

# MaineDOT News Releases

Following are the latest news releases issued by The Maine Department of Transportation.

1/14/2020: [MaineDOT Releases New Three-Year Work Plan Amid Funding Challenges](#)



News Release for January 14, 2020

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AUGUSTA - The Maine Department of Transportation has released the 2020 Edition of its Three-Year Work Plan. This Work Plan includes all capital projects and programs, maintenance and operations activities, planning initiatives, and administrative functions for calendar years 2020, 2021, and 2022. It includes 2,051 individual work items with a total estimated value of \$2.59 billion.

This Work Plan largely consists of spreading what used to be two years of capital projects over three years to stay within funding and cost constraints. Due to cost increases arising from workforce challenges, work constraints, and other factors, making old projects whole at the beginning of this Work Plan process has required an extraordinary amount of funding. The bottom line on this year's Work Plan is higher than last year's (largely due to increased levels of one-time infusions of federal grant money), higher costs will yield lower levels of capital project production in terms of miles of paving, numbers of bridges, etc.

"This fiscal challenge required us to prioritize even more and rely on less-reliable bond and competitive federal grant funding for basic needs," said Commissioner Bruce Van Note. "With lower levels of capital project production, we are focusing on essential safety needs, bridges, matching federal funds, and low cost patching of higher-priority roads until normal treatments become fiscally possible. The reality is that we are now competently managing a slow decline of our transportation system until bipartisan funding solutions materialize. The system will not fail immediately, and we will do our best to avoid any serious safety impacts, but holding actions only work for a short time, and the reliability of the system will suffer."

The biggest project in this Work Plan is the replacement of the Madawaska-Edmundston International Bridge. This bridge represents a vital link between Maine and New Brunswick. The current structure is 100 years old and has deteriorated to the point that it is near the end of its useful life.

"The importance of safe and reliable public transportation infrastructure and the effect on it has on our state and local economy cannot be ignored," said Madawaska Town Manager Gary Picard. "The International Bridge's five-ton weight limit has been financially detrimental to our town's largest employer, the Twin Rivers Paper Company, which employs more than 500 workers and contributes to more than 5,800 indirect jobs throughout The County. Under the bridge's current weight limits, all commercial traffic from Canada to Madawaska must now be rerouted primarily through Van Buren, adding 75 miles and nearly two hours in transit time to each trip. We need a new bridge."

Last year, the Legislature created the Blue Ribbon Commission To Study and Recommend Funding Solutions for the State's Transportation Systems. Commission members have identified an annual unmet funding need of approximately \$232 million. Members recommend that after providing sufficient funding, the state gradually reduces its reliance on bonding. The Commission is continuing to meet this year to try to identify a nonpartisan solution to MaineDOT's chronic funding problem.

"Not meeting this need is both concerning and disappointing," said Paul Koziell, President of CPM Constructors, Inc. of Freeport. "The Work Plan is comprehensive and mentions lots of projects. However, what projects are not in this Work Plan as a result of this annual \$232-million shortfall and should be? Think about this when you are driving and hit a crack in the road, a deteriorating road shoulder, or raised bridge joint and then need to bring your car, truck, or SUV to the garage for yet another front-end alignment. Maine deserves better. We need not only to maintain our transportation infrastructure but also to improve it. Regrettably, until there is a willingness to solve this funding shortfall once and for all, this will not be accomplished."

"Businesses in every sector in Maine are eager to recruit and train tomorrow's workforce," said Dana Connors, President of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. "That workforce needs to be able to get to and from work safely, and their families need to be able to access educational and recreational opportunities throughout the state. Transportation infrastructure and having transportation choices is important to every single citizen in the state of Maine, which means it is important to every single business in Maine, no matter their size, their location, their product or service. Transportation is critical to every single one of us. We must make it more cost-effective to move freight, we must expand transit for our aging population, and we must do so with safety at top of mind. This Work Plan moves us in the right direction."

Read the full 2020 Edition of MaineDOT's Three-Year Work Plan:

<http://www.mainedot.gov/projects/workplan>

Download images and renderings of Work Plan projects:

<https://file.ac/21euC01oZvBVcYfYZrdHMA/>

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