



State of Maine  
132nd Legislature, First Regular/Special Session

**Report of the Maine-Canadian  
Legislative Advisory Commission to  
Examine Restoring Passenger Rail  
from Boston to Montréal**

**December 2025**

**Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission**



**STATE OF MAINE  
132<sup>nd</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR/SPECIAL SESSION**

**Staff:**

Annina V. Breen, House Speaker's Office  
Eliza Woodcock, Senate Republican Office

**Members:**

Sen. Richard Bennett, Chair  
Rep. Daniel Sayre, Chair  
Sen. Stacey Guerin  
Sen. Mark Lawrence  
Sen. Michael Tipping  
Rep. Mark Blier  
Rep. Lucien Daigle  
Rep. Christopher Kessler  
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Lise Pelletier  
Lisa Scali

## Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
I. Background	2
II. Commission Process	5
III. Recommendations	8
IV. Policy Questions for Consideration	9
 Appendices	
A. Authorizing Legislation: Resolve 2025, c. 30	
B. Membership List: Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission	
C. Information/White Paper on Train-Hotel Proposal	
D. Bibliography of Previous Studies	

## Executive Summary

The 132nd Maine Legislature directed the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission (referred to in this report as the “Commission”) to examine restoring passenger rail from Boston, Massachusetts to Montreal, Quebec, Canada with the passage of Resolve 2025, chapter 30.

The resolve sets forth the following duties for the Commission:

- Examine restoring passenger rail from Boston, Massachusetts to Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Submit a report with the Commission’s findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation by December 3, 2025.

Over the course of seven meetings, the Commission developed the following recommendations to further examine the potential to restore passenger rail between Boston and Montreal by way of Maine:

1. Extend the remit to the Commission in the next session to continue examining public and private proposals to restore passenger rail between Boston and Montreal.
2. Request that the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation hold a hearing on the *Report of the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission to Examine Restoring Passenger Rail from Boston to Montréal*, with Chairs Bennett & Sayre available to answer questions.
3. Consider the establishment of a single, multi-jurisdictional (i.e. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Quebec) entity to focus on the project’s progress.
4. Engage with representatives of neighboring states and provinces to further the discussion and fact-finding moving forward, such as through the National Conference of State Legislatures (“NCSL”) or the Council of State Governments (“CSG”).
5. Engage with relevant stakeholders, including those entities listed above.
6. Authorize the Commission to work with public and private entities within Quebec and New England to develop proposals and analyze economic, environmental, and other impacts of such a project.
7. Hold a public hearing by the Commission to solicit feedback on proposals and ideas for restoration of passenger rail services between Canada and New England.
8. Review NNEPRA’s statutory authority to determine whether proposals under consideration may require amendment.

The Commission voted unanimously of those members present and voting to approve the final recommendations (Sen. Richard Bennett, Rep. Daniel Sayre, Rep. Mark Blier, Rep. Lucien Daigle, Hon. Jonathan Labonte, Ms. Lisa Scali).

## **BACKGROUND**

Passenger rail connections once played a major role in linking Maine and Montréal, most notably through the Grand Trunk Railroad, which offered transfers in Maine to connect further to Boston. This service carried generations of travelers, strengthening both economic and cultural ties across the border. In more recent years, the corridor has been the focus of state, regional, and cross-border studies examining the potential for renewed service. These evaluations have consistently highlighted:

- The economic benefits of reconnecting Maine and Montréal by rail, particularly for tourism and regional commerce.
- The ridership potential tied to both leisure and business markets.
- Implementation strategies, including extending Amtrak's Downeaster service to Auburn and beyond. This potential extension is significant not only for providing service deeper into Maine, but also because Auburn lies directly on the St. Lawrence & Atlantic rail corridor, positioning it as the logical connection point for passenger service continuing north toward Montreal.

Beyond Maine's specific interests, there has also been broader demonstrated interest among the New England states and Quebec in re-establishing direct passenger rail ties between Boston and Montréal. These interstate and cross-border efforts underscore the value of Maine's participation in regional planning and strengthen the case for investment in this corridor.

