

**From:** [McConnell, Ian](#)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#); [Moulton, Nathan](#); [meddy@midcoastcog.com](mailto:meddy@midcoastcog.com)  
**Cc:** [jcluchey@gmail.com](mailto:jcluchey@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Letter from Mid Coast-Parkview Health in support of Trail option for Lower Road RUAC  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 28, 2023 10:24:37 AM  
**Attachments:** [Trail Advocacy 6.26.23.pdf](#)

---

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, Nate, and Matt,

Thank you all for facilitating the Lower Road RUAC process. I am a primary care physician at Mid Coast Hospital and spoke at the recent public input meeting on the public health benefits of a trail option. The president of Mid Coast-Parkview Health, Dr. Chris Bowe, has written a letter of support on behalf of the health system that serves patients from each of the communities along the Lower Road.

I was not able to upload the letter to the RUAC site online so am emailing it now for review by the committee and inclusion in the public record. Please let me know if you would prefer I submit it in a different fashion.

Best,

Ian McConnell

Ian McConnell, MD (he/him)

PCP - Internal Medicine & Pediatrics

Family Practice at Parkview

Mid Coast-Parkview Health

MaineHealth Primary Care

From: Bowe, Christopher <[Christopher.Bowe@mainehealth.org](mailto:Christopher.Bowe@mainehealth.org)>  
Sent: Monday, June 26, 2023 8:59 AM  
To: McConnell, Ian <[Ian.McConnell@mainehealth.org](mailto:Ian.McConnell@mainehealth.org)>  
Subject: Letter

Ian,

Here is my attached signed letter to share.

Chris

Christopher T. Bowe, MD (He/Him/His)

MaineHealth | President

Mid Coast- Parkview Health

123 Medical Center Dr. | Brunswick, ME 04011

Phone: 207-373-6027 | Christopher.Bowe@mainehealth.org<<mailto:Christopher.Bowe@mainehealth.org>>

mainehealth.org

[Values+Logo-Email-Signature-Graphic-Treatment]

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email message, including any attachments, is for the use of the intended recipient(s) only and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and prohibited from unauthorized disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient of this message, any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this message is strictly prohibited. If you received this message in error, please notify the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message and attachments.



Mid Coast-Parkview Health  
MaineHealth

June 26, 2023

To the Lower Road Rail Use Advisory Council,

As you evaluate how best to utilize the Lower Road rail corridor for the maximum benefit of our region, we at Mid Coast Hospital hope you will consider the important health benefits that would accompany the development of a 30+ mile recreational trail connecting several of the communities we serve.

At MaineHealth, our Vision is to work together so our communities are the healthiest in America. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 40% of Americans are obese and 11% have diabetes. This epidemic demands that we help our patients develop and maintain healthy living habits that help prevent disease. Regular physical activity is particularly important for our wellbeing. Its immediate positive effects include reducing anxiety and improving sleep. Long-term benefits includes the reduction of risk for more than 20 chronic diseases including obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, stroke and dementia.

Having a local resource like the Interim Trail under consideration would allow our primary care doctors, cardiologists, behavioral health clinicians and other providers to encourage their patients to walk and exercise in a safe, beautiful, and natural setting. The trail has the opportunity to become a public health asset that could pay dividends for generations to come. It could also help us start to bend the curve on rising healthcare costs, as over 11% of U.S. healthcare expenditures are associated with inadequate physical activity (\*Carlson et al).

Investing in critical infrastructure to support the health of our communities is a positive investment. Developing the largely unused Lower Road rail corridor as a recreational trail for walkers, runners and cyclists represents a golden opportunity to do this. We respectfully recommend that the trail be made accessible to the communities we serve as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Bowe, MD  
President

\*Carlson SA, Fulton JE, Pratt M, Yang Z, Adams K. Inadequate physical activity and health care expenditures in the United States. *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases* 2015;57(4):315-23.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 27, 2023 2:09:16 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: Tuesday, 27-Jun-2023 13:59:22 EDT  
Name: Todd Bachelder  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-215-5757  
Email: [todd.f.bachelder@gmail.com](mailto:todd.f.bachelder@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

With this email I wanted to express my support for the proposed Merrymeeting Trail. It is these sorts of outdoor recreational opportunities that will continue to promote tourism, economic development, as well as the health and wellness of Maine's citizens. It is unrealistic to expect that the return of rail service is going to enable us to address climate change. That will happen with e-vehicles, e-bikes and an energy grid that is built around renewable energy.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 25, 2023 9:18:43 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, 25-Jun-2023 09:09:25 EDT  
Name: Nicholas Sherman  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2078372894  
Email: voiceoftreason@hotmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I would like to voice my support for the Merrymeeting Trail (Lower Road). As a homebuilder based in the town of Topsham and a resident of the town of Brunswick, I understand the benefits that a recreational trail provides to the community as well as local businesses. I personally use the bicycle trail in Brunswick on a weekly basis. Additionally, I hear from my homebuying customers, young families and retirees alike, the value that they place on accessible trails, when deciding where they would like to live. Please support the Merrymeeting Trail on behalf of the many communities that will benefit from its creation. Thank you. Nicholas Sherman

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 24, 2023 4:33:28 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, 22-Jun-2023 16:34:14 EDT  
Name: Nancy Grant  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [nancylewisgrant@gmail.com](mailto:nancylewisgrant@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am writing in support of an interim trail on the Lower Road Rail Corridor. The proposed trail would be an extraordinary resource for Mainers and visitors alike, for active transportation, recreation and physical activity. Let's make this public property useable to the public! The time is now. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 24, 2023 8:23:23 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, 24-Jun-2023 08:18:42 EDT  
Name: Teddy Faugno  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: tfaugno14@duck.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I strongly believe that upgrading and adding passenger rail in Maine is the way to go. I live in Augusta and hate how much I am required to drive as well as many aging people who struggle to get around due to limited public transportation.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 9:13:18 PM

---

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

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

Date: Friday, 23-Jun-2023 21:05:58 EDT  
Name: Daria Walton  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2078075063  
Email: [daria.walton@gmail.com](mailto:daria.walton@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

As a Chelsea resident, I want to encourage the DOT to keep the Lower Road available to train traffic, as well as having a rail trail. Having passenger rail service from Augusta south would be a boon to our area. I feel that removing the tracks wouldn't be forward thinking, as we need viable public transportation in this part of the state. Please consider the rail with trail option.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 5:23:13 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, 23-Jun-2023 16:55:25 EDT  
Name: Alex Paul Peterson  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 8018091009  
Email: alexppeterson19@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello,

I did not have a chance to speak in last nights meeting about the lower road rail use. I think that we can all come to a "win". I am currently living in Utah but will be moving to Brunswick in a few short weeks. We have a commuter rail system in Utah called "front runner" this goes from Provo to Ogden a distance of 83 miles. This train also utilized some of the union pacific track but allows freighting during "off hours". I think having a multi-use path along side would be beneficial for all residents. I am actually a little disappointed that there is not a clear cycling path from Brunswick to Portland as I would love to commute by bike to work or even an easy place to pick up a bike path so I don't have to park in Old Port, and the public transit is not frequent enough to justify using it, because if I miss the 6:45 bus I will have to drive to make it to work by 8 and it also takes an hour or I can just drive 35 minutes. If you want people to use public transit it has to be so easy and quick that say why not use it.

Alex

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 9:43:09 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, 23-Jun-2023 09:38:20 EDT  
Name: john berce  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 12073332782  
Email: [john@berce.us](mailto:john@berce.us)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

local rail trails are a vital way to promote healthy & safe activities for Mainers and will also attract visitors to the area.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 7:13:06 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, 23-Jun-2023 07:07:17 EDT  
Name: Nancy B Hunsberger  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073194047  
Email: [nancy.hunsberger@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.hunsberger@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello! I would love to see this trail include horse use. It's getting almost impossible to find a safe place to recreate with horses these days. We've lost more and more public and private land as formally rural areas are being developed! Thank you for your consideration.  
Nancy

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:03:01 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, 22-Jun-2023 21:44:26 EDT  
Name: Susie Knowles  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075044106  
Email: susieqknowles@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

A few years ago after a perfect snowstorm, I XC skied from Topsham to Bowdoinham along the tracks. Throughout the entire experience I kept thinking, what a spectacular opportunity this would be to ride my horse ( who has since passed).

In Gorham NH I enjoyed riding him on a beautiful converted rail trail network where hikers, bikers & horses all coexisted nicely. There was a separate section of the trail network that allowed the ATVs to use the track as well. What a wonderful thing this would be for so many recreational uses. Thanks for considering!!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:48:02 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, 22-Jun-2023 21:44:26 EDT  
Name: Kara Podkaminer  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [kpodkaminer@gmail.com](mailto:kpodkaminer@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

More trails please!! Its a great way to safely get outside, get exercise and connect with nature.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:43:00 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, 22-Jun-2023 21:35:27 EDT  
Name: Ruth Indrick  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: rindrick@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

We've been working since 2008 to develop a rail with trail along the Merrymeeting Trail corridor, and that option has been completely cost prohibitive. We have had strong support from many people within the communities, but there has been no construction of any section of the Merrymeeting Trail route in that time. People who started working on this trail with a hope that their young children would be able to walk and bike along it now have children who have graduated from high school and gone away for college. In that whole time, there has been no use of the rail line for passengers or freight. The corridor has sat empty and unused and valueless to these communities while a generation grew up in the region.

