

MIDCOAST RAILSERVICE, INC.

c/o Finger Lakes Railway Corp.

P.O. Box 1099

Geneva, New York 14456

mikesmith@fingerlakesrail.com

December 16, 2022

Mr. Nathan Moulton
Director, Rail Program
Maine Department of Transportation
24 Child Street
Augusta, ME 04333
Via Email: nathan.moulton@maine.gov

Re: Portland to Auburn Rail Line - Trail

Dear Nate:

Maine's Railway network needs to remain in place. We hope an anticipated update of the State Rail Plan recognizes that this is not the time for dramatic further change following recently revised operational responsibility for the remaining infrastructure.

The reality is that Maine's serving rail carriers essentially have been playing defense since the advent of the Interstate Highway System a half-century ago. Their ongoing challenge is overcoming an embedded "think truck" mentality perpetuated by declining rail-service dependability. Our Midcoast Railservice (MCRI) mission is aggressive – to develop rate and service parameters that divert heavy bulk traffic like cement, coal, propane, steel, stone, lumber, pipe, scrap and waste from road to rail. Current economic circumstances afford timely opportunity to do so, taking advantage of the railroads' superior manpower productivity, fuel efficiency, and safety considerations. Moreover, major industrial development projects like Louisiana Pacific's Millinocket expansion and American Steel & Aluminum's West Bath distribution center are rail-dependent keys to critically needed economic diversification.

There is no crystal ball that can provide an accurate prediction as to where Maine's railway business will be, or the required infrastructure to support that business, in the future.

CSX is a new owner and operator in the State, and they will need time to digest their purchase, plan future investments, and develop a longer-term, growth-oriented marketing and operating strategy to justify a major investment. New short-line operator MCRI similarly is early in the process of ascertaining prospects for revitalizing a nearly dormant property. Canadian Pacific (CPR) is a new "returnee" to the State, and it is clear that CPR's plans include working with its developing network of short line connections and investments in its infrastructure, i.e., the Port of Searsport.

On the passenger side, interest is growing in extending NNEPRA's Brunswick trains along the Lower Road to Augusta and Bangor. It is the logical route.

Then there is the question of where Portland's Amtrak station should be located: On the former MEC mainline or on the waterfront? If it is on the waterfront, the currently dormant SLA route is a viable alternative to access Brunswick and the Lower Road.

The railway system in Maine is a "network." Every time track is lifted, the future capability of the remaining network is diminished. For example, MCRI is examining a cement terminal for the Portland metro area in support of Dragon's Thomaston cement mill (and its 150 direct jobs). It could be located either on CSX or the SLA at Deering. MCRI (and Dragon) need the flexibility that a complete railway network can provide.

Finally, we must be realistic about the promised return of rail service to a right-of-way once the rails are lifted. At best, with a mixture of new and relay ties and rail, the cost would be \$2-million per mile, not including grade crossing installations. Further, there is nothing like the opposition mounted by homeowners who subsequently built along the former rail line. Once gone, the railway is gone forever. So much for maintaining the "network."

Maine's railways, for a potentially viable future, require the "network" left in place pending the outcome of a reversing trend of initiatives in progress.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M.V. Smith", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael V. Smith
President

STATEMENT OF F. BRUCE SLEEPER, ESQUIRE
LEGAL COUNSEL TO TRAINRIDERS NORTHEAST
REGARDING RAIL AND TRAIL USE OF THE BERLIN SUBDIVISION BETWEEN
PORTLAND, MAINE AND AUBURN, MAINE
12/21/2022

TrainRiders Northeast is a tax exempt, grass roots, citizens' organization whose purpose is to educate public officials, as well as the public at large, as to the benefits of passenger rail travel in the Northeast. I have been volunteer legal counsel to TrainRiders since shortly after its creation in 1989. TrainRiders was the primary advocacy voice for the return of passenger rail to Maine, which, in 2001, resulted in the commencement of Amtrak's Downeaster service between Portland and Boston. In 1990, I wrote the original version of the "Passenger Rail Service Act" and a political action committee formed by TrainRiders then gathered the signatures of approximately 90,000 registered Maine voters petitioning the Maine Legislature to adopt that Act, which required the Maine Department of Transportation ("MDOT") to spend at least \$40 million to return passenger rail service to Maine. In 1991, that is exactly what the Legislature did, with the Act becoming the first citizen initiated bill to ever be adopted by the Maine Legislature without advance voter approval. In 1995, I helped write legislation that amended that Act to create the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority ("NNEPRA"). Later in that same year, then-Governor King appointed me to NNEPRA's first board of directors, where I served until 2000. Starting on January 1, 2023, I will succeed to the presidency of TrainRiders upon my retirement from most legal practice.

TrainRiders was also instrumental in obtaining the expansion of the Downeaster service north from Portland, to Freeport and Brunswick in 2012. Currently, it provides volunteer hosts at some of the Downeaster station stops, and now awaits the return of the on board Downeaster host service it provided from its inaugural run in 2001 through the onset of COVID in 2020. TrainRiders continues to work with various parties, both public and private, in supporting the Downeaster service, as well as in further developing passenger rail service in Maine and elsewhere in the Northeast.

The rail line between Portland and Auburn formerly owned by the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad (the "SLR Line") and now by the State of Maine must be preserved in a manner that will realistically permit future rail use of that line when and if that otherwise is desirable. The removal of track and ballast from that line will not achieve that result and, so, any such removal to permit trail use of the line should not occur. TrainRiders would support properly constructed and spaced rail with trail use of the line, as well as its preservation solely for rail use.

The reasons for this are many:

1. Whether the State funded its purchase of the SLR Line in whole or in part by the proceeds of bonds sales by the State or by using other funding sources is not clear to TrainRiders. Maine voters, however, would have had to approve any such bond, and it appears that in each instance where approval was obtained for bond funding of a State purchase of a rail line purchase the question presented to voters stated that the bond funds would be used to promote rail, and not trail, use of the line. Any General Fund money used to help purchase the SLR Line would have been a line item in a budget bill approved by the Maine Legislature, and this line item would have indicated that these funds were to be used for rail, and not trail purposes. Therefore, the effective ability of the SLR Line to continue to be used for rail purposes is a basic premise of that funding and that purchase, and any deviation from this would constitute a failure to keep faith to those voters or the Maine Legislature.

2. The Maine Legislature has determined that “a viable and efficient rail transportation system is necessary to the economic well-being of the State” and that “the State must take active steps to protect and promote rail transportation in order to further the general welfare”. 23 M.R.S. § 7102. Consistent with these findings, the legislation authorizing the creation of this Advisory Council explicitly states that any non-rail use of the SLR Line must be interim in nature and preserve the corridor for future rail use as provided for in 23 M.R.S. § 7107. See 23 M.R.S. § 75(1). At the very least, this puts a heavy burden on those who advocate for the removal of rail, ballast and other infrastructure from a State-owned rail corridor to unquestionably demonstrate that this removal will not interfere with future rail use of the line.

3. Proponents for removal of the rail, ballast, signals, and other infrastructure on the SLR Line to make way for its use as a trail now quickly agree that the trail can be removed and replaced by new rail, ballast, signals, and related items for future rail use of that Line. This, however, ignores reality. For many years, federal law has provided a mechanism for rail banking in which rail ballast and other infrastructure is removed from a rail line and replaced by a trail, with the same legal requirement that it be held in readiness for trail removal if that becomes necessary for future rail use. Although thousands of miles of rail line have been banked under this program, probably less than 100 miles has ever again been reconverted to rail use. Instead, such reconversion simply becomes too expensive after the removal of rail, ballast, and other infrastructure, and this has sometimes made renewed rail use too costly to pursue even though it would otherwise have been economically or socially justified. Additionally, despite the legal right for renewal of rail activities on a rail banked lien, in some instances the outcry from trail users, NIMBY’s, and others has made reconversion politically impossible even where economics and social need might otherwise favor it. **This Council should be clear on this point: removal of rail infrastructure from the SLR Line will, as a practical matter, mean that it will never again be used as a rail line.** Therefore, unless trail only proponents can clearly and unequivocally prove that rail use of the SLR Line will never be needed can this Council, consistent with the mandates of 23 M.R.S. §§ 71(1), 7102, and 7107, approve a trail only

option here, and, indeed, this Council can only approve a rail with trail option if the trail will not interfere with possible future rail use of the Line.

4. The December 2022 final draft of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor Study (the “Draft Study”) prepared for this Council includes several deficiencies that make it an unreliable guide to any decision that this Council might make here, including the following:

- a. Appendix B to the Draft Study includes an analysis of the economic impact of trail users on the SLR Line by assuming that about 23% of those users would be non-local and that these non-local users would spend an average of \$118 for food, lodging, and equipment each day that they use the trail, resulting in spending of \$3.5-\$5.3 million annually by those users for trail related activities. See App. B at 6. That same study, however, includes only what rail passengers might spend on the train itself, resulting in spending of \$114,000 to \$130,000 annually. See App. B at 17-18, 38-39. Apparently, trail users get to eat, sleep and buy things whether or not they are on a trail, while rail passengers only do those things when on board their trains. Even if those passengers may primarily be commuters who would travel to the same destination by other means if passenger rail service was not available, still, it would only take 10 non-commuter passengers a day who spend \$100 for one day at their destination to add \$365,000 in localized spending annually to the figures used in the study. Rail passengers may also be more likely than trail users to spend multiple days at their destinations increasing the rail passenger spending benefit even more as compared to trail use.
- b. The same discrepancy between spending by trailer users and rail passengers also results in an understatement of other direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of passenger rail use, since those impacts are estimated based upon the spending by rail passengers solely while they are on the train, while those of trail users is calculated using estimated spending occurring while they are at or anywhere near the trail. See App. B at 17-18, 39-40.
- c. The analysis also projects that, as a result of passenger rail service, only 37-58 new housing units would be developed around the proposed station site in Auburn, 17-26 units at Pineland, and 85-172 units at Yarmouth. This compares to over 400 units developed close to the Brunswick station, several hundred in Saco, 250 in Dover, New Hampshire, 100 in Durham, and 100 in Exeter after the initiation of the Downeaster service. Those numbers do not include a 60 unit residential apartment building that has been approved, or an additional

40-50 units for which a proposal is now being planned, both of which will involve construction within a few hundred feet of the Freeport station. Furthermore, the 2018 Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan Transit Propensity Report (the “Propensity Report”) prepared for NNEPRA and the Maine Department of Transportation (“MDOT”) surveyed other studies, at least one of which concluded that by 2030 the extension of the Downeaster service north from Portland, through Freeport to Brunswick, with seasonal service to Rockland, would result in the construction or rehabilitation of over 42,000 housing units. See Propensity Study at 83-84. Although many of the Downeaster stations support local populations that substantially exceed those at some of the historic station stops along the SLR Line, these numbers still give a strong indication that the Draft Report has undercounted the number of new housing units that should be anticipated as a result of passenger rail service on the SLR Line.

- d. The Draft Study indicates that it will cost \$274 million to upgrade the tracks between Portland and Auburn for passenger rail service. See Draft Report at 22, App. A. A substantial portion of that (perhaps as much as \$60 million), however, would be for the cost of positive train control along the SLR Line, something that is only required if and when there are more than 6 passenger rail round trips per day utilizing that corridor. See Draft Report at 21. See also App. A at 3, 4, item 8 (Communications & Signal System Improvements).

5. As noted above, TrainRiders can support rail with trail usage of the SLR Line, but only if the trail is properly constructed and properly separated from the rail line. This separation must include fencing between the rail and the trail, as well as elimination of trail crossings over the rail line except at fully signalized, protected, and, preferably, already existing, public rail crossings. The Draft Study assumes a minimum 15-foot offset from the edge of the trail to the centerline of the tracks. See Draft Study at 26. Since a standard gauge rail line has a distance of 28.25 inches from its centerline to the inside edge of each rail, this would result in a distance of about 12 feet 7.75 inches between the inside edge of the rail nearest to the train and the edge of the trail itself. Rail cars and locomotives hang over the edge of each rail, with that overhang potentially increasing with any lateral movement of that equipment when traveling along the Line. This might decrease the offset of the trail from the side of a passing rail car or locomotive to 11.5 feet or so.

The primary concern with any such separation is the safety of trail users who would be walking along an active rail line. A second concern is to ensure that construction, maintenance and use of the trail does not undercut support for rails, ties and ballast. Finally, the trail must be far enough away from the rail to permit the use, construction, and maintenance of that line. Rail with trail separation requirements vary widely. Several

private railroads have their own guidelines for the separation required between a trail and their rail lines. CSX, for example, requires a 50-foot separation, which is not uncommon for private railroads. See Public Project Information: For Construction and Improvement Projects that May Involve the Railroad at 38 (CSX Transportation, Rev. April 2022), available at <https://www.csx.com/index.cfm/library/files/about-us/property/public-project-manual/>. Several Class I railroads, such as CSX, Norfolk Southern, and the BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad, do not permit any trails to run parallel to their rail lines within the railroad right of way. See Rails With Trails, Best Practices and Lessons Learned at 16 (Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Highway Administration, March 2020) (“Best Practices”), available at https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/2020-04/RWT_Report_Final_031620_0.pdf. Some smaller railroads require a separation of 20-50 feet between a trail and an active rail line. Id. at 17. The State of Vermont requires a separation of 11 feet between the outside rail and the edge of a trail for low density/low speed branch lines, increasing to 25 feet or more for high density/high speed lines. See Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual (Vermont Agency of Transportation, December 2002) at 6-12, 6-13, available at <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/highway/documents/publications/PedestrianandBicycleFacilityDesignManual.pdf>. New Hampshire requires a 20-foot separation distance. See Trail with Rail Design Standards (New Hampshire Department of Transportation Bureau of Rail & Transit. January 2013), available at <https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped/documents/NHDOTTrailwithRailStandards.pdf>.

Although the desired separation distance between an active rail line and a trail varies depending upon many factors, one thing is certain: almost all rails with trails (87% nationally, and 96% of those that have opened since 2000) have some sort of barrier between the rail and the trail. See Best Practices at 51. Although some barriers consist of vegetation, berms, or ditches, only a fence between the rail and the trail can provide the type of minimally acceptable protection that can prevent trail users from become witting or unwitting trespassers on an active rail line with all of the dangers that this presents.

Other design constraints are also required for the safety of trail users. This might include, for example, proper lighting, signage, and additional physical protections for those users. What might be required for a particular line must be developed as the trail is surveyed and designed.

6. Finally, this is not the time to consider ripping up the rails along the SLR Line or even rails with trails on that corridor. First, the Legislature has also directed MDOT to prepare a separate study of the potential for passenger rail use along this same Line. That study will not be completed until sometime next year at the earliest and its findings will have a substantial impact upon what should happen on the SLR Line. Second, COVID has changed transportation needs and desires. At least some part of the information and projections upon which the Draft Study is based depend upon Downeaster ridership figures

from September 2021 through August 2022. While the Downeaster is currently at about the same ridership level as it had in 2019, because of COVID, such was not the case during a large part of the period from which these figures were taken. Moreover, experience is showing that the demographics of post-COVID rail passengers differ from pre-COVID ridership, with riders now being younger and including somewhat fewer commuters than prior to the pandemic. How this will impact future ridership trends is now unknown, so giving any decision about the SLR Line the gift of time would enable all interested parties to make far a better decision than is now possible.

TrainRiders appreciates this opportunity to comment on the future of the SLR Line and would be more than happy to do whatever the Council might wish in order to help this process proceed in a knowledgeable and informed manner.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 23, 2022 6:38:00 AM

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

Date: Friday, 23-Dec-2022 06:36:01 EST
Name: Joie Grandbois
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: joiegrandbois@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Rail with trail please!!! Please! Please! We need rail between Auburn and Portland and we need safe routes for those who bike and walk so both please.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

Howard, Nathan

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2022 12:59 PM
To: Howard, Nathan
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments

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

Date: Tuesday, 27-Dec-2022 12:50:00 EST
Name: Ariel Anderson
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 5204066030
Email: ariel.anderson@maine.edu

Topic:

Comments:

I support the Casco Bay Trail Loop. My husband and I moved here from Tucson, AZ which has the Loop trail that provides 131 miles of safe biking and walking away from cars
(<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsouthernarizonaguide.com%2Fbicycle-path-the-loop%2F&data=05%7C01%7CNathan.Howard%40maine.gov%7C7182075ad5e04ab3578508dae834109c%7C413fa8ab207d4b629bcdea1a8f2f864e%7C0%7C0%7C638077607559426684%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=GA7jwIEGgAB91eYycfFyuNjSPyFMPAer1T%2FQFPsM40c%3D&reserved=0>). We absolutely love Maine, but there is limited accessible bike trails, and many routes include narrow roads along side cars. This is dangerous, and as a result we bike a lot less. I've known many people who have been hit by cars on their bikes. Unfortunately, the risk is too high when there are limited accessible bike trails. The Loop in our previous city has been an amazing community project that promotes healthy lifestyles and outdoor recreation, and it keeps the community safe.

Maine is a beautiful state that prides itself with access to outdoors. Please consider the positive impact accessible bike trails have on local communities. I would love to bike more in Maine, but feel the narrow shoulder on the roads is unfortunately a hazard to both cyclists and motorists. Accessible bike trails solve this problem, while adding more outdoor recreational opportunities for locals.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 21, 2022 9:12:21 AM

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Dec-2022 09:02:29 EST
Name: Phil Gleason
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207 831 2827
Email: pgleasonuva@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

As a long time Cumberland resident and avid cyclist, I'm all in favor of this project, whether it's trail only or trail until rail.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 20, 2022 6:22:07 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 20-Dec-2022 18:19:34 EST
Name: Elizabeth Wise
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-205-4698
Email: mainefreehealer@outlook.com

Topic:

Comments:

Rail, or rail with trail. Not just trail. It would be best to keep the line available for passenger rail.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 6:55:47 PM

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

Date: Wednesday, 14-Dec-2022 18:45:09 EST
Name: Steve Richard
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2075723080
Email: SRICHARD3080@GMAIL.COM

Topic:

Comments:

Hello, hope to be heard on my wishes for this Trail on the St Lawrence and Atlantic RR Corridor being perfect for snowmobile use to connect to other club trails and businesses.

Steve Richard

President

Moonlite Sno-Skimmers

North Yarmouth & Cumberland ME

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 12:45:44 PM

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

Date: Wednesday, 14-Dec-2022 12:28:05 EST
Name: Ed McAloney
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-650-5580
Email: emcaloney@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

The Saint Lawrence and Atlantic rail line from Portland to Yarmouth Junction to Danville would make an excellent multi-use recreational trail. Put it out to bid to remove the rails and use the proceeds to fund the rest of the project; just like Downeast.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 9:56:46 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 09:48:40 EST
Name: Jim Fitch
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-926-4936
Email: rfitch@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

I just had surgery and was unable to attend the meeting on the LA to Portland rail. Can I access information and provide thoughts on this? I feel that if we lose this commuter corridor we will suffer as the region grows.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments
Date: Friday, December 9, 2022 6:13:40 PM

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

Date: Friday, 09-Dec-2022 18:04:35 EST
Name: Blaise Dupuy
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: blaise.dupuy@mac.com

Topic:

Comments:

Please keep the rail for train service. Future train services will be essential for the Kenebec region to improve our economy and provide more transportation without adding highways.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [Edward Hanscom](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn rail corridor
Date: Monday, December 12, 2022 4:34:12 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, Nate!

I hope all is well with you and your family. The boys must be bigger than ever!

Here is a comment that I placed on the Portland-Auburn RUAC site today. I hope it's helpful. --- Ed

Legislation over the years in Maine has consistently recognized that the highest and best use of railroad corridors is for rail transportation. They were designed and built to provide a uniquely efficient mode of transportation for people and goods, a purpose for which they continue to serve and will serve far into the future. The Maine Legislature has called on MaineDOT to preserve these lines for future use, even though a line may be inactive today.

However, the Rail Until Trail option for any rail corridor, as a practical matter, is the permanent destruction of the rail corridor and contrary to the intent of state law. Trail Until Rail removes rails, ties, and ballast from the railbed, and no Maine rail corridor converted to non-rail use in this way has ever restored to rail service. The Farmington Branch, the Calais Branch, and the Madison Branch are a few of the examples.

