

Dear Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Thomas Battcock-Emerson and I live & work in Kittery.

I am one of the approximately seventeen people in just about any small town that populate almost all of the local boards & committees. After serving on the Planning Board & Board of Appeals, I'm currently on Kittery's Economic Development, Housing & Land Issues Committees. I've also recently begun serving on our 2025-35 Comprehensive Plan Committee, as I did for the previous iteration of the Comp Plan in 2015.

My reasons for supporting LD 1940 are two fold.

First, given that so many people involved on the local level are limited in the amount of time they have available, streamlining the process to allow greater focus on issues of local priority would be most helpful. Committee meetings can easily go down the rabbit hole, especially as members grapple with issues that may be unfamiliar locally. The flexibility to tailor planning to local needs that this legislation offers will prove beneficial.

Second, this proposal, in defining "growth areas" with recognizable placetypes such as crossroads, villages, neighborhoods, downtowns, and high-impact corridors, provides a common language & understanding of the situation on the ground in most communities. This is particularly useful in discussions among committee members who may lack the specific vocabulary to articulate positions relative to conditions they otherwise intuitively understand.

Thank you for both allowing me to voice my support for this legislation and for your continued efforts in making Maine such a great place to live.

Respectfully,  
Thomas Battcock-Emerson  
Kittery, ME