

II. Corridor Identification, Needs and Objectives

The project team and Steering Committee identified the most important corridors in their respective sub-regions within the SMEDD Region (see cover map). Based on input from the Southern Maine Corridors Steering Committee and other public participation activities, six regional corridors were identified for the SMEDD Region:

A) Southern Coast Corridor

- Portsmouth, New Hampshire/Kittery to Portland (U.S. Route 1, I-95, Eastern Trail, Guilford Rail Line/Amtrak).
- Towns: Kittery, Eliot, South Berwick, Berwick, York, Ogunquit, North Berwick, Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Arundel, Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Scarborough, Cape Elizabeth, South Portland, Portland

B) Southern Maine Central Corridor

- South Central Cumberland County to KACTS via Sanford (Route 4, Route 5, Route 11, Route 35, Route 202, Route 236).
- Towns: Baldwin, Standish, Gorham, Buxton, Hollis, Limington, Cornish, Parsonsfield, Newfield, Limerick, Acton, Shapleigh, Waterboro, Dayton, Lyman, Alfred, Lebanon, Sanford, Kennebunk, Arundel, North Berwick, Berwick, South Berwick, Eliot, Kittery

C) York County East-West Corridor

- Northern York County to Southern PACTS Area (Route 4A, Route 5, Route 22, Route 112, Route 117, US Route 202).
- New Hampshire to I-95 and Coastal Towns via Sanford (Route 99, Route 109, Route 111, US Route 202).
- Somersworth, NH/Berwick, ME to Wells (Route 9, Guilford Rail Line, Amtrak).
- Towns: Cornish, Limerick, Limington, Acton, Shapleigh, Alfred, Waterboro, Hollis, Buxton, Gorham, Westbrook, Scarborough, South Portland, Portland, Dayton, Saco, Biddeford, Lyman, Lebanon, Sanford, Kennebunk, Arundel, Berwick, North Berwick, Wells

D) Coastal PACTS Corridor

- Portland to Brunswick (US Route 1, I-295, rail corridors)
- Towns: Portland, Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, Freeport, Brunswick

E) Cumberland County Central Corridor

- Portland to Lewiston (I-95, Route 26/100) – to be implemented through the Central Corridors Coalition.
- Towns: Portland, Westbrook, Windham, Falmouth, Cumberland, North Yarmouth, Gray, Pownal, New Gloucester, Raymond

F) Lakes Region Western Corridor

- Portland to Fryeburg (US Route 302, Routes 113, 114)
- Portland to New Hampshire via Gorham, Standish, Cornish, Porter (State Route 25) including Lakes Region
- Mountain Division Rail with Trail
- Westbrook, Windham, Raymond, Casco, Naples, Bridgton, Harrison, Scarborough, Gorham, Standish, Frye Island, Limington, Sebago, Baldwin, Hiram, Denmark, Brownfield, Fryeburg.

Regional Corridor Objectives

The Southern Maine Economic Development District Transportation Advisory Committee for the 2004-2005 Regional Transportation Assessment recognized that many recommendations that they have identified or reviewed are not specific to one corridor. Below is a list of objectives that were identified during the Regional Transportation Assessment process. These recommendations should by no means be considered a complete list. Please refer to the Region 6 2001 Regional Advisory Report for other recommendations that are more global and not necessarily written from a corridor standpoint.

- As part of the Transportation 2025 effort, work with transportation stakeholders in York and Cumberland County to develop strategies, including local strategies, to raise funds for the transportation infrastructure. Involve towns, regional planning commissions, economic development districts, chambers of commerce, etc.
- Increase dialogue and coordination efforts with the Maine State Planning Office, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Department of Environmental Protection. Examine ways that comprehensive planning and economic development planning processes can be further integrated into the Maine Department of Transportation's planning and policy development.
- Examine ways to bring economic development considerations (as they impact important roadways) into the Traffic Movement Permit process. Work with transportation and economic development leaders to identify strategies (including legislation) to integrate these two planning issues.
- Increase investment in strategies that enable bottom-up planning and increase communication between towns and the Maine Department of Transportation.
- Develop model access management guidelines for Maine's urban, suburban and rural communities.
- Integrate utility planning and management with the Maine Department of Transportation's planning and policy development.
- Increase investment in non-motorized transportation linkages between recreational areas and green spaces.

Southern Coast Corridor System

Description:

The Southern Coast Corridor System, extending from the Kittery, ME/Portsmouth, NH area north to the Portland area carries the state's highest through-traffic volumes. It encompasses some of the state's largest service centers, employers and scenic tourist attractions. While the movement of people and goods is dominated by Interstate 95 and US Route 1, other modes of transportation continue to assume a greater role in the transportation system including transit services, passenger and marine cargo transportation, freight and passenger rail, and trails. This corridor connects two of Maine's four Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System (KACTS) and Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS), as well as New Hampshire's Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization. For more information see Appendix A.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Sub-corridors include I-95, US 1, the Boston Maine Rail Line and the Eastern Trail
- Contains seven Service Centers including Portland, South Portland, Scarborough, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Biddeford and Kittery, all of which are on the coast;
- Dramatic Seasonal Traffic Fluctuations (Based on 2004 AADT):
 - York, US 1 N/E of Pine Hill Rd: January 6080, August 14,660
 - Ogunquit, US 1 N/ of Captain Thomas Rd: January 8360, August 22720
- Maine Turnpike, the main artery on the corridor recently completed widening and EZ Pass initiatives.

