



# INVESTING IN MAINE'S INFRASTRUCTURE

FEDERAL FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS 2022-2026  
September 2026

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## OVERVIEW

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This report is a collection of case studies drawn from the significant federal investment that has flowed to Maine since 2022. It is designed to illustrate, through concrete examples, what that investment has looked like on the ground: who it has reached, what it has built or improved, and how it connects to Maine's longer-term infrastructure goals.

The federal programs represented here – the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and the CHIPS and Science Act – together represent a generational moment of federal infrastructure resources flowing to states. Since Governor Mills convened the Infrastructure Implementation Committee (IIC) in April 2022, Maine has secured approximately \$4.6 billion through these programs. The IIC, an inter-agency coordination body staffed by the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) and the Governor's Office, was established to ensure that Maine approached this moment strategically — aligning agencies, setting priorities, and actively pursuing funds rather than waiting for opportunities to arrive. The report includes background on how that committee came together and how it operates, for readers who want to understand the organizational context behind Maine's approach.

The case studies that follow are organized into four sections: Transportation; Resilience and Environmental Protection; Energy Programs and Building Efficiency; and Broadband and Technology. Within each section, readers will find a range of projects – from the reconstruction of a critical stretch of US Route 1 in Aroostook County to PFAS remediation at a school district in Buxton; from new hybrid-electric buses servicing Acadia National Park to a first-of-its-kind career and technical education center in St. George. Some of these projects are complete and already delivering results, while others are still underway.

The projects featured here were selected as representative examples because they illustrate the range of work underway and the connections between federal dollars and Maine's own priorities, including the Maine Climate Action Plan, the 10-Year Economic Development Strategy, the MaineDOT Three-Year Workplan, the State Energy Plan, and the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan.

This report is not a full accounting of every federally funded infrastructure project in Maine, nor does it track the complete lifecycle of every grant the state has received. Infrastructure moves on long timelines. Grants are awarded months or years before construction begins; projects break ground long before ribbons are cut; and the full economic and community impacts of this investment will continue to unfold well beyond the publication of this document. What this report offers instead is a window into the scale, variety, and human dimension of what is being built, and a record of Maine's active role in making it happen.

# INVESTING IN MAINE'S INFRASTRUCTURE

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## State infrastructure planning

In November 2021, Congress passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). BIL provided \$1.2 trillion in funding over five years, an unprecedented federal investment in modernizing transportation infrastructure, accelerating the transition to clean energy, improving climate resilience, and creating new economic and workforce development opportunities across the country. For Maine, it represented an extraordinary opportunity to make significant strides on several existing State plans aimed at tackling economic, resilience, and climate goals.

Since the Mills Administration began in 2019, the State has engaged in several significant and impactful planning processes that have set Maine up to effectively compete for federal funding opportunities and make progress on these goals. The State developed a [10-year Economic Development Strategy](#) to grow Maine's economy and create quality jobs, and released [Maine Won't Wait](#), a four-year climate action plan. When the severe storms of 2023-24 exposed the fragility of critical infrastructure across the state, the Administration convened an [Infrastructure Rebuilding and Resilience Commission](#) which produced a comprehensive assessment of Maine's infrastructure vulnerabilities and investment needs. These plans have been complemented by regular planning processes in many state agencies, including MaineDOT's Three-Year Work Plan, the State Energy Plan, and the State's Broadband and Digital Equity Strategies.



President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on November 15, 2021, surrounded by lawmakers and members of his Cabinet on the South Lawn at the White House. Credit: Official White House Photo



## Governor Mills' Infrastructure Implementation Committee

Following the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Governor Mills signed Executive Order 2 in April 2022, establishing the Governor's Infrastructure Implementation Committee (IIC). The order charged the IIC to "coordinate the activities of state agencies to maximize the benefits of The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021," and to develop strategies to leverage federal funding in direct alignment with MaineDOT's Work Plan, *Maine Won't Wait*, and Maine's Economic Development Strategy. When Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the CHIPS and Science Act later that August, the IIC expanded its scope to track and coordinate programs funded through those bills as well.



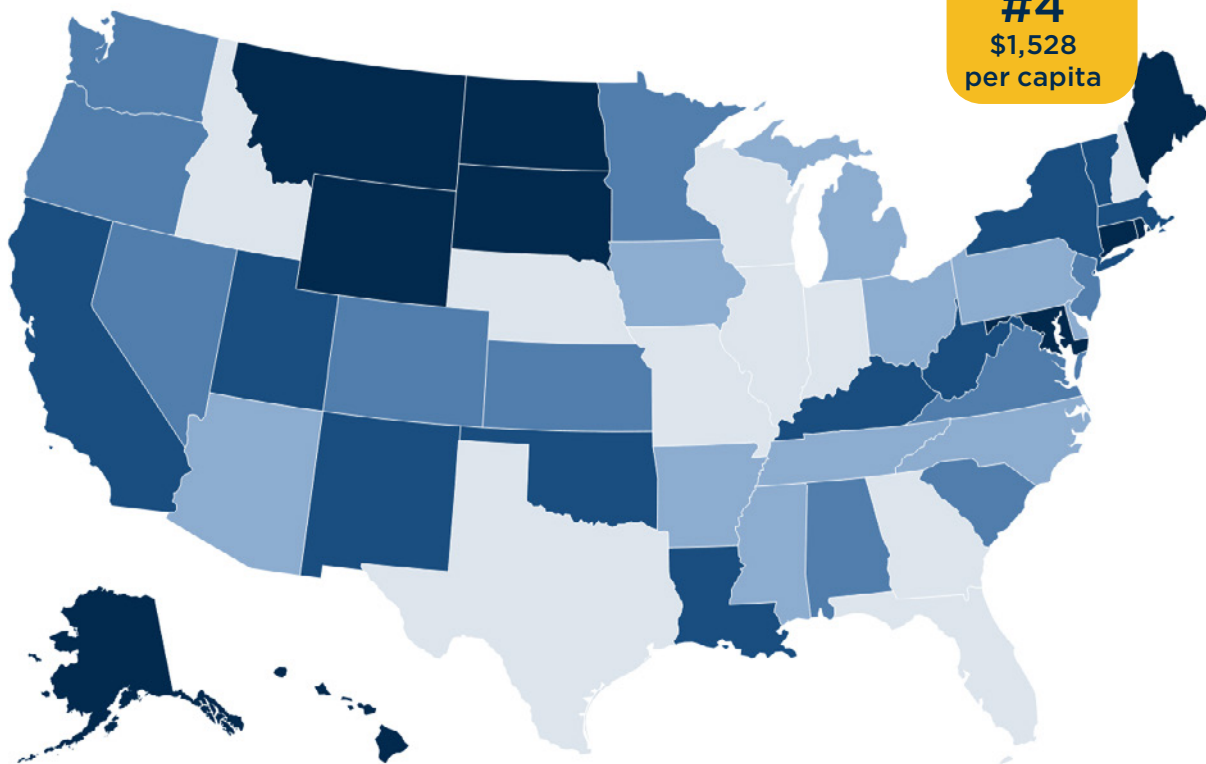
The IIC brings together leadership from across state government, including the Departments of Administrative and Financial Services, Economic and Community Development, Environmental Protection, Health and Human Services, Transportation, and Energy Resources, and the Maine Connectivity Authority, to ensure that federal investments are coordinated, strategic, and aligned with Maine's priorities. Dedicated working groups drive progress on specific areas, including infrastructure workforce development, led by the Department of Labor; and climate resilience and adaptation, led jointly by the Departments of Marine Resources, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, and the Maine Emergency Management Agency. Staff from the Governor's Office and the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future are responsible for coordinating regularly scheduled IIC meetings, facilitating inter-agency work, and maintaining internal and public-facing reporting and evaluation trackers.

# Driving results for Maine people, businesses, and communities

Since November 2021, Maine has been awarded over \$4.6 billion in federal funding from BIL, IRA, and CHIPS, about half of which is formula funding and half is competitive discretionary grants. Maine projects have received the fourth-most per capita competitive dollars from BIL among all states around the country.

## COMPETITIVE BIL FUNDING PER CAPITA

Ranked by dollars awarded per resident



**#4**

Maine ranks 4th in the U.S. for per capita competitive BIL funding



**\$4.4B**

Total Federal Funding Awarded to Maine

*Source: Brookings Institution*

### BIPARTISAN

**INFRASTRUCTURE LAW (BIL;** also called the Infrastructure Investments & Jobs Act, IIJA)

Passed in Nov 2021; \$1.2 trillion to modernize American infrastructure, including significant investments in transportation infrastructure, climate resilience and conservation, drinking water and wastewater treatment, electric grid resilience, and high-speed broadband.

### INFLATION REDUCTION ACT (IRA)

Passed in Aug 2022; \$1 trillion, about 1/3 of which was dedicated to combating climate change through tax credits for EV chargers, incentives for clean energy production and advanced manufacturing, and residential energy efficiency programs.

### CHIPS AND SCIENCE ACT

Passed in Aug 2022; \$280 billion to boost American semiconductor manufacturing, invest in science and technology, and maintain American dominance in high-tech sectors.

# THE STATE HAS BEEN AWARDED

**\$2.6 BILLION**

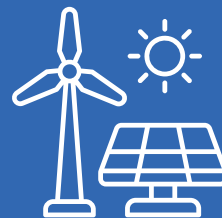


to upgrade and modernize  
transportation infrastructure



**\$974  
MILLION**

to invest in infrastructure  
resilience and climate  
adaptation strategies



**\$901  
MILLION**

to improve energy efficiency,  
harden grids, and meet clean  
energy goals

**\$92 MILLION**



to expand high-speed  
broadband across the state

Prior planning work has provided valuable direction for state agencies applying for federal funds through these laws. Several large, successful infrastructure funding applications were directly informed by state agency plans, including \$69 million from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for resilience activities recommended by *Maine Won't Wait* and the Infrastructure Rebuilding and Resilience Commission; a prestigious Regional Technology & Innovation Hub designation centered on economic development activities recommended in Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy; and several grants to address longstanding transportation improvements identified in MaineDOT's Three-Year Workplan and Long-Range Transportation Plan.

## INFRASTRUCTURE IN ACTION: CASE STUDIES FROM STATE AGENCIES

Translating federal infrastructure dollars into real-world outcomes for Maine people is a years-long process — one that begins long before a shovel breaks ground and extends well after a project is complete.

Federal infrastructure funding flows to states through two primary mechanisms. Formula funding is allocated automatically based on factors like population or road mileage, providing a relatively predictable baseline of investment. Discretionary grants, by contrast, require states and other eligible applicants to compete for dollars by submitting detailed applications that demonstrate need, readiness, and alignment with federal priorities. These applications are often complex and resource-intensive, requiring significant upfront planning, data collection, and coordination across agencies and partners — sometimes before there is any guarantee of an award. Award timelines vary widely; some programs announce results within months, while others involve multiple rounds of review spanning a year or more.

Winning funding is only the beginning. Once an award is made, agencies must execute grant agreements, satisfy federal compliance requirements, and complete any required environmental or permitting reviews before project activity can begin — a process that can itself take months to years. Large capital projects then move through design, engineering, procurement, and contracting phases each carrying its own timeline and potential for delay. Because federal funds are typically reimbursement-based, states must spend first and draw down federal dollars afterward, requiring careful financial planning throughout.

Maine, like other states, has also had to adjust to delays, freezes, or cancellations of some federal programs at the direction of the current federal administration. This has created uncertainty for state agencies working to access and deploy funds, and in some cases has

required Maine to adapt its implementation approach in response to shifting federal program conditions.

Even after a project is built, the work continues. Grant agreements require ongoing reporting on spending, milestones, and outcomes, and the full impacts of infrastructure investment — on economic activity, safety, resilience, or emissions reductions — often take years or decades to fully materialize and measure. Grant periods of performance commonly extend five to ten years beyond the initial award. The case studies that follow reflect projects at different stages of this lifecycle. Some represent projects that are already completed and delivering impact for Maine people; others were won more recently and are still in the process of rolling out. Taken together, they illustrate both the breadth of Maine's infrastructure investment and the sustained, long-term commitment that turning federal opportunity into lasting impact requires.



