

# Public Transit Advisory Council

## Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2018

Note: Decisions and commitments in ***bold italic*** type.

Meeting was called to order at 9:01.

Members present: Mary Ann Hayes (chair), Connie Reed, Jessica Maurer, Kalie Hess, Chris Hall, Carla Dickstein, Dana Knapp, Rep. Bettyann Sheats, Theresa Savoy, Jonathan Labonte, Al Schutz, Rebecca Grover, Sandy Buchanan, William Shane, Barbara Schneider, Duane Scott, Deirdre Wadsworth; (via phone) Tom Reinauer, Casey Gilbert, Marcia Larkin, Lisa Feldman.

Members absent: Jennifer Williams, Zoe Miller, Coretta Cooper, Alley Smith, Sen. Kimberly Rosen, Patricia Quinn, Tom Meyers, Deborah Deatruck, Giselle White.

Liaisons absent: Stefanie Nadeau-DHHS, Bill Hurley-DOL

Others present: Wayne Emington-FHWA, Steffanie Pyle, Ryan Neale, Amy Rau, Jennifer Grant, Michael Hallundbaek, Kelly Arata, Diana True, Jim Wood, Barbie Lord, Richard Taylor, Rick McCarthy, Scott Rollins, (via phone) Hank Berg, Leah Sirmin-FTA, Paul Pottle, Lori Brann-Clerk.

**Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:** Mary Ann welcomed attendees who then introduced themselves. Rep. Sheats asked if the membership included a business representative. Mary Ann stated that there were several angles on purposeful business representation: Deidre Wadsworth was recruited as a developer to link transportation, land use and housing. Chris Hall represents economic development interests and Casey Gilbert represents businesses dependent upon public transportation. There are also other Council members who happen to be businesses as well.

***June 7 meeting minutes: Connie moved to adopt the minutes and Barbara seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.***

**Long Range Transportation Plan:** Jen Grant updated the PTAC members on progress. Still in the data collection phase and collecting public input through surveys. The primary goal is a well-managed system. Help is needed from partners to accomplish all goals. Reliant on partners to implement strategies. Emphasis on partnerships, communications, investments in public transit, support investments in transit oriented design and smart infrastructure. Themes: support transportation choices other than personal auto, safe and secure infrastructure, mobility management, transit oriented design, smart growth/concentrated development. Mainers appreciate rural areas of Maine. Council members noted that the themes suggested increased focus on areas relevant to its mission compared with past department priorities.

**Moving Maine:** Kalie Hess provided the update. Lots of energy towards mobility management now. Good time to look at networking/working together. Design team established representing business, housing, aging, philanthropy, disability, health, state, others, to help design a network approach to

improve mobility in state. Kickoff held October 2 to design guiding principles to start network. Need advocacy, some policies get in the way, need funding, need to improve volunteer network, need for coordination among partners. Assess where we are, what are the needs, and how to address them. Next step is to create a logic model to follow. Looking for funding to support the effort. Intent is to grow organized network for success. Questions can go to any member of the design team.

**LCP:** Mary Ann updated the group. Regional forums being developed in coordination with Age Friendly Community network. Reached out to 58 Age Friendly communities statewide. Fifteen volunteered to host forums in Maine. Would like to hold forums by early December so will be a push to get done in short window available. York County Forum will be in Kennebunk on November 1. Hallowell possible for Region 4 and Limestone possible for Aroostook County. Other sites to be determined. PTAC members are encouraged to help with promotion and attend a forum if possible.

Jess commented that Thriving in Place communities funded by Maine Health Access Foundation (MEHAF) might offer locations in Washington and Hancock counties. Will reach out. Seniors Plus in L/A might host. Mary Ann – need to settle on hosts – perhaps 10. Bill offered town of Cumberland for Cumberland County. GPCOG also hosting a transit forum for disabled and immigrants on Oct. 24. Tom R. requested save-the-date email ASAP for Nov. 1 York County Forum.