The following summaries are highlights from a series of state-funded studies evaluating the feasibility and potential benefits of passenger rail service along the corridor from Portland through Lewiston-Auburn and into the Province of Quebec, including prospective connections to Montreal. Each summary captures the principal findings and recommendations of these efforts, focusing on economic, infrastructure, and tourism considerations. This appendix and bibliography are not exhaustive of all analyses completed to date; readers are encouraged to consult the full text of the referenced reports for detailed methodologies, data, and policy context.

### **Maine's Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan (1997, MaineDOT)**

This statewide plan established Maine's framework for a coordinated, multimodal passenger transportation system consistent with the Sensible Transportation Policy Act. It promoted expanded use of rail, bus, air, and marine modes to improve mobility and support tourism-based economic growth. The plan identified the potential for intercity rail connections from Portland through Lewiston-Auburn and Bethel to Montreal as a long-term economic development opportunity, emphasizing cross-border tourism and trade. It projected that integrated passenger and freight systems could generate over 1,400 jobs and \$100 million in annual economic benefits by enhancing visitor access, particularly from Quebec. The report laid the conceptual foundation for subsequent intercity and commuter rail studies in Maine.

**Longwoods International Maine Tourism Study (2000, Maine Office of Tourism)**

The 2000 Longwoods International study provided a comprehensive analysis of visitor origins, travel behavior, and spending patterns, confirming tourism as one of Maine's largest economic drivers. The study found that visitors spent approximately \$3.5 billion annually, supporting over 125,000 jobs and generating more than \$6 billion in total economic activity. Canadian visitors, especially from Quebec and the Montreal region, represented a major share of overnight travelers, staying longer and spending more per trip than domestic visitors. Among all Canadian visitors to Maine, approximately one in four originated from Quebec, with the majority traveling from the greater Montreal metropolitan area.

These visitors were found to have high interest in short-break leisure trips and seasonal second-home opportunities, both of which align closely with Maine's outdoor recreation and coastal tourism strengths. The study also noted that transportation convenience strongly influenced destination choice. Limited intercity public transport beyond automobile travel was cited as a barrier, and potential reintroduction of rail service between Montreal and Maine was viewed as a means to expand access for both leisure and business travelers. Such cross-border rail connectivity was projected to increase Quebec visitation by 15-25%, translating into tens of millions in new annual visitor spending and reinforcing tourism as an export-driven component of Maine's economy.

**Environmental Assessment for the Auburn Intermodal Passenger Center (2007, MaineDOT & Federal Highway Administration)**

This environmental assessment evaluated alternatives for a multimodal passenger terminal adjacent to the Auburn-Lewiston Airport designed to link air, bus, automobile, and potential future passenger rail services. The preferred site (Alternative 6C) was approved with a federal Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Phase 1 called for bus and parking facilities; Phase 2 envisioned a rail platform to accommodate trains from Portland and beyond. The facility was intended as a key component of Maine's intercity transportation system, supporting the long-term vision of connecting Lewiston-Auburn and Montreal via the St. Lawrence & Atlantic corridor. The project reflected early federal and state commitment to multimodal access under the Sensible Transportation Policy Act.

**Portland to Lewiston-Auburn and Montreal Intercity Passenger Rail Study (2011, MaineDOT/Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments/Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority)**

This study assessed the technical and economic feasibility of extending passenger rail service from Portland northwest through Lewiston-Auburn and Bethel to Montreal. It examined infrastructure, ridership, and investment requirements along multiple alignments, focusing particularly on the state-owned St. Lawrence & Atlantic (SLR) line and its Canadian connection through Quebec. The analysis identified a need for significant track rehabilitation along the Auburn-to-Montreal corridor, including tie and rail replacement, ballast renewal, drainage improvements, and signal upgrades to meet Federal Railroad Administration Class III-IV standards. These improvements were estimated to cost between \$400 million and \$600 million for full intercity operations, supporting passenger speeds of up to 79 mph in Maine and 90 mph in Quebec.

