NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY

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NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION
1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001

Nicole Bucich
Vice President, Network Development & State Supported Service

August 5, 2025

Patricia Quinn
Executive Director
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial St., Suite 104
Portland, ME 04104

Dear Patricia Quinn:

Both Amtrak and the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) share the goal of relocating Portland Station from its current location on the Mountain Branch stub line to a new location on the CSX mainline. This relocation will bring significant customer benefits, as well as improving the operational, ridership, and financial performance of the Amtrak *Downeaster* service. NNEPRA has been working in partnership with Amtrak, the Maine Department of Transportation, and CSX for several years to relocate Portland station, and we are therefore all excited to see this project move forward and to realize the associated benefits.

The current station location and the train movements required for the *Downeaster* to stop at that location add additional travel time to the five daily roundtrips between Boston, MA and Brunswick, ME, totaling 130 minutes per day. These movements also create risks of potential delays when passenger service is impacted by freight rail traffic, require additional crew time and fuel costs, and decrease the competitiveness of the *Downeaster* with other travel options serving the Northern New England market. This extra travel time and potential delays impact Portland Station's 190,000 annual rail customers, as well as the Downeaster's 550,000-plus annual customers.

Moving this station to the mainline not only saves time and money for the *Downeaster* service but will also optimize passenger and freight rail operations and increase the *Downeaster*'s competitiveness. Locating the station closer to Downtown Portland will also improve connectivity to Portland's thriving business district and provide better opportunities for station area development. As ridership on the Downeaster continues to grow and is on track to surpass the FY24 record, the importance of relocating the Portland station only grows.

Amtrak reiterates our support—as stated in previous discussions and correspondence—for the recommended option (Site 3) identified in NNEPRA's 2024 *Portland Train Station Relocation Planning Report*. As outlined in the report and as discussed previously with NNEPRA, Site 3 has several advantages compared to the other options considered:

- **Strategic Location** – Site 3's location, south of the existing Mountain Branch switch, provides several key advantages with respect to optimizing train movements, reducing delays, and future-proofing potential passenger rail extensions, including:

- Maintaining fluid movement to access the Mountain Branch line from points south and easily move trains into the Portland Layover Facility (PLF) without requiring additional switching movements.
- Reducing travel delays, saving passengers at least 13 minutes of travel time as trains will not need to back in and out of the station or stop at the platform longer than necessary to change cab direction (as illustrated in the attachment below). This will also mitigate any potential delays incurred by concurrent mainline freight and passenger rail traffic.
- Keeping the station clear of nearby at-grade crossings will mitigate risk of rail or vehicular delays incurred at the crossing.
- Allowing for future passenger rail expansion towards Westbrook that includes the new station as part of both the existing and future rail routes.

Comparatively, Site 2's location, north of the Mountain Branch switch, is less strategic for train movements wishing to access the Mountain Branch or PLF from the station directly. Furthermore, this location does not mitigate delay risk incurred by concurrent mainline freight traffic (since only one track at this location may be used to access the Mountain Branch by reversing south towards the switch) or potential delays from the nearby at-grade crossing, and does not allow for the new station to be included on future rail extensions that include the Mountain Branch line.

- **Increasing Passenger Safety** – Site 3 provides a safer location for passengers to board and alight trains, away from nearby at-grade crossings. Access to the station is provided from adjacent pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and features a nearby grade separated roadway crossing to keep drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists away from the tracks. In comparison, Site 2, which is located much closer to the Congress Street at-grade crossing, creates an additional risk for passengers accessing the station from the crossing, as well as vehicles crossing the tracks close to the station.
- **Improving Multimodal Connectivity** – Site 3 offers maximal multimodal connectivity to existing pathways that abut the station site and its adjacent lots. The location benefits from easy access to the Fore River Parkway and St. John Street for both vehicles and bicycles and sits next to the existing pedestrian pathway that encircles the Northern Light Mercy Hospital. A new station at this site would have the opportunity to join the pedestrian and bicycle networks on both sides of the tracks, allowing pedestrians on the east side of the station easier access to the Fore River and Mercy Hospital via a new bridge. Comparatively, Site 2's multimodal access is limited, as the site's west side abuts the County Jail and does not offer an opportunity to expand pedestrian or bicycle access beyond the current network.
- **Optimizing Station Area Development** – Site 3 has the benefit of being adjacent to high density commercial and residential development areas on both sides of the track, existing bus routes and employer shuttles, and nearby anchoring institutions that are open to future development conversations and possibilities. Combined with the existing pedestrian and bicycle networks, as well as possible expansion of future service along the Mountain Branch, Site 3 would maximize the potential train services that could enable increased commercial and residential development nearby, spanning both sides of the track with limited physical impediments. Site 2, which could only spur development potential on the east side of the tracks, has more limited land available for station area development, additionally hampered by neighboring institutions that have indicated that they are not interested in working with area stakeholders to realize a station-oriented development vision.

Given these advantages that benefit all stakeholders, Site 3 provides a preferred solution that improves existing train operations and minimizes travel delays while benefitting from adjacent access pathways and multimodal links to best position the site for new station area development. This creates the opportunity to generate additional *Downeaster* ridership, thereby increasing market share in Northern New England and increasing the ability to spur station area development that will increase real estate investment in Portland.

Like any project of this complexity, there may be additional challenges that will need to be addressed in the design phase to ensure project feasibility. However, Amtrak remains confident that Site 3 will create the most successful station location, in terms of safety, operations, ridership, revenue, station area development, multimodal connectivity, and public perception of the *Downeaster* service.

