

The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

# MAINE TRAILS



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MARCHING TO A  
GENEROUS DRUMMER**

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The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

# MAINE TRAILS

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### Maine Better Transportation Association

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

by Paul Bradbury, MBTA President



**Yes, we can**

The MBTA and our members are known for the ability to rise to a challenge. These days, there are no shortage of challenges.

**I**N ADDITION to what has become a perennial shortage of funding for Maine's transportation infrastructure, we have been presented with an unexpected and unprecedented new challenge with the recent arrival of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on our shores.

Because our industry has been deemed essential by the government and not subject to the restrictions placed on most individuals and businesses, many of us have continued to work. It is challenging, but also possible to move dirt, build a bridge, drive trucks, or pave a road while maintaining six feet between you and the next person.

It's a bit harder for others in the MBTA. Airports, like the one I manage, have been hit hard with passenger volumes down 96 percent from the same day last year. In fact, with the average number of daily nationwide passenger boardings now below 100,000 (prior to this pandemic it was over 2.1 million) we are at the same passenger volume the United States saw at the birth of the jet age in 1954, when the de Havilland Comet (the first commercial jetliner) was just a few years old. Like aviation, those of us who operate buses and passenger trains have also been heavily impacted by sharp drops in passengers.

There is transportation money included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) that recently passed and will be coming to Maine. We are very fortunate that our senior U.S. Senator Susan Collins is in an ideal position, and works tirelessly to provide aid to Maine. She was critical in getting the CARES Act passed and ensuring that Maine and the nation receive this much needed economic relief. We thank her and the rest of our congressional delegation for always having Maine top of mind. The support from the CARES Act will help keep some federally

**"It is challenging, but also possible to move dirt, build a bridge, drive trucks, or pave a road while maintaining six feet between you and the next person. . . It's a bit harder for others in the MBTA. Airports, like the one I manage, have been hit hard with passenger volumes down 96 percent from the same day last year."**

funded projects going and may help Maine launch some additional projects that were awaiting funding. It will also provide some relief for aviation and our transit providers – bus, rail, and ferry – whose revenues have been hard hit with social distancing and the associated declines in ridership.

Still, we have to keep looking out at the horizon, to make sure we will recover from this as quickly as possible.

One way we can promote a recovery for our industry and our state is to keep pushing for the changes recommended prior to this current health crisis by the Blue-Ribbon Commission





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on Transportation Funding. That group was comprised of legislators from both sides of the aisle representing the Transportation, Appropriations, and Taxation Committees; MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note; Maine Turnpike Director Peter Mills; and several business, municipal and transportation representatives.

As I mentioned in a speech delivered at the Cumberland County Meeting in March, members of the commission all agreed that the gap in transportation funding for MaineDOT is around \$340 million per year. If you assume a \$100 million annual general obligation bond going to the voters, as has been the case for the past four years, the number is \$240 million. If you further challenge our national partners in Washington to be responsible for one-third of that figure, the number is \$160 million. Still, that's a big gap. Ultimately, all agreed that the General Fund should play more of a role in funding transportation, in part because sales taxes on transportation-related items net more than \$200 million for state coffers, all of which goes into the General Fund.

Commission members also agreed there had to be a combination of General Fund support

and new revenues. While the "rub" came in the details, and they were unable to come up with a funding solution for this year, hopes remain high that these ideas will move forward.

The media and the public are getting this, and more legislators are talking about having the General Fund contribute even more than just repaying transportation bonds. In her state of the state address, Governor Mills talked about transportation, and even followed that up by earmarking \$10 million from the General Fund supplemental budget for highways, bridges, and transit. That hasn't happened in 20 years.

It isn't over yet, but we have a target (\$340 million) to aim for, and we have a great group of engaged people, inside and outside the commission, who are anxious to come back next year to fight for more.

In the shorter term, the bond on the Maine ballot in July calls for the authorization of \$105 million in general obligation bonds for transportation infrastructure projects, including \$90 million for highways, bridges, and MaineDOT's Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) and another \$15 million for multimodal facilities and equipment related to transit, freight and

passenger railroads, aviation, ports, harbors, marine transportation, and active transportation projects. The bond revenue would be used to match an estimated \$275 million in federal and other funds.

Now, with the COVID-19 public health crisis creating havoc with work schedules and markets, we have even more challenges ahead of us. We will see declines in fuel tax collection, and many other revenues that fund towns and the state. But one thing is certain: our recovery will depend on us coming together as a community and our willingness to pitch in and help our neighbors and our communities.

As I have said before, I can't think of anyone better suited to meet these challenges. We're Mainers and that's what we do.

As I am writing this column, we have yet to confirm when we will reschedule our 81st MBTA Annual Meeting. Please watch your e-mail box, the MBTA Facebook page, LinkedIn and Instagram sites for updates to the schedule.

In closing, I hope that you, your family and co-workers stay safe and healthy! Please take care, and let's all work together to keep "flattening the curve," so that we can move forward as a state. ■

## 2020 MBTA CALENDAR

TBA

**TRANSPORTATION ON TAP**  
Location TBD

TBA

**MBTA ANNUAL MEETING**  
Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport

TBA

**INFRASTRUCTURE GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Augusta Country Club, Manchester

Thursday, August 6

**AROOSTOOK COUNTY MEETING**  
Northeastland Hotel, Presque Isle

Friday, September 11

**FALL CONVENTION/OUTING**  
Samoset Resort, Rockport

Saturday, September 12

**FALL GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Samoset Resort, Rockport

Friday, October 2

**PDH TOUR**

Thursday, December 3

**MAINE TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE**  
Augusta Civic Center

Thursday, December 10

**BANGOR AREA MEETING**  
Black Bear Inn, Orono

### A NOTE TO OUR MEMBERS:

Due to the coronavirus outbreak and travel and meeting restrictions placed on businesses and organizations in the state of Maine, the MBTA board of directors has not yet determined whether several meetings and events planned for 2020 will be postponed, cancelled or moved to different venues. Please watch your e-mail, [MBTAonline.org](http://MBTAonline.org) and MBTA's social media sites for updates as they come available. And please stay safe!



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# ONRAMP

## Banishing the EV myth

**F**EARS THAT electric vehicles (EVs) could actually increase carbon emissions are 'a myth', according to new research in a story published in the journal *Nature*.

Skeptics have long questioned whether EVs are really greener than vehicles powered by fossil fuels when emissions from electricity generation are taken into account.

The study by researchers at the universities of Radboud in Nijmegen, Netherlands, and Cambridge and Exeter in the UK, shows that use of EVs does lead to lower carbon emissions overall - even if electricity generation still involves substantial amounts of fossil fuels.

The researchers found that driving an EV under current conditions is better for the climate than conventional combustion engine cars in 95 percent of the world. This excludes countries like Poland, where electricity generation is still mostly based on coal.

Researchers divided the world into 59 regions and found that in 53 of them - including most of Europe, the U.S. and China - EVs are "already less emission-intensive than fossil-fuel alternatives."

As energy production worldwide decarbonizes, the "last few debatable cases will soon disappear", said Florian Knobloch, an environmental scientist at Radboud.

Other findings revealed the average lifetime emissions from EVs are up to 70 percent lower than petrol cars in countries like Sweden and France - which get most of their electricity from renewables and nuclear - and around 30 percent lower in the UK.

Even "inefficient" EVs will be less "emission-intensive" than the newest petrol cars in most countries in a few years, the report says, because electricity generation is expected to be less carbon-intensive.

The study projects that every second car on the streets by 2050 could be electric, reducing global carbon dioxide emissions by up to 1.5 gigatons per year. ■

FMI: To read the study, visit [bit.ly/EVmyth](http://bit.ly/EVmyth).

## Rise of the superblock

**B**ARCELONA'S SUPERBLOCKS - 40-acre, tic-tac-toe sections of the street grid - have transformed sections of the city into pedestrian-first environments and drawn attention from the urban design community around the world.

Excess traffic, unmitigated pollution, and a lack of green space aren't unique to Barcelona. Superblocks are one solution, as reported by the publication *CityLab*.

Drawing inspiration from the city's historic plan, Mayor Ada Colau centered her transportation policy platform around wide-scale pedestrianization of the city, with the goal of reducing private car and moped use by 21 percent.

Just a few years ago, multiple lanes funneled traffic down every block in the once-industrial neighborhood of Poblenou, now home to working-class families and artists. Now, a single narrow lane without any grade separations winds cars slowly around the perimeter of the special three-block-by-three-block chunk of streetscape. The rest of the space is cleared for pedestrians, cyclists, and kids to move among bike lanes, open paths, trees, sculptures, street furniture, and playground equipment.

The visual effect of these long, linked corridors of public space with multiple uses is somewhat surreal. Unlike a small "pocket park" or even a pedestrian mall designed for shoppers in which the surrounding grid still defers to automobile traffic, superblocks are designed to put people first.

The superblock concept is not entirely new to Barcelona; the first large pedestrianized swath came to the city's El Born district in 1993. But Colau's plan is far more comprehensive, with a vision for some 500 superblocks that would cover virtually all of Barcelona. This won't be easy - protesters have dogged the Poblenou project with some residents resenting the traffic restrictions - and only a few new superblocks have opened since 2016.

In Poblenou, the complaints from skeptical residents have largely died down, according to Silvia Casorrán of the Poblenou Neighbors Association. "Many people that were against it in the beginning ... are now happy with it," she told *CityLab*. ■



A car, far right, drives through one of Barcelona's superblocks.

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COLE FAMILY FOUNDATION PHOTOS

## Marching to a different and generous drummer

**Galen Cole wasn't just a successful Maine businessman. He worked hard to preserve transportation history, honor veterans and give thousands of Mainers a leg up, too.**

By Glenn Adams

**E**VEN AS a child, Galen Cole showed an interest in trucks. He liked hanging out with drivers working for his father, between their runs from Bangor to small towns where people counted on those deliveries.

"To him, the trucks and truckers were his world," said Bob O'Leary, education coordinator at the Cole Land Transportation Museum in Bangor. Cole's youthful fascination with trucks transformed into a career which saw his company - Cole's Express - grow and him become a kingpin of Maine's highway freight haulers.

But to Cole, it wasn't just about trucks. It was also about inspiring and helping others. It was a full life for Galen Cole, who died January 9 at age 94 in his hometown of Bangor.

Many of his contributions are well-known and continue through the Cole Family Foundation as well as from his personal wealth. "He helped people when other people



Cole honored thousands of veterans with his walking stick program (top). His service during World War II with the 5th Armored Division shaped his idealism and belief in public service.

didn't know about it," said O'Leary. For example, Cole paid for children to get their teeth straightened. The list of his beneficiaries ranges from the Shriners hospitals for children to the tiny Southern Aroostook Agricultural Museum and Millinocket library.

"He helped the people of Maine attain their potential," said Jim Neville, executive director of the Cole Family Foundation and the transportation museum started by Cole.

For two decades, the foundation has helped to support the Maine Reading Recovery Program. It works with the University of Maine to identify school districts with a need for the program, in which teachers are trained to work one-on-one with students who are lagging in their reading skills.

The foundation has contributed \$100,000 per year to the children's literacy program, which Neville said helps 400 to 500 students per year. The foundation says that lifting the aspirations of children, "particularly



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Top: Galen Cole (second from left) with three of his five children Len, Janet and Gary. Below: Allie Cole (middle) founded the family trucking business in 1917. Bottom: Young Galen at his desk.

those from financially distressed families," is of primary importance.

The Cole Family Foundation has also been a leading supporter of Literacy Volunteers of Bangor for several years, which addresses adult literacy needs.

"It's an invisible problem," says the Literacy Volunteers organization. "Thousands of people in the Bangor area have trouble reading." The problem is not just limited to Bangor. Statewide, as many as 15 percent of Mainers are functioning at the lowest rates of literacy, the organization says.

In addition to teaching reading skills to adults, it teaches English as a second language and comprehension with an eye toward citizenship, said Neville.

### PRESERVING A MOVING PIECE OF HISTORY

One of Galen Cole's proudest achievements was the creation of the Cole Land Transportation Museum in Bangor, where dozens of antique vehicles of all types amaze visitors from all over the country.

