
Board Briefing Materials

November 22, 2021

Location:
Virtual Meeting

1:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

NNEPRA FY2022 Strategic Workplan

NNEPRA was established under Maine law for the general purpose of supporting the operation of passenger rail service. (Section 8111). To accomplish this purpose, NNEPRA shall in part:

1. Take all actions reasonably necessary to initiate, establish, or reinstate regularly scheduled passenger rail service between points within this State and points within and outside this State. (Section 8003)
2. Seek and use all funds necessary to pay all expenses of this passenger rail service that are not met by fares and other funds or revenues. (Section 8006)
3. Set fares at reasonable levels to encourage the use of this service. (Section 8009)
4. Adopt a budget, make allocations and account transfers subject to the approval of Maine's Transportation Commissioner. (Section 8116)

In fulfillment of these statutory expectations, and in recognition of the 20th Anniversary of Downeaster service, the NNEPRA Board of Directors adopts the following FY2022 workplan:

1. Meet high standards for transportation safety including the provision of robust public health safeguards.
2. Maximize public awareness of the Downeaster service, attract new riders and retain existing riders through advertising, promotions, digital, traditional and earned media.
3. Support efforts to provide customers with a travel experience that consistently exceeds their expectations, delivers value and benefit, and contributes to a modern, integrated public transportation system.
4. Support the reduction of vehicle miles travelled and State climate change initiatives by improving service accessibility and quality by taking steps necessary to accomplish the following:
 - a. Extend double track and construct station improvements in Wells to improve service reliability, increase frequency and enhance efficiency.
 - b. Relocate the station in Portland to the railroad mainline to reduce travel times, improve access and operating efficiency.
 - c. Build a new station in Falmouth to improve access to I-95 and communities north of Portland.
 - d. Initiate passenger rail service on the Rockland Branch to expand access and provide traffic relief alternatives to coastal Route 1.
 - e. Prepare for new trainsets purchased by Amtrak which will replace legacy equipment and significantly reduce air emissions.
 - f. Collaborate with MaineDOT on studies and planning efforts associated with rail improvements and service expansions.
 - g. Participate as appropriate in national and regional planning initiatives to enhance access and connectivity.
5. Secure favorable terms for the continuation and expansion of passenger rail service to include the following:
 - a. Surface Transportation Board proceedings related to the Pan Am merger with CSX Transportation
 - b. Amtrak/NNEPRA operating agreement renewal
 - c. Downeaster Municipal Station agreement renewals
 - d. Portland Transportation Center agreement extension/renewal
6. Increase state and federal operational and capital funding opportunities:
 - a. Maximize the benefit of COVID-related assistance
 - b. Monitor federal discretionary grant opportunities including CRISI, RAISE, and State of Good Repair to supplement needs for applicable projects
 - c. Ensure NNEPRA is positioned to receive eligible federal funding made available through surface transportation reauthorization or supplemental infrastructure bills
 - d. Collaborate with MaineDOT to secure resources needed to leverage federal funding opportunities.

NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

November 22, 2021

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from October 25, 2021 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of September Variance Report
 - Approval of FY21 Audit
- Marketing Update
- Project Updates
- Other Business

Vote to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Cooperative Grant Agreement between NNEPRA and the US Department of Transportation/Federal Railroad Administration for funding to complete the Wells Area Improvement Project.

Next Meeting:



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

October 25, 2021

Directors in Attendance:

Chairman John Melrose; Mr. Dana Connors; Mr. Brian Hobart; Mr. Jim Cohen; Ms. Carol Murray; Mr. Nate Moulton

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Ms. Leslie Guerrette; Mr. James Russell; Mr. William Gayle; Ms. Natalie Bogart; Mr. Stephen Houdlette

Interested Parties:

Ms. Allison Harris; Mr. Eric Conrad; Mr. Mark Bickford; Mr. Bruce Sleeper, TrainRiders; Mr. Dean Rybolt, Amtrak; Ms. Jane Brophy, Amtrak; Mr. Nathaniel Rosenblatt; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Kelsey Frenette, Wipfli; Richard Schriewer, Wipfli.