Amtrak is excited to continue working with you and your colleagues at NNEPRA, as well as CSX, MaineDOT, and the City of Portland, to create a new Portland station location that meets the needs of all stakeholders and supports the ongoing success of the Downeaster service.

Very truly yours,

Nicole Bucich

Nicole Bucich
Vice President, *Network Development and State Supported Service*

cc:

Jeff Mann, Senior Director, State Supported Services
Chris Natale, Director, State Supported Services
Joseph Barr, Director, Network Development - East
Margaret Clark, Manager, Government Affairs - Northeast
Kevin Chittenden, Superintendent Operations II
Luke Irvine, Assistant Superintendent Operations

ATTACHMENT A: MOVEMENTS AND TIME REQUIRED FOR EXISTING DOWNEASTER PORTLAND SERVICE



3019 Warrington Street J500
Jacksonville, FL 32254
Office (904) 359-3568

VIA EMAIL

November 20, 2025

Patricia Quinn
Executive Director
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 W Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, Maine 04101

Dear Patricia,

I am writing to express CSXT's support to Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA)'s project to relocate the Amtrak Portland Station.

CSXT fully supports the relocation of the Amtrak Portland Station from its current location on the Mountain Branch to the mainline. The current location requires Amtrak trains to leave and then return to the mainline to serve the Portland station. It requires a reverse move that is time consuming and inefficient. This move increases the travel time for the Downeaster service and creates a bottleneck along the entire corridor.

NNEPRA has worked collaboratively with CSXT and other stakeholders for years to evaluate mainline locations and identified three options:

1. Site 1 is located between Congress Street and Park Avenue
2. Site 2 is located south of Congress Street between the Cumberland County Jail and the Maine Medical Center
3. Site 3 is located at the southern end of St. John Street, between Northern Light Mercy Hospital and St. John Street

CSXT preference is to select a site that provides for as much clearance as possible from an active at grade railroad crossing. Therefore, CSXT is not supportive of Site 1 because of its proximity to two at grade railroad crossings. We are also aware of a letter from MaineHealth dated September 30th, 2025. In it, MaineHealth expresses its opposition to Site 2 (which is also close to a grade crossing) citing many reasons including public safety, conflicts with an Institutional Overlay Zone and Operational and Parking Impacts.

Since both Site 1 and 2 are not viable, CSXT is therefore supportive of Site 3 located at the southern end of St. John Street, between Northern Light Mercy Hospital and St. John Street.

A new station on the mainline, coupled with additional infrastructure improvements to support passenger and freight operations in the area, will improve the performance of passenger trains through the area. A mainline station is prerequisite to the consideration of any additional passenger train frequencies to or through Portland beyond those already agreed upon.

CSXT looks forward to the upcoming work to relocate the Amtrak Portland Station to the mainline and to make it a reality that will benefit the Downeaster Service and its passengers.

Very truly yours,



Andy Daly

Brunswick
DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION

RE: Support for NNEPRA's Recommendation of Site 3 for the Portland Rail Station

Dear Mayor and Members of the Portland City Council,

I am writing in my capacity as Executive Director of the Brunswick Downtown Association (BDA) to express my support for the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's (NNEPRA) recommendation to pursue Site 3 for the proposed Portland rail station.

While I am unable to attend the meeting in person, I wanted to share my perspective as a community leader representing a downtown that directly benefits from the Amtrak Downeaster and the regional connectivity it provides.

In Brunswick, we see firsthand the value of passenger rail. The Downeaster connects our downtown to communities throughout Maine and New England, bringing visitors, supporting local businesses, and providing residents with an important transportation option. As an organization committed to the economic and social vitality of Downtown Brunswick, we recognize that investments in passenger rail infrastructure benefit far more than the communities in which those investments are physically located.

With $48 million in federal funding secured for this project, Maine has an extraordinary opportunity to strengthen its passenger rail network for generations to come. It would be disappointing to see that opportunity jeopardized by disagreements over station siting, particularly when NNEPRA, the agency responsible for operating the Downeaster, has identified Site 3 as the most viable option.

We recognize that a project of this scale requires thoughtful consideration of land use, public safety, transportation access, and the interests of neighboring property owners. Based on the information shared with us, Site 3 appears to offer the most practical path forward while avoiding significant property acquisition and operational challenges associated with Site 2.

I respectfully encourage the City Council to support NNEPRA's recommendation and work collaboratively with NNEPRA and the Maine Department of Transportation to secure the necessary matching funds and move this important investment forward.

The success of passenger rail in Maine depends on strong regional partnerships and a shared commitment to improving connectivity. We hope that commitment will guide the decisions ahead.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Reilly Kons
Executive Director
Brunswick Downtown Association

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The mission of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation is to partner with the community to promote sustainable economic growth that strengthens and diversifies the economic base and enhances the quality of life and unique character of Freeport.

March 18, 2026
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101

Subject: Portland Station Relocation Project – Support for "Site 3"

Dear Members of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority:

My name is Mary Davis and I am President of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) Board in Freeport, Maine. We are an independent non-profit business and volunteer led organization that supports and encourages sound economic growth and development in Freeport. We strive to balance resident desires, businesses needs, and future growth to support a vibrant town while maintaining the lovely small town feel that many attribute to Freeport. In the past years, we have championed Downtown Visioning and Planning, housing, new business location to Freeport, growth of our iconic Freeport business brands, and worked closely with the town of Freeport on zoning, ordinances, transportation/parking and other initiatives critical to our economic growth.