Relevance to region/state:

- It is the primary gateway for surface transportation to the rest of the state of Maine and the connecting point to economic opportunities in southern New England;
- It connects the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System (KACTS), New Hampshire's Seacoast MPO and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS);
- It contains several alternative mode corridors including the Downeaster Amtrak service and the on and off-road network Eastern Trail; and
- It contains the region's largest employers and service centers (Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portland Metro Area, Biddeford/Saco Metro Area, Kittery, ME/Portsmouth, NH Metro Area, as well as a strong seasonal tourist industry.

Rank in Priority: 1

Southern Coast Corridor Transportation Issues & Objectives

Transportation Issues Summary:

The Southern Coast Corridor System carries large volumes of through-traffic and plays host to the transportation needs of the fastest growing region in Maine. Interstate 95 will continue to have a dominating role for north-south through-travel in the region. The MaineDOT should work to complement the long distance north-south travel corridor by continuing to support Amtrak's Downeaster service. In addition, MaineDOT should work to complement Interstate 95 by more effectively capturing shorter distance north-south trips by using other north-south modes or highways. Redundant north-south travel opportunities for passengers and freight are especially important for this corridor. The lower half of Route 1 from Arundel to Kittery is in need of creative transportation demand management planning to handle its excessive summer traffic volumes. MaineDOT should provide technical assistance and financial support to the new Atlantic Shoreline transit service that is planned for the southern portion of the corridor between Kennebunkport and York. The upper half of Route 1 from Biddeford to Portland will need improved transit services to link workers and consumers to employment and services. Development of the Eastern Trail is moving at a very slow pace, and MaineDOT should continue its support for this important recreational corridor.

Transportation Objectives:

- Implement safety and congestion improvements to Interstate 95.
- Increase seasonal transportation demand management on Interstate 95 and Route 1.
- Support and improve transit service opportunities between the six contiguous service centers between Portland and Biddeford.
- Support the Atlantic Shoreline transit service being proposed for the southern portion of the Southern Coast Corridor.
- Direct safety improvement programming towards the on-road Eastern trail system and support and invest in the off-road Eastern Trail system.
- Work with Downeaster to explore opportunities to improve commuting service between Maine communities.
- Work with towns to implement preferred heavy haul truck exits and routes using the MaineDOT Heavy Haul Truck Network Study¹.
- Ensure reliability of transportation infrastructure and services by developing redundant means for people, goods and services to travel through this corridor.
- Increase coordination and communication with New Hampshire on all facets of transportation planning and programming. Important themes include bridges, shared interstate throughways, freight planning and emergency management.
- Increase rest area opportunities for truck freight drivers on this corridor.

¹ Study of Impacts Caused by Exempting Currently Non-exempt Maine Interstate Highways from Federal Truck Weight Limits. June 2004, Wilbur Smith Associates.

Southern Coast Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

MaineDOT's greatest land use issues on this corridor are at the corridor's interstate interchanges, on Route 1, at Downeaster train stations, and along the Eastern Trail. As the Southern Coast continues to grow, residential and economic growth will continue to increase congestion on Interstates 95 and Route 1. For the Route 1 and the I-95 interchanges, MaineDOT needs to develop relationships with towns and other stakeholders to establish meaningful and complementary transportation and land use policies that will help conserve mobility and redirect new growth to other modes.

Land Use Objectives:

- Work with towns, the MTA, MPOs, and RPOs to develop Master Plans for Interstate 95 interchanges that balance transportation access with economic development needs.
- Assist towns and provide funding opportunities for Route 1 municipalities to develop consistent and effective access management plans for urban compact zones.
- Encourage the MaineDOT Region 1 office to limit permit waiver opportunities of Highway Driveway and Entrance Rules on Route 1.
- Encourage MaineDOT to work with RPOs to assist in Traffic Movement Permit processes for interchanges on the corridor.
- Encourage Towns to pursue transit-oriented development, particularly adjacent to existing train stations.
- Work with Towns to identify corridors that can still be planned to encourage dense development, more open space and facilitate public transit and better land use.

Southern Coast Economic Issues and Objectives

Economic Issues Summary:

MaineDOT will need to increase its flexibility in order to respond to the Southern Coast Corridor's rapidly changing and growing economy. Part of this effort will require allocating more resources to the marine transportation infrastructure by closely monitoring events with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and also improving funding resources for small harbors along the Southern Coast. MaineDOT has significant opportunities to bolster the Southern Coast tourism economies by further developing the Eastern Trail, supporting Amtrak Downeaster service and improving transit connections. Access management on Route 1 and at the Interstate 95 exits remains an important economic issue, by allowing commuters, freight and shoppers to pass through the transportation system quickly and efficiently.

Economic Objectives:

- Monitor the Federal Base Re-Alignment process to determine if the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard will continue as an active military base or be closed. If Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is closed, be prepared to invest in the port as an opportunity to compete in the global economy.
- Support and invest in portions of on-road and off-road Eastern Trail, and other bicycle and pedestrian trail facilities that will help facilitate recreational tourism.
- Continue to support train stations and assist in developing efficient transit options for train riders to reach their destinations.
- Continue to support coastal communities needing marine infrastructure for tourism and working waterfronts through Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP).
- Promote business development that preserves corridor mobility along Route 1.
- Develop strategies to work with Service Centers and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to help MaineDOT support commuter van and bus services.
- Work with municipalities, chambers of commerce and businesses to leverage impact fees on private developers to improve corridors for future and sustainable economic growth.