As the history of rail line preservation in Maine has shown, the only effective way to preserve lines for future use is to leave existing tracks in place, even when temporarily converting a portion of a line to a non-railroad use. The Lower Road tracks in Augusta were covered temporarily for downtown parking, but they were reopened for use by Maine Eastern to haul freight between Augusta and Brunswick. Any non-rail use of the Portland-to-Auburn rail line must protect the railroad track structure that is in place.

The Portland-to-Auburn rail line was built as part of a mainline (the Grand Trunk) to connect the Portland area to the Lewiston-Auburn, western Maine, northern New Hampshire, and on to Montreal, Canada. As such, it was built to a high standard of design and materials. The portion between Portland and Yarmouth is located in a suburban setting, parallel with I-295 and US Route 1. The portion between Yarmouth and Auburn is located in a rural area through North Yarmouth and New Gloucester.

MaineDOT's 2010 *I-295 Corridor Study* identified the suburban part of the Portland-to-Auburn rail line as a promising commuter rail corridor that could be part of a larger strategy to reduce vehicle-miles travelled and traffic congestion on I-295. The park-and-ride lot constructed at I-295 Exit 15 in Yarmouth next to the rail line was built as part of this strategy. Use of this corridor as a commuter rail corridor to Portland from Falmouth, Yarmouth, and beyond is the most effective option for reducing vehicles-miles travelled on I-295 north of Portland.

Conversion of this corridor to a trail will have negligible value for commuting and other everyday travel purposes. The distances involved are just too long. National statistics indicate that the average walk trip is well under a mile and the average bicycle trip is less than 3 miles. Biking or walking to work along this corridor is impractical for all but the most fanatical cyclists. (I know this from more than 30 years of bicycle commuting!)

If we want to invest in walking and biking facilities that will reduce vehicle-miles traveled and

improve our health, we should look at our villages and built-up areas, where land use is dense enough to support short trips from home to village centers, schools, parks, and local businesses. These are the places where automobile travel can be converted to bicycle and pedestrian travel. Investments in sidewalks, bike lanes, and bicycle parking spots that make walking and biking safer and more convenient in these denser areas will help convert short-distance automobile trips to walking and biking trips. The added bonus of this approach is that, as we create more walkable and bikeable villages and built-up areas, they become the ideal origins and destinations for longer trips by rail and bus links that connects these areas.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 10:19:40 AM

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

Date: Thursday, 01-Dec-2022 09:57:58 EST
Name: Karin Orenstein
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: orenstein04096@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

My name is Karin Orenstein and I am a property abutter of the railroad ROW in Yarmouth. I strongly support the use of this corridor as a rail trail.

I own and live on land abutting approximately 520' of the unused railroad tracks. Adding commuter rail service on those tracks would increase unwanted noise on my quiet, wooded property and create a danger for my children and animals, as well as those belonging to families on the other side of the tracks that divide our road. By contrast, a rail trail would give my children a safe way to bike into town and to school. Currently, they must bike part of the way on North Road. When they return, I make them walk their bikes against traffic rather than cross North Road twice, as the second crossing is below a rise in the road that blocks their view of southbound traffic. My husband and I would also gladly use a rail trail. We are not serious cyclists, just recreational ones. We took our bikes this summer to Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island where we biked on and marveled at their wonderful rail-trail systems and 0-2% grade that enabled us to keep going. I also regularly hike on area trails and would use a rail trail to bike to local conserved lands with hiking trails.

Neither my husband nor I work outside the home or need regular transportation to Portland or Lewiston-Auburn. Therefore, we have a great deal to gain from a rail trail (child safety, increased opportunities for healthy recreational activity), while a commuter line will negatively impact our quiet enjoyment of our property and our family's safety. Likewise, a rail trail will increase our property value, while a commuter rail will decrease it.

I recognize that my family represents one data point. So let me share my observations about the current use of the railroad tracks. Although entry onto the railroad property is technically disallowed, the reality is that people already make use of it for recreation. I cross over the tracks to leave my property and regularly see walkers, some with dogs, making their way across the railroad ties. And in the winter, I see cross-country ski tracks. Thus, there is a built-in audience waiting for a rail trail so they can continue and increase their use of the corridor for healthy recreation. In addition, because a rail trail would be universally accessible, we can anticipate new use by seniors and by community members using wheelchairs or pushing strollers. And then there's all the bike riders, especially kids, who would prefer a direct, car-free route surrounded by woods and crossing rivers on dedicated bridges.

Taking a step further back to consider the project more broadly, a rail trail would benefit my community and match its values. Yarmouth has just completed an extensive visioning project that is part of our town's effort to draft a new comprehensive plan. During this process, following multiple meetings and efforts to collect residents' views, our consultants produced a report and draft vision statement reflecting our community's values. The first community value they recognized was, "We value the natural environment, including the numerous parks, open space preserves, rivers, and Casco Bay, and prioritize preserving and protecting these areas for enjoyment by all and as critical ecosystems." Throughout the visioning report there was mention of ensuring that residents had access to public transportation, referencing the BREEZ bus and encouraging bike use, but there was no specific mention of

rail service as a way to achieve “regional connectivity.” I don't believe there is a strong enough interest in rail service to or from Yarmouth to justify having a second train crossing through our town. Use of the CSX line for passenger trains or adding intercity bus service could satisfy the needs of longer distance commuters between L-A and Portland.

A rail trail would be consistent with the Yarmouth community's value of protecting the natural environment and promoting access to it. It would also support local small businesses such as shops and cafes that could be frequented not only by residents enjoying the rail trail but visiting cyclists who decide to take a break in Yarmouth's picturesque village. By being part of a larger rail trail system, Yarmouth could appeal to tourists in the same way that small towns along Canada's rail trails appealed to my husband and I during our summer travels.

In closing, for the reasons stated above, as a property abutter and Yarmouth community member, my family and I strongly support conversion of the corridor to a recreational trail and oppose its use for commuter rail.

Sincerely,
Karin Orenstein

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:14:42 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: Thursday, 01-Dec-2022 11:13:33 EST
Name: Kathy Potrepka
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2077990757
Email: kcp@gwi.net

Topic:

Comments:

I support the Casco Bay Trail for off road use by bicycles.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:19:41 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: Thursday, 01-Dec-2022 08:11:21 EST
Name: David Farmer
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-557-5968
Email: davidwfarmermaine@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

As a Portland resident for more than 20 years and a frequent user of Portland's amazing trails and open space, I'd like to offer my support for the Casco Bay Trail, which would connect Portland to Yarmouth.

A trail network connecting Portland to Yarmouth and the communities in between, would be a great outdoor recreation asset for our region.

I love the idea of starting in Back Cove and being able to make my way all the way to Yarmouth.

Although I've lived in Maine for more than 20 years, my hometown of Abington, Va., has redeveloped the former Virginia Creeper rail line into a trail system connecting to other towns, including Damascus, Va. The trail draws tourists, hikers and bikers from all over the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and to register my strong support for this great idea.

David Farmer

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:34:41 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: Thursday, 01-Dec-2022 11:28:47 EST
Name: Erik Sulcs
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: erik.sulcs@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

"My name is Erik Sulcs. I live in Cumberland. I strongly support the use of this corridor as a rail trail."

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 4:34:49 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, 01-Dec-2022 16:31:10 EST
Name: Russell Mawn
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 205-222-9972
Email: russ@mawn.com

Topic:

Comments:

Please support the development of the Portland to Auburn Rail Trail. Trails are a vital part of the cycling infrastructure and are low cost means of expanding travel.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 4:34:52 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, 01-Dec-2022 16:31:39 EST
Name: Ian Maines
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: ian.maines@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Gray (on the North Yarmouth line) and work in Portland. This proposed trail would give me a safe route to bike to work - something I would like to do, but currently do not feel safe doing because of the narrow shoulders on Routes 1, 9, & 231, as well as on North Road.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 4:44:49 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, 01-Dec-2022 16:12:33 EST
Name: Bruce Sherwin
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 12074155751
Email: bsherwi1@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

As I see no economic benefit for Cumberland, nor any public access within Cumberland, I do not believe this project merits any expenditure of Cumberland taxpayer receipts. Other towns have both. Either towns that have benefits, or the State of Maine, or the railroad companies should fund this project.

I am disturbed to see that our town manager is attending meetings for this project in what appears in an official capacity as chairman. My observations conclude that he is not unbiased on this issue. The town manager is paid by our town to handle the business of our town, not represent us. He should have more than enough on his plate handling current town issues, without working on future ones. Either a town councilor or a knowledgeable volunteer resident should represent the taxpayers of Cumberland on this issue.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 5:39:52 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, 01-Dec-2022 17:33:32 EST
Name: Robert wood
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: robwood717@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in North Yarmouth and own 4000 feet of frontage
I think the rail trail is a great idea for our community, I would not want to see motorized vehicles however

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 9:35:09 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, 02-Dec-2022 09:30:38 EST
Name: Lisa Kellndorfer
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 6039137566
Email: lkellndorfer@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in N Yarmouth and am in support of the trail on this abandoned rail line. It would add a lot of value to our community.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 2:10:17 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, 02-Dec-2022 14:06:46 EST
Name: March Truedsson
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2076719484
Email: march_truedsson@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Iâ€™d love to see a Portland to Auburn rail trail. I think the project would benefit Maine in a number of ways.
Thank you!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 2:25:20 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, 02-Dec-2022 14:21:23 EST
Name: Kevin Young
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2075725343
Email: kevin.v.young@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello,

I'm writing to voice my support for the proposed rail trail from Portland to Auburn. I live in North Yarmouth currently and would whole heartedly welcome the connectivity and promotion of health that an active trail corridor brings to the region. As a professional in the bicycle industry, I would love to see this mode of transportation embraced, promoted and celebrated here in my home state. There is no healthier, more sustainable, or efficient way to get around than by bike and I believe this rail trail will help to grow bicycle culture here in Maine. Thank you.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 2:30:19 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, 02-Dec-2022 14:25:12 EST
Name: Bill Richards
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2076504599
Email: rider.bill@icloud.com

Topic:

Comments:

A trail from Yarmouth to Portland would be great for commuting at least 9 months a year. Going the other way would be good for recreation. As I understand it, the corridor would still be available for a return to rail if that ever becomes necessary. I also understand there is a separate rail corridor that connects Auburn and Portland that could handle passenger trains.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 2:50:20 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, 02-Dec-2022 14:48:23 EST
Name: Colin VETTIER
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 9736528033
Email: colin.vettier@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Portland and support the creation of the Casco Bay Trail from Portland to Auburn because

- * Trail corridors allow more people to choose biking or walking for transportation and recreation.
- * Access to safe off-road places to walk and bike is good for public health and economic development for local businesses, and the communities along the trail.
- * Maine law requires any conversion of an unused rail to trail be 'interim' and preserved for future rail use. Therefore, 'trail until rail' is the best option so people can use this public space now, while long term planning for rail use continues to happen.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 3:50:19 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, 02-Dec-2022 15:45:21 EST
Name: Jeff Brookes
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2077765838
Email: jhbrookes@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello!

Please support the new pPortland to Auburn Casco Bay Trail. This is an opportunity to greatly benefit our communities.

Thank you!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 3:50:24 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, 02-Dec-2022 15:46:23 EST
Name: Peter Aten
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 6037700955
Email: peter.aten@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Portland and support the creation of the Casco Bay Trail from Portland to Auburn because

Trail corridors allow more people to choose biking or walking for transportation and recreation.
Access to safe off-road places to walk and bike is good for public health and economic development for local businesses, and the communities along the trail.
Maine law requires any conversation of an unused rail to trail be 'interim' and preserved for future rail use.
Therefore, 'trail until rail' is the best option so people can use this public space now, while long term planning for rail use continues to happen.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 4:15:22 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, 02-Dec-2022 16:09:24 EST
Name: Edward Walworth
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-782-1011
Email: ezwalworth@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

In favor of such a trail as long as the other rail line remains available for passenger rail between LA and Portland.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 6:55:29 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, 02-Dec-2022 18:48:02 EST
Name: Paul Carignan
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2073219492
Email: pbcarignan@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am in support of the development of this trail as it will diversify economic development for areas along the route.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 6:55:29 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, 02-Dec-2022 18:48:02 EST
Name: Paul Charest
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 6037235778
Email: paulocharest@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Please help to create the trail. It would be a great addition to the lifestyle of so many people in multiple communities.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 11:40:33 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, 02-Dec-2022 23:32:18 EST
Name: Wayne J Book
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 4043773914
Email: wayne.book@me.gatech.edu

Topic:

Comments:

Maine is a great state for bicycling. The state needs some great trails for riders such as myself who are there in the summer. Two years ago my biking career almost ended when a sandy spot on a trail led to a crash, concussion and Brain bleed. I will be back but I'm reluctant to ride my bike for any distances. This looks like a great solutions to me and to many other potential summer "residents" of Maine.

See you next summer,
Wayne Book

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Saturday, December 3, 2022 3:50:35 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: Saturday, 03-Dec-2022 03:42:37 EST
Name: RICHARD MARBLE
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2074916166
Email: Richardin52@hotmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Just wanted to drop you a note in support of the proposed Casco Bay Trail. I'm in Farmington, We bike all over Maine and put on 2,500 miles average per year. We would love to see this trail happen.

Thanks

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Saturday, December 3, 2022 10:10:37 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: Saturday, 03-Dec-2022 10:02:19 EST
Name: Marcel B Poulin
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2075763676
Email: marcelpoulin@masiello.com

Topic:

Comments:

I highly support the Casco Bay trail system that is being proposed. It would be a great place to ride your bike off the road and safer for everyone. I live in Lewiston and it would close to my residence.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Saturday, December 3, 2022 12:30:43 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: Saturday, 03-Dec-2022 12:24:01 EST
Name: Jason Perkins
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: jasonperkins@allagash.com

Topic:

Comments:

My family and I fully support the efforts to expand the Casco Bay Trail
This will be a great community resource, connecting towns in the area and promoting healthy living.
I can not think of a better use of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic rail corridor between Portland and Lewiston-Auburn.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 9:46:02 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 09:40:24 EST
Name: Andrea Maker
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207--7769500
Email: andreacmaker@outlook.com

Topic:

Comments:

As an avid bicyclist who lives nearly adjacent to this rail line, I strongly support its conversion to a recreational rail trail. It would provide a safer alternative to road bicycling.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 11:21:04 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 11:14:38 EST
Name: Patty Barber
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-625-4755
Email: rugbyvet88@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

To the RUAC members: Will pulling up the tracks speed up trail placement?

During the Nov 15th RUAC meeting, the question was raised to trail advocates why they preferred Interim Trail over Rail WITH Trail (RWT).

The overwhelming answer from all of them was TIME. That by pulling up the tracks the trail could be put in place sooner. That the "underutilized asset" of the rail corridor could be brought to the people quicker with an Interim Trail vote.

Actually, that is NOT the case. A vote to pull up the tracks, such as with Interim Trail, sends the case to the Joint Transportation Committee of the Maine Legislature. From there it goes to a vote in the Maine House and also the Maine Senate. Then to the Governor. From there, Federally to the FRA for approval. As those involved in the legislative process know, politics can be fickle. And if there is opposition to the decision, which there certainly is in this case, that opposition could delay the whole process even further.

Now, if no tracks are to be removed, as with Rail WITH Trail, the process can move directly into the planning stages.

Council members can move this process forward for all parties involved by voting Rail With Trail. Keeping the tracks is THE KEY to getting our trails sooner.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 4:01:09 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 15:23:42 EST
Name: Edward W. Hanscom
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 582-8182
Email: ed.hanscom@msn.com

Topic:

Comments:

To MaineDOT and the Berlin Subdivision Advisory Council Members:

During the Common Ground Fair, the weekend of Sept 23-25, 2022, the Maine Rail Group set up a table and collected signatures for support of the return of passenger trains. The focus of this petition is on extending passenger rail service from the Portland-Brunswick area to the city of Bangor, but the general support for passenger rail shown in the data collected could be applied to any proposed service to any city in Maine. Below is a summary.

Common Ground Fair Petition Signers

Home County/Location	Signers
Androscoggin	13
Aroostook	4
Cumberland	52
Franklin	4
Hancock	34
Kennebec	56
Knox	32
Lincoln	17
Oxford	5
Penobscot	63
Piscataquis	2
Sagadahoc	17
Somerset	7
Waldo	45
Washington	3
York	9
Out of State	17
Total	380

Gender

M 185
F 179

Important Points:

- It shows support for passenger rail from a wide geographic area: urban and rural areas, every county of Maine, and from out of state, too. There is statewide support for better passenger rail connectivity, both in areas currently served and those not yet served.
- It shows support for passenger rail from a wide population: from men and women equally, from all ages, from college students on up. Students from Colby, UMaine, Husson, and College of the Atlantic are represented.
- It shows support for passenger rail from a wide range of interests. The Common Ground Fair attracts people from all walks of life and all interests, not just a group of people interested in a specific transportation mode. The common thread among these people is that they see passenger rail as a valuable transportation option that should be pursued.

Over 380 people at the Fair signed the petition, and the list of signers is growing. Their voice is an important one and needs to be included in the discussions of this RUAC.

If you wish to view more petition details, please contact Maine Rail Group at mainerailgroup.org.

Sincerely, Ed Hanscom, Maine Rail Group

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 6:36:10 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 18:25:59 EST
Name: Judith Cunningham
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2073180459
Email: megramm@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Please support the Casco Bay Trail that would repurpose an unused railroad line and hook up with many of the communities in and around Portland, Auburn and Brunswick. What a great opportunity to give access to recreational bikers and walkers to exercise safely away from traffic. This will also expand the opportunity for recreational tourists to see our beautiful state away from the hub bub of busy roads. Perhaps some of the money from DHHS that is being distributed by the Mills administration can be diverted to this project. It definitely will reflect in the health and welfare of our people.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 6:41:09 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 18:34:40 EST
Name: Larry Loves nstein
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2073184620
Email: luncie2@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Please support the Casco Bay Trail that would repurpose an unused railroad line and hook up with many of the communities in and around Portland, Auburn and Brunswick. What a great opportunity to give access to recreational bikers and walkers to exercise safely away from traffic. This will also expand the opportunity for recreational tourists to see our beautiful state away from the hub bub of busy roads. This is a win win for the tourism industry in Maine!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 7:51:12 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 19:45:54 EST
Name: Susan Green
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: s.green@mac.com

Topic:

Comments:

I would love to see a Portland to Auburn multi-use trail. Maine could definitely use additional off road cycling opportunities. Please support the Casco Bay Trail!

Susan Green

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 8:51:11 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: Sunday, 04-Dec-2022 20:43:18 EST
Name: John Koons
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2074414919
Email: jdkoons@gwi.net

Topic:

Comments:

Way overdue to be seriously planning for reintroduction of passenger rail with trail where possible. There is new and exciting technology out there

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 7:31:21 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 07:28:08 EST
Name: Sam LeGeyt
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2076536904
Email: swlegeyt25@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I support the rail trail!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 7:46:20 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 07:32:18 EST
Name: Suzanne Brink
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: sbrink@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Cumberland Maine and have been an avid cyclist here for over 35 years. I strongly support the Casco Bay Trail effort. As the roads continue to become more congested with car and truck traffic; having a car-free option to safely commute to work, go for a casual ride or walk with friends becomes more important. There is a genuine community interest in getting outside and enjoying the environment. A trail network will make it much safer to do that.