The Downeaster is considered a Freeport valuable assets. On behalf of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation, we write to express our strong support for "Site 3" as the location for the Amtrak Downeaster Portland Station Relocation Project.

Site 3, the NNEPRA preferred location, is the site located along St. John's Street in Portland at the meeting point between the mainline and the Mountain Division branch line. We agree that Site 3 best strengthens the long-term regional transportation network and best supports train service in Freeport. Its location on the mainline rail corridor will improve operational efficiency, reduce unnecessary train movements, and enhance on-time performance—benefits that are essential to riders and the business community. Reliable passenger rail service is vital to Freeport's employers, retailers, and hospitality operators. The Downeaster connects our workforce to regional job centers and brings visitors to our downtown. Site 3 supports efficient rail operations while advancing shared goals of sustainability, reduced congestion, smart growth, and economic development. As Site 3 is also available now, which is a key distinction with other sites under consideration, we think it would be prudent to move forward with this location to take advantage of funding and opportunities.

Passenger rail remains a cornerstone of Southern Maine's economic competitiveness. Selecting Site 3 reflects a forward-looking investment in infrastructure that supports job growth, tourism, and long-term regional prosperity, including for communities like Freeport that directly benefit from the Downeaster's success. We appreciate your thoughtful evaluation process and continued leadership. The Freeport Economic Development Corporation stands ready to support the advancement and successful implementation of Site 3.

Sincerely,

Mary Davis
President of the Board
Freeport Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) 42 Main Street, Freeport, Maine 04032

September 19, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 W. Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Maine Tourism Association, I am writing to express our support for the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's (NNEPRA) proposal to relocate the Downeaster's Portland station to Site 3. This relocation is an important step forward in strengthening Portland's role as a transportation hub and improving travel options for both residents and visitors.

Relocating the station to Site 3 will provide significant cost savings for construction and operations, ensuring long-term fiscal responsibility while creating a more efficient facility. At the same time, this move will greatly enhance passenger satisfaction by offering improved access, better connections, and a modernized travel experience.

For residents, the new station will provide more reliable and convenient transportation options, helping to reduce congestion and improve mobility throughout the region. For visitors, the relocation will create a more welcoming and seamless first impression of Portland and Maine as a whole, supporting our tourism economy and enhancing Maine's reputation as a destination that values quality and accessibility.

Maine's economy depends on a strong and integrated transportation network that connects communities, supports the workforce, and welcomes visitors. By supporting the relocation of the Downeaster's Portland station to Site 3, NNEPRA has the opportunity to invest in high-quality, sustainable infrastructure that will benefit Portland and our state for decades to come.

The Maine Tourism Association strongly supports NNEPRA's proposal.

Sincerely,

Tony Cameron
Chief Executive Officer
Maine Tourism Association

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PORTLAND
Regional Chamber of Commerce

93 Exchange Street Portland, ME 04101 • (207) 772-2811
chamber@portlandregion.com • PortlandRegion.com

Cape Elizabeth • Cumberland • Falmouth • Gorham • Scarborough • South Portland • Portland • Westbrook

September 23, 2025

Patricia Quinn
Executive Director
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Ms. Quinn,

On behalf of our over 1,300 members, collectively employing over 75,000 Mainers, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce writes to express support for the relocation of the Amtrak Downteaster's Portland station from Thompson's Point to the main line Site 3 location, as identified through NNEPRA's rigorous analysis of main line and no-build alternatives.

Over the past several years, our organization has been deeply engaged in the public engagement process led by NNEPRA and in subsequent discussions with stakeholders. That process has made it increasingly clear that Site 3 is the only viable choice for main line relocation, both in terms of operational efficiency and multimodal connectivity. Located near the Western Prom Trail, the recently extended West Commercial Street Pathway, the Fore River Trail, and existing METRO bus service, Site 3 offers unmatched integration with Portland's bike, pedestrian, and transit networks. In addition, NNEPRA, Amtrak, CSX, the Maine Department of Transportaiton, and impacted property owners have all raised critical concerns about the operational limitations of Site 2 that cannot be feasibly resolved.

While we respect the vision of those advocating for Site 2, we are concerned that locating the station there, without landowner support or clear redevelopment pathways for the entire Saint John Shopping Plaza, would hinder rather than enable transit-oriented development at that location. We share the City's vision for the eventual redevelopment of the Saint John Plaza, but that transformation is far more distant than the immediate need to achieve the operational benefits of main line relocation. When that redevelopment does occur, it should not be constrained by the space and access demands of an active rail station.

We greatly appreciate the thoughtful work of NNEPRA in advancing this project and urge all stakeholders to support moving forward with Site 3. As planning continues, we encourage further attention to key site plan elements, including lighting, wayfinding for bike/ped and transit connections, and broader strategies to spur redevelopment along the Saint John Valley corridor. This should include integration with existing institutional uses as well as future opportunties for transit-oriented development. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional input or support for this important investment in our region's transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Quincy Hentzel
President & CEO
Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Lydia V. Crafts
P.O. Box 122
Newcastle, ME 04553
Phone: (207) 593-2664
Lydia.Crafts@legislature.maine.gov

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Dear Director Quinn,

The Amtrak Downeaster passenger train service is a vital public transportation link for the region and state. The current Wells commuter upgrades will increase commuter access to Portland, but the impact of the additional train cannot be fully realized due to the distance and time constraints of the current station location.

