

## RFC Q&A Session 1

March 11, 2021 – 3PM

### Presentation

- **Strategic Plan Overview:**
  - Strategic Plan was released in Dec. 2019. Roadmap document designed to be used by multiple stakeholders.
  - It is both a strategy and a plan – it's a plan that needs to be executed by the State, but it's also a strategy that needs private sector support and to live within local communities. The 10-year time horizon will span multiple administrations and legislatures, so the Plan needs to be embedded with others outside of state government
  - DECD is responsible for oversight of the Plan's implementation. We are looking at the products that need to come out of the plan, the processes we'll use, and the people who need to be involved.
  - The Strategic Plan is meant to be a flexible document. Implementation should be informed by additional reports released in 2020:
    - Maine's Climate Action Plan
    - Economic Recovery Committee Report
    - Permanent Commission's Recommendations to the Legislature
- **Implementation:**
  - Implementation is currently being led by 7 strategy work groups (corresponding to the 7 strategy areas of the Plan) and an executive steering committee (responsible for operations and thought leadership)
  - Grow Local Talent and Ubiquitous Connectivity are being managed by existing State structures
    - Talent: State Workforce Board
    - Connectivity: ConnectME Authority
  - In most cases, the work groups are also serving as solutions-based teams for the FEMA long term economic recovery process for the state, ensuring alignment across these various efforts
- **Request for Collaboration/Invitation to Collaborate:**
  - The Strategic Plan Steering Committee recognized we need a mechanism for involving more people in the Plan's implementation while ensuring everyone's time is put to its best use.
  - We are trying to use the RTC and ITC process to understand and connect with what's happening out in the community.
    - You can find information on the website [here](#). Check back regularly for FAQ updates.
  - It is a strategy, a plan – and a collaboration of collaborations
- **Collaboration Definition:**
  - A collaboration needs each of the following 3 elements:
    1. 2 or more (team)
    2. Working together (processes or project)

- 3. Towards shared goals (purpose)
  - Could be working towards goals directly related to those of the Strategic Plan, or towards intermediary goals
  - For collaborations who are already tacitly connected – we hope to make that collaborative relationship explicit
  - For collaborations who are perhaps not as closely involved – we want to invite them to build with us
  - We also hope to identify blind spots and build more inclusive process
  - The collaboration **can be**:
    - Working on any level of the plan – vision, goals, strategies, or actions
    - Time-limited or for the long haul
    - Layering in recommendations and elements from the Climate Council, ERC, and Permanent Commission reports
  - The collaboration is **not intended to be**:
    - State procurement
    - One-on-one partnership with DECD
    - Primarily transactional – it's a relational relationship
    - Vendor relationship
    - Something you haven't started
    - Stressful
- **People:**
  - We are using social network mapping to understand the networks of people and organizations involved in the Plan's implementation
  - We need to identify which networks aren't in the process that need to be brought in, and how to ensure certain highly connected individuals aren't overburdened with communication responsibilities

### Q&A Session

#### **Bill Benson (Boots2Roots):**

- **Q: If we participate in the RFC process and submit the request, what happens next? What does DECD do with the request, and what does DECD bring to the table once the request is submitted? What is the outcome?**
- **A:** DECD is accepting RFC submissions on a rolling basis. Anything submitted by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month will be reviewed in that month's Steering Committee meeting. The Steering Committee will look at the RFC, identify alignments, and agree whether it is a collaborating partner. We will also share that information in the strategy work groups to figure out how the collaboration can be feathered into their work.
- **A:** Once a collaboration is identified as a collaborating partner, a few things will happen. We are trying to build a three-way communication process between the collaboration, the work groups, and the Steering Committee. We also want to amplify the work being done by those collaborations, both through branding as a Strategic Plan partner and through promotion on social media/the Strategic Plan's website. We are looking at this as an opportunity for co-

creation and feedback. As a collaborating partner, we'll have open lines of communication to redirect initiatives as needed to ensure alignment.