Thank you.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 8:51:20 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 08:43:42 EST
Name: Sean Mahoney
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2076710845
Email: smahoney@clf.org

Topic:

Comments:

I have followed the good work of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC) formed to review the 24-mile section of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic rail corridor to determine its best use, and the feasibility of developing a rail trail. I believe that the old rail line has tremendous community value and support the trail on this abandoned rail line. Many thanks for convening this group and taking the input of the public into consideration.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 9:36:22 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 09:26:37 EST
Name: Lawrence Kovacs
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2077517296
Email: lkovacs3@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Dear Rail Use Advisory Council,

As the founding president of the Bath area chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association and an avid cyclist, I strongly support the development of the Portland to Auburn rail trail (or trail until rail). There is a demonstrated need for safe places to ride bicycles and walk in our region, and the benefits would range from improved health of citizens to economic opportunities for local businesses and municipalities. There are ample case studies demonstrating a correlation between the existence of rail trails and myriad positive outcomes for residents and visitors. I am certain this trail will see vigorous use, especially if it leads to a longer loop that could be completed over multiple days. Feel free to contact me with any questions and please, make this trail a reality.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Kovacs

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 10:26:22 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 10:21:04 EST
Name: Jeff Candura
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2073817869
Email: jcandura@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am a resident of North Yarmouth and a strong supporter of using this rail corridor as a multi-use rail trail. In the past, I served on the Board of Mahoosuc Pathways (Now Inland Woods and Trails) in Bethel. The value of a trail like this to the communities it serves -- in housing values, business growth, access to the outdoors, and the health of its citizens -- is significant. I encourage you to move forward with plans to use this corridor as a rail trail. Thank you.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 10:31:21 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 10:26:49 EST
Name: Leanne Candura
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: lcandura@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

My name is Leanne Candura and I am a resident of North Yarmouth. I strongly support using this corridor as a rail trail.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 11:51:22 AM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 10:53:43 EST
Name: Winston W Lumpkins IV
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2074081508
Email: winston.lumpkins@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council,
I want to offer comment on the Portland To Auburn rail corridor.

While I want to support a full trial conversion, I can't discount the transformational effect that having a rail link to Auburn & Lewiston could provide. A number of people I know have moved to Auburn & Lewiston from Portland, but continue to work in Portland, and endure the long & dangerous drive along 95 every day. Many of them would take a train instead if it were available.

My position is that using the 1A or 1B alignment, allowing convenient service from Lewiston to Boston, (in the May 2019 report) is the most likely outcome. The SLR should be preserved between Yarmouth & Auburn to allow for the 1B alignment.

The 2B alignment appears, to me, to be the most expensive, environmentally damaging & unlikely outcome.

Between Yarmouth & Portland a trail would provide a legitimately useful connection for both transportation & recreation. Trail, at least for the short term, should be prioritized between Yarmouth & Portland. On the other hand, I don't think the number of people using the trail from Yarmouth to Auburn is worth losing the potential rail connection, and back-roads provide a relatively safe existing connection for bicyclists.

Between Falmouth & Portland it's my understanding that there is space for rail with trail- that should be done as soon as possible, it's a short distance & genuinely useful for transportation purposes.

Sincerely,
~Winston Lumpkins IV,

East end, Portland Maine

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 12:21:24 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 12:14:10 EST
Name: Emma Scudder
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 6032195190
Email: scudder.emma@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Portland and strongly support the use of this corridor as a rail trail. This trail would have a positive impact economically for abutters and surrounding businesses. It would have a positive impact on the climate, getting more people out of their individual cars. Importantly, it would address the pressing public safety issue of increased pedestrian deaths in the state (of which Maine had one of the largest increases in the country) and provide a safe way for people to bike and walk off of the roadways.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 1:31:28 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 13:24:13 EST
Name: Aaron Hamlen
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: ahamlen@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I support any rail to trail project in the state.
Thanks,
Aaron Hamlen

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 3:06:30 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 14:30:00 EST
Name: Jonathan Diotalevi
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: jediot@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hi, I'm writing in support of "rail and trail" for the corridor. It seems crazy the state would own this right of way and leave it only for a rail trail. It is a state owned direct connection between two major population centers.

This needs to be passenger rail, we need to be committing long term to public transportation right now. TOD's can be built around new stations. More walkable housing/ neighborhoods can be built in towns where the line will pick up passengers.

Not everyone can take advantage of a bike trail, leaving out vulnerable/disabled/older parts of the population, rendering them invisible. Bike commuting wouldn't be an option unless you live immediately adjacent, especially in winter. My fear is once this becomes only a trail it will be impossible to convert it back to rail.

Both are the best option. Bikes are needed for healthier, more efficient commuting options, while rail is needed as a fast and efficient way of moving people across the state. Both can boost tourism as a new way to get people into Portland for a visit (or wherever along the route). Both can work hand and hand in taking cars off the road. One won't do the trick.

A train doesn't necessarily need to be a big bulking Amtrak Downeaster. Light rail would be cheaper, quieter and powered by overhead wire (or battery).

Rail and Trail

Thanks,
Jon D

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 5:06:30 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 16:55:18 EST
Name: John Clark
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-712-0480
Email: jmclark995@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello,

My name is John Clark and I would like to express my support for the rail corridor as a multi-use trail until rail is feasible. Given the current cost estimates, reviving the rail line would cost a significant amount of money which would not be feasible to obtain in this current political climate. Therefore, I believe approving anything with rail is a vote to retain the status quo of the rail line not being used for anything productive. With the rise in popularity of bicycling for transportation, especially by e-bike, this corridor has the potential to provide a safe way for communities north of Portland to bicycle commute and reduce our dependence on I-295 and cars in our society. This has economic, health, and environmental benefits that will be greatly appreciated by the future generation.

Additionally, I would like to request the Council hold a public hearing regarding the Portland-Auburn rail line in Portland or a neighboring community served by METRO. I appreciate the availability of a live stream, but would have appreciated being able to give my comments in person. Holding the meeting on a Monday evening in a community only served by cars essentially shuts out the voices of residents who do not own a car and rely on bicycling or public transit. Given the significant impact the rail corridor would have on Portland, it feels like a slap in the face to hold the only public meeting 12 miles away in a community who has refused to welcome public transit in the face of a climate and housing crisis. Thank you for the work you do and I hope you consider this factor in future rail-use corridor event plans.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 6:36:31 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 18:33:42 EST
Name: Marcie Lapido
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2077474005
Email: marcie.lapido@icloud.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am in favor of the tail to trail option.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 7:51:33 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 19:34:10 EST
Name: Michael Dixon
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: michaelpdixonesq@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I support more rail, especially light rail. And I support more trails for bikes, pedestrians, skiers, wheelchairs, etc. I am disappointed to hear rail advocates and trail advocates pitted against one another to compete for limited resources that should be doubled or trebled to ensure both for all of us. We need more of both, and we need fewer roads and fewer cars. I am disappointed in the failure of state and federal leadership that has pitted rail advocates against bike-ped advocates, when, in fact, we should be promoting both solutions for so many reasons: climate, community, and health for starters. Until that degree of resources becomes available, based on my understanding of the Hobbesian choice presented to us, the better choice for now would be to support the trail-until-rail approach. I would very much welcome a cost-effective solution to pair rail and trail, but have not yet seen that presented, and so would, for now, encourage the RUAC to seize this opportunity to create a vital trail until rail + trail becomes more feasible.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 8:41:34 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 20:34:21 EST
Name: Thomas Nosal
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 4015951346
Email: thomas.nosal@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am writing to voice my support for the trail-until-rail option. My wife and I live in Portland without a car. She works in Yarmouth, and commutes on the Breez and also by bike. I hate having to worry about her safety on the days that she bikes. A pathway would bring tremendous relief to our family. Thank you for your consideration.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 8:41:34 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 20:38:02 EST
Name: Lucien A Desrochers
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 12074001106
Email: lucienadesrochers@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I would like to see Rail to Trail option.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 8:46:34 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 20:31:23 EST
Name: Julianna Lord
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-210-8959
Email: julianna.lord@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I live in Portland and commute to Tyler Technologies in Yarmouth. I don't have a car and my bike commute would be much safer and more pleasant if the pathway was constructed. Car free or car lite living would be much easier for many more people with more infrastructure like this.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 8:46:35 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 18:15:58 EST
Name: Lauri Boxer-Macomber
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: (207) 615-1926
Email: LBoxer@krz.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am a resident of Cumberland County and an attorney who practices bicycle and pedestrian law throughout the state of Maine. Tonight, I write to support the development of the Casco Bay Trail from Portland to Auburn and to encourage the development of a passenger rail system along the Western rail corridor. Like other supporters of the Casco Bay Trail option, I underscore that this decision is not just about what to do with a trail. It is a decision that will impact public health, economic development, and the environment. In addition to needing passenger railways, and safe roadways, people need safe and separated infrastructure that they can use for active transportation, exercise, play, mental decompression, and travel. The more the MDOT can get people of all ages and abilities on trails, the more people we will have in our state who see themselves as bicyclists and walkers. This, in turn, will mean having more drivers on our roadways who are situationally aware and sensitive to the needs of bicyclists and walkers. As we also know, more situationally aware drivers on roadways generally translates to fewer traffic tragedies. The numbers of such tragedies in Maine and across the US are at an all-time high, and many Maine families, health care entities, law enforcement departments and others are being drained and taxed (literally and mentally) by this public health problem on our roadways. Well-built trails that slowly change attitudes, while building better, safer and more sustainable communities, is one solid way to address this public health crisis on our roadways. Thanks for your time and considering my comments. If you would like to discuss them further, please do not hesitate to reach out.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 10:41:35 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 22:32:15 EST
Name: Joseph Kumiszczca
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: joe@kumiszczca.com

Topic:

Comments:

My name is Joe Kumiszczca I am a resident of Cumberland and an abutter to the proposed trail. I state my opposition to this proposal as a supporter of rail and economic development and as an abutter to the trail. Whether a trail or trail/rail line is considered; motorized vehicles must not be allowed.

The highest and best use of the corridor is for rail travel. Use for non-rail activities is not in the public's interest. The town of Cumberland would receive no economic benefit from this trail as there are no public access points to the area. The only impact to Cumberland residents would be negative and a hardship to abutters. Current parking for Cumberland's existing trails have been targeted by vandals and auto break-ins are frequently being reported. The fact that parking areas are needed for walking/biking trails is a bit odd to begin with. I do not believe that this proposed trail would be used for commuting; the plan itself identifies that peak use would be in October and May; it would not meet the infrastructure needs to be a permanent solution for commuters. A rail corridor is really the only option, rail can run 12 months per year and parking areas for rail stations are very secure. Rail will bring economic benefit. It would be poor public policy and a waste of c

urrent and future public funds to pay for a trail instead of supporting an expansion of rail.

- Maine has a housing crisis that requires immediate attention and action. We need more public transit options and routes to other areas of the region to help alleviate Portland's severe housing shortage.
- While Cumberland isn't poised to have a rail station, stops in other communities can generate new economic activity to reduce residential property taxes and create new jobs. Cumberland would be better served economically if the trail would be connected to Route 1 or Route 88 at Johnson Road in Falmouth and Tuttle Road in Cumberland.
- Rail is the most equitable option; trail use is intended for a small percentage of the population. Rail would be used by a wider population base and would be an excellent option for Maine's aging demographic.
- Rail offers the best environmental option to connect suburban and metropolitan areas in the region.
- Investing in existing rail lines is the most cost effective way to reduce vehicle miles driven and emissions. Rail can succeed in removing vehicles from the roads.
- The demolition of Union Station is the perfect example of what happens when rail is underestimated. We can't afford to remove this rail line and repeat that mistake.
- Our area does not lack recreational opportunities we do suffer from a lack of transportation alternatives.

I've lived on Middle Road for 37 years and I already feel like I live on a bike trail. Beverage bottles, chocolate bar wrappers, and other debris are disposed of on the side of the road requiring constant attention. I have witnessed bike riders relieving themselves on our property. The current users are not what I would call environmentally conscious, and this seems to be supported in surveys of bike/hike trails.

The current Advisory Council is comprised of bureaucrats and partial non-profits. There is not one citizen resident on the committee. Aside from Shirley Storey-King, a Cumberland town councilor and abutter who is not on the committee, I have heard no information from this group about the project. Abutters I have talked to in Falmouth are

even less aware than I of this project. The fact that this group has appeared to take the position of keeping abutters out-of-the-loop makes me believe that much is being hidden from the community. From what I have seen from other similar rail/trail groups they have been counseled to establish direct communication with abutters, but most often fail to do so. I do not believe that this council has an impartial view of this project.

There are many flaws in published reports and studies regarding the benefits of trails like this proposed trail. Most of the reports are single-source templated and neglect to report on the longer term effects of trails.

The Lynfield Rail Trail has taken a strange look at measuring how trails are related to property values. They are quick to mention the increase of property values along trails. Unfortunately the increase seems to only apply to trails with scenic spaces. The boast is that scenic trails can have properties assessed by local governments at a higher level thus increasing property tax revenues. They discount out-of-hand any surveys done of abutters at other trail projects; they claim the abutters' surveys offer no details and call the surveys biased.

The Seattle Times has reported extensively about the Burke-Gilman Trail (which was used by the Lynfield Rail Trail to promote their line). Some of the findings:

- Values of the properties bordering the Burke-Gilman trail only increased 26 percent between 1978 and 1988, while the average properties in King County went up 325 percent. Between 1988 and 1997, the properties bordering the Burke-Gilman Trail only increased 99 percent while the average assessment increased on other properties in the region by 140 percent.
- The slower growth of assessed property value along the Burke-Gilman Trail has cost the city and county taxpayers these past 20 years \$50 million a year in assessed value. This information directly contradicts the report from the Lynfield Rail Trail boosters.
- The Seattle Police Department (SPD) testified "There are higher rates of theft and vandalism along the Burke-Gilman Trail." Sgt. Hume (SPD) also testified at the hearing that the area along the Burke-Gilman Trail experienced a higher crime rate than other comparable neighborhoods.
- In 1991, King County and Seattle had to institute 24-hour police bicycle patrols along the Burke-Gilman Trail
- A quick search of The Seattle Times reports multiple murders and attempted murders along the trail, numerous sexual exposure incidents, multiple rapes, body-dumping cases, numerous violent thefts, vandalism, and scrapes between property owners and bikers.

Other trails referenced in similar studies show glowing reports after the initial development but crime and unauthorized uses have become more prevalent. Surveys done of residents in towns with existing trails distort the results as they combine data from abutters and users. The surveys typically do not give the number of responses from abutters. One example done by americantrails.org indicates a survey of about 1600 responses in Schenectady, New York. The real, unreported, numbers show that more than two-thirds of abutters complained about: lack of privacy, litter, illegal motorized vehicles, disruptive noise, loitering, trespassing, unleashed pets, discourteous users, vandalism, burglary, and harassment. The truth of the report is obscured by the unethical manner of comingling user and abutter data. Many reports also claim "The number of respondents and response rate are unclear." It is apparent that most all surveys and reports are biased by trail advocates, and partisan paid consultants in favor of building recreational trails which benefit few.

Motorized vehicles are regular visitors on trails that outlaw them. Homeless encampments are new features, and more frequent physical assaults are reported on existing trails. Negative reports seem to be suppressed by communities that promote the trails as beneficial. Local governments and "Friends of Trails" groups gloss over any bad press coverage. Police coverage on the trail will be non-existent; local municipalities lack the staffing.

The Advisory Council needs to realize that family safety, privacy, and property values are valid and critical issues regarding the proposed trail. Please perform the due diligence to uncover the facts regarding extensive trail lines.

I reiterate my opening statement that the highest and best use of the corridor is for rail travel. Non-rail use is not in the public's interest.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 10:46:35 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 22:32:15 EST
Name: Stephen Barr
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2072324463
Email: Stephen.Barr@spectrumhcp.com

Topic:

Comments:

I was at your public hearing at the Greely high school center for the arts this evening.

First, thank you so much for your preparation, and the information you shared at the meeting. Between your presentation, the questions from the audience, I learned a lot.

I am more convinced than ever, that a state of the art Rail to trail is the best choice. Invest the funds in infrastructure for rail with the adjoining existing line with CSX. While the decision is complex, and there are a lot of moving parts, it seems silly to invest more in a railway adjacent to a functioning railway, which would be more cost-effective to invest that money in.

I am for a Rail to Trail choice for the retired St Lawrence tail from Auburn to Portland.

Stephen J Barr MD
North Yarmouth ME

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 10:51:35 PM

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

Date: Monday, 05-Dec-2022 22:48:36 EST
Name: Debbie Poliquin
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207 754 1846
Email: debbie_poliquin@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

I'm from Lewiston and I support the rail trail. I attended tonight's meeting but didn't speak in public. The line to speak was very long! Thanks for what you are doing!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 5:56:44 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 05:52:07 EST
Name: Janet Rae Jorgensen
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 510.301.3863
Email: Sunrae88@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

We need more safe bike access for our families as one more way to enjoy this beautiful land we call home.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:06:45 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 06:57:35 EST
Name: Deb Myers
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2078389425
Email: debanmyers@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello,

I was not able to attend the meeting last night regarding the Casco Bay Trail so I am sending this to express my wholehearted support for this project. It's a fantastic opportunity to provide miles of beautiful trails for exercise, enjoying the outdoors, as well providing an alternate way to travel between local cities.

Thanks for your consideration,
Deb

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:56:46 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 07:45:16 EST
Name: Drew Cheney
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: dcheney1@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

I fully support the idea of a recreational trail from Portland to Auburn. As for rail, I am not in favor of restoring it at this time because the potential traffic would not justify the cost.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 10:06:45 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 09:59:22 EST
Name: Emily Sampson
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2078371987
Email: egworth@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello! My name is Emily Sampson and I live in Durham. I think this would be an incredible investment in our communities and Iâ€™m so hopeful it happens!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 10:41:48 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 10:33:07 EST
Name: Brian Duggan
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 860-885-8929
Email: brianduggan93@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am in favor of this project moving forward. I am an avid cyclist in the Greater Portland area and would utilize this trail system regularly if it existed.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@Maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 4:21:55 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 16:20:11 EST
Name: Shirley Storey-King
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2074151128
Email: sstoreyking@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

6 December 2022

Dear Rail Use Advisory Council Members:

Thank you for taking public comment last night, though I can't tell you how disappointed I was in Council attendance. Only seven of you were actually present. How can you take the temperature of the public if you're not present? You were not able to see who clapped for certain points, and who clapped for other points, nor who did not clap at all.

I would like to reiterate how deeply flawed this entire process has been, the most concerning being the lack of landowner participation in the process. You may or may not have abutter support, especially in the lesser traveled outlying areas, but you could have benefitted by their questions. Dale Storey asked an excellent question last night: what are you going to do when you need to widen 295, one of the most high volume crash areas in the state? In the summer, there is a crash in Yarmouth, Cumberland or Falmouth every Friday night. Abutters know this because the noise from the highway is diminished, so it is a nice night to sit outside. In Cumberland, you can't expand east because of ledge and topography, and there is not enough space between the rail corridor and highway to add additional lanes. Nor is there enough land in the median for expansion.

Early in the process, Casco Bay Trail Alliance, the well-organized promoter of this corridor said there could be approximately a half a million users a year, making the CBT the most traveled section of the Eastern Trail. They've since taken this information off their website, which is telling. It was propaganda they must have rethought. Since most use will occur from May to October, 25% of the users being tourists, that's more than 2500 people a day traveling very close to homes in Cumberland and Falmouth. Even at half those estimates, that volume is unacceptable to our way of life. The abutters in Cumberland live in a rural residential area, not urban or suburban.

CBT also advocates for commuter rail on the CSX line. I don't think I need to remind you CSX is a privately owned rail, and valid arguments exist about putting commuters and freight on the same line.

Next, you need to reread the report more carefully, paying attention to the small print. With regards to the economic projection of the trail, the fine print indicates that number will be reduced by 25% if snowmobiles aren't allowed. What are the chances snowmobiles are going to be allowed? The honest answer is nil.

Another major consideration you have overlooked are the environmental impacts. While a trail could conceivably reduce carbon emissions (so could an electric train), what about the damage to wildlife habitats? There are deer, herons(summer),turkeys, rabbits, and a bobcat currently residing on my property. They are cohabitating on several abutting acres with cows and a horse. The corridor has also hosted moose and bear and is home to many species of

birds. They won't stay with that amount of human scent in the air. In addition, Chenery Brook that runs adjacent to the trail through Cumberland, flows unencumbered into Casco Bay. Humans, even the most well-intended, produce pollution—from microtrash to human waste.

Another concern with the information presented is that maintenance costs were included, but those costs do not appear to include public safety expenses. Right now, my home cannot be accessed by anyone without a relative/neighbor seeing something. With thousands of people traveling behind my house, comes the potential for increased crime, the least of which is trespass. I fear vandalism and robbery. The CBT supporters promote positive impacts, but gloss over these concerns. If there are transients camped along the trail, as happens in many other locations, then cyclists are going to avoid the more urban areas. In Ohio for example, there are wonderful trails that go along the old canals and rail corridors from Akron to Cleveland. However, people avoid the part of the trail that goes through downtown Akron out of fear for safety.

