



Penobscot County Community Conversation, January 14, 2016

Vision

- Establish a just relationship with Penobscot nation
- Sustainable economy America's happiest and healthiest list
- Reduction in substance abuse and best place for recovery
- Heart of Maine
- Best place to raise a family
- Dynamic center of entrepreneurship
- End hunger w/economically vibrant
- Health and wellness
- Reduce stigma w/mental illness and connection to whole body
- Impact of poverty
- Maintain cultural and arts
- Seniors and gathering places
- Build on partnerships for growth
- Broadband
- Education partnerships
- Funding for students-low income
- Keep students in Maine
- Invest in human capital, build workforce
- County and state people feel safe and educate youth and people respectful
- Diversity-invite and embrace
- Learning economy
- Age friendly-universal access
- Vibrant healthy place to visit and live
- Nat. res capital (natural resource?)
- Recognize and utilize transportation assets to world
- Region of collaboration
- Culture of service in youth
- Stronger public research university
- Encourage participation in arts-engage youth constructively
- Access to arts, education

Strengths

- Collaborative attitude (twin cities)
- Valuable infrastructure-medical education, arts
- Natural resources-Millinocket
- Great region of volunteers and friendliness of people
- We are a county that serves a region-robust support systems, infrastructure
- We have the land grant institution for Maine- major resource for research and knowledge
- Great leaders willing to listen and take a risk
- Strong work ethic
- CHLB-collaboration and leadership
- Schools are phenomenal and welcoming
- We are an affordable place (land)
- Young entrepreneurs risk takers-make it better
- Agricultural resources, young farmers
- Transportation
- Outdoor recreational opportunities
- Healthcare resources
- Public safety
- Rich history-culture, arts, etc
- Great network for young professionals
- Highest density of institutions for learning
- World class hiking (within an hour's drive)

Challenges

- Access to early childhood high quality educ
- Access to housing
- Transfer resources outside hub-tale of 2 cities, urban to rural
- Access to public transportation
- High speed internet
- Road infrastructure
- Need more recovery programs
- Need more re-entry programs for incarceration
- Appreciation of resources and assets (to leverage in the attraction conversation)
- Or vs. And-more to AND (benefit both)
- Resistant to change or new opportunities
- Substance abuse
- Better access to mental health
- Poverty (ACES and generational)
- Aging workforce
- Loss of human capital-youth leaving state
- High cost of energy
- Homes not energy efficient
- Access to healthcare
- Economic development
- Maintain public services
- Improve overall health
- Respect and appreciate veterans
- Lack of civility in public discourse
- Service center-to meet needs of community/achieve balance

Build on strengths and address challenges

- We lack a shared vision as a state. MCF has opportunity to LEAD in a non-partisan way, to create a shared vision for the state.
- Focus on positive, not the negative
- When parents are depressed they teach their kids to think this way; we need to change this
- Need a qualified work force; we have a strong chamber
- We need to communicate our strengths and communicate better with each other
- Make it easy for people to access the help they need
- CHLB-how does Bangor work with outlying areas?
- Guard well the opportunities less they be robbed
- Rural vs. service center
- Substance abuse and recovery project w/CHLB opportunities for MCF to provide challenge grant
- Aging population is an asset. Connecting people with knowledge with those that need it
- Economic development Δ workforce intricately connected \leftrightarrow health & human services \rightarrow this directly affects economic growth
- Shift in the way we think—Bangor-to reach out, be more proactive instead of people coming to Bangor
- Break down silos-open to different perspectives and ways of doing things: build on education hub, broad band growth; don't lose the art of writing and public speaking
- We are proud people (as Mainers) and we are not good at asking for help. What can we do personally to reach out to help others?
- Daycare & senior center in one facility
- Communication: how do we let others know what we have? Would there be a clearing house to make connections?
- Collaborate, communicate, put away egos
- Reputational assets-how do we make this work for us?
- Substance abuse-hug albatross-we need to come together and work on this: prevent, treat, enforce
- Collaboration is a huge strength, continue conversations
- Technology and connectivity-we need to organize and not duplicate efforts
- We offer a great quality of life here, we need more advocate for this region
- Right leaders in rural areas? Leverage impact investing. Engage people in problem solving
- Need to increase resources for the area
- How can we break down boundaries? We are all connected, we need to work together. We need a shared vision.
- We are in a global economy and a global system. How do we fit in?
- Need to be more proactive vs. reactive. Take the time to think and plan for the future