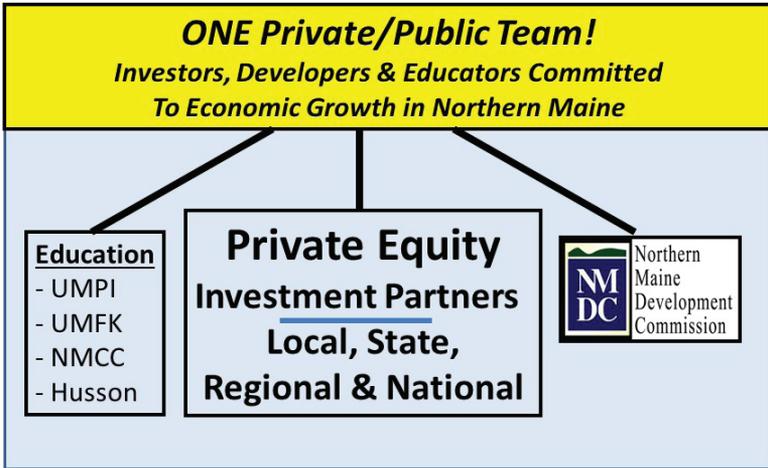




Aroostook Partnership Annual Report 2019



“The Aroostook Partnership”



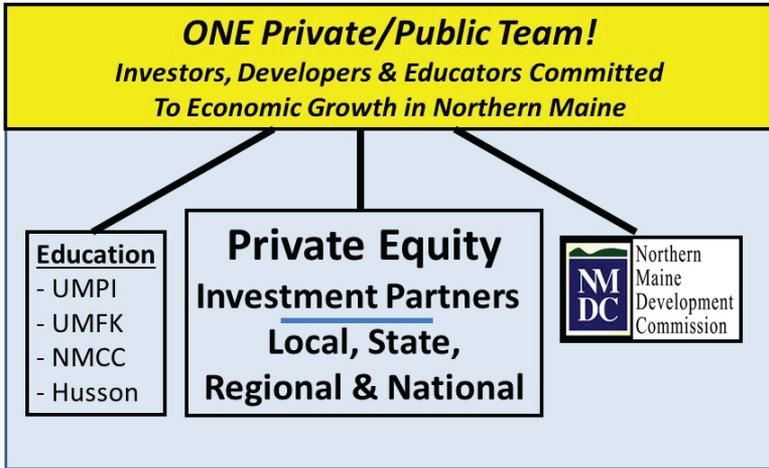
Mission Statement

Aroostook Partnership is the private/public partnership speaking with one voice and engaging the private sector leadership, talents, and resources in the region to ensure the economic survival and growth of Aroostook County.



www.arostookpartnership.org

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State Strategic Plan

The Aroostook Partnership had a hand in crafting a new state strategic plan for economic development.

Paul Towle, CEO/President of AP, participated in months of meetings to give perspective on rural Maine and its particular challenges and opportunities.

The initiative, which was led by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), in partnership with other government agencies, business leaders and private organizations, focuses on strategies to enhance economic growth, particularly in rural Maine, and address Maine's workforce challenges. The strategic plan is the first of its kind in more than two decades.

The ten-year, nonpartisan plan will serve as an economic roadmap for the state and offer strategic recommendations for how Maine can build a strong, diversified, and sustainable economy powered by a highly-skilled, robust workforce. The plan's guiding vision statement calls for Maine, by 2030, to be known as a national leader for its forward-looking work in creating a diverse and sustainable economy.

A six-member steering committee which included officials from the Finance Authority of Maine, ConnectMe, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Governor's Office of Policy and Management and the Maine State Economist will lead the development of the strategic plan. The plan will be crafted with the close help of economic development and business

Vision Statement for the Strategic Plan:
By 2030, Maine will be known as a national leader for its forward-looking work in creating a diverse and sustainable economy. We will empower innovators and entrepreneurs, attract young families and new businesses, and revitalize rural Maine so that every person will know unequivocally that living in Maine means not only an unmatched quality of life, but an unmatched opportunity for good-paying jobs in innovative industries across the entire state.

organizations, like the Aroostook Partnership, and sought input from across all economic sectors, industries and regions in Maine. The Department of Economic and Community Development convened meetings across the state to obtain public input to help inform the plan and the department issued regular progress updates to the public and the business community.

