

Greater Portland Council of Governments

Annual Report

2013-2014

Mission Statement:

Providing responsive service and leadership to our municipal members & community partners through regional cooperation.





Ed Suslovic, GPCOG President

President's Message

It has been another dynamic year at the Greater Portland Council of Governments, one of great progress and change. I am pleased and honored to have served this outstanding organization as its President over the past year and look forward to a second year in that capacity, working together with all of you to continue to move the economy of our communities and our region forward toward an ever brighter, more sustainable and livable future.

My sincere thanks to the members of our Steering and Executive Committees for providing unparalleled support and leadership, and to the amazing staff of GPCOG for your continued hard work and dedication to our communities and the region, as evidenced by the wealth of great accomplishments outlined in this year's Annual Report.

I strongly encourage you to read through this report, make note and duly recognize the wide array of projects, programs and services embodied in the work of GPCOG for the public good, starting with some fifteen areas of municipal planning assistance, from comprehensive plans to coastal hazards, complete streets to waterfront planning. Sustain Southern Maine has finished its initial three-year planning phase, growing its ranks to 45 partners, completing 11 "Centers of Opportunity" pilot projects, and formulating 160 priority strategies and actions. The Brownfields Assessment and Clean-Up program has assisted Nathan Clifford School, Mallison Falls Mill, Thompson's Point and Bridgton Memorial School, among others.

A potential game changer for the Greater Portland economy and our local food industry, the recent federal designation of the region as one of 12 "Manufacturing Communities" in the country by the Department of Commerce will help boost the area as a food production hub. The Mobilize Maine Energy Action Team has worked to promote locally produced biodiesel, energy efficiency for businesses, and combined heat and power technologies. Maine Clean Communities, recently re-designated by the U.S. Department of Energy, continues to advance alternative fuels, including electric vehicle technology. And GPCOG is leading the SMART Initiative, with the hope that we may finally realize the benefits of a consolidated public transit service in the region.

The coming year brings a new strategic planning process and the important opportunity to examine the GPCOG mission and position the organization to meet the challenges of an uncertain future. I look forward to our work together on this and many other important projects. Thank you!

GPCOG Steering Committee 2013-2014

Ed Suslovic, *Portland, PRESIDENT*
Matthew Sturgis, *Gray, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT*
John Pressey, *Gorham, SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT (2013)*
William Baker, *Westbrook*
Gordon Billington, *Standish*
Thomas Blake, *South Portland*
Anthony Plante, *Windham*
Michael Reynolds, *Raymond*
Judy Roy, *Scarborough (2013)*

Executive Director's Message

Playing to Our Strengths

I am pleased and proud to frame my annual message around the exciting news from the Secretary of the United States Department of Commerce that **the *Greater Portland Sustainable Food Production Cluster***, as proposed and developed by GPCOG, has been formally designated as an **Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership Region (IMCP)**.



Neal Allen
GPCOG Executive Director

As one of just 12 regions and the only Council of Governments selected from a highly competitive national field of 70 applicants, we are of course honored. However, of more significance than the temporary rush of ending up in the winners circle, the designation provides us and our public-private sector consortium partners with preference for federal dollars from a number of federal agencies in support of implementing the Sustainable Food Production Cluster. Of particular relevance, all of the federal agencies that we are actively involved in are participating in this new initiative. These include Commerce, Energy, Housing & Urban Development, Transportation and Environment.

The IMCP designation speaks to the value and foresight of the GPCOG Steering Committee in developing and adopting a set of ***Sustainability Principles*** in 2008 to guide agency, community and regional thinking. While admittedly more “feel good” and visionary at the time of adoption, the Sustainability Principles have provided a unifying theme and direction to our core areas of expertise in transportation, energy and land use planning, and community and economic development. By playing to our strengths we have cultivated effective partnerships with a wide range of public and increasingly private sector interests and stakeholder groups. In doing so, we were successful this year in the re-designation of *Maine Clean Communities*, completing and advancing *Sustain Southern Maine*, incorporating *Mobilize Maine* as our economic development arm, and moving the *SMART* consolidated transit initiative closer to an implementation plan.

To ensure that our efforts and focus remain consistent with our strengths, we plan to conduct a strategic planning process in the coming year on the belief that it is periodically important to conduct a fresh new look at ***who*** we are, ***what*** we do and, most importantly, ***how*** we can best serve the interests of our municipal members. Working with a terrific staff and guided by a group of public officials who are completely dedicated and committed to the purpose and vision of the Greater Portland Council of Governments, I am more confident than ever in the future of this organization. Finally, I want to welcome Cumberland County as a full member as I believe that our two organizations are now positioned to complement the work of each for the benefit of all.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'N. Allen', written in a cursive style.

Municipal Planning Assistance

South Portland

Mill Creek Neighborhood Zoning

As a continuation to the HUD-funded Sustain Southern Maine (SSM) pilot projects, GPCOG is currently assisting the City of **South Portland** with the drafting of a new zoning district for the Mill Creek Neighborhood. The zoning also included an Energy Benchmarking Ordinance, modeled after similar efforts in Washington D.C. and Boston. This type of ordinance is the first of its kind in the State. GPCOG will continue to assist the City as it embarks on the public process for these revisions in the fall of 2014.

Windham

Complete Streets Policy & Infrastructure Assessment

GPCOG planning staff have worked extensively with the Town of **Windham** and the Windham Active Lifestyles Coalition (WALC) to assess current conditions for walking and biking, and identify specific opportunities for improvements. Staff recently drafted a Complete Streets policy for the town and will likely be working on a town-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan later this summer.

