

Lewiston Supports CMP Clean Energy Investment That Will Expand Municipal Tax Base



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LEWISTON: Central Maine Power Company's (CMP) New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) Project received 7-0 unanimous support by the Lewiston City Council at its June 19, 2018, meeting with the passage of a favorable Resolve. The City has long enjoyed a close and harmonious relationship with Central Maine Power and has recently worked successfully with CMP on the Maine Power Reliability Project and the Lewiston Loop project to upgrade the city's downtown electrical infrastructure.

The converter station for the new Clean Energy Connect Project will be located within the City of Lewiston. CMP's investment in Lewiston for this project is estimated to be about \$250 million, which will substantially expand the City's tax base and assist in mitigating the City's property tax rate. In addition, the permitting and construction phase of the project is projected to run through 2022, supporting an average of 1,700 jobs annually in Lewiston and Maine.

Mayor Shane Bouchard noted, *"The City is pleased to unanimously reaffirm our support for this clean renewable power project. While all utility projects have impacts, this one has major positives for Lewiston, Maine, and the region, with few negatives. It will generate jobs, lower energy costs, and expand the tax base. The City has a long and positive working relationship with CMP, and we know they deliver on their promises."*

The Lewiston portion of the project will include a substation that will convert direct current to alternating current and a new power line in the existing transmission corridor that will not require additional or expanded right of way.

CMP's Vice President of Business Development Thorn Dickinson adds, *"After completing a number of major projects in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Somerset Counties over the past ten years, we have a strong relationship with the communities in this region. We're pleased to have support from Lewiston and nearly all of the host communities because of the many local and statewide benefits it will provide, including increased property tax revenues of about \$18 million annually."*

In addition, the Council Resolve noted that the availability of 9.5 terawatt hours of additional electric power in New England will help to offset expected retirements of power plants in New England, and it will increase the overall availability of electricity to our region. This additional supply will result in lower energy costs, with CMP estimating \$3.8 billion in energy related savings over the first twenty years of project operation. It is projected that this additional hydro based energy will reduce the use of current fossil fuel generated capacity, leading to the reduction of 3 million metric tons of annual carbon emissions in New England.

CMP has also worked to mitigate project impacts and has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the non-profit Western Mountains & Rivers Corporation to support conservation and nature-based tourism in that region of Maine.

In light of the *"significant benefits"* that the project will bring to Lewiston, Maine, and New England, the Council encourages all individuals and entities playing a role in the regulation and approval of the project to act expeditiously. Permits and approvals will be required from a variety of agencies including the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Land Use Planning Commission, and Public Utilities Commission, as well as the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and ISO New England.

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