

PACTS Saco and Scarborough Route 1 Corridor Complete Streets Plan Survey
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Methodology

The objective of this survey was to generate feedback regarding the portion of Route 1 that passes through Saco and Scarborough, from just north of the Route 1/Route 112 junction in Saco to the Scarborough-South Portland line. The survey was created on *SurveyMonkey*, launched on November 30, 2018 and closed on December 29, 2018. It included questions about vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian and transit usage. Of the thirteen questions, 7 included the opportunity to provide open-ended comments. During the time the survey was open, a public meeting in Saco (December 5) and in Scarborough (December 13) took place. Media coverage in the *Portland Press Herald*, *Forecaster*, *Mainebiz*, *Journal Tribune*, and *WGME-TV*, along with multiple online messaging from both municipalities, publicized availability of the survey. The survey was easily accessible by smartphone. A total of 376 individuals participated.

Demographics

- Sixty percent of respondents were from Scarborough, with 31% from Saco. The remainder were primarily from Old Orchard Beach, with a few other respondents weighing in from Portland, Freeport, Standish, Dayton, Buxton, Windham and Kennebunk
- The age of respondents was quite well distributed, with a slight skew towards middle age: 21% age 20-36, 34% age 37-50, 29% age 51-65, 12% age 65-74 and 3% 75 years or over

Summary of Feedback

1. Usage

- Respondents were heavy vehicle users of Route 1, with almost 70% indicating daily use of the road and another 22% using it at least three times a week.
- Bike and pedestrian usage, as expected, was much less: 84% never bike and 74% never walk along Route 1. Eight percent bike monthly; 11% walk monthly.
- Transit use was almost non-existent with respondents: 98% never take transit along the corridor.

2. Increasing Alternative Mode Usage

- *Bikes:* Route 1 is not considered a safe place for bikes at this time. What was surprising is that many people – as much as half – didn't think it could ever be

safe and advocated for bike lanes on other roads, and/or for only short distances on sections of Route 1 that will connect them to destinations on the other side of the road. Other respondents specified that bike lanes would be needed in order to make them ride more on Route 1; a majority of these specified that a wide, separated bike lane would be necessary in order to feel comfortable. It was noted that installing bike lanes instead of sidewalks in areas that are not heavily retail-oriented would be more useful to travelers, as people generally cannot visualize why people would walk on Route 1 in those sections (noisy, dangerous, not scenic). Many others noted that the East Coast Greenway provides a safe and pleasant north-south route for those who want to commute by bike and again, did not feel Route 1 needed bike amenities along its entire length.

- *Pedestrians:* Other than in areas such as Dunstan Corner, Oak Hill and the Thornton Academy section of Saco, there did not seem to be much interest in pedestrian amenities on Route 1. Similar to above, there were many comments such as, “Why would I choose to walk on Route 1 when there are other, more hospitable places to walk?” There was real fear shown in terms of the speed and scofflaw activities of drivers in terms of running red lights and not stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks. However, thoughts regarding the more densely commercial areas were different, there we heard requests for crosswalks, sidewalks, and for enforcement of vehicle infractions.
- *Transit:* This was a very suburban audience. Lots and lots of, “No,” “Never,” “I have a car, I don’t need transit,” responses here. Other comments included those of not wanting to stand and wait for a bus on Route 1 because it is noisy and dangerous, that if a bus route was offered there would have to be parking available on Route 1 so as to be able to drive to the bus stop, and a comment on if parents don’t put their kids on school buses, why would we expect them to ride a bus? One person simply commented, “Oh stop!” There were also many comments regarding the lack of knowledge that any bus service was available now, and that level of service would have to be much better for transit to be considered a reliable mode of transport here.

3. What do you like about traveling on Route 1?

- 71% like Route 1 because it is direct
- 60% like Route 1 because it is free
- 40% like that there are lots of places to eat and shop
- One person liked the sunrises across the marsh and another noted that when driving a hybrid, Route 1 is better on gas mileage. (This latter comment came up at Scarborough public meeting as well.)

4. For what reason are you usually traveling on Route 1 in Saco or Scarborough?

- 75% are going to a business or restaurant on Route 1
- 54% are commuting
- 46% are going to shop in another town (at a business not on Route 1)
- 41% are going to a medical appointment in another town
- Many noted that it is necessary to travel on Route 1 to get to the many other places they go: beach, daycare, parks, etc.

5. What do you like least about traveling on Route 1 in Saco and Scarborough?

- 76% like the traffic least
- 60% say there are too many stop lights
- 35% say it is too dangerous
- In the open-ended comments, by far the most numerous were complaints about uncoordinated traffic lights. Other comments included the need for a signal at Waterfall Drive, banning left turns on Route 1 by Thornton Academy in Saco, adding turn lanes in congested areas (Dunstan/Tap and Table), problems with motorists running red lights, problems with the configuration at Payne Road, backups on Route 1/Broadturn to Ash Swamp Road

6. Where on Route 1 is your biggest safety concern?

- There was a three-way tie – at about 24% each – among Oak Hill, Dunstan Corner and Saco’s Thornton Academy section
- Eleven percent suggested other problem areas: the connector (which was one of the listed choices, but only 7% chose it); need for a crossing at Little Dolphin Drive; Mill Brook/Route 1; Scarborough Marsh, where people felt a center lane divider was needed due to speed of traffic; Route 1/Main Street in Saco; anyplace where people are running red lights, and a request for no more cut-throughs on Maple Ave.