

Portland North Expansion Review

RAIL ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES
December 2006

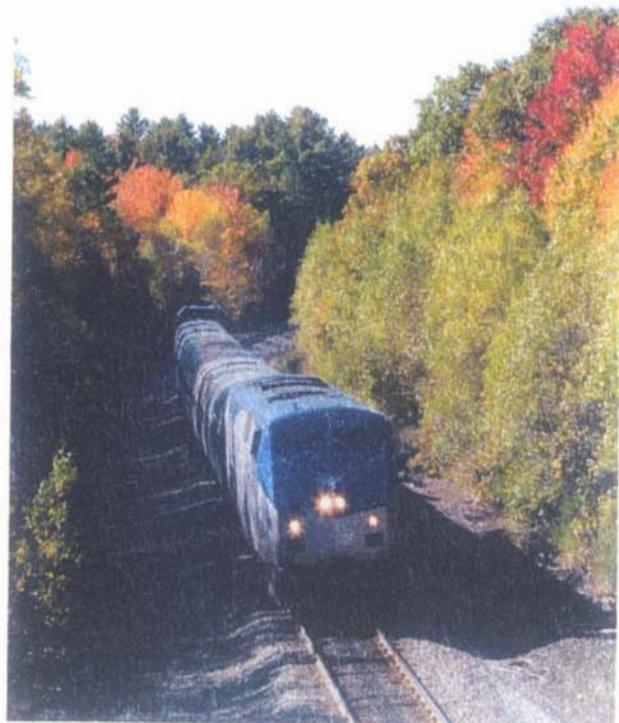




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PORTLAND NORTH EXPANSION REVIEW

Rail Alignment Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

Five years ago, passenger rail service returned to Maine after a 30-year absence. Since that time, the Downeaster has transported more than 1.3 million passengers the equivalent of more than 100 million passenger miles in the Boston to Portland corridor. Nationally recognized for customer service, on time performance and 32% ridership growth last year, the Downeaster has proven to be a viable, quality transportation alternative in northern New England. Additionally, Maine's Downeaster station communities are experiencing economic growth and vitality. Municipal leaders in Old Orchard Beach credit the renaissance of their town, including the 808 new year-round housing units and the area's first luxury hotel, to the Downeaster. Developers of the \$100M Saco Island redevelopment project clearly states that their project, "would not make sense if it were not for the train service."

In order to fully develop a passenger rail system in Maine that optimizes the potential for economic development, tourism, congestion mitigation and positive environmental impacts, it is important to "connect the dots" and expand service to Brunswick. This is a critical element to the future of Maine, because it connects the economic center Boston with Rockland, extending economic and community development opportunities through to the Mid-Coast region.

Currently, passenger service from Boston terminates at the Portland Transportation Center (PTC) in Portland. From this point, there are two possible alignments that can be developed to support passenger rail service north of Portland to Yarmouth Junction: the *Pan Am Main Line* and the *I-295 Corridor*.

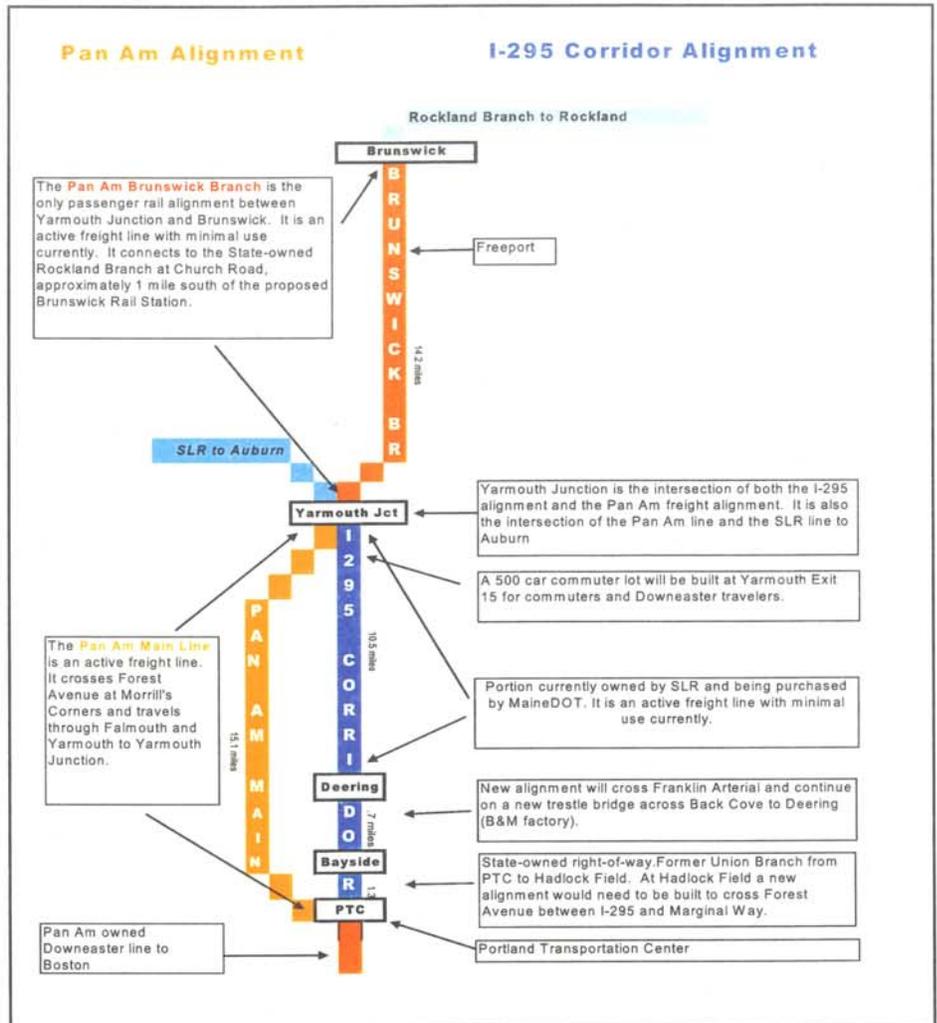
This review is not intended to be an "either/or" competition among rail alignments between Portland and Brunswick, but rather an assessment of the overall needs and opportunities associated with the expansion of rail services in Maine. It seeks to provide information about the work elements, capital costs, levels of service and operating costs associated with the development of each of these alignments and contemplates a comprehensive approach that will help Maine meet its near and long term transportation and economic objectives.

ALIGNMENT OVERVIEW

The *Pan Am Main Line* is an existing and active freight line that could be rehabilitated to support the expansion of the Downeaster. While this alignment would not support a commuter rail system, it does create a passenger rail connection that would allow for service from Boston through Portland to Yarmouth Junction, and then onto Brunswick via the Brunswick Branch.

The *I-295 Corridor*, the preferred alternative of the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), requires the construction of a new rail corridor through the Bayside area of Portland and a new rail bridge over Back Cove. The plan then calls for the rehabilitation of existing St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad (SLR) freight line that would allow passenger service to continue to Yarmouth Junction.

The *I-295 Corridor* alignment will support both intercity and commuter service and meets many of Maine's long term transportation objectives. The project, however, is complex, expensive and will take a number of years to complete.



Yarmouth Junction is the intersection of those two alignments and where the SLR line continues in a north-westerly direction to Auburn, Lewiston, Pineland, Sunday River and Montreal; it is also where the *Pan Am Brunswick Branch* continues in a north-easterly direction to Freeport, Brunswick and Rockland. Whichever route(s) is developed between Portland and Yarmouth, the 14.2 *Pan Am Brunswick Branch* will need to be rehabilitated to continue service to Brunswick.

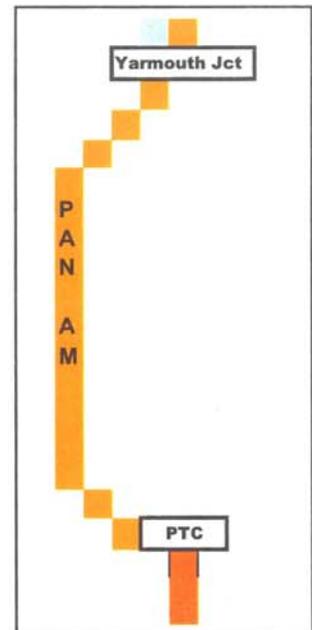
RAIL LINE DEVELOPMENT PART 1: PORTLAND TRANSPORTATION CENTER TO YARMOUTH JUNCTION Pan Am Main Line or I-295 Corridor

Pan Am Main Line

The *Pan Am Main Line* is an active freight line that runs from the PTC, crossing outer Forest Avenue at Woodfords Corner, through Falmouth to Royal Junction. Currently, approximately four to six freight trains operate on this line per day. At Royal Junction, the freight main line veers north toward Waterville and the Pan Am *Brunswick Branch* continues east through Yarmouth Junction, on to Freeport and Brunswick.

Operating passenger rail service along the *Pan Am Main Line* between the PTC and Yarmouth Junction would support the operation of two or three daily round trips between Brunswick and Portland with continuing service to Boston. Because it is an active freight line and is not located in a downtown or a concentrated business area, it will not support commuter service.

Pan Am Railways has provided a proposal to rehabilitate their freight line to Class 3, meaning it would support the operation of passenger trains with speeds up to 60mph. The rehabilitation would include the replacement of all rail to 115lb continuously welded rail (CWR), the replacement of approximately 16,000 ties, ditching and culvert work and the upgrade of all signals and crossings.



In addition to providing passenger service, this rehabilitation would improve safety at rail crossings, reduce noise associated with the passing of trains and could increase the operating speed of freight trains. The railroad cost to rehabilitate this line between the PTC and Yarmouth Junction to passenger standards, based on a proposal provided by Pan Am Railways, would be approximately \$15M.

Table 1

PORTLAND TRANSPORTATION CENTER to YARMOUTH JCT		
Pan Am Main Line		
	Length	Proposed RR Cost
Pan Am Freight Line Rehab		\$ 14,083,746
Contingency		\$ 916,254
Total Railroad Costs		\$ 15,000,000

I-295 Corridor

Passenger rail service along the *I-295 Corridor* will provide a number of transportation options for Maine. Studies show that I-295 through Portland will reach capacity by the year 2020. With little room to expand the highway, there is a necessity to develop transportation alternatives through that corridor, and passenger rail can play an integral role.

The *I-295 Corridor* project requires the development of a new rail corridor in the designated alignment beginning at the Portland Transportation Center, crossing Forest Avenue and then running parallel to I-295 through the Bayside area of Portland. It includes the construction of a 1,700 foot rail bridge over Back Cove to connect with the existing SLR freight line to Yarmouth Junction. The SLR line, which is currently being purchased by MaineDOT, would be rehabilitated to sustain passenger service continuing parallel to I-295, through Exit 15 in Yarmouth to Yarmouth Junction.

