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Gardiner Receives Grant for Waterfront Project

Gardiner, ME, April 6, 2008 —Gardiner's waterfront project got a major financial boost recently thanks to some new State grant funding. Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) announced it will provide Gardiner a \$150,000 Community Enterprise (CE) grant for the City's waterfront project. The City applied for CE grant funding to go towards completing the boardwalk and making other site improvements, such as installing new lighting, parking and greenspace areas. Fortunately, the timing of the grant announcement allows the City the opportunity to move forward with some of these improvements in 2008.

The DECD grant announcement comes a few months after the City received news it will be receiving a \$147,000 federal earmark in 2008. Senator Collins and Snowe presented the city's request in the United States Senate and gained final approval for the federal funds in December of 2007. The total of grant funding, for the next phase of the waterfront project, now stands at just under \$300,000.

Gardiner last made significant improvements to the waterfront park in 2006. With grant funding totaling over \$850,000, and support from many funding state and federal agencies (including DECD, MaineDOT, Department of Conservation, Land for Maine's Future, and others), the City built phase I of the project. Phase I included installation of over 525 linear feet of new timber boardwalk and railing over new shoreline-stabilizing timber crib sections. The DECD and State of Maine continue to be a major supporter of Gardiner's downtown revitalization and waterfront redevelopment efforts, with this recent CE grant announcement.

The City has been in the process of finalizing a site plan for the waterfront, since January of this year. Kent Associates and Wright Pierce Engineering helped conduct several interactive public

meetings to finalize a site plan that defines what the waterfront park will look like for years to come. It has been the goal of the public process to view the future of the entire waterfront comprehensively, and blend the new expansion area with the original boat launch site. The final plan will include recommendations on how to improve gateway and pedestrian access to the park, balance new greenspace and parking areas, improve lighting and many other aspects. Overall, the plan will create an exciting waterfront park destination for visitors and an economic boost to the city's downtown.

The future of the waterfront in Gardiner looks bright, as does the Kennebec River. The Kennebec is currently the focus of an ambitious and significant regional action plan, which touts it as a regional resource for recreation, tourism, economic development and the environment. See the Kennebec River Initiative's Action Plan at <http://www.kcsxcd.org/Projects/KRI%20info/KRI%20Page.htm> for more details on current regional efforts.

Gardiner's waterfront planning project is included in a group of 13 other City planning and design projects, referred to in the Bundled Projects RFP. If interested in learning more about the waterfront project, please click on http://www.gardinermaine.com/Public_Documents/GardinerME_EcDev/waterfront or contact Jason Simcock at 207-582-6888, or email to ecodev@gardinermaine.com.