Regional Projects

The Casco Bay Environmental Planning Assessment

The *Casco Bay Environmental Planning Assessment* was an effort by GPCOG to document the current level of environmental regulations among its ten member communities that directly abut Casco Bay. These communities included **Cape Elizabeth, Chebeague Island, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Long Island, Portland, South Portland, Yarmouth** and **Scarborough**. The data collected identifies gaps and inconsistencies in environmental regulations among coastal communities, providing knowledge of the “weak links” and developing potential strategies to address them.

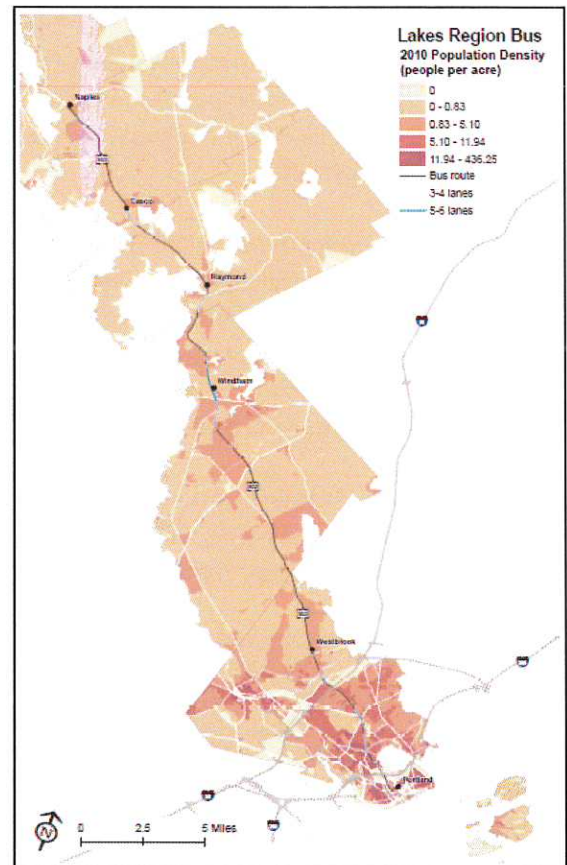


Coastal Communities Conservation Project

GPCOG planning staff are currently working on a DACF-funded project to convene land trusts, municipalities, and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the status of conservation efforts in the region and identify opportunities for coordinated action on common goals.

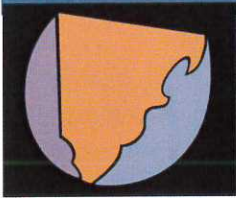
Lakes Region Bus: Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Transit Stops

GPCOG planning staff are currently assessing bus stops along RTP’s Lakes Region Bus route to provide recommendations to Route 302 communities on how they can improve bicycle and pedestrian access to these stops. The project identifies barriers, provides information on existing land uses adjacent to stops, and makes specific recommendations for infrastructure improvements.



Waterfront Planning & Harbor Management

GPCOG has worked to support harbor planning for its 10 coastal municipalities this year as part of its contract with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. This work has included a compilation of the status of harbor planning in each community, with a summary of the regionally applicable issues. A forum is planned to occur in late June for the discussion of regional harbor planning challenges, such as fishery declines and climate change impacts.



Sustain Southern Maine

Partnering to strengthen our economy, environment and community

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FY 2014 In Review

This past year saw the initial planning phase of **Sustain Southern Maine** come to an end. The initiative was launched in January of 2011 with the aid of a three-year, \$1.6 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant awarded to the **Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)** by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in concert with the US Department of Transportation and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Covering the modeling and planning areas of Southern Maine’s two metropolitan planning organizations, **Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System** and **Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System**, the initiative encompasses 42 municipalities in Cumberland and York Counties stretching from **Brunswick** down the coast to **Kittery**, and west to **Raymond**, **Standish**, **Acton** and **Sanford**.



Sustain Southern Maine geography

The work has been conducted in collaboration with the **Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission**, the **Muskie School of Public Service/University of Southern Maine**, **Cumberland County**, and a Partnership of communities, organizations, and businesses working together to strengthen the region’s economy, environment, and communities. The aim of the initiative was to develop a suite of regionally applicable strategies and actions related to transportation, housing, infrastructure, economic development, natural resources, and social equity that when implemented **will result in a more prosperous region**.

Since its start in 2011, Sustain Southern Maine has grown to 45 Partner members; completed 11 Centers of Opportunity pilot projects; formulated nearly 160 priority strategies and actions across 9 sectors; hosted 10 Knowledge Sharing Sessions; and drafted a concept regional capital improvement program.



Partnership meeting, October 2013

This past year **Maine Clean Communities** and the **Town of Freeport** both joined the Partnership. Having Maine Clean Communities join the Partnership officially brought representation of the energy sector to the table. This addition is critical as increasing energy efficiency of residential, business, and municipal buildings is a high priority for the region.

Two more pilot projects were conducted in the **Town of Freeport** and **City of Saco**. These projects allowed for the exploration of new issues within the Center of Opportunity concept. The Porter’s Landing Neighborhood pilot project in **Freeport** explored creative ways to integrate land conservation into village growth. The Downtown **Saco** pilot project explored the impacts of bringing ultra high speed, broadband internet into a downtown.



