreach throughout all phases of the study (including workshops and an on-line survey).

14. Planning Study Cost Estimate: \$ 35,000

15. Budget Breakdown A line item spreadsheet document may be inserted here:

- Collect GIS base data, crash data, and maps - \$2,000
- Conduct detailed field inventory - \$ 8,000
- Conduct policy and program review - \$3,000
- Prepare draft bike/pedestrian network plan - \$12,000
- Refine plan and recommendations based on feedback received \$ 4,000
- Conduct public outreach throughout all phases of the study (including workshops and an on-line survey) - \$6,000

Section 2: Destination Tomorrow Regional Long Range Plan Consistency:

Staff will score the proposals using the five Policy criteria below. Each criterion carries the same weight. Each criterion will be scored on a scale from 0 (not applicable) to 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Study proposals should not address the criteria individually, rather the proposal as a whole should address the criteria that are applicable.

The questions and paragraphs below are from *Destination Tomorrow's 5 Policies*. Please type your answers in the document below at the "A:".

Destination Tomorrow Policy1: Regional Focus – Prioritize a regional approach to transportation and land use planning and decision making founded on effective communication and management of regional resources in agreement with our other policies.

Question: How is the planning study important to the region? Please list regional benefits of the planning study.

A: As a first-tier suburb of Portland, the Falmouth network provides important pedestrian and bicycle links for the Portland North region. Specifically, bicycle travel between Portland and northern communities is generally directed to Route 1 via the Martin's Point Bridge (which is being replaced and will include a share use path) and Middle Road (Route 9). Riders also travel on Route 100 and Blackstrap Road to and from Portland. The Town is currently improving the commercial area of Route 1 with enhanced bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities. These facility improvements, particularly transit, will allow for enhanced regional connectivity to and from Falmouth. Conducting a systematic study of this type will serve as a

learning model for other communities in the region that wish to create pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environments in their communities.

Destination Tomorrow Policy 2: Maintaining and Transforming the Transportation System –

Maintain and improve Mobility, Safety, and Accessibility of existing infrastructure while improving and completing infrastructure and services to accommodate non-motorized vehicular modes in the appropriate places.

Question: What are the intended goals of the planning study for maintaining, improving, or transforming the existing transportation system? Please list potential infrastructure improvements and services the study proposes to develop as alternatives and what transportation modes are to be included.

A: National studies have found that 40% of all trips by car are less than 2 miles. By taking these short trips on bicycle or on foot, local vehicle traffic volumes and congestion in Falmouth can be impacted substantially. Additionally, non-drivers will be served by improved bicycle and pedestrian networks in their ability to move through the community. The goal of the pedestrian and bicycle network is to provide a seamless system throughout the community. The network will consist of improvements to the existing road network, but will also to some degree be independent of the existing road system. Connectivity to the existing transit network is an important goal. Potential improvements may include, but are not limited to, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, new sidewalks and crosswalks, trails, bridge and underpass improvements, transit shelters, and wayfinding (incorporating PACTS regional wayfinding signage recommendations). Another key goal of the study will be to mitigate existing safety deficiencies related to bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Destination Tomorrow Policy 3: Economic Development – Enhance regional prosperity through support for the economic vitality of existing business and for economic development opportunities that are efficiently located based on the availability of transportation in mixed use and compactly developed areas.

Question: How would the planning study goals and objectives enhance existing business, employment and economic development opportunities? Please list anticipated planning study results and their benefits to economic development, businesses, and enabling development opportunities. Be specific as to benefits to mixed use development and/or connects jobs and housing by walking, biking or transit.

A: Bicycling and walking are affordable modes of transportation allowing a greater portion of available personal income to be spent on local goods and services. As one study puts it:

“People who ride bikes buy bikes. This puts people to work in bicycle shops and apparel stores. People who ride bikes buy other things, too. Bike-accessible business districts benefit by catering to these customers. People on bikes are also more likely to make repeat trips to their local stores. People who

ride bikes on vacation buy food, have travel costs, and pay for lodging. Bicycling tourists bring millions of dollars to cities and towns across the country that wouldn't otherwise end up there. All that spending means jobs -- and tax revenue -- for communities. But people who ride bikes also *save* money. With the money saved from lower travel costs, people who ride bikes have more of their money to spend on local businesses. People who ride bikes can save their companies money on health insurance costs. Developers, cities, and individuals can save money on parking costs by providing space-efficient, low-cost bike parking instead of expensive car parking."

Falmouth has become a trail "destination." It has seen its trails actively used by members from the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) and from individuals throughout the region.

Additionally, national studies indicate that trails are highly valued amenity by homebuyers and that bicycling projects create twice as many construction jobs per dollar as road projects. Additional economic benefits of walkable communities include a study by the Urban Land Institute which shows that home buyers are willing to pay more for homes in walkable neighborhoods. Analysis by the real estate market has shown that property values rise fastest in pedestrian-friendly areas. Sidewalks improve access to business and industry for employees relying on public transportation and improve customer traffic for retail businesses.