You have heard support for both rail and trail. How about consideration and support for abutting landowners?

I have further concerns directly related to Cumberland. Why should Cumberland invest any dollars in this project, even maintenance, when it does not provide connectivity to any of our current public lands, of which we've preserved hundreds of acres? Secondly, why would we not instead, if we wanted safer pedestrian and bicycle traffic, invest in sidewalks in our more populated areas of town? Finally, Cumberland has more pressing concerns, like care for our seniors and educational space needs for our students to consider spending one penny on this proposal. The CBT may conceivably be a nice-to-have, but it is certainly not a need-to-have.

Finally, there would be one condition I would support if trail development is eminent, and that is for the DOT to collaborate with the PUC and CMP to insist that the proposed Brightline expansion be put underground between Greely Road and the station on Johnson Road. The rail/trail abutters own this land, not CMP, and this compromise would allow abutters full access to land they already pay taxes on. For me, that would be $\frac{2}{3}$ of an acre. Then I could plant all the trees I want so I don't have to see the thousands of users, and my privacy would be restored.

In conclusion, I request that you consider the motivation of all the RUAC members' motivations when writing your reports. The biases are significant, even in your consultants' report. I specifically asked to be appointed to the council as an abutter, but I was not selected. Bill Shane has done a terrific job, as the DOT knew he would, but he is not an elected official. The Town of Cumberland's Council support for the RUAC was with the condition that one of our councilors be selected which did not happen. Cumberland's support was not for the CBT, as has been misrepresented to you. These are facts. When it comes time to write your report, do not bow to special interests; do the right thing.

Thank you for your time and service,

Shirley Storey-King

Cc: Cumberland abutters for whom I have email
Cumberland Town Council
Representative Steve Moriarty
Senator Breen
Governor Janet Mills

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:26:58 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 19:19:29 EST
Name: Travis Pryor
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2072090595
Email: tjpryor76@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I was able to attend the public meeting in Cumberland yesterday. Thank you again for hosting and providing all of your planning information. One item that I don't think was raised was alternative options to a new bridge connecting to the Portland peninsula, at least for bike/ped use. This would be either a walkway along the water front of the former B&M Baked Bean property running under Tukey's Bridge and connecting to the existing multi-use path over Tukey's Bridge, like the connection to the eastern prom trail, or using a short portion of Veranda Street sidewalks, bike lanes etc. This could be a significant cost savings, both in terms of construction costs and in terms of reduced maintenance over the long term.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:56:57 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 19:54:17 EST
Name: Victor Langelo
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: vjlangelo@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hi. My name is Victor Langelo and I reside in Topsham. I bicycle and walk for both transportation and recreation. I'd like to point out the health benefits of the Casco Bay trail. It's well known that physical activity is important to good health. For many people, it's trails that provide a safe environment where they feel comfortable regularly engaging in physical activity.

There are many studies that document the positive economic benefits of bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Some of those studies have quantified the community health benefits. A 2005 study of the cost-benefit analysis of physical activity using bike/pedestrian trails concluded that every \$1 investment in trails yielded \$2.94 in direct medical benefit. Walking and bicycling has longevity benefits as well. An adult cyclist typically has a level of fitness equivalent to someone 10 years younger, and a life expectancy two years longer. A 2010 study comparing the health benefits of physical activity in green infrastructure vs urban environments found that exposure to forests produced lower concentrations of the stress hormone cortisol, a lower pulse rate, and lower blood pressure in test subjects.

I have experienced the benefits of bicycling over and above other physical activity. I have type 1 diabetes. While I remain active year round by walking, paddling, hiking and skiing, it's bicycling outdoors that provides the greatest benefit in managing my condition. When I bicycle regularly my sugar levels are well controlled even on days when I get little physical activity. Over the winter months my cycling is replaced by other activities of equivalent duration, yet it's much harder to maintain good sugar level control. Bicycling on the roads during the winter is far more dangerous when shoulders are covered or icy. Having more off-road trails would benefit me and others who bicycle for health. I look forward to the Casco Bay trail vision becoming a reality.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 8:47:03 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 20:40:42 EST
Name: Patricia Johnson
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: hikinurs@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am a cyclist and hiker. I fully support this effort to build the Portland to Auburn rail trail.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2022 10:07:20 AM

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

Date: Wednesday, 07-Dec-2022 10:03:06 EST
Name: Louis Christen
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: louischristen@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hi,

I live in Portland and support the creation of the Casco Bay Trail from Portland to Auburn because

Trail corridors allow more people to choose biking or walking for transportation and recreation, like myself and visitors.

Access to safe off-road places to walk and bike is good for public health and economic development for local businesses, and the communities along the trail.

Maine law requires any conversation of an unused rail to trail be 'interim' and preserved for future rail use. Therefore, 'trail until rail' is the best option so people can use this public space now, while long term planning for rail use continues to happen.

Thanks!

Lou

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2022 12:37:26 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, 07-Dec-2022 12:33:12 EST
Name: Cynthia McNinch
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-965-5080
Email: c51mcninch@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I enjoy riding my bike ðŸšŸ on those trails plus I enjoy easy hikes.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 8, 2022 6:38:12 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, 08-Dec-2022 18:13:02 EST
Name: Patty Barber
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-625-4755
Email: rugbyvet88@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

To the Portland to Auburn RUAC members

At the urging of the Council at the Dec 5th Public Comment Meeting, I read the entirety of the VHB's Draft Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor Study. I would like to add my critique/concerns of the Draft Report, by page number.

PAGE 2: "A RWT configuration adjacent to passenger trains - typically moving much faster than freight trains-can be an uncomfortable experience for trail users when a minimum of 15 feet is not provided."

This is an opinion, no reference to data is included. It is meant to discredit the 10.5 foot waver that MDOT could grant for constrained areas.

PAGE 11 and 12: "The 2019 report documents...an evaluation of the modes and vehicle technologies that were considered to support a future passenger service" and "Were rail use to resume, it would be limited to 25 mph for freight service."

This part of the report needs to be updated to reflect newer technologies- light rail has been a viable option for a while now, and the fact that this analysis completely ignores light rail renders this part of the study, and the figures resulting from such, obsolete.

PAGE 14: "..interim trail use (either TUR or RWT)..."

Although they state elsewhere in the report "Interim" means any trail placed in a state-owned rail corridor, including RWT, this RUAC has been using and accepting "Interim" to equate with TUR. Using this term as it is in the report is at odds with the term usage in RUAC discussions. It seems to be a deliberate attempt to mislead the readers. A more important distinction for this final report's purpose would be to retain the tracks (rail and RWT) or remove the tracks (TUR) because this is the decision that needs to be arrived at.

PAGE 14- the last set of bullet points supporting trails

"A strong baseline of potential...(trail) users exists along the corridor based on socio-economic metrics, area population and density, and demand...(for walking and bicycling facilities)."

*swap out (trail) for (train) and (for walking and bicycling facilities) for (commuter rail options) and you get support for rail

"...depending on level of activity by snowmobilers."

*VHB stated elsewhere in the report they did not include motorized vehicles in the study criteria, yet they did here

"Offering expanded ...(recreational) facilities...will lead to reduced health care costs."

*swap out (recreational) for (commuter rail) and you get support for rail

"Presence of ...(either TUR or RWT) has the potential to show a positive fiscal impact on residential property values along the corridor."

*swap out (either TUR or RWT) for (commuter rail options) and you get support for rail

"Passenger rail service will lead to a reduction of transportation costs (though a more robust transportation study is needed...)"

*There are many published transportation studies outlining the savings associated with taking X number of cars off the road. That fact should be part of this Transportation Consultant's report.

PAGE 21: "... achieve a minimum of Class 3 Track conditions, capable of supporting up to 60 mph passenger service."

Again, they are using outdated transit technology. This fact alone comprises a majority of their estimated costs of returning trains, leading to highly inflated final numbers.

PAGE 28: "Existing trail usage data includes non-motorized trail user counts..."

So why in heaven did VHB use motorized trail users (snowmobiles) in their economic study?

"...recorded before and during the first two years of the Covid 19 pandemic, during which time there were spikes in trail usage..."

No assumption can be made that the spike in trail usage due to Covid 19 lockdowns will remain now that the pandemic has stabilized. This is a supposition, not based on facts. Yet this number is the basis for the entire economic evaluation, leading to falsely inflated numbers.

Describing peak usage numbers for trails, yet not accounting for peak usage numbers for trains (ie college student use during school months, holiday travel, summer tourists) is a false equivalent.

"40% of peak (trail usage) in March, April and November"

Is there study data to support this? I doubt whether March in Maine will bring 40% of summer numbers; the trails will be covered in ice, snow and mud which will prohibit many people from using the trail. And I for one would not venture out on any trail in the height of November hunting season unless it was a Sunday.

PAGE 29: "estimated (trail) trips for the Berlin Subdivision Corridor peak month use 17,300 (to) 26,000...annual use 129,750 (to) 195,000."

Again, using Covid lockdown spike in trail numbers cannot be the baseline for trail use going forward. These numbers are erroneously inflated.

PAGE 33: "Demographic Patterns along the Corridor"

Isn't this paragraph supposed to be just demographic facts? Why is only trail mentioned? These facts also support trains.

"The dominant land use is residential...(although a handful of businesses reside at the South end...)"

*Isn't the South end Portland? Including the Roux Institute? That statement doesn't make sense in that context.

"Approximately 46% of the population is 45 years or older..."

*Perfect description of one of the major train user demographics

"56% over those >25 years holding a college degree"

*Perfect description of business commuter rail user demographics

"In general, these demographics are consistent with those with a high propensity to use nearby (trails)."

*swap out (trails) for (commuter rail) and the statement supports trains

This whole paragraph is a blatantly one-sided interpretation of the data toward trails

PAGE 34: "...other economic impacts (of rail service) ...are increased real estate values near station sites and along the corridor itself."

Correct. But compare the incredibly difficult chart on page 35 supporting this, versus the very easy-to-read and interpret chart for trail real estate value increases on page 38. Again, intentionally clouding train vs trail data.

PAGE 35: the chart for trains is incredibly confusing

PAGE 36: I question using 2018 data for trains. Recent circumstances that would increase support for trains include the State's Climate Change Initiatives, Federal Infrastructure monies available specifically for train corridors, the increased cost of buying and driving a car, the lack of truck drivers and the cost of diesel fuel, and the ongoing trend of younger generations to embrace mass transit to name a few.

"Passenger rail estimates...range from 210-240 passengers per day...This equates to 76,650 to 87,600 passengers annually...Based on potential spending rail passengers could generate \$114,000 to \$130,000 in economic activity."

This calculates out to less than \$1.50 per person. This is a ridiculous figure that leaves out additional discretionary spending.

"Trail user trips is anticipated to range from 130,000 to 195,000..."

Again, questioning the Covid lockdown numbers going forward and % of peak numbers off-peak, falsely inflating the end number.

"It is estimated that 23% of (trail) trips are non-local. This equates to 30,000 to 45,000 trips from out-of-towners."

Where are the same studies for out-of-town train users? They did not do one.

PAGE 37: "...the average non-local trail user spends an average of \$118 for each daily trip to the trail for food, lodging and equipment...using \$118 as a multiplier, spending by non-local trail users would range from 3.5m to 5.3m annually."

VHB is asking me to believe that trail users would bring in 5.3 million per year, but train users would only bring in \$130,000? Putting aside the overly inflated numbers used to make this calculation, this doesn't even make any logical sense.

Then in footnotes the disclaimers

1) "(This includes snowmobilers who have different needs than walker and bicyclists when visiting a trail, including gas, snowmobile maintenance, and cold weather gear)"

2) Footnote 8- "If snowmobile use is ultimately prohibited along portions of the entirety of the Berlin Subdivision corridor, average daily spending would be significantly less than \$118."

See page 28- "Existing trail usage data includes non-motorized trail user counts" The entire section on snowmobile users should be eliminated from this report. A reminder that the Eastern Trail, which was the focus of much of the presentations and discussions of this RUAC, does NOT allow snowmobile use.

"...the economic value added to the statewide economy based on interim trail ...were 3.3m to 4.9 m to the GSP (Gross State Product)"

Why is there not a GSP calculated for train use?

"Potential Health Benefits" "Encouraging 174 more adults to meet recommended CDC levels of activity helps eliminate the \$1274 of annual health care costs for each, resulting in a regional benefit of roughly \$222,000 annually."

*VHB did not include in this calculation the cost of injuries and other medical issues that were directly related to trail use.

*Where is the "Potential Health Benefit" analysis for the decrease in automobile accident injury and death that would result from commuter train use? There are multiple studies available through Transportation Departments for this figure.

*And add in the "Potential Health Benefit" of a population who, because of trains, would have better access to health care treatments, better nutrition due to expanded shopping options, and the greater ability to connect with non-local family, friends, and support groups.

Again, this is a false comparison skewed towards trail use.

PAGE 38: Now do a similar, simple chart for benefits to real estate values due to train access.

PAGE 41: "Community Input" "Supports Interim Trail" "Verbal comments 9 email 528 vs trains verbal comments 11 email 19. "

Misuse again of the Interim Trail nomenclature for the purpose of this RUAC. As stated before, these figures need to be broken down into retaining the tracks (rail and RWT) and eliminating the tracks (TUR).

Footnote 12 "although only two commentators specifically expressed support for both rail use and trail use (ie RWT), it is not clear if all others' stated support for a trail would exclude a RWT configuration as a desirable option."

This statement should not be relegated to a footnote, but be explained in the main body of the report.

**Any trail support that does not specifically state "rail until trail" needs to by default be placed in the RWT option, and associated assumption to retain the tracks. Using the TUR option as the default trail support is wrong- the TUR option has a higher burden of proof for support because it entails a more complicated series of steps to be completed. (Legislative review, Federal approval etc). whereas RWT does not. I read most of the public comments. Many people did specify TUR but almost half of them did not. Comments such as "I support a trail in this corridor", "Please make a trail happen" "A trail is a great idea" do not appear to me to support removal of the rails.

Again, a deliberate mischaracterization of facts to support TUR.

I also take issue with the widespread assumption that the privately owned CSX freight line would allow and support passenger rail. The CSX line isn't even part of this study, and no information exists that CSX has stated their approval of such. For the trail people to purposely mislead the public with this assumption is quite disingenuous.

Footnote 11 "It should be noted that ...support for an interim trail by those who submitted written comments to Maine DOT may not reflect the attitude of the broader population of people living in communities along the Berlin Subdivision Corridor."

Why wasn't there input from the broader population? Wouldn't that have been important information? I think a wider perspective of diverse populations within this corridor is a key component missing from this report.

Thank You
Patty Barber

If required, please CSpond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Sunday, December 11, 2022 7:34:41 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: Sunday, 11-Dec-2022 17:41:05 EST
Name: John
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2078725252
Email: jdkoons@gwi.net

Topic:

Comments:

Attended the Ruac mtg in Cumberland last Monday eve and impressed, not surprised by the turnout. I'm a bike guy, a trail guy and a rail guy. It is obvious that the trail types are aiming for instant gratification, in sprint mode hoping for a quick kill and getting rid of those unused rails. Rail types are presently handicapped by a nebulous future, but have a quite cogent view toward the societal benefits of rail in our future, which will be sooner than we think, especially if we aim for it rather than try to avoid it. What the trail type group is doing amounts to a "taking", of an irreplaceable public asset for use by a special interest group, and although well intentioned and thoughtful of the health of the public, it is at the expense of at least four fifths of the population who will never set foot or bike no matter the benefits. I am sorry, but it is quite obvious this particular hearing scenario is slanted from the start to the trailer's benefit without more than a glance at commuter rail's potential, especially with the new hydrogen and battery technologies now coming on line. I would be personally embarrassed and unable to sleep at night to pretend this venue is a thorough look at our future and unwise to sneak it through in this fashion. These new rail technologies are very exciting and it is so very sad to see this state and present MDOT leaders not getting all over this. I met and talked to both Nate Moulton and Bruce Van Note and they are great people trapped by some unknown force. They can do better and we deserve better. Thanks for the time. John Koons

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 12, 2022 10:44:52 AM

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

Date: Monday, 12-Dec-2022 10:39:16 EST
Name: Bruce McLaughlin
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-256-7047
Email: tmperm24@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

We need to keep the tracks and the ability to use trains for the military and national security. Moving troops, equipment, and supplies quickly and efficiently.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 12, 2022 4:30:01 PM

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

Date: Monday, 12-Dec-2022 16:25:26 EST
Name: Edward W Hanscom
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 582-8182
Email: ed.hanscom@msn.com

Topic:

Comments:

Legislation over the years in Maine has consistently recognized that the highest and best use of railroad corridors is for rail transportation. They were designed and built to provide a uniquely efficient mode of transportation for people and goods, a purpose for which they continue to serve and will serve far into the future. The Maine Legislature has called on MaineDOT to preserve these lines for future use, even though a line may be inactive today. However, the Rail Until Trail option for any rail corridor, as a practical matter, is the permanent destruction of the rail corridor and contrary to the intent of state law. Trail Until Rail removes rails, ties, and ballast from the railbed, and no Maine rail corridor converted to non-rail use in this way has ever restored to rail service. The Farmington Branch, the Calais Branch, and the Madison Branch are a few of the examples.

As the history of rail line preservation in Maine has shown, the only effective way to preserve lines for future use is to leave existing tracks in place, even when temporarily converting a portion of a line to a non-railroad use. The Lower Road tracks in Augusta were covered temporarily for downtown parking, but they were reopened for use by Maine Eastern to haul freight between Augusta and Brunswick. Any non-rail use of the Portland-to-Auburn rail line must protect the railroad track structure that is in place.

The Portland-to-Auburn rail line was built as part of a mainline (the Grand Trunk) to connect the Portland area to the Lewiston-Auburn, western Maine, northern New Hampshire, and on to Montreal, Canada. As such, it was built to a high standard of design and materials. The portion between Portland and Yarmouth is located in a suburban setting, parallel with I-295 and US Route 1. The portion between Yarmouth and Auburn is located in a rural area through North Yarmouth and New Gloucester.

MaineDOT's 2010 I-295 Corridor Study identified the suburban part of the Portland-to-Auburn rail line as a promising commuter rail corridor that could be part of a larger strategy to reduce vehicle-miles travelled and traffic congestion on I-295. The park-and-ride lot constructed at I-295 Exit 15 in Yarmouth next to the rail line was built as part of this strategy. Use of this corridor as a commuter rail corridor to Portland from Falmouth, Yarmouth, and beyond is the most effective option for reducing vehicles-miles travelled on I-295 north of Portland.

Conversion of this corridor to a trail will have negligible value for commuting and other everyday travel purposes. The distances involved are just too long. National statistics indicate that the average walk trip is well under a mile and the average bicycle trip is less than 3 miles. Biking or walking to work along this corridor is impractical for all but the most fanatical cyclists. (I know this from more than 30 years of bicycle commuting!)

If we want to invest in walking and biking facilities that will reduce vehicle-miles traveled and improve our health, we should look at our villages and built-up areas, where land use is dense enough to support short trips from home to village centers, schools, parks, and local businesses. These are the places where automobile travel can be converted to bicycle and pedestrian travel. Investments in sidewalks, bike lanes, and bicycle parking spots that make walking and biking safer and more convenient in these denser areas will help convert short-distance automobile trips to walking and biking trips. The added bonus of this approach is that, as we create more walkable and bikeable villages and built-up areas, they become the ideal origins and destinations for longer trips by rail and bus links that connects these areas.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Monday, December 12, 2022 8:25:01 PM

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

Date: Monday, 12-Dec-2022 20:19:22 EST
Name: David Baird
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 7176020357
Email: davidsbaird@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I am a resident of Pownal. I am in favor of rail AND trail system on the Auburn Portland route. I believe that a trail system would benefit many in our community. It would make it much easier to bike into Portland for work for example.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 11:35:14 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 11:20:14 EST
Name: Dan Emery
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: (207)807-3750
Email: dan@danielemery.com

Topic:

Comments:

Regarding the trail with rail option, I recently looked at the right of way by my property on the Yarmouth/North Yarmouth line, and it appears much too narrow and sloping to accommodate both without major construction and possibly property acquisition. Thank you for considering this comment and for your work in general.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 1:35:25 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 13:14:37 EST
Name: Josh Brown
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: jmbrown1@ecolab.com

Topic:

Comments:

RE: Trail on the St Lawrence and Atlantic RR Corridor -

I am writing the council to advocated for snowmobiling to be included in the accepted uses for the trail on the St Lawrence corridor from Yarmouth to Auburn. As private property is continually becoming harder and harder to access, trails such as this are critical for the continued enjoyment and economic activity snowmobiling brings to the area. Please consider allowing snowmobiling on this corridor. Thank you.