Broadband Event at UNE, April 2014

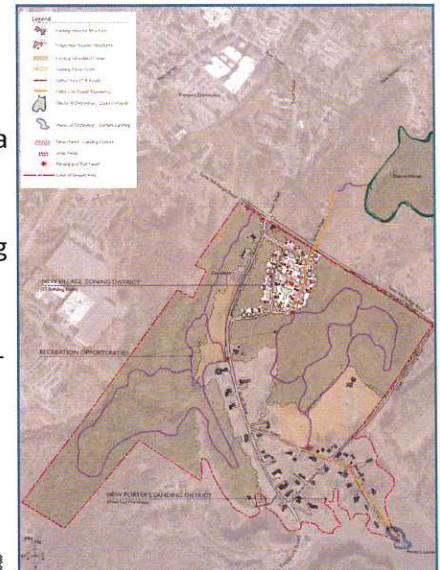


All six of the initial Centers of Opportunity pilot projects located in the GPCOG region undertook next steps building on their lessons learned. As this was not a requirement of hosting a pilot project, it lends credence to the Centers of Opportunity concept. Examples include the **Town of Standish** contracting to complete a master plan for Steep Falls; and the **City of Portland’s** receipt of an Urban Sustainability Accelerator grant from Portland State University (Portland, Oregon) to address challenges identified in the India Street Neighborhood as well as initiating drafting of a form based code for the neighborhood.

The SSM Executive Committee and Partnership reviewed all recommended priority strategies and actions leading to **acceptance of 160 priorities**. Their review and debate resulted in a balanced and progressive set of priorities for the Partnership to address in the years ahead.

Example:

“Cumberland and York Counties spent over \$2.1 billion on energy in 2010”
Excerpt from *Cumberland & York Counties, Maine 2010 Energy Use and Emissions Inventory* produced for Sustain Southern Maine



Porter’s Landing Neighborhood scenario

Priority: Increase energy-related upgrades for businesses, residences, and municipalities by:

- A. Working with government, financial institutions, and private businesses to develop additional funding options (ex. revolving loan program) for commercial energy upgrades for businesses
- B. Promoting existing funding and incentive programs for energy-related upgrades for residents
- C. Establishing connections between local renewable energy and alternative fuel suppliers, and businesses considering facility energy upgrades



Trails & A Livable Southern Maine

Three Knowledge Sharing Sessions were held: Adapting to Climate Change In Maine, Trails and a Livable Southern Maine, and Creating a Regional Model of Southern Maine. The sessions both continued to increase the capacity of the Partnership as well as pull more stakeholders into the Sustain Southern Maine initiative. The *Adapting to Climate Change* session spurred lively debate regarding the ability of municipalities to employ policy and regulation regarding the effects of climate change; the *Trails* session drew the largest crowd of any session; and the *Creating a Regional Model* session provided an opportunity to view and weigh in on a customized model for the region.

The ***Making Sustainability Work* Open House** was held in Biddeford this past November. It proved a successful event for Partners to showcase their work and engage with each other.

We would like to thank our Partners and staff for their hard work over the past three years. Collaboratively developing and agreeing to a suite of regionally applicable concepts, strategies, and actions is no small feat—one we should all be proud of. In FY 2015 we look forward to reconvening and growing the Partnership, developing metrics for success, and continuing work towards bringing our Centers of Opportunity to fruition.



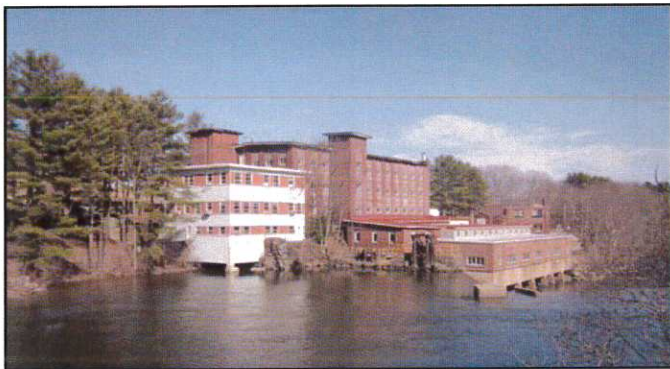
Making Sustainability Work Open House



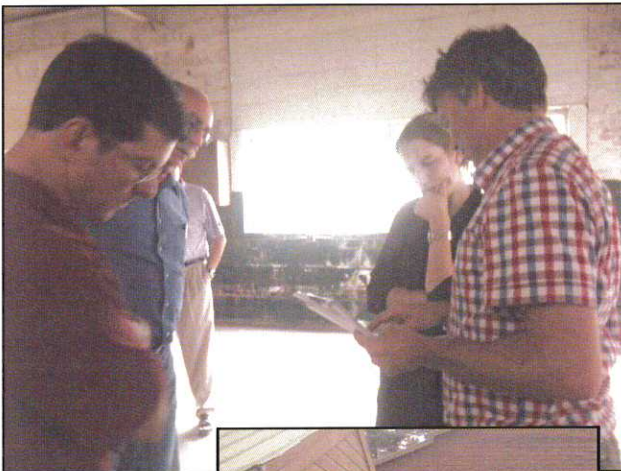
Groundbreaking for the Nathan Clifford School, featuring GPCOG President and Portland City Councilor Ed Suslovic, Kevin Bunker from Developer's Collaborative, Mayor Mike Brennan, and Paul Stevens, from SMRT. Caroline Paras chaired the City's Task Force to identify potential reuse opportunities.

Now in its fifth year, the GPCOG Brownfields Assessment and Clean-Up program continues to help municipalities redevelop industrial, commercial, and institutional properties in Cumberland County. Projects assisted with GPCOG's \$400,000 FY11 grant include the following:

- **Thompson's Point:** This 27.5 rail yard in Portland will be transformed into a dynamic gateway destination featuring a hotel, convention space, commercial offices, and the nation's first circus college.
- **Sensata Plant:** Vacant since 2007, this 100,000-square foot building in Standish now serves as the new home of New England Castings.
- **Nathan Clifford School:** This historic 44,000 square foot landmark is being transformed into 22 units of market rate housing in the heart of Portland's Oakdale neighborhood.
- **Mallison Falls Mill in South Windham:** This historic woolen mill on Mile 10.2 of the Mountain Division is being assessed for residential reuse.
- **Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad:** The museum is exploring relocation to Gray Plaza. Its running track would reuse a portion of the old Interurban Railroad right-of-way from Portland to Lewiston.



