

**The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System
(PACTS)**

RFP

Request for Proposals for a

**Portland -Forest Avenue
Integrated Transportation
and Land Use Plan**

November 2, 2010

The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) and the City of Portland, Maine request proposals to carry out a FHWA-funded study of a portion of the Forest Avenue corridor between the intersection of Forest Avenue and Park Street, along Forest Avenue and through the north side of the Woodford's Corner intersection. A detailed description and image of the study area is included under subheading III.

I. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Forest Avenue from Park Avenue to Woodfords Corner is a vital transportation corridor linking the highly urbanized Portland peninsula to Woodford's Corner, a neighborhood center with strong building fabric. This section of Forest Avenue is uniquely poised with the potential to become a more Complete Street, to support Transit Oriented Development, and to build on its many strengths and assets. These assets include the following:

- frequent transit service (20 minute headways);
- architecture reflecting high density mixed use buildings at the I-295 end of the corridor;
- surviving “auto row” buildings with an urban street presence, which have been adaptively re-used to modern commercial enterprise;
- USM's urban campus fronting on Forest with the Osher Map Library and the University Commons gateway to the Portland campus on Bedford Street;
- Oakhurst Dairy, an important economic asset providing jobs within an urban food processing plant with its historic art deco street front buildings;
- Woodfords Corner with its pre-war multi-story commercial blocks filling the

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- triangular block frontages at the cross roads;
- Hannaford Shopping Center with the largest grocery in the city anchoring a center serving a large portion of the Portland consumer market;
- Attractive residential neighborhoods lining the street and providing an existing moderate density residential presence within a ¼ mile walk to the street and its transit service;
- Infill development opportunities to fill the gaps with moderate density mixed use development.
- Wide existing right-of-way ripe for reconfiguration.

But this segment of Forest Avenue can only be described as a diamond in the rough. The infrastructure of the street is worn and tired. Amenities are sporadic or non-existent. Although Forest Avenue is a critical transportation and development corridor linking Portland's downtown peninsula to Interstate 295 and beyond to off-peninsula neighborhoods and outlying communities, it has serious issues and challenges, among which are the following:

- Auto-oriented land uses have come to dominate much of the use and character of Forest Avenue, thus eroding the corridor's attributes as its own destination and business district;
- Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility has been diminished by vehicle speed, road width, and minimal safe pedestrian crossings and sidewalk amenities for residents and businesses alike, and in spite of the continued need for high quality pedestrian access to existing regional destinations including the Portland peninsula, downtown and business districts, University of Southern Maine campus, the Hannaford's shopping complex and the Back Cove trail;
- Transit use has also been compromised by vehicle congestion and difficult pedestrian access while business viability is hindered by a perceived lack of parking and low pedestrian volumes; and
- Residential density is sporadic along the corridor, further challenging business diversity and transit use.

For the purposes of this study, the project area is defined by three sub areas with particular issues:

1. **Woodford's Corner:** The Woodfords Corner intersection, a five legged intersection, of which three legs include railroad crossings, is among the busiest intersections in the State. Pedestrian and bicycle access is particularly circuitous and challenging. Train passage often interferes with traffic flow, creating backups that can take up to thirty minutes to clear. This will potentially worsen as the Down Easter begins its six (6) daily runs in 2012. Forest Avenue south of Woodford's Corner is two lanes in each direction. Northbound through traffic becomes restricted

