

**L.D. 1673, Resolve, Establishing a Working Group to
Coordinate Collaboration Among State Agencies for the
Purpose of Promoting Smart Growth and Development
in High-use Corridors**

March 4, 2025

Presentation to the Committee On Housing and Economic Development



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March 2025

LD 1673 directs GOPIF to convene an agency working group with MaineDOT, DEP, DACF, DECD and MaineHousing

- To design a plan for agency coordination to maximize state resources and promote smart growth, walkable neighborhoods, mixed-use development, and mixed-income housing in high-use corridors, near higher-density downtowns, village centers, or crossroads, and through infilling and redevelopment of underutilized lands, and
- To propose a plan for technical assistance grants to municipalities for the development of ordinances and zoning regulations governing high-use corridors including model transit-oriented development zoning ordinances for municipal consideration.

Thoughtful land use management will optimize co-benefits to people and nature and our state's strong support for environmental protection while meeting Maine's current and future housing and economic development needs and streamlining the transition to clean energy.



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Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA)

Mission: To foster communications and partnerships between the State and communities in Maine. The Office will engage with towns, cities, Tribal governments, and regional entities to provide coordinated and efficient planning, technical assistance, and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions, and create stronger, more resilient Maine communities.

1. Assistance; data; planning, and funding
2. Coordination and communication

MOCA will work in partnership with communities and regional organizations to navigate these complex challenges and pursue comprehensive solutions.

- **Climate Resilience:** Community Resilience Partnership, Maine Coastal Program, Maine Floodplain Program
- **Land Use Planning:** Municipal Planning Assistance Program
- **Housing Planning:** Housing Opportunity Program, MUBEC/Code Enforcement
- **Volunteer Maine**



Key Existing Programs and Policies

- Maine Office of Community Affairs
- Municipal Planning Assistance Program at Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
- Maine Coastal Program at Department of Marine Resources
- Code Enforcement Training and Certification Program at the Maine Fire Marshal's Office
- Maine Department of Transportation's Village Partnership Initiative, Complete Streets Policy and Speed Limit Setting to Promote Village Centers
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection's Brownfields Redevelopment Program
- Housing Opportunity Program at Department of Economic and Community Development, the Community Development Block Grant Program, and site selection online tool
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Beginning with Habitat Program
- MaineHousing's Qualified Allocation Plan
- Regional Councils and Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Recommendation 1: Plan for Interagency Coordination to Maximize State Resources

- The state, through MOCA, should enhance communication to Maine's municipalities about existing state programs that promote smart growth principles.
- The one-stop shop model of MOCA will allow communities to more effectively pursue funds and receive technical assistance that can achieve multiple smart growth goals, such as mixed-use development and mixed-income housing, village centers, and walkable neighborhoods.

Recommendation 1: Plan for Interagency Coordination to Maximize State Resources

- Incentivizing density with state funds
- Define key terms for smart growth principles
- Encourage re-use and redevelopment of existing buildings and underutilized land
- Pursue legislation to modify site location of development act for multistate housing
- HR&A Production Roadmap
 - Streamline processes and build public capacity
 - Incentivize production and increase transparency
 - Strengthen the private sector



Recommendation 2: Plan for Technical Assistance Grants to Municipalities

- Resources for Maine's communities regarding smart growth principles should provide pathways and choice for communities, rather than a uniform approach or too many state requirements
- As a largely rural state, technical assistance opportunities and resources must include smart growth opportunities for community infrastructure that is inclusive of rural village needs.

