



**10 Year Statewide Strategic Plan  
Supportive Infrastructure Strategy – Meeting 2  
Wednesday, April 28 – 1-2PM  
Zoom Meeting**

**Meeting Objectives:**

- Identify three short-term priority projects with measurable outcomes
- Determine group meeting frequency moving forward

**Meeting Attendees:**

- Ryan Neale
- Denise Lord
- Ana Hicks
- Erik Jorgensen
- Sandy Buchanan
- Maria Fuentes
- Martha Bentley
- Kelsey MacKinnon, DECD Staff

**Notes:**

**Item 1: Introductions**

- **Ryan Neale:** MDOT Bureau of Planning. Supporting Jen Brickett by taking the lead on this work group.
- **Maria Fuentes:** ME Better Transportation Association. Coalition of private sector and public sector organizations/individuals interested in investing in our transportation system.
- **Sandy Buchanan:** Western Maine Transportation Services. Feasibility study in 2017 gave us a roadmap on how to make connections between urban and rural areas, particularly with an eye on employment and social determinants of health.
- **Denise Lord:** MaineHousing. We operate both as a bank and as an administrator of public programs. As a bank, we finance multifamily housing developments and a First Home Loan Program for homebuyers. On the program side, we provide grant assistance. Mission is focused on low- to moderate-income families.
- **Erik Jorgensen:** MaineHousing. Previously in the state legislature and philanthropy.
- **Ana Hicks:** Children's Cabinet Coordinator in GOPIF. Goal of having all children enter kindergarten prepared to succeed; birth through 5 system is a key area of focus. Also helped staff some of the ERC work focused on infrastructure around housing and childcare.

**Goals for today:**

1. Identify three or four projects for our group to pursue in the short-term around issues connected with the Strategic Plan (6-8 month timeframe).
2. Determine whether it makes sense to continue to meet as a larger group, and if there are any additional individuals who should be invited in.

## Item 2: Updates from Transportation, Housing, and Childcare and Short-Term Project Identification

### Transportation/Transit

- **Updates:**
  - MDOT is looking at the 86 cents/person public transportation spending figure and comparing it to spending amounts in other states. Challenging because states include different measures in the figure – e.g., some include ferries, some do not.
  - Looking at public transportation and urban/rural connection. Putting out an RFP, hoping to understand what an appropriate public transportation system looks like in an urban area and in a rural area, and how we can use technology innovations to provide the appropriate level of service in rural areas.
  - Also trying to advance Climate Council's goals of getting more people out of their individual vehicles, providing more options for people to get around the state.
  - MDOT will be taking the lead on the GO MAINE program in the coming months (in continued partnership with the Maine Turnpike Authority) – ridesharing/ride matching program.
  - Potential federal funding coming in, but don't yet know the amount we'll receive or any restrictions tied to the dollars.
- **Short-Term Priorities:**
  - Support GO MAINE – tracking and optimizing the program
  - Explore across agencies how employers can support that initiative. Many employers offer transportation services to employees, but it's all piecemeal – want to understand how different employers are doing it and how their methods can be scaled.
    - Provide coordination and technical assistance/resources to initiatives already up and running, and help identify any gaps.

### Housing

- **Updates:**
  - MaineHousing's mission is focused on low- to moderate-income households, but we have looked at some programs to see how we might create more housing for higher income thresholds, as well.
  - First Home Loan Program – in the process of formalizing incentives for home buyers of multifamily units (2-4 unit buildings) to become owner-landlords. Looking at creating additional down payment assistance based on the number of units in the multifamily building as an incentive to get people to purchase them and become landlords. Good opportunity to promote and sustain a sense of neighborhood/avoid absentee landlords. Rental units aren't income restricted.
  - Existing subdivision program – people are more open to living in suburban areas in light of COVID; seeing increased interest in the subdivision program. Area we could possibly create more affordable home ownership opportunities. Looking at working with certain partners—like public housing authorities, nonprofit housing development corporations, and potentially private landlords—to purchase and renovate buildings that could be used for multifamily housing. We're good at funding multifamily housing with 25-40 units, but trying to finance a program to increase rentals in the smaller 2-10 unit niche. Considering composition of 20% low- to moderate-income and 80% market rate.
- **Short-Term Priorities:**
  - Develop and implement a starter home innovation challenge, similar to the clean energy innovation challenge by MTI and the Governor's Energy Office.
    - Will potentially need buy-in from communities who would be willing to waive some permitting/zoning requirements.
    - Can tie in access to transportation and childcare as part of the challenge – not just employer childcare, but also childcare near the housing unit.
    - Youth and Family Outreach program in Portland is putting together affordable housing with a childcare facility, with easy access to downtown Portland/public transportation. Would be a good model to promote.

- Speaker Fecteau's bill also passed – group will be meeting to look at land use planning around housing and will hopefully push on some of those ordinances.

### **Child Care**

- **Short-Term Priorities:**
  - Will hold on identifying priorities in this area.

### **Item 3: Next Steps**

- Start to put guardrails around the idea of a starter home innovation challenge, including transit and housing as elements.
- Group will share with Martha/Kelsey any known examples of employers who are doing things differently to meet some of these needs around transit, childcare, and housing.
  - The better sense we have of what's already going on that's successful, the better we can think about scaling it into a statewide system.
- Will continue to meet as a broader group to identify areas of intersection and opportunities for collaboration, and to learn from Martha when other work groups are working on similar initiatives.
  - For future meetings, updates from the 3 subgroups can be done in writing in advance of the meeting, so more time together can be spent discussing areas of overlap.
- Martha, Kelsey, Denise, and Erik will discuss if there are additional people who make sense to bring into the housing subgroup.
  - Martha/Kelsey will send names to Denise/Erik for consideration.