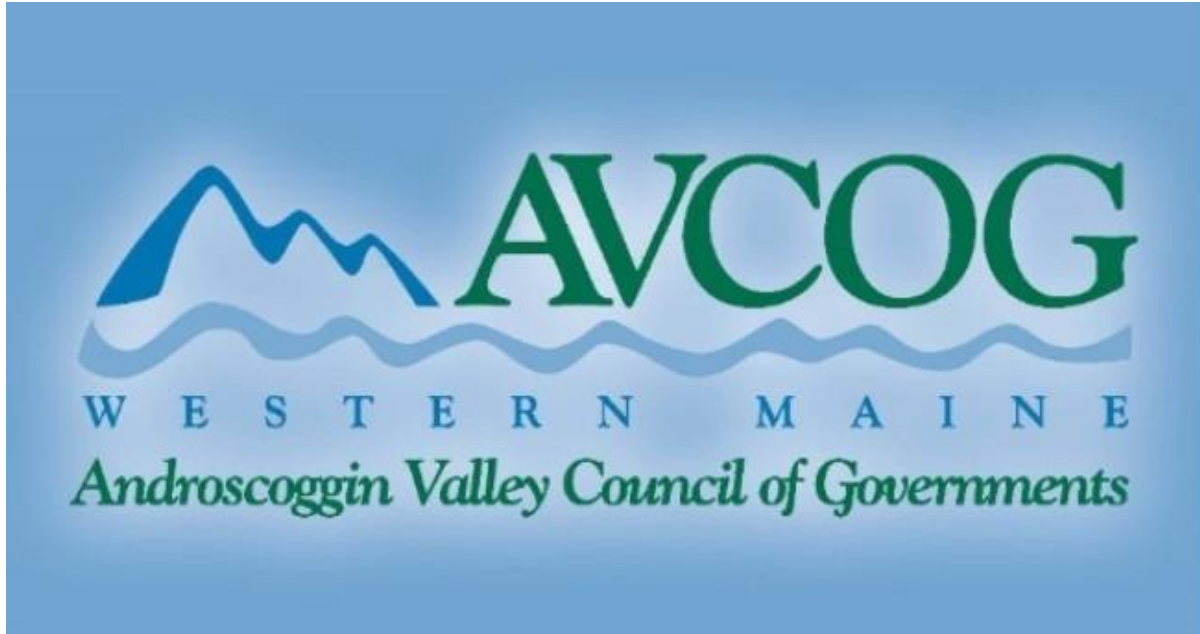


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### **In this 2018 Fall Edition...**

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### **Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds Available**

AVCOG's Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, established with an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), provides below market rate loans and/or subgrants to facilitate cleanup of contaminated properties (brownfields) within our service area.

The purpose of this program is to assist in the revitalization of these properties, promote jobs and create a cleaner environment for the communities within the AVCOG Region.

Loan funds are available to municipalities and other public entities, nonprofit agencies and organizations, and private property owners/developers who comply with the eligibility requirements of the EPA. Subgrants are only available to eligible municipalities and nonprofit owners of brownfield properties.

Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and a plan for site remediation/cleanup must be complete to apply. Cleanup grants and loans require a 20 percent cost share from the applicant. [Click here for more information about AVCOG's Brownfields Program.](#)

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### **Maine Tourism Group Launches Service to Help Members Find Employees**

10.26.18 – Maine – By Ernie Smith

Tourism is an important part of our regional economy and finding employees for those tourism related jobs continues to be a challenge.

To address this issue, the Maine Tourism association is bringing on a full-time employee who will specialize in helping connect the association's members with potential workers who can fill the many seasonal jobs available each year. [Click here](#) for the rest of the story.



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## Textile Recovery Off to a Great Start!

Participating towns include:

- Andover
- Bethel
- Dixfield
- Farmington
- Gilead
- Greenwood
- Hartford
- Jay
- Livermore Falls
- Mexico
- Sabattus
- West Paris
- Wilton
- Woodstock



Working with AVCOG's Lisa Bonney, Apparel Impact created a western Maine tri-county route throughout the AVCOG region.

Within three weeks of placement at 14 locations, 6,443 pounds of textiles were collected and kept out of our landfills. That's 3 tons of textiles within 3 weeks!

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## Forest Opportunity Roadmap - Worth the Read

The Forest Opportunity Roadmap (FOR/Maine), released in late September, outlines a vision and roadmap for Maine's forest products sector from now to 2025.

FOR/Maine is a unique cross-sector collaboration of industry, communities, government, education, and non-profits, that have come together to realize the next generation of Maine's great forest economy. [Read it here.](#)



## Governor's Conference on Tourism – Save the Date



Where: Augusta Civic Center, Augusta  
When: April 9 & 10, 2019

The Maine Office of Tourism presents the annual **Governor's Conference on Tourism**, a two-day event for tourism and hospitality professionals from across the state. In addition to a presentation of the Maine Office of Tourism's annual report on the "state of the state" for tourism, and roll-out of the marketing plan and creative for the coming year, the conference features dynamic and relevant workshops, inspiring keynote speakers, multiple networking opportunities and an exciting expo of services and resources for the tourism industry.

This is Maine's premiere tourism event and, if you're in the industry, you will definitely want to be there!

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## Out of the Woods - Bethel's Community Forest

October, 2018 - Maine - By Kate Gardner

The Town of Bethel sees great value in creating a community forest. "What is a community forest?" you may be asking yourself. Well, it's a permanently protected tract of land owned and managed by local residents for the benefit of the local community. [Click here](#) for the rest of the story and [click here](#) to get the details.

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## Lewiston-Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan – Phase I Complete

The first phase of a study commissioned by the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) to evaluate the potential expansion of passenger rail service to Lewiston–Auburn was recently completed. This phase resulted in the [Transit Propensity Report](#) designed to evaluate potential ridership demand for this service. The analysis was based on a variety of data sources, including existing traffic volumes, origin–destination data, census data and Journey to Work data, as well as current and historical Downeaster ridership information.

Two public open houses were held early last spring and an online survey was used to gather public input. Based on the data, comments, local input, and analysis, the study estimates a low of 600 to a high of 800 daily trips in 2025, for a transit–style service (frequent round–trip daily). The next phase of the plan is to evaluate operating service scenarios, rail corridor and station/connection locations, and infrastructure. The final report is expected to be complete in the spring of 2019.



## Planning Day 2018

AVCOG's 31<sup>st</sup> Planning Day took place in Auburn on November 1 with 96 attendees, presenters and staff in attendance. Offering a variety of topics from marijuana ordinance development and stormwater issues for new projects to the new road discontinuance process, short term rentals and the status of electronic vehicle charging stations in our region, there was a little something for everyone.

Presentations can be found [here](#) along with a few [tips](#) for our communities from the marijuana ordinance session.

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