



Project Prioritization and Selection Policy

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Background

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Bangor region, Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System (BACTS) is responsible for programming projects funded with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds. As required by 23U.S.C 134, BACTS annually develops a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the BACTS region. The TIP must be consistent with the BACTS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and strive to achieve performance measures (see BACTS Performance Measures Report [here](#)) set by the MPO in cooperation with the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT).

In 2024, BACTS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MaineDOT which details how MaineDOT and the MPO have agreed to collaboratively do business to benefit the transportation system users within and adjacent to the MPO area that is consistent with the above cited regulation and 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. The MOU contains eight initiatives that ensure that transportation on the state and federal classification systems have a source of funding and coordinated improvement processes between the MPO and MaineDOT. This prioritization policy addresses project selection procedures for the first six. The final two initiatives, “Enhance the State’s Transit System” and “Prioritize Climate-Friendly Investments” may require separate policies as projects arise.

Historically, the TIP project selection process has been data driven, with complex formulas and data sets. The selection process has changed several times in recent years, to ensure BACTS is appropriately prioritizing project funding.

Purpose

The purpose of the BACTS Prioritization Policy is to establish a consistent, transparent, and data-driven framework for evaluating and prioritizing transportation projects, corridors, and other investments within the BACTS planning region. The policy provides a standardized process for comparing projects based on factors such as safety, mobility, efficiency, accessibility, regional significance, and other applicable criteria.

The prioritization process is intended to help BACTS and its member communities direct limited transportation resources toward projects that provide the greatest regional benefit and are consistent with adopted plans, policies, and funding program requirements. This policy also establishes a clear basis for recommending projects for funding, further study, or advancement through applicable MaineDOT, federal, and BACTS programs.

Eligibility, Roles, and Responsibilities

The BACTS region includes 10 municipalities and the Penobscot Nation. Representatives from a BACTS member community may propose projects to be considered for submission to MaineDOT.

The BACTS Policy Committee will assign a subset of members to the prioritization subcommittee on a biennial basis. The subcommittee will annually review project proposals for each initiative as needed based on the MaineDOT MOU calendar.

Project Proposal Requirements

In order for a project to be considered for submission to MaineDOT, proposals must meet the following criteria:

- Proposals must be consistent with the most recent BACTS MTP.
- Proposals must be consistent with the comprehensive plan or municipal policy document of the City / Town / Tribe in which it is located.
- Projects must be aligned with achieving performance targets as established and approved by the BACTS Policy Committee (See BACTS Performance Measures Report [here](#)).
- Proposed projects that begin or end at a town, city, or tribal boundary line must be appropriately connected with the existing or programmed transportation infrastructure in the adjacent community.
- Municipalities will coordinate with any necessary utilities located within the project's limits in order to coordinate utility work plans with possible projects. Proposals shall be scoped to include all necessary utilities work in the cost estimates.
- Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
- Only complete project proposals with detailed scopes of work will be considered for funding. Municipal officials will sign off on the final scope of the proposed project prior to being considered for funding prioritization. BACTS Staff can provide assistance with project scoping, if requested.
- Proposals for roadway improvements must be located on the federal functional classified highways in the BACTS region and must be for either a collector or arterial roadway. Local roads are not eligible for MaineDOT Initiative funding.
- Highway reconstruction project proposals that add capacity to the system (including turning lane construction) must be based on a thorough engineering analysis, such as a study sponsored by BACTS, MaineDOT, or the municipality. Projects that are deemed “reasonably significant” per Maine’s Sensible Transportation Policy Act will also require a full alternatives analysis before they can be considered for funding (pursuant to MaineDOT Rule 17-229-103).

Project Scoring

MaineDOT evaluates Surface Transportation Program (STP) Safety and STP Enhancement project proposals in advance of the remaining highway and transit program. MaineDOT notifies BACTS of projects selected for inclusion in the TIP with funding from one of the previously mentioned sources.