Southern Maine Central Corridor System

Description:

The Southern Central Maine Corridor System extends from Gray/New Gloucester through the Greater Sanford Area down into Kittery, ME/Portsmouth, NH (Appendix B). As residential growth continues to expand into the central parts of York and Cumberland counties, so have central town economies and demands for transportation infrastructure on this corridor system. The demands and pressures on this corridor are greatly impacted by changing conditions on the York County East-West Corridor System and the Southern Coast Corridor System. Although the Southern Central system does not contain any limited access highways, roads continue to serve as very important alternatives for north-south travel in the region. For goods and people with origins or destinations in Northwestern York County, the Southern Maine Central Corridor System is a very important north-south travel option, because there are also limited opportunities for north-south travel in neighboring New Hampshire.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Subcorridors include SR 4, SR 11, SR 35, SR 236, US 202
- Substantial Heavy Truck Traffic
 - SR 236: 1210 (9%) Heavy Truck AADT in Eliot
 - SR 4: 850 (8%) Heavy Truck AADT in Berwick;
 - SR 202: 840 (9%) Heavy Truck AADT in Hollis; 597 (8%) Heavy Truck AADT in Lebanon
 - SR 5: 550 (11%) Heavy Truck AADT in Hiram
- Southern portion of corridor is sustaining very high and growing traffic volumes:
 - SR 236 AADT Highs: 15,140 (2003), 12,690 (1989)²
- Active Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee

Relevance to region:

- With new federal restrictions on heavy truck interstate travel, highways in this corridor are assuming a larger responsibility of freight movement along roads like Route 236, Route 202 and Route 4;
- Market forces south of Maine are having enormous impact on increasing commuter traffic demands on southern portions of the region, especially on Routes 4 and 236;
- Sanford is both the dominant service center in region as well as an important transportation crossroads in the region connecting the Central Corridor (SR 4, SR 11, US 202) with York County East-West Highway (SR 99, SR 109, SR 111)

Rank in Priority: 4

² MaineDOT Transportation Information for Decision Enhancement (TIDE) Database

Southern Maine Central Corridor Transportation Issues and Objectives

Transportation Issues Summary:

The Southern Central Maine Corridor System links York County residents and businesses to important interior Maine destinations such as Sanford, Lewiston-Auburn and Augusta, as well as Southern New England destinations. Steady growth is occurring in the KACTS region (Kittery, Eliot & South Berwick) and greater Waterboro region placing unprecedented demands on this north-south system. Because the Southern Maine Central Corridor does not contain any limited access highways, it is often used as a secondary, alternative north-south option for moving goods and services. However, since truck weight limits are enforced on the interstate system, and since growth is creating new mobility obstacles for businesses and residents accustomed to using the Southern Coast Corridor, the Southern Maine Central Corridor's highways are increasing in importance. Fixed route transit is not available in this region and may be warranted for the southern portion of the corridor.

Transportation Objectives:

- Preserve mobility on Route 202.
- Increase coordination with municipalities and RPOs to monitor heavy truck movements and average annual daily traffic throughout region.
- Explore commuter transit service opportunities on Route 236.
- Continue to implement safety improvements to rapidly growing portions of US 202, Route 4 and Route 236.
- Closely monitor and direct funding to intersections on Southern Maine Central Corridor System connecting to the York County East-West Corridor System and the Portland West/Lakes Region Corridor System.
- Build park and ride lot that can be used by Sanford Area commuters to access Route 4 and US 202. This park and ride lot could also serve Route 111 on the York County East-West Corridor System.

Southern Maine Central Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

Since the corridor system lacks any limited access highways, MaineDOT's greatest challenge in this region will be to protect the mobility of this north-south corridor from poor land use planning. In order to be successful, it is likely that MaineDOT will need to cooperate with municipalities that control land use changes throughout the region. Several towns in this corridor system are growing steadily and MaineDOT will need to work closely with them to encourage nodal development before strip development impedes mobility. There are significant opportunities for connecting forested and open space areas in the region.

Land Use Objectives:

- Collaborate with towns on Route 202 to adopt land use codes and access management regulations that preserve mobility and improve safety.
- Work with towns in the corridor system to encourage nodal development in existing town centers with public infrastructure. Towns needing immediate attention and support would include Gray, Waterboro, Sanford, South Berwick, and Eliot.
- Work with South Berwick and surrounding towns to develop a transportation-land use strategy that improves north-south mobility in the vicinity of downtown South Berwick.
- Work with KACTS, Kittery, Eliot, South Berwick and Berwick to encourage strengthening access management on the Route 236 corridor.
- Encourage MaineDOT and Transportation Lobby to pursue legislation that would limit Highway Driveway and Entrance Rule waivers for strategic roads such as Route 202, 4 and 236 to support growth in the region and alleviate north-south dependence on Interstate 95.
- Support efforts to increase trail and open space planning and land acquisition in the region.

Southern Maine Central Corridor Economic Issues and Objectives

Economic Issues Summary:

An important challenge on this corridor system relates to balancing the heavy truck freight transportation needs of the state with the safety of the corridor and the livability of towns in the corridor system. Recreational tourism remains an untapped opportunity for this corridor system and transportation would help catalyze an effort to boost tourism and economic opportunities in the area. Traffic demands on the southern portion of this corridor are largely based on the economic draw of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Southern New England. MaineDOT needs to step up its role in working with towns and employers in the area to develop more transportation demand management strategies to alleviate commuter traffic on Routes 4 and 236.

