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An Act To Create Regional Quality of Place Investment Strategies for High-value Jobs, Products and Services in Maine

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA Pt. 16-A is enacted to read:

PART 16-A

MAINE QUALITY OF PLACE

CHAPTER 363

MAINE QUALITY OF PLACE JOBS CREATION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

§ 7019. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

- 1. Council.** "Council" means the Maine Quality of Place Council set out under section 7020.
- 2. Economic development district.** "Economic development district" means an economic development district as defined in 42 United States Code, Section 3122(3) that has a comprehensive economic development strategy under 42 United States Code, Section 3162.
- 3. Quality of place assets.** "Quality of place assets" means those exceptional, marketable, place-based competitive strengths, resources and advantages that drive the local and regional economy and its sustainability, including:
 - A.** Sustainable economic activities based on natural resources, including farming, fishing, forestry, nature-based and heritage-based tourism and outdoor recreation and leisure;
 - B.** Downtowns and community centers;
 - C.** Historic buildings, structures and related facilities;
 - D.** Arts, culture and creative economy activities;
 - E.** Landscapes, including the working landscapes of farms, forests and waterfronts;
 - F.** Access to outdoor recreational activities and leisure over public and private lands, including motorized and nonmotorized activities;

G. Skills and knowledge of a workforce that relate to quality of place, including but not limited to those of workers in fishing, farming, forestry, research, historic preservation, the arts and culture, tourism and outdoor recreation and leisure; and

H. Intellectual assets, including schools and colleges, research institutes, museums and educational programs.

4. Regional quality of place assets inventory. "Regional quality of place assets inventory" means a listing, mapping and assessment of identified local and regional quality of place assets.

5. Regional quality of place investment strategy. "Regional quality of place investment strategy" means a plan of action, including proposed sources of funding, that makes use of a regional quality of place assets inventory to achieve the following goals:

A. Creation of new, high-value jobs, products and services in the geographic area served by an economic development district;

B. Increased regional investment, incomes and public revenues; and

C. Increased protection, enhancement and marketing of assets identified as economic drivers in a regional quality of place assets inventory.

§ 7020. Maine Quality of Place Council

1. Composition. The Maine Quality of Place Council, established in section 12004G, subsection 29-C, consists of the following 12 members:

A. Six ex officio members:

(1) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development;

(2) The Commissioner of Transportation;

(3) Two commissioners selected by the Governor from the following agencies: the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, the Department of Conservation, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Marine Resources;

(4) The Director of the State Planning Office within the Executive Department; and

(5) The chair of the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council established in section 12004G, subsection 7-A; and

B. Six private citizen members, appointed by the Governor, subject to approval by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over business, research and economic development matters and to confirmation by the Legislature. The private citizen members must be selected for their knowledge of and demonstrated commitment to protecting, enhancing and building upon the State's natural, historic, cultural, intellectual, tourism, outdoor recreational and downtown assets for marketability and jobs creation. One private citizen member must be a representative of an economic development district.

2. Terms. The members of the council appointed pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph B serve for 2-year terms. Each private citizen member of the council serves until that member's successor is appointed and qualified. A private citizen member of the council is eligible for reappointment.

3. Vacancy. A vacancy in the council does not impair the right of a quorum of the members to exercise all the rights and perform all the duties of the council. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the membership, the Governor shall appoint a replacement member for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

4. Chair; vice-chair. At the first meeting of the council, the council shall elect from its membership a chair and a vice-chair. The chair and vice-chair serve for one-year terms. The chair and vice-chair serve until their successors are elected. The chair calls meetings of the council and presides over meetings. The vice-chair serves as the chair in the absence of the chair. The Director of the State Planning Office within the Executive Department shall call the first meeting of the council as soon as all initial appointments to the council have been made.

5. Meetings; quorum. The council shall meet at least 3 times each year. The chair shall establish the agenda. A quorum of the council is 7 members.

6. Compensation. Members of the council appointed pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph B are entitled to receive compensation for travel expenses as allowed under section 12004-G, subsection 29-C while engaged in council activities. The Executive Department, State Planning Office shall absorb these costs.