Far left: Mallison Falls Mill in South Windham. Above: New home of New England Castings in Standish. Left: Bob Gaudreau of Hardy Pond Construction, Rip Patten of Credere Associates, Steve Dyer of Ransom Consulting, and Jessica Dominguez of the EPA review the Phase I Assessment for the Mallison Falls Mill.



Route 113 Corridor Committee

Celebrating its 10th year, the Route 113 Corridor Committee encompasses the towns of Standish, Baldwin, Hiram, Brownfield and Fryeburg. Accomplishments include the following:

- Partnership with Golden Eagle Railway, a Maine-based start-up, to leverage private sector capital to rebuild the Mountain Division rail line.
- Submission of a \$200,000 TIGER VI Planning Grant to explore global export opportunities from the Mountain Division through the Port of Portland.
- Adoption of the first Corridor Management Plan for the Pequawket Trail Scenic Byway.
- Site visit to Hiram Works LLC, an incubator for artists and craftsmen on the site of the old Hammond Lumber Mill in Hiram.
- Shipper's Summit on May 9th to connect businesses with potential freight operators, including Golden Eagle Railway, Pan Am Railways, Vermont Rail System, and New Hampshire Central Railroad.
- Buildout analysis of nodes along the Mountain Division in Steep Falls, Fryeburg and Bridgton to spur redevelopment of Brownfields sites associated with future rail and trail uses.

Henry Banks of Hiram Works LLC discusses the reuse plan for the old Hammond Lumber Mill with Lou Stack, Chair of the Route 113 Corridor Committee.



White House designates 12 'Manufacturing Communities'



Feds offer 'game changer' funding to help Portland area's local food industry.

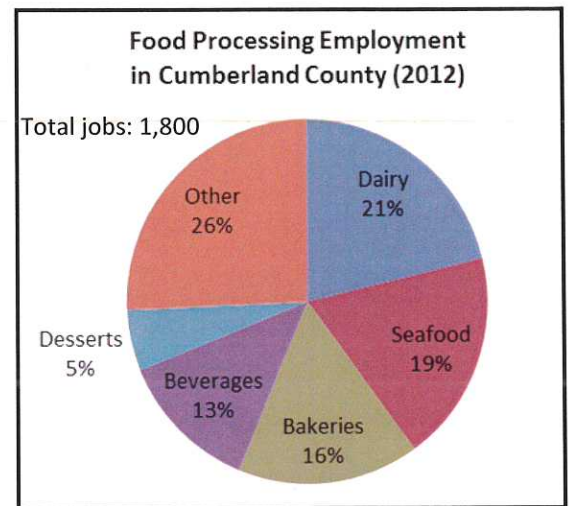
"The finalists have demonstrated that they have the vision to move their plans from drawing board to implementation and USDA is pleased to work with them and other federal partners to help rebuild America's manufacturing base and create good-paying jobs across the nation and especially in the rural communities that were selected." Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Federal designation may boost Greater Portland as food production hub.

Dave Leonard of Evergreen Geothermal gives a tour of the nation's first "emissions free" greenhouse at Cozy Acres in North Yarmouth to Jennifer Puser, Mark Ouellette, and Megan Woolhouse of the Boston Globe.

With GPCOG as the lead applicant, the Greater Portland region was designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce as one of 12 Manufacturing Communities in the nation. Selected from over 70 applicants, the designation grants the region preferential consideration to access a \$1.3 billion pool of Federal grants to implement the goals of the **Greater Portland Sustainable Food Production Cluster**:

- Scale up 50 home enterprises to food manufacturing operations
- Find markets for 20% of raw food that is wasted
- Increase global markets for Maine food by 25%
- Add value to 10% of raw food that is now shipped out of state for processing
- Replace 10% of imported manufacturing inputs with Maine product
- Replace \$100 million in food imported by households, restaurants and institutions with local food



Over a period of five years, we propose to leverage \$91 million in public and private investment that will generate 2,503 jobs in the region's food processing sector with a direct impact of \$400 million. Through multiplier effects associated with food manufacturing, this effort will generate an estimated 8,010 jobs and a \$1 billion infusion into the regional economy.

The cluster's geographic target is Cumberland County. **With over 60 businesses and 1,800 jobs, the Portland region accounts for 31% of Maine's food manufacturing employment.** In addition, hundreds of entrepreneurs operate licensed home businesses from kitchens, basements, and barns. By growing its processing sector, the Portland region will be able to build on its international reputation as a "foodie" city. The hallmark of this cluster will be sustainability, which will be reflected in the following activities:

- Enhance Portland's dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem to support start-ups
- Redevelop Brownfields sites as centers for incubation and enterprise development
- Leverage a growing renewable energy sector, including wind, solar, and biomass, for year-round production
- Capitalize on green transportation, including freight rail and an international marine highway from New York to Europe
- Utilize technology to connect farms and fisheries with processors, institutions, and consumers
- Create value-added products out of food that is wasted or underutilized
- Preserve open space for agriculture and the working waterfront
- Promote integration with Maine's technology clusters, including environmental technology, biotechnology, composites, and precision manufacturing
- Research the impact of climate change on the supply chain



In 2011, GPCOG was designated by the Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District (EDD) serving 26 communities in Cumberland County. The region's 256,656 people represent 19% of Maine's population and its 155,431 jobs represent 27% of its employment. As an EDD, one of our core responsibilities is the creation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the GPCOG region. To fulfill that mission, GPCOG, in collaboration with the other six EDD's, is implementing Mobilize Maine, a grass-roots economic strategy that focuses on leveraging unique assets within each region for economic growth and quality of place.

