

## 10.0 Economic Development and Tourism

### 10.1 Introduction

One of the most important issues facing metropolitan areas is ensuring economic competitiveness in a global economy. More employers are recognizing that recruiting and retaining employees from across a region requires safe, convenient and affordable transportation options. With the aging population, stagnant birth rate and decrease in child-bearing age population, the region will have to implement strategies to attract an in-migration of skilled individuals to provide the needed workforce. Competing for talented young workers will require economic development strategies that consider walkable neighborhoods with good transit access and safe streets for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The Greater Bangor area is the employment, commercial, communication, banking, transportation, distribution, educational, healthcare and governmental center serving central, eastern and northern Maine and more than one-third of the State's population. The Bangor region serves as northern New England's economic link to the Canadian Maritimes and Eastern Quebec and beyond. The region's proximity to mountains, lakes, and the coast attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

### 10.2 Retail Market

Bangor serves as one of the largest retail markets in Maine. It serves an extensive geographic area ranging from Eastern Maine to the Canadian Maritimes with an estimated population of over three million people. The Bangor Economic Statistical Area (ESA) generated 8.3 percent of the State's total taxable retail sales in 2016 (Figure 10.1).

Annual Taxable Retail Sales 2011 - 2016 (thousands)											
Economic Statistical District / Area		Annual Totals						Annualized 2011-2016	Percentage Change		
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		2011-2016	2011-2016	2015-2016
PENOBSCOT	BANGOR	\$1,567,772	\$1,571,890	\$1,614,456	\$1,658,560	\$1,710,368	\$1,773,123	2.49%	13.10%	3.67%	
	BANGOR SUB	\$345,601	\$355,413	\$369,525	\$375,104	\$393,977	\$410,270	3.49%	18.71%	4.14%	
<b>PENOBSCOT Total</b>		<b>\$2,229,409</b>	<b>\$2,248,466</b>	<b>\$2,314,470</b>	<b>\$2,380,451</b>	<b>\$2,464,881</b>	<b>\$2,564,938</b>	<b>2.84%</b>	<b>15.05%</b>	<b>4.06%</b>	
<b>State Total</b>		<b>\$17,035,969</b>	<b>\$17,544,822</b>	<b>\$18,277,622</b>	<b>\$18,973,743</b>	<b>\$19,909,865</b>	<b>\$21,288,888</b>	<b>4.56%</b>	<b>24.96%</b>	<b>6.93%</b>	

Source: Governor's Office of Policy and Management April 13, 2017

The Bangor ESA includes Bangor, Brewer, Great Works, Indian Island, Old Town, Orono, Stillwater and Veazie.

The Bangor Sub ESA includes Alton, Argyle Twp, Bradley, Cardville, Carmel, Clifton, Corinna, Corinth, Costigan, Dixmont, Eddington, Etna, Exeter, Glenburn, Greenbush, Greenfield, Hampden, Hermon, Holden, Hudson, Kenduskeag, Levant, Milford, Newburgh, Newport, Olamon, Orrington, Plymouth and Stetson.

### 10.3 Regional Economic Development

Regional economic development aims at creating more employment and a rising standard of living in the region through expansion of profitable business activity in the region. In the Greater Bangor area, either genuine or perceived factors to impeding economic growth and development include high energy costs, lack of digital infrastructure, remote location, a limited customer base, poor roads and transportation infrastructure and a general lack of collaboration between agencies and businesses.

**Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)** is a private nonprofit organization established in 1967. The Corporation is located in Bangor and serves Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and part of Waldo Counties. EMDC’s economic vision is to improve economic opportunity and increase wealth for the region’s communities, businesses and individuals.

EMDC identifies infrastructure and environment as one of the six drivers of growth and prosperity in the region. Addressing transportation and logistical infrastructure challenges will be critical to the region for economic growth across industries. The EMDC identified issues of importance are included in the 2016 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Four Directions Development Corporation (FDDC)** is a non-profit community development corporation and Community Development Financial Institution (CDC/CDFI), which was established in March of 2001 by the Penobscot Nation, a federally recognized Native American Tribe with reservation land in Maine.

