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## **Gardiner Announces Waterfront Groundbreaking August 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Gardiner, ME, July 29, 2009** —Visitors to Gardiner's Kennebec River Waterfront Project will soon notice some exciting changes happening at the park! Phase II of the project begins with a groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM. The ceremony will be held under a tent at the center of the waterfront park and feature Maine Department of Economic Development (DECD) Commissioner John Richardson as the keynote speaker. The City will also recognize its many funding partners, including the Savings Bank of Maine and other agencies. The public is encouraged to join the event and celebrate the beginning of this exciting phase of the project!

Construction for the waterfront project will kick off this August and includes improvements to the Maine Avenue/Depot Square gateway entrance. The Savings Bank of Maine is funding improvements to Depot Square as part of the overall waterfront project. Other future Bank funded waterfront improvements include a new information center, Water Street park gateway entrance, and two pedestrian plaza locations including "Big Hook Pass" and "Floodtide Terrace."

While the project officially begins in Depot Square, the City is wrapping up the bid document phase for much of the remaining project. Public bids will be advertised in August, with notice going out via newspaper and city website. Once the construction contract is awarded by the City, work can begin as early as September. Work will include extension of the boardwalk, and installation of new lighting, greenspace and parking areas.

Much effort has gone into the final design process since the Bank announced its \$1 Million contribution for the project earlier this year. A team representing both the City and the Bank have incorporated design ideas and elements that will result in a world class waterfront park right

in downtown Gardiner. Recently, the Bank and the City agreed to a license agreement which authorizes the Bank to work in specific city right of way areas (such as Depot Square) to make improvements. Other “enhancement areas” will have their own license agreements. Each agreement provides the legal framework and understanding on how bank funding will be utilized at each location.

“The City is excited about kicking off the next phase of the waterfront project, and recognizing all of our partners,” says City Mayor Andrew MacLean. “The project will have such a positive impact on the community and region for many years to come.”

Including Phase I of the project, the City has raised over \$1.6 Million in grant funding to date. Funding partners include Maine Department of Economic Development, MaineDOT, Land for Maine’s Future program, the Robinson Trust, Department of Conservation, US Department of Interior, and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The current phase includes over \$800,000 in state and federal grant funding. Local match is provided by in-kind services where necessary, such as the public works department, and downtown tax increment finance district revenues. Other than funding, there has been tremendous support from the Gardiner Rotary Club and various volunteer City Committees, such as the Waterfront Task Force.

The Kennebec River 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.kcswd.org/Projects/KRI%20info/KRI%20Page.htm> for more details on current regional efforts. If interested in learning more about Gardiner’s project, please click on [http://www.gardinermaine.com/Public\\_Documents/GardinerME\\_EcDev/waterfront](http://www.gardinermaine.com/Public_Documents/GardinerME_EcDev/waterfront) or contact Jason Simcock at 207-582-6888, or email to [econdev@gardinermaine.com](mailto:econdev@gardinermaine.com).



Waterfront Amphitheater with Information Center in background.