

From: [MaineDOT, Communications](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Fw: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: general
Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 9:23:19 AM

From: mthomas@smccme.edu <mthomas@smccme.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 1:44 PM
To: MaineDOT, Communications <Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov>
Subject: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: general

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from the MaineDOT contact form.

Date: Wednesday, 22-Mar-2023 13:42:29 EDT
Name: Mitchell Clyde Thomas
Phone:
Email: mthomas@smccme.edu

Topic: general

Comments:

I'm writing to register my support for development of the Merrymeeting Trail.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [MaineDOT, Communications](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Fw: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: general
Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 9:23:54 AM

From: markvward3@gmail.com <markvward3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 1:46 PM
To: MainedOT, Communications <Communications.MainedOT@maine.gov>
Subject: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: general

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The following message was submitted from the MainedOT contact form.

Date: Wednesday, 22-Mar-2023 13:43:00 EDT
Name: mark ward
Phone: 12073236673
Email: markvward3@gmail.com

Topic: general

Comments:
meeting trail, so I'd say yes to the trail but no motorized vehicles including electric.... unless medically unable to walk.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [MaineDOT, Communications](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Fw: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: project
Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 9:23:11 AM

From: paulgreenfield92@gmail.com <paulgreenfield92@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 1:44 PM
To: MainedOT, Communications <Communications.MainedOT@maine.gov>
Subject: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: project

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from the MainedOT contact form.

Date: Wednesday, 22-Mar-2023 13:43:11 EDT
Name: paul
Phone: greenfield
Email: paulgreenfield92@gmail.com

Topic: project

Comments:
merry meeting trail. We want it! Im sick of getting hit by cars

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [MaineDOT, Communications](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Fw: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: project
Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 9:23:31 AM

From: bonzinathaniel@gmail.com <bonzinathaniel@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 1:43 PM
To: MainedOT, Communications <Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov>
Subject: MaineDOT Contact Form Submission: project

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The following message was submitted from the MainedOT contact form.

Date: Wednesday, 22-Mar-2023 13:41:20 EDT
Name: Nathaniel Bonzagni
Phone:
Email: bonzinathaniel@gmail.com

Topic: project

Comments:

I live within the 10 mile radius of the proposed Merrymeeting Bay trail, and would like to put forth my support for the project

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Thursday, March 30, 2023 7:04:15 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Thursday, 30-Mar-2023 18:44:19 EDT
Name: Patricia Barber
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 3018326766
Email: rugbyvet88@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Now is not the time to be thinking about pulling up railroad infrastructure. In response to trail advocates who say "I'd support trains if there was a plan, but I see no plan"- well, there is a plan. Many plans. The Maine 131st Legislature is showing unprecedented interest and excitement in returning rail use- both passenger and freight- back to the people of Maine. There are over a dozen train-based bills being presented this session- covering every corner of the state. Rail lines that have not been used for decades are returning to use and turning profits for investors, businesses, and towns. All this is documented in the current Maine State Rail Plan. Rail-based technology innovations are happening at lightning speed. Rail infrastructure and rolling stock manufacturing are returning to the United States due to supportive legislative policies. As these technologies advance, the cost of rail infrastructure and equipment will decrease and the total estimates for return of trains will be lower in the future. I think we can all attest to the fact that doing things cheaply and quickly is never in the long run the best way to do something. There appears to be more than adequate funds in the newly formed Active Transportation Dept for Rail With Trail. Let's get this right and invest in our State Owned Rail Corridors for both trains and people for now and for the future.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 5:14:27 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Wednesday, 15-Mar-2023 17:03:28 EDT
Name: Bruce Snider
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2073226232
Email: bdeansnider@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am strongly in favor of trail use for the Lower Road Rail corridor. Providing that use while preserving the potential for rail use in the future would be ideal, assuming the two could coexist, and that the cost of parallel use is not prohibitive. But if the choice is between trail now vs. potential rail later, I support trail now. This would be a huge resource and benefit for those living nearby, as well as an important link in an eventual statewide, interconnected trail network.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 2:19:26 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Wednesday, 15-Mar-2023 14:12:23 EDT
Name: Patrick Conlon
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: paddymike2@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I support the creation of the Merrymeeting Trail. Trails/multi use paths, are becoming more and more popular in Maine and all over the country. The more the merrier!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, March 10, 2023 12:37:46 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Friday, 10-Mar-2023 12:31:11 EST
Name: Steve Hall
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-356-5786
Email: ridehills@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I would like to state my support for the proposed Merrymeeting Trail System to run from Gardiner to Brunswick. This would be a tremendous asset to both those communities as well as many surrounding areas. It would be a tremendous boost for everyone's physical well being as well as a great social environment. I am also sure it would be a substantial financial benefit to the towns and businesses along the route. I truly hopes this project moves forward.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, March 10, 2023 12:02:45 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Friday, 10-Mar-2023 11:56:31 EST
Name: Deborah Blood
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-530-0429
Email: djblood@icloud.com