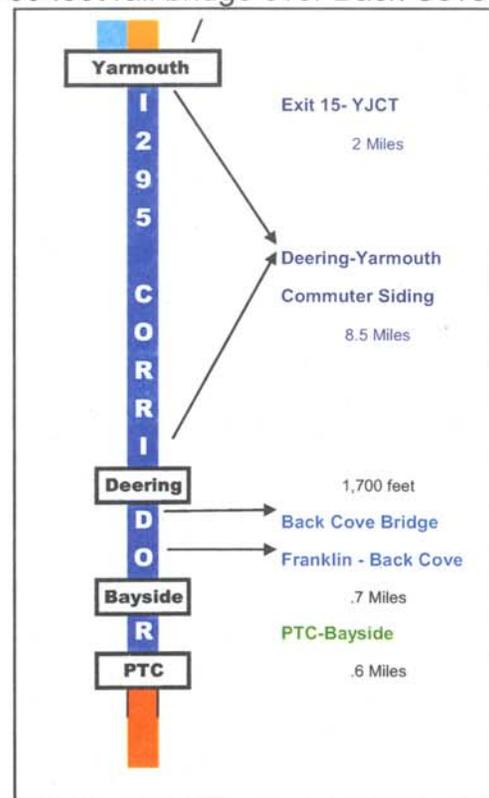
When completed, the Portland to Yarmouth Junction portion would be mostly state-owned and would provide the infrastructure to support both the Downeaster and commuter rail. While there is little dispute over the merits and long term benefits of this plan, it is complex and will cost in excess of \$40M to complete this PTC to Yarmouth Junction portion.

In addition to intercity Downeaster service, the *I-295 Corridor* would support the operation of commuter rail service between Bayside, currently in the midst of a \$100M revitalization project, and Yarmouth Exit 15.

Office, retail and residential complexes have and continue to be constructed in Bayside. Pedestrian walkways to other downtown Portland commercial districts are being developed. A rail station would be built in Bayside and METRO will provide transit connections to key locations throughout the Portland peninsula.

Parking at the Bayside station would be limited and passengers needing to leave a car would be encouraged to use facilities at the Portland Transportation Center. The Bayside Station would NOT replace the PTC as Portland's Train Station, but would act as a pedestrian and commuter station.

This proposal includes a number of complexities, significant construction and infrastructure modifications.



Scope of Work: I-295 Corridor from PTC to Yarmouth Junction

To support the operation of Downeaster service between the PTC and Yarmouth Junction it is necessary to:

- Construct a new alignment from the old Union Branch at the Park Street Bridge, across Forest Avenue and parallel to I-295 through Bayside and across Franklin Arterial.
- Construct a new alignment to the Sewer Plant and a new trestle bridge across Back Cove to Deering.
- Rehabilitate the existing SLR line parallel to I-295 by replacing all rail with 115lb CWR, replacing ties, reconstructing or replacing existing signals and upgrading the Presumpscot River and Royal River bridges.

To support commuter service as well as Downeaster service, it would also be necessary to:

- Construct a 3-mile passing siding in Yarmouth.
- Construct adequate track at the proposed Exit 15 and Bayside stations locations.

These improvements are projected to cost approximately \$41M.

Table 2

PORTLAND TRANSPORTATION CENTER to YARMOUTH JCT		
I-295 Corridor		
	Length	Proposed RR Cost
Investment to support Downeaster Extension		
PTC To Bayside/Franklin	1.3	\$ 4,328,435
Bayside/Franklin to Yarmouth Junction	14.4	\$ 25,186,775
Bayside Station		\$ 500,000
Contingency		\$ 2,472,074
Total for Downeaster Extension	15.7	\$ 32,487,284
Additional Investment to support Commuter Rail		
Double Track at Bayside		\$ 1,370,900
3 Mile Siding for Commuter Service		\$ 5,174,500
E. Deering and Yarmouth Exit 15 Stations		\$ 1,000,000
Contingency		\$ 780,545
Total for addition of Commuter Rail		\$ 8,325,945
PROJECT TOTAL for Downeaster & Commuter	15.7	\$ 40,813,229

The table above reflects costs provided by MaineDOT to construct a passenger rail corridor between the Portland Transportation and Brunswick that supports the extension of Downeaster service and provides for commuter rail service between Bayside and Yarmouth Exit 15. It does not take into consideration that new rail equipment would need to be purchased for commuter service, anticipated to cost approximately \$12M. See Appendix 2 for more detail. All costs in 2006 dollars.

RAIL LINE DEVELOPMENT PART 2

YARMOUTH JUNCTION TO BRUNSWICK

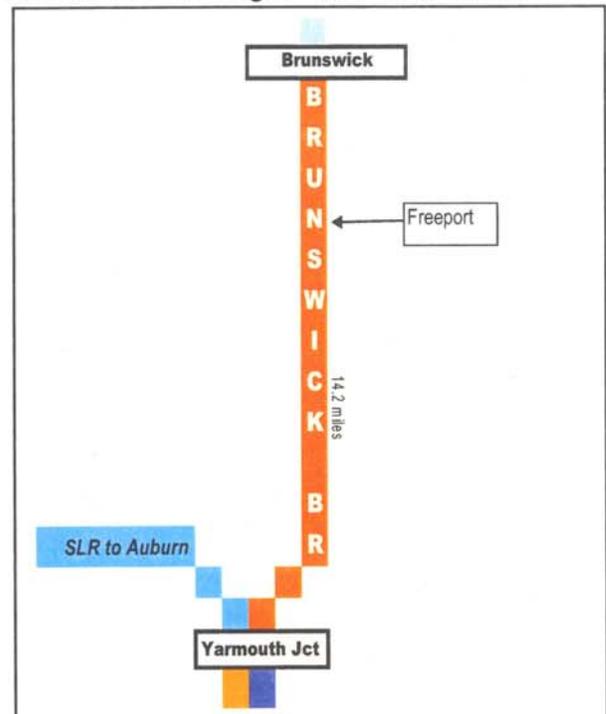
Pan Am Brunswick Branch

Yarmouth Junction is the intersection of the two alignments discussed in Part 1, the *Pan Am Main Line* and the *I-295 Corridor*.

At Yarmouth Junction the SLR freight line continues west through Auburn to Montreal. This SLR line is anticipated to be rehabilitated as part of the *I-295 Corridor* to support commuter service from Auburn, through Yarmouth Junction, to Exit 15 and then Bayside.

Also at Yarmouth Junction, the Pan Am *Brunswick Branch* continues east through Freeport to Brunswick. Although only one or two trains per week currently operate on the *Brunswick Branch*, it is an active freight line. This entire route is owned by Pan Am Railways through Church Road in Brunswick, approximately 1 mile south of the Brunswick rail station site. At Church Road the Pan Am *Brunswick Branch* connects to the state owned Rockland Branch, an active freight line already restored to support passenger service. The Rockland Branch continues through Bath and Wiscasset enroute to Rockland.

Currently, the Maine Eastern Railroad provides freight and seasonal passenger excursion on the Rockland Branch. Connectivity to the Downeaster would greatly enhance the potential for this service as it would provide a passenger connection from Boston through to Mid-Coast Maine.



The *Brunswick Branch* is the only rail corridor in existence between Yarmouth Junction and Brunswick. **The rehabilitation of the *Brunswick Branch* is required to support any/all passenger train service between Yarmouth Junction and Brunswick regardless of which alignment is utilized to provide service between the PTC and Yarmouth Junction.**

Pan Am Railways has provided a proposal outlining the scope of work and cost elements required to rehabilitate the *Brunswick Branch* to passenger standards.

It includes replacing all existing rail with 115 lb CWR, signal and crossing replacements/rehabilitations and other ditching and excavation work. Additionally, the Pan Am owned portion of the line extends as far as Church Road in Brunswick. A cost estimate has been provided by MaineDOT to rehabilitate the Church Road to Brunswick Station portion, including required track at the Brunswick Station.

The MaineDOT has submitted a slightly different proposal for the upgrade of the *Brunswick Branch*, due in part to the inclusion of a wye at Yarmouth Junction that is necessary to connect service from the *I-295 Corridor* to the *Brunswick Branch*.

Table 3

**YARMOUTH JUNCTION to BRUNSWICK
Pan Am Brunswick Branch**

	Length	Proposed RR Cost
PAN AM ESTIMATE		
Pan Am Brunswick Branch to Church Road		12,515,071
Rockland Branch Church Road to Brunswick Station		1,495,850
Freeport and Brunswick Stations		1,000,000
Contingency		1,500,000
Total Railroad Costs	14.2	16,510,921
MaineDOT ESTIMATE		
Pan Am Brunswick Branch to Brunswick Station		16,671,818
Freeport and Brunswick Stations		1,000,000
Contingency		2,500,772
Total Railroad Costs	14.2	20,172,590

The Pan Am Estimate reflects the proposal provided by Pan Am Railways to rehabilitate their Brunswick Branch from the Pan Am Main Line. This includes estimated costs provided by MaineDOT to complete the track from Church Road to the Brunswick station location.

The MaineDOT estimate reflects the proposal provided by the MaineDOT to rehabilitate the Pan Am Brunswick Branch between Yarmouth Junction and Brunswick from the SLR/I-295 Corridor branch. It includes the cost of building a wye at Yarmouth Junction to make a "right hand turn" onto the Brunswick Branch. See Appendix 2 for more detail. All costs in 2006 dollars.

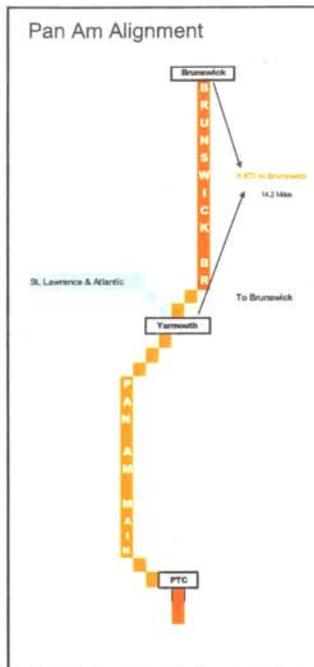
RAIL LINE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

PORTLAND TRANSPORTATION CENTER TO BRUNSWICK

Total Alignment Review

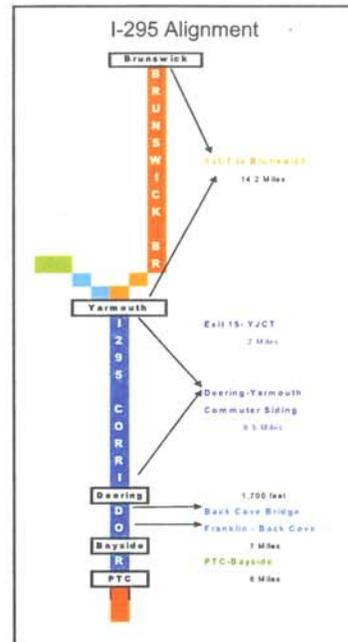
This summary evaluates the scope of work and cost elements associated with expanding passenger rail service from the PTC through to Brunswick via both the *Pan Am Main Line* and the *I-295 Corridor*.