Initiative 1: Planning and Scoping Transformative Projects

As part of the MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and MaineDOT's Planning Partnership Initiative (PPI) and Village Partnership Initiative (VPI) planning efforts, the MPO will solicit for and lead efforts, in partnership with local Municipalities and MaineDOT, to develop projects that are transformative in nature. These projects should advance the goals, investment priorities, of the MTP and state Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), as well as other state and regional planning initiatives.

Funding for projects identified through transformative plans is expected to come primarily from discretionary grants and other federal funding opportunities, including Congressionally Directed Spending. As funding opportunities become available, members will submit project proposals for consideration.

The subcommittee will evaluate and score submitted proposals based on the criteria and priorities established for each funding opportunity and will develop a ranked list of recommended projects. The ranked list will be submitted to MaineDOT for further consideration.

MaineDOT will review the recommendations and apply any additional criteria or considerations necessary to determine which project or projects will advance through the MaineDOT application process.

Initiative 2: Corridor Management Plans

BACTS will develop and periodically update Corridor Management Plans for key corridors in the region. These plans should include safety improvements, equity, active transportation improvements, traffic management, congestion mitigation, GHG emissions reduction, transit improvements, and key maintenance implications. Corridors should be looked at as more than just one street or highway, but rather in a systems approach of a network of integrated infrastructure and as an opportunity to achieve economic, housing, equity, quality of life, and climate goals. These plans serve as a short- and long-term vision for the corridor and should be consistent with the MTP and state LRTP. These plans should transcend municipal boundaries and/or be regional in nature.

The scoring system evaluates attributes that influence roadway safety, efficiency, and public access. Scoring metrics were developed using data from MaineDOT, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), BACTS, member municipalities, and previously completed corridor studies.

Corridors will be ranked in accordance with this policy and prioritized for study through the UPWP funding process.

Scoring Criteria	Weight
Facilitate Economic Opportunities	10
Reduce Congestion	10
Promote Safety	20
Support Transit Access	10
Support Pedestrian Access	10
Support Bicycle Access	5
Existing Bicycle Activity	5
Avoid Redundant Studies	10
Target Vulnerable Communities	10
Implement MTP Priorities	10
Maximum Score	100

Criteria Description

Facilitate Economic Opportunities

Municipal zoning maps showcase designated areas of economic development. A corridor which has economic opportunities within its boundaries has high growth potential and commercial zoning areas. This scoring is based upon a municipality's zoning map, and includes areas described as general commercial, village commercial, shopping and personal service. Scoring also accounts for the region's freight routes, and uses the most recent freight studies to conduct scoring.

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Not At All	No economic and/or freight studies opportunities along corridor
5	Somewhat (<50%)	Some economic opportunities and/or freight studies along corridor
10	To Great Extent (>50%)	Economic opportunities and/or freight studies exist to great extent

Reduce Congestion

Congestion is measured by MaineDOT and can be viewed on the MaineDOT Mapviewer using the customer service level (CSL) attribute known as CSL (Service). This particular scoring criteria focuses on the lower ranks of C, D, or F which highlight areas of a corridor that

experience congestion. This measure uses the ratio of peak traffic flows to highway capacity to arrive at an A-F score for travel delay. Peak summer months are specifically considered to capture impacts to Maine's tourism industry. This scale is uniform across Highway Corridor Priority, since tourist travel is system-wide and sitting in traffic affects customer service similarly on all roads (MaineDOT).

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Less than 10%	No Congestion
5	Between 10-50%	Some Congestion
10	To Great Extent (>50%)	Great levels of congestion

Promote Safety

Safety is measured by MaineDOT and can be viewed on the MaineDOT Map Viewer using CSL (Safety) attribute. This criteria focuses on the lower ranks of C, D, or F which highlight areas of a corridor that experience motor vehicle crashes. This measure includes the two types of motor vehicle crashes most likely related to the highway; head-on and run off road crashes. The A-F scale compares these crash rates with the statewide average (MaineDOT).

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Less than 10%	No safety segments
10	Between 10-50%	Some safety segments
20	To Great Extent (>50%)	Great levels of safety segments

Support Transit Access

The Community Connector is a fixed route public transit system operated by the City of Bangor to assist communities of the Greater Bangor Urbanized Area. Bus routes are located in Bangor, Brewer, Veazie, Orono, Old Town, and Hampden while also providing service to higher education facilities across the region. This attribute of the corridor scoring system is measured if the Community Connector travels within or partially within the corridor.

