

The last six months of 2016...

In the sixteenth year of the  
I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study

Welcome to another informational  
newsletter for impacted citizens in  
opposition to alternative 2B-2.

**FACT: 2B-2 met 20% of Purpose and Needs in Apr2009.**

**FACT: This alternative was removed from consideration in Jan2003 for specific safety concerns and the failure to satisfy the study's system linkage need and traffic congestion need.**

*I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study*  
PAC Meeting April 15, 2009



**Purpose and Needs Matrix**

Alternatives	Meets Purpose			Meets Needs	
	Study Purpose	USACE Purpose	System Linkage	Safety Concerns	Traffic Congestion
No-Build	No	No	No	No	No
Alternative 1-Upgrade	No	No	No	No	No
2B-2	No	No	No	Yes	No
3A-3EIK-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3EIK-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5A2E3K	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5A2E3K-1	No	No	No	Yes	No
5A2E3K-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5B2E3K-1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

[www.i395-rt9-study.com](http://www.i395-rt9-study.com)

**FACT: MaineDOT wants \$61 million to construct 2B-2!!**

**FACT: The FHWA approved this project on 6.13.2016!!**

**What is it about **NO** that they don't seem to understand??**

“...terribly inadequate and unsafe transportation infrastructure...”



# Bangor

Wednesday, July 6, 2016 Last update: 2:05 p.m.

## Crash halts traffic on Route 1A in Holden

By Ryan McLaughlin, BDN Staff

[Follow on Twitter](#) [Find on Facebook](#)

Posted July 06, 2016, at 12:11 p.m.

Last modified July 06, 2016, at 1:28 p.m.

HOLDEN, Maine — Drivers are being asked to avoid Route 1A because of a crash on the busy highway, according to officials.


A dispatcher at Penobscot Regional Communications Center said the crash occurred shortly before noon in the area of Maine Military Supply.

The dispatcher said the road was shut down in both directions, and alternate routes should be sought as crews work at the scene.

No other information was available.

### Related stories

» [Crash on Route 1A in Holden sends two to hospital](#)

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**maine\_hiker** · 41 minutes ago

1A is a disaster in Holden and Ellsworth because it mixes through traffic with local commercial zones. Holden should never have allowed so many curb cuts and commercial development along 1A, or 395 should not terminate in it's present location (it really should be dumping most through traffic onto 1A in Dedham). A tourist on their way to Bar Harbor doesn't need to buy patio pavers, horse supplies, guns, lumber, or a shed. Also Ellsworth should have had a bypass decades ago (again to separate through traffic from local traffic), and Trenton needs to move businesses off route 3 and into a village center (which it currently doesn't have).

This is terribly inadequate and unsafe transportation infrastructure serving a major tourist destination. Most of the route should be of the same standards as 1A through Dedham (limited curb cuts, ample passing lanes, etc)

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Why is the Maine DOT so willing to squander \$61 million on a deficient alternative (2B-2) when more pressing traffic problems exist elsewhere in the immediate area? Maybe that's the question that the MaineDOT should answer. How many more accidents have to happen on Route 1A? 4 serious accidents in two weeks!!



## Holden Residents Asking for Safer Route 1A



JUL 18, 2016 5:15 PM EDT

BY BRENNA KELLY

LOCAL NEWS, NEWS, REGIONAL  
NEWS, TODAY'S TOP STORIES

AA

Four serious car accidents on Rt. 1A in the last two weeks is prompting Holden town officials and businesses to take action.

They're asking for help from the State Department of Transportation.

"You know people on their devices. That's the root of the problem," said Frank Spizuoco, the owner of Maine Military Supply.

Four serious car accidents have happened along Rt. 1A in just two weeks.

If it's not due to the weather this time of year, then what?

"They're going fast. They don't realize sometimes the speed has gone from 55 to 35," said Chris Greeley, the Holden Police Chief.

We're told around 25,000 cars travel on Rt. 1A every day in the summer.

"Roughly the population of Bangor driving by the police department here once a day," said Greeley.

Three of the four crashes happened in Holden. Greeley said it's time for Maine DOT to make some concrete changes.

"It's all about money, I get that. But I wish they would take a look at it because we're really concerned and were afraid we're gonna see a loss of life potentially, because of the traffic issues on this road," he said.

Small improvements like signing, striping and signals have been made, but Holden residents want more.

One solution the Holden town manager and business owners have proposed is extending the center turn lane to Rt. 46.

"Something needs to be done, you know. We've rented cops before and that's helped but it's really not a long-term solution so I mean whatever it takes to make it happen. I'll end up doing something eventually," said Spizuoco.

The owner of Maine Military Supply says the left turn outside of his business is causing him to lose customers.

"You know, we're lazy. We don't want to be inconvenienced. We don't want to have to wait 30 seconds," said Spizuoco.

The owner says he doesn't think he should have to kick in money to stop car accidents from happening.

But road modifications aren't cheap, and Holden's proposal has to compete with statewide projects for funding.

"The resources are the limiting factor here. Safety is obviously a top priority but we do have to deal within the resources we have from a financial perspective," said Steven Thebarger, the Maine DOT Maintenance and Operations Manager.

Thebarger says they'll conduct an immediate safety audit on Tuesday.

<http://wabi.tv/2016/07/18/holden-residents-asking-for-safer-route-1a/>

# I-395 connector informational meeting to take place in Eddington



By **Nok-Noi Ricker**, BDN Staff

Posted July 19, 2016, at 2:31 p.m.

Last modified July 19, 2016, at 3:51 p.m.

EDDINGTON, Maine — The Maine Department of Transportation is coming to town Wednesday to provide updated information on the permitted [Interstate 395/Route 9 connector](#), receive public comments and answer questions about the controversial project.

“The Maine Department of Transportation will discuss the I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study and Federal Highway Administration’s recent decision approving Alternative 2B-2 as the build alternative,” states a public notice announcing the meeting. “MaineDOT will also describe the process moving forward, as the study now transitions into a project.”

The public meeting will be held 6-8 p.m. at Eddington Elementary School.

Department of Transportation staff will be available for individual questions before the meeting, starting at 5 p.m., as well as after the meeting, “until all individual questions are addressed,” a [press release from Ted Talbot](#), Department of Transportation spokesman, states.

The department was [awarded federal approval of the project on June 23](#), when the Federal Highway Administration issued a record of decision identifying the state’s preferred route, Alternative 2B-2, as the environmentally preferred alternative for the estimated \$61 million project.

“The permitting for 2B-2 is complete,” Nathan Howard, Department of Transportation project manager, said Tuesday in an email.

The planned route extends I-395 where it ends at Wilson Street in Brewer and roughly follows the Holden-Brewer line until entering Eddington and connecting with Route 9, where a stop sign will be added.

The two-lane, limited access road is designed to ease heavy truck traffic and improve safety on nearby routes 46 and 1A, while also creating a more direct link from Canada to the U.S. highway system.

Residents and community leaders in Brewer, Eddington and Holden have expressed concerns about the project that they say is being forced down their throats. An estimated [eight homes will be “displaced”](#) and another 54 properties in the three neighboring communities will be affected, according to concept plans posted on the state’s [I-395/Route 9 connector website](#).

Brewer City Manager Steve Bost and City Councilor Kevin O’Connell both said no one at the state or federal level is listening to local people, so they see no point in attending the meeting.

“Why [go]?” O’Connell asked.

“I thought about going, but my points haven’t changed, and the [Department of Transportation] lineup hasn’t changed, so other than to hear myself talk I’m not sure that it would be time well spent,” Bost said in a Tuesday email. “Ironically, the buzz right now is how unsafe 1A has become, particularly through Holden. But of course there is no money to address key problem areas. Oh wait, I know where you could find a cool \$67 million right now!”

Bost and O’Connell said they lost all confidence in the process in March when the [Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System](#)’s policy committee members said they felt forced to [endorse the road project](#) when state officials told them they would lose \$57 million in regional road project funding if they didn’t.

Members of the committee had asked that the project be separated from other projects at the March meeting, but state and federal officials said it was all or nothing. The regional project funding includes \$250,000 to prepare preliminary engineering and right-of-way documents for the connector.

What is next in the process and the estimated timeline also will be discussed.

“Members of MaineDOT’s Bureau of Planning (responsible for the study), Bureau of Project Development (responsible to design and construct the project), and the Property Office (responsible for right-of-way and property impacts) will be available to present and answer questions,” Talbot said.

The Department of Transportation project manager said he also has asked the consultant study manager to attend.

“I have not received any questions from residents,” Howard said.

<http://bangordailynews.com/2016/07/19/news/bangor/i-395-connector-informational-meeting-to-take-place-in-eddington/>

# Opponents crowd I-395-Route 9 connector meeting



# Bangor

By Dawn Gagnon, BDN Staff

Thursday, July 21, 2016 Last update: 6:25 p.m.

Posted July 20, 2016, at 9:48 p.m.

EDDINGTON, Maine — An informational meeting Wednesday on the proposed Interstate 395-Route 9 connector road drew at least 150 area residents, a large majority of them opposed to the route, the project itself or both.

The meeting was the first the Maine Department of Transportation has conducted here since it [received federal approval of the project on June 23](#), when the Federal Highway Administration issued a record of decision identifying the state's preferred route, Alternative 2B-2, as the environmentally preferred alternative for the estimated \$61 million project.