For the purposes of this summary:



The *Pan Am Alignment* is the total route between the PTC and Brunswick via the *Pan Am Main Line* from the PTC to Yarmouth Junction and then the *Brunswick Branch* from Yarmouth Junction to Brunswick, using costs proposed by Pan Am Railways.

The *I-295 Alignment* is the total route between the PTC and Brunswick via the *I-295 Corridor* from the PTC to Yarmouth Junction and then the *Brunswick Branch*, using costs proposed by MaineDOT.



The *Pan Am Alignment* has been proposed as a single project that would include rehabilitation of the entire route. The *I-295 Alignment* could be completed in stages, with the *I-295 Corridor* being built for the purposes of expanding Downeaster service, and then being upgraded to support commuter service.

Table 4 illustrates the cost of rehabilitating the respective lines to support varying degrees of service.

Table 4

Cost Comparison of Alignments for different service levels

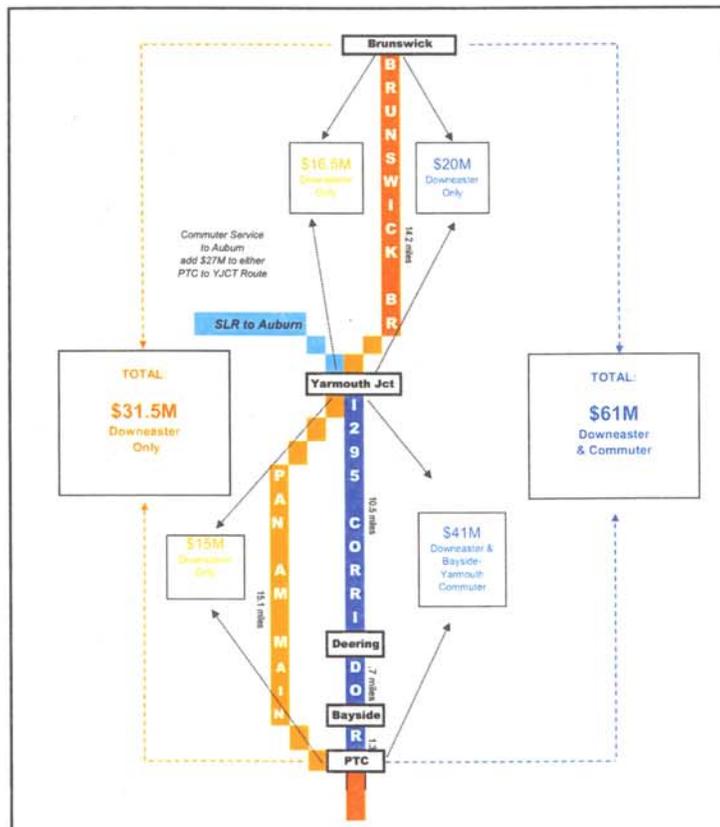
	Col 1	Col 2	Col 3
	Pan Am Alignment Supports Downeaster Extension	I-295 Alignment Supports Downeaster Extension	
			Supports Downeaster & Commuter Service
PTC to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 32,487,284	\$ 40,813,229
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 15,985,321	\$ 20,172,590	\$ 20,172,590
Total	\$ 30,985,321	\$ 52,659,874	\$ 60,985,819

Notes: Costs stated include contingencies and stations. They do not include any equipment, highway or operating costs. A detailed breakdown of cost elements is located in Appendix 3 of this report. All costs in 2006 dollars.

Column 1 - Illustrates the proposed cost of rehabilitating the *Pan Am Freight Line*, including the *Brunswick Branch*, between Portland and Brunswick such that it could support two daily round trips of the Downeaster to Brunswick.

Column 2 - Illustrates the proposed cost of building the *I-295 Alignment* including the *I-295 Corridor* and the *Brunswick Branch*, such that it could support two daily round trips of the Downeaster to Brunswick.

Column 3 - Illustrates the proposed cost of building the *I-295 Alignment* including the *I-295 Corridor* and the *Brunswick Branch*, such that it could support two daily round trips of the Downeaster to Brunswick in addition to commuter service between Bayside and Yarmouth Exit 15 and commuter service between Exit 15 and Auburn.



FUNDING CHALLENGES and OPTIONS

Federal or State

The MaineDOT is in the process of applying to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for *I-295 Alignment* funding. Federal funds are competitive and require significant amounts of planning and study. There is no guarantee that the project will meet the criteria to receive adequate levels of FTA funding. Even under the most favorable of circumstances, it is anticipated that the approval process will take approximately two years, followed by an additional year of engineering. Construction will commence at that point and is expected to take approximately two additional years. It is anticipated that approximately \$11M in highway work would be required to support this rail alignment and that it will be completed prior to the beginning of rail construction.

Based on the criteria for FTA programs, it is less likely that the Downeaster project on the *Pan Am Alignment* alone would qualify for federal funding. Pan Am has indicated that they would be willing to complete the rehabilitation of their line as a lump-sum force account. This would guarantee a fixed labor cost for each work element and materials would be charged at cost. In addition to providing a much more dependable cost estimate, this simplifies both the accounting and inspection process and saves on expensive engineering costs.

Non-federal funding sources could expedite the completion of any of the projects described in this report.

A SYSTEM ALTERNATIVE

Meeting Short Term and Long Term Objectives

While there is little disagreement that the *I-295 Alignment* is the most comprehensive alternative and that it should be pursued as an ultimate goal, the complexity and costliness of the project will delay Downeaster expansion possibilities for several years, or at least an undetermined amount of time.

A system approach might achieve the near term objective of expanding the Downeaster sooner, as an interim step, by investing non-FTA funds to rehabilitate the *Pan Am Alignment*. Note that this would complete the *Brunswick Branch* portion of the project and secure passenger access to Brunswick for future service.

Meanwhile, federal funding to construct the *I-295 Corridor*, complete with stations, equipment, parking and facilities to support the operation could be pursued. Once the *I-295 Corridor* is complete, Downeaster service could be re-aligned to operate through Bayside and commuter service could be introduced.

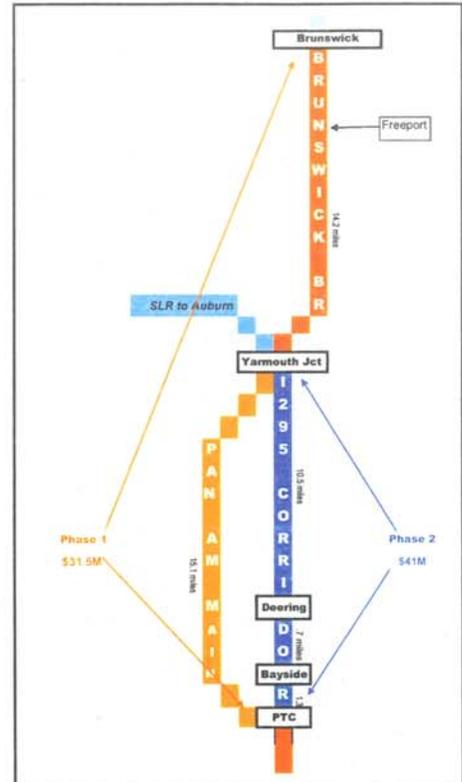


Table 5
System Approach Cost Summary

	Phase 1 Pan Am Alignment Supports Downeaster Extension	Phase 2 I-295 Alignment Add I-295 Corridor and Commuter Service	Total System Supports Downeaster & Commuter Service
PTC to Yarmouth Junction	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 40,813,229	\$ 55,813,229
Yarmouth Junction to Brunswick	\$ 16,510,921	\$ -	\$ 16,510,921
Total	\$ 31,510,921	\$ 40,813,229	\$ 72,324,150

Table 5 demonstrates the combined system railroad costs of rehabilitating the entire Pan Am Alignment an interim step, then adding the costs of building the I-295 Corridor between PTC and Yarmouth Junction. See Appendix 4 for more detail.

It is imperative to consider, however, that FTA requirements are rigid. **It would be necessary to follow appropriate guidelines to assure that state funding of the Pan Am Alignment as an interim step would not jeopardize future federal funding of the I-295 Alignment/Corridor.** Should this system approach be pursued, a formal request for consideration would need to be made to the FTA.

The proposed cost of proceeding with the system approach would be greater than pursuing either of the two alignments, but may serve to be more efficient in the long run to due to the nature of the Pan Am cost proposal, escalating prices and benefits of expanding Downeaster service sooner.

Table 6
System Approach Cost Comparison

	Alignment A	Alignment B	System
	Pan Am Alignment Supports Downeaster Extension only	I-295 Alignment Total Build out for I-295 Only	System Supports Downeaster & Commuter Service
PTC to Yarmouth Junction	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 40,813,229	\$ 55,813,229
Yarmouth Junction to Brunswick	\$ 16,510,921	\$ 20,172,950	\$ 16,510,921
Total	\$ 31,510,921	\$ 60,986,179	\$ 72,324,150

Table 6 compares the railroad costs of rehabilitating the *Pan Am Alignment* and the costs building the *I-295 Alignment* to the combined system approach of building the *Pan Am Alignment* as an interim step and then building *I-295 Corridor*. At an inflation rate of 3% annually, the 2012 cost of the I-295 Alignment alone would exceed the \$72M-the 2006 system cost illustrated above. See Appendix 4 for detail.

The Downeaster service has demonstrated that the impacts of passenger rail transcend transportation and produce tangible positive benefits such as economic development, environmental preservation and improved quality of life. Because expansion of the service would increase the benefits to tourism, promote investment and improve access to Brunswick and Mid-Coast Maine, more global funding sources may also apply to this project. The expansion of a strong and viable passenger rail service to and within Maine is a development project that will provide a multitude of positive impacts for decades to come.

LEVELS and TYPES of SERVICE

Amtrak Downeaster Intercity Service and Commuter Rail

The *Pan Am Alignment*, an active freight line, could be rehabilitated to support Downeaster Intercity Service. Because of its activity and location, it would not support Commuter Rail.

As a state owned alignment, dedicated to passenger rail, the *I-295 Alignment* could be designed to support the extension of Amtrak Downeaster service through Bayside to Freeport and Brunswick as well as a commuter service between Yarmouth Exit 15 and Portland. It could also support the eventual development of commuter service between Lewiston/Auburn on the SLR line and Portland.

This next section serves to outline the scope of each of these types of rail services.

Downeaster Intercity Service

Intercity service is defined as the extension of Downeaster service through Yarmouth Junction to Brunswick. Both the *Pan Am Alignment* and the *I-295 Alignment* would support the continuation of Downeaster service. Both alignments would require the rehabilitation of the Pan Am *Brunswick Branch* to continue that service to Brunswick.