The study noted that while high-speed or full intercity service would require major investment, limited passenger operations at lower speeds could be implemented with incremental upgrades. Portions of the corridor could support 40-50 mph service using existing freight-compatible track with safety enhancements and targeted bridge or crossing improvements. This incremental approach was identified as a potential near-term strategy to reintroduce passenger service, particularly between Auburn, Bethel, and the Quebec border, using shorter trainsets, until full corridor rehabilitation could be funded. The Portland-Auburn segment was estimated to have annual ridership of roughly 30,000-45,000; full Portland-Montreal service was projected at up to 200,000 annual riders. While capital costs were high, the analysis confirmed physical feasibility and identified opportunities for phased implementation, such as Amtrak Downeaster extensions or regional service pilots, to reconnect Maine and Quebec by rail and stimulate tourism and trade.

#### **Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan: Operating Plans and Corridor Assessments (2019, VHB/WSP for NNEPRA & MaineDOT)**

Building on the 2018 Transit Propensity Analysis, this report defined potential operating plans, station locations, and infrastructure needs for passenger rail between Portland and Lewiston-Auburn. Encouraged by MaineDOT and the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA), the study focused on evaluating a commuter rail model rather than an intercity extension, which would mirror the model of the Downeaster passenger service. Two primary routes, the western PanAm Railways and eastern St. Lawrence & Atlantic corridors, were evaluated on cost, mobility, and environmental performance. Both alignments produced similar ridership potential, with capital costs ranging from \$264 to \$349 million and annual operating costs of \$15-20 million. The report recommended advancing to an economic and financial feasibility phase and outlined next steps for NEPA documentation and federal funding eligibility. It reaffirmed the corridor's strong public and municipal support and its potential to serve as a foundation for future intercity service to Quebec.

#### **Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Economic Evaluation (2023 Memo & Study, MaineDOT/VHB/RKG)**

Undertaken pursuant to LD 991 (Resolve 2021, ch. 56), this study analyzed the economic and fiscal impacts of potential passenger rail extensions between Portland and Lewiston-Auburn. Two alignments, the western (CSX mainline, formerly PanAm) and eastern (St. Lawrence & Atlantic) routes, were compared using station-area development scenarios. With capital costs of \$264-349 million and expected annual operating subsidies of \$7-9 million, the project was deemed unlikely to qualify for federal funding. MaineDOT recommended pursuing a two-year commuter bus pilot between Portland and Lewiston-Auburn as a cost-effective interim step to test ridership and lay the groundwork for future rail service.

## COMMISSION PROCESS

The Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission first met on June 12, 2025. At this meeting, members elected Sen. Richard Bennett and Rep. Daniel Sayre to serve as Commission Chairs and determined three areas of focus, including the following:

1. fulfilling the obligations set forth in Resolve, Chapter 30: Resolve, Directing the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission and the New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission to Examine Restoring Passenger Rail from Boston to Montréal;
2. considering the importance of cross-border trade and tourism between Maine and its neighboring Canadian provinces and the effects of recent tariffs; and
3. reestablishing a legislative-parliamentary exchange program between the Maine Legislature and the assemblies of proximate Canadian provinces.

It was determined that each of the three work groups would schedule separate meetings to establish their work plans. With respect to the first area of focus, which is the subject of this report, at the second meeting of the Commission on July 11, 2025, the Passenger Rail Work Group membership was finalized. The work group included Sen. Richard Bennett, Hon. Jonathan LaBonté, Rep. Mark Blier, and Hon. Anne Perry.

At the first meeting of the Passenger Rail Work Group on September 2, 2025, Sen. Bennett and Mr. LaBonté were joined by Francois Rebello of Train-Hotel, Inc. and René Sylvestre, the Quebec Delegate to New England. This meeting provided an opportunity to review the lessons of past studies, consider private-sector innovations, and situate Maine's efforts within the larger regional movement to reconnect Montréal and Boston by rail. Mr. Rebello has proposed a private-sector initiative to operate passenger service between Montréal and Boston via Maine. His approach makes use of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic corridor through Auburn, working within existing speed restrictions, and offers a potential complement to ongoing public planning if integrated with the DownEaster service of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA).