Among the half-million people who have visited are more than 50,000 Maine schoolchildren, who also have been given the opportunity to interview veterans through the museum's Ambassadors of Patriotism program.

Exhibits at the museum include such diverse elements as a restored Maine Central Railroad caboose (the featured exhibit), a Bangor and Arrostook Railroad engine, firefighting equipment, military vehicles,



construction vehicles and snow plows, milk delivery vehicles, an ice wagon, motorcycles, bicycles and more.

As a gesture toward Cole's longstanding commitment to veterans, the grounds are graced with monuments and memorials to those who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the war against terrorism.

Veterans who attend parades and visit the transportation museum have been presented with thousands of walking sticks as part of his program to honor veterans. For nearly three decades, scores of veterans of wars since World War II have participated in the Cole museum's Veterans Interview Program for young Mainers.

### THE FIRST MODEL T

Cole was born on November 29, 1929, in Bangor, the fifth of seven children. Even in later years, he recalled with precision his early years and fascination with trucks, said O'Leary.

"He had a phenomenal memory for names, dates, places and people. If you asked him anything about his personal life or Cole's Express, he knew the answers," O'Leary added.

Cole graduated from Bangor High School in 1944 and, with the war raging, he was drafted. After his military service, he returned to his hometown and took over the family's trucking company, which was founded in 1917 by his father Albert (Allie) Cole.

Early on, the startup company gained momentum with the contract for mail delivery from the Enfield railroad station. Then in 1919 the business



nudged forward again as Allie Cole bought its first Model T for delivery of mail and other goods. Customers were delighted by the speed of deliveries faster than horse-drawn conveyances.

As the company grew, the elder Cole moved headquarters from Enfield to Bangor, 30 miles away. In the 1920s, people in the northern reaches were more dependent on deliveries to get their goods especially in winter time when the roads went unplowed and were so bad that people stored their cars for the season. Responding to the need, Cole's company used its freight trucks to plow snow from the upstate roads. Those efforts helped convince the state Legislature to appropriate money for plowing as well as improved maintenance, according to a history of the company.

The Depression almost drove Cole's company to bankruptcy, but a bank loan saved it and the trucks continued rolling. World War II saw continued growth, but a lack of drivers. Galen was hired by his father as



Galen setting the first cobblesone at the Cole Land Transportation Museum in 1998.

a driver when he was 16, but he was called up for military service.

Cole became a combat infantryman. While serving as a member of the U.S. 5th Armored Division in Germany in April 1945, he was sitting on the rear of a half-track when he was asked to move. A German shell hit the truck and killed five men and injured several others, including Cole. He later was awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

That horrific experience inspired Cole's philanthropy said O'Leary. Cole made a promise to God that if he came home from the war, he would do his best "to leave my community and my fellow men better than I found them."

### BUILDING COLE'S EXPRESS

After Galen returned, he helped build Cole's Express – with its familiar orange trucks – into a regional carrier serving northern New England



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COLE FAMILY FOUNDATION



Cole loved kids and frequently spoke with students who visited the museum he founded. The Cole Family Foundation has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to support literacy in Maine.

and Maritime Canada. New terminals were added, other freight companies were acquired, a truck and trailer repair operation expanded, and eventually Cole's Express did more business in Maine than all the rest of the haulers combined, according to Company-Histories.com.

An 18-month strike by the Teamsters resulted in a significant downsizing, but the company gradually regained most of its lost business. Through 50 years, Galen Cole served as company president.

During that time, he served on the Bangor City Council and then became mayor in 1958. Cole also served as chairman of the Bangor Chamber of Commerce, and president of the University of Maine Development Council, in addition to his work for the Bangor YMCA and other groups.

"He was very passionate. He was very driven, and he was committed to giving back," Cole's daughter, Janet Cole Cross, told WCSH. "Always, to his last morning."

Cole's Express was sold in 1993 to Roadway Services as part of that company's geographic and service expansion.

Cole was married for 73 years to Suzanne (Welch) Cole, who died in 2017. The two had been childhood sweethearts.

His obituary listed his seven-decade marriage as his greatest honor, but his civic and military honors were many. He received a Distinguished Service Award from the Maine American Legion and was also a legion Citizen of the Year. He also received a Distinguished Service Award from

the Maine National Guard's 101st Air Refueling Wing. The Military Order of the Purple Heart's National Americanism Award was another of Cole's honors.

On the business side, Cole was a long-time member of MBTA and a recipient of the 1992 Maine Transportation Achievement Award, the same year that fellow transportation giants Bob BaRoss, Chuck Cianchette, Nick DelMonaco and Ralph Leonard were honored. The Maine Chamber of Commerce, Bangor Chamber of Commerce and Maine Education Association all bestowed honors on Cole. He was presented with an honorary doctorate in business administration from Husson University. Board memberships included Merrill Trust Bank, Merrill Bankshares, Central Maine Power Co. and Eastern Maine Medical Center.

Maine Governor Janet Mills praised Cole following his death for his wartime bravery, post-war public service and activities to champion the state's veterans, "particularly through his walking stick recognition program."

Independent U.S. Senator Angus King said, "It's impossible to summarize the totality of his contributions to Maine, but if there's one thing I choose to remember about him, it's this: Galen Cole helped people." ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Glenn Adams is a freelance writer based in Augusta. He is the former Maine State House correspondent for the Associated Press.

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# The CAP, the gap and the bond

**With a bond vote coming up on July 14, and a projected \$125 million budget gap due to the coronavirus, transportation infrastructure is seen as a key element to Maine's economic recovery**

**I**N LATE April, MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note fired off a letter to Maine's Congressional delegation, calling for clarification on an issue currently on the minds of state DOTs across the nation: how much can they expect to glean from the \$150 billion in funds the CARES Act has directed to the states? More to the point, will that be enough to cover a giant \$125 million hole in MaineDOT's budget created by social distancing measures causing a dramatic decrease in vehicle travel on state roads?

### DEFINING THE GAP

By mid-April, less than one month after Governor Janet Mills enacted sweeping measures to curb the outbreak of COVID-19 in Maine, traffic was down by 52 percent statewide and more than 60 percent in the Portland region. The decrease has had a devastating effect on state fuel tax revenues, with MaineDOT projecting a 30 percent decline in receipts for April 2020 and another 60 percent decrease predicted for the month of May. The losses don't stop there, either, with economists predicting economic impacts into 2021, adding up to \$125 million in

losses to Maine's Highway Fund. MaineDOT's revenue projections show that travel will continue to be down well into the third quarter of 2021.

"There is good reason to believe that even if Maine has been able to 'flatten the curve [of COVID-19's effects]' and can begin to open up our economy, we will be feeling the effects on trade and travel for a long time to come," said MBTA Executive Director Maria Fuentes.

In the last round of Congressional action aimed at providing pandemic relief, the CARES Act directed \$150 billion in funding to state governments; however, unless the U.S. Treasury provides additional guidance and clarification, those funds cannot be used to help bail out state DOTs. Therefore, it is critical that MaineDOT receive federal funds to fill the hole in the state's Highway Fund. The CARES Act provided much needed relief for transit and airports, businesses, charitable organizations and educational institutions, among others, but Congress hasn't yet addressed state DOT needs. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is calling for \$50 billion in relief funds to state DOTs, which MBTA and many others have urged Congress to act upon quickly.

MBTA President Paul Bradbury noted: "As Congress continues to deliberate on how to help the nation cope with the pandemic, there is a strong case to be made for Washington to provide funding to cover losses in state highway funds. The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the economy, and like other revenues, fuel taxes have been impacted."

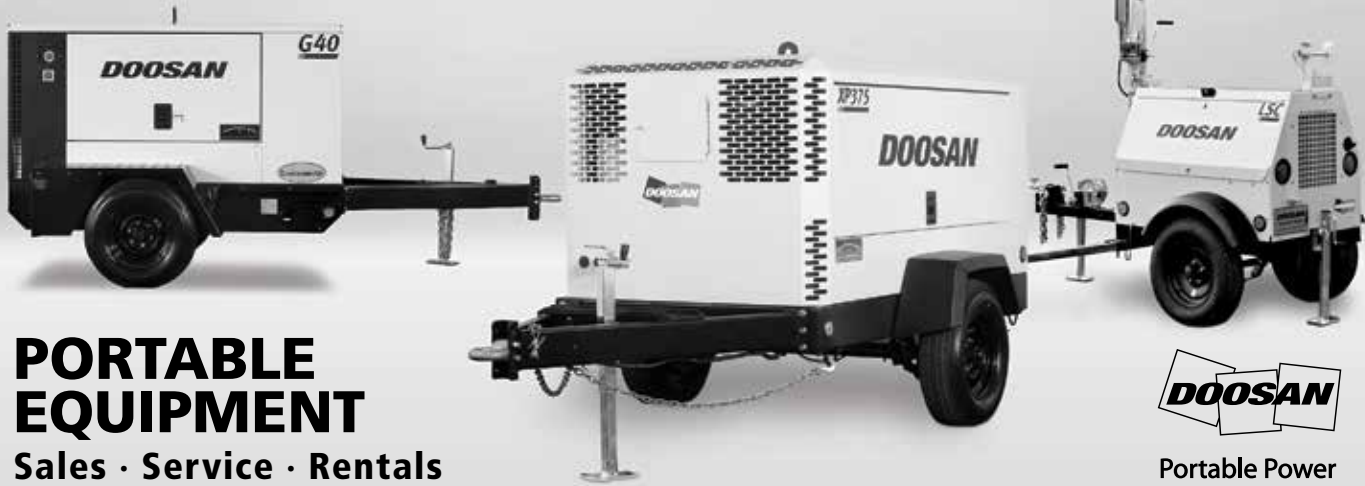
### PUSHING ON THE CAP

Meanwhile, the governor and MaineDOT have been looking at ways to use road and bridge construction as an economic generator in hard times. While a few states postponed or canceled construction projects, MaineDOT took early action to keep road and bridge projects in the state underway.

On March 24, when Governor Mills announced extended measures



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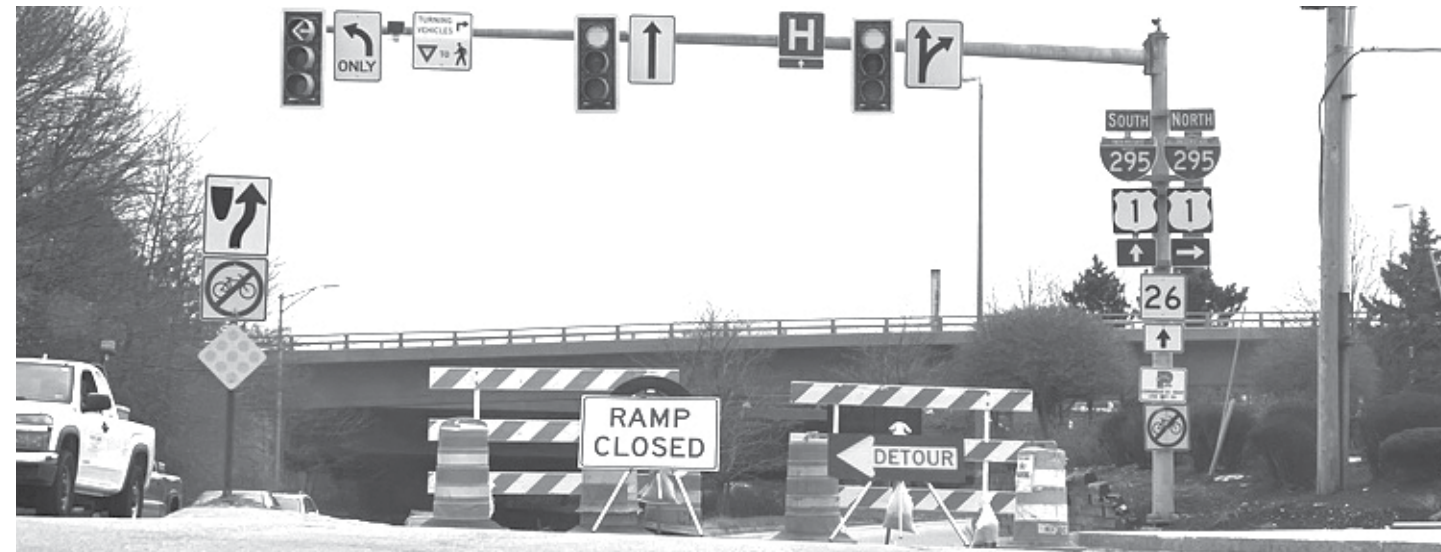
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With traffic down by more than 60 percent in Portland this April, this detour on a MaineDOT project inconvenienced far fewer drivers.

to inhibit the spread of the coronavirus, she included construction crews working on MaineDOT projects among the list of essential workers who could continue to work through the crisis. Additionally, MaineDOT has continued to put projects out to bid in the 2020 Construction Advertisement Plan (CAP). Since March 25, the department has opened 172 bids on 56 projects with a total construction value of \$93,847,647. The department is also working with the construction industry to determine if there is additional capacity to take on five to 10 percent more work in the CAP. Additionally, the Maine Turnpike Authority has said it plans to keep projects on that highway underway.

