

Message from The Vice President, Lynne Paul

The Maine Community Development Association (MCDA) is having another busy year working on community development in Maine.

We will have another busy year working on community development in Maine. It will include some great discussions on emerging issues like the new lead paint

***The Maine Affordable Housing Network Presents Housing Bond Forums  
Holly Baldwin, Maine Affordable Housing Network***

The Maine Affordable Housing Network (MAHN) is hosting three forums to help Maine State Housing Authority generate ideas for how the \$12 million Housing Bond funds would best serve Maine's need for affordable housing. MSHA officials will be present to receive your comments. Comments may also be sent to MSHA by e-mail, Housing [Bond@mainehousing.org](mailto:Bond@mainehousing.org).

The \$12 million bond has been allocated as follows:

- ✎ Renovating or replacing affordable apartments and homes: \$2 million
- ✎ Providing predevelopment costs to nonprofit housing organizations: \$1.2 million
- ✎ Providing housing for mental health services consumers: \$2.75 million
- ✎ Providing housing for victims of domestic violence: \$2 million
- ✎ Providing housing for people who are homeless: \$2.75 million
- ✎ Reducing costs of acquiring land for development of new affordable housing: \$1.2 million

The forums will be held:

- April 23: Rockport, 3:30 p.m. Camden National Bank
- April 24: Westbrook, 1:00 p.m. Westbrook Housing Authority
- April 25: Bangor, 1:00 p.m. Bangor Housing Authority

For more information, or to RSVP, contact Holly Baldwin at the Maine Affordable Housing Network, 882-7552 ext 168, [hlb@ceimaine.org](mailto:hlb@ceimaine.org) or check the Maine State Housing Authority website, [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org).

***Aroostook County Receives Rural Development Empowerment Zone Designation***

It took the Northern Maine Development Corporation more than three years and many applications before Rural Development designated it as an Empowerment Zone. The NMDC application was one of only two that received this designation in the third round this year. It is also the only Empowerment Zone in the Northeast.

The Zone includes part of Houlton and runs north toward Madawaska, covering about 770 square miles and 29,000 people.

This designation is very important to Aroostook County because it will allow Northern Maine Development Corporation to apply for Federal funds earmarked for Empowerment Zones, such as a share of about \$42 million that is available for economic and business development.

For more information contact the Northern Maine Development Corporation at 1-800-427-8736.

### ***Westbrook and the Use of Brownfield Money*** ***Matt Eddy, City of Westbrook***

In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected the City of Westbrook for a *Brownfield's Pilot Grant*. The grant is focused on the redevelopment of Brownfield sites. EPA defines Brownfield sites as follows:

Abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

The total amount of funding, \$250,000 will be used for environmental analyses, planning, and engineering, as the Westbrook looks to redevelop a number of sites.

EPA uses Brownfield monies to leverage public and private funds to attract "clean" businesses, create good jobs, increase the tax base, improve recreational facilities and generate public pride. Pilot funding can be used to perform environmental assessments in order to develop plans for cleanup, commercial redevelopment, or the creation of open space. EPA's Pilot programs also work to ensure that all members of the community are informed about Brownfield issues and take an active part in the decision-making process regarding redevelopment.

Westbrook's story is no different than that of other communities. Like so many older industrial communities, most of Westbrook's lumber, textile, and pulp and paper mills have shut down or reduced activity in recent years. For Westbrook, the most significant of these closings is that of portions of the Sappi Pulp and Paper Mill (S.D Warren). Sappi had long served as the city's largest employer and in 1998 represented 26.7 percent of the municipal tax base. In April 1999, Sappi announced that it would cease all pulp operations and dramatically reduce its paper manufacturing capacity. This had tremendous impact on the local economy, including the elimination of hundreds of jobs and the reduction of local tax revenue (only 4% of the total). In addition to Sappi, Westbrook also had four other abandoned or underutilized sites: the Maine Rubber Mill, the site of the Foye Mill and Stultz Electric, the Dana Warp Mill, and the City's former sewage lagoon.

Activities in Westbrook's Pilot include:

- Conducting environmental assessments of the Foye Mill/Stultz property, Saccarrappa Island, Maine Rubber sites, and the city's Wastewater Treatment Lagoon site;
- Evaluating cleanup and reuse options for the three target sites, including the development of concept plans and preliminary engineering;
- Using greenspace funding to conduct assessments at the Lagoon and city owned river sites and evaluate cleanup and reuse options that will create recreational areas to increase public access to and use of the river; and
- Developing a community outreach program to involve residents in the decision-making process at the targeted sites.

The process, thus far, has led to plans to build a new parking garage, a new 125,000 square foot office building, a new trail and recreation area along the old lagoon site. At the same time and with private funding, the Dana Warp Mill has been completely redeveloped.

### *News from the Office of Community Development*

**2002 Implementation Workshop** will be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Augusta at the American Legion Post #2. It will be a 1½ day catered event. There will be no audit workshop this year, it will be discussed during the financial portion of the training.

**CDBG Administrator Workshop** will be held on June 10 and 11 at the Maine Motor Transport Building in Augusta. No rehab technician certification workshops are scheduled at this time. DECD is planning a re-certification program to update the people who are already certified.

**CD Appreciation Day** is August 16, 2002. It will not be held in the Arboretum this year. It is under reconstruction. DECD is presently looking for a suitable site. For those that are interested, Mike Baran will be looking into obtaining Portland Sea Dogs game tickets.

**2003 CDBG Program Guidelines and Rule-making** will start earlier this year, although release of funds may not be any earlier. The target date for the Public Facility and Infrastructure applications is before Thanksgiving and Housing Assistance for after the holidays.



### **Downeast Harbors Portland, ME**

The Office of Community Development (OCD) of the Department of Economic and Community Development is hosting the 2002 Council of State Community Development Agencies (COSCODA) annual conference in Portland on September 21 – 25 at the Eastland Park Hotel. COSCODA, founded in 1974, serves as the advocate for the interests of states in the areas of community development, affordable housing, homelessness and local economic development.

“We are looking forward to hosting our counterparts from across the country” said Orman Whitcomb, OCD Program Manager. The conference gives the state a chance to highlight its accomplishments through the use of CDBG, HOME and Homeless funds provided by the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Some of the topics to be discussed include Downeast Downtown – a revitalization approach, Maine’s Strategic Plan to end Homelessness and Policy Academy, Development Activities in the Floodplain, How HOME Helps the Homeless and a tour of Bath housing projects. HUD staff from Washington will provide briefings and COSCODA staff will update legislative and policy issues. After hours’ activities include a bus trip to Freeport,

the President's reception at the Portland Museum of Art, and a Casco Bay Cruise and lobster bake at Peak's Island.

The first notice was e-mailed to COSCDA members on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. A preliminary agenda and registration materials will be sent during May.

For additional information please contact Mike Baran @ (207) 624-9816, [mike.baran@state.me.us](mailto:mike.baran@state.me.us) or Diane Langlois @ (207) 624-9822, [diane.langlois@state.me.us](mailto:diane.langlois@state.me.us)