



## TOWN OF GRAY

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## OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

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March 10, 2022

Honorable Senator Matthea Daughtry, Chair  
Honorable Representative Mike Sylvester, Chair  
Maine State Legislature Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

Senator Daughtry, Representative Sylvester, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing:

I write today in response to a gracious invitation from Senator Hickman for me to present 21<sup>st</sup> century community development models that have succeeded in other states, for use in the LD 2003 work session. Here are links to a few recommended development readiness programs for your consideration:

**State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development Better Places** "is a non-competitive, community matching grant program empowering Vermonters to create inclusive and vibrant public places serving Vermont's designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas. The program provides one-on-one project coaching, local fundraising support, and two to one (2:1) matching grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000 to make your community-led placemaking ideas happen."  
<https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/better-places>

**The University of Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox** "aims to help build local government capacity to develop complete-communities planning approaches, community-design tools, and public engagement strategies."  
<https://www.completecommunitiesde.org>

**Michigan Economic Development Corporation Redevelopment Ready Communities®** program involves "planning for new investment and reinvestment, identifying assets and opportunities, and focusing limited resources to attract and retain businesses, and have a streamlined development approval process making pertinent information available around-the-clock for anyone to view."  
<https://www.miplace.org/programs/redevelopment-ready-communities/>

I have also attached a document from the Michigan Association of Planning entitled **Modernize your Zoning Code** that includes a zoning reform toolkit.

For the past three years, a group of planners, developers, municipal officials, and experts in related sectors in Maine (real estate, environmental protection, code enforcement, public safety) have been studying these models and developing our own locally calibrated, Maine-ready approach. This group met eight times from September, 2019 to March, 2020 and produced a volume of work that could inform the Committee's work and the Legislature's rulemaking process. I have attached a small **Introduction to Priority Development Zones and Building Types** that can create a flexible and scalable framework that could be applied in any neighborhood type, in any town, to meet a variety of housing priorities. I have also attached a draft **Build Maine Development Ready Communities** program document, which includes a set of minimum standards that may satisfy the requests from several entities who spoke at the public hearing on March 7.

As a former real estate broker, municipal planning and development director, and DECD business development specialist, I feel confident that a performance-based planning model with an emphasis on housing choice and density in priority development zones, which have been identified or indicated in many municipal comprehensive plans, an a selection of Maine vernacular building types to fit both local needs and the statewide goals of the bill, a clear framework of measurable, scalable goals, and funding for both technical assistance and support for housing developments that can work for many Maine communities and will also advance the state's goals.

Many people contributed to the assembly of this material, but I would be happy to speak with you about it at the work session if I may be of service.

Respectfully yours,



Nathaniel Rudy  
Gray Town Manager

#### Attachments

CC: Honorable Senator Catherine Breen, Maine State Senate  
Honorable Representative Susan Austin, Maine State Legislature  
Honorable Representative Steve Moriarty, Maine State Legislature  
Gray Town Council