“We are grateful Governor Mills and Commissioner Van Note have been so proactive about moving forward with projects during this crisis,” said MBTA’s Fuentes, noting that the work advertised is estimated to support 1,220 jobs. “Those paychecks that go to transportation workers not only support their families, they support our communities and preserve the infrastructure that holds our state together.”

**BOND ON A FAST TRACK**

One of the last actions of the Maine Legislature before it adjourned early due to the coronavirus outbreak, was to pass Governor Mills’ transportation bond, that passed by a vote of 124 to seven on March 17. Mills signed the bill into law on the same day.

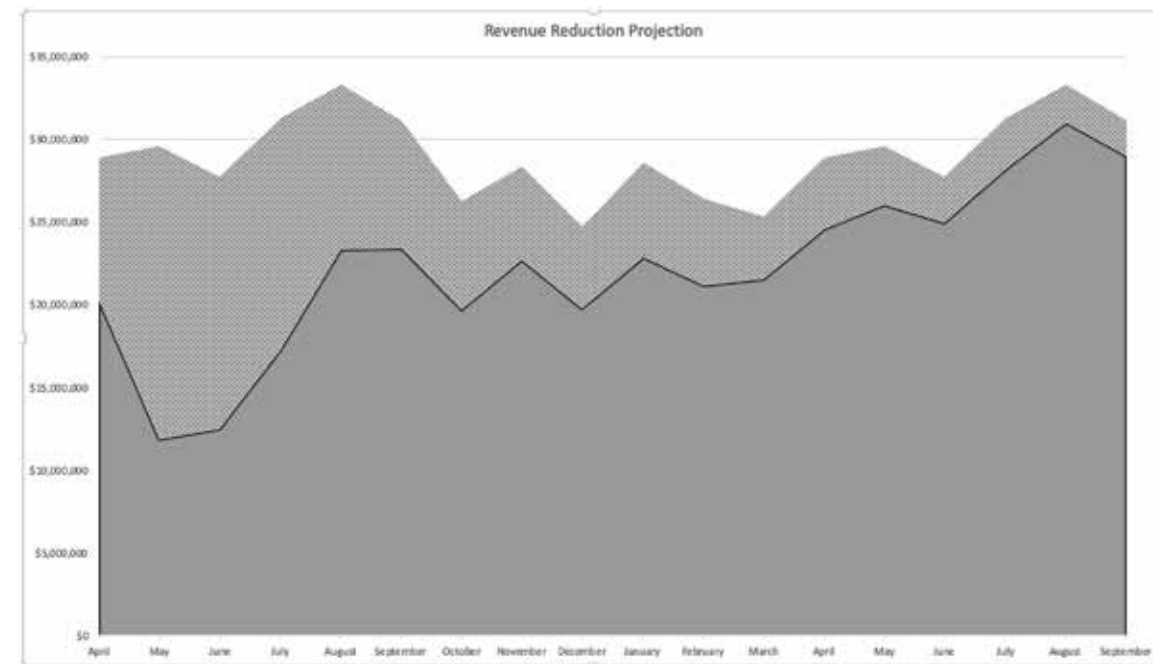
The bond originally was

**MaineDOT estimates the Highway Fund will come up short by \$124 million over the next 18 months due to falling fuel tax receipts.**

to go to voters in November and was moved to the June primary election ballot. Then, on April 10, the governor moved the primary from June 9 to July 14 as a measure to accommodate citizens who may want to vote via absentee ballot, a number expected to jump because of the outbreak.

If the bond passes, MaineDOT may be able to fast-track several projects. The bond that citizens will vote on includes \$90 million for highways and bridges and \$15 million for transit and other non-highway modes. A second bond that will go before voters on July 14 includes \$15 million for investments in high-speed internet infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas.

MBTA President Paul Bradbury noted that it will be more important than ever that members urge their friends, families and co-workers to support the bond, especially since much of the voting is expected to take place via absentee ballot. “Making sure we do all we can to support passage of this bond will be very important,” said Bradbury. “It is just too important for Maine’s economy to not have it pass.” ■





**PLEASE  
VOTE YES  
ON  
QUESTION 2  
JULY 14**

**O**N JULY 14, voters will go to the polls to vote in Maine's primary elections. Originally scheduled for June 9, the date was moved due to the COVID-19 outbreak in order to give more time for voters to send in absentee ballots while observing social distancing.

The transportation bond will be one of two bond questions on the ballot. Question No. 1 is the Internet Infrastructure Bond, \$15 million in General Fund borrowing to allow Maine to expand internet service to "unserved and under-served" areas of the state. If passed, the bond funding will be used to match \$30 million in federal, private and local matching funds.

The transportation bond will be Question No. 2 on the ballot and, if passed, will be used to match \$275,000,000 in federal and other funds. Of the \$105 million in the bond question, \$90 million will be used to "improve highways and bridges statewide, including the Madawaska International Bridge replacement project and associated utility relocation costs, and for the department's municipal partnership initiative and associated activities."

The remaining \$15 million will be used for multimodal transportation projects throughout the state, including transit, freight and passenger railroads, aviation, ports, harbors, marine transportation and active transportation projects and associated activities. ■



**TRANSPORTATION  
ON THE BALLOT**

**Question 2: Transportation Bond**

**"Do you favor a \$105,000,000 bond issue for improvement of highways and bridges statewide and for multimodal facilities or equipment related to transit, freight and passenger railroads, aviation, ports, harbors, marine transportation and active transportation projects, to be used to match an estimated \$275,000,000 in federal and other funds?"**

**HOW TO REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT**

- CONTACT THE MUNICIPAL CLERK IN THE TOWN OR CITY WHERE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE.
- YOU CAN MAKE A TELEPHONE REQUEST FOR YOUR OWN BALLOT, WHICH WILL BE MAILED TO THE ADDRESS YOU PROVIDE TO THE CLERK.
- UNIFORMED SERVICE AND OVERSEAS VOTERS WILL REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT DIRECTLY FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE, DIVISION OF ELECTIONS.

**Maine ranks 7th in nation for percentage of structurally deficient bridges**

**Annual survey of bridges finds nearly 231,000 spans in need of repair across nation, including 314 in Maine**

**M**AINE RANKS seventh in the nation with 12.8 percent of its total bridge inventory structurally deficient, according to a new report compiled from federal data and released by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

The annual ARTBA bridge report found that more than one third (37 percent) of U.S. bridges—nearly 231,000 spans—need repair work. More than 46,000 bridges are rated in poor condition and classified as "structurally deficient." That's one in three U.S. bridges needing repair or replacement and those bridges account for 178 million crossings in the U.S. every day.

The report comes as Congress and the Trump administration continue working on measures to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. ARTBA says once policy makers shift from a rescue focus to

economic recovery, they should work on robust transportation infrastructure investments, since they have comprehensive economic and societal benefits.

"We have work to do in every corner of our state, and as Congress debates what kinds of steps they can take to stimulate the economy, they should be thinking about all of the good they can do by investing in our public infrastructure," said MBTA President Paul Bradbury.

The ARTBA report notes that 314 of Maine's inventory of 2,461 public bridges are classified as structurally deficient. This means at least one or more of the key elements of the bridge is in poor or worse condition. This is down from 348 bridges classified as structurally deficient in 2015.

"MaineDOT has done a good job with the funds it has and is constantly finding ways to tackle its backlog of bridges in need of repair, but now, more than ever, Maine will

need federal help to make sure we don't lose ground," said Bradbury. "Mainers will vote on a \$105 million transportation bond in July, with \$90 million to fund needed road and bridge repairs, but that is not nearly enough to address this backlog, especially as we anticipate reduced gas tax revenues. States like Maine need the federal government to step up. Investment in our transportation infrastructure has proven to be good for the country's economy."

Nationally, 81,000 bridges should be replaced, says ARTBA Chief Economist Dr. Alison Premo Black, who led the team conducting the analysis. The report also notes that one-third of interstate highway bridges (18,177 spans) have identified repair needs. ARTBA estimates the cost to make the identified repairs for all 231,000 bridges in the U.S. at nearly \$164 billion, based on average cost data published by the FHWA. ■

**KEY FINDINGS OF THE ARTBA REPORT:**

- 12 OF MAINE'S STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT BRIDGES are on the interstate highway system.
- 117 BRIDGES ARE POSTED FOR LOAD, which may restrict the size and weight of vehicles crossing the structure.
- THE STATE HAS IDENTIFIED NEEDED REPAIRS FOR 335 BRIDGES (including those identified as structurally deficient) at an estimated cost of \$175.6 million.
- SEVEN OF THE 10 MOST TRAVELED structurally deficient bridges in Maine are in Cumberland County. The others are in Sagadahoc and Penobscot counties.
- NATIONALLY, STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT BRIDGES, on average, are nearly 69 years old, compared to 44 years old for non-deficient bridges. One-third of Interstate highway bridges (18,177 spans) have identified repair needs.
- IF PLACED END-TO-END, the length of these bridges would stretch over 6,300 miles—long enough to make a round trip across the country from New York City to Los Angeles and back again to Chicago.
- AMERICAN DRIVERS CROSS THESE BRIDGES 1.5 billion times per day, representing one-third of all daily bridge crossings, according to the data.

FMI: For more information, visit [artbabridgereport.org](http://artbabridgereport.org).



# Cold storage redux

## New group revisits plan to build cold storage facility on Portland's waterfront

"The original plan and design was actually developed by Woodard & Curran which had been commissioned by the Maine Port Authority," said Heather Hayes of Sewall, an infrastructure firm working with the developers. "Our operator and contractors will bring the most up-to-date handling and cold storage equipment to the project, therefore the systems could be significantly different."

Another difference, said Hayes, is the plan to incorporate solar panels on the roof. The proposed project will be the largest rooftop solar array in Maine once it is built.

The Maine Port Authority has wanted a cold-storage facility at the container terminal in Portland for years. Eimskip and Atlanta-based Americold Realty Trust, a major cold-storage developer, planned to build a facility five years ago, but Americold later dropped out following a two-year city zoning process to amend city ordinances to allow tall, bulky buildings at the port.

Height limits in the zone were increased from 45 feet to 55 feet, and up to 75 feet for buildings specifically connected to marine industries that meet certain conditions.

Americold walked, saying that after considering the regional economics, construction costs and an industry analysis, it had concluded that the cost to operate a state-of-the-art, temperature-controlled facility at the waterfront would not meet its underwriting criteria.

Early this year, Eimskip, which still had an active bid to develop the project, selected Treadwell and Amber Infrastructure Group, an international development and fund management company, to lead the project, Campbell said. Amber, which manages a \$14 billion portfolio of energy, hospital, school, transportation and other facilities, would own the building and hire a company to run it.

The total cost of the building is subject to its final design, but is estimated to be between \$25 million and \$30 million, Campbell said. It would be funded with borrowing and private equity from Amber.