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is exploring opportunities to reduce travel times and increase ridership by relocating the Downeaster station in Portland from its current location along the Mountain Division branch line to the main line. The new location will save fifteen minutes of travel time in each direction for ten trains daily, reducing operating costs and saving the travelling public time and money.

NNEPRA conducted a thorough Site Alternatives Analysis of potential locations for the Portland Station along the main line. The Analysis included a robust public process and input from the Maine Department of Transportation and other stakeholders, culminating in NNEPRA's decision to site the station at the junction between the main line and the Mountain Division branch line adjacent to St. John's St. in Portland (Site 3). NNEPRA determined that Site 1 is not functional, and Site 2 presented significant operational challenges and is located on land that is not available for acquisition.

CSX, Amtrak, MaineDOT, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the majority of public commenters all support the location of Site 3. It is within walking distance to more than 9,000 jobs, will create a pedestrian link between St. John Street and the Fore River Parkway, and will support the potential expansion of passenger rail service in the region and to the north.

As the Chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation in the Maine State Legislature, we have heard from hundreds of rail advocates that improving rail transit in Maine is their number one transportation priority. Rail bills garner the largest turnout of any policy issue that comes before our committee. With this firsthand knowledge, we support the relocation to Site 3 as well as NNEPRA's due diligence identifying Site 3 as the only viable location for the station. We strongly support NNEPRA's efforts to pursue federal funding to design and develop a station at Site 3 in partnership with MaineDOT.

Sincerely,

Rep. Lydia Crafts & Senator Tim Nangle

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Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739
TOWN COUNCIL
85 UNION STREET
BRUNSWICK, MAINE 04011-2418

TELEPHONE 207-725-6659
FAX 207-725-6663

September 3, 2025

Patricia Quinn, Executive Director
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Patricia,

On behalf of the Brunswick Town Council, I am writing to express support for the relocation of the Portland train station from its current location on Thompson Point to the main rail line in Portland. The Council also appreciates the thorough study of various potential locations for the new station that the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) has completed and analyzed.

Moving the train station will benefit Brunswick riders by decreasing the trip time by 15 minutes and will allow visitors from Southern Maine to arrive in Brunswick in mid-morning and spend the entire day enjoying our Town.

Amtrak's Downeaster Train first came to Brunswick in November 2015, and with the construction of a 650' X 70' layover facility in 2016, and construction of a secondary passing rail line in Falmouth and Cumberland in 2018, Brunswick now enjoys five round trip trains to Boston per day. At the end of the Downeaster line, the Brunswick Station is used by residents in surrounding communities to the north and west.

With the ongoing improvement projects and continued investment in the Downeaster rail line by NNEPRA, we expect that train ridership from the Brunswick Station will grow. For all train riders from Brunswick, it will be very advantageous if the trip to and from Boston is 15 minutes shorter.

Please accept this letter as the Brunswick Town Council's endorsement of NNEPRA's plan to relocate the Portland train station to a location along the main rail line.

Sincerely,

Sande Updegraph

Sande Updegraph
Chair, Brunswick Town Council

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TOWN OF FREEPORT, MAINE
Town Manager's Office
30 Main Street
Freeport, ME 04032
Phone: (207) 865-4743 x 118
Email: swilson@freeportmaine.com

November 18, 2025

Patricia Quinn, Executive Director
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101

Subject: Letter of Support for Portland Station Relocation Efforts

Dear Ms. Quinn:

On behalf of the Town of Freeport, I am writing to express our support for the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's efforts to relocate the Portland train station to a location along the main rail line. We recognize the thorough evaluation and analysis NNEPRA has undertaken to review various potential locations, and the importance of this initiative to improve the efficiency and reliability of the Amtrak Downeaster service.

Freeport is proud to be a Downeaster station community. Passenger rail is an essential link for our residents who commute to jobs throughout the region and for visitors who come to experience our downtown and outdoor amenities. Reliable and convenient rail service helps reduce traffic congestion, supports sustainable travel, and strengthens economic connections across communities.

This effort also aligns with Freeport's Downtown Vision Plan, which emphasizes accessibility and multimodal transportation as key strategies for creating a vibrant, welcoming center. Improved rail service complements these goals by offering an alternative to driving and enhancing the experience for both commuters and tourists.

Relocating the Portland station to the main line will eliminate time-consuming train movements, improve operational performance, and position the Downeaster for future service enhancements. These changes will benefit Freeport and the entire corridor by advancing shared objectives for economic vitality and sustainable transportation.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing passenger rail in Northern New England. We look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the success of this project and the long-term growth of the Downeaster service.

Sincerely,

Sophia L. Wilson
Town Manager

The Town of Freeport is an equal opportunity employer and service provider that celebrates diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive environment for our employees and those we serve.