These proactive passenger rail policy developments happening through the federal Executive branch and NNEPRA, include the installation of a new communication system, Positive Train Control (PTC) on the CSX corridor paid by governmental grants as part of the negotiated agreement for CSX to acquire PanAm.

Mr. LaBonté shared a compilation of relevant reports and studies (see Appendix D) on passenger rail from the last two decades, including evaluations of passenger rail connections to Montreal that pre-date the DownEaster service, and follow on studies along the same corridor to Montreal or an interim step to expand service to Lewiston and Auburn.



Mr. Rebello walked the group through an overview of the private service concept under development, outlining proposed operations and market potential. He noted this proposal, the Train-Hotel, has several benefits over other similar proposals. Mr. Rebello has data from independent surveys that demonstrates there is significant interest in the concept from potential tourists to sleep on a train with private bedrooms using a slower speed. More information about the Train-Hotel proposal may be found in Appendix C.

The Passenger Rail Work Group considered and discussed how to move forward with railroad partners and other authorities to further the purpose of restoring passenger rail connections between Montreal and Boston through Maine. The following entities were identified as preliminary stakeholders that should be engaged by the Commission to explore such an initiative:

- Maine Department of Transportation (“MDOT”)
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (“NNEPRA”)
- Amtrak
- Canadian National (“CN”)
- Genessee and Wyoming (parent company of St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad)
- CSX Transportation
- Maine Office of Tourism
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (“MBTA”)

The Work Group met again on September 16, 2025, with Sen. Richard Bennett, Rep. Mark Blier, Hon. Jonathan LaBonté, and Mr. Francois Rebello in attendance to review the draft report completed by staff and made several recommended changes to the content and organizational structure.

The Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission met again on October 10, 2025, with Sen. Richard Bennett, Rep. Daniel Sayre, Rep. Lucien Daigle, Rep. Mark Blier, Hon. Jonathan LaBonté, Hon. Anne Perry, Lisa Scali in attendance. At this meeting the Commission reviewed a draft of the passenger rail report, gave feedback, and made recommendations. Mr. LaBonté recommended including a summary of previous passenger rail studies in the final version of the report. Sen. Bennett proposed that the Commission hold a public hearing to solicit input from stakeholders and the public on the preliminary passenger rail report. The public hearing was set for November 7, 2025.

The Commission then listened to a presentation by Mr. Rebello on his Train-Hotel proposal. Commission members asked questions of Mr. Rebello about how his private sleeper train proposal could restore passenger rail between Boston and Montreal, including discussion about the train schedule and track owners.

On November 7, 2025, the Commission held a public hearing to solicit input and feedback from stakeholders and the public. Commission members Sen. Richard Bennett, Rep. Daniel Sayre, Sen. Stacey Guerin, Rep. Mark Blier, Rep. Lucien Daigle, Sen. Mike Tipping, Hon. Jonathan Labonte, Ms. Lisa Scali, and Sen. Mark Lawrence were in attendance.

Two members of the public provided testimony at the hearing. Patty Barber, representing the Rail Passengers Association, voiced excitement about the proposal, highlighted potential benefits for Lewiston-Auburn, and endorsed the “overnight motel” rail model that could allow for quicker implementation with less infrastructure upgrades. Francois Rebello, CEO of Train-Hotel Inc., emphasized the need for collaboration with existing rail organizations and integrating private sector financing with public operations. He praised Maine’s Down Easter rail model and expressed support for the commission’s work.

Patty Barber also submitted additional written comments after the public hearing, highlighting differences between previous passenger rail proposals and the Train-Hotel Inc. proposal, which she believes will lead to reduced capital costs and subsidies. She also emphasized the success of the Lewiston-Auburn-Portland Bus pilot program, which has seen steady ridership, demonstrating a demand for increased transit options along this portion of the proposed passenger rail route.

