



The City of Bangor

Economic Development Strategic Plan

January 2022



Prepared By



Better City
Solving Problems. Creating Opportunity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October of 2021, the City of Bangor engaged Better City, LLC to prepare an Economic Development Strategic Plan to address three questions:

1. Who and where are we? What is our community? Our current economic base?
2. Which direction should we go? How do we expand the economic base, and how do we ensure all segments of our population benefit from economic growth?
3. How do we get there?

In preparing recommendations, 16 prior studies were reviewed 52 stakeholders were interviewed, 17 youth participated in focus groups, 377 residents completed surveys, 19 members of the community made 76 comments on an online message board and 21 residents attended public forums. Extensive demographic and economic data was researched and analyzed.

The consensus in the community is that Bangor is a fantastic place to live, work, play, raise a family, and live life. The vision is for the City to strengthen its appeal as a relocation destination so that it can reverse decades of population declines and begin an era of intentional, sustainable growth and prosperity. The recommendations are designed to help make Bangor a more desirable destination and make it feasible for those who chose to live here to enjoy a high quality of life.

A key takeaway from the stakeholder interviews and reviews of past studies was that there is a tremendous number of organizations that are undertaking a large number of initiatives related to the economic progress of the area. A key recommendation, therefore, is that the City play a central coordination and communication role and be the nexus of all of the different efforts. In this role, the City will be able to ensure that there aren't duplicative efforts, that resources are being utilized efficiently, that organizations with similar missions are effectively collaborating and that the community prioritizes its investments.

To increase the desirability of the area, it is recommended to:

- Engage PR Firm
- Prioritize the Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights
- Establish Youth Council
- Hold Council Discussions about Accepting Refugees
- Prioritize Implementation of Key Parts of Housing and West Side Village Studies
- Designate Entertainment District
- Create a High-level Mall Redevelopment Project Proposal

To increase the feasibility of living in Bangor with a high quality of life it is recommended to:

- Conduct Feasibility Study for Cold Storage Concept
- Assign City Staff as Liaisons to Community Organizations
- Consider "Community Coffee"
- Process Map Entrepreneurship / Create Entrepreneur Guide
- Prepare a housing project plan for 57-acre parcel off Garland Street

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Objectives

October 12, 2021 the City of Bangor signed a contract with Better City to develop an economic development strategic plan. The objective of the strategic plan is to enable the City to take control of its economic progress, set clear and achievable economic development objectives, and design policies and programs to achieve those objectives.

The questions to be answered by the strategic plan are:

1. Who and where are we? What is our community? What is our current economic base?
2. Which direction should we go? What opportunities exist to expand the economic base, and how do we ensure all segments of our population benefit from economic growth in the City?
3. How do we get there?

Process

The City of Bangor launched the community visioning and strategic planning project to provide strategic direction to the Community and Economic Development department in advance of the City's comprehensive planning exercise.

The process included:

- Review of pertinent prior plans and documents (see Appendix E: Reviews of Past Studies for a short description of each document, along with key takeaways)
- Stakeholder interviews held in person and virtually
- Public forums and survey
- Regular meetings with the Business and Economic Development Committee
- Focus group meetings

From October 27th to 29th, there was a tour of the community and initial interviews with key stakeholders. 20 one-on-one interviews were conducted. During the following weeks,



additional stakeholder interviews were conducted virtually. In total, 52 stakeholders were interviewed. Each interview comprised questions around community vision, challenges, opportunities, and resources.

On November 17th and 23rd, there were two separate focus groups. One group of 10 Bangor high school students and another group of 7 University of Maine students of diverse backgrounds and interest.

377 surveys were completed by residents and community stakeholders. A total of 19 comments were made on the Bangor My Social Pinpoint site ideas wall along with a total of 76 comments on the interactive map.

On December 7th the draft recommendations were presented to the Business Economic Development Committee in person and available via zoom to the public. During the meeting, feedback and responses to the recommendations were received and integrated into the final reports.

On December 8th two public forum were held for a virtual audience of 13 participants and in person setting with 8 residents. In these meetings, key trends and ideas were brought before the community for additional input and dialogue. Community members and stakeholders reviewed the topics and provided ideas and strategy for several areas of focus. Additional in-person stakeholder interviews as well as additional site tours were also conducted.

This report is the culmination of all above efforts and was delivered to the City of Bangor on January 4th, 2022.

Prior Plans

Prior plans reviewed and referenced in Appendix E include:

- Bangor Parks & Recreation Master Plan
- Bangor International Airport Master Plan Capital Improvements
- Bangor International Airport Master Plan (Sustainability Initiative)
- Broadband Strategic Plan and Roadmap
- Recommendations to Improve the Status of Housing in Bangor
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Promotion of Research Development, Innovation and Workforce to Build a Sustainable Life
- Maine Business Enterprise Park
- BanAir Industrial Park
- BIA Commercial/ Industrial Park
- Bangor Innovation Center
- BanAir Corporation Vacant Industrial/ Commercial Property Sites Specifications
- Bangor Foreign Trade Zone No. 58
- West Side Village Neighborhood Conceptual Land Use Plan, 2013

BACKGROUND

Historical Background of Community

The City of Bangor is one of the oldest cities in the oldest state in the nation (measured by median age). Bangor has a rich and significant history and much has been done to preserve that history while also looking toward a vibrant future. Since the loss of the military base in the 1960s Bangor has both struggled and grown. Like many other cities, for many decades Bangor focused on growth in suburban 'Big Box Retail / Mall' development. Recent efforts have begun to shift back into a vibrant downtown community thanks to the initiatives of a few key organizations and businesses.

Traditionally, Bangor has been a service hub not just for the community, but for the region - serving many opioid users and a growing unhoused population. While Bangor provides many services to support these groups and many efforts are still underway, these issues continue to be an area of concern for many. Bangor also stands as a retail, job, educational and governmental service hub.

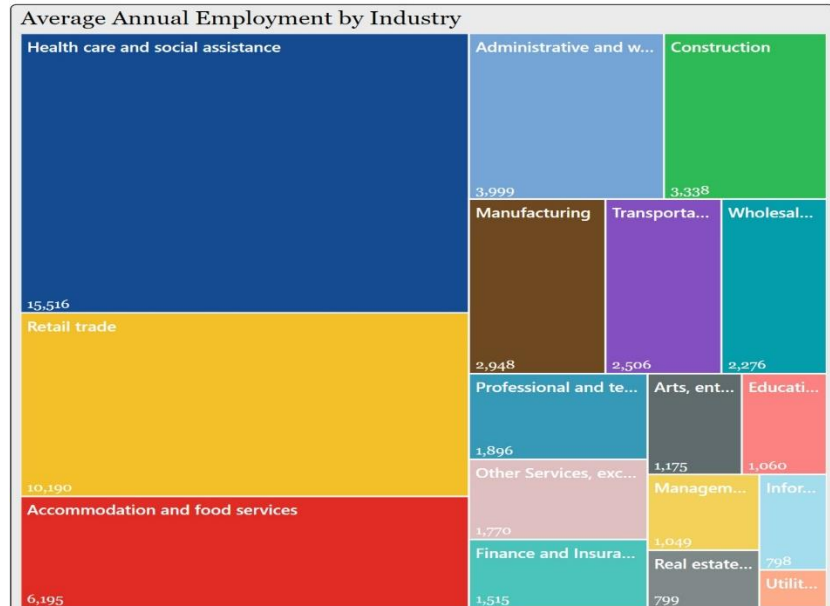
The City has become a more walkable and neighborhood friendly community with the increase of parks and recreation opportunities, with more efforts to increase the standards and quality-of-life on the rise. Broadband, transportation, and housing efforts are underway to make for a more livable and connected community.

Land space for redevelopment is important for both increase in housing stock and business diversity. Both Ban Air Corporation and the University of Maine serve as fundamental for scaling the entrepreneurial ecosystem (see Appendix F).



Economic Base

The Bangor area's economy has experienced significant shifts from its origins as a mill town. The largest sector of the economy today (measured by employment) is Office and Administrative Support / Management, followed by Sales (retail), Education, Food Preparation and Healthcare / Health Diagnosing. These are all internally-focused, service-oriented jobs and reinforce the status of Bangor as the region's retail, services, government and healthcare center. No export-oriented industries cracked the top 10—despite the presence of several large manufacturing employers including General Electric and C&L Aviation.



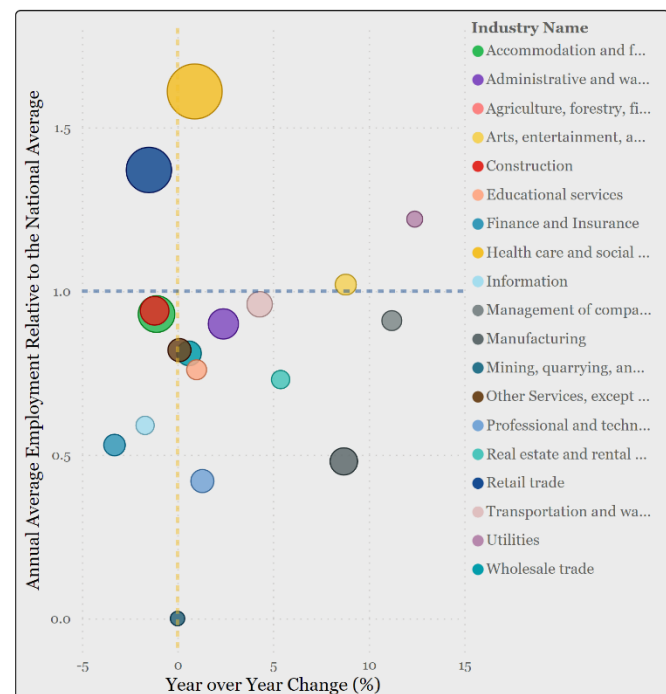
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Above data represents the number of average employees by industry for that year.

The industries that have materially disproportionate representation in Penobscot County compared to the country are (location quotient below 1):

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Management
- Utilities
- Transportation & Warehousing
- Retail Trade
- Construction

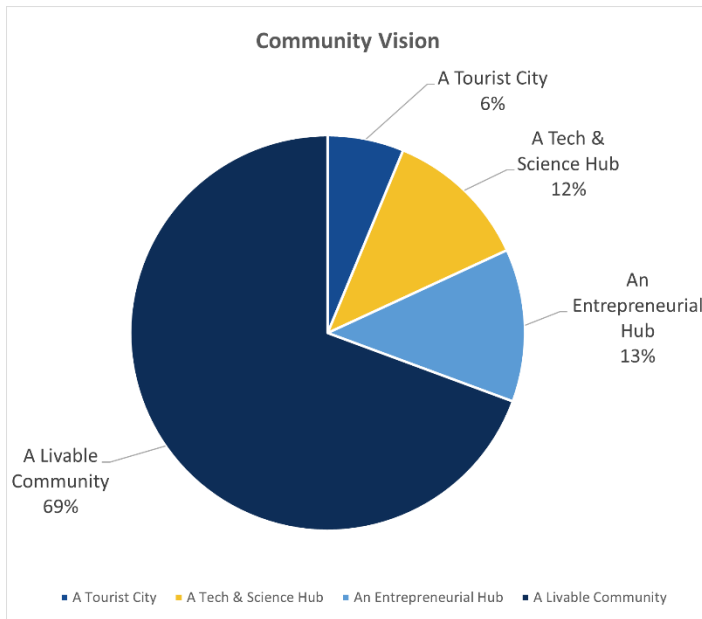
It is worth noting that healthcare is almost as large in Penobscot County as in the average county in the nation while Healthcare and Social Assistance have only 75% as many establishments as the national average.

The industries that are showing the most growth are Management of Companies and Mining.



Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Above data represents an average number of employees within each industry

COMMUNITY VISION



The Community Vision represents how local residents and stakeholders view their ideal future—what they want the City to be.

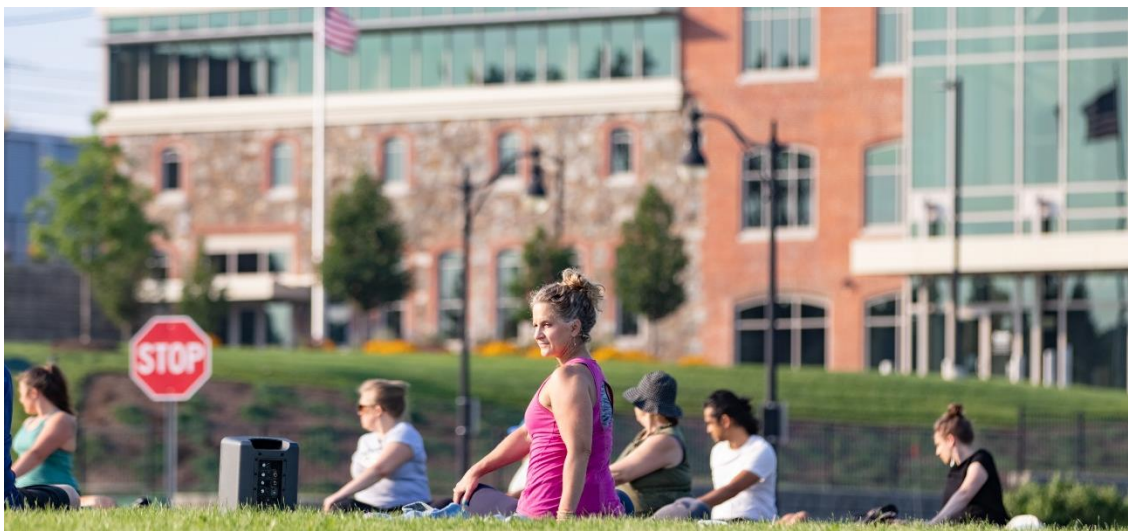
The City of Bangor is an involved community with a long history. The City has previously been seen primarily as a service hub, and the community believes that the City can grow into a vibrant and diverse community.

As a demographically older than average community with an aging population, the

community must begin to think of ways to add to population. Bangor has evolved into a vibrant regional center over the years and can continue to expand that role and add vitality with an increase in residents.

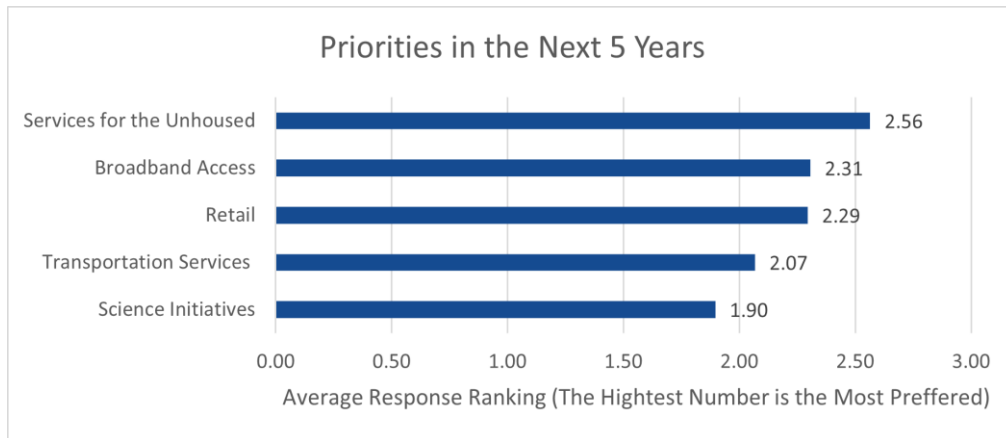
The vision for the City in the next five years is to move from being a pass-through city to a place where a diverse culture of young professional and current residents can call home.

The residents of Bangor expressed interest in becoming more than a service hub—they want to capitalize on the unique skills and talents already present in the area. Citizens believe that Bangor has the potential to become an educational hub, given the proximity of two major universities (Husson and University of Maine), the quality of the Bangor School District, and its location in an advantageous central position to become a region for world leading scientists accomplishing groundbreaking work. The City already stands as a center of academic excellence and groundbreaking research and has the potential to grow and be recognized even further.



COMMUNITY TOPICS OF CONCERN

During the interviews and public engagement many important topics were discussed, and concerns raised. Each of these topics are important to the community and have merit—however it is not feasible to address them all as part of the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The recommendations in the sections that follow are a prioritized subset of all the issues that were identified and are intended to be the proximate steps to be addressed in the next five years. Upon completion of these priorities, it will be possible to pivot and address other topics.

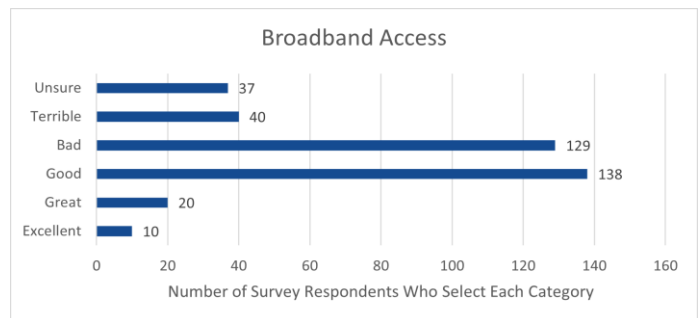


Following is a summary of the key issues that were raised, and while some are not included as key areas of focus for the Economic Development Strategic Plan, it is important for City leaders to be aware of these topics of interest to the community.

Unhoused The plight of the unhoused and the impact of their presence in the community was one of the most-cited points of concern. Bringing relief to the unhoused is important to the community and a topic that has universal interest. While many spoke of the economic impacts from the large, unhoused population in the City, the causes of homelessness are complex and multi-layered and best addressed regionally through social services.

Opioid Crisis The concerns for the impact on Bangor of the opioid crisis center around both the enormous personal and societal toll it exacts, as well as the economic and public safety concerns. As with helping the unhoused, the solutions reside within the national and regional purview of social services.

Broadband The availability, cost and reliability of the broadband infrastructure and service is a rising concern within the community as it effects connectivity and efficiency for businesses, students, residents, and remote workers.

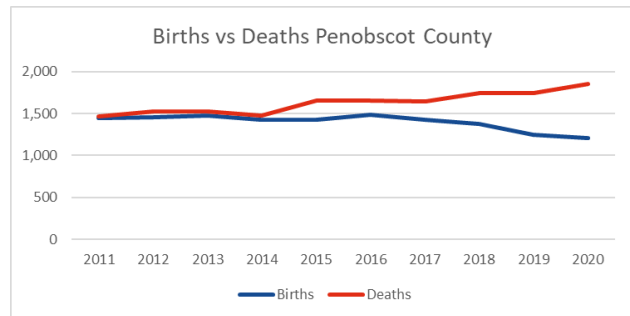


BGR International Airport The Community has acknowledged the airport has an opportunity to continue to increase in

its importance to the economy through the execution of its strategic plan. The airport is a significant asset as it provides easy access to both national and international travel. It is also a key asset in the advancement of international trade with possibilities of homeland security screening that draw in resources for the city.

Cold Storage Distribution The Airport Strategic Plan highlights the opportunity to create a Cold Storage and Distribution hub to enhance distribution and transportation opportunities. Bangor’s access to the coast, airport and highways provides a strategic advantage for distribution operations and there isn’t another cold storage facility in the region.

Population Growth Many stakeholders had concerns with the population timebomb in the State of Maine with knowledge that the workforce is aging. To address this concern community members have acknowledged the need to target young professionals to help enhance both a vibrant and diverse culture.

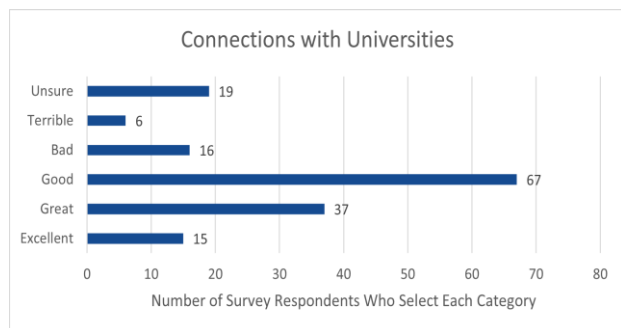


Workforce Retention Another rising concern amongst community members stems from the lack of quality low- to mid-level jobs. This lack of employment opportunity creates a challenge for retaining a large segment of workforce participants.

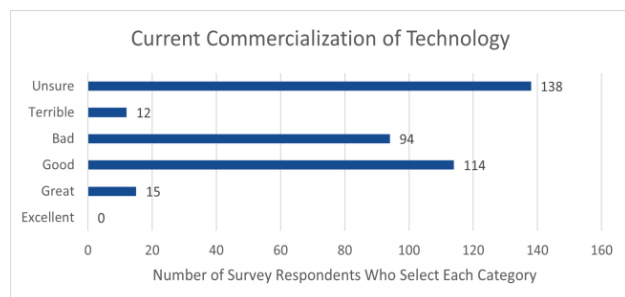
Increase Diversity and Inclusion High school and University of Maine students provided feedback on the need for diversity and inclusion as an important factor to bring a sense of culture and vibrancy to the City for a well-rounded community of thought, taste, and experience.

