



4/14/2023

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To: Maine Legislature Transportation Committee

From: Maine Rail Transit Coalition
Tony Donovan, Director

Date: April 14, 2023

Re: In support of LD 406 -Post Public Hearing Comments

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Tony Donovan, I am a Portland resident and founding Member of the Maine Rail Transit Coalition (MRTC).

The MRTC is here in support of LD 406 New title: Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation To Develop and Adopt a Rail Corridor Use Vision Plan for State of Maine-Owned Railroads

Thank you to the Transportation Committee for providing the unique public hearing April 12 for a number (8) very unique Legislative Acts intended to address the immediate needs, and future requirements for addressing a sustainable transportation future for Maine.

In recognition of the letter of support from the City of Portland, please find attached the staff information provided to the city from Jeremiah Bartlett, City of Portland representative to the Berlin Subdivision Rail Use Advisory Council. I am also attaching the City of Auburn position on the same RUAC. Both Cities agree, rails and trails, must be considered. MRTC believes these sentiments apply to all the Rail Use Advisory council on all Maine owned railways.

Mr. Bartlett goes on to recommend.

- MaineDOT completes transit alternatives analysis for corridor (i.e. light rail, BRT, something else), terminating at Ocean Gateway.
- Followed by design for transit and co-located trail uses.
- Scope of design work to include abutters, stakeholders (i.e., Roux, etc.) to evaluate on and off-corridor segments for the trail, depending upon geographic and/or environmental constraints.

These and other sets of data will be provided by the implementation of LD 406, intending to determine the highest and best value of these corridors.

In its public testimony, the City of Portland says, *"Based on the City of Portland's recent involvement with multiple rail-related studies and initiatives, including passenger rail feasibility to Lewiston and the Portland-to-Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council, it has become clear that a guiding vision of the future use of critical state corridors is necessary," ...and, "... is essential to an effective, forward-looking course as we navigate climate and housing crises."*

We completely agree. **PLEASE SUPPORT PASSAGE OF LD 406**

Anthony J. Donovan, Director Maine Rail Transit Coalition
84 Middle St. Portland, Me. 04101 (207) 329-6732 Mobile
Mailto: MElikesRail@Gmail.com

Train Time

** Please consider the environment before printing this message.*

City of Portland | City Council
Kate Snyder, *Mayor*



To: Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
From: Mayor Kate Snyder, City of Portland
Date: TBD
Re: LD 406

**Testimony in Support of LD 406 “Directing the Department of Transportation To
Develop and Adopt a Rail Corridor Use Vision Plan for State of Maine-Owned
Railroads”**

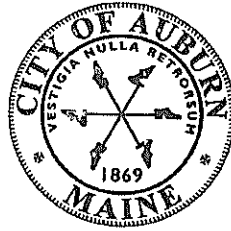
Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Transportation:

I write to you on behalf of the City of Portland’s Legislative/Nominating Committee in Support
of LD 406, Directing the Department of Transportation To Develop and Adopt a Rail Corridor
Use Vision Plan for State of Maine-Owned Railroads.

Based on the City of Portland’s recent involvement with multiple rail-related studies and
initiatives, including passenger rail feasibility to Lewiston and the Portland-to-Auburn Rail
Use Advisory Council, it has become clear that a guiding vision of the future use of critical
state corridors is necessary, for everything from passenger transportation to freight to active
transportation connections.

The actions included by this legislation would provide the high-level analysis needed to
move the State of Maine on a path toward sustainable community development and away
from auto-centric planning; this shift is essential to an effective, forward-looking course as
we navigate climate and housing crises.

Thank you for your consideration.