In September 2024, work crews completed installation of the new large-scale underground stormwater retention system to help prevent coastal flooding in Damariscotta. Credit: Town of Damariscotta

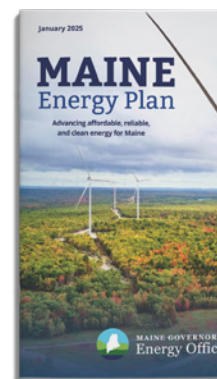
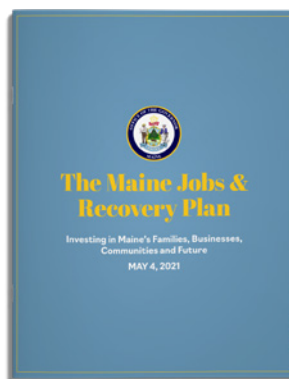
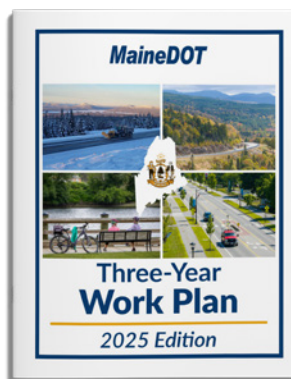
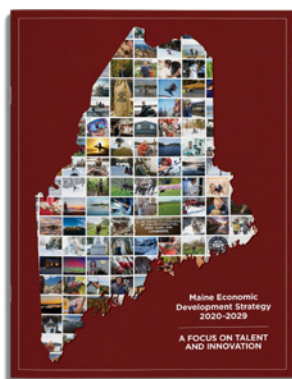
The case studies contained in this document are the result of years of planning across multiple state agencies. This page shows how that informed preparation, unlocked by transformational federal investment, has resulted in real impacts for Maine people and communities. The colored dots trace each project back to key state plans that laid the groundwork for it.

## TRANSPORTATION

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## RELEVANT STATE PLANS

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

STATE ENERGY PLAN

MAINEDOT 3-YEAR WORKPLAN

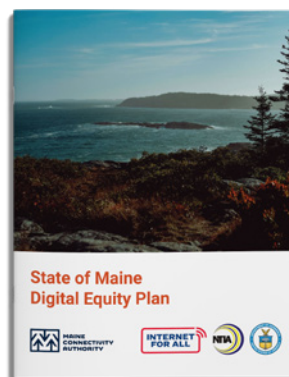
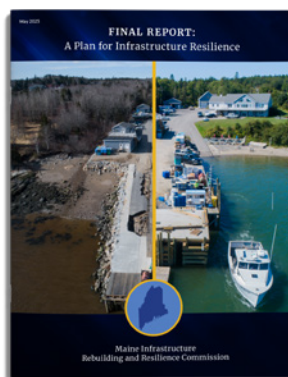
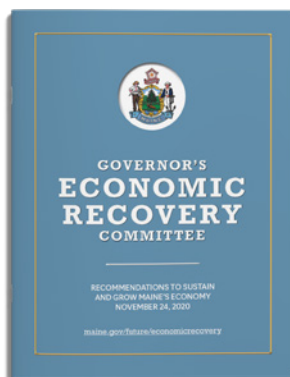
ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN



Each of these efforts reflected the same underlying conviction — that collaborative, forward-looking planning enables state agencies to advance progress and maximize opportunities when they arise.

## SECTION 1: TRANSPORTATION

Since 2022, Maine has secured approximately **\$2.6 billion in federal transportation funding** through formula allocations and competitive grants made available under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These investments are modernizing roads and bridges, improving aviation and port infrastructure, strengthening freight and passenger rail connections, and enhancing safety across urban and rural communities alike.

Through coordinated action, facilitated in part by the Infrastructure Implementation Committee, state agencies worked to align federal opportunities with Maine's long-term capital planning priorities, including Maine-

DOT's Three-Year Work Plan, regional transportation strategies, and safety improvement plans.

**The result has been both scale and impact: major bridge replacements, airport upgrades, culvert and fish passage improvements, freight rail modernization, and investments that improve reliability for working waterfronts and rural communities. The following case studies illustrate how these federal investments are strengthening Maine's transportation network for decades to come.**

Photo below, credit: Maine DOT





The Roux Institute's Portland campus waterfront will be open to the public with sidewalks and bike lanes to provide a direct connection to the Back Cove, Eastern Promenade, and mid-town trails. Credit: Cambridge Seven

### **CASE STUDY 1.1: Advancing multi-modal transportation to promote economic development: the Roux Institute campus in Portland**

In June 2024, MaineDOT was awarded a \$25 million RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to improve transportation access in Portland's East Deering neighborhood — the future home of the Roux Institute at Northeastern University.

The award was the result of a competitive, collaborative application process. MaineDOT, the City of Portland, and Northeastern jointly developed and submitted the grant proposal, reflecting broad agreement that the investment was needed and the project was ready.

This work addresses a longstanding challenge: East Deering currently has limited road access, and the arrival of a major university campus stood to significantly increase traffic in a residential neighborhood. The grant funds a package of complementary improvements designed to move people more safely and efficiently by every mode of transportation. A new I-295 offramp at Exit 8 will provide direct vehicle access to the Roux campus via Sherwood Street, reducing cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets. A new

pedestrian and bike bridge running parallel to Tukey's Bridge will connect the Portland peninsula directly to East Deering, and the Back Cove Trail will be extended to link up with the new bridge. Additional improvements include updated foot and bike paths on Sherwood Street and the Back Cove system, and a new bicycle lane on Washington Avenue.

Together, these investments reflect a vision of East Deering not just as a place to drive through, but as a connected, multimodal neighborhood — one where students, researchers, and long-term residents alike can move safely and easily. With construction on the transportation portion expected to begin this spring, the project marks the next phase of a years-long transformation of an iconic piece of Portland's industrial waterfront into an engine of innovation for the entire state.

#### **RELEVANT STATE PLANS:**

**10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

**MAINEDOT 3-YEAR WORKPLAN**

### **CASE STUDY 1.2:** Improving road safety throughout the state: Route 1 in Frenchville/Fort Kent

US Route 1 is unlike any other road in Maine. Starting in Fort Kent and stretching all the way to Key West, Florida, it is the longest north-south highway in the United States. In northern Maine, where there is no interstate highway and vast forestland covers much of the landscape, Route 1 is not a scenic alternative to a faster road. It is the primary artery for residents, businesses, tourists, and the agricultural and logging industries that drive the region's economy.

Over the past 25 years, MaineDOT has been systematically reconstructing and modernizing Route 1 through Aroostook County, segment by segment. In 2024, a \$27.7 million Rural Surface Transportation grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law allowed Maine to tackle two of the last remaining unreconstructed sections: a combined 10.4 miles in Frenchville and the surrounding area that had lagged due to funding constraints.

**Photo below: Improvements to Route 1 between Fort Kent and Madawaska along the St. John River will alleviate the long travel times, construction congestion, and reliance on smaller roads connecting towns along the St. John River in Aroostook County. Reconstruction of the two segments in disrepair will allow people and goods to move more efficiently. Credit: Adobe Stock**



The project is comprehensive in scope. It will fully reconstruct the roadway, ease pavement and slope conditions, and build paved shoulders four to six feet wide where gravel shoulders currently exist, a critical safety improvement for the cyclists and pedestrians who use the road alongside heavy commercial trucks. More than 3,700 feet of new guardrail will be installed, and an additional 7,000 feet of existing guardrail will be upgraded to meet modern standards, protecting drivers from steep embankments that drop toward the Saint John River below. The project will also replace 42 culverts and add approximately 6,000 feet of closed drainage infrastructure, designed to last 50 to 75 years, ensuring the road can withstand the region's cold and snowy winters.

The investment matters beyond the road itself. Route 1 connects Fort Kent and Frenchville to two interna-

tional border crossings, the University of Maine at Fort Kent, Northern Maine Medical Center (the region's only hospital with inpatient psychiatric services) and the broader network of communities in the Saint John Valley that depend on it for daily life. For a region where the next closest hospital can often be over an hour away, a reliable road is not a convenience – it is essential infrastructure.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

**MAINEDOT 3-YEAR WORKPLAN**

**MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN**



With preliminary design complete and construction expected to begin in the coming years, this project represents the culmination of a generation of systematic investment in one of Maine's most important road corridors. Credit: Maine DOT

### **CASE STUDY 1.3: Supporting low-emissions public transit for rural communities: the Acadia Clean Bus Initiative**

For the roughly 20,000 workers within a mile of its 140 stops, Downeast Transportation Inc. (DTI) is a daily necessity. As the largest rural bus system in Maine by boardings and the third largest in the state overall, DTI connects residents of Hancock County and the surrounding region to workplaces, medical appointments, and everyday tasks across a geography where driving is often the only alternative. The communities it serves include eight census tracts designated as historically disadvantaged and four areas of persistent poverty, and its riders include older adults, people with disabilities, and workers commuting to jobs they could not otherwise reach.

The fleet making those connections possible is aging out. In 2024, MaineDOT was awarded a \$23.5 million grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (matched by funding from the National Park Service and private partners) to replace DTI's entire active bus fleet with low-emissions vehicles. The award was the product of a close, multi-partner collaboration involving MaineDOT, DTI, Hancock County, municipal governments, and the National Park Service, reflecting broad agreement that the investment was both necessary and ready to move forward.

The project will proceed in two phases. Phase 1 will replace 23 buses currently in DTI's active fleet that are reaching the end of their useful life; Phase 2 will add the remaining 17 vehicles, timed to align with bus availability and cost. The first phase of buses is expected to arrive in 2028, with Phase 2 delivery anticipated in 2031.

The case for investment extends beyond the immediate needs of DTI's riders. Acadia National Park – one of the most visited national parks in the country, drawing nearly 4 million visitors in 2022 and generating an estimated \$690 million in economic output that year – sits within DTI's service area, and tourism is the dominant economic driver of the broader Downeast and Acadia region. A reliable, modern transit system supports not

just visitors but the workers who serve them: people who live in the region, depend on DTI to get to work, and whose employment underpins the local economy year-round.

DTI's partnerships reflect the breadth of that role. The agency works closely with community organizations including Healthy Acadia, Friends of Acadia, and the Eastern Area Agency on Aging, which serve older adults and people with disabilities. It coordinates with Chambers of Commerce, housing developers, and municipal governments on residential and workforce planning. And it maintains what MaineDOT has described as the state's most successful employer commuter program with the Jackson Laboratory, carrying workers from underserved communities to well-paying jobs with strong benefits.

A modernized fleet will allow DTI to sustain and strengthen all of those connections for years to come.

#### **RELEVANT STATE PLANS:**

**MAINEDOT 3-YEAR WORKPLAN**

**MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

**STATE ENERGY PLAN**





Current buses like this one in use in Acadia National Park will be phased out and replaced with a new low-emissions fleet between 2028 and 2031 for visitors as part of the Acadia Clean Bus Initiative. The initiative also supports rural communities and workers who depend on Downeast Transportation to get around. CREDIT: Friends of Acadia

## **CASE STUDY 1.4: Upgrading Maine’s aviation gateways: the Airport Terminal Program’s impact across the state**

For communities in Maine’s rural areas, reliable air service is not a convenience but a practical necessity, connecting residents to medical care, businesses to markets, and visitors to the destinations that drive Maine’s tourism economy. Yet across the state, airport terminals have aged significantly, with many facilities dating back decades and struggling to meet the safety, accessibility, and passenger experience standards that modern air travel demands.

The BIL-funded Airport Terminal Program (ATP) is helping to address that gap directly, allocating \$5 billion nationally in competitive grants for terminal development projects. The program prioritizes primary towered airports serving commercial air traffic, while reserving at least 10 percent of total funding for non-hub and non-primary airports, ensuring that general aviation facilities serving smaller communities could also compete. Maine has been a consistent beneficiary across multiple grant years, receiving ATP awards at six airports totaling more than \$33 million.