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Town Of Old Orchard Beach
1 Portland Ave, Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064
207.937.5626
www.oobmaine.com

EST. 1883 Old Orchard Beach MAINE

Memories Start *Here*

TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH

Old Orchard Beach, Maine

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Amtrak Downeaster passenger train service operating between Brunswick, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts is an important public transportation link for the region as well as residents visitors, and businesses within the Town of Old Orchard Beach;

WHEREAS there is an important opportunity to reduce the travel time between Boston and Brunswick by relocating the Downeaster station in Portland from its current location along the Mountain Division branch line to a new location along the main line to eliminate the need for time-consuming reverse movements by the train to access the station. Eliminating this movement will save fifteen minutes of travel time in each direction for each train;

WHEREAS the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is completing a double track extension and station project in Wells that, in conjunction with a relocated Portland Station, will enable the operation of a new morning train for commuters traveling into the greater Portland Region for work;

WHEREAS NNEPRA, the operator of the Downeaster conducted a thorough Site Alternatives Analysis of potential locations for the Portland Station along the main line, including a robust public process and input from the Maine Department of Transportation and other stakeholders, culminating in a decision by NNEPRA that the most advantageous site for the station is the junction

between the main line and the Mountain Division branch line adjacent to St. John's St. in Portland (a/k/a "Site 3"). In reaching this conclusion, NNEPRA determined that "Site l" was not functional, and that "Site 2" presented significant operational challenges and was located on land that was not available for acquisition;

WHEREAS Site 3 is also preferred by the railroad owner and operator CSX, Amtrak, MaineDOT, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the strong majority of public commenters; is within walking distance to more than 9,000 jobs; will enable a pedestrian link between St. Johns Street and the Fore River Parkway; and will support potential expansion of passenger rail service in the region and to the north;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Town of Old Orchard Beach supports the decision by NNEPRA to relocate the Downeaster's Portland station along the main line at Site 3.

Given under our hands this 7th Day of October, 2025.

TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH:

Shawn O'Neill Chairman

Kenneth Blow Vice Chairman

Connor Ragué Councilor

V. Louise Reid Councilor

Michael Tousignant Councilor

TOWN OF WELLS

Wells, Maine

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Amtrak Downeaster passenger train service operating between Brunswick, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts is an important public transportation link for the region as well as residents, visitors, and businesses within the Town of Wells;

WHEREAS there is an important opportunity to reduce the travel time between Boston and Brunswick by relocating the Downeaster station in Portland from its current location along the Mountain Division branch line to a new location along the main line to eliminate the need for time-consuming reverse movements by the train to access the station. Eliminating this movement will save fifteen minutes of travel time in each direction for each train;

WHEREAS the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is completing a double track extension and station project in Wells that, in conjunction with a relocated Portland Station, will enable the operation of a new morning train for commuters traveling into the greater Portland Region for work;

WHEREAS NNEPRA, the operator of the Downeaster conducted a thorough Site Alternatives Analysis of potential locations for the Portland Station along the main line, including a robust public process and input from the Maine Department of Transportation and other stakeholders, culminating in a decision by NNEPRA that the most advantageous site for the station is the junction between the main line and the Mountain Division branch line adjacent to St. John's St. in Portland (a/k/a "Site 3"). In reaching this conclusion, NNEPRA determined that "Site 1" was not functional, and that "Site 2" presented significant operational challenges and was located on land that was not available for acquisition;

WHEREAS Site 3 is also preferred by the railroad owner and operator CSX, Amtrak, MaineDOT, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the strong majority of public commenters; is within walking distance to more than 9,000 jobs; will enable a pedestrian link between St. Johns Street and the Fore River Parkway; and will support potential expansion of passenger rail service in the region and to the north;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Town of Wells supports the decision by NNEPRA to relocate the Downeaster's Portland station along the main line at Site 3.

Given under our hands this 5th day of August 2025.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF WELLS:

Timothy Roche

James N. Smith

Kathleen Chase

John K. MacLeod III

Avery Seuter

January, 26th 2026

Urbanist Coalition of Portland
contact@urbanistportland.me

To Whom It May Concern,

The Urbanist Coalition of Portland has previously spoken in favor of building Portland's new Amtrak station closer to Congress Street behind Union Station Plaza (Site 2), or to leave it where it is rather than moving it further down Saint John Street (Site 3). We have written articles and spoken up at city meetings to this effect. However, after a presentation from NNEPRA and a vigorous discussion, we have changed our position to support NNEPRA's proposed relocation to Site 3.

We still believe a completed station at Site 2 would be better located than a station at Site 3. However, the discussion made clear that the obstacles to construction at Site 2 require additional negotiations, collaboration, and funding to address. The timeline for making Site 2 viable is unclear, and a feasible solution may never materialize. Meanwhile, the benefits of moving the station to the main line are significant. We cannot afford to wait and hope that a better project appears instead of saying yes to the project we can get started with today.

Relocating Portland's station to the main line is important for the overall improvement of the Downeaster. It will save time, money, and open the door for future improvements to frequency and speed. Moving the station immediately makes the train to Brunswick time-competitive with driving. Longer term improvements, including additional trains each day, cannot begin while the system is dealing with the operational problems of the existing Portland Station. The primary beneficiaries of the move may not be Portlanders taking intermittent regional rail trips, but all of us will benefit when more employees commute to two of our region's biggest employers – MaineHealth and Mercy Hospital – by train, leaving their cars at home and easing traffic and parking demands within Portland. Time is of the essence, and NNEPRA believes that there is a limited window to secure federal funding for this project with a letter of support from the City required by February 6.

Both Site 2 and Site 3 would deliver on these improvements, but Site 3 is more feasible today. Even if NNEPRA were to move forward with a station at Site 2, Union Station would not be restored. We would get a tiny station tucked behind a parking lot and strip mall. A true urban station at Site 2, integrated with housing and commercial space, will not happen by convincing NNEPRA to build at Site 2. Rather, we would need NNEPRA to give up on their project entirely and wait for a new proposal. A proposal originated by someone other than NNEPRA, and complete with funding.

