

***Brewer Connects: Improving Local and Regional Mobility Project***  
**Maine Department of Transportation**

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)  
FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program  
Funding Opportunity Number: DTOS59-26-RA-BUILD

# PROJECT READINESS

## **PROJECT READINESS**

### **Planning and Constructability**

MaineDOT will be able to begin Project construction well in advance of the obligation deadline of September 30, 2030, however, the Department will not begin work prior to execution of an obligation agreement. Upon notification of a BUILD grant award, MaineDOT will update all public documentation, including the state's transportation improvement plan, to include all components of the Project. The Project is consistent with the goals set forth in *Working to Move Maine: MaineDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan, March 2023*, which include: Safe Travel, a Well-Managed System, a Vibrant Economy/Quality of Life, Environmental Sustainability, and Equitable Access.<sup>23</sup> These goals are also detailed in the *Maine State Active Transportation Plan, March 2023*.<sup>24</sup> The primary Project study report, *City of Brewer Village Partnership Initiative Study, Final Report, February 2025*, Chapter 6, Recommendations, details the extensive analysis of various possible construction alternatives that was undertaken, including analysis of the selected option.<sup>25</sup> Right-of-way (ROW) determinations will be completed as part of preliminary engineering, which will begin in Summer of 2026 and be completed by the end of 2027. MaineDOT does not anticipate right-of-way (ROW) acquisition will be required since Project components consist of street, sidewalk, crosswalk, multi-use pathway, and signage improvements or construction all within existing rights of way.

### **Programmatic Agreements**

MaineDOT will utilize the NEPA Assignment Program (Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program) to innovatively accelerate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and permitting measures. This program formally assigns the Federal Highway Administration's NEPA responsibilities to a state department of transportation. Through the program, MaineDOT has assumed responsibility from FHWA for all classes of NEPA (Categorical Exclusions, Environmental Assessments, and Environmental Impact Statements) and also assumes responsibility for environmental laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and interagency consultation in Maine. The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for the Project will be carried out by MaineDOT pursuant to either:

- 23 U.S.C. 326 and Memorandum of Understanding executed by FHWA and MaineDOT dated October 9, 2024
- 23 U.S.C. 327 and Memorandum of Understanding executed by FHWA and MaineDOT dated January 30, 2026

Maine is the 9<sup>th</sup> state in the nation to receive NEPA Assignment Program approval from the Federal government.

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<sup>23</sup> *Working to Move Maine: MaineDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan, March 2023*, page 10, <https://uploads.mainedotpima.com/300823a7-ddcf-4ccc-9ca9-53d6425d1c4c.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> *Maine State Active Transportation Plan, March 2023*, page 62, [https://www.maine.gov/dot/sites/maine.gov.dot/files/inline-files/AT%20Plan\\_RUAC\\_2\\_22\\_23.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dot/sites/maine.gov.dot/files/inline-files/AT%20Plan_RUAC_2_22_23.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> *City of Brewer Village Partnership Initiative Study, Final Report, February 2025*, page 59, <https://www.maine.gov/dot/about/funding/grants/build>

## Proposed Schedule

Project Milestone	Begin Date	Completion Date
Project Kickoff	June 2026	June 2026
Preliminary Engineering	July 2026	July 2027
NEPA	July 2027	July 2028
Obtain Permits/Approvals	July 2027	May 2029
STIP/TIP Inclusion	January 2026	January 2028
Final Design	August 2027	March 2028
ROW Acquisition	March 2028	June 2029
Anticipated Finalization of Grant Agreement	N/A	July 2029
Anticipated Obligation of Grant Funds	N/A	July 2029
Construction	November 2029	November 2032

The Project phases that comprise this BUILD application consist of Construction Engineering and Construction. The above dates are contingent on the date of signed grant agreement and may adjust as needed. The Project kickoff date is also the MaineDOT internal kickoff date.

### NEPA and Permitting

MaineDOT recognizes that transportation infrastructure can exist while simultaneously assuring the sustainability of environmental habitats and ecosystems. The Department exercises stewardship over natural resources and transportation infrastructure when examining aspects of a proposed transportation project.

MaineDOT is applying an innovative means with respect to NEPA and permitting for this Project through Programmatic Agreements to ensure timely and consistent reviews and accelerate project delivery. MaineDOT and various other state and Federal departments have executed agreements to expeditiously and thoroughly review environmental impacts from projects.