RESOLVE 09-12192022

City Council Resolve

IN CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Transportation, pursuant to Public Law 21, Chapter 239, established a Rail Use Advisory Council to facilitate discussion, gather information, and provide advice regarding the future use of the state-owned section of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad Berlin Subdivision between Auburn and Portland; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn was provided a seat on said Council to provide input on city plans and policies relating to the future use of this rail corridor; and

WHEREAS, state of Maine acquired this corridor through two purchases, one in 2007 and another in 2010, as part of on-going planning for freight and passenger movements between the City of Portland and the City of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the city has identified south Auburn as a growth area in its most recent Comprehensive Plan and multi-modal use of this corridor, including for active transportation, would increase its attractiveness for residential and commercial investment; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Auburn City Council supports a "rail with trail" recommendation from the Rail Use Advisory Council and the expedited movement of any necessary planning and design work to implement that recommendation between Maine's largest city, Portland, and the city of Auburn.

A TRUE COPY

ATTEST Susan Clements-Dallaire 1/3/23
Susan Clements-Dallaire, City Clerk Date

Passage on 12/19/2022, 7-0.

Richard Whiting, Ward One
Joseph Morin, Ward Four
Belinda A. Gerry, At Large

Ryan Hawes, Ward Two
Leroy G. Walker, Ward Five
Jason J. Levesque, Mayor

Stephen G. Milks, Ward Three
Dana Staples, At Large
Phillip L. Crowell, Jr., City Manager

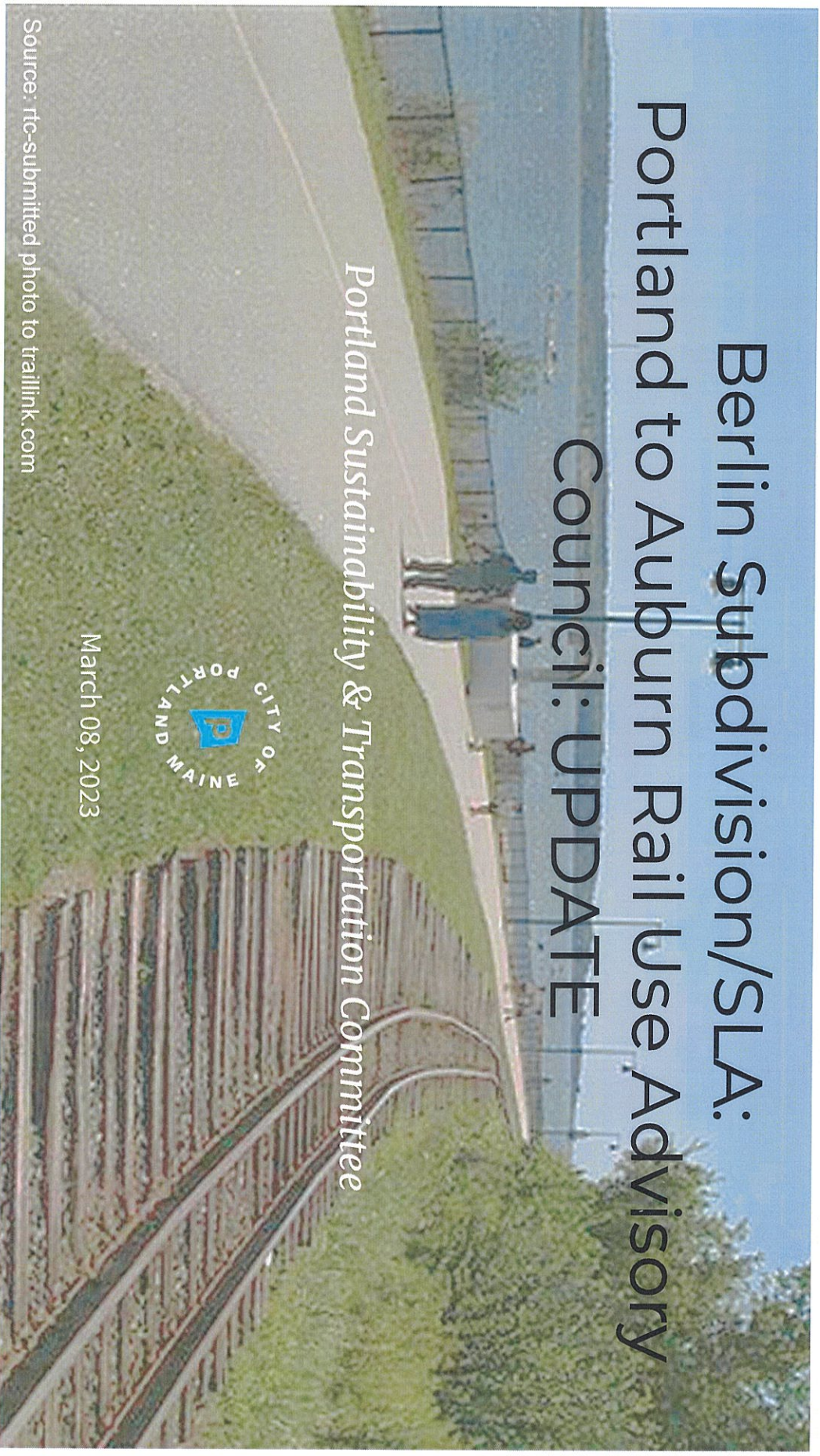
Berlin Subdivision/SLA: Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council: UPDATE