The interim trail cost is about \$100 million less than the rail with trail. The interim trail is a cost that could be feasible, and this corridor could be used before another generation misses out on it. I love the idea of a train in this area, but waiting for a train that may exist if there is ever enough demand in the future is not worth depriving one, two, or three more generations of access to a trail.

An additional value that the trail will provide that I didn't hear mentioned at the public forum is access to a very special and unique part of Maine. Merrymeeting Bay is an amazing habitat. It is one of the few places in the world where multiple freshwater rivers meet to create a freshwater tidal delta. It has the largest area of freshwater tidal marsh in the state, a rare and sensitive habitat. It's one of the most important areas for migratory waterfowl in New England. Right now, this amazing natural area is not accessible to many because much of the shoreline is private. For a large majority of the bay, only people who own boats or who own property along the water can easily access it. Because it will be built along the existing rail line, creating an interim trail will not cause significant damage to any new habitat. The trail would make it possible for many more people to explore and discover this special place. The rail trail will be 10ft. wide and flat, so people of all ages and abilities, from those with walkers to those sitting in strollers, could walk, ride, or roll along the route to visit and explore the region.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:38:01 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, 22-Jun-2023 21:34:20 EDT  
Name: Lisa Constantino  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 3393098832  
Email: [lisaconstantino143@gmail.com](mailto:lisaconstantino143@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

This is awesome!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:38:06 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, 22-Jun-2023 20:23:08 EDT  
Name: Jeanette MacNeille  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 610-755-1445  
Email: [jeanette@eclipseservices.com](mailto:jeanette@eclipseservices.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I'd like to weigh in in favor of the least expensive Merrymeeting Trail option. The rails are rotten, we pull them up now or we pull them up later, either way they must come up. We'd probably want to use electrified rail rather than diesel, should a train route be developed there, but I think a really good bus route -- like the ones they have in Brazil -- would be a better bet because it could stop much more often and because it costs less to ride and to establish.

I often ride my bicycle from Topsham to Bowdoinham for the farmer's market on Saturday, to the hardware store, and for community events. Route 24 scares the living daylights out of me. A trail would be safer and much more fun -- I'd go ride out that way all the time if a safe trail was available.

I don't fit the "men in spandex" mold: I'm old enough to be retired, female, and stop to smell the roses (the other day it was the Small's Ragwort and New York Ferns) when I'm out on my bike. The walkers and joggers and people pushing baby carriages would surely appreciate the trail, too.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:28:02 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, 22-Jun-2023 20:03:07 EDT  
Name: Brian & Kailee Reeves  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072724558  
Email: reevesbr09@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:  
Lower Road RUAC

My wife and I are landowners along the Lower Road in Richmond that is divided by the tracks. I have mixed feeling about trail use along this corridor. I bought my property fully understanding that rail could come again, but knowing that would not likely affect my plans for the property. My concerns are: The influence of opinions outside the immediate communities involved in this corridor. How land owner interests will be protected from trespass, littering and damage (specifically our waterfront property)? Has safety related to hunting activity been considered? I hunt and give permission for others to hunt on my property. there is also significant use of the Merry Meeting Bay WMA for hunting.

If a trail were to be recommended I would be more supportive of a rail with trail to allow both uses in perpetuity (though I prefer it remain rail). We do not support opening the trail to motorized use.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:08:00 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, 22-Jun-2023 19:51:05 EDT  
Name: James Rea  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207 312 1512  
Email: james.rea43@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Listened to the webinar on the Lower Rail trail and have a few comments: the existing rails probably are not capable of handling modern rail traffic so taking them up is not an issue. If in the future the trail would be returned to rail traffic modern rail construction is fully capable of laying ties and tracks on a prepared roadbed without needing rails already in place.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:07:58 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, 22-Jun-2023 19:57:10 EDT  
Name: Deb Sewall  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [debsew@gmail.com](mailto:debsew@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I support the concept of extending a multi-use trail south from Gardiner. The current trail from Augusta to Gardiner is used by people of all ages and levels of fitness. It is a pleasure to see so many people out and about enjoying a walk along the beautiful Kennebec River.

I hope that improving the trail as it passes through Hallowell is included in planning this project. The current connection is awkward and unsafe for users.

Thank you for soliciting public comments in planning this project.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 7:43:00 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, 22-Jun-2023 18:17:36 EDT  
Name: Robin Sanford  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-620-6473  
Email: robin.lee.sanford@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello,

I am a resident of Brunswick, and I grew up in Bowdoinham. My mother, Lynne Sanford, has been involved in trying to get the Merrymeeting Trail to come to fruition for over a decade. I will be a resident of Bowdoinham again in future (a long time in future) when I inherit my parents' house.

I support the Interim Trail option, or a Rail with Trail option (like the Kennebeck River Rail Trail, which I used often while I lived in Augusta). I feel that to get rail service to Bangor, rail lines that go through Lewiston/Auburn would be more beneficial for both freight and passenger rail. More people live in those towns and would ride the trains, than who live in Topsham, Bowdoinham, Richmond, and Farmingdale. People in those smaller towns who want to ride a train to Boston can drive to a larger city, like Brunswick or Lewiston.

I grew up in Bowdoinham, and there was no safe place to ride a bike. I had to ride up and down the driveway, because we lived on busy route 24 with no shoulders and a 45 mile per hour speed limit. I never grew to like biking as a result.

I would not support motorized vehicles on this trail. There are lots of ATV and snowmobile trails in the area, but there is no place safe to walk that is level and smooth and safe. Yes, I love the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust's trails, but they are often steep and covered with tree roots. They are a hike, and no place for a bike or a parent with a stroller. I would love to have a safe, level trail that families can use together. People will walk dogs, bike, snowshoe, and cross-country ski on a trail like this, as they do in Augusta and Gardiner. People will be able to access this trail in wheelchairs (and indeed my mother wants to be on this trail on day one, in a wheelchair if needed!).

A trail connecting Brunswick to Augusta would bring visitors to the area - it is beautiful and while they were enjoying the natural beauty people visiting the trail would be able to visit the wonderful businesses in Bowdoinham (a pub, a country store, two art galleries).

This will be a wonderful resource for people in the area to exercise and be safe from motorized vehicles, including cars, snowmobiles, and ATVs.

I support this trail, and hope that the DOT will support it as well.

Thank you,  
Robin Sanford

-----

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 7:42:57 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, 22-Jun-2023 19:36:38 EDT  
Name: Sarah Tinker  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076567001  
Email: sarahjtinker@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I live in Bowdoinham and my family would be delighted to have a trail! The towns on this rail route are too small to support passenger trains. We would love to ride bikes on this trail with our children, walk to the green spaces in town and enjoy our neighbors. I attended the meeting tonight but had to leave before commenting (6/24/23). Our community would benefit, and I believe it would make bowdoinham, Richmond and adjacent towns more attractive places to live. We need young families and working folks to support our aging demographic, and this could be a great draw for them!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 6:02:59 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, 22-Jun-2023 17:58:20 EDT  
Name: David Asmussen  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: daveasmussen@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello, my name is David Asmussen, I am co-chair of The Bowdoinham Comprehensive Planning Committee. Our committee voted for me to represent them and speak in favor of the interim trail option. Our committee in turn represents the citizens of Bowdoinham who come to our monthly public meetings, public forums and solicit feedback in online surveys about the future of Bowdoinham. Our current comprehensive plan, approved way back in 2014 specifically supports The Merrymeeting Trail in our chapters about Transportation, Recreation and The Economy. We are currently updating the plan for 2034 and are increasing references to this type of walkable infrastructure in the document. Our town is so supportive of the trail option because it runs right through the heart of Bowdoinham and is a backbone to the waterfront area the town is actively redeveloping. Our downtown businesses including a general store, pub, music studio, art gallery and The Farmers' Market are all adjacent to the trail and would benefit from trail activity. There are already public restrooms, public docks and parking which would compliment the trail as well. There is a new park, parking area and paddle put-in slated for construction this summer on public land that also directly abuts the corridor and our architects have included trailhead access in their designs. Our town's TIF can even be used to contribute to the trail. This is a critical time to develop the trail to coincide with our waterfront redevelopment. Part of our proposed 2034 vision statement has a goal of "miles of trails available for people powered recreation" which is in reference to the Merrymeeting Trail being completed before 2034, a timeline which only appears possible with the simple and cost effective interim trail-only proposal. The day the section of trail in downtown Bowdoinham is complete, is the day we will see immediate transportation, recreational and economic benefits for our town. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 5:58:00 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, 22-Jun-2023 17:38:49 EDT  
Name: Carol Minnehan  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072120694  
Email: [cminnehan@yahoo.com](mailto:cminnehan@yahoo.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I fully support the Merrymeeting Trail. As an avid bicyclist and a resident of Richmond I've had to time my bike rides for when I know traffic patterns will allow for safe bike riding. (For instance, when BIW workers are traveling to or from work I steer clear of the roads heading towards Bath Me.) if I want to take an extended bike ride out of Richmond, the choices are State Rt 24 or State Rt 197. Neither of these roads have safe shoulders to ride safely. It's just not as enjoyable to ride a bike when you have to constantly be looking in your rear view mirror hoping the driver of car coming up behind you sees you. The Merrymeeting Trail will provide residents and visitors of all ages the opportunity to get exercise and enjoy the out of doors safely. I can imagine this trail becoming quite a destination experience for people from all over Maine and out of states as well. It will bring more business traffic to stores and restaurants in both Bowdoinham and Richmond. I urge the powers that be to make the decision to move forward with this important and valuable project. Sincerely, Carol Minnehan

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 5:27:58 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, 22-Jun-2023 17:25:24 EDT  
Name: Mary Ann Wilson  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072154137  
Email: mawilson73@live.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I would like to see the trail open to equestrians. Thank you.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.





