

Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 19, 2004
EMDC Boardroom
One Cumberland Place, Bangor, Maine

MINUTES

(For approval at November 10, 2004 Meeting)

Present: Terry Hannan, MDOT; David Pardia, Penobscot Nation; Linda Johns, Brewer; Frank Higgins, Brewer; Jerry Douglass, MDOT; Jim Ring, Bangor; John Perry, FHWA; Fred Hutchinson, MDOT; David Struck, Orono; Pete Coughlan, MDOT; Ted Trembley, Bangor; Charles Heinonen, Old Town; Bob Osborne, Hampden; Rob Kenerson, BACTS; Sandi Duchesne, BACTS; Don Cooper, BACTS; Sue Morse, BACTS

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:30am.
2. It was moved by Linda Johns and seconded by David Struck to approve the minutes of June 30, 2004.

Jerry Douglass asked that the minutes be corrected to reflect his actual statement during the meeting. On page 2, next to last paragraph, the sentence should read:

“Jerry Douglass explained that BACTS might be able to use carry over funds to do the Main Street study in Brewer, subject to FHWA approval.”

It was unanimously VOTED:

To approve the minutes of June 30, 2004, as amended.

3. Federal Functional Classification

Pete Coughlan of the Maine Local Roads Center was present to review the final, recommended changes to the federal functional classification of BACTS roads. He updated the Committee on the status of this process within the other MPO's in Maine. Both ATRC and KACTS should be providing final approval soon. PACTS started the process this summer and will take longer to finalize as there have been more communities added since the 2000 census.

Pete listed the goals of this process:

- To review and update the 10 year old classifications
- To consider the new census urban lines.
- To align the FFC with state highways, state aid roads, & town ways.
Arterials should be state highways;
Collectors should be state aid roads; and
Locals should be town ways.

Pete further explained that MDOT uses the federal designations and definitions for roadways. He provided a graphic that showed the proportion of service between the different classifications. Arterials offer more mobility, while locals offer more land access.

John Perry of FHWA provided a handout (attached) that showed the FHWA guidelines for mile allocation according to classification, versus what is actually allocated within the BACTS region. Pete explained that these numbers are similar to the other MPO's.

There was brief discussion regarding the need to recognize that within a rural state like Maine, there is more mileage needed for arterials and collectors to connect with each other. Sandi Duchesne noted that it is difficult to increase our local roads when we don't need them; what we need is more mobility.

There was also brief discussion regarding the impact of weight limits on the interstate and the cost of maintaining lower arterials & collectors. John Perry noted that truck traffic doesn't affect mobility versus land access.

Pete Coughlan noted that he felt we would fall more within the FHWA guidelines as changes were made to the classifications.

Pete explained the timeline for this process. From the discussions here, Pete will go back and make appropriate changes, then send a map back to the Committee for final approval. Once that final approval is received, it will go to the MDOT Commissioner for his approval, then on to John Perry for final FHWA approval.

In order to get discussion started, Pete remarked on Rt. 1A and its classification. It is currently an arterial with a state aid designation. If it is to stay as an arterial, it should be designated state highway. He noted that Rt. 202, which runs parallel to Rt. 1A, is also an arterial and that this is not, normally, desirable. It was explained that, in this case, truck traffic must use Rt. 1A and Rt. 202, because of the truck limits on I-395. It was decided to keep both as arterials and raise the designation on Rt. 1A to state highway.

It was decided to continue discussion of arterials within the BACTS region and the Committee moved to discussion of arterials in Orono & Old Town.

College Ave./Rt. 2A

This road is currently designated as an arterial/state highway. It really provides access to the University, which would make it fall under the definition of a local road. David Struck explained that this road serves a population of 25,000+ and serves people from outside of both Old Town & Orono. The University is a community in itself and there is no other community on this road.

Terry Hannan reminded the Committee that we need to consider the upgrading of these roads. Arterials are much more expensive to upgrade to standards than collectors; collectors get done much faster. Also, it is not a matter of volume, it is more a matter of function. The MDOT is trying to be consistent throughout the state.

After discussion, it was decided to keep College Avenue as a minor arterial/state highway.

Rt. 43

Pete Coughlan is recommending that his roadway be lowered to a collector/state aid. The volume is low and it falls short of the definition for an arterial highway. Charlie Heinonen noted that the section from I-95 towards town acts more as a collector. It was noted that collector roads are eligible for CHIP funds, with no local share.

After further discussion it was decided to lower the status of Rt. 43 to collector/state aid.

Stillwater/Hogan Road

Pete is recommending that Stillwater Avenue remain as a collector and that the section of Hogan Road, between Stillwater and the Bangor Mall Entrance/Springer Driver, be lowered to collector/state aid.

Jim Ring pointed out that this was discussed at length in our previous meeting. Traffic in that area has increased dramatically.

Pete explained that volume does not always indicate what the classification of a road should be. We need to look at who is using the road and how it functions. Does it function like Rt. 2 or Rt. 15?

After further discussion, it was decided to keep Stillwater Avenue as a collector/state aid. It was further decided to lower the section of Hogan Road, between Stillwater Avenue and Springer Drive/Bangor Mall Road, to a collector/state aid roadway.

There were no further arterials needing discussion or clarification. Discussion moved to collectors.

So. Brunswick, Old Town

Pete is recommending that this road be lowered to local status, as it does not meet any of the definitions for collector. After brief discussion, it was decided to lower the status to local.

Kirkland Rd, Old Town

This road was discussed briefly. It was determined to meet the definition of a local road.

With time running out, it was decided to continue this discussion at another meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45am.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Morse
Clerk Pro-tem