**Department of Economic
& Community Development**

**10 Year Statewide Strategic Plan
Executive Steering Committee
March 23, 2021, 2 PM
Via Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Objectives:
- ➢ **Integrate new members**
- ➢ **Review Request/Invitation to Collaborate Process and Responses**
- ➢ **Set Project Priorities Identification Timeline Goals**
- ➢ **Continue to Refine Frameworks for Implementation**

Meeting Outcomes:
- ➢ **Decision Guardrails for Collaboration Process**
- ➢ **Decisions on RFC/ITC Responses Received**

Meeting Attendees:
- Martha Bentley
- Yellow Breen
- Amy Landry
- Carlos Mello
- Charlene Virgilio
- David Daigler
- Laura Fortman
- Jeannette Andre
- Jennifer Brickett
- Joan Ferrini-Mundy
- Kimberly Hamilton
- Melanie Loyzim
- Christopher Quint
- Peggy Schaffer
- Brian Whitney
- Carol Woodcock
- Chris Rector and Adam Lachman
- Ryan Neale
- Kelsey MacKinnon, DECD Staff

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

- Charlene Virgilio and Carlos Mello are new to the Steering Committee
- Members of the federal delegation are also joining today
- Two major goals for today:
    1. RFC/ITC process – want to figure out how to fold this piece into our work plan

2. Also want to start making decisions around a timeline for early sequencing of work groups' projects

Item 2: Updates from Work Group Chairs

Grow Local Talent (Chris Quint):
- Group has met twice. Third meeting scheduled for April 13.
- At previous meeting, smaller groups reported out on the different action items in the Strategic Plan and relevant ERC recommendations. Some items/ideas that surfaced as early projects already underway include:
  - **A1:** collaborations with GOPIF, Children's Cabinet, and Governor's Energy Office on internship development effort; Work on clear definitions of the various career exploration options (internships, apprenticeships, job shadows, etc.) and associated outreach
  - **A2:** There are a lot of existing web portals – need to research them to avoid duplication.
  - **A4:** NGA Workforce Innovation Network – technical assistance grant
  - **A2-A6:** Subgroups have started mapping existing programs/resources/partners
  - **A6:** Connecting to Children's Cabinet for E1
  - Also discussed combining A5 and A6
- Goal for next meeting is to identify priority projects and associated timelines

Attract Talent (Martha Bentley):
- Group has met once.
- Group's current work most strongly aligns with B2 and B3.
- Found that it makes sense to move B1 and B4 into alignment with the State Workforce Board's existing structures and subcommittees – particularly the new Immigrant Workforce subcommittee.
- DOL and DHHS are also working to integrate the support services for people who aren't currently in the workforce and are moving into it, so there will be further opportunities to strengthen this group by combining it with existing systems.
- Quality of place piece hasn't been pulled in as part of this work group yet, but it's an area with a lot of activity/energy. We plan to connect with some of those initiatives/partners doing work in this space (e.g., Working Communities Challenge, Coworking Development Fund, Maine Downtown Center, Destination Development, Grow Smart Maine, etc.)

Promote Innovation (Brian Whitney):
- Group has met twice. Third meeting is next Thursday.
- Associated projects underway or identified by work group:
  - **C1:** Early Adopter Program to take place in Q2 this year
  - **C2:** Completed 2020; ongoing evaluation of improvements underway
  - **C3/ERC:** Reinvigoration of MIEAB underway. So far, 80 folks have volunteered to serve the 32-member board.
  - **C4:** Domestic trade program is being developed/rolled out by DECD with updates now available on DECD website
- Work group also discussed some of the opportunities associated with the $1.9T stimulus package
- MxG attended last meeting to tell us more about their 5 working groups, focused on:
  - Metrics for innovation and the entrepreneurial ecosystem
  - DEI
  - Strategies for strengthening early stage companies
  - Strategies for growth stage companies
  - Communications
- Hoping to leverage MxG's work to help establish clear priorities for work group moving forward
- Also folding in the FEMA solutions-based Innovation team into this work group. We'll be working with FEMA to identify priority projects and figure out how to bring in federal, philanthropic, and other resources to make them happen.