Topic:

Comments:

I a writing in strong support of the proposed MerryMeeting Trail that would link the Kennebec Rail Trail to the Androscoggin River Bicycle and Pedestrian Path in Brunswick. I am from Hallowell and have been walking the Kennebec Trail for years. It would be wonderful to extend and create a longer trail for longer walks and bicycling. This Trail has been very good for my health and was one of the reasons I chose to move to Hallowell. Please support that great idea!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 11:26:17 AM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Monday, 06-Mar-2023 11:17:14 EST
Name: Clare Marron
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2075124679
Email: clare@monkitree.com

Topic:

Comments:

As a business owner in downtown Gardiner, I would like to express my support for the rail trail that will connect Gardiner to Brunswick. In the Spring, Summer and Fall, I see many customers who travel from Augusta and Hallowell on the rail trail. Extending in the opposite direction would bring additional customers to our downtown and create a more dynamic regional recreation area.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, March 3, 2023 8:50:38 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Friday, 03-Mar-2023 20:45:07 EST
Name: Fred Cole
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 6197082532
Email: fgcole49@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

The rail trail would pass about 40 feet from our house. There are no facilities, such as public restrooms, within miles of our house. Weâ€™re not interested in providing these services. I would much prefer a local passenger train passing by several times a day. Fix the tracks and run trains.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, March 3, 2023 10:45:30 AM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Friday, 03-Mar-2023 10:34:01 EST
Name: Luca Uggeri
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2072038001
Email: luca@caymanmojo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hi, I am writing to express my support for converting the existing, un-used railroad along the Kennebec river to a walking, cycling and cross-country skiing trail connecting the coast to the Capitol and beyond.

I believe that such a trail would improve quality of life for all residents, attract tourism and provide economic development opportunities.

I am aware of the concerns about a future revival of train service on the Kennebec corridor. I am a strong supporter of train travel, but I believe that a commuter train will not be possible until the political will to subsidize public transport can be galvanized. Not likely in the current environment.

In the meantime a deal can be struck with the owner to the effect that the trail will be reverted to a train track if the conditions change.

Until then let us convert that eye sore to a useful resource.

Thank you for your consideration,

Luca

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, March 31, 2023 12:44:32 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Friday, 31-Mar-2023 12:40:38 EDT
Name: Peter Cole
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-406-4324
Email: PCole473@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Bike trails are great for recreation.

Rails provide economic benefits through decreased traffic and increased mobility. Protect the rail right of way for the rail service for which it was designed- and if there is a way to safely add a bike trail nearby that is fine.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [Tony Donovan](#)
To: [Phil Goff](#)
Cc: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: RUAC Economic Impacts
Date: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 12:39:18 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi

I will seek to find some time to put these comment's in the web site public comments. But before you present the economic impacts please consider:

The costs estimates must consider Return on Investment.

And train station locations

Your economic impact report must show a Cost and Benefit Analysis meaning not just the costs of a train station but also the benefits of new development, housing, services and businesses at those stations.

The inflated costs being used by the commenter today (\$500 million!) are not realistic and you should have said so. Otherwise it is clear that this RUAC process, as I noted in my comment's is not presenting all the required data for an informed decision.

As it appears you forgot, at the last RUAC you indicated economic returns of \$118 /day per trail user included snowmobile and ATV. With the caveat, but not amount, that it would be less of they were not allowed.