**A** CONSORTIUM of private developers submitted plans to the city in early April for a 120,000-square-foot cold storage facility to be built on the Portland waterfront on state-owned land at the International Marine Terminal.

The proposal represents a new chapter for the project that has been championed by the city as a way to build on the city's success increasing commercial marine freight traffic at the port in recent years.

Called the Maine International Cold Storage Facility, the building is expected to meet the refrigerated cargo demand of Icelandic shipping company Eimskip and be big enough to accommodate customers from Maine's growing food, beverage and biopharmaceutical industries, said George Campbell, Jr., in an article in the *Portland Press Herald*. Campbell is chairman of Treadwell Franklin Infrastructure, the Yarmouth developer fronting the plan.

"This can serve the entire state of Maine in extraordinary ways," said Campbell, a former Maine transportation commissioner.

Treadwell Franklin Infrastructure is proposing a building that would be 75 feet tall at its tallest and just within the current zoning limit. The project would cost between \$25 million and \$30 million. The new plan meets the requirements in the RFP that was issued in 2015 and has some differences from the original proposal that was abandoned by Americold in 2018.

A rendering of the planned cold storage facility on Portland's waterfront.



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The Maine Port Authority board of directors last month agreed to a lease of up to 50 years for the building. The owner would pay at least \$100,000 a year in rent for the first seven years and \$200,000 in the next seven years, but that could increase to \$500,000 a year or more depending on the volume of cargo through the facility.

The Maine Department of Transportation has budgeted \$8 million to pay for foundation work and building design.

“I think we are in a sweet spot – this is going to happen,” said Jon Nass, CEO of the Maine Port Authority, adding that the facility would improve export opportunities for Maine businesses and encourage more shipping companies to use it. “We think a cold-storage (facility) on site here will make this a competitive port for decades to come.”

The city went through an extensive zoning process to modernize its port and the project should comply with land use requirements, Portland Economic Development Director Greg Mitchell said.

“My expectation is that it can move through the planning board process at a normal pace,” said Mitchell. “We’ve been anxiously awaiting an opportunity for a cold-storage project to complete the infrastructure investment we need for an active port with cargo shipping.”

The building would be 75 feet tall at its peak, the maximum height allowed under a zoning amendment passed by the city in 2017. Changing the zoning involved more than a year of public engagement amid fierce opposition from some residential neighborhoods in Portland’s West End.

Hayes noted that the new proposal has included outreach to residents in the West End. She said: “There has been neighborhood outreach during the design phase to discuss concerns and make sure the constructive community voices are being heard and accommodated. The site planning process continues to invite public input



George Campbell, Jr.



A brochure detailing the project. The group has invested in significant outreach to the community and the project’s neighbors.

to our proposal as well.”

Eimskip and its clients would use up to 40 percent of the pallet space, Campbell said. He expects excess capacity to be filled quickly by companies in Maine and elsewhere that want storage for perishables intended for export.

In the past decade, Maine has invested heavily to make its only container port competitive. The state has spent \$64 million on new cranes, container space, buildings and other equipment.

The investment appears to have paid off – freight volume through the Portland terminal has grown by an average of 25 percent annually since Eimskip began making trips seven years ago. In 2019, more than 28,600 container units transited Portland, quadruple the volume in 2013.

Portland is the western anchor of a shipping line that runs to Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Iceland, with connections to Northern Europe. In 2017, Eimskip added weekly stops – and last year larger ships – to its added run and transshipment opportunities in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with French shipping giant CMA CGM. Transshipment is when cargo is shipped to an intermediate destination, then to another destination.

The planned building could be divided into cold- and dry-storage areas to accommodate a variety of customers, and initial analysis indicates it is “right-sized for this market and can offer some good opportunities,” Campbell said. Sterling Solutions, a cold-storage and logistics company, is conducting the design and demand analysis of the facility.

Hayes noted that original plans were to begin the first phase of construction in June of this year, but those plans are likely to shift. “The pandemic has caused delays for the construction start date since public meetings are being pushed back,” said Hayes. “We are hoping the meetings can be resolved in a virtual setting and construction can begin as soon as possible.” ■



Leroy Muise

## BHB names Muise manager

**L**EROY MUISE, a longtime employee with Columbia Air Services that provides services to pilots and airlines at Hancock County-Bar Harbor Airport (BHB) in Trenton, has been named the airport’s new manager.

Muise has worked for the past 17 years with Columbia as general manager, director of maintenance and chief inspector, according to Rebekah Knowlton, the county’s deputy administrator. Muise was approved in early April to the position by a 3-0 vote by the county’s elected commissioners.

Muise takes over a position that has been vacant since February, when previous manager Brad Madeira resigned. Madeira had served as manager of Hancock County-Bar Harbor Airport since July 2013.

As airport manager, Muise will oversee operations at the Route 3 airport, which sees a spike in activity each summer as tourists, seasonal residents and other visitors flock to the Mount Desert Island area. The airport has two runways, one 5,200 feet long and another 3,364 feet long, and had roughly 8,500 enplanements in 2018, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. ■

### State news

# States respond to COVID-19

**S**INCE MID-MARCH, when the scope and severity of the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States first became apparent, state governors followed two tracks when forming policy around transportation construction. As states issued a series of stay-at-home orders, several governors designated public works construction as an “essential” line of business and allowed infrastructure work sites to remain open. Other governors issued statewide construction project shutdowns, citing health concerns, as well as concerns about budget impacts of the outbreak.

While most governors have issued social distancing orders for their states, many have also implicitly or explicitly designated public works construction as an “essential” or “critical” line of business which is to remain open. Some state DOTs are taking advantage of lower traffic volumes and accelerating work on road and bridge projects. Many state transportation agencies have put their office employees on telework status.

According to Rich Juliano, general counsel for the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), these state designations are grounded in the federal Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce, issued by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). According to a CISA memo issued on April 17, the “essential worker” designation includes “workers who conduct a range of operations and services that are typically essential to continued critical infrastructure viability, including staffing operations centers, maintaining and repairing critical infrastructure, operating call centers, working construction, and performing operational functions, among others. It also includes workers who support crucial supply chains and enable functions for critical infrastructure. The industries they support represent, but are not limited to, medical and healthcare, telecommunications,

information technology systems, defense, food and agriculture, transportation and logistics, energy, water and wastewater, law enforcement, and public works.”

Maine was one of many states that early identified construction as essential, and MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note has indicated that MaineDOT intends “to deliver the 2020 CAP and maintenance construction activity as planned, and perhaps even supplement those plans.” He also noted that could change due to various risk factors including COVID-19 guidance, supply chains, and financial viability measures such as declining Highway Fund revenue and the bidding climate. The commissioner believes that MaineDOT construction activity could be “a rare bright spot in 2020 if COVID-19 risks can be managed for worker safety and if we all work together for the common good.”

For many states, a major concern was how to enact safety measures that would comply with social distancing requirements. ARTBA’s Juliano in his March 31 memo also noted that contractors are implementing COVID-19 safeguards as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, their respective public health agencies, and others, while some agencies and industry groups have issued their own guidance in this area.

In Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ordered a Safety Stand Down Day beginning at 6 a.m. on March 30. All transportation projects in the state were stopped while contractors were required to distribute a copy of the state’s COVID-19 safety guidelines to all employees and subcontractors and make sure everyone understands and is in compliance with the guidelines. Additionally, contractors were required to designate a COVID-19 officer to monitor the company’s practices and response. Firms were also required to update their Health & Safety Plans (HASP). Public works construction resumed on March 31.

In contrast, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Washington state opted to suspend



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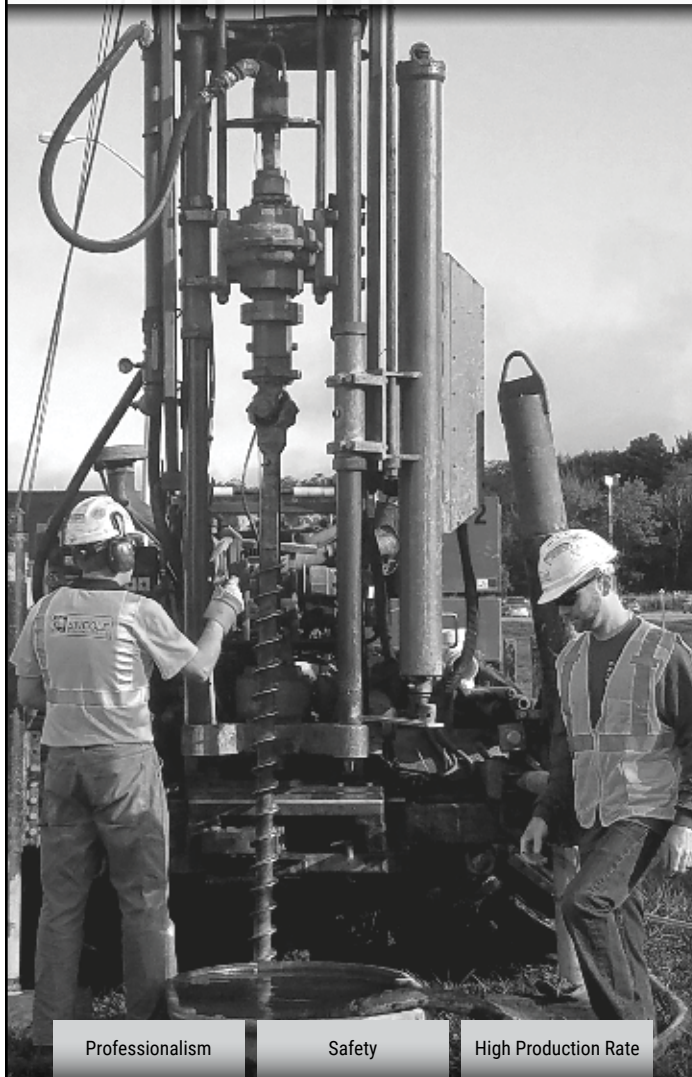




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construction work at the time of during the public health crisis.

In late February, Washington became the first state to record a death from COVID-19, and by late March the state was reporting a significant outbreak.

On March 25, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Director Roger Millar sent word to all of the department's pre-qualified contractors, stating: "As we are all aware, the impacts related to COVID-19 continue to evolve and worsen every day in Washington. While transportation is an essential function during a National Emergency, WSDOT's priority at this time is to ensure the safety of its employees, partners, and the public while continuing to deliver an essential service to the public. We have worked very closely with our contractor, labor, and industry partners to ensure safety measures are met and maintain them as best possible, though despite these efforts, COVID-19 continues to impact construction throughout the state. . . Consistent with the Governor's Stay Home, Stay Healthy proclamation, WSDOT is temporarily suspending all construction projects, effective immediately. This suspension broadly covers all of our projects with a small number of exceptions that will be clarified on project specific basis. . . This order must be followed immediately, and I need all of you to initiate efforts to close projects down, leaving them in a safe, and maintainable condition."

After a month-long shut down, Washington Governor Jay Inslee announced on April 24, that "low-risk" construction could resume. His administration had worked with industry representatives to develop a plan to safely re-start projects in the state, and Washington State Building and Construction Trades



**Maine Governor Janet Mills, whose administration included construction on its list of essential workers (left). Washington Governor Jay Inslee who announced the phased in lifting of restrictions, including those on construction activity, in late April.**

Council Executive Secretary Mark Riker said of the plan: "The governor's given us the opportunity to have a great effect on our industry. . . If we do it right, we'll move to the next step. If we do it wrong, we will be shutting ourselves back down. . . So let's take responsibility and do this the right way."

At the end of April, PennDOT announced that highway and bridge construction would resume work on May 1.

"Our decision to pause construction was not made lightly, and we understand the importance of these projects to communities across Pennsylvania and to our industry partners," Acting PennDOT Secretary Yassmin Gramian said in a statement. "Thanks to the

swift, decisive actions of the administration and the cooperation of Pennsylvanians, the curve is starting to flatten and we're now in a position to restart these important improvements to the transportation network."

Vermont also began phasing in work on construction projects on April 24, first allowing projects with five or fewer workers on site to resume. That was expanded to 10 workers per site in early May.