Four to six trips of the Downeaster service could be extended to provide two to three round trip connections daily between Boston and Brunswick utilizing the existing Downeaster equipment pool,. The travel time between the PTC and Brunswick is anticipated to be approximately 50-55 minutes, including a stop in Freeport.

Profile of Downeaster Intercity Service Boston-Portland-Brunswick:

Frequency:	2 Round Trips Daily
Portland-Brunswick Travel Time:	50 Minutes
Equipment Required:	Existing Downeaster Equipment
Intermediate Station Stops:	Freeport
Operating Cost	\$1M Annually
Projected Ridership	98,000 riders
Projected Revenue	\$800,000

Commuter Service

Commuter service is defined as short-distance, multiple frequency passenger rail transportation primarily intended to ease congestion on I-295 by providing alternative transportation options for commuters into downtown Portland. Commuter trains would operate between the Auburn Intermodal Center and Portland's Bayside terminal with a transfer point at the proposed Exit 15 Commuter Station.

Profile of Commuter Service between Exit 15 and Bayside:

Peak Hour Frequency:	Every 15 Minutes
Off-Peak Hour Frequency:	Every 30 Minutes
# Weekday Trips:	22 Round Trips
# Weekend Trips:	11 Round Trips
Travel Time:	14 Minutes
Equipment Required:	4 Train Sets
Intermediate Station Stops:	Falmouth, East Deering
Operating Cost	\$3.8M Annually
Projected Ridership	400K riders
Projected Revenue	\$800,000

Proposed Commuter Service would operate between the Auburn Intermodal Center and Exit 15. At the Exit 15 station, passengers would change trains to travel to Bayside.

Profile of Commuter Service between Auburn Intermodal Center and Exit 15:

Peak Hour Frequency:	Every 15 Minutes
Off-Peak Hour Frequency:	Every 30 Minutes
# Weekday Trips:	22 Round Trips
# Weekend Trips:	11 Round Trips
Travel Time:	14 Minutes
Equipment Required:	4 Train Sets
Intermediate Station Stops:	Falmouth, East Deering

EQUIPMENT OPTIONS

NNEPRA's operating agreement with Amtrak includes the use of train sets through 2020. This equipment is aging and expensive to operate and maintain. Working cooperatively with Amtrak, NNERPA is researching new equipment for the Downeaster service that could also service to support commuter service and and improve operating efficiencies of a rail system in Maine.

Colorado Rail Car is introducing a Diesel Multiple Units (DMU's) product into the marketplace which is generating interest. Instead of traditional locomotives, these American-built self-powered units can operate independently or pull coaches. Colorado Rail Cars can support a Boston to Portland/Brunswick Downeaster service and could be a reasonable option commuter service as well.

Equipment Requirement:

Downeaster Service

Three sets, each consisting of 2 DMU power cars/coaches, 1 coach and 1 café/coach would enable the Downeaster to operate up to **6 daily round-trips between Portland and Boston and two daily round trips to Freeport and Brunswick.** The estimated cost for 12 cars to operate this service is \$36M. NNEPRA is working with the FTA and Amtrak to investigate funding options for this equipment.



Commuter Service

It is estimated that three to four DMU units would be required to operate commuter service between Bayside and Yarmouth Junction and another three or four units for commuter service between Yarmouth Junction and Auburn. The cost of a single DMU is approximately \$3M.

Financial Benefits

- New Equipment would save approximately \$1M in the Downeaster's annual operating costs by reducing fuel consumption and maintenance expenses.

- Undetermined additional revenues will result from increased ridership and food sales on the “shiny new Maine trains” and enhanced private sponsorship/advertising opportunities.

Environmental Benefits

- The DMU would reduce fuel consumption by 47% meaning that 150,000 fewer gallons of diesel fuel annually than current Amtrak locomotives or 3 million gallons of diesel fuel saved over a 20 year period.
- On a per mile basis, the DMU has less than one-third the emissions of the Downeaster’s current locomotive-hauled train sets.
- The DMU emits less than 25% of the noise of a locomotive-hauled consist.

Note:

Equipment is an important consideration in the development of an effectiveness rail network. While previously-owned or re-built equipment may be available for a lower initial cost, it is NNEPRA’s recommendation that new equipment be given consideration over refurbished equipment for either Downeaster or commuter service. In addition to the environmental and maintenance advantages of new equipment, the customer appeal of a “shiny new train” should not be overlooked or underestimated.

COMPATABILITY with OTHER PROPOSED ALIGNMENTS

The former Union Branch Alignment, including connectivity to Ocean Gate and the Narrow Gauge Railroad, has not been considered as part of this discussion. That alignment is no longer available for use as a rail corridor due to the Bayside Development Project.

While it can be theorized that connectivity to and from a rail station in Bayside could possibly support a Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad service to Ocean Gate, information is not available at this time to make any comments on the potential costs or feasibility.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The attached report and Executive Summary are based on extensive discussions with representatives from MaineDOT, Pan Am Railways, Amtrak, and the Federal Transit Administration.

In addition, small briefings were held with various stakeholder groups to discuss these alignments and options. They include, but are not limited to: TrainRiders Northeast, Maine Tourism Association, Maine Bicycle Coalition, PACTS and GPCOG, SLR, Maine Eastern Railroad; and station community representatives from Lewiston, Auburn, Freeport, Brunswick, Yarmouth, Falmouth and Portland.

In general, the desire to expand Downeaster service in the near future is a priority for all groups. There was little or no discussion about why it needed to happen; conversations focused primarily on when and how.

TrainRiders Northeast remains very committed to the expansion of service to Brunswick and Auburn as one of their original objectives when their quest to return passenger rail service to Maine began 18 years ago. Additionally, the Maine Eastern Railroad is anxious for a Boston connection to their service as are the communities of Freeport and Brunswick.

Amtrak representatives, off the record, have indicated support for taking advantage of the opportunity to partner with its host railroad, Pan Am, to rehabilitate the line and begin operating service to Brunswick as a near term option.

Representatives of the communities of Lewiston-Auburn and Portland are committed to the I-295 Corridor because it supports their development initiatives. They express concern that a system approach may delay or compromise that project.

There was support for expanding the scope of the project to encompass not only the transportation, but the economic development benefits of expanding service and recommendations to coordinate a group of organizations to work together to secure the required funding.

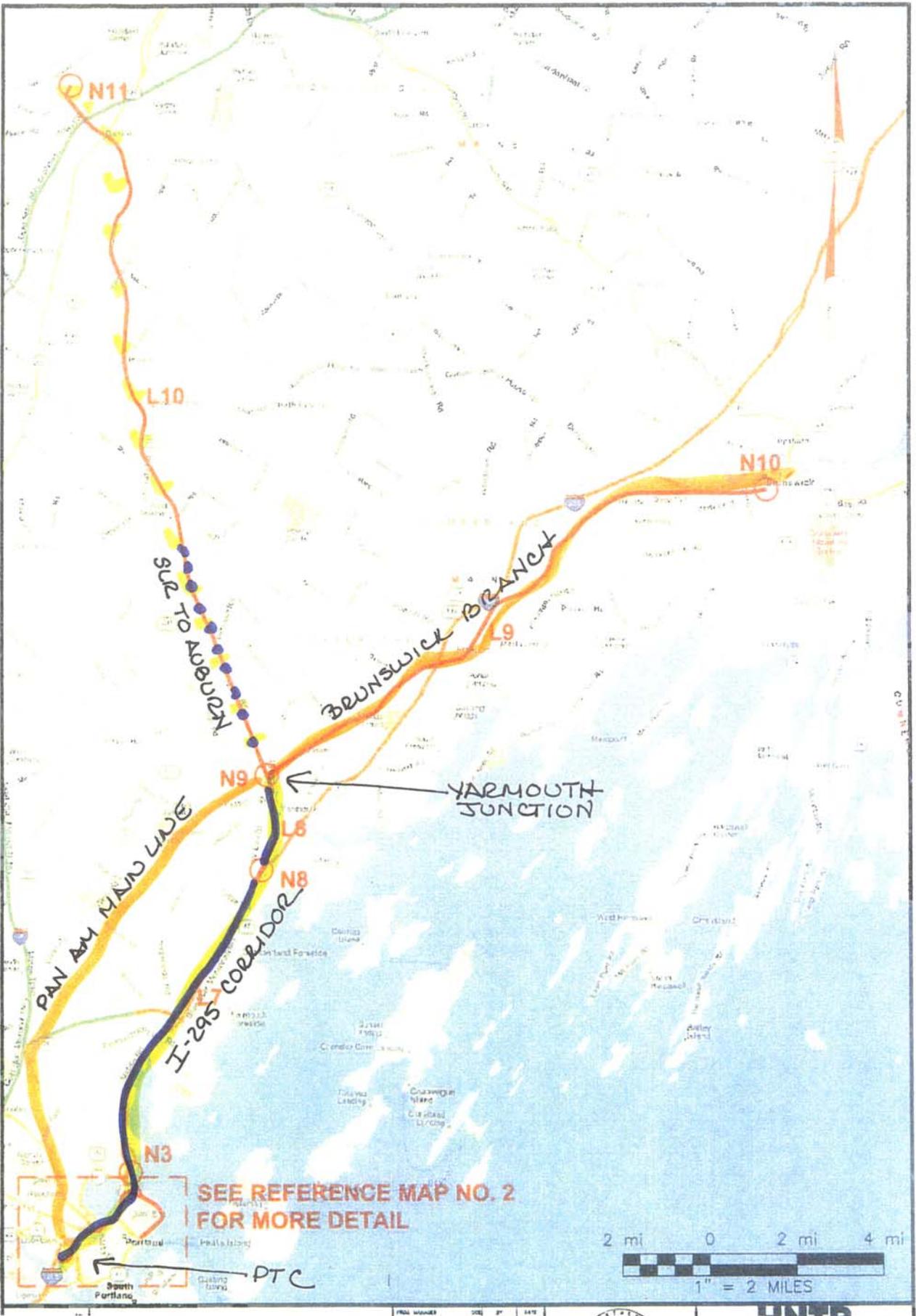
An important result of this process would be a solid, reasonable and believable plan for the expansion of rail service. There is great enthusiasm and the key is to keep the process moving and inclusive of the many supporters.

Written comments received from some groups following the briefings are included in the Appendix of this report.