There was a discussion asking if electric trains even existed. You could have replied yes. And you might have referenced the electric train my organization presented at the last RUAC.

In case you forgot.

<https://youtu.be/TSjAozf2r3g>

I trust my criticism of your work is accepted for the situation we are in. I know all about VHB and the light rail and other passenger rail projects VHB has done and is doing nationally.

In this case however, maybe due to the medot scope of services in your contract, - in the case of your work on these RUACs VHB is all trails.

Again it is unfortunate vhb is the recipient of our criticism. But that goes with the job.

Have a nice day

--

Anthony J. Donovan, Director
Maine Rail Transit Coalition

84 Middle St. Portland, Me. 04101
(207) 329-6732 Mobile
Mailto: MElikesRail@Gmail.com

| *[Train Time](#)*

From: [Howard, Nathan](#)
To: [patricia barber](#)
Subject: RE: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Thursday, April 6, 2023 7:07:00 AM

Patty -

The RWT estimates do not include upgrades for the restoration of rail service.

Nate

Nathan Howard
Director, Rail Transportation
MaineDOT, Planning
Division of Freight and Business Logistics
(207) 624-3042

-----Original Message-----

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov <Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 26, 2023 3:10 PM
To: Howard, Nathan <Nathan.Howard@maine.gov>
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The following message was submitted from your MaineDOT website contact form .

Date: Sunday, 26-Mar-2023 15:04:09 EDT
Name: Patricia Barber
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 3018326766
Email: rugbyvet88@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

To MDOT,

A question on the Lower Rd RUAC agenda that was posted regarding the VHB Cost Estimates. Does the RWT estimate listed include upgrades to the railroad tracks? Or in other words, is there an estimate for building the trail beside the tracks but not including any upgrades to the rail infrastructure.

Also can you post the public comments for January and February for the Lower Rd RUAC.

Thank you, Patty Barber

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [Howard, Nathan](#)
To: [Tom Reeves](#)
Subject: RE: Lower Road, March 29, 2023 , Questions for VHB, Public Comments
Date: Thursday, April 6, 2023 11:19:00 AM

Tom –

Please refer to the document entitled “MaineDOT Response to Questions from Jeremy Cluchey (PDF)” for answers to similar questions.

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/ruac/lowerroad/docs/MaineDOT%20Response%20to%20Questions%20from%20Jeremy%20Cluchey.pdf>

Thanks

Nate

From: Tom Reeves <Tom.reeves@twc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 8:43 AM
To: Howard, Nathan <Nathan.Howard@maine.gov>
Subject: Lower Road, March 29, 2023 , Questions for VHB, Public Comments

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Nate,

Below are some questions that would provide useful information for the Lower Road Railroad Use Advisory Council to have.

1) The Bangor Propensity Study estimates monthly ridership ranges from a low of 5,150 to a high of 7,250. On a daily basis the estimated ridership would range from 172 to 242 passengers. What would be the daily ridership range for the Lower Road from Augusta to Brunswick?

2) What would be the range of annual operating costs for

passenger rail service from Brunswick to Augusta?

3) VHB in 2019 indicated that the cost for railroad rolling stock ranged from \$75-95 million for commuter service between Portland and Lewiston/Auburn. Would the rolling stock cost range for the Lower Road be similar and what would the estimates be in 2023?

4) From Brunswick to Augusta is enhanced transit or bus service a more viable option than passenger rail service?

An article in the Sun Journal on March 27, 2019 provided the following concerning Portland to Lewiston/Auburn:

“A proposed commuter rail service to connect the Twin Cities to Portland would likely cost between \$200 and \$300 million, depending on which service scenario is selected, according to an engineering consultant.

Trains would cost between \$75 and \$95 million, and annual operating and maintenance costs would fall between \$15 million and \$20 million, said Natasha Velickovic of the engineering firm VHB.

She said the annual costs for the project would be offset by rider revenue, “but I haven’t seen a service yet that has entirely paid for itself, so this would require some level of subsidy.”

The cost of a ticket would likely be between \$6 and \$10, Velickovic said.”

[Passenger rail service between Lewiston-Auburn and Portland could cost \\$300 million - Lewiston Sun Journal](#)

Thanks,

Tom