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:00pm.

Mr. William Gayle conducted the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Melrose opened the floor to public comment. No public comments made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to Approve the September 27th, 2021 Minutes

Motion: Mr. Connors

Seconded: Ms. Cohen

Accepted: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the performance statistics for September.

VARIANCE REPORT– Leslie Guerrette

Leslie Guerrette provided an update on Variance Report noting that the Amtrak invoice for September had not been received as of the morning. Once the invoice has been received, the Variance Report will be updated and included in the next Board Packet and that the Amtrak expenses listed were estimates only.

Leslie Guerrette mentioned that the remaining CRSSA funds will be applied to the train operations expenses in September and ARPA funds will be applied moving forward. Chairman Melrose asked for clarification on the CRSSA funding. Leslie Guerrette noted that previously NNEPRA had requested Amtrak apply \$500,000 in funding per month to offset expenses however in September, with a balance of only \$216,000 in CRSSA funds, NNEPRA revised the figure to apply the remaining balance. Next month, APRA funds will be applied by Amtrak to reduce the train operations costs.

Director Cohen asked a question how Café performance was measured given increased sales due to more passengers than had been projected. Patricia Quinn noted that the cost recovery ratio (expenses/revenue) is used to monitor overall Café efficiency. Pre-COVID, cost recovery was approximately 88-90 percent range; this year the budgeted cost recovery is 65 percent.

Chairman Melrose suggested that the vote on the variance report be deferred until the September Amtrak invoice has been received and the figures for the month are finalized.

REVIEW OF FY21 AUDIT – Richard Schriewer

Patricia introduced Richard Schriewer from Wipfli to provide an overview of the FY21 Audit Report. Richard Schriewer noted that Wipfli prepared four Audit documents, which were sent to the Board. Richard Schriewer provided an overview of the Single Audit Report highlighting on pages 1 and 2 is the high-level opinion; pages 3-7 contains management's discussion and analysis; page 8 is the statement of position; page 10 is the statement and revenue discuss. It was noted that there no issues were found during this year's audit.

Director Murray noted that the audit looked good and congratulated the staff and Board members for the audit results given the challenges of the past year.

Director Moulton asked if the financial statement needed to be submitted to the Legislature. William Gayle responded that it will get submitted with the annual report in January 2022.

Chairman Melrose suggested holding off a formal action until next meeting to provide the Board with additional time for review and questions.

PROJECT UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the various projects, noting most recently NNEPRA had a productive meeting with the Town of Wells, Maine Turnpike Authority and VHB regarding the Wells Platform and Siding Extension project. Patricia Quinn highlighted the busy grade-crossing construction schedule for the fiscal year noting that six projects had been completed which required Downeaster service modifications. Patricia Quinn provided a presentation of the steps for a grade-crossing replacement project. James Russell noted that the Portland North tie replacement project is scheduled to begin in the next few weeks. Patricia Quinn followed by reviewing the project budget summary explaining that some of the work listed in FY20 and FY22 workplans has been completed but not billed to date.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided updates related to the installation of the new Amtrak ticket kiosks; Amtrak vaccine policy; System Safety Plan; FTA reporting; renovations at Back Bay station; operating agreement with Amtrak and train schedules. It was noted that Amtrak's COVID vaccine mandate is not expected to significantly impact Downeaster service.

Nat Rosenblatt provided an update on the CSX and Pan Am merger noting there have been some objections to the transaction from Massachusetts and Vermont related to anti-competition concerns. The proposed schedule provided by the Surface Transportation Board includes a public hearing that has yet to be determined with a final decision on April 1, 2022 that has an effective date of May 1, 2022.

Chairman Melrose requested a status update the length of term for the Amtrak service agreement. Nat Rosenblatt answered that Amtrak was willing to agree to a 10-year term, with some specific instances identified to allow for early termination.