“Not being exposed to [diversity], I feel like I am at a disadvantage in my life.”—Bangor High School Student

University Collaboration Stakeholders recognize the importance of leveraging relationships between Eastern Maine Community College, Husson University, and the University of Maine for both resources and increasing the local population through the potential for students to make the area their home after graduation.



Monetizing Research Science leaders and stakeholders recognize opportunities to further monetize research coming from the universities and laboratories - to recognize Bangor as a Center of Science with world-leading research and technology.



Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Business owners and stakeholders identified opportunities that enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem presents to the community, enabling Bangor to continue creating scalable businesses that produce jobs and spur economic growth.

Diversify the Business Market Recognized by community members and stakeholders as an important key to attract students graduating and midlevel professionals outside of Bangor by adding diverse professions and career opportunities.

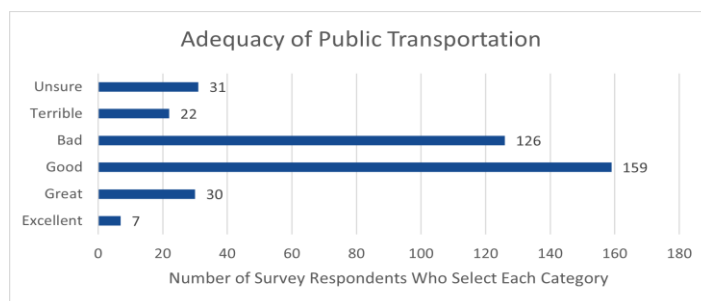
Downtown Adjacent Neighborhoods Community members shared concerns about, and spoke of the potential of, the downtown adjacent neighborhoods. The key priority was increasing the standard of living and quality of life for those spaces.

Rehabilitating the Mall Area Highly recommended by youth at the Bangor High School and students at the University of Maine, rehabilitating the mall area was suggested as a resident attraction and retention tool. Community members also spoke on the high utilization the mall area receives from those crossing the Canadian border. There are mixed opinions on the possibility of the rehabilitation of the mall area due to private ownership; however, City employees believe there may be hope in restoring or redeveloping this area for mixed use.

“The mall area is good, but the mall is dying. [It would] be nice to turn the mall into a park or just more walkable, it’s a drag on the perception of the community, [and] having to go all the way to Portland just to find a decent store is horrible”—High School Student

Ensuring Animal Habitat Due to Bangor’s natural beauty and being proximate to the ocean, mountains, forest, and the river, some residents expressed concern that development not jeopardize animal habitat unnecessarily and that preserving as much as possible be a community priority.

Expanding Transportation The community expressed concern with the transportation system due to lack of signage and operating hours that don’t match the working community. There is a City transportation plan to address these concerns.



Wayfinding / Improved Entry Points

Stakeholders agreed that wayfinding and entry points could be improved to highlight the City’s culture and history. Addressing these concerns will be within the scope of the Comprehensive Plan.

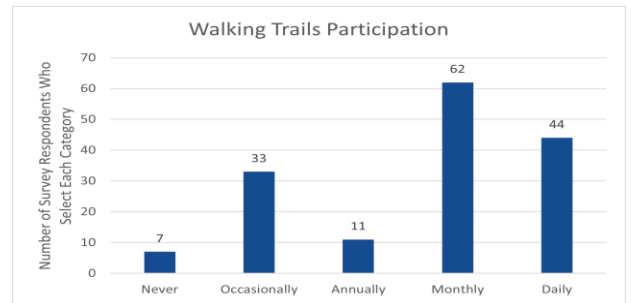
Connecting the Entertainment Venues and Downtown Stakeholders and residents have identified the importance of the entertainment venues—the Cross Center, Casino, and Waterfront Amphitheater having inviting walkable connections to the downtown area.

Embracing the City as a Regional Hub Community members and stakeholders have concerns that Bangor takes on the weight of the region—there are opportunities to connect and collaborate for regional efforts that will free resources, time, and staff.

Workforce Shortages A rising concern within the business community is the lack of skilled and willing workers. This helps demonstrate the disconnect between the types of jobs available and the types of jobs people are looking for.

Improve Trails Survey respondents mentioned that an increase in bike and walker-friendly venues will increase the quality of life.

City Staff Support Community members all speak highly of the efforts gone forth with the City Staff and expressed the belief that when growth occurs the current staff level may reach capacity given the current workload.



Utilization of Facilities Some stakeholders mentioned the Cross Center and the Harness Racetrack are underutilized and have incremental potential and opportunity.

Safety Residents at the public forums, students, and stakeholders spoke on the concern of perceived safety for the community as it relates to neighborhoods and environments. This perception affects quality of life.

Computer Tech Workforce Several residents at the public forum spoke on the benefit of having computer tech jobs to help attract and retain professionals with these skills.

Worker Cooperatives A few residents at the public forum spoke on the benefits of having a worker cooperative style to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem and scale businesses in a way that benefits all workers equally.

ORGANIZATIONAL ECOSYSTEM

Reviews of past studies, interviews, public forums, and survey feedback show that the City of Bangor and the organizations that serve its people have made substantial and proactive efforts for the future of the community. These efforts affect many of the topics listed in the “Community Issues” section.

A significant number of programs, plans, and organizations exist to address the housing, quality of life, business, commerce, and entrepreneurship fields. (Social services are not included in the fields of discussion due to those topics being outside of the scope of economic development.) In other words, there are few aspects of the economic ecosystem of Bangor that have not been studied and for which there are not already motivated and effective organizations providing services. It is therefore imperative to understand and acknowledge these different organizations and studies to ensure that duplicative or conflicting recommendations are not being provided.

One of the most important roles the City of Bangor can play in impacting the City’s economic future is that of strategic coordination - making the City the point of connection for all entities and to ensure there isn’t duplication of efforts and that information flows freely among the many organizations.

The following charts detail the Strategic Plans, read Appendix E for the “Review of Past Studies” and the work being done by each organization, read Appendix F for the “Organizational Summaries” that are already being done for each field.

Quality of Life

Plans:

- Bangor Waterfront Park and Performance Pavilion
- Broadband Strategic Plan and Roadmap
- Bangor Parks & Recreation Master Plan
- YMCA Expansion Plan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Organizations:

- Bangor Housing Authority
- Penquis
- YMCA
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation

Housing

Plans:

- Recommendation to Improve the Status of Housing in Bangor
- West Side Village Neighborhood Conceptual Land Use Plan

Organizations:

- Bangor Housing Authority
- Penquis
- Community Housing of Maine

Business, Commerce, Entrepreneurship

Plans:

- Bangor International Airport Master Plan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Organizations:

- BanAir Corporation
- International Trade Center
- Bangor Innovation Center
- **University of Maine**
- **Husson University**
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation
- Downtown Bangor Business Partnership
- Maine Discovery Museum
- Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce
- Upstart Maine

University of Maine

- Advanced Manufacturing Center
- Aquaculture Research Institute
- Advanced Structures and Composites Center
- Center for Research on Sustainable Forest
- Climate Change Institute
- Forest Bioproducts Research Institute
- Frontier Institute for Research in Sensor Technologies
- Innovative Media, Research and Commercialization Center
- Institute of Medicine
- Maine Center for Genetics in the Environment
- Maine Sea Grant
- Sen. George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions

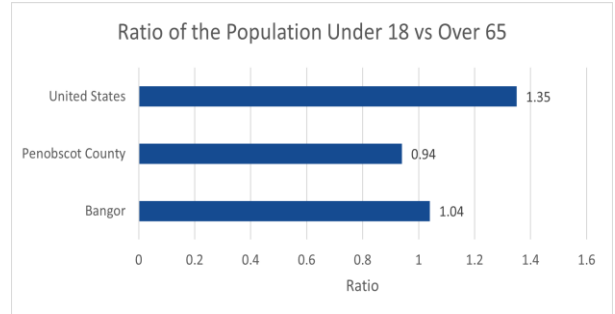
Husson University

- College of Business
- iEx Center



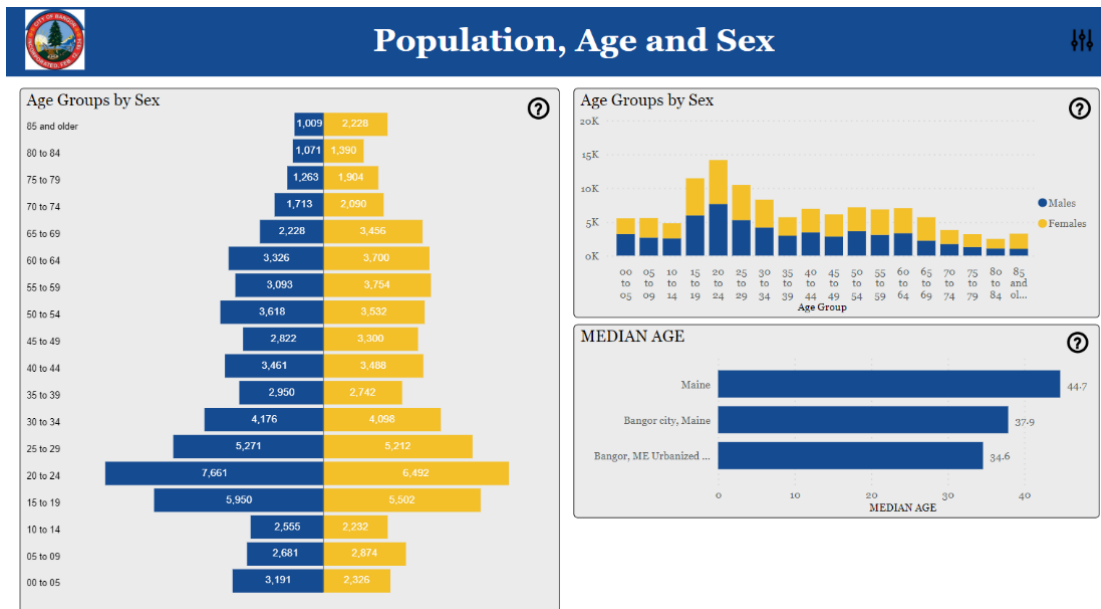
RECOMMENDATIONS

From 2010 to 2020, Maine grew by 2.6% - roughly one third of the national rate of 7.4%¹. Penobscot County declined by 1.2% during that same period² while the City of Bangor declined by 3.9%.³



The ratio of the population that is under 18 versus those over 65 is 1.35 for the United States, .94 for Penobscot County and 1.05 for Bangor.⁴ As the City and County's population ages, there may not be enough natural growth (births vs deaths) to sustain the workforce at current levels.

Another challenge is the decline in workforce participation. From 2010 to 2020, the total Civilian Labor Force in Penobscot County declined by 5.9%.⁵



Many business owners and community leaders cited the challenges of finding available and qualified workers as one of the Bangor Area's greatest challenges and impediments for future success. In particular executives in the health care industry have communicated to city officials the impact of workforce shortages.

Population declines, workers aging out of the workforce, and a diminishing workforce participation rate will all exacerbate the workforce challenges. A declining workforce will

¹ US Census - <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/maine-population-change-between-census-decade.html>

² US Census - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/penobscotcountymaine>

³ US Census - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bangorcitemaine/PST045219>

⁴ US Census - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,penobscotcountymaine,bangorcitemaine/PST045221>

⁵ Maine Department of Labor - <https://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/laus.html>

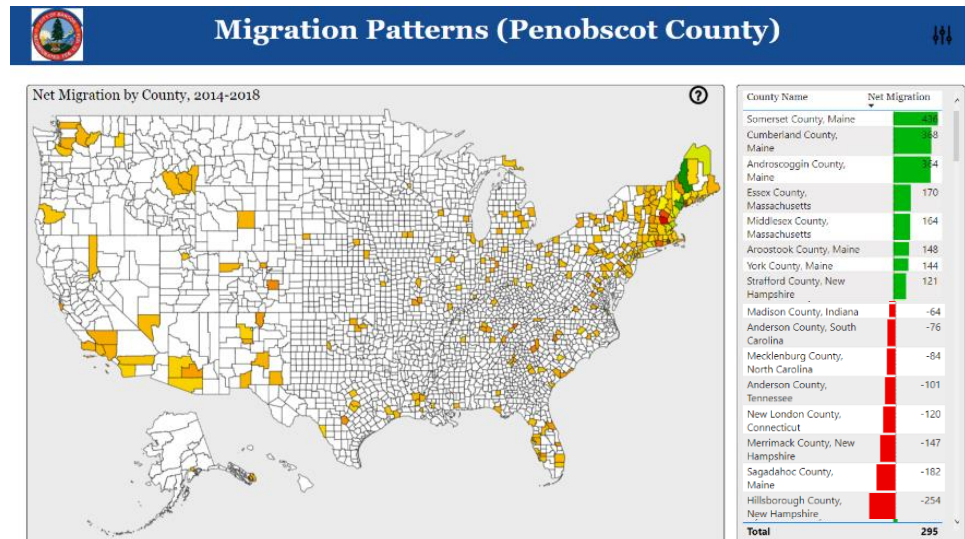
lead to inflation as businesses have to compete for labor resources. Fewer workers also mean fewer households needing homes, groceries, insurance, health care, etc. It is difficult for productivity gains to make up for population declines and economic stagnation often results. Japan provides a cautionary tale. Japan’s population has been in decline since 2010 and from 2014 to 2019 the economy grew at an anemic 0.8% annually.

Addressing the long-term trends of depopulation is critical for Bangor’s future.

The macroeconomic and demographic trends in the United States offer some hope. The Pew Foundation recently cited a Stateline analysis of US Census data that estimates that rural areas lost 226,000 people (0.5%) from 2010 to 2020 versus growth of 21M (8%) for urban and suburban areas⁶. The pattern of the depopulation of rural America during a time of overall population growth (2010 to 2020) may be accelerated as the Country enters a period of stagnant growth or population decline. The US Census Bureau Vintage 2021 Population Estimates released on Dec. 21, 2021 reflect population growth of only 0.1% - the lowest level (by far) ever recorded in our Country’s history⁷.

The ex-migration from rural communities to larger urban areas presents an opportunity for the Bangor area. From 2014 to 2018, there was a net migration (total arriving minus total leaving) of 1492 people into Penobscot County from Somerset, Androscoggin, Aroostook, York, Strafford (NH), Grafton (NH), Oxford, Kennebec, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Lincoln counties. The total net migration

during that period was only 295 so these counties (which represent 10 out of the top 14 net migration counties) account for a disproportionate share of the total movement.



Similarly, 8 of 12 Counties with the largest net out migration(i.e. people coming from one county into another) were larger than Penobscot and accounted for a total net loss of 844 people. The trend is clear—the US population is moving from smaller to larger communities.

⁶ Shrinking Rural America Faces State Power Struggle, August 10, 2021 - <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2021/08/10/shrinking-rural-america-faces-state-power-struggle>

⁷ US Census Bureau Vintage 2021 Population Estimates, Dec. 21, 2021 - https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/12/us-population-grew-in-2021-slowest-rate-since-founding-of-the-nation.html?utm_campaign=20211221msprts1ccpuprs&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

“Being from a small town in Maine I always wanted to come [to Bangor] because to me, it’s an upgrade and a good balance of urban development and nature.”—University of Maine Student

The opportunity for Bangor is to focus on becoming an attractive destination for those leaving smaller communities. Bangor is perfectly situated to enhance its position as a desirable location for households looking to move to larger communities because of its quality of life. Features include:

- Family-friendly culture
- Sense of community
- Proximity to and appreciation of the natural environment
- Excellent medical facilities
- Outstanding public education
- High-quality higher education
- Retail amenities
- Unique Historical Value

According to the survey and interviews, some of the key challenges to attracting new residents that the city faces include:

- Higher property taxes relative to surrounding communities
- Scarcity of housing / affordability
- Perception of a large number of unhoused population
- Opioid epidemic and its perceived impact on public safety
- Availability of public transportation
- Availability and quality of broadband
- Lack of branding
- Availability of competitive salaries

Addressing the decline in population is the most critical factor for medium and long-term economic development for the City. Consequently, all the recommendations in this report will focus on the actions that have the highest likelihood and the greatest impact in achieving intentional, sustainable population growth.

To turn the tide of population loss, Bangor will need to make incremental improvements in both its desirability as a destination for relocating households and the feasibility of having a high quality of life in the area. The recommendations that follow (see the underlined statements) are therefore grouped into these two categories: (1) Desirability—recommendations that will enhance the desirability of Bangor as a relocation destination, and (2) Feasibility—recommendations that will make it feasible for new residents to enjoy a prosperous life in the City.

Addressing the decline in population is the most critical factor for medium and long-term economic development for Bangor.

Desirability

Positioning / Branding



Bangor is a remarkable place to live, work, and raise a family / grow up. In interviews, residents uniformly celebrated the City's throw-back sense of community, excellent schools, proximity to nature, pace of life and improving downtown amenities as key things they loved about the City.

Many residents lamented that Bangor is viewed as either a place to stop on the way to other local attractions or as the region's service center. The designation as the 'service center' was repeated so often by key officials and stakeholders that it almost seemed to be the unofficial positioning of the City that conveys a commonly-shared image of Bangor as the region's center of social and medical services. While this positioning is accurate, it is not emotive (at least in a positive way).

The 'service center' designation is not official and not projected outside of the City, but because there is no other coordinated, intentional messaging it has become the default internal positioning. The way a community talks about itself and the image it projects matter. In the case of Bangor, the default branding paints a picture of a community that falls short of the reality.

"People don't even realize what is within a ten-minute drive from them, there is so much more to offer but we're always offering what Bangor has nearby instead of what is within"

– Marketing Professional and Resident

Chris Fair noted, "A strong place brand helps a place compete in the global marketplace. A business or a potential resident or a visitor can go anywhere they want today, so articulating

differentiating and unique characteristics is important to attracting investment, people and capital to your place.”⁸

Through storytelling, positioning and marketing, a community can take ownership of its narrative and project a curated and authentic image that will resonate with like-minded individuals. Projecting this emotive and compelling image will be essential to being on the radar of individuals and businesses interested in relocating.

Many community and business leaders suggested positioning Bangor as a hub of technology, commercialization of university and other research, and entrepreneurship. This narrative is not only compelling but authentic as the City has a great track record of spinning off successful businesses from local research as well as an active, progressive, and successful entrepreneurship ecosystem. This is definitely a story that needs to be told.

A community can either decide to intentionally and strategically take ownership of it's narrative OR be owned by the public-generated narrative.

Engage PR Firm

Short-Term Recommendation 1: Engage a firm that specializes in branding of communities to create a brand identity for Bangor. The firm can work with the Community and Economic Development team as well as elected officials and key stakeholders to ‘uncover’ Bangor’s brand and determine effective and realistic ways to share the message. A long-term communication strategy with recommendations for social media engagement and marketing outreach.

Create Internal Communication Capacity

Mid-Term Recommendation 1: Create capacity to maintain presence on social media once the communication strategy is developed. A critical part of controlling the narrative is being intentional and consistent about telling the City’s story and engaging the public with positive, affirmative messages. The portfolio of strategic communications could be added to the Community and Economic Development department but may require additional resources.

Diversity

The best prospect for future growth in Bangor rests largely with its ability to either retain the young people who come to the area for school or have its high school students return after going away for school or their early careers. Accordingly, the most important voices to listen to in determining the City’s branding would be those younger people.

Focus groups were conducted with students from Bangor High School and the University of Maine (several efforts were made to coordinate a focus group with Husson University students but ultimately the efforts were not successful). There was near unanimity of opinion among the students that vibrant diversity is an important consideration in determining where they ultimately live. They defined diversity as a community with people of different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic

⁸ The Power of Place – The Importance of Branding, <https://resonanceco.com/insights/the-power-of-place-the-importance-of-place-branding/#:~:text=Fair%20says%20that%20a%20well,by%20business%2C%20community%20and%20visitors.&text=A%20place%20brand%20reflects%20what,can%20be%20in%20the%20future.%E2%80%9D>

and gender preference backgrounds. The students spoke of the richness of experience that is inherent living in a community that is inclusive and diverse.

In order to create the kind of community that will appeal to these young people as they move through their life stages, significant progress is needed for Bangor to become more diverse and inclusive. Universally, those interviewed in Bangor were warm, respectful, and inclusive but some highlighted that the community can still make progress on its inclusivity.

Short-Term Recommendation 2: Ensure that the City’s messaging emphasize its focus on becoming a diverse and inclusive community. The images and language the City uses to talk about itself and tell its story will help establish its position as a community that values and is increasing its diversity. To ensure that the message of inclusion is authentic, the important work of the Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights must be emphasized and prioritized.

“We are not perfect but as a city we are moving forward in diversity and inclusion, our current city council demonstrates progression, and our schools are implementing programs”—Community Stakeholder

Youth Council

Staying connected to the City’s youth is a way to stay informed of their desires and priorities and to keep them connected and invested in the community.

Short-Term Recommendation 3: Appoint a Youth Council from among local high school students. The Youth Council should be given significant roles including participating in social media communications and community service projects as well as playing an advisory role. The Youth Council could reside under the auspices of the City Council or the Community and Economic Development department.