The two largest awards went to Maine’s primary commercial airports: Bangor International Airport received \$14.2 million and Portland International Jetport received \$10.4 million, supporting renovations at facilities that together serve most of Maine’s commercial air passengers. Beyond those two anchors, the program has reached communities that would have had little prospect of funding terminal improvements through other means. Presque Isle International Airport, the primary commercial gateway for Aroostook County, received \$6.5 million for a new terminal, a transformative investment for a region that has



**Projects include runway improvements and terminal upgrades — including the connector bridge (cover photo), which links the domestic and international terminals post-security at Bangor International Airport. Credit: Bangor International Airport.**

long faced connectivity challenges. New terminals were also built at Eastport (\$1.12 million) and Dexter (\$760,000), and Oxford County Regional Airport received \$244,000 for improvements serving general aviation users in western Maine.

The 2026 grant year represents the final round of ATP funding, and several Maine airports have submitted applications, including a \$5 million application for upgrades to Augusta State Airport’s terminal. Through its first four years, the ATP has delivered a meaningful and geographically broad round of capital investment in aviation infrastructure that would have been difficult to assemble through any other available funding mechanism.

### **RELEVANT STATE PLANS:**

**10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

**MAINEDOT 3-YEAR WORKPLAN**

**A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE**

## SECTION 2: RESILIENCE & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, Maine has secured approximately \$974 million in federal funding to advance climate resilience, environmental protection, ecosystem restoration, and community preparedness. These investments help safeguard communities from flooding and severe weather, restore natural resources, improve water infrastructure, and strengthen the long-term resilience of Maine's coast-lines, forests, and working lands.

The Infrastructure Implementation Committee's Resilience Working Group supported agencies in aligning federal resilience funding with *Maine Won't Wait*, hazard mitigation strategies, and long-standing conservation and environmental restoration priorities. By coordinating across environmental, transportation, emergency management, and economic development agencies, the IIC helped position Maine to compete effectively for large, complex, and often multi-agency grant opportunities.

These funds are supporting flood mitigation and stormwater upgrades, culvert and watershed restoration, coastal resilience planning, brownfield redevelopment, and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure improvements. Together, they represent a generational investment in protecting Maine's natural resources and ensuring communities are prepared for a changing climate.



"Maine knows firsthand the devastating impact that climate change can have on our people, our communities, and our economy – just look at the unprecedented damage caused by last winter's severe storms. We are in a critical fight to protect the health of our people, the health of our environment, and the health of our economy from the ravages of climate change. Thankfully, this historic investment from the Biden-Harris Administration will accelerate and expand our already aggressive work to make our state, especially our vital working waterfronts, stronger and more resilient to the severe storms we know are ahead."

—GOVERNOR JANET MILLS



In July 2024, Governor Mills joined state leaders and representatives from NOAA on the Portland waterfront to announce a \$69m grant from the IRA-funded Climate Resilience Regional Challenge program. Maine's grant is building enduring community resiliency; reducing climate impact through nature-based solutions and investments in green infrastructure; and strengthening the resilience of Maine's iconic working waterfronts.

## **CASE STUDY 2.1: Protecting important natural resources and recreation areas: conservation and restoration in the Scarborough Marsh**

Maine’s coastal ecosystems – salt marshes, estuaries, and tidal wetlands – provide a range of ecological and economic benefits that have become increasingly difficult to protect. As sea levels rise and storm patterns intensify, these landscapes face mounting pressure, and the communities that depend on them for flood protection, wildlife habitat, fisheries productivity, and recreation are confronting planning and restoration challenges that exceed what any single agency or municipality can address alone. The Coastal Zone Management program, funded by both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, has provided Maine communities with resources to move coastal resilience planning from aspiration to action.

On April 22, 2024, members of the White House Office of Science Technology Policy, NOAA, Maine’s congressional delegation, and representatives from state agencies and local government convened in Scarborough to announce ~\$60 million in grants from the Coastal Zone Management program<sup>1</sup>, including a \$1.5 million award to the Scarborough Land Trust for resilience and restoration planning work in Scarborough Marsh.<sup>2</sup> This grant weaves together funds from BIL and IRA to support resilience activities in coastal communities.

Scarborough Marsh is Maine’s largest contiguous salt marsh, stretching for over 3,000 acres across the towns of Scarborough, Cape Elizabeth, and Old Orchard



Credit: GOPIF

1 <https://coast.noaa.gov/funding/bil/czm/projects.html>

2 <https://scarboroughlandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/SLT-NOAA-Grant-Award-Release-FINAL-42224.pdf>





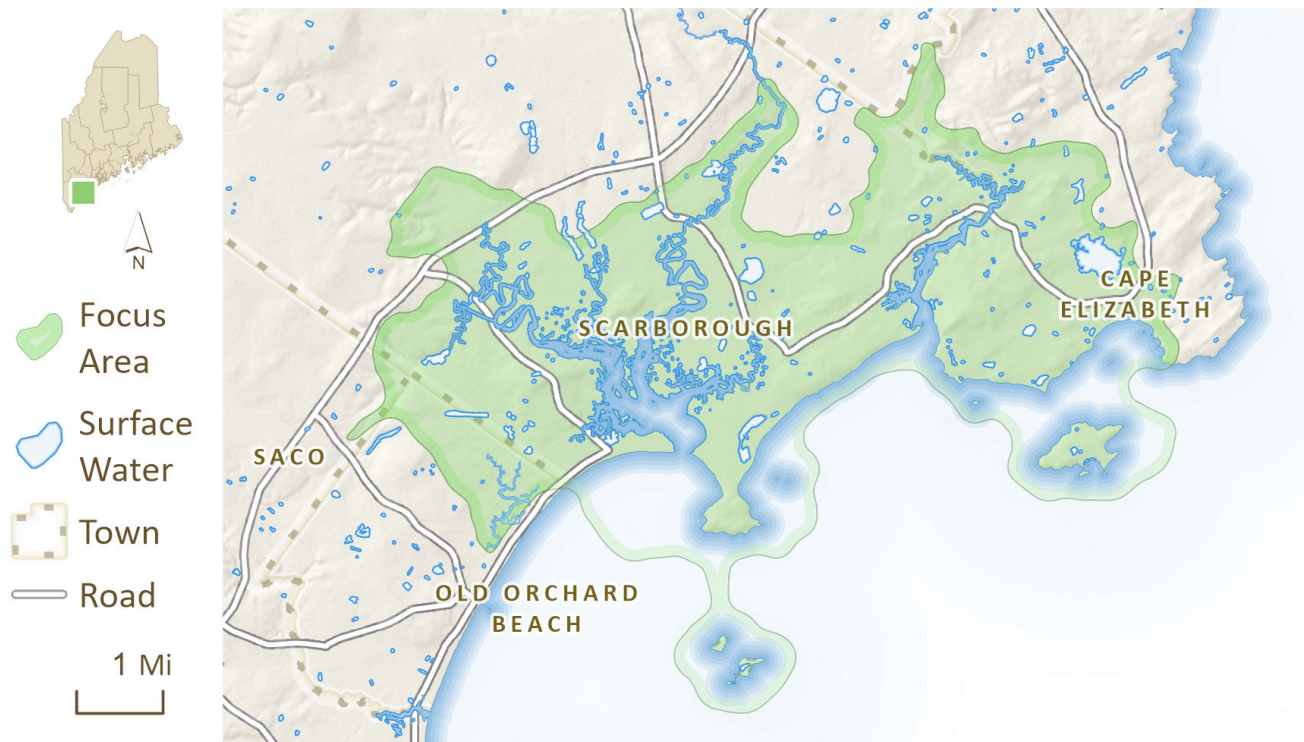
Beach. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife owns and manages approximately 95% of the Marsh, which is home to several rare and endangered plant and wildlife species.<sup>3</sup> This area has some of the highest wildlife productivity and habitat diversity in the state, and includes the Scarborough Beach area among other recreational areas that are important economic drivers for the region.

The Scarborough Land Trust is already leveraging these funds to move conservation activities from theory to reality – enabling on-the-ground partners to develop an informed and strategic pipeline of restoration and conservation projects aimed at restoring vital hydrological features, protecting areas for marsh migration, and ensuring the Marsh's long-term viability. It brings together municipal governments, state agencies, federal partners, and non-profit organizations to build consensus on multi-objective climate resiliency projects. This work is built upon many existing state plans, including the State Climate Action Plan, the State Infrastructure Resilience Plan, and infrastructure planning at MaineDOT, Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Maine Coastal Program, and the Maine Geological Survey, alongside leadership from local governments and non-profits.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE



Scarborough Marsh Focus Area map. Source: Beginning with Habitat, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/beginning-with-habitat/about/focus-areas.html>

## **CASE STUDY 2.2: Investing in critical water infrastructure: upgrades to Machias' South Street Pump Station**

Every year, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) solicits applications for wastewater and sewer projects from municipalities, quasi-municipalities, and districts through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). DEP receives capitalization funding from the EPA annually, combines it with State match dollars and repayment funds from previous years' loans, and issues new loans that are used to plan, design, and construct wastewater and sewage systems; repair and upgrade vital clean water infrastructure such as pumping stations and treatment facilities; enable strategic planning processes around municipal infrastructure and climate adaptation; and address emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law made unprecedented investments into clean water projects, enabling DEP to address dozens of wastewater and sewer infrastructure concerns around the state. For example, in Machias, CWSRF funds have been used to protect important natural resources and recreational areas along the Machias River. In recent years, the river has flooded more frequently and more severely than in years past, and the aging sewage overflow infrastructure has proven insufficient. Flooding waters often overwhelmed siphon pipes on the river's south side, discharging sewage into the river near a productive shell fishing and beach area, threatening public health and disrupted important economic activities.

To address this critical concern, DEP and the Town of Machias invested over \$3.5 million (braiding BIL clean water funding with other State and federal sources) to replace the outdated pipes with a new pump station and force main located well above the flood line, greatly reducing overflow risk and protecting the river's natural resources. Over the past four years, DEP has invested tens of millions in BIL funds into similar



Part of the well for the Southside Pump Station in Machias is installed in 2023. The pump station was part of a 10 year upgrade to reduce overflow events at the Machias Wastewater Treatment Plant. Credit: Town of Machias

projects throughout Maine, revitalizing aging infrastructure and helping Maine communities address areas of greatest need.<sup>4</sup>

The work is far from complete, however. The most recent EPA Clean Watersheds Needs Survey (conducted in 2022) estimated that Maine would need to invest over \$3.1 billion into publicly owned wastewater collection and treatment facilities to meet the water quality goals

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/grants/SRF/cwsrf/CWSRF%202023%20and%202024%20Project%20Highlights.pdf>



Now completed, the new pump station is located on higher ground, above the flood line on the south side of the Machias River in Machias. Credit: Town of Machias

laid out in the Clean Water Act.<sup>5</sup> Discharge from failing wastewater systems or outdated sewage treatment infrastructure, like the siphon pipes on the Machias River, can harm ecosystems, impact human health, and interrupt economic activities. The progress made over the past four years can provide important guidance in planning for a significant reduction in federal infrastructure spending after BIL winds down.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

5 <https://www.epa.gov/cwns/clean-watersheds-needs-survey-cwns-2022-report-and-data>

### **CASE STUDY 2.3: Improving disaster resilience in Maine's drinking water and wastewater infrastructure: rapid response capabilities at the Maine Rural Water Association**

Maine's water and wastewater utilities serve communities of all sizes, from small rural districts with limited staffing to larger municipal systems with dedicated operations teams. When a pump fails, a pipe breaks, or a storm overwhelms a treatment facility, the consequences can be immediate and serious: untreated sewage discharged into waterways, drinking water systems knocked offline, and communities left without reliable service. Smaller utilities are often particularly vulnerable, lacking the in-house technical expertise and equipment reserves to respond quickly on their own.

The Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) exists to fill that gap, providing technical assistance and training to water and wastewater systems across the state. With support from a \$250,000 investment that braids BIL funds

through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF and DWSRF), MRWA developed and deployed a dedicated training and response trailer, a mobile resource that can be dispatched to utilities anywhere in Maine facing an emergency or in need of hands-on training.