Portland Sustainability & Transportation Committee



March 08, 2023

Source: rtc-submitted photo to trailink.com



S&T Requests for Follow-up from January

Outcome from 12/22/22 RUAC Vote

Copy of Auburn Council Resolve from 12/22

Possible Transit Uses for Corridor (Options)

Other Updates



PACTS Rail with Trail Study

PACTS/GPCOG: Rail with Trail

- 2017 Study
- Examined Rail with Trail from Portland to Yarmouth
- Reviewed other facilities around the U.S.
- Examined alternative trail segments
- Included stakeholders active in RUAC study
- Most residents supported trail with rail
- Should connect to the Portland Peninsula
- Cited in RUAC Report – does not specify why outcomes from that report not clearly followed up on

RAIL WITH TRAIL

*Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of Building an
Active Transportation Corridor from Portland to
Yarmouth*

December 2017



RUAC Member Vote Tally, 12/22/22

Interim Trail Until Rail: 7 Votes

(i.e. Track Removal)

- Dick Woodbury, Casco Bay Trail Alliance
- Angela King, Advocacy Manager, Bicycle Coalition of Maine
- Amy Kuhn *for* Hope Cahan, Town Councilor, Falmouth
- Diane Barnes, Town Manager, North Yarmouth
- Christopher Chop, Transportation Director, Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)
- Scott Laflamme, Director of Economic Development, Yarmouth
- Nate Wildes, Executive Director, Live + Work in Maine

Rail with Trail: 5 Votes

(i.e. Trail Next to Track)

- Jonathan P. LaBonté, Transportation Systems Analyst, Auburn
- Tony Donovan, Maine Rail Transit Coalition
- Bill Shane, Chair, Town Manager, Cumberland
- Brian Harris, General Manager, Maine Yacht Center
- Jeremiah Bartlett, Transportation Systems Engineer, Portland

RUAC Member Vote Tally, 12/22/22 (cont.)

Rail Only: 1 Vote

(i.e. No Trail)

- Charles Hunter, AVP Government Affairs, G&W
(Genessee & Wyoming) RR Services, Inc.

Abstain from Voting: 2 Votes

(i.e. No Position)

- Natalie Thomsen, Town Planning,
New Gloucester
- Becky Taylor-Chase, Town Administrator,
Pownal

City of Auburn Maine Resolve for SLA



RESOLVE 09-12192022

City Council Resolve

IN CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Transportation, pursuant to Public Law 21, Chapter 239, established a Rail Use Advisory Council to facilitate discussion, gather information, and provide advice regarding the future use of the state-owned section of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad Berlin Subdivision between Auburn and Portland; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn was provided a seat on said Council to provide input on city plans and policies relating to the future use of this rail corridor; and

WHEREAS, state of Maine acquired this corridor through two purchases, one in 2007 and another in 2010, as part of on-going planning for freight and passenger movements between the City of Portland and the City of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the city has identified south Auburn as a growth area in its most recent Comprehensive Plan and multi-modal use of this corridor, including for active transportation, would increase its attractiveness for residential and commercial investment; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Auburn City Council supports a "rail with trail" recommendation from the Rail Use Advisory Council and the expedited movement of any necessary planning and design work to implement that recommendation between Maine's largest city, Portland, and the city of Auburn.

