

June 2011



Capital Riverfront Improvement District

History, Achievements, and the Future



CRID

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CRID History

The Capital Riverfront Improvement District (CRID) was established by law in 1999 creating a local-state partnership that coordinates and shares resources to the benefit of Maine's capital city and Maine citizens.



CRID is governed by a 16-member board comprised of ex-officio state agency representation, appointments by the Augusta City Council, and appointments by the Governor. The Governing board meets on a regular basis and all meetings are open to the public. The Maine Development Foundation staffs the effort on a contractual basis.

The genesis of CRID began with the removal of the Edwards Mill Dam on the Kennebec River at the head-of-tide, just north of Augusta's downtown in 1999. This resulted in a free flowing Kennebec River for the first time since 1837, opening up 17 miles of prime spawning habitat for sea-run fish such as the American shad, the endangered Atlantic salmon and Shortnose sturgeon, as well as important commercial species like Alewives, and Striped bass.

The removal of the dam presented a unique opportunity for the City of Augusta and the State of Maine to work in a cooperative partnership to revitalize the heart of Maine's Capital City. This partnership is unique in the nation and has served the people of Maine well.

CRID Vision

Augusta is a World Class Capital City, the heart of which is a riverfront area that supports a vibrant and diverse downtown, embraces Maine's center of Government, celebrates and protects its natural resources, culture and history, and welcomes residents, workers, and visitors to recreation opportunities along its shores.

CRID Goals

1. Enhance the Kennebec River and its natural environment;
2. Establish the District as the economic and cultural heart of the region;
3. Improve the image of the District and invest in high-quality public improvements;
4. Promote a modern, efficient infrastructure system; and,
5. Develop new housing opportunities while enhancing existing neighborhoods.

CRID Achievements

Mill Park

Located at the north end of downtown Augusta and along the Kennebec River, this 17-acre former mill site provides spectacular views of the Kennebec and downtown Augusta. It is a prime public recreational space that not only serves as a community resource, but also as a statewide attraction for Maine residents and tourists attending events like the annual Kennebec Celebration. This park is a critical cornerstone in the revitalization of downtown Augusta.

In 2003, CRID developed a Master Plan for the park, identifying a number of amenities including



improved river access, additional parking, cultural and historic interpretive elements, the renovation of the old sawmill and an amphitheater just to name a few.

In 2004, Governor Baldacci and Senator Beverly Daggett announced over \$300,000 in state grant funds for the implementation of Phase I of the park. With this grant money, the City of Augusta created the beautiful park space seen today complete with parking, river access and unobstructed views up and down the Kennebec River.

Canoe and Kayak Launch at Mill Park



As part of Phase I of the Mill Park project, the CRID board led the efforts to build a canoe and kayak launch on the Kennebec River.

The launch offers parking and water access on the north end of Mill Park. It is a widely used amenity by boaters, fishermen, and sightseers.

Farmers' Market and Pavilion at Mill Park

The CRID board was instrumental in establishing the Farmers' Market at Mill Park. The market opened May 1, 2007, and currently boasts 20 vendors open for business every Tuesday from May through November.

As part of Phase II of the Mill Park plan, the CRID board and the City of Augusta pursued grant opportunities through the USDA to fund the construction of an open air pavilion to be used as a Farmers' Market as well as for concerts and other events. The City of Augusta was awarded the \$60,000 grant and with a \$60,000 match constructed the pavilion.



Other Amenities at Mill Park

Community groups like Augusta Rotary and Franco heritage organizations have worked with the CRID board to add a dog park and patanque courts to Mill Park. Both are heavily used and add tremendous value for the residents of Augusta.

The Kennebec Arsenal

The historic Kennebec Arsenal property, located on the East side of the Kennebec River is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This grand cluster of eight granite buildings, built over a ten-year period from 1828 to 1838, has played an important role in Augusta's history and the development of its riverfront. The Arsenal is the most intact early nineteenth century munitions depot in the United States and is nationally significant as the best surviving example of this type of complex.

Redevelopment of this site has been a major priority for CRID over the past few years. In 2006 the Arsenal property was optioned for sale by the State of Maine to Niemann Capital, a private developer, for \$750,000. Niemann Capital is also responsible for the renovation and new life of the Hathaway Mill just upriver in Waterville.

The Arsenal site will be redeveloped into a mixed-use campus. The sale included historic preservation covenants to ensure that the site will retain its historic character, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission will have approval rights on the site.



The CRID Board will continue to work with the developer and the City of Augusta to ensure a positive outcome for this key riverfront property.