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MaineDOT will take advantage of the following up-to-date agreements, where applicable, to streamline the environmental review and approval process:

1. Programmatic Agreement among Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Maine State Historic Preservation Officer, and Maine Department of Transportation Regarding Implementation of the Federal Aid Highway and Federal Transit Programs in Maine
2. Cooperative Agreement between U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), FHWA and the MaineDOT for State Transportation Reviews by the USFWS in Maine
3. Programmatic Agreement for the State of Maine concerning identification of listed and proposed species and designation of non-federal representative under the Federal Endangered Species Act between FHWA, Maine Division USACE, and MaineDOT
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5. Memorandum of Agreement for Stormwater Management Between the MaineDOT, MTA and Maine Department of Environmental Protection
6. Memorandum of Agreement between United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District and MaineDOT for Expediting Permit Application Evaluations under Section 214 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, as amended, and Section 139(j) of Title 23, United States Code, Assistance to Affected State and Federal Agencies, July 2022.

#### Floodway/Floodplains

The Project will not require work in a designated floodway or floodplain.

#### **Public Outreach and Project Support**

As a Village Partnership Initiative, residents and community stakeholders have been included in numerous public outreach efforts about the Project. MaineDOT and the City will continue seeking community feedback during all Project lifecycle stages, including the NEPA environmental review. NEPA-related public involvement will be managed in accordance with the *MaineDOT Public Involvement Plan* and the *MaineDOT NEPA Public Involvement Plan*.<sup>26</sup> MaineDOT utilizes a Virtual Public Involvement platform to present project information on demand to stakeholders.<sup>27</sup> Through this web-based platform, stakeholders can view Project details, provide feedback, and access traditional contact methods for sharing input, such as the mailing address, email address, and phone number of the project manager.

Creation of the study document that contains the final selected Project components, *City of Brewer Village Partnership Initiative Study, Final Report, February 2025*, included extensive public engagement.<sup>28</sup> The study team held two public meetings, engaged the public in roundtable

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<sup>26</sup> MaineDOT Public Involvement: <https://www.maine.gov/dot/programs-services/environmental-efforts/nepa/public-involvement>

<sup>27</sup> Active Meeting Presentations - MaineDOT Public Involvement: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/415913f8cfcf4fc5a5cc3039a8fe6dd4>

<sup>28</sup> *City of Brewer Village Partnership Initiative Study, Final Report, February 2025*, <https://www.maine.gov/dot/about/funding/grants/build>

discussions, and conducted a map-based community survey using a platform called Social Pinpoint, allowing users to provide geographically specific feedback electronically. Representatives from BACTS also attended the Riverwalk Festival in June 2025 to solicit Project feedback. The Project team will continue to evaluate additional formats and techniques for public involvement based on the potential for social, economic, and environmental impacts. MaineDOT will ensure that any public meeting notices are posted at municipal buildings and public libraries to solicit comments from individuals who may not have access to the internet.

Numerous letters of support accompany the application. The Project has received the support of a diverse group of elected officials and stakeholders who understand the significant benefits it will create. MaineDOT will post all support letters on the Department website at <https://www.maine.gov/dot/about/funding/grants/build>. Additional letters will be posted to the website as they are received.

**Risks and Mitigation**

During Project development, risks were contemplated but each has a comprehensive mitigation strategy. Coordination between Project designers, the City, and the environmental team will continue to ensure that Project goals and community needs are met while avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating potential negative environmental impacts.

Project Risks	Mitigations
Listed and potential National Register eligible historic properties within the Project area	Close coordination with MHPC and the City will be completed regarding potentially affected resources. Project design will be compatible or complement the character-defining features of NR-eligible properties.
Maintenance of Traffic	Maintaining existing high volume of traffic during construction could incur high costs and/or lengthen construction schedule. Ensure early coordination between design engineers, traffic engineers, and construction engineers to understand maintenance of traffic impacts to construction schedule and budget early in the Project design stage. Develop ways to mitigate those impacts well in advance of construction.
Stormwater Management	Develop conceptual stormwater and drainage plans early to ensure adequate right-of-way is identified to accommodate stormwater treatment measures

**Applicant Capacity Review**

MaineDOT is an accomplished, experienced, and responsible recipient of past successful TIGER, FASTLANE, INFRA, CRISI, RAISE, and BUILD grants and can be relied upon to fully fund and commence the Project well in advance of the obligation deadline and to complete the Project well in advance of the expenditure deadline without risk.

MaineDOT also adheres to Administrative and National Policy Requirements during all phases of all projects. The Department’s Federal grant and formula funds experience includes managing numerous infrastructure projects and associated Federal requirements and regulations, such as compliance with Buy America, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Davis Bacon Act, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act.

MaineDOT understands the requirement of Section 3(C)(iv) of Executive Order *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*. As part of the grant agreement phase, MaineDOT will provide documentation of past, current and ongoing compliance, as it has with previous grants.

MaineDOT follows all applicable domestic preference laws including Executive Order 14005, *Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers* (86 FR 7475) and ensures the use of products and materials produced in the United States for all infrastructure projects.

Since enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), MaineDOT has successfully managed more than \$585 million in various grant program funding.