Economic Objectives:

- Work with towns in corridor system to arrive at strategies that balance local downtown economic development goals with heavy truck through traffic.
- Explore rail freight opportunities that alleviate north-south truck traffic burdens experienced by Southern Maine Central Corridor.
- Support and invest in portions of trail systems that are likely to help facilitate recreational tourism.
- Explore scenic highway opportunities in this region that will also promote tourism.
- Develop strategies to work with Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Service Centers in Kittery and Southern New England to help MaineDOT support non-traditional transportation modes for commuters.
- Work with towns, regional planning commissions and councils of governments to closely monitor and assess heavy truck impacts or resource extractive industries increasing heavy truck traffic on this corridor.

York County East-West Corridor System

Description:

The York County East-West Corridor runs in three broad parallel east-west movements from New Hampshire and Central York County to southern Maine's largest coastal service centers in Portland, Biddeford/Saco/Kennebunk and Kittery (Appendix C). A great deal of east-west traffic is dominated by work commuters and shoppers from small village and rural communities to service centers on roads like Route 22 and Route 111. Other traffic extends from the coast westward to recreational opportunities and New Hampshire service centers via roads such as Route 5, Route 202 and Route 9.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Includes SR 5, SR 9, SR 22, SR 25, SR 99, SR 109, SR 111, SR 112 & US 202;
- Active Route 109 and Route 111 Corridor Committees;
- No major fixed route transit services available despite substantial growing commuter demands on corridor system;
- Traffic volumes at I-95 interchanges continue to increase:
 - Biddeford Exit 32: 12, 690 (1994), 21,830 (2004)
 - Kennebunk Exit 25: 5,890 (1994), 8,930 (2004)
 - Saco Exit 35: 16,134 (1994), 25,311 (2004)
 - Wells Exit 19: 9,120 (1994), 13,520 (2004)
- Except for Sanford, all Maine service centers are on the eastern terminus of corridor system

Relevance to region:

- Serves growing York County interior towns relying on goods and services in southern coastal service centers and relying on access to interstate travel destinations;
- Roads support substantial labor forces that support business and industry in coastal service centers;
- Mobility corridors such as Route 111 and Route 109 are becoming increasingly attractive to developers of major retail complexes;
- Corridor regional mobility is subject to continued pressure from small towns and bedroom communities interested in capitalizing on through-traffic for economic development opportunities.

Rank in Priority: 6

York County East-West Corridor Transportation Issues and Objectives

Transportation Issues Summary:

A major issue for this region is accommodating the transportation needs of York County interior towns needing access to service centers on the coast and fast and efficient connections to Interstate 95. While the state contemplates developing a limited access East-West Highway, it is noteworthy that this region faces increasing demands for east-west travel. Even though this corridor supports the travel needs of a very large commuter population, there are very few alternatives. Infrastructure for carpooling on the west side of the corridor is also limited. Sanford, for example, almost equivalent in size to Biddeford, does not have any park and ride lots.

Transportation Objectives:

- Continue to support the Route 109 and Route 111 Corridor Committee planning efforts.
- Explore the feasibility of commuter transit services for Routes 109 and 111.
- Build a park and ride lot near Sanford for Route 111/202 commuters. This park and ride lot could also serve commuters traveling north or south on Routes 4 and US 202 on the Southern Maine Central Corridor System.
- Continue to implement safety improvements to Routes 109, 111 and 25.
- Improve communication with York County Sheriff's Department and State Police on ways that police enforcement can be used to improve highway safety in region.
- Work with towns and regional planning commissions to closely monitor heavy truck traffic increases on Routes 109, 111 and 112.

York County East-West Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

Though it experiences some of the highest traffic growth in the SMEDD region, this corridor system lacks any limited access highways. MaineDOT's greatest challenge in this region will be to protect the mobility of this east-west corridor from poor land use planning. In order to be successful, it is likely that MaineDOT will need to cooperate with local entities that control land use changes throughout the region. In this area MaineDOT will face two land use challenges in particular. First, several towns in this corridor system that used to be considered rural bedroom communities are looking to expand their tax base by attracting more commercial enterprises that do not require as many services. Many of these commercial businesses are looking to locate on arterial highways to attract through traffic, because towns do not already have town centers or already thriving economic districts. Second, interchanges are experiencing increased commercial growth. Large developers are increasingly looking to expand business in this fastest growing region of Maine. MaineDOT will need to work closely with municipalities to educate local towns how land uses and land use regulations restrict mobility.

Land Use Objectives:

- Continue to support regional corridor committees focusing on improving access management.
- Step up access management efforts on these corridors, including providing technical support to Towns on long-term creative ways to improve mobility by planning for new local roads, frontage roads and rear access drives.
- Where feasible, purchase control of access to protect significant corridors.

York County East-West Corridor Economic Issues and Objectives

Land use and economic development issues on this corridor system are closely related. Several towns in this corridor system that used to be considered rural bedroom communities are looking to expand their tax base by attracting more commercial enterprises that do not require as many services. Many of these commercial businesses are looking to locate on arterial highways to attract through traffic, because towns do not already have town centers or already thriving economic districts. I-95 interchanges will continue to attract large developments of regional impact, because land is reasonably affordable and available. MaineDOT will need to work closely with towns to identify when local economic development goals for towns in the corridor system are not meeting the mobility needs of the greater region.

Economic Issues:

- Take advantage of increased commercial growth where East-West highways have interchanges with Interstate 95 and leverage impact fees on private developers to improve corridors for future and sustainable economic growth.
- Work with towns to develop appropriate local commercial and industrial zoning standards for East-West highway mobility corridors that are consistent with MaineDOT's access management guidelines.
- Encourage MaineDOT, Transportation and Economic Development Lobby to pursue legislation that expands state review of Traffic Movement Permit economic and mobility needs of interior towns when reviewing developments of regional impact (through Traffic Movement Permit) and developments of cumulative regional impact (through the enforcement of the Highway Driveway and Entrance Rules).
- Develop transportation demand management strategies targeting commuters traveling from interior York County towns to coastal service centers.