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Not at All	No public transit access
5	Somewhat (<50%)	Some public transit access
10	To Great Extent (>50%)	Full public transit access

Support Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian infrastructure is measured on availability and condition along a corridor. Sidewalk condition and whether or not it exists within an area impacts active transportation for individuals. If sidewalks are in rough condition, they are likely to not be up-to-date to support current ADA compliances.

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Low Severity	Sidewalk in good condition, was new or recently built
10	High Severity	No sidewalk exists or sidewalk is in extremely poor condition

Support Bicycle Access

Corridors showcasing a bike lane, breakdown lane, or shoulder, showcase a location that appeals to bikers recreationally and as a mode of transportation that also has an area in mind for bike safety. This scoring is based on what current paint lines and road width exist.

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Biking Access	Full width (4 - 5ft) marked lane exists on a low speed limit (<35 mph) road or a road shoulder exists in high speed corridor (>35 mph)
5	No Biking Access	No bike lane or shoulder exists along corridor

Bicycle Activity

Bicycle activity is measured using Strava Metro data. Low, medium, and high activity levels are meant to be on a relative scale with "High" being set as the highest biking activity levels in the region and "Low" and "Medium" as reasonable intermediate steps.

Severity Level Score	Description
0	No biking tracked on this corridor
1	Low levels of biking activity on this corridor
3	Medium levels of biking activity on this corridor
5	High levels of biking activity on this corridor

Avoid Redundant Studies

Studies that have been performed along a corridor or partially along a corridor, impact scoring. If a corridor has been recently studied it likely does not warrant another study but may be ready for engineering or construction.

Severity Level Score	Description
0	Existing Study
5	Includes Part of Corridor
10	No Existing Study

Target Vulnerable Communities

Vulnerable communities can be found along corridors using the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities.

Severity Level Score	Description	Notes
0	Not at All	Corridor does not exist within U.S. DOT map
5	Somewhat (<50%)	Some of the corridor exists within U.S. DOT map
10	To Great Extent (>50%)	The majority of the corridor exists within the U.S. DOT map

Implement MTP Priorities

BACTS is required to prepare an MTP to outline a long term transportation vision for the region. These plans must identify how the area will manage and operate a multi-modal transportation system to meet the region's economic, transportation, development and sustainability goals on a 20+-year planning horizon. A corridor which is referenced within the MTP would further support project/study prioritization and/or recommendations.

Severity Level Score	Description
0	Not At All
5	Somewhat
10	To Great Extent

Rescoring:

Staff at BACTS will score the entirety of the corridor study every five years to keep up to date with infrastructure deterioration. BACTS will reference the scoring every two years in conjunction with UPWP development, though minor updates may be deemed necessary to show which corridors have been studied in the past years. This action is performed by Staff to ensure updated data can rescore the region. Each corridor scoring attribute is likely to change overtime as projects and citizens exist throughout the region. The newly scored corridor study shall be presented to the BACTS subcommittee for approval.

Initiative 3: Urban Partnership Initiative (UPI)

The UPI will be administered by MaineDOT and the MPO in a similar manner to MaineDOT's Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) program. MaineDOT will annually evaluate the demonstrated need and may increase funding as project requests and available funding grow. MaineDOT will provide funding expectations by October of each year. This program is State funded (with local match) and is directly dependent on the State budget, as are the other MPIs.

This program is intended to prioritize improvements to active transportation; however, all MPI-eligible project scopes are eligible for consideration. Eligible active transportation projects may include new sidewalks, sidewalk reconstruction, multi-use trail connections to highways, accessibility upgrades to existing pedestrian facilities, and intersection safety improvements.

Projects located on the state or state-aid system are eligible. BACTS will limit eligibility to projects located within the existing roadway right-of-way that improve safety and accessibility for active transportation users.