Immigration / Displaced Communities

As the City considers ways to increase population while also improving the community’s diversity, consider accepting populations of displaced refugees. There are many studies that have corroborated the economic benefits to communities that welcome refugees. The Brookings Institute noted, “Most migration economists agree that the presence of more foreigners in the labor force doesn’t hurt natives, mainly because natives and foreigners typically have a different set of skills and compete for different types of jobs—a fact recently corroborated using data on refugees resettled in the U.S.”⁹. They also note that refugee immigrants engage in entrepreneurship at rates nearly double the native population. Refugees can stimulate economic vitality through their entrepreneurship.

Short-Term Recommendation 4: Hold City Council open discussions about volunteering to host refugees. Bangor is a community marked by compassion and civic-mindedness and would seem to be ideal for welcoming refugees. Specific information about receiving refugees can be provided by the US Citizenship and Immigration Service.

⁹ Brookings Institute, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2018/06/19/refugees-are-a-win-win-win-formula-for-economic-development/>

Next Steps: Short-Term

1. Engage PR Firm
 - a. Branding
 - b. Positioning
 - c. Communication / marketing strategy
 - i. Social Media
 - ii. Local communication channels
2. Prioritize the Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights
3. Establish Youth Council
4. Hold Council discussions about accepting refugees

Next Steps: Mid-Term

1. Create communication capacity

Downtown Development

The renaissance of Downtown Bangor over the past 15 years has been dramatic and impressive. It is unique for a community the size of Bangor to have achieved such a monumental transformation in so short a time and with so much private investment. The revitalization of the downtown and transitioning the economy from the legacy wood mills and military installations is a testament to the community's civic pride and ability to come together to accomplish great things.



The significant private investment flowing into the downtown area, the development and rehabilitation projects and the rising retail and residential lease rate are the market's validation of the value of the renaissance. Now that the economic flywheel has been put into motion by the visionary and determined pioneers of the revitalized downtown (the Penobscot Theater, Maine Discovery Museum, Paddy Murphy's, Waterfront Concerts, Cross Insurance Center, etc.) there is every indication that there will continue to be investment and expansion because the area has reached the critical mass where it now generates market returns on investments.

Revitalizing the downtown-adjacent neighborhoods is the next step in uplifting the downtown area. In the interviews, many mentioned that they would like to feel safer downtown and others

highlighted the deteriorating neighborhoods that are adjacent to downtown as a deterrent for visitation.

“Rehabilitating the downtown adjacent neighborhoods would ignite economic development in the region.”—Ben Sprague

Downtown-Adjacent Neighborhoods

There is a widely held perception in the community that the neighborhoods immediately adjoining the downtown area are economically challenged and have higher rates of crime and drug activity. City staff corroborated that those communities do have concentrations of criminal and drug-related activity. Many of the homes in those neighborhoods are in states of disrepair and neglect that erode the otherwise fantastic Bangor aesthetic and diminish the downtown experience.

In the strictest sense neighborhood redevelopment is only tangentially related to economic development. The frequency with which stakeholders and interview respondents mentioned their concerns about the downtown-adjacent neighborhoods, however, is indicative of the community’s conviction that improving these neighborhoods is key to further improvements to downtown.

The “Recommendations to Improve the Status of Housing in Bangor” and “West Side Village Neighborhood Conceptual Land Use Plan, 2013” studies both discussed blighted and declining neighborhoods and provided recommendations to address them. As noted in the Organizational Ecosystem section, it is important to leverage the work that has already been done and not create confusion by adding new or contradictory recommendations when existing ones are adequate.

Both studies have recommendations to utilize City ordinances and code enforcement to improve and maintain the quality of the housing stock in Bangor and to track and address properties that disrupt residential neighborhoods. Some of those key recommendations are:

- Launch universal rental inspections throughout the city
- Require multi-units to undergo an inspection prior to being sold, inspection of GA units and in targeted areas of the City in need
- Increase city legal action to enforce code violations, starting with worst case examples
- Launch data system for rental registry
- Provide tiered grading system for rental units based on graduated inspections and improvements made
- Launch landlord outreach and education program
- Set expectations and communicate the City’s standards and ordinances
- Systematically review exterior conditions, as viewed from public streets and other public properties, with follow-up to address conditions that violate any building, fire, or zoning code
- Condition occupancy of any unit by a tenant receiving GA on a full-unit inspection, with follow-up to address conditions that violate any building, fire, or zoning code

- Enforce the Disruptive Property Ordinance, including a comprehensive code and fire-safety inspection of properties classified as disruptive if they have not otherwise been inspected in the past year

Short-Term Recommendation 1: Prioritize the implementation of these key recommendations from the Housing and West Side Village studies.

Short-Term Recommendation 2: Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan that is currently being developed 1) provides guidance for zoning and ordinance changes that will give the City even more tools to improve these neighborhoods, 2) addresses ways the City can provide incentives for or encourage development of local, pocket, or corner retail that will enhance the livability and community feel of those neighborhoods, and 3) detail specific actions the City can take to improve the target neighborhoods through specific investments in roads, streetscapes, infrastructure, walkability, etc.

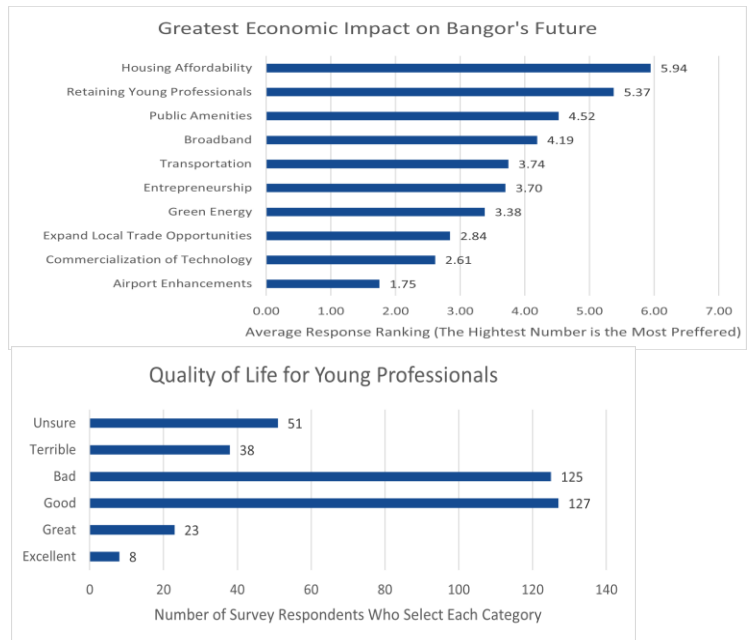
Many residents expressed concerns that upgrades and enhancements to the downtown-adjacent neighborhoods would create an increase in the value of the housing stock that would result in rent increase that could price economically challenged households out of their legacy homes. While at the macro level, increases in property values; improved safety, walkability, and aesthetics; and higher returns to property owners who invest in their assets are positive for the City, the dislocation of individuals who could potentially be displaced are real and painful.

Mid-Term Recommendation 1: Work with the Housing Authority to devise interventions and strategies to provide protections for the economically disadvantaged.

Entertainment District

Many interviewees - including those participating in the focus groups, mentioned improving entertainment options as a critical factor in improving the livability of the City. Improving Public Amenities was cited by those who completed the survey as having the third most important impact on Bangor’s economic future.

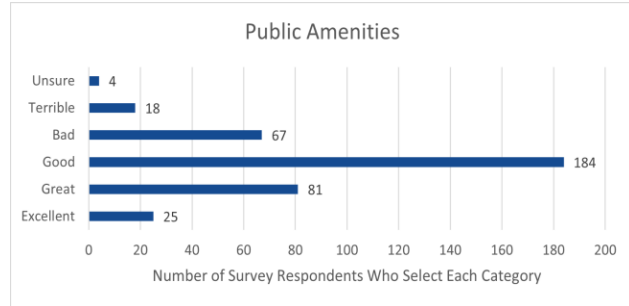
Similarly, more respondents indicated that Bangor’s quality of life for young professionals was “Bad” or “Terrible” than “Good”, “Great”, and “Excellent” combined. From the focus groups, it was clear that the young people felt like Bangor is missing key entertainment assets.



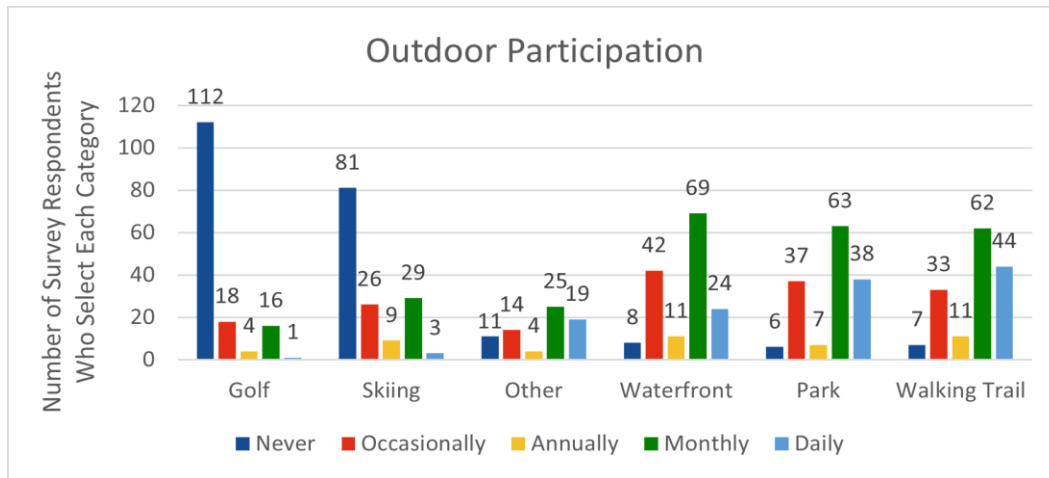
“Bangor is not a fun place for young professionals...dating life is horrible, socialization is worse...there’s a lack of events for young professionals, it’s all family and kid centered”—Community Stakeholder

Interestingly, there is broad consensus that the public amenities (parks, retail, entertainment, etc.) are good.

So, while there is the acknowledgement that those amenities that are in place are good, there is also the recognition that for the City to progress and grow in appeal there needs to be more.



The amenities that are most utilized appear to be those geared toward the active lifestyle—using walking trails, visiting the parks, and enjoying the waterfront.



Short-Term Recommendation 3: Designate the area between the amphitheater and the Sea Dog Restaurant along Front Street as the “Entertainment District.” The designation of this area as the Entertainment District would have the two-fold benefit of creating a locus for entertainment while also creating more contiguity between the Cross Center, Casino, and Amphitheater.

The Cross Center, Hollywood Casino Hotel and Raceway, and Waterfront Concerts Amphitheater are next-level attractions that bring tens of thousands of people to Bangor every year. It would be hard to overstate the economic impact of these entertainment venues to Bangor’s economy. They have been crucial in building the critical mass of consumers to enable the downtown to flourish.

Though the impact of these venues has been significant, they have not reached their full potential as catalysts for the downtown’s growth because of their physical separation from downtown. From the Cross Center’s location on Main Street it is 0.7 miles (1,219 yards) to the beginning of downtown (Main and Union Street). Under the best circumstances, this would be a very long walk for event goers, but the aesthetic and experiential quality of the walk creates even more of a deterrent. Along that stretch of Main Street from the Cross Insurance Center to Union Street are banks, public safety buildings, parking lots, and the Homeless Shelter—but very little walkable retail or restaurants (with storefronts adjacent to the sidewalk rather than separated by parking lots).

The walk along Front Street, by contrast, is much better with the appealing walkways along the waterfront and interspersed retail venues like the Sea Dog Brewery and Union Plaza. There are still many awkward sections with parking lots and poorly lit areas, but overall it is a more inviting walking corridor.

Mid-Term Recommendation 2: Create additional entertainment venues and activities within the Entertainment District to create an inviting walkable connection to the downtown area, enhance the walking corridors, and create appealing wayfinding to further enhance the utilization of the area. Bridging some of the 1200-yard gap with areas of activity and enhancing the walkability will make a dramatic difference in the number of event goers who engage in other parts of Bangor when attending events.



Fountain Park in Rock Hill, South Carolina replaced a parking lot and created a walkable connection between the old town and new development.

Venues that could be added to the Entertainment District include:

- Paddleboard / kayaking launch ramp
- Paddleboard / kayak / canoe rental
- E-bike rentals
- Splash Pad
- Fishing Pier
- Town Plaza with displays or art highlighting the City's history and heritage
- Venue for pop-up retail

The next steps would be:

- Determine exact location of Entertainment District
- Select activities / venues to be included

- Create design
- Secure funding
 - Grants
 - Donations
 - Naming Rights
 - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Finally, the YMCA has expressed an interest in expanding its services beyond what its current location permits. The YMCA’s vision for its future and the activities it is planning to provide as part of its expansion will bring exactly the kinds of recreation and wellness amenities that many residents feel are missing. An expanded, upgraded YMCA would be a tremendous asset to the community and provide assets that will be critical to improving its livability.

Mid-Term Recommendation 3: Support the YMCA’s expansion. If it were possible to find a location for the YMCA near the Entertainment District and/or Downtown, it would create vital synergies that would add significant vitality to the Downtown.

Next Steps: Short-Term

1. Prioritize Implementation of Key Parts of Housing and West Side Village studies
2. Ensure Comprehensive Plan Provides Specific Guidance for Downtown-Adjacent Neighborhoods:
 - a. Specific ordinances and incentives to clean up blighted neighborhoods
 - b. Incentives or ways to encourage pocket or corner retail
 - c. City Investment Priorities
3. Designate Entertainment District
 - a. Determine location
 - b. Select Activities / Venues
 - c. Design
 - d. Secure Funding

Next Steps: Mid-Term

1. Work with the Housing Authority to create interventions for economically disadvantaged residents of Downtown-adjacent Neighborhoods
2. Create additional entertainment venues within the Entertainment District and enhance the walking corridors and improve wayfinding
3. Support the YMCA’s expansion and encourage them to expand near the Entertainment District and/or Downtown

Mall Redevelopment

As noted previously, the most important voices to consider in the next phase of economic development are those of the Bangor High School and university students. The current status of the mall was mentioned repeatedly in the focus groups with the students as a detriment to the current quality of life and making it relevant again was a primary wish.

The mall in its current state is an ever-present symbol of decline. It is the exact wrong metaphor for a City that is full of hope, progress, and vitality. The psychological impact of the mall is its greatest detriment.

The Bangor Mall is far from unique in its fate. Across the country, malls have struggled to stay relevant in a retail environment that has been upended by online shopping and in which shoppers are gravitating toward experiential retail. In June, Moody Analytics issued an analysis of the current mall environment and estimated that on top of the hundreds of malls that have already closed across the country, an additional 25% will be renovated, repurposed, or razed.¹⁰

The general mall area has significant economic vitality, but the mall itself is an anachronism. Only malls that have excellent locations near high populations and undertake significant and consistent reinvestment will survive.

The mall is privately owned by the Namdar Realty Group and any potential changes are outside of the control of the City. The Namdar Realty Group employs an investing strategy of “invest[ing] as little as possible on many of their properties ... the aim is to hold the assets, not redevelop them.”¹¹ Still, the City can play a role by creating an alternative vision for the mall and encouraging the owners to invest in its redevelopment.

Short-Term Recommendation 1: Develop a high-level vision for redeveloping the mall into a mixed-use, walkable experiential retail and entertainment center. The project should incorporate green spaces, and nature corridors to synchronize the developments with Bangor’s natural environment. The housing would be market-rate lofts and 1- to 2-bedroom units—the presence of which would create excellent housing alternatives for professions (especially medical professionals) and would alleviate the pressure on affordable housing.

Short-Term Recommendation 2: Identify how the City can participate in the project by providing public financing incentives. Across the country, mixed-use projects have replaced stagnant legacy malls and created vibrant, relevant retail nodes while also addressing housing shortages—however many of these projects required public participation to make the redevelopment feasible. The City should look into what options they have for offering incentives—especially the possibility of providing tax increment financing.

“15 years ago, the mall was my reason to stay, Bangor Mall was full of life, it attracted Canadians and people still care about the mall area”
—Community Stakeholder

Next Steps: Short-Term

1. Create a high-level mall redevelopment proposal and present to current mall owners
2. Prepare an outline for public financing participation
 - a. Explore the option for using tax increment financing

¹⁰ Moody Analytics, <https://www.globest.com/2021/06/28/some-malls-are-fated-to-die-heres-what-will-happen-to-the-rest/?slreturn=20211123134235>

¹¹ Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-malls-investment/who-is-making-money-from-struggling-u-s-malls-idUSKBN1JM17V>

Feasibility

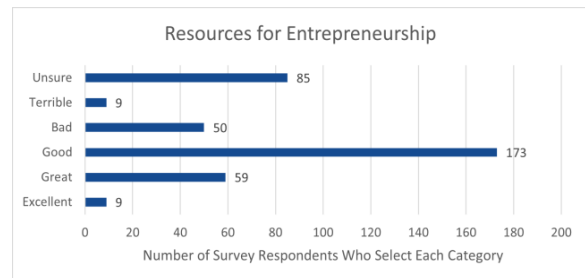
In the current environment, stimulating interest in Bangor as a relocation destination would be analogous to advertising tickets to a show that is already sold out. The tight housing market and relatively scarce professional employment opportunities would make it challenging for new residents to enjoy a high quality of life in Bangor. The Feasibility section addresses housing and jobs.

Jobs

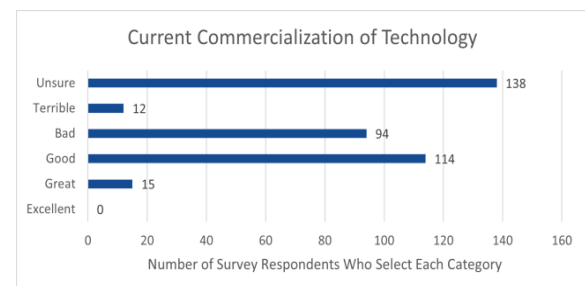
Entrepreneurship, Research, and Technology Commercialization

Entrepreneurship is a key part of Bangor’s history and economic legacy. Many communities speak of commercializing research and innovations from their institutions of higher education but few can point to actual businesses that have grown out of research and that are successful and growing. Bangor has many such examples. Similarly, many communities launch incubators and tout their focus on entrepreneurship, but most cannot point to actual successful businesses that have graduated and scaled. Bangor has many businesses that have launched either in the incubator or assisted by other programs that have not only survived but have grown and scaled and become thriving businesses.

Bangor’s residents appreciate the City’s proficiency in supporting entrepreneurs and creating a supportive ecosystem. 80% of survey respondents with an opinion rated the City’s “Resources for Entrepreneurship” favorably.



Similarly, 55% of respondents had a favorable view of the community’s “Commercialization of Technology”. This result is quite remarkable since the term “Commercialization of Technology” is fairly arcane and not likely to be well-understood by many.



Many key stakeholders mentioned supporting and improving the entrepreneurial ecosystem among the key priorities for continued economic development in the City. While commonly mentioned among the key considerations, entrepreneurship was seldom identified as the top priority. This lower ranking of entrepreneurship was echoed in the surveys where it was assessed as being the sixth most impactful facet of the economy—only slightly ahead of Green Energy.

Placing greater emphasis on and dedicating more resources to leverage the region’s research and technology to catalyze new business ventures had a few ardent supporters but didn’t enjoy broad support in either the interviews nor the survey responses.

Within the region there are already significant efforts, plans, and organizational resources dedicated to both entrepreneurship and commercialization of technology and research. As listed in the Organizational Ecosystem section, within the greater Bangor area, there are 10 organizations that have some level of involvement with either entrepreneurship, commercialization of technology and research or both. Within the University of Maine alone,

there are twelve departments that are involved with practical applications or commercialization of the University's research, and Husson has another two.

Business, Commerce, Entrepreneurship

Plans:

- Bangor International Airport Master Plan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Organizations:

- BanAir Corporation
- International Trade Center
- Bangor Innovation Center
- University of Maine
- Husson University
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation
- Downtown Bangor Business Partnership
- Maine Discovery Museum
- Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce
- Upstart Maine

In summary, the Bangor area already does an extraordinary job at leveraging local talent, resources, and research to generate new businesses and scale them. There are 10 organizations that are currently providing support and resources in these areas. Any improvements would be at the margins and any new programs or efforts would risk either duplicating existing efforts or sowing confusion.

The planned commercial kitchen is an excellent example of an initiative that is strategically important, well-conceived, planned, and in process of being funded. The commercial kitchen project should continue with full support of the community. As with other efforts that are already underway, it would be

redundant to dedicate analysis or make recommendations in this Strategic Plan to legacy projects.

Short-Term Recommendation 1: Assign a liaison from the Community and Economic Development department to each organization and serve as the clearinghouse for coordinating programs, services, and resources among the different entities. The critical role for the City to play is to make sure that there is cross pollination of ideas and that City resources be prioritized to helping those organizations and programs that will have the greatest impact in the most strategically important areas. The prioritization is perhaps the most important contribution. There are a surprising large number of contemporary initiatives in the Bangor community and a finite amount of institutional bandwidth and resources. In some cases, it may be necessary to delay certain initiatives so that a critical mass of attention and resources can be applied to projects sequentially.