On December 1, 2025, the Commission met again to review the semi-final version of the report and vote on the final recommendations. Commission members Sen. Richard Bennett, Rep. Daniel Sayre, Rep. Mark Blier, Rep. Lucien Daigle, Hon. Jonathan Labonte, and Ms. Lisa Scali were in attendance.

Discussion occurred about possible amendments to the report recommendations and the remaining policy questions. Mr. Labonte suggested a potential 12-month timeline on the extended remit of the Commission. Commission members debated the respective authorities of the Commission, the Legislature, and other entities to explore the remaining policy questions and suggest legislation. Rep. Sayre asked whether the Commission should submit a letter with potential action items around the policy questions in the report to the Transportation Committee.

After discussion, Sen. Bennett suggested a recommendation be added for the report to be reviewed at a full meeting of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, with Chairs Bennett & Sayre available to answer questions. The Commission then voted unanimously of those members present and voting to approve the final recommendations as amended.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognize that the effort to re-establish passenger rail will extend past the tenures of the current Legislature and Administration.

- Extend the remit to the Commission in the next session to continue examining public and private proposals to restore passenger rail between Boston and Montreal.
- Request that the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation hold a hearing on the *Report of the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission to Examine Restoring Passenger Rail from Boston to Montréal*, with Chairs Bennett & Sayre available to answer questions.
- Consider the establishment of a single, multi-jurisdictional (i.e. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Quebec) entity to focus on the project's progress.
- Engage with representatives of neighboring states and provinces to further the discussion and fact-finding moving forward, such as through the National Conference of State Legislatures ("NCSL") or the Council of State Governments ("CSG").
- Engage with relevant stakeholders, including those entities listed above.
- Authorize the Commission to work with public and private entities within Quebec and New England to develop proposals and analyze economic, environmental, and other impacts of such a project.
- Hold a public hearing by the Commission to solicit feedback on proposals and ideas for restoration of passenger rail services between Canada and New England.
- Review NNEPRA's statutory authority to determine whether proposals under consideration may require amendment.

## **POLICY QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- What initiatives currently underway at NNEPRA would influence advancing a Maine to Montreal service (i.e. how may the planned relocation of Portland train station affect travel times between Maine, Boston and Montreal?)
- How may participation and expansion of passenger rail service to Montreal sit within NNEPRA's existing statutory authority? What encouragements or direction would be helpful or necessary from the Legislature?
- What, if anything, does NNEPRA need for authorization to study and or proceed with additional service to Canada? What additional financial resources may be required and from what sources?
- What are the specific barriers to advancing this proposed service that have been identified from previous studies? Are they policy, funding, or political barriers?
- What ongoing costs (travel, staff, etc.) may the Legislature require to continue the Commission's work in this area?
- What funding will be needed for the Commission to be able to fulfill the recommendations? How much funding may be needed for each recommendation? How may the Commission accept or raise these funds?

## **APPENDIX A**

**Authorizing Legislation: Resolve 2025, c. 30**

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

S.P. 212 - L.D. 472

**Resolve, Directing the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission  
and the New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission to  
Examine Restoring Passenger Rail from Boston to Montreal**

**Sec. 1. Passenger rail from Boston to Montreal. Resolved:** That the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission and the New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission shall examine restoring passenger rail from Boston, Massachusetts to Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The commissions shall submit a report with their findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation by December 3, 2025.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Membership list, Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission**

## Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission

### MRS Title 3, §227. MAINE-CANADIAN LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMISSION

#### Appointed by the Senate President

Sen. Richard Bennett, Chair	citizen of the state; Republican member of the Senate
Sen. Stacey Guerin	citizen of the state; Republican member of the Senate
Sen. Mark Lawrence	citizen of the state; Democratic member of the Senate; speaks French
Sen. Michael Tipping	citizen of the state; Democratic member of the Senate
Hon. Jonathan LaBonte	citizen of the State
Lise Pelletier	citizen of the state