That means the project has made the transition from a study to a project, Scott Rollins, the department's assistant director of planning, said at the start of Wednesday's roughly two-hour meeting during which he provided an overview of the study process, which began back in 2000, and discussed what happens next.

The route approved by federal transportation officials extends I-395 where it ends at Wilson Street in Brewer and roughly follows the Holden-Brewer line until entering Eddington and connecting with Route 9, where a stop sign will be added.

The two-lane, limited access road is meant to ease heavy truck traffic and improve safety on nearby Routes 46 and 1A, while creating a more direct link from Canada to the U.S. highway system.

However, residents and community leaders in Brewer, Eddington and Holden have expressed concerns about the project, which they say is being forced down their throats.

Brewer City Councilor Kevin O'Connell said people from the three affected communities "do not support this process." He noted that members of a local regional transportation board earlier this year [said they felt forced to endorse the road project](#) when state officials told them they would lose \$57 million in regional road project funding if they failed to do so.

"Who is pulling your strings and who is pulling their strings?" O'Connell asked state transportation officials.

Rollins said the preferred route was the only one acceptable to the federal government. He also said the the state's transportation commissioner, David Bernhardt, strongly believes it is necessary to improve safety in an area that has 10 high-crash sites.

"Our issue is we feel this is a very important project and we want to move forward," he said.

He added that the decision to build is not political, as the project has survived three governors.

Rep. Arthur Verow, D-Brewer, said it was his understanding that community opposition to the project "carries a lot of weight" with state officials.

"In some cases, that's true," Rollins said.

But not in this one.

"The regional significance of this project is really what drives it forward," Rollins added.

Verow also asked if the state could tweak the route to minimize impact on abutters, which Rollins said is possible, and if the state planned to install noise barriers such as the one it put up along Interstate 95 near Broadway.

At least one attendee, David Peppard of Eddington, said the connector is needed. As it stands, heavy truck traffic on Route 46 makes the road "very unsafe. We aren't able to walk, ride bikes or ride horses" along it, he said.

According to Rollins, the project timeline begins in 2016-17 with surveying. In 2017-18, the connector's preliminary design will be developed and another public information meeting will be conducted, Rollins said.

Final design and the final public hearing are slated for 2018-19, and construction is expected to begin in 2021-22. If all goes to plan, the connector will open to traffic sometime between 2023 and 2025, he said.

An estimated [eight homes will be "displaced"](#) and another 54 properties in the three neighboring communities will be affected, according to concept plans posted on the state's [I-395-Route 9 connector website](#).

Rollins said during Wednesday's update that the department is required to conduct a market assessment for those properties and must provide "just compensation." Property owners who feel the state's offer is unfair can appeal, he said.

Area resident Daniel Cox pointed out that for some, a home's sentimental value is higher than its fair market value.

"If they wanted to sell it, they'd be doing it," he said.






**The Pulse AM 620**

11 hrs · 🌐

Thanks to Gretchen Heldmann. For 7+years, she has been holding state and federal transportation officials accountable on the I-395 connector proposal. Check out the REAL facts of the matter on her web site:


<http://i395rt9hardlook.com/>




*I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study*  
PAC Meeting April 15, 2009

**Needs Matrix**

Study Purpose	Meets Purpose		Meets Needs		
	Study Purpose	USACE Purpose	System Linkage	Safety Concerns	Traffic Congestion
Upgrade	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	Yes	No
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	No	No	No	Yes	No
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes





[www.i395-rt9-study.com](http://www.i395-rt9-study.com)

## I-395 Rt. 9 Hard Look | citizens taking a "hard look" at the MDOT's I-395 Rt.9 study

Home Welcome to the I-395/Rt 9 Hard Look website! This site is created by citizens that have a vested interest in the Maine Department of Transportation's efforts to...

[I395RT9HARDLOOK.COM](http://I395RT9HARDLOOK.COM)

[http://www.wzonthepulse.com/podcast/Gretchen\\_Heldman\\_on\\_WZON\\_7-21-16.mp3](http://www.wzonthepulse.com/podcast/Gretchen_Heldman_on_WZON_7-21-16.mp3)



<http://www.wlbz2.com/news/local/dot-meets-with-community-on-i-395-connector-plans/278400542>

**EDDINGTON, Maine** (NEWS CENTER) -- A controversial plan by Maine's Department of Transportation to connect I-395 to U-S Route 9 in Eddington is becoming more of a reality for residents there--one that many residents do not want to accept.

The final version of 61-million-dollar plan received federal approval just about a month ago.

Residents met with Maine D.O.T. Officials to voice their concerns at the Eddington Elementary School Wednesday night.

The plan known as 2B-2 was first presented as the less-likely of 79 options when the project first started back in 2000.

The Assistant Director of Bureau of Transportation Systems Planning, Scott Rollins, called it a "done deal."

"We really want to focus on where we go from here," Rollins said.

When completed the two-lane road will cut through Holden, Brewer and Eddington.

Transportation experts say the overall plan aims to cut down on traffic along Route 1A and Route 46.

However, critics argue that the traffic diverted to Route 9 in Eddington will only make things worse.

"It said right in the proposal that they would work with the towns to control access to Route 9 for safety. When you bring a road in from one commercial zone into another and a mixed-use zone...that doesn't sound very good for business or residents," Eddington Planning Board Chair Susan Dunham Shane said.

The connector could impact an estimated 54 properties and eight homes.

The project has been criticized by a Bangor area transportation committee whose members felt they were pressured to vote for the I-395 project or risk losing federal funds for other project—something D.O.T officials denied at Wednesday's meeting.

Now some residents and town leaders say their voices have gone unheard since the very start.

"I have worked tirelessly on this for years and my home's not going to be affected. I'm probably going to see less traffic in front of my house, but I can see beyond the end of my nose and how this is going to impact the community," Eddington resident Gretchen Heldmann said.

Heldmann spoke up at the meeting and felt she went unnoticed, adding that the project is only a temporary fix and waste of tax dollars.

The study looked at system linkage, traffic flow and environmental concerns regarding wet lands.

Rollins said 2B-2 is the best and only option now.

Officials say that construction is still a ways off and not likely to be completed until 2025.

The next step in the process is to survey land and complete the final project design to determine just how much of an impact it will have on landowners.

"All these people who are in the 200-foot wide corridor, what happens to their lives? What do they do? I have friends who are going lose their house. They're definitely gone," Dunham Shane said.

(© 2016 WCSH)

# The Role of the PAC:

“I consider my role on the PAC to be that of a steward for the interests of all Maine citizens who will be using this connector (and paying for it), and I think the selected route needs to be justifiable to all the people and not just those of a particular small constituency. The people whose lives and property will be disrupted by our final decision deserve nothing less.

I spoke up...because I am concerned about maintaining fairness in the overall process.

Whichever route is chosen, some people in our community are going to be affected—either directly or by the proximity of the new road. We in the PAC owe it to those individuals to demonstrate that the selected route was truly the best alternative for the State of Maine, and why.”

Sandi Duchesne [1.28.2003](#)

A letter to MaineDOT Project Manager from a PAC member who lived in Clifton and worked for the Bangor Comprehensive Transportation System (BACTS). This letter provides insight into how this study was managed, how dismissive the MaineDOT was to a PAC/BACTS member; you will read how the MaineDOT reneged on how they looked at variations of the same alternative and you will see how meetings outside of the PAC process with influential citizens steered the process away from the first alternative (4B) that had regional support. I hesitated at first to put this up on the website; however, this letter is part of the official record and available on MaineDOT's own website. I have pulled out her thoughts on her role as a PAC member and as mentioned – we deserve nothing less than a full accounting on the selection process. MaineDOT has failed to demonstrate to those impacted by the 2B-2 alternative – that this route is truly the best for the state of Maine. Why do I say that? 2B-2 does not meet the original purpose and needs to provide a high speed limited-access connection from I-395 to Route 9 to the east of Route 46 and in fact was removed from consideration in January 2003 only to be reinstated by September of 2003 – and – only met 20% of purpose and needs in April of 2009. When criteria was changed to only 2B-2 and none of the other 79+ studied alternatives, did the MaineDOT go back and take a “hard look” at other alternatives? NO!! Why was 4B removed from consideration? We were told because of earthwork costs – it needs to be noted that this email offers a suggestion to ease the grade requirements from the freeway design criteria that was in affect at the time; also note that the design criteria for 2B-2 has been downgraded to rolling rural which eases the grade restrictions. Did the MaineDOT go back and look at 4B and others with the downgraded rolling rural design? Of course not – so here we are, impacted by an alternative which does not meet the original purpose and needs and will cost our state \$61 million!!



# A matter of priorities:

9/28/2016: We were told by Maine DOT officials at the March BACTS meeting that, with the exception of the SML Bridge replacement in Kittery, this connector project is the number one transportation project in/for the state of Maine. This “priority” project has been in the “works” since the year 2000. You can judge for yourself by the schedule below if this seems to fit that priority that Maine DOT would like you to believe. I would only say that if this project was so important, why has it taken 16 years to get just to this point and another 7 to 9 years for fruition?