In easing the restrictions, Vermont Governor Phil Scott said: "If we want to continue getting Vermonters back to work, there must be a constant, consistent everyday battle to fight this virus." ■

## MaineDOT updates continuity plan, bidding protocol

**O**N MAY 4, the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) posted an updated Continuity of Operations Plan, providing staff, contractors, vendors and the public guidance on the department's operations impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Additionally, MaineDOT posted changes to the bidding protocol, including restricting bid openings to online viewing and listening. ■

FMI: To view the updated plan and bidding protocols, visit [www.MaineDOT.gov](http://www.MaineDOT.gov).





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2020 Cumberland County Meeting

# It's all connected

## Portland City Manager Jon Jennings' varied career and the city's ambitious transportation plans

**M**AINE BETTER Transportation Association (MBTA) President Paul Bradbury started the evening off on a bright note, bringing more than 100 MBTA members and friends up to date on recent developments in Augusta. He spoke about the fruitful work of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding that issued a report on their findings earlier this year.

Bradbury praised the commission for its work, singling out several members of the audience – former MBTA presidents Paul Koziell and Representative Tom Martin and Maine Transportation Committee Chair Representative Andrew McLean, all of whom have been serving on the Blue Ribbon Commission. He also introduced several other guests in the audience including: MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note; former MaineDOT Commissioner George Campbell; Representative Richard Farnsworth and his wife Ellen; Wayne Davis, who Bradbury called “the godfather of passenger rail in Maine”; and two candidates for the Maine House – Kyle Bailey, who is running for House District 27 in Gorham (to fill the seat being vacated by his husband, Representative McLean, who is terming out of office this year), and Barb Wood, a candidate for House District 38 in Portland.



Jon Jennings offered a glimpse into his colorful career and plans the city of Portland has to modernize its transportation infrastructure.



MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note, Steve Whitcomb, MBTA President Paul Bradbury and former MaineDOT Commissioner George Campbell.

### IN PRAISE OF THE COMMISSION

Of the Blue Ribbon Commission, Bradbury noted that one of the most important outcomes of the commission's work was bipartisan agreement on the scope of the funding shortfall: \$332 million annually, including the \$100 million annual voter-approved bond that MaineDOT has relied on to cover its work plan over the past several years. He said, “It's very hard to solve a problem, if you can't get everyone into a room and agree that there is a problem.”

As big as the challenge is, Bradbury sounded a hopeful note for those in the room. He called on the determination and Yankee spirit that has driven Mainers to remarkable achievements over the years, including the construction of the Maine Turnpike during the 1940s.

“It's not over,” said Bradbury, noting that the commission had been charged with continuing its work and that the commission hopes to recommend legislation during the next legislative session. He called on

everyone in the room to stay engaged and active in the effort to build a strong, statewide coalition in support of increased transportation funding. “This is a complex problem, but we know that if anyone can do it, it's Mainers.”





Pike crew on Main Street in Rutland, Vermont in 1885.

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Charlie Hews and Senator Brad Farrin (left), Eric Ritchie and Chris Bales (middle), Diane Morabito and Nikki Scott (right).

## UNUSUAL CAREER PATH

The evening's featured speaker was Jon Jennings, who spoke about his unusual career path to the position he holds today as city manager of Portland, Maine's most populated city. Jennings has worked in professional sports, in coaching and management positions with the Boston Celtics for 11 years during the Larry Bird era. He has held several positions in government and politics, including in the Washington offices of Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, at the U.S. Department of Justice and as a White House Fellow during the administration of President Bill Clinton. He also was a founder and part owner of the Maine Red Claws, Portland's professional basketball team. Most recently, he was assistant city manager for the city of South Portland before taking the city manager position in Portland in 2015.

## NOT JUST 'TOURISTS AND LOBSTERS'

Speaking in sports terms, Jennings praised his "phenomenal team," including Bradbury, who in addition to serving as MBTA's president, is director of the award-winning Portland International Jetport (Jennings

called him the "Larry Bird of airport directors"). Jennings' team runs a complex municipal transportation system that includes air, rail, marine and roadways.

Jennings said he believed the city, state and feds play a key role in keeping the economy moving and investing in the transportation infrastructure that enables the movement of freight and passengers around the country and beyond. He also said he believed the groundbreaking work the city and MaineDOT have begun in introducing autonomous vehicles and smart transportation to Maine will help the state establish itself as a technology hub. The City Manager noted it would "help diversify the way people see us, because we can't just be about tourists and lobsters."

## ACCELERATED CHANGES

Those changes are being accelerated in Portland, where the city plans to launch a self-driving shuttle on Commercial Street, one of the city's busiest corridors. It has also begun introducing intelligent transportation systems in other areas of the city including on Forest Avenue, where Jennings said there has been a 33 percent reduction in drive time.



Maine Legislature's Transportation Committee Co-Chair Rep. Andrew McLean, Maine House candidates Barb Wood and Kyle Bailey and Maine Rep. Tom Martin (left). Jasmine Strout, Ellie Morin, Cody Berkowitz (winner of the 50-50 raffle) and Owen Krauss.



Greg Dore and Paula Dore (left), Bruce Munger and Brandon Havu (middle), Shannon Walton and Russ Bragg.



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Jason Griffiths, Wayne Berry and Todd Sawyer (left), Ellen Farnsworth and Maine Rep. Richard Farnsworth (right).

Another congestion point in the city, Franklin Arterial, is poised to be the next major phase of the project once the last bit of technology is installed for that system.

That has been good news for Portland and for Maine, according to Jennings. "I can't tell you the amount of publicity we have gotten and the number of calls that we've received about what is happening in Maine and tiny Portland looking at this and implementing this," said Jennings.

He said city planners are also looking at more traditional means to reduce traffic at congestion hot points, including eliminating six of the eighteen crosswalks on Commercial Street. Plans are to put those changes in effect this summer, as well.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

When Jennings came into his current position, he made it a priority to improve the everyday experience of the city's residents. That "getting back to basics" approach has included a campaign to upgrade the city's sidewalks, bringing them into compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. He also has focused on improving maintenance of city

streets. In recent years, the city has spent \$110 million on sidewalk improvements and \$80 million on city streets. He had high praise for the city's partners that have helped make that possible, including MaineDOT which has provided matching funds for construction through its Municipal Partnership Initiative.

Still, he said, there was definitely a need for more revenues to tackle the backlog of projects that Portland – and every other city and town in Maine – has been experiencing. To that end, Jennings proposed that Maine's leaders continue their discussions of funding solutions.

"We've got to increase the gas tax," said Jennings, adding that it would help Maine cities and towns keep up with the work that needs to be done. "And I'm not even talking about aspirational stuff, I'm talking about taking care of what we've got – streets and bridges and sidewalks."

He also said that maybe it was time to think about some new sources of revenue, including new tolls. "We need to be talking about tolling, and maybe the idea of tolling on I-295 and directing that revenue to communities."

In the end, Jennings connected the work he does today to the early



Daniel Myers and Greg Brown (left), Chris Abboud, Erik Wiberg and Kevin McCain (right).



Doug Davidson and Deborah Dunlap Avasthi (left), Jack Sutton and Tim Folster (middle), Patricia Quinn and Natalie Bogart (right).

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## 2020 MBTA CUMBERLAND COUNTY MEETING

### INNOVATORS



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days of his career and the different “teams” he has worked with over the years.

“I’ve been very fortunate to have been among a lot of different people,” said Jennings, referring back to his time in professional sports and in politics. “Of all of those, the most satisfying has been working in city government.”

MBTA President Bradbury wrapped up the evening with reminders of the upcoming MBTA schedule, including Transportation on Tap and the MBTA 81st Annual Meeting. He also announced the winner of the 50-50 Raffle. Cody Berkowitz took home \$180, while an equal amount went to the MBTA Scholarship Fund. ■

FMI: The MBTA holds regional meetings throughout the year where we discuss issues related to current events and the transportation industry. For more information, check out the Events tab at [www.mbtaonline.org](http://www.mbtaonline.org).



Lindsey Lamontagne and Hugh Carroll (above). Sean Chaput, Ryan Bragg and David Berlin (below).



# Until we meet again

ON MARCH 16, MBTA President Paul Bradbury sent a somber letter to the MBTA membership. He was addressing the fast-changing public health crisis caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the related illness known as COVID-19. That same day, Portland Mayor Kate Snyder and Portland City Manager Jon Jennings announced a city-wide curfew banning group gatherings that would go into effect one day later on St. Patrick’s Day. As Jennings said at the press conference announcing the curfew: “In a global pandemic, it cannot be business as usual. We simply cannot have large gatherings. We need your help in confronting the coronavirus in detail.”

### SLOWING THE SPREAD

Just three days earlier on March 13, the Maine CDC had reported the first known positive test result for the disease in Maine, and the MBTA board of directors acted quickly, cancelling the Transportation on Tap gathering planned for April 9, and alerting members that other MBTA meetings, including the MBTA’s 81st Annual Meeting on May 7 may be cancelled as the organization worked to do its part to help slow the spread of the highly contagious virus.

In his letter, Bradbury wrote: “Please know that the staff and board of the Maine Better Transportation Association continue to monitor issues related to COVID-19. While there has been ample media coverage on the situation, some more accurate than others, the MBTA staff is following the recommendations of Maine and U.S. CDC in order to promote public safety and joining others in trying to control the spread of COVID-19.”

In his letter, Bradbury noted that the organization was following Governor Janet Mills’ recommendation regarding non-essential travel and large meetings and that the MBTA staff would be setting up conference calls or ZOOM meetings for committee and board meetings. He promised to keep members in-the-know as well, updating events quickly on the MBTA Facebook page and web site, and through e-mails.

Since that first COVID-19 E-Alert, much has changed. By late March, the number of reported infections in the state had risen to several hundred, and on March 30, Governor Janet Mills issued the Stay Healthy at Home directive that requires people living in Maine to stay at home at all times unless for an essential job or an essential personal reason, such as obtaining food, medicine, health care, or other necessary purposes.

### LOOKING AHEAD

This year, the MBTA 81st Annual Meeting was scheduled for May 7 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport, and, as you know, MBTA is unable to hold the gathering due to COVID-19. Since it is not yet known when larger gatherings will be able to take place, the organization has moved forward with the election of officers and new directors (check your e-mail for the ballot). MBTA is so grateful to Paul Bradbury, director of Portland International Jetport, who has served as president for the past year. Paul’s energy, depth of knowledge, work ethic and unfailing optimism are legendary; in fact, at the MBTA Cumberland County Meeting in March, Portland City Manager Jon Jennings, who used to work for the Boston Celtics, referred to Paul as “The Larry Bird of U.S. airports.”

While the MBTA staff is working remotely (for the most part), they are continuing the work of advocating for investment in a safe, efficient transportation network for all of Maine. MBTA staff and board members miss seeing members, but everyone is staying very busy, and trying to

get as much pertinent information out to members as possible. It is a balance to disseminate information while trying not to overwhelm you with emails. MBTA has been sending most communications out through Constant Contact (CC) e-mails, and understand that, despite the staff’s best efforts, some organizations have filters that block messages from web-based services like CC. If you haven’t been receiving MBTA messages, please let the staff know, and they can look into it or forward e-mails to you as an individual email.

In terms of live events, MBTA expects the organization’s first upcoming event to be a Transportation on Tap, the traveling social hour hosted by MBTA Young Professionals, likely to be held in Brunswick. Stay tuned for more information.

### WORKING THROUGH THE CRISIS

MBTA staff has been working throughout the crisis to provide members with updates on resources available to them and their businesses, including accessing forgivable loans in the federal economic relief package, the CARES Act, that was passed by the U.S. Congress on March 26, as well as state resources.

Please feel free to contact the MBTA staff if you have any questions or need help with anything. Call 207-622-0526 or e-mail:

- Executive Director Maria Fuentes: [maria@mbtaonline.org](mailto:maria@mbtaonline.org)
- Bookkeeper Cindy Fabbriatore: [cynthia@mbtaonline.org](mailto:cynthia@mbtaonline.org);
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- Communications Director Kathryn Buxton: [kathryn@mbtaonline.org](mailto:kathryn@mbtaonline.org)

As Paul Bradbury wrote in his March 16 letter, “In Maine, we know how to come together during tough times, and we are confident we will see that during this time of uncertainty as well.”

