



February 4, 2025

Dear Margaret Rotundo, Senate Chair, Drew Gattine, House Chair, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

I am writing to express my strong support for the results-driven economic development work led by the Maine Development Foundation (MDF) and Maine Downtown Center (MDC). As the Executive Director of Saco Main Street for the past two years — one of Maine's 11 accredited Main Street Communities — I have witnessed firsthand the invaluable support and resources that MDC provides to communities like ours.

Anne Ball and her team work tirelessly to strengthen our efforts, both professionally and financially, through grants that expand our programming and impact in downtown Saco. Their dedication to the Main Street mission has allowed us to benefit from extensive training opportunities and, most notably, develop an engaging historical and ecological tour of the Saco River through an MOT grant. This project has not only energized our board but has also shaped our long-term vision by reinforcing our commitment to outdoor recreation and aligning our transformation strategies with this initiative.

Additionally, the Entrepreneur Ecosystem grant enabled a strong partnership between Saco Main Street and Heart of Biddeford. Through this collaboration, we launched the Two Cities, One Main Street podcast, providing accessible business resources to entrepreneurs, and hosted our first pitch competition. The event was a resounding success, fostering meaningful connections among local businesses. The true victory was not just in the competition itself, but in the way the businesses came together, eager to learn from and support one another.

Without these grant opportunities, our organization would not have achieved its current level of growth and impact. The support provided by MDC has been instrumental in our success, made possible by Anne's dedication and innovative leadership.



I am writing in support of your allocation of at least \$25,000 to the Maine Downtown Center (MDC), with the recommendation to consider allocating more. Funding this program is essential. It plays a vital role in strengthening Maine's economy by investing in the heart of our communities—our downtowns. I urge you to continue supporting this critical work.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Best,
Angie

Angie Presby
Executive Director, Saco Main Street
An Accredited Main Street Maine Community since 2001