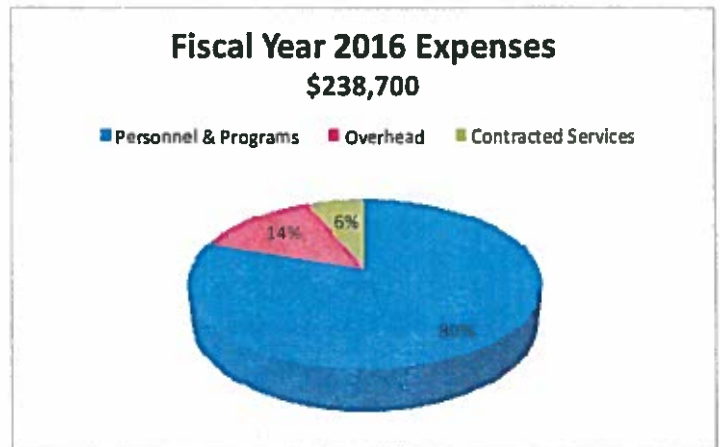
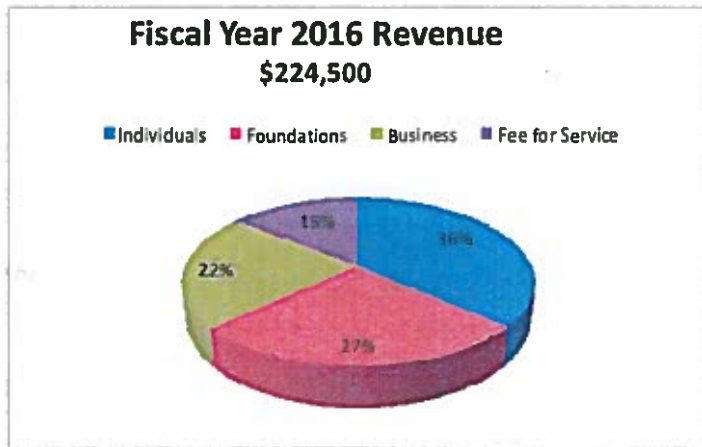


GrowSmart Maine Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report



GrowSmart Maine works to achieve our mission across the state: Creating lasting prosperity without sacrificing the quality of life that defines Maine. Below is a summary of our work in Fiscal Year 2016.

Advocacy, Events and Community Engagement. We connect these three tools, ensuring that our advocacy is informed by what we learn from our communities, that our events help move our advocacy forward, and that engagement increases community awareness of what we do, providing access to our events and knowledge of our advocacy.

Advocacy

As members of the Solar Coalition, GrowSmart advocated for a state solar policy that would provide reasonable and predictable policy and pricing for solar installations in the omnibus solar bill, LD 1649. It passed but the legislature failed to override the Governor's veto, so we are still engaged as the PUC takes up the issue and anticipate further work when the 128th legislature convenes in January.

GrowSmart Maine continues to serve on the Maine Broadband Coalition steering committee, working to encourage wise investment in this essential infrastructure. Mainers need the opportunity to earn a living, access education and health care, and stay connected with the rest of the world.

Advocacy occurs beyond the legislature. The Land Use Planning Commission serves as the planning board for Maine's unorganized territories. GrowSmart Maine will encourage potential changes in adjacency rules that will direct growth toward areas where similar development already exists. This provides the best use of existing infrastructure - such as roads and fire protection - while keeping large undeveloped tracts of land intact.

Events

This year, we hosted forums in Belfast, Bath, Brunswick, Bar Harbor, Dover-Foxcroft, Freeport, and Portland. Topics included community solutions for renewable energy; arts, culture and Maine's prosperity; 21st century transportation, plus Brewer's Village Centre, one of the largest Passive House projects in North America and Dover-Foxcroft's downtown multi-use rehab of a manufacturing facility.

Community Engagement:

Making Headway in Your Community is our primary community outreach program, a partnership with the Maine Downtown Center, a program of the Maine Development Foundation. In our first full year implementing this program, we engaged with the Downeast coastal communities of Eastport, Milbridge, and Lubec and the western Maine towns of Rumford and Wilton.

