



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

Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.
Eliot Town Hall, [1333 State Road, Eliot, ME.](#)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989842158?pwd=ckdHSIZ1RnB0dWISdDlneXZzWGdFQT09>

Meeting ID: 849 8984 2158

Passcode: 198530: Dial in:1-646-558-8656

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

Additional Attendees: Eric LaBelle (Kennebunkport), Carol Murray (Wells), Paige Melius (FHWA), Randy Davis (SMPDC/KACTS), Marissa Fink (SMPDC/KACTS), Mikala Jordan (SMPDC/KACTS), Thomas Morely (Portsmouth Naval Shipyard)

1. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

2. Approval of Minutes from the November 1, 2023 KACTS Committee Meeting

David Rich made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Tom Reinauer. Motion passed unanimously.

3. KACTS Match Discussion-Steph Carver, KACTS Director, provided an overview of the two match options as laid out in the meeting agenda. The total match to be covered is about \$96,000. The first match option consists of \$85,580 to match the FHWA portion and \$10,420 to match the FTA funding. In this option SMPDC covers the FTA match and members cover the remaining \$85,580 FHWA match using a base plus population allocation. In option 2 the match of \$96,000 separates out \$16,350 for match for the Municipal Studies task and \$10,420 in FTA match. Municipalities participating in municipal studies would pay the 10% match for those studies. SMPDC would cover the FTA match and any non-covered municipal study match leftover. Members would cover the full \$69,230 in FHWA match using a base plus population allocation..

Eric LaBelle (Kennebunkport) commented that he would like to table this vote until Laurie Smith his Town Manager can weigh in.



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Dean Lessard (York) asked the reason for this new match requirement that KACTS hasn't had before. Steph responded that the substantial change in our MPO boundary has significantly increased our match obligation and although we covered the small amount of required match in the past, the increased amount is a much heavier burden. Other MPOs across the country ask municipal members to contribute to match so this is a common practice.

Dylan Smith (York) clarified that member dues used to cover this, and that now the MPO will be asked to cover an additional amount in addition to member dues, which Steph confirmed but said that this is match to the UPWP and not member dues. Dylan commented that it will be important to confirm these new numbers soon as York is in the process of developing their town budget.

Randy Davis, SMPDC's Finance Director acknowledged that he is aware town budget discussions are happening now. He emphasized that most MPOs' member towns cover the match, and that these new scenarios still have SMPDC's buy-in as SMPDC is covering a portion comparable to what its covered in the past. Steph added that the new DOT capital funding program will rely on relationships between MPOs and communities, and community participation in the MPO will be important. She requested that everyone take a closer look at these two options, and if these options don't fit into your town budget schedule Randy will work with you to adapt until we can make it work.

Jason Garnham (Kittery) asked for clarification on the \$0 base in Option 1 versus the \$2,000 base in Option 2, commenting on the fairness of Option 2 and the importance of local buy-in for municipal planning projects. Randy responded that the base is a commonly used allocation method to give a minimum amount to all communities; after that, the allocation is based on population. Steph added that funds are also representative of the regional planning aspect of the MPO.

Steph asked the group for input on which option they would like to consider. Jeff Brubaker (Eliot), Dean Lessard, Tom Reinauer (YCCAC), and Jason Garnham expressed their support for Option 2 with the \$2,000 base. Randy suggested starting conversations in towns about this now.

Dylan informed the group that we will take up consideration of actions at the next Policy Committee meeting. He requested that SMPDC send out a memo to each community with information about Option 2. Jason asked if this would impact communities' SMPDC dues; Steph and Randy responded that those dues would not be



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impacted. Dylan suggested that, moving forward, information on the MPO requirements could be added to the memo on SMPDC dues that SMPDC already sends out.

Steph informed the group that SMPDC will aim to send a memo to MPO members outlining the proposal by the end of next week. Steph will touch base with everyone before the February Policy Committee meeting with the goal of making a final decision in that meeting. No motion was made on this item.

4. 2023-2026 Proposed KACTS Transportation Improvement Program Amendment-

Steph introduced the item explaining that all federally funded projects must be in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to receive federal funding. KACTS must update the TIP when there is a change to any project such as funding increase or a request to add a project to the TIP. MaineDOT must receive the KACTS Policy Committee endorsement when any federally funded project has a major scope change or cost increase or when MaineDOT wishes to add a project to the STIP. The proposed amendment has completed the required 10-day public comment period. MaineDOT is seeking a TIP amendment to transfer the funding source from the statewide bridge inspection WIN already present in the STIP for the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge (#3641), and the Piscataqua River Bridge (#6330), both located on the Maine-New Hampshire state line.

James Bellissimo moved to approve the proposed TIP amendment. Dean Lessard seconded the motion. Steph suggested approving both the TIP amendments together, which is a later item on the agenda. The Committee tabled the item to combine it with the other TIP amendment, item 6 on this agenda.