**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 4:52:57 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, 22-Jun-2023 16:32:55 EDT  
Name: Tim Blair  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-720-0024  
Email: tblair@bpadvisors.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

This comment is being submitted in support of the Merrymeeting Trail and its use of the Augusta Lower Road rail corridor. As a resident of Bath, I view this trail as a connector that will create new opportunities not only for Bath residents who want to utilize active transportation for trips from the Bath/Brunswick area north, but it would have an incredible economic impact on numerous downtown areas that will receive an increase in visitors due to this trail. Converting this dormant rail corridor into an active trail would create recreational opportunities for many people, improve public health, and will help to expand Maine's growing network of trails that offer an alternative to vehicular transportation. Thank you very much.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 4:42:56 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, 22-Jun-2023 16:34:14 EDT  
Name: Nancy Grant  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [nancylewisgrant@gmail.com](mailto:nancylewisgrant@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am writing in support of an interim trail on the Lower Road Rail Corridor. The proposed trail would be an extraordinary resource for Mainers and visitors alike, for active transportation, recreation and physical activity. Let's make this public property useable to the public! The time is now. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 4:27:54 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, 22-Jun-2023 16:21:35 EDT  
Name: Tamara Whitmore  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075823100  
Email: [tamara@gardinermainstreet.org](mailto:tamara@gardinermainstreet.org)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Lower Road Rail Corridor Use Advisor Council  
Office of Freight and Passenger Services  
Maine Department of Transportation

Dear Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council,

On behalf of Gardiner Main Street, I would like to express support for the rail corridor from Topsham to Gardiner be put to use as a recreational trail. As it has been determined that this stretch of rail is not feasible to reinstate, it makes sense that the resource be put to alternate use.

A recreational trail from Topsham to Gardiner would provide a safe and environmentally friendly alternative transportation route between the cities of Gardiner, Richmond, Bowdoinham, and Topsham, and even beyond by connecting to already existing trails. This could be useful for some commuters during the warmer months, and as outdoor recreation year round. Additionally, this type of resource could be a big draw for tourists and encourage more time spent in the Kennebec River region and therefore, more opportunities for economic impact. Outdoor recreation resources such as the rail trail also contribute to a “quality of life” that many people consider when selecting a community to live in.

The primary purpose of Gardiner Main Street is to strengthen the City of Gardiner as a hub for community, commerce, and culture. We do this by focusing on the following community transformation strategies: Cultural Connections, Wellness and Recreation, Local Business, Welcoming Community, and History and Heritage. The creation of the Merrymeeting Rail Trail supports these community transformation strategies, especially the Wellness and Recreation aspect. We therefore wholeheartedly support the transition of the stretch of rail corridor from Topsham to Gardiner from unused rail to vibrant recreational trail.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tamara Whitmore  
Executive Director  
Gardiner Main Street

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 3:57:54 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, 22-Jun-2023 15:31:00 EDT  
Name: Steve Eagles & Peter Walsh  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2077378023  
Email: mpwalsh2807@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I want to highlight an important new technology that will greatly increase the use of the proposed Merrymeeting Trail for recreation, tourism, and most importantly, for commuting. That technology is e-bicycles, bicycles that work with regular pedaling and supplemental electric power when needed. This technology is revolutionizing the distances that average people can travel by bicycle.

E-bikes are a viable alternative to buses and cars. Local and state governments across the country are subsidizing them for commuting purposes. On the Merrymeeting Trail many riders would be able to commute to work to and from Augusta, Hallowell, Gardiner, Richmond, Bowdoinham, Topsham, and Brunswick. In addition, many people from our area -- probably most - have not experienced the unspoiled beauty of the Kennebec River from Gardiner south. Electric bikes will change this.

Think ahead 10 years. Instead of spending millions of dollars annually to subsidize a train that very few will use, Maine can spend a small amount of money to support hundreds and eventually thousands of local Mainers by providing them a bicycle-safe route from Augusta to Brunswick. In the process it will get people out of their houses, fill Main Street restaurants and coffee shops, and increase tourism in Central Maine.

Funding for new trains in the US should go for high speed trains between large population areas, not inefficient service between small towns. We should invest in the future, not the past. The future is here now, and it is e-bikes.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 2:52:53 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, 22-Jun-2023 14:42:01 EDT  
Name: Frank K O'Hara  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075921788  
Email: frankomaine@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I can't attend the public hearing but want to go on record supporting the Merrymeeting Trail as the number 1 option for the Lower Road. The "rail with trail" has a theoretical appeal, but the only practical effect of choosing this option is that the lower road development will be too expensive for MDOT and the right-of-way will remain unused for another quarter century. Passenger rail became popular in the 1800s when the alternatives were packet boats and stagecoaches from Augusta to Portland, both of which took all day, while the train took only 2 hours. Today we have cars and buses that get back and forth to Portland in an hour; no one is going to go back to a 4 hour round trip Augusta to Portland down the old tracks. A high speed train from Bangor to Augusta to Portland to Boston down the turnpike right of way would be twice as fast as cars and buses; that is the future of passenger rail in Maine, and I would strongly support it. In the meantime, let's develop the Merrymeeting Trail and enjoy the economic and social and health benefits today.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 2:27:56 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, 22-Jun-2023 14:11:49 EDT  
Name: Melissa Fochesato  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [melissa.fochesato@mainehealth.org](mailto:melissa.fochesato@mainehealth.org)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

On behalf of Access Health, a comprehensive community health coalition, we would like to show our support for the Merrymeeting Trail. Our coalition works with community partners across all sectors to improve the health and well-being of our communities. We support and promote opportunities for no cost and low-cost opportunities for physical activity in Sagadahoc County, Brunswick, and Harpswell. The development of this trail will provide a free, safe, and accessible way for people of all ages and mobility levels to enjoy the outdoors and the beautiful natural surroundings along Merrymeeting Bay and the Kennebec River.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 2:22:52 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, 22-Jun-2023 14:11:49 EDT  
Name: Jessie Chalmers  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073736925  
Email: [jessie.chalmers@mainehealth.org](mailto:jessie.chalmers@mainehealth.org)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

On behalf of our local physical activity coalition-Get Active Southern Mid Coast we would like to show our support for the Merrymeeting Trail. Our coalition works to promote no cost and low-cost opportunities for physical activity in Sagadahoc County, Brunswick, and Harpswell. The development of this trail will provide a free, safe, and accessible way for people of all ages and mobility levels to enjoy the outdoors and the beautiful natural surroundings along Merrymeeting Bay and the Kennebec River.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 2:07:52 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, 22-Jun-2023 14:05:25 EDT  
Name: David Sheain  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075225227  
Email: david.sheain@gmail.com

Topic:  
-----

Comments:

I support using the rail bed for ATV and snowmobile use. It will enhance tourism in the area.

David Sheain  
-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 1:07:52 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, 22-Jun-2023 12:58:19 EDT  
Name: Andrew Walton  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-415-8221  
Email: andrew.walton72@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello Council,

My name is Andrew Walton from Steep Falls(Standish), I am in support of trail until rail option for this rail corridor. I have used the Kennebec River Rail Trail and enjoyed the experience from Hannaford to downtown Augusta to have lunch. The Hallowell section was scary, we had one child on board making it more tense for us to be traveling on the road. I would like to not only see this section be extended but also the Hallowell section of trail moved to the rail bed where it is safest. The trail will bring immense benefits to the towns it passes through and be a gateway for active transportation to our capital. I encourage the council to vote trail until rail.

Thank you,  
Andrew Walton

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 1:02:54 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, 22-Jun-2023 12:32:59 EDT  
Name: Paul Drinan  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073708586  
Email: pdrinan@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

RUAC members,

My name is Paul Drinan and I am writing to testify in strong support of the proposed Merrymeeting Trail for “trail until rail”.

This publicly owned asset will connect the villages of Topsham, Bowdoinham, Richmond, and Gardiner. It would utilize the long-unused “Lower Road” railroad corridor, owned by the State of Maine, and link the Kennebec River Rail Trail in the north to the Androscoggin River Bicycle and Pedestrian Path in the south — joining Augusta to Brunswick (and one day to Bath!) in an incredible “capital to coast” connection.

Having a separated facility such as the proposed Merrymeeting Trail would be an incredible opportunity for our community to enjoy a car-free experience. Having ridden rail trails in other parts of the country, I can assure you these trails are much more than a recreational amenity. These are not stand-alone projects but components of what will be regional active transportation and economic development systems.