#### Representation

#### Appointed by the House Speaker

Rep. Daniel Sayre, Chair	citizen of the state; Democratic member of the House
Rep. Mark Blier	citizen of the state; Republican member of the House
Rep. Lucien Daigle	citizen of the state; Republican member of the House; speaks French
Rep. Christopher Kessler	citizen of the state; Democratic member of the House
Hon. Anne Perry	citizen of the state
Lisa Scali	citizen of the state

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#### Staff:

Annina V. Breen, House Speaker's Office  
Eliza Woodcock, Senate Republican Office



## **APPENDIX C**

### **Train-Hotel Proposal**

# A MONTRÉAL — BOSTON SLEEPER TRAIN



The passenger train we are proposing has run for more than 100 years. Indeed, between 1860 and 1967, there was a passenger train connection from Montreal to Portland. Some people occasionally talk about having a high-speed train to serve the Montreal-Boston corridor. We found that the investment needed in this international project will never be a political priority in the federal capital of both countries. If we cannot go fast enough, could we make time disappear while sleeping in a comfortable bedroom on the train? As shown in the table featured on the map of the previous page, a marketing study ran by Ryerson University shows what approximately 19% of our potential market would choose the night train.

Years ago, we discussed this project with the different rail owners along the route in question. We realized at that time that we did not meet all the conditions required to move on with this project. Following a meeting we got in the spring of 2022 in Chicago with Jack Hellman, the CEO of G&W who owns the large majority of this route, and it became very clear that a strong proposal from us would be seriously considered. To make sure that we would still have the support of the various communities and government levels along the route, we organized in September 2022 a meeting at the Coaticook train station where more than 60 representatives have contributed \$100 to participate in this event.

We are now presenting this proposal with two documents in way of support. The first one is a technical report written by Josh Putterman, a railway consultant, confirming that the project with our suggested scheduled is feasible. The second one is a potential market ridership study put together by a Ryerson University group.

## **1. Financial Backing**

Following the work done two years ago, we were able to secure funding for the project. Financial forecasts that have been showed to the investors demonstrate that the operational process would break even at a 50% occupational rate, as it is the case for the airline industry. This is not surprising considering that passenger railway services connecting big markets together (Toronto-Montreal-Quebec, Boston, NY-Washington) are making profits. It is especially the case for night trains operating in European countries where private companies are making money. It is also important to consider that the population from Quebec going to Maine is so large that with only 3% of it our summer train would be full. The other distinction in our overnight model is the fact that we don't need a

considerable investment on the tracks speed as would be the case for a higher speed day train operation. In any case, G&W could charge upfront fees to Train-Hotel Inc. to make sure that they would not be exposed to any financial risks.

## **2. Compensation**

We are proposing to compensate the host railroads for the maintenance of the tracks at a price of 8.50 US\$ per train mile plus an additional 1,200 US\$ to share with the host railroads per on-time train, which is, according to the information that we have, more than the actual price paid by Amtrak for a Class II railroad. We could pay upfront amounts with the help of governments to cover the needed infrastructure improvement in exchange for long-term agreements.

## **3. Rail Capacity and Infrastructures**

Our train would run on the CN from Montreal Central Station and Saint-Hyacinthe where it would connect on the Saint Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (SLA own by Genesee & Wyoming) from this station onto the CN to Auburn, Maine where it would continue on the CSX track to Portsmouth NH where it would finish the route on the MBTA till the Boston North Station.

As showed in the following schedule and confirmed as feasible by our railway consultant, the average speed of the train on the SLA part of the route will be 25 mph and higher on other railroads where actual passenger trains are running. To make sure that our train will not interfere with a freight train, we have planned a two-hour stop on a siding in Berlin NH.

We would also like to bring to the attention the fact that an overnight train could have some flexibility within its schedule, which a day service train would not have. It is totally acceptable to stay parked on a siding for a couple of minutes while passengers are sleeping.

