



QUALITY OF PLACE

DRAFT

Legislation Outline

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Maine Quality of Place Council (5 MRSA c.311-A, §§3317 et seq)

○ Composition

- Commissioners of DECD and DOT, 2 natural resource agency commissioners, Cultural Affairs Council chair, SPO director
- Public members engaged in enhancing Maine's natural, historic, cultural, recreational, and downtown economic assets
- Representative(s) of Council of Governments/Economic Development Districts



Maine Quality of Place Council (continued)

○ Duties

- Align related state agency laws, programs, funding with a Quality of Place Investment Strategy (QPIS)
- Seek public and private funds in support of implementing regional quality of place economic enhancement plans (EEPs)



Maine Quality of Place Council (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Assess alignment of regional quality of place EEPs with the State's QPIS
- Approve creation of more than 2 EEPs within a Council of Government/Economic Development District (COG/EDD) or a COG/EDD cross-boundary EEP



Maine Quality of Place Council (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Administer any funds appropriated, bonded, or donated for a Quality of Place Investment Fund to support EEP development and implementation
- With COG/EDDs, develop common performance measures to assess success of QPIS and EEPs



Regional Quality of Place Councils (30-A MRSA c. 119-A, §§2345 et seq)

○ Composition

- Public officials, community and nonprofit leaders, representatives of business, tourism, recreation, land conservation, culture, historic preservation, and downtown revitalization



Regional Quality of Place Councils (continued)

- Composition (continued)
 - With approval of the Maine Quality of Place Council, may be integrated with other similar COG/EDD structures—e.g., EDA CEDS Committees



Regional Quality of Place Councils (continued)

- Duties

- Inventory/map marketable quality of place assets in the region, including:
 - natural resources, landscapes, recreational, historical, and cultural assets
 - intellectual and educational assets
 - transportation and recreational assets
 - renewable energy resources



Regional Quality of Place Councils (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Create a regional quality of place Economic Enhancement Plan (EEP)
 - Identify sustainable market opportunities employing the region's quality of place assets



Regional Quality of Place Councils (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Create EEP (continued)

- Develop an investment strategy based on the regional quality of place assets assessment and economic opportunities
- Set priorities for the region's quality of place investments and initiatives



Council of Governments/Economic Development Districts (30-A MRSA c.119-A, §§2345 et seq)

○ Duties

- Appoint, convene, staff, provide technical assistance to Regional Quality of Place Councils (RQPCs)
- Write grants, administer funds for RQPCs



Council of Governments/Economic Development Districts (continued)

- Duties (continued)
 - Coordinate RCPC Economic Enhancement Plan (EEP) and implementation with related COG/EDD economic development activities and RQPC activities that cross COG/EDD boundaries



Council of Governments/Economic Development Districts (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Provide outreach and education to local and regional leaders about quality of place assets and investment strategies



State Planning Office (5 MRSA §§3307-G)

○ Duties

- Staff Maine Quality of Place Council
- Develop and publish educational materials regarding quality of place assets and asset-based development



State Planning Office (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Develop and administer guides for relevant state agencies to assist with alignment of state laws, programs, and funding with a Quality of Place Investment Strategy
- Develop and publish guides and memoranda of understanding with COG/EDDs regarding establishment and administration of RQPCs



State Planning Office (continued)

- Duties (continued)

- Create and maintain an inventory of state grant programs that might support implementation of regional Economic Enhancement Plans (EEPs)
- In consultation with the Maine Quality of Place Council, develop potential expanded criteria and preference points for proposals for existing state grants when a proposal arises from an EEPs



State Planning Office (continued)

- Duties (continued)
 - In consultation with the Maine Quality of Place Council, develop and publish criteria for EEP development and implementation grants from a Quality of Place Investment Fund



Funding

- Planning, Staff, Technical Assistance, Outreach, Education, Marketing cannot be funded by bonds
- Economic Enhancement Plans and implementation needing the above will require
 - new funds from federal or philanthropic grants
 - reassignment of existing appropriations
 - raising new general fund or other special revenues



Capital Funding

- Existing program examples
 - Municipal Investment Trust Fund (DECD)
 - Available to municipalities (service centers?)
 - For sidewalks, parking, lighting, piers, visitor centers, bus stations, mill redevelopment



Capital Funding (continued)

- Existing program examples (continued)
 - Community Development Block Grants (DECD)
 - Available in low income areas
 - For sidewalks, water and sewer, community buildings, historic preservation, housing rehab and construction



Capital Funding (continued)

- Existing program examples (continued)
 - Riverfront Community Development Program (DECD)
 - Available to municipalities located on a river
 - For rehab of riverfront buildings and property, river restoration, riverfront parks, trails, and recreational facilities, boating and fishing access, habitat restoration and improvement, facilities supporting arts, crafts, local agriculture, and the creative economy



Capital Funding (continued)

- Existing program examples (continued)
 - New Century Community Fund (Cultural Affairs Council agencies)
 - Available to non-profit community-based organizations
 - For preservation of downtowns and historic buildings and sites, library and arts projects, support of cultural tourism, access to digital resources, and expansion of the creative economy



Capital Funding (continued)

- Existing program examples (continued)

- Land for Maine's Future (LMF Board)

- Available to conservation projects achieving sponsorship by land-holding state agency

- For conservation, farmland, water access, and working waterfronts



Capital Funding (continued)

- Existing program examples (continued)
 - Village Area Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections (DOT)
 - Available to municipalities
 - For shoulders, sidewalks, trails, crossing improvements



New Capital Funding Possibilities

- Revolving Fund for Historic Properties

- For emergency purchase of endangered properties, then resold for rehab with easements or protective covenants



Possible Support for Other Legislation

- Site Law

- Potential alignment with QP principles
- DEP gathering information, will report back to SPO

- LURC

- Potential review of staffing, online permitting, permit by rule



Possible Support for Other Legislation

- Maine Downtown Center
 - Community design, architecture, and engineering consulting services (would require funding)
 - Expand Main Street Maine to rural communities (would require funding)



Possible Support for Other Legislation

- Landowner Relations

- Potential enhancement of activities that protect public access to private lands (might require funding)
- DOC gathering information, will report back to SPO



Quality of Place Projects of Statewide Significance

- An outstanding issue needing QP Council discussion
 - Seek bond?
 - Maine Quality of Place Council to review proposals, give grants?
 - Would need funding for staffing