

# Mobilize Maine

FairPoint Communications has agreed to work with the State of Maine, the regional Economic Development Districts and collaborative investors across Maine to establish **Mobilize Maine** and develop regional capacity throughout the state that will build a strong, growing and sustainable knowledge-based economy for all of Maine.

## Why We Need Mobilize Maine?

Maine has seen a significant decline in traditional manufacturing and commodity-based industries over past decades and these losses have not been fully replaced with new, sustainable businesses and good quality jobs. As a result, Maine's per-capita personal income growth, compared to the national average, has declined from 28<sup>th</sup> to 35<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. since 1989<sup>1</sup>.

Economic development efforts in the past have changed with every change of administration in Augusta and have been chronically fragmented, top-down, disconnected and under-funded, greatly limiting their success. These include programs such as tax subsidies, investment plans, tax reform and task forces.

Current economic development efforts focus largely on competition for business and jobs among Maine cities, towns and regions and are not clearly focused on how Maine as a whole may better compete in the global economy.

Economic development as we practice it today is not getting the job done. Business as usual is getting us nowhere.

<sup>1</sup>Sources: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis and Measures of Growth In Focus, Maine Economic Growth Council 2009 and the Maine Development Foundation

Governor John E. Baldacci quote from Mobilize Maine kickoff press conference:

*"In these challenging times we must rely on creative partnerships to stretch limited resources," Governor Baldacci said. "With FairPoint Communications as our partner, we will focus on an asset-based and regional-based economic development strategy. Instead of our communities being in a reactive mode economically, Mobilize Maine will enable our distinctive regions to be proactive and to prepare and execute their own comprehensive development activities."*

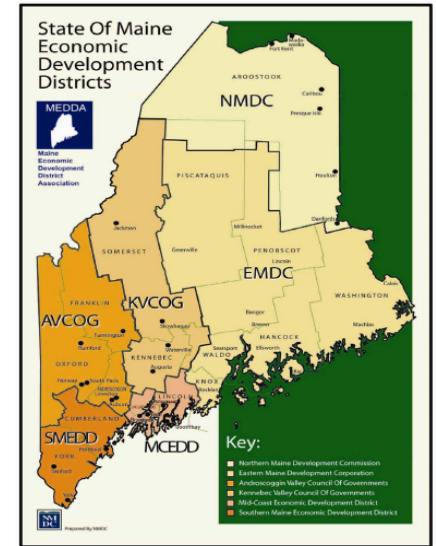
## What's Different About Mobilize Maine?

**Mobilize Maine** is a needed, new, collaborative, bottom-up approach to community and economic development that will help Maine grow and prosper now and in years to come.

**Mobilize Maine** is a fresh approach to community and economic development that builds on indigenous strengths and authentic assets of Maine's people, places and businesses.

**Mobilize Maine** will identify and develop strategies to address Maine's unique assets, which may be skills, businesses, activities or special places that have market-leverage in the global economy, but may not have been previously recognized.

**Mobilize Maine** is a private/public/nonprofit partnership facilitated by FairPoint's Connect Northern New England Community and Economic Development Initiative (CNNE). FairPoint's commitment is unprecedented and will expand the number and kinds of investors committed to assuring economic prosperity for all of Maine.



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## What Will Mobilize Maine Do?

- Establish long-term strategies for growth that will span successive state administrations, and be sustained by a broad mass of local, private, public and non-profit sector leaders and citizen volunteers.
- Initiate a ground-up approach whereby citizens in each region will identify strengths and assets that will be the foundation of the new economy.
- Identify regional priorities that will become the basis for private, public and philanthropic investment in each economic region.
- Preserve and sustain Maine's unique Quality of Place, while growing good paying jobs and businesses.
- Focus on measurable outcomes with firm timeframes, benchmarks, and assigned responsibility for getting things done.

## How Will Mobilize Maine Connect to Other Related Efforts?

**Mobilize Maine** will be facilitated and coordinated by and among the six Economic Development Districts (EDDs), namely:

- Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC)
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)
- Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG)
- Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG)
- Southern Maine Economic Development District (SMEDD)
- MidCoast Economic Development District (MCEDD)

These organizations, supported by federal, state and local governments, will coordinate and integrate the following efforts and implement their related recommendations through **Mobilize Maine**:

- Economic Development Administration (U.S. Dept of Commerce)
- The Maine Quality of Place Council
- The Governor's Working Group on Economic Development Delivery
- The Northern Border Regional Commission
- The Northern Forest Sustainable Economy Initiative

## What Does Mobilize Maine Hope to Achieve in Year One?

Build a critical mass of citizens who understand how Maine can and will grow, and who will mobilize people and resources to invest in growth that transcends changing political administrations in Augusta.

Through broad citizen participation, identify unique and marketable assets that have greatest potential for growth in the global economy.

Achieve a clear understanding of how Maine's Quality of Place creates good paying jobs, new businesses and sustainable economic growth; an urgent sense of the need to transform Maine's economy and economic performance; and a shared vision for community and economic development strategies at the regional and state policy levels.

Establish the first systematic and consistent approach to planning regional and statewide asset based community and economic development strategies.

Develop better-integrated regional and state economic development budgets that will align with **Mobilize Maine** actions.

Prioritize a roadmap for public, private and philanthropic investors to strengthen Maine's most promising assets and to help grow the economy in a sustainable manner.

Set concrete actions, timelines and benchmarks to transform Maine's regional economies and business climate