Portland North Expansion Review

APPENDIX A
2011-2012





Portland North Expansion Review

APPENDIX B
Cost Estimate Data

APPENDIX 1

Projected Railroad Costs

PAN AM ALIGNMENT

Segment	Pan Am Main Line		
	Construction	Contingency	Total
PTC to Franklin			
Franklin to Yarmouth Jct			
Platforms @ \$500K			
Double Track @ Bayside			
3 Mile Siding for Commuter Rail			
PTC to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 14,083,746	\$ 916,254	\$ 15,000,000
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 12,515,071	\$ 1,275,600	\$ 13,790,671
Brunswick Stn Double Track	\$ 1,495,850	\$ 224,400	\$ 1,720,250
Platforms	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 15,010,921	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 16,510,921
PTC to Brunswick	\$ 29,094,667	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 31,510,921
Yarmouth Jct to Auburn	\$ 27,289,151	\$ -	\$ 27,289,151
PTC - Brunswick and Yarmouth - Auburn	\$ 56,383,818	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 58,800,072

APPENDIX 2

Projected Railroad Costs

I-295 CORRIDOR RAIL ALIGNMENT

Segment	I-295 Downeaster Corridor			I-295 Commuter Corridor			I-295 Alignment Total		
	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total
PTC to Franklin	\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278
Franklin to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006
Platforms @ \$500K	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000
Double Track @ Bayside	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,370,900	\$ 205,600	\$ 1,576,500	\$ 1,370,900	\$ 205,600	\$ 1,576,500
3 Mile Siding for Commuter Rail	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,174,500	\$ 574,945	\$ 5,749,445	\$ 5,174,500	\$ 574,945	\$ 5,749,445
PTC to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 30,015,210	\$ 2,472,074	\$ 32,487,284	\$ 7,545,400	\$ 780,545	\$ 8,325,945	\$ 37,560,610	\$ 3,252,619	\$ 40,813,229
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 16,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 19,172,590	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 19,172,590
Brunswick Stn Double Track	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Platforms	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 17,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 20,172,590	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 20,172,590
PTC to Brunswick	\$ 47,687,028	\$ 4,972,846	\$ 52,659,874	\$ 7,545,400	\$ 780,545	\$ 8,325,945	\$ 55,232,428	\$ 5,753,391	\$ 60,985,819
Yarmouth Jct to Auburn	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523
PTC - Brunswick and									
Yarmouth - Auburn	\$ 74,976,179	\$ 9,066,216	\$ 84,042,397	\$ 34,834,551	\$ 4,873,917	\$ 39,708,468	\$ 82,521,579	\$ 9,846,763	\$ 92,368,342

Reflects projected costs of constructing the I-295 Corridor to support Downeaster service with supplemental costs required to support a commuter rail system.

APPENDIX 3

Projected Railroad Cost Comparison

PAN AM ALIGNMENT and I-295 ALIGNMENT in Service Segments

Segment	Column 1			Column 2			Column 3		
	Pan Am Alignment Investment required for Downeaster extension only			I-295 Alignment Intercity Corridor Investment required for Downeaster extension only			I-295 Alignment Commuter Corridor Total to support Downeaster and Commuter Service		
	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total
PTC to Franklin				\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278	\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278
Franklin to Yarmouth Jct				\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006	\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006
Platforms @ \$500K				\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,500,000		\$ 1,500,000
Double Track @ Bayside							\$1,370,900	\$205,600	\$ 1,576,500
3 Mile Siding for Commuter Rail							\$ 5,174,500	\$ 574,945	\$ 5,749,445
PTC to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 14,083,746	\$ 916,254	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 30,515,210	\$ 2,472,074	\$ 32,987,284	\$ 37,560,610	\$ 3,252,619	\$ 40,813,229
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 12,515,071	\$ 1,275,600	\$ 13,790,671	\$ 16,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 19,172,590	\$ 16,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 19,172,590
Brunswick Stn Double Track	\$ 1,485,850	\$ 224,400	\$ 1,720,250				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Platforms	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 15,010,921	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 16,510,921	\$ 17,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 20,172,590	\$ 17,671,818	\$ 2,500,772	\$ 20,172,590
PTC to Brunswick	\$ 29,094,667	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 31,510,921	\$ 48,187,028	\$ 4,972,846	\$ 53,159,874	\$ 55,232,428	\$ 5,753,391	\$ 60,985,819
Yarmouth Jct to Auburn	\$ 27,289,151	\$ -	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523
PTC - Brunswick and Yarmouth - Auburn	\$ 56,383,818	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 58,800,072	\$ 75,476,179	\$ 9,066,218	\$ 84,542,397	\$ 82,521,579	\$ 9,846,763	\$ 92,368,342

Compares projected railroad costs of Pan Am line rehabilitation with the projected costs of constructing the I-295 Corridor to support Downeaster service only and the projected costs associated with constructing the I-295 Corridor to support both the Downeaster and Commuter Service.

APPENDIX 4

Projected Railroad Costs

SYSTEM APPROACH: Pan Am / I-295 Rail Network

Segment	Phase 1			Phase 2			Total		
	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total	Construction	Contingency	Total
	Investment required for Downeaster extension only			Additional investment to add Commuter Rail			Total to support Downeaster and Commuter Service		
PTC to Franklin	\$ 14,083,746	\$ 916,254	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278	\$ 4,328,435	\$ 432,843	\$ 4,761,278
Franklin to Yarmouth Jct				\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006	\$ 25,186,775	\$ 2,039,231	\$ 27,226,006
Platforms @ \$500K				\$ 1,500,000	-	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	-	\$ 1,500,000
Double Track @ Bayside				\$ 1,370,900	\$ 205,600	\$ 1,576,500	\$ 1,370,900	\$ 205,600	\$ 1,576,500
3 Mile Siding for Commuter Rail				\$ 5,174,500	\$ 574,945	\$ 5,749,445	\$ 5,174,500	\$ 574,945	\$ 5,749,445
PTC to Yarmouth Jct	\$ 14,083,746	\$ 916,254	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 37,960,610	\$ 3,252,619	\$ 40,813,229	\$ 51,644,356	\$ 4,168,873	\$ 55,813,229
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 12,515,071	\$ 1,275,600	\$ 13,790,671	-	-	-	\$ 12,515,071	\$ 1,275,600	\$ 13,790,671
Brunswick Sin Double Track	\$ 1,495,850	\$ 224,400	\$ 1,720,250	-	-	-	\$ 1,495,850	\$ 224,400	\$ 1,720,250
Platforms	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 1,000,000	-	-	-	\$ 1,000,000	-	\$ 1,000,000
Yarmouth Jct to Brunswick	\$ 15,010,921	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 16,510,921	-	-	-	\$ 15,010,921	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 16,510,921
PTC to Brunswick	\$ 29,094,667	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 31,510,921	\$ 37,560,610	\$ 3,252,619	\$ 40,813,229	\$ 66,655,277	\$ 5,668,873	\$ 72,324,150
Yarmouth Jct to Auburn	\$ 27,289,151	-	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523	\$ 27,289,151	\$ 4,093,372	\$ 31,382,523
PTC - Brunswick and Yarmouth - Auburn	\$ 56,383,818	\$ 2,416,254	\$ 58,800,072	\$ 64,948,761	\$ 7,345,991	\$ 72,195,752	\$ 93,944,428	\$ 9,762,245	\$ 103,706,673

Reflects projected costs associated with rehabilitating Pan Am line PTC to Brunswick as an interim step, then constructing the I-295 Commuter Corridor PTC to Yarmouth Junction as a long term project



Portland North Expansion Review

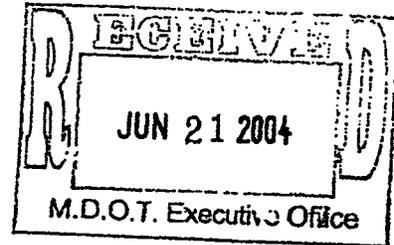
APPENDIX C
PERFORMANCE

Executive Department



Joseph E. Gray, Jr.
City Manager

CITY OF PORTLAND



June 17, 2004

David Cole, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

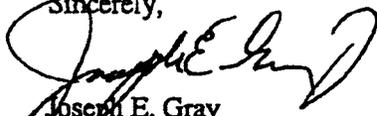
Dear Commissioner Cole:

I am writing to express the City's continuing support for the location of a passenger rail line along the I-295 corridor. The City believes that there are both near term and long term economic benefits to be realized from the expansion of rail service to the north along this corridor. Certainly the expansion of AMTRACK service would immediately benefit Freeport and Brunswick residents and businesses as well as enhance Maine's tourism industry. Of equal if not greater significance are the future benefits to the state and region. This rail corridor will provide the necessary infrastructure to allow for commuter rail service to the north of Portland; Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Freeport adjacent communities. These are all growth areas as demonstrated by the increasing volume of traffic on I-295. A second future economic benefit would be the ability to connect with the Lewiston/Auburn area and its favorably priced housing market. Increasingly people working in Portland are finding it economically necessary to purchase a home outside of the immediate labor market area. This connection with Lewiston/Auburn will benefit both regions, serving as an economic stimulus. I believe that the up front capital costs associated with establishing a rail corridor along I-295 are warranted by these and other long-term economic benefits. The City also supports the I-295 rail corridor because we believe that the location of a passenger rail stop in the Bayside neighborhood will stimulate business and residential growth in this high priority area.

An additional reason for our support is the potential disruption to neighborhoods should the Guilford line be used as the passenger train corridor to the north. As you know the Guilford line runs straight through several Portland residential neighborhoods that must already co-exist with numerous freight trains that now use the line. Another and related issue is the potential disruption to traffic flow since the Guilford line already crosses a number of major arterials and minor collectors including; Congress Street, Brighton Avenue, Forest Avenue and Allen Avenue. These are all streets that are already over capacity at many intersections during commuter hours.

In closing I ask that you do whatever you can to move this project forward and bring rail service to and through Portland's Bayside neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Gray
City Manager

Order 310-01102
Tab 3 6-25-02

KAREN A. GERAGHTY (MAYOR) (2)
PETER E. O'DONNELL (1)
NATHAN H. SMITH (3)
CHERYL A. LEEMAN (4)
JAY M. HIBBARD (5)

**CITY OF PORTLAND
IN THE CITY COUNCIL**

JAMES F. CLOUTIER (A/L)
PHILIP J. DAWSON (A/L)
JILL C. DUSON (A/L)
NICHOLAS M. MAVODONES (A/L)

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE FOR COMMUNITIES
NORTH AND EAST OF PORTLAND AND THE
LOCATION OF A COMMUTER RAIL LINE NEXT TO I-295**

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has spent considerable time, money and effort to institute passenger rail service in the State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, the current rail service from Portland to communities south of Portland, including Boston, has been well-received and much-used by the public; and

WHEREAS, the State has also spent considerable time, money and effort planning to institute passenger rail service to communities north and east of Portland; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that this effort will be a catalyst to the revitalization of the Bayside area in Portland, supports downtown development, and further enhances the City of Portland's objective of being a commuter-friendly community and a destination point; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Department of Transportation is planning to develop a passenger rail through Bayside parallel to the I-295 corridor at grade level; and

WHEREAS, MDOT is also planning to construct related passenger rail facilities and address improvements to traffic flow at the Franklin and Forest Avenue interchanges;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Portland City Council strongly endorses the efforts of the State of Maine and MDOT to institute passenger rail service to communities north and east of Portland, the location of a passenger rail line through Bayside parallel to the I-295 corridor at grade level, the construction of related passenger rail facilities, and the continuing effort to reach a mutually satisfactory solution for traffic flow issues at the Franklin and Forest Avenue interchanges.

