



A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Administered by Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission

KACTS
Members:

Berwick

Eliot

Kittery

South Berwick

York

Maine Turnpike
Authority

MaineDOT

Southern Maine
Planning and
Development
Commission

Public
Transportation
Providers

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Eliot Town Hall
1333 State Road
Eliot, ME 03903

Voting Members Present: James Bellissimo (Berwick), Jeff Brubaker (Eliot), David Rich (Kittery), Jason Garnham (Kittery), Denise Clavette (South Berwick), Dean Lessard (York), Dylan Smith (York – Chair), Tom Reinauer (YCCAC – Vice Chair), Steve Cole (MaineDOT), Rebecca Grover (Maine Turnpike Authority), Stephanie Carver (SMPDC/KACTS)

Additional Attendees: Joel Anders (WSP), Marissa Fink (SMPDC/KACTS), Dean Williams (SMPDC/KACTS), Thomas Morely (Portsmouth Naval Shipyard)

Zoom Meeting Access:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83269824471?pwd=V0VOMUVBelpOchBSaWg0bVNvNGh1dz09>

Meeting ID: 832 6982 4471

Passcode: 159565

Dial in: 1-646-558-8656

1. Welcome

Jeff Brubaker, interim chair, opened the meeting at 10:04 AM.

2. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes from the September 20, 2023 KACTS Committee Meeting

Dean Lessard made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Denise Clavette.

Motion passed. Abstention: Rebecca Grover.

4. Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant Presentation

Joel Anders, Project Manager from WSP, provided a presentation on project goals, activities, and timeline for the upcoming KACTS Regional Safety Action Plan, funded by the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program. He began with an overview of Vision Zero, which aims to prevent traffic fatalities and serious injuries. The SS4A program under Vision Zero connects this goal with equity and climate goals.



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Joel reviewed the goals and desired outcomes of the Regional Safety Action Plan. The Plan will develop a set of projects and strategies to reach a goal of eliminating or reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries, will focus on equitable spending in areas that are traditionally underserved, and will incorporate stakeholder input and best practices. The project timeline aims to have the public comment period on the draft plan in April 2024, and the finalized plan in May. The first step will be forming the Project Steering Committee, including KACTS personnel and members representing other groups, and holding the steering committee kickoff meeting.

Steve Cole asked if there is a national SS4A template that must be followed and if there is flexibility in project design. Joel responded that while there are certain required checklist items (e.g. spatial analysis of crash data, creating a prioritized list of project and strategies, updating an action plan), there is plenty of flexibility within that framework to make choices based on regional needs.

Steph Carver commented that an appealing aspect of this project is getting a better understanding of the projects and safety issues in the KACTS region, which will help us prioritize projects and create a list of needs for our region. Dean Williams commented on the importance of forming a stakeholder committee this month to keep to the project timeline. Members could include law enforcement (police chief, fire chief), bike ped advocates, and people who have been affected by traffic injuries or fatalities. Steph suggested that a notice be sent out to towns, who can then recommend committee members.

Steve Cole raised the question of if this project is for the MPO communities or the entire SMPDC region. Steph responded that it is for the MPO communities due to the quick turnaround time for the grant application, as well as the issue of match.

After discussion regarding the development of a PDF flyer to send to potential stakeholders, Jason Garnham asked Joel how SS4A will overlap with local projects (e.g. Kittery's current traffic safety project). Joel responded that it will be important to review town plans and identify ongoing activities. Dean Williams added that the Kittery Route 1 project does not include regional analysis, and that the regional analysis in SS4A could help inform that project.

Jeff Brubaker raised the question of how a high injury network might look in a regional setting with many areas with low crash histories, and if the HIN would be too sparse. Joel responded that it may prove challenging from a data analysis perspective to link disparate points into logical corridors, and the focus will be on identifying points of high risk within a community and how to tie those together.



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James Bellissimo asked how highway speeds will impact the rest of the corridor if, for example, a highway speed limit is reduced. Joel responded that at an operational level it wouldn't impact the rest of the corridor, and that this project will not be doing traffic modeling but will be looking at where we might need to focus efforts for policy momentum. The project will be looking more deeply into 3 to 5 locations, as well as creating a prioritized list of locations to be addressed over time. Steph added that if we determine a need for more information on specific locations, we can submit supplemental grants to conduct another round of study.

5. 2023-2026 KACTS Transportation Improvement Program Proposed Amendment

Steph provided an overview that DOT is seeking a TIP amendment adding the Piscataqua River Bridge Plan to address short- and long-term closures of the Piscataqua River Bridge. This amendment was listed on the website and a notification was sent out; the public comment period ends today.

Denise made a motion to approve the amendment, seconded by Dean Williams. Dylan opened the floor for discussion.

Steph commented that this project will have major impacts given the importance of the bridge for access to Maine. She added that there has been discussion about how this work could help us be more competitive for federal funds in the future.

Motion passed unanimously.