- to one lane at Revere Street, causing significant delays and diversion through Back Cove neighboring streets, especially during peak hours.
2. **Revere Street to I-295:** Along this stretch, pedestrian and bicycle access has been diminished by vehicle speed, road width, and infrequency of safe pedestrian crossings and sidewalk amenities. This, along with perceived lack of parking and low pedestrian volumes hinders commercial growth. Transit use has also been compromised by vehicle congestion and limited pedestrian accessibility.
 3. **I-295 to Park Avenue:** In spite of limited infrastructure, there is a consistent flow of pedestrian and bicycle traffic navigating this portion of the corridor to access destinations including the University of Southern Maine campus, commercial businesses, Deering Oaks Park, Bayside and the Back Cove trail. This section includes three significant pedestrian obstacles including the Marginal, Kennebec, State and Forest Avenue intersection, which presents lengthy crossing distances and a lack of adequate crosswalk infrastructure. I-295 has five (5) access points to/from the highway on the east side of Forest Avenue and three (3) on the west side, each of which represents an individual pedestrian crossing. There are existing sidewalks on both sides of Forest Avenue, however the crossings at these ramps are compromised by dense traffic and high travel speeds. A lack of pedestrian lighting and perceived threat of crime in the vicinity of the highway ramp islands and highway underpass present additional obstacles. A pending improvement project involving the north and south bound off ramps to Forest Ave. at Exit 6 provides an opportunity for coordination of this improvement plan to complement and support the work of this study.

II. STUDY DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The goal of the study is to develop an integrated transportation and land use plan that will leverage transportation and other public investments to stimulate private redevelopment and infill of underutilized properties. The plan should provide functional and safe pedestrian, bicycle, transit and motorist access both along and across this key gateway corridor.

The study shall present alternatives that promote the principles of Transit Supportive Development and Complete Streets, and use a process and decision approach of Context Sensitive Solutions, defined as follows:

- **Transit Supportive Development (TSD)** promotes land use and development patterns and urban design that supports and helps create the potential ridership for an effective bus and rail transit system. By definition, TSD is also highly pedestrian-oriented to facilitate safe and convenient access to transit routes and facilities. TSD is accomplished by establishing land use policies and design standards that result in moderate-density, mixed use communities where

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- multiple modes can be conveniently used and can comfortably exist together to create a balanced transportation environment.
- **Complete Streets** policies are intended to ensure that roadways are designed with the comfort and safety of all users in mind, including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, motorists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
 - **Context Sensitive Solutions** (CSS) is a collaborative interdisciplinary approach to transportation decision-making and design, which takes into consideration the communities and lands which streets, roads, and highways pass through ("the context").

In evaluating land use and zoning in the study area, consideration shall be given to the value of integrating Form Based Code methods of zoning as a tool for supporting desired project outcomes. Form Based Codes are defined as follows:

- **Form Based Code (FBC)** *methods foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm through the use of physical form, rather than separation of uses, as the organizing principle for regulation.*