Short-Term Recommendation 2: Consider creating a "Community Coffee" event hosted by the Community and Economic Development department, where every few weeks representatives from each of the organizations that are involved in the economic ecosystem gather to share what they are working on and what community support they would like. (The frequency can range from weekly to monthly depending on the amount of information exchanged.) These informal exchanges have been very successful in other communities and have increased the information flow and helped create synergies and build momentum for key community initiatives.

Short-Term Recommendation 3: Prepare a process map that shows the steps for entrepreneurs to start a business and which organization can provide which resources. Often, processes that seem intuitive and simple to those within an organization are obscure and confusing to the uninitiated. The exercise of mapping processes often uncovers duplicative efforts, overlapping responsibilities, confusing requirements and legacy processes that are no longer relevant. Once the processes are defined and refined, an Entrepreneur's Guide can be prepared that will guide a new business owner through the process of starting a business.

Cold Storage

For several years, the Bangor Airport has been exploring the potential of creating a cold storage and distribution facility within the airport footprint. The concept is included in the 2021 Airport Master Plan as a high-level recommendation for further exploration.

The Bangor area has several strategic advantages as a location for a cold storage facility. Of primary importance is its location as a transportation hub. Bangor is the intersection of the main north-south corridor in eastern Maine—I95 and smaller regional collector highways like Highway 9, 1A, 222, 15 and 2. It also boasts the second-largest international airport in the region in BGR which is also the northeastern-most TSA custom clearance airport with the infrastructure / runway length to accommodate high volumes of large freight aircraft. Bangor is also the nexus of the Montreal, Maine, and Atlantic Railroad, Pan Am Railways, and the State of Maine's Downeast Scenic Railroad Company's lines.

The proximity of rail spurs to the airport and the airport's location within a mile of I95 create an optimal location for a multi-modal transportation hub. The City's proximity to the coast is also an advantage as all the seafood that is caught must pass through Bangor on its way to its destination at a distant cold storage facility.

Initial indications are that there is a significant opportunity for a cold storage facility in Bangor to capture the processing and storage of a wide range of agricultural and seafood products from northern and eastern Maine as well as southeastern Canada. These products are now passing through Bangor on their way to facilities much further south. The opportunity would be to not only capture the collection, processing, and distribution of these products but also to create opportunities to create synergistic value-added manufacturing businesses. The City's planned Commercial Kitchen could be a key asset for new startups testing food manufacturing concepts.

Though many of the jobs in transportation / distribution tend to be entry level and blue collar, there would be sufficient other entrepreneurial and white-collar opportunities to justify the City's further pursuit of this opportunity. In contrast to other areas where the City could apply its efforts (assisting the health care industry, research-based entrepreneurs, etc.) 100% of the cold storage jobs would be incremental, new jobs that otherwise wouldn't have been created, and would not happen without the City's intervention.

Short-Term Recommendation 4: Commission a feasibility study for a cold storage / distribution facility located at the airport. This study would research the market for cold storage in the northeast, current competitive landscape, the projected volumes of products that could be processed through the facility, costs, potential operators, and the amount of public investment required. The feasibility study should also determine the extent to which the facility could support or catalyze women and minority-owned businesses.

Next Steps: Short-Term

1. Assign City Staff as Liaisons to Community Organizations
2. Consider "Community Coffee"
3. Process Map Entrepreneurship
 - a. Create Entrepreneur Guide
4. Feasibility Study for Cold Storage Concept
 - a. Consider impact on women and minority-owned businesses

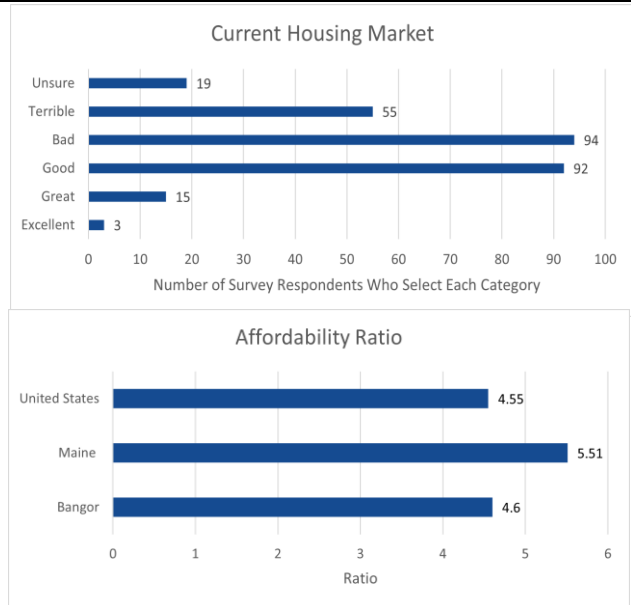
Housing

The current housing situation in Bangor was the most-cited challenge among both interviewees and survey respondents. Additionally, 59% of survey respondents ranked the current housing market as “Bad” or “Terrible”.

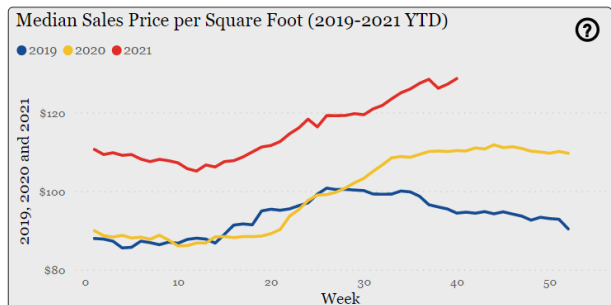
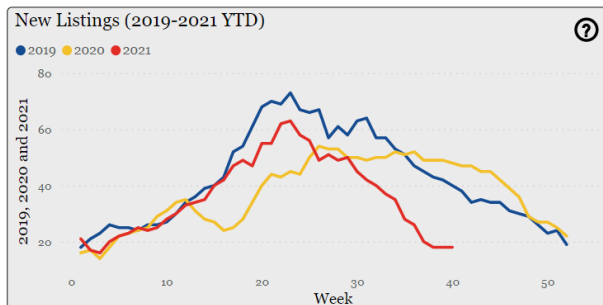
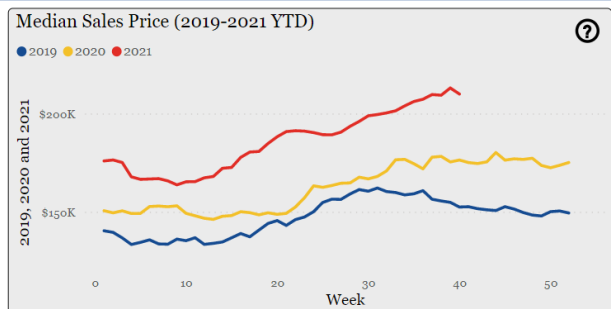
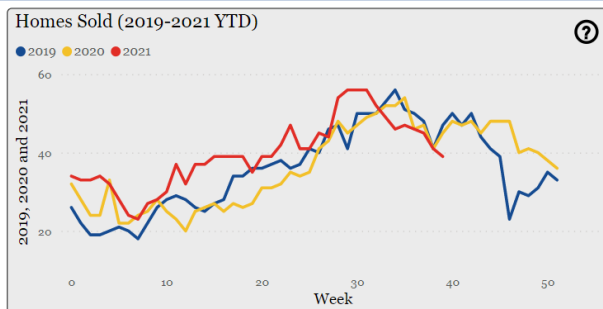
Indeed, the City’s current Affordability Ratio (Median Home Price / Median Household Income) is at 4.6—slightly worse than the national average (though better than the State’s average of 5.51). Anecdotes of 15 offers for one home are common. Housing prices are presently 19% higher than a year ago and an astonishing 38% higher than 2019.

Local health care providers report that their professional staff is having difficulty in finding market-rate housing – making it challenging for the hospitals to retain these critical employees. Anecdotes abound of more than 10 offers on homes – all above the asking price. Many interviewees related knowing people who were desperately looking for affordable rentals but were unable to find anything suitable.

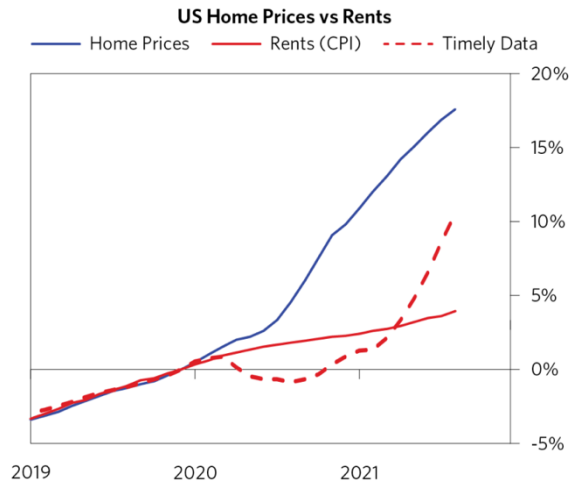
Bangor residents are far from alone in their concerns about the housing market. Across the country, home prices are rising as inventories fall to historically low levels.



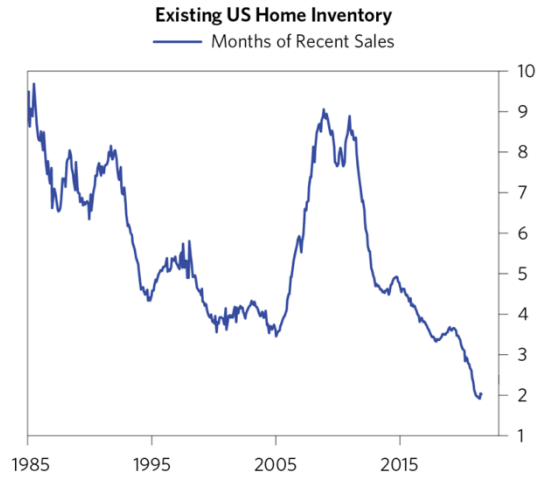
Residential Real Estate



Historic increases in money supply along with unprecedented fiscal stimulus—including direct payments to households, have created a wealth effect that has spurred demand for housing that has never been seen before. The increased demand for goods across the economy and a shortage of workers as Baby Boomers leave the workforce in large numbers has also created supply constraints.

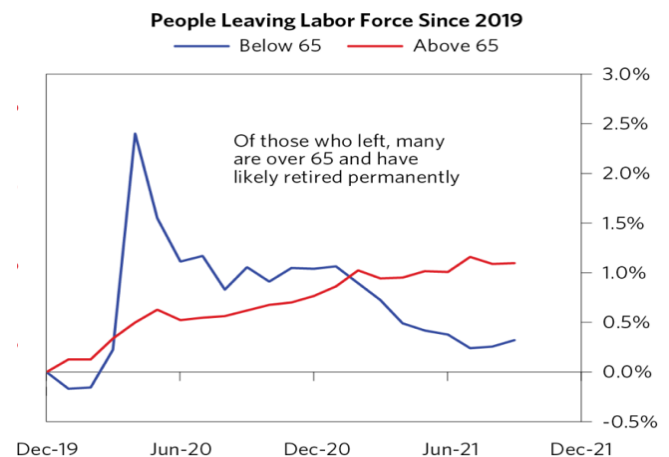


US Housing Prices – Bridgewater Associates

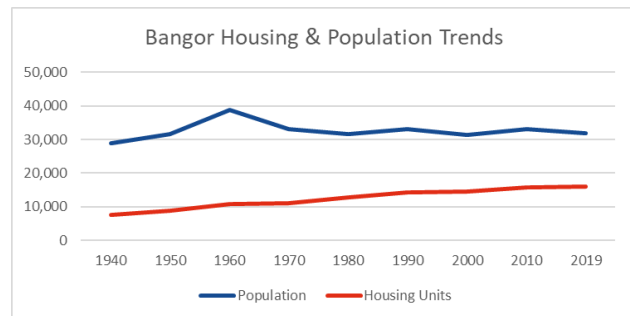


US Housing Inventory – Bridgewater Associates

The Bangor situation has several elements that are unique, however. First, the City’s population has been in decline since the 1960s while the housing stock has steadily increased. Even accounting for decreases in household size, the ratio of housing units to households has steadily increased. Similarly, Census data indicates that 1,300 housing units are vacant. These units could be abandoned, rented out as short-term rentals, be 2nd homes, or in the process of being sold. The City knows of around 150 total homes that are abandoned / uninhabited. There are approximately 150 homes listed for short term rental so there are many homes that are listed as vacant within the City that aren’t accounted for—other than as being 2nd homes. Anecdotally, real estate agents and home builders report large numbers of buyers who come from out of the area and only live in the homes for a portion of the year.

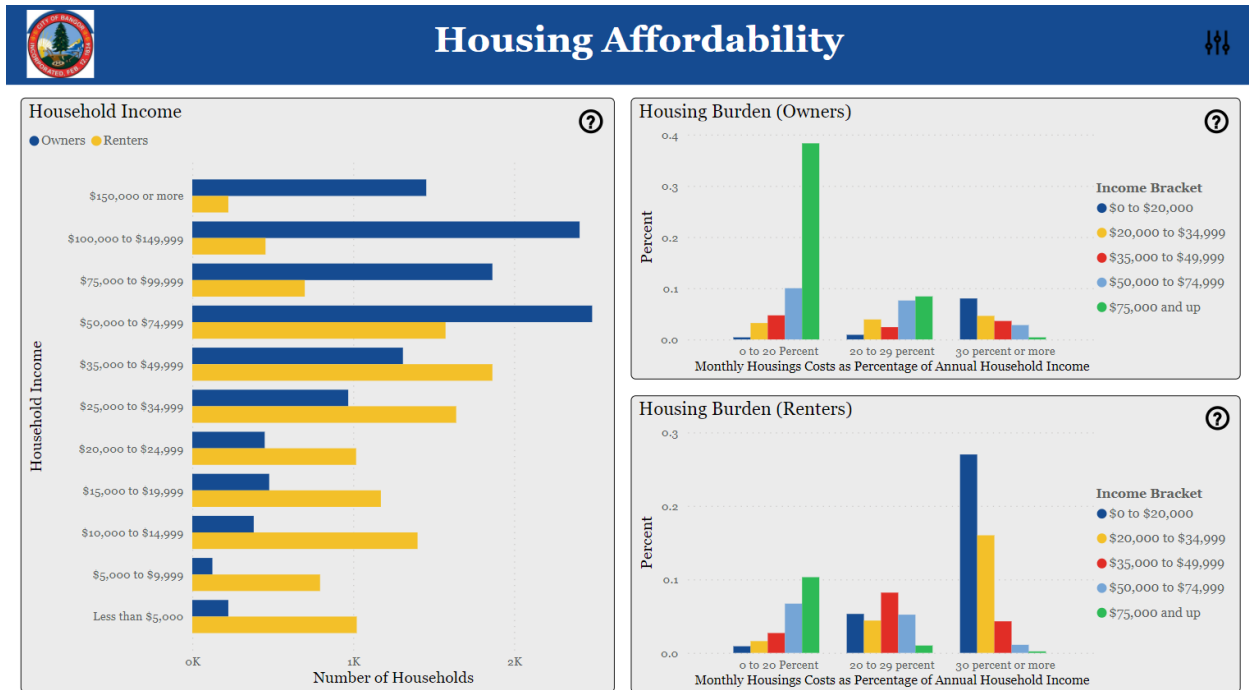


US Workers Leaving Labor Force – Bridgewater Associates



“A few months ago it would take six months for materials that should’ve taken three. It’s getting better now but boy was it a nightmare.” – Bangor Home Builder

The overall affordability of Bangor remains reasonable. Far more Bangor households are ‘under-consuming’ housing (spending less than 30% of their income on rent/mortgage) than are ‘over-consuming’. While there are challenges at the individual level, the overall affordability picture is favorable at present but will worsen dramatically if current price increases continue.



There are indications that the shortage of market-rate housing will be resolved over time as market forces align resources with opportunities and returns. In 2020, 337 City permits were pulled for housing units—the highest total since 2015 and 15% higher than 2019. Real estate agents report that there has been a steep decline in the number of offers for each home since early in 2021 and inventories are rising. Housing developers indicated that the parts shortages that were adding weeks and even months to the total construction time are improving and material costs falling back close to pre-pandemic levels.

While there is progress with housing, availability of affordable rentals is still a challenge. There will need to be some public intervention to address market challenges with the supply of affordable rentals.

Short-Term Recommendation 1: Continue to use the March 2019 study as the City’s playbook for housing and prioritize its implementation. The City prepared the Recommendation to Improve the Status of Housing in Bangor in March of 2019. This study highlighted several areas of focus and provided specific recommendations for the City to undertake to improve the City’s housing situation. The report is an excellent analysis of the housing market and as cited above, the recommendations are appropriate.

Short-Term Recommendation 2: Put together a mixed development project plan for the 57 acre parcel zoned for residential development, for sale in the Tree Streets neighborhood that is not currently under construction. The objective is to not only catalyze development in the City but also to create visionary template as a standard for future development. The plan should incorporate best practice for residential design with particular focus on open spaces, nature corridors, and parks. The nature corridors in particular are critical to maintaining animal habitat and to promoting nature-harmonized development.

The development should integrate starter homes, mid-level homes, and some higher-end homes to create a diverse community and address every aspect of the market.

Work with civil engineers to determine development costs and working with designers / architects to come up with housing concepts. Create a project financial pro forma and a funding capital stack.

Mid-Term Recommendation 1: Once the project is designed it can be presented to local investors as a 'pret a porter' (ready to wear) project. Bringing onboard a housing project of this size and quality will shift the market and stimulate other investment that will ensure a steady supply of future housing.

Next Steps: Short-Term

1. Continue to use the March 2019 study as the City's playbook for housing
2. Prepare a housing project plan for 53-acre parcel

Next Steps: Mid-Term

1. Present housing project plan for 57-acre parcel to local investment community

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Next Steps Summary

Next Steps: Short-Term

Positioning & Branding

1. Engage PR Firm
 - a. Branding
 - b. Positioning
 - c. Communication / marketing strategy
 - i. Social Media
 - ii. Local communication channels
2. Prioritize the Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights
3. Establish Youth Council
4. Hold Council discussions about accepting refugees

Downtown Development

1. Prioritize Implementation of Key Parts of Housing and West Side Village studies
2. Ensure Comprehensive Plan Provides Specific Guidance for Downtown-Adjacent Neighborhoods:
 - a. Specific ordinances and incentives to clean up blighted neighborhoods
 - b. Incentives or ways to encourage pocket or corner retail
 - c. City Investment Priorities
3. Designate Entertainment District
 - a. Determine location
 - b. Select Activities / Venues
 - c. Design
 - d. Secure Funding

Mall Redevelopment

1. Create a high-level mall redevelopment proposal and present to current mall owners
2. Prepare an outline for public financing participation
 - a. Explore the option for using tax increment financing

Jobs

1. Assign City Staff as Liaisons to Community Organizations
2. Consider "Community Coffee"
3. Process Map Entrepreneurship
 - a. Create Entrepreneur Guide
4. Feasibility Study for Cold Storage Concept
 - a. Consider impact on women and minority-owned businesses

Housing

1. Continue to use the March 2019 study as the City's playbook for housing
2. Prepare a housing project plan for 57-acre parcel

Next Steps: Mid-Term

Positioning & Branding

1. Create communication capacity

Downtown Development

1. Work with the Housing Authority to create interventions for economically disadvantaged residents of Downtown-adjacent Neighborhoods
2. Create additional entertainment venues within the Entertainment District and enhance the walking corridors and improve wayfinding
3. Support the YMCA's expansion and encourage them to expand near the Entertainment District and/or Downtown

Housing

1. Present housing project plan for 57-acre parcel to local investment community

Appendix B: Acknowledgements

Interviewees

1. Rick Fournier, City Council
2. Susan Hawes, City Council
3. Jonathan Sprague, City Council
4. Clare Davitt, City Council
5. Gretchen Schaefer, City Council
6. Dina Yacoubagha, City Council
7. Jonathan Cross, President and Chief Operating Officer
8. Betsy Lundy, Executive Director of Downtown Bangor Business Partnership
9. Thomas Judge, Executive Director of Life Flight of Maine
10. Aubrae Filipiak, Director of Woodland Pond School & Vice Chair of the City's Commission on Cultural Development
11. Miles Theeman, Retired
12. Deb Neuman, President of Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce
13. Kerrie Tripp, Executive Director of Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau
14. Tony Caruso, Airport Director Bangor International Airport
15. Jim Donnelly, Bangor Savings Bank
16. James Tager, School Committee Chair, Bangor School Department
17. Justin Freeman, Manager BBSC CPA's
18. Chris Kilgour, Owner C&L Aviation
19. David Austin, Managing Partner Eaton Peabody
20. Molly Briggs, Executive VP of Lease Administration team of Epstein Commercial Real Estate
21. David Hughes, Broker team of Epstein Commercial Real Estate
22. Bev Unlenhake, CCIM Broker team of Epstein Commercial Real Estate
23. Niles Parker, Executive Director, Maine Discovery Museum
24. Julia Munsey, Maine International Trade Center, Director of Membership and Corporate Development at Maine International Trade Center
25. Kate Dickerson, Maine Science Festival, Founder and Director
26. Jason Bird, Housing Development Director Penquis
27. Barbara Cardone, State Rep
28. Laura Supicia, State Rep
29. Amy Roeder, State Rep
30. Alex Gray, Waterfront Concert President
31. Brandon Keim, Free Lance Writer
32. Dash Davidson, New York Developer
33. Matt Dexter, Fusion- Young Professionals Rep
34. Mike Myatt, Executive Director of Bangor Housing Authority
35. Lee Umphrey, President and CEO Eastern Maine Development Corporation
36. Kraig King, Plant Manager General Electric
37. Kara Hay, Chief Executive & Marketing Officer Penquis
38. Ed Bearor, Local Land Use Attorney, Rudman Winchell