Our Regional Vision

The Greater Portland and Sebago Lakes region is the *best place* in New England to live, work, and play. The only way to have a sustainable future for our children and to preserve the Maine way of life is to focus on working TOGETHER to grow good quality jobs by helping new businesses start and existing businesses grow and expand. We are committed to driving entrepreneurship, investment, and innovation through:

- Access to capital
- High quality workforce
- Predictable regulatory environment

Five-Year Goals	Two-Year Progress
Attract 10,000 people to sustain region's population growth rate	Up 323 people
Increase the pool of available workers by 1%	Up 1.7%
Increase rate of participation in the labor force by 1%	Down 1%
Create 8,000 new jobs	Up 3,662 jobs
Increase regional Gross Domestic Product by 7%	Up 5.2%
Increase average wage per job to \$52,000 from \$42,000	Up to \$43,732
Increase the region's total wages by 27%	Up 6.3%
Increase per capita income by 17%	Up 8.7%
Increase attainment of Bachelor's Degrees to 45% of the adult population	Up to 40.2%
Increase access to high speed Internet to 100% coverage	TBD
Attract 5,000+ people aged 25-44 from outside the region	Up 481 people
Triple the number of adults with an Associate's Degree	Down 1.1%
Decrease the region's commercial vacancy rate to 7.5%	Down to 10%
Increase annual number of new business starts by 1,000	Up 1,386
Reduce the region's dependence on foreign oil	TBD
Increase access of small businesses to the right resources at the right time	TBD
Decrease the rent-to-income ratio to the national average of 29%	Up to 36%
Increase transit ridership by 1 million	Up 658,151

Energy Planning

GPCOG is leading the region in energy planning. From reducing petroleum in the transportation sector by working with fleets and promoting Electric Vehicles (EVs), to working with the private sector, Cumberland County, and our municipal members to implement energy efficiency technologies, combined heat and power units and the development of renewable energy projects, we are leading the way on reducing energy consumption and energy costs for the region.



A 40 kW solar electric system installed on the roof of Windham's Fire Department by ReVision Energy



Mobilize Maine Energy Action Team

An Energy Action Team (Team) was formed in May, 2013 with Jennifer Puser of GPCOG and Jeff Packard, CEO of Alodyne both co-chairing the Committee.

The Energy Action Team formed several sub-committees made up predominantly of private sector business people in order to implement energy projects that reduce energy consumption and costs in the following project areas.

- **Promotion of Locally Produced Biodiesel** – The Team has been working with Casco Bay Lines to use a blend of 20% locally produced biodiesel in their ferry fleet from Maine Standard Biofuels of Portland. The new fuel use is expected to commence this summer on a trial basis.
- **Energy Efficiency for Businesses** – The Team held a successful Energy Efficiency Workshop for Small Businesses on April 1, 2014 with approximately 50 people in attendance. Efficiency Maine provided a trainer.



Ian Burnes of Efficiency Maine at CHP Workshop

- **Sebago Lakes Region Energy Projects** – The Team has met with local elected officials in the Lakes Region in order to gauge interest in potential energy projects. The Team also held an Energy Summit at St. Joseph's College on April 29th to continue exploring potential ideas and these discussions are ongoing. So far, solar, biomass and bringing natural gas to the region have been suggested.

- **Creation of a 2030 District in Portland** – The Team has done considerable research into the potential for creating a 2030 District, a high performance building district of commercial properties on the Peninsula in Portland, with the goal of reducing energy consumption. Member recruitment is taking place now and then a Board of Directors will be formed.
- **Promotion of Combined Heat and Power Technologies** – The Team held a successful workshop on Combined Heat and Power at Woodard and Curran with over 65 people in attendance. The event was sponsored by Woodard and Curran, East Brown Cow, Self-Gen, Alodyne and GPCOG.



U.S. Department of Energy Grant: Advancing Alternative Fuels in New England

Maine Clean Communities and GPCOG received a U.S. Department of Energy grant in the amount of \$725,000 in 2013 to share among four other New England Clean Cities Coalitions to advance alternative fuel markets in New England. Also assisting in the effort are Maine's own Hydrogen Energy Center and New York based Emerald Alternative Energy Solutions, Inc.

The grant includes the following tasks:

- Working with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to better understand alternative fuels and technologies
- Drafting model language for statutes, regulations and ordinances that promote the use of alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles
- Carrying out a survey of fleets to determine the barriers to adopting alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles
- Researching the barriers to the transport of alternative fuels
- Holding numerous trainings and workshops on propane, compressed natural gas, and biodiesel for first responders, fleets and fleet technicians
- Creating a Biodiesel Producers Regional Workgroup to expand the use of biodiesel as a motor fuel in New England
- Establishing the "Northern Stars of New England" fleet designation program in New England that recognizes fleets' use of alternative fuels and vehicles
- Working to promote the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and the development of EV infrastructure.



Biodiesel Working Group Meeting

Acadia National Park is Awarded Alternative Fuel Vehicle Grant

Acadia National Park, a Maine Clean Communities' stakeholder, is one of nine national parks selected to receive new alternative fuel and fuel-efficient vehicles through the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities National Parks Initiative.

Acadia and the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) partnered with Maine Clean Communities staff to develop their alternative fuel vehicle project. The park will replace ten existing vehicles with eight new alternative and fuel-efficient vehicles. Also, two electric vehicle charging stations for public and park vehicles will be installed.

Acadia, SERC and Maine Clean Communities will also collaborate to engage visitors and staff on the benefits of fuel-efficient driving practices through use of the recently-released "Green Rides Toolkit."

