

***Gear Up*** The COG Way!

Benefits and Services of Regional Planning



KENNEBEC VALLEY  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

*KvcoG*

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# Membership Guide

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# KENNEBEC VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

## *Welcome to KVCOG*

### **Dear new member:**

**Thank you for considering the advantages of becoming a member of KVCOG, a leader for local and regional economic development and planning. Our mission is to support you, and expand the capacity of local government within the Kennebec Valley region. KVCOG develops and maintains resilience capacity to meet the region's changing needs.**

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*Established in 1967, KVCOG is a valued partner of local and county governments serving 62 municipalities in Kennebec, Somerset, and western Waldo counties, including 54 members for which we provide high quality and cost-effective professional services to build a resilient local economy.*

*This guide will prepare you to become a member and take advantage of exclusive access to a wide range of direct services delivered locally, including:*

- Governance and ordinance writing, developing/updating your Comprehensive Plans
- Land use planning, including technical assistance for revisions and reviews
- Project management or program development (grant writing, meeting space, etc.),
- Solid waste technical assistance (recycling and household hazardous waste),
- Business finance and consulting, and
- Regional services that benefit all members including infrastructure investments (EDA, USDA, CDBG), and regional business attraction marketing.



***Our office at 17 Main Street. Fairfield***

# Who We Are

ALBION ANSON ATHENS BELGRADE BINGHAM BRIGHTON PLT  
BURNHAM CAMBRIDGE CANAAN CARATUNK CHELSEA CHINA CLINTON  
CORNVILLE DETROIT EMBDEN FAIRFIELD FAYETTE FREEDOM  
GARDINER HALLOWELL HARTLAND HIGHLAND PLT JACKMAN  
LITCHFIELD MADISON MERCER MONMOUTH MOOSE RIVER MOSCOW  
NEW PORTLAND NORRIDGEWOCK OAKLAND PALERMO PALMYRA  
PLEASANT RIDGE PLT RANDOLPH READFIELD ROME SKOWHEGAN  
SMITHFIELD SOLON STARKS THE FORKS THORNDIKE TROY UNITY  
WATERVILLE WAYNE WEST FORKS WINSOR WINSLOW WINTHROP

