



GrowSmart Maine

Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2022



GrowSmart Maine's 2021 Summit at the Pepperell Mill Campus in Biddeford. Photo by Dave Dostie.

JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022

GrowSmart Maine supports communities in navigating change by convening our network to action, sharing thought leadership across Maine, and advocating, all in alignment with smart growth principles. We work so that communities and people of Maine will appreciate and practice smart growth in order to advance climate action, ensure equity and preserve place. As a result, community planning and investment support vibrant and resilient communities with a sense of place and quality of life for everyone.

Thought Leadership

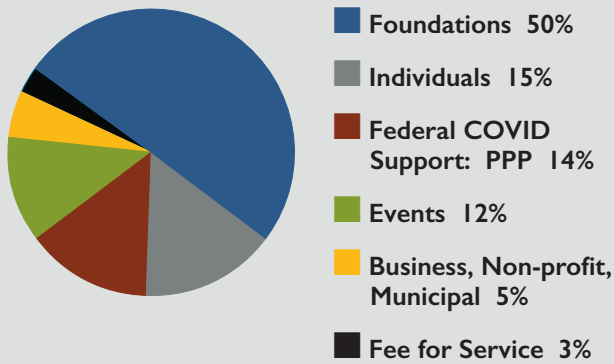
GrowSmart Maine is the thought leader and voice for smart growth solutions throughout the state. Our overall goal in this work is providing communities with the tools and guidance to be proactive and to improve municipal and regional planning processes. Our strategies in FY22 included:

- Development and promotion of Community Guides, including a new version “Regional Collaboration for Climate Action” and an updated guide “Historic Preservation—An Economic Opportunity.”
- Maine Smart Growth Awards has become an annual highlight of our Summit, as we recognize projects, plans, and people with distinctive connections to advancing smart growth in Maine.
- Smartinis: The Maine Alliance for Smart Growth hosts occasional Smartinis networking events, and did so at the Portland Observatory in July 2021, highlighting the historic nature of Portland's waterfront.
- Bimonthly e-newsletters were sent to our recipient list of 3400 interested parties with updates on GrowSmart's advocacy and Community Guides as well as sharing relevant resources and events hosted by our partner organizations.

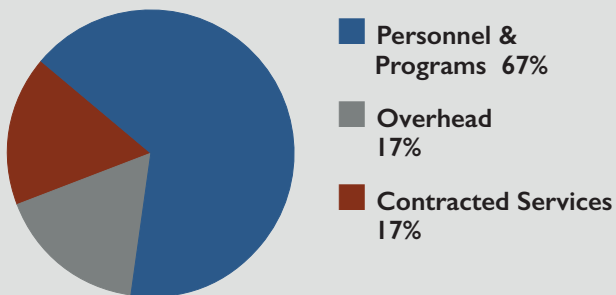


Policy Action breakout room in action during GrowSmart Maine's 2021 Summit in Biddeford. Photo by Dave Dostie.

FY2022 Revenue: \$223,480



FY2022 Expenses: \$177,840



FY2022 P&L is stronger than both budget and prior year with higher income, and expenses balanced with targeted fundraising related to our Impact Strategy evaluation. We began charging non-members for webinars, as these continue beyond the pandemic limitation on in-person forums. FY2022 marked year one of two multi-year funding grants to support general operations. Federal COVID relief is based on time of loan forgiveness.

Advocacy

Our overall goal in advocacy is to support comprehensive policies and funding for smart growth. The outcomes of our advocacy work are that:

- Development supports mitigating the effects of climate change.
- Land use regulation is equitable, sustainable, and resilient.
- Communities are fiscally sustainable while providing amenities, including affordable and responsible housing and transportation choices.

Our primary advocacy work is at the state level, much of it in collaboration through the Maine Alliance for Smart Growth and the Maine Broadband Coalition, with focus on the following policy areas:

- Affordable Housing
- Broadband
- Climate and Energy
- Equity
- Historic Preservation
- Land Use Planning
- Transportation

One recent bill of particular note, LD 1240 was developed based on discussions within the 2020 Summit and resulted in creation in 2022 of a Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Land Use Regulations and Short-term Rentals, demonstrating the integration of our three programming areas.



Photo of downtown Bangor by Zachary Edmundson / unsplash.com.

Convening to Action

GrowSmart Maine leads smart growth-related community engagement to build a stronger and more diverse smart growth network.

- Smart Growth Webinars are recorded and posted on our YouTube channel. In FY2022 these were:
 - ◆ February 2022: Exploring the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
 - ◆ April 2022: The Gorham Spur: Spurring Growth without Spurring Sprawl.
- Annual Summit: Turning Climate Action into Economic Opportunity: Smart Growth Guidance for Maine Communities. With attendance of 161 at our in-person locations and virtually, we hosted Dr. Devashree Saha, Senior

Associate, World Resources Institute and Kate Dufour, Director of Federal and State Relations, Maine Municipal Association to address conflicts and opportunities for Maine's diverse regions, iconic industries, and economies to ensure lasting positive impact from recent federal initiatives while activating our new Climate Action Plan and 10-year economic plan. Outcomes of this event include:

- ◆ In-person networking and connections and statewide information sharing
- ◆ Based on the regional breakout sessions and follow-up forum, GrowSmart Maine created and shared a new Community Guide: Regional Collaboration for Climate Change, as noted in Thought Leadership.

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www.growsmartmaine.org

227 Water Street, Suite 215, Augusta ME 04330 | (207) 250-0220



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