The trailer serves two complementary functions. In an emergency, MRWA staff can deploy it to provide direct technical support, supplemental staffing, and critical equipment, while also serving as a liaison between affected utilities and the vendors and services they need most. The trailer also anchors a training program covering chemical injection pumps, general pump operations, and mechanical equipment maintenance — practical, hands-on skills that help utility staff prevent emergencies before they occur. By May 2024, just months after



**Wastewater workers utilize the Maine Rural Water Association's new emergency training and response trailer**

deployment, the trailer had already been dispatched to eight emergency events across Maine.

Keeping water systems operational during and after emergencies is essential not only for public health, but for ensuring that treatment facilities continue to meet discharge standards that protect Maine's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. The MRWA trailer represents a relatively modest investment with broad and lasting utility — the kind of resilience infrastructure that pays dividends every time a crisis is averted or quickly contained.

#### **RELEVANT STATE PLANS:**

**MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN**

**MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

**A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE**

## CASE STUDY 2.4: Protecting Mainers from “forever chemicals”: PFAS remediation at Bonny Eagle School District in Buxton

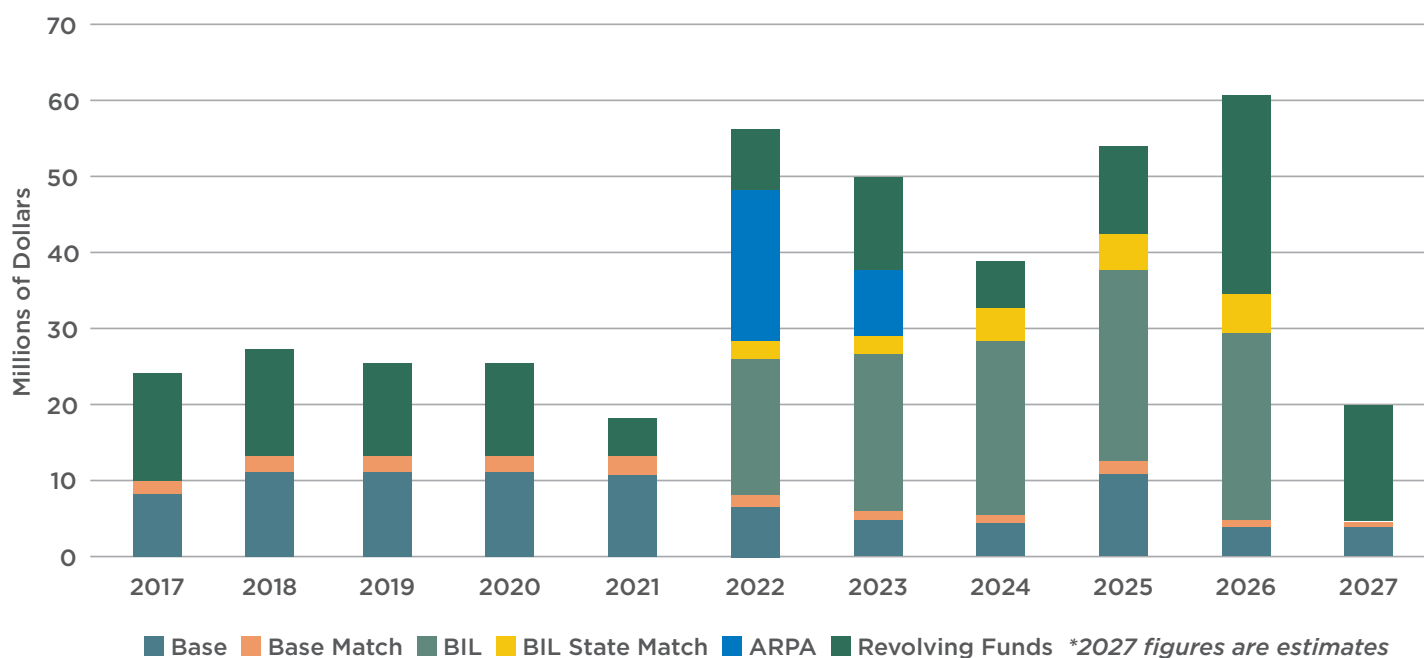
PFAS — per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly called “forever chemicals” — are a class of synthetic compounds that do not break down in the environment and can accumulate in the human body over time. Though their production has been curtailed, decades of industrial and agricultural use have left PFAS widely distributed in Maine’s soils and groundwater. In 2021, the Maine Legislature mandated that all community public water systems, as well as schools and daycares operating their own water systems, test their drinking water for PFAS. The results revealed a serious and widespread problem: across the state, dozens of schools, mobile home parks, municipal water systems, and private wells were found to contain PFAS at levels exceeding Maine’s interim drinking water standard of 20 parts per trillion.

One of the water systems with the highest PFAS levels

was at School Administrative District 6 in Buxton, home of the Bonny Eagle schools. Results from testing done in July and August 2022 showed that Bonny Eagle Middle School registered PFAS levels of 822 parts per trillion — more than 40 times the State’s standard and among the highest readings recorded at any public water system in Maine. The Frank Jewett Elementary School in the same district tested at 153 parts per trillion, nearly eight times the standard. School officials promptly shut off water sources at affected buildings and notified families, but the path to a permanent solution required significant investment.

That investment came through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), which — like its clean water counterpart — received a transformational infusion of capital through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. BIL dedicated \$4 billion nationally through

### Program Funding Availability Look Back & Ahead



Funding availability for clean drinking water, 2017-2027 (projected)



Updated water filtration systems, along with regular testing and maintenance, were implemented in partnership with the DHHS-CDC-DWP following the discovery of PFAS in well water at Bonny Eagle Middle School, and several other schools in MSAD-6. Credit: MSAD-6

the DWSRF to address emerging contaminants like PFAS, enabling Maine to extend grants and principal forgiveness loans to water systems that could not otherwise afford remediation. The State awarded over \$1 million in funding with 100% principal forgiveness to address the PFAS contamination at MSAD 6's affected schools, protecting the health of students and staff and restoring safe, reliable drinking water to the community.

The treatment systems installed at schools like Bonny Eagle require sustained maintenance and monitoring, and the pipeline of unaddressed contamination sites remains long. How Maine navigates that gap — between the scale of investment that BIL made possible and the more limited resources likely available once it winds down — will have real consequences for the students, families, and communities that depend on clean drinking water.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



### **CASE STUDY 2.5: Remediating pollution at former industrial sites: redevelopment at the Irving Tannery site in Hartland**

For over a century, the former Irving Tannery was the backbone of Hartland's economy. Its closure resulted in the loss of more than 500 jobs and triggered sustained economic decline that the community has struggled to overcome ever since. Today, the 27-acre former tannery site — located centrally along Main Street and adjacent to the Sebasticook River — remains vacant, contaminated, and structurally deteriorated, representing one of the most significant barriers to local revitalization. The property contains hazardous substances, including heavy metals, asbestos, and contaminated soil and groundwater, that pose health risks to nearby residents and the surrounding environment. Its condition deters private investment, reduces surrounding property values, and removes a large, strategically located parcel from the town's already limited tax base. Hartland's small population



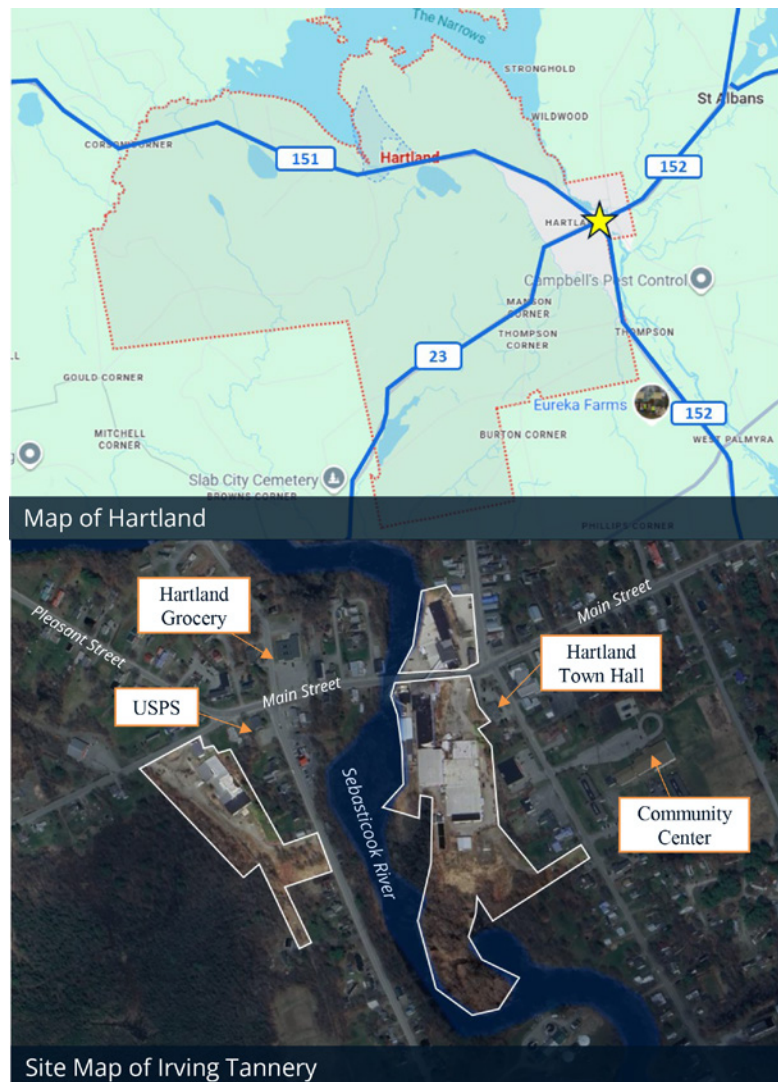
View of the Irving Tannery in Hartland. Source: Maine Department of Environmental Protection

and constrained municipal capacity make it infeasible for the town to independently address cleanup and redevelopment on this scale. As a result, the site has remained underutilized for nearly two decades.

BIL's significant expansion of EPA's Brownfields program has helped unlock a path forward. Maine's Department of Environmental Protection has used approximately \$180,000 in Brownfields funding for Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments and remedial planning. This has allowed the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority, which recently acquired the site, to apply for a \$4 million EPA Brownfields cleanup grant, which, if awarded, would mark a major step toward transforming the site from a liability into an asset.

The proposed reuse plan, developed through community engagement and a market analysis prepared through the Department of Energy Resources' Maine Community Energy Redevelopment Program (MECERP), envisions transforming the site into a mixed-use hub aligned with local and regional economic development strategies. Following environmental cleanup and demolition of unsalvageable structures, the plan includes options for mixed-use Main Street redevelopment that include ground-floor retail and upper-level housing and office space; new multifamily housing and a dedicated 55-and-older housing complex; approximately 70,000 square feet of flexible light industrial space designed to attract precision manufacturing, logistics, and forest products industries; a new municipal Public Works and Life Safety facility; and expanded riverfront access, walking trails, and green space along the Sebasticook River.

Anticipated outcomes include job creation, increased housing availability, expansion of the local tax base, and improved quality of life through enhanced public



spaces and environmental conditions. Hartland is one of many Maine communities carrying significant environmental and economic legacy costs from past industrial use — sites where the scale of remediation needs routinely exceeds what municipalities can address on their own. The assessments and planning work funded through BIL's Brownfields investment have positioned Hartland to compete for the larger cleanup grants needed to move from planning to action and represent the kind of early-stage federal support that makes subsequent private investment and redevelopment feasible.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

## **CASE STUDY 2.6: Enabling natural animal migrations: removing the Woodland Dam on the St. Croix River**

The Maine Department of Marine Resources is constructing a new, state-of-the-art fishway at Woodland Dam on the St. Croix River to restore passage for sea-run fish and provide critical new infrastructure at the Woodland Pulp mill. Designed to meet modern fish passage standards and accommodate multiple species, the facility will provide upstream and downstream passage for river herring, American shad, Atlantic salmon, and other migratory fish that have been impacted by poor fish passage for over a century. The project is being implemented through a coordinated effort among State and federal partners, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with the Woodland Pulp facility, Tribal governments, Canadian partners, and the Downeast community.