Tentative Schedule	
Survey	2016/2017
Preliminary Design	2017/2018
Preliminary Public Meeting	2017/2018
Final Design	2018/2020
Final Public Meeting	2019/2020
Construction Begin	2021/2022
Open to Traffic	2023/2025

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[Click here for complete document.](#)

## QUESTIONS to the MaineDOT:

I posed this question to the MaineDOT in lieu of attending the recent meeting: “This is my immediate neighborhood...as clearly shown in your 2013 preliminary engineering plan [snapshot of map included] which will make me an abutter to MaineDOT property. Seems clear to me...yet other maps—including the map on the back of the meeting handout—are of insufficient scale to make that determination; that lack of clarity has led to many rumors and even false hopes which need to be squelched. I contend that I have every right to know if I am or if I am not an abutter to this project.”  
7.19.2016

ANSWER from the MaineDOT: “The depiction below is based on a Planning level determination without the use of any survey, so it is very conceptual. As we stated at the meeting, it may be at least a year or more before we have definitive impacts known. MaineDOT will conduct aerial and ground survey this fall and next year. This data will allow us to transfer the current planning-level concepts to final design plans.” At that point we will be able to make a final determination on all properties along the corridor...”  
Nathan Howard MaineDOT Project Manager 7.22.2016

A Question for you: MaineDOT’s April 2013 Preliminary Drawings are now considered “very conceptual”, yet apparently good enough to displace 8 families and 54 properties, but not good enough to tell me if I am an abutter?? In my mind, the biggest issue is what in the world did they spend \$2.8 million (as of Feb 2015) on??



How can we have money problems when we are able to spend \$61 million on this 2B-2 boondoggle? Seems if we prioritized the maintenance of our infrastructure first without squandering our limited transportation dollars on pet projects – we would be better off:

Bangor Daily News, Tuesday, September 6, 2016 OpEd

ANDREW MCLEAN

## Taxing hybrids won't solve road funding problems

During a radio interview on Aug. 23, Gov. Paul LePage blamed drivers of hybrid and electric cars for the condition of Maine's roads and bridges, saying that Maine lawmakers need to address this issue.

The truth is that state lawmakers, transportation officials and road and bridge construction experts have been working hard to address inadequate funding of our transportation system. LePage has not been willing to engage in the conversation. In fact, just last year, he opposed my bill to bring lawmakers and stakeholders together as part of a commission to identify sustainable transportation funding reforms, which would have been an important step toward implementing solutions.

The Legislature's Transportation Committee, which I co-chair, has worked on a number of bills to improve Maine's infrastructure over the past four years, including measures that sought to address how fuel-efficient vehicles affect state transportation funding. During that time, LePage has been unwilling to participate in this process, so his comments on WVOM came as something of a surprise to me.

When it comes to solving complex issues like transportation funding, bringing stakeholders to the table to gather and share information so everyone is working from the same facts and figures is a necessary first step. But LePage has been a vocal opponent of legislative studies and commissions to do this, even vetoing their creation despite bipartisan support.

Our infrastructure funding problem in Maine is much bigger than the limited number of electric cars and hybrid vehicles on our roads. The state's Highway Fund relies on fuel taxes for about two-thirds of its revenue. As new vehicles use less fuel to meet federal efficiency standards, revenue from the fuel tax drops. That makes it more and more difficult to fund necessary infrastructure projects.

According to the Maine Department of Transportation's projections, we are coming up \$168 million short every year of what it costs just to fund basic maintenance and repairs. We have worked with the department to find cost savings wherever possible, but anyone who drives on our roads and bridges can see that finding cost savings alone is not solving the problem.

And funding all of Maine's necessary infrastructure projects on the backs of a small group of drivers won't work.

That's not to say we shouldn't find a way to make sure that people who drive especially fuel-efficient cars still share in the costs of maintaining a modern transportation system. But to suggest that this small piece of the puzzle can somehow bridge a \$168 million gap just doesn't make any sense.

While LePage has sat on the sidelines, the transportation funding problem has been getting worse. On this and other issues, LePage's obstructionism and habit of vetoing the work of bipartisan legislative committees prevents us from moving our state forward.

When you consider the cost of aging and dilapidated infrastructure, it's clear we can't afford to wait. Mainers pay hundreds of dollars per person in additional operating costs every year because of rough road conditions.

And it's hard to overstate the importance of a 21st century transportation system to our economy. Agriculture and forestry, construction and manufacturing all require reliable roads

and bridges. The visitors who spend their tourist dollars here expect smooth and safe travel across the state. If we want our state and its people and businesses to thrive, the state of Maine must commit to funding basic services like roads and bridges.

This isn't a partisan issue. Mainers of all political backgrounds recognize the simple necessity of investing in our infrastructure. Voters have repeatedly and overwhelmingly approved transportation bond measures at the ballot box. Bonding is an important tool, but we shouldn't be relying on it to fund basic maintenance.

I am glad to hear that LePage recognizes the ongoing challenges our state faces as we work to maintain our roads and bridges. It's about time he joined the conversation. If he's serious about fixing the problem, it is important he come to the table next session so he can be a part of the solution.

*Rep. Andrew McLean, D-Gorham, is serving his second term in the Maine House. He is the House chair of the Transportation Committee and represents parts of Gorham and Scarborough.*

[Click here to view BDN document.](#)



QUESTION: Who forewarned of impacts to hundreds of residents living in this area when selecting an alternative (2B-2) that does not meet the long established east of Route 46 system linkage need?

“Alternatives that would connect to Route 9 west of Route 46 would severely impact local communities along Route 9 between proposed alternative connection points and Route 46.”



“Alternatives that do not provide a limited access connection to Route 9 east of Route 46 would not be practicable because that would not provide a substantial improvement in regional mobility and connectivity and would negatively affect people living along Route 9 in the study area.”



ANSWER: The same [state and federal transportation professionals](#) (page 5) that now promote this \$61 million project at a time when the state cannot afford to even maintain our current infrastructure. The statements above forewarn that alternative 2B-2 will severely impact residents of Eddington that live along 2B-2's 4.2 mile segment of Route 9 and will negatively affect a large number of North Brewer residents and every Eddington resident living along Route 9.





Paul R. LePage  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
REGION 4  
219 HOGAN ROAD  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401-5603

David Bernhardt  
COMMISSIONER

09/27/2016

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Brewer, ME 04412-9627

Pin : 018915.00  
Project Number: STP-1891(500)  
Route: I-395/Route 9 Connector

Dear Property Owner:

The Maine Department of Transportation is considering a transportation project near your property and we are in the preliminary stages of gathering project information for the I-395 / Route 9 Connector. At this time, we are collecting information from a variety of sources so we can consider all possible options and alternatives. We are sending you this letter to notify you that the project has been initiated and to ask for some specific information regarding your property.

In order for our researchers and designers to fully consider potential project impacts, we would like you to fill out the enclosed *Property Owner Report (POR)* and return it in the pre-paid envelope within two weeks. Completing this report to the best of your knowledge will ensure we are aware of pertinent property information, and will be helpful in future discussions with you, if necessary.

If you haven't already, you may soon see MaineDOT employees actively identifying and collecting data along the roadway. Depending on the needs of the project, there may be several different engineers, technicians or scientists in the area from time to time surveying or performing environmental reviews, water tests, soil explorations or other necessary field studies. It is usually necessary for us to enter your property to obtain the locations of important structures, property pins, wells, etc. Because the project is in its preliminary stages, the MaineDOT representatives collecting data will not be able to give you project information that has any final or official status. However, feel free to ask for identification, or call me if you have any concerns.

The construction schedule for this project will be finalized in the future once alternatives are analyzed and funding is available. If any public meetings are held during the development of this project, property owners along the project will receive a notice of the date, time and place of such meetings.

In the meantime, don't hesitate to call me, Benjamin Darrah, at (207) 592-1452, with any questions or concerns. My thanks, in advance, for taking the time to complete and mail the Property Owner Report.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Darrah  
MaineDOT



RECYCLED PAPER

THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER  
PHONE: (207) 941-4500 TTY 711 FAX: (207) 990-2667

# The LePage/Bernhardt administration loves transportation bonds no matter what they may have asserted previously:

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During questioning at his hearing, **Bernhardt said the administration would oppose** raising the gasoline tax as well as **any new bonding initiatives**.

"We have to leave no stone unturned," he said, responding to questioning from Democrats on the Transportation Committee. "We need to be able to tell the people, the department is as efficient and cost-effective as it can be, I believe, before we can go out and ask for more additional funding than we already receive." [Portland Press Herald February 9<sup>th</sup> 2011](#)

YET:

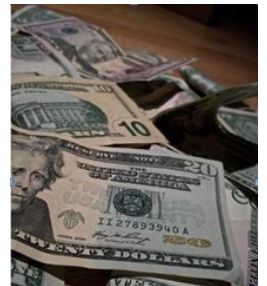


\$51.5 million transportation bond passed in 2012

\$100 million transportation bond passed in 2013

\$85 million transportation bond passed in 2015

Question #6—\$100 million transportation bond



QUESTIONS:

Maybe, if the MaineDOT stopped promoting questionable projects such as the ongoing Presque Isle Bypass @ \$120 million and the future North Brewer Bypass (2B-2) @ \$61 million—not to mention the already completed \$20 million Caribou Bypass—at a time when the MaineDOT cannot even afford to maintain our existing roads and bridges—we wouldn't need to vote on bonds four times during the LePage administration—AND—when are we going to hold the words of our government leaders to any standard? Before you vote on Question 6—ask yourself if 2B-2's \$61 million cost wouldn't be better spent on the unmet transportation needs of the state of Maine?

QUESTION: Who said the following?

