What will $61 million buy?

Larry Adams 7/23/2014 3:03 PM

To: Brewer City Council; Brewer City Manager; Councilor Beverly Uhlenhake; Councilor Joseph Ferris; Councilor Kevin O'Connell; Deputy Mayor Matthew Vachon; Mayor Jerry W. Goss; Eddington Board of Selectman and Town Manager; Carol Woodcock / U.S. Senator Susan Collins; Elizabeth Montgomery Schneider MacTaggart / U.S. Senator Angus King; Representative Arthur Verow - District #21; Representative David Johnson - District#20; Rosemary Winslow / U.S. Congressman Mike Michaud; Senator Edward Youngblood - District#31;

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What will $61 million of critical transportation dollars purchase?

Core Highway and Bridge Programs
Current Work Plan vs. Need
(Millions of Dollars)

Work Group	Average Annual $ from 14-16 Work Plan	Annual $ Needed to Meet Basic Statutory Goals	Average Annual $ Shortfall	Dollar % Shortfall*
Bridge Projects*	$71	$105	-$34	-32%
Highway Reconstruction/ Rehab	$82	$100	-$18	-18%
Pavement Preservation	$71	$120	-$49	-41%
Light Capital Paving	$28	$28	$0	0%
Total - Core Programs	**$252**	**$353**	**-$101**	**-29%**

* Does not include SML Bridge Replacement

http://maine.gov/mdot/projects/workplan/docs/WorkPlan2014-2015-2016Final.pdf

A. Highway and Bridge Capital Work

The largest component of Maine's transportation system is the state's approximately 8,600-mile highway network. Our state's need to invest in developing, upgrading, and maintaining highway infrastructure is significant, as the great majority of people and goods travel on our highways. Highway construction and reconstruction, rehabilitation, preservation paving (PPP), Light Capital Paving (LCP), and safety and spot improvements all fall in the class of highway improvements. Over the three-year life of this Work Plan, MaineDOT anticipates delivering to construction:

- 212 miles of Highway Construction and Rehabilitation - Estimated Cost: $244 million
- 718 miles of Pavement Preservation - Estimated Cost: $213 million
- 1,800 miles of Light Capital Paving - Estimated Cost: $83 million
- 190 "Spot and Safety Improvements" - Estimated Cost: - $86 million
- 126 Bridge Construction Projects - Estimated Cost: $295 million

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The $61 million that could be saved by cancelling the I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study is 86% of one year of the average annual $71 million cost for Bridge Projects and 90% of two years of the average annual -$34 million shortfall for Bridge Projects as detailed in the Core Highway and Bridge Programs/Current Work Plan vs. Need Chart.

At an average of 42 bridge projects per year, (126/3) as identified in the Current 2014-2015-2016 Work Plan, that same $61 million could address the repair of as many as 36 additional bridges. So the big question is: should the MaineDOT squander $61 million on a connector that does not satisfy the Study Purpose and Needs OR fix an additional 36 bridges? That should not be a hard question to answer...

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- Construction of an alternative (2B-2) where the clearly stated Purpose and Needs, specifically the System Linkage Need and the Need for a Limited-Access Facility, are not satisfied at the onset of the project but classified as long-term needs to be punted to an undetermined time (likely 20+ years), with an undetermined plan at an undetermined cost.
- Construction of an alternative (2B-2) that has been downgraded in design criteria and cheapened as none of the other 79+ studied alternatives have; an alternative where the design criteria will be downgraded from freeway to rolling rural following the conclusion of the NEPA process; an alternative where the right-of-way has been reduced from 200 feet to between 100 and 125 feet placing this road even closer to residents; and an alternative that will no longer be expandable to a 4-lane divided highway as that safety upgrade criteria was deleted by October 2011.
- Construction of an alternative (2B-2) that even the FHWA Right of Way Manager and Co-Manager of this Study, Mark Hasselmann, questioned (December 2011) if the preferred alternative really satisfied the Purpose and Needs as the design criteria for only 2B-2 was downgraded to 2-lane/2-lane ROW and all the other 79+ alternatives were evaluated as 4-lane/4-lane ROW. The downgrade of only the 2B-2 alternative and not the other 79+ studied alternatives created an *apples to oranges* comparison that does not seem to be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Construction of an alternative (2B-2) where the DEIS states: *However, future development along Route 9 in the study area can impact future traffic flow and the overall benefits of the project.*
- Construction of an alternative (2B-2) where the Corps of Engineers would dare to ask in comments to the DEIS: *How do MaineDOT and FHWA intend to address the argument that the no build alternative might save state and federal transportation funding that might be better served on other unmet needs in the state?* AND that comment is of course not considered substantive requiring no further comment and buried in the back of the book. http://www.i395-rt9-study.com/Pubs/Draft_Comments.pdf page 59

- Repair and/or replacement of 36 additional bridges.