# MEMBERS

# STAFF

Matthew Underwood, Executive Director

Joel Greenwood, Planning Director

Lorra-Lee Snyder, Finance Director

Brandy Sloan, Revolving Loan Fund Manager

Jessie Cyr, Economic Development Specialist

Robyn Stanicki, Community Resilience Planner

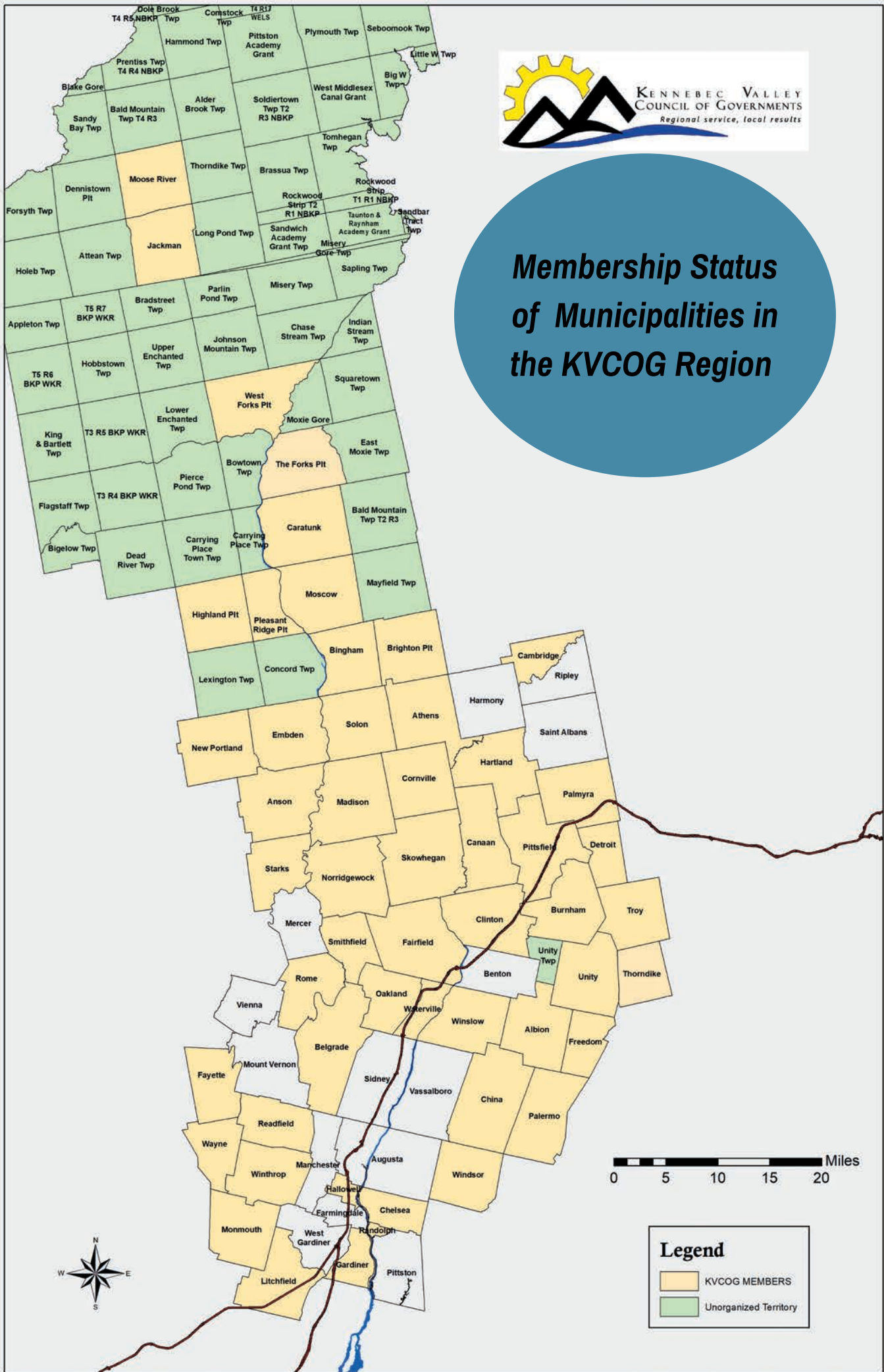
Jessica Cobb, Community/Land Use Planner

Olivia Kunesh, Environmental Planner





**Membership Status  
of Municipalities  
in the KVCOG Region**



Map labels include: Dole Brook Twp, Comstock Twp, T4 R37 WELS, Plymouth Twp, Seboomook Twp, Little W. Twp, Hammond Twp, Pittston Academy Grant, Prentiss Twp T4 R4 NBKP, Bald Mountain Twp T4 R3, Alder Brook Twp, Soldiertown Twp T2 R3 NBKP, West Middlesex Canal Grant, Big W. Twp, Sandy Bay Twp, Tomhegan Twp, Rockwood Strip T1 R1 NBKP, Sandbar Tract Twp, Dennistown Pit, Moose River, Thorndike Twp, Brassua Twp, Rockwood Strip T2 R1 NBKP, Taunton & Raynham Academy Grant, Forsyth Twp, Attean Twp, Jackman, Long Pond Twp, Sandwich Academy Grant Twp, Misery Gore Twp, Haleb Twp, Parlin Pond Twp, Misery Twp, Sapling Twp, Appleton Twp, T5 R7 BKP WKR, Bradstreet Twp, Johnson Mountain Twp, Chase Stream Twp, Indian Stream Twp, Hobbstown Twp, Upper Enchanted Twp, West Forks Pit, Moxie Gore, Squaretown Twp, King & Bartlett Twp, T3 R5 BKP WKR, Lower Enchanted Twp, Bowtown Twp, The Forks Pit, East Moxie Twp, Flagstaff Twp, T3 R4 BKP WKR, Pierce Pond Twp, Caratunk, Bald Mountain Twp T2 R3, Bigelow Twp, Dead River Twp, Carrying Place Twp, Carrying Place Twp, Mayfield Twp, Highland Pit, Pleasant Ridge Pit, Moscow, Lexington Twp, Concord Twp, Bingham, Brighton Pit, Cambridge, Ripley, Harmory, Saint Albans, New Portland, Embden, Solon, Athens, Hartland, Palmyra, Anson, Madison, Cornville, Canaan, Pittsfield, Detroit, Starks, Norridgewock, Skowhegan, Burnham, Troy, Mercer, Smithfield, Fairfield, Clinton, Bentley, Unity, Thorndike, Rome, Oakland, Waterville, Winslow, Albion, Freedom, Vienna, Belgrade, Sidney, Vassalboro, China, Palermo, Fayette, Mount Vernon, Readfield, Wayne, Winthrop, Manchester, Augusta, Windsor, Hallowell, Farmington, Chelsea, Monmouth, West Gardiner, Randolph, Gardner, Litchfield, Pittston.