39. Michael Mckerman, Director of Government and Community Relations The Jackson Laboratory
40. Habib Dagher, Executive Director of Bath Iron Works, Professor of Structural Engineering at University of Maine
41. Jake Ward, VP Economic Development of University of Maine
42. John Diamond, Executive Director of University of Maine Alumni Association
43. Renee Kelly, Assistant Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development at the University of Maine
44. Kristen McAlphine, Business Development Officer, The First
45. Tony C. McKim, President The First
46. Ben Sprague, Comercial Lender The First
47. Adam Leach, Bangor High School Counselor
48. Steve Libby, Building Developer
49. Diane Dickerson, CEO YMCA
50. Evan Richart, Founding Board Member Upstart Maine
51. Stephen Crotty, Crotty Construction Management
52. Steve Jarzabek, Builder

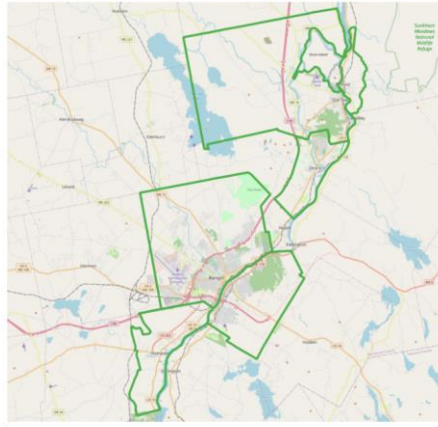
Appendix C: Data & Survey Responses

Community Data Profile

Area Boundaries

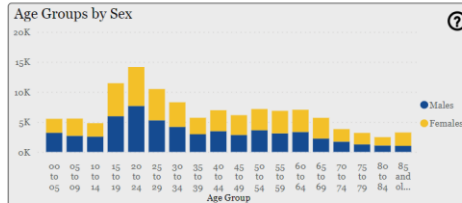
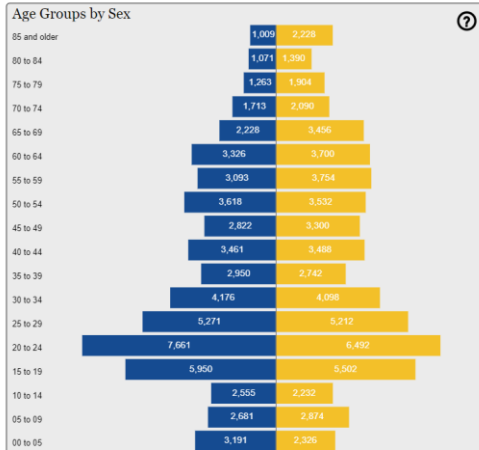


Bangor, ME Urban Area

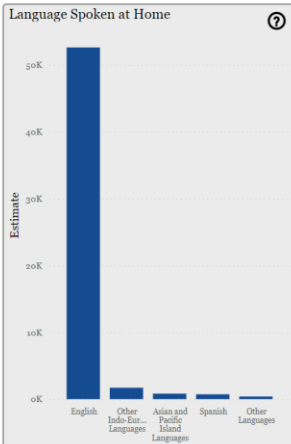
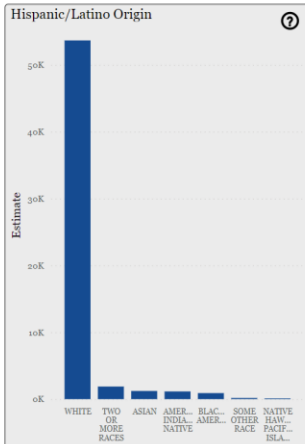
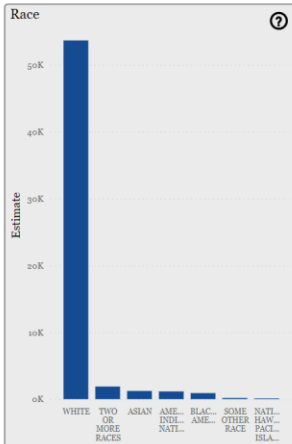


"Place" Boundaries (Cities, Towns, Census Designated Places)

Population, Age and Sex



Race and Ethnicity

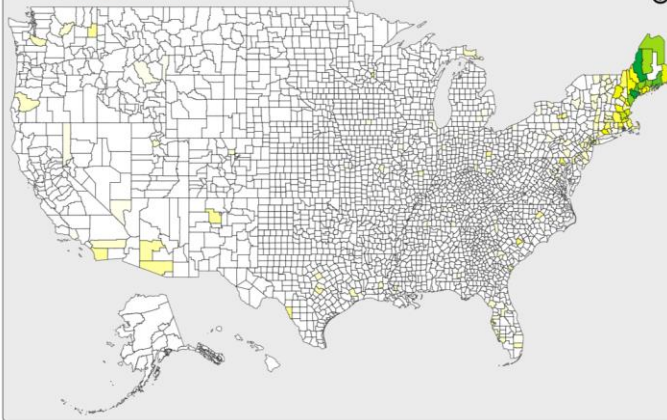




Migration Patterns (Penobscot County)



Inflow by County (2014-2018)



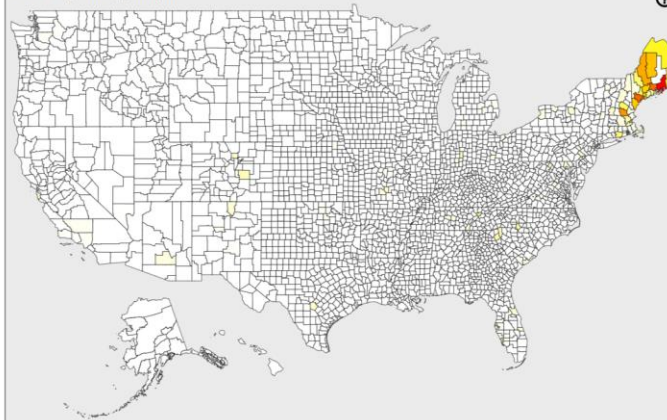
County Name	Inflow
Cumberland County, Maine	181
Somerset County, Maine	171
Hancock County, Maine	163
Androscoggin County, Maine	115
York County, Maine	137
Waldo County, Maine	123
Kennebec County, Maine	177
Aroostook County, Maine	163
Piscataquis County, Maine	147
Middlesex County, Massachusetts	246
Essex County, Massachusetts	192
Washington County, Maine	156
Grafton County, New Hampshire	134
Strafford County, New Hampshire	132
Oxford County, Maine	128
Lincoln County, Maine	126
Norfolk County, Massachusetts	123
New Haven County, Connecticut	122
New York County, New York	110
Bronx County, New York	104
Hillsborough County, New Hampshire	93
Franklin County, Maine	90
Knox County, Maine	87
Providence County, Rhode Island	84
Sagadahoc County, Maine	66
Total	9269



Migration Patterns (Penobscot County)



Outflow by County, 2014-2018



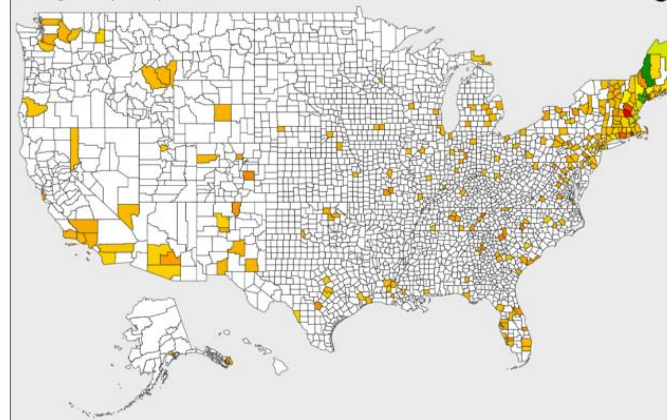
County Name	Outflow
Hancock County, Maine	187
Cumberland County, Maine	117
Waldo County, Maine	109
Hillsborough County, New Hampshire	147
Somerset County, Maine	129
Piscataquis County, Maine	101
York County, Maine	193
Kennebec County, Maine	182
Sagadahoc County, Maine	248
Aroostook County, Maine	215
Washington County, Maine	162
Merrimack County, New Hampshire	153
Androscoggin County, Maine	151
Franklin County, Maine	139
New London County, Connecticut	132
Anderson County, Tennessee	101
Knox County, Maine	100
Lincoln County, Maine	84
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina	84
Middlesex County, Massachusetts	82
Anderson County, South Carolina	76
Madison County, Indiana	64
El Paso County, Colorado	63
Norfolk County, Massachusetts	63
Total	6788



Migration Patterns (Penobscot County)



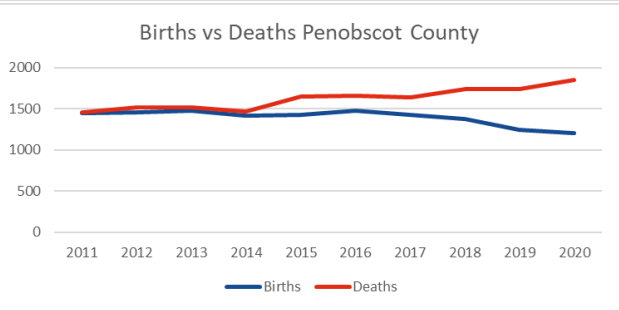
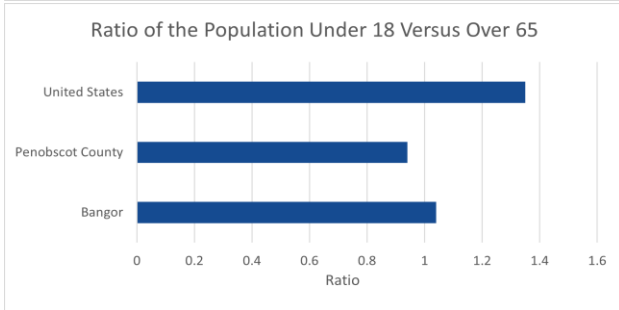
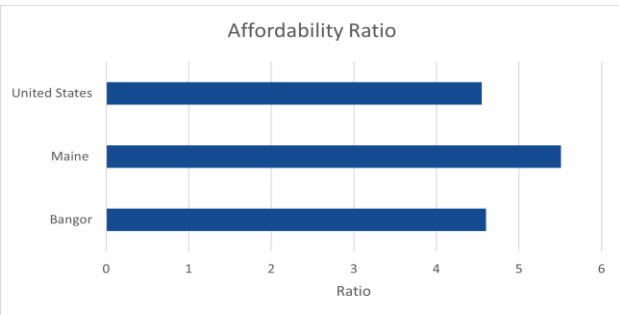
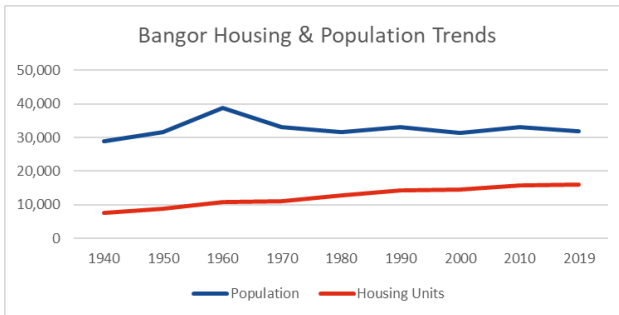
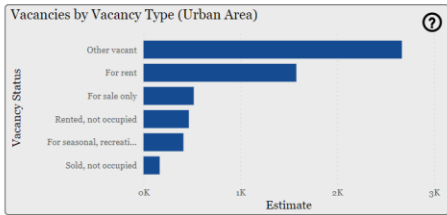
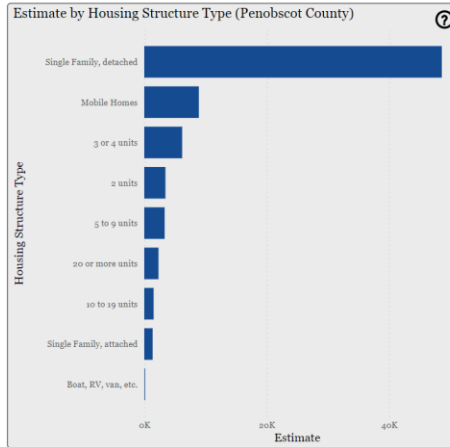
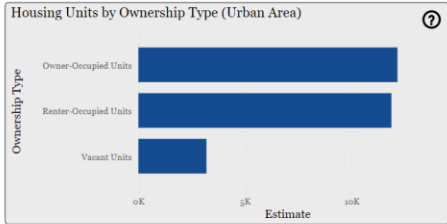
Net Migration by County, 2014-2018



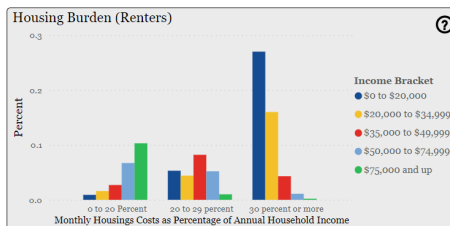
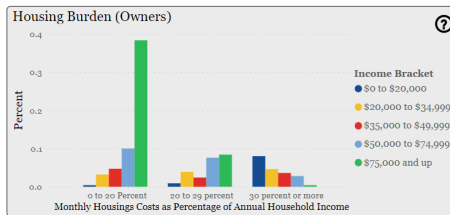
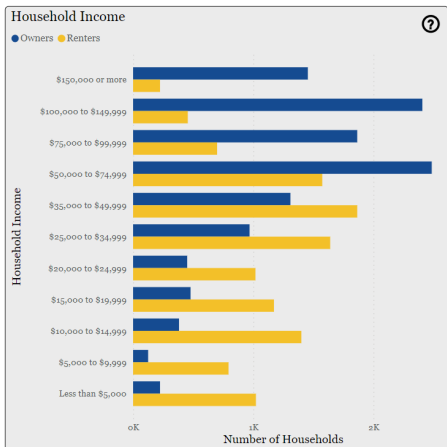
County Name	Net Migration
Somerset County, Maine	158
Cumberland County, Maine	158
Androscoggin County, Maine	154
Essex County, Massachusetts	170
Middlesex County, Massachusetts	164
Aroostook County, Maine	148
York County, Maine	144
Strafford County, New Hampshire	121
Total	295



Housing Stock (Mixed Geographies)



Housing Affordability



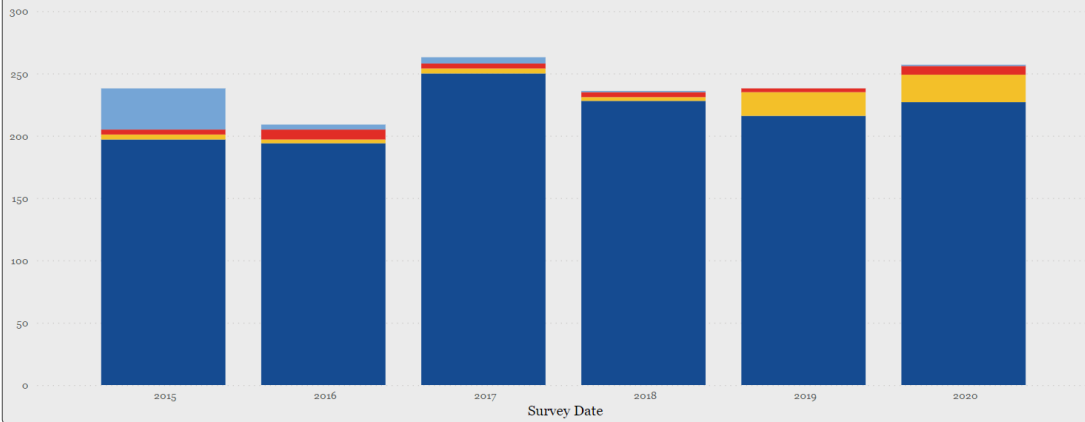


Build Permits



Building Permits by Number of Buildings

● 1-unit Buildings ● 2-unit Buildings ● 3-4 Unit Bldgs ● 5+ Unit Buildings

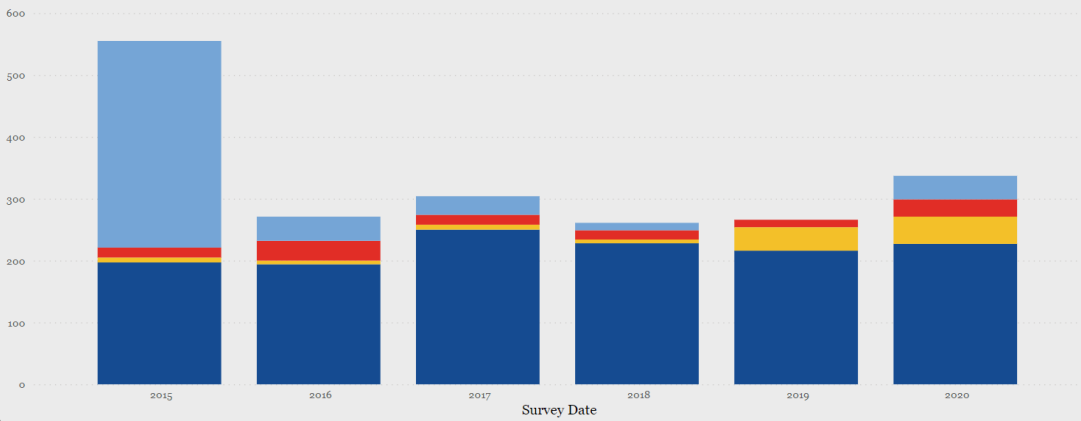


Build Permits



Building Permits by Number of Units in Each Building

● 1-unit Units ● 2-unit Units ● 3-4 Unit Units ● 5+ Unit Units

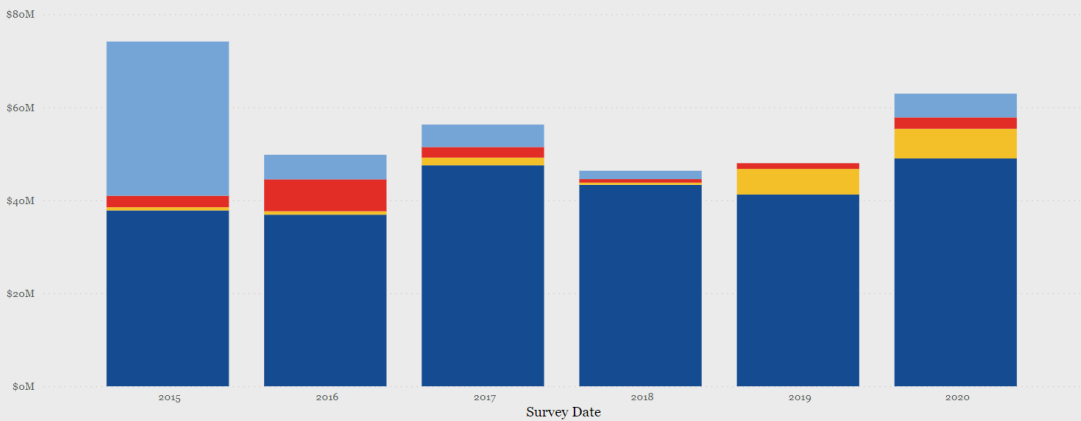


Build Permits



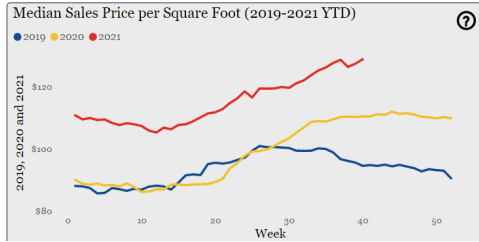
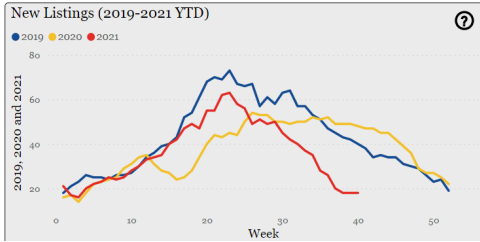
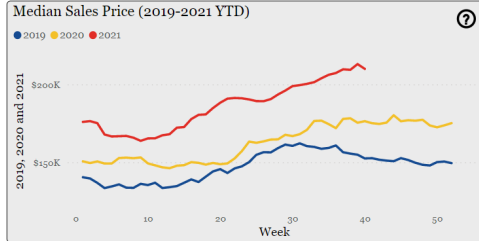
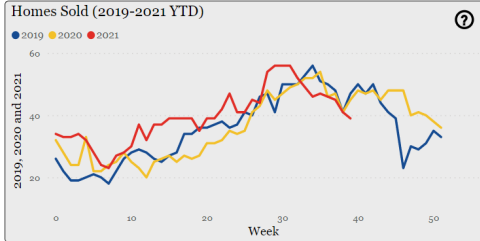
Building Permits by Value of Building

