

KACTS

Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System

The Metropolitan Planning
Organization (MPO) for the
Kittery Urbanized Area

Maximizing opportunities to enhance the movement of goods and people through the Gateway to Maine

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 7 at 3:00 p.m.

**Kittery Town Hall
200 Rogers Road
Kittery ME 03904**

KACTS MEMBERS

Berwick

Eliot

Kittery

South Berwick

York

Maine Turnpike
Authority

MaineDOT

Southern Maine
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Voting members present: Adam Causey (Kittery), Chris Mann (MaineDOT), Tom Reinauer (Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission), Dylan Smith (York), Robert Currie (York County Community Action Corporation), David Rich (Kittery), Jon St. Pierre (South Berwick)

Staff & Guests: Eric Sanderson and Kelsey Pelton (Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission), Frank Underwood (Berwick)

1. Welcome/Introductions

Meeting called to order by Chair, Dylan Smith at 3:19

2. Approval of Minutes from the July 19, 2018 Policy Committee Meeting

David Rich made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris Mann seconded. No further comments/discussion. Motion passed 6-0-0.

3. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Tom discussed 2 KACTS Projects MaineDOT that were originally omitted from the TIP project list. These two projects were the Sarah Mildred Long bridge replacement and the Berwick Route 4 project. A discussion was held revolving around TIP funding changes and reallocation of funds to the Government Street project in Kittery. Previously, the KACTS Policy Committee voted to commit all 2020 KACTS funding to the Walker and Wentworth Street intersection project in Kittery. The TIP was released for public comment in February and the Policy Committee is accepting comments until March 11th, 2019.

Chris Mann clarified that the Committee cannot approve the tip with the stipulation of incorporation of public comments. Public comment must occur before the document can be approved. The KACTS Policy Committee will have to meet again to approve the TIP after the public comment period ends.

Due to the ongoing public comment, TIP approval will be on the next KACTS Policy

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Committee Agenda. Chris Mann confirmed this will give MaineDOT adequate time to review the document before passing on to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Dylan Smith asked the Committee if the TIP fiscal resources are adequately accounted for. Tom asked the Committee to continue to review the document with this in mind before the next Committee meeting.

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4. Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Tom provided an overview of what has been done on the Plan, and Kelsey Pelton presented results of the MetroQuest survey distributed to solicit public comment. Kelsey noted over 2,000 data points were received from approximately 200 survey responses. These include intersections, issues, congestion areas and other data points. Kelsey summarized that the major issue from public comment was congestion and several intersection issues. Transit, road repair and biking/walking concerns were also raised. These problem areas were mapped in the presentation.

Tom noted that the results will be shared with MaineDOT. Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission staff will consult with MetroQuest on how to best do this.

Bob Currie asked if there was a way to export the data into a report. Kelsey responded that the mapping program does not include geographical coordinates, so responses are listed in a lengthy excel spreadsheet with no geospatial reference. KACTS and SMPDC staff are still going through individual, written comments made and common commute destinations and starting points. Tom stated the commuter data will likely be sorted by zip code. The portion of respondents who worked from home was larger than expected.

Tom discussed that other high investment priorities as identified by the public response were safety for all users, investing in technology systems and expanding public transit.

KACTS will also use MetroQuest for two current studies (Route 236 Eliot/Kittery corridor study and the Downtown Berwick study).

Dylan noted that the Plan has a need for how the region needs more monies allocated towards the various programs of the MPO. Increased costs of construction have made the ~\$800,000 allocation KACTS receives very difficult to work within. How many times and by how much have projects gone over allocated budgets in the past? A more legislative focus at the state and federal level would be key. Chris agreed regarding increased project costs, and noted that MaineDOT is also seeing increased project costs (averaging about 20% over project budgets for engineering bids received). The Committee discussed these rising costs

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due to increasing workforce competitiveness, and a depleted public sector workforce due to higher paying private sector jobs.

Tom agreed that KACTS staff will put together a financial section in the Plan, and send it for the next Committee meeting. For brevity purposes, only this section will be distributed, as the rest of the document will remain unchanged.

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5. Draft Project Selection Procedure

Tom overviewed the various project selection criteria developed to select projects for the TIP. This new version of the procedure was meant to be succinct and simplified. KACTS also wanted to add a prioritization and scoring for projects that are submitted. The Committee must approve any project selection procedures by May as July is the cutoff to have any KACTS project(s) submitted to MaineDOT. These updates have incorporated sustainable planning, feasibility of projects, and community support. KACTS transit funding has remained unchanged.