Maine Clean Communities

Managed by GPCOG, Maine Clean Communities is one of nearly 100 U.S. Department of Energy designated Clean Cities Coalitions across the country



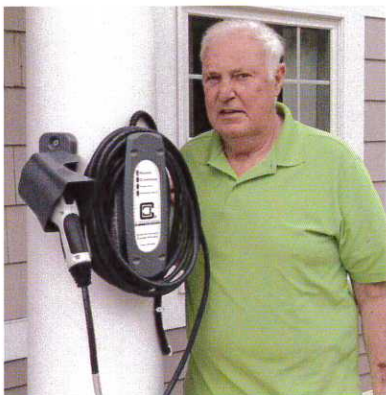
working together to reduce petroleum consumption in the transportation sector. Maine Clean Communities is the only Clean Cities Coalition in Maine and works statewide. Bringing together fleets and fuel providers, Maine Clean Communities works to promote the use of alternative fuels (such as natural gas, propane, biodiesel and hydrogen), alternative fuel vehicles and other fuel-saving practices.

US DOE Re-Designation Webinar with Stakeholders

In February, Maine Clean Communities did a presentation to the U.S. Department of Energy officials from the National Clean Cities Program for a re-designation of the program for another three years. DOE officials said, **“Your work is consistently high quality, and the coalition provides real value to its stakeholders.”**

Electric Vehicle Loan program

Maine Clean Communities and GPCOG were awarded a grant from Central Maine Power in September, 2013 for a two-year lease of an all-electric, Nissan Leaf, and the installation of two EV charging stations at our office in Portland.



Gordy Billington, Standish Town Manager, with Clipper Creek Charging Station outside of Standish Town Hall

“Today’s electric vehicles are a glimpse into the future. Very cost effective, clean transportation.”
Gordy Billington

As part of our EV outreach, Maine Clean Communities and GPCOG are loaning the vehicle out to our municipal members and stakeholders to experience the vehicle firsthand. So far, **South Portland, Portland, Raymond, Scarborough, Casco and Standish** have borrowed the vehicle and many of our staff and some stakeholders have tested out the vehicle as well. The response has been overwhelmingly positive.



South Portland Mayor Tom Blake, Jim Gailey and Jon Jennings, along with Gail Rice of CMP, and Steve Linnell, Maine Clean Communities Coordinator, at South Portland City Hall

The Town of **Standish** has installed an EV charging station and leased a Ford Fusion plug-in hybrid EV that will arrive in July, while the Town of **Scarborough** has approved funding for the two-year lease of a Nissan Leaf. The Cities of **Portland** and **South Portland** were recently awarded grants from CMP as well, and both intend to incorporate EV’s into their fleets. **Portland** is installing at least one charging station while **South Portland** is installing one DC Fast Charger and two Level II charging stations at their Community Center and City Hall.

GPCOG is also collecting data of drivers’ attitudes, experiences and other data points related to vehicle use, performance, and energy costs and overall savings.

Transit Planning

Transit Coordination

The PACTS *Regional Transit Coordination Study* was identified as one of the top recommendations in *Destination Tomorrow*, the Long Range Plan of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS). The overall goal of this study was “to identify opportunities to increase efficiency of transit operations within Greater Portland and to work toward the development of one regional transportation system.” As a result, a number of PACTS Transit Committee projects are focused on coordination efforts in order to improve the quality of transit services for customers of public transit.

Greater Portland CAD/AVL, RTPI Project (Now including Scheduling, Rostering and Runcutting Software)

GPCOG continues to manage the deployment of the computer aided dispatch (CAD), automatic vehicle location (AVL), real-time passenger information (RTPI) project on behalf of Casco Bay Lines, METRO and South Portland Bus.



South Portland Bus

Given the periodic scheduling and information changes, the transit agencies determined during the project requirements review and planning phases that the method proposed for updating the CAD/AVL, RTPI system was not the most efficient way to proceed. Thus, the transit agencies agreed to expand the project to include scheduling, rostering & runcutting software proposed by Clever Devices, a firm used by other small to medium-sized agencies deploying a Clever Devices CAD/AVL system.

The additional software is Sched21-Lite, which is produced by EngHouse Transportation. EngHouse will also be responsible for the software deployment and maintenance under a subcontract with Clever Devices at no additional cost to the transit agencies.

Deploying a scheduling system is a complex undertaking requiring development of the block, run, trip pattern, scheduling and rostering databases.



Casco Bay Lines Ferry, Aucocisco



Portland METRO Bus

The project has also been expanded to include an automatic passenger counter (APC) system for METRO. While the project adjustments have delayed the project acceptance date, a fully functioning system, which includes the availability of real-time passenger information and predicted arrival times on websites and smart phones, is expected in the first quarter of 2015.

Southern Maine Area Transportation (SMART) Initiative

GPCOG has been leading the SMART Initiative to consolidate public transit in our region. Last year we convened a large group of stakeholders who all agreed to move forward, assigning a smaller subset of the attendees to be the SMART Steering Committee. The SMART Steering Committee chose to break the effort into phases, the first being an assessment of combining the three fixed-route providers.

Over the last six months the SMART Steering Committee and GPCOG staff have worked with consultant URS Corporation to develop Options for a Feasibility Study. Recently, URS gave a presentation of their findings from a Cost Analysis and Benefits Assessment of three potential consolidation Options. While no final decision has been made regarding which option to recommend for an implementation plan, Option D (merger of three fixed-route providers into one Transit District) emerged as the informal preference subject to further analysis and information, which URS is currently doing. Since Option D provides the greatest number of benefits that have been identified as the most important to the region, (as was determined in the cost-benefit analysis), the consultant is also examining Option D in more detail. Once all of the outstanding questions have been answered, a Leadership Summit will be held.