“The people further find that the decisions of state agencies regarding transportation needs and facilities are often made in isolation, without sufficient comprehensive planning and opportunity for meaningful public input and guidance.”

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ANSWER: Was it from one of us that so strongly oppose the selection of an alternative (2B-2) that does not meet the near-decade-long-original study purpose and needs?

NO—Maine Legislators.

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REFERENCE: That comment is actually a part of Maine Statute.

Title 23: TRANSPORTATION

Part 1: STATE HIGHWAY LAW

Chapter 3: OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

Subchapter 1: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

§73. Transportation policy

2. Purposes and findings.

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/23/title23sec73.html>

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2B-2 is a solution in search of a problem—a waste of \$61 million at a time when the state cannot even afford to maintain existing infrastructure. Wouldn't 2B-2's \$61 million be better spent on the well-publicized unmet existing transportation needs of the state of Maine?

# Letter to the Editor—Bangor Daily News

submitted September 26, 2016

Dear Editor of BDN,

I read the [OP-ED article by Representative Andrew McLean](#), Democrat in Gorham in the BDN September 9, 2016 issue. Representative McLean chairs the House Transportation Committee. He states we are consistently short \$168,000,000 every year! That's right; \$168,000,000 is short EVERY YEAR, just to fund basic road and bridge maintenance. He goes on to say our infrastructure is aged and dilapidated, and he is trying to make improvements. He is working with the MDOT to find cost savings wherever possible. He also states that voters have overwhelmingly and repeatedly approved transportation bond measures, but he says, and I agree, that we shouldn't rely on borrowing money for basic road maintenance.

I can't help wondering, if we can't maintain our existing roads why are we building new ones? Take for instance, the I-395/Route 9 connector in Brewer and Eddington. This project is costing an estimated \$61,000,000 plus, plus, plus. Yes, some money is funded federally but not all. The state of Maine's share is 20%. But think about it. That's a total of \$61,000,000 (and of course there will be overages) for a 6.1 mile road from where I-395 ends in Brewer to Route 9 in Eddington. What is the point of this road? This is to allow Canadian traffic a quicker route to points south. Why should WE build a road for Canada you say? Well, that's what we have been asking for years.

**Vinal S. Smith**

*Brewer*

Reference BDN OPED posted 9.05.2016:

<http://bangordailynews.com/2016/09/05/opinion/contributors/taxing-hybrids-and-electric-cars-alone-wont-solve-maines-road-funding-problem/>



## Construction starts for \$4.8 million I-95 interchange at Trafton Road

By Amy Calder Staff Writer  
(Excerpts below)

WATERVILLE — After years of debate, work is underway on building a \$4.8 million interchange at mile 124 on Interstate 95 that connects on- and off-ramps with Trafton Road.

The project is being funded with state, private and federal money. Trafton Properties Inc. is funding most of the project at \$1.81 million plus engineering and other costs, combined with a \$1 million federal Economic Development Administration grant and \$2 million from the state Department of Transportation.

[Public hearings held over the last couple of years](#), as required by the project, drew residents who live in the area where the interchange is being built, and they expressed concern about a variety of issues, including traffic, safety and noise. Some people said Trafton Road has problems, including that parts of it sink in winter. Others cited climate change, saying an interchange is an investment in urban sprawl, and cars and trucks are not sustainable, but rail that runs on clean energy would be.

Environmental impact from the project also was of concern to some residents who said they worried about wetlands protection. Ernie Martin, a DOT project manager, said at the time that about \$310,000 was designated for wetlands for the project. Several residents who spoke at a public hearing last December, as well as in [May 2014](#) at Thomas College, were unavailable for comment Friday.

The City Council [approved the interchange project](#) in 2014 but made it clear the city would not help fund the project. However, the council did approve a tax increment financing district for Trafton Road.

[Click here to view complete Kennebec Journal article.](#)

Once again—impacted residents are dismissed by MDOT...

They want our input and then ignore it!!!

## An email to community leaders, neighbors and others impacted by 2B-2:

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### Updated website

10/7/2016 @11:15 am

Larry Adams

After two months of silence, I updated the [website](#).

I posted a letter that many of us received recently from the MaineDOT looking for property information. The MDOT won't tell us specifics on the project, but they expect us now to provide property specific information that I contend they can get from any town or city hall themselves. I believe the letters were sent to those directly impacted and those abutting the project. I feel no obligation to fill out the form, attached to the cover letter, until they honestly tell me if/how my property is affected.

Before the July 20th meeting, I emailed the MDOT project manager with a simple question whether or not my property would abut MDOT properties obtained by eminent domain as clearly shown in their own preliminary engineering drawings and they could not answer one way or another. I find it hard to believe that their own 2013 preliminary engineering drawings seem to be good enough to identify 8 homes that will be destroyed and 54 properties to be encroached upon – yet – now apparently not good enough to tell us how close this highway will be to our back yards. After all – they have spent some 3 Million dollars on this study and now they can't answer a simple question and that's all we ask – show us the impact...

I think it's fair to continue to question why they (the state and the MaineDOT/FHWA) feel free to promote this \$61 million bypass boondoggle at a time when they can't afford to even maintain our existing roads and bridges and, especially when the co-chair of the JSC Transportation complains in a recent [BDN oped](#) about a \$168 million shortfall every year. That oped was uploaded along with a LTE sent recently to the BDN.

Commissioner [Bernhardt at his confirmation hearing in 2011](#) affirmed that if confirmed the administration would not support any new gas taxes and any new bonding initiatives – yet – we will soon be voting on the 4th bonding package under the LePage administration.

Maybe - just maybe – if they weren't wasting our scarce transportation funds on these highly questionable pet projects such as the Caribou Bypass, the Presque Isle Bypass and now the North Brewer Bypass – we would have the money to properly maintain our infrastructure. It's all about priorities – no new projects should have even been studied before getting our roads and bridges back to an acceptable level.

I personally - no matter how attractive bonding may be – can not and will not support new bonding until the DOT proves they have the ability to prioritize projects going forward to ensure that existing infrastructure is repaired and maintained first and remove the obvious politics from the project selection process.

I'm still miffed that our state and federal legislative delegation – with the exception of Representative Verow – turned their backs to us. The feds claim that it is the state's purview to spend the fed's money (our money) as they like. 80% of the \$61 million cost is federal monies. It should be unacceptable to all that the \$48.8 million needed to take this project forward, with the \$12.2 million from the state (our money), will be supported and approved by our federal delegation without any serious discussion with the majority of their constituency that opposes this project!! It is beyond me what any of these people are elected to do. They seem to serve the few and abandon the many...

I'll continue to update the website as necessary...

Larry



# Opinion

Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2016 Last update: 12:44 p.m.

## I-395 connector unnecessary

Rep. Andrew McLean, House chair of the Legislature's Transportation Committee, states in his [Sept. 5 BDN OpEd](#) that we are consistently short \$168 million every year just to fund basic road and bridge maintenance. He goes on to say our infrastructure is aged and dilapidated, and he is trying to make improvements. He is working with the Maine Department of Transportation to find cost savings wherever possible. He also states that voters have [overwhelmingly and repeatedly approved transportation bond measures](#), but he says, and I agree, that we shouldn't rely on borrowing money for basic road maintenance.

I can't help wondering, if we can't maintain our existing roads why are we building new ones? Take for instance, the [proposed I-395/Route 9 connector in Brewer and Eddington](#). This project is costing an estimated \$61 million. Some money comes from federal sources but not all. Maine's share is 20 percent. But think about it. That's \$61 million (and, of course, there likely will be overages) for a 6.1-mile road from where I-395 ends in Brewer to Route 9 in Eddington.

What is the point of this road? This is to allow Canadian traffic a quicker route to the Interstate system. Why should we build a road for Canada? That's what we have been asking for years.

Vinal S. Smith

*Brewer*

<http://bangordailynews.com/2016/10/11/opinion/letters/wednesday-oct-12-2016-send-a-message-to-gop-question-6-no-deal-for-taxpayers-christian-voters-need-to-mobilize/>

Some of the same state and federal transportation professionals that now support the selection of the \$61 million 2B-2 alternative for the I-395/Route 9 Connector—at a time when the state cannot afford to maintain existing infrastructure—when 33% of our bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete—when 38% of our roads are rated fair or unacceptable—with an annual \$168 million shortfall in the DOT budget—unequivocally stated in October 2003: (<http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/Alts%20Tech%20Memo.pdf> page#5) “To meet the need of improved regional system linkage while minimizing impacts to people, it was determined that an alternative must provide a limited-access connection between I-395 and Route 9 east of Route 46.” AND “Alternatives that would connect to Route 9 west of Route 46 would severely impact local communities along Route 9 between proposed alternative connection points and Route 46.” AND “Alternatives that do not provide a limited access connection to Route 9 east of Route 46 would not be practicable because that would not provide a substantial improvement in regional mobility and connectivity and would negatively affect people living along Route 9 in the study area.”

MaineDOT’s own words forewarn that 2B-2 will “severely impact” the community of Eddington along an approximate 3.8 mile segment of Route 9 to the west of Route 46 and “negatively affect people living along Route 9” from Clifton to North Brewer.