Also, key goals of Maine Department of Transportation’s Maine State Active Transportation Plan align with the outcomes of the proposed trail. These include:

- Safe Travel
- A Vibrant Economy
- Connectivity
- Environmentally Sustainable Transportation System
- Equitable Access
- Healthier Maine (which translates to a healthier economy)

If, indeed, the State of Maine wants to support economic impact opportunities, equitable transportation, environmental justice, and public health, a rail trail checks all the boxes. Climate change has elevated Maine’s active transportation imperative from desirable to essential and urgent.

Active transportation infrastructure enables emission-free transportation, outdoor recreation, and improved public health. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote in favor of this project.

Thank you,  
Paul Drinan

-----

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 12:57:51 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, 22-Jun-2023 12:52:31 EDT  
Name: David Pease  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: mainepod@mac.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I live in Topsham and would love to be able to access the Merrymeeting trail for walking and biking. Please support the effort to make this happen!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 12:32:54 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, 22-Jun-2023 12:16:12 EDT  
Name: Stephanie K  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [skjustfood@gmail.com](mailto:skjustfood@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I support the creation of a rail trail in this corridor. Moving from an area with an extensive and growing network of rail trails, I have seen the benefits- connecting communities, improving physical and mental health; positive environmental impact and increased community engagement and stewardship. The town businesses directly benefit from bike traffic(happy to send examples!) and the potential for commuting if eventually connecting to Brunswick/Bath reduces carbon footprint in already overcrowded roads in the summer. And my husband a many generation Mainer supports the DOT in developing more rail trails.Thank you for allowing me to share my opinion.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 11:12:50 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, 22-Jun-2023 11:07:16 EDT  
Name: Jennifer Richards  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: (207) 319-5533  
Email: [jandrrichards2011@gmail.com](mailto:jandrrichards2011@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

This needs to be a multi use trail! It would bring money to small towns and allow everyone to use it.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:07:55 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, 22-Jun-2023 10:00:45 EDT  
Name: Kari Crosman  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072426645  
Email: [crosmankari@gmail.com](mailto:crosmankari@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I would LOVE to see the Rail Trail come through Richmond in particular. We currently have to drive to Gardiner or Topsham to hop onto the biking/walking trails, which we do on occasion, but having it right in town would make it so much more accessible. I also love the idea that it would give our middle and high school students a safer place to ride and walk during their PE unit on biking. They currently bike a loop of downtown Richmond that involves riding with car traffic that isn't always as patient or attentive to bikes as it could be. I think connecting it with our downtown areas will give a great opportunity for increased exercise and overall health of the people in our communities. Win-win!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 10:02:50 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 10:01:56 EDT  
Name: Jesse Abbruzzese  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [jessabbruzz@gmail.com](mailto:jessabbruzz@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

The proposal to repurpose the corridor as the Merrymeeting Trail presents an exciting opportunity for Maine's transportation future. By creating a new active transportation route, the region can enjoy several significant benefits:

**Active Transportation:** The Merrymeeting Trail would provide a dedicated pathway for pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized users. It would promote active lifestyles, encourage physical activity, and offer a safe and scenic environment for people to enjoy outdoor recreation.

**Community Connection:** Trails have a remarkable ability to connect communities and foster a sense of belonging. The Merrymeeting Trail would link various towns and neighborhoods along the corridor, enabling residents to easily access schools, parks, businesses, and other amenities. It can enhance social interactions, strengthen community ties, and contribute to a vibrant local culture.

**Tourism and Economic Development:** Trails often attract visitors, tourists, and outdoor enthusiasts. The Merrymeeting Trail, with its scenic beauty and recreational opportunities, could draw tourists to the region, benefiting local businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and shops. The increased tourism activity can boost the economy and provide employment opportunities for residents.

**Health and Well-being:** Active transportation options like the Merrymeeting Trail encourage healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for regular exercise and physical activity. Improved health and well-being among residents can lead to reduced healthcare costs and a higher quality of life.

**Environmental Benefits:** By promoting non-motorized transportation, the trail can help reduce carbon emissions and alleviate congestion on roads. It would contribute to a greener and more sustainable transportation system, aligning with efforts to combat climate change and protect the environment.

**Adaptive Reuse:** The proposal to repurpose the corridor as a trail allows for adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure. While serving as a trail in the interim, the corridor can be preserved for future rail service if demand and technology support its reintroduction. This approach combines immediate community benefits with long-term flexibility.

Overall, the creation of the Merrymeeting Trail would offer numerous advantages, including improved transportation options, enhanced community connections, economic growth, health benefits, environmental sustainability, and the preservation of rail infrastructure for potential future use. It's an opportunity to create a valuable asset for the region and shape a more vibrant and equitable future.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:47:48 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.

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

Date: Thursday, 22-Jun-2023 09:41:45 EDT  
Name: Dan Coker  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075228399  
Email: dcoker3@comcast.net

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I think the Merrymeeting Trail is a fabulous idea - both for residents of the hosting towns and visitors from away. I bike to work from Bowdoinham to Brunswick and this would make a big difference for my daily commute.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 9:02:50 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, 22-Jun-2023 08:59:00 EDT  
Name: Joshua Shean  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075225723  
Email: [jgshean@gmail.com](mailto:jgshean@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am a resident of Brunswick. I am writing in support of the Merrymeeting Trail being a multi-use trail that would allow ATV use.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:57:48 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.

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

Date: Thursday, 22-Jun-2023 08:42:12 EDT  
Name: Aaron Pikcilingis  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: a.jpikc@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Hello! I'm writing to express my strong support for the Merrymeeting trail use of the rail right of way. I am a regular visitor to Gardiner where, in the past, I have enjoyed cycling with my family. In the more recent past, we have found distracted driving, coupled with the high speed differential on many roads, has made us wary of biking many places. Adding an off-road connection between communities would give us an option to travel to other communities that is only feasible by car right now.

Thanks!

Aaron Pikcilingis  
Belmont, MA (but frequent visitor to Gardiner, ME)

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 8:07:46 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 21:04:24 EDT  
Name: darren wallach  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073910379  
Email: darrenwallach@hotmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I live in Brunswick and I am the father of two young boys and a high school teacher. I'm very much supportive of the proposed Merrymeeting Trail from Topsham to Gardiner for biking, walking and non- motorized use. I think that creating a bike/ped trail is the best thing that we could for youth with the old rail bed, for recreation, health benefits and commuting. It is very important that it is non- motorized as if cars, atvâ€™s and snowmobiles are on the trail it will be uncomfortable and unsafe for young children and the elderly. There are thousands of miles of atv and snowmobile trails in Maine but very little off road bike trails.

If the state is interested in equity this is a great opportunity because a two-year-old can walk on a trail safely and the large retirement community in Topsham and Brunswick would also have a safe and serene place to walk and bike. I teach primarily low income youth without cars so this would make equitable transportation for them. One of the things young families and young professionals look for in re- locating are off rail- trails like these. The phenomenal popularity of the eastern trail is a great example. It would definitely attract people to living in the area and be used for commuting and recreation. I believe there could be a tourism benefit as well and quickly become one the top rail trails in New England because of its placement on the beautiful Kennebec River and forming a trail from the Capital to Bath.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 6:42:47 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, 22-Jun-2023 06:35:52 EDT  
Name: Frances Townsend  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-213-3393  
Email: ftownsend0908@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I think a railtrail stretching from Bowdoinham to Gardiner would benefit Richmond a great deal, bringing visitors through our town, providing a scenic safe place, particularly for older adults and parents with young children to walk. I definitely support this endeavor as a way to utilize the old railroad property which otherwise will grow up to weeds and brush.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 6:17:49 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, 22-Jun-2023 06:07:03 EDT  
Name: Adam Hills  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-323-5667  
Email: maddoghills@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I think this new trail should be a multi use trail allowing ATVs, snowmobiles, horses, bicycles, etc. With motorized users, there would be more revenue to maintain the trail. Also, the more people using the trail, the better for supporting businesses along the trail.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 10:57:41 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 22:25:27 EDT  
Name: John Bursley  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2077516982  
Email: lchafingers@myfairpoint.net

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

This trail would make an outstanding Multi use trail. It would bring in money for the towns. Restaurant and gas station would flourish. ATV/UTV community is growing and the money they bring in would help keep the trail in great condition for everyone to use. It would be a great opportunity for real estate to flourish.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 5:57:39 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, 21-Jun-2023 17:28:54 EDT  
Name: Cheryl King  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207 721 1163  
Email: [inthegarden24@yahoo.com](mailto:inthegarden24@yahoo.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of The Merrymeeting Trail. I live in Topsham on Walnut Street and use the Topsham Bike Path every single day, at least once. I don't frequent the Brunswick Bike Path because of the close proximity to Rt 1, as there are a few sections that are downright scary. I also take advantage of other trails in the area. I would definitely make use of the proposed trail on a regular basis, as I know many of my friends would as well. What a lovely, scenic path - which would allow folks to unwind from the business of everyday life, increasing a sense of well-being. Having such a trail would attract residents of all ages and also serve as an enticement for new people and families moving to the area.

Thank you for your consideration to this matter.