New South Portland Transit Hub

Regional Bus Signs and Shelters

To improve access and ridership, all transit stops in the Greater Portland region have been assessed to determine where new passenger shelters would be most beneficial and feasible. A number of new shelters and signs will be installed at the highest-priority transit stops. The new shelters will take advantage of a recent state law that allows advertising at bus stops. Proceeds will first be used to maintain the shelters with any additional funds supporting transit operations.

Regional Branding & Marketing



Student Logo Design Winner Jonathon Novak of MECA Pitching the Point of Connection Logo

This project is implementing common branding strategies among the seven transit providers to improve marketing and branding and efficient information delivery of transit options in the Greater Portland Region.

The Branding and Marketing Plan includes: posting all transit providers' information on a shared website, and implementing a regional transit umbrella logo to be used on all vehicles, websites and promotional materials, where appropriate. The logo was developed by **Maine College of Art** students, in consultation with the Branding and Marketing Committee, and

will be presented to participating providers in the next few months. Future projects include a coordinated customer service center for the three fixed-route bus services and access to other transit providers in one phone call, as well as a single website for the three fixed-route bus services.

A Companion website for the Greater Portland Regional Transit Guide

The Regional Transit Guide is in its fifth year of printing and is now available for viewing online. The Transit Guide website also includes: a downloadable PDF of the Transit Guide, a list of participating agencies, agency links, map of Transit Guide pick-up locations, information about using Google Transit for METRO and South Portland Bus, and downloadable route GIS files. More information is planned for the website.

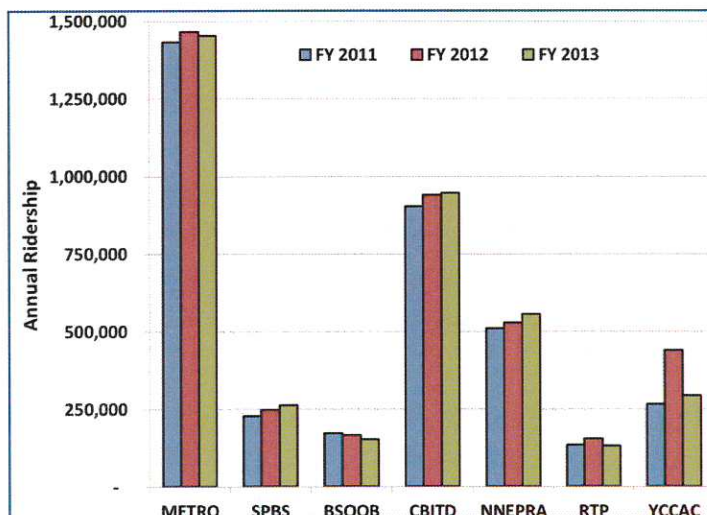
To view go to: <http://transitguide.wordpress.com/>



PACTS Transit Committee Develops Six-Year Capital Plan and Expansion/Enhancement Policy

In response to MAP-21, the two-year federal transportation authorization that begins to provide more predictable funding for transit, the regional transit providers with assistance from GPCOG staff have developed a capital maintenance budget. With very few exceptions, the days of earmarks or discretionary funding are a thing of the past. In order to take full advantage of this new way of doing business, the providers wanted to map out their capital replacement needs along with an annual operations budget that ensures maintenance of effort throughout the system.

The expectation is that the amount of funding coming to the region over time will be roughly the same as before, only now it comes in predictable amounts each year. Assuming it does, there appears to be a modest amount of funding available to develop new service. So, working with GPCOG staff, the providers are developing an Expansion/Enhancement policy and application for deciding which projects are the most regionally significant. The priorities range from improving existing core service and enhancing customer service overall, to expanding beyond the existing system.



Note: National Transit Database urban ridership values do not include trips resulting from seasonal services, charters, volunteer drivers, or in rural regions, and consequently do not provide a complete picture of total ridership for all transit services. Data is also reported based on the Fiscal Year calendar of each transit provider, the dates of which vary by provider.

PACTS Region Transit Ridership - National Transit Database

	Annual Ridership (Annual Unlinked Trips)		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
METRO - Greater Portland Transit District	1,433,664	1,465,891	1,452,363
South Portland Bus Service	229,067	247,370	263,124
ShuttleBus/ZOOM	172,734	165,467	153,890
Casco Bay Island Transportation District	903,780	939,674	946,184
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority	510,015	528,282	556,347
Regional Transportation Program	135,558	154,126	131,350
York County Community Action Corporation	265,687	440,103	293,816
Total	3,650,505	3,940,913	3,797,074



Regional Innovations at PACTS

The PACTS Executive Committee and staff created three exciting new funding programs this year:

- A PACTS version of MaineDOT’s highly successful Municipal Partnership Initiative
- A regional bike rack program
- A regional bicycle wayfinding signs program

PACTS Transportation Plan 2015 Update

We began a major update of our regional transportation plan (see public forum photo). Our membership wants this Update to recommend bold actions, more and better public transportation, and more direction on how to spend the federal capital improvement funds that we allocate. Contact Carl Eppich for more information.



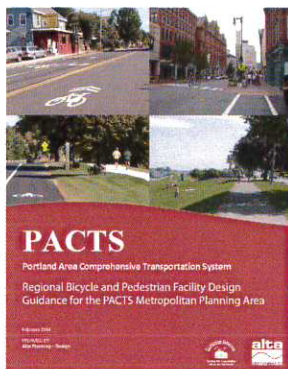
Regional Coordination of Traffic Signals

Our traffic signals have “bells and whistles” – and a lot of work is underway to make these high-tech systems continue to enhance traffic flow on our major thoroughfares. We thank our six municipalities, MaineDOT and our consulting team for their great work.



