

How was the Site Selected

NNEPRA contracted with VHB to initiate a detailed study process to evaluate siting options for relocating Portland Station along the Mainline, as recommended by the [2021 MaineDOT Study](#). The Alternatives Analysis was conducted in accordance with the project planning process outlined in the [Federal Railroad Administration \(FRA\)](#) Guidance on Development and Implementation of Railroad Capital Projects and evaluated three sites in the project area. The [Portland Train Station Relocation Planning Report](#) was published in December 2024 documenting why [Site 3](#), located between Northern Light Mercy Campus and St. John Street, was selected as the location which best meets project needs:

- Site 3 offers direct access to the most jobs.
- Site 3 is the only site which can provide varying levels of multimodal access from the platforms on both sides of the tracks, connecting two areas of the city currently bifurcated by the railroad.
- Site 3 best improves pedestrian/bike connectivity by connecting St. John Street to the Fore River Parkway and its location between the major thoroughways of West Commercial Street and Congress Street.
- Site 3 provides connectivity to the Fore River Parkway and the opportunity for future collaboration with Mercy Hospital.
- Site 3 provides the most direct access to the Concord Coach Lines intercity bus station via the Fore River Parkway.
- Site 3 creates no new impacts to grade crossings and requires the least amount of costly infrastructure improvements.
- Site 3 is the only site that provides direct access to the Mountain Division branch, which preserves the opportunity for future passenger rail development to the west.
- Site 3 is the only site with direct access to maintenance facilities on the Mountain Division and best supports train operations.
- Site 3 is comprised of land where acquisition is possible.
- Site 3 complies with local zoning code and land use and supports Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities within 0.5 miles of the station site, including at Site 2.
- Site 3 is supported by [Amtrak](#), [CSX](#) and MaineDOT.

Portland City Staff has expressed a preference for Site 2. NNEPRA has performed additional [analysis](#) to confirm that:

- Site 2 presents significant operational challenges for freight and passenger trains due to the close proximity to the Congress Street [grade crossing](#).
- Property is not available for train station development:
 - Site 2 abuts the Cumberland County Jail to the west and MaineHealth property to the east. Cumberland County has submitted a [letter](#) opposing the station's location immediately adjacent to the jail, and the Cumberland County Sheriff has also submitted a [letter](#) outlining various public safety and security concerns associated with the proposed site. In July 2026, Cumberland County adopted a [resolution](#) opposing the proposed relocation of the NNEPRA Portland Passenger Rail Station. In addition, NNEPRA is not able to acquire property from Cumberland County through eminent domain.
 - Site 2 is primarily owned by Maine Health. A train station would negatively impact the employee shuttle and would limit [Maine Health's](#) ability to expand to accommodate the community's increasing healthcare needs.
 - [Site 2](#) is bordered by a large building, an existing parking garage, a plaza and the County Jail constraining visibility and connectivity to/ from St. John Street and prohibiting connectivity to/from the Fore River Parkway.

