

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 13 FY 08/09
DATE June 6, 2008

**AN ORDER TO CREATE A MAINE QUALITY OF PLACE JOBS
AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

WHEREAS, Maine is rich in resources and potential for economic growth based on the state's unique character and Quality of Place; and

WHEREAS, entrepreneurs, employers, and skilled workers in today's high-growth industries especially value Quality of Place, making it a critical driver of economic growth and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, Maine's place-based assets, both natural and built, are diverse and plentiful, yet are today at risk from sprawling development and the lack of investment in downtowns and historic assets, the selling off of industrial forest ownership to new investor groups with diverse interests, and the loss of agricultural land and access to working waterfronts and outdoor recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Quality of Place is a compelling framework for local and regional economic and community development, and a needed complement to traditional development strategies and programs to expand the workforce and create new high-value jobs; and

WHEREAS, Maine has underway a variety of promising, Quality of Place investment initiatives in the creative economy, nature-, adventure-, and heritage-based tourism, land conservation, and transportation planning; still, Maine government could be better organized to carry out these and other Quality of Place investment efforts; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate have enacted the Northern Border Regional Commission, patterned after the Appalachian Regional Commission, which promises to bring substantial federal assistance to Maine in support of place-based investment strategies and initiatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby order that it shall be the policy of the State of Maine to pursue a Quality of Place Investment Strategy as a complement to its traditional economic and community development programs, as follows:

Definition

A “Quality of Place Investment Strategy” is one that builds on exceptional and marketable, local and regional strengths, resources, and opportunities, to create new high-value jobs, products, and services. In practice, Quality of Place investment is market-based, locally-driven, regionally-organized, strategic from both a regional and statewide perspective, involves broad cross-sections of people in decision-making, and engages the private, public, and nonprofit sectors in its planning, financing, and implementation. At a minimum, it includes the five sequential steps of: 1) asset-mapping, 2) strategic planning, 3) education and training, 4) financing, and 5) marketing.

Goals

The goals of this strategy are to:

- A. Protect, strengthen, and develop Maine’s Quality of Place assets, both natural and built;
- B. Make the State’s several regions more economically competitive and prosperous through increased investment, job opportunities, regional incomes, and public revenues; and
- C. Create new jobs and valued products and services in Maine that will succeed in national and global markets for local, regional, and state benefit.

Maine Quality of Place Council

There is established a Maine Quality of Place Council to provide overall direction and support for this strategy. The Council comprises eleven members including five state executives and, to be appointed by the Governor, five public members and one representative of regional councils, as follows:

- A. Five state executive: the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or designee, the Commissioner of Transportation or designee, the Commissioner of Conservation or designee, the Director of State Planning or designee, and the Director of the Maine Arts Commission or designee;
- B. Five public members selected for their knowledge of and commitment to protecting, enhancing, and building upon the State’s natural, historic, cultural, recreational and downtown assets; and
- C. One representative of the state’s regional councils of government that are designated as federal economic development districts;

All members serve without compensation for three-year terms, staggered to assure continuity. No public member may serve more than two consecutive terms. For those members serving initial one- and two-year terms, the first term will be considered a full term.

The Chair of the Council will be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor, call meetings of the Council as needed, but not less than three times annually, and establish their agendas.

Duties

The duties of the Council are to:

- A. Identify opportunities for improved coordination among all related state executive agencies in regard to their missions, policies, plans, programs, funding practices, activities, and, where applicable, regulations;
- B. Create standards for regional Quality of Place investment plans and strategies;
- C. Develop a process to award Quality of Place investment strategy planning and implementation grants to the state's regional councils of government/federal economic development districts;
- D. Create standards and a process to award planning and implementation grants for broad Quality of Place investment projects of statewide significance;
- E. Develop, apply, and report on quantifiable measures that will effectively assess progress toward meeting the goals of the Maine Quality of Place investment strategy;
- F. Consult and coordinate with the Governor's Council on Competitiveness and the Economy, the Maine Economic Growth Council, Community Preservation Advisory Committee, and Intergovernmental Advisory Commission; and
- G. With the State Planning Office, prepare legislation for the Governor's consideration by December 1, 2008, to establish a statewide and regional Quality of Place investment strategy for Maine.

Staffing, Guidelines, and Legislation

The State Planning Office shall provide staff support to the Council. At the direction of the Council, the State Planning Office shall prepare and publish guidelines for creating regional Quality of Place investment strategies to preserve, strengthen, and market Maine's place-based assets, both natural and built. These guidelines must present means to:

- A. Develop the region's place-based assets and identify new and creative ways to generate investment, new jobs, income, and revenues from them;
- B. Create regional inventories of cultural, natural, structural, and leadership resources, for use in developing strategies to increase their economic and social value to communities and regions;

- C. Identify best practices for carrying out regional Quality of Place investment strategies; and
- D. Identify performance standards to measure and evaluate the progress of such regional investment strategies' toward meeting the Maine Quality of Place goals.

Reporting

The Maine Quality of Place Council shall regularly report to the Governor, but not less than annually on December 1 of each year, including any suggestions for legislation.