After a decade of study, the original study design criteria morphed from a high speed, limited-access (direct) connection from I-395 to the Clifton/Eddington border, built as a 2 lane highway with future upgradability to a 4 lane full divided facility, built to freeway design criteria—TO—a downgraded 2 lane, controlled-access roadway with no future upgradability, built to a downgraded rolling rural design criteria with a Route 9 connection point 4.2 miles west of the study’s “Route 9 east of Route 46” system linkage need that 45 of the 79 studied alternatives satisfied. <http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/DEIS/AppC.pdf>

On April 15<sup>th</sup> 2009, at what would become the final PAC meeting, 2B-2 satisfied only 1 of the 5 (20%) study purpose and needs while 5 other alternatives met 100% of purpose and needs, yet 2B-2 became the preferred alternative for a \$61 million project by the end of 2010. [http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/PAC041509\\_handouts.pdf](http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/PAC041509_handouts.pdf)

2B-2’s \$61 million would be better spent to fund the immediate unmet transportation needs within our state and to offset the impact of an annual \$168 million shortfall in the DOT budget. There are too many more pressing transportation needs that should be addressed before spending one more dollar on any new projects.



# Words have meaning—unless they are suppressed...

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MaineDOT and FHWA transportation professionals clearly stated in their October 2003 MaineDOT/FHWA/ACOE Tech Memorandum (<http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/Alts%20Tech%20Memo.pdf> page#5)

“Alternatives that would connect to Route 9 west of Route 46 would **severely impact local communities** along Route 9 between proposed alternative connection points and Route 46.”

“Alternatives that do not provide a limited access connection to Route 9 east of Route 46 would not be practicable because that would not provide a substantial improvement in regional mobility and connectivity and would **negatively affect people** living along Route 9 in the study area.”

MaineDOT/FHWA’s own words forewarn that alternative 2B-2 will **“severely impact”** the community of Eddington along an approximate 3.8 mile segment of Route 9 to the west of Route 46 and **“negatively affect”** people living along Route 9” from Clifton in the east to North Brewer in the west.

DOT is now more than willing to communicate—but not when these same issues were raised at the March BACTS meeting...



## Route 1A still a safety concern for drivers

Shawna Newcomb, WLBZ 5:59 PM, EST October 14, 2016



CONNECT TWEET LINKEDIN GOOGLE+ PINTEREST

**DEDHAM, Maine (NEWS CENTER)** – Since January, there have been nearly 50 accidents and 6 fatalities along route 1A, which stretches from Brewer to Ellsworth. Over the past 10 years, the Maine Department of Transportation has installed centerline rumble strips to help keep drivers safe, but residents say that is not enough.

Officials say high speeds, triple lanes, and distracted drivers are the leading cause of accidents on Rt. 1A.

One of the most notorious crash sites is in Dedham—but according to DOT standards- it is still not considered a high crash location.

In order to be classified as one, that section of the road must harbor eight crashes in a three-year period and have a critical rate factor above one.

The Dedham fire chief says it is one thing to look at the numbers from a distance and another- to witness it first-hand.

Chief Shane thinks that stronger communication is the first step to make the roads safer and the Department of Transportation says they're more than willing to make that happen.

Copyright 2016 WLBZ

“...stronger communication is the first step to make the roads safer and the Department of Transportation says they’re more than willing to make that happen.”

[Click here to view WLBZ report.](#)

## The DOT was not in the mood to talk at the March BACTS meeting in Brewer:

“Some on the committee, including Brewer Planner **Linda Johns**, who has been involved with the project since its 2000 inception, **spoke strongly against plans for the new roadway**, which would displace eight homes. The state’s preferred route, 2B2, would extend I-395 where it ends at Wilson Street and would roughly follow the Holden-Brewer line until entering Eddington and connecting with 4.5 miles of rebuilt Route 9.

**Johns said** with the number of paper-related mills that have closed since work on the project began 16 years ago, traffic numbers are down and **the estimated \$61 million should be spent on other needed projects, such as improving the connection between Bangor and Bar Harbor.**

“Watching this unfold today, in my humble opinion, is precisely why people have lost faith in government,” **Brewer City Manager Steve Bost** told the panel.

He described Thursday’s process as “an unyielding bureaucracy that is unwilling to listen and unwilling to move” and said state and federal officials have not listened to the communities, including Brewer which has had three unanimous City Council votes [opposing the state’s plans](#).

“I believe that if the Maine public knew what was going on in this room today, that all those projects would be essentially set aside if you do what is in your heart. I think they would be very displeased,” Bost said.

[Click here to view BDN article referencing the March 2016 BACTS meeting.](#)



Friday, 14 October 2016 19:31

[Print](#) | [Email](#)

## DOT moves ahead with plans for I-395 connector Featured

Written by [Craig Colson](#)



BREWER-The Department of Transportation is moving ahead with a controversial plan for a new road that would extend Interstate 395 to Route 9.

Officials announced today it's moving from the planning stage to project development.

DOT surveyors, design engineers and others will all be in the area over the coming months, gathering data and making plans for the new roadway.

Once that data is collected, the department plans to hold a public meeting .

That most likely wont take place until late in 2017 or in early 2018.

The road is seen as necessary to link 395 with Route 9 to make it easier for travelers and truckers.

Many residents in the area fear how the increased traffic will effect their quality of life and how construction will impact local land owners.



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# Email to impacted private citizens and their community leaders:

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A new unexplained marker has appeared on Eastern Avenue near Sylvan Road

Larry Adams

10/31/2016 1:21 PM

Several markings have appeared on Eastern Avenue which we attribute to DOT work on 2B-2:



Official survey reference point in a boulder behind the Woodridge Road stop sign.



Unpinned marking (both sides of road edge) to the west of the above reference survey point – considerably west of the (western) right-of-way as shown in 2013 preliminary drawings.



Unpinned marking (both sides of road edge) to the east of the (eastern) right-of-way as shown in the preliminary drawings @ [http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/Conceptual\\_Design.pdf](http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/Conceptual_Design.pdf).





A new marking – on Eastern Avenue just east of Sylvan Road - one that is “pinned” (obviously surveyed as per the orange pin) which one may assume is a marking for the aerial survey.

Does anyone know positively what the above pinned and unpinned markers are for?

Are there any markings on other intersecting streets to the north and Route 9? I understand there has also been survey activity on Wilson Street near I-395.

Why are impacted residents left to “assume” what they see when the MDOT has a website (that we are paying for) that they could easily update on a weekly basis so this project can - for once in its long history - be brought out in the open? Why aren't MDOT officials held accountable when we pay their salary? We may not get any answers now for over a year!!

One of my neighbors approached DOT workers and was told that they had found 2 areas of significant ledge in the immediate vicinity of Eastern/Woodridge and weren't sure if 2B-2 would go over or under Eastern Avenue while another neighbor was told that they found no ledge. DOT workers mentioned that they were finding considerable wetland and weren't sure if this project was going to happen or not and I heard back in March that eminent domain would eventually take more than the 8 homes that they have been talking about for years. Are these all intention acts of misinformation or do they really not know? What have they been studying for 16 years??

There are too many unanswered questions. We cannot live our lives by assumptions, rumors, hearsay and false hope – we need real answers – we deserve real answers!!

After 16 years and over \$3 million spent – we seem to know less at this time than at any other time in the process...

Larry Adams

## Re: A new unexplained marker has appeared on Eastern Avenue near Sylvan Road

10/31/2016 5:24 PM

I am not at all surprised at this appalling lack of information, care, or concern from MDOT...

Those of us who have lived in a state of suspense, anxiety, and agitation because of the machinations of certain communities and MDOT deserve a MUCH better response other than the indecisive drivel to which we are continually subjected.

WHEN will MDOT tell us the unvarnished truth? Why are they NOT AT ALL accountable to the citizens of our neighborhood?

Mary Adams  
2B-2, Brewer, Maine

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## Another marker found on Eastern Avenue

Larry Adams

11/1/2016 11:42 AM

We found another pinned-V marker on Eastern Avenue - all the way into Holden across from the entrance to Sarina Drive. There may be a simple, logical explanation for looking at that large of a corridor (from Sylvan Road to Sarina Drive) but it sure leads to unwarranted speculation.

There are also pinned-V markers at/near 245 and 376 Clewlyville Road and a pinned-X marker at/near 104 Levenseller Road.

Unpinned white arrows with MDOT markings are at/near 134 and 164 Levenseller.

I'm sure there are also similar markings on other roads within the 2B-2 corridor.

Sure wish we knew what they were up to...

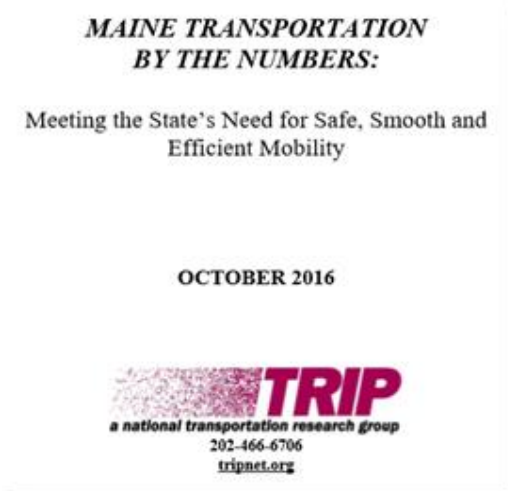
# Email sent to impacted citizens and their community leaders:

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In case you need a reminder on the condition of our infrastructure - here's the latest report from TRIP...