Sincerely  
Cheryl King  
12 Walnut St  
Topsham, Me 04086

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 5:47:37 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, 21-Jun-2023 17:44:09 EDT  
Name: Ruth Indrick  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-442-8400  
Email: [rindrick@kennebecestuary.org](mailto:rindrick@kennebecestuary.org)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

As a staff member at the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT), I am writing to express my support and KELT's support for an interim trail.

Based on feasibility, demand, costs, climate benefits, environmental impact, and community benefits, of the three options for near-term use of this corridor (an interim trail, a trail alongside the rail, or rail), we think that the arguments are strongest for an interim trail.

KELT is excited about this trail for a number of reasons.

1. It's beautiful! It passes by amazing spots on Merrymeeting Bay and the Kennebec River.
2. It connects downtowns, from Brunswick to Gardiner, making it easy for people to travel within and between communities. Connecting to the Kennebec River Rail Trail in Gardiner, it allows people to follow the path further, through the downtowns of Farmingdale, Hallowell, and Augusta along a 33 mile off-road route.
3. It connects people to natural areas along the river and bay.
4. It provides a safe and accessible space for people of all ages, all fitness levels, and all mobility levels to stroll, exercise, and explore. This can help to increase the health, wellness, and resilience of people in the region.

Some key findings of the rail corridor study and information shared during the Rail Use Advisory Council process that have informed our decision to support an interim trail are outlined below.

Construction Costs: Building an interim trail is about \$100,000,000 less than building a trail alongside the tracks, and it is about \$330,000,000 less than upgrading the tracks so a passenger train could use them.

\$34,300,000 - building an interim trail on the rail line

\$146,300,000 - building a trail beside the rail line

\$55,000,000 - upgrading the train tracks so they are safe for freight train use

\$363,000,000 - upgrading the train tracks so they are safe for passenger train use

Demand: There is more demand for trail use than for passenger rail use, and no businesses have currently expressed interest in freight use for this line.

56,000 to 80,000 - Predicted annual passenger train use (153 to 219 people per day)

125,000 to 188,000 - Predicted annual trail use (342 to 515 people per day)

Use Costs: The train will be significantly more expensive than other public transportation options.

\$84 to \$116 - Estimated cost of a one-way train ticket from Bangor to Brunswick with a 50% subsidy from the state

\$30 - Current cost of a one-way bus ticket from Bangor to Brunswick

\$0 - Cost to use the trail

Climate Benefits: A passenger train would not provide significant emission reductions. Because the predicted number of riders is as low as it is, there are not significant emissions reductions expected if a diesel powered passenger train operated on the line. For an electric train to operate on the line, the current train tracks would need to be removed, new tracks would need to be laid, and additional infrastructure would need to be added. This would be much more expensive than any of the estimates listed above. The use of buses, particularly as more are upgraded to electric, and the ability of people to commute along the trail by bike or foot, would have equal or greater climate emission reduction benefits.

Environmental Impacts: Because the interim trail would be built along the current rail corridor, construction would not have any significant new impacts to wetlands. Freight train use would also not have new wetland impacts. Because a trail beside the rail would widen the corridor by about 25 feet, it would impact 7 acres of wetland. Improvements to make passenger rail possible with current diesel train technology would impact 8 acres of wetland.

Ability to Adapt to Changes in the Future: Building an interim trail is a method of railbanking - making use of a rail corridor now while there is not rail demand in a way that conserves the corridor for future rail use if changes in population or technology in the future mean that rail becomes a good fit for this region. Stabilizing the landscape with a well maintained trail will position the corridor to be ready for rail if it is needed.

On a personal note, I have ridden my bike along the on-road route of the Merrymeeting Trail to travel from my home to Celebrate Bowdoinham, to the Bowdoinham farmers market, to Richmond for breakfast at a café or for ice cream, to local farm stands, and to buy a pair of rubber boots from Renys in Gardiner. I am a relatively fit person in my mid 30s, so I felt moderately comfortable on the route, but cars travel fast and there is no curb along the roads in this region. I would not have felt safe bringing kids along on my bike rides or bringing along someone who is less stable and comfortable on a bike. It is such a beautiful place to travel through, and it makes me sad that the current route is not safe or accessible for many people. I think that an off-road interim trail would be a wonderful asset for this region. It will offer a community gathering space accessible for anyone to easily visit and explore.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 4:42:38 PM

---

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

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 16:33:00 EDT  
Name: William Rogers  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074403984  
Email: wdrogers@outlook.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

My wife and I have traveled to Europe for the past 10 years to ride on their off-road bike networks. These trails are safe and allow us to visit new locations. We travel frequently, 30 to 40 miles a day. We support coffee, shops, ice cream stands, Restaurants and lodging at our destinations. I we currently are in Switzerland and Germany or I would have joined your zoom meeting. I do believe that 12 networks such as the proposed Mary Meeting Trail will lead to a bike culture that now exists in Europe. The current absence of safe, off-road biking in the United States And Maine, especially makes it more attractive for us to go to Europe. The current long distance trails, such as the sunrise Trail, or not really conducive to biketours, because of their multi use nature and poor bike surfaces. I would hope that development of this trail , be accomplished and would look forward to riding it on its opening day.

Again, thank you for allowing me to comment.

William D Rogers MD

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 4:02:36 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.

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 11:32:50 EDT  
Name: Silvia J Cassano  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [mainetrailscoalition@gmail.com](mailto:mainetrailscoalition@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Members of the Lower Road Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council,

My name is Silvia Cassano, I'm the Project Coordinator for the Maine Trails Coalition or MTC, and I am speaking today on behalf of the MTC. MTC is a state-wide, all volunteer organization formed in 2019 to champion the establishment, use, and stewardship of trails in Maine. We have supporters all over the state and are part of a growing movement that is helping make Maine a leader in active transportation.

Trails and bikeways connect communities, bring innumerable health, economic, social, and environmental benefits, and provide critical alternative transportation routes in the face of climate change. In recent polling, 86 percent of Mainers support the idea of "trail until rail" – using currently idle railroad beds for trail use, until such time as rail use proves viable. This support holds true regardless of age, geography, or political affiliation.

MTC supports the trail-until-rail use for the Lower Road Corridor. This long-unused rail corridor is an incredible public asset, and this use would bring the highest value to Maine at the lowest cost connecting our Capital to the Mid-Coast- how incredible would this be?! Not to mention the support and vision of the Merrymeeting Trail has been 15 plus years in the making. The community support alone should speak for itself!

Too often, trails and trains have been at loggerheads on projects like this. The Maine Trails Coalition believes that dynamic is unnecessary. We have made it a point to support restoration of rail service in places where it makes sense, and to encourage a trail-until-rail approach in places where that is not realistic. Over time, trails and bikeways will preserve these corridors for potential future rail use – and in the meantime, they will bring untold benefits to the communities they connect.

This corridor is an integral component of our Maine Active Transportation Arterials vision- a joint vision of 8 organizations concerned with active transportation in Maine. This vision connect all of Maine's 25 largest municipalities and over two-thirds of the population. The Merrymeeting Trail/Lower Road is a part of this plan and referenced as a priority in the new, MDOT Maine State Active Transportation Plan.

The MTC supports the interim use of the Lower Road as a trail-until-rail, acknowledging that it additionally is one piece of the puzzle to providing more equitable transportation options for communities and underserved populations. This project can serve as a multi-use recreation AND active transportation corridor, connecting people to what they need to access in their daily lives while preserving the rail corridor for potential future rail use.

Thank you all for your commitment to this new, important process and for the opportunity to comment today.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 3:37:36 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.

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 15:32:01 EDT  
Name: Joanne Joy  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074466569  
Email: joanne\_joy@comcast.net

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

My comments focus on the role of Merrymeeting Trail in supporting healthy communities and overall public health. Healthy Communities is a model articulated and supported first by the World Health Organization back in the 1980s and has been redefined and expanded ever since. Both built and natural environments that promote and support regular daily physical activity are very important for the health of people of all ages in the community. There is a revival of healthcare, mental health care and public health professionals encouraging people to walk together out of doors to prevent and control chronic conditions like heart disease and diabetes.

The value of out-of-doors, free and accessible physical activity for children, families, and individuals of all ages has been documented over and over. Merrymeeting trail extends from Gardiner, through Richmond, Bowdoinham, and into Topsham supporting people to recreate locally – as well as connect for longer biking, all great for healthier living no matter

During COVID Maine experienced a renewed and expanded interest in visiting local, state and national parks and trails. We want to continue and expand that interest. The addition of Merrymeeting Trail provides a relatively underserved part of the state with both local walks and longer trails that connect communities. As someone who has walked the Kennebec River Rail Trail between towns, I can't wait until I can walk from my home town of Bowdoinham's waterfront!

Thanks for considering all the aspects and benefits of the trail for the health and wellbeing of us all.

Joanne Joy

Special Projects Administrator, Healthy Communities of the Capital Area

Home - 143 Main St  
Bowdoinham, ME 04008

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 2:52:36 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.