The mission of the FDDC is to improve the social and economic conditions of the four Native American tribes in Maine — the Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot — through education and investment in affordable housing, tribal business ventures, and Native entrepreneurship. Through its Board of Directors and Advisory Board, FDDC is governed and managed by the four Wabanaki tribes of Maine. FDDC’s boards are composed of tribal leaders, councilors, and directors of tribal departments, as well as non-Native members specializing in sectors such as banking, small business, community development, and housing.

**The Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber)** was established in 1911. It is one of the oldest and largest Chambers in the State, representing 21 communities, and includes all 11 of the BACTS communities. The Chamber advocates on behalf of the communities they represent through initiatives designed to take a proactive approach to policies and goals that enhance and develop a healthy business environment in the region.

The Chamber’s mission is to promote and advance a vital, healthy business environment, which includes being an advocate for public policy aimed to help the region prosper. To that end, the Chamber’s Governmental Affairs Committee identified, and the Board of Directors endorsed, priorities that address issues of concern and importance for the Bangor region. The Chamber understands and appreciates the importance of a reliable and resilient transportation system in supporting economic growth, job creation, and enhancing quality of life. They have specifically committed to transportation related issues and initiatives that preserve, maintain and expand the transportation network. This includes amenities for non-motorized modes of transportation, as well as supporting marketing, and other developmental efforts and initiatives that serve to support the region’s transportation related potential in commercial and industrial trade and production, and tourism.

#### *10.4 Small Business Incubators*

**The University of Maine Foster Center for Student Innovation** helps students and community members develop a mindset and skill set for creating, testing, and achieving ideas. The center offers free business coaching to college students with a business idea, runs a student business incubator, offers academic courses in innovation, consults with businesses implementing innovation, and manages the Innovate for Maine Fellows Program, a statewide college internship program focused on innovation.

**The UpStart Center for Entrepreneurship** is a 20,000 square-foot facility located in Orono that leases office space to a variety of different companies, from the small one person start-up to the larger 8-10

person company. The UpStart Center is also home to the [UpStart Incubator](#), which provides coaching services and support to entrepreneurs in order to build competitive, market-oriented companies.

**Bangor International Enterprise Center** operates in a 25,000 square-foot building at 40 Johnson Avenue in the Bangor International Airport Complex. The incubator is designed to support small businesses during their start-up and early growth stages. It is a valuable resource for entrepreneurs providing flexible operating space at affordable rental rates. The facility can accommodate manufacturers, distributors and business service companies for one to two years after which the businesses graduate to other locations within the community. The facility has seven individual offices and eight flex space areas for rent. The flex space areas range from several hundred to three thousand square feet and are suitable for activities from warehousing to manufacturing. The building has a truck-height loading dock, four drive-in overhead doors, a forklift and other equipment available for tenant use.

### *10.5 Higher Education*

Founded in 1865, the **University of Maine** is a land and sea grant institution, and the flagship campus of the University of Maine System. It is located in Orono along the banks of the Stillwater River serving Maine, the nation, and the world through its teaching, research and outreach mission. UMaine students come from every county in Maine, more than 49 other states and 63 countries. UMaine offers 90 undergraduate majors and academic programs, 85 master's degree programs, and 35 doctoral programs.

**University College**, formerly the University of Maine at Bangor and Bangor Community College, became a satellite campus of the University of Maine at Augusta in 1995. The campus is located at the former Dow Air Force Base and provides associate degrees in liberal studies along with specialties in legal technology, dental hygiene, animal medical technology, human services, health information management, and landscape horticulture. About 1,000 students attend University College, which has 73 faculty members at its 160-acre campus next to Bangor International Airport.

**Husson University's** 208-acre primary campus is located in Bangor, with education centers in [Westbrook](#) and [Presque Isle](#). Established in 1898 as the Shaw School of Business in downtown Bangor, the school's current campus is on Husson Avenue. In 1982, the school merged with the Eastern Maine Medical School of Nursing and began offering nursing degrees. The school merged with the New England School of Communications in 1997. In October 2008, the school changed its name from Husson College to Husson University. There are approximately 2,800 undergraduate students, 700 graduate program students on the Bangor campus. Students come from all over Maine, the country and the world. In addition to offering business, nursing, and broadcasting degrees, the school also offers programs in occupational therapy, physical therapy, criminal justice, paralegal studies, and physical education.