The additional analysis presented by NNEPRA showed that even this small version of Site 2 would cost around $20 million more than Site 3. Site 2 also requires land negotiations between the County Jail on one side and Maine Health on the other, which adds to the time and cost. If

the City of Portland is serious about building a quality station at Site 2, the Urbanist Coalition would like to see a plan from the City describing how they will drive and fund this process. We would love an excellent station at Site 2, but we can't wait any longer without a material commitment from the City.

We instead want to focus on ensuring that the station at Site 3 is as good as it can be. The proposed station is small and may not be ready to handle a big growth in ridership. We would like to see longer and full-height platforms, a larger waiting area, covered bike parking, and dining options like a small cafe or a designated food truck spot with electrical hookup to improve rider experience. The station design is not finalized, and we are confident improvements can be made during the process.

During the ReCode process, we advocated for rezoning the industrial parcels around Site 3 for mixed use, including housing. ReCode did not include this rezoning, but this change will be essential if the station is built on Site 3. Nearby housing and businesses will set the station up for success. If Maine Health is going to redevelop Union Station Plaza, we should push for mixed-use housing development; the people living in these new homes will still be able to walk to the station.

As difficult as it is, we can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Moving the station onto the main line saves time and improves train service. In the absence of developer interest, property owner cooperation, or funding sources for our ideal alternative of a mixed-use station complex at Site 2, we support NNEPRA's proposed relocation to Site 3. We can ask for improvements of the station at Site 3 while we improve neighborhood and regional connectivity.

Sincerely,
The Urbanist Coalition of Portland

September 25, 2025

RE: Support for Relocation of Portland's Downeaster Station to Site 3

To Whom It May Concern:

As the destination marketing and management organization for Greater Portland, Visit Portland strongly supports the efforts of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) to improve passenger rail infrastructure and service along the Downeaster Corridor — particularly through the proposed relocation of the Portland station to a new site along the main rail line.

The Amtrak Downeaster is a critical public transportation link for our region, serving not only local residents and commuters but also the many leisure and business travelers who make a significant contribution to our tourism economy. With service between Brunswick, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts, the Downeaster connects Greater Portland to major markets and enhances our accessibility as a visitor destination.

However, the current location of the Portland station — nearly one mile off the main line — significantly reduces the efficiency and appeal of the service. It adds travel time, limits pedestrian access to Portland's downtown and commercial areas, and makes the train less competitive with other modes of transportation.

To address these issues, NNEPRA conducted a thorough evaluation of potential new station sites along the main line, with the goals of increasing ridership, reducing operational costs, and improving overall service efficiency. As a destination management organization, Visit Portland recognizes that accessible, modern, and well-located transportation infrastructure is essential to our mission. A station at Site 3, located directly on the main line, would meaningfully enhance the visitor experience, support regional events and conventions, reduce car dependency, and open new opportunities for travelers to explore Greater Portland without needing a personal vehicle.

We fully support NNEPRA's site selection and their plans to pursue federal funding — in partnership with MaineDOT — to design and construct a new passenger rail station at Site 3.

We respectfully urge decision-makers to support this essential investment in sustainable transportation and regional connectivity.

Sincerely,

Lynn Tillotson
President + CEO

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Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Dear Patricia,

As you know, we have over 2 million square feet of development planned at full buildout for Rock Row making us a significant regional draw. We're already pulling guests from as far south as Rhode Island, as far west as upstate NY, and as far north as Canada. With roughly 10% of the development complete we still saw over 3 million visits last year alone, prompting us to up our projected guest total to over 10 million people per year.

Considering the success of the project to date, we've been passionately supportive of all modes of alternative transportation to get to Rock Row including Amtrak, Metro, ride-share, bike/ped, etc. In our efforts to understand how best to integrate these various modes into our development, we became keenly interested in the needs and desires of NNEPRA and Amtrak specifically, as you are the premier, preferred transit provider connecting Greater Portland with so many of our current and future guests from the farthest stretches of our exhibited trade area. Moreover, with the Mountain Division Line running right through our site, the vision of bringing people to Rock Row via some type of rail/rail-with-trail connection has been ambitious yet always attractive and we've appreciated your commitment to keeping this vision top-of-mind throughout your station relocation process which we've found to be both thorough and inclusive of the public and stakeholders alike.

As such, we'd like to formally share our support for the Amtrak station relocation project at the proposed Mercy Hospital and St. John Street location. From everything we've seen, this location would satisfy the needs for the Amtrak station relocation while maintaining the possibility for some type of corridor activation along the rail line from Portland to downtown Westbrook in the future and will, overall, provide a better guest/traveler experience for anyone visiting our great Maine cities via rail! Thank you again for giving us an opportunity to weigh in on this important matter.

Warmest Regards,

Josh Levy, Principal

Waterstone Properties

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Cumberland County Government
27 Northport Drive, Portland, Maine 04103
207-871-8380 • cumberlandcounty.org

James H. Gailey, County Manager

Maine Cumberland **County**

August 15, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101
Subject: Train Station Relocation - Site 2

Dear Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority,

This letter expresses significant concern to Site 2 for the proposed Portland train station relocation, as outlined in the VHB report dated December 5, 2024. While acknowledging the potential benefits of relocating the station, such as increased efficiency and improved passenger experience, the proximity of Site 2 to the Cumberland County Jail presents unacceptable security risks.