6. 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Steph provided an overview of the changes made to the UPWP. Information required by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) was added, including requirements around planning factors, information in Task 3 for safety and accessibility options for multiple travel modes, language about the connection between housing and transportation, additional federal performance goals, and additional plan emphasis areas.

The Tasks were simplified from eleven or more tasks down to four – Administration, Data and Projects, Multimodal Assistance, and Policy and Planning – which will simplify the administrative process if money needs to be shifted in the budget later. The additional funds reflecting the 2020 census and the expansion of the KACTS area have not yet been added to the UPWP budget because we are awaiting action from MaineDOT. There will be an amendment to add those funds when the contract is received. The State is now providing a 10% match across the board, which is a change from previous years when the



KACTS Members:	state matched 15% and local 5%. The proposed UPWP reflects the new match of 10% State and 10% local.
Berwick	Steph added that the UPWP also lays out plans for a new Long-Range Transportation Plan that also incorporates the new MPO communities. We expect to have between \$150,000 and \$200,000 budgeted for that item once the additional funds are finalized which should be shortly. The next step will be opening it up the discussion for municipal projects in January. The York Route 1 project is one that is mentioned in the UPWP, which has been discussed with DOT and the Town of York, and additional funding will likely be added to the municipal planning budget.
Eliot	
Kittery	
South Berwick	
York	
Maine Turnpike Authority	No comments on the UPWP were received in the public comment period. The final plan will have a new cover page as well as a matrix of all tasks.
MaineDOT	Denise made a motion to approve the draft UPWP, seconded by Rebecca.
Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission	Tom commented that we had previously delayed discussion of municipal match until we had more information about the UPWP, and asked if we should discuss it now. Steph responded that between the UPWP and FTA increases, there will likely be a substantial enough increase that we should delay discussion until we have specific numbers. Jeff asked if, for those municipalities developing projects now, a placeholder should be put in using old numbers. Steph responded that for the first year of the UPWP SMPDC will provide match with the idea that towns could cover the match in their next budget cycle but and that we will discuss further at our January meeting.
Public Transportation Providers	Motion passed unanimously.

7. Amendments to KACTS Bylaws

Steph informed the group that in the amended KACTS bylaws, the four new municipalities have been added and the Shipyard has been added as a non-voting member. This aligns with the original MOU establishing the MPO and was also a recommendation of the JLUS project. Wells and Kennebunk have two votes each because their populations fall between Kittery and York, which both also hold two spots. Ogunquit and Kennebunkport each have one vote. Steph clarified that once we update these bylaws, the towns will be added to the MPO and will begin with the new UPWP in January 2024.

Jeff commented that he feels ready to move forward with the change. Dean Williams noted that the bylaws should be changed to read “urban area,” not “urbanized area.”



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Denise proposed that an additional change be made to list the towns individually with their number of votes, rather than listed as a group as having one or two votes.

Denise made a motion to accept the bylaws as changed, contingent on the 15-day comment period. Dean Lessard seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

8. **MaineDOT and Municipal Project Updates**

Steve Cole informed the group that a new planner, Claire Winter, has joined DOT. She will be working as the liaison between DOT and all MPOs. Steph commented that Claire will be a great addition to the department.

James Bellissimo provided an update on Berwick's Saw Mill Hill/School Street project. The curb cut had to be redesigned due to a local gas station remaining in business that was expecting to close, which has pushed back the project timeline to 2025. There is also a major drainage project and other transformations that will be ongoing in downtown Berwick over the next couple of years.

Rebecca Grover updated the group on the Part Time Shoulder Use project. Fencing will be installed over the next several weeks starting today. A press release was put out from MTA, Maine DOT, and NH DOT, and Rebecca offered for those present at this meeting to take some flyers to have available at town halls.

Jason Garnham informed the group that multiple pilot demonstration projects were carried out based on recommendations from Kittery's Bike Ped plan. The demonstrations were removed yesterday, and conversations regarding next steps are ongoing. The Route 1 Feasibility Study is in its draft phase. David Rich added that Kittery's Walker/Wentworth project is still on track.

Jeff Brubaker updated the group that the Eastern Trail study has kicked off.

Dylan shared that the Village project in York has been delayed by DOT from December 2023 to April 2024, and that it would be helpful to get more information from DOT about it. Steve Cole shared that he had not been made aware of the delay. Steph offered to reach out and find more information.

Denise updated the group that South Berwick's Route 236 project is moving along.



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Thomas Morely expressed his thanks at the Shipyard being added as a non-voting member and thanked the Town of Kittery for helping to get traffic at the Shipyard moving at peak times during recent traffic signal difficulties. A test lane closure is planned for tomorrow, as well as a temporary bridge lane closure to evaluate conditions for next year's bridge repair and restoration project. The Shipyard is hoping to meet soon with SMPDC and the Town about that project.

Tom Reinauer shared that DOT's Workforce Transportation Program awarded YCCAC \$500,000 for a two-year project to add additional service from Sanford to the Shipyard.

9. Other Business

Steph informed the group that the next KACTS Policy Committee meeting will likely be in January unless something comes up in the interim.