Reconnecting this reach of the St. Croix River provides access to a broad network of lakes and tributaries capable of supporting one of the largest river herring restoration efforts in the United States and Canada. Increased forage production from these runs is expected to benefit the lobster and elver fisheries and associated industries, strengthen nearshore food webs, and improve feeding opportunities for birds, mammals, and other wildlife throughout the region. The scale of habitat being reopened positions the project as one of the most significant fisheries restoration efforts underway in the United States, with benefits that extend across the Gulf of Maine and into Canadian waters.

Construction of the Woodland fishway builds upon prior restoration actions, including the removal of the Milltown Dam in New Brunswick, which restored



Ralph Dana (center) of the Passamaquoddy Tribe speaks with NOAA Fisheries Head Janet Coit (second from left) and other partners about the importance of migratory fish in May 2024. Credit: NOAA Fisheries.



Improvements along the St. Croix River's dam systems include a fishway at Woodland Dam that will reconnect 60,000 acres of spawning habitat in lakes for alewife and other migratory fish. The project could create the largest Alewife run in North America. Credit: Adobe Stock

connectivity to the lower river. By extending improved passage beyond Woodland, the project enables those earlier investments to translate into watershed-scale biological gains and supports the recovery of shared U.S. and Canadian fish populations. Implementation has also been coordinated with targeted upgrades to mill infrastructure, improving the facility at Woodland while accommodating modern fish passage, supporting the regional forest products economy alongside ecological restoration.

Funded in part through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, the Woodland Fishway Project reflects how federal investments through

NOAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation are being applied to large-scale, technically complex restoration projects in Maine. Alongside other statewide projects, this project demonstrates measurable progress toward restoring aquatic connectivity, rebuilding fisheries that support coastal economies, and strengthening partnerships among Tribal nations, local communities, industry, and resource agencies.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

## SECTION 3: ENERGY PROGRAMS & BUILDING EFFICIENCY

Via programs funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, Maine has secured over \$900 million in federal funding to accelerate clean energy deployment, improve building efficiency, reduce energy costs, and modernize the state's energy infrastructure. These investments support households, businesses, municipalities, and institutions in reducing energy burdens while advancing Maine's long-term energy and climate goals.

Maine agencies coordinated applications and program design across the topics of energy, housing, economic development, and environmental. This coordination

ensured that formula funding and competitive grant opportunities were integrated into existing planning efforts — including the Maine Energy Plan, building energy code updates, workforce development initiatives, and programs aimed at electrification and weatherization.

Federal investments are supporting residential and commercial efficiency upgrades, heat pump and electrification programs, grid modernization, clean energy innovation, and targeted assistance for low- and moderate-income households. These efforts not only reduce emissions but also strengthen energy independence and affordability across the state.



The 110-megawatt Unity Solar Farm, also called Three Corners Solar Project, was constructed in 2024 in Unity. It is officially the largest operating solar farm in Maine, generating enough clean energy to power roughly 30,000 homes. Credit: Maine Department of Energy Resources

## SPOTLIGHT: SOLAR FOR ALL

"Thousands of Maine people stood to benefit from lower energy bills delivered by the Solar for All program. Terminating this funding doesn't help Maine people, it only hurts them. Canceling the program deprives Maine of access to affordable solar, energy storage, and the skilled electricians, installers, and construction workers needed to meet our energy and economic needs now and in the future."

—DAN BURGESS, FORMER COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES

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Maine's \$62 million in federal funding for the Solar for All program was terminated in 2025. The application was estimated to help over 20,000 low-income Maine households save between \$380-\$1400 annually on their energy bills through incentives for rooftop solar with storage, support for cooperatively owned projects, and a new community solar and storage program- all designed to benefit Maine ratepayers. The proposed program would've increased solar access for multiunit dwellings and also included funding to support workforce training for over 700 Maine residents in electrical work, construction, maintenance and repair, and other essential building trades. In October 2025, Maine joined 20 states in a lawsuit to unfreeze these funds. Litigation is ongoing. Credit: Adobe



### CASE STUDY 3.1: Hardening Maine's electric grid: resilience at Madison Electric Works

Maine's electric grid faces a growing set of weather-related threats. Storms are more frequent and more severe, flooding events are increasingly common, and the aging infrastructure that serves many of Maine's rural communities (including wooden poles, overhead lines running through dense forest corridors, and substations in low-lying areas) was not designed with today's climate conditions in mind. When power goes out in a rural Maine town, the consequences can be serious: compromised heating systems in winter, disrupted water and wastewater operations, and economic losses for businesses and households with few nearby alternatives. For small municipal utilities serving tight-knit communities, the cost of the infrastructure upgrades needed to address these vulnerabilities has often been simply out of reach.

Maine's new Grid Resilience Formula Grant Program, administered in Maine by the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), was designed to help close that gap. In the first round of grid resilience awards — totaling over \$5.7 million across five projects — Madison Electric Works received \$510,633 to fund the Madison Extreme Weather Resilience project. The project targets three interconnected vulnerabilities: upgrading and relocating critical power lines that are at risk during flooding events, expanding vegetation management along distribution corridors to reduce outage risk from fallen trees and encroaching growth, and deploying advanced monitoring devices that give the utility real-time visibility into grid conditions, enabling faster response when outages do occur. Together, these improvements are designed to reduce the frequency and duration of outages, particularly those driven by the kind of extreme weather events that have become more common across western Maine.

Vegetation management — one of the most effective and cost-efficient tools available to small utilities for reducing weather-related outages — is already underway. Madison Electric Works has begun clearing work along its distribution corridors, and before-and-after documentation of that work illustrates in concrete



terms what grid resilience investment looks like on the ground. The monitoring devices being deployed as part of the project will add a layer of situational awareness that many small municipal utilities have historically lacked, enabling earlier outage detection and restoring power to more customers in less time.

The other awards in Maine's first round of grid resilience grants — funding distribution upgrades in the Calais region, pole and line replacements in Van Buren, switching and reliability improvements serving roughly 36,000 customers in the Sebago region, and submarine cable upgrades for North Haven Island — reflect the geographic breadth of grid vulnerability across the state. From island communities dependent on aging underwater infrastructure to inland towns contending with flooding and storm damage, the challenge of building a more resilient grid is one that touches every corner of Maine. For communities like Madison, where a small municipal utility serves a rural population with limited margin for extended outages, targeted federal investment of this kind represents one of the most direct and tangible ways that BIL's infrastructure priorities have translated into local impact.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

STATE ENERGY PLAN

A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

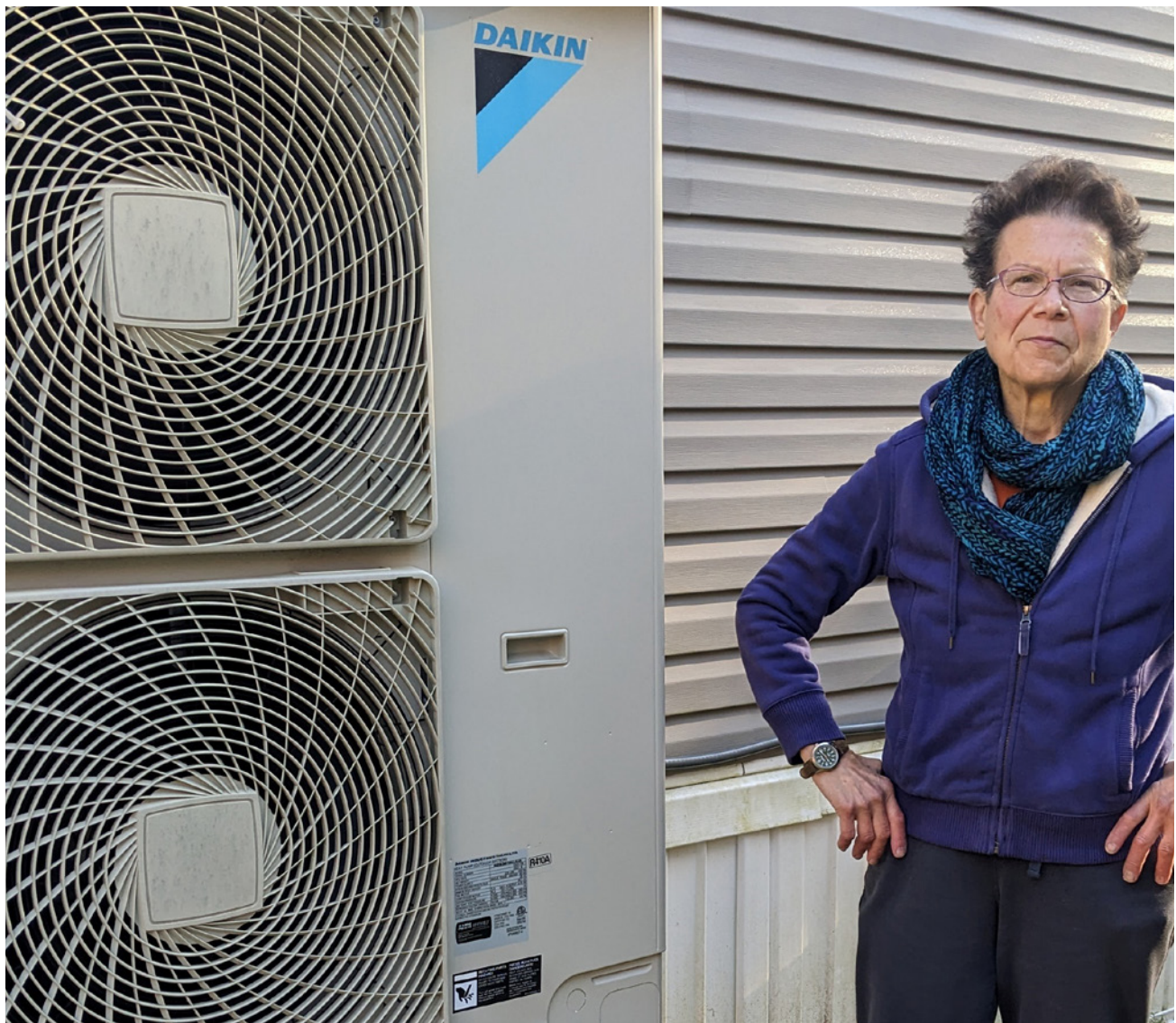


Grid resilience grants funded projects to help solidify and upgrade existing infrastructure, including underwater power cables linking to Maine's islands, including North Haven. Credit: Adobe Stock

### **CASE STUDY 3.2: Leveraging federal funds to lower ratepayer costs via energy efficiency upgrades: heat pump rebates in affordable and manufactured housing**

Maine is the most heating oil-dependent state in the country, and the costs of that dependence fall disproportionately on low-income households, rural residents, and people living in older, less efficient housing stock. Against that backdrop, Maine has made heat pump deployment a central pillar of its clean energy strategy — and the results have been striking. Maine surpassed its goal of installing 100,000 heat pumps ahead of schedule, tallying over 200,000 installations

statewide as of 2026. The State is now working toward a target of 275,000 by 2027. The Inflation Reduction Act's Home Energy Rebate programs represent the next major federal investment in sustaining and accelerating that trajectory, directing nearly \$72 million to Maine to extend rebates for electrification and efficiency upgrades, with a particular focus on the households that have historically been hardest to reach.