Larry Adams

11/1/2016 8:19 AM



[http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME Transportation by the Numbers TRIP Report October 2016.pdf](http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME_Transportation_by_the_Numbers_TRIP_Report_October_2016.pdf)

“Statewide, 26 percent of Maine’s major urban roads are in poor condition. Fifty-eight percent are in mediocre or fair condition and the remaining 16 percent are in good condition.” page #1

“A total of 34 percent of Maine bridges show significant deterioration or do not meet current design standards. Fifteen percent of the state’s bridges are structurally deficient and 19 percent are functionally obsolete.” page #1

“Driving on rough roads costs Maine motorists a total of \$494 million annually [\$485 per driver] in extra vehicle operating costs. Costs include accelerated vehicle depreciation, additional repair costs, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear.” page #3

SO—let’s spend waste \$61 million on 2B-2 as Maine has no problem with their existing roads and bridges...

# The [Portland Press Herald](#) reminds us of the poor condition of Maine's infrastructure while endorsing Question #6—but who determines where to spend the money? The MaineDOT alone...

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## **Our View: For better roads, more jobs in Maine, vote 'yes' on Question 6**

By The Editorial Board  
(Excerpted from original article)

"It might feel like voters are always being asked to pony up more money for Maine's roads and bridges. Indeed, in 2012, 2013 and just last year, bonds totaling tens of millions of dollars were approved at the polls.

But those funds are barely sufficient for maintaining the state's transportation infrastructure the highways, bridges, ports, railways and paths that allow businesses to move goods, and residents and tourists to travel safely. That's why we are endorsing a yes vote on Question 6 on the Nov. 8 ballot.

If voters approve the Question 6 transportation bond – just as they have, by wide margins, previous transportation bonds – the state will borrow \$100 million, leveraging an additional \$137 million in federal funds toward the \$2.2 billion the state Department of Transportation plans to spend in the next three years.

While the money is not tied to any particular projects, \$80 million from the state bond will go toward improving the highest-priority highways and bridges. The remaining \$20 million will be earmarked for multi-modal projects—ports, harbors, rail, aviation, bike-pedestrian paths and transit facilities.

That money is necessary to keep up with work on thousands of miles of roads in Maine —twice as many miles, in fact, as New Hampshire has, though we receive only half the federal funding that our neighboring state does.

That's part of the reason why major roads here are falling behind—33 percent statewide are considered poor or mediocre, including 61 percent in Portland and 40 percent in Bangor—and part of the reason why there is a projected \$150 million annual shortfall in transportation spending moving forward.

It is also a factor in the deterioration of many of the hundreds of bridges in Maine, a problem with sometimes dangerous consequences.

So, far from being extravagant, the bond represented by Question 6 is just part of the normal spending necessary to keep roads from crumbling. It also is an investment that is returned to taxpayers in many ways."

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"While the money is not tied to any particular projects, \$80 million from the state bond will go toward improving the highest-priority highways and bridges... major roads here are falling behind—33 percent statewide are considered poor or mediocre, including...40 percent in Bangor...a projected \$150 million annual shortfall in transportation spending moving forward."

How much of that \$80 million will be funneled to the Presque Isle Bypass and 2B-2? We will know in January 2017 when the new MaineDOT Work Plan goes public. Wouldn't 2B-2's \$61 million be better spent on Maine's unmet transportation needs?



# BANGOR DAILY NEWS

## [I-395 connector may cost Newcastle residents waterfront access](#)

By Nok-Noi Ricker, BDN Staff

Nov. 02, 2016, at 6:06 p.m. (The following is an excerpt of the original article)

NEWCASTLE, Maine—The saltwater marsh behind Marva Nesbit's home is so beautiful that she constantly is snapping pictures of it. It's where she takes people when they come to visit. It's where she goes after a long day. It is her sanctuary.

It also is where Maine Department of Transportation officials would like to create the state's second wetland mitigation bank, which means changes for Nesbit and 16 of her neighbors who live around the saltwater estuary.

The wetland mitigation bank proposal also is already linked to a controversial Department of Transportation connector project in Brewer that [recently gained federal approval](#), the town manager said.

"They can use four times the number of acres for a saltwater marsh," Duke said of the [Interstate 395/Route 9 connector](#) that will eventually run through Brewer, Holden and Eddington. "It's a windfall in their mind. For us, it's a catastrophe."

After 16 years of planning, the proposed [connector](#) gained its first federal approval in June. The decision clears the way for the Department of Transportation to begin designing the route for the estimated \$61 million project and for the right-of-way acquisition process to start.

Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act authorizes the use of wetland mitigation banks as an acceptable means of compensation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands with construction and development projects.

Sen. Christopher Johnson, who represents District 13, is questioning whether the move makes sense. He added that the affected Newcastle landowners "have been very good stewards to the marsh."

"It's not clear whether it's appropriate policy for DOT to use eminent domain to seize easements, and create a conservation easement that can be banked for a construction project," Johnson said.

The senator sent Maine Transportation Commissioner David Bernhardt a letter about Newcastle's concerns, and Bernhardt responded by saying, "The Sherman Marsh bank credits will be used for future Maine DOT projects (25-plus years) in the coastal interior and mid-coast biophysical region (i.e. Brunswick to Ellsworth and inland to Waterville)."

"On average, the department will have need for 2-3 acres per year in this region," Bernhardt said.

"Projects likely to use this credit have not been identified, except for one of the department's larger projects, [the] I-395-Route 9 connector project," he said.

The number of acres that will be affected by the Brewer-area connector project, designed to ease traffic from the Canadian Maritimes to the federal highway system, is not yet known, so the number of credits needed from the proposed Newcastle mitigation bank are still to be determined.

NOV 5, 2016 AT 10:00 AM

# Trump And Clinton Both Want To Fix Infrastructure. But That Doesn't Mean They'll Succeed.

(An excerpt of original article.)

But peek beneath the surface and that apparent consensus disappears. Democrats, for example, want to borrow money to pay for new investments in infrastructure, while Republicans would rather cut spending elsewhere or rely on the private sector. The real difference, though, is less between left and right than between politicians and economists. Politicians have an incentive to favor projects that provide a quick infusion of jobs that they can point to in their next re-election campaign; economists are more concerned about the long term. **Politicians tend to favor impressive new projects they can put their names on; many economists would rather focus on repairing and upgrading existing infrastructure.** And there are also disagreements over how much to spend on infrastructure projects and how to pay for them.

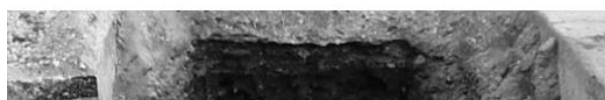
## Build new projects or repair old ones?

Another decision that policymakers face is whether to focus on building new projects or maintaining old ones. **The nation's roads, bridges and airports have a massive backlog of deferred maintenance. Many economists see that backlog as a top infrastructure priority:** A 2011 report from the Brookings Institution recommended redirecting all revenue from the federal gasoline tax to “repair, maintain, rehabilitate, reconstruct, and enhance existing roads and bridges.”

**Economists like spending on repairs and maintenance because it's cheaper in the long run to maintain existing infrastructure than to let it deteriorate and be forced to start over.** Maintenance also takes out the guesswork — we already know which bridges and highways are the most valuable. “One of the benefits of an emphasis on deferred maintenance is that it's done on the infrastructure that's heavily used,” said Summers, who served in the Clinton and Obama administrations.

But politicians might not play along. A new bridge or expressway is more marketable than filling potholes — hence the “bridges to nowhere” that occasionally make headlines. **Some research has suggested that political incentives lead governments to direct resources to overly expensive or unnecessary projects and to underinvest in maintenance.**

**In the end, the new president and Congress may not have much control over which projects are chosen. A large share of federal infrastructure spending is executed by block grants to state and local governments, which decide how the money gets spent.**



MAKING GOOD INFRASTRUCTURE  
DECISIONS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE



NOVEMBER 9, 2016  
BY [RACHEL QUEDNAU](#)



“When our towns and cities can barely pay to patch a sidewalk or fill in a pothole, there’s no way that we should be spending billions of dollars to build brand new roads, bridges, and other large-scale projects.”

[Click here to read article.](#)

## City Council incumbent named Brewer mayor



By Nok-Noi Ricker, BDN Staff

Posted Nov. 15, 2016, at 8:11 p.m.

Last modified Nov. 15, 2016, at 8:28 p.m.

City Council incumbent Kevin O’Connell, who earned the most votes in the Nov. 8 local election, was elected mayor by the panel on Tuesday at the annual meeting.

He said he is honored and thankful for the opportunity to lead the city again.

“I’m humbled to be standing here and honored to have the opportunity to continue to be of service to the citizens of Brewer,” O’Connell said in his acceptance speech.

O’Connell said his plans for the next year include keeping an eye on the Interstate 395-Route 9 connector project, and working on extending the waterfront trail.

“O’Connell said his plans for the next year include keeping an eye on the Interstate 395-Route 9 connector project...”

[Click here to view complete BDN article.](#)



# Portland Press Herald

## Condition of Maine's infrastructure still declining, report says

A civil engineers' group finds little has improved in the state's transportation networks and other infrastructure since 2012.

Written by PETER MCGUIRE  
(Excerpt of original article)

The overall condition of the state's infrastructure has not improved in the past four years and the condition of some facilities is declining, according to a report released Monday.