# Your Business is Our Business

## Comprehensive Business Management Assistance

Business Startup and Acquisition  
Marketing and Cash Flow Analysis  
QuickBooks Training  
Financing Assistance through KVCOG's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program



*KVCOG offers direct loan programs through our Revolving Loan Funds (RLF). An RLF lends funds to borrowers, using loan payments to fund new approvals. In addition to our direct loan programs, KVCOG can also aid businesses in accessing other local and State sources of financing.*

*Available, though not limited to Kennebec, Somerset, and western Waldo counties in Maine. The business must be unable to finance the proposed project from its own resources or through commercial credit or other federal, State or local programs at reasonable rates and terms. Interest rates vary.*

*Eligible uses include real estate, building improvements, working capital and/or refinancing debt.*

*To get started with your loan, please fill out our Application for Financing located at <https://www.kvcog.org/business-services>*



## What makes for an ideal borrower?

- A focused entrepreneur with a clear and realistic vision
- Has a business plan and financials projections or statements
- Makes an impact on employment locally or regionally
- Possess assets to serve as collateral to secure the loan
- Has good listening skills and adaptability

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

Questions? Email us at [info@kvcog.org](mailto:info@kvcog.org)

# Community Planning Services

## Municipal Planning, Including:

- \*Interpreting, implementing, and enforcing ordinances*
- \*Site plan (development) & subdivision review*
- \*Comprehensive Plan updates*
- \*Area and topical plans (open space plans, joint services plans, bike plans, village and streetscape plans, etc.)*
- \*Contractual Town Planner- KVCOG provides town planner services to municipalities on an hours-per-month contractual basis*
- \*Permit Review Assistance: KVCOG will assist a local board in reviewing applications for subdivision approval, development/land use permits, rezoning applications, etc. Staff also assist many towns to conduct reviews of large or complex subdivisions and site plans.*
- \*Board Training: Staff will provide on-site or centralized training to volunteer boards. Topics include general board procedures, development procedures, forms and checklists, review practices, legal requirements. From time to time, KVCOG hosts a series of workshops at its Fairfield offices on procedural or technical planning topics.*

## Regional Planning, Including:

*Coastal regional planning*

*Technical Assistance: Staff are available by phone, email or in person to answer questions of interpretation of regulatory language. When needed, staff may attend planning board or board of appeals meetings to assist a board in interpretation of provisions of their ordinances.*

**\* Available to Members**

## **Why should you update your Land Use Ordinance?**

- Ensures consistency with State and Federal requirements**
- Legal protection- when land use or zoning ordinances are not updated regularly, they can be legally contested, resulting in avoidable expenses for the municipality**
- Updating language and format are essential in having a clear, concise document that is easy for residents to read and interpret**
- An updated ordinance will be more easily enforceable for the Code Enforcement Officer, especially if it incorporates plain language**
- Updating ordinances regularly can resolve conflicts and ambiguities resulting from decades long incremental updates.**
- The use of plain and clear language and engaging graphics to define and illustrate uses and terms and strengthens the legal standing of ordinance interpretations.**
- Updates can address confusing concepts that have led to inconsistent application of code.**
- An updated ordinance will more easily respond to changes in the future, such as specifics from a newly adopted Comprehensive Plan**

# More on Planning

## A Few Quick Questions:

What year was your municipality's Comprehensive Plan last updated?