Marianna Casagrande of Wardtown Mobile Home Cooperative community in Freeport, was part of an Efficiency Maine grant program in 2021 to pilot and study heat pump use in manufactured homes. She says she can keep her home warm easily and much more affordably now, something she struggled with in rental homes she previously occupied that had other forms of heating. "During the days when we had the 15-below temperatures, my house was fine. I was comfortable. The heat pump worked beautifully through all of that." Credit: GOPIF

The Home Energy Rebate funding is structured around two complementary programs. Under the original U.S. Department of Energy program guidance, the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) program, administered by Efficiency Maine Trust, targeted income-eligible households with rebates for heat pump installations in two priority areas: newly constructed affordable multifamily housing and manufactured (mobile) homes — two housing types where the gap between energy costs and household income is often most acute, and where energy efficiency investment has historically faced significant barriers. The Home Efficiency Rebates (HER) program will extend support for qualifying energy efficiency upgrades across a broader range of household types, targeting improvements that achieve minimum energy savings thresholds set by the federal government. Together, the two programs were designed to reach Mainers across the income spectrum, from renters in newly built affordable apartments to owners of manufactured homes in rural communities.

HEAR is already deployed and producing results. Since the program launched in September 2024 and as of March 2026, the Manufactured Home Initiative issued rebates for 33 homes totaling \$346,500 in customer incentives — braided with other funds for a total incentive of approximately \$12,900 per home — and enrolled 15 participating contractors across the



state. The Initiative for Electrification in New Affordable Multifamily Housing has completed one installation serving 18 dwelling units, and approved 14 additional projects representing 655 dwelling units and \$5.24 million in committed incentives. In early June 2026, the U.S. Department of Energy released updated guidance for the Home Energy Rebate program. Reflecting the new guidance, Efficiency Maine will shift to an alternative source of funding to continue offering the Manufactured Home Initiative while continuing to provide heat pump incentives for income-eligible newly constructed affordable multifamily housing.

The HER program has not yet launched. Maine's application for the program's \$35.9 million allocation was conditionally awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy in January 2025. Following the release of the updated federal guidance, the U.S. Department of Energy has indicated that it will work with states that received conditional awards to advance remaining program launches. Although no implementation timeline has been announced, the Maine Department of Energy Resources and Efficiency Maine Trust continue to coordinate on program design and federal compliance to support deployment of HER funding for qualifying energy efficiency improvements, including heat pump installations in existing multifamily housing.

Complementing the Home Energy Rebate programs, Maine is also receiving \$43 million through the New England Heat Pump Accelerator — a multi-state federal initiative — to support the installation of high-efficiency heat pump water heaters, with a goal of adding 30,000 units to the more than 70,000 already installed in Maine since 2018. Water heating accounts for roughly 18 percent of a home's energy use, making it the second largest household energy expense after space heating.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

STATE ENERGY PLAN

### **CASE STUDY 3.3: Training a new generation of clean energy workers: HVAC training at the Maine Community College System**

Maine's transition to clean energy depends not only on the availability of efficient technologies and financial incentives, but on having enough trained workers to install, maintain, and service them. Heat pumps, weatherization systems, and high-efficiency HVAC equipment are only as accessible as the contractor workforce available to deploy them. The Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC) program, funded through the Inflation Reduction Act and administered by the Maine Department of Energy Resources (DOER), was established to close that gap.

On January 13, 2026, DOER announced \$1.2 million in TREC grant awards to three organizations to expand Maine's HVAC workforce and provide upskilling opportunities for incumbent workers across the state.<sup>6</sup> The awarded programs are expected to serve as many as 1,200 participants — including both new

entrants to the field and experienced professionals seeking additional credentials — while supporting 60 local Maine businesses. Among the awardees, the Maine Community College System will expand the pipeline of qualified HVAC workers by offering an HVAC Careers Summer Academy for high school students and short-term heat pump installation training for current professionals, with programming delivered at community colleges in Bangor, Auburn, Calais, and Presque Isle. Kennebec Valley Community College, which received an earlier DOER award in 2022, continues to offer a Building Science course with optional certifications in Building Science Principles and Building Analyst-Technician credentials.

The TREC program is awarded through DOER's Clean Energy Partnership, established to advance Maine's clean energy, climate, economic development,



White House National Climate Advisor Ali Zaidi (center left) joins Maine Community College System President David Daigler and Governor Mills in July 2023 to announce Maine's 100,000 milestone at heat pump workforce lab at Kennebec Valley Community College. Credit: GOPIF

6 <https://mailchi.mp/75c1fbeaca57/press-release-trec-awards-jan-2026>

and workforce goals. Over the past four years, the CEP has deployed over \$9 million in awards across programs like TREC, building a durable infrastructure for workforce development that extends well beyond any single grant cycle. Over 5,000 participants have been served through these awards, including 1,400 that have received workforce training and career support. This investment is reflected in Maine’s clean energy labor market: in 2024, clean energy jobs in Maine grew at more than three times the rate of the state’s total economy and outpaced national clean energy job growth, with over 16,000 clean energy workers employed across the state. TREC is one of the programs helping to sustain that trajectory — connecting Mainers

to careers in a sector that is growing and ensuring that Maine businesses have the local workforce capacity to meet demand.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

STATE ENERGY PLAN

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN



Students at Central Maine Community College learn about heat pump installation through its expanded training program at campuses across the state. Credit: Maine Department of Energy Resources

## SPOTLIGHT - MAINE'S CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE

Maine's clean energy sector is growing faster than nearly any other part of the state's economy. In 2024, clean energy jobs grew at more than three times the rate of Maine's total economy, outpacing national clean energy job growth, with over 16,000 workers employed across the sector. Meeting Maine's statutory goals of 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and 100% by 2040 will require filling an estimated 30,000 clean energy jobs over the next decade — a challenge that has prompted sustained investment in workforce development across the state.

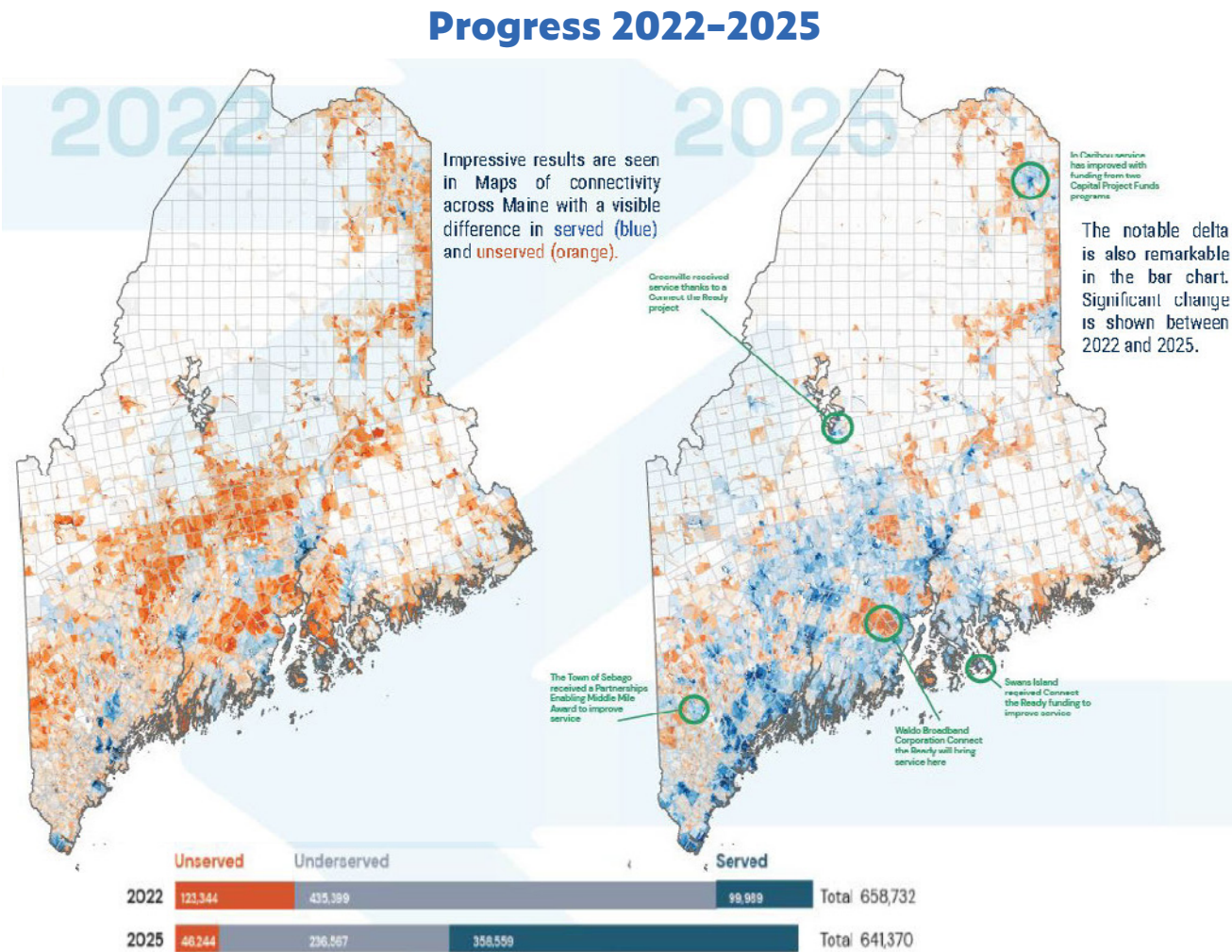
Federal funding and interagency partnerships have been central to building that pipeline. Through programs like DOER's Clean Energy Partnership — which has deployed over \$10 million in workforce and clean energy awards over the past four years — and DOL's Employment and Training Administration grants, Maine has supported training pathways ranging from heat pump installation and building science certifications to renewable energy engineering and construction management. One recent example: Green Jobs for ME, a \$2 million no-cost training program managed by Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. and delivered through Goodwill Northern New England's Workforce Solutions, is expected to add over 300 skilled workers to Maine's renewable energy workforce through partnerships with employers including Cianbro, ReVision Energy, and ClimateWork Maine. Taken together, these investments reflect a recognition that the clean energy transition depends not only on technology and infrastructure, but on having enough trained Mainers to build and maintain it.



# SECTION 4: BROADBAND & TECHNOLOGY

When the Maine Connectivity Authority was established in 2021, the challenge was daunting — tens of thousands of Maine homes, businesses, and community institutions had no reliable path to the internet, and the state’s rugged geography and dispersed population made the problem uniquely difficult to solve. Since 2021, Maine has facilitated nearly \$300 million in broadband investments utilizing numerous state and federal funding sources, matched by \$225 million in private investment from internet service providers. These investments have enabled reliable connectivity to over 120,000 households and businesses that were previously identified as “unserved”. As of December 2024, all Mainers had either a viable option, or planned infrastructure projects underway, to connect to the internet.

This approach has been anchored with MJRP funding balancing critical investment in regional organizations and enabling infra-structure. Dedicated funding for local and regional partners help drive public, private partnerships and ensure that communities are in position to utilize expanded connectivity services. Concurrently, new infrastructure expands opportunities for long term public benefit as well as provide a variety of connectivity technologies such as wireless, cellular and Low Earth Orbit satellite. MJRP funding has enabled Maine to become a national leader in establishing comprehensive connectivity, not just in recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic but in preparing for a future dependent on connectivity.



Maine’s progress in achieving universal broadband access since 2022. Credit: Maine Connectivity Authority

In parallel, Maine’s designation as a federally recognized Tech Hub positions the state as a national leader in a strategic innovation sector — underscoring that this period of federal engagement has advanced not only connectivity, but Maine’s broader technology and economic competitiveness.