- o Jeannette can help think through which philanthropic partners might be interested in supporting this work
- Debbie Strumsky will be attending next Thursday's meeting to discuss Innovation Data Dashboard

Ubiquitous Connectivity (Peggy Shaffer):
- ConnectME has a grant round open for the first piece of the $15M grant.
- Also have an RFP out for the Broadband Intelligence Platform, due in early April.
- Significant amount of federal money likely coming in sometime in the summer/fall, though not sure of structure or exact timing yet. If we combine that with the money going to counties/municipalities, we have an opportunity to cut our unserved number in half.
- We're now thinking about other ways we can help with that – figure out the affordability piece, look at middle mile where it needs to be done, as well as strategic last mile investments.
- Also hired a consultant to help with ConnectME governance issues leading into the development of our 3-year plan this spring
- Maine Broadband Coalition and ConnectME are also serving as FEMA solutions-based team around broadband.

Supporting Infrastructure (Martha):
- Met once as a full group. Recognized that each of the subtopics (Childcare, Transportation, and Housing) has a specific workstream.
    - o Children's Cabinet will lead childcare piece
    - o MDOT will lead transportation, pulling in additional people
    - o MaineHousing is focused on affordable housing, so will need to pull in additional people to expand focus to include workforce housing
- Jennifer will provide updates on Transportation workstream. Ana Hicks and Denise Lord will join Steering Committee meetings moving forward to report out on the Childcare and Housing pieces.
- **Transportation Updates (Jennifer Brickett):**
    - o Smaller group has met once and began discussion around continued funding challenges
    - o MDOT is also working on transit initiative to meet mobility and climate change goals. Looking at how to make the transit system cleaner, including electrification where possible.
    - o In the beginning stages of updating MDOT's 2015 transit plan. As a precursor to that effort, we're working with UMaine to look at transportation models nationwide, especially in states similar to Maine, so we can identify potential models that we can apply to our state
    - o Also working with MTA to expand GOMAINE in 2022, looking at nationwide commuter models
    - o Developing a Village Partnership Initiative, partnering with municipalities to invest in transport solutions for downtowns to support local economies, improve quality of life, and attract new/former residents
    - o We've also identified freight transportation as a critical part of economic development and are meeting internally to discuss that
    - o As a next step, we will be reaching out to other stakeholders in the transport space to help with these efforts

Stable Business Environment (Melanie Loyzim):
- **F1:** Legislation underway to change a variety of departments' permitting thresholds and timeframes. Working on this effort with the Maine Municipal Association and a member of the Nature Conservancy, who has offered to develop a mapping tool for DEP, DMR, etc. to use to prescreen potential sites. We've had issues with locations being selected that were later discovered to not be optimal for permitting – some of these tools will enable us to do a lot of this work upfront.
- **F2:** We're wrapping up the requirements gathering for this portal. With our list of hundreds of requirements, we'll put out an RFI to get an idea of cost to build the system – for DEP to use, but also to connect to a statewide licensing/registration system
- F3 and F4 are very separate issues, so it makes sense to move them into a different workstream.
    - o Climate Council will take the lead on F3, mapping the Strategic Plan/ERC priorities against those of the Maine Won't Wait plan.
    - o F4 (health care costs) will be led through DHHS and the Affordable Health Care Office (in bill).

Hubs of Excellence (Martha):
- Group has not met yet. Only project identified within this strategy area so far is the alignment of the Northern Border Regional Commission's grant funding priorities with the Strategic Plan's priorities.

Developing Priority Timelines:
- End of April is soft deadline for work groups to identify first round of priority projects, mapping out timelines and figuring out what funding support is needed

Item 3: Social Network Mapping

Overview:
- Debbie Strumsky developed a network map of people and organizations working on the Strategic Plan (either serving on Steering Committee or on a work group)
- Goals:
  - Identify who is missing and how people are not connecting into these networks
  - Recognize where people are already well connected so we can avoid redundancy and ensure we're using people to their best and highest use, rather than having them attend a lot of meetings when they're already connected in
- This network map is a first pass based on available data, largely via LinkedIn and what we already know about the Steering Committee/work group members' affiliations. Gives sense of what these networks look like and how we need to enhance them, but we'll need to build out more complete data to ensure accuracy.

Implementation Network Map MVP PPT:
- Nodes are the people or organizations in the network
  - 74 people are working on Strategic Plan implementation in a formalized way
- Edges are the connections between individuals/organizations
  - Over 1000 connections between these 74 people
- In the network map, every line is a connection between different people. If the line is thicker, it's because there are multiple ways the two people connect.
- Important to notice there is a small dot that isn't connected to anybody else in the network – want to make sure we are encouraging strong connections across the entire network
- We also mapped the network of individuals by gender and the network of organizations by type (public, private, or public-private partnership). Can show us how the networks are connected/disconnected across various factors.
  - Based on this first pass, the private organizations are fairly well connected, but without the private sector intersects, the government organizations appear to be disconnected from one another – meaning improved communication might be necessary to ensure work isn't happening in a vacuum