Projects will be scored according to the project category under which the municipality submits the application. For example, a project may include both pedestrian and bicycle improvements, such as a shared-use path; however, the municipality must designate the project as either a **Pedestrian** or **Bicycle** project for scoring purposes. Projects cannot be submitted or scored under multiple categories.

Scoring Criteria	Project Type		
	Pedestrian	Bicycle	Intersection
Traffic Volume	20	20	20
Safety	15	15	15
Pedestrian Improvements	20	-	-
Bicycle Improvements	-	20	-
Intersection Improvements	-	-	20
Maximum Score	55	55	55

Criteria Description

Traffic Volume

The volume of traffic that a roadway serves is indicative of its importance in serving the transportation system. Roads which serve more vehicles will be given more importance than roads that do not serve as many vehicles. Intersection volumes will be measured by the greatest of the crossing roads. i.e Main Street has 2500 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and Union Street has 2800 AADT, the intersection project will use the higher of the crossing roads or 2800 AADT.

Volume (AADT) in thousands	Sidewalk Project	Intersection Project
< 2	0	0
2 - 5	5	5
5 - 8	10	10
8 - 11	13	13
11 - 15	17	17
> 15	20	20

Safety

The safety score is based upon MaineDOT's list of high crash locations (HCL) for the preceding three years and the list of fatal and severe injury crash locations for the preceding three years. MaineDOT classifies a roadway link or node as a high crash location if it has had eight or more crashes in a three-year period, and if it has a critical rate factor (CRF) greater than 1.0. Fatal and severe injury crash locations will be identified from the latest MaineDOT Public Crash Query Tool data. A project that includes a location with at least one fatal or serious injury (A rated) crash in the past three years will receive the full points for that category.

HCL	Sidewalk Project	Intersection Project
HCL	10	10
Fatal / Severe Crashes	5	5

Pedestrian Improvements

Projects may receive up to 20 points for including improvements to the pedestrian network. These points may be awarded as shown below.

Points	Criteria
20	The project will replace existing pedestrian facilities where such facilities have excessively deteriorated or the project will replace existing pedestrian facilities, as with ADA sidewalk modifications, etc. within a BACTS Complete Streets Buffer Zone.
15	The project will include new pedestrian facilities where none currently exist but are recommended by the BACTS 2026 Complete Streets plan, within a Buffer Zone.
10	The project will replace existing pedestrian facilities where such facilities have excessively deteriorated or the project will replace existing pedestrian facilities, such as for ADA sidewalk modifications etc. outside of a Buffer Zone
5	The project will include new pedestrian facilities where none exist, outside a Buffer Zone.

Bicycle Improvements

Projects may receive up to 20 points for improvements to the bicycle network. These points may be awarded as shown below.

Points	Criteria
20	The project will replace existing bicycle facilities where such facilities have excessively deteriorated or the project will replace existing bicycle facilities, as with ADA sidewalk modifications, etc. within a BACTS Complete Streets Buffer Zone.
15	The project will include new bicycle facilities where none currently exist but are recommended by the BACTS 2026 Complete Streets plan, within a Buffer Zone.
10	The project will replace existing bicycle facilities where such facilities have excessively deteriorated or the project will replace existing bicycle facilities, such as for ADA sidewalk modifications etc. outside of a Buffer Zone
5	The project will include new bicycle facilities where none exist, outside a Buffer Zone.

Intersection Improvements

Projects may receive up to 20 points for improvements to a given intersection. Points may be awarded in multiple categories, i.e. a project may get points for equipment older than 10 years and points for upgrading functionality.

Points	Criteria
5	The project will replace equipment placed in service 10 years or more before the date of the proposed installation.
5	The project will improve ADA compliance.
5	The project will upgrade the functionality of the equipment, e.g. replace loop detection with camera detection, add remote access, etc.
5	The project will improve mobility within the intersection and/or the corridor, e.g. adds adaptive timing or the ability to program protected pedestrian intervals.