Making Headway is a six to nine month program featuring three public events that invite the community to consider what matters most to them about their town. We offer a \$1,000 grant to select a simple, inexpensive, and visible project to draw attention to that piece of their community and \$500 in scholarships for workshops and trainings. Participants strengthen local connections and lay the groundwork for more collaborations. Successes are posted on the statewide, searchable online inventory of community projects and resource organizations, makingheadway.me.

In June, we convened a forum around the community engagement process. "Bridging the Divide: Community Outreach Solutions for Portland and Beyond" addresses the tensions and opportunities arising in Portland as development pressure returns. Lessons learned will be shared broadly.

This year we are announcing the formation of The Downtown Alliance of Maine. This coalition is a collaborative effort of non-profit, business, civic, and governmental organizations aligned to support Maine's downtowns. The Alliance will strengthen relationships with communities across the state, highlighting the value of vibrant downtowns.



Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2017

The mission of GrowSmart Maine is to create lasting prosperity without sacrificing the quality of life that defines Maine. Our work is comprised of events, advocacy and community engagement.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM FY2017 (JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017)

Events:

We convene people to discuss familiar challenges and explore proven solutions.

Our 2016 Summit in Waterville featured Maine-grown Solutions with tours and workshops throughout downtown Waterville and Thomas College. We hosted six smart growth forums from Bangor and Dover-Foxcroft, Falmouth and Lewiston to Hallowell and Rockland on walkability, river restoration, historic renovations of large mill buildings and smaller projects in our downtowns, Maine's new forest economy and sea level rise.

Advocacy:

We advocate to remove barriers and provide resources for community action and impacts.

At the state level, we supported:

- > **comprehensive policy** for solar power and broadband infrastructure; (LD 1373 and LD 1399 held over)
- > **streamlining local regulations** for reuse of buildings as multi-unit housing (LD 805 Governor signed)
- > **Inclusion in the Communities for Maine's Future** program of local business loans to facilitate locating in the downtown (LD 1343 held over)
- > **\$5M each year in state dollars** for the Local Government Fund to Encourage Regional Planning and Reorganization (LD 328 enabling language to be addressed in special session)
- > **continuation of funding** for downtown revitalization and the Maine Downtown Center in Maine's Community Development Block Grant Program.
- > **strengthening regional service** center communities as the Land Use Planning Commission considers changes to its adjacency rules

GrowSmart Maine's most lasting value is in drawing people together with a goal of sharing ideas for bettering their community.

We opposed a proposal to Allow Municipalities to Opt Not to Enforce the MUBEC (LD 1392 dead)

At the federal level, we joined Maine Preservation in rallying support for Sen Collins' bill to strengthen the small projects portion of the Federal Historic (Preservation) Tax Credit and as a member of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, signed letters to support the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and essential services.

Community Engagement:

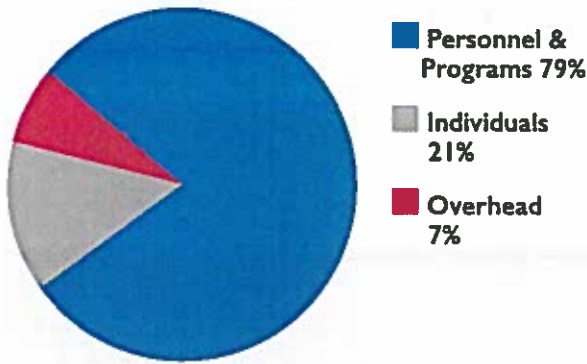
We bring resources and expertise and facilitate local action.

Making Headway in the Katahdin Region supports six local projects connecting Medway, East Millinocket and Millinocket as this region adapts to significant economic and cultural changes. Making Unity a Destination coordinates town-led strategies to encourage more visitors and to create hospitality amenities.

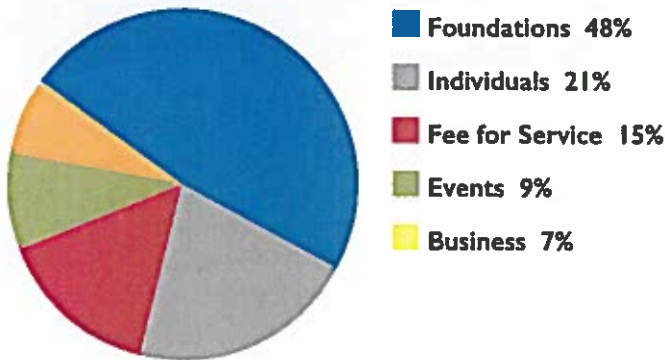
In our partnership with Maine Farmland Trust, we are encouraging municipalities to implement farm-friendly practices. As a member of the Climate Table, GrowSmart Maine co-chairs the Energy Efficiency Committee and is preparing to engage municipalities in implementing strategies to reduce energy use.

