

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 16 FY 04/05
16 FY 04/05
DATE May 26, 2004

**AN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN AND RESTORE THE VITALITY
OF MAINE'S DOWNTOWNS**

WHEREAS, the state's economic health and prosperity is inextricably tied to the vitality of our downtowns that serve the local and regional needs of our citizens and businesses;

WHEREAS, the historic role of our downtowns as focal points of commerce and cultural affairs has changed with our sprawling patterns of development and outward migration to our rural areas;

WHEREAS, our vision for a high quality of life in Maine requires that we have strong service center communities;

WHEREAS, the state and our communities need to be investing in housing, culture assets, utility and green infrastructure, and jobs in our downtowns and adjacent residential neighborhoods to provide the suburban sprawl alternative that many of our citizens seek; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Downtown Center is charged by statute to advocate for downtown revitalization, promote awareness of the importance of vital downtowns, serve as a clearinghouse for information related to downtown development, and provide technical assistance to communities;

WHEREAS, the Maine Downtown Center is effective in fostering a public-private partnership that assists Maine communities raise funds to support downtown revitalization efforts, draws on the expertise of the National Maine Street program and provides technical and financial assistance to reinvigorate Maine's downtowns; and

WHEREAS, the State Planning Office is represented on the Board of Directors of the Maine Downtown Center and has responsibilities that involve the health of downtowns;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John Elias Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby direct the State Planning Office to work with the Maine Downtown Center to engage stakeholders, including the Community Preservation Advisory Committee, to:

- National Downtown Revitalization Best Practices – Analyze and recommend innovative approaches used by peer states that include, but are not limited to, the National Main Street Center’s approach to stimulate downtown revitalization and maintain healthy downtowns;
- Maine Downtown Revitalization Best Practices – Recommend innovative downtown revitalization approaches in Maine that are locally-based, comprehensive and lead to sustainable and vital downtowns and surrounding residential areas;
- Effect of State and Local Policies – Analyze state and local policies and programs that act as barriers to downtown vitality, identify high leverage opportunities, and recommend improvements, including the establishment of an annual Downtown Recognition Day, that will accelerate the renovation and vitality of downtowns; and
- Local and State Support – Recommend organizational improvements that will more effectively focus local and state downtown revitalization resources and priority investment mechanisms that local and state government should pursue.

Timeline for Recommendations

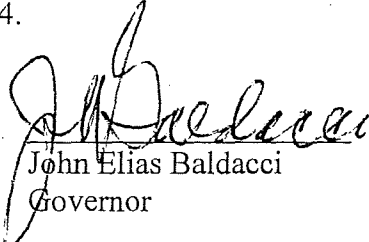
The State Planning Office shall submit its recommendations based on its work with the Maine Downtown Center to the Governor no later than October 1, 2004.

Expenses

The State Planning Office shall conduct these activities using existing resources.

Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is May 26, 2004.


John Elias Baldacci
Governor