Site 2, located south of Congress Street near Union Station Plaza, is situated directly between the Cumberland County Jail and St. John Street. The close proximity of a public transportation hub to a correctional facility raises significant safety and security concerns for passengers, residents, and correctional staff alike.

Introducing a high-traffic train station adjacent to the jail could:

- Compromise Jail Security: The constant movement of people and vehicles associated with a train station could create opportunities for security breaches, illicit activities, and potential escape attempts.

- Endanger Public Safety: An incident at the jail or the train station could endanger a large number of people in a confined area. Evacuation of the jail is complex coordinated effort, one that the County tends to try to mitigate exposure.

- Increase Traffic Congestion: The area surrounding the jail already experiences significant traffic, and a new train station would exacerbate these issues, impacting response times and daily commutes. Additionally, train patrons may attempt to gain access to available parking on the County's jail campus.

- Create Unnecessary Strain on Law Enforcement and Correctional Facilities: Responding to incidents or concerns in such close proximity would place an additional burden on already strained resources.

- Impacts to County Property: through the installation of a third rail with subsequent relocation of the County Way right-of-way this would move closer to the jail property, impacting County jail & facilities operations and full perimeter security and emergency coverage.

While acknowledging the desirability of a new train station, the selection of a site that jeopardizes the safety and security of the community is of major concern to the County. We have no objections to Site 3, the site selected by NNEPRA, but would have serious concerns if Site 2 were selected.

Prioritizing public safety in the selection of the new station location is essential.

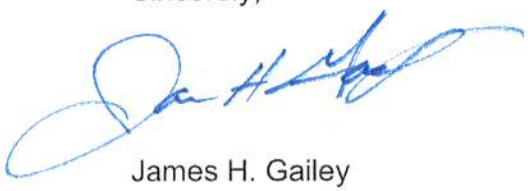
Thank you for your consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Kevin Joyce
Sheriff

Sincerely,



James H. Gailey
County Manager

CUMBERLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Kevin J. Joyce
SHERIFF
Brian R. Pellerin
CHIEF DEPUTY

36 County Way, Portland, Maine 04102 Phone (207)774-1444 – fax (207)828-2373

June 8, 2026

Dear Ms. Quinn,

I am writing to provide additional context regarding the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's (NNEPRA) proposal to construct a train station and loading dock adjacent to St. John Street. Based on recent discussions I have had with staff and attorneys of NNEPRA I understand that the City's preferred location is what is described as site #2, which is situated on or immediately adjacent to the Cumberland County Jail.

While I won't speak on behalf of the Cumberland County Commissioners regarding sale of property, or potential use of county-owned property, I will speak as the Sheriff on behalf of public safety. For the past 33 years, the current Cumberland County Jail has been located on County Way in Portland. One of the most frequent comments and concerns made by community members has been the close proximity of the facility to the railroad corridor. Although the jail's location is a now longstanding reality, intentionally introducing a public transportation hub a mere 54 feet from the largest county jail has a high level of operational safety concerns for both law enforcement and corrections. It would create an entirely new set of challenges that warrant serious consideration.

Unfortunately, when the Cumberland County Jail was built in 1993, it was built as an open campus. Meaning, individuals have access to the property from multiple directions, including County Way, Congress Street, The Fore River Parkway, and the railroad tracks. This open campus concept may have reflected the security environment of the time; however, today's public safety realities are considerably different.

In the past 33 years, the Sheriff's Office campus has managed a number of incidents that show just how vulnerable unrestricted access to the campus is.

- We have had the father of a sexual assault victim attempt to run down their daughter's assailant with a Hummer upon release from the jail, and when the individual got into the awaiting vehicle, the Hummer repeatedly rammed the vehicle to the point of being pushed up against the jail. It wasn't until the police took the operator of the Hummer down at gunpoint did the ramming stop.
- There have been several incidences of vehicles speeding into the parking lot of the Cumberland County Jail complex and driving up to the entry doors of the jail and law enforcement center, as if they were going to drive through the entry doors. As a result, we have had to place large

granite blocks in front of the doors of the jail, law enforcement center and community corrections building to discourage any future breach to our buildings.

- In recent years, a police pursuit came onto our campus and drove around the back of the jail which is supposed to be prohibited to anyone not an employee of the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office.
- There have been a number of occasions whereby pedestrians and homeless individuals have been caught walking behind the jail and are asked to leave.
- With an increase in the homeless population within the city, we are constantly evicting homeless individuals who are setting up camp on the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office campus.
- Last year, we had a protest at the jail. I had to schedule a large number of staff members to make sure that the safety and security of the jail remained intact.

If resources permitted, I would have a security fence installed, including a gatehouse so that the Sheriff's Office property would not be open to anyone who wanted to come on to the property.

Given all these incidences on our currently open campus, constructing a passenger rail would be counter to security for this property.

In addition to public safety implications, there are also operations concerns to consider. The area being considered sits adjacent to what are critical jail service functions, including food deliveries, waste removal, recycling collection and loading dock access. The proposed new station/ramp would make it difficult and maybe impossible for tractor trailers to access the loading dock to deliver supplies and various dumpsters that need to be serviced regularly.

I strongly believe Option #2 is an inappropriate location for such a facility, given its close proximity to the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office campus. Options #1 and #3 are further way from the jail and do not create the issues that Option #2 presents.