Chairman Melrose asked if NNEPRA's liability/indemnification had changed as compared to the original agreement. Nat Rosenblatt responded that the original agreement indemnified NNEPRA regardless of negligence, and that provision would not be included in the new agreement.

Chairman Melrose asked for a status update on the station agreements. Patricia Quinn responded that the Old Orchard Beach agreement was signed; drafts were under review by Saco and Exeter, and drafts of a Dover and Durham agreements were nearly ready to send to the towns for review.

MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart

Natalie Bogart provided an overview of marketing efforts in September noting that there were seven concerts and eight sporting events in the Boston. Moving into November and December efforts will be aligned with Amtrak's national campaigns aimed at travelling and shopping. Natalie Bogart mentioned that NNEPRA recently awarded a contract a graphic design firm to support the various marketing efforts. Natalie Bogart also noted that events and promotions were being developed surrounding the 20th Anniversary of the Downeaster on December 15.

Chairman Melrose asked for additional information on a transit commercial he saw. Natalie Bogart responded that GPCOG produces an add to increase transit ridership in the region that NNEPRA partnered with them on it. Funding for the development of the commercial was provided by the CARES Act.

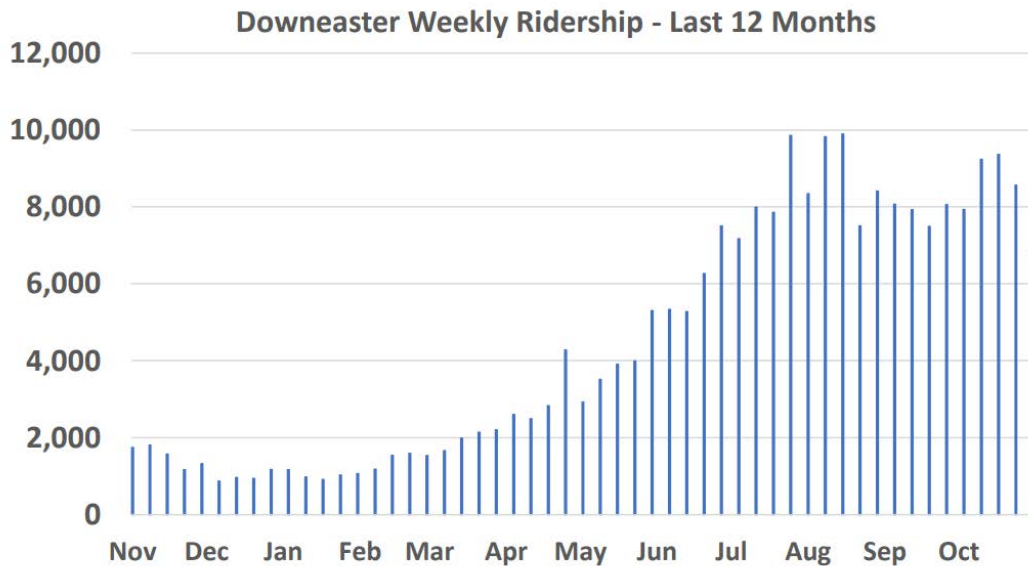
PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Melrose opened the floor to additional public comment. No public comments made.

Meeting adjourned via roll call vote.