The 2016 report card, from the Maine chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, gives the state a C minus across 14 categories, including energy, roads, bridges, airports, schools, water systems and public transportation. It was the same grade the state received in 2012.

Eight of the categories have declining conditions in Maine since the 2012 report, and four – dams and levees, municipal waste water, roads and passenger transportation – are in poor condition, the ASCE said. Only two categories – ports and energy – were judged in good condition.

The report shows the same issues and recommendations highlighted by the ASCE since its first Maine report in 2008, said Lynn Farrington, president of the Maine chapter of the ASCE and traffic group manager at the Louis Berger Group, a global engineering firm.

“We now have 12 years of data, across those 12 years nothing is really changing,” she said.

It is not economically feasible to expect high grades across the board, but the ASCE draws attention to poor and deteriorating infrastructure, Farrington said.

Infrastructure projects in Maine are underfunded by tens of millions of dollars every year. The state's roads receive the lowest funding per mile out of the six New England states and there is a projected \$68 million annual funding gap, the ASCE said. Maine roads received a D in the 2016 report.

About 58 percent of the state's 3,714 bridges are more than 50 years old, and the overall system received a C minus. Although there has been an increased emphasis on bridge replacement following a 2014 state report on bridge conditions, the state still needs an estimated \$33 million more in annual funding, the report said.

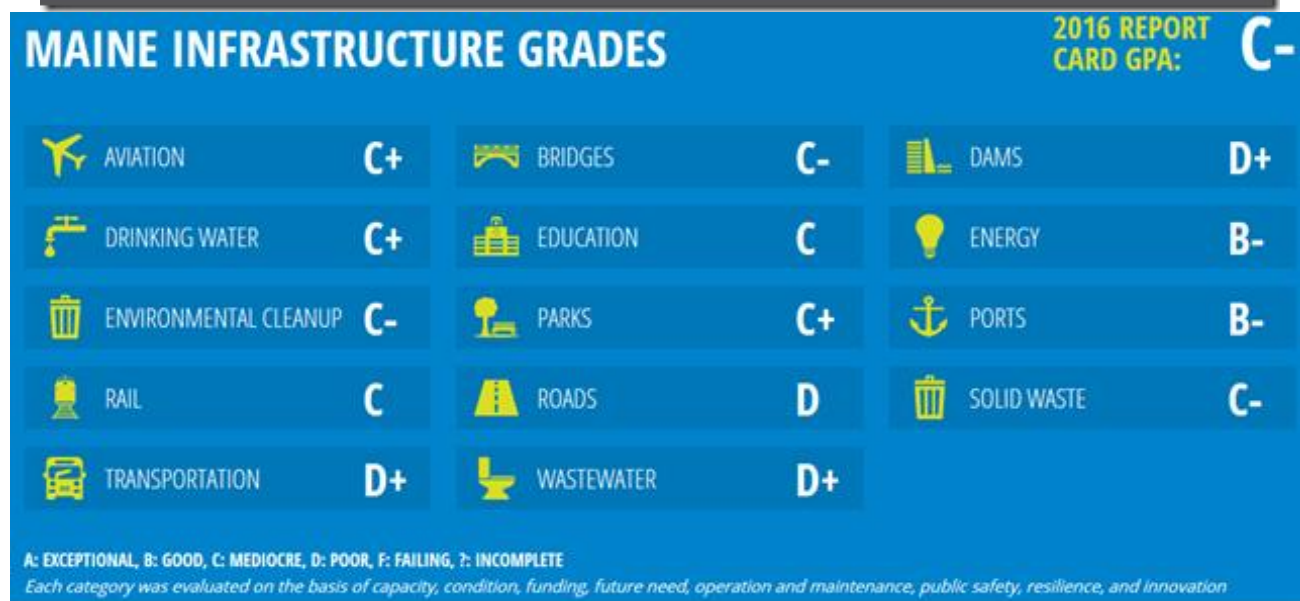
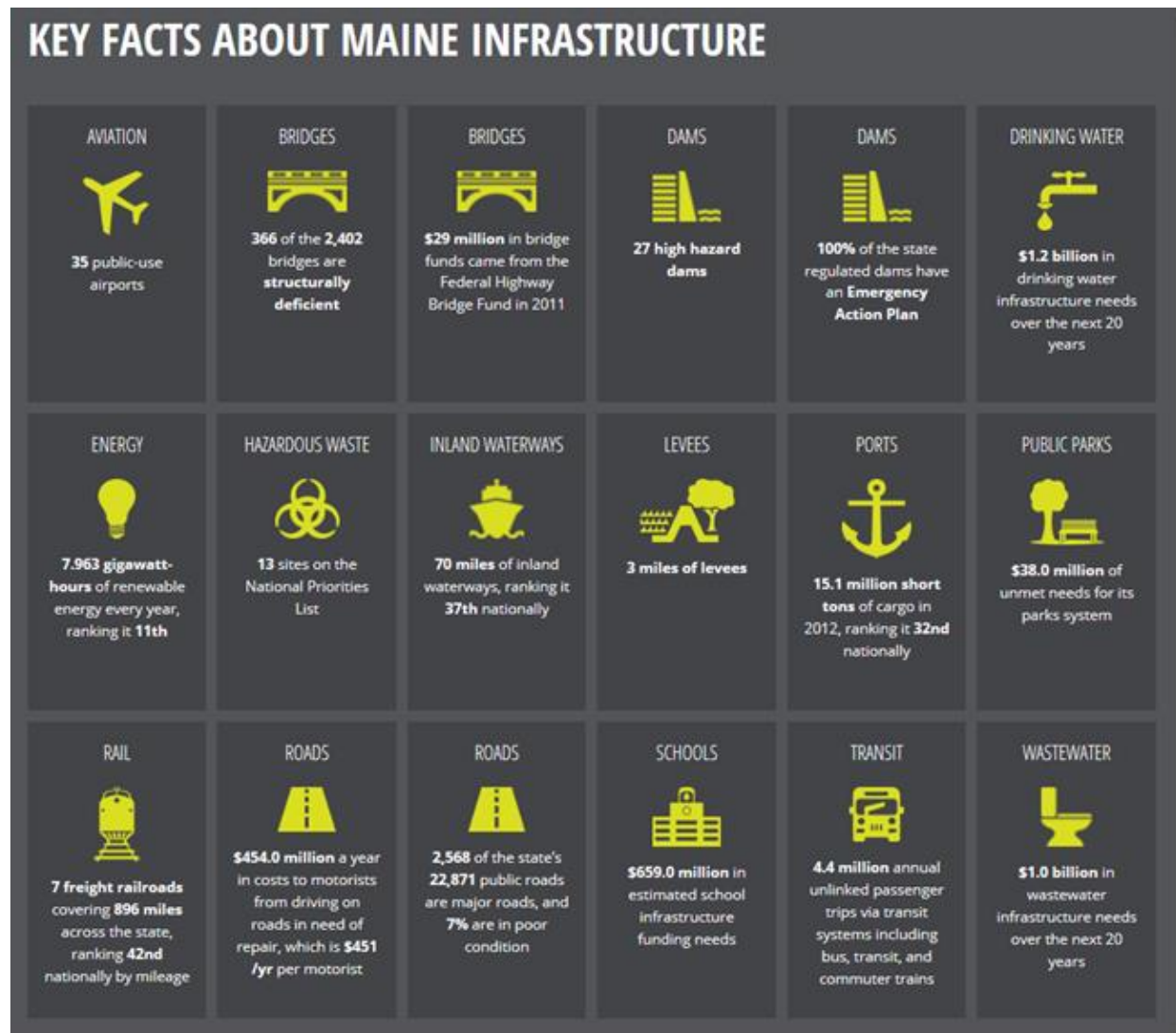
The Maine Department of Transportation faces an overall \$75 million to \$80 million budget shortfall every year, department spokesman Ted Talbot said. “We don't know any details, but they are talking,” Talbot said. “Everyone seems to be on the same page when it comes to infrastructure.”

Andrew McLean, D-Gorham, the Maine House chairman of the Legislature's transportation committee, said he did not have an expectation for Trump's plan and is wary of proposed public-private partnerships that could privatize services such as bridges and roads. Despite a \$300 billion transportation bill passed by Congress last year, McLean said Maine should look for its own solutions instead of relying on increased federal aid.

“We have under-invested in our infrastructure for a long time,” McLean said. “I don't think we should rely on Congress to find solutions soon, we have to look for them in Maine.”

To: Brewer City Council; Brewer City Manager; Councilor Beverly Uhlenhake; Councilor Joseph Ferris; Councilor Matthew Vachon; Deputy Mayor Jerry W. Goss; Mayor Kevin O'Connell; Representative Arthur Verow - District #128; [nrickert@bangordailynews.com](mailto:nrickert@bangordailynews.com);

The [Report Card for Maine's Infrastructure](#) was just released by the Maine chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers - here are the real cold facts on what our state's infrastructure looks like:



The [Portland Press Herald reported on November 28th](#):

“The report shows the same issues and recommendations highlighted by the ASCE since its first Maine report in 2008, said Lynn Farrington, president of the Maine chapter of the ASCE and traffic group manager at the Louis Berger Group, a global engineering firm.

“We now have 12 years of data, across those 12 years nothing is really changing,” she said.

It is not economically feasible to expect high grades across the board, but the ASCE draws attention to poor and deteriorating infrastructure, Farrington said.