I respectfully urge the City of Portland to reconsider the location for this project, and I am willing to answer any questions that the council or NNEPRA may have in regards to the public safety risk this poses to this campus.

Respectfully,

Kevin J. Joyce, Sheriff
Cumberland County.

Maine
Cumberland **County**

Patti Smith
Chair of Commissioners

Tom Tyler
Vice Chair of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE NNEPRA PORTLAND PASSENGER RAIL STATION RELOCATION

WHEREAS, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) has completed a comprehensive Site Alternatives Analysis Summary Report evaluating three sites for the relocation of the Portland Transportation Hub Amtrak Downeaster station to eliminate an operational bottleneck occurring due to the location of the current station; and

WHEREAS, the current station location requires a time-consuming, 15-minute backup maneuver for all trains traveling through Portland, which severely limits operational efficiency, increases travel times, and restricts future service expansions to central and northern Maine; and

WHEREAS, the relocation to a mainline platform will eliminate this operational bottleneck, reduce regional carbon emissions by shortening idling and transit times, and lower overall long-term transit operational costs; and

WHEREAS, NNEPRA's feasibility planning report has identified a preferred mainline location known as "Site 3," which is near the Fore River Campus that optimizes regional accessibility, maintains strong multi-modal transit connections, and aligns with local municipal zoning goals; and

WHEREAS, an alternate location known as "Site 2" of the report proposes to locate the station adjacent to the Cumberland County Jail, resulting in the station perimeter coming within 39-feet of the Jail, impacting Jail security and facilities operations of the Jail; and

WHEREAS, the proposal to locate the station at "Site 2" implicates County-owned property; and

WHEREAS, the Cumberland County Sheriff, through his June 8, 2026 letter, expresses significant concerns with such a close placement of the station to the Jail; and

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners have reviewed information related to the site analysis and received a presentation by NNEPRA on the site location(s).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Cumberland County strongly opposes the location of a passenger rail station at the proposed station location known as "Site 2" in the alternative's analysis undertaken recently by the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority as it would unreasonably interfere with the operations of the Cumberland County Jail located immediately adjacent to such proposed location.

Be it Further Resolved: Cumberland County opposes any efforts to transfer County-owned land to NNEPRA or any other organization for the purpose of locating a passenger train station at so-called "Site 2" of NNEPRA's alternatives analysis.

Patti Smith
Chair – District Four

Tom Tyler
Vice Chair – District Two

Stephen F. Gorden
District Three

Jean-Marie Caterina
District One

James F. Cloutier
District Five

September 30th, 2025

To: Patricia Quinn, CEO - NNEPRA
Fr: Brian Batson, MaineHealth
Re: MaineHealth Opposition to Rail Station Site 2
cc: Britt Crewse; Katie Fullam Harris; Katie Krakowka; Matt Wolden; Jim Cohen

This memo is provided In response to NNEPRA's request for MaineHealth's position regarding the relocation of the commuter train station from Thompson's Point to the area between the MaineHealth Maine Medical Center employee garage and the Cumberland County jail off St. John Street in Portland, Maine ("Site 2"). MaineHealth has been a consistent participant in stakeholder engagement meetings, calls and other written communications regarding the potential relocation of the Thompson's Point station to various sites on the Portland peninsula over the course of the past several months.

Throughout this period of stakeholder engagement, MaineHealth has undertaken its own operational, financial and strategic assessments of the impact of relocating the station to Site 2. As part of our own analysis, MaineHealth has prioritized the impact to patient and employee safety and relied on the expertise of transportation and safety professionals, including the professionals from Amtrak, CSX, and MaineDOT. Based on the foregoing, we have concluded that **Site 2 is not a viable option** for the relocation of the rail station. Locating the station at Site 2 would have consequences for patient and employee safety MaineHealth cannot support, and would negatively impact MaineHealth financially and strategically.

Key Concerns with Site 2

- **Public Safety Risks**
    - Amtrak, VHB Engineering, and CSX have all identified unavoidable safety risks at Site 2.
    - Traffic congestion and longer gate closures would increase the likelihood of accidents and create greater risk of injury to members of the public.
    - Emergency medical services would be directly impacted, with delayed ambulance transport times along Congress Street, a critical route to MaineHealth Maine Medical Center. The Libbytown "two way" Congress St conversion, which City staff has referenced in stakeholder discussions, has also lost federal funding and will not be coming to fruition.
    - Site 2 would increase risks to public safety and is therefore not a tenable or responsible option, regardless of any perceived attractive qualities of that site.
- **Conflict with Institutional Overlay Zone (IOZ)**

- Roughly half of Site 2 falls within MaineHealth's IOZ — the only area specifically designated by city zoning for future MHMMC expansion.
- Alternative use of this land would constrain MaineHealth Maine Medical Center's ability to meet growing healthcare demand in Portland.

- **Operational and Parking Impacts**
  - Site 2 currently provides essential staff and tenant parking, along with shuttle operations.
  - The garage holds over 2,300 spaces, serving 3,200 vehicles daily, with capacity to grow as needed to meet future workforce demand driven by regional healthcare needs.
  - Shuttles operate 24/7 with 680 trips per day, supporting staff access and hospital operations.
  - Loss or impairment of this infrastructure would severely disrupt hospital operations.

Conclusion

MaineHealth unequivocally opposes Site 2 due to serious public safety risks, conflicts with the IOZ, and major operational impacts. While we take no position on whether the rail station should be relocated, we do not support Site 2 under any circumstances.