Initiative 4: Paving-Highway Corridor Priorities (HCP) 3 & 4

BACTS will send to MaineDOT up to 10% of the HCP 3 & 4 mileage in their network as prioritized candidates for HCP 3 & 4 paving. Eligible mileage will not include Light Capital Paving (LCP) program roadways (HCP 4 and unbuilt HCP 3 outside the urban area). MaineDOT will program as many of the candidates as possible given available funding in the priority order provided by BACTS. If a high priority candidate will not be paved due to readiness, cost, or timing, the next high priority candidate of comparable cost will be selected from the list. Funding levels, determined in September, are split between MPOs using an agreed upon formula by MaineDOT.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
Traffic Volume	10
Preferred Trucking Route	3
Pavement Condition	50
Safety	5
Bus Routes	2
Maximum Score	70

Criteria Description

Traffic Volume

The volume of traffic served by a roadway is an indicator of its importance within the overall transportation system. Roadways serving higher traffic volumes will receive greater weight in the prioritization process than those serving lower volumes. The traffic volume thresholds used in this scale differ from those used in the UPI process to better reflect the typical traffic volumes found on HCP 3 and HCP 4 roadways. If a segment under consideration has more than one calculated AADT, the final score shall be based on a weighted average AADT for the full segment.

Volume (AADT) in thousands	Points
< 1	0
2 - 3	1
3 - 4	3
4 - 5	5
5 - 6	7
> 7	10

Preferred Trucking Route

Projects which will facilitate the efficient transport of goods in the BACTS area will be prioritized. The selection committee will use the 2007 Truck Route Study by Gorrill Palmer (see Appendix A), as a determining factor for identifying a truck route. If a segment is on a defined truck route it will receive 3 points.

Points	Description
0	The segment is not located on a freight route.
3	The segment is located on a freight route.

Pavement Condition

The pavement condition score is based upon the Vialytics segment weighted EMI multiplied by 10. More information about how Vialytics calculates EMI can be found at <https://viatl.vialytics.com/en/article/how-emi-is-calculated>. The maximum points awarded in this category will be 50.

Safety

If a municipality chooses to add a municipally-funded safety project to a proposed HCP 3 & 4 paving candidate, the segment will receive an additional 5 points. Examples may include sidewalks or raised crosswalks.

Points	Description
0	The municipality is not proposing any locally-funded safety improvements.
5	The municipality is proposing to add locally-funded safety improvements, e.g. adding or repairing sidewalks, adding raised crosswalks, adding RRFBs, etc.

Bus Routes

Projects which will facilitate the efficient transport of people in the BACTS area by improving conditions for transit will be prioritized. A project which resides on a designated Community Connector bus route will receive 2 points.

Points	Description
0	The segment is not located on a designated Community Connector bus route.
5	The segment is located on a designated Community Connector bus route.

Initiative 5: Safety & Mobility, HCP 1 & 2 (including NHS) Paving, Interstate, and Bridge Improvements, etc.

MaineDOT will provide the MPOs with an outlook of current & anticipated bridge, pavement, and highway rehabilitation or reconstruction candidates on all HCP 1 & 2 roadways, including last treatment and current condition. This data will help the MPOs understand upcoming needs (and potential projects) and streamline the coordination and development of future Work Plan candidates. Using the outlook of current and anticipated bridge/pavement candidates on HCP 1 & 2 roadways, BACTS will share any plans (e.g., local plans, corridor management plans), studies, and suggested improvements for consideration and inclusion in candidate projects. It is not anticipated that BACTS will prioritize projects under consideration in this initiative.