**New England School of Communications**, originally the New England School of Broadcasting, is an affiliate of Husson University with classrooms on the Husson campus. It offers a two-year program in broadcast communications, with concentrations in radio, television, multimedia, advertising and public relations, and general communications.

**Eastern Maine Community College** is part of Maine's six-campus community college system. It was established in downtown Bangor in 1966 as Eastern Maine Vocational Technical Institute. Two years later the school moved to its current 72-acre campus on Hogan Road. The school offers one-year certificates and two-year degrees in such areas as mechanical, engineering, and construction industries; nursing; and business. About 500 full-time and 750 part-time students attend the school, which has 50 full-time and 80 adjunct faculty members. The school changed its name from Eastern Maine Technical College on July 1, 2003.

**Bangor Theological Seminary** was established in 1814 and is one of the oldest in the United States. The school is open to high school and college graduates who want to go into the ministry. The school offers degrees in Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Ministry with a satellite campus in Portland. The school moved from its 12-acre campus near the middle of Bangor to the Husson University campus in August 2005. The school had been at its Union Street campus since 1824.

**Beal College** was founded in 1891 and is primarily a business school located on Farm Road in Bangor. The school offers associate degrees in accounting, medical administrative assisting, office management, and law enforcement. Enrollment is approximately 500 students. The school does not go by a traditional semester calendar. Instead, it uses a mod system, in which courses are always starting in a matter of weeks year round.

### *10.6 Healthcare*

Healthcare is also an important segment of Bangor's economy. In addition to providing a major portion of the jobs filled by residents in the Bangor Labor Market Area, the majority of residents in Penobscot County also come to the BACTS area to obtain hospital and/or surgical care.

There are six hospitals in Penobscot County, four located in Bangor - Eastern Maine Medical Center, Acadia Hospital, Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center and St. Joseph Hospital. These four hospitals comprise 94 percent of all licensed and 92 percent of all setup and staffed hospital beds in the County. In addition, there are three Veterans Affairs (VA) sites in Penobscot County, two of which are located in Bangor. Penobscot County also has two ambulatory care surgery centers, both located in Bangor, and two ambulatory end-stage renal disease (ESRD) centers, one of which is in Bangor. Of the 50 primary care practices in Penobscot County there are four dedicated pediatric practices, three located in Bangor and one in Brewer. There are two school-based health centers located in Penobscot County, both are located in Brewer.

A 2016 report on transportation as a barrier to healthcare access in Bangor, reports that a significant barrier to accessing care in this area, especially for the underserved population, is transportation. Patients indicate a general unawareness of the types of transportation resources available and medical schedulers indicate regular appointment cancellations due to lack of transportation.

### *10.7 Travel and Tourism*

Tourism is another important segment of the economy. Economic impact begins when a visitor spends money in an area. According to 2016 statistics from the Maine Office of Tourism, Tourism is one of Maine's largest industries, employing about 106,000 people, one out of every six jobs in the State. The total economic impact is estimated at \$9 billion.

Maine's tourism industry depends on a reliable, safe transportation system. Overnight visitors and day travelers, whose principle mode of travel is the highway system, account for 27 million trips and directly spend a total of \$4.9 billion annually. The condition and reliability of a region's transportation system impacts the accessibility of activities and destinations such as conferences, trade shows, sporting and entertainment events, parks, resort areas, social events and everyday business meetings. An improved transportation system increases the accessibility of leisure/tourism and business travel destinations, which stimulates economic activity.