Auburn Resolve 09-12192022

Auburn City Council Resolved: 'support a "rail with trail" ... and the expedited movement of any necessary planning and design work to implement that recommendation between Maine's largest City, Portland, and the City of Auburn.'

Passage on 12/19/22, 7-0

Unanimous passage.

A TRUE COPY

ATTEST

Susan Clements-Dallaire 1/3/23

Susan Clements-Dallaire, City Clerk

Date

Source: City of Auburn

ATRC Rail Support Letter

January 31, 2023 Letter to DOT

■ ATRC Supports Rail with Trail

■ Desires More Active Discussion on Future
RVAC Planning



January 31, 2023

Bruce Van Note, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Dear Commissioner Van Note,

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Lewiston-Auburn urbanized area, the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC), when considering the Rail Use Advisory Council's proposals strongly supports the "Rail with Trail" option being advanced through the RVAC process.

We feel that the positive impacts of recreational trail use, coupled with the potential future rail use, both freight and passengers, would conform with our overall transportation goals of improving access, safety and reliability in our transportation system but also allows for continued economic growth within our MPO member communities as both residential and commercial growth continues to climb. Having the possibility of regional, national, and international rail access in the future keeps our communities relevant from a logistics standpoint.

Coupled with our support position, comes a request. We would respectfully request that ATRC be invited to participate in further RVAC planning and all future transportation related forecasting and feasibility studies that may impact our MPO communities (Lewiston, Auburn, Lisbon, Sabattus).

We appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Allen
Interim MPO Transportation Director
ATRC / AVCOG
125 Mainly Road
Auburn, ME 04210

Source: ATRC

LR 1755 Resolve: MainedDOT/SLR Service Plan

LR 1755

- Resolve, directing MainedDOT to complete a service plan for the Berlin Subdivision Line from Downtown Portland to Auburn
- Introduced by Sen. Ben Chipman
- Available for public hearing soon
- Resolve seeks service plan for:
 - Operator to provide passenger service (inter-urban light rail)
 - Determine other uses for corridor, including trail use

LR 1755 Sen. Chipman, Benjamin of Cumberland Title: Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation to Complete a Service Plan for Restoration of Rail Use of the Berlin Subdivision Line from Downtown Portland to Auburn.

Purpose. The section of the Berlin Subdivision railroad (St. Lawrence & Atlantic) owned by the State of Maine between the state's two major population centers has not been comprehensively studied for use as a passenger railroad, despite a recent advisory committee convened for that purpose.

Therefore, be it Resolved that the Maine Department of Transportation (MainedDOT) will complete a clear and comprehensive service plan and scope of work for restoration of the railroad to a minimum of Class 3 inter-urban light rail operating conditions, including proposed community train station locations and appropriate multi-modal use of the corridor, including trail and other non-rail use. The scope of services will provide a development plan for the feasibility of applying for Federal Capital Improvements Grant (CIG).

Be it further Resolved that Maine DOT will seek proposals for an operator to provide a passenger rail transit service on this route between downtown Portland and Auburn. The scope of services will also address legal and federal railroad administration requirements for crossing the CSX Transportation mainline corridor, and shared corridor use to downtown Lewiston and, through Danville Junction on the Genesee & Wyoming railroad to a station site at or near the Auburn-Lewiston Municipal Airport

Membership. The Commissioner of Transportation shall invite at least 11 and not more than 15 persons representing transportation and economic development interests to serve on an advisory committee to be appointed no later than November 1, 2023. The advisory committee must include representatives of

- A. Transit Oriented Development
- B. Executive Director or designee from the Androscoggin Regional Chamber of Commerce;
- C. Executive Director or designee of the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce;
- D. Executive Director or designee of the Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce;

E. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the Commissioners designee;

F. The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) or the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Systems (PACTS);

G. the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG) or the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) and Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG);

H. One member representing other state agencies;

I. One Member representing an organization advocating for rail use;

J. One member advocating for non-rail or recreational rail interests;

K. The Commissioner May invite other interests with expertise in rail logistics and/or infrastructure

Meetings: chair. The Commissioner of Transportation shall designate the chair of a council. The department shall provide staff support to the council. The council may adopt bylaws and other policies to effectively govern its proceedings. The council shall meet at the call of the chair and shall hold a minimum of one public hearing located in the geographic area along the rail corridor for which the council was formed.

MainedDOT is required to seek competitive bids for the study. The Advisory Committee will vote on whether to approve the accepted study provider.

Report. Within nine months of convening its first meeting, a council shall submit a detailed report to the Legislature Transportation Committee chairs. The Committee shall [?] report out a bill on the findings.

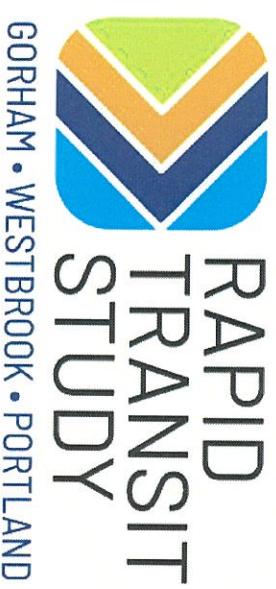
A appropriations and allocations

Funding for this study will be allocated from the State Multi-Modal Fund Initiative. Provides one-time funding to complete the service plan and scope of work for restoration of the railroad to a minimum of Class 3 inter-urban light rail operating conditions for the state-owned portion of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad line from Portland at Ocean Gateway Milepost 0.0 to the Lewiston-Auburn area.

GPCOG/PACTS Rapid Transit Study

Draft Tier 2 Route Analysis

- Consultant has completed draft Tier 2 Alternatives
- Four potential routes in Portland
- Virtual meeting with more information March 9
- Ocean Gateway features prominently in Tier 2 Outcomes
- PACTS presentation this evening
- Takeaway: Ocean Gateway likely to be a significant transit hub (now hosts Husky and likely Routes 2 & 4)



Potential Passenger Transit on SLA



Source: NNEPRA

Option Considered by RUAC Study

- Amtrak Intercity Rail - Style Train
- Considered Heavy Rail
- Generally requires upgrades to Tracks, Ties, and Ballasts
- Designed for Intercity Service, with service usually 2 or more hours apart
- Option already ruled out by staff and Mayoral testimony

Potential Transit Options on SLA

Light Rail Vehicles

- Requires less heavy rolling stock
- Frequent service with shorter headways than heavy intercity rail
- More frequent service intended for commuting as opposed to long-distance travel
- Generally requires external power feed (generally overhead)



Source: By The Port of Authority (talk) -- Own work
(Original text self-made)

Potential Transit Options on SLA



Source: Siemens Desiro in San Diego, source, Loco Steve

Multiple Unit Trains

- Self-powered train – does not require engine unit
- Can be:
 - Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU)
 - Battery Multiple Unit (BMU)
- DMU's in use in locations around the world, including US
- United States does not appear to currently have active BMU systems
- Does not require external power feed

Potential Transit Options on SLA

Bus Rapid Transit

- Greater capacity than “standard” bus system
- May have some operational savings
- Would require more modification of a rail-based transit line
- Could transition between dedicated ROW and urban streets