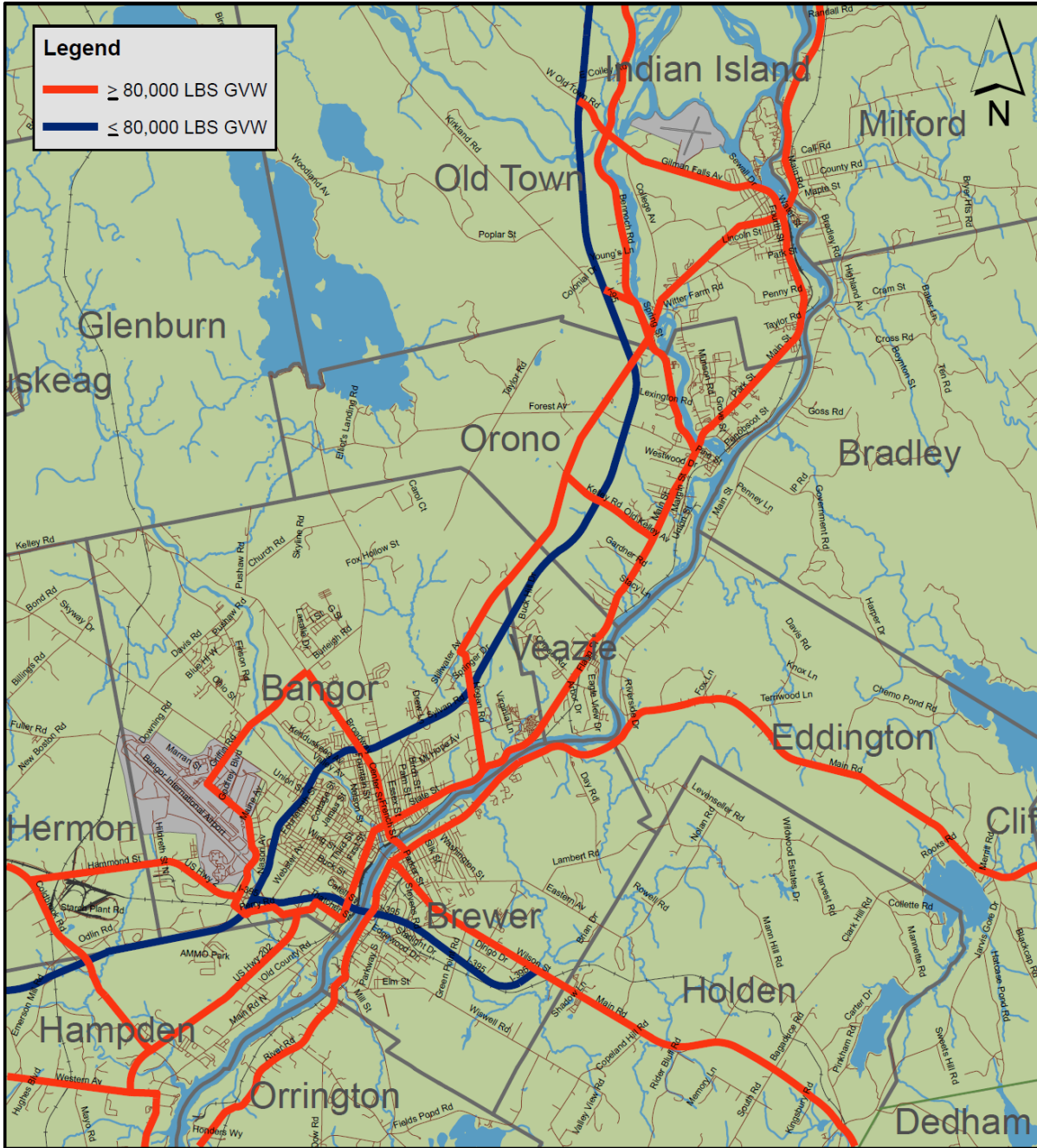
Initiative 6: General Highway, Bridge, and other Work Plan Items

For projects that are not captured in the initiatives above (initiatives 1-5), MaineDOT and BACTS will annually propose other BACTS-area projects for inclusion in MaineDOT's Work Plan. BACTS will prioritize the projects (considering priorities identified by MaineDOT) and return the prioritized lists to MaineDOT. At the time of this policy publication, MaineDOT has not provided a set of priorities for this initiative.