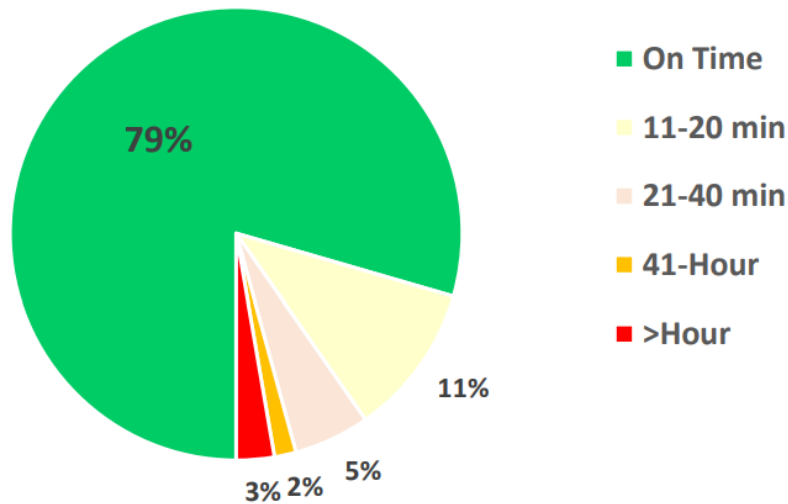
Downeaster FY2022 Performance to Date

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Oct 21	FY22	37,383	25,308	12,075	74%	\$ 746,767	\$ 474,517	\$ 272,250	\$19.98
Sep 21	FY22	32,682	23,648	9,034	68%	\$ 632,226	\$ 443,404	\$ 188,822	\$19.34
Aug 21	FY22	38,534	32,632	5,902	63%	\$ 751,210	\$ 611,859	\$ 139,351	\$19.49
Jul 21	FY22	37,260	30,536	6,724	68%	\$ 726,323	\$ 572,553	\$ 153,770	\$19.49
FY22 To Date		145,859	112,124	33,735	68%	\$ 2,856,526	\$ 2,102,334	\$ 754,193	\$19.58
Jun 21	FY21	25,668	27,000	-1,332	53%	\$ 515,857	\$ 459,000	\$ 56,857	\$ 20.10
May 21	FY21	18,643	26,350	-7,707	42%	\$ 379,959	\$ 447,950	\$ (67,991)	\$ 20.38
Apr 21	FY21	13,054	25,500	-12,446	27%	\$ 256,539	\$ 433,500	\$ (176,961)	\$ 19.65
Mar 21	FY21	8,606	23,250	-14,644	18%	\$ 170,785	\$ 395,250	\$ (224,465)	\$ 19.84
Feb 21	FY21	5,756	21,000	-15,244	14%	\$ 127,509	\$ 357,000	\$ (229,491)	\$ 22.15
Jan 21	FY21	4,447	21,700	-17,253	12%	\$ 96,657	\$ 368,900	\$ (272,243)	\$ 21.74
Dec 20	FY21	4,408	20,150	-15,742	10%	\$ 98,587	\$ 342,550	\$ (243,963)	\$ 22.37
Nov 20	FY21	6,233	18,000	-11,767	13%	\$ 140,090	\$ 306,000	\$ (165,910)	\$ 22.48



Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café			CSI
				End Point	Customer	Sales	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Oct-21	FY22	306	3,257,121	71%	79%	\$ 45,383	17%	\$ 8.03	87
Sep 21	FY22	296	2,730,658	70%	81%	\$ 54,569	17%	\$ 8.43	88
Aug-21	FY22	306	3,287,802	66%	77%	\$ 56,023	20%	\$ 8.27	89
Jul 21	FY22	298	3,208,359	64%	73%	\$ 50,825	19%	\$ 8.38	89
FY22 To Date		1,206	12,483,940	68%	77%	\$ 206,800	18%	\$ 8.28	88
Jun 21	FY21	296	2,200,782	58%	67%	\$ 43,730	22%	\$ 7.69	86
May 21	FY21	306	1,610,195	60%	71%	\$ 30,273	21%	\$ 7.63	90
Apr 21	FY21	236	1,100,506	75%	83%	\$ 17,743	20%	\$ 6.80	88
Mar 21	FY21	248	685,967	71%	82%	\$ 12,395	20%	\$ 7.28	93
Feb 21	FY21	224	449,228	76%	85%	\$ 8,130	21%	\$ 6.69	93
Jan 21	FY21	248	355,362	79%	84%	\$ 7,097	23%	\$ 6.77	93
Dec 20	FY21	244	367,574	62%	74%	\$ 7,349	23%	\$ 7.01	88
Nov 20	FY21	240	519,168	62%	78%	\$ 7,983	20%	\$ 6.39	88

Delay Intensity (By Rider)