We assist communities seeking short-term assistance with unique issues. In Portland, we convened neighborhood associations and developers to create three "Bridging the Divide" tools to improve cross-sector communication. In Hallowell, we facilitated planning sessions to support businesses im-

FY2017 Revenue: \$217,585



FY2017 Expenses: \$201,000



pacted by the 2018 reconstruction of Water Street. Named "Down with the Crown", this set of strategies devised for before, during and immediately after major road work will serve as a model for other communities.

Smart growth offers strategies to accommodate and even welcome growth in ways that make a community more resilient, the economy more sustainable while protecting the natural environment in its extraordinary beauty and productivity. Smart growth benefits span across Maine, for regions dealing with white-hot development pressure or tepid growth, as both scenarios threaten the quality of life that defines Maine.

For our part, GrowSmart Maine's most lasting value is in drawing people together with a goal of sharing ideas for bettering their community. Just the opportunity to find oneself among neighbors and seeing you are not alone in wanting to support positive goals can be a game changer. We so often live within our own fears of speaking out that finding others with whom you share perspectives is a real uplift. Let's work together to welcome opportunities while keeping Maine...*Maine*.

Thank you to our business and individual members, foundations and partners for your ongoing support.

GrowSmart Maine Board of Directors 2017

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Diversified Communications, Falmouth

Evan Richert, Emeritus, Orono

Anna Marie Thron, Emeritus, Portland

- > Hon Ted Koffman, Bar Harbor, and Jenn Burns Gray, Bath, stepped down during 2017 due to competing interests.
- > Nominated for a second 3-year term: Carol Morris, Kennebunk, Morris Communications; Ethan Boxer-Macomber, Portland, Anew Development
- > Nominated for a first 3-year term: Bryce Hach, Falmouth; Sally Stockwell, Portland, Maine Audubon



GrowSmart Maine

Keeping Maine...*Maine*

Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2018

The mission of GrowSmart Maine is to build lasting prosperity without sacrificing the quality of life that defines Maine. We achieve our mission through community engagement, events and advocacy. We focused in 2018 on farm-friendly communities, climate change & energy efficiency, broadband, rural economic & community development, and land use.

HIGHLIGHTS FISCAL YEAR 2018 (JULY 2017-JUNE 2018)

New!

State Rural Development Council Designation:

GrowSmart Maine is pursuing this designation from the USDA: Rural Development with support from Maine's State Director for USDA: Rural Development, Sen. Susan Collins, Sen. Angus King, and Partners for Rural America, the national convener of state rural development councils. This will allow us to take a more prominent role in rural economic development.

Maine Alliance for Smart Growth (MASG):

GrowSmart Maine leads this network connecting Mainers with each other, resources and expertise; coordinating community engagement while maximizing collaboration and minimizing redundancy; and jointly advocating on issues of statewide impact. MASG hosted an advocacy workshop and another entitled "Rising Water: Adapting Maine Communities."

Community Engagement:

We bring resources and expertise and facilitate local action.

Making Headway in Your Community: Making Headway in the Katahdin Region concluded with a Community Celebration on the banks of the Penobscot River in August 2017. Making Headway in Sanford has begun, supporting the city's Lafayette School redevelopment strategy. Making Headway in Sanford will connect residents of this neighborhood with the city's major initiatives in solar, broadband and workforce training as they determine how the retired school building will serve the city.

GrowSmart is active in the Kennebec West Regional Farm Support Working Group: Volunteers representing Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester are developing municipal strategies to support farming. In Monmouth,



voters approved the Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program through which eligible farms can receive a property tax refund on land and structures. Each town completed a farm inventory or farmer survey to prioritize additional efforts.