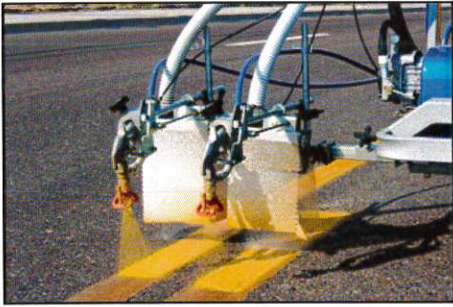
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guidance

Our member communities, MaineDOT and others will use this comprehensive document to design bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Contact Paul Niehoff for more information.



PACTS 2014 and 2015 Studies	
Biddeford & Saco Mill Districts Traffic Permit	Portland West Commercial Str. Design
Congestion Mgt Process Data Collection	Regional Arterial System Assessment
Destination Tomorrow Update	Regional Bike/Ped Plan Implementation
Falmouth Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Update	Regional Collector Study
Gorham East-West Land Use Technical Assist.	Regional Enhanced Project Scoping
GPCOG Mapping and Data Support	Regional Traffic Signals Management
Maine Clean Communities	Regional Transportation Funding Policy
PACTS Travel Model Consultant	SMPDC Planning Services
Portland Bayside Circulation Master Plan	Standish Village Center Connector
Portland Bikeway Network Implement. Plan	Westbrook Riverwalk North Trail
Portland Martin’s Point Pathway	Yarmouth Village Land use Study/Code

Cooperative Purchasing Program



This past year GPCOG staff reached out to member communities through a series of meetings to brainstorm about the Cooperative Purchasing program. These discussions focused on ways to improve the service, establish and confirm key contact information, assess participation levels, other potential products and services that could be added to the program, and any additional ways to make the bid program more efficient and effective.

GPCOG coordinates a competitive bidding process for the purchase of a variety of vendor products and services that are of common benefit to municipalities, school districts, and nonprofits in the region in order to obtain the best possible pricing. In 2013, the total value of items bid is estimated to be over \$10 million, with savings to participants estimated at about \$1.5 million.

GPCOG member municipalities, as well as schools and nonprofits in the region, are eligible to participate. GPCOG members pay no bid fees, with the exception of road salt (which is less than that paid by non-members). Non-members in the SMPDC and MCOG regions may also participate, but are subject to bid fees on all bids.

The current bid list of products and services includes:

- road striping and pavement marking services,
- tires and tire repair services
- catch basin cleaning,
- road resurfacing and reclamation
- bulk copier paper
- transportation fuels (gasoline, diesel and biofuels)
- office supplies
- heating fuels (K-1, #2, #4, #6, biofuels, propane)
- culvert pipe
- sodium chloride (road salt) and de-icing products
- traffic control products (signs and posts)
- snow plow cutting edges



The GPCOG Cooperative Purchasing program meets the legal and transparency requirements of many municipalities, schools and nonprofits to bid out products and services that exceed an established dollar value. Where this is not always required, many entities find that local officials and taxpayers appreciate the bid process to ensure and justify obtaining the very best value for the money.

GPCOG Revolving Loan Funds: Over FY 2014, the GPCOG Revolving Loan Fund has approved eight loans in Freeport, New Gloucester, Portland and Yarmouth totaling \$448,000 for small business start-ups or expansions. These loans have helped to leverage more than \$10 million of financing, while adding new jobs to our regional economy.

GPCOG Regional ReCOgnition Awards

June 12, 2013

City of Westbrook Community Center for Best Practices in Improved Municipal Service, Cost-Effective Management, and Strengthened Citizen Participation for developing a creative and cost-effective reuse of the Westbrook Middle School as the Westbrook Community Center.



Town of Naples and Maine Department of Transportation for Best Practices in Public Infrastructure, Planning, Design and Community Collaboration in the design and implementation of the Naples Causeway Bridge and Improvement Project.

PACTS Transition Team for Best Practices in Regional Collaboration for their collaborative and effective efforts in transitioning PACTS as a federally designated Transportation Management Area.



President's Award to Gordy Billington, Standish Town Manager, for Outstanding Regional Leadership

Gordy Billington has provided exceptional regional leadership to GPCOG through his years of service on the Executive and Steering Committees and as its President for two years. Gordy's commitment to regional collaboration extends to his exemplary leadership as Co-Chair of Sustain Southern Maine, an active member of the Mobilize Maine Leadership Team, a leader in helping to build a strong and effective Mountain Division/Route 113 Corridor Coalition, and through his steady leadership on behalf of the successful efforts of the Town of Standish to adopt Maine's first Form Based Code Ordinance. Gordy's professionalism, integrity, and commitment to a career of public service, beginning as a Pilot in the U.S. Air Force, represent the positive characteristics critical to effective regional and community leadership.

GPCOG Sustainability Principles

As adopted by the GPCOG Executive Committee – October, 2008

A sustainable Greater Portland Region is one that...

1. Uses non-renewable resources sparingly, renewable resources at a sustainable rate, and in a continuous cycle
2. Remains flexible and adapts to changing opportunities and challenges
3. Maintains and protects Southern Maine's traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, while recognizing opportunities for sustainable global commerce
4. Recognizes, plans for, and values a diversity of housing, transportation, educational and employment opportunities for a varied and competitive workforce
5. Analyzes development opportunities based on long term effects on the regional economy, environment and community
6. Recognizes and protects natural, cultural and diverse human qualities that make the region unique and enhance the quality of life/quality of place for current and future generations
7. Thinks globally, acts regionally, and respects the local interests of its citizens.

GPCOG Staff

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Long Island
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North Yarmouth
Portland
Pownal
Raymond
Scarborough
Sebago
South Portland
Standish
West Bath
Westbrook
Windham
Yarmouth

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Opportunity Alliance
Portland Trails
Threshold to Maine RC&D

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Cumberland County
Portland Water District

Greater Portland Council of Governments

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