**\*\*To be considered valid by the state, and to make best use of state and federal grant opportunities, a Comprehensive Plan should be updated every 12 years.\*\***

If your municipality has a subdivision ordinance, what year was it last amended?

Does your municipality have a solar ordinance?

Does your municipality have a cannabis ordinance?

Does your municipality have a Code Enforcement Officer? Would you consider a shared/regional CEO?

Do you have an Emergency Response Plan?

Comprehensive plans provide a long-range vision and strategy for your community and is an all-inclusive approach to analyzing and evaluating the current conditions of the municipality to prepare and plan for the future.

We provide on-going Coordination, Communication, Education, and Outreach for municipalities and other agencies and organizations within our region. We can act as the conduit for getting DOT to investigate transportation issues, find solutions and move forward with future DOT workplans.

We are now also provide larger communities in the Piscataquis and Waldo Counties with this service!

- Crosswalk ADA Compliance
- Bicycle, Pedestrian, Complete Street and Age-Friendly Planning
- Public Works Planning and Technical Assistance

Public work group activities might include software demonstrations and trainings, increasing collective purchasing of products and sharing of resources, lane striping, lane widths, signage and inventory tools.



# Economic and Community Development Services

## What is Economic Development?

*Our Region's economy directs the actions of the community towards the set economic objectives in a coordinated and focused way, articulating a vision to pursue objectives in both the short and long term. This involves the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive.*

### ***Equitable Distribution of Resources***

*One of the goals of an economic plan is equitable distribution of resources. Wealth is controlled by 2% of people and is the main reason for economic inequity. The inequity calls for governmental intervention through planning to ensure equitable distribution of resources.*

***KVCOG is responsible for updating our regional CEDS plan every 5 years. We also provide:***



***Downtown and Neighborhood Revitalization  
Housing Solutions, including Workforce Housing  
Demographic Survey Planning and Implementation  
U.S. EDA and USDA supported infrastructure  
Investment projects  
Technical Assistance (EDA, CDBG, USDA Brownfields,  
Northern Border Regional Commission)***

### **Benefits to our Members:**

- \*Strategic Planning and Research***
- \*Local committees, Meeting Facilitation***
- \*Funding Search (federal, State and private foundations)***
- \*Grant Assistance (Writing, and Administration)***