Dylan addressed the issue of some communities wanting more weight on community support, including from comprehensive plans. Chris and Tom added that letters of support from municipalities could be considered under this definition.

David brought up that some projects might not have cross category support, especially if a project was meant to address one issue/challenge. Dylan added that projects could be subcategorized or show if a project crossed multiple categories.

Tom concluded the discussion noting KACTS staff would likely score submitted projects in late May.

6. Calendar Year 2022 Capital Improvement Allocation

Tom reviewed the KACTS allocation, stating it would remain the same as previous years for calendar year 2022. Project ID forms will be sent out in late March to solicit projects. Items needing to be submitted include preliminary estimates and traffic counts, among other things. SMPDC will set a deadline to have these submitted, and site visits will be scheduled for late April or early May.

MaineDOT will have Right of Way and environmental staff come to site walks. Chris noted that once an application is received by MaineDOT, staff there will voice concerns to see if a project has reasonable estimates and identifies any appropriate issues.

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Tom stated towns will present their projects to the Committee in June, with selections occurring in July.

7. Project Updates

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Berwick

David updated the Committee on the Walker and Wentworth street project in Kittery, noting it was still in design. Separately, the town's Government street project is ready for bid. A third project on Whipple Street has obtained 3 easements from MaineDOT, with further utility issues being worked out. Right of Way issues on this project are ongoing and hopefully will be worked out soon.

Eliot

Kittery

Tom asked if MaineDOT has seen the preliminary design of the Walker and Wentworth street project. David noted that the town hasn't seen it yet. Tom concluded that preliminary design review documents have been submitted to the project manager at MaineDOT.

South Berwick

York

Jon provided the Committee with an update on the Route 236 and Route 91 intersection in South Berwick. The town has also signed a contract with consultant Gorrill Palmer to look at the intersections north of the route 236 and 91 intersection. There will be a kickoff meeting for that study in several weeks. In the meantime, the town needs to find improvements to make before Route 236 is repaved by MaineDOT in 2020 or 2021. Gorrill Palmer is aware of that paving and is hoping to have painting modifications available for recommendation in the ongoing Route 236 study. Tom concluded the discussion by noting that KACTS staff can follow up with Gorrill Palmer for signal design options for the route 236 and 91 intersection.

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Dylan discussed the York Village project. York's Public Works Director, Dean Lessard is the main town staff member working on the project. There have been questions regarding moving the monument in York Village, but those have been addressed. The Route 1 and the new Town beach connector road is done, but the road is not open to traffic. The town is considering zoning changes in that area and discussing what developments would be best for the area. An ad-hoc committee has been formed to analyze economic development surrounding Short Sands Road and the general surrounding area.

Tom reminded the Committee of the ongoing work on the high level bridge of Interstate 95 between Kittery and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The project is on schedule, but bids came in substantially higher than estimates. The project is fully funded in the KACTS TIP, with construction starting in April. Lane closures will be as minimal as possible, with night work seeking to alleviate other traffic concerns. Exit 7 Northbound in Portsmouth may be closed due to the small space between this exit and the bridge (this space may need to be used as a buffer area). The project should take 3 construction seasons. The end result of the construction will likely allow shoulder travel on the bridge in high demand times on both

sides of the bridge. Several miles north, the Maine Turnpike York highway speed toll plaza project should also be a 3 year project.

8. Other Business

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Tom updated the committee on KACTS work with MaineDOT to develop performance measures. All 4 Maine MPOs have agreed to allow MaineDOT to suggest or set targets for safety performance measures.

Eliot

Chris added that 5 year annual averages will be used. Safety performance targets will be adopted annually on February 27th. MPOs will need to notify MaineDOT by this date whether they will use state adopted targets, or craft their own.

Kittery

South Berwick

Tom concluded that prior to the next KACTS meeting, the Public Participation Plan (PPP) needs to be updated to reflect newly agreed upon TIP and STIP processes regarding amendments. MaineDOT, FHWA, and the Federal Transit Administration have agreed on this process after the approval of the PPP. This will necessitate the KACTS Policy Committee to vote on and approve that procedure at the next meeting. Thresholds of amendments and administrative modifications will also be discussed at the next meeting.

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9. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items

MaineDOT

The next meeting will be held at 9AM on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at Kittery Town Hall. Agenda items to be discussed include:

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1. Update and approval of the Public Participation Plan
2. Consider the Long Range Transportation Plan for approval
3. Consider the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for approval
4. Consider TIP Project Selection Criteria for approval

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The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 PM