At the time when our consultant reviewed this schedule, there were only five 10 mph TSO (Temporary Slow Orders) on the SLA that amounted to 1.2 miles of track. Since that time, we found out that SLA received a grant to upgrade a 20 mile-portion in Vermont and New Hampshire. Therefore, we think that those TSOs may not all be a necessity now. But in any case, it is possible to slow our night train to 10 mph should there be some TSOs still in place.

For the section between Auburn, Maine and the border of Massachusetts (Plaistow NH), CSX is requesting an Amtrak operation like the one used for the Downeaster mainly to get a federal government insurance coverage. This is possible since we could plan a crew change in Auburn and subcontract the maintenance in Boston to Amtrak. Finally, MBTA is open to let us get to North Station if we get there outside of the rush hours.

Southbound	Time	Lap	Miles	Avg mph	Track class	Stop time	Stop detail	Northbound		
Montréal	18:00	0:30	21	60	4 (70 mph)			8:43		
St Hyacinthe	18:30					0:30	Transfert ViaRAil	8:13 7:43		
	19:00	0:45	19	25	2 (30 mph)				0:02	
Acton Vale	19:45									
	19:47	0:43	18			0:02		6:13 6:11		
Richmond-Windsor	20:30									
	20:32	0:55	23			0:05		5:16 5:11		
Sherbrooke	21:27									
	21:32	0:40	21	25 (B)	2 (30 mph)	0:02		4:31 4:29		
Coaticook	22:12									
	22:14	0:24	10			1:00	Border stop	4:05 3:05		
Norton VT-Stanhope QC	22:38									
	23:38	0:36	16			0:02		2:29 2:27		
Island Pond	0:14									
	0:16	2:10	54			0:02		0:17 0:15		
Berlin - Gorham NH	2:26									
	2:28	1:05	28			0:02		23:10 23:08		
Bethel	3:33									
	3:35	1:40	42			25 (B)	2 (30 mph)	0:02		21:28 21:26
Auburn	5:15									
	5:17	0:45	34	50	3 (60 mph)	0:05		20:41 20:36		
Portland	6:02									
	6:07	0:14	12	60	4 (70 mph)	0:05		20:22 20:17		
Old Orchard Beach	6:21									
	6:26	0:51	42			0:02		19:26 19:24		
Durham	7:17									
	7:19	1:24	62	60	4 (70 mph)			18:00		
Boston	8:43									
Elapsed	14:43							14:43		

With the help of the Vermont government, we have been able to address the issue of customs. In a meeting held in Burlington on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, in the presence of the Vermont Transportation Secretary and staffers of Vermont representatives in Washington, the representative of the US Customs Office mentioned that the US border clearing could be done in Norton, Vermont, where they actually do freight



clearing from time to time. We also met with Norton's Town Council, who has accepted to eventually help out in the financing of a safe platform for passengers in that location. The Canadian Customs Representative suggested to do the clearing in Coaticook, Quebec, where the platform is already in place.

The US customs people have assured us that, since the implementation of the new pre-clearing process, trains are very rarely stopped for clearing on the Norton siding that we intend to use for passenger clearing. We must also mention that the customs clearing for this train would be very similar to the actual one used for the Amtrak Adirondack everyday stopping in Rouses Point, NY.

#### **4. Supporting Structures**

We plan to load and unload passengers only where adequate platforms are in place. There are such platforms on the SLA railway in Coaticook, Quebec, and Bethel, Maine. We have had discussions with all the cities and towns along this railway, and they have all agreed to invest for upgrading their former train stations to your requirements to allow for safe passenger loading and unloading. Train-Hotel Inc. will be responsible to review those platforms and to ensure that structural repairs are made if needed, and we will of course share those plans with the host railway.

On the Saint-Hyacinthe end, we will load and unload the passengers on the platform located on the CN railway. At the other end, we will unload and load passengers on the different platforms located on the CSX railroad and in North Station in Boston.

The maintenance of each station will be under the responsibility of the city, which will have to provide an employee who must be present before the arrival of the train in order to oversee the platform's condition and to welcome the passengers. This employee will communicate directly with the train conductor.