● 1-unit Value ● 2-unit Value ● 3-4 Unit Value ● 5+ Unit Value

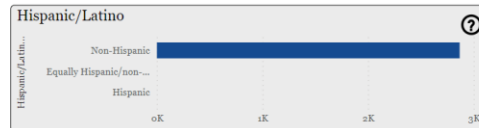
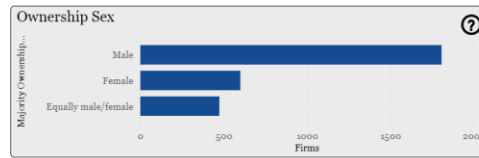
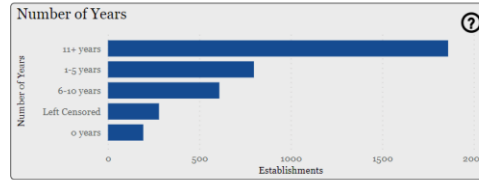
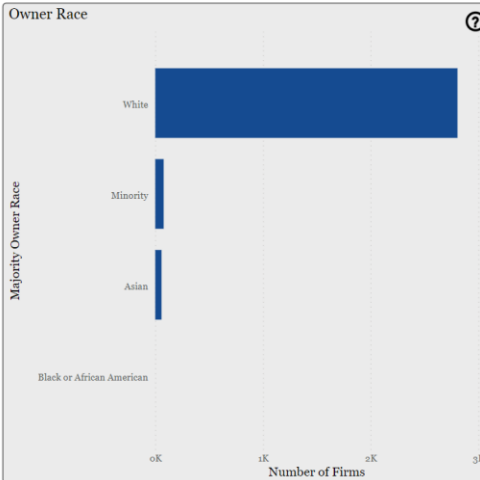




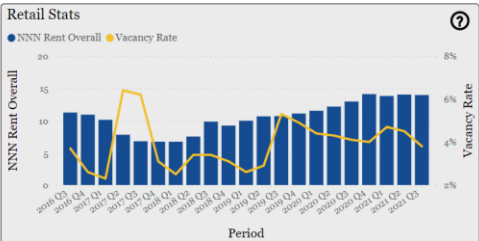
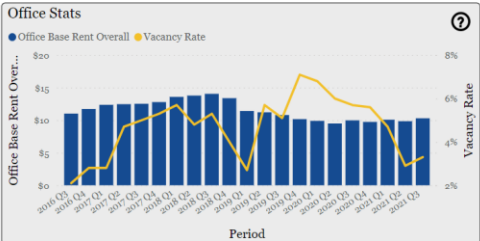
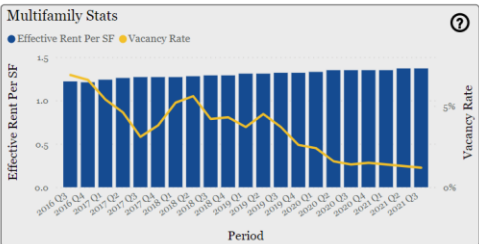
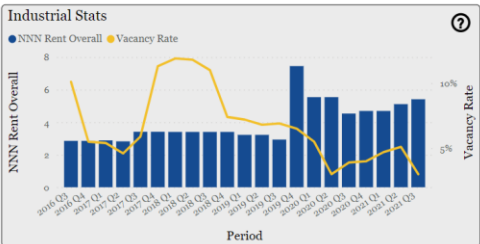
Residential Real Estate



Business Demographics (Penobscot County)



Commercial Real Estate

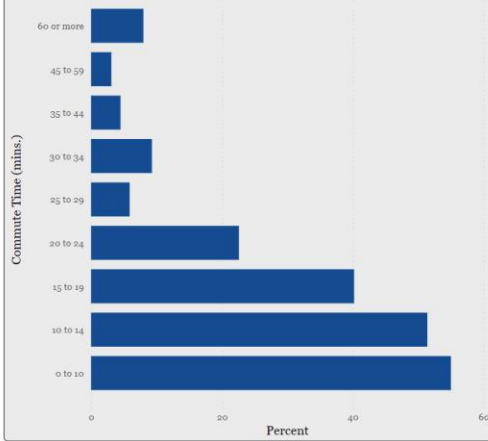




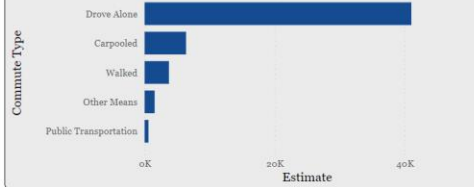
Commuting



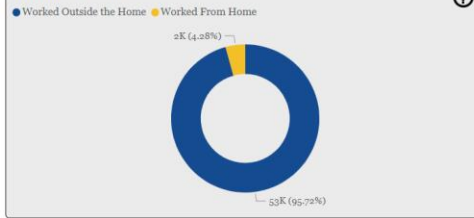
Time to Work In Minutes



Commute by Type



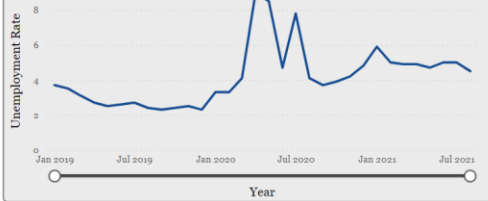
Work from Home



Workforce (Mixed Geographies)



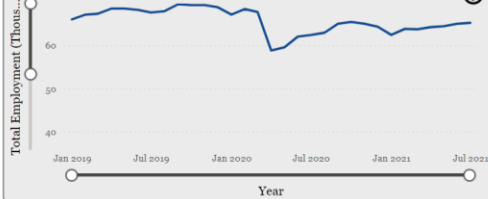
Unemployment Rate by Year, Quarter and Month



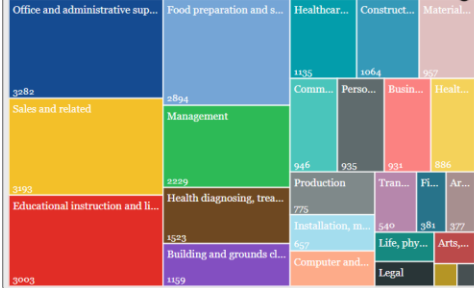
Estimated Workforce by Type



Total Employment (Thousands) by Year, Quarter and Month



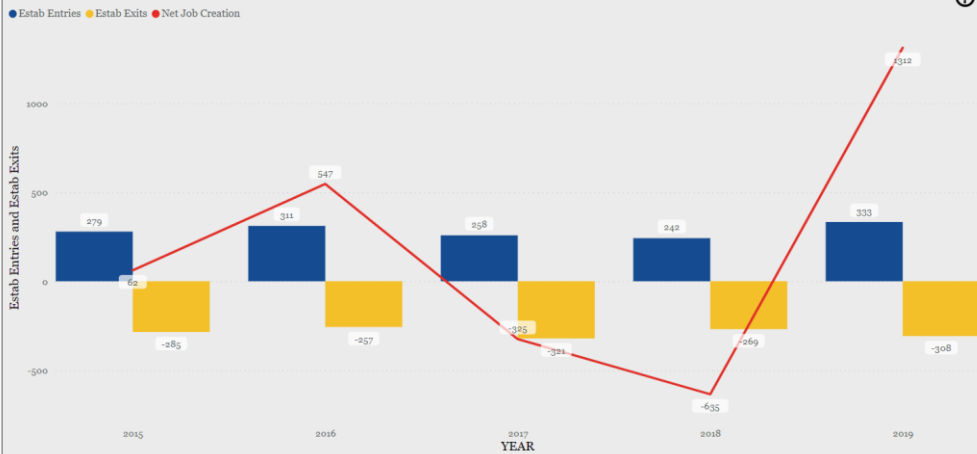
Estimated Workforce by Occupation



Entrepreneurship (Penobscot County)

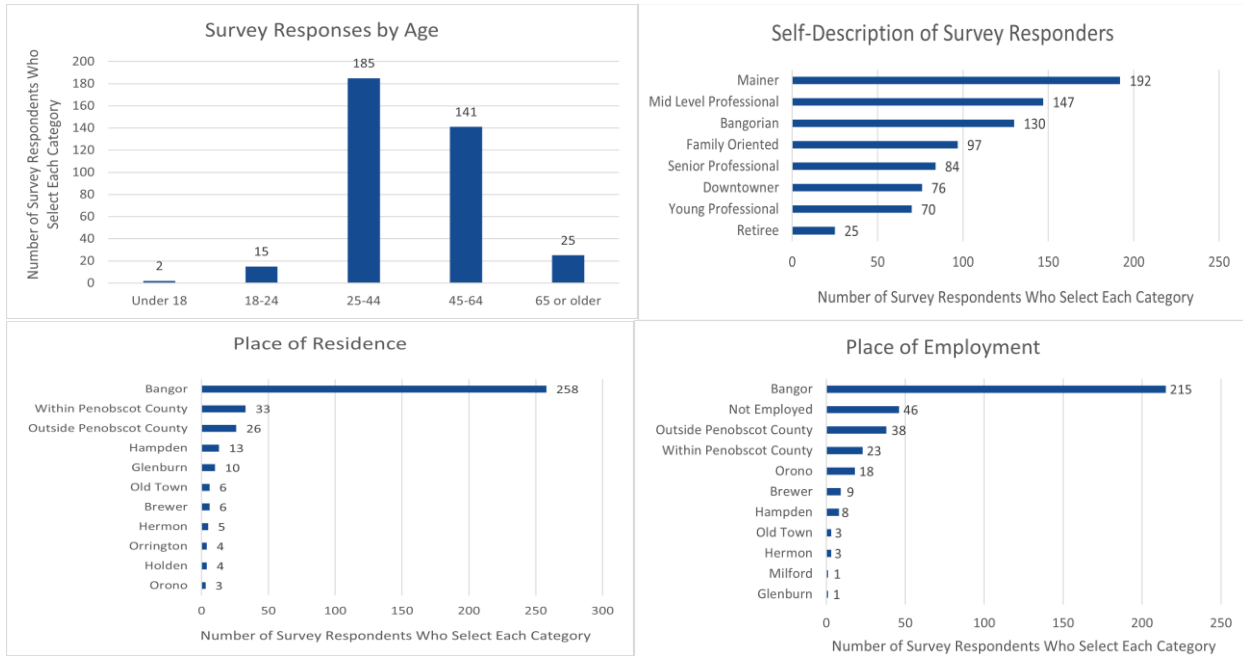


Establishment Entry and Exit & Jobs Created by Year

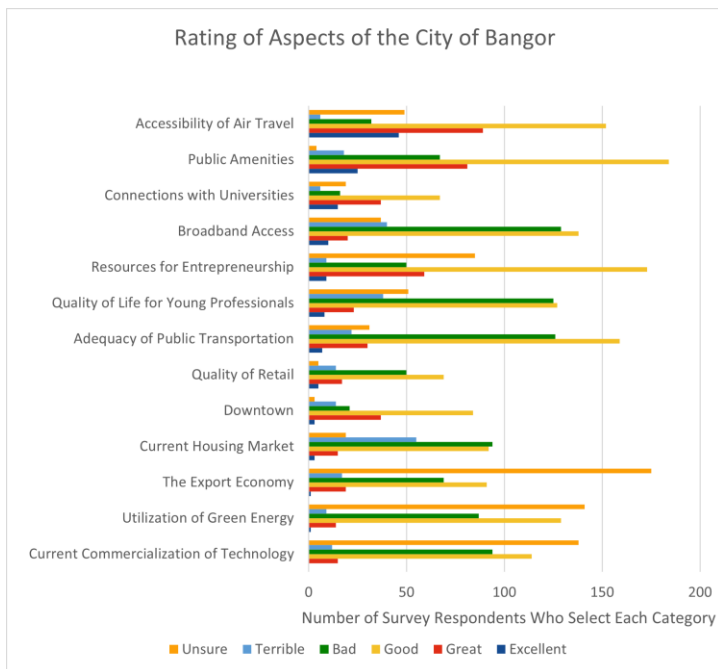


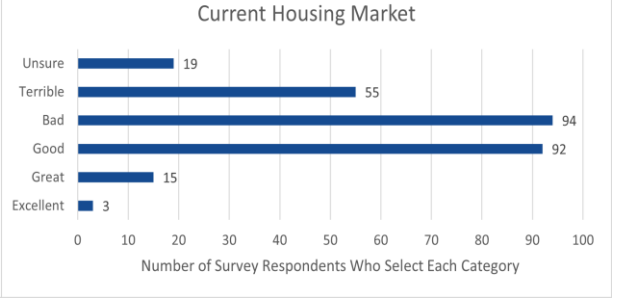
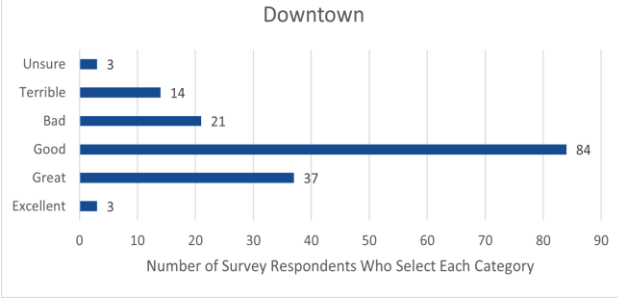
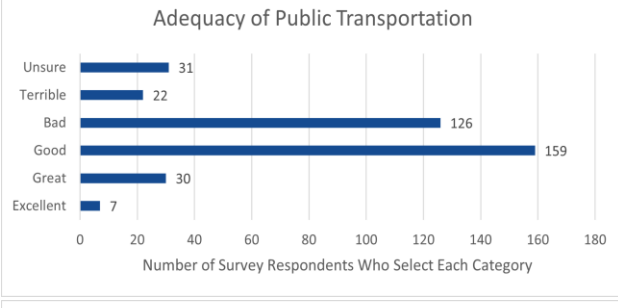
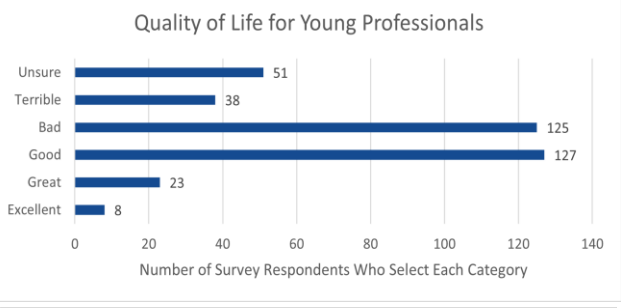
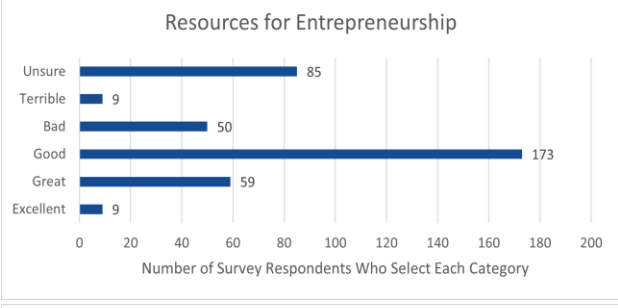
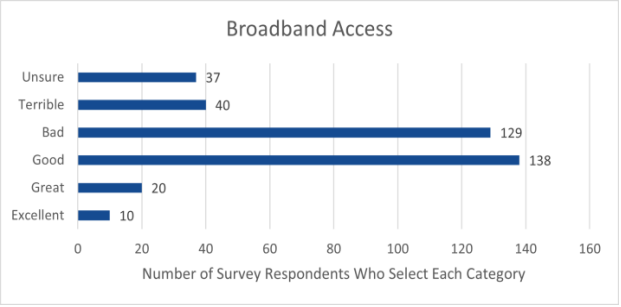
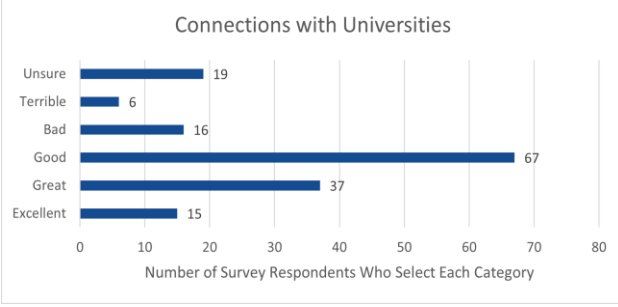
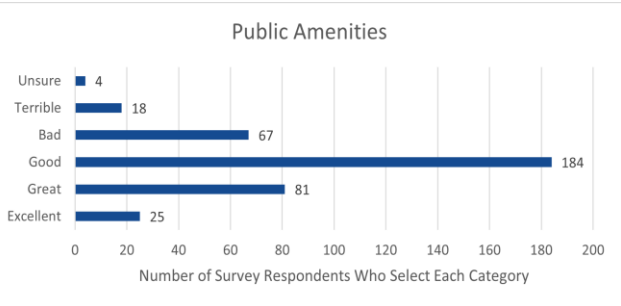
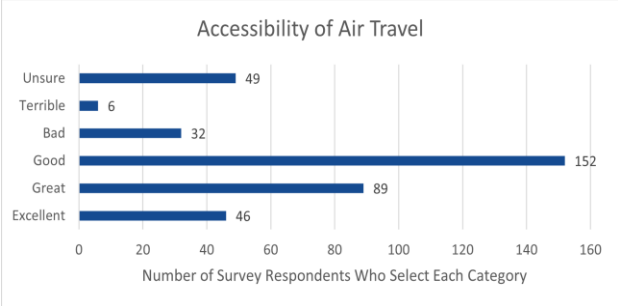
Survey Responses

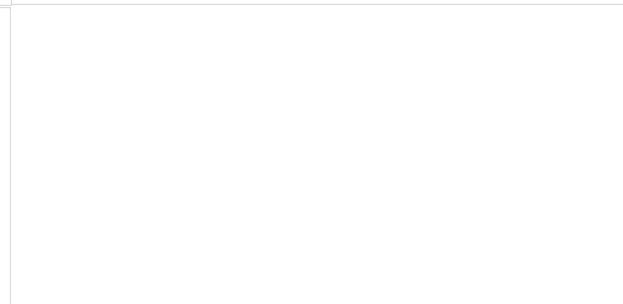
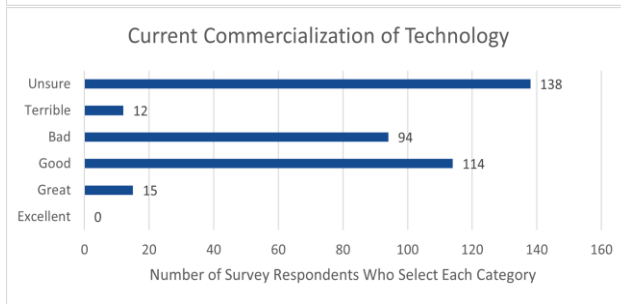
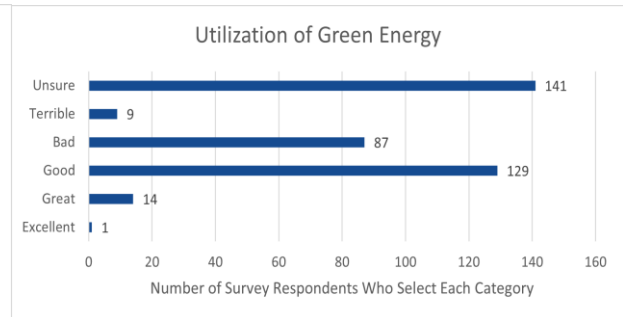
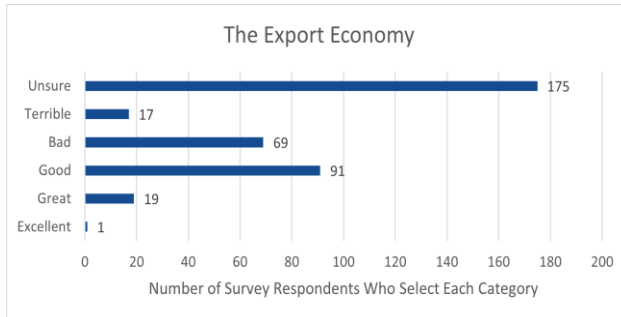
Profile of Survey Responders