Josh Brown
Royal River Snowmobile Club
207-356-1389

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 1:45:18 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 13:43:11 EST
Name: David Gardner
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207-653-6750
Email: davegardner45@yahoo.com

Topic:

Comments:

Our snowmobile club, the Royal River Snowmobile Club, would like to be able to use the rail corridor.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 2:45:17 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 14:34:03 EST
Name: Abby Samuelson + Matt Dunlap
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2079397758
Email: abbysamuelson@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Hello. We are new to the New Gloucester community and live on Intervale Road. We are avid runners, bikers and skiers and recreating on Intervale road is just plain dangerous. While the speed limit in front of our home is 35, most travel at 60-70+mph speeds and there is very little shoulder to get off the busy road.

We are SO excited about the prospect of the Portland to Auburn trail as we believe it will enable more members of this community to be active and be active with one another. We also love the idea of our toddler daughter learning how to ride a bike and play with her friends in a safe and friendly environment that will help foster a lifetime of activity.

We have just settled in from a West Coast move and have been out of town for all of the advisory community meetings, but we would love to be involved in the effort as we look ahead. Thank you!

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 2:50:23 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 13:20:15 EST
Name: Tom Reeves
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2075838621
Email: tom.reeves@twc.com

Topic:

Comments:

Draft Berlin Sub. Rail Corridor Study

What is the estimated cost for passenger rail rolling stock?

What is the estimated annual range of cost for operating expenses?

What revenue is projected for passenger rail service? What is the estimated subsidy? What will be the source for the subsidy? What is the current subsidy for passenger service from Portland to Boston? What is the source for this subsidy? What is the current subsidy for passenger service from Portland to Brunswick? What is the source for this subsidy?

What are the current average daily on and off by station for passenger service from Brunswick to Boston?

The study notes that between L/A and Portland there would be 210-240 passengers per day. Is passenger rail service the most efficient way to carry this amount of traffic? Are there more efficient ways such as bus or some form of Uber or Lyft?

Will passenger rail service between L/A and Portland remove about 100 automobiles from the highway network?

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 7:05:26 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 18:33:28 EST
Name: Andrea de Leon
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2076716629
Email: andreajanedeleon22@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Dear Rail and Trail committee members:

I have lived on the Penney Road in New Gloucester for more than 25 years. I write in support of “trail and rail.” At 62 years old, I sincerely hope that the trail can be accomplished while I still have the ability to use it. I suspect there’s not enough demand to justify the rail right now, but the opportunity should be preserved for when that need is there. I suggest that the trail be developed in such a way that rail can be added later. If rail never makes sense, we’ll have a wonderful trail.

In the summer, pelotons of cyclists pass my house on weekend mornings—making a loop north from Portland or south from LA. Single cyclists pass at all times of day. In the fall, the cyclists are joined by roller skiers prepping for winter. At all times there are walkers, parents with strollers, and an ever-growing number of people driving way too fast for the road and endangering all other users. Beer bottles and nips litter the shoulderless roadside, proving that some motorists are likely impaired as well as speeding. And they are not always prepared to slow down for a walking family or a cyclist. As you are aware, nearly two dozen pedestrians and cyclists have died on Maine roads so far this year.

I often take my bike to South Portland or other communities where it is possible to ride through greenspace and slower roads without fear, but I no longer feel safe riding in New Gloucester. In the winter, when snow banks are high and light is low, there’s hardly a safe place to even walk in our town.

The idea of taking the train to Auburn, Portland, and beyond is also wonderful. New Gloucester is an aging town, with no services in walking distance. When the time comes to give up driving, longtime residents are often forced to move from a place they love.

Both rail and trail would make New Gloucester a healthier and better place to live.

Thank you for all that you.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 8:05:26 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 19:58:04 EST
Name: Ken Taplin
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 207/712-2814
Email: ktaplin@maine.rr.com

Topic:

Comments:

I would respectfully request that you consider allowing snow mobiles on the trails

Ken Taplin

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 8:45:28 PM

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Dec-2022 20:33:06 EST
Name: Steven Palanza
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: stevenp9@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Good Evening.

As an active member of several local snowmobile clubs, I can confirm that we are rapidly losing trails due to new construction. Please consider allowing snowmobile access on the new St. Lawrence and Atlantic RR Corridor trail. This would provide a wonderful new route to travel by snowmobile in the winter and provide economic benefit to destinations along the way - convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants, etc.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@Maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 1, 2022 8:44:39 AM

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

Date: Thursday, 01-Dec-2022 08:38:58 EST
Name: Laurie Winslow
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: lauriewin@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I want to share my support for the Casco Bay Trail. As we hear of more bicycles being hit by vehicles, our bike rides are becoming more dangerous. The Casco Bay Trail will provide both safety and beauty while bike riding. Thank you

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [Karen Herold](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn rail use
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 5:43:20 PM

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Dear Mr. Howard,

I am writing in support of developing the Portland to Auburn line as a rail trail. In my bike trips across the US, in Canada, and in England and Denmark, I have ridden many rail trails. These routes allowing mobility away from road traffic are enormously valuable for public health and enjoyment. In Maine, roads are often ill suited for cycling or walking that feels safe for most people. We would do the public a great service in establishing a Portland to Auburn rail trail.

Thank you,

Karen Herold
Cumberland, Maine

From: [michele flaherty](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Portland to Auburn trail
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 12:59:36 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.

Hello Nathan,

I am a resident of North Yarmouth who would be impacted by this trail as our property borders it. What about homeowner privacy? People's pets? I am unable to attend the meeting for my area on Dec 5th and would like my concerns heard. I am at 5 Dragon fly Ln North Yarmouth. My neighbor across the tracks on Cluff Rd is even closer to the rail and has small children and small dogs. Will maintaining our privacy be put in the homeowner? Thank you, Michele Flaherty

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:56:44 AM

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

Date: Tuesday, 06-Dec-2022 07:12:43 EST
Name: Mike Tremblay
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 5084510208
Email: mtrem225@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I'm strongly in favor of a trail until rail option! I don't believe there is enough latent demand for rail transit yet, nor will there be for quite a while.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Thursday, December 8, 2022 4:38:08 PM

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

Date: Thursday, 08-Dec-2022 16:32:21 EST
Name: Stephanie Small
Organization(if applicable):
Phone:
Email: ssmall75@hotmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

Strongly support rails to trails. Mainers (including me and my family) love safe biking routes. As a nurse practitioner, anything that increases opportunities for people to get outside and be active is a worthy investment in the health of our population.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Rail Use Advisory Council Comments
Date: Saturday, December 3, 2022 9:40:41 AM

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

Date: Saturday, 03-Dec-2022 09:34:28 EST
Name: Kim True
Organization(if applicable):
Phone: 2074002500
Email: kimandersontrue@gmail.com

Topic:

Comments:

I support the plan to convert rails to trails in the Portland-Cumberland-Auburn region. It would create a safe means for bicycle commuting, stimulate tourism and economic growth, and contribute to improving the health of the area residents.

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

From: [Stacey Caulk](#)
To: [Howard, Nathan](#)
Subject: Support for Casco Bay Trail
Date: Friday, December 2, 2022 10:03:48 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.

Dear Nathan Howard -

As a resident of North Yarmouth within walking distance of the proposed Casco Bay Trail, I'm writing to express my strong support for this trail. An off-road trail for bikers and walkers is badly needed in this area, will allow children and adults to have better access to safe biking routes without driving half an hour to the nearest bike trail, and will increase the number of individuals (myself included) who can bike to work. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Take care,

Stacey
553 Mountfort Rd, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

--

Stacey Caulk

staceyclaulk@gmail.com
207.400.0835

Joseph Kumiszczca
3 Middle Road
Cumberland, ME 04021
joe@kumiszczca.com
(207) 829-6435

December 5, 2022

Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council

My name is Joe Kumiszczca I am a resident of Cumberland and an abutter to the proposed trail. I state my opposition to this proposal as both a supporter of rail and economic development and as an abutter to the trail. Whether a trail or trail/rail line is considered; motorized vehicles must not be allowed.

The highest and best use of the corridor is for rail travel. Use for non-rail activities is not in the public's interest. The town of Cumberland would receive no economic benefit from this trail as there are no public access points to the area. The only impact to Cumberland residents would be negative and a hardship to abutters. Current parking for Cumberland's existing trails have been targeted by vandals and auto break-ins are frequently being reported. The fact that parking areas are needed for walking/biking trails is a bit odd to begin with. I do not believe that this proposed trail would be used for commuting; the plan itself identifies that peak use would be in October and May; it would not meet the infrastructure needs to be a permanent solution for commuters. A rail corridor is really the only option, rail can run 12 months per year and parking areas for rail stations are very secure. Rail will bring economic benefit. It would be poor public policy and a waste of current and future public funds to pay for a trail instead of supporting an expansion of rail.

- Maine has a housing crisis that requires immediate attention and action. We need more public transit options and routes to other areas of the region to help alleviate Portland's severe housing shortage.
- While Cumberland isn't poised to have a rail station, stops in other communities can generate new economic activity to reduce residential property taxes and create new jobs. Cumberland would be better served economically if the trail would be connected to Route 1 or Route 88 at Johnson Road in Falmouth and Tuttle Road in Cumberland.
- Rail is the most equitable option; trail use is intended for a small percentage of the population. Rail would be used by a wider population base and would be an excellent option for Maine's aging demographic.
- Rail offers the best environmental option to connect suburban and metropolitan areas in the region.
- Investing in existing rail lines is the most cost effective way to reduce vehicle miles driven and emissions. Rail can succeed in removing vehicles from the roads.

- The demolition of Union Station is the perfect example of what happens when rail is underestimated. We can't afford to remove this rail line and repeat that mistake.
- Our area does not lack recreational opportunities we do suffer from a lack of transportation alternatives.

I've lived on Middle Road for 37 years and I already feel like I live on a bike trail. Beverage bottles, chocolate bar wrappers, and other debris are disposed of on the side of the road requiring constant attention. I have witnessed bike riders relieving themselves on our property. The current users are not what I would call environmentally conscious, and this seems to be supported in surveys of bike/hike trails.

The current Advisory Council is comprised of bureaucrats and partial non-profits. There is not one citizen resident on the committee. Aside from Shirley Storey-King, a Cumberland town councilor and abutter who is not on the committee, I have heard no information from this group about the project. Abutters I have talked to in Falmouth are even less aware than I of this project. The fact that this group has appeared to take the position of keeping abutters out-of-the-loop makes me believe that much is being hidden from the community. From what I have seen from other similar rail/trail groups they have been counseled to establish direct communication with abutters, but most often fail to do so. I do not believe that this council has an impartial view of this project.

There are many flaws in published reports and studies regarding the benefits of trails like this proposed trail. Most of the reports are single-source templated and neglect to report on the longer term effects of trails.

The Lynfield Rail Trail has taken a strange look at measuring how trails are related to property values. They are quick to mention the increase of property values along trails. Unfortunately the increase seems to only apply to trails with scenic spaces. The boast is that scenic trails can have properties assessed by local governments at a higher level thus increasing property tax revenues. They discount out-of-hand any surveys done of abutters at other trail projects; they claim the abutters' surveys offer no details and call the surveys biased.

The Seattle Times has reported extensively about the Burke-Gilman Trail (which was used by the Lynfield Rail Trail to promote their line). Some of the findings:

- Values of the properties bordering the Burke-Gilman trail only increased 26 percent between 1978 and 1988, while the average properties in King County went up 325 percent. Between 1988 and 1997, the properties bordering the Burke-Gilman Trail only increased 99 percent while the average assessment increased on other properties in the region by 140 percent.
- The slower growth of assessed property value along the Burke-Gilman Trail has cost the city and county taxpayers these past 20 years \$50 million a year in assessed value. This information directly contradicts the report from the Lynfield Rail Trail boosters.
- The Seattle Police Department (SPD) testified "There are higher rates of theft and vandalism along the Burke-Gilman Trail." Sgt. Hume (SPD) also testified at the hearing that the area

along the Burke-Gilman Trail experienced a higher crime rate than other comparable neighborhoods.

- In 1991, King County and Seattle had to institute 24-hour police bicycle patrols along the Burke-Gilman Trail
- A quick search of The Seattle Times reports multiple murders and attempted murders along the trail, numerous sexual exposure incidents, multiple rapes, body-dumping cases, numerous violent thefts, vandalism, and scrapes between property owners and bikers.

Other trails referenced in similar studies show glowing reports after the initial development but crime and unauthorized uses have become more prevalent. Surveys done of residents in towns with existing trails distort the results as they combine data from abutters and users. The surveys typically do not give the number of responses from abutters. One example done by americantrails.org indicates a survey of about 1600 responses in Schenectady, New York. The real, unreported, numbers show that more than two-thirds of abutters complained about: lack of privacy, litter, illegal motorized vehicles, disruptive noise, loitering, trespassing, unleashed pets, discourteous users, vandalism, burglary, and harassment. The truth of the report is obscured by the unethical manner of comingling user and abutter data. Many reports also claim "The number of respondents and response rate are unclear." It is apparent that most all surveys and reports are biased by trail advocates, and partisan paid consultants in favor of building recreational trails which benefit few.

Motorized vehicles are regular visitors on trails that outlaw them. Homeless encampments are new features, and more frequent physical assaults are reported on existing trails. Negative reports seem to be suppressed by communities that promote the trails as beneficial. Local governments and "Friends of Trails" groups gloss over any bad press coverage. Police coverage on the trail will be non-existent; local municipalities lack the staffing.

The Advisory Council needs to realize that family safety, privacy, and property values are valid and critical issues regarding the proposed trail. Please perform the due diligence to uncover the facts regarding extensive trail lines.

I reiterate my opening statement that the highest and best use of the corridor is for rail travel. Non-rail use is not in the public's interest.

Regards,

Joseph Kumiszczka

December 5, 2022.

This is Richard Rudolph, a resident of Portland, Maine who is the chair of a national rail organization called the Rail Users' Network and a director of the Maine Rail Group which is working to build public support for restoring passenger rail service from Brunswick to Augusta over the state owned "Lower Road" rail line and then onto Waterville and Bangor.

Regarding the issue that is being discussed tonight. I support restoring the St. Lawrence Rail line for light rail service from Portland to Lewiston / Auburn. If it can be done with a walking trail that is safe to walk or bike and it isn't too expensive so be it. While there is many reasons that could be cited I will just mention two. First, is climate change the other is equity. The state needs to recognize that much more needs to be done to reduce carbon emissions besides encouraging folks to buy electric cars and to build charging stations on major highways. Many young folks and seniors can't afford to buy an electric car, nor do they want to drive. They much rather be traveling on a train. There is also a matter of social equity. Lewiston-Auburn is the second largest metropolitan area in the state and has many folks living there who could benefit if light rail service existed between L./A and Portland especially given the economic development taking place in the downtown area of Portland.

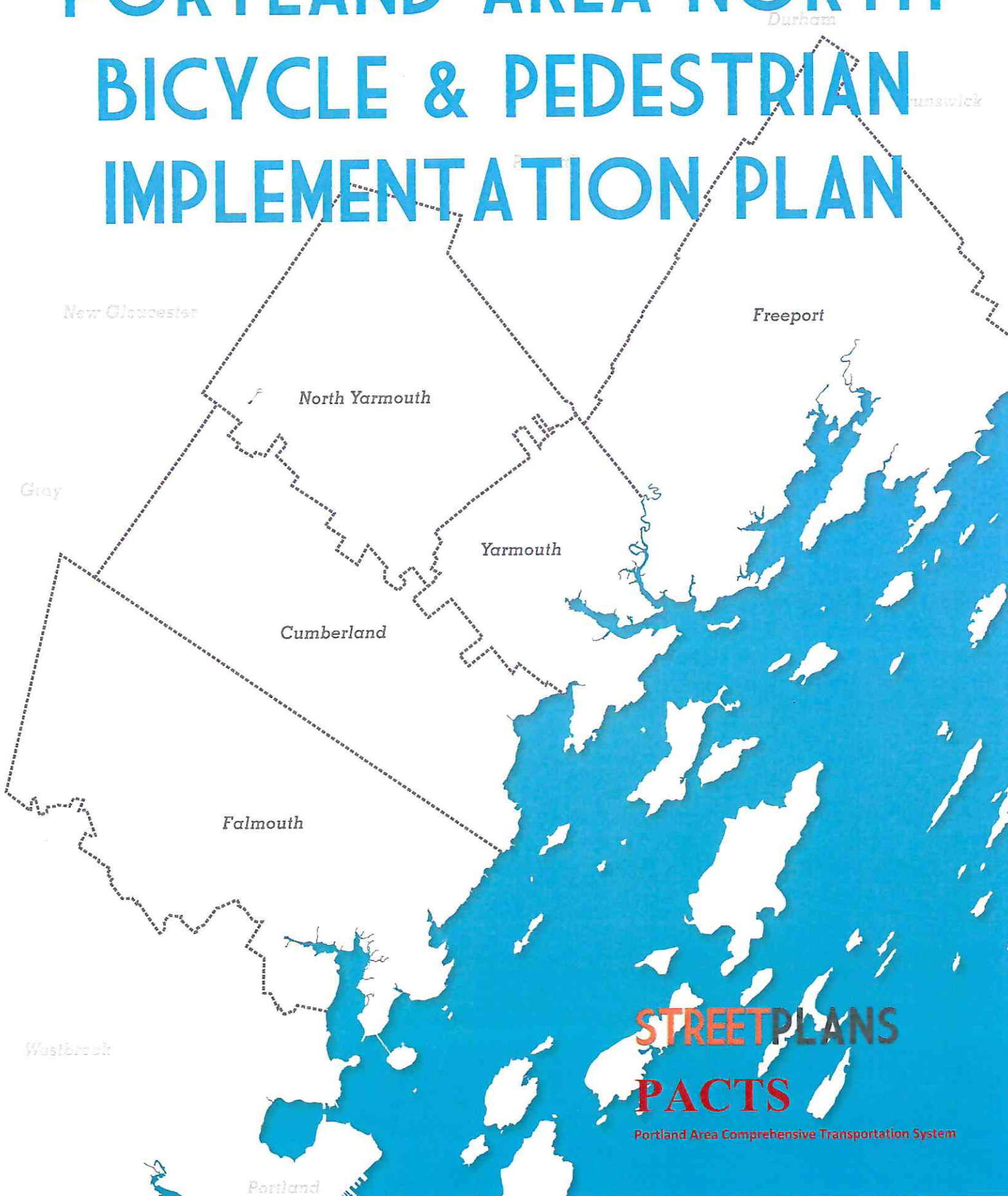
Restoring the rail line with last mile connections would also reduce the need for folks living in some of the communities north of Portland to drive to work. Instead, they would take the train to work rather than traveling on Rt. 295 or Rt. 95. In the long run, this approach would be far less expensive than adding an additional highway lane on either of the interstate roadways which costs more than than \$10 million dollars per mile to build.

In closing, I would urge MEDOT to conduct a study this fiscal year to not only identify station sites, but also to provide an actual design of how a trail would fit into the corridor that is currently under discussion.

Thank your for your time.

Richard Rudolph, Ph.D.
211 Ocean Ave., Portland, Maine.

PORTLAND AREA NORTH BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



STREETPLANS
PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town of Falmouth

Patrick Connolly, Debra Coyman, Nathan Poore, Kathy Hillman Reed, Theo Holtwijk, John Kilbride, Anne Reis, Jay Reynolds, and Bob Shafto

Town of Cumberland

Bill Shane

Town of Freeport

Donna Larson and Anne-Marie Davee

Town of North Yarmouth

Andy Walsh and Heidi Shaw Alpern

Town of Yarmouth

Vanessa Farr, Ed Ashley, Sue Ellen Bordwell, and Dan Ostrye

Bicycle Coalition of Maine

Jim Tasse

PACTS

Carl Eppich and Paul Niehoff

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“We need to walk, just as birds need to fly. We need to be around other people. We need beauty. We need contact with nature. We need not to be excluded. And we need to feel some sort of equality. A bikeway is a symbol that shows that a citizen on a \$30 bicycle is equally important as a citizen in a \$30,000 car.”