Coastal PACTS Corridor System

Description:

This corridor is located in Southern Maine along the Casco Bay coast between two regional service centers, Portland and Brunswick (Appendix D). Economically, Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, and Freeport on Route 1 are within 18 towns and cities that comprise the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area, an area defined by the economic ties between the central city, Portland, and its suburbs. The Portland MSA offers the largest and most technically diversified workforce, a wide range of business support systems, extensive infrastructure, air, rail, and surface transportation hubs, employee housing, educational institutions, and capital markets in the State of Maine. Many of the municipalities serve as bedroom communities of Portland and rely heavily on Portland, South Portland, and Westbrook for jobs. Major routes in the corridor include I-295, I-95, Route 1, and Route 9. The primary focus is to preserve arterial highway capacity on I-295 and Route 1, improve highway access, balance increasing traffic congestion, and explore needs for commuter bus and rail services.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Major transportation systems include I-95, US 1, Maine Central Rail Road, and the East Coast Greenway.
- The corridor is comprised of three Service Centers including Portland, Freeport, and Brunswick.
- Four municipalities in the corridor including Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, and Freeport have developed Route 1 Design Guidelines that apply mostly to commercial development with emphasis on architectural and landscape standards, road and access planning, pedestrian and bicycle movement, internal connectivity, parking and open space, erosion control and stormwater management.
- The number of commuting residents has increased from 13,562 to 16,093 in the last decade, but the journey to work profiles have remained constant (see Appendix D for more information).³
- Interstate access continues to be the top priority for coastal towns.
- The towns are involved in numerous regional efforts, including the Coastal Corridor Coalition, Casco Bay Stormwater Working Group, Southern Maine Economic Development District (SMEDD), Southern Maine Corridors Committee, Portland Water District (PWD), Regional Waste Systems (RWS), and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee (PACTS)

Relevance to region/state:

- The Corridor connects three major employment centers Freeport, Portland and Brunswick
- It serves as one of the major tourist destination areas in Southern Maine including Freeport's outlets and Portland's historical and cultural sites.
- The area is supported by the multi-modal transportation system and is considered as a potential passenger rail and/or bus corridor connecting Portland and Maine's Midcoast points.

Rank in Priority: 2

³ U.S. Census Journey to Work Data, 2000

Coastal PACTS Corridor Transportation Issues and Objectives

Summary of Transportation Issues:

U.S. Route 1 and I-295 (principal arterial) provide primary south-west/north-east travel movements along the coast with the highest Average Annual Daily Traffic volumes of 18,940 recorded on I-295 between Martin Point in Falmouth and Exit 15⁴. There are seven primary access points to the Interstate in the study area: Exit 10 in Falmouth; Exits 15 and 17 in Yarmouth; and Exits 19, 20, 21 in Freeport, and 28 in Brunswick. Access to the Interstate remains one of the major problems in the Coastal Corridor including Exits 15 and 17 in Yarmouth and the problem of traveling from I-95 southbound to I-295 off the Falmouth spur at Exit 10. High crash locations are concentrated in Portland where traffic volumes are also the highest in the region. The MaineDOT should be actively involved in funding regional studies addressing this issue and support alternative transportation options that will alleviate traffic congestion on the highways and at the highway interchanges.

Transportation Objectives:

- Work with MaineDOT, FHWA and PACTS on TSM and TDM strategies to mitigate congestion and peak hour highway capacity on I-295 including flexible highway system and improving Interstate access. GPCOG suggested preserving future interchange improvements at Falmouth (Exit 10) and Yarmouth (Exits 15 and 17) to ensure future interstate access if possible.
- Work with MaineDOT on Access Management standards in Urban Compact Zones where MaineDOT rules do not apply. Create incentives for parallel roads, combined driveways, and preserve capacity.
- Ensure maximum communication between communities and area transit providers to ensure use of the existing services and resources.
- Work with GOMaine program to examine vanpool opportunities with major employers in the area as well as incentives to employers for having employees participate in carpools/vanpools.
- Establish satellite parking lot model in the Portland area similar to the OpSail Event in 2000.
- Work with the municipalities, local planning entities and the business community on establishing passenger rail and/or bus service between Portland and Brunswick and identify location for future intermodal facilities.
- Recognize the importance of utility corridors for regional economic development.
- Consider creation of a continuous bikeway from Freeport to Portland along Route One as a part of the East Coast Greenway, and alternate parallel routes and off-road facilities as appropriate.

⁴ MaineDOT Transportation Traffic Counts, 2003

Coastal PACTS Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

Future development and growth will result in traffic increases at major road intersections and issues with the access to the interstate interchanges especially for emergency vehicles. Establishment of the passenger rail service will require station and infrastructure planning and upgrade. The MaineDOT should work closely with municipalities on supporting transit especially in the areas that have sufficient population density. Current development patterns and regulations are often result in the incremental development outside the designated growth areas and regional and cumulative impacts are not adequately evaluated.

Land Use Objectives:

- Work with municipalities, MTA, PACTS, and GPCOG on Route 1 and I-295 Master Planning process that balances transportation improvements with economic development and population growth needs
- MDOT Bureau of Planning needs to work closely with towns and cities on their Comprehensive Plans, land use regulations, and development goals.
- Provide technical and financial assistance to the municipalities in developing and implementing innovative growth management techniques that direct new development to the areas supported by infrastructure and services and promote public transit
- Encourage communities to develop consistent and effective access management plans especially in the Urban Compact Areas for the major thoroughfares including Route 1 and Route 26/100.
- Reinvest in village areas and work with the business community in preparation for the new passenger rail and/or bus service extension.
- Develop a regional Future Land Use Plan with the help from GPCOG and PACTS.

