Saco and Scarborough Jointly Commit to Making Route 1 Fully Multi-Modal

Upcoming Public Meetings Scheduled in both Communities to Hear Concerns

The Saco and Scarborough communities are partnering with the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) to make Route 1 safer and more accessible for all modes of transportation, including motor vehicles, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

The benefits of this will be a business-friendly road that encourages people to walk, bike and use transit, says Jay Chace, Scarborough planning director. Patrick Fox, director of public works for Saco, agreed, adding that Route 1 in Saco is under significant development pressure. “The resulting increase in vehicle traffic on Route 1 will make safety a key priority there,” Fox said. “Carefully planning driveways and managing traffic flow as this area develops will help to alleviate some of the existing traffic concerns.”

The communities are planning a series of public meetings to hear ideas and concerns, with the first two taking place December 5 in Saco and December 13 in Scarborough. Both meetings begin at 6 pm; the Saco meeting will take place in the City Council Chambers in Saco City Hall, and the Scarborough meeting will be held in the Town Council Chambers in Scarborough Town Hall. The public can also go to www.sacomaine.org/Route1 or www.scarboroughmaine.org/departments/planning-codes/planning to get more information on the study, learn about the Complete Streets principles that both communities are using, ask questions and make comments. For those who are unable to attend meetings or would prefer to offer comments online, a link to a community survey will be available in early December.

Overall, the study will lay the groundwork for the development and implementation of a comprehensive, regionally consistent approach for Complete Street best practices in both communities. The focus will be on improving pedestrian facilities, including signal
design, crosswalk locations, crossing distances, pedestrian refuges, and related safety, comfort and convenience measures.

A comprehensive plan for bicycle facility improvements will also be developed, looking at signage, lane markings, bike racks, and other bicycle features. The study will provide recommendations for improving timing on traffic signals to reduce energy consumption for motorists and to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. Access management, which involves the careful planning of the location and spacing of driveways, street connections, median openings and traffic signals, will be used to reduce vehicle crashes and conflicts between vehicles and other travelers. More detailed information on what the study will include is available on at http://www.sacomaine.org/Route1 or www.scarboroughmaine.org/departments/planning-codes/planning.

Fox and Chace noted that the study will result in a comprehensive plan for Route 1 that unifies the road character in both communities, and that the plan will be implemented over time as funding is available. PACTS is contributing to the financing of the study.