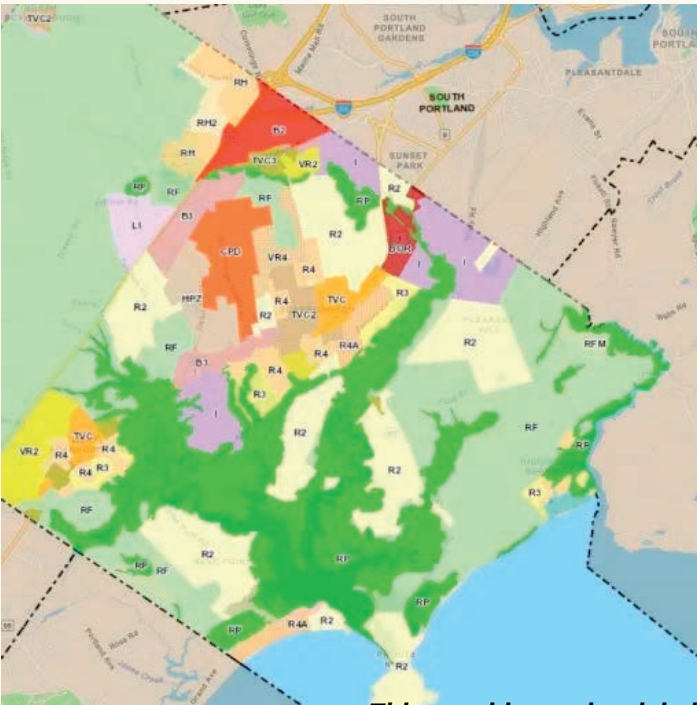


# Mapping Services

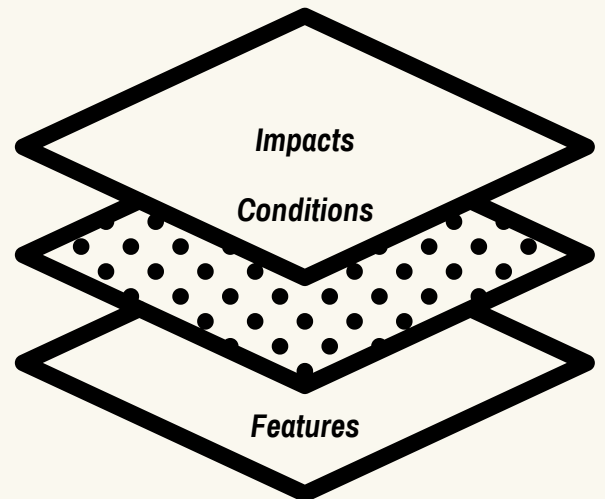


*KVCOG provides a variety of mapping services to member towns upon request. We can create customized maps of communities showing a wide range of information including but not limited to: natural resources, public facilities, infrastructure, development trends, and/or locally-defined land use districts.*

*KVCOG uses the latest GIS software, ESRI, and has an extensive database that includes geographic base data at the town, regional, and State levels. This data is used in a variety of projects, including transportation, economic development, and planning projects.*



*This graphic needs a label*



- \*Basic GIS generated maps*
- \*GIS generated maps for planning or municipal projects*
- \*Integrated census/economic data with mapping*
- \*Visual assessment analysis (Waldo/Kennebec County only)*
- \*Shoreland zoning*
- \*Digitizing of tax maps*
- \*Development of sustainability mapping*
- \*Data Center Statistics (federal, state, and local economic and labor conditions)*
- \*Map archiving (existing paper maps)*

# Resilience Planning

KVCOG and our Resilience Program is dedicated to fostering your need for responsive and adaptable solutions for now, and a new normal. Our aim is to not only bounce back, but leap forward.

What does this look like? We can boost your initiatives to bring new housing options and diverse business to your vibrant downtown; help to connect you to the world with new transportation and internet options for your verdant neighborhoods; and sharpen your vision for clean energy, new technology, and climate action to sustain and safeguard personal property and prosperous livelihoods. These are big ideas that need partners at every level—and a lot of money.

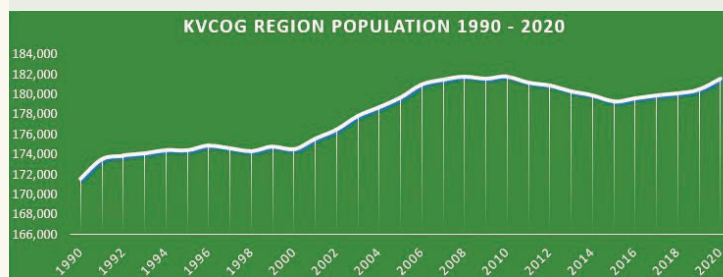
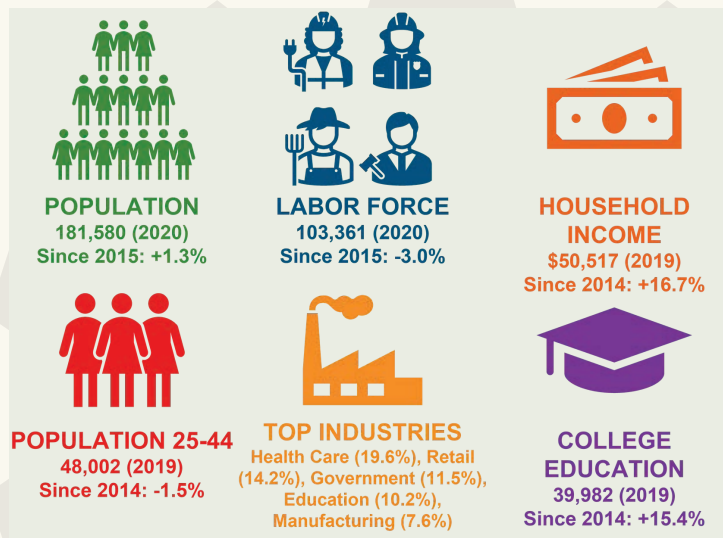
## Resilience in Motion: Regional Strategy

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) enables communities to apply for funding to accomplish a variety of projects that align with the Economic Development Administration's Investment Priorities and is the perfect opportunity to underline resilience into the framework of this five-year plan. We now have the convergence of ideas and financial resources to make big ideas a reality. The focus of this federal money will help us pivot toward new systems of thinking and innovative solutions to old problems. As we weave resilience concepts into this guiding document, we are laying the foundation for bigger, better, and beyond.