Coastal PACTS Corridor Economic Issues and Objectives

Economic Issues Summary:

Home to Maine's largest municipality, the Coastal PACTS Corridor serves as the economic engine of the state and of Northern New England. With an international network that facilitates transportation by air, rail, bus, ferry, and container ship, Portland serves as both a gateway and a destination for visitors, freight, and commuters. The region's diverse economic base is anchored by over 10 large employers with over 1,000 workers, including L.L. Bean, Brunswick Naval Air Station, Maine Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, Unum Provident, Fairchild Semiconductor, Hannaford Brothers, and the University of Southern Maine. Commuting patterns could change significantly if the Brunswick Naval Air Station, with its 5,000 employees, is shut down in the latest round of base closures. Future job growth is projected to be entirely service oriented, as manufacturing declines and retail changes from downtown to suburban locations. Although the urban service center communities of Brunswick, Portland, South Portland, and Westbrook are expected to capture more than 60% of the region's job growth over the next 20 years, suburban job growth is expected to increase even faster, particularly in Scarborough and Falmouth. In Portland growth is expected to occur primarily as infill, off the peninsula. New highways and interchanges are attracting proposals for new commercial development, including Haigis Parkway, Portland Connector, I-95 Exits 46, 47 and 53, and I-295 Exits 5a, 5b, 15, 17, and 20. Both urban and suburban job growth place a heavy strain on arterials as the lifeblood that feeds commuters and divides neighborhoods. Investments must be made to increase the convenience and frequency of access to the Portland peninsula by means other than the single-occupant vehicle.

Economic Objectives:

- Support investments in marine infrastructure that sustain Portland Harbor as a world-class port for commercial fishing, freight/shipping, and tourism.
- Preserve coastal access for shellfish harvesting in Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Freeport, Harpswell, and Brunswick.
- Maintain the vitality of downtown and village centers as the primary location for civic, housing, retail, and commercial growth.
- Support density and development associated with Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit along the region's arterial corridors and integrate system schedules
- Invest in track upgrades and station development to support passenger rail service from Portland-Brunswick.
- Support transit-oriented developments around I-295 interchange exits in Falmouth, Cumberland, and Yarmouth.
- Continue to support off-road development, plus local spurs, of the East Coast Greenway from Portland to Brunswick.

Cumberland County Central Corridor System

Description:

The corridor is located between two major service centers Portland and Lewiston/Auburn along I-95, Route 26, and Route 100 (Appendix E). The corridor is characterized by rapidly growing suburban areas with bedroom community characteristics and rural towns including Raymond and Pownal. The region experiences significant amount of heavy haul truck and rail routes and serves as a connection between coastal communities and recreational areas in the Lakes Region and in western Maine. Some of the focus areas for the corridor include highway access and alleviation of traffic around town centers. One of the key changes that may have a significant impact on the area is the proposed location of a new Bypass in the New Gloucester-Gray area off the Maine Turnpike and Gray Village Bypass.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Major transportation systems include Maine Turnpike, Route 26/100, Route 202/4, Route 302, Route 115, Maine Central Railroad and the St. Lawrence and Atlantic
- The work traveling patterns in the area became more diversified and workers are commuting to farther destinations outside the area. At the same time, the number of commuters has increased from 16,771 people in 1990 to 22,171 people in 2000 or 32% increase, which added additional traffic on the major travel routes (see Appendix E for more information).⁵
- An active Central Corridors Coalition comprised of seven municipalities is working on access management issues, shared delivery of services, open space protection, and growth management strategies.
- The region has extended heavy haul truck network on local arterials and collector roads including Route 26/100, Route 302, Route 4/202, and Maine Turnpike. Due to the federal heavy haul truck weight restrictions on interstate highways the amount of these vehicles on the local roads is increasing.
- The roads with AADT ranging between 15,000 and 27,000 include sections of Route 302 starting at Fosters Corner in Windham and ending at the Raymond Village, a section of Route 26 in the Gray downtown, and the entire length of Interstate 95 in Cumberland.
- The corridor is characterized by many backlog roads including Routes 302, 100/26, and 231 that need reconstruction or other capital improvements to bring them up to modern safety standards and adequate structural capacity.⁶

Relevance to region/state:

- The corridor connects two Metropolitan Statistical Areas – Portland MSA and Lewiston-Auburn MSA.
- Portland continues to be a principle employment destination for Central Corridor residents with the greatest number of employers followed by Windham and Lewiston-Auburn.
- The Corridor provides numerous recreational opportunities including Sebago Lake (Windham, Raymond, Casco), Bradbury State Park (Pownal), Morgan Meadows WMA (Raymond), and Pineland Center (Pownal, New Gloucester, North Yarmouth and Gray).

Rank in Priority: 3

⁵ U.S. Census Journey to Work Data, 2000

⁶ Highway backlog refers to those road sections identified as being in need of reconstruction or other capital improvements, to bring them up to modern safety standards and adequate structural capacity. For arterial roadways, the preferred 40-foot road profile is two 12-foot travel lanes and two eight-foot paved shoulders. For collector roads, MaineDOT aims for a 30-foot road profile, or two eleven-foot travel lanes and two four-foot paved shoulders. All deficient rural, principal, and minor arterials need to be addressed within 10 years, as enacted by law by the 119th Legislature in May 2000.