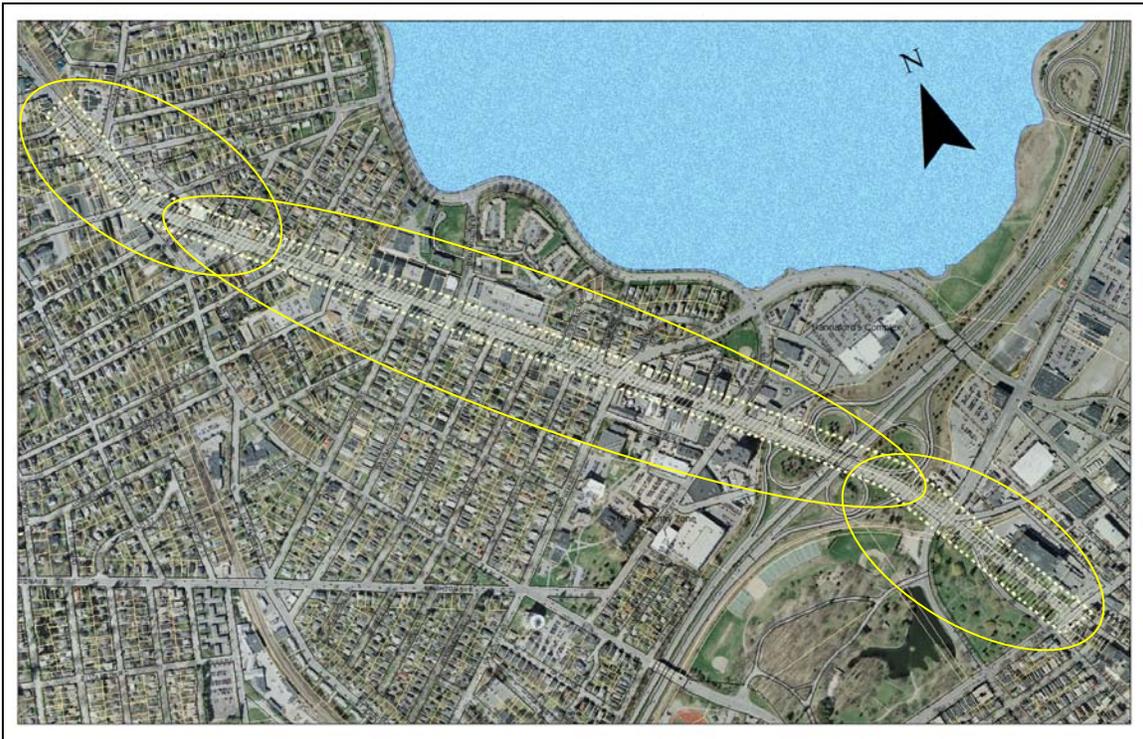
At least one member of the consulting team shall have demonstrated expertise in Transit Supportive Development, Complete Streets, and Context Sensitive Solutions. The study outcome shall be built on a comprehensive public process and shall include analysis and development of alternatives and selection of a preferred alternative for the entire study area and development of preliminary design reports (PDR) for select portions of the corridor. PDRs shall include enough detail to facilitate development of a preliminary project budget for future implementation. The Woodford's Corner intersection shall be included among locations where a PDR will be conducted. The location and number of additional areas selected for PDR shall be based on study outcome and available project budget. The area in the vicinity of the I-295 ramps is a high priority as well for a PDR, in light of the pending ramp improvement at Exit 6. Early attention to this location in relation to the impending design of ramp improvements is desirable. Coordination with these ramp improvements is needed to allow that project to proceed in design development and construction in light of the recommendations of this study.

The City of Portland and PACTS will be responsible for overseeing and managing the work of Consultant(s) retained for this study. All methodology/analytical decisions and conclusions will be coordinated with the City of Portland.

III. STUDY AREA

The Study Area ([Figure 1](#)) encompasses an approximately 1.5 mile long stretch of Forest Avenue from the south side of the intersection of Park Ave, Portland Street and Forest Avenue through the north side of Woodford's Corner at the railroad crossing in the vicinity of Pleasant Avenue and Forest Avenue.

Figure 1: Project Boundary (3 subareas defined under subheading 1 are circled)



IV. DESCRIPTION OF TASKS

1. TASK 1: Land Use and Zoning Assessment

The study shall evaluate current land use and zoning along the corridor. The predominant B-2 and B2b zoning and adjacent residential zones that abut the business corridor will be evaluated for consistency with the principles of TSD, including density, dimensional, design and performance standards and use regulations.

With assistance from the Portland Planning Division and other client offices, the Consultant will collect land use, development, social and economic data in and adjacent to the Study Area including, but not limited to:

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- (a) Land and building use;
- (b) Zoning district boundaries with appropriate zone designations;
- (c) Vacant and underutilized parcels;
- (d) Inventory and select mapping of development projects that have been applied for and/or approved;
- (e) Community facilities, such as schools, police/fire stations, libraries, post offices, cemeteries, health care facilities, day care, religious houses of worship and other institutions, as applicable;
- (f) Utilities including but not limited to water, electric, gas, communication, storm drain, and sewer utilities;
- (g) Applicable demographic Data, which may include population, households, income levels, commuting characteristics, types of businesses, and real estate trends and values; and
- (h) Boundaries of neighborhoods and communities.

Information gathered will be supplemented by previous studies and field reconnaissance, as necessary.

