

The Maine Quality of Place Council

December 5, 2008

Hon. John E. Baldacci, Governor
State House Station 1
Augusta ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor Baldacci,

It is with great pleasure that I offer this first report on the activities of the Maine Quality of Place Council created on June 6 of this year by Executive Order 13 FY 08/09.

In the several months since we first met with you in July, the Council has met five times during which it has continued to build on the work of the earlier Governor's Council on Maine's Quality of Place. In particular, staff members of your State Planning Office have educated the Council on the important learnings, efforts, and achievements of our predecessors; and we have enjoyed presentations from the Maine Department of Transportation, Fairpoint Communications, Inc., the Maine Downtown Coalition, Maine Preservation, and the Maine Environmental Funders Network.

In addition, we have met with the Maine Hospitality Association to discuss their continuing interest and engagement in the quality of place effort; made efforts to keep abreast of the progress of your Working Group on regional delivery of economic development services (created by E.O.11 FY 08/09), to assure that the results of these two parallel efforts will complement one another; opened a dialogue with the Maine Department of Education on enhancing opportunities for entrepreneurship education in Maine's elementary and secondary schools; and informed ourselves of the various quality of place-related bond proposals now in circulation.

Meanwhile, separate conversations have proceeded with Fairpoint Communications toward the end of assuring that their forthcoming "asset-based" economic and community development efforts across their northern New England service area will both complement and strengthen our own; and with the Environmental Funders Network, which is now organizing a substantial grants program in support of quality of place public education, regional collaboration, and project implementation. We hope to be able to report to you on the culmination of these conversations in the near future.

I am greatly pleased to attach to this report the draft legislation you requested in E.O. 13 FY 08/09, to give the Maine quality of place effort the status and effect of law. Skillfully drafted by your SPO staff, the legislation has been carefully reviewed by the Council and comes to you with its strong endorsement. We look forward to working with you and your Administration to secure its passage and enactment.

Lastly, you will recall that our predecessor council in its final report of May 6, 2008, recommended nine "Follow-on Tasks" for early action by Maine state government to advance the Quality of Place agenda. Substantial progress has been made on a number of these and some progress on all. This Council will review the status of these early in the new year and report to you in timely fashion, especially respecting those that might be of legislative interest and concern.

With gratitude for the opportunity and support you have provided the Council, and on behalf of all its members, I am,

Sincerely,

Richard Barringer, Chair

Quality of Place Council Members

Richard Barringer,
Council Chair
Edward Barrett,
City of Bangor
David Cole,
MDOT
Martha Freeman,
SPO
Eleanor Kinney,
Natural Resources
Council of Maine
Patrick McGowan,
DOC
Donna McNeil,
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Affairs Council
Matthew Polstein,
New England
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John Richardson,
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Robert Thompson,
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