The Strategic Plan was to be delivered to the Governor's office on November 15, 2019 and will be available to all legislators prior to the start of second session of the 129th Legislature.



AROOSTOOK
Partnership

Aroostook Partnership

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Letter from the President/CEO

My first year as president of Aroostook Partnership has given me the time to gain a deeper understanding of the great potential we have within Aroostook County. This potential will be unlocked through the commitments made by you, AP's talented, passionate and invested leaders, guiding us to a more diverse and stable economy and an even more fulfilling "County way of life". I thank the Partnership's major investors for giving me this opportunity to lead this important effort, and for taking the time to offer your counsel on priorities and helping to build our vision for success.



Paul Towle

The Partnership has made significant progress in the three priorities identified and worked on over the past year. This is largely due to the strong leadership and membership of our three committees. Our Chairs, Todd Saucier, Jason Parent and Jason House are true subject matter experts on the issues in which their committees are focused; Population Growth- Education to Industry, Legislative Advocacy and Business Growth and Expansion respectively. The structure of AP requires an active working Board and that is precisely what we have developed with 28 active committee members now engaged in the priorities identified by our Board. The Partnership works because it is a genuine, collaborative partnership consisting of Aroostook County's most passionate leaders, thinkers and doers.

Our Workforce Growth and Education to Industry Committee gained significant traction raising awareness of the many career opportunities across Aroostook County to our students and educators on the many career opportunities across Aroostook County. We attended CACE Day at PIHS with over 500 education professionals where AP Chair Matt McHatten addressed the group with a powerful message of AP's support in linking our youth to dynamic County career opportunities. Other activities we lead or participated in included; JMG and JA career readiness events, the Region Two Career Fair, Wisdom High School Career Day, a Business-Educator Social in Fort Kent and the growing Plan For Your Future Day with student tours of 17 Central Aroostook businesses. Additionally, I am actively engaged with numerous committees, working groups and advisory councils at all levels of education. Our message is simple and consistent. Let us show you the many great career opportunities in Aroostook and how to obtain an affordable post-secondary degree or credential of value to begin your career right here in The County. Our work toward all these imperatives has just begun.

Our Legislative Advocacy efforts are unique to Maine with no other county or region engaged in anything similar. Our goal is to set politics aside and unify our Aroostook delegation behind a common goal focused on the mission of AP addressing Aroostook County's imperatives. This work is done consistently throughout the year by direct interactions with our delegation involving several interested organizations across Aroostook. We are fortunate to have leadership in both parties in Augusta and AP has established relationships and mechanisms to effectively engage with them on legislation impacting

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Letter from the President/CEO

The County.

The Business Growth and Expansion Committee has begun to target specific growth industries which stand the best chance for success in Aroostook. We will certainly attract new investments, sectors and businesses, but our most significant job growth will likely come from our established businesses and new natural resource-based products on the horizon. We are blessed with abundant rainfall, rich tillable soils, over 3 million acres of managed forestland and an unmatched quality of life. These assets will play an important role in addressing many of the climate change concerns increasingly being raised across Maine, the US and the world. I like what I see coming for Aroostook as investments in green technologies and products are increasing across the planet with new markets continuing to open up for biobased products which we will provide.

One of my most important roles over the past year has been portraying a message of hope, growth and prosperity. I do this through a county and statewide effort promoting success strategies to address population loss, growing our economy and securing Aroostook County's seat at the table in Augusta. One such effort earned me a spot on the working group charged with developing Maine's Strategic 10-year Economic Development Plan, the first of its kind in over two decades. This 9-month project involved our core Working Group of 18 which met regularly in Augusta and eventually included over 50 subcommittee subject matter experts. During this time, we hosted two summits and eight regional meetings with over 1,000 total participants.

My experience working with this diverse committee of economic, business and educational leaders has enabled me to form solid long-term working relationships with dozens capable and influential leaders from across Maine. The process educated me on many aspects of state policy making and sound economic decisioning, while also giving me a great stage to help educate my colleagues on the important differences, challenges and opportunities inherent to Aroostook County. I constantly communicated the importance of farming and forestry to rural Maine and explained how these natural resource-based industries are so vital to our economies, while also driving the success or failure of our supporting business sectors. I believe my efforts to educate committee members on the imperatives of ag and forestry in Northern Maine's economy contributed greatly to highlighting these industries in our final plan submitted to the Governor last Friday.