#### **5. Supervision and Personnel**

We are looking to different potential operators for this train. Amtrak could be an option especially on the CSX part of the route (between Auburn Maine and Boston). We notably have received a letter from them in 2014 where they were opening the door to it if we could get agreements with the host railways. We could also operate it privately and some of the responsibilities could be subcontracted to host railways if it is what they wish.

## **6. Equipment**

All the equipment will be FRA & Transport Canada certified (both locomotives and passenger cars). This rolling stock will be maintained to ensure reliable and safe operations, meeting all federal requirements. The details of the exact location and how this maintenance will be done will have to be defined once a first general agreement is established with the host railroads.

The new United States regulations mandate the installation of a PTC system certified under Section 236.1015 on each railroad providing or hosting intercity passenger service. However, a study done by the Maine DOT in August 2011, written after the PTC rules adoption, clearly states that “PTC requirements can be waived in a segment of dark territory if there are no more than 15 million gross tons transported annually and if passenger service is limited to four regularly scheduled moves per day” (Portland & Montreal Intercity Passenger rail Feasibility Study, Maine DOT, Aug 2011, p.19 and 61). It seems to be the case in our situation. We therefore don’t foresee a mandatory installation of PTC on the SLA part of this route and in the section of CSX between Auburn and Portland. Since the PTC is on the way to be installed between Portland and Boston, we would have use locomotives than can run with this PTC.

## **7. Liability**

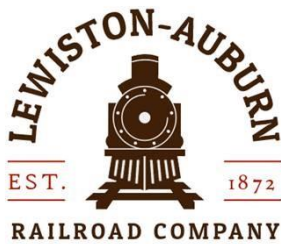
Transit trains in Canada are running with 100 million\$ of coverage, but we are willing to provide terms that indemnify the host railways for any damage or liability for personal injury that would not have been incurred but for the existence of this proposed operation to a maximum of 200 million US\$. This 200 million\$ limit is covering all the risks related to a passenger rail accident to the cap in the US law in the case of passenger rail accident (cap of 75 million\$ for all the liabilities related to a passenger train accident in all the states that we are passing through).

François Rebello, Train-Hotel Inc.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Bibliography of Passenger Rail Studies**





August 29, 2025

## **Partial Listing of Assessments of Passenger Rail Service to Auburn and/or Montreal**

Wilbur Smith Associates, 1997

*A Maine Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan that recommended establishing passenger rail service connecting Portland to Brunswick and Portland to Lewiston/Auburn*

Maine Tourism Study, Longwoods International Tour, 2000

*Evaluated general interest of train travel to Maine from Montreal, estimated up to 789,000 over a two year period*

Travel Demand Forecast, Wallace Floyd Design Group, 2001

*Forecasted travel demand (tourist and commuter) for a passenger intermodal terminal at the Auburn-Lewiston Airport, estimated 1,220 passenger trips per day*

Cost Feasibility Study, HNTB, 2005

*Cost feasibility study for Portland Commuter Rail linking to Auburn-Lewiston Airport and Brunswick*

Auburn-Lewiston Passenger Intermodal, MaineDOT Environmental Assessment, 2007

*MaineDOT completed this assessment and submitted to FHWA, which issued a “Finding of No Significant Impact” to proceed with the development of a passenger rail station at the Auburn-Lewiston Airport.*

Portland North Alternative Modes Study, MaineDOT 2011

*Evaluated rail and bus alternatives for commuters between Portland and Brunswick and/or Auburn*

Portland to Lewiston/Auburn & Montreal Study, MaineDOT, 2011

*Enhanced evaluation of intercity rail connections northwest of Portland (to Lewiston/Auburn, Bethel, Montreal) in response to public comment received during state rail planning*

Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan, VHB, 2018

*This legislatively directed study was completed with a financial contribution required to come from Lewiston and Auburn*

Lewiston-Auburn to Portland Economic Impact Study, VHB, 2022

*This legislatively directed study is underway with a financial contribution required from municipalities along the corridor. Local funded received from Lewiston and Portland*