Purpose and Need

The **Purpose** of the Project is to establish passenger rail service between Portland and Brunswick as an extension of the existing Boston to Portland Downeaster Amtrak service, and as the first step in providing future interconnected service to Rockland and the Lewiston/Auburn area. Furthermore, the establishment of rail service between Portland and Brunswick would help MaineDOT achieve several other goals set out in the *Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan*. These include the following:

- Increasing access and mobility options for all modes of transportation.
- Enhancing integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the state, for people and freight.
- Protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, promoting economic growth and improving the quality of life for Maine citizens.

Specific elements of the Need as described in the plan for transportation improvements are:

- The lack of access and mobility alternatives other than the automobile for people traveling to and from the Brunswick area.
- The lack of integrated alternative modes of transportation for tourists to reach local attractions.
- The increasing levels of traffic on Maine highways such as the Maine Turnpike, I-95, U.S. Route 1, and I-295.

Category	Issue	St. Lawrence & Atlantic	Guilford Main Line
Policy	Purpose and Needs Statement: See attached	Meets purpose and all needs	Does not meet need to reduce level of traffic on I-295 (commuter rail)
	State Investment in Private Rail roads	Brings balance to state investment in private rail lines.	Continues state investment in one private rail road. (\$64M to date)
Environmental	Environmental Issues & Impacts	Identified in Environmental Assessment (2004)	Unknown -- no inventory done.
	Rare Species	None present in vicinity	IF&W notes presence of a number in the vicinity of GRS main line
	River Corridors	crossed	3.5 miles of track parallel to river in undeveloped area.
	Historic and Cultural resources	Known	Unknown
Costs	Bridges	3 historical bridges, condition and costs, known, mitigation plan in place	2 bridges, may be historical, condition and costs unknown.
	Maintenance costs	Less freight traffic, easier to maintain.	More freight traffic, higher Maintenance costs.
	Costs – Infrastructure	\$63,569,856 (includes bridges)	\$51,000,000 (does not include bridges)
	Construction Schedule	Can divert freight to trucks during construction	Track has to remain open to freight, increasing construction costs and time.
	Bid vs. Force Account	Bid	Force Account
Operations	Schedule Flexibility	More flexibility, little freight use (2 trains 3 time a	GRI main line, Limited flexibility, 3 through trains/day and switching

		week)	
	Potential For Future Commuter Rail	Exit 15 park and ride to downtown Portland at Bayside. Support of SLA	Does not connect residential area with downtown Portland. GTI not supportive of non Amtrak service in past
	Track ownership	SLA in discussions with MaineDOT regarding sale of line to state	Privately owned
Transportation Impacts (safety, connectivity, congestion, etc.)	Impacts on Transportation Corridor	In I-295 corridor, possible commuter service. LOS C-D in 2000, E in '10, F in '20 (without rail)	Crosses I-95 in Auburn, adjacent to I-95 at Exit 52. LOS at Exit 53 C in 2002, C in 2013 (without rail)
	Grade Crossings	11	21, six at Level of Service(LOS) D, 2 with Critical Rate Factor (CRF) above 1
	Impacts on Major Arterials	Forest Avenue, Franklin Avenue. MaineDOT and City have developed a mitigation plan.	Morrill and Woodford Corners already heavily congested., no mitigation plan.
	Connectivity to Auburn and Montreal	Good, connects to proposed Auburn intermodal Facility. Single operator Portland to Montreal	No access to proposed Auburn intermodal Facility. .Access limited to Amtrak service Requires changing to SLA in Danville Jct.

Community Impacts	City's desires	Supports (see letter)	Does not support
	Neighborhoods	Less dense, scattered, mixed use in existing transportation corridor	Denser, more neighborhoods mostly residential
	Noise & Vibration	Impacts on fewer residences, whistle blowing at 11 crossings	Extensive impacts on numerous residences, whistle blowing at 21 crossings
	Pineland Development Connection	Connectivity to downtown Portland	Dependent on willingness of GTI to allow commuter service
	Economic Growth Potential	Supports Bayside Redevelopment	GRS corridor fully built out, limited opportunities for new development.
	Connectivity to Surrounding Communities	Potential service in Yarmouth, Cumberland, Falmouth by commuter service.	Service to these communities unlikely (Amtrak Service only)
	Communities with potential for rail service based upon access to rail line	Downtown Portland, Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth. With expansion to Auburn will serve Pineland, New Gloucester, Auburn	Portland (Thompson's Pt.) Portland-Westbrook Line, New Gloucester, Auburn

**Maine Department of Transportation
Passenger Rail Initiative
Utilization of the Union Branch in Portland to Support Amtrak Service**

Fact Sheet

Overview: The Maine Department of Transportation is proposing the routing of Amtrak service in Portland over the Union Branch. The Union Branch is an abandoned rail line owned by Guilford Transportation. The Union Branch leaves Guilford Transportation's main freight line at union junction near Hadlock Field and follows a right-of-way through Deering Oaks and Bayside in Portland. It is proposed that the Department would follow the current right-of-way to Forest Avenue then establish a new right-of-way adjacent to Interstate 295.

It is anticipated that Amtrak and commuter rail service would leave Portland to the North across Back Cove joining rail lines owned by the St Lawrence and Atlantic RR to Yarmouth junction. At Yarmouth junction Amtrak Service would continue along Maine Central rail lines through Freeport to Brunswick. Commuter and excursion rail operations would continue on the St Lawrence and Atlantic line to an intermodal facility located proximate to the Lewiston Auburn Municipal Airport. Excursion trips could then continue through Oxford County to service the Bethel ski areas and on to Montreal. This initiative has the potential of moving passenger rail service to a new plane and will provide connectivity to Amtrak service to a significant population. This option for the expansion of passenger rail service beyond Portland best meets the needs of the people of Maine and yields many benefits.

It:

- Creates immediate economic development opportunities at Portland Bayside and at the Auburn Lewiston Municipal Airport.
- Helps the airport realize it's role as a reliever for the Portland International Jetport.
- Places passenger rail in the transportation corridor adjacent to the busy interstate, increasing the visibility of passenger rail and creating opportunities for the introduction of commuter rail between Portland and the nearby service center communities.
- Connects Lewiston / Auburn directly to Amtrak service in Portland.
- Increase opportunities to support Western Mountain ski areas by rail. Providing relief along the route 26 corridor and creating new opportunities for Oxford County communities to take advantage of new travel and tourism opportunities. It opens the Montreal market to Maine.
- It supports the goals of the citizens of Maine to reduce sprawl, encourage downtown revitalization and to develop a strong interconnected transportation system which reduces reliance on the automobile.
- Importantly it brings balance to the State's investment in rail infrastructure.



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

101 Walnut Street
P. O. Box 9151
Watertown, MA 02471-9151
617 924 1770
FAX 617 924 2286

randum

To: Ms. Judy Lindsey
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Date: July 6, 2004

Project No.: 07971

From: David Hewett

Re: Portland North Passenger Rail Service
Extension

You asked us to summarize the reasons why use of the Guilford Rail System's (GRS) Freight Main Line corridor between Portland and Yarmouth was dismissed from further consideration as a potential route for the proposed extension of passenger rail service between Portland and Brunswick. This memorandum responds to your request.

The GRS Freight Main Line diverges from the Union Branch in Portland just south of Congress Street. It runs for approximately 13 miles through the communities of Portland, Falmouth, and Cumberland before intersecting with the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Line (SLR) at Yarmouth Junction in Yarmouth.

One of the reasons that the GRS Freight Main Line was dismissed from consideration for the Portland to Brunswick service was because the St. Lawrence & Atlantic line offered greater flexibility in scheduling the proposed P NPRSE. Through correspondence with MaineDOT, representatives of SLR indicated that there was a fair degree of flexibility in their current schedule of train movements along the line. SLR operations could be modified to accommodate the needs of the proposed P NPRSE. In contrast, the GRS Freight Main Line, which is part of GRS' primary freight route in New England, has more scheduled movements of trains between Portland and the Brunswick Branch. GRS' flexibility in scheduling their freight traffic to accommodate the P NPRSE is more limited than SLR. The conclusion was that from an operational perspective, the SLR route offered greater flexibility in scheduling the P NPRSE and was therefore more attractive.

Several other issues were considered in the comparison of the two routes. These factors are described below.

Grade Crossings

The GRS Freight Main Line would have 21 grade crossings between the existing Union Branch and Yarmouth Junction (compared to 11 for the Relocated Union Branch). Many of the crossings would be within the residential Deering and Woodfords neighborhoods west of Back Cove. It would also cross Forest Avenue (Route 302) at Woodfords Corner and Allen Avenue (Route 100) at Morrills Corner. These are extremely important commuter routes and two of the busiest intersections anywhere in the state. The City of Portland is currently reviewing plans for a large new mixed use shopping center at Morrills Corner.

Noise and Vibration

Although VHB has not calculated potential noise and vibration impacts along the GRS Freight Main Line, it can be assumed that impacts would be substantial as trains would be very near a large number of homes in Portland.

It is worth noting that in December of this year, a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) final rule (49 CFR Parts 222 and 229) will take effect requiring trains to sound their horns at all public highway-rail crossings unless the local governing authority successfully petitions for the establishment of a quiet zone (no horn blowing). Currently, the use of a locomotive horn at a public highway-rail crossing is governed by state law and railroad operating rules. The specific requirements of the new rule are that the railroad must sound the horn 15 to 20 seconds prior to arrival at the crossing but not more than ¼ mile in advance of the crossing. The minimum sound level for the horn is set at 96 db(A) and the maximum at 110 db(A).

Ability to Serve Commuters

Either the GRS Freight Main Line or the SLR line could serve as a commuter rail route into Portland. Based upon the limited analysis completed, the SLR line might be a more attractive route because of the locations it could potentially serve. The GRS Corridor would not be able to serve potential stations at either Exit 15 of I-295, which has been identified as a possible Park N' Ride location, or in the Bayside neighborhood of Portland, where the City has expressed interest in possibly siting a station. The GRS Corridor also could not support a downtown "village station" in Yarmouth as could the SLR Corridor, should the Town of Yarmouth wish to establish one.

Other Environmental Considerations

A cursory review of the GRS Freight Main Line shows that it may encounter other environmental constraints as well. The corridor crosses the Presumpscot and Piscataqua Rivers and runs parallel, very near the East Branch of the Piscataqua River for approximately 3.5 miles through a relatively undeveloped area. Information provided by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife provided for the project earlier indicates the presence of a number of rare species in the general vicinity of the GRS Freight Main Line.

