



# Maine DOT lays out three year plan while facing major budget shortages

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*By Owen Kingsley* | Jan 14, 2020

**AUGUSTA, Maine (WABI)** – Officials with the Maine Department of Transportation laid out their plan today for maintenance and repairs while wrestling with a tight budget.



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In the plan, they laid out 2,051 separate projects, with an estimated cost of nearly \$2.6 billion.

Officials outlined the challenges ahead, including a \$232 million dollar shortfall for this year.

Some of the larger projects outlined in this plan are the Madawaska International Bridge, and a large stretch of repaving on I-95 to and from Houlton.

Officials also applauded voters for supporting transportation bonds in recent years to help funding costs, but recognize that those have been growing.

"I do believe that the people of Maine understand that it is expensive to invest in transportation. But it's much more expensive not to. When I was commissioner there was a bond issue every other year, and it didn't even come close to \$100 million. But for the past several years, we've had \$100 million every single year," said Dana Connors, President of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce.

Even though Maine DOT says that more funds are needed to keep up with the state's transportation needs, they remain optimistic.

"We are now in a stage of constantly managing a slow decline of our transportation system. Despite the size of that challenge I am optimistic. People ask me why sometimes but I am. And that's because Maine is still a place where reasonable people with differing views can come together and get big things done for the common good," said Bruce Van Note, Maine DOT Commissioner.

The blue ribbon commission, which was founded in 2019, will continue to allocate transportation funds in the coming year.

I for one do not understand...