

Chapter 7 - Regional Focus on Planning

Regional Perspectives and Priorities

Connecting Maine is the result of MaineDOT coordinating and collaborating with sister long range transportation planning entities. These groups include the Maine Turnpike Authority, Maine's four metropolitan planning organizations, its 11 regional councils, six economic development districts and three Indian tribal governments. The following pages provide a summary of their long-range transportation plans so as to provide a single source for the important transportation investment needs each has identified, as they all tie in with this statewide long-range transportation plan.

Maine Turnpike Authority

The Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA) is a quasi-public entity that owns and maintains through a toll system and other revenues the Maine Turnpike along the southern portion of I-95. With only one known exception, MTA receives no state or federal tax dollars – its capital, operations and maintenance activities are all funded by their toll collections. The exception is that MTA received funding from the American Resource and Recovery Act of 2009 through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The MTA generates a ten-year plan, and their 2004-2013 plan was used in developing this statewide plan. Examples of some of the strategic transportation investments provided in the 2004-2013 plan are summarized below:

Examples of Recommended Strategic Transportation Investments

- Maintain existing infrastructure with an aggressive reserve maintenance program, including bridge rehabilitations, intelligent transportation system upgrades, and a 15-year paving cycle
- Modernize and widen through the Portland area
- Replace “Southern End” toll plaza
- Upgrade electronic toll collection (ETC)
- Upgrade park-and-ride lots and add truck parking at service plazas
- Make “Northern End” clear zone and safety improvements
- Rehabilitate the Gray maintenance facility
- Construct the Lewiston/Auburn Downtown Connector interchange

Maine Indian Tribal Governments

Maine's three federally-recognized Indian tribal governments each have developed a long-range transportation plan. The strategic investment needs identified in these long-range transportation plans are summarized below for each Indian tribe in Maine. These needs are included for consultation and to ensure that their priorities are coordinated with those of *Connecting Maine*.

Passamaquoddy Tribe (Indian Township)

- Construct new bicycle and pedestrian paths, and rehabilitate the existing path
- Fix sight distance problems on Grand Lake Stream Road
- Provide multimodal transportation alternatives throughout Indian Township
- Invest in infrastructure to support ecotourism and jobs creation

Passamaquoddy Tribe (Pleasant Point)

- Reconstruct the Rte. 190 Causeway to allow tidal flushing and boat access, or remove the causeway and construct a new bridge on Old Eastport Road
- Install lighting along Rte. 190 to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Monitor potentially significant impacts that may occur in the general vicinity of Pleasant Point if a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal or other large scale industrial facility is constructed

Penobscot Nations – Indian Island

- Install consistent signage on the island and a kiosk near the entrance to the island
- River Road access control
- Repave River Road Extension
- Widen and reconstruct Oak Hill Road from River Road to the widened section of Oak Hill Road
- Reconstruct Olamon Lane and Mosquito Lane
- Reconstruct Rolling Thunder Drive, complete with a new drainage system
- Improve drainage on Bear Ridge Road and Extension
- Construct new connector from Center Street to the service center area, primarily for use by commercial vehicles and buses
- Extend Center Street to intersect Oak Hill Road to provide a more direct route to the newer residential areas of the island
- Install sidewalks or provide wider shoulders along Bear Ridge Road and Extension, Burnurwubskek Road from Bear Ridge Road to the existing sidewalk and Oak Hill Road from River Road to Pine Grove

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Maine's four metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) each have recently developed or upgraded their respective long-range transportation plans. The following paragraphs identify their major transportation investment recommendations for the *Connecting Maine* 20-year planning period. Examples of recommended strategic transportation investments are listed below for each of Maine's four metropolitan planning organizations. The MPOs are listed alphabetically.

Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC)

- Construct new turnpike interchanges for downtown Lewiston-Auburn
- Pursue Access Management, Transportation System Management (TSM), and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies
- Provide sidewalks and trails along arterial and collector roads
- Purchase the Lewiston Lower Road rail line from Lewiston to Lisbon Falls and establish the Auburn Passenger Intermodal Facility
- Add and expand transit services to surrounding communities

Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System (BACTS)

- Replace and widen the bridge over the Stillwater River on Stillwater Avenue in Old Town
- Complete the reconstruction of Route 1A in Hampden from Hillside Drive to Western Avenue (Route 9)
- Design and construct a new I-95/I-395 interchange including flyovers
- Expand transit service with additional intermodal links and increased hours of service (evenings and Sunday)
- Plan and construct a Penobscot River Valley bicycle/pedestrian trail network

Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System (KACTS)

- Support implementation and expansion of the *Shoreline Explorer* transit service
- Establish transit links between Maine and Portsmouth, NH
- Link bicycle and pedestrian corridors and enhance access to schools
- Further develop the *GOMaine* (Transportation Demand Management) program
- Implement Access Management and Corridor Preservation along Route 236

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS)

- Address congestion and safety at key intersections
- Address mobility and congestion – Portland to western suburbs
- Increase the use of public transportation
- Provide passenger rail service and/or transit from Portland to Brunswick
- Pursue Access Management, TSM, and TDM strategies, including sidewalks

Maine Regional Councils/Economic Development Districts

The new direction taken by the MaineDOT in developing this long-range statewide transportation plan required a public involvement process that would focus not only on transportation but also on its relationship to economic and community development and land use patterns. To achieve a greater understanding of these relationships, MaineDOT engaged the state's eleven regional councils to evaluate transportation assets and needs within each region and to work with the state's economic development districts to ensure that the proposed transportation investments support regional economic development strategies as well.

Examples of the regional councils' recommended strategic investments, listed by their respective economic development districts, are summarized below. The detailed CREST Strategic Investment Plans developed by Maine's eleven regional councils, summarized by economic development district, are provided in Chapter 8.

Northern Maine Economic Development District

- Improve north-south mobility to include projects listed in the *Aroostook County Transportation Study's* Environmental Impact Statement
- Upgrade the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic rail system
- Implement the Northern Maine Regional Airport Service Redevelopment Plan
- Improve access to Maine's seaports
- Provide a new commercial port of entry in the St. John Valley

Eastern Maine Economic Development Corporation

- Increase mobility and safety along coastal Route 1
- Improve I-95 corridor in Penobscot County
- Develop the Acadia Gateway Center
- Upgrade multimodal facilities along the U.S. Route 1 corridor including rail, airports, and ferry terminal
- Develop a Tourism Infrastructure Program for Eastern Maine

Midcoast Economic Development District

- Provide intermodal connections for Brunswick Naval Air Station redevelopment
- Implement the *Gateway I* strategies when they are defined
- Extend passenger rail to Brunswick and establish a multimodal transportation center in Brunswick
- Improve highways to communities in coastal peninsulas (Routes 24, 27, and 32)
- Improve freight rail access

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments

- Make mobility improvements to commuter routes into Augusta (Rtes. 201 and 202)
- Build a second bridge in Skowhegan
- Improve heavy haul truck routes (Routes 2, 15, 43, and 135)
- Expand commuter “high occupancy vehicle” (HOV) opportunities, (e.g., intermodal facilities at I-95 interchanges and other strategic locations)
- Develop the East Coast Greenway and expand the bicycle/pedestrian trail network along the Kennebec River

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments

- Reconstruct Routes 2, 4, and 26
- Develop a Lewiston-Auburn Downtown Connector to the Maine Turnpike
- Construct a passenger intermodal facility in Auburn
- Extend high-speed rail corridor and passenger rail from Portland to Auburn, and on to Montreal
- Establish daily transit services from Lewiston-Auburn to Carrabassett Valley, Farmington, Rumford, Bethel, and Portland

Southern Maine Economic Development District

- Implement the Interstate Exit Master Plan, and I-295 mobility and safety improvements
- Expand transit service at multiple locations
- Improve Port of Portland marine facilities
- Improve the Portland International Jetport
- Conduct alternatives analyses for east-west transportation from the Maine Turnpike to the Sanford area and north-south travel in the village area of South Berwick