MBTA, its staff and its board of directors are thinking of you all during these challenging times and are here to help however they can. ■

## Stay in the know

Information about MBTA meeting dates, including cancellations and postponements:

- [www.MBTAonline.org](http://www.MBTAonline.org) (go to the Events tab)
- Facebook ([www.facebook.com/MaineBetterTransportation](http://www.facebook.com/MaineBetterTransportation))
- Instagram (@MaineBetterTransportation)
- LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/groups/8780285](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/8780285))

COVID-19 resources for businesses and individuals:

- [bit.ly/MBTA-covid-19-resources](https://bit.ly/MBTA-covid-19-resources)



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# Down to earth

## GZA GeoEnvironmental grows into its 6<sup>th</sup> decade

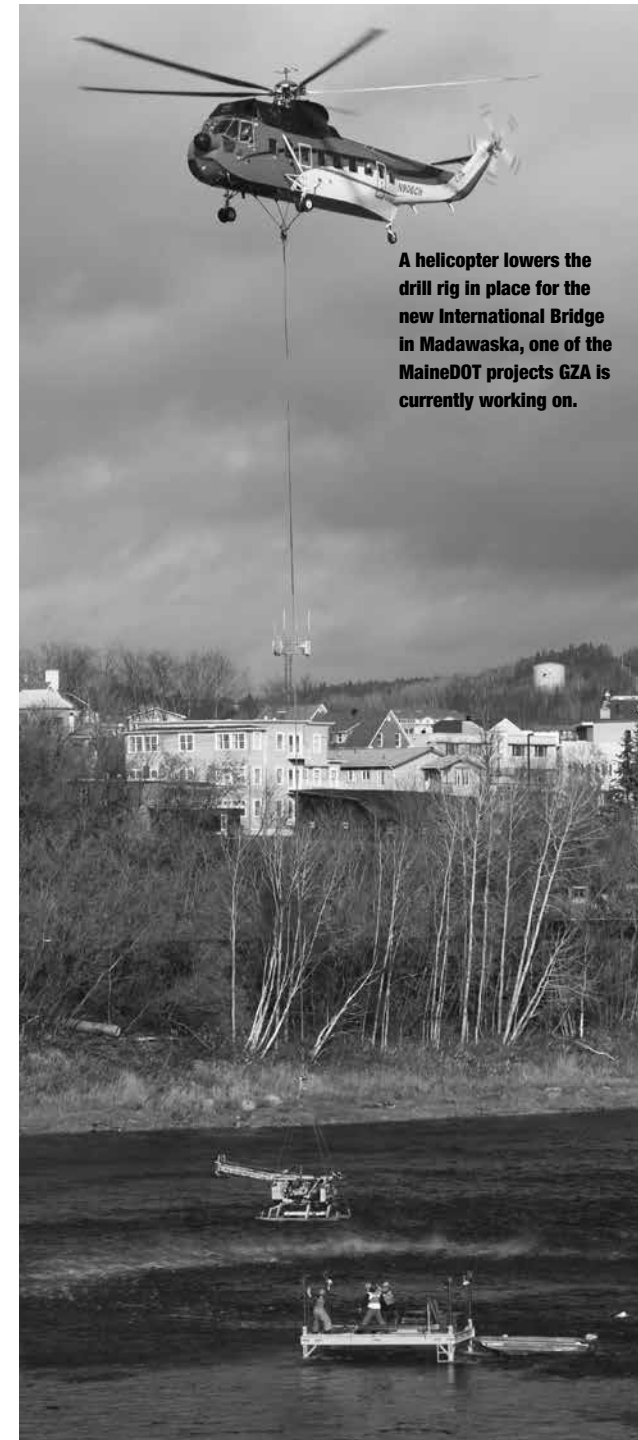
It's a quiet morning in late March, made all the quieter by recent social distancing restrictions placed on Maine businesses due to the coronavirus outbreak. The South Portland offices of GZA GeoEnvironmental are unusually quiet, according to Chris Snow, associate principal and vice president of the firm. Snow also manages the South Portland office, so he is one of two employees (Andy Blaisdell is the other) who have been making daily visits to the office to pick up the mail, order and distribute supplies and make sure things are running smoothly.

The rest of GZA's Maine staff of 13 is working from home, though Snow believes that, despite the inconveniences, the change in venue is not slowing any one of them down. The team, he said, is used to being flexible and often has had to work in the field and during off-hours to meet project requirements. Remote meetings and check-in phone calls are things they are accustomed to, and everyone on this team knows how to navigate the work-from-home office productively.

"We all have laptops and are able to work from a job site, hotel, or from home," said Snow. "We decided years ago to be able to make sure we could be mobile."

As of early April the firm, which specializes in geotechnical and environmental consulting, still had a full docket of projects underway. The company has several ongoing consulting relationships, including with Bath Iron Works, the U.S. Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth and VTrans (GZA provides on-call geotechnical engineering services for Vermont's Department of Transportation).

MaineDOT and the Maine Turnpike Authority have vowed to continue



A helicopter lowers the drill rig in place for the new International Bridge in Madawaska, one of the MaineDOT projects GZA is currently working on.

to push work out to contractors through the downturn caused by the coronavirus, and Snow said GZA is fortunate to have work on several ongoing highway and bridge projects underway in Maine.

### IN THE 60S

The firm – originally called Goldberg Zoino and Associates – was founded in 1964 by Donald T. Goldberg and William S. Zoino, two colleagues at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The firm's first office was in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the company soon expanded, adding offices throughout New England and New York. In the 1980s, the firm experienced considerable growth and launched two subsidiaries that provided environmental remediation and specialty drilling services.

According to the company history, GZA's partners decided to take the company public in 1989 and it was traded on the stock exchange for more than a decade. In 2000, after another extended period of growth, the company's senior management decided to return the firm to private ownership.


Today, GZA continues to grow and employs 700+ professional staff at 31 offices in New England, the mid-Atlantic and the Great Lakes regions. Over the last five decades the company has completed more than 100,000 projects for a wide array of public and private clients. The firm's Maine office was established in the early 1990s in downtown Portland. Last year, GZA relocated its Maine headquarters to Sable Oaks in South Portland.

### MAINE EXPERTISE

Snow originally worked at one of the firm's offices in Connecticut during the mid-1980s when he was



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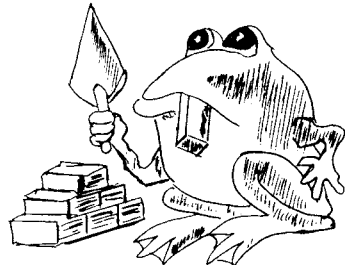
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an undergraduate student at the University of Rhode Island majoring in engineering. He went on to get his master's in engineering from Texas A&M University and, after working for other firms, rejoined GZA in 2000 after hearing that the firm was returning to private ownership. He said that the chance to have an ownership stake in the company was a big selling point. GZA offers shares to its salaried staff and long-term employees with 10-plus years with the company.

Snow brought on Andy Blaisdell, who holds an undergraduate engineering degree from Clarkson University and a master's from University of California-Berkeley, to join the firm's Maine office in 2010. Between the two of them, they manage a team that offers a wide range of geotechnical and environmental consulting services throughout GZA's service area. While both are known for managing geotechnical and marine projects, Blaisdell leads GZA's geotechnical earthquake engineering practice and provides consulting services within the company on major geotechnical earthquake engineering assignments.

Blaisdell and Snow were part of the team that developed the geotechnical design for the Tappan Zee Bridge crossing the Hudson River in New York. Blaisdell consulted on the seismic design and Snow on the very large diameter driven piles of the bridge's foundations. In Vermont, GZA has an ongoing contract to evaluate rock slope failures and at-risk rock slopes for VTTrans for which they employ a combination of LIDAR and on-site inspection, often rappelling down the rock faces to perform first-hand mapping of the sites. In preparation for this work, GZA hosted a special three-day training event for its northeast staff who were able to earn their level 1 slope access certification from the Professional Climbing Instructors Association. Snow and Blaisdell led an evening session that gave participants a refresher in rock-slope evaluation, basic field rock-mapping techniques, rock slope stabilization design, construction observation and GZA safety practices. Snow wrote a column



GZA's Nick Williams assessing high above a highway rock slope in Rockingham, Vermont.

in the *Portland Press Herald* about the experience titled, "Can your geotechnical engineer/geologist do this?"

**MAINE PROJECTS**

The GZA team's expertise can be seen on several noteworthy projects during the past two decades. The firm was the geotechnical designer and won an ACEC Engineering Excellence Award for the preload design for the Veterans Bridge in Portland. Because the project included waterfront construction over mudflats that were considered environmentally sensitive, GZA designed a 25-foot high preload embankment that, during construction, was anchored with a sheet pile cofferdam. That structure provided the stability that allowed crews to construct the permanent pile-support abutment and retaining wall. The team also designed, installed and monitored geotechnical instrumentation to assess the performance of the preload, including settlement plates, piezometers and inclinometers.

Based on the data gathered, GZA recommended removal of the preload approximately five months ahead of schedule.

Among the firm's current Maine projects are the subsurface investigation and foundation design for the new International Bridge in Madawaska and geotechnical consulting on the



GZA Maine Ski Day, Sunday River March 12, 2020 just days before Maine imposed social distancing orders. Left to right: Allie Hazard, Nick Williams, Mike Johnescu, Luis Navarrete, Chris Snow, Andy Blaisdell and Maddie Blaisdell.

Warren Avenue overpass replacement for the Maine Turnpike Authority.

In Madawaska, GZA's Nick Williams led the team that used a custom fabricated drill platform constructed by partner firm New England Boring that was placed on location using a helicopter. The setup was a unique solution to the challenge of drilling test borings at essential pier locations in a river that was too shallow and dangerous to navigate with a barge, yet too deep to access with land-based equipment.

At Warren Avenue, Blaine Cardali managed the GZA design of an innovative solution to limit long-term settlement of the reconstructed I-95 mainline being built on Maine's heavy clay soil. The project is using ultra lightweight foamed glass aggregate (ULFGA) as fill. The material



produced from recycled glass bottles can be used to reduce settlement in place of wick drains or expanded polystyrene (EPS) lightweight fill. Snow said this is one of the first times the material has been used in northern New England, and is an example of the value engineering that GZA can bring to a job.

"It is a pumice-like material that is very light, and we expect it will become more popular because it can be placed using traditional methods," said Snow. For the overpass project, it will reduce settlement at the site, eliminate negative friction on the piles and decrease the bump in the road where the mainline highway embankments meet the bridge.

GZA Portland's Aimee Mountain is managing an effort for the MaineDOT and the New England Transportation Consortium to develop an ESRI-based screening tool for potential slope stability and erosion areas. The tool will help planners and engineers with asset management in the geotechnical area. The first step is expected to be completed in about 18 months. It is a pilot tool that will allow the user to evaluate these risks for transportation assets in Maine.

In addition to consulting on design and construction projects, GZA also consults on environmental issues, including air permitting, storm water management, resource delineation, stream monitoring and stream restoration, as well as assessment of contaminated soil and water. The Portland office currently provides environmental support and compliance services for the Maine Turnpike Authority and in-house training for the MTA's maintenance personnel. Portland's Kate McDonald, Ben Woodman and Allie Hazard have been integral to the team assessing and mitigating industrial PFAS (perfluorooctanoic acid)

contamination for GZA's Michigan office and have provided technical review and project support for PFAS projects around the company.

