

Transit Together

Project Advisory Group (PAG)

October 6, 2021

2:00–3:30 pm

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Chad Heid and Greg Tansley (BSOOB), Hank Berg (CBITD), Rob Liscord (Policy Advocate), Al Green (MaineHealth), Rebecca Grover (MaineTurnpike), Ryan Neale and Jennifer Langland (MaineDOT), Ed Knutson (Metro/RTP), Greg Jordan (Metro), Patricia Quinn and William Gayle (NNEPRA), Nell Donaldson (City of Portland), Quincy Hentzel (Portland C of C), Deb Fritzon (RTP), Donna Tippet and Rick Sargent (SPBS), Raegan Young (SMPDC), Liz Cotter Schlax (UnitedWay), Aaron Witham (USM), Tom Reinaeur (YCCAC)

Project Team in Attendance: Amy Pettine (NN), Joe Poirier (NN), Dan Berez (NN), Anne Galbraith (ASG), Kristina Egan (GPCOG), Andrew Clark (GPCOG), Chris Chop (GPCOG)

Welcome and Introductions

- Andrew Clark (GPCOG) welcomed all attendees and provided an overview of the project, explaining that it is an outcome of PACTS' 2021 Transit Tomorrow transit plan.

Study team members, transit agencies and other stakeholders then introduced themselves.

Why Are We Here? Project Background

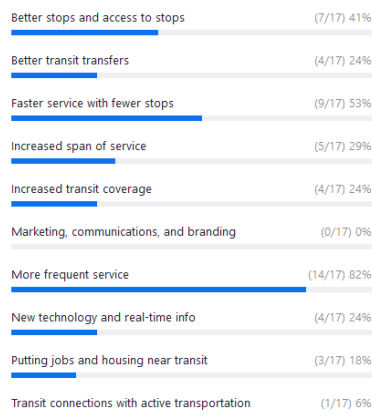
- Amy Pettine (Nelson Nygaard) expanded on how this study grew out of Transit Tomorrow and is a specific objective intended to help improve regional connections and service frequency.
- A GPCOG review of public outreach related to transit found that public desires have remained fairly consistent over the last 10-15 years. The PAG was asked to guess what they thought the top three public transit priorities were. Results are compared to the actual public rankings below.

PAG Guesses at Public Priorities

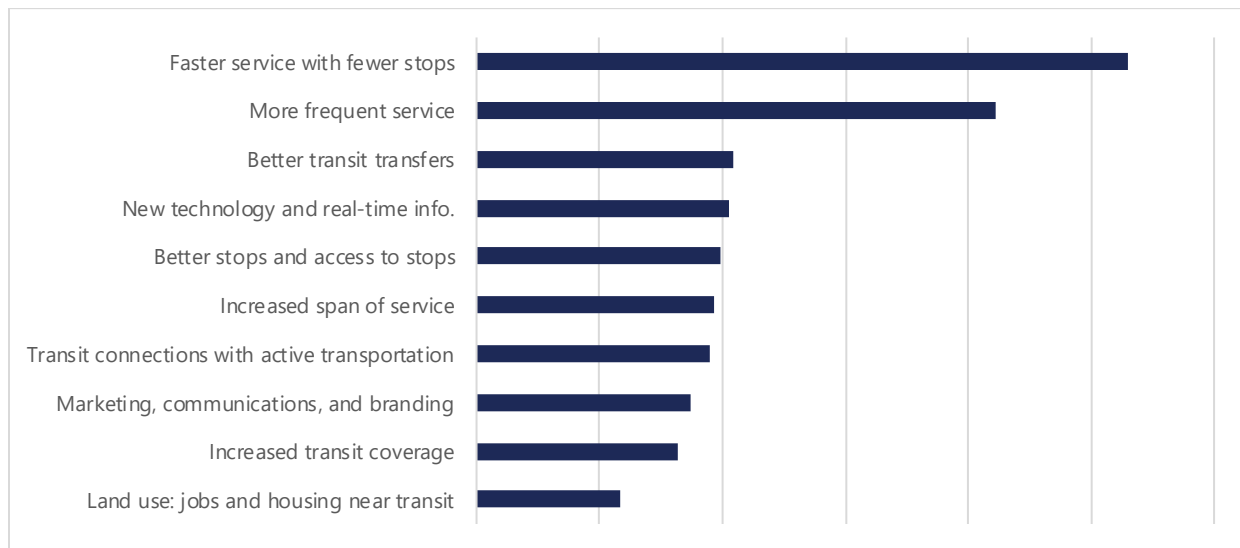
1. What do you think are the public's top three transit priorities?

(Multiple Choice) *

17/17 (100%) answered



GPCOG Summary of Public Priorities Related to Transit



Discussion:

- Results might be similar nationally.
- There is a disparity in that the lower ranked “land use policies” are needed to support the top responses.
- Would be interesting to know where riders want faster service to go?
- SPBS and RTP representatives were surprised at the results. SPBS gets more requests for additional stops (as opposed to faster service), because riders want shorter walks. RTP was surprised increased coverage was ranked low as they get many requests to serve new areas.
- Chad Heid (BSOBT) highlighted the importance of transit-supportive land use and suggested policy incentives (such as parking prices).

Project Scope and Schedule

Amy Pettine provided an overview of the project scope and schedule. Six Project Advisory Group meetings are anticipated. Joe Poirier (Nelson\Nygaard) shared a sneak preview of the Market Analysis that will be discussed at the next meeting.

Role of the PAG

Anne Galbraith (ASG Planning) explained the PAG is an ad hoc advisory committee set up to serve as a sounding board for GPCOG/PACTS on study recommendations. The main goals are to seek common ground on desired actions/priorities to improve regional transit, and to focus on the transit rider’s perspective.

Plan for Public Engagement

Amy Pettine provided an overview of public engagement and proposed outreach methods. Outreach conducted by GPCOG over the last few years will be recognized as a starting point. The [Transit](#)

[Together website](#) will be transitioned to this study shortly and the first round of outreach will be conducted in January.

Discussion (feedback outreach locations and organizations to contact):

- Reach out to organizations focused on helping seniors age in place (e.g. M-Gray).
- Try to engage people that don't currently ride transit.
- Also need to understand where tourists and visitors from outside the area want to go.
- Al Green (MaineHealth) has a list-serv of MaineHealth people that use alternative transportation and he offered to query it on behalf of this study.
- Reach out to the Chamber of Commerce and hospitality associations to understand how hotel workers use transit.
- Maine Service Employees Association Union would be a good organization to contact regarding service workers
- Check the Maine Office of Tourism website, they post survey results that may be helpful
 - https://motpartners.com/wpcontent/uploads/2018/07/2018_MaineDestinationNEXT_Results_GreaterPortlandCascoBay.pdf
- Contact Homeless Voices for Justice and Maine People's Housing Coalition to understand the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- Contact housing authority resident groups and resident service coordinators at affordable housing projects, especially in Portland, South Portland, Westbrook, and Biddeford.
 - Rob Liscord will help track down comments and contacts for coordinators
- Nell Donaldson from the City of Portland mentioned Portland Downtown did some analysis for multi-modal marketing campaign a few years ago that might be helpful

Public Comment

- None

Next Steps

- Next meeting anticipated for December. Presentation will include a review of existing conditions, the Market Analysis, and outreach plans for January.