Source: Ctttransit Novabus, by NewFlyer504

Potential Transit Options on SLA: NE Example



Source: Wikipedia

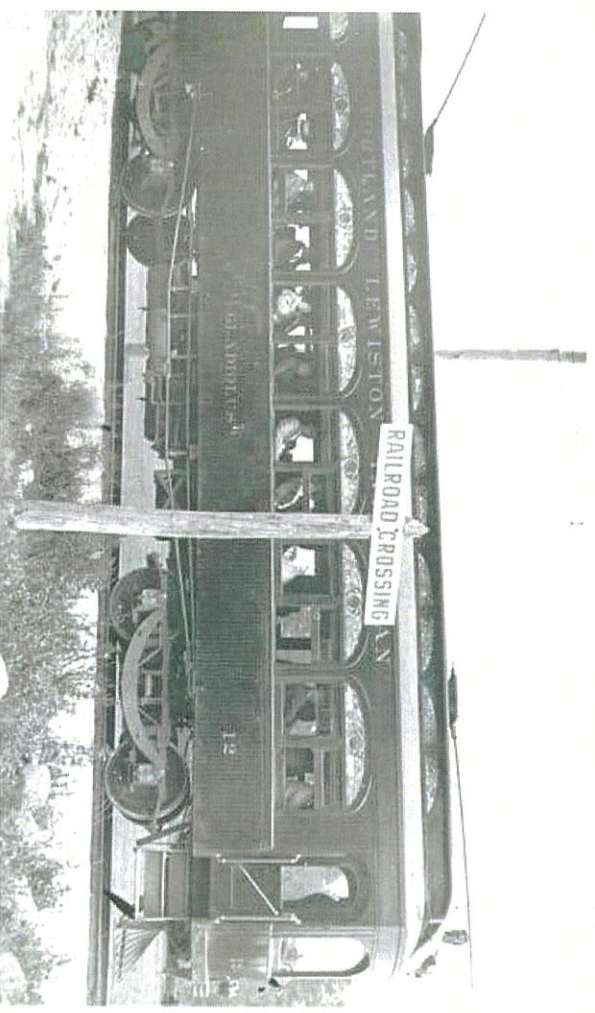
MBTA Green Line D Branch

- Operates on former rail line
- Self-Powered Electric Units
- High Stop Frequency
- Serves mostly suburban locations outside of Boston

Historical Precedent: Portland to Auburn

Portland-Lewiston Interurban

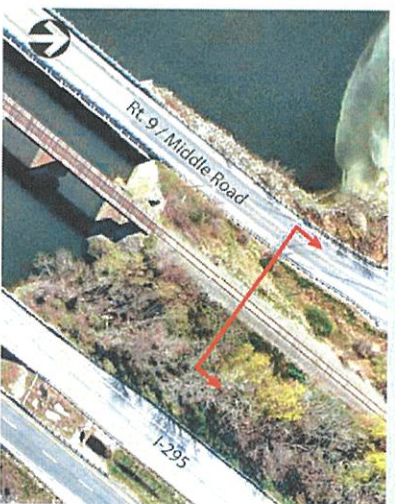
- Early overhead -powered electric transit line
- Hourly service from Lewiston to Monument Square
- Hydroelectric power with overhead feed
- Capable of 60 -mph operation
- In service: 1914-1933
- Unable to compete with state-subsidized buildout of Route 100 from 1925 onward
- Much of former ROW turned into Maine Turnpike