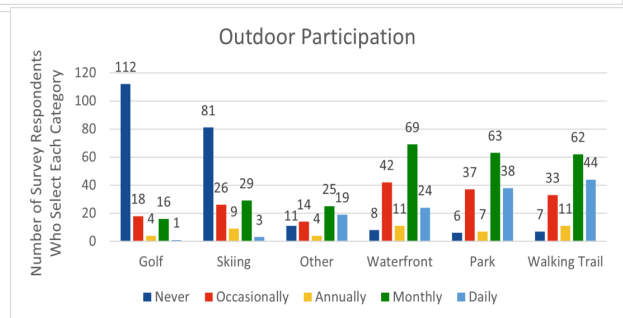
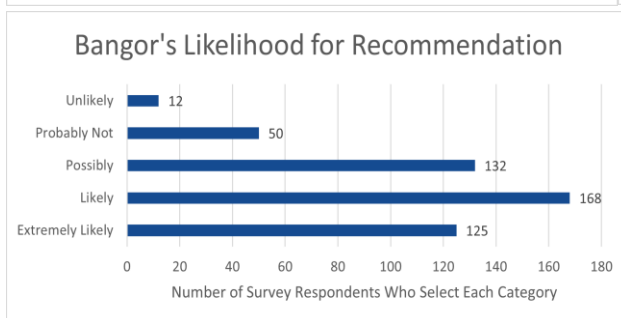
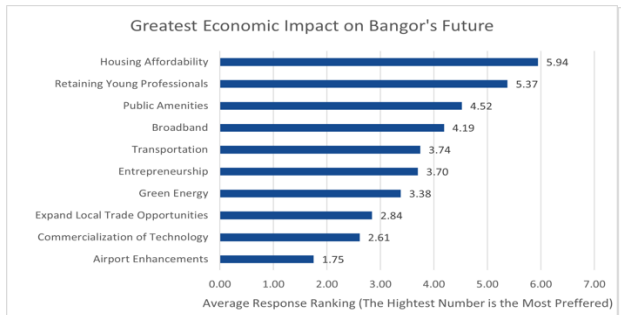
Rating Aspects of the City of Bangor



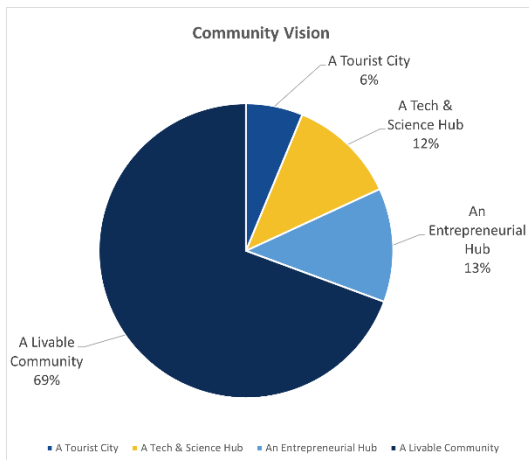




Input on Vision and Impact



Community Vision



Appendix D: Summaries of Interviews & Community Forums

Input on the vision plan came from 52 interviews of elected officials, county and city staff, business owners, stakeholders in nonprofits, and citizens. The interviews had broad, general questions designed to provide understanding of community dynamics, power structures, projects and initiatives, and current efforts for recovery. Questions emerged from the interview process to target 17 students in two separate focus groups at Bangor High School and the University of Maine. As the interview process progressed, more specific questions were asked to better understand topics and themes that had emerged from the previous interviews, defining key trends that were explored with the community at the virtual and in person public forums with 21 total participants.

Concepts that arose in these unstructured interviews were sorted and categorized into the “Community Issues” described within this document. The project ideas were then taken to the Community and Economic Development team to review projects that are already underway or beyond the scope of work for the department. The team further categorized the topics into attainable strategies which are found in the “Recommendations” of this document. Due to the timeline of this project, recommendations were presented at a high level during the community forums to hear feedback and suggestions. Below you will find a summary of the interviews, focus groups and community forums for each recommendation.

Desirability

- Branding
 - Branding was mentioned 13 times in this process in regard to shaping the narrative of Bangor as an inclusive place to live and work rather than just a service center.
- Downtown Development
 - Downtown as a whole was highlighted 29 times during the strategic planning as a key piece in the strategic visioning for the future of economic growth.
- Mall
 - The Mall was mentioned 12 times and often as a lost hope. The High School Students who would be the target group of mid-level professionals in the next 10 years validate that having a mall experience is an important factor in selecting a place to live.

Feasibility

- Jobs
 - Jobs were a key factor in being a competitive place to live amongst so many others. Careers and salary were mentioned 12 times during this process
- Housing
 - Housing was mentioned 21 times as a challenge for the Bangor area in regard to availability and affordability.

Appendix E: Reviews of Past Studies

The City of Bangor has undertaken a number of studies over the past several years covering a wide range of topics from the airport to parks and recreation. 14 of the studies were reviewed to determine its applicability to the current effort and to ensure that knowledge and findings from past studies was incorporated into this Plan. Following are short descriptions of each plan, along with key takeaways.

Bangor Parks & Recreation Master Plan, October 2021

Purpose: To assess existing park and recreation facilities, defining strategic benchmarks to guide decision making and finally prioritizing the direction of future projects and programs.

Outcome: An overview of each park and recreation facility with recommendations within the Bangor Community to aid short- and long-term planning efforts related to formatting programs and projects to ensure facilities feel cohesive in character and function.



The general recommendations include increasing visual signage, expanding pedestrian path, continued infrastructure replacements and adjustments such as equipment, lighting, and security features.

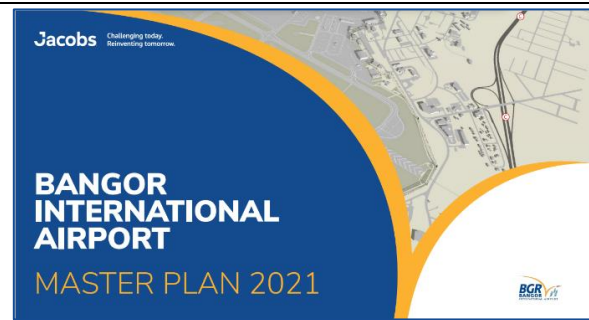
Project Goals:

- Assessment of Existing facilities:
 - Bangor has seen a shift in its residential population centers from the city center to North and East Bangor. But while the community's patterns of residential development have shifted, the parks and recreation assets that serve Bangor residents have not. Notably 18% of the respondents are not within walking distance of a facility.
 - The community has a vast number of parks and recreational activities all year round from pools, trails, neighborhood parks, outdoor concerts, local YMCA and skiing.
- Comparison Review:
 - The City of Bangor has nearly three times the park acres per 1,000 residents than similar communities while also maintaining 2x the number of parks, 3x the trail miles, and 2x the number of buildings of similar communities. The community manages all of the above with 40% fewer full-time staff than similar communities.

Bangor International Airport Master Plan Capital Improvements 2021

Purpose: An overview of the current operations, space for capital improvements, available routes and planes.

Vision Statement: The airport will develop improvements in their curbside operations, passenger experience with concession amenities, and adding additional aircraft storage and hangar space for the rehabilitation of pre-covid travel rates.



Project Outlines:

- Details the four airlines: American, United, Allegiant and Delta with their traveling cities from Bangor to Newark, New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C, Charlotte, Chicago, Tampa and Orlando. Showing an average 40% of those travelers in last three years coming through American Airlines.
- Showcases the at-a-glance view of vehicle access, landside buildings, airside building, aircraft parking, and airfield pavement with detailed benefits and threats of each area. Mentions a 2020 Airfield Pavement Condition Index survey that addresses the need to maintain and rehabilitate airport pavement in the future master plan.

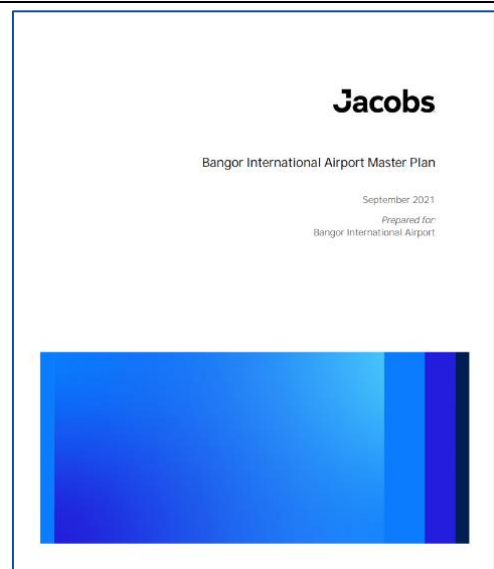
Bangor International Airport Master Plan (Sustainability Initiative), September 2021

Purpose: A review and update of the Airport master plan to become more aligned with the Federal Aviation Administration standards and provide recommendations for the continual growth of the airport.

Mission Statement: Environmental sustainability will be integrated into all aspects of airport planning and operations to drive cost savings, reduce environmental impacts and risks while enhancing passenger airport experience

Recommendations:

- Sustainability will help provide cost avoidance by lowering resource intensity per unit of operation and slow the growth in the environmental footprint. Will also align with community interest and local government priorities fostering positive relationships with local stakeholders.
- It's important to conduct an energy and water use assessment across all facilities, screening of the current environmental footprint with risk and opportunities and construct initiatives from the screening.



- Include solar energy as an advanced technology to stabilize long term power prices, provide onsite power, avoid emissions, increase public appeal and possible solar parking canopies.

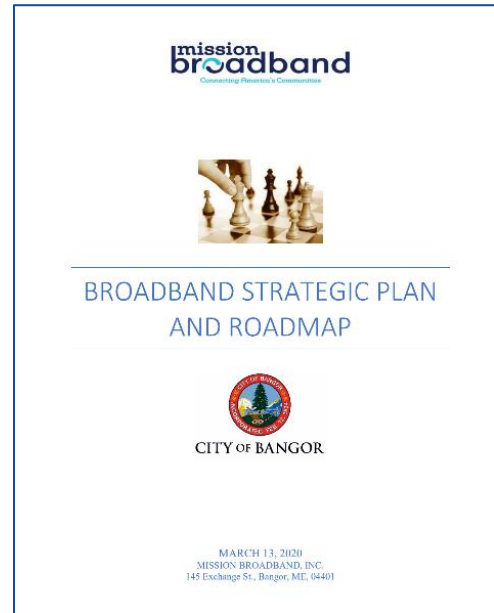
Broadband Strategic Plan and Roadmap, March 2020

Purpose: An outline of the current efforts to understand the residential and business needs of a robust broadband network and to identify municipal network models, risks and next steps for the City of Bangor.

Overview: Determine the needs of the community, areas of impact, current community support, method of investment, different models based on current and projected city resources, expand the fiber footprint, increase digital literacy and using broadband to promote economic development.

Project Outlines:

- Broadband access is available in most of the City but there are gaps in coverage which cause residential and business access issues. High speed broadband isn't available on a wide scale across all sectors of the city. Lower income residents and small businesses present concern for affordability. Economic impacts include inefficiencies in businesses performing online functions, difficulties in attracting retail business and remote workers, and the continual impact on digital literacy.
- Healthcare impacts lead to continued high cost for medical care, lack of access to those home bound, reduce availability of critical social services and telepsychiatry services.
- *Project Recommendations*
 - Transparent communication regarding ongoing status to the citizens in regard to the broadband strategic plan, choose a network model (city owned and operated, city owned with private contracted operator, and private owner and operator), develop financial and operational models to support goals.



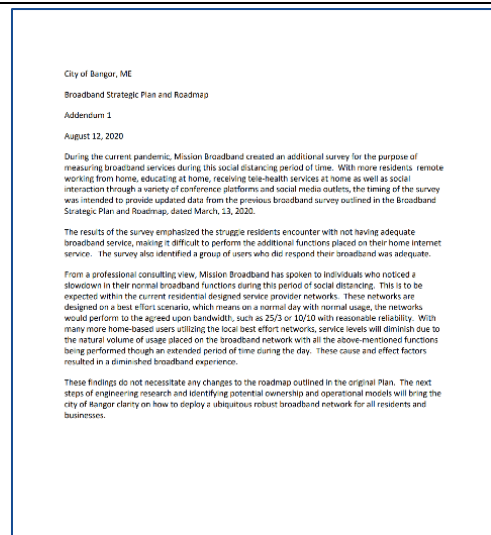
Broadband Strategic Plan and Roadmap, August 2020

Purpose: Serves as additional material added to measure the broadband services during the social distancing period.

Vision Statement: Used to provide updated data from the previous broadband survey outlined in the broadband Strategic Plan and Roadmap, dated March 13, 2020.

Updates:

- Emphasized the challenge residents encountered with not having adequate broadband service..
- The broadband experience diminishes due to the increase of volume usage placed on the broadband network.
- These findings do not necessitate any changes to the roadmap outline in the original Plan.



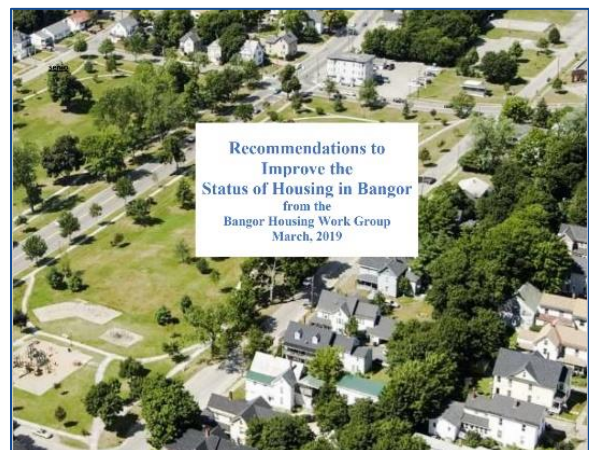
Recommendation to Improve the Status of Housing in Bangor, March 2019

Purpose: An analysis of Bangor's housing situation with recommendations for a city that is one of the most expensive places to live in Maine, dealing with an older population, older housing and lower median incomes.

Recommendations: Create a housing system that accounts for quality, includes inspections, incentives rehabilitation and development in the urban core, develop a housing production plan, updating zoning and development standards.

Project Goals:

- Intentionally returning to the traditional pattern of development based on creating neighborhoods of value, scaled to actual people. The professionals and older generations need a more walkable community. A lot of the housing developments have been made in the urban outskirts of the city therefore creating less quality housing within the urban communities and an increasing need for transportation.
- One in four residents in Bangor live below the Federal Poverty Line making the housing in Bangor less affordable for renters in all of Penobscot County. The price of housing and rentals are generally lower in Bangor, but the lower median income makes it less affordable.
- The largest population pull comes from adults 20-34 years of age and potential retirees 65 and older. These populations also have lower incomes than the gap of adults in



between. They're also more likely to search for 1 bedroom or efficiency units. Making more than 58% of the general assistance rental support toward smaller units.

- Surrounding communities have increased their housing developments and their populations. Bangor is experiencing national housing trends that show a misalignment between demand for smaller houses and the current stock of larger units. There is also a demand for higher quality and more affordable rental properties and home ownership.
- The Bangor housing crisis is a long-term project. Continual research on vacant units that don't match quality standards is vital to know whether owners need to proceed with renovations or demolition. Several recommendations for collaborative programming amongst duplicate services were also made.
- Upon reconstruction or demolition if displacing is needed for residents being able to provide mini villages or employer-based housing and options for more supportive housing services are recommended.

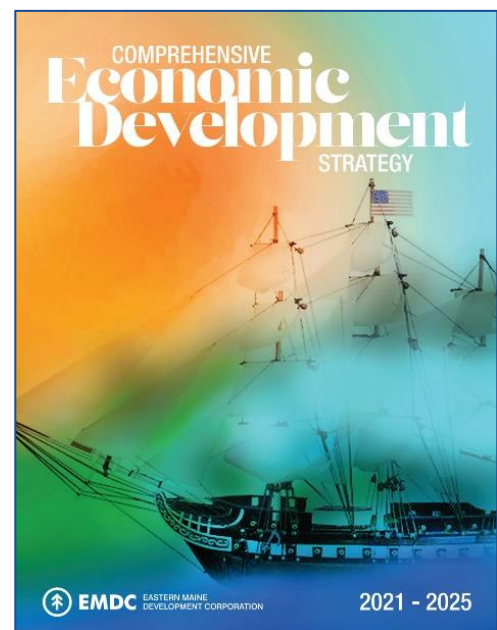
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2021

Purpose: Serves as the 2021 five-year update to previous efforts in 2016 that focused on developing strategies to spur economic growth following the massive layoffs and closures of 5 paper mills, decline of traditional manufacturing, and negative business impacts.

Vision Statement: Improve economic opportunity and increase jobs by strengthening the connectivity and collaboration between communities, businesses and individuals while fostering the region's long-term sustainability, resilience and prosperity

Project Goals:

- Broadband
 - Increase collaboration between communities with a regional broadband committee, regional needs assessment, identify gaps and develop strategies for improvement
 - Prioritize affordability and connectivity by increasing access in underserved areas and increasing regional broadband capacity that meets federal communications commission standards.
- Transportation
 - Enhance the movement of people with a regional needs assessment, support improvements and upgrade of roads and bridges, and increase public transportation network and infrastructure.
 - Enhance the movement of goods and services by identifying gaps in existing network, promoting the benefits of rail improvements and port infrastructure to businesses & communities and develop a business survey to assess Air Freight needs.
- Climate Resilience



- Support the goal and strategies of Maine’s climate Action Plan by developing a regional climate needs assessment, identifying building and transportation infrastructure for key concern, and provide specialized technical assistance to communities.
- Support clean energy innovation by assisting with grant development for projects that support renewable energy generation and climate adaptation, encourage investments in climate-ready infrastructure.
- **Workforce & Education**
 - Increase collaboration between education institutions and businesses by developing an ongoing survey to determine training needs and skills businesses seek. Promote and provide educational training opportunities for in Demand industries and support the increase of Micro Credentialing and certification programs.
 - Improve digital literacy of individuals and business by developing a survey to gauge digital literacy skills and provide digital literacy skills training.
 - Attract workforce to region by promoting and increasing regional assets and amenities and increasing participation in workforce services programs.
- **Business**
 - Promote regional assets & funding opportunities by promoting opportunity zones and department of economic and community development business site selection tool.
 - Enhance existing regional business services by developing economic gardening initiatives, providing increased support for rural business entrepreneurs, increasing number of businesses that hire workforce service participants or connect with impact lending programs.

Promotion of Research Development, Innovation and Workforce to Build a Sustainable Life Sciences Hub of Excellence Coalition in Eastern Maine

Purpose: Serves as a document to support the use of a life science hub in Bangor for Eastern Maine with partners, measures, funding and barriers.

Vision Statement: The Life Sciences Hub of Excellence in Eastern Maine will enhance long-term existing partnerships between life science organizations, education, economic development, and industry leaders.

Project Goals:

- Grow Local Talent
 - K12 - The Maine Science Park, led by the Maine Discovery Museum and the Maine Science Festival, will instill aspirations for future careers in science.
 - Higher Education - The University of Maine, through expanded facilities and programs, will enhance and expand higher education and research opportunities.
- Promote Innovation
 - The coalition will expand the capacity of existing Maine life sciences incubators, through equipment upgrades, programmatic support of startups, and investment funds tied to keeping business in Maine.
- Provide Supporting Infrastructure
 - Projects in childcare, housing, and transportation will support Maine's existing workforce and draw new people into the state.
- Promote Hubs of Excellence
 - The Eastern Maine life sciences coalition, which is characterized by a convergence of research, higher learning, skilled workforce and business, in a livable, healthy space, is by the Economic Development Strategy definition, a Hub of Excellence.

Promotion of Research, Development, Innovation and Workforce to Build a Sustainable Life Sciences Hub of Excellence Coalition in Eastern Maine

Vision for the Regional Growth Cluster
The Life Sciences Hub of Excellence in Eastern Maine will enhance long-term existing partnerships between life science organizations, education, economic development, and industry leaders. Our collective mission is to educate the next generation of life sciences leaders and perform cutting-edge, significant research leading to new discoveries and breakthroughs, products, business enterprises, and jobs. Through this coalition, we will navigate through the cycles of change that are reflected in our project components to Grow Local Talent, Promote Innovation, Provide Supporting Infrastructure, and Promote a Hub of Excellence.

The Life Sciences Hub of Excellence Coalition will be dedicated to life sciences and STEM education, which will create a foundation for future life sciences research and accelerate economic development. A regional focus aligned with Eastern Maine's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and the State of Maine's 10-year Economic Development Strategy provides the platform for this cluster to build on our existing assets to encourage people to stay and work in Maine. This project also aligns with Eastern Maine Development Corporation's regional CEDS plan published in July 2021 supporting life sciences economic development including research, business and job creation.