2. TASK 2: Existing Transportation Analysis

The study shall include detailed analysis of existing and forecast vehicular and pedestrian volumes along the identified portion of the Forest Avenue corridor and shall recommend appropriate streetscape and roadway improvements. The project area includes approximately 8000 feet (1.5 miles) of Forest Avenue. Right of way width varies considerably throughout the corridor, including approximately seventy four (74) feet between the intersections of Forest/Marginal Way and Forest/Portland Street; eighty six (86) feet between the intersections of Forest/Bedford Street and Woodford's Corner and sixty six (66) feet north of Woodford Street.

The Consultant(s) will conduct an assessment of the corridor including the existing and forecasted vehicular and pedestrian volumes through major signalized intersections and alternatives for streetscape and roadway improvements for the project area.

It is anticipated that the selected Consultant(s) will be able to utilize traffic and pedestrian count data and existing conditions Synchro/SimTraffic model developed by the Regional Traffic Management System (RTMS) project that will occur simultaneously.

The Consultant(s) shall solicit as-built plans, traffic signal data, and other data inventories, as necessary, from the City of Portland, PACTS, Maine DOT, and Pan

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Am/NNEPRA. All data will be field verified by the Consultant. Specifically, analysis and recommendations should include the following:

(a) Existing Conditions Analysis: Incorporating data and information from existing studies, where possible, the Consultant(s) will analyze, describe, and evaluate existing conditions including:

- Analysis of roadway characteristics data including but not limited to number of lanes, land use, lane and shoulder width, turn lane storage length, horizontal and vertical geometry, sight distance, railroad track configurations, traffic control devices, signal phasing and timing, pavement striping, signage, on-street parking, and speed limit;
- Traffic volumes;
- Intersection Level of Service and Traffic simulation;
- Traffic signal locations and timing;
- Operations analysis for the AM peak hour for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles with the exception of Woodford's Corner, where AM and PM peak hour for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles will be collected.
- Assessment of crash information;
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and any perceived gaps in that infrastructure;
- Transit service and infrastructure, service frequency, bus stop locations, shelters, benches, pull-outs, and other transit amenities, if any;
*** Note: Consultant(s) shall leverage information from the 2010 PACTS Transit-Focused Region study group and other similar or related studies.*
- Off-street and on-street parking;
- Existing rail data,(this shall include analysis of the planned at-grade rail crossing improvements at Forest Avenue, Saunders, Woodford, and Revere Streets) and projected impacts of the new Down Easter service beginning in 2012.
- Woodford's Corner: Origin-destination or trip distribution data as needed. This is primarily related to the likely attraction of traffic that utilizes alternative routes such as Baxter Boulevard to Clifton Street to Read Street so motorists can avoid congestion at Woodford's Corner.

*** Note: In reference to analysis of the Woodford's Corner intersection, Maine DOT will be implementing a signal system improvement project including data collection and development of a Synchro/Simtraffic model*

for major signalized intersections. Outcomes will include development of a base year model. The intent is to coordinate the timing and schedules of these two projects in order to reduce costs associated with this Forest Avenue study.

- (b) Streetscape Evaluation: The study shall include a streetscape evaluation to include existing sidewalk and crosswalk treatments, landscaping, street furniture, and other items as needed. Supporting graphics should be provided as necessary.