VHB has not investigated the GRS Freight Main Line for other constraints such as aquifers, wells, wildlife, fisheries, hazardous materials, cultural resources, Section 4(f) resources, traffic considerations, etc. These would all need to be investigated if the corridor is to be fully studied in the Environmental Assessment.

Please give me a call if you have any questions.



Ms. Patricia Quinn Douglas
Executive Director
Northern New England
Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street Suite 204
Portland, Maine 04101-4831

Dear Ms. Douglas.

Many thanks to you for taking the time to come and enlighten our group on the different alternatives regarding the continuation of rail service from Portland through Freeport to Brunswick. Understanding that it might be possible to have a solution that would take place in two years instead of the seemingly endless announcements of further delays was very exciting to hear for many of those assembled here on Friday.

From a business point of view we know opening up the line to Brunswick would give Freeport, Brunswick and towns beyond all the way to Rockland a direct line to Portland and the Boston Market. Maine citizens would be able to take advantage of this expansion going in both directions. Very exciting for train buffs, of which there are a lot and older folks who aren't fond of driving in bad weather or at night. This would free the roads of some of the traffic burden which seems to be increasing every year. Some commuting would probably also be achieved by certain people. Development would occur in areas we haven't even thought of because of the train service as happened in Saco. Tourism would greatly increase in every town with a station as would retail sales.

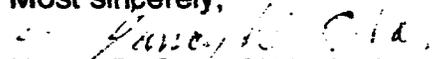
One of our dreams has been to have farmer's markets at the railroad stations so visitors from away, where ever that is, can add to the income of our resident farmers thereby helping them prosper so they can keep their land a farm which is getting harder to do. That is one of the reasons why two years seems greatly more appealing than eight or ten years, especially when you realize that inflation will raise the price quoted now for that far out to a much higher amount. Waiting for Federal aid is difficult if not impossible because of the number of "others" applying for it. The Brookings Institute Report, a million dollar study that took a year to develop, suggested that Maine had not utilized its bonding as efficiently as other New England States which leads me to believe that bonding by the State for this project would be the smartest thing we could do. Twenty eight million dollars spent to take cars off the road, add to the Tourism trade (our largest industry), to the retail trade and create some commuting

and development opportunities seems like something we should start now. When the funding is available for the straight up I-295 design which will hopefully be a very strong commuter line and reduce the need to add more lanes to our highways, we will still be saving money and saving land. What we will have already done will not have been wasted or compromised. By that time we hope to see more lines developed so you can go to Montreal or Augusta. Trains made this State when they first came in 1840 - 1850. We need multiple methods of transportation still in a world where fuel is in question and population is increasing.

Please know that we are behind the two year, twenty eight million dollar, start it now plan one hundred percent and hope this will really happen. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" is our philosophy.

Again, many thanks for your informative presentation.

Most sincerely,


Nancy D. Gray CHA Innkeeper

November 18, 2006



Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1726
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

DONALD H. GERRISH, MANAGER

28 FEDERAL STREET
BRUNSWICK, MAINE 04011
TELEPHONE 735-6696
FAX # 735-6693

November 30, 2006

Ms. Patricia Douglas,
Executive Director
Northern New England
Passenger Rail Authority
75 W Commercial Street
Suite 204
Portland, ME. 04101-4631

Subject: Support for Rail Service in Brunswick

Dear Patricia:

The Town of Brunswick offers its support to bring rail to the area within a two year window. As we understand it, this would include \$30 million worth of improvements to the northern route, allowing Amtrak to begin operations soon, while focusing on the more expensive \$70 million improvements at a later date.

With the Naval Air Station closing, Brunswick is looking to diversify its economic base over the next five years. Bringing the rail to Brunswick will assist with the Maine Street Station project. Maine Street Station is a \$36 million dollar project on an existing Brownfield site in downtown Brunswick. The mix of uses at the project are estimated to create as many as 250 new jobs. A second phase across the street to the west has the potential to double that value and job creation.

The train station at the Maine Street Station is an integral part of that project. Whether it is moving commuters, tourists, or making connections to Rockland, the potential for expanding the local economy is tremendous. The train station would become an anchor for galleries, a first class hotel, retail stores, and other uses that would feed into a growing creative economy.

We support this project and eagerly look forward to working with all involved to see it accomplished. Please contact me if you have further questions or need the assistance of my staff.

Sincerely,

Donald Gerriah,
Town Manager

30 Main Street, Freeport, ME 04032
207.865.4743 Fax: 207.865.0929
info@freeportecon.com
www.freeportecon.com

November 28, 2006

Ms. Patricia Quinn Douglas
Executive Director, NNEPRA
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 204
Portland, Maine 04101-4631

Dear Patricia:

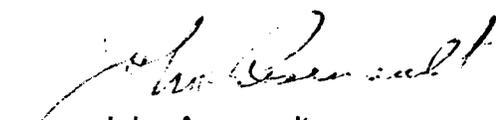
The Board of Directors of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation ("FEDC") strongly supports the development of passenger rail transportation between Portland and Brunswick, as the service is anticipated to have a significant impact on the economy of the Freeport area. The implementation of this service has been deemed essential to the economic growth plan of Freeport and needs to occur sooner rather than later. The two pursuits of the short-term plan for using the current rail line around the back bay to Yarmouth as well as the long-term plan for a passenger and commuter rail service direct route through Bayside and Falmouth to Yarmouth Junction are critical.

We feel that each of these approaches will encourage new business growth, foster increased levels of tourism, provide highway congestion and parking solutions, allow I 295 expansion costs to be delayed, provide more cost-effective transportation and access to affordable housing for the local workforce, and connect businesses with their customers in Boston and the mid-Atlantic region. All will impact economic development in the Freeport area.

The FEDC's mission is to promote economic growth and stability by strengthening and diversifying the economic base in Freeport. These plans for more balanced transportation systems in Maine will enhance Freeport's foundation and strategies for economic development.

Sincerely,


Stephanie Slocum
Executive Director


John Arsenault
Board President

TRAINRIDERS NORTHEAST

Supporting TrainRiders Northeast

BOX 4869 PORTLAND, MAINE 04112
(207) 879-7245 (TRY-RAIL)

November 28, 2006

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Ms. Patricia Douglas, Exec. Dir.
NNEPRA
75 W. Commercial St., Suite 204
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Patricia:

On behalf of TrainRiders/Northeast, I'd like to thank you for speaking to the members of our board of directors recently about the options available to us as we explore the long discussed expansion of Amtrak's Downeaster service to Freeport and Brunswick from Portland.

From our point of view, the two most viable corridors are nearly parallel and would both provide service from the existing Portland Transportation Center to Yarmouth Jct., Freeport and Brunswick. Both routes provide opportunities at Yarmouth Jct. for extensions to Auburn/Lewiston, So. Paris, Bethel and Montreal over existing track. Both routes also provide, over existing track, extensions to Augusta, Waterville & Bangor, as well as connections at Brunswick to Maine Eastern Railroad's presently operating service to Rockland.

We understand that one corridor ("Option 1") involves construction of a completely new rail line from the Portland Transportation Center, heading northerly along state-owned ROW's, past a new station in Bayside, crossing Back Cove on a new trestle, then running on the existing tracks of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic line, parallel to I 295, to Yarmouth Jct. This would then connect to Pan Am Railway's line (which would also have to be upgraded) from Yarmouth Junction north through Freeport and on to Brunswick. This corridor presents very attractive prospects for commuter rail service and transit oriented growth, and it deserves continuing consideration for future service. However, it comes at a projected cost of \$65 to 75M, (a higher figure was given to us by the FTA Administrator at TNE's Annual Meeting last April which may have included the cost of train sets to operate the service as commuter service) with a completion date of at least 8+ years, realizing that a 1700' trestle would need to be designed and built with rather lengthy permit and construction times dealing with the FTA. While the FTA questions the ridership projections for the present, they feel that in 10 years, the Yarmouth-Portland corridor should have enough commuters and other riders to support the service.

The second corridor ("Option 2") would require an upgrade to the existing Pan-Am Railway main line freight corridor from the Portland Transportation Center through

Bringing more passenger train service to the Northeast
On The Web at www.TrainridersNE.org
e-mail <info@TrainridersNE.org>

to Yarmouth Junction, connecting with an upgrade to Pan Am's line through to Freeport and Brunswick, to allow two round trips per day between Portland, Freeport and Brunswick, using existing Amtrak Downeaster equipment. This Option would permit the service to pass through the same communities between Portland and Yarmouth Junction as Option 1, though further west. The time frame of 2-3 years at a projected cost of \$30M or less is suggested by Pan Am Railway.

After much discussion of the pros and cons of each, our board unanimously agreed that TNE would support Option 2 as having the greater immediate potential to sustain and continue the positive momentum and growth experienced by Amtrak's Downeaster. We understand that the upgrade of the portion of Option 2 from the PTC through to Yarmouth Junction may not qualify for federal funding and may, ultimately, have to be supplemented by construction of Option 1 at a later time. However, the speed with which Option 2 can be implemented, as well as its reduced cost, make it substantially preferable to Option 1 at this time. This reduced cost might permit the construction of Option 1 to be financed solely through State bond money, further enhancing the flexibility and speed of that upgrade. Additional delay would continue to deprive Maine residents of the substantial and virtually certain economic benefits that would result from extension of the service through Falmouth, Yarmouth and Freeport to Brunswick. Delay here will also increase construction costs over current estimates and could also jeopardize the long proposed station/hotel complex planned for downtown Freeport, as well as the development of Brunswick's long awaited Maine St Station Development. After nearly 18 years of talking about an extension to Brunswick, it's time to do it.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne E. Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Wayne E. Davis, Chairman
TrainRiders/Northeast

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

**Update on
the current
findings of
the governor's
task force.**

TRAINRIDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST



TEWS ON LAST MONTH'S EDITORIAL

**1) From a State Representative to the editor and
From Wayne Davis to MDOT Commissioner
and Cole, with a cc to Governor Baldacci**

In our last newsletter, we published our Editors Opinion about expanding Downeaster service. That opinion generated sometimes heated discussion. Included in this issue are responses by (1) Rep. Boyd Marley, House Chair of the Transportation Committee for the Maine Legislature and (2) Wayne Davis, Chairman of TNE.

To the Editor:

I write as a member of TrainRiders' board as the House Chairman of the Legislature's Transportation Committee. In the last newsletter it stated that "...it has been more than four years since the inauguration of Downeaster service and MDOT has done nothing to extend it. It is not matter of being broke. The money is there, waiting." The newsletter also implied that the government was unresponsive to the needs of TrainRiders members. I disagree.