This spring, we convened a diverse group of local leaders, business owners, and planners to conduct an assessment of the Six Drivers of Success related to positive indicators of vibrant communities. Our staff collected mountains of data and compared to our view five years ago. We found that despite our recent challenges, our region has progressed in numerous ways. This is encouraging! Our next task is to apply our strengths to address the areas that we still need to work on and identify opportunities through projects that can take us to that next level.

Later this fall, the public will be invited to participate in this process to engage a variety of perspectives on community and economic development. We will use this input to evaluate project ideas and strategies which have a regional focus and wide impact across our communities.



CEDS Drivers of Success (Harper, 2021)

# Environmental Planning

Our low-cost, high value member services make participation easy

The KVCOG Joint Purchase program has again been able to provide our member communities significant savings on materials and resources that represent a common need. By leveraging our aggregate demand KVCOG is able to negotiate more reasonable pricing for the rural communities that make up our region. We continue to offer Road Salt, Calcium Chloride, Geotextiles and Culverts to our membership. Thanks to an expansion of our DOT contract we are now able to offer this service out to communities in Piscataquis & Waldo counties as well, giving us a stronger position negotiating prices with suppliers.



Moving forward we are exploring an expansion of the program offerings to include: secure document shredding, precast cement culverts/fishways and water treatment chemicals. Tell us what you need and we will try to save you money!

# HOUSEHOLD

KVCOG's contact-free framework for our Household Hazardous Waste Collections help residents dispose items such as old oil based paint, gas, motor oil, pesticides, cleaners, pool chemicals, TVs, computers and other materials that are difficult to remove. Many chemicals commonly used around the home, as well as unused pharmaceuticals, are hazardous and need to be disposed of by professionals trained to handle this material. Improper disposal can disrupt the function of sewage treatment plants, private septic systems, and contaminate ground water,



Even with the challenges of the pandemic –and some rough weather—we successfully hosted all of the five scheduled collections and maintained the consistent levels of participation we have come to expect at these events. Moving forward we are looking to modernize the administrative processes that go along with these collections so KVCOG can provide the most efficient and sustainable program possible.

# WASTE

# Members-Only Purchase Program Services

- **Highway products (road salt, weight and bump signs, flake calcium chloride, culverts, geotextiles)**
- **Hazardous Waste Disposal (public works, janitorial, airport, motor pool, schools, clean-ups)**
- **Universal Waste Disposal (offices, lighting, schools)**
- **School chemical waste**
- **Labpacks**
- **Heating Pellets**
- **Oil/water separator and catch basin cleanouts (public works, fire-dept., police dept., motor pool, airports)**
- **Tank removals, tank cleanings (all fuels and all buildings)**
- **Vacuum truck services (waste oil and water in tanks)**
- **Site cleanup/restoration (oil spills, lead contamination, etc.)**
- **Geoprobe sampling services (soil, vapor and groundwater spills) and Brownfields redevelopment**
- **Compost bin and tote purchasing program**



- **KVCOG solicits bids for calcium chloride, culverts, geotextiles, and road salt in early spring. KVCOG's role is to aggregate volumes, set specifications, and solicit vendors' bids. The actual purchase, including quantities, delivery arrangements, and quality control, is controlled by the town.**
- **Member towns will receive notification of opening of the bid window according to the Joint Purchase Calendar. Towns will receive a physical form to return, or there is also an opportunity for electronic submission. KVCOG summarizes the information returned and sends it out to qualified vendors.**
- **Once the low bid is selected, participating towns will be provided the price and contact information of the company who has won the bid. Your town is then responsible for arranging the purchase. In some cases, we also provide you with information on quality control.**
- **This program is a benefit for KVCOG members only. Our administrative costs are covered using your membership dues. We estimate that every year, we can save our members over \$60,000 in price reductions.**