NNEPRA Draft FY22 Budget Variance Report

July 2021- September 2021

Revenues	Current Month				Fiscal Year to Date			
	September Actual	September Budget	Variance	%	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 632,226	\$ 443,404	\$ 188,822	43%	\$ 2,109,759	\$ 1,627,817	\$ 481,942	30%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 54,569	\$ 47,094	\$ 7,475	16%	\$ 206,800	\$ 125,290	\$ 81,510	65%
Advertising Revenue		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 13,010	\$ 22,255	\$ (9,245)	-42%	\$ 88,525	\$ 71,258	\$ 17,267	24%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 119,429	\$ 13,400	\$ 106,029	791%	\$ 187,317	\$ 40,200	\$ 147,117	366%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 819,234	\$ 526,153	\$ 293,081	56%	\$ 2,592,401	\$ 1,864,565	\$ 727,836	39%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 65,833	\$ 68,000	\$ (2,167)	-3%	\$ 195,675	\$ 204,000	\$ (8,325)	-4%
Office Expenses	\$ 7,135	\$ 8,000	\$ (865)	-11%	\$ 23,321	\$ 24,000	\$ (679)	-3%
Professional Services	\$ 30,184	\$ 56,000	\$ (25,816)	-46%	\$ 82,488	\$ 104,000	\$ (21,512)	-21%
Insurance	\$ 482	\$ -	\$ 482		\$ 3,258	\$ -	\$ 3,258	
Board Operations	\$ 317	\$ 1,250	\$ (933)	-75%	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,750	\$ (1,350)	-36%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 103,951	\$ 133,250	\$ (29,299)	-22%	\$ 307,141	\$ 335,750	\$ (28,609)	-9%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 1,246,218	\$ 1,308,496	\$ (62,278)	-5%	\$ 3,825,566	\$ 3,925,501	\$ (99,935)	-2.6%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 174,480	\$ 160,446	\$ 14,034	8%	\$ 500,086	\$ 480,730	\$ 19,356	3.9%
Other Train Operations	\$ 113,664	\$ 142,500	\$ (28,836)	-25%	\$ 375,860	\$ 427,500	\$ (51,640)	-13.7%
CRSSA Relief Credit	\$ (216,034)	\$ (216,034)	\$ -	0%	\$ (1,216,034)	\$ (1,216,034)	\$ -	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 34,772	\$ 32,000	\$ 2,772	8%	\$ 82,154	\$ 90,784	\$ (8,630)	-10.5%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 26,661	\$ 140,000	\$ (113,339)	-425%	\$ 55,316	\$ 440,000	\$ (384,684)	-695.4%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,379,761	\$ 1,567,408	\$ (187,646)	-14%	\$ 3,622,947	\$ 4,148,481	\$ (525,533)	-14.5%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,100	\$ 9,200	\$ (100)	-1%	\$ 27,300	\$ 27,600	\$ (300)	-1.1%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 21,800	\$ 22,000	\$ (200)	-1%	\$ 65,400	\$ 66,000	\$ (600)	-0.9%
Platform Ins.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 14,298	\$ 33,436	\$ (19,139)	-133.9%
Station Platform Leases	\$ 14,612	\$ 10,000	\$ -	0%	\$ 15,907	\$ 30,000	\$ (14,093)	-88.6%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ (2,000)		\$ 1,574	\$ 6,000	\$ (4,426)	-281.2%
Total Station Operations	\$ 45,512	\$ 43,200	\$ 2,312	5%	\$ 124,478	\$ 163,036	\$ (38,558)	-31.0%
Food Service	\$ 83,862	\$ 61,712	\$ 22,150	26%	\$ 232,671	\$ 197,694	\$ 34,978	15.0%
Marketing	\$ 27,930	\$ 45,000	\$ (17,070)	-61%	\$ 81,192	\$ 135,000	\$ (53,808)	-66.3%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,641,016	\$ 1,850,569	\$ (209,553)	-13%	\$ 4,368,431	\$ 4,979,961	\$ (611,530)	-14.0%
		\$ 1,850,569						
Additional Funding Required	\$ 821,783	\$ 1,324,417	\$ (502,634)	-61%	\$ 1,776,031	\$ 3,115,396	\$ (1,339,365)	-75.4%