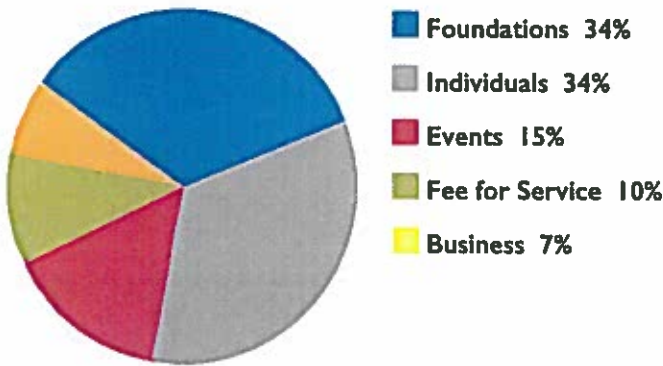
Climate messaging and energy efficiency: GrowSmart Maine works within the Maine Climate Table to increase uptake of Energy Efficiency measures statewide and across all sectors. In addition, we led a series of Maine Climate Table's "Communicating with Mainers on Climate Change" workshops, sharing Maine-based research on climate change impacts in Maine on farming, marine and coastal sectors, as well as the economic value of clean energy and the need for energy efficiency.

Events:

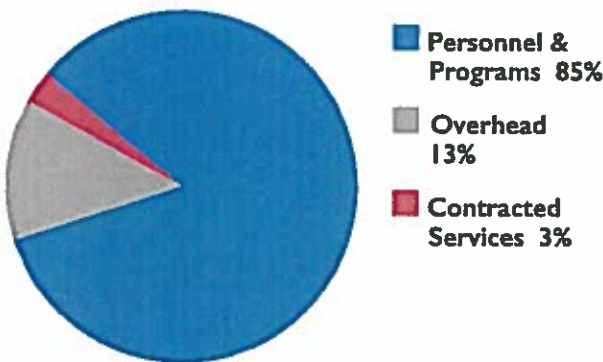
We convene people to discuss familiar challenges and explore proven solutions.

The 2017 Summit was hosted in downtown Westbrook. Five sessions throughout the downtown featured Westbrook's response to the Summit theme, "First, Build a Bridge," whether cultural, food-based, or between fisheries and industry. Featured speakers John Robert Smith of Smart Growth America and Jonathan Arnold of Arnold Development Group brought in national perspectives.

FY2018 Revenue: \$177,600



FY2018 Expenses: \$210,621



The evaluation survey revealed that attendees were ready for action, with 93% "likely" or "extremely likely" to discuss Summit content with colleagues, 87% planning to follow up with a new contact made at the Summit, 65% planning to access a tool or resource gained at the Summit, 69% planning to use information gained to influence a workplace decision, 96% planning to attend another GrowSmart Maine event and would recommend GSM to others.

GrowSmart Maine hosted eight forums from Bangor to Kennebunk, Belfast to Windham. Topics included housing choices, Midcoast community divides, commercial corridor redevelopment, walkability and farm-friendly communities.

Advocacy

We advocate to remove barriers and provide resources for community action and impacts.

Development rules in the unorganized territories: The Land Use Planning Commission, which serves as the Planning Board for Maine's unorganized towns, is updating land use rules related to adjacency and location of development, and subdivision rules, or how the development can be laid out on the land. GrowSmart Maine is recommending a cautious approach, given the potential

GrowSmart Maine Board of Directors 2018

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Daniel Hildreth, *Emeritus*, Falmouth
Evan Richert, *Emeritus*, Brewer
Anna Marie Thron, *Emeritus*, Portland

impact on the largest area of undeveloped land east of the Mississippi and particularly on nearby small towns.

Broadband, Solar, Bonds: We focused on these three issues in the State Legislature. LD 1686, "An Act To Amend the Laws Regarding Distributed Energy Generation and To Eliminate Gross Metering" was a tightly focused bill offering changes necessary for Mainers to invest in solar energy generation – and yet it failed final passage in the House. We supported additional initiatives with the Maine Broadband Coalition, but with very little meaningful outcome. We also supported multiple bonds for investments in transportation and water infrastructure, downtowns, economic development and broadband. At the end of the session, a balanced package of bonds was approved that will go to voters this November.

Federal focus: GrowSmart Maine traveled to DC to advocate for continued federal investments essential to community and economic revitalization. These include Community Development Block Grants, Brownfield Restoration funds, and federal tax credits to encourage reuse of historic buildings and creation of affordable housing.

Thank you to our business and individual members, foundations and partners for your ongoing support.