



November 4, 2015

Deb Johnson, Director  
Office of Community Development  
Maine Office of Economic and Community Development  
59 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0059

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I write to you today in support of Community Development Block Grant funding for the Maine Downtown Center and the Downtown Revitalization Grant program. We at the Unity Foundation see firsthand how dedicated volunteers on the Main Streets and downtowns all across Maine come together to make our communities thrive and prosper. Support in both areas is important to our shared goal of a better future for Maine.

The Unity Foundation's mission is to support mission-driven nonprofits in Maine through capacity-building initiatives, organizational assessment, programmatic grantmaking and nonprofit management education. Our goal is to promote strong, sustainable nonprofits that reliably serve Maine communities. The sound business practices that the business sector must employ must also hold for those entities that work for the public good, like the Main Street programs and the Maine Development Foundation's Downtown Center.

Most recently, our work with Waterville Creates! is a testament to impact-driven commitment to central Maine's healthy economy. The leveraged investment of Colby College and private investors is growing, in no small part because of the efforts of our partners toward a stronger Waterville. The Downtown Revitalization grants further improve the shared space of downtown, where tax revenue per acre is the highest, and most of our small businesses reside.

Please make every effort to reconsider the current funding parameters and reinstate funds for Downtown Revitalization and the Maine Downtown Center.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Sterrs  
CEO/Chairman of the Board - Unity Foundation  
Board Chair - Waterville Creates!

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