*- Enrique Penalosa
Former Mayor, Bogota, Colombia*



1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING?

Bicycle and pedestrian planning is the process of assessing and addressing the needs of a community or region in the area of roadway infrastructure, programs, and policies supporting bicycling and walking. It involves taking an inventory of existing resources, consulting with community stakeholders, and identifying strategies and tactics for making improvements. Ultimately, bicycle and pedestrian planning is about giving communities a viable transportation alternative and recreational options that encourage lively streetscapes, a healthy population, and a more livable and sustainable environment.

WHY PLAN?

After decades of declining activity and being pushed to the margins of society—and our roadways—people are increasingly interested in walking and bicycling again. This may be attributed to any number of related factors, but mostly demonstrates a growing need to accommodate walking and bicycling in our communities' physical and social fabric. Indeed, those towns and regions that accommodate this activity best are also some of our country's most healthy, economically competitive, and desirable places to live, work, and visit. Planning for increased levels of bicycling and walking therefore will help communities in the north of Portland area stay healthy and competitive, not only across the metro region, but also nationally.

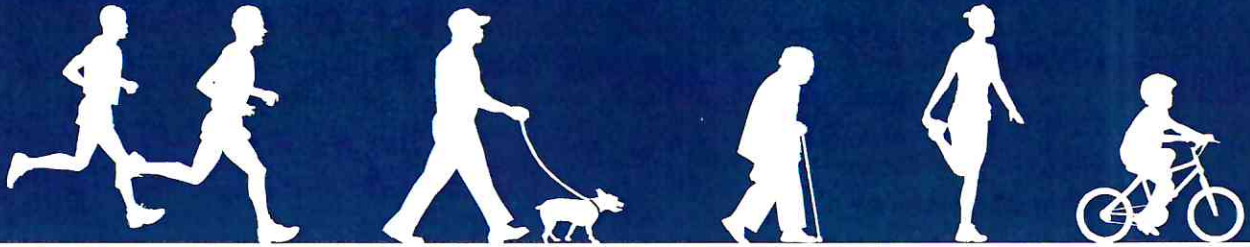
THE NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This is not a master plan. Rather, it's the result of a regional conversation about advancing bicycle and pedestrian planning, policy, and programs. It's also a response to a growing need for dialogue amongst five communities — Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, and Freeport — herein referred to as the north of Portland area. Each of the five towns are in various places with respect to bicycle and pedestrian planning, yet each have made some measure of progress. Thus, this process was created to facilitate increased collaboration to position bicycling and walking as not just outlets for recreation, but also viable forms of local and regional transportation. Ultimately, this Plan is also intended to help the five municipalities obtain implementation funding from local, regional, statewide, and even federal sources. By its very creation, this Plan posits that a collaborative approach will only increase the chances of success and help implement projects of local and regional significance. Such accomplishments could be exceedingly difficult without regional cooperation.

While adjustments will surely be made as political and economic realities change, the recommendations put forth in this Plan assume that local and state roadways should be treated not as de facto corridors of auto mobility, but as civic assets that enable accessibility for people no matter their mode of transport.

What would make bicycling and walking better in your community?

COME OUT AND TELL US!



NORTH PORTLAND AREA CONNECTIVITY WORKSHOPS

Cumberland | Falmouth | Freeport | Yarmouth | North Yarmouth

Join us for a series of public workshops to improve connectivity for people biking and walking in the north Portland area.

WORKSHOP #1:

PORTLAND NORTH BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

NOVEMBER 12TH, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Falmouth Town Hall, 271 Falmouth Road

WORKSHOP #2:

PORTLAND NORTH BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

NOVEMBER 18TH, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Yarmouth Town Hall, 200 Main Street

WORKSHOP #3:

PORTLAND NORTH BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

FINAL DRAFT PRESENTATION

DECEMBER 10TH, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Yarmouth Log Cabin, 196 Main Street

PACTS Light refreshments will be served at each Workshop.

2. PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Although the project timeline was only three months, a variety of planning methods were used to inventory the North of Portland area’s walking and bicycling infrastructure, programs, and policies. The process included a public involvement process; Town and citizen-leaders meetings; a Handlebar and Walkabout Survey; and a review of any/all existing plans, policies, and planned capital budget expenditures related to bicycling and walking. Each of these elements are described briefly below.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

A public input and communications process was developed to best guide the planning process. It was comprised of two key elements: three public workshops and a sub-regional survey distributed online and in print. The public involvement efforts was also supported by the Handlebar and Walkabout Survey process, which is both a tool for on-the-ground analysis and public involvement (see next page for more information). The input gathered from this process helped the planning team “take the temperature” of each community relative to the Plan’s goals and ultimately informed the recommendations included in this Plan.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS + STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

Three public workshops were organized and carried forward on November 12, November 18th, and December 16th. The first two workshops introduced the planning process, presented a general best practices overview, shared preliminary findings, and solicited input through question and answers and an open mapping exercise. The final meeting summarized the project team’s findings, shared draft short and long-term recommendations, and collected public feedback. Approximately 100 people attended the three meetings.

In addition to the three workshops, a digital and paper survey was created by Falmouth’s Town Planner, Theo Holtwijk. The survey was distributed amongst attendees and through outreach conducted online. The results of this survey are available in chapter 2 Findings. The insight and feedback gathered from the workshops and the survey was used to strengthen the recommendations contained in chapter 4.

TOWN LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

Between the two public workshop dates the planning team met with Town officials and advocates in each of the five towns. A







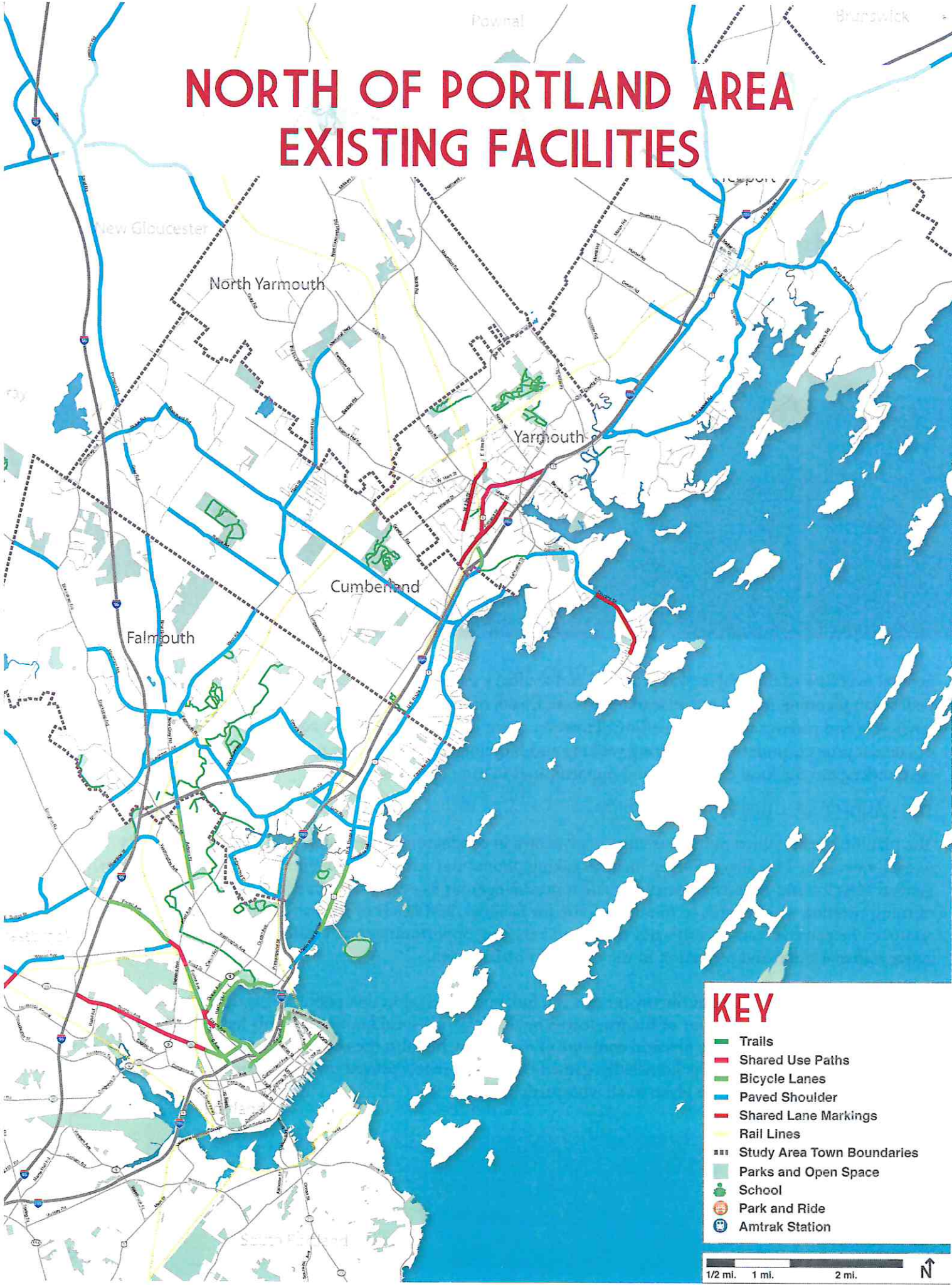
general overview of the project was provided and feedback gathered as it relates to current and future bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives. As is to be expected, each of the five towns is in a different place with respect to its bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts. However, town officials from all five communities could point to past or current projects underway bolstering walking and bicycling. Ultimately, the meetings helped the project team best understand the local challenges and opportunities in each of the five towns.

THE HANDLEBAR + WALKABOUT SURVEY

The planning team joined numerous citizen-advocates in conducting a Handlebar and Walkabout Survey in each town. The Handlebar Survey includes taking photos and written documentation of street conditions, general bicyclist and pedestrian behavior, safe routes/dangerous routes, and interactions among various modes of transportation with regards to safety, desire for facilities, and needs of the community. This user-level approach helped the team identify and understand existing opportunities and challenges inherent to advancing active transportation and recreation in the north of Portland area.

The Handlebar and Walkabout Survey process is a fun, open, and replicable public engagement tool. Citizen-stakeholders participated in four of the five towns by sharing their local knowledge. This helped the planning team get to know not only the physical contours of each town, but also the socio-political ones as well. With five towns and a short time-line, the knowledge gained from this process proved invaluable for the creation of the Plan. Special thanks should be given to all who participated.

NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA EXISTING FACILITIES



KEY

- Trails
- Shared Use Paths
- Bicycle Lanes
- Paved Shoulder
- Shared Lane Markings
- Rail Lines
- Study Area Town Boundaries
- Parks and Open Space
- School
- Park and Ride
- Amtrak Station



3. FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The public involvement process yielded a wide range of findings that were used to create the recommendations found in Chapter 4. A summary of these findings are presented herein.

ONLINE/PRINT SURVEY RESULTS

The survey, which generated 83 responses, included six basic questions about bicycling and walking. While not statistically significant, the results were helpful in providing direction for recommendations found in Chapter 4. The rest of this section displays the top five responses to the questions, and then offers a short summary.

1. WHAT TOWN DO YOU LIVE IN?

The answers clearly skewed to residents living primarily in two towns (Falmouth and Yarmouth, see graph results from question one at right). It should be noted that the Town of Freeport was conducting its own Active Living planning process (with its own survey) while this planning process was undertaken. This may explain why citizens from that town did not participate in high numbers for this overlapping effort.

2. WHAT ARE YOUR TYPICAL DESTINATIONS FOR BIKING AND WALKING?

- Portland (16)
- Freeport (10)
- Falmouth Town Center (9)
- Falmouth Town Land (7)
- Cumberland/Mackworth Island/Route 88 (6)

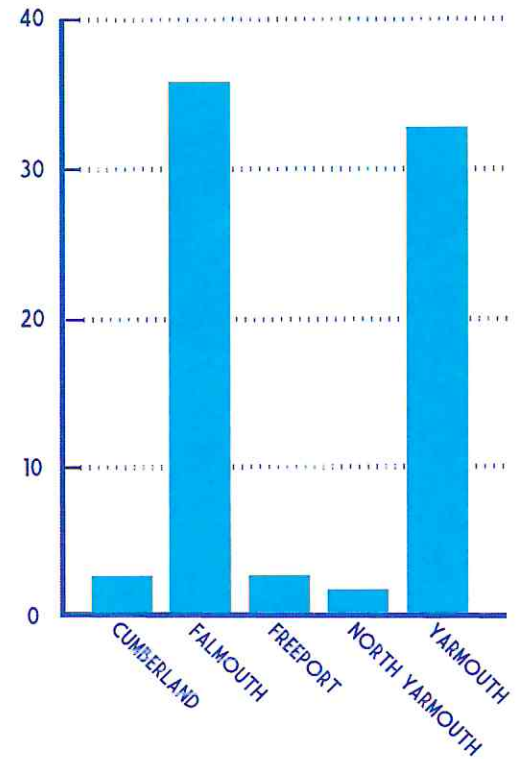
While the respondents named more than 100 destinations, the results demonstrate plenty of cross-town movement, which underscores the need for more regional collaboration in planning and implementing bicycling and walking facilities.

3. WHAT ROUTES/ROADS DO YOU TYPICALLY USE?

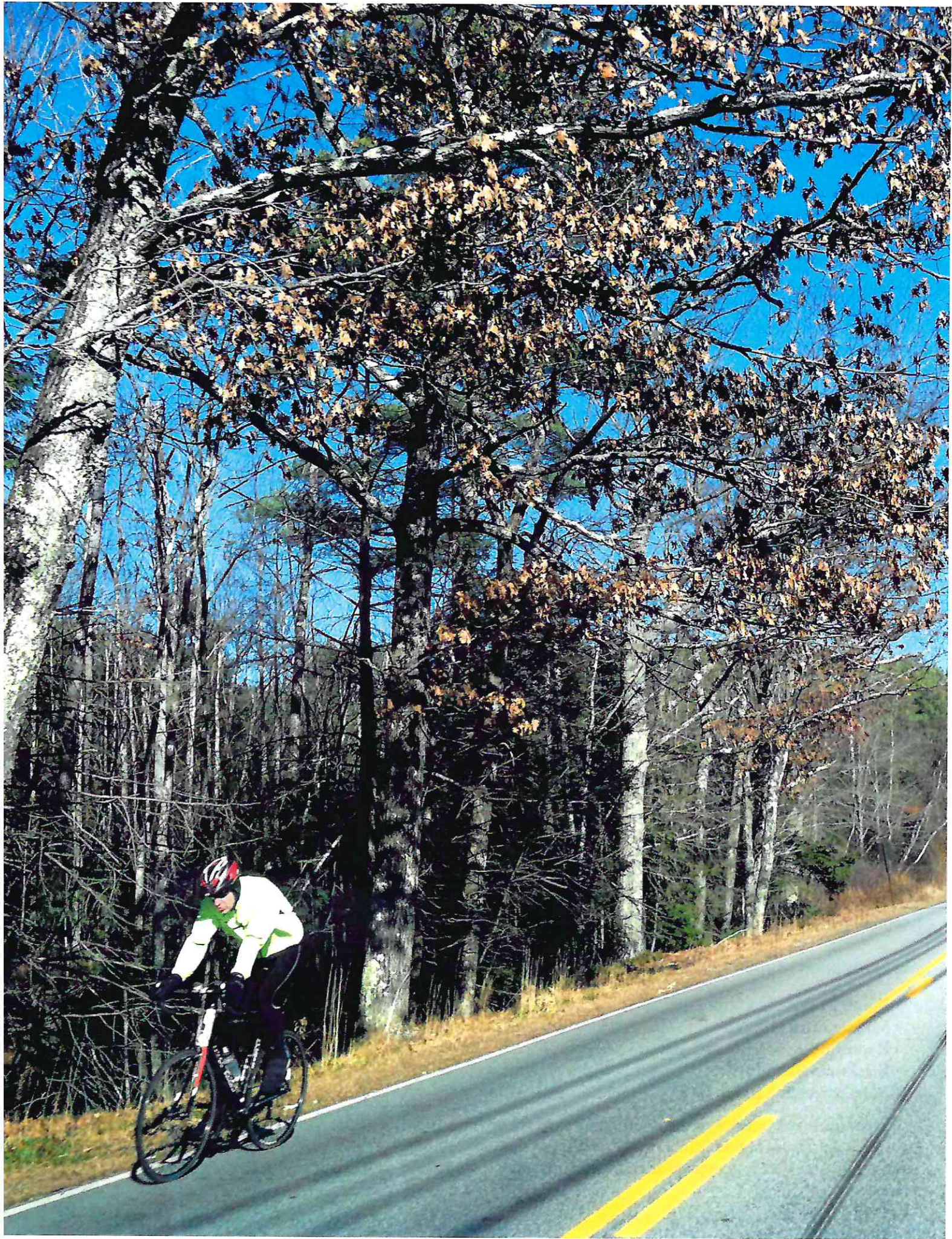
- Route 1 (21)
- Middle Road (19)
- Route 88/Forside Road/Lafayette Street (18)
- Blackstrap Road (9)
- Main Street in Yarmouth (9)

Given the characteristics of the roads mentioned above (mostly rural or suburban, higher vehicle speeds, no sidewalks) the responses above suggest that respondents are referring primarily to bicycling.

WHAT TOWN DO YOU LIVE IN?



Survey respondents named Portland as their top destination while bicycling and/or walking.



4. WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BIKE/WALK, BUT FIND IT HARD TO DO SO?

- Route 88/Forside Road/Lafayette Street (13)
- Route 1 (12)
- Route 9 (6)
- Blackstrap Road (4)
- Falmouth Road (4)

These results indicate that as frequently as some people use the Route 1 and Route 88 corridors, many respondents avoid them for what should be obvious reasons: the speed of cars and lack of pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities through part or all of the corridor.



Route 1 provides direct connections to numerous regional destinations, however the speed of motor vehicles and the lack of sidewalks makes the corridor intimidating to all but the intrepid user.

5. WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE WHILE BIKING/WALKING?

- Lack of, or too narrow shoulders (23)
- Driver hostility/poor driving behavior (14)
- Motor vehicle speed (11)
- Lack of bicycle-specific infrastructure (bike lanes or paths) (10)
- Pavement quality (7)

While the most common response has to do with infrastructure (roadway shoulders) it's clear too that education and enforcement efforts should be pursued alongside infrastructure development.



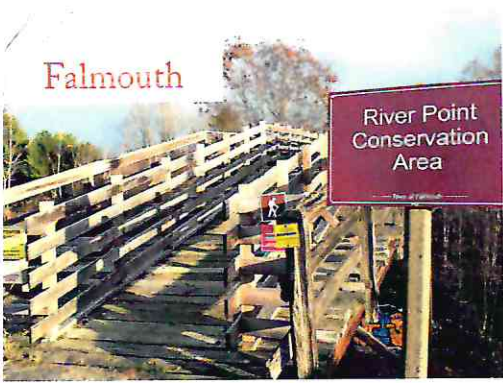
Building more bicycle and pedestrian facilities is important, but so too is educating all roadways users and enforcing laws protecting vulnerable users from unsafe behavior.

6. WHAT ARE YOUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING BIKING/WALKING?

- Education for Drivers about Sharing the Road (8)
- Improve/Widen Shoulders (8)
- Off-Road Trails (8)
- Bike Lanes (5)
- Pavement Maintenance/ Debris Removal (5)

While there was less consensus among respondents, the results indicate also demonstrate the importance of education/enforcement efforts.

