

Acadia Gateway Center News – May 2009

Public Hearing Scheduled

**WHEN: Tuesday, May 12th
7:00–9:00 PM**

WHERE: Trenton Town Office



The town of Trenton will host a public hearing to discuss a proposed contract zone amendment for the Crippens Creek property that would allow the Planning Board to review the proposal to develop the Acadia Gateway Center as a conditional use. The Trenton Planning Board will summarize the contract zoning proposal and the public meetings it has held on the proposed Contract Zone, and open the floor for public comment.

The Maine Department of Transportation staff will be available to answer questions about the project.

In October, 2008, Trenton voters adopted the language that allows for major developments to seek contract zoning. The complete land use ordinance is available online at www.hcpcme.org/trenton/. Article V1: Contract Zoning is on pages 93 – 100. The article states, “A contract zone, when approved, represents a deviation from the Trenton Land Use Ordinance standards, and as such, is subject to the conditions established in the contract agreement and is an amendment to the Trenton Land Use Ordinance.”

Trenton residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions and express their views. You may contact the town office at 207-667-7207 or townoffice@trenton-me.com if you have questions or comments for town officials. You can find additional information about the Acadia Gateway Center at the website: www.acadiagatewaycenter.com.

Your Chance to Vote on the Acadia Gateway Center

**WHEN: Saturday, May 30th
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

WHERE: Trenton Elementary School

If the contract zoning request is voted through the planning board and the select board, the project will be up for a public vote at the Trenton Town Meeting to approve or not approve the contract zone request.

The article reads: Shall an ordinance entitled “Acadia Gateway Center (Maine DOT) Contract Zoning Amendment to the Trenton Land Use Ordinance” be enacted.

If the article is presented at town meeting and people of Trenton approve the contract zone, the Planning Board will complete its Site Plan Review. Ground-breaking will begin this spring or early summer. Construction of the buildings and other facilities will continue for several years.

Costs and Benefits of the Acadia Gateway Center

The town of Trenton hired Dr. Todd Gabe, an economist with the University of Maine, to measure the future costs and benefits of the Acadia Gateway Center.

From the town's perspective, there are a number of direct costs and what economists call "opportunity costs."

The direct costs include services that the town would need to provide, such as emergency response, solid waste and routine municipal administration. Some of these may be avoided, if for instance the Acadia Gateway Center, hires a private firm for trash removal.

The opportunity costs are more difficult to measure. A tangible cost will be the reduction of property taxes by approximately \$1,700, the amount paid while the property was in private hands. Beyond this are more speculative "what if" costs. For instance, what taxes would the town earn if this property were developed for a private business, and what costs would the town bear?

Benefits from the center are also a mix of direct and indirect benefits. Dr. Gabe is investigating how an investment of more than \$20 million during start-up, with ongoing expenditures of more than \$400,000 per year will impact economic activity.

Direct benefits include:

- 2009 – 2010: Construction jobs, including roads and the Downeast Transportation Inc. bus operations and maintenance building
- 2011 – 2014: Construction jobs for the Intermodal Visitor Transportation Facilities
- Beginning 2010: Permanent and seasonal employment for Downeast Transportation Inc. and the Island Explorer and the intermodal visitor center
- On-site emergency response capacity, including people trained in emergency medical response, and space for emergency management operations

- Improved bus service, with express buses to Bar Harbor, regular service to Ellsworth and connections beyond Ellsworth
- Conserved land for wildlife, walking, and biking trails
- Road improvements on Route 3 that preserve traffic flow and improve safety

Indirect and induced benefits result from increased business activity in the region connected with project spending as well as tourists that will stop in Trenton going forward.

- Spending by persons hired to build and run the center
- Purchases from local suppliers of materials used in construction and operations of the center
- Increased spending by visitors that stop in Trenton
- Business start-ups and expansions that emerge in connection with the center

A business would ask whether the benefits of creating this facility exceed the costs. In this case, the cost of creating the facility is paid largely through federal grants to the Maine Department of Transportation and the National Park Service. It is up to Trenton voters and elected leaders to consider whether the Acadia Gateway Center will provide benefits that cover local costs and contribute to the future prosperity of the community.

Questions or Suggestions?

Please contact Jim Fisher, Transportation Planner for the Hancock County Planning Commission at 667-7131 or jfisher@hpcme.org if you have questions or need additional information.

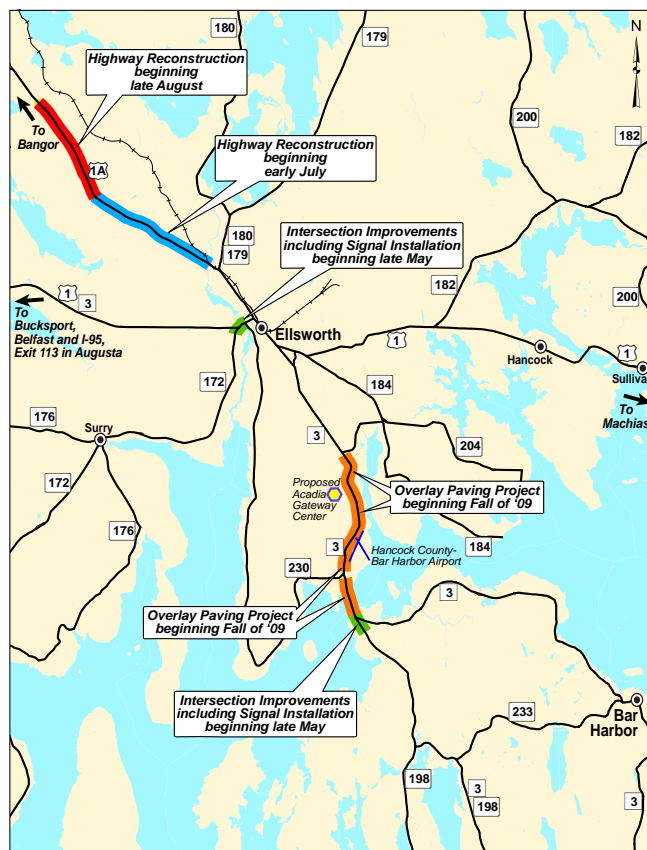
Transportation Projects Slated for Trenton Area