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 14:46:12 EDT  
Name: Stephen Louria  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 9737691502  
Email: [stephen18440@proton.me](mailto:stephen18440@proton.me)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

My property is right alongside the tracks. I think a recreational trail would be a good asset, but I would like to strongly suggest that it is NON-motorized vehicles only. Bikes, cross country skiing, walking/running, etc. Bulky motorized vehicles such as side-by-sides and ATVs would be a significant noise disturbance and ruin the serenity of the route... I walk the tracks all the time as they are now, and I love the quiet nature you go north... there is enough motorized road noise in Richmond... please do not add to it.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 1:17:32 PM

---

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

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

Date: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 13:11:01 EDT  
Name: Heather Ridley  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075835423  
Email: [ridley.heatherl@gmail.com](mailto:ridley.heatherl@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I am moving to Bowdoinham in the coming months and this would be such an amazing addition to my new community!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 8:47:26 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 08:44:35 EDT  
Name: Deb Embler  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074240949  
Email: deb.embler@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

Can't make the zoom meeting but I support this idea! Great repurpose idea for our town

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 8:37:27 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 08:19:20 EDT  
Name: Drew Masterman  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076508241  
Email: drewmasterman@hotmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

This proposed trail runs close to our house and I am all in favor of it! There is nothing to fear. Local kids are good. We could bicycle to Gardiner and beyond, and the hum of snowmobiles in winter is nice too. Make this project happen!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:32:26 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 07:21:15 EDT  
Name: Nate Burns  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 6039788977  
Email: nate.burns@aldenwoods.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

My wife and I moved to Richmond 2 years ago, we live close to the old train tracks. Ever since we moved here we thought of how great it would be for us and the community if the tracks were turned into a walking/biking rail trail path. We use the ones in Augusta and Brunswick all the time and would love to have one in our own town, connecting all of them together. We both very much support this trail, and hope to see it come to fruition.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023 7:32:25 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: Wednesday, 21-Jun-2023 07:25:59 EDT  
Name: Corey Whitegiver  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076191286  
Email: Corey.whitegiver@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

As a resident of Richmond, I would love to see the Merrymeeting trail extended through my town. I think it would be great for the town increasing activity to the area but that it would also provide a safer outdoor walking space as many of our roads do not offer sidewalks.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 2:37:10 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 14:29:55 EDT  
Name: Marna Miller  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: marnam@maine.rr.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am unable to attend the June 22 public meeting, but I would like to express my strong support for the proposed Merrymeeting Trail. I took up biking after completing cancer treatment, when side effects caused so much joint pain that I was nearly unable to walk. Biking was pretty much the only thing I could do, and the protected, off-road portions of the Eastern Trail became my lifeline. I am now an enthusiastic advocate for the expansion of off-road bicycle paths throughout our state, so every citizen can safely enjoy the health benefits of biking. Please support the proposed Merrymeeting Trail.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 12:32:09 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 12:29:49 EDT  
Name: Brian Berube  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072406791  
Email: memorylanefarm207@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

As a property owner in Richmond I support the proposed rail trail system for our community.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 12:27:07 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 12:20:57 EDT  
Name: Debbie Berube  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074769703  
Email: rberube41@aol.com

Topic:  
-----

Comments:

We just brought property in Richmond and would love recreational biking and walking trails!!  
-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 12:27:07 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 12:18:45 EDT  
Name: Robert Abrell  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 5302630161  
Email: star\_flower@comcast.net

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Strongly hope for extension of trail south from Gardiner. Rail Trail existence played a large part of reason we recently purchased a home in Hallowell. Hope project construction can begin soon. Thanks.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 12:22:08 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 12:19:44 EDT  
Name: Harold Payson  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [hcpayson@gmail.com](mailto:hcpayson@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I support the use of rail beds for active transportation.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 12:07:02 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 11:56:11 EDT  
Name: Julie Isbill  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [isbilljk@gmail.com](mailto:isbilljk@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am thrilled to think of a new off-road, universal access trail from Topsham to Gardiner! I can imagine riding the entire route for a special occasion and pieces of the route more regularly for recreation, exercise, and getting around while enjoying fresh air and connection with community! The Merrymeeting Trail will be one more giant step forward in boosting quality of life and environment in Maine. The investment will pay off tenfold. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 10:17:01 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 10:07:22 EDT  
Name: Peter Hall  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-420-0431  
Email: [petehall9@gmail.com](mailto:petehall9@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am writing in support of adapting the Lower Road Rail Corridor to be made suitable for active (bike/ped) use. I have used dozens of these types of trails all across the US and the world. In addition I have reviewed the literature about the benefits these trails can make. I can with confidence say they improve health, safety and the quality of life of our citizens and visitors. And it is clear that while accomplishing this they at the same time enhance the economies of the areas they traverse. Please vote in favor of the Merrymeeting Trail.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 9:32:00 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 09:25:43 EDT  
Name: Joseph G Pelliccia  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073445159  
Email: [jpellicc@yahoo.com](mailto:jpellicc@yahoo.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am a big supporter of converting the Berlin Subdivision route into a Portland to Auburn multi-use trail. Unlike most supporters of this effort, I am also a member of Trainriders Northeast who oppose this effort for reasons I can't comprehend as this line would not make an economically reasonable passenger rail line to Auburn as it would not connect with the Downeaster service in Portland. And carrying freight can be done on the parallel CSX line which exists but is not heavily utilized. Having said that I am a big supporter of extending passenger rail service to Auburn (and other points North) using the CSX line.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 7:56:59 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: Tuesday, 20-Jun-2023 07:49:03 EDT  
Name: Lisa Childs  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [anderchilds@hotmail.com](mailto:anderchilds@hotmail.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I support the Merrymeeting Rail Trail. Please approve this plan to support a healthy future for Mainers!  
Thank you!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 19, 2023 3:16:46 PM

---

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

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

Date: Monday, 19-Jun-2023 11:29:06 EDT  
Name: Alan Claude  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074460401  
Email: [ac@alanclaude.com](mailto:ac@alanclaude.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

the proposed walking/bike trail from Topsham/Brunswick to Augusta is a huge economic and recreational opportunity attracting cyclist and marathoners alike. Please proceed in making this happen from an Art Gallery owner in Gardiner.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 19, 2023 10:36:45 AM

---

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

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

Date: Monday, 19-Jun-2023 10:29:36 EDT  
Name: James O'Hare  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2078412261  
Email: oharejp@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I would like to express my support for the completion of the Merrymeeting Trail. These types of trails provide great opportunities for people to get healthy exercise and serve to draw tourist dollars from those who wish to have a safe place to walk, and bike.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 19, 2023 10:01:42 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: Monday, 19-Jun-2023 09:46:19 EDT  
Name: David Whittlesey  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207 522 4118  
Email: david.whittlesey@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

As I will be traveling June 22 and may miss the public hearing on the Merrymeeting Trail, I want to express my strong support for completing the full 34 mile mixed use project as expeditiously as possible. As a former Bowdoinham resident and select board member, and active member of BCDI, as well as current resident of Brunswick, I believe the trip will be a huge benefit to the entire region.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 18, 2023 10:21:37 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, 18-Jun-2023 21:59:03 EDT  
Name: Nick Suarez  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 3015258175  
Email: nsuarezcardenas@hntb.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

As a former Bowdoin student and intern at the Town of Topsham Department of Planning and Development, I am excited to voice my strong support for the Merrymeeting Trail and the conversion of the Lower Road rail corridor into a unique recreational facility. Re-imagining the rail tracks as an active mobility corridor will greatly benefit all the communities and residents it touches from Augusta to Brunswick. I cannot wait to return to Maine and experience the trail for myself!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 18, 2023 8:16:37 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, 18-Jun-2023 20:08:29 EDT  
Name: Greg Korbet  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2073180403  
Email: [greg.korbet@gmail.com](mailto:greg.korbet@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

The creation of this trail would give local residents access to some remote and beautiful parts of Maine. The section that runs along the Cathance river is certainly where you should start and work your way north.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 18, 2023 5:11:28 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, 18-Jun-2023 17:08:34 EDT  
Name: Martin Spahn  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076298277  
Email: martinlewisspahn@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I am writing in support of the Merrymeeting Trail. We can have BOTH a trail and rail service!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 17, 2023 6:01:16 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, 17-Jun-2023 17:50:20 EDT  
Name: Betsy Fear  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: +1 02075222048  
Email: betzfear@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

We need more trails for safe biking as the roads with no paved edges are treacherous! The Merrymeeting trail would be a huge benefit. All that being said, I do mourn the loss of the train system of my parent's era. We are beholden to the oil and auto industries.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 2:40:05 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, 14-Jun-2023 14:32:59 EDT  
Name: Hal Norvell  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075404068  
Email: halnorvell@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

While I am in favour of extending the rail trail in both directions, I am very concerned that the rail trail be kept for possible use of extending its use for the return of rail service through to Augusta and beyond. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 10:20:02 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: Wednesday, 14-Jun-2023 10:10:12 EDT  
Name: Craig Erskine  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-877-4915  
Email: cerskine19dscout41@protonmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I'm commenting on the use of the unused rail in-between Winslow and Brunswick. It would nice to have less opportunities to be hit by a dangerous moron in a vehicle on the road while biking that portion of the East Coast Greenway. It's highly irresponsible to leave this public property unused when it will benefit every town it goes through. Stop dragging butt on this project, get it down.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023 8:59:46 PM