Economic Opportunity
 The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic affected every facet of our society. Individuals and institutions responded in real time, in perhaps one of the most rapid evolutions of personal and professional life that most living Americans had ever experienced. In the *2020 Year in Review*¹, the Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services and the Maine State Economist reported that state GDP fell by 4.1% in 2020. Maine, whose unofficial brand is "Vacationland", experienced its deepest losses in the hospitality and leisure sector. Restaurant and lodging were down 25% and 35%, respectively, compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Conversely, the Maine innovation economy, led by higher education and research institutions, not only weathered the pandemic, they thrived. The University of Maine reported in FY 2021 its highest levels of productivity, including institutional R&D expenditures of nearly \$180 million. Enrollment in graduate programs exceeded 2,300 students in Fall 2021, an all-time high.² The Jackson Laboratory (JAX) rapidly scaled its clinical research laboratory and by May 2021 had performed over 1.5 million COVID tests for partners including UMaine and Maine Maritime Academy. JAX developed the first COVID-19 mouse model to become widely available to researchers around the world. The MDI Biological Laboratory recruited two international research groups to its year-round facility. These examples of the success of Maine's life sciences sector during a massively disruptive pandemic illustrate the necessity of a robust knowledge-based economy to respond to intractable problems, the *resiliency* of the life sciences sector to adapt to ensure continuity of operations, and the creativity of the sector to identify and capitalize on new opportunities. MDM and MSF pivoted in their missions to provide expanded on-line opportunities. For these reasons, the life sciences sector in Maine is *uniquely prepared* to

¹ <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economic/sites/maine.gov/dafs/economic/files/inline-files/2020Year%20in%20Review.pdf>
² <https://umaine.edu/research/2021/05/07/university-of-maine-research-productivity-at-all-time-high-despite-pandemic/>

1

Bangor Waterfront Park and Performance Pavilion, August 2015


Purpose: Analysis of the current waterfront and performance pavilion with a strategic master plan to enhance residents and visitors' experience.

Vision: To heal the urban fabric of downtown Bangor, celebrate the heritage of the Bangor Waterfront, and create an inviting atmosphere.


Project Goals:

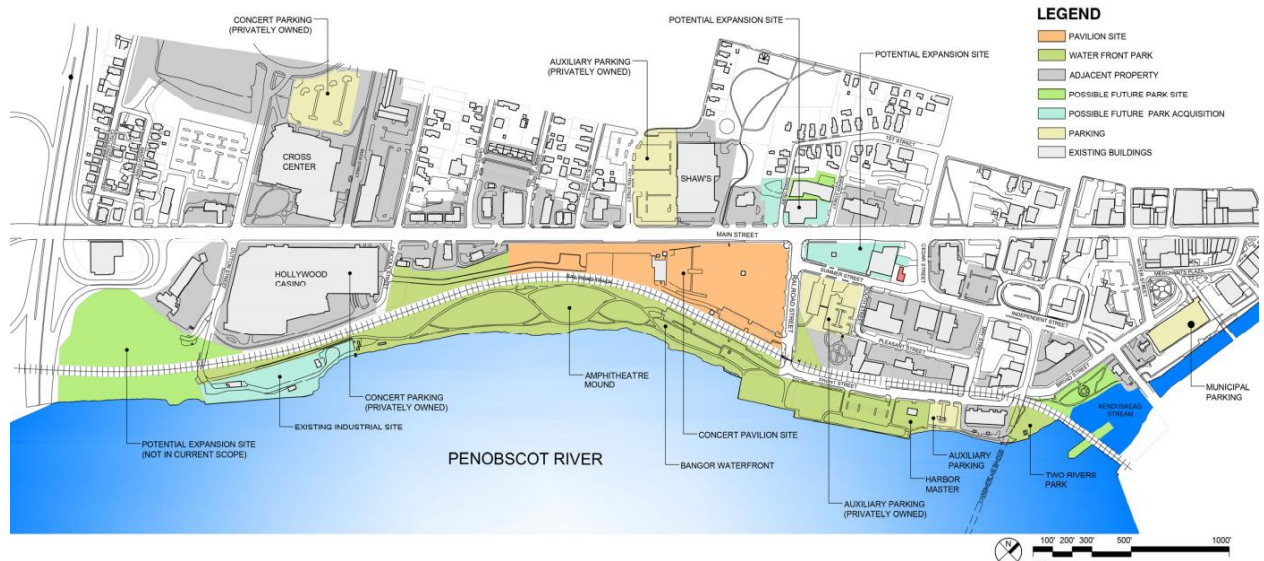
Bangor Waterfront Park and Performance Pavilion
 Master Plan Study

August 4, 2015



FTL Design Engineering Studio, Architecture + Engineering
 Terronco J. DeWitt & Associates, Landscape + Planning
 Harriman Associates, Associate Architecture + Engineering
 Jaffe Holden, Acoustics + Audio/Video





- A unified waterfront park experience and a permanent new performance facility
- New entry experience to park and music facility
- Enhanced access to the Penobscot River, renewal of railroad street with a bridge
- Increase the presence on Main Street with wayfinding and inviting entry points
- A 4-season year round use with water amenities, winter amenities and public sculptures.
- Enhance festivals (Folk Festival, GBCVB, Town Square)

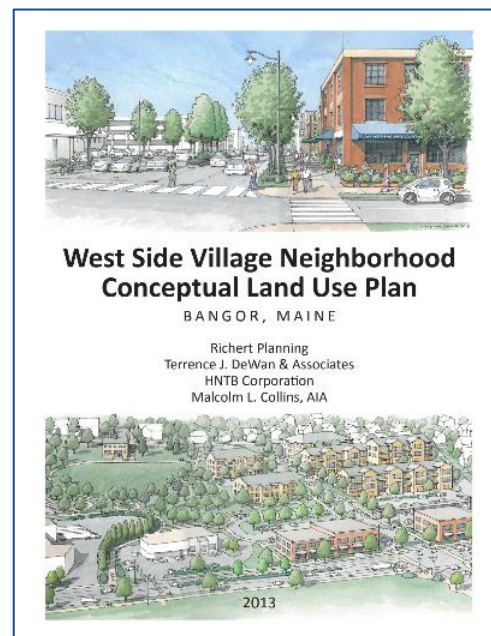
West Side Village Neighborhood Conceptual Land Use Plan, 2013

Purpose: An analysis of the current conditions, history and characteristics of the West Side Village neighborhood with conceptual plans and implementation strategies to move forward with those plans.

Vision: To create a vibrant livable community with inviting areas to gather residents, connecting more spaces, having arts and cultural displays in a neighborhood named by the community.

Project Goals:

- **Housing:** enforcing codes to improve the quality and standard of living. Expanding housing in the area near Main Street.
- **Entertainment District:** Addresses redesigning main street, adding additional housing to the area, enhancing transportation, and bussing options, approaching marketing efforts, connecting the waterfront and creating more pedestrian friendly building forms and streetscapes.
- **Parks and Recreation:** Creating walkable trails for both day and night settings, enhancing lighting, implanting more street trees and structure current neighborhood park with safer entry points.





Maine Business Enterprise Park

Purpose: Displaying a proposal for a ready-to-develop building site owned and operated by the City of Bangor

Land Use: Serves as professional offices, technology-based research and testing facilities, services businesses, manufacturing, processing, medical, general commercial, office and retail, bank operation center, Bangor International Airport, and Bangor Community College use.

Advantages:

- There is a total of 46.15 acres of land with 13 available lots. Consists of a campus-like atmosphere, wide streets, wooded areas and walking paths, Fitness Center within walking distance and protected by development covenants.
- Has access to a workforce of 167,000-employees for easy commuting distance. Located in a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art and redundant fiber optic cable. Adjacent to the Bangor International Airport and two miles from the interstate for ease of travel.

Bangor's finest commercial and industrial property

Build with us... MAINE BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARK

This ready-to-develop building site is:

- In a campus-like setting, owned and operated by the City of Bangor
- Environmentally approved with utilities in place
- Within easy commuting distance of a 167,000-employee workforce
- In a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art, redundant fiber optic cable
- Adjacent to Bangor International Airport, a CAT III, 24/7 full service airport
- Within 1.5 miles of three Interstate 95 interchanges, one interchange within 750 feet
- Within 30 miles of three ocean ports with service to European ports
- Near the Foreign Trade Zone offering duty-free importing

BANGOR, MAINE

Surprisingly Metro. Refreshingly Real.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 202-663-4300 www.bangormaine.gov

BanAir Industrial Park

Purpose: Displaying a proposal for a ready-to-develop building site owned and operated by the City of Bangor

Land Use: Serves as Urban Industry District (UID), Permitted Uses-Commercial, wholesaling, warehousing, general commercial and industrial uses.

Advantages:

- There are two available lots at 2.33 and 1.93 acres of land. These lots allow access to the seaport increasing the ability of foreign trade. Lots are part of Bangor’s designated Pine Tree Development Zone which allows qualified business to receive a host of economic incentive benefits.
- Has access to a workforce of 167,000-employees for easy commuting distance. Located in a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art and redundant fiber optic cable. Adjacent to the Bangor International Airport and two miles from the interstate for ease of travel.

Build with us... Bangor's finest commercial and industrial property

BANAIR INDUSTRIAL PARK

This ready-to-develop building site is:

- Owned and operated by the City of Bangor
- Environmentally approved with utilities in place
- Within easy commuting distance of a 167,000-employee workforce
- In a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art, redundant fiber optic cable
- Adjacent to Bangor International Airport, a CAT III, 24/7 full service airport
- Within two miles of three Interstate 95 interchanges
- Within 30 miles of three ocean ports with service to European ports
- Near the Foreign Trade Zone offering duty-free importing

BANGOR, MAINE
Surprisingly Metro. Refreshingly Real.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 207-965-4360 www.bangormaine.gov

BIA Commercial/ Industrial Park

Purpose: Displaying a proposal for a ready-to-develop building site owned and operated by the City of Bangor.

Land Use: Serves as industry and service, permitted uses-manufacturing, assembling, warehousing distribution centers, information processing and communications facilities, research and testing facilities, general commercial, office and retail, GE Power Systems and Bangor International Airport use.

Project Goals:

- There is a total of 80.52 acres of land with three available lots. Has a high visibility area with close proximity to retail and service centers.
- Has access to a workforce of 167,000-employees for easy commuting distance. Located in a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art and redundant fiber optic cable. Adjacent to the Bangor International Airport and two miles from the interstate for ease of travel.

Build with us... Bangor's finest commercial and industrial property

BIA COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL PARK

This ready-to-develop building site is:

- Owned and operated by the City of Bangor
- Environmentally approved with utilities in place
- Within easy commuting distance of a 167,000-employee workforce
- In a telecommunication hub with state-of-the-art, redundant fiber optic cable
- Adjacent to Bangor International Airport, a CAT III, 24/7 full service airport
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BANGOR, MAINE
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 207-965-4360 www.bangormaine.gov

Bangor Innovation Center

Purpose: Continual development of the entrepreneurial eco system as a recognized incubator by offering the physical space for new businesses to grow and develop.

Results: The incubator has operated for 22 years assisting over 50 companies and several of its “graduates” have become important components of the local economy. The 25,000 sq. ft. building offers seven individual offices and eight flex spaces for rent. Rental terms are flexible and modified to the financial situation of each tenant.

Project Goals:

- To encourage businesses related to the development of new products and manufacturing, enhancing international trade and the potential for significant job creation.
- To provide a facility for businesses related to both domestic and international aspects of the Bangor International Airport, serving as an initial location for Canadian businesses, space for companies conducting research and development and organizations with a strong business plan.

Bangor Innovation Center

The Bangor Innovation Center is operated by the BanAir Corporation, a non profit development corporation whose mission is to encourage and manage development at Bangor International Airport and in the City of Bangor. The goal of the incubator program is to stimulate entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation by providing the necessary physical facilities for new business development within the City of Bangor. During 2013 five (5) different businesses were members of the Bangor Innovation Center occupying an average of 65% of available area. The program is a component of the City of Bangor's economic development strategy which places a high priority on encouraging the growth of local business.

The BanAir Corporation manages a business incubator, the Bangor Innovation Center, in a building leased from the City of Bangor at 40 Johnson Ave. in the Bangor International Airport complex. The Bangor Innovation Center is a small business "incubator" 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 incubator has operated for 22 years assisting over 50 companies. Several of its "graduates," such as Ansewa Shoe, My Maine Bag, Anzac Electronics, and Chate Chemicals have become important components of the local economy.

Bangor Innovation Center operates in a 25,000 sq. ft. building at 40 Johnson Ave. in the Bangor International Airport Complex. The facility has seven individual offices, and eight "flex" space areas for rent. The flex space areas range from several hundred to 3,000 sq. ft. 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. Rental terms are flexible and are modified to the financial situation of each tenant. Included in the rental rate are electricity, heat, parking, rubbish removal, common area cleaning, and water and sewer fees. Lease terms range from one month to one year and can be extended up to two years.

The objectives of the Bangor Innovation Center are to:

- Encourage development of new manufacturing related businesses, especially operations which will develop new products.
- Accommodate businesses which may play a role in enhancing international trade.
- Provide a facility for businesses that are related to both domestic and

Contact Information

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04401

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Second floor, City Hall
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Hours
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Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Email
comin.dcc@bangormaine.gov


BanAir Corporation Vacant Industrial/Commercial Property Sites Specifications

Purpose: Overview of the current operations of Ban Air with specifications of a vacant industrial/commercial property.

Site Specifics: The site is owned by BanAir Corporation and has a total land area of 82 acres. Vacant property can be used for commercial and industrial uses, residential use or to further the Bangor International Airport expansion.



Project Overview:

- Details the current advantages of transportation (highway, airport, rail and seaport access), Infrastructure (public water, sanitary sewer, electrical, natural gas and road access), and services (police, fire and medical departments)



**1381 HAMMOND STREET
BANGOR**

**VACANT INDUSTRIAL / COMMERCIAL PROPERTY
SITE SPECIFICATIONS**

73 Harlow Street
Bangor, Maine 04401
Phone: 207-992-4280
Fax: 207-992-4487
www.choosebangor.com

Page 1 of 4

Bangor Foreign Trade Zone No. 58, Month Year

Purpose: Serves as an application for a zone use permit for those who need access to foreign trade.

Supportive details: The Foreign Trade Zone No. 58 is supported by a developed infrastructure including highway access, overnight trucking services and a full-service passenger and cargo airport.

Advantages:

- Security for goods, lower charges, duty, insurance, capital and overhead savings, warehouse receipts, no time limits, immediate recovery of drawback on goods entered in the zone for subsequent export and can choose to cancel and ship elsewhere.

Bangor Foreign Trade Zone No. 58

Bangor Foreign Trade Zone No. 58 is located on 33 acres within the Port of Entry in the Bangor International Airport complex. There is a 25,000 sq. ft. processing building with some space available for light manufacturing or warehousing. There is also 25 acres of land available for the construction of special purpose buildings. Foreign Trade Zone No. 58 is supported by a developed infrastructure including:

- Immediate access to the U.S. Interstate Highway System (I95).
- Fifteen major trucking companies with overnight service from Philadelphia to Moncton, New Brunswick.
- Bangor International Airport, a full service passenger and cargo airport with regularly scheduled airline service by Delta, Continental and other carriers.

What is a foreign trade zone?

A foreign trade zone is an authorized area, considered outside of U.S. Customs territory, but under Customs supervision. Foreign merchandise transported into a zone is considered in international commerce, which delays formal Customs entry procedures and payment of duties until the merchandise enters U.S. Customs territory for domestic consumption. Therefore, distribution and processing can be conducted within the protective environment of a U.S. foreign trade zone with resulting savings in duty costs, cash-flow schedules, and import/export paper work. The Bangor Corporation, operator of Bangor Foreign Trade Zone #58 offers a full range of services for zone users from loading/unloading, manpower

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Hours
Staff available by appointment

Appendix F: Organizational Summaries

The City of Bangor has several organizations within the city assisting toward fields of housing, quality of life, business, commerce, and entrepreneurship. Below is a list detailing the works being done within each organization for the field provided.

Housing

Bangor Housing Authority: Provides affordable housing opportunities and assistance for low to moderate income households offering both apartments and houses for rent through a variety of programs including Section 8.

Penquis: Assist individuals and families in preventing, reducing, or eliminating poverty in their lives and, through partnerships, to engage the community in addressing economic and social needs. Providing housing for seniors, families, and individuals making 60% or less of the Area Median Income.

Community Housing of Maine: Develops, owns, and maintains high-quality affordable housing for working families and older Mainers. Currently working on a project that was approved by Bangor City Council to add 21 new units and fix up the Schoolhouse Apartments.

Quality of Life

Bangor Housing Authority: Enriching the lives of residents through programs that support budgeting, financial sustainability and homebuyers guides and assistance.

Penquis: Offering services from behavioral health and disability support, childcare and preschool, legal services/family law, finances, senior services, transportation, and youth programs.

YMCA: A community leader in supporting children, adults, and families in their lifelong quest for physical, emotional, and social wellness.

Eastern Maine Development Corporation: Working on efforts toward broadband, transportation, workforce and education, and climate resistance.

Business, Commerce, Entrepreneurship

Ban Air Corporation: A private, non-profit corporation providing lending services, property management and real estate marketing and development.

International Trade Center: A leading source for international business assistance offering customized consulting, research, and an extensive network of connections across Maine and around the world to help businesses expand global markets for their products and services.

Bangor Innovation Center: Offers a business location for small businesses during their startup and early growth stages. Valuable resource for entrepreneurs providing flexible operating space at supportive rental rates. Accommodating manufacturers, research and development, distributors, and business service companies.

Eastern Maine Development Corporation: provide financing solutions and individualized counseling that nurture businesses. Promote development through public and private investment, planning and fostering strategic partnerships.

Downtown Bangor Business Partnership: Promotes and markets activities that enhance the distinctive identity of Downtown Bangor which encourages retention and growth of commercial, residential, and cultural life within the Downtown district. Advocating, assisting, and marketing for businesses from sales to events.

Maine Discovery Museum: Provides unique educational opportunities for children and families in Maine. Currently working with **Jackson Laboratory, Maine Science Festival** and the **University of Maine** as the Life Sciences Hub of Excellence in Eastern Maine making Bangor a center of innovation with a goal of increased jobs, research and commercialization of technology.

Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce: the voice of the business community. Its mission is to promote and advance a vital, healthy business environment. Getting behind legislature that will support businesses, helping employers with workforce education and training, provide focus groups to collect feedback on what's needed, hosting law seminars and connecting businesses with resources or people for their next steps.

UpStart Maine: A coalition on entrepreneur-support programs and organizations in the greater Bangor Region connecting innovative entrepreneurs to resources, customers, and each other for greater partnership and the opportunity to scale those businesses.

University of Maine

- **Advanced Manufacturing Center:** Helps businesses, entrepreneurs, inventors, and researchers to transform ideas into tangible proof of concepts, prototypes, or commercialized products by offering engineering, research, support, and manufacturing services.
- **Aquaculture Research Institute:** to serve Maine as an objective authority on aquaculture research with the goal of advancing a sustainable aquaculture future in Maine and beyond.
- **Advanced Structures & Composites Center:** a world-leading, interdisciplinary center for research, education, and economic development encompassing material sciences, manufacturing, and the engineering of composites and structures. Cultivating jobs and businesses.
- **Center of Research on Sustainable Forest:** Leveraging Intelligent Informatics and Smart Data for Improved Understanding of Northern Forest Ecosystem Resilience to enhance understanding of Maine's forest resources.
- **Climate Change Institute:** Fosters learning and discovery through excellence in graduate academic programs, addresses local and global needs through basic and applied research, and contributes research-based knowledge to make a difference in people's lives.
- **Forest Bioproducts Research Institute** Advances forest-based technologies and supports state and regional forest industries by understanding the scientific underpinnings, system behavior, and policy implications for the production and adoption of forest-based bioproducts, to harness our available forest resources in new ways.
- **Frontier Institute for Research and Sensor Technologies** Developing and implementing innovative research and education programs in sensor systems related to grand challenges in energy, health, environment, and economic well-being.

- **Innovative Media, Research and Commercialization Center:** Provides research and prototyping laboratories, makerspaces, audiovisual production spaces, performance spaces, and classrooms, each designed and staffed to welcome, support, and engage all learners.
- **Institute of Medicine:** Collaborating researchers and educators in partnership with health care providers and other stakeholders are dedicated to the advancement of human health and wellbeing through the discovery and learning in health and life sciences, from basic and translational research to clinical practices and healthcare workforce development.
- **Maine Center for Genetics in the Environment** Foster broad-based environmental genetics collaborations, partnerships, and infrastructure that contribute to sustainability of current and future natural resource industries and agriculture, improve human health and wellbeing, and prepare a technologically skilled workforce.
- **Maine Sea Grant:** Receives funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, matched by the state of Maine and other non-federal sources. Promoting science and education for the sustainable development, management, and stewardship of Maine's marine and coastal resources
- **Sen. George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions** A leader in launching and supporting partnerships in which interdisciplinary teams of students and faculty from universities and colleges throughout the state collaborate with diverse stakeholders to tackle and help find solutions to a wide range of urgent sustainability challenges that directly benefit Maine and other regions.

Husson University

- **College of Business:** 47 programs of study dedicated to preparing students for a variety of careers in all aspects of public sector, private and corporate sector and nonprofit organizational work.
- **iEx Center:** an innovation hub that develops solutions for real world problems using advanced technology associated with extended reality (XR) experiences such as virtual and augmented reality.