5. MaineDOT Transportation Improvement Program 2024-2027 Project List

Steph introduced the item saying that MaineDOT has recently developed the 2024-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project list and the associated KACTS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project list. The KACTS Policy Committee is required to approve the STIP/TIP project list, release the TIP for a 15-day comment period, and then adopt the final TIP to be included in the STIP. Included in the agenda is the 2024-2027 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) MaineDOT project list, FHWA MPO-sponsored projects, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) project list. These project lists are static documents, and all changes to project information are captured on the errata sheet. Also included is the 2024-2027 FHWA/FTA funding obligation information. All of these documents must be included in the final TIP document. There are no new projects being added to the TIP from the



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KACTS allocation. All KACTS funded projects have already been selected through the KACTS TIP selection process. The proposed schedule for approving the 2024-2027 TIP is:

- February 12, 2024- Draft 2024-2027 TIP posted for a 15-day public comment period.
- February 27, 2024- Public comment period ends.
- At its March 2024 Meeting, the Policy Committee approves final 2024-2027 KACTS TIP.

Tom Reinauer asked if staff has had the opportunity to review the proposed TIP list. Steph responded that it has been reviewed. She encouraged the group to take a closer look at the list, and any suggested changes can be added to the errata sheet.

Steph informed the group that the goal is to have a draft by February 12th and hold the public comment period until February 27th. The group will be notified via email when the public comment period begins.

Jeff raised the question of whether this list includes all capital paving projects or only certain projects. Steph responded that this only includes the projects that are funded through FHWA surface transportation funds, and that the list includes both MPO-sponsored and DOT-sponsored projects.

Carol Murray made a motion to approve the proposed TIP list, seconded by Jason Garnham. Motion passed unanimously.

6. 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Amendment- Steph introduced the item as a continuation of the discussion of the previous TIP Amendment discussed in 4 in the agenda. Steph reiterated the process around the state and MPO TIPS. All TIP amendments must be posted to the SMPDC website for a 10-day public comment period. This TIP amendment was posted for public comment on 1/8/24. MaineDOT is seeking a TIP amendment for the following:

- Amend the current 2023-2026 TIP to include the FHWA and FTA project list proposed for the 2024-2027 TIP. This allows all 2024 projects to be authorized at their current level of funding, with updated information, prior to the 2024-2027 STIP/TIP approval.

Included in this TIP amendment is the most recent Errata sheets and attached project sheets which capture changes to the 2023-2026 project list during the approval process. The projects on the errata sheet (see project lists attached) will be part of the proposed TIP amendment.



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James Bellissimo amended his motion approve both TIP amendments. Dean Lessard seconded the motion. The motion to pass both amendments passed unanimously.

1. Annual MPO Federal Highway Administration Performance Measures and Targets

Steph provided background on the performance measures. In 2016, the Federal Highway Administration implemented the final rule on the Highway Safety Improvement Program, requiring State DOT’s and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop safety performance targets, to be published annually. MPOs establish Highway Safety Improvement Program Targets by either: Agreeing to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the State DOT safety target(s); or 2) Committing to quantifiable safety targets for the metropolitan planning area.

Steph reviewed that adopting performance targets is part of our annual MPO requirements. Steph brought the group’s attention to DOT’s comments in the attached packet regarding the effects of the COVID pandemic on these targets.

Tom Reinauer commented that KACTS could consider developing our own targets in future years with our region increasing in size and available resources. Dylan expressed his support for exploring this option. Steph responded she will discuss with Dean Williams how much staff time may be involved in developing our own targets for the MPO, and noted that PACTS, BACTS, and ATRC all use state targets. Steph also noted that the current numbers in the attached packet only include the original 5 MPO towns because DOT has not yet formally approved the boundary change.

Tom moved to adopt the State Performance Targets for Safety, seconded by Carol. Motion passed unanimously.

2. MaineDOT KACTS Contract Update

Claire Winter informed the group that the extension of the 2022-23 MPO contract extends through the end of January, and that DOT is working on the 2024-25 MPO contract and new UPWPs, which should be in place before the end of January.

3. SMPDC Regional Updates

Steph updated the group that the KACTS Safety Action Plan Steering Committee has started convening. The project consultants at WSP are developing a public survey and a stakeholder list will be sent out to the group for review. Steph also notified the group that the Eastern Trail’s new Executive Director, Chelsey Berlin, may attend a future KACTS meeting. The KACTS Long Range Transportation Plan RFP has been



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posted and 2 or 3 volunteers will be needed for proposal review and scoring committee. SMPDC has received a new speed feedback sign from DOT; any towns interested in using it for a project should reach out to Dean Williams.

4. MaineDOT and Municipal Project Updates

Dave Rich (Kittery) informed the group that the Walker/Wentworth project was awarded and will begin soon.

Dean Lessard gave an update that York is working with Maine DOT on the cost increases for the York Village project, and asked Steph if she was able to reach out to schedule a meeting. Steph responded that she will follow up.

Dave Rich asked if Steph has received any updates on the design of the Route 236 project. Steph responded that she will get him a status update.

Jeff Brubaker updated the group that there are multiple projects on Route 236 in Eliot in the design phase for this year, including a corridor project and intersection projects on the North side of town. The study on the Depot Road intersection will be presented soon to the Select Board.

Thomas Morely (Portsmouth Naval Shipyard) informed the group that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is looking for 1.5 acres of flat, secure, municipal-owned property within 15 minutes of the Shipyard to use for 6-10 months. There would be no hazardous materials stored on the property and access would be needed a couple of times per week. He requested that anyone who may have an available area contact him at thomas.morely@navy or 804-625-5311.

Steph provided an update that DOT's workplan will be released at the end of this month.

5. Other Business

Steph informed the group that we aim to hold the next Policy Committee meeting at the same time next month.

The meeting was adjourned.