Cumberland County Central Corridor Transportation Issues and Objectives

Description:

The Maine Turnpike, Route 100/26 and Route 202/4 divide the study area into nearly equal quadrants, and provide the primary east/west and north/south travel movements. Exit 63 in Gray represents the only Turnpike Exit in the Study Area. Major transportation projects include upgrading the existing roads and constructing bypasses around Gray Village and in New Gloucester. A “Westerly Bypass” of Gray Village is in the design process and is intended to send westbound traffic from Route 202 directly to Route 26 along a new road to be built on the western side of the Maine Turnpike. There are two active railroads within the study area, the Maine Central Railroad and the St. Lawrence and Atlantic. Both of these railroads are limited to freight transportation only.

Transportation Objectives:

- Work with MTA, and PACTS on toll reconfiguration strategies to mitigate congestion and highway access on the Maine Turnpike.
- Work with local communities on Access Management standards in Urban Compact Zones and address issue of the cumulative impact of development.
- Continue to explore regional freight and passenger rail and fix route bus possibilities between Portland and Lewiston/Auburn and between Windham and New Gloucester (Pineland Center).
- Support development of off-road trails plus feeder connections from Bradbury Mountain in Pownal to Pineland Farms in New Gloucester to improve connectivity.
- Work with towns and regional planning agencies on managing and monitoring heavy truck traffic movements and effect of the existing weight limits on the heavy haul truck volumes on the local roads.
- Work with Guilford and local communities to try to improve highway/rail grade crossings at all railroad crossings and other safety improvements on local transportation systems.
- Encourage development of the “Ring” road systems to alleviate traffic congestions in village centers and improve mobility and safety.

Cumberland County Central Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

The Cumberland County Central Corridor's current land use patterns consist primarily of residential dwellings, concentrated areas of commercial establishments, and undeveloped forestland. Most of the residential development along Route 302 north of Windham, in New Gloucester and Pownal has been rural in nature on large lots with single-family houses. Higher density residential and commercial uses are located in North Windham and in Downtown Gray, where traffic problems are most evident. Rapid population and housing growth rank among the highest in Maine. This growth has placed stress on the area's natural resources, public infrastructure, and transportation systems. Development of the Pineland Center in New Gloucester, Gray, North Yarmouth, and Pownal increased area's traffic flow and will continue to affect regional traffic patterns following on site business expansion. Highway access, access management, traffic congestion in the community centers, and road maintenance are some of the concerns that the towns will need to address in the future.

Land Use Objectives:

- Work with towns, the Maine Turnpike Authority, PACTS, and GPCOG on Route 100/26 Master Planning process that balances transportation improvements with economic development and population growth needs.
- Promote innovative growth management techniques that direct new development to the areas supported by existing infrastructure and support local growth management strategies such as the Transfer of Development Rights technique in New Gloucester.
- Encourage open space system planning and natural habitat preservation that support recreational opportunities and nature-based economies.
- Work with RPOs, business community, and towns on identifying regional economic clusters and promoting the development that benefits towns' tax base and is supported by the public infrastructure and services.

Cumberland County Central Corridor Economic Issues and Objectives

Economic Issues Summary:

As a region without a service center, the Central Corridor is comprised of bedroom communities whose residents travel to Portland, Bath-Brunswick, and Lewiston-Auburn for work, intensifying the demand for safe and efficient east-west travel. Future job growth is projected to occur only in the service sector, primarily at planned business park locations in Gray, New Gloucester, Cumberland, and North Windham. Due to the lack of public sewer, industrial development is limited. With lower land prices than on the coast, population growth has exploded in the corridor, bolstering the expansion of retail, and the need for access management throughout the region's villages. The demand for housing continues to threaten its historic economic base of forestry and agriculture, which gives the region its distinctive rural character as well as its future niche-manufacturing base.

Economic Objectives:

- Maintain the vitality of downtown and village centers as the primary location for civic, housing, retail, and commercial growth.
- Invest in public infrastructure to support business park expansions at Pineland, Gray, Windham, and Cumberland and business development in the region's economic clusters, e.g., environmental technology, agriculture.
- Support feasibility study for commuter rail/bus service for Portland-Gray-Pineland-Lewiston-Auburn.
- Advocate for full construction of the Turnpike bypass in Gray at Exit 63.

Lakes Region Corridor System

Description:

This corridor includes 19 municipalities between Portland and Fryeburg along Routes 302, 114, 113, 11, 35, and 115 (Appendix F). Sebago Lake and the area's abundant natural resources provide year-round recreational opportunities for residents, tourists, and summer visitors. The corridor consists of rural and suburban communities and is characterized by significant commuter traffic movements between Portland and corridor towns. The Mountain Division Rail with Trail was recently opened in the towns of Windham, Gorham, and Standish along the rail line between Portland and Fryeburg. Future priorities in the corridor include the feasibility of freight and/or limited excursion rail service, access management, and transportation corridors preservation.