3. TASK 3: Development of Alternatives and Recommended Alternative

- (a) Future Traffic Analysis: Future Projections Analysis: The Consultant(s) shall forecast conditions along the corridor for the horizon year 2030 using a combination of trend line analysis and the PACTS Travel Demand Model. Forecasts shall include modified trend line projections based on anticipated increases in rail, transit, pedestrian and bicycle use, in addition to probable economic changes, predicated on success of a transit-focused corridor.
- (b) Land Use Assessment and Recommendations: The Consultant(s) shall provide a conceptual land use assessment that includes analysis of residential density and parameters and a minimum of two (2) recommended alternative for ordinance development and/or amendment that will support desired project outcomes to optimize opportunities for transit supportive infill and redevelopment. Consideration shall be given to the general potential of integrating Form Based Code methods or other zoning and land use alternatives that may not be represented in the existing regulatory framework, as appropriate.
- (c) Develop and Analyze Transportation/Streetscape Alternatives and Recommendations: The Consultant(s) shall develop up to three (3) cross-sectional graphics for each of up to up to three (3) distinct sections of the corridor, to illustrate recommended land use, transportation and streetscape alternatives. Sections of the corridor may or may not be selected according the three identified sub-areas described in section I, depending on the nature of the recommendations.
- (d) Selection of Recommended Alternative: Working in consultation with study partners, the Consultant(s) shall develop a rating matrix with which to evaluate each alternative in order to reach consensus on a preferred alternative with which to move forward. The Consultant will develop a concept plan of the recommended alternative and shall include:

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- Description of recommended land use and zoning modifications;
- Plan view drawings of recommended improvements;
- Representative cross-sections prepared to scale;
- Locations of pedestrian and bicycle crossings;
- Intersection improvements;
- Landscape/ streetscape plans;
- Location, layout and proposed quantity of any on street parking, transit stops and associated details and amenities; and
- Drainage system alterations.

Presentation of recommended alternatives shall include a series of renderings, including photo enhancements (a combination of aerial, “birds-eye view” and/or street level).

- (e) Enhance Project Scoping (EPS): Once a concept plan for a preferred alternative is complete, the Consultant(s) shall work in consultation with study partners to prioritize areas for which to implement enhanced project scoping (EPS) for select locations within the corridor. These shall include the vicinity of Exit 6. Woodford’s Corner shall also be a priority with the number and location of any additional EPS locations otherwise to be determined by project outcomes and available project budget. EPS’s shall include adequate information to develop a rough preliminary estimate of project cost (2010 dollars), broken down by major cost elements for preliminary design, right-of-way, construction, and construction engineering.

V. PUBLIC PROCESS

The Consultant(s) shall work in concert with the City to develop a public process plan that will sustain stakeholder involvement and gain public support. This will include development of a project Steering Committee, discussed in further detail below. A draft public process plan will be submitted to the City for review and approval shortly after project initiation. Major components of the plan shall include:

- Description of the Steering Committee’s role and responsibilities in the study.
- A study schedule, including decision points and meetings.
- Consultant(s) responsibilities at Steering Committee and public informational meetings.
- Information sharing mechanisms and public education programs (these may include web-based information, emails, flyers, newsletters, and/or other media).

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- Strategies and opportunities to reach various constituencies and to include their input into the process.

The Consultant(s) shall take a Context Sensitive Solution (CSS) approach to the public process by incorporating public outreach with respect to development of recommendations and conclusions. CSS is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach that involves stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS principles include the employment of early, continuous and meaningful involvement of the public and stakeholders throughout the study process.

As noted above, the public process shall include development of a project Steering Committee to participate in the overall study process, provide and disseminate information to their constituents, review and comment on draft documents and address specific issues associated with the development of study recommendations. The role of the Steering Committee will be advisory with the purpose of providing a range of insights, history, data, and reaction to study direction and findings. Each City Councilor whose District overlaps the project area will be invited to appoint a Steering Committee member. The Committee may include but shall not be limited to:

- Area Residents
- Neighborhood Association representatives;
- University of southern Maine representatives;
- Public interest groups;
- Chamber of commerce and local businesses;
- transit providers;
- Real estate brokers;
- Property owners and local business owners in the vicinity of the project area;
- Local business organizations; and/or
- Bicycle/pedestrian advocates.

The public process will include four (4) to six (6) Steering Committee meetings to be held at points in the study at which comment and input are needed. In addition or concurrent with the above Steering Committee meetings, two (2) public meetings will be held at which there will be opportunities for public engagement in the design development process and input on the recommended preferred alternative. It is assumed that meetings with individual businesses and property owners and other stakeholders in the study area may also be required. The draft public process plan,

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to be submitted by the Consultant(s) should expand on the aforesaid description and present a detailed framework for a public process.