### THE COMMUNITY

GZA is committed to supporting community charities and projects as well. The firm is a frequent sponsor of MBTA-related events, including the MBTA Annual Meeting and the Maine Transportation Conference. GZA's Blaisdell is an active member of the MBTA Membership Committee, as well. Since 2010, GZA employees have donated more than \$800,000 to charitable organizations in the communities where they work. The company founded the Shareholders Grant Program in 2013, and every year selects several projects for grants that are spearheaded by GZA staff. Those grants in recent years have included work supporting community gardens, cancer research and animal welfare. In Maine, GZA matches individual contributions staff make to the Good Shepherd Food Bank. In lieu of a formal holiday party, GZA Portland staff volunteer to ring bells at Salvation Army kettles around South Portland and have a celebratory meal at a local pub. The Portland staff also gather to celebrate Maine with events for clients and staffers at the Portland Sea Dogs and Maine Ski Day, which for several GZA team members, sadly closed out this season in mid-March.

These commitments are just one more reason that GZA has a strong reputation in the community, something Snow says comes with working for a company that cares about its employees and the communities in which they work. "We get to live in a nice place and work on challenging stuff," said Snow. "It doesn't get much better than that." ■

FMI: To learn more, visit [www.gza.com](http://www.gza.com).

# Taking the right turn

## After more than 25 years, Rob Kenerson leaves BACTS

**R**OB KENERSON hadn't expected his last few days on the job would be spent during a time of social distancing. That has made saying goodbye to the people he has worked with for more than 25 years all the more challenging. It also has put some of his post-retirement plans on hold for the duration.

Kenerson has been the executive director of BACTS – the Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System – since January 1995. In the 25 years and four months since taking that position, he has steered the 10 communities and Penobscot Indian Nation, that make up

the membership of the metropolitan planning organization, through transportation planning and projects that have helped transform the region. In 2013, he had overseen the MPO's move from under the wing of the Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). The organization also had recently completed two of its essential long-range plan documents: the *BACTS Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2018-2038* and the *BACTS Long-Range Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan*.

"Last summer, it felt like a really good time to go," said Kenerson of the decision to retire. "It's been 25 years and the organization was in good shape."



Rob Kenerson

spending more time with his wife, who is already retired, getting his Class B commercial driver's license, and possibly launching a new, part-time career driving people to medical appointments. The idea of starting something new has been immensely appealing to him. He also was looking forward to spending more time with his 13 grandchildren.

"I wanted something different," he said. "I was feeling like I was stuck in a rut and doing a lot of paperwork. I want to help people in a more direct way."

But by early April, some of those plans were put on hold when Governor Janet Mills announced a state of emergency and was urging social distancing due to the coronavirus, and state offices, including the Department of Motor Vehicles, had closed to the public.

Still, Kenerson said he does not regret his decision since he believes he is leaving the planning organization in good hands. He and his successor, Sara Devlin, have been working

together at BACTS since January, and he has known Sara through her work at the Maine Turnpike Authority and PACTS (Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System) over the years. She had been one of the first people in what became a national search to show interest in the job.

"When she heard that I was leaving, Sara had given me a call and asked me about the job," said Kenerson. "I said there were very few downsides. You have a great Policy Committee and our

relationship with MaineDOT is very good." Devlin went through the application process and made it to the final interview along with one other candidate. Devlin, who grew up in

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A crew works to remove the old Grist Mill Bridge in Hampden. The new "72-hour bridge," designed by Kenerson's son Tim, marks the completion of a Route 1A reconstruction that BACTS began more than 20 years ago.

Kenerson, an engineer by training who graduated from the University of Maine in 1985, first worked for engineering firms in Florida and Portland, Maine, before joining BACTS in 1995. He is looking forward to





At Kenerson's retirement party, above left, he praised the many dedicated, open-minded and equitable staff and BACTS committee members he worked with over the years. Friends and co-workers celebrated Kenerson with a delicious memento of his time at BACTS, right.

the area and had worked in transportation in Maine for many years, did well in the interviews, and Kenerson said he was pleased when the BACTS Policy Committee offered her the job.

Devlin joined BACTS as executive director in late January. Kenerson stayed on in the role of deputy director through early April to ease the transition.

Even though she has known Kenerson for several years and counted on his advice while serving as transportation director for PACTS, Devlin said that working alongside him was a good way to learn on the job.

"Rob has a calm, steady approach which

instills trust," said Devlin. "Rob's integrity has led to strong partnerships and great transportation projects . . . Rob wants to find solutions and he wants to get things done, he focuses on solutions not obstacles."

She added: "Rob is like the kingpin of MPO directors in Maine, so I knew that I would be joining a well-run organization, with an extraordinary staff. He is so respected by his staff, which is a sign of a great leader."

Under Kenerson's leadership, the agency oversaw the construction of one of the region's first roundabouts at the intersection of Godfrey Drive and Maine Avenue in Bangor in 2012 which had been one of the high crash locations

tracked by MaineDOT. He also shepherded projects including the introduction of center turning lanes on several of the region's major commercial corridors.

One of the projects he is most proud of is the reconstruction of a three-and-a-half-mile stretch of Route 1A in Hampden leading up to the Bangor city line. The planning for this project began before Kenerson started at BACTS. BACTS had tackled the project in sections until Kenerson talked to MaineDOT about loaning the agency the money so the process could be completed more quickly.

"We were doing just short sections of the road," said Kenerson. "Just a quarter mile here



During Kenerson's leadership at BACTS, the region undertook several seminal transportation projects including, above left, construction of one of the region's first roundabouts at the intersection of Godfrey Drive and Maine Avenue in Bangor. Sara Devlin, right, joined BACTS as the new executive director earlier this year.



and there every two years. That's a costly way to reconstruct a road."

MaineDOT fronted the extra funding to complete the project, including construction of a composite girder bridge to replace the Grist Mill Bridge in Hampden. The new bridge will be one of AIT's new "72-hour bridges" designed right here in Maine. Kenerson is doubly proud because his youngest son, Tim Kenerson, who works for AIT, served as a senior designer on the project. The bridge is scheduled to be completed in August of this year.

"That was a neat addition to the project," said Kenerson. "It was the first big project he


put his stamp on as a professional engineer."


Looking back at his time at BACTS, Kenerson said he is particularly grateful for the working relationships he built with his staff, MaineDOT and the BACTS Policy and Executive committees, whose members he credits with being open-minded and equitable. During his time, he introduced "project rides" for which BACTS would rent vans and committee members would tour all of the proposed projects together as a group. That, he said, made it easier for members to achieve consensus on how and where it would be best to spend the limited local and state

funds BACTS has available.


MaineDOT and the four MPOs in Maine have a great working relationship. A few years ago the agencies decided to produce a guidebook outlining the responsibilities of each agency and the state and federal decision-making processes. This guidebook was unusual at that time and has been requested and used by other MPOs and state DOTs.

"I remember going to national conferences and hearing about how other state DOTs didn't like working with their MPOs and wanted to get rid of them and thinking, 'Wow, we have it good here,'" said Kenerson. ■


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## Go, Sox!

MBTA members met up at Hammond Stadium in Fort Myers, Florida to watch the Boston Red Sox take on the Minnesota Twins on February 28. MBTAers had the chance to see Sox standout J.D. Martinez at work. In his first up at bat, Martinez hit a triple. His second time at bat, he hit his first homer of the season. Unfortunately, Martinez was the Sox's only scorer for the day. Minnesota won the game (4-to-1). Before spring training was suspended on March 12, the Sox were 1 for 2 in their match-ups against the Twins. But isn't it great to see all those tan, smiling MBTA members' faces!

# National podcast features Herb Sargent

**T**HE PODCAST Aaron Witt's Dirt Talk on Iheart.com features an interview with Maine's own Herb Sargent, president and CEO of Sargent Corp. The podcast first aired on March 1 of this year. The interview features the story of Herb, and how he founded Sargent Corp.

In 1926, Herb Sargent's grandfather started a heavy construction business called H. E. Sargent with a dump truck and steam shovel. The company expanded and changed over the decades as Herb's dad and Herb himself joined the family business to build airports, interstates, and dams.

In 1988, a large French company purchased H. E. Sargent. After a few years of working for the changing business, Herb R. Sargent thought he could start his own business. So he did.

He not only started a new business with his brother Shane, called Sargent & Sargent, but grew it so fast that in 2005, he purchased H.E. Sargent back from the French when the company was over four times the size of his own. [After a few years with Sargent & Sargent, Shane started his own company, Maine Earth.] Sargent & Sargent was a relatively small company of about 80 employees. H.E. Sargent had about 500, Herb said in the interview. "It was kind of the guppy swallowing the whale in a way." The best part, he said, was that his 99-year-old grandfather was alive to see the company back in the Sargent family.

"It was kind of like starting a business all over again," in the sense that at that point it's about going "all in," said Sargent. It helped for all involved that they knew that business, and Herb said he was grateful for the counsel of Tim Folster and George Thomas, two long-time employees he had brought over to Sargent & Sargent from H.E. Sargent and who, he said, "made the purchase possible."

The two companies merged to become what's now Sargent Corporation – a heavy civil construction company with more than 400 people on staff and projects in seven states across the northeast and mid-Atlantic. Sargent Corp. is not only now employee-owned, the company also is "really, really aggressive on matching 401ks." Sargent Corp. also set up an academy in which it recruits, trains and pays kids fresh out of high school to give a career in construction a shot. (Sargent, himself, never completed college.)

He talks about giving it a try but learning quickly that construction was his true love). And after what he learned from bussing tables in Florida: that what he thought were "the three things he needed in life . . . Budweiser, Chicken McNuggets and rent" wasn't enough, he went back to construction. Sargent Corp.'s "academy" is designed to cut out the bussing phase, giving kids with an interest in construction a leg up in the business.

Witt peppers Sargent with questions about the academy for a good portion of the podcast – its ups and downs and Sargent's belief in it and the value construction holds for anyone considering it as a career, as he so well knows and sees played out again and again in the young people moving through the academy.

Sargent says it was almost "unfair" that he was given the "gift at 14, or 15" to know what he wanted to do. He also offered up advice to young people starting out today: ". . . keep moving. If you don't like it, you can get into something else."

In part two of the interview, Witt talks with Sargent about the challenges of guiding a company through an economic downturn. Plenty of wisdom and insight in these two interviews! Check them out. ■

FMI: Listen to the full episodes at: [podtail.com/en/podcast/dirt-talk-by-buildwitt/](http://podtail.com/en/podcast/dirt-talk-by-buildwitt/) - episodes DT009 and DT013.



Herb R. Sargent with his grandfather Herbert E. Sargent, who founded H.E. Sargent in 1926.



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# CIANBRO wins 2019 ABC Pinnacle Award

**C**IANBRO AND Starcon, a Cianbro company, have both received the 2019 National Safety Excellence Awards as Pinnacle recipients from Associated Builders and Contractors. This is the sixth year in a row that Cianbro has been recognized at the Pinnacle level and the first year for Starcon.

The 2019 National Safety Excellence Award winners were selected from ABC member firms that achieved Diamond, Platinum and Gold status in ABC's STEP Safety Management System in 2019. During the selection process, contractors were judged on self-evaluation scores, lost workday case rates, total recordable

incident rates, leading indicator use, process and program innovations, and video interviews conducted by members of ABC's National Safety and Health Committee.

Additionally, Cianbro earned the Excellence in Construction Pyramid Award for the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge Replacement in Kittery, Maine. Starcon earned the Excellence in Construction Eagle Award for the 2018 Maintenance and Turnaround Program in Canton, Ohio. The awards program is the industry's leading competition that honors contractors for innovative and high-quality merit shop projects.

"The craftsmanship of Cianbro

and Starcon and their hard-working employees continues to raise the bar when it comes to how we define excellence in construction," said 2020 ABC National Chair Tim Keating, owner and president of R.C. Stevens Construction Co., Winter Garden, Florida. "It's an honor to recognize these award winners for their respective commitments to building safely, on time and on budget, as well as contribute to the communities in which they work."

The awards will be presented at the 30th annual Excellence in Construction Awards during ABC Convention 2020 later on this year. ■

# Poland Spring, Maine Tourism Association create Maine Tourism Relief Fund

**T**HE MAINE Tourism Association (MTA) and Poland Spring 100% Natural Spring Water, part of the Nestlé Waters family, announced the official launch of The Maine Tourism Relief Fund, founded by Poland Spring and the Maine Tourism Association. Thanks to a generous donation of \$100,000 by Poland Spring and the work of the Maine Tourism Association, one-time grants will be made available to Maine's tourism businesses and employees who have been impacted by a loss of business, or decrease in income, due to the COVID-19 crisis. Both MTA and Poland Spring are members of MBTA.