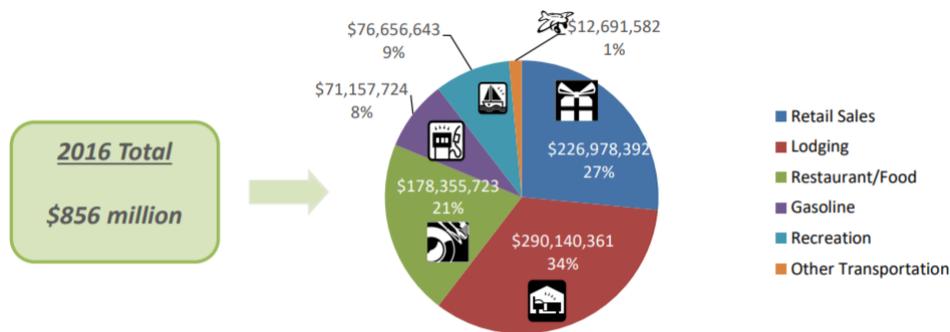
Bangor International Airport makes the region easily accessible by air, and proximity to major roadways makes traveling by motor coach or car simple. Bangor is centrally located in the state and is within a 90-minute drive of Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, Baxter State Park and the Moosehead Lake Region.

Maine Highlands (Figure 10.2a and 10.2b)

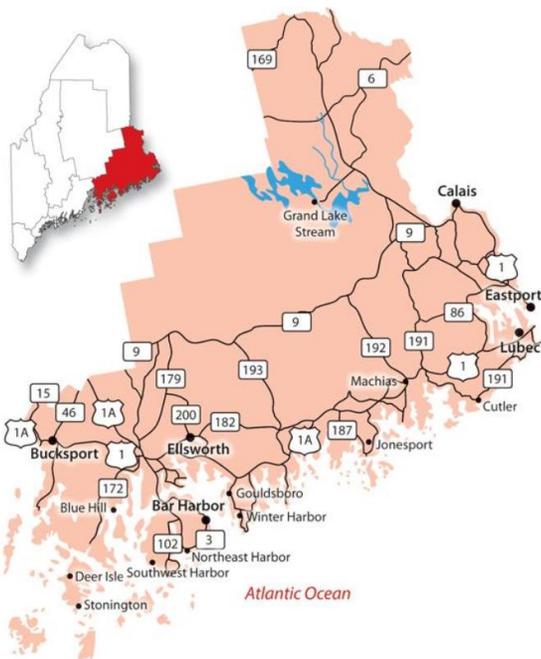


The Maine Highlands region is located in the center of Maine. The area offers tourists outdoor adventure, including dozens of lakes and rivers, over 200 waterfalls and thousands of miles of trails. The Maine Highlands includes Baxter State Park, home of Maine’s highest peak, Mount Katahdin; and Baxter Peak, the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. The Maine Highlands also encompasses Moosehead Lake, Maine’s largest lake.

An estimated 4.4 million people visited the Maine Highlands in 2016 (an increase of 9.9% from 2015), and spent \$856 million (an increase of 20.1% from 2015). Tourist spending supported 14,714 jobs, \$280,128,838 in earnings and \$78,134,192 in total taxes. The figure depicts the sectors benefiting from these tourism dollars.



Downeast and Acadia (Figure 10.3)



Although the Greater Bangor area is not included in the Downeast/Acadia tourism area, many of the more than three million people who visit Acadia National Park each year come through the Bangor area.

Maine’s Downeast and Acadia region encompasses the easternmost portion of the state, stretching along the coast to the Canadian border. Popular destinations include Bar Harbor, Lubec, Bucksport, and the Penobscot Narrows.

The Downeast and Acadia region is made up of six similar, yet very distinct subregions. The ocean tides are some of the highest on the planet, with highs and lows occurring twice daily. [Acadia](#), Maine’s National Park, is the top tourist destination in this area and offers 120 miles of hiking trails and 55 miles of Rockefeller-built carriage roads. North of Acadia, the village of [Grand Lake](#)

[Stream](#) is home to the most concentrated population of [Registered Maine Guides](#) in the state. The fishing and hunting are unmatched, as are the opportunities to simply relax and enjoy the great outdoors. [Roosevelt Campobello International Park](#) offers a guided tour of FDR's historic 34-room summer cottage.

### Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Greater Bangor Convention & Visitors Bureau (GBCVB) is a nonprofit membership organization that exists to stimulate economic vitality by promoting the Greater Bangor Region as the preferred destination for meetings, conventions and visitors. GBCVB provides destination marketing and visitor services for the Greater Bangor Region, including the Bar Harbor Coastal area.

### *10.8 Recommendations*

A diverse, efficient and safe transportation network is vital in connecting people locally, regionally and globally. The economy is dependent on facilitating the import and export of goods and people. With the aging population stagnating and the resulting potential workforce shortage facing the Greater Bangor area, attracting new and innovative enterprises and developing strategies to in-migrate a skilled and active workforce is essential.

- Investigate opportunities for more frequent and inter-connected public transit services which allow individuals outside of the urban area to more easily access employment, retail and healthcare services in the urban area.
- Encourage the development of transportation options and intermodal connectors for passengers, specifically from Bangor International Airport to the most popular tourist destinations in the Acadia and Maine Highlands areas.
- Encourage the development of intermodal connector facilities for movement of freight into and out of the area.
- Investigate non-traditional funding sources to supplement the area's transportation system maintenance needs.
- Support the Greater Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau efforts in attracting economic development and tourist activity in the area.

### **Resources**

2017 Maine Development Foundation Measures of Growth: [http://www.mdf.org/files/MOGReport2017-WEB\\_1493056448.pdf/800/](http://www.mdf.org/files/MOGReport2017-WEB_1493056448.pdf/800/)  
[http://www.mdf.org/files/17-026\\_MDF-ExecutiveSummary-Letter\\_1493312007.pdf/803/](http://www.mdf.org/files/17-026_MDF-ExecutiveSummary-Letter_1493312007.pdf/803/)

October 2016 TRIP Maine Transportation by the Numbers:  
[http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME\\_Transportation\\_by\\_the\\_Numbers\\_TRIP\\_Report\\_October\\_2016.pdf](http://www.tripnet.org/docs/ME_Transportation_by_the_Numbers_TRIP_Report_October_2016.pdf)

2016 Transportation as a barrier to access to care in Bangor and the surrounding Penobscot County area:  
<http://scholarworks.uvm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1215&context=fmclerk>

Greater Bangor Chamber of Commerce Issues of Impact:  
<https://www.bangorregion.com/business-advocacy/issues-of-impact/>

EMDC 2016 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

[https://www.emdc.org/image\\_upload/CEDS%202016%20FINAL%20COMBINED.pdf](https://www.emdc.org/image_upload/CEDS%202016%20FINAL%20COMBINED.pdf)

2016 Maine Highlands Area Tourism Reports:

<https://visitmaine.com/assets/downloads/2016-RegionalReport-MaineHighlands.pdf>

<https://visitmaine.com/assets/downloads/2016-EconImpact-MaineHighlands.pdf>

2018 Downeast Acadia Area Tourism Reports:

<https://visitmaine.com/assets/downloads/2016-RegionalReport-DownEastAcadia.pdf>

<https://visitmaine.com/assets/downloads/2016-EconImpact-DownEastandAcadia.pdf>

### **Local Economic and Community Development Programs**

City of Bangor - <http://www.bangormaine.gov/ced>

<http://www.choosebangor.com/>

City of Brewer - <http://brewermaine.gov/economic-development/>

Town of Hampden - <http://www.hampdenmaine.gov/business>

Town of Hermon - <https://www.hermon.net/economic-development/>

City of Old Town - <http://www.developoldtown.com/old-town-the-region/>

Town of Orono - <http://www.oronoedc.org/>

Town of Orrington - [http://www.orrington.govoffice.com/index.asp?SEC=ED2E4238-0302-4BCF-AC15-3218E8268F7A&Type=B\\_BASIC](http://www.orrington.govoffice.com/index.asp?SEC=ED2E4238-0302-4BCF-AC15-3218E8268F7A&Type=B_BASIC)

Penobscot Indian Island - <http://www.fourdirectionsmaine.org/>

Town of Veazie - [http://www.veazie.net/Public\\_Documents/VeazieME\\_EDCMin/](http://www.veazie.net/Public_Documents/VeazieME_EDCMin/)