Charlie Woodworth, Executive Director, Greater Franklin Economic and Community Development, presents the merits of reliable connectivity to a group gathered in Franklin County. Credit: Maine Connectivity Authority

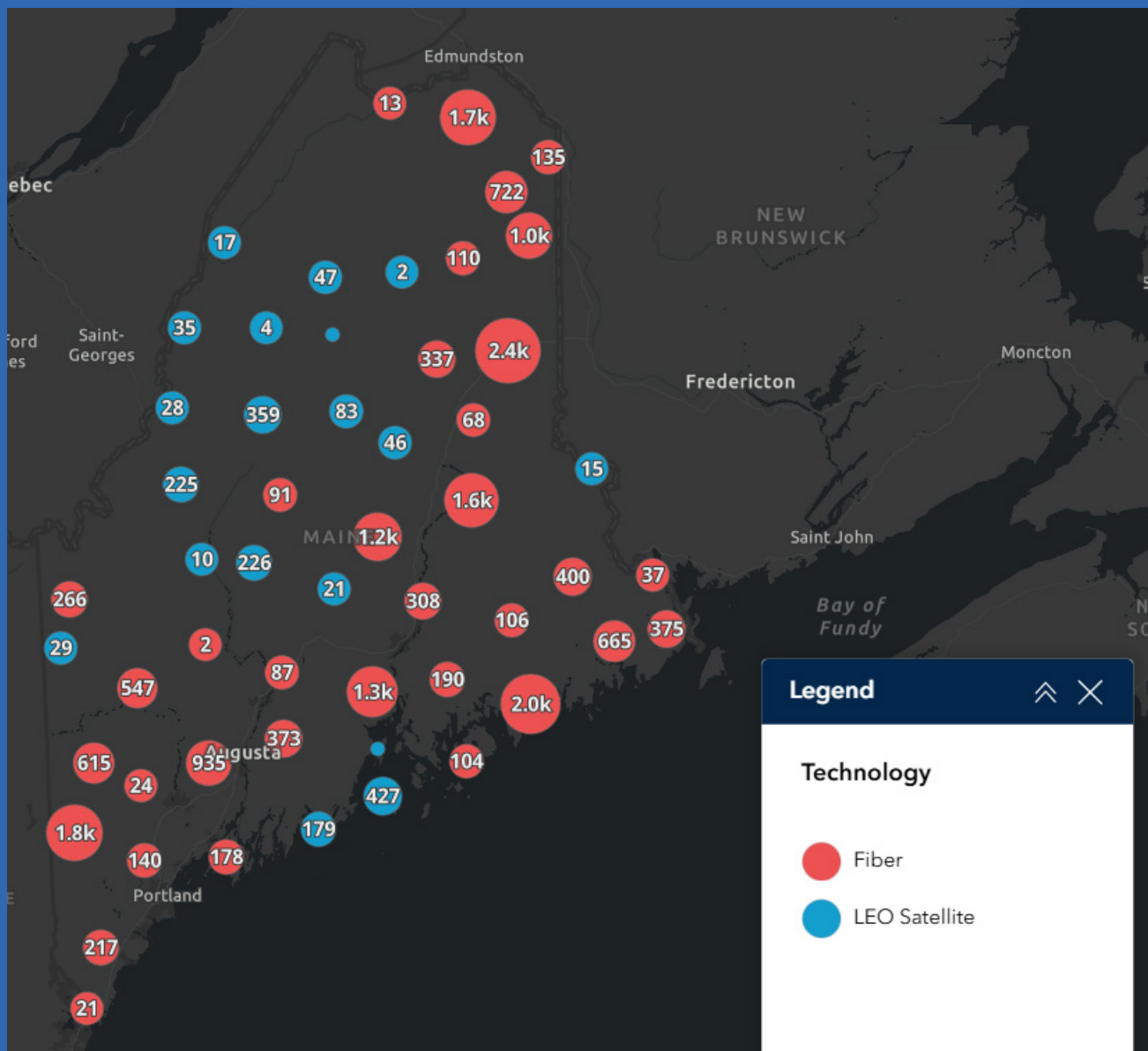


Precast colocation huts, which weigh around 63,000 lbs each, were delivered to the Central Maine Crane Yard in Avon in April. Built with reinforced concrete, integrated electrical, HVAC, and grounding systems, these heavy-duty structures will eventually be installed at their final locations by Sertex Broadband Solutions to complete the MOOSE NET Middle Mile Program’s plans to expand broadband access across Maine. Credit: Maine Connectivity Authority

## Spotlight - BEAD

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program represents Maine's single largest federal broadband investment — a \$272 million BIL grant to bring high-speed internet to every remaining unserved and underserved home and business in the state. Over three years, MCA completed an extensive process to put those funds to work, culminating in a Final Proposal approved by NTIA in November 2024 to connect 21,818 locations through 25 projects, leveraging \$48 million in BEAD funds alongside \$109 million in matching investment.

Despite that progress, NTIA's June 2025 Restructuring Policy Notice required MCA to restart portions of the subgrantee selection process under a compressed 90-day timeline — adding delay to a program that had already cleared every prior milestone. For the thousands of Maine households still waiting for reliable connectivity, the pace of federal decision-making has direct consequences.



#### **CASE STUDY 4.1: Closing digital equity and literacy gaps: Maine's first State Digital Equity Plan**

Access to high-speed internet is increasingly a prerequisite for full participation in the modern economy. For individuals without reliable connectivity or the skills to use it effectively, the consequences are concrete: limited access to job opportunities, workforce training, telehealth services, educational resources, and civic life. Maine faces this challenge acutely. Rural geography, an aging population, high rates of poverty in certain regions, and persistent gaps in both infrastructure and digital literacy mean that the benefits of connectivity are unevenly distributed across the state, with the communities that most need digital inclusion often the least equipped to achieve it on their own.

The Digital Equity Act, passed as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, established a \$2.75 billion framework of federal investment to address these gaps, structured around three grant programs: a State Planning Grant, a Capacity Grant, and a Competitive Grant. Maine moved quickly and effectively through each stage of the process. MCA used approximately \$522,000 in Planning Grant funds to develop Maine's first State Digital Equity Plan — a comprehensive roadmap for addressing digital readiness, literacy, and inclusion across the state's diverse communities and populations. Maine's plan, developed with input from over 80 organizations participating in the Digital Equity Task Force, was the first in the nation to receive federal



Stakeholders discuss broadband needs in their communities at the Maine Connectivity Authority's second annual Digital Opportunity Workshop in October 2025 in Augusta. Pictured are Liz Caruso, left, representing Somerset County Economic Development, Elaine Abbott, representing the Sunrise County Economic Council, Nakia Dana, representing the Passamaquoddy Tribe, and Olivia Jolley, representing Hancock County Planning Commission. Credit: Maine Connectivity Authority

approval, a distinction that reflected the significance of broadband access and adoption for a broad array of geographies, sectors, and populations. That approved plan in turn served as the foundation for leveraging approximately \$12 million in Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan funds to advance regional and tribal capacity for digital inclusion work on the ground, including through the Regional & Wabanaki Broadband Partners program.<sup>7</sup>

Building on that work, Maine secured significant additional investment through the Act's two remaining grant programs. MCA was awarded \$10 million through the Capacity Grant Program, approved in December 2024, to advance the strategies laid out in the Digital Equity Plan, with activities slated to launch in early 2025. Two Maine organizations were awarded a combined \$24.8 million through the Competitive Grant Program: the National Digital Equity Center was awarded \$13.7 million and the Greater Portland Council of Governments was awarded \$11.1 million. Both competitive grants targeted population-specific digital adoption, readiness, and technical assistance including rural residents, older adults, veterans, and low-income households.

On May 9, 2025, the federal government terminated both grants—\$35 million in total—before the funds had been substantially deployed.<sup>8</sup> The terminations eliminated programming that had been designed, in many cases, specifically for communities with the fewest alternative pathways to digital inclusion. Despite this termination, the planning and coordination work that Maine invested in, the approved Digital Equity Plan, the regional and tribal partnerships, and the pipeline of organizations prepared to put these funds to work, remains intact. What it currently lacks is the investment in time and resources that those efforts were built to leverage.

Since May 2025, MCA has been able to implement three key initiatives as outlined in the original Digital Equity Plan for Maine: Tech Help for ME, Maine Tech Share, and the Digital Opportunity Fund, in part because of available Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan funding.

- Tech Help for ME ([www.techhelpforme.org](http://www.techhelpforme.org)) is a directory of resources in Maine that help people use the internet. Anyone in Maine can use this tool to find public wifi, public computers, low-cost computers, digital skills classes, technology help, video call rooms, financial assistance, and more. Tech Help for ME currently lists 203 partner locations and 700 public resources offered in Maine.
- Maine Tech Share ([www.maineconnectivity.org/techshare](http://www.maineconnectivity.org/techshare)) is on a mission to refurbish 25,000 desktops and laptops by connecting unused business technology with the people who need it most. We work with a professional, Maine-based technology refurbisher, give IT. get IT., to safely collect unused or underused technology. Refurbished technology is given back into the community, to those who need it most.
- MCA has launched the Digital Opportunity Fund, a campaign to raise \$15 million over three years from private and philanthropic donors, to ensure that investments made in infrastructure will create outcomes such as greater economic opportunity, workforce participation, or improved health.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

A PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

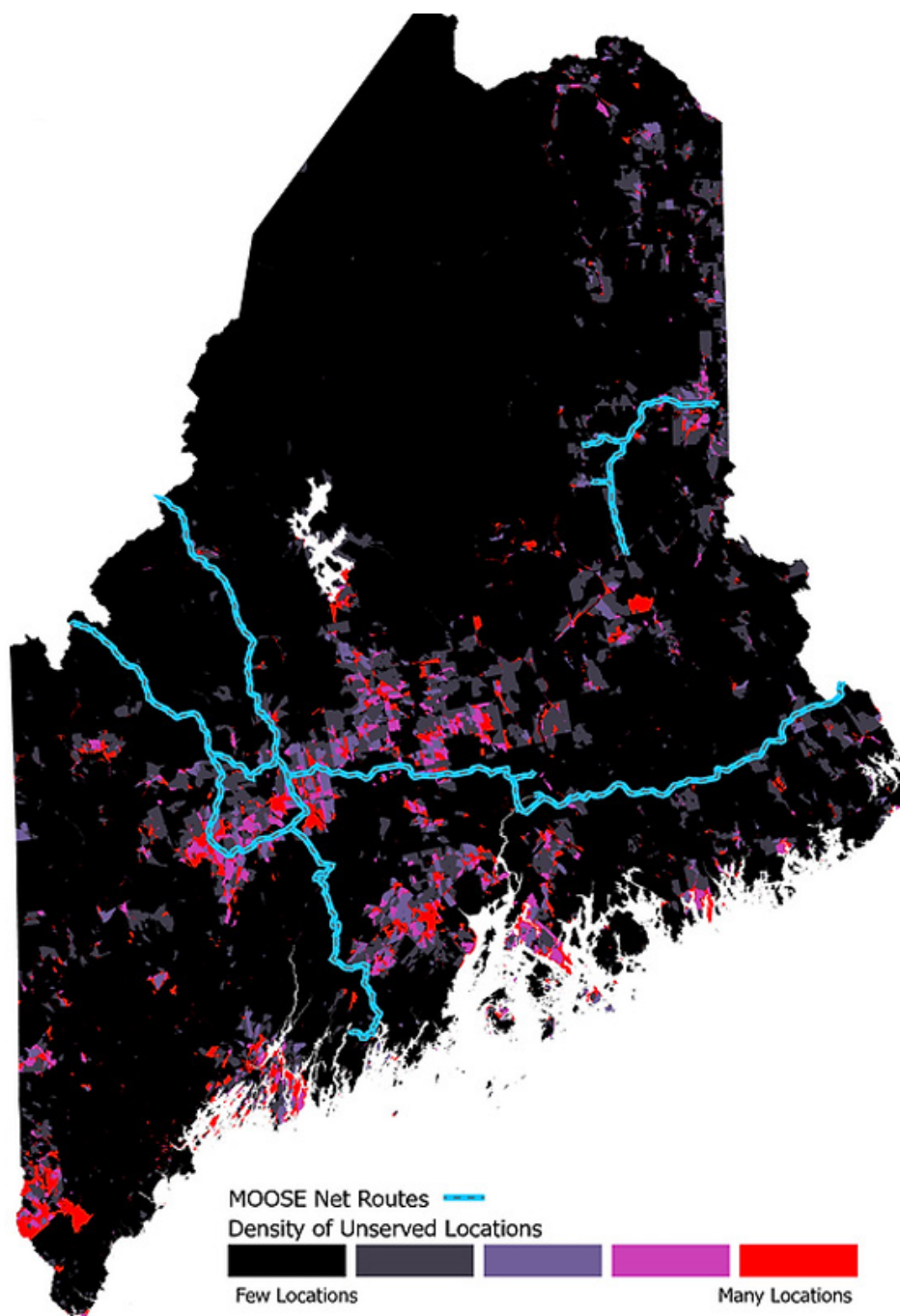
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.maineconnectivity.org/dea-funding-programs>

<sup>8</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NRP4Hc1vjwAo7FSEtKuyxpLjyX7Ja2PJ/view>

#### **CASE STUDY 4.2: Building Maine's broadband backbone: the MOOSE Net Middle Mile Network**

Connecting Maine's most rural and remote communities to high-speed internet is not simply a matter of running fiber to the last house on a country road. Before that last mile of connection can be built, there must be robust middle mile infrastructure — the high-capacity fiber highways that carry large volumes of data over long distances and provide the regional back-

bone from which local networks branch out. Without viable middle mile infrastructure nearby, last mile deployment in low-density areas is often prohibitively expensive, and private carriers have little incentive to invest. For much of Maine, that has meant persistent gaps in connectivity that no market solution has been willing to close.