State Government Support of Maine's Quality of Place Assets

The Commissioner of Conservation, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, the Commissioner of Transportation, and the Director of State Planning shall lead an effort by the executive agencies of state government to provide a continuing and sustainable framework to advance regional Quality of Place investment strategies. At their direction, the commissioners and heads of all executive agencies of state government shall:

- A. Review their missions to identify how they can better actively protect, strengthen, and support efforts to build upon Maine's Quality of Place assets;
- B. Examine their statutes, missions, policies, programs, activities, and funding practices and make appropriate administrative changes and propose statutory changes needed to support statewide and regional Quality of Place investment strategies;
- C. Examine use of public resources to determine if they support regional Quality of Place implementation initiatives, with priority given to those that have potential for significant future economic growth and where the expected long-term return on public investment will be greatest;
- D. Examine revising grant program requirements to reward regional Quality of Place investment strategies by providing set-asides or establishing preferences for them;
- E. Review regulatory practices to identify where they compromise or run counter to advancing the Maine Quality of Place Investment Strategy and its goals; and
- F. Identify opportunities for leveraging federal and state agency partnerships and resources toward these ends.

The State Planning Office shall invite the Maine State Housing Authority, the Finance Authority of Maine, the University of Maine System, and the Maine Community College System to join the effort to examine missions, policies, plans, programs, activities, and funding practices; to identify where and how they may best advance the Maine Quality of Place investment strategy; and to report as described below.

The State Planning Office shall develop guidelines to assist agencies in examining the impact of their mission, policies, plans, statutes, programs, activities, funding practices, and regulations on Maine's Quality of Place efforts and related regional investment strategies.

Prior to November 1, 2008, the lead executives specified above shall report to the Maine Quality of Place Council and to the Governor with a comprehensive, state government-wide blueprint for implementing this investment strategy, complete with specific task and responsibility assignments, timelines, and benchmarks to measure the progress of each state agency toward aligning its mission, policies, plans, programs, activities, funding practices, and regulations with this strategy. By December 1, 2008, the State Planning Office shall prepare for the Governor's consideration any legislation necessary to implement findings under this section. The Council shall monitor progress toward fully implementing the blueprint and report annually to the Governor on the several agencies' progress toward this end.

Regional focus

Prior to November 1, 2008, the State Planning Office shall convene regional government and economic leaders to promote the Maine Quality of Place investment strategy, as follows:

- A. The Office shall convene representatives of all the regional councils of government (COGs) designated as federal economic development districts (EDDs), namely, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, Mid-coast Economic Development District, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, Northern Maine Development Corporation, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, and Southern Maine Economic Development District. The Office shall consult with the Maine Quality of Place Council in preparing for this meeting.
- B. At the meeting of COG/EDDS, the State Planning Office shall provide information on planning and implementing regional Quality of Place investment strategies, including how each COG/EDD may:
 1. Create and staff at least one regional Quality of Place Council within the geographic region covered by each COG/EDD, as follows:
 - a) Each regional Quality of Place Council comprises public officials, community and non-profit leaders, and stakeholders engaged with local and regional business, tourism, and downtown development, with a special effort to include those knowledgeable about the main, marketable quality of place assets within the region including but not limited to natural resources and the landscape, historical and cultural assets, intellectual and educational assets, and transportation and recreational assets.
 - b) Each regional Quality of Place Council:
 - 1) Maps and inventories significant, marketable regional assets;

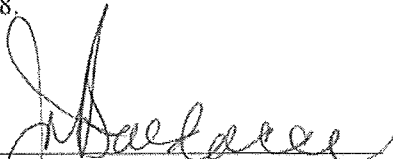
- 2) Develops regional place-based investment plans that conform to overall regional development plans;
 - 3) Establishes strategic priorities among potential regional investments and initiatives; and
 - 4) Evaluates and recommends proposals for implementation project grants, using criteria developed by the Maine Quality of Place Council.
2. Establish a joint regional council where the relevant geographic area and assets lie within the jurisdiction of more than one COG/EDD and councils for sub-regions within their coverage areas where such sub-regions are appropriate to address particular or unique market-based opportunities, the advancement of which is consistent with overall regional development strategies.
 3. If available, administer State Quality of Place planning and implementation grant funds, including contract administration;
 4. Leverage federal, private, and philanthropic funding to advance the Maine Quality of Place Investment Strategy and their regional counterparts;
 5. Provide technical assistance to regional nonprofit organizations seeking to develop funding proposals for Quality of Place investment initiatives; and
 6. Coordinate with neighboring COG/EDDs on Quality of Place plans and projects that cross regional boundaries.

Funding

Funding for regional Quality of Place investment strategy planning and implementation shall come from reconfiguring and reallocating existing state and federal resources, from private and philanthropic sources, and from such other funding sources as may be approved by the Legislature. In preparing legislation for the Governor's consideration prior to December 1, 2008, the State Planning Office shall include any recommendations for funding Quality of Place investment strategies developed in consultation with the Maine Quality of Place Council, state agencies, and COG/EDDs.

Effective Date

The effective date of this order is June 6, 2008.



John E. Baldacci, Governor