

Position Paper

File #: TMP-809

Agenda Date: 7/20/2026

Agenda Item Request

County Commissioners position on Option 2 of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authorities feasibility study for a new train station in Portland.

Background and Purpose of Request

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NEPRA) has been communicating with the Sheriff and me for over the last six months concerning its efforts to relocate the Amtrak Station to a site along St. Johns Street in Portland.

The Authority has gone through a feasibility study to explore potential sites a station could operate. The study was commissioned to explore locations that would provide efficiencies in Amtrak operations as they continue to focus on providing service north of the City. Currently, the trains need to back-up from the station to the mainline in order to head north out of the current station. This movement adds fifteen to twenty minutes to the route schedule. One of the locations the study brings forward is located behind the "Railroad Building" on St. John Street, adjacent to the old Union Station site (now a strip mall). This site appears to be in conflict with County Jail operations and security, as a station would span across the railroad lines and operate from both sides of the tracks, coming within 39-feet of the County Jail.

The Sheriff and I have expressed concerns due to its proximity to the Jail and hindering its operations.

NEPRA has requested that the County Commissioners taking a position on whether this location is acceptable to the County.