Water Street Affordable Housing Project



In partnership with MaineHousing, a private developer created new rent controlled housing in downtown Augusta at the former CMP building on lower Water Street.

This \$2.9 million renovation project provides 24 new units of housing, and represents a considerable visual and architectural improvement to lower Water Street in downtown Augusta.

Festivals and Events

The riverfront is an ideal and attractive place to hold a festival or event. The following are just a few happening in the District.



Kennebec Celebration is an annual celebration of life in, on and along the Kennebec River. The festival celebrates and promotes the historic, cultural, and economic connections of Augusta to the spring herring run and the Kennebec River. The event is held on both sides of the river in downtown Augusta.

The 4th of July starts off with the annual parade down Water Street ending across the river at Fort Western. There is food and activities throughout the day at Fort Western. There is live music at Mill Park and the day concludes with a huge fireworks show over the river.



Waterfront Wednesdays is a series of free summer concerts sponsored by radio station 92 Moose & the City of Augusta. They happen Wednesday evenings throughout the summer at Waterfront Park.

The Whatever Family Festival commemorates the cleanup of the Kennebec River and celebrates the people and environment of the river communities. It runs from mid-June through July.



The Future

There are a number of exciting opportunities on the horizon for both sides of the Kennebec River in Augusta. CRID will play an important oversight and planning role as many of these projects evolve.

Statler Tissue Mill

This site is located on the east side of the river directly across from Mill Park. The City of Augusta acquired the property and demolished the buildings. The site is prepped and open for development. It is a prime location along the Kennebec River with direct views of Augusta's downtown. CRID will work with the City to ensure a mix of development that drives economic development and brings people to the river banks.



MaineGeneral Medical Center

MaineGeneral will move their operations to North Augusta on the Cancer Center campus. This means downsizing their current campus on the Kennebec River. This potentially means that much of the river frontage held by the hospital will become available for development.



This too is prime riverfront property, situated directly across from downtown and adjacent to Fort Western, the park, and the Arsenal property. CRID will work the City to plan a bright future for this critical waterfront property.

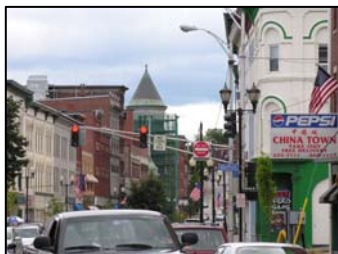
University of Maine at Augusta (UMA)

As UMA expands their programs and their facilities, there will be a need for more class space, performance and exhibition space, and residential space for their students. They



recently moved their Architecture Program to a building on Water Street in Downtown Augusta. CRID will continue to work with UMA to have bigger presence along the riverfront.

City of Augusta - A Downtown Network Community



The City of Augusta, working with the Maine Downtown Center, is a member of the Downtown Network. Member communities of the Network get assistance in building a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan.

Already, the effort has resulted in the formation of the Augusta Downtown Alliance and the group is active in driving business and development to Water Street. CRID will look to support this effort as they revitalize a key component of the District.

CRID Administration and Funding

Administration

The CRID Governing Board contracts with the Maine Development Foundation (MDF) to act as staff, providing technical assistance, administrative services, and financial management services.

MDF is a private, 501c3 non-profit organization, which drives sustainable, long-term economic growth for Maine. MDF stimulates new ideas, develops leaders, and provides common ground for solving problems and advancing issues.

Funding

CRID was originally created by funds from the settlement that came with the removal of the Edwards Dam.

Over time, funding evolved to a joint and equal appropriation by the City of Augusta and the State of Maine on an annual basis.

CRID Board 2011

- William Bridgeo, Co-Chair, City Manager, City of Augusta
- Dale McCormick, Co-Chair, Director, MaineHousing
- Jennifer Curtis, Augusta Resident
- Beverly Daggett, Augusta Resident
- Elizabeth Hertz, Director, Land Use Planning, State Planning Office
- Senator Roger Katz, Kennebec County
- Marc LaCasse, Representative, Heart of Augusta Team
- Representative Maeghan Maloney, House District 57, Augusta
- Bill McKenna, Planning Board, City of Augusta
- Patrick Paradis, Augusta City Council
- Roger Pomerleau, Representative, Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Greg Ponte, Environmental Representative
- Duane Scott, Director, Multimodal Planning, Department of Transportation
- Earle Shettleworth, Director, Maine Historic Preservation Commission

For More Information

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Or visit our website at: www.mdf.org