Appendix A - Designated Truck Routes Map

Designated Truck Routes Map - Overall

Figure No. 3



BACTS TRUCK ROUTE STUDY

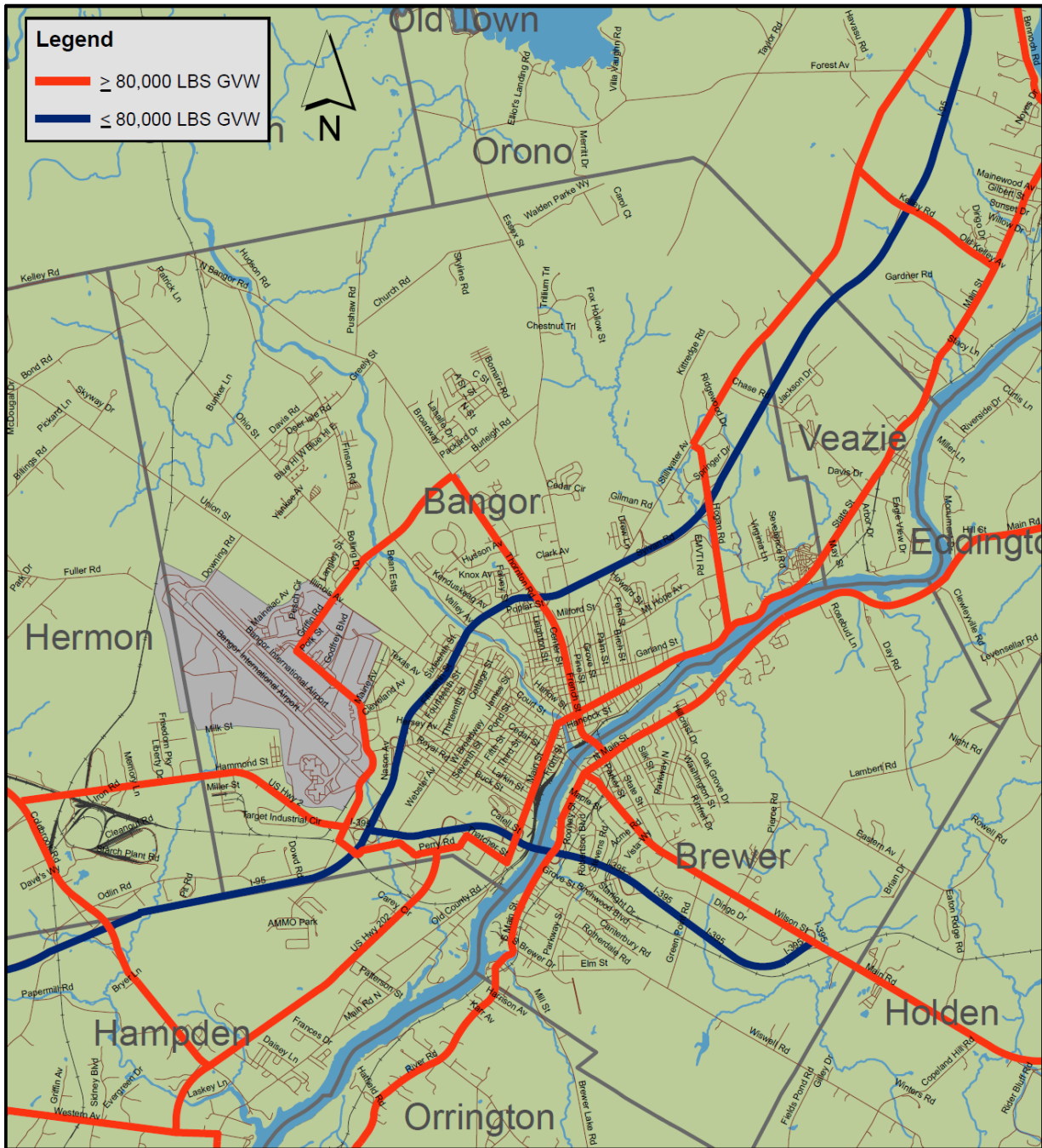
GP Gorrill-Palmer Consulting Engineers, Inc.