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We should all be appalled by the C- grade for Bridges, the D grade for Roads, the C- grade for our total Infrastructure and the annual reported shortfalls in our roads and bridges funding at the same time that the 2B-2 project is going forward!!!

# KEY FACTS from the [2016 ASCE report](#):

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November 28, 2016

## ROADS

### Grade: D

#### Overview

Maine roads are the most used mode of transportation in the state, but Maine has the lowest funding per mile of the six New England states and a projected \$68 million annual funding gap. This evaluation shows that due to the funding shortfall, combined with deteriorating roadway conditions and increasing traffic volumes, Maine's roads are not meeting the customer service level goals set forth by the state legislature. Consequently, Maine motorists spend an extra \$1 billion per year in vehicle operating costs, congestion delays, and crashes. To address these deficiencies, Maine must continue to maximize existing revenue streams as well as find additional funding sources.

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“Cost to Maine Drivers: According to The Road Information Program (TRIP) in 2016 Maine’s road conditions are currently costing each Maine motorist an average of \$485 per year in extra vehicle operating costs (accelerated depreciation, additional repair costs, increased fuel consumption, and increased tire wear), which amounts to over \$494 million statewide annually. Road conditions, congestion delays and crashes cost Maine motorists \$1 billion annually.”



**Table 2 Maine Roads broken up by Highway Corridor Priority Measures<sup>viii</sup>:**

Priority	Description	Miles	Approx. VMT % of total
1	Interstate, Turnpike, key principle arterials such as Rt. 1, 2, 9, & 302	1,751	42%
2	Non-interstate, high value arterials	965	12%
3	Remaining arterials & most significant major collectors	1,884	16%
4	Remainder of Major collectors including much of State aid roads	2,077	9%
5	Minor Collectors, almost all State aid	2,385	8%
6	Local Roads & Streets	14,451	13%

**Table 3 State Highway Miles broken out by customer service level: Condition<sup>ix</sup>**

Priority	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
1	297	477	386	144	77
2	153	318	268	143	73
3	324	598	464	342	235
4	901	540	344	138	26
5	928	650	467	251	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,603(30%)</b>	<b>2,583(30%)</b>	<b>1,929(22%)</b>	<b>1,018(12%)</b>	<b>512(6%)</b>



**November 28, 2016**

## BRIDGES

### Grade: C-

#### Overview

Maine's highway system includes a total of 3,714 bridges, 58% of which are more than 50 years old. Historic funding levels have not been sufficient to replace bridges before they exceed design life and one out of every seven Maine bridges (14.8%) is structurally deficient. Accordingly, MaineDOT's current 3-year work plan includes an increased emphasis on bridge maintenance and preservation projects. The area of structurally deficient bridges in Maine has been declining gradually over the past several years. However, achieving long term, sustained improvements necessitates a comprehensive strategy that identifies potential financing methods and investment requirements to meet the additional \$33 million annual funding need projected by MaineDOT.

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Table 1 – Condition of Maine Bridges in 2015

Bridges (Spans  $\geq$  20 feet)

Owner	Bridges by Count		Bridges by Deck Area	
	Bridge Count (Ea.)	Structurally Deficient	Bridge Area (Sq. Ft.)	Structurally Deficient
Maine	2,431	361 (14.8%)	1,201,978	105,671 (8.8%)
New England	17,808	1,859 (10.4%)	11,295,595	1,503,427 (13.3%)
United States	611,845	58,791(9.6%)	369,109,088	24,766,427 (6.7%)

Figure 3a – Historical Number of Maine Structurally Deficient Bridges compared the Region and the Nation

### Condition and Adequacy

A breakdown of Maine bridges classified as structurally deficient in 2015 is shown in Table 1. Bridge condition data for New England and the nation are included for comparison. The data shows that Maine’s bridge inventory includes significantly more structurally deficient bridges compared to the national average.

Approximately one out of every seven Maine bridges is structurally deficient. These bridges show significant deterioration to their decks, girders and other major components and/or have insufficient load carrying capacity. According to The Road Information Program (TRIP), a non-profit transportation research organization, “Deteriorated bridges can have a significant impact on daily life. Restrictions on vehicle weight may cause many vehicles – especially emergency vehicles, commercial trucks, school buses and farm equipment – to use alternate routes to avoid posted bridges. Redirected trips also lengthen travel time, waste fuel and reduce the efficiency of the local economy”.<sup>4</sup>

“The data shows that Maine’s bridge inventory includes significantly more structurally deficient bridges compared to the national average.”

“Approximately one out of every seven Maine bridges is structurally deficient. These bridges show significant deterioration to their decks, girders and other major components and/or have insufficient load carrying capacity.”

14.8% (361) of Maine’s 2,431 bridges are rated structurally deficient—4.4% worse than the N.E. average and 5.2% worse than the National average!!



November 28, 2016

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Current investment levels by the state are not sufficient to address the growing needs of the system. Over the next ten years, MaineDOT will not meet goals for roads and bridges set out by the Legislature in 2012, unless a \$68 million per year funding gap is resolved. Maine must restore investment in its highway infrastructure as a funding priority for the safety and economic well-being of the state's residents and businesses. Maine ASCE grades Maine roads as a D.

Under-investing in our road system for many years has created a growing backlog of unmet needs that is severely burdening Maine today. Without appropriate levels of sustainable funding unacceptable conditions on roadways will continue to increase.

“Over the next ten years, **MaineDOT will not meet goals** for roads and bridges set out by the Legislature in 2012, **unless a \$68 million per year funding gap is resolved.**”

“Under-investing in our road system for many years has created a growing backlog of unmet needs that is severely burdening Maine today.”

The I-395/Route 9 Connector (2B-2) will cost \$61 million in 2011 dollars to construct. Cancelling the 2B-2 project would save 90% of one year of that \$68 million annual shortfall forecasted over the next 10 years. Wouldn't it make more sense to spend 2B-2's \$61 million on the existing unmet transportation needs in the state of Maine?

Recent headlines claim the sky is falling—yet MDOT will spend \$61 million (\$12.2 million coming from state coffers) on 2B-2!

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## Politics

Friday, Dec. 9, 2016 Last update: 2:50 p.m.

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LePage welcomes new Legislature  
with warning of impending  
economic peril

“Impending  
economic  
peril”

## Portland Press Herald

NEWS Posted 4:00 AM Updated at 9:40 AM

INCREASE FONT SIZE A

With traffic up 12 percent on Interstate 295, state  
says ‘volume is really pressing capacity’

Congestion is raising safety concerns for the Maine State Police, forcing troopers to adjust the way they respond to crashes and enforce traffic laws on the highway.

BY KATE MCCORMICK STAFF WRITER



Follow:     

“Interstate  
295...  
safety  
concerns”

Congestion on the busy highway has increased to the point that it is affecting how Maine State Police respond to collisions and enforce traffic laws there.

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At what point will Maine citizens demand that  
our scarce transportation funds be spent on  
Maine’s unmet transportation needs—not on  
such questionable boondoggles as the Presque  
Isle Bypass and the I-395/Route 9 Connector?

[Click here to view Bangor Daily News Article.](#)

[Click here to view Portland Press Herald Article.](#)





Our friends at [STRONG TOWNS](#) [echo in once again](#) on the I-395/Route 9 Connector project in the BEST OF 2016.

“This project in Maine is sadly very typical of what we see around the country; a financially fragile local government trying to represent the needs of people in their community getting run over by a project being pushed from afar. As we seem ready to pour hundreds of billions of dollars into similar endeavors in the coming year, the need to reform this approach becomes more and more urgent.”



“An unyielding bureaucracy that is unwilling to listen and unwilling to move. Apparently also unwilling to think. **This is stupid, Maine. You’re broke. What are you doing?**”

“Nice rant, Chuck! I suppose the **Maine DOT is doing what all institutions do best, self-perpetuate. If they don't do the projects they don't get the bucks from the Fed and State and have to worry about budget cuts. Isn't it wonderful, another DOT searching for meaning in life.** And according to the Bangor Daily News, they've been at this particular boondoggle that the affected towns don't want for 16 years. Heavy sigh.” [\(Comment to this article \(DW\) 12.07.2016.\)](#)

## VIDEO

## Maine Yankee fallout: A town's turmoil, 20 years in the making

By Beth Brogan, BDN Staff

Posted Dec. 17, 2016, at 1 a.m.

Last modified Dec. 17, 2016, at 1:15 p.m.

[Seems problems follow the MDOT wherever they go...](#)

“But the most high-profile drama this year involves a proposed \$5 million traffic-easing project designed to clear Main Street traffic that each summer creeps up and down a section of Route 1 as slowly as the line at nearby Red’s Eats. The plan includes installing several traffic lights and eliminating on-street parking along Main Street.

In early September, residents learned that although the plan they voted to support was pitched as almost completely federally funded, with the final \$1 million paid by the state, the Maine Department of Transportation will instead use the \$4 million in federal funding slated for the Wiscasset project on other projects.

The news prompted some to feel hoodwinked.

Still, despite vocal opposition and several letters from an attorney representing a large downtown property owner warning that any such vote would be illegal, the Board of Selectmen voted to authorize Town Manager Marian Anderson on Nov. 15 to sign a letter of intent to move forward with the Department of Transportation project as endorsed by the nonbinding vote.”

- Another project—just like the I-395/Route 9 Connector—that many in the community of impact do not want.