

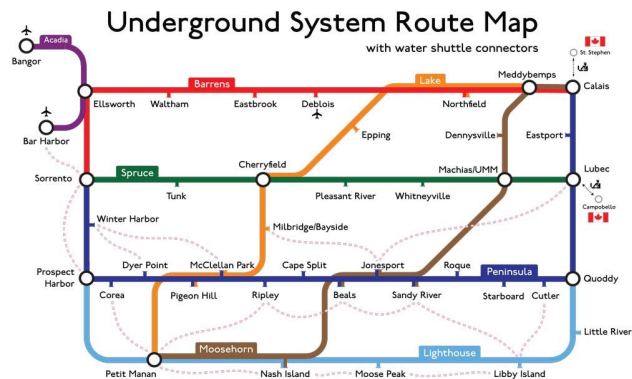
# Downeast Rapid Transit

A public arts project for  
Coastal Washington County and beyond

Welcome aboard the "D" — the first, longest, fastest, smoothest, most affordable, and most energy efficient subterranean public transit system in all of Maine.

Conceived in 2010 and launched in 2014, Downeast Rapid Transit (a.k.a. "the DRT" or simply "the D") is an ongoing public art project that inserts evidence of a fully operational high-speed, high-efficiency underground subway system into public places in and around coastal Washington County, Maine.

To many residents and visitors who are inured to driving countless hours across this sparsely populated and economically disadvantaged region,<sup>1</sup> high speed rapid transit comes as a welcome relief. The DRT bypasses the real-world economic challenges of building such a system<sup>2</sup> by imagining it as a fully functioning completed reality.



DRT subway stations are portals to the deep that appear at unexpected public places in the surface world: the parking lot of a business in downtown Ellsworth; alongside a gently flowing stream popular among birders and kayakers; or on the shoulder of a remote unpaved rural road. Each station is an invitation to descend into the world of imagination, a reminder of the deep connections that weave our lives together.

Stations, parking areas, and other facilities are marked by custom signs (provided, signed, and dated by the artist) that are installed at prearranged locations by volunteer "station masters", who serve as guardians and public spokespersons for their stations. Each station master is issued a set of official DRT business cards and is invited to customize his or her station by installing benches, shelters, parking areas, escalators, vending machines, or any other features and services — real or imagined — they deem suitable for their station.

The DRT website ([downeastrapidtransit.com](http://downeastrapidtransit.com)) is the central repository of official information about the system. The website offers maps, schedules, station photos, travel alerts, and other timely information useful to travelers. The site is tightly integrated with social media platforms Facebook (@DowneastRapidTransit) and Twitter (@DRT\_news), through which the DRT posts official news and announcements. Station masters, riders, and curious onlookers are all invited to post their reports, sightings, photos, discoveries, and reflections on Facebook and on Twitter (hashtags #DowneastRapidTransit and #theUndergroundConnectsUsAll).

**Service update**  
**Sun July 19, 2015 9:05pm**

All services are operating on schedule.

All travelers are welcome on the DRT. As each train pulls away from the station and accelerates into the depths, riders are encouraged to put down their smartphones, greet their neighbors, and listen to the Earth. After ascending and disembarking at their destination, travelers — once strangers, now companions — can often be heard laughing and sharing stories of their remarkable journey between the physical world and the imaginary, between the surface world and the unconscious depths. It is on this journey that we can finally meet and embrace one another as we truly are: fellow travelers in the deep. The Underground connects us all.

For more information about the DRT, or to get involved with the project, please write to:

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 c/o JT Bullitt  
 PO Box 37  
 Milbridge ME 04658  
 email: [info@downeastrapidtransit.com](mailto:info@downeastrapidtransit.com)

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Washington County's per-capita income was \$19,401 in 2010 — near the bottom of the seventh decile of all counties in the US ("United States counties by per capita income", Wikipedia, retrieved 20150719). The per-capita income of the town of Milbridge (where the DRT is based) ranks near the bottom of all of Maine's communities (#509 of 540) ("Maine locations by per capita income", Wikipedia, retrieved 20150719).

<sup>2</sup> The estimated cost of constructing the DRT is \$100B, according to a comparative study of existing urban subway systems around the world. This makes it by far the costliest terrestrial transportation project ever undertaken. See "Construction Cost Estimates" (DRT Technical Report #2015-0411).