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Miles
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JN: 1700
 DATE: SEP 2007
 FILE: 1700-TRUCK ROUTES_3.MXD
 SOURCE: MAINE GIS WEBSITE

Designated Truck Routes Map - South Figure No. 3A

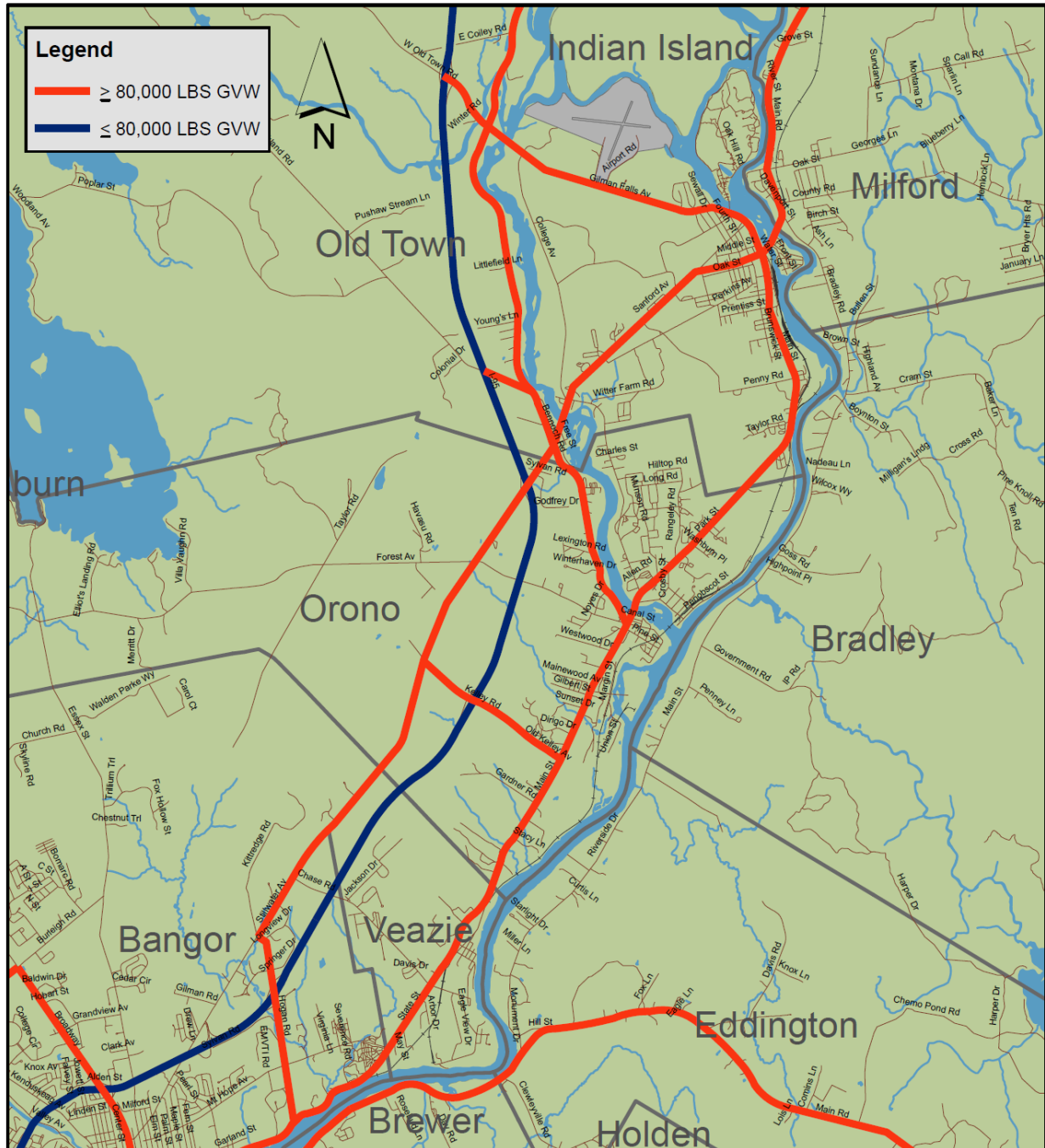


BACTS TRUCK ROUTE STUDY

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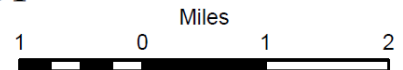
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 SOURCE: MAINE GIS WEBSITE

Designated Truck Routes Map - North Figure No. 3B



BACTS TRUCK ROUTE STUDY

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