The Maine Online Optical Statewide Enabling Network (MOOSE Net) is the State's answer to that structural problem. Developed by the Maine Connectivity Authority in partnership with the Maine Department of Transportation, the University of Maine System, the Maine Office of Information Technology, the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, and leading internet service providers, MOOSE Net represents over 400 miles of new fiber running from the Midcoast through central Maine, north through Franklin and Somerset Counties, east through the Bangor region and much of Washington County, and terminating at the Canadian border near Calais. When complete, it will pass within reach of more than 11,000 unserved homes and businesses and more than 200 community anchor institutions — schools, hospitals, libraries, and local government buildings — in some of the most persistently underserved parts of the state.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.maineconnectivity.org/middle-mile>

In June 2023, the Maine Connectivity Authority was awarded a \$30 million competitive grant from the NTIA's Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program — one of the largest individual awards in a program that received over \$7.5 billion in requests against roughly \$1 billion in available funding, with 35 projects ultimately selected from more than 260 applications.<sup>10</sup>

The project has moved steadily from planning to construction. Following completion of environmental and historic preservation review, NTIA authorized construction in February 2025, and MCA issued a Notice to Proceed the same month. In March 2026, MCA entered into a contract with Sertex Broadband Solutions to manage MOOSE Net's deployment. To manage this project, Sertex committed to establishing a Maine-based operational hub and creating an apprenticeship program to train and hire local fiber technicians. Engineering and permitting are underway, with construction expected to be completed within two years.<sup>11</sup> As of March 2026, Sertex has established a facility in Sidney, Maine and created an apprenticeship program approved by the Maine Department of Labor to build and train a ready workforce.

Maine's low population density and rural geography have consistently made it difficult to attract the private middle mile investment that more densely populated states have seen, and the communities that most need connectivity are often the hardest and most expensive to reach. MOOSE Net's open-access design — functioning as a public fiber highway available to any internet service provider, or wireless carrier seeking to extend last mile connections — is intended to change that calculus by reducing the cost and risk of last mile deployment across a large swath of the state. The Network will serve as a platform enabling increased collaboration and cooperation between public entities at a local, regional, state and federal level to increase shared services and decrease the costs of connecting citizens to an array of digital services.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

<sup>10</sup> <https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-930-million-expand-and-strengthen-americas>

<sup>11</sup> <https://mainebiz.biz/article/broadband-firm-will-use-kennebec-county-base-to-build-middle-mile-fiber-network>

### **CASE STUDY 4.3: Establishing regional connectivity and workforce development hubs: the GRACE Innovation Center in St. George**

Building broadband infrastructure is a necessary condition for closing Maine’s digital divide, but it is not sufficient on its own. For many rural communities, the more immediate barrier is not the absence of a fiber connection but the absence of an anchor location where residents can access high-speed internet, develop digital skills, receive telehealth services, and connect to workforce training opportunities. The Maine Connectivity Authority’s Connectivity Hubs program was designed to address exactly that gap, directing grants to community anchor institutions in areas most affected by the digital divide to build or renovate facilities capable of delivering connectivity-enabled services to the people who need them most.<sup>12</sup>

In June 2024, MCA awarded \$684,715 to the St. George Municipal School Unit in Tenants Harbor to support the development of the Gateway to Rural Academic Community Education (GRACE) Innovation Center. The center opened on August 14, 2025, as the nation’s first pre-K–8 Career and Technical Education and Makerspace building. St. George is a small Knox County community on the St. George Peninsula made up of the villages of Tenants Harbor, Port Clyde, and Spruce Head. The vision for GRACE had been in development since 2020, when St. George was among the first recipients of the Maine Department of Education’s Rethinking Responsive Education Ventures (RREV) grant, a federal program that awarded Maine \$16.9 million as one of only eleven states selected nationally. St. George received \$350,000 from RREV to kick-start the building’s design process, curriculum development, and capital campaign, which ultimately reached a total project cost of \$4.5 million through a combination of federal grants, state support, and community fundraising.<sup>13</sup>

The center draws a deliberate line from the community’s past to its future. Its name honors the Lillius Gilchrest Grace Institute, a nonprofit founded in 1936 that offered St. George students instruction in home economics and manual arts for more than 70 years — a recognition that hands-on, trades-connected learning has deep roots in this fishing community on the Maine coast. The physical facility reflects that continuity: GRACE includes two shop areas equipped for boatbuilding, woodworking, and metalwork, alongside a Makerspace outfitted with 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC routers, robotics equipment, and sewing machines, and a flexible classroom space for education, training, and telehealth programming.

Crucially, the center is not designed to serve only students. Its mission is explicitly cross-sector and cradle-to-career, organized around three pillars: Pre-K–12 career and technical education, adult education and workforce development, and telehealth and community paramedicine. By bringing together educational institutions, medical providers, local government, nonprofits, and businesses under one roof, GRACE is intended to make services accessible to the full range of residents — older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, low-income households — who have historically had limited local access to them. The MCA Connectivity Hub grant funds the broadband infrastructure and devices that make those digital services possible, transforming a building that honors the trades into one that also connects a rural peninsula to the broader digital economy.

GRACE is one of nine projects funded in MCA’s first round of Connectivity Hubs awards, which together directed over \$8 million to organizations across the state, including two projects serving Wabanaki Nations. The range of awardees — from Tribal governments and agencies on aging to public libraries and

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.maineconnectivity.org/connectivity-hubs>

<sup>13</sup> <https://mainedoenews.net/2025/09/05/st-george-opens-nations-first-pre-k-8-career-and-technical-education-makerspace-building/>

adult education centers — reflects the breadth of the digital equity challenge in Maine and the diversity of institutions working to address it at the community level. This model will serve as a foundation for how Maine continues to address priorities identified in the digital equity plan and leverages MOOSE Net to address. In 2026 MCA will further invest \$6M through the digital opportunity fund to address place-based connectivity priorities.

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN



Visitors attend the opening of the Gateway to Rural Academic Community Education (GRACE) Innovation Center on August 14, 2026. The RREV grant played a crucial role in funding educator stipends for developing a pre-K—8 CTE curriculum and in supporting architectural designs, site planning efforts, and construction. CREDIT: Maine Department of Education

#### **CASE STUDY 4.4: Spurring technological innovation in Maine's heritage industries: the Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Technology Hub**

Maine's forest economy is one of the oldest and most important features of the state's economic identity. The 16.3 million acres of working forest that cover much of the state's interior have sustained generations of workers and communities and today anchor an \$8.3 billion industry employing nearly 30,000 people.

In October 2023, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated Maine as one of 31 inaugural Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs under the CHIPS and Science Act, selected from more than 370 applicants representing every state and territory in the country.<sup>14</sup> This designation recognizes Maine's potential to become a global leader in sustainable wood biomass polymers — materials derived from forest fiber that can replace plastics, eliminate toxic additives, serve as the basis for alternative aviation fuels, and supply next-generation construction systems.

In July 2026, the EDA announced a \$20 million grant for the Tech Hub and its partner institutions to expand commercial-scale production of new forest products, strengthen Maine's manufacturing infrastructure, and develop the skilled workforce needed to support long-term growth in the state's forest bioproducts industry. The Hub is led by the University of Maine — a world leader in nanocellulose research and home to one of the world's largest 3D printers — and brings together more than 50 organizations across the state, including the Maine Technology Institute, the Maine Departments of Labor and Economic & Community Development, the Maine Development Foundation, the Roux Institute at Northeastern University, the Maine Community College System, and a broad range of private sector partners from startups to multinational corporations.



<sup>14</sup> <https://www.eda.gov/news/press-release/2023/10/23/Forest-Bioproducts-Advanced-Manufacturing-Tech-Hub>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.eda.gov/news/press-release/2026/07/20/us-department-commerce-intends-invest-169-million-tech-hubs-funding>



Consortium members receiving news of their designation as a Regional Technology and Innovation Hub at Tanbark Molded Fiber Products in Saco in November 2023. Credit: GOPIF

Since receiving the Tech Hub designation, the consortium has secured more than \$1 billion in committed public and private investment. Companies like Sappi, which completed a \$500 million investment in new papermaking infrastructure, and TimberHP, which has brought three wood insulation production lines to full scale, represent the kind of private capital formation the Hub is designed to attract and accelerate. The Tech Hub adds vital infrastructure for moving innovations from the lab to commercial scale — connecting technology development

#### RELEVANT STATE PLANS:

10-YEAR ECONOMIC STRATEGY

MAINE JOBS AND RECOVERY PLAN

MAINE WON'T WAIT-STATE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

with entrepreneurship support, workforce training, and global market access. The designation reflects a federal judgment that Maine is a potential center of gravity for an emerging advanced manufacturing sector.



The University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center (ASCC) unveiled BioHome 3D on Nov. 21, 2022, in Orono. The first 3D-printed house made entirely with bio-based materials, the fully recyclable home will now form the basis of a new nine-unit neighborhood in Greater Bangor. Governor Janet Mills, center, was in attendance with U.S. Sen. Susan Collins; Jeff Marootian, senior advisor for energy efficiency and renewable energy for the U.S. Department of Energy; Rebecca Isacowitz, acting chief of staff for the office of energy efficiency and renewable energy at the DOE; Steve McKnight, acting advanced manufacturing office director for the DOE; and Xin Sun, associate laboratory director for energy science and technology with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Credit: University of Maine

## LOOKING AHEAD

Four years ago, Maine set out to make the most of a once-in-a-generation federal investment in the nation's infrastructure. The results speak for themselves: more than \$4.6 billion secured for Maine projects, spanning highways and ferry routes, drinking water systems and coastal marshes, electric grids and broadband networks. In a competitive process that rewarded states with clear plans and the organizational capacity to execute them, Maine emerged as a national leader.

That moment is now giving way to a more complicated one.

Some of the federal programs Maine planned around and competed for have been frozen, restructured, or terminated before funds could be fully deployed. The consequences are tangible: the loss of solar programs that would have lowered energy bills for low-income households, unrealized broadband investments that rural communities were counting on, workforce training that no longer has money behind it. Maine cannot control those decisions but must reckon with their effects and find ways to continue the work with fewer resources.

At the same time, the projects that are funded and underway demand sustained focus to deliver. Getting from a grant award to a finished project (through design, permitting, contracting, construction, and federal compliance requirements) is a long and complex process. The work that began when Maine won these grants is, in many cases, still years from completion.

What Maine has built over the past four years extends beyond any list of funded projects. The relationships across state agencies, the planning processes, the experience of competing for and managing complex federal programs; these are real assets, and they do not disappear when a funding cycle ends. The challenge ahead is to preserve and apply them in a more constrained environment, continuing to make progress on Maine's infrastructure needs even as the extraordinary conditions of the past four years give way to something more uncertain.

Taken together, these dynamics underscore a central reality: Maine's longterm infrastructure success will depend not only on the scale of federal funds secured during this unique period, but on the State's capacity to sustain momentum in an increasingly constrained environment. Strengthening crossagency capital planning, building delivery capacity, and preparing for a more uncertain federal landscape will be key to ensuring that the transformative opportunities of the past four years translate into longlasting benefits for Maine's people, communities, and economy.



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