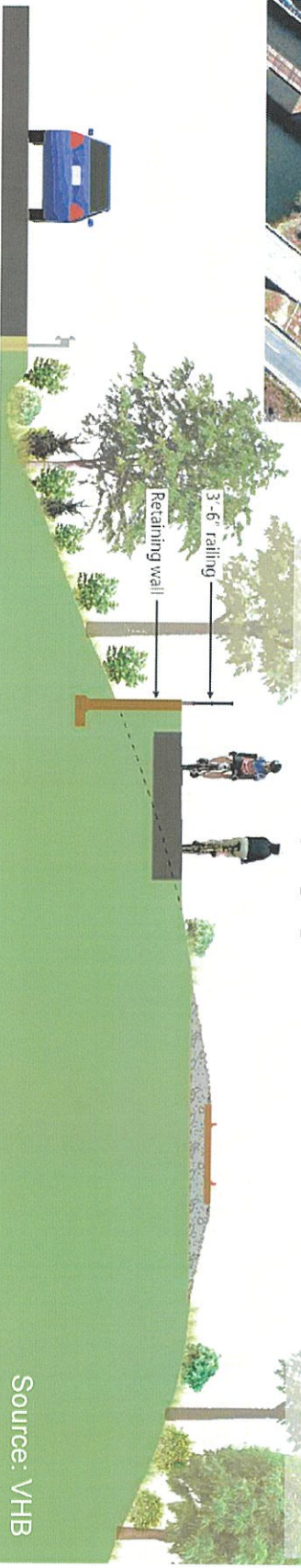
Source: Gladiolus, trolleymuseum.org

Staff Recommendation (if action desired)

Rail with Trail (Co-Location Option)



- Also recommend MaineDOT complete transit alternatives analysis for corridor (i.e. light rail, BRT, something else), terminating at Ocean Gateway
- Followed by design for transit and co-located trail uses
- Scope of design work to include abutters, stakeholders (i.e. Roux, etc.) to evaluate on and off-corridor segments for the trail, depending upon geographic and/or environmental constraints



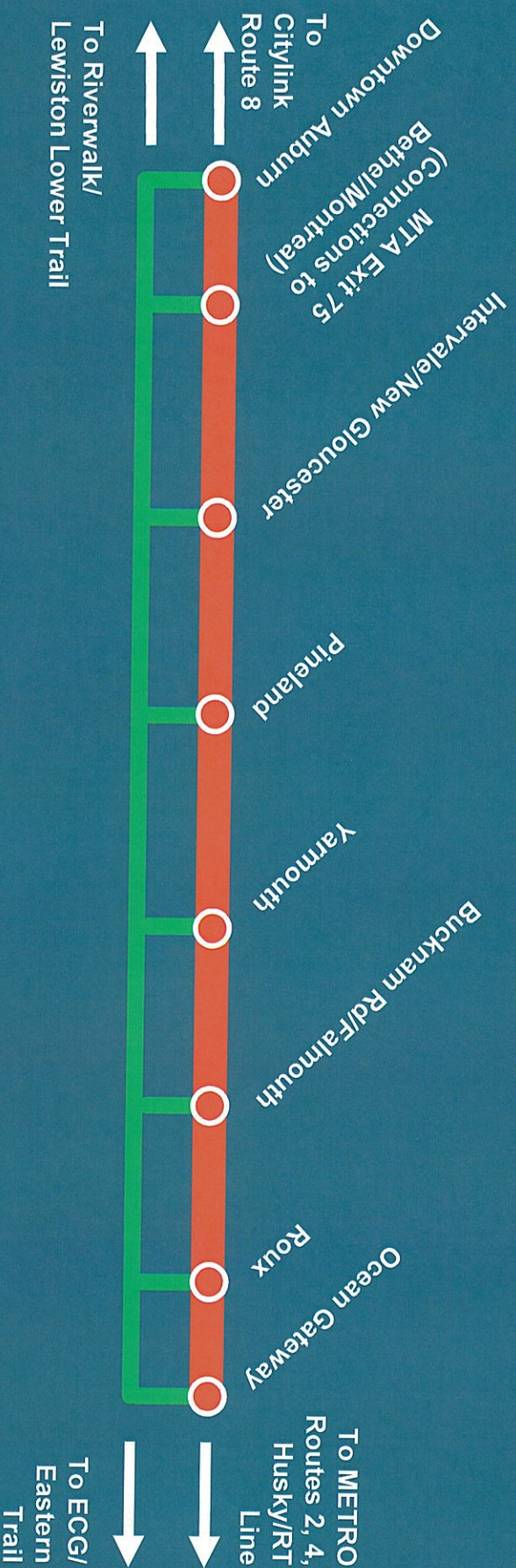
Source: VHB

Questions?



Source: Rails To Trails Conservancy
– Blackstone River Bikeway

Thank You!



(Potential 'Grand Trunk Greenway/Transitway')