

Place and Prosperity



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GrowSmart Maine Annual Summit
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Executive Order 29 FY06/07

“To promote sustainable development, the State’s competitive strategy must focus on what makes Maine different and distinctive in the increasingly global marketplace; and will only do so by building on demonstrated strengths, by investing in them, and by creating opportunity through widely understood and supported investments in quality – in quality clusters and in quality places.

Council Purpose and Duties

“Examine the State’s public programs, decision-making processes, investment practices, private market incentives, institutional capacities, and research efforts to assess their readiness to maintain Maine’s distinctiveness as a desirable place to live, to work, to raise a family, and to build a useful and productive life; and...

Council Purpose and Duties

“Develop a recommended action plan or plans for protecting, investing in, and enhancing Maine’s distinctive quality of place, including creative ways and means to finance such plans.”

Quality of Place

“Quality of Place consists of those characteristics of a community or region that make it *distinctive* from other places and *attractive* as an area to reside, work, and/or visit. Because it is distinctive, Quality of Place varies from location to location. Because it is attractive, it entails characteristics that are outstanding from the norm...

Quality of Place

Maine's distinctive and marketable assets include its:

- natural environment,
- clean air and water,
- cultural heritage and traditions,
- historic heritage and downtowns,
- forest products, maritime, and agricultural heritage,
- working lands and waterfronts,
- reputation for hard work and quality,
- physical infrastructure, businesses, and organizations that support the assets and provide access to them.

Our research questions:

What are the theoretical and empirical connections between Quality of Place and economic prosperity?

What does that mean for Maine?

Seven Findings on Quality of Place (Q of P)





1. Q of P is an economic good of real value.



2. An attractive Q of P strengthens a region's economic prospects.




**3. Today's high-growth industries
value Q of P.**




**4. Q of P is an appealing framework
for economic development in
Maine.**



5. Q of P is a complement to, not a substitute for, traditional economic development strategies.



6. Within a Q of P framework, the value of Maine's natural resources depends on their accessibility.



7. Successful Q of P initiatives are likely to be regional, strategic, and multidimensional.

**What does this
mean for Maine?**



Asset-Based Development

- Identify region's strengths and unique assets
 - Workforce
 - Businesses, Organizations, Institutions
 - Natural, Historical, Cultural Resources
- Capitalize on them
- Knowledge and leadership come from within region

Needs-Based Development

- Identify region's deficiencies
- Correct or compensate for them
- Leadership often comes from outside because the region is seen as a client needing assistance

The bottom line...

Both are necessary.

NBD: crisis oriented and remedial

ABD: visionary and purposeful

The bottom line...

New understanding of the connections between Q of P and economic prosperity call for strengthening regional, asset-based development in Maine.

ABD in other places...

- Regions lead
- Higher levels inform, fund, and assist
- Comprehensive
- Joint public, private, non-profit
- Long-range planning and implementation
- Performance measures and evaluation