- **A:** In terms building out resources for shared those projects (human or financial), we can't make promises on what that will look like yet – but we are hoping this process will give us an understanding of the collaborations/initiatives that are growing in the same direction so we can make sure they get support. Additionally, with the work groups serving as solutions-based teams for FEMA's long-term recovery task force, FEMA can help us identify some of the federal resources that can be brought to bear.

**Sam Belknap (SEAMaine):**

- **Q: I'm wondering about the opportunities for this collaboration of collaborations to direct funding to pilot projects that are implementing projects aligned with the Strategic Plan. How will this collaboration of collaborations feed into the piloting approach?**
- **A:** We are taking a piloting/minimal viable product approach with implementation – hoping to identify pilot projects and figure out how to put resources behind them. We don't want to raise expectations around General Fund dollars, but we do want to figure out ways to aggregate available resources and identify pilot projects that we want to launch and accomplish in the short run. Identifying existing collaborative efforts that already have energy behind them is a way to accelerate this effort.

**Stacey Keefer (Maine Marine Trades Association)**

- **Q: I'm curious if you are seeing any specific gaps where industry folks could jump in and collaborate?**
- **A:** A potential gap could be around the continuation of things that have been done in the past where collective memory at the state level has been lost. We don't want to lose the great work that's been done – e.g., with building clear career pathways and mapping/understanding what skills are needed, there is the forward-looking skills component we still need to understand, but there are efforts done in the past that could also be useful and supportive.
- **A:** Some of the Plan's overarching pieces are also less clear in terms of the "how" for implementation. This collaboration effort could help us around the process part, too, rather than just with the people and the products. There is a lot of expertise out there that isn't within state government (e.g., work around metrics and evaluation, finance innovation, etc.). We're very early in the implementation phase, so there's room for a lot of co-creation.

**Katie Shorey (Live + Work in Maine and Startup Maine)**

- **Q: Say Startup Maine was already partnering with another organization to promote Maine's innovation/startup scene outside the state. We write in to say what we're doing and what projects we're working on. If you know of or hear about another organization doing similar work, will you encourage us to work together and potentially provide support if we all come together?**

- **A:** We're not looking for the story of each organization, so we'd want to hear about the collaborative efforts of multiple organizations, rather than just what Startup Maine is doing. Are multiple organizations coming together and working toward a shared goal that aligns with the Strategic Plan?
- **A:** There are multiple levels of the Strategic Plan, so we'd like to understand if your collaborating organizations are coming together for a specific project and then going your separate ways, or if you are coming together around a broader strategy area. The more specific you can be on how the work you're doing connects to the Plan, the better. We'd also like to know how you know you are doing the right thing – what tells you this is the right solution/path?
- **Q: Live + Work in Maine and Boots2Root already work in partnership. There is stuff we've been doing that we want to continue to do, and we also have big ideas for other potential projects. When would we know if what we're doing will be checked off/approved by DECD? We'll continue doing our work regardless, but what is the timeline for knowing if DECD wants to put some resources behind it?**
- **A:** Making explicit the collaborative relationship – making clear that this is an effort we're behind and we really want to happen – will happen quickly. Building out an understanding of additional financial resources are needed will take a second step. We wouldn't want this process to slow down any work that's already being done – it's really more about how we can further amplify the efforts. It also gives us an opportunity to step out of the way. Once we know the time/energy already being put in elsewhere, we can avoid going down a different path and diluting existing efforts.
- **Q: So for the people on this call, we have homework to submit our ideas explaining the collaborative efforts of our work, and we should submit them by a certain date?**
- **A:** Yes, but we will look at them on a rolling basis, so there's no strict deadline. If you can't submit it this month, that's fine – we're going to look at them on a monthly basis. Or if it's a forming collaboration and you're not yet sure how/if it will connect, it's okay to wait on that, too. We want to understand what work is being done around the Strategic Plan, as well as in alignment with the Climate Plan, ERC, and Permanent Commission reports, so we can make clear that you are part of this process and that we're supportive of the work you're doing.

### Final Thoughts

- We will share the slide deck and continue to update the FAQs on DECD's website
- RFC/ITC submissions will not be posted on the website. Anything you submit to the state is accessible via Freedom of Information Act requests, but we won't be proactively posting every RFC/ITC.