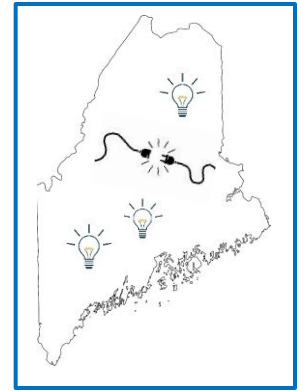


## Community Hubs: An Opportunity to Power Resilience and Prosperity

**Every community needs a community hub.** Most blueprints for Maine’s future vitality depend on the existence of community-level capacity for convening, planning, coordinating, and evaluating. This includes a variety of current plans for economic growth, climate adaptation, public health, emergency response, health care, lifelong learning, transportation, housing, and many others. National models offer similar visions. The following examples vary in their terminology, but each depends on community-level, multi-sector partnerships to achieve its objectives.



### National examples:

#### **The Aspen Institute: Rural Development Hubs, Strengthening America’s Rural Innovation Infrastructure**

“A Rural Development Hub is a place-rooted organization working hand-in-glove with people and organizations within and across a region to build inclusive wealth, increase local capacity and create opportunities for better livelihoods, health and well-being. Hubs focus on all the critical ingredients in a region... and weave them into a system that advances, rather than impedes, enduring prosperity for all.”

#### **Bipartisan Policy Center: “Public Health Forward: Modernizing the U.S. Public Health System**

Partnerships Action 1: “Incentivize partnerships...Flexible funding for cross-sector partnership development (as opposed to categorical disease-specific funding) enables partners and coalitions to work on a range of issues specific to their jurisdictions’ health and well-being, a departure from the typical current funding practices...”

#### **Brookings: How should local leaders use their American Rescue Plan funding?**

“Regional Recovery Coordinating Councils. Local coalitions can stabilize their communities, strategize together to invest in future prosperity, and organize themselves to enable an inclusive recovery from COVID-19.”

#### **National Council of Nonprofits: Investing Coronavirus Recovery Funds**

“Partnerships between the sectors allow for leveraging of resources, relationships, and strengths... to maximize public benefits... particularly in low-income and underserved or hard-to-reach populations.”

#### **U.S. CDC: National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities**

“Address COVID-19-related health disparities and advance health equity by expanding state, local, US territorial and freely associated state health department capacity and services...”

### State examples:

#### **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): Maine funding allocation framework (LD 1733)**

Section 3. “Infrastructure revitalization... support systems that ensure residents are able to live a decent, healthy and productive life, retain current residents and attract others to move here, raise their families and contribute to the economy.”

#### **Helping Maine Grow: Strengthening Our Early Care and Education System**

Recommendation 1: “Improving Access to Quality Care Through Community Innovation, Coordination, Integration and Partnership: Utilizing regional hubs... to develop a comprehensive approach to early childhood.”

#### **Maine Climate Council**

Strategy F: “Build healthy and resilient communities through 1) empowering local and regional efforts; 4) strengthening monitoring, education, and prevention.”

### **Maine Economic Recovery Plan: Foundational Guidance**

“Support public health and access to care. Strengthen public health infrastructure - a proactive, coordinated system; ensure access to prevention, high-quality care.”

### **Maine Economic Development Plan**

Strategy G “Hubs of excellence. Includes livable healthy space; supports working together to deliver comprehensive assets”; Strategy E “Provide supporting infrastructure: child care, transportation, housing.”

### **MaineHousing: Homeless System Re-Design Initiative**

Create regional “service hubs” to coordinate housing and social services offered by public and private agencies in the region, allowing local communities to serve people where they are and reduce pressure on population centers.

### **Maine legislation (LD 1693) to advance health equity**

Section 1517, 5 A (3) “Supporting public-private partnerships at the local and district levels, including comprehensive community health coalitions...” (*LD 1693 has been carried over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session of the 130<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature*)

### **Maine Obesity Advisory Council**

“Increase cross-sector coordination and collaboration; enhance public private partnerships to prevent obesity and promote healthy weight”

### **Maine Opioid Response: Strategic Action Plan 2021**

Strategy 10: “Support and expand community partnerships to educate and engage youth, families, and communities”

### **Maine Prevention Services**

“A collaborative effort of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and community partners that works across the state to prevent obesity, tobacco, and other substance use.”

### **Maine Rural Health Action Network: Priority Actions**

“Convene an interdisciplinary, cross-sectional group to address barriers; reduce fragmentation; promote collaboration; and align services, resources, and strategies among rural health entities.”

### **Statewide Coordinating Council, Maine CDC: 2020 Annual Report**

“Expand pandemic-related opportunities to improve public health, including more local public health infrastructure... and reducing silos among Emergency Management Agencies, Emergency Medical Services, and public health.”

## **Opportunity: Invest in every community’s ability to prepare, respond, and grow**

No matter your zip code, the COVID pandemic has challenged the systems we have often taken for granted: health care, education, transportation, public health, digital connectivity, emergency response, and many others. We now have an unprecedented opportunity to modernize, fill gaps, and invest in essential systems and infrastructure to a degree that was unimaginable only two years ago. Community Hubs are the missing piece of the puzzle – the game changer that can connect our disparate efforts and generate the power to pursue a multi-faceted vision in our communities and for our state. Building a network of Community Hubs across Maine, where relationships can be developed, partners can be engaged, local assets can be leveraged, and regional approaches can be pursued, will not only improve outcomes and efficiency, but create truly transformational change.