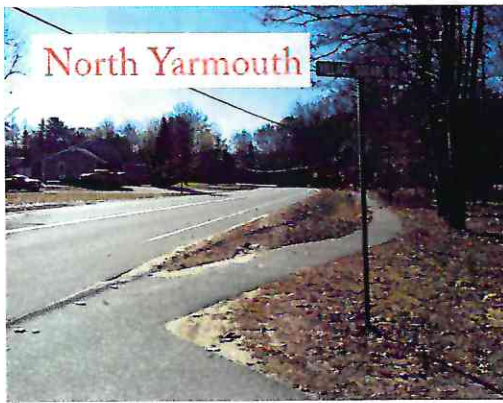
Falmouth



Cumberland



North Yarmouth



Yarmouth



Freeport



HANDLEBAR AND WALKABOUT SURVEY RESULTS

The Handlebar and Walkabout Survey revealed a range of built and natural conditions throughout the north of Portland area. Conditions for bicycling and walking within varied greatly as well. In-town locations, such as downtown Yarmouth or Freeport feature a small grid of streets, a mixture of uses, and residential neighborhoods with homes close together. In these places, sidewalks and crosswalks are common, motor vehicle speeds are relatively low, and people get around using a variety of modes - walking, bicycling, and driving are all common.

However, as one moves outward from these town center areas, the roads become a bit wider, people drive faster, and sidewalks disappear. These areas are where the most population growth has occurred and are far more suburban in nature; relatively small low-density residential subdivisions with short dead-end streets have become increasingly common. While there is nothing wrong with a few dead end streets, it does keep traffic away from the inside of neighborhoods, and in the aggregate, numerous subdivisions limit roadway connectivity and force a majority of motor vehicle trips onto a limited number of regional roads. In turn, this creates even more pressure to widen roadways, which costs a lot of money, threatens rural character, and comes at the expense of discouraging bicycling and walking.

That being said, a small number of regional roadways do include paved shoulders of a useable width for people bicycling. Yet the speed and volume of people driving intimidates all but the most intrepid of recreational cyclists, to say nothing of people who prefer to walk, jog, or engage in other physical activity along such roadways. While largely rural in nature, some of these roadways could be improved to accommodate bicycling through the implementation of wider paved shoulders, safety signs, and wayfinding at key decision points.

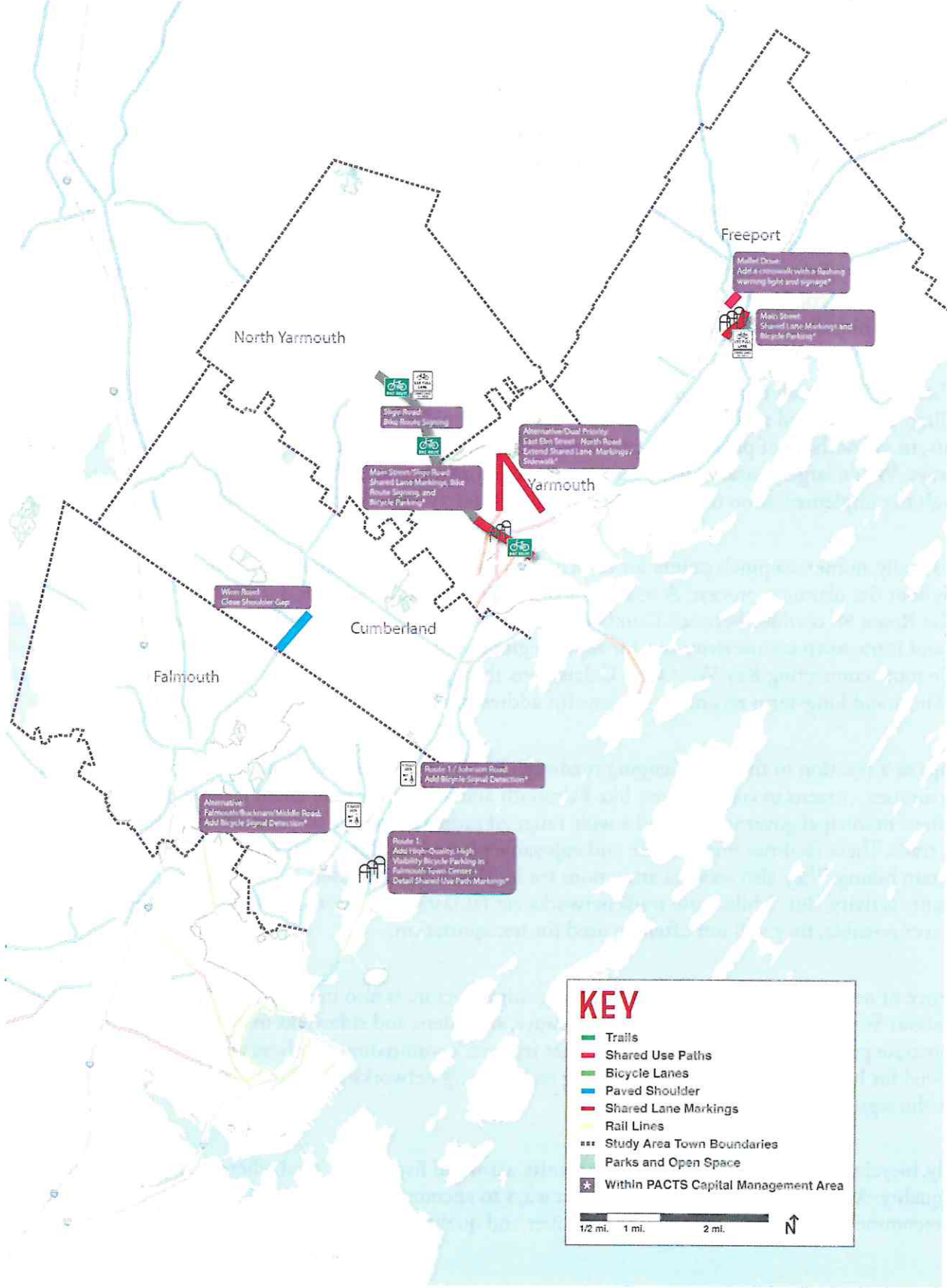
Additionally, numerous pinch points for bicycling and walking were found in the Survey and also identified throughout the planning process. A few examples include the Route 1 corridor between Yarmouth and Freeport and the Route 88 corridor between Cumberland and Yarmouth. Improving these areas is not just important for inter and intra-town connectivity, but for supra-regional connections. Indeed, the East Coast Greenway -- a bicycle route connecting Key West with Calais, runs through four of the five towns in the north of Portland area. Short and long-term recommendations for addressing these conditions are included in Chapter 4.

Perhaps as a reaction to these challenging roadway conditions, and the desire to have more recreational opportunities, citizens in communities like Falmouth and Yarmouth have taken it upon themselves to work with their municipal governments and a wide range of property owners to build a burgeoning network of off-street trails. These facilities provide safe and enjoyable places for hiking, trail running, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking. They also serve as attractions for local and regional users, which brings increased physical and economic activity. But while these trails networks are fantastic recreational amenities and should be expanded whenever possible, they will not often be used for transportation.

Evidence of new on-street bicycling and walking infrastructure is also increasingly evident. The Handlebar and Walkabout Survey revealed relatively new bikeways, shoulders, and sidewalks in all five towns. These findings demonstrate progress, however it's clear too that regional coordination for these and future projects will be beneficial for both local and regional bicycling and walking networks and should be coordinate more closely across the region.

Finally, bicycle parking was a rarely found amenity across all five towns. And where it exists it is not of a very high quality. As one of the fastest and cheapest ways to encourage cycling, chapter 4 includes a number of short-term recommendations for improving the number and quality of bicycle parking facilities.

PACTS - NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA PRIORITY PROJECTS (SHORT-TERM)



4. RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The following recommendations are the result of a regional planning process where select projects emerged as priorities for both short and long-term implementation. For the purposes of this Plan, short-term projects are those estimated to take one to three years to come to fruition. Beyond infrastructure (hardware), the short-term plan includes programs and policies, (software) like Complete Streets policies, that may be adopted relatively quickly and help municipalities develop and implement long-term planning and infrastructure initiatives that address bicycle and pedestrian needs.

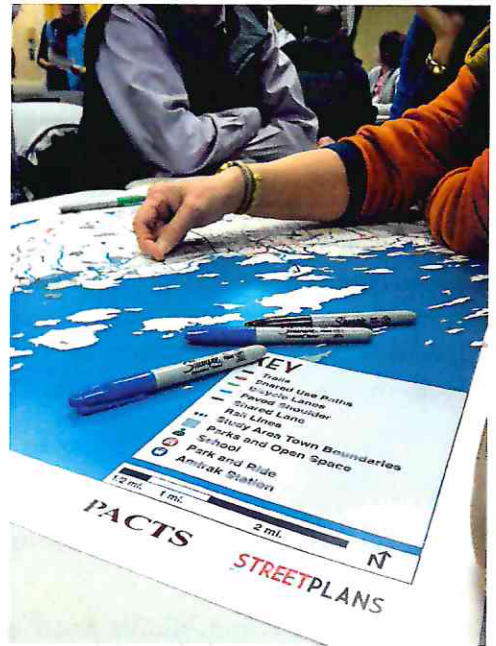
Long-term project Proposals discussed herein are considered to be those requiring a timeframe of three years or more. This indicates a greater scale/complexity/cost associated with each recommended project.

PROJECT SELECTION AND PRIORITIZATION

With so many possible projects, the planning team had to develop a basic scoring methodology and then prioritize the Plan's short and long-term recommendations. A weighted scoring system employed by PACTS was used as the basis for project selection (see the Appendix for sample point distribution). The scoring system, which was altered slightly to fit this planning project, includes 11 categories of analysis allowing for a maximum of three points to be awarded to each category. Thus, the best possible score is 33 points. The 11 categories are as follows:

1. Improves Safety
2. Provides Safe Routes to School
3. Community Destinations (including town centers)
4. Helps "Complete" the Street
5. Impact on Traffic
6. Increased Connectivity
7. Access to Transit
8. Public Input
9. Ease of Implementation
10. Order-of-Magnitude Costs
11. "Curb Appeal"

Note, the projects scored herein are only those related to physical infrastructure, not policy or programs. Finally, the recommendations are calibrated to the current political, social, economic and physical realities, yet recognize that over time these conditions will change. Thus, the prioritization of projects may change as well, and should be re-evaluated as progress is made.



Short-term and long-term recommendations that emerged from the planning process include both infrastructure and policy suggestions.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

While bicycle and pedestrian accommodations – trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, wide paved shoulders, shared lane markings (SLMs) and bicycle lanes – are currently found throughout the north of Portland area, there are very few linkages between them. These recommendations are intended to build momentum, facilitate sub-regional municipal collaboration, and to use small-scale and relatively inexpensive roadway and policy improvements to enhance connectivity locally and regionally. That being said, these recommendations are by no means comprehensive; they are what emerged as key priority projects from the North of Portland Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan process.

FALMOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Bicycle Detection at Route 1 and Johnson Road

Project Score: 16/33

Route 88, Route 1, and Middle Road are well-used cycling corridors and Johnson Road is used frequently to move between the two. It is recommended that in-pavement bicycle detection, or other types of proven detection devices, be implemented on both the east and westbound intersections of Johnson Road and Route 1. This relatively low-cost improvement may also be recommended for similar intersection locations along popular routes for cyclists, such as the convergence of Falmouth, Middle, and Bucknam Road.

Falmouth Town Center Bicycle Parking + Path Markings

Project Score: 22/33

Further south, an approximately 1-mile section of Route 1 will soon be reconstructed to include wider sidewalks, more crosswalks, and to reduce the number of points of ingress/egress for commercial businesses located along this busy thoroughfare. It is recommended that one side of Route 1 be detailed as a sidewalk and the other as a shared use path. The latter will require careful attention to designing intersection treatments and signing that alert path users and motorists to expect each other's presence.

And as this area redevelops and becomes more walkable and bikeable it is recommended that high-quality bicycle racks be implemented. This will create a highly visible, low cost amenity that encourages people to bicycle to the corridor. It is recommended that the bicycle racks be high-quality, “inverted U” or post and ring racks (see following page for an example) placed as close or closer to the destinations they serve than the nearest motor vehicle parking space.



High visibility crosswalks and shared lane markings (“SLMs”) along Yarmouth’s West Elm Street provide precedent for additional use in other “in town” locations.



The intersection of Route 1 and Johnson Road is a great candidate for a bicycle detection device.



These markings indicate the presence of in-pavement loop detectors that trigger a green light when a bicyclist places their bicycle nearby.

CUMBERLAND

Add Paved Shoulders to the Winn Road Gap.

Project Score: 19/33

Many regional roadways in Cumberland already include paved shoulders. These include a large stretch of Route 9, Tuttle Road/Blanchard Road, and most of Route 88. The Town has also expanded sidewalks along Route 9 and Tuttle Road to connect schools, neighborhoods, and the Town Hall. Additionally, the Town of Cumberland is already planning to include paved shoulders when it reconstructs Blackstrap Road, from Skillin Road to the Falmouth town line. One of the missing and remaining gaps in the town's rural roadway network is an approximate one-mile segment of Winn Road where cars move quickly and there is little room for people cycling, jogging, or walking. It is recommended that Cumberland focus on closing this gap wherever possible with a 4' paved shoulder on both sides of the road.



Winn Road is a scenic corridor used frequently by bicyclists.



This simple "inverted U" rack provides an important symbol and an amenity at Yarmouth Town Hall. More bicycle racks of this type are recommended in Yarmouth and elsewhere in the region.

YARMOUTH

Add Shared Lane Markings, Wayfinding, Bicycle Parking to Main Street.

Project Score: 25/33

In the short-term, it is recommended that advocates and municipal leaders focus on improving Main Street to include Shared Use Lane Markings (like those used on East and West Elm Street) and highly visible, high-quality bicycle parking for businesses and institutions. Connect the schools, businesses, library, town hall, and link to the Beth Condon Trail running alongside Route 1. Wayfinding signs implemented along this stretch, and across the sub-region, should be consistent with recommendations emerging from PACTS' North of Portland Area wayfinding standards and recommendations.



Sidewalks and shared lane markings would go a long way towards improving bicycling and walking along North Road.

Add Bike Route Wayfinding signs to Sligo Road.

Project Score: 19/33

The proposed signs should be consistent with those emerging from PACTS' North of Portland Area wayfinding standards.

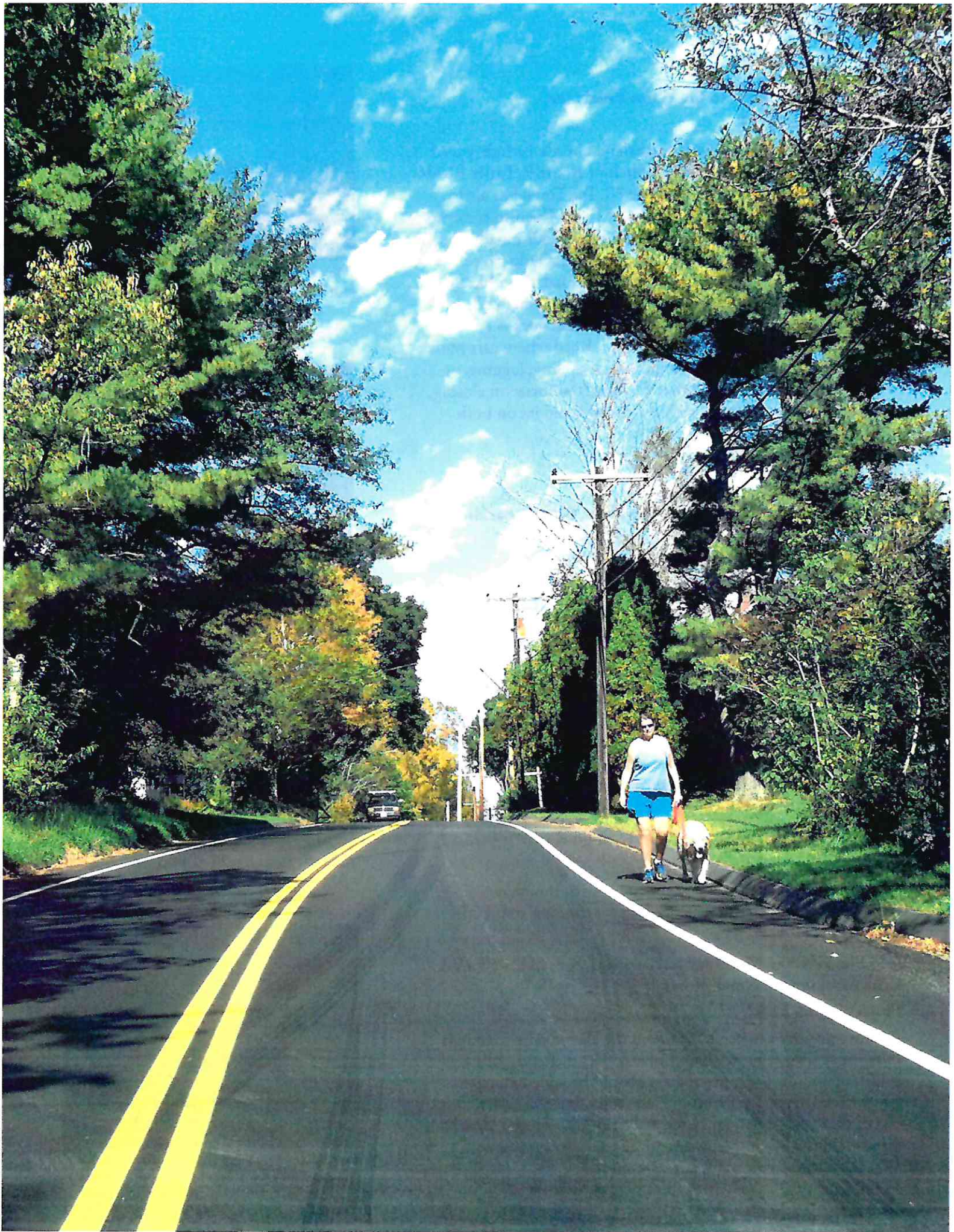
Add Shared Lane Markings to East Elm, Sidewalks/Shared Lane Markings to North Road.

Project Score: 22/33

Another priority project is to extend the shared lane markings along East Elm, from Melissa Drive to North Road. Additionally, these same markings should be added along North Road, from East Elm to East Main Street. Finally, The North Road sidewalk gap, between Melissa Drive and East Elm Streets, should be closed by extending the existing sidewalk.



Bike Route signs should be placed along Sligo Road between Route 9 and Yarmouth's W. Main Street.



NORTH YARMOUTH

Add Bicycle Route and “Bikes May Use Full Lane” Signs to Sligo Road

Project Score: 21/33

Sligo Road was named throughout the planning process as a preferred recreational route. It is recommended that the Town of North Yarmouth add “Bicycle Route” and “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” signs to this stretch of roadway, which connects Route 9 with Yarmouth’s Main Street. PACTS can provide guidance for such signs.



Closing the sidewalk gap between Melissa Drive and East Elm will provide better connectivity from this area of Yarmouth to downtown, parks, playgrounds, and playing fields.

FREEPORT

Add “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs, Shared Lane Markings, and Bicycle Parking to Main Street

Project Score: 24/33

Freeport’s Main Street has millions of visitors each year. The addition of shared use lane markings and bicycle parking will quickly and inexpensively improve conditions for cycling in the downtown area. Indeed, Main Street’s wide sidewalks will provide space for a number of bicycle racks. As in Yarmouth and Falmouth, the proposed bicycle racks should be a version of the “inverted U” or post and ring racks. Please see the Town’s 2014 Active Living Plan for specific rack locations.



The addition of Shared Lane Markings and bicycle parking would make downtown Freeport much more welcoming to bicyclists.

Add a crosswalk with a flashing warning light and signage to Mallet Drive

Project Score: 19 /33

Students move frequently by foot or bicycle between Freeport Middle School, Morse Street School, and Freeport High School. To do so requires crossing Mallet Drive. In conjunction with a few other trail/access improvements, it is recommended that Freeport work with PACTS and the Maine DOT to implement a high-visibility pedestrian crosswalk and flashing warning light at Mallet Drive. This project should be considered essential to the safety of school age children who are already making this trip and should therefore be prioritized in the short-term.



Improving bicycle safety along, and pedestrian safety across Mallet Drive would slow motorists and provide a safer way for students to move between Freeport’s downtown schools.