---

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

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

Date: Tuesday, 13-Jun-2023 20:53:11 EDT  
Name: Peggy Brown  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-751-6768  
Email: brownmartell@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I'm writing in support of the Merrymeeting Trail connecting Topsham, Bowdoinham, Richmond and Gardiner. We need to invest in these types of healthy, non-motor vehicle using trails for our kids, for our economy and for our future.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023 1:19:42 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: Tuesday, 13-Jun-2023 13:13:30 EDT  
Name: Catherine Kimball  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: (207) 712-9319  
Email: cathkimball@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am very much in support of establishing the Merrymeeting Trails system as proposed. I think it would be of great benefit to the surrounding communities and would also be appealing to potential visitors. I would definitely use the trail. I also see a need for safe trails and bike routes in the area. I would use my bike more and cut down on gas use, and related cost and pollution, if routes for walking and biking were safer, as they would be with this route.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023 8:14:34 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: Tuesday, 13-Jun-2023 08:11:05 EDT  
Name: Elizabeth M Cheever  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2077257137  
Email: Dogsandhouse@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

The Merrymeeting Trail would be a terrific asset to the area. Bikers, hikers and other community uses would have the opportunity to benefit with the development of this defunct rail line as a public use area. I urge the committees to encourage and develop this space for the public good, enhancing Maine's reputation as a vacation destination and contributing to the local economy.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023 7:39:36 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: Tuesday, 13-Jun-2023 07:25:31 EDT  
Name: Patrick Conlon  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 3473313982  
Email: paddymike2@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am unable to attend the Lower Road Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council meeting on Thursday, June 22, 2023 so I wanted to cast a vote in support of the Merrymeeting Trail. In my daily work for the Eastern Trail the one question that I am constantly asked by trail users is when more of the ET will be finished to facilitate more off road trail. People love trails. They don't love cycling on Maine roads for fear of fast moving, oversized motor vehicles. People feel safe on trails in Maine. Maine needs to expand its trail system. Build the Merrymeeting Trail. Thank you.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 12, 2023 9:14:15 AM

---

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

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

Date: Monday, 12-Jun-2023 09:02:45 EDT  
Name: Sue Ellen Bordwell  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076503858  
Email: seabordwell@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am writing in support of the Lower Road rail corridor becoming a trail until such time as rail use is feasible. Connecting our towns, providing car-free easy access to the sights, scenery, history and natural delights will be a great draw for tourists, car-free commuters to the state capitol and folks like me: Maine tax payer, active transportation enthusiast. Underlying all this is my unease in paying my taxes to maintain a Maine resource that I and other citizens are unable to enjoy. Please recommend to the commissioner the use of this corridor for a trail.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 5:44:00 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-Jun-2023 17:36:36 EDT  
Name: Michael Berry  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072006394  
Email: mike.berry41@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I am writing to bring your attention to an idea that has the potential to make a significant positive impact on our rural community, regarding the Merrymeeting Trail. It revolves around the transformation of unused railroads into biking trails, creating valuable fitness opportunities for our residents while simultaneously revitalizing our local infrastructure.

As you may know, railroads that are no longer in use often lie dormant, serving no purpose other than gathering dust and occupying valuable land. By converting these neglected railways into biking trails, we can breathe new life into our surroundings and unlock a wealth of benefits for our community. Here are some compelling reasons why this endeavor is worth considering:

**Enhanced Fitness and Well-being:** In today's fast-paced world, it has become increasingly important to prioritize physical activity and overall well-being. By repurposing unused railroads into biking trails, we provide a safe and accessible space for individuals of all ages and fitness levels to engage in regular exercise. Biking is not only a fun and enjoyable activity but also a low-impact form of exercise that promotes cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles, and improves mental well-being.

**Community Cohesion and Social Engagement:** The development of biking trails fosters a sense of community by providing a shared space for people to connect and engage with one another. Families, friends, and neighbors can come together to enjoy the great outdoors, promoting a healthier and more connected community. Additionally, these trails can attract visitors from neighboring areas, boosting tourism and supporting local businesses.

**Economic Benefits:** The creation of biking trails has the potential to bring economic advantages to our rural community. It can attract outdoor enthusiasts and tourists, who will likely spend money on accommodations, dining, and other local services. The increase in visitors can inject new life into our local economy, create job opportunities, and stimulate growth in related industries such as bicycle rentals, repair shops, and eco-tourism.

**Environmental Conservation:** Biking trails provide an eco-friendly alternative to motorized transportation, reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable living. By encouraging cycling as a mode of transportation, we can contribute to the preservation of our natural environment and reduce the impact of vehicular congestion on our roadways.

**Heritage and Cultural Preservation:** Converting unused railroads into biking trails allows us to honor our region's rich history and preserve its cultural heritage. By incorporating informational signage along the trails, we can educate visitors about the significance of the railroads, the communities they once connected, and the stories they hold. This cultural preservation adds depth and interest to the biking experience and instills a sense of pride in our community's past.

I strongly believe that the transformation of unused railroads into biking trails represents an excellent opportunity for our rural community. It not only provides a range of health and fitness benefits but also contributes to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of our area. I kindly request your support and consideration in exploring this proposal further, potentially bringing us one step closer to a healthier and more vibrant community.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I am more than willing to discuss this idea further or provide additional information if needed. Together, let's seize this opportunity to create a brighter future for our community.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 12:53:54 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-Jun-2023 12:47:54 EDT  
Name: david g whittlesey  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075224118  
Email: david.whittlesey@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:  
Definitely support the Merrymeeting Trail!!  
-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 12:08:54 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-Jun-2023 12:03:51 EDT  
Name: Catherine L Curtis  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2072086902  
Email: [curtisc@link75.org](mailto:curtisc@link75.org)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I see this trail as an investment in the future of all the communities it serves as well as a place for me to safely walk in my retirement years-and the history that could be shared along the trail would be another benefit.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 8:33:51 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, 11-Jun-2023 08:22:24 EDT  
Name: Douglas Dickinson  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 757-478-8071  
Email: maineatvcoalition@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I just heard about the possibility of this railbed system being considered for redevelopment into a trail system. Has any consideration been given to allowing it as a multipurpose trail system to include motorized vehicles such as ATV and snowmobiles? The support could be monumental, and the funding would likely be more feasible if both types of vehicles were allowed to share this trail system. I am in full support and would put some significant effort into helping to move this forward if ATV and snowmobiles would be allowed to use this system. It would be of huge economic benefit. Please contact me if you would like to discuss. My personal cell is (757) 478-8071. I am the president of the Maine ATV Coalition, trailmaster for the Central Maine ATV Club, Secretary for the Fairfield Country Riders Snowmobile Club and member of many ATV and snowmobile clubs.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 10, 2023 10:48:44 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, 10-Jun-2023 22:42:21 EDT  
Name: Ben Martens  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2076191755  
Email: martens.ben@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

This trail is a fantastic idea. With all the people looking for outdoor recreation opportunities, one of the best things we can do is connect communities though trails. I fully support using this old train line for a trail.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 10, 2023 7:23:41 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: Saturday, 10-Jun-2023 19:13:42 EDT  
Name: Emma Bond  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: emma.e.bond@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I strongly support interim trail on this corridor. Authorizing an interim trail would help public health and improve the wellbeing of people across the state. It is also the only viable and cost effective use of this corridor, as recent studies make clear that there is no federal money available to support the astronomical cost of passenger rail on this route. An interim trail would also preserve the underlying grading and corridor if passenger rail were to become feasible in the future. A trail would be a fantastic public resource " far better than allowing this state-owned track to remain unused for decades to come.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 10, 2023 5:03:38 PM

---

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

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

Date: Saturday, 10-Jun-2023 16:59:15 EDT  
Name: Lauren Tobias  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: laurent@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

Love the idea of creating a new trail in midcoast Maine!

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Saturday, June 10, 2023 12:43:36 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.

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

Date: Saturday, 10-Jun-2023 12:39:34 EDT  
Name: Linda Hermans  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074463774  
Email: lindasueheemans@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:  
Iâ€™ve been waiting for this for years!

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Friday, June 9, 2023 9:43:08 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, 09-Jun-2023 09:36:56 EDT  
Name: Neil Stottler  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [neilstottler@duck.com](mailto:neilstottler@duck.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I didn't know there was a specific group for researching the lower road. Train service is very important to me and this is something I fully back and would use. I ended up moving to cambridge mass for work but often travel back to Farmingdale on the weekends. Having a train connection would be very convenient for myself. I'm reading through all the meeting notes and presentations and I see lots of comments swaying towards trail usage, if we rip up the tracks they will never go back... we need to keep the rails. Put the wires up while we're at it since Hallowell is concerned with noise pollution. The MBTA just funded and almost finished the South Coast rail project which is of similar scale and cost to this project idea. The MBTA is also starting electrification of their lines. Since CSX can't run doublestacked containers there's no reason for us not to put the wires up. I really want rail connection to Augusta.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 5, 2023 11:16:48 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.

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

Date: Monday, 05-Jun-2023 11:09:42 EDT  
Name: Jennifer Curtis  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [jenncurtis1@yahoo.com](mailto:jenncurtis1@yahoo.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

As a resident of Topsham, I wholeheartedly support the proposed Merrymeeting trail and would love to see it built. My daughter and I would use it as a destination to bike as we do now with local rail trails in Lisbon and Brunswick.