Despite tight economic times, several significant transportation upgrades are planned for the Trenton area. Several projects will break ground this spring, including:

- Route 1A in Ellsworth will be rebuilt with paved shoulders and other safety improvements;
- The intersection of Route 1 and Route 172 will be fixed to improve traffic flow and safety;
- Route 3 at the head of the island will be redesigned to improve traffic movement;
- Construction of a new airport entrance road; and
- If approved by Trenton voters, construction of the Acadia Gateway Center

Maine Department of Transportation plans for 2010 and 2011 include:

- Redesign of the Route 3 and Route 230 intersection in Trenton, with a traffic signal and turning lanes (\$2.75 million);
- Route 3 re-surfacing beginning at the Ellsworth town line and including most of Trenton; and
- Numerous improvements for the airport.



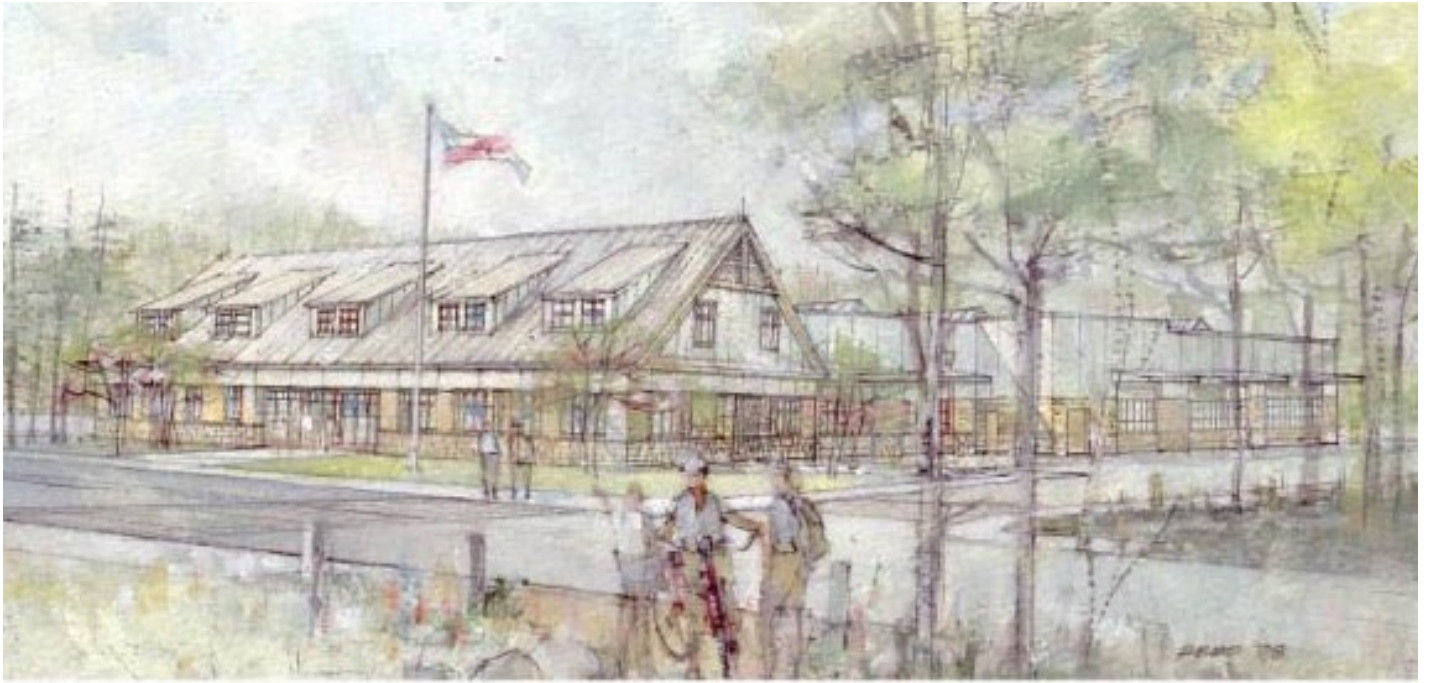
How is This Project Financed?

Phase I is financed through a combination of federal and state funds. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is providing the single largest contribution in support of the expansion of mass transit services. The National Park Service is also a major contributor using park entrance fees and the “transit in the parks” initiative. The Maine Department of Transportation has identified this as a priority in the next six year transportation plan and will be devoting considerable staff time and resources. State funds will be used to leverage the larger share being paid through the federal agencies. Finally, the Friends of Acadia

provided funding at a critical juncture in order to place an option on the preferred location and to purchase the property prior to selling the front acreage to the Maine Department of Transportation. County and local funds are not being used to finance this project. The town of Trenton is not asked to contribute funding toward the construction or operations of this facility. However, the economic impact study, cited earlier, will identify any changes in municipal service costs that may result from creating the center.



East Elevation of the Phase One Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility



www.AcadiaGatewayCenter.com for more information, photos, and project updates

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