

Western Maine

Regional Capital Improvement Plan Update



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Improved job opportunities and tax base for all communities in the region.

Objectives:

- Provide business assistance programs and financing to encourage entrepreneurial activity, including exporting.
- Improve and revitalize downtowns, especially service center downtowns.
- Encourage development of appropriate regional industrial, technology and business parks.
- Encourage re-use of old mill buildings and facilities.
- Encourage sustainable use of the region's natural resources ~~including~~ **with a focus on** agriculture and forestry. Support innovative concepts and value added use.
- Create, nurture and attract more entrepreneurial start-ups/activity ~~including home based businesses.~~

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Improve the skill levels of the region's workforce by coordinating education and business needs to ensure an adequate, available labor pool.
- Develop a regional plan based on the sustainability of the region and its resources. Encourage “smart-growth” concepts, **including walkable communities**, and the breaking down of institutional barriers.
- Work with state agencies to resolve regulatory conflicts between development and conservation and improve the business climate.
- **Encourage the continued viability of agricultural businesses and agricultural land protection.**

GOVERNMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Maintain a responsive and cost effective government structure that supports and implements the goals and policies contained herein.

Objectives:

- Provide for and protect the welfare of residents.
- Create job opportunities by encouraging economic development **through entrepreneurial activity and asset development.**
- Develop the necessary infrastructure to encourage economic development, protect the environment and protect the health and welfare of residents.
- Provide a sound **Pre-K-12** education and opportunities for continuing and advanced education.
- Operate efficiently and cost effectively, cooperating with other government entities and quasi-governmental agencies when appropriate, including joint purchasing and shared staff.

GOVERNMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives:

- Provide adequate public infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, gas, telecommunication, rail, airports, roads, housing, and cultural facilities) to support sound economic and community development.
- **Support an education system that creates lifelong learners, pathways to career opportunities and engaged citizens.**
- **Improve and grow broadband connectivity throughout the region.**

ENVIRONMENT

~~Goal: Natural Resource Management. Encourage municipalities, residents and businesses to reduce pollution and protect critical natural resources for use and enjoyment by future generations.~~

Protect our critical natural resources for use and enjoyment by residents and visitors.

Objectives:

- Provide continuous improvements in the quality of our ~~surface waters, including the Androscoggin River~~ **lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and wetlands. Show change**
- Protect the quality of existing high quality surface waters and groundwater, **for continued public and private drinking water sources.**
- Encourage sustainable watershed management, ~~through planning and other programs~~ **utilizing Stream Smart principles and local panning efforts to improve aquatic habitat.**

ENVIRONMENT

Objectives:

- ~~■ Develop a broad regional strategic plan that establishes a framework for local comprehensive and economic development planning efforts such that the region is working to implement a common vision of prosperity and sound environmental quality.~~
- Provide sound waste management solutions based upon the State hierarchy of Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, Energy Recovery and Landfill, respectively.
- Develop cooperative approaches to environmental protection and waste management, where appropriate and effective.
- Conserve energy and provide alternative energy sources, such as wind and hydro.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

~~Goal: Recreation and tourism facilities, services and opportunities that encourage healthy lifestyles for residents of the region and support growth in the tourism industry by providing a variety of activities.~~ Support sustainable growth in the tourism industry through new product development, existing product improvement and targeted promotion.

Objectives:

- Promote tourism throughout the region by working with the Maine's Lakes & Mountains Tourism Council.
- ~~Create an atmosphere that encourages development of the "Creative Economy" through recreation and cultural facilities, services and activities.??~~
- **Support and enhance** ~~improve~~ natural resources related tourism opportunities ~~including appropriate access to lakes and rivers and Agra tourism.~~
- ~~improve~~ **Support and enhance** cultural heritage offerings throughout the region.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Objectives:

- Encourage entrepreneurial activity for recreation and tourism product development ~~including facilities and services.~~
- ~~Develop conference and convention centers in appropriate locations in the region.~~
- ~~Provide multi-modal links to tourism centers and provide transit opportunities in tourism centers for workers and visitors.~~ **Moved to Transportation.**
- **Encourage and support communities' tourism preparedness i.e. asset inventory, signage/infrastructure needs, market research, marketing.**
- **Promote public access to natural resources.**

HOUSING

Goal: To have a wide variety of housing types available for all income levels in a variety of settings.