There is money from previous referendums for Portland North extension, but not enough to build it completely. In addition, the FTA has told the state that despite the success of the Downeaster service, the state needs to identify funding for covering operational costs. Such costs currently are covered by federal dollars which are used for VMT (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) projects.

TrainRiders and MDOT have also asked that Portland and Boston service be enhanced—faster round-trip travel time, etc.—before extending service north. Some argue that the MDOT should divert money from other projects. However, the state is facing a shortfall in funding for its transportation infrastructure, a shortfall that continues to grow due to high fuel prices, inflation in construction materials and more fuel efficient vehicles.

The State's Constitution limits the majority of revenues that the MDOT collects. "Fuel tax dollars" can only be used for roadways and bridges. While

continued on page 2

2 Dear Commissioner Cole:

I regret that it has taken so long for me to respond to your concerns about the "Editor's Opinion" that appeared in the winter issue of our quarterly newsletter "The TrainRider." While we certainly understand your concerns, we believe that several points should be kept in mind.

Please remember that the article was clearly labeled as the opinion of the editor of our newsletter. As such, it does not necessarily reflect TrainRiders' formal position on this matter. From time to time we include articles in our newsletter that are independent of our formal position in order to provide a more complete picture of the status of passenger rail issues.

While the opinion is not necessarily reflective of TrainRiders' official position, it does mirror the feelings of many of TrainRiders' members and directors. While I certainly know that you and many people working at MDOT have put, and continue to put, tremendous time and energy into passenger rail issues, the fact is that there is no service north of Portland and no visible construction on that route. We remember that back when the Downeaster was put into service, we were told by then-Commissioner Melrose that it would take only one more year for the initiation of service north of Portland. Though there was no reason to be skeptical of that timetable, it is now four years later and we are being told that many more years will pass before service will begin. Everyone knows that it took longer to obtain the Downeaster service than it took to build the first trans-continental railroad and our members and directors do not want a repeat of that experience.

The trepidation of our members and directors is reflected in the feelings of the public at large. While the question that is asked most often of our train

hosts and directors is when additional trips will be added to the current service, a close second is when service will be extended to Freeport and Brunswick.

The messages received by our members as well as the public, have been, to put it mildly, confusing and frustrating, as shown by, for example, the following:

continued on page 7

s noted, we were initially told that ice north of Portland would begin one after the Downeaster started its runs. This was repeated in MDOT's booklet, *The Transportation Facts*, published in 2002 and given wide distribution.

In his October 29, 2002 Rail Newsletter, editor Chop Hardenbergh reported that a DOT official had told the Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce and the Yarmouth Historical Society that service could begin in late 2004.

In his August 22, 2003 newsletter, Chop noted that the DOT had changed this to a 2006 start-up date, with an environmental impact assessment that was "almost complete."

In his June 10, 2004 issue, Chop notes that the DOT was then stating that the project was still in the environmental assessment phase and cautioning about how soon it could be before the service begins.

In his July 2, 2005 edition Chop quotes another DOT official as stating that the service would not begin for another 5 years.

Chop is not the only one with different information:

In an April 2003 article in the Portsmouth Herald says that based on information provided by Maine DOT officials, service to Brunswick might begin in 2006.

In a December 2003, the same paper was reporting a 2007 start-up date.

At a press conference (attended by about 100 TrainRiders/Northeast Directors) held in late 2004 at the Portland Transportation Center, Governor Baldacci and David Fink indicated that a pilot excursion service from Portland through Brunswick to Brunswick would begin that summer.

In a January 9, 2006, the Portland Press Herald quoted DOT officials as stating that service to Brunswick "could" start in 2010.

In an April 11, 2006, that paper quoted her DOT official as stating that she thought that the service would be extended to Brunswick "hopefully before I retire," but that the State was only then undertaking a feasibility study to determine whether the extension would be feasible.

Commissioner, our editor lives in Bangor. The feelings that she expressed in her Opinion parallel those of many of our directors, members and the public at large. While there may be valid reasons for short extensions of time for commencement of the service, we have never been clear as to why it should take nine years from the beginning of the Downeaster service for service to Brunswick to begin. We understand that many MDOT personnel have worked and continue to work hard on this project, but continuing delays are frustrating. You can also understand that nearly 90,000 Maine voters who signed petitions in 1991 directing the State of Maine to restore passenger rail service between Boston and Portland, as a first step to restoring service to Freeport and Brunswick, feel a growing sense that their efforts were wasted and their legislatively endorsed bill is being ignored. The Passenger Rail Service Act, passed by the legislature clearly directed the DOT to financially support passenger rail in the same manner in which roads and airports are supported. There was never any expectation that the rail service would ever cover its operating and capital costs without state support. It was also never expected that expanded service would be subject to special FTA conditions since the State of Maine was to be the responsible party. We are also disturbed to hear

from some of today's legislators that they cannot be bound by a previous legislature's action.

Unhappily, there is also a growing public sense that the commitment to passenger rail that was so apparent in the last administration is lacking in the present administration. Whether or not you agree with the feelings expressed in the editorial piece, those feelings are very real and widespread.

Having said all that, please believe us when we say that we certainly look forward to doing everything we can to assist both state and federal officials in making sure that the commitments made in 1991 are honored by today's leaders. In that spirit, we would be very pleased if you submitted an article for inclusion in our next newsletter, one which could either be responsive to the Opinion or which otherwise deals with passenger rail issues. We would also invite you to address TrainRiders' Board. We appreciate your understanding of our concerns, and look forward to working together to accelerate this process.

Sincerely,

Wayne E. Davis, Chairman, TNE

cc: Governor John Baldacci

Won't you join us in the good fight?

Yes, I'd like to join TrainRiders/Northeast:

Name _____

Street or P.O. # _____

City or town _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

e-mail _____

Please choose a membership category (membership per year)

- \$25.00 Individual Member
- \$35.00 Family Member
- \$100.00 Sponsoring Member
- \$250.00 Supporting Member
- \$500.00 Endorsing Member
- \$1000.00 Sustaining Member
- Other \$ _____

Please make check payable to TrainRiders/Northeast
Mail to TRNE, Box 4869 Downtown Station, Portland, ME 04112



Bicycle Coalition of Maine

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Beth Townsend
League of Cons. Voters
Violette
Maine Turnpike Authority
Wells
Portland Hospital

Patricia Douglas
Northern New England Rail Authority
75 West Commercial St, Suite 204
Portland, ME 04101-4631
November 30, 2006

Dear Patricia:

First, a thank you to your team and the Downeaster for the first-rate service you provide to Maine residents and visitors. We also are very grateful for the bicyclist-friendly roll-on service you provide. It is with this appreciation that we eagerly look forward to further expansion of the Downeaster to Yarmouth, Brunswick, and Auburn.

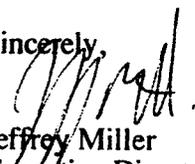
It is our understanding that providing passenger rail access deeper into Portland, Yarmouth and Brunswick is likely to take at least six or seven years. We also understand their may be a more immediate alternative that could supplement access to Brunswick with in a couple of years. We are writing in support of pursuing both avenues of rail service.

Providing rail access northward should be realized as soon as possible to meet traveler needs, relieve roadway congestion, and make the link to the Maine Eastern Railroad that runs from Brunswick to Rockland. Leaving the Maine Eastern lingering for six or seven years seems risky at best for the viability of this line and more importantly, neglects Mainers and visitors from better transportation options for a longer time.

We do hope that MaineDOT, Pan Am, and your federal partners will do all they can to pursue both routes ASAP.

Thank you again for all you do.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Miller
Executive Director



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Portland North
New Start Program Update
Outline
2-22-06

The Maine Department of Transportation supports the extension of passenger rail service north of Portland and has been carrying out studies consistent with the FTA "New Starts Program". This is a lengthy process that requires ongoing approval from the Federal Transit Administration before moving on to the next step. Typically it takes up to five years for a project to advance through planning to receive federal funding and begin construction.

WERE WE ARE NOW

- Three alignments for passenger service North of Portland were analyzed in the *Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment for the Portland North Passenger Rail Service Extension Project*. The Guilford Rail System (GRS) mainline, the former GRS Union Branch alignment, and the I-295 Right of Way alignment were evaluated. Of these, the I-295 alignment was identified as the preferred alternative. Advantages to I-295 alignment include: fewer at grade intersection crossings, visibility from I-295, competitive travel time for rail service from Exit 15, no need to take property, is preferred by neighborhood residents and businesses, and supports the City's Bayside redevelopment efforts.
- Further retention of the historical Union Branch alignment through Bayside was determined to be unnecessary for the purpose of this project and the property has since been released to the City of Portland.
- Federal Transit and Highway Administrations concurred with the MaineDOT's decision to release a portion of the Union Branch Right of Way to the City of Portland.
- The role of lead agency has been reassigned from the FHWA to the FTA, with FHWA now participating as a cooperating agency.

NEXT STEPS

- MaineDOT will proceed with the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts planning process for the extension of passenger rail service. This must include the evaluation of numerous alternatives to address congestion on the I-295 corridor including transit options and passenger rail service in the I-295 Right of Way and on the Guilford main line. In addition, this study must continue to be processed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.
- MaineDOT's Bureau of Planning is concluding a study of the I-295 corridor that includes analysis of alternatives to increasing capacity to meet demand.

- MaineDOT will use the Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment and the I-295 study as resource documents. This will allow us to expedite the New Starts Planning process, with FTA concurrence. The I-295 study will serve as the required system plan. The *Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment* and I-295 study will contain much of the information that is usually generated by the first phases of the New Starts process.
- After the FTA evaluates the findings of the I-295 Study, MaineDOT will prepare a Scope of Work for the Portland North New Starts project, develop a request for proposals, choose a consultant, and negotiate a contract.
- Once a contract is signed with the consultant for planning and preliminary engineering, the Study is expected to conclude within 18 to 24 months. At the completion of the Study, the MaineDOT will request FTA approval to move on to Final Design.
- Preliminary Engineering will develop reliable cost estimates, benefits, and impacts, and a management plan. Transportation System Users Benefits will be used to measure mobility improvements.
- Final Design will provide construction plans, a final cost estimate, operational plan, environmental mitigation, joint development agreements, financial plans, risk assessment, and right-of-way /utilities planning. At the completion of Final Design, the MaineDOT will request a Full Funding Grant Agreement with the FTA. A realistic time line for this step is 12 months.
- With an aggressive schedule and assuming that the FTA will accept the work already done in the *Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment for the Portland North Passenger Rail Service Extension Project* and I-295 Study, planning, preliminary engineering and final design in 36 to 48 months.
- Construction is estimated to take 2 years.
- Current cost estimates for the extension of service are \$72 million in capital investments in the rail line and \$13 million for a third train set, which is necessary to extend service to Brunswick.
- A Governor's Task Force has been formed to address ongoing funding for the *Downeaster*. A report will be presented to the next session of the legislature. This also must be addressed for the New Starts planning process.