7. Assistance. The Department of Economic and Community Development and the Executive Department, State Planning Office shall jointly provide staff support to the council. The Department of Economic and Community Development; the Department of Conservation; the Department of Transportation; the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council established in section 12004-G, subsection 7-A; the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources; the Department of Marine Resources; the Executive Department, State Planning Office; and all other state agencies shall provide assistance considered necessary by the council to fulfill the objectives of this chapter.

§ 7020-A. Council responsibilities

The council shall facilitate interagency coordination of state and regional activities regarding regional quality of place investment strategies.

1. Standards and guidance. In consultation with directors of economic development districts, the council shall establish standards and guidelines for regional quality of place investment strategies. The standards and guidelines must ensure that regional quality of place investment strategies are developed with broad public input. The council shall provide guidance to directors of economic development districts for integrating regional capital investment plans, regional transportation plans and other regional plans and strategies with regional quality of place investment strategies.

2. Interagency coordination. The council shall work with relevant state agencies to identify how they can actively promote, strengthen and support efforts to make best use of the State's quality of place assets, including initiatives that support and implement regional quality of place investment strategies. State agencies are encouraged to fund projects that are identified as priorities in regional asset-based strategies developed by economic development districts according to the guidance in this chapter. The council shall coordinate its work with other state economic plans and with the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over business, research and economic development matters. The council shall also consult with the Department of Economic and Community Development in the context of its economic development strategy authority under section 13053; the Maine Development Foundation in the context of its economic development strategy authority under Title 10, section 917-A, subsection 2; the Maine Economic Growth Council in the context of its economic development strategy authority under Title 10, section 929-B, subsection 1; the Maine Community College System; and the University of Maine System.

3. Performance measures. In consultation with directors of economic development districts, the council shall develop performance measures to assess the contributions of regional quality of place investment strategies to the goals described in section 7019, subsection 5.

4. Annual report. The council shall report on its activities to the Governor and seek input from and report on its activities to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over business, research and economic development matters prior to December 31st of each year. In its report, the council shall describe whether and how regional quality of place investment strategies have contributed to the goals described in section 7019, subsection 5 and make any recommendations necessary to further the purposes of this chapter.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §12004-G, sub-§29-C is enacted to read:

29-C.

5 MRSA §7020

Natural and Built
Assets

Maine Quality of
Place Council

Travel Expenses for
Appointed Members

Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §2343 is enacted to read:

§ 2343. Regional quality of place investment strategies

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

- A. "Economic development district" has the same meaning as in Title 5, section 7019, subsection 2.
- B. "Quality of place assets" has the same meaning as in Title 5, section 7019, subsection 3.
- C. "Regional quality of place assets inventory" has the same meaning as in Title 5, section 7019, subsection 4.
- D. "Regional quality of place investment strategy" has the same meaning as in Title 5, section 7019, subsection 5.

2. Regional quality of place investment strategies. If an economic development district chooses to develop a regional quality of place assets inventory and regional quality of place investment strategy, the economic development district shall seek involvement from leading representatives of natural resources-based businesses, tourism, outdoor recreation and leisure, land conservation, arts and culture, historic preservation, downtown and community revitalization and municipal, transportation and workforce development interests within the region and any other entity that represents regional business or economic development interests, as well as consult with the Maine Quality of Place Council as established in Title 5, chapter 363. In addition to a regional quality of place assets inventory, a regional quality of place investment strategy must include:

- A. Identification of sustainable market opportunities that make best use of the region's identified quality of place assets;
- B. An investment plan that includes one or more initiatives designed to realize the identified market opportunities;
- C. Priorities among the region's identified and recommended quality of place investments and initiatives;
- D. Opportunities and approaches for leveraging other public and private development activities and funds to support the regional quality of place investment strategy; and
- E. A plan to achieve full implementation, monitoring and measurement of the results of the regional quality of place investment strategy.

Sec. 4. Staggered terms. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 7020, subsection 2, of the initial appointments of the private citizen members of the Maine Quality of Place Council, 2 members must be appointed for 2-year terms, 2 members must be appointed for 3-year terms and 2 members must be appointed for 4-year terms.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 124th
Legislature, Second Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.