Mary Ann requested input on how the forums will be set up and distributed a suggested outline. Lori noted that the meetings need to discuss needs, priorities, and strategies as per federal requirement. It was agreed that focusing on confirming needs (“what we’ve been hearing”) rather than starting with a blank sheet was best. The strengths and weakness of in-person forums vs. on-line surveys available at people’s convenience w/o traveling were discussed. Tom – survey better than voting at forum due to more transportation professionals instead of customers attending forums. Ideally both would be utilized. The MetroQuest instrument is time-consuming to set up but will be considered. Lisa – for community involvement and Internet/computer access use libraries via the Maine Library Association. Important to provide transportation to transit dependent people to make sure they can attend meetings or hold meetings where there is transit available. Add statewide webinar for those who can’t make meetings in person. Jess offered to set up the webinar.

**Statute Amendments:** Mary Ann discussed the PTAC statute 23 §4209-A and offered suggestions for streamlining council appointments to a calendar year with 1/3 of seats being replaced every year. There is an opportunity to improve the reporting requirement also. Reports due to legislature every other March. Discussion of what committees to report to. Better to report to 2 committees than one. Otherwise better to have targeted conversations with appropriate committee leadership about specific key recommendations than full report. Use council members who have relationships to determine how to distribute report - don’t overthink details in statute. Use COL factors to grow estimates in 2015 strategic plan instead of hiring a consultant to get new numbers for LOS and cost estimate of providing service.

**Go! Vermont Trip Planner:** Overview by Ross MacDonald, Public Transit Coordinator from Vermont Agency of Transportation and Go! Vermont coordinator. Manages 8 transit providers and \$33M

annually. 68% of the budget is flexed from FHWA. Go! Vermont is a one click, one call resource for transportation in VT and multimodal trip planner. Began as a vision to use GTFS and expand to GTFS-flex. Trillium Solutions and Cambridge Systematics were the vendors contracted to provide the interface for rural mobility on demand project. (See attached Powerpoint presentation.) Expectations: Trip Planner will show all routes and show demand response, car pools, airport shuttles. Better rural model to make collaborative trips instead of single modes. Statewide AVL proposals to link to providers. To include apps for phones/laptops. Partners: providers, call centers, Medicaid, vocational rehabilitation, state employees, housing, AARP, association of the blind, council on independent living, hospitals, recovery centers, senior center. Launch through TV for \$25K as part of community outreach. Working with Uber and Lyft for last mile/first mile. Want to pitch to Google to get them to provide same features. Soft launch only so far, pilot project under mobility on demand grant.

Costs: \$20/25K year to create and maintain data with Trillium, plus an additional \$30K for Trip Planner. \$100K to get up and running and \$20/40k to maintain. Cambridge Systematics is collecting origin/destination data for planning purposes. Volunteer programs are incorporated into system, also Medicaid trips. Resort communities support local providers to support transit. Businesses coordination occurs upon request. Marketing is mostly web ads and some tv. Outreach – ask advocates to help distribute. Need something like rural Uber to complement what exists now. Funding is challenging, takes advantage of public advocacy and flex funds as well as discretionary grants.

**Performance Measures:** Deadline is May 16 for established performance measures. What should be measured? Lively discussion of the relevance of demographic data and how to collect it. One comment was that demographic data would be bad as there should be less silo-ing and a good transportation system would provide for everyone's needs. Growth a better target to remove stigma. Hard to measure/compare urban/rural areas/needs. Only so much money, how to invest to help the majority of people. Wayne – American Community Survey has some good data that might be used. Penquis – new customers are asked, how did they hear about the Lynx, are you a veteran, why is transportation needed? Biggest need is family/friends don't provide rides or don't have a vehicle. Survey could be developed and administered by college students to collect demographic data.

Sandy suggested NTD measures, trips per revenue mile, trips per population, # fatalities. Tom agreed to start with these, adding a few others for next reporting period. Jess – maybe add operating cost per mile/passenger. Then think of other ways to collect data of riders/non-riders. Kalie – what funds pay for each ride? State provides \$1/per person. Providers can provide counts for most common address.

**Recap:** LCP to be developed by end of calendar year. Council will have chance to review. Next meeting TBD for a morning at MaineDOT in mid-January. Agenda items to include LCP review and preparing report for Legislature due March 1.

**Feedback:** General positive comments from members that the meeting was well-designed and implemented, good use of their time. Bill observed – basically public transit has gone backwards...in the past there were trains and buses, now more cars, and we are returning to transit needs.

Adjourned at 12:03 pm.