I hope that someday it can also be connected to Bath, and create a truly world-class destination cycling attraction.

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@Maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@Maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 5, 2023 8:51:47 AM

---

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

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

Date: Monday, 05-Jun-2023 08:48:19 EDT  
Name: Nina Scheepers  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 8585396869  
Email: n.n.scheepers@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

Good morning,

I am writing to support the creation of the Merrymeeting Trail to connect Topsham, Bowdoinham, and Richmond. I am not able to make the meeting on 6/22, but am in full support of building the trail. Trail infrastructure is critical to decreasing our reliance on cars, increasing our climate resilience, and building strong communities.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions, and if I can show support in other ways.

Thank you,

Nina

Topsham Resident

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 4, 2023 8:21:39 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-Jun-2023 20:13:31 EDT  
Name: Alicia Heyburn  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075228065  
Email: aheyburn@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

In support of the Merrymeeting Trail.

Rail corridors are transportation corridors, and while rail is not viable, other transportation options should be prioritized. A decade ago I was involved professionally with developing the Merrymeeting Trail. We had a grand vision for a protected bike/ped route "from the capitol to the Coast." And now, on June 22, we have a chance to make that vision come true.

Living in Brunswick along the Androscoggin River Bike path I see all kinds of use from roller skis to baby carriages. It's a wonderful

community asset, and a chance to blend commuting, exercise, dog play and family time. I wish for every community from Augusta to Brunswick to have the same opportunities.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 4, 2023 7:21:37 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-Jun-2023 19:08:26 EDT  
Name: Ray Ayotte  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2078775437  
Email: rayotte@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

There are several major reasons why converting rails to trails can be a good idea:

Converting unused railroad tracks into trails creates new opportunities for outdoor recreation. This trail can be used for activities such as walking, jogging and cycling. They provide a safe and accessible space for people to engage in physical activity, promoting health and well-being.

This rail-trail offers a green corridor through urban and rural areas, preserving natural landscapes and wildlife habitats.

Rail-trails have the potential to stimulate local economies and enhance community development. They can attract tourists and visitors, who may spend money on accommodations, food, and other services in nearby towns. The trails can also boost property values, attract businesses, and create job opportunities in the surrounding areas. Furthermore, rail-trails often encourage community engagement, bringing people together and fostering a sense of civic pride.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.



**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 4, 2023 6:41:35 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-Jun-2023 18:33:13 EDT  
Name: Manon whittlesey  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2075226142  
Email: mwhittle77@gmail.com

Topic:

-----

Comments:

I'm really excited at the idea of a walking/biking trail, and being part of an interconnected Greenway. We would commute by bike whenever possible. Thank you

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 4, 2023 5:21:36 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.

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

Date: Sunday, 04-Jun-2023 17:12:00 EDT  
Name: Mary Malia  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074501611  
Email: mgmalia@gmail.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

To the MaineDOT's Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council: as a recent shows that it is not financially feasible to restore rail service between Brunswick and Bangor, I want you to know that I support the development of the Merrymeeting Trail for use by the citizens of Maine. We need more trails, easier access that is with reach of local communities along this line. Please support this.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 10:54:55 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, 29-Jun-2023 10:46:31 EDT  
Name: Patricia Barber  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 207-625-4755  
Email: rugbyvet88@yahoo.com

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

To RUAC members,

I wish to respond to a comment (and the rebuttal) I made during the June 28th RUAC meeting regarding the overrepresentation of trail interests on this council. I acknowledge the response given by a RUAC member, stating that the overrepresentation was due to the fact that their constituents supported pulling up the tracks, hence it was fair and valid.

I disagree. These railroad corridors are like a river. Everything upstream and downstream is affected by what happens in any section. If you dam the middle, the entire system is altered forever. So although one may say, well that dam is beneficial to my town, it is disingenuous to infer that action does not have detrimental implications for the rest of the population.

Pulling up this section of railroad destroys any potential benefit for tens of thousands of people forever, for this section of rail connects to every other rail system in Maine and beyond. Everyone does not agree with your town that the trail is the only possible use of this corridor. Councilman Leonard in Bangor, Transportation Analyst LaBonte from Auburn, and Transportation Engineer Bartlett from Portland, among others, have been very outspoken about the detrimental effects removal of rail infrastructure would have on their constituents. It is selfish and greedy to destroy what others need just to satisfy your own advantage.

Now if one builds a bypass to benefit their area, the whole system might be slightly altered, but it far from destroyed. A Rail With Trail option is that bypass.

I implore the RUAC members to think about a bypass (RWT) vs destruction (TUR) of the entire system. Your decision to remove tracks affects more than your immediate area. You CAN support your constituents with their needs, and not destroy those who live beyond you.

Please vote RWT in your final decision.

Thank you, Patty Barber

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**To:** [neilstottler@duck.com](mailto:neilstottler@duck.com)  
**Subject:** RE: Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, July 6, 2023 12:59:00 PM

---

All cost estimates are based recent rail projects adjusted for inflation. It is worth noting that the study you are referencing also has a \$15m/mile scenario. Our cost estimates fall somewhere in the middle.

Nathan Howard  
Director, Rail Transportation  
MaineDOT, Office of Freight and Business Logistics  
16 State House Station, 2nd Floor  
Augusta, ME 04332-0016  
(207) 624-3042

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

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov <Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov>  
Sent: Saturday, June 17, 2023 10:40 AM  
To: Howard, Nathan <Nathan.Howard@maine.gov>  
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments

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

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

Date: Saturday, 17-Jun-2023 10:34:03 EDT  
Name: neil stottler  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone:  
Email: [neilstottler@duck.com](mailto:neilstottler@duck.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I've been reading all these documents and strongly think RWT is the way to go. We can't loose our rail connection or it will never return. I'm also curious how you've reached \$11m/mi? A much larger project in Mass, the Norther Tier Passenger Rail Study, only is spending \$7m/mi with much more substantial infrastructure upgrades. Are we sure the cost of a Class 3 rail infra is really that high? What would the cost of a Class 4 look like? I think at least up to Gardiner should be class 4 so it can be competitive to driving and capture more riders. I am eager for the meeting this week.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Kathryn](#)  
**To:** [Howard, Nathan](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 7:53:12 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.**

Thank you, Nate. I would encourage the Council to review the success of the Sunrise Trail. Trails like this draw many people to the area. Perhaps ATV clubs in the Merrymeeting area could be consulted and counted on for support.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

On Sun, Jun 11, 2023 at 5:39 PM, Howard, Nathan  
<[Nathan.Howard@maine.gov](mailto:Nathan.Howard@maine.gov)> wrote:

Hello Kathryn -

The Council has yet to develop a specific recommendation for potential trail usage. However, the existing rail trail located along a portion of this corridor does not allow ATVs or Horseback riding.

Regards

Nate Howard  
Director, Rail Transportation  
MaineDOT

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

From: [Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)  
<[Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov](mailto:Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov)>  
Sent: Saturday, June 10, 2023 12:14 PM  
To: Howard, Nathan <[Nathan.Howard@maine.gov](mailto:Nathan.Howard@maine.gov)>  
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments

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

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

Date: Saturday, 10-Jun-2023 12:10:53 EDT  
Name: Kathryn McGloin  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 2074465253  
Email: [mcgloinkl@yahoo.com](mailto:mcgloinkl@yahoo.com)

Topic:

-----

Comments:

Hello. Will the Merrymeeting Trail be open, as the Sunrise Trail in Washington County is to horse and ATV riders?

-----

If required, please respond as soon as possible.

**From:** [Howard, Nathan](mailto:Howard.Nathan@maine.gov)  
**To:** [maineatvcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:maineatvcoalition@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** RE: Lower Road Public Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 11, 2023 5:43:00 PM

---

Hello Douglas -

The Council has yet to develop a specific recommendation for potential trail usage. However, the existing rail trail (Kennebec River Rail Trail) located along a portion of this corridor does not allow ATVs or snowmobiling.

Regards

Nate Howard  
Director, Rail Transportation  
MaineDOT

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

From: Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov <Communications.MaineDOT@maine.gov>  
Sent: Sunday, June 11, 2023 8:30 AM  
To: Howard, Nathan <Nathan.Howard@maine.gov>  
Subject: Lower Road Public Comments

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

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

Date: Sunday, 11-Jun-2023 08:22:24 EDT  
Name: Douglas Dickinson  
Organization(if applicable):  
Phone: 757-478-8071  
Email: [maineatvcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:maineatvcoalition@gmail.com)

Topic:

-----  
Comments:

I just heard about the possibility of this railbed system being considered for redevelopment into a trail system. Has any consideration been given to allowing it as a multipurpose trail system to include motorized vehicles such as ATV and snowmobiles? The support could be monumental, and the funding would likely be more feasible if both types of vehicles were allowed to share this trail system. I am in full support and would put some significant effort into helping to move this forward if ATV and snowmobiles would be allowed to use this system. It would be of huge economic benefit. Please contact me if you would like to discuss. My personal cell is (757) 478-8071. I am the president of the Maine ATV Coalition, trailmaster for the Central Maine ATV Club, Secretary for the Fairfield Country Riders Snowmobile Club and member of many ATV and snowmobile clubs.

-----  
If required, please respond as soon as possible.