# Environmental Planning Services

- *RFP drafting assistance*
- *Design assistance with transfer stations and waste systems*
- *DOL and OSHA compliance*
- *Assistance with contract negotiation to obtain the best rates for members*
- *Technical and compliance assistance for municipal environmental programs*
- *Solid waste ordinance assistance – drafting and committee work*
- *Solid waste planning and technical assistance*
- *Household Hazardous and Universal Waste Collection coordination*
- *Facilitate collection of materials for transfer stations and recycling centers*



## *Environmental Planning Projects Include:*

*Cleaning up sites where redevelopment, expansion, or reuse is complicated by the presence (or perceived presence) of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants through our Brownfields Program.*

*Textile recovery and recycling services*

*Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Program*

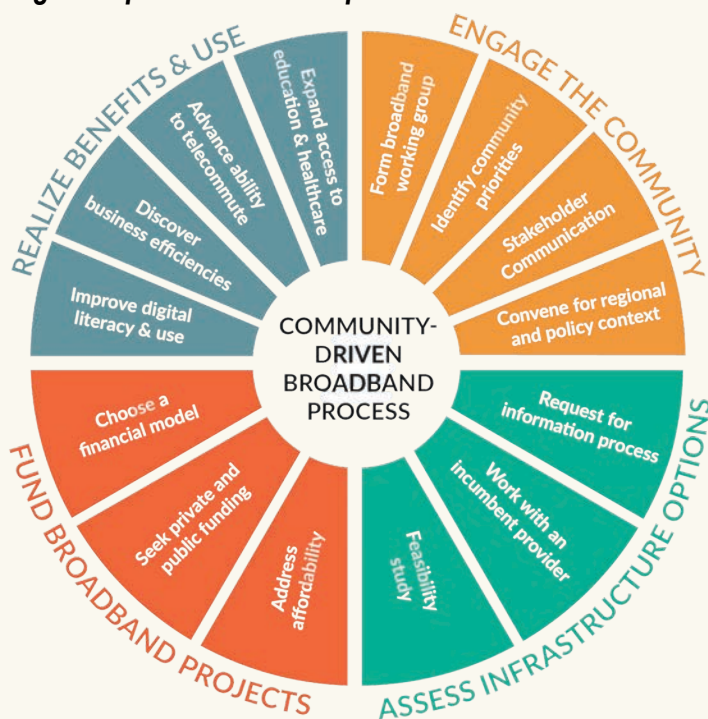
*Solid waste system analysis and design*

*Recycling/reuse assistance and public education*

# Grant Funding

Don't miss out on these opportunities

- **Grant opportunities are shared via email to our members**
  - Please opt in to receive emails via our website.
- **Member towns with a strategic need for grant funding can also contract with KVCOG to write and administer grants.**
  - **Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program- USDA**
  - **Community Broadband Startup and Planning Grants - ConnectME**
  - **Stream Crossing Grants - Maine DEP**
  - **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**
  - **Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) SEID Grant**
  - **Coastal Community Planning Grant Programs**
  - **Shore and Harbor Planning Grants**
  - **Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects Grant**
- **KVCOG is authorized to make sub-grants to eligible entities and nonprofits in order to help carry out a range of cleanup activities at brownfield sites within our targeted area to encourage and promote redevelopment and revitalization.**



working communities challenge

The logo for 'working communities challenge' features three interlocking gears of different sizes in a teal color. The text 'working communities challenge' is positioned below the gears, with 'working' and 'communities' on the top line and 'challenge' on the bottom line.



# KENNEBEC VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

*KVCOG's goal is to provide high quality professional services that will directly lower expenses to municipalities. Our staff is here to serve and assist you. Please call us whenever you have a project or a need. It is important that your department heads are also connected to KVCOG for services and assistance. Please share this memo with them, so we can provide the best value for your membership. It is our honor to provide professional assistance at affordable costs to municipalities within our region.*



kvcog