Objectives:

- Develop additional affordable housing and workforce housing where needed, especially in service centers and areas experiencing a shortage of seasonal workforce housing.
- ~~Develop a regional approach to affordable housing to take advantage of resources.~~
- Encourage development of mixed-use housing opportunities.
- Encourage in-fill of housing in service center areas.
- Encourage sustainable housing development that does not unnecessarily adversely impact the environment, transportation patterns or municipal services.

HOUSING

Objectives:

- Assist, where possible, in supporting seniors who wish to live in their own homes for the rest of their lives.
- ~~■ Provide housing opportunities for those who cannot afford typical “affordable” housing — those with extremely limited incomes.~~

EDUCATION/ WORKFORCE

Goal: Develop and support quality education programs (**Pre-K** through graduate) and **workforce development initiatives** to create the backbone for implementation of the goals and policies contained in local and regional plans.

Objectives:

- Expand post-graduate & continuing education opportunities.
- Encourage sharing best practices in **Pre-K-12** education. Work with educators, municipal leaders, and economic development to improve **Pre-K-12** education.
- Encourage local, grass-roots efforts and programs to get adults back in school **and transitioned into high demand jobs.**
- Encourage residents to seek college and/or advanced degrees.
- Support all efforts to educate and encourage entrepreneurial activity.

EDUCATION/WORKFORCE

Objectives:

- Create more opportunities for internships in the trades.
- Establish collaborative relationships between government, businesses, economic development initiatives, and educational institutions to address issues facing the region.
- Establish formal and informal networks between economic development, education/training service providers and other appropriate organizations to share information about programs/services currently available.
- **Attract and retain young people in Maine to strengthen the workforce.**
- **Increase workforce participation within the existing populations (e.g. veterans, immigrants, 65+ years, people with disabilities).**

Transportation

Goal: A cost-effective, environmentally sound, and efficient multi-modal transportation network serving the region and linking to the vital national transportation network.

Objectives:

- The transportation network should create multi-modal links in order to ensure the efficient, effective and environmentally sound movement of people, goods and services.
- Improve major transportation corridors, both roads and rail, to ensure the efficient movement of people, goods and services.
- Improve transportation links **for natural resource-based industries**, industrial/business parks, recreational and tourism areas, and service areas.
- Road improvements in service centers should create an efficient link to major transportation corridors in order to facilitate the continued growth and redevelopment of those areas.

Transportation

Objectives:

- **Adopt local access management standards**, particularly along major road corridors, to maintain regional traffic flow and corridor efficiency.
- Improve **general aviation** airports to support business and tourism needs.
- ~~■ Where it can be reasonably supported, transit systems should be improved or developed to provide energy efficient and cost effective choices for urban areas and to provide a link between service centers.~~
- **Establish daily transit services between service center communities to provide transit options for commuters, employees, medical patients, shoppers, students, tourists and the general public.**

Transportation

Objectives:

- Maintain the scenic character of appropriate highways in order to maintain regional character and support tourism.
- **Extend passenger rail between Boston and Montreal via Lewiston/Auburn and Western Maine.**
- Build a multi-use trail network serving service centers and rural areas to encourage **active alternative** transportation, provide for healthy recreation opportunities, and support tourism.
- Link the multi-use trail network within the region and to adjacent trails, including major snowmobile trails and the East Coast Greenway.
- Improve the safety of the regional transportation system for all users.
- **Provide multi-modal links to tourism centers and provide transit opportunities in tourism centers for workers and visitors.**