ALL 5 NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA COMMUNITIES

Expand Bicycle Parking in North of Portland Area Communities

Project Score: N/A

While specific needs will differ, it is recommended that all five communities in the North of Portland Area work with PACTS to discover specific locations for high quality bicycle parking facilities. Schools, commercial districts, civic buildings, and recreational destinations should be prioritized. The inverted-U rack is recommended to be the standard rack type.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Increasing the viability of bicycling and walking in the North of Portland area will require the utilization of numerous strategies. These include, but are not limited to, organizing bicycling skills courses, launching motorist, pedestrian and bicyclist safety campaigns, promoting the benefits of bicycling and walking, supporting local bicycle and walking-centric events, utilizing social media and web-based advocacy communication tools, enforcing existing motor vehicle-bicyclist-pedestrian laws, and maintaining traditional communication strategies that position bicycling and walking as viable option for transportation and recreation.

All of these efforts will require a wide variety of collaborations amongst many actors. However, a single policy recommendation that each town could pursue is that of “Complete Streets.” Complete Streets policies are based on the premise that streets ought to be designed for everyone. Complete Streets ensure that transportation planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire roadway with all potential users in mind - that includes public transportation vehicles and riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, a comprehensive Complete Streets policy is one that:

- Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets.
- Specifies that ‘all users’ includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way.
- Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions.
- Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
- Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads.
- Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.
- Directs that Complete Streets solutions will complement the context of the community.
- Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.
- Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.



This roadway includes bike lanes so that cyclists can ride safely. The raised median in the center provides for landscaping opportunities and gives pedestrians crossing the multi-lane road a safe place to wait in the middle. (Photo credit: Flickr, Complete Streets Coalition)



This complete street features a landscaped pedestrian refuge median with wide, well-marked crosswalks. Sidewalks and bike lanes make for safe and easy travel by bike or on foot. (Photo credit: Flickr, Complete Streets Coalition)



This main street from Hamburg, NY is built for all users, from pedestrians, to cyclists, to motorists looking for on-street parking to access shops and restaurants along the roadway. (Photo credit: Flickr, Complete Streets Coalition)

There are many resources available to assist communities in creating and adopting their own Complete Streets policies. The National Complete Streets Coalition website provides free resources, including a Local Policy Workbook to guide communities in this planning process.

North of Portland area communities can also look locally for shining examples. To date, three Maine municipalities have been recognized for their model complete streets policies by Smart Growth America, a national organization dedicated to improving communities through smart growth practices. Portland was recognized for creating one of the Best Complete Streets Policies of 2012, and Lewiston and Auburn were both recognized in the listing of the Best Complete Streets Policies of 2013.

ALL 5 NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA COMMUNITIES

Implement a Complete Streets policy in each of the North of Portland Area Communities

Project Score: N/A

It is recommended that all five communities in the North of Portland area adopt a Complete Streets Policy that makes sense given their unique land use, transportation, and political context. There is great potential for collaboration in this effort. All five communities can work from a similar policy framework based on Portland's and/or other successful models, and then make adjustments to their respective policy documents as needed.



This downtown area accommodates vehicle travel and on-street parking, but also provides wide side walks, curb extensions and visible crosswalks for pedestrians. (Photo credit: Flickr, Complete Streets Coalition)

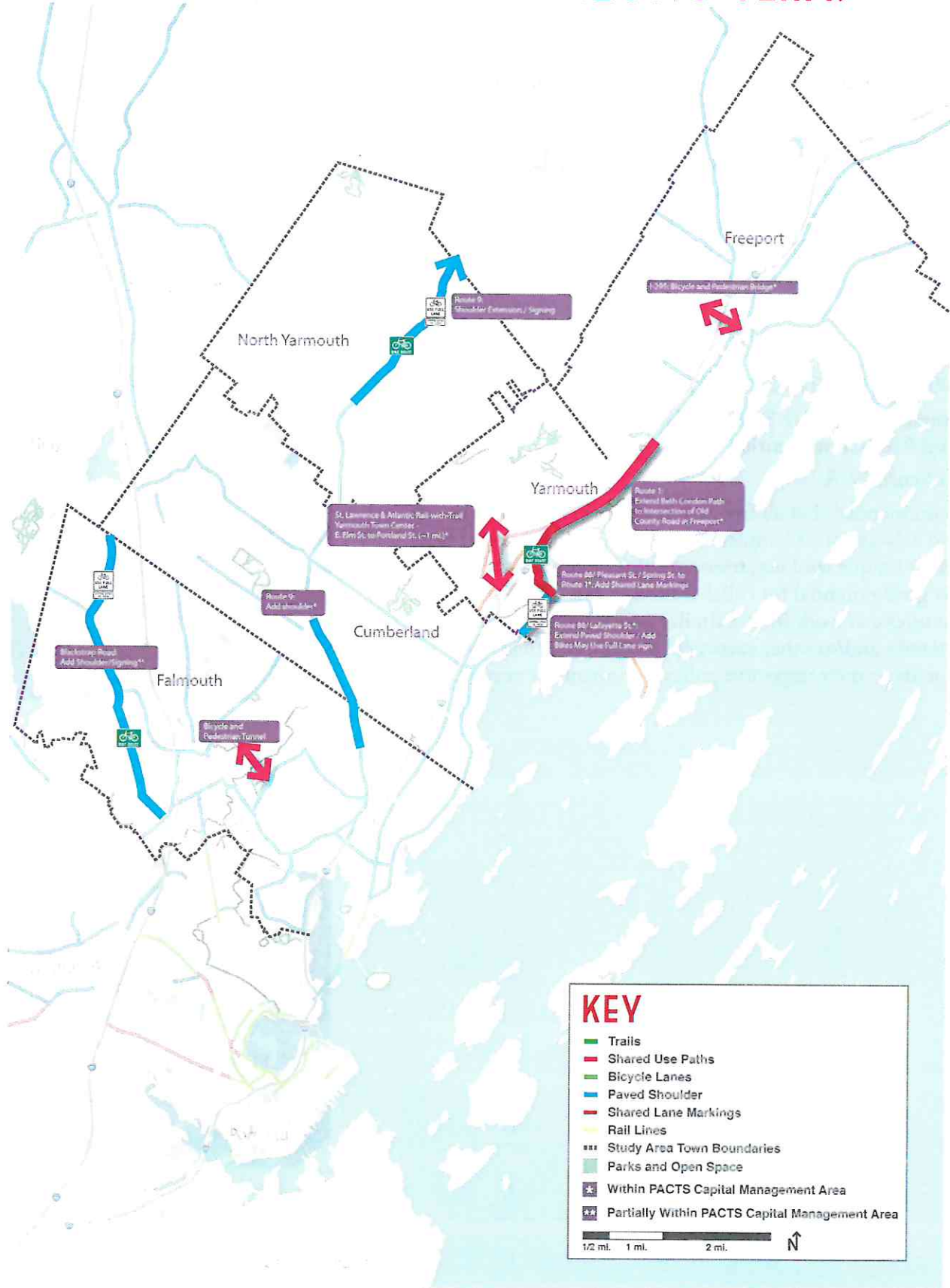


On this residential street, traffic volume is low and cars travel at a slow speed. Bikes and cars can share the travel lane, and there is a sidewalk for pedestrians on one side of the street. (Photo credit: Flickr, Complete Streets Coalition)



This downtown intersection features a bike lane, highly visible crosswalks and ADA-compliant sidewalks that are friendly to wheelchair users. (Photo credit: City of Charlotte DOT via Complete Streets Coalition)

PACTS - NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA PRIORITY PROJECTS (LONG-TERM)



LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

The long-term project recommendations of this plan are comprised of relatively expensive “big moves.” However, each one would be catalytic in providing increased connectivity for bicycle and pedestrian systems regionwide. There are numerous other projects that could be included in this possible list, however these are what emerged as key long-term priority projects from the North of Portland Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan process.

FALMOUTH

Add Paved Shoulders to Blackstrap Road

Project Score: 19/33

Blackstrap Road provides beautiful vistas and rolling terrain in a primarily rural section of Falmouth. This corridor also intersects in three places with the Falmouth trail system. Most notably this includes the trails of Blackstrap Hill Preserve. For these reasons and others, Blackstrap Road was named throughout the planning process as a road of local and regional importance. And given that Blackstrap Road in Cumberland is due for an upgrade, it is recommended that paved shoulders be added wherever possible.

Build a Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge/Tunnel Over/Under Pan Am Railway

Project Score: 17/33

The Falmouth Schools complex is very close to the playing fields and trails found at Falmouth Community Park. However, the two are not connected because of the Pan Am Railway carrying Amtrak trains on a frequent basis. It is recommended that a connection - bridge or tunnel - be studied and eventually constructed between these two important recreational and civic amenities.

CUMBERLAND

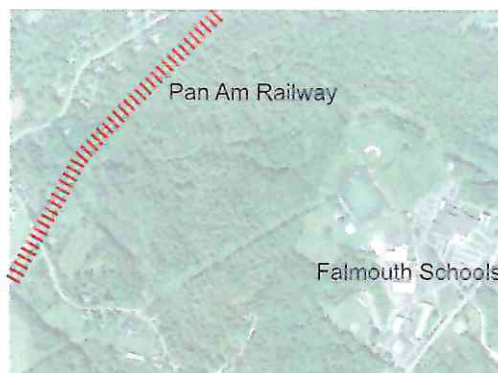
Add Paved Shoulders to Route 9.

Project Score: 14/33

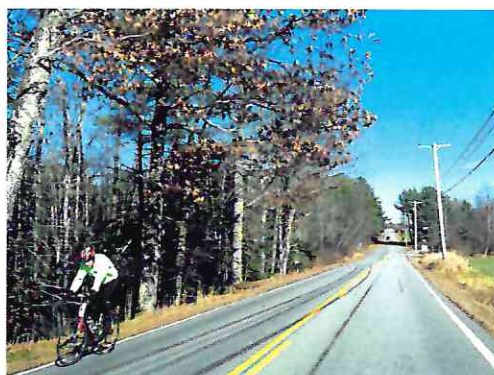
Route 9 is a corridor of regional significance connecting Portland, Falmouth, Cumberland, and North Yarmouth. It is recommended that a 4' paved shoulder be added to the approximate 2.75-mile stretch between Cumberland's Stockholm Drive and the existing paved shoulder on Route 9 in Falmouth .



Blackstrap Road in Falmouth.



The Pan Am Railway corridor blocks trail connections from Falmouth Schools Complex to Falmouth Community Park playing fields and trails.



Route 9 in North Yarmouth.



This section of the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railway could one day feature a shared use path.

NORTH YARMOUTH

Add Paved Shoulders to Route 9

Project Score: 19/33

Route 9 serves as a major recreational corridor between North Yarmouth, Cumberland, Freeport, and Portland. Currently, sidewalks and paved shoulders currently serve much of the corridor through Cumberland and into North Yarmouth. However, they terminate just beyond the North Yarmouth Memorial School. It is recommended that these shoulders be extended to at least the North Yarmouth and Pownal town line.

YARMOUTH

Build a Shared Use Path Along the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway

Project Score: 21/33

During the planning process it was announced that the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway will no longer carry freight trains between Portland and Auburn. While the corridor could one day be repurposed to carry commuter passengers, an approximate one-mile segment in Yarmouth features enough right-of-way to create a shared use path located between Elm and Portland Street. This proposed path would link Royal River Park, downtown Yarmouth, the Beth Condon Trail, and the Town's middle and high schools.



Pleasant Street is already signed as a Bike Route alternative to a rather difficult section of Route 88.

Extend Paved Shoulder/ Add Shared Use Lane Markings / Signs along Route 88 to Route 1

Project Score: 22/33

The scenic Route 88 corridor features a wide shoulder used by bicyclists all over the Portland region. However, the facility disappears near the Cumberland/Yarmouth town line. It is recommended that the shoulder be extended to Yarmouth's Pleasant Street. From there, shared use lane marking should direct cyclists along the already marked Pleasant Street Bike Route until it rejoins Route 88. Finally, the shared use lane marking would be extended along Route 88 until it meets up with Route 1 and the Beth Condon Path extension project (See below).

YARMOUTH / FREEPORT

Extend The Beth Condon Path Along Route 1 to Freeport

Project Score: 18/33

At present the eastern reaches of the Beth Condon Path terminates before reaching the Route 1 and Interstate-295 interchange. It is recommended that the path be extended across and beyond the interstate and onward to the intersection of Route 1 and Old County Road. This extension will connect the two towns and link together a variety of destinations, including the well-used Casco Bay YMCA, which was frequently cited as a



destination of people in Yarmouth and Freeport.

FREEPORT

Build a Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge Over I-295

Project Score: 20/33

Interstate 295 bisects Freeport, leaving only two bicycle and pedestrian *un*-friendly connections across the highway. While the Freeport Active Living Plan includes preliminary options for bridging the divide, it is recommended that further study be conducted and a preferred option be carried forward to implementation. This bridge could link to a shared use path on the west side of the Interstate, connecting downtown Freeport and the Hedgehog Mountain/Pownal Road/Hunter Road recreational facilities.

ALL 5 NORTH OF PORTLAND AREA COMMUNITIES

Restripe Roadways to Calm-Traffic

Most communities have residential, commercial, and rural roadways featuring overly wide travel lanes. As the short and long-term project are implemented, each of the five communities should also continue identifying roadways where narrower lane widths would slow traffic and provide more space for bicycling and walking.

East Coast Greenway

Finally, it's important to mention that numerous projects recommended in this Plan will enhance the north of Portland area segment of the East Coast Greenway. These projects include the upgrades to Route 1 in Falmouth, Route 88 in Cumberland and Yarmouth, and the Beth Condon Path extension from Yarmouth into Freeport.

WEST SIDE

TRAIL

WORK DAY

SAT 11/16

SANDY PT

BEACH 830

COLLABORATION

Making progress on this Plan will only occur through local, regional, and state cooperation. The following recommendations are intended to increase communication, expertise, and increase the speed of implementation.

- Continue developing local committees; designate at least one member as regional liaison to communicate across town lines on a consistent basis. This should include communication with not just the five towns included in this Plan, but all contiguous towns. For example, Freeport's leaders and advocates should not only speak with counterparts in Yarmouth, but also those in Brunswick, Pownal, and Durham.
- Use simple collaboration/social media communication tools to share ideas, initiatives and projects. Google and Facebook Groups are free and simple ways to build and advance awareness.
- Host a periodic North of Portland area community Biking and Walking "Summit" comprised of local community members, town and elected officials, and other stakeholders.
- Create a framework for regular communication between North of Portland area communities and adjacent communities.
- Create a framework for PACT's staff to periodically discuss on-going studies and/or other opportunities for collaboration on bicycle and pedestrian-related improvements in the region. This discussion could be added to the agenda of existing monthly or quarterly meetings.
- Municipal and state budgets are perpetually strained. Thus, it will be necessary for advocates to work with town officials, and town officials to work with regional and state entities to prioritize those projects that include bicycle and walking infrastructure of local/regional significance.
- Volunteer your time. Great progress can be accomplished through low and zero cost volunteer efforts. Indeed, most of Falmouth and Yarmouth's growing trail networks are built and maintained by volunteers. Such efforts also increase social capital, which leads to stronger relationships regionally and better communication.
- Town officials and local/regional advocates should occasionally pursue education opportunities for volunteers and staff through conferences, continuing education, and trainings. Engaging in these activities will help bring national and regional best practices to local municipalities. Two opportunities are the annual New England Bike-Walk Summit and the Active Communities Conference. Learnings should then be shared through local communication, such as the online communication tools suggested above.
- Get out and bike and walk together! Hold monthly or bi-monthly walks and/or bike rides to different neighborhoods, trails, and parks. Fun, social, physical activity will increase collaboration and build communication networks while also identifying locations for additional improvements.

GO SLOW
Little Locals Playing



5. APPENDIX

PROJECT SCORING

Project scores for the Short and Long-Term Recommendations in this report were based on points awarded using a project prioritization matrix. The matrix included 11 categories, and each project was scored across all categories to arrive at a point total. Projects with the highest point totals reflect the highest level of favorable characteristics. The 11 categories are as follows:

- **Improves Safety:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their impact to safety (1 point for modest improvement, up to 3 points for major improvement). Projects at sites with a pedestrian-car collision in the past three years gained 2 additional points.
- **Provides Safe Routes to School:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their proximity to a school (1 point for location within 1 mile of a school, and up to 3 points for projects within .25 miles of a school).
- **Community Destinations:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their proximity to key community destinations (1 point for location within 1 mile of community destinations, and up to 3 points for projects within .25 miles of community destinations).
- **“Completes” The Street:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on the extent to which they enhanced usability of the street for all users, including motorists, transit riders, cyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Projects gained 1 point for “completing the street” for a short length of a local street, and up to 3 points for “completing the street” for a significant length of a major roadway.
- **Impact on Traffic:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their potential impact to traffic, defined as a noticeable increase in congestion (1 point for projects with a significant impact on traffic, and up to 3 points for projects with no impact).
- **Increased Connectivity:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their distance from facilities or trails (1 point for location within .5 miles of a planned facility, and up to 3 points for projects within .25 miles of an existing facility).
- **Access to Transit:** Projects were awarded 1-3 points, based on their distance from a bus stop (1 point for location within .5 miles of a bus stop, and up to 3 points for projects with direct access to a bus stop). Projects that were over .5 miles from a bus stop did not earn any points in this category.
- **Public Input:** Projects were awarded 0-3 points, based on how frequently they were identified by the public as a desirable facility throughout the public outreach process for this report (0 points for a project that was not identified by the public, and up to 3 points for projects that were mentioned multiple times).
- **Ease of Implementation:** Projects were awarded 0-3 points, based on how easy they would be to implement (0 points for projects that would require extensive right-of-way negotiations with private property owners or expensive engineering, and up to 3 points for projects within the public right-of-way with low costs and minimal changes to traffic patterns).
- **Order-of-Magnitude Cost:** Projects were awarded 0-3 points, based on their cost (0 point for the costliest projects, and up to 3 points for projects estimated to cost less than \$50,000).
- **Curb Appeal:** Projects were awarded 0-2 points, based on their aesthetic value (0 points for a project that added little aesthetic value, and up to 2 points for projects that significantly beautified the surrounding area).

SAMPLE PROJECT PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

YARMOUTH MAIN STREET: SHARED USE LANE MARKINGS, BIKE ROUTE SIGNING, AND BIKE PARKING (SHORT TERM)		POINTS
IMPROVES SAFETY	Major improvement = 3 Significant improvement = 2	
	Modest improvement = 1 Pedestrian-car collisions in the past three years = up to 2 additional points	1 unknown
	Within .25 miles of school = 3 Within .5 miles of school = 2 Within 1 mile of school = 1	3
COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS (INCLUDING TOWN CENTERS)	Within .25 miles of destinations = 3 Within .5 miles of destinations = 2 Within 1 mile of destinations = 1	3
	"Completing the street" for significant length of an arterial or collector roadway = 3 "Completing the street" for short length of an arterial or collector roadway = 2 "Completing the street" for short length of a local street = 1	3
	IMPACT ON TRAFFIC No impact = 3 Some perceived impact (e.g. longer queues) = 2 Significant impact (e.g. signal operations, intersection capacity) = 1	3
INCREASED CONNECTIVITY	Within .25 miles of an existing facility or trail = 3 Within .5 miles of an existing facility or trail = 2 Within .5 miles of a planned facility = 1	3
	ACCESS TO TRANSIT Within direct access of a bus stop = 3 Within .25 miles of a bus stop = 2 Within .5 miles of a bus stop = 1	
	PUBLIC INPUT Identified by the public as a desirable future facility multiple times = 2-3 (varies) Identified by the public as a desirable future facility once = 1 Not identified = 0	3
EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION	Exclusively in the public right-of-way with few cost complications or changes to traffic patterns = 3 Some modifications to curbs/traffic lanes required, use of private property and/or modest engineering challenges = 1-2 ROW negotiations/acquisition and sidewalks along multiple private properties required; expensive engineering required = 0	3
	ORDER-OF-MAGNITUDE COST 3 = <\$50,000 / 2 = < \$250,000 1 = <\$1,000,000 0 = > \$1,000,000	2
	CURB APPEAL 'Gotta Have It! = 3 Very Desirable = 2 Desirable = 1 Ho-Hum = 0	1
POINT TOTAL		25

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STREETPLANS

PACTS

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System