Starting a few decades ago, Falmouth has been in the process of transforming a 1-mile stretch of the Route 1 Commercial District into a mixed-use environment, including retail, office, services, medical, entertainment, and residential uses. The proximity and density of these uses to each other is a perfect environment in which walking and bicycling can provide the necessary transportation modes. Similar opportunities exist in the Route 100 commercial corridor near Turnpike Exit 53.

Destination Tomorrow Policy 4: Transportation-Land Use Connection Strengthen the connection between land use, transportation and community livability in the planning process

Question: How would the planning study improve decision maker understanding of the transportation-land-use connection? Please list benefits to transportation choice (density), accessibility in terms of ease of travel between points (distance), variety of compatible uses and services made available (diversity); and overall design. If the planning study anticipates Design, please provide a narrative on the components that will be considered such as alternative geometries, potential interconnections, access management issues, streetscape considerations, and preservation of community character and context sensitive design issues.

A: The study will enhance the benefits of “the 4 D’s” in the community – distance, diversity, density, and design. Falmouth has two sizeable commercial areas that are surrounded by relatively compact residential neighborhoods. The study will further enhance the choice of transportation in Falmouth as demonstrated below:

- **Distance and Diversity:** The commercial areas have several types of land use activities (including civic functions, finance, specialty retail, arts, residential, and restaurants). The Route 1 core area is 1-mile from end to end. Many of the activities are within ¼-mile of each other. Bus service is available in both commercial areas. Principal employment and retail facilities and the local library are no more than ¼-mile from bus stops. Compact residential neighborhoods are located with 2 miles of these commercial areas. Accessibility to, and within, these areas will be improved by the plan.
- **Density:** Falmouth is finalizing a proposal to increase density in the commercial area by allowing multiple story development, a reduction of front setbacks, and reduction of on-site parking requirements. Public sewer is available in the two commercial areas and adjacent neighborhoods. The Town is evaluating its density requirements to allow more infill in these already compact neighborhoods.
- **Design:** The Town has a combination of rural collector roads and collectors and arterials that are more urban in nature. Along collectors and arterials where the speed limit is between 30 and 40 mph or greater, land uses share points of access. The Town is striving for a continuous network of sidewalks, connecting neighborhoods and commercial areas in the town’s growth areas. Accommodations by the proposed plan for safe bicycle travel, including shoulders along collector roads and arterials or dedicated bike/pedestrian paths will help to create a continuous network between neighborhoods, the commercial areas, and other destinations in the community.

By example, Falmouth is home to at least two kinds of bicycle trails: those to get you from A to B (from home to school, to work, to the store) and those designed for recreational purposes (i.e. - mountain biking trails). Falmouth has a lot of mileage of the latter, but seeks to increase mileage of the former. As noted above, the Town wants to bring the planning of all on and off road bicycle and pedestrian facilities together to provide a comprehensive look at ALL facilities available to people traveling and recreating using walking and biking.

Destination Tomorrow Policy 5: Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation – Protect and improve the human and natural environments including natural and cultural resources, air and water quality, and prepare and be proactive for the *most likely* impacts of climate change. Make transportation improvements

that use more energy efficient transportation options, low and non-polluting modes such as transit, and/or reduce harmful pollutants associated with transportation.

Question: How does the planning study explore or potentially enable the use of energy efficient transportation and lend itself to improving the human and natural environment? Please list benefits in terms of potential energy use, energy savings; and benefits to natural resources such as air, water, and land; and cultural benefits such as places preserved.

A: As is widely known, pollutants are reduced by walking or bicycling. Noise levels are reduced as well, and water quality is improved as fewer motor vehicle-related discharges end up in water bodies. Trails that are part of greenways help protect plant and animal habitat. These green areas also provide oxygen and filter air pollutants. The Town of Falmouth is looking to use good, comprehensive land use planning to inform ongoing policy and infrastructure changes. Examples from throughout the US show that a well-designed and connected network of sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities induces new riders and walkers, result in less dependence on automobiles and fossil fuels. A shift from motorized to non-motorized transportation mode will improve air quality as car trips are reduced. Falmouth intends to do its part in helping to mitigate congestion mitigation and climate change.

This planning study will assist in improving the human environment by focusing on and enhancing the Town's sidewalk network. A comprehensive sidewalk network has many health benefits. Studies have shown that sidewalks provide opportunities for walking, and studies have shown that people with access to sidewalks are more likely to walk. Physical inactivity contributes to the incidence of various health issues and it carries a risk burden close to that of smoking. In that sense the proposed Falmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is in essence an "Active Community Environment" (ACE) Plan.