



Ms. Deborah Johnson  
Director Maine Office of Community Development  
Department of Economic and Community Development  
59 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0059

November 13, 2015

Re: 2016 Proposed Program Statement Community Development Block Grant Program

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am writing in support of public comments provided by the Maine Downtown Center requesting continued CDBG funding for 2016 so that the Center can continue to perform the important work for which it was created by the Maine legislature.

The Maine Downtown Center is charged by statute to advocate for downtown revitalization, promote awareness of the importance of vital downtowns, serve as a clearinghouse for information related to downtown development, and provide technical assistance to communities.

Most particularly, the Maine Downtown Center promotes public-private sector partnerships with local businesses in more than twenty Maine communities to support downtown revitalization efforts and reinvigorate Maine's downtowns.

Bangor Savings Bank has retail branch locations and has supported revitalization efforts by small businesses in many of the communities served by the Maine Downtown Center. Beginning in 1999, Bangor Savings Bank has cumulatively provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in grant and sponsorships to leverage CBDG support of Maine Downtown Center programs. We have seen and encouraged through direct grants, sponsorships, small business lending, and direct investments the efforts of small business owners, civic leaders, and local governments to promote new business investment, employment, and economic vitality particularly in Maine's smaller rural communities. This important work would be harder without the sustained support of the Maine Downtown Center.

Accordingly, we believe an abrupt termination of CDBG funding for the Maine Downtown Center and community grants for downtown revitalization would slow our momentum as we work to revitalize Maine downtown communities. We ask you to revise the proposed Statement to include continued funding for downtown revitalization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Montgomery-Rice", is written over a horizontal line.

Bob Montgomery-Rice  
President and CEO  
Bangor Savings Bank