Discussion:
- What databases are used for this network mapping and how will we continue to grow those?
  - In this first pass, the database is simply info that Martha/Kelsey collected, looking at LinkedIn or based on what already knew about Steering Committee/work group members
  - Our next step will be making sure we have all the right connections by surveying the Steering Committee/work group members
  - We'll also be asking collaborating partners about their networks/affiliations as they're onboarded
- Network mapping can be a tool to help us avoid duplication of efforts – based on the connections identified, we can see when people will already know what's happening elsewhere in the network, and when we might need to facilitate better communication/information flow between groups
- Can also evaluate the network along other factors, such as age, geography, and race, to ensure inclusivity and diversity
- Important to ensure certain groups/individuals aren't entirely disconnected from the rest of the network

Next Steps:
- Martha and Kelsey will develop a survey to get everyone's full affiliations/information and update the network maps with this more complete dataset
- Steering Committee can help determine what else we want to know about our networks:
  - What are the connections we want to understand?
    - Want to consider the strength of the connections/level of engagement with each connection – do you email every week/month/quarter? do you only see them at board meetings?
  - What other information do we want to know about the network (gender, race, etc.)?
- As we bring in additional partners, we'll ask them for this same information so we can continue to build out the network of people working on the Plan's implementation

Item 4: Request/Invitation to Collaborate – Review Process and Responses

Overview:
- Want to get an agreed upon set of guardrails from this committee (i.e., this is the definition of what we are looking for, this is the definition of what we're not looking for)
- We've received 6 RTC/ITC submissions so far. Each represents a different way someone could collaborate with the Strategic Plan.

Guardrails:
- Suggested minimum guardrails include:
  - A clear connection of the collaboration to some area of the Plan
  - Idea of it being a collaboration of collaborations – not looking for every individual organization to submit, but instead for groups that are already working together or forming ways they are going to work together
  - A willingness to adjust within the collaboration – not just offering what they're doing, but also willing to connect in/collaborate with other work being done
  - A clear path to collaborative action – how they want to interact with the State
  - Data provided supports that what the collaboration is doing is a value add
- Two questions to consider:
  1. For those who don't fit the guardrails we establish, but are interested and engaged – how do we want to connect them to the implementation effort?
  2. Is there a different role for trusted intermediaries who are doing a lot of different things and serve as a touch point to many different efforts (e.g., MDF)?
- **Discussion:**
  - Does the collaboration have to be at the governance/structural level, or just at the implementation/ethos level?
    - Steering Committee to provide additional feedback on this question to Martha/Kelsey via email
  - Should also include willingness to contribute to metrics as an additional guardrail
  - Further discussion of the role of trusted intermediaries (EDDs, MDF, etc.) is needed

Submissions to test suggested guardrails:
- **Maine Business Education Partnership (MBEP):**
  - 501 (c)(3) (subsidiary of RAM and MGFPA)
  - Industry skills credential program
  - Recommending the State can collaborate with them to recruit candidates and place them in suitable work environments
- **Discussion:**
  - Could connect in this collaboration with the state's overall credentialing effort
  - MBEP could also collaborate with additional partners, including CTEs, UMaine Cooperative Extension, food safety/food manufacturing developers, etc.

- o Need to ensure there are established metrics to evaluate the collaboration's impact on the Strategic Plan's vision/strategy, as well as its local impact
- **Next Steps:**
  - o Steering Committee needs to decide whether partners must be collaborative in structure, or simply collaborative in ethos and execution
  - o Should also consider whether RFC/ITC submissions should be reviewed by work groups initially, with final clearing by the Steering Committee

Item 5: Next Steps

- End of April is soft deadline for work groups to identify first round of priority projects (map out timelines and identify what funding support is needed)
- **Network mapping:** Send Martha/Kelsey feedback on what connections we want to understand and what other information we want to know about our networks.
  - o What are the connections we want to understand?
    - ▪ Want to consider the strength of the connections/level of engagement with each connection – do you email every week/month/quarter? do you only see them at board meetings?
  - o What other information do we want to know about the network (gender, race, etc.)?
  - o Martha and Kelsey will develop a survey to get everyone's information once this feedback is received
- **RFC/ITC:** Send any additional feedback to Martha/Kelsey around whether the submissions should be collaborative in ethos or in structure in the next day or so
- April meeting will be focused on finalizing RFC process and going through submissions
- In May, we'll then be able to look at prioritized projects for the work groups