The Consultant will work with the City on meeting development but shall take primary responsibility for meeting organization and outreach. Depending on the nature of the proposed public process, consultant responsibilities will include:

- Meeting facilitation;
- Stakeholder database maintenance;
- Meeting notes and sign in sheets;
- Audio visual equipment;
- Display graphics, PowerPoint presentations, and handouts;
- Development of meeting notices and agendas; and
- Distribution of draft documents for review and comment.

The City and partners will be responsible for the following:

- Scheduling and identification of accessible meeting locations;
- Distribution of meeting notices and agendas developed by the Consultant(s)
- Posting of meeting materials and other project documents to the City of Portland website.

Regulatory Agencies: The City and Consultant(s) will meet, as necessary, to coordinate with regulatory agencies and/or municipal officials to report on progress and elicit their input. City staff will make necessary arrangement for these meetings.

VI. CONSULTANT BUDGET PROPOSAL

This study is funded at \$100,000.00

The Consultant(s) shall estimate the amount of work hours and other expenditures for each work task and provide a statement of expected work products.

Aside from public process meetings, the consultant shall be expected to meet with staff periodically during the course of the project to review draft product, coordinate project elements and to review the progress of the project.

VII. CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS

Each applicant shall submit seven (7) copies of their proposal. Each proposal should include the following:

- Information described in the Methodology section, above.
- Qualifications of the staff to be assigned to this study.
- Detailed person-hour assignments by task.

We encourage firms responding to economize in the submission of qualifications.

One cost proposal should be submitted in a separate sealed envelope marked as "Cost Proposal for *"PACTS Portland Forest Avenue Transportation and Land Use Plan"*". The cost proposal should include details, by task, for total work hours and for work hours by personnel classification (preferably in tabular form). Direct costs, overhead costs and profit must be also be shown. The consultant will be paid directly by PACTS on the basis of cost plus fixed fee up to a certain limit.

Proposals shall be delivered to the PACTS **at 68 Marginal Way, Portland Maine, 04101** by **4:00 p.m. on November 24 , 2010**. Any materials or submissions received after that time will not be considered.

The selection schedule is as follows:

- November 29th - December 3rd: Review of proposals.
- December 6th – 10th: Selection of firm(s) to be interviewed (if committee chooses to conduct interviews).
- December 13th -17th: Interviews and selection of firm to be offered contract.
- December 20th – January 14th: Finalization and signing of contract.

All firms submitting proposals are notified that MaineDOT certified disadvantaged and women-owned enterprises (DBE) are encouraged to submit responses to this request. More information is available at <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/disadvantaged-business-enterprises/dbe-home.php>. PACTS will ensure that respondents to this request will not be discriminated against based on sex, race, color, creed or national origin in consideration of an award. PACTS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive minor irregularities, and to select the proposal which it believes to be most closely matched to its needs. PACTS is under no obligation to select the lowest cost proposal. It reserves the right to further negotiate with one or more of the firms

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submitting proposals to ensure that the process to be utilized, and the ultimate product to be received, are to PACTS and the City Of Portland's full satisfaction.

A team comprised of PACTS and City of Portland staff will review the proposals and select a firm. The selection committee will select a firm based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications and experience of proposed staff (45 percent)
- Proposed scope of work (45 percent)
- Cost in relation to the proposed scope of work (5 percent)
- Use of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (5 percent)

Comments or questions may be directed to:

- Carl Eppich, Transportation Planner, PACTS (207) 774-9891 or,
- Molly Casto, Senior Planner, City of Portland, Maine (207) (207) 874-8901

Answers to all significant clarification questions will be written and sent to all firms.

PACTS reserves the right to accept and reject any and all proposals, to negotiate with any consultant or business, to waive technical details or informalities considered to be in the interest of PACTS or the City of Portland.

PACTS

68 Marginal Way

Portland Maine, 04101

www.pactsplan.org