Said Tony Cameron, CEO of the Maine Tourism Association: "Tourism is the backbone of Maine's economy, and that is why the industry needs to be supported in this difficult time. These small businesses are what makes Maine a unique and special place to live – and visit. . . We hope that by creating this fund, we can help protect the industries that Mainers and visitors alike will enjoy for many years to come."

One hundred percent of the money donated to the Maine Tourism Relief Fund will be given directly to fund recipients.

"One-hundred-and-seventy-five years ago, Poland Spring started out as a small Maine business and tourist destination, and we are proud to team up with the Maine Tourism Association to help support today's small businesses in the tourism industry," said Tara Carraro, executive vice president and chief corporate affairs officer for Nestlé Waters North America, which owns the Poland Spring brand. Subject to the availability of funds, a one-time grant of \$500 for individuals or \$1,000 for businesses with fewer than 50 employees will be disbursed directly to the applicant following the review and confirmation of eligibility, within approximately seven days of the closing of the application process. Awards will be limited to one grant per household. ■

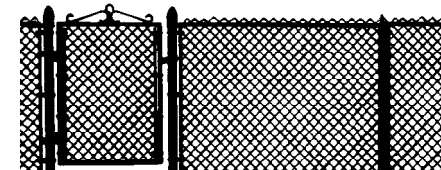
FMI: Details about the grants are available at [mainetourism.com/maine-tourism-relief-fund/](http://mainetourism.com/maine-tourism-relief-fund/).

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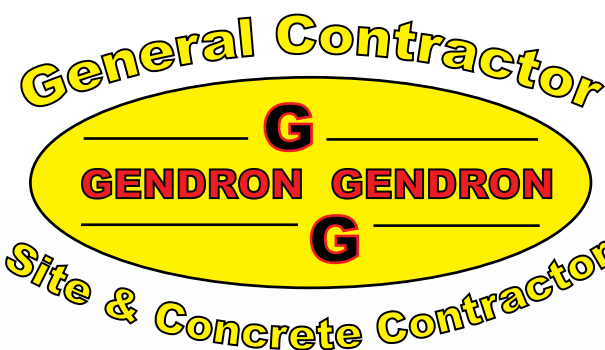
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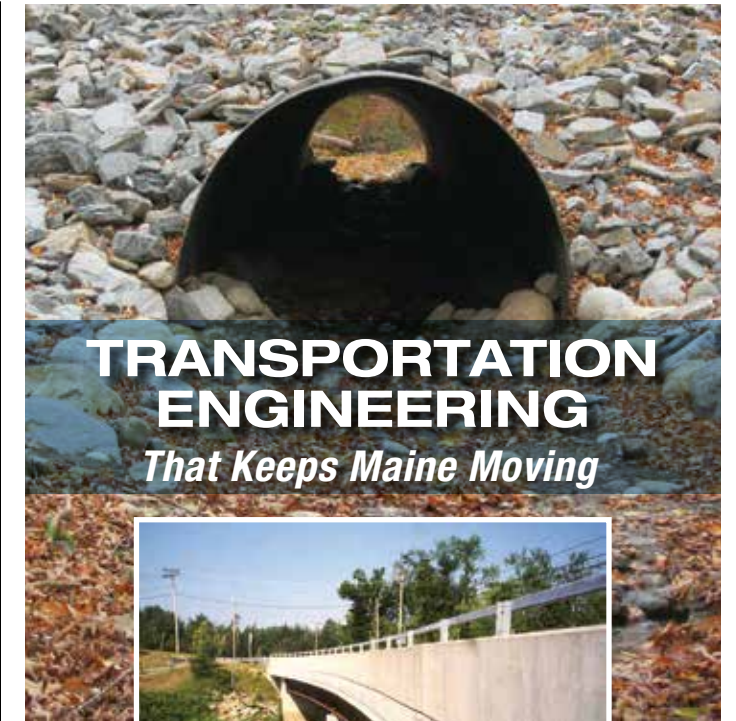
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## LET'S GET GOING!

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## New Benefits Department team members:



**Justin Clutter** comes to The Rowley Agency after graduating from Assumption College and working in Finance & Auditing since graduating.



**Matt Labbe** is a graduate of UNH and has worked in Underwriting for UNUM, Liberty and Lincoln Financial.



**Tim Truncellito** is a graduate of St. Paul's School and Wesleyan University and has been a part of Truncellito & Davis for 10 years.

## New Commercial Insurance Department team members:



**Jonathan Watkins** is a graduate of Kent State University and has been with Grange Mutual and more recently Cincinnati Insurance, performing several roles including Underwriting and Field Marketing.



**Tyler Halstead** is a graduate of Keene State College and was with AmTrust North America, with roles and experience in Loss Control and Underwriting.

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# Our renewed focus on Maine's future

**M**AINEDOT is responsible for planning and overseeing a safe and reliable multimodal transportation system for our state. This system connects people to their destinations and moves freight throughout Maine. There are several trends that we anticipate will impact our transportation system in the years to come, including rapidly changing technology, climate change, a changing economy, and an aging population. Planning for these changes with limited transportation dollars requires the Maine Department of Transportation to move ahead in a thoughtful and measured manner. That's why MaineDOT is putting a new emphasis on its Bureau of Planning.

The Bureau of Planning's mission is to turn input, ideas, and future trends into reasoned action. We do so by developing and maintaining customer and stakeholder relationships relating to all transportation modes, analyzing system impacts, administering freight and passenger programs, and producing viable project candidates for our Work Plan.

Late last year, MaineDOT reorganized the Bureau of Planning. This reorganization was done with an emphasis on building relationships and improving communication – both externally and internally. The Bureau has three divisions.

## 1. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND PLANNING DIVISION

This Division forms the heart of the planning function. It is responsible for proactively building and maintaining relationships with customers and stakeholders of all modes to produce coordinated planning efforts and viable project candidates. This Division is also responsible for producing statewide and regional long-term plans and leading high-profile planning efforts. This Division oversees three sections.

- Our Regional Planners are our eyes and ears at MaineDOT. They have been to every corner of our state, building relationships with municipalities, metropolitan planning organizations, regional planning and economic development organizations, and other community leaders. Our Regional Planners know what MaineDOT programs are available, and they can match those programs to the specific needs of customers and stakeholders. These planners are responsible for staying up to speed on regional developments.
- The Multimodal Planning section is charged with building and maintaining relationships with multimodal advocates and stakeholders and developing multimodal planning documents. Stakeholders include the Public Transit Advisory Council, transit planners, rail advocacy groups, aviation stakeholders, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, the Eastern Trail Alliance, and other trail groups.
- The Project Viability section in this Division bridges the gap between planning and project development by evaluating and more clearly defining complicated projects. This group turns partially-vetted concepts and ideas into viable project candidates. Evaluations are typically done on major – sometimes even transformational – projects or initiatives. Examples include regional studies, significant

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new capacity, complete street concepts, and downtown or village improvements. These types of projects are qualitatively different than the perennial asset management work needed to manage MaineDOT's existing highway and bridge system.





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### 2. FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES DIVISION

This Division develops policy, programs, and projects that improve Maine's freight transportation network and passenger programs. The Division maintains operational relationships with multimodal transportation providers, shippers, businesses, and municipalities including freight and passenger rail operators, port owners and operators, trucking interests, freight-related businesses, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA), transit operators and airports. This Division also oversees the administration of grants, operating assistance, and federal compliance to identify and leverage all available funding programs. It plans and manages demand-response freight and passenger programs and freight and passenger-related discretionary programs.

### 3. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

This Division provides multimodal transportation analysis to support decisions within the Bureau of Planning as well as other operating units

within MaineDOT. Analysis is done at the project, corridor, regional, and statewide level. The Division studies all modes of transportation and analyzes modal choice and the interconnectivity of the intermodal traveler. The Division also provides analysis of complex alternatives and recommends appropriate alternatives and strategies for implementation that ensure the safety and mobility of the traveling public. This Division has provided guidance and policy support for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Even though the results of the work done in MaineDOT's Bureau of Planning are often intangible, the work we do is important. Our dedicated planners work with our many partners to coordinate planning efforts, make connections, analyze data, and solve problems. We analyze trends and plan for a transportation system that supports Maine's future. Our renewed focus on planning will help support MaineDOT's mission to responsibly provide our customers with the safest and most reliable transportation system possible, given available resources. ■

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## B.I.B. (before the International Bridge)

**C**ROSS BORDER commerce has long been important to the local economies of Madawaska, Maine, and Edmundston, New Brunswick. As far back as the late 1800s, residents regularly crossed by boat between the two towns, and there was an outpost of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on the United States shore of the St. John River as far back as the early 1920s. Viva D. LaPlante, who worked in the INS Madawaska office wrote a good history of the crossing in the *I & N Reporter* (Volume II, No. 3, 1954).



1919 photo of a hand-pulled ferry that enabled travel between Madawaska and Edmundston prior to the construction of the original bridge.

“Early ‘commuters’ made their comings and goings by rowboat or ‘bateau’ and in the years immediately preceding the erection in 1922 of the steel bridge that connects Edmundston, N.B. and Madawaska, Maine, a ferry was operated. However the ‘deep freeze’ of the St. John River each winter made a ferry boat unnecessary for several months of the year, and a road over the ice was the accepted thing. . . The temperature at Madawaska has on occasion fallen as low as 58 degrees below zero, and in the summer sometimes hovers between 98 or 100 in the shade.”

LaPlante, who had worked for the INS office in Madawaska since 1932, noted that the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad had averaged

7,500 carloads of freight in recent years, primarily paper from the Fraser Paper Mill and local Maine potatoes.

Today MaineDOT is overseeing plans to replace the nearly 100-year-old international bridge that has been in poor condition and closed to commercial traffic in recent years. The new crossing and expanded border station will be approximately 1,300 feet upriver on the St. John. The project is set to advertise in the fourth quarter of 2020. ■





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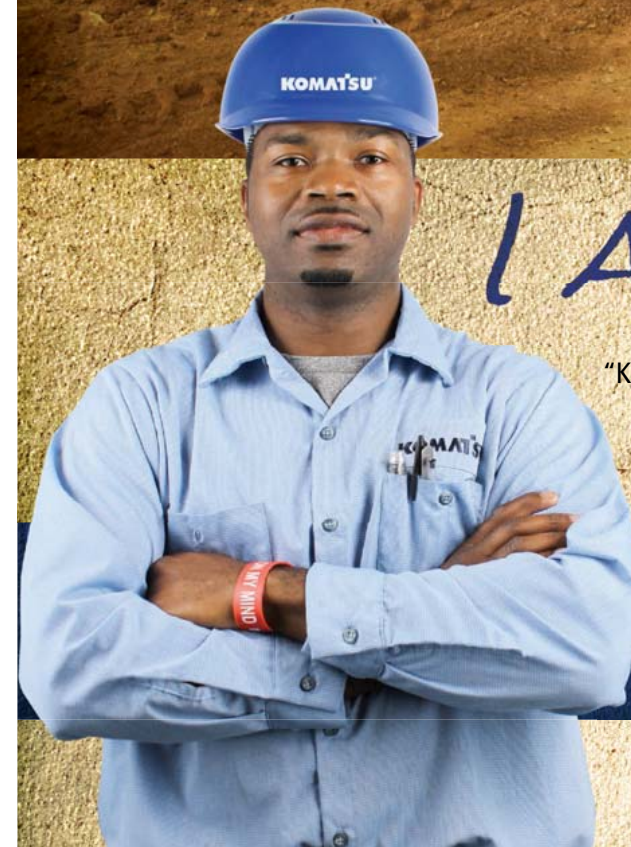
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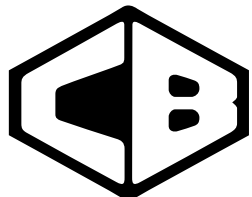
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