2021 Construction Season Maintenance Project Status

Updated 11/17/21



1 Trackwork			Location		Scheduled	Status
CM 21	1a	Spot Rail Replacement	Exeter, NH	MP 252	8/17/21	Complete
PNS 21	1a-c	POR-BRK Tie Replace & Surface	POR-BRK	7,850 EA	Nov-21	Complete
CM 22	1a	Spot Rail Replacement	POR-State Line	1000 LF		as needed
Various		Tie Pick up	POR-EXR			
2 Special Trackwork					Scheduled	Status
CM17	2a	Solar Flange Lubricator	Newfields, NH	MP 256.7		1 to be installed
CM21	2a	Switch Timber Replacement	Various Locations	200 EA		Materials on hand
CM21	2c	#10 Frog Replacement	Monson Switch	MP 199.5		Materials ordered
CM21	2d	#10 Frog Replacement	Cooks Switch	MP 201.3		Materials ordered
CM21	2f	#15 Frog Replacement (2 Frogs)	Dover, NH	CPF 241		Materials on hand
CM21	2g	#20 Frog Replacement	Kingston, NH	CPF 273		Materials ordered
CM21	2h	Switch Points & Stock Rail Repl.	Portland, ME	CPF 201		Materials ordered
PNS21	2a	#10 Frog Replacement	Portland, ME Mtn Br	CPF 196		Materials ordered
CM22	2a	Joint Elimination Welding (100)	BRK to State Line			Locations Pending
3 Grade Crossing Upgrades					Scheduled	Status
CM22	3e	Exeter, NH	Salem St, MP	MP260.27	11/9/21	Complete
CM22	3a	Berwick, ME	Main St.		10/14/21	Complete
CM22	3d	Berwick, ME	Berwick Rd/Route 236	MP239.57	10/6/21	Complete
CM21	3b	Arundel, ME	Log Cabin Road		9/28/21	Complete
CM22	3f	Exeter, NH	Powder Mill Rd.	MP262.4	9/14/21	Complete
CM21	3d	East Kingston, NH	Sanborn Road	MP262	8/25/21	Complete
CM21	3c	Plaistow, NH	Main Street	MP253	8/17/21	Complete
CM22	3b	Old Orchard Beach, ME	Old Orchard St	MP 207.16		
CM22	3c	Berwick, ME	Blackmore's Crossing	MP 239.26		
TBD		Scarborough, ME	Cooks #1	MP 201.37		
4 ROW Improvements					Scheduled	Status
CM22	4a	Culvert Rehabilitation	Freeport, ME	1 EA	Nov-21	

Maintenance Project Budget Variance						
	Original Project Budget	Expended through FY21	Expenses incurred July-Sept 2021	Expenses incurred in October 2021	Expenses incurred FY22 To Date	Project Balance
Replacements	\$ 4,500,000	\$ 4,185,000	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 315,000
FY20 Tie Replacement	\$ 2,287,478	\$ 1,984,885	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 302,593
CM2016	\$ 744,179	\$ 735,662	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 8,517
CM2017	\$ 763,199	\$ 688,199	\$ 22,988		\$ 22,988	\$ 52,012
2018/2019	\$ 1,523,701	\$ 1,367,767	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 155,934
CM2020	\$ 833,887	\$ 587,456	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 246,431
CM2021	\$ 876,270	\$ 194,314	\$ 365,947		\$ 365,947	\$ 316,009
CM2022	\$ 801,400	\$ -	\$ 96,226	\$ 106,832	\$ 203,058	\$ 598,342
PNorth Tie Replacement	\$ 1,096,525	\$ -	\$ 116,261	\$ 118,692	\$ 234,953	\$ 861,572
Project Total	\$ 13,426,639	\$ 9,743,283	\$ 601,422	\$ 225,524	\$ 826,946	\$ 2,856,410