Inventory/Analysis Summary:

- Major transportation systems include Routes 302, 113, 114, 107, 25, Mountain Division Railroad and Mountain Division Trail, snowmobile trails and other trails.
- There are two housing markets in the area – Sebago Lake Housing Market and Portland Housing Market. Housing prices in this region remain relatively affordable which attracts new residential development to the areas that are often not regulated by ordinances or comprehensive plans.
- There are four service centers within the corridor including Portland, South Portland, Scarborough, Westbrook, and Bridgton. Generally, communities south to Naples commute to the Greater Portland Area for work and communities north to Naples rely on Windham, Bridgton, and North Conway for jobs.
- The northern part of the corridor remains rural in character with little public infrastructure and vast tracks of undeveloped land.
- Tourism remains an important part of the regional economy and relies on abundant natural resources including Saco River Corridor, Sebago Lake, mountain and ski areas, Mountain Division Trails and other trail systems.
- The corridor is characterized by distinctive historically established village centers and hamlets with some mixed-use development that can be considered for the future transportation and public investments

Relevance to region/state:

- The Corridor provides the Southeast-Northwest traffic movement and connects coastal communities with inland recreational areas.
- It serves as one of the major tourist destination areas in the Southern Maine including the Sebago Lake recreational areas, the Saco River Corridor, mountain areas, and cultural fairs and events.
- The area is considered as a potential freight rail and trail corridor connecting Portland and Fryeburg.

Rank in Priority: 5

Lakes Region Corridor Transportation Issues and Objectives

Summary of Transportation Issues:

Lakes Region Corridor provides an important link between interior mountain communities and major destination points on the coast. The municipalities undergo slow transition from rural to suburban communities starting from the coastal areas and moving towards Fryeburg. This growth will place greater demand for public infrastructure and transportation services. There are no any limited access highways within the corridor and major transportation movements including freight and passenger vehicles occur along Route 302, 114, 25, 11, 35 and Route 5. Except for the USM bus service between Portland and Gorham campuses, other fixed route transit services are not available in the area; however, MaineDOT is considering feasibility of freight and passenger rail service between Portland and Fryeburg. The MaineDOT should be actively involved in regional studies addressing access management issues and corridor development as often communities do not have adequate land use regulations in place.

Transportation Objectives:

- Work with towns and RPOs on Access Management standards and corridor Master Planning process especially in the undeveloped areas that experience growth pressure.
- Work with towns and the Lakes Region Corridor Committee on improving road conditions and address issues with a significant amount of backlog roads within the corridor including Routes 11, 17, 237, 302, and 35.
- Examine potential for the commuter bus service between Portland and Bridgton/Naples and feasibility of the freight and excursion passenger rail service between Portland and Fryeburg with the focus of accommodating area residents and growing tourist industry.
- Consider the creation of a continuous trail from Portland to Fryeburg along Mountain Division rail line and off-road recreational facilities as appropriate.
- Explore opportunities for street inter-connectivity where feasible and support local planning efforts such as Standish Range Roads Plan.

Lakes Region Corridor Land Use Issues and Objectives

Land Use Issues Summary:

The area is characterized by the significant amount of undeveloped land especially in the northern part of the corridor. Because the corridor does not have limited access highways and many communities lack advanced land use regulations or planning resources, preservation of mobility and access management can become the greatest challenge for the municipalities in the future. Therefore, it is important that MaineDOT and local planning entities work together on land use regulations and innovative growth management techniques that can direct land development in the region. The area has enormous natural and recreational resources that serve both the nature-based and tourist economies. Protection and management of these resources are vital to the future planning.

Land Use Objectives:

- Encourage planning strategies that preserve and improve existing village centers and hamlets by investing in public infrastructure and directing growth to these areas and discouraging growth in the rural tiers.
- Work with the Route 113 Committee and surrounding towns along Mountain Division Rail Road and Route 113 on establishing continuous scenic trail from Portland to Fryeburg following the historic path of Pequawket Trail, which ran from Biddeford Pool on the Atlantic Ocean to the Mt. Washington Valley.
- Support preservation of scenic areas and corridors along transportation thoroughfares and work on on-road and off-road recreational facilities.
- Work with regional planning agencies and PACTS on developing corridor-based access management rules that improve mobility and discourage Highway Driveway and Entrance Rule waivers for strategic roadways, such as Routes 302, 114, and 113.
- Support planning strategies that conserve open space and emphasize regional connectivity and protect valuable natural resources and habitats.
- Work with the municipalities to create a Lakes Region Master Plan process and encourage regional cooperation and infrastructure sharing.

Lakes Region Corridor Economic Issues and Objectives

Economic Issues Summary:

Although the region is home to a service center community, the shutdown of Sebago Shoe and the Bridgton Knitting Mill have dealt serious economic blows to the region. Coupled with relatively low housing prices than in Greater Portland, more residents are now driving south to Portland for work than north to Bridgton. Limited public sewer constrains opportunities for industrial development. Future economic growth will occur entirely in the service sector, with most growth occurring outside the walking radius of village centers as well as in some planned business park locations. While the western side of Sebago Lake is well known for tourism, the east side holds great potential for scenic touring opportunities along Route 113, the Saco River and the Mountain Division Trail. Both sides of the lake need to create a unified image that would attract visitors during the winter and summer months in order to sustain economic activity on a year-round basis.

Economic Objectives:

- Maintain the vitality of downtown and village centers as the primary location for civic, housing, retail, and commercial growth.
- Continue to support the development of the Mountain Division for multi-use recreation and freight service.
- Explore the potential designation of Route 113 as a National and/or State Scenic Byway.
- Work with the Lakes Region Corridor Committee and Lakes Region Development Council on investing in public infrastructure to support Brownfields redevelopment (Bridgton, Steep Falls, Little Falls/South Windham), business park expansions (Windham, Fryeburg), and business development in the region's economic clusters (precision manufacturing, tourism, forestry, and agriculture).
- Expand and centralize local access to higher education and business assistance services.
- Invest in public infrastructure to alleviate the region's commuter bottlenecks, e.g., Gorham Village bypass.
- Develop transportation demand strategies targeting commuters along the Route 302 corridor.