

PORTLAND TO AUBURN RAIL USE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RUAC)

PUBLIC MEETING MEETING

December 5, 2022: 6-8 pm



WHAT IS A RAIL USE ADVISORY COUNCIL?

- A process established by the Legislature in 2021 for review of *nonrail recreational or nonrecreational transportation* use on state-owned rail corridors
 - *The council shall review and make recommendations on the likelihood, benefits and costs of potential uses of the rail corridor, including, but not limited to, rail use, trail use or bikeways.*
- MaineDOT may establish a RUAC upon petition by one or more governmental entities that represent communities along a state-owned rail corridor
- Within 9 months, Council submits a recommendation regarding use of the corridor
 - May include majority and minority reports
 - Process will include 1 public meeting

WHAT IS THE CORRIDOR UNDER REVIEW?

- State-owned Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor
 - Begins at MP 0.0 at Ocean Gateway, Portland
 - Ends at MP 26.5 at the New Gloucester/Auburn line
 - Maine Narrow Gauge operates first 1 mile along Portland Waterfront
 - Freight service concluded in 2015
- Purchased by MaineDOT under the Rail Preservation Act in 2007 and 2010
 - **Use of railroad line.** The department may lease the railroad line, or otherwise contract for operation of the railroad line, to a railroad operator, or it may hold and manage the railroad line for future transportation use.

WHAT USES WILL BE CONSIDERED?

- Maintain and Preserve Existing Rail Corridor
 - Continue to preserve rail for future use
- Interim Trail until Rail
 - Remove rail and convert to interim trail
- Rail with Trail
 - 15' trail offset from rail or 10.5' with fence (design exception required)
- Other considerations
 - Motorized vs non motorized uses
 - Maintenance responsibility

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

1. Finalize Rail Corridor Study
 - End of December
2. Hold 2 additional council meetings
 - December 22, 2022
 - January TBD
3. Develop recommendation for MaineDOT commissioner
 - End of January
4. MaineDOT Commissioner may submit recommendation(s) (if applicable) for legislative approval

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

- <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/ruac/index.shtml>

MaineDOT OUR MISSION To support economic opportunity responsibly providing our customers with the most reliable transportation system given available resources.

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Office of Freight and Passenger Services

Rail Use Advisory Council

Public Law 21, Chapter 239 gives the Maine Department of Transportation the authority to accept a petition of one or more governmental entities.

The purpose of this council is to facilitate discussion, gather information, and make recommendations concerning the future of a rail corridor identified in the petition. These recommendations will include the council's understanding that any non-rail use of the corridor is considered a non-preferred use.

Rail corridors will continue to be preserved for future rail use as a condition of any other use.

The Rail Use Advisory Council process creates an opportunity for interested parties to be heard and documented concerning the future of a rail corridor.

Lower Road Rail Use Advisory Council

Mountain Div. - Rail Use Advisory Council

Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council

- Web Search: “MaineDOT RUAC”