With a new economic plan to guide us, continued support from our investor-members and a new cadre of influencers from which to leverage support, the future in Aroostook is bright. I offer my sincerest respect and appreciation to the Officers, Board of Directors, and Members of Aroostook Partnership for your belief in what more The County can become, and will certainly achieve, through your commitment of time, talent and treasure to our important mission.

Sincerely,

Paul Towle
President & CEO
Aroostook Partnership

AP Board Members

Officers

Matt McHatten - Chair - MMG Insurance

Greg LaFrancois - VC -Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital
Robert Clark - Public VC- Northern Maine Development Commission

Matt Nightingale- Secretary - Katahdin Trust Co.

Jennifer Buckingham - Treasurer - Tempo Employment

Jacob Buck - Maine Malt House
Ryan Bushey - Louisiana Pacific
Jon McLaughlin - SADC
Carl Flora - Loring Development Authority

Timothy Doak - RSU 39

Mike Kelley Jr. - Machias Savings Bank

Dave Cyr - NMDC Board Chair

Joy Barresi-Saucier - Empower Aroostook

Gina LeBlanc Eggert - Emera Maine

Tim Crowley - Northern Maine Community College

Ray Rice - University of Maine at Presque Isle

Scott Voisine - University of Maine at Fort Kent

Jennifer Flynn - Husson University

Board Members

Jason House - TD Bank

Kris Doody - Cary Medical Center

Ginger Kieffer - Momentum Aroostook

Todd Saucier - UIG

Carter Vaillancourt - Daigle Oil

Ryan Rogers - Dead River Co.

Cheri Doak - Key Bank

Jason Parent - ACAP

Chris Anderson - FA Peabody

Aroostook Partnership Major Investors



Letter From the Chair

To Our Membership:

In 2019, I am pleased to report that The Aroostook Partnership continued to deliver upon its mission of advancing the economy of the County. Under the leadership of our President and CEO Paul Towle, we worked to increase member engagement, represented the interests of our area both locally and statewide, and increased initiatives focused on workforce development. As a result, we were able to take important steps in continuing to reverse trends that negatively impact our future.



Matt McHatten

First, in the area of workforce, our Education to Industry Committee built upon a relationship with County educators that is as strong as it has been in the history of the Partnership. As a result of the Committee's efforts, we increased awareness of career opportunities in our area and built stronger connections with our teachers. The result is a unified effort to improve student experience in learning about a potential future career in the County. Specific examples included a featured spot at the annual Central Aroostook Council on Education Day. We presented to over 550 educators and administrators to create awareness and improve connection with the business community. The Committee also held its annual experiential bus tours that provided nearly 200 area sophomores a look at real life work by taking them on site to area businesses. In addition, the Committee and members spoke at a variety of teacher functions and classrooms. While this work is never done, the partnership built with our educators generates connections to build upon as we look to retain students and attract those that leave back in the future.

The reality is that even if every high school stayed or came back to the County, we would still struggle to meet our future workforce needs. Our age demographics continue to work against us – a trend that will only accelerate. Therefore, we contracted with a consultant to assist in increasing the reach of Opportunities Aroostook (OA). As a result, OA saw a record number of position listings and visitors. A good measure of this activity is from outside of Maine. It is proof positive that the quality of life we offer is sought after. That said, we have work to do in promoting the County's benefits to those who have not heard of our area (and without effective digital presence will never stumble upon it). More work here is planned in 2020.

From a political aspect, our Committee in charge of tracking legislation important to the County provided steady leadership. It is vital that Aroostook stays relevant in the issues that impact us which is difficult due to our distance from Augusta. Through consistent communication and engagement, we provided meaningful input and perspective. Our

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Letter from the Chair

ability to collaborate and speak with a unified voice is a recognized strength of the County. We appreciate the leadership of the Committee in continuing to uphold this standard as well as our local delegation's commitment to listen and engage.

Last, we thank Paul for logging thousands of miles and attending numerous meetings. Because of his dedication, he has quickly become recognized as an important first point of contact for all things Aroostook. The number of potential areas of involvement are almost limitless and Paul managed to cover anything relevant to our mission. In particular, his commitment to connecting and representing our area within statewide efforts was vital in keeping our interests well served. Paul did it with thoughtfulness and professionalism which reflected very well on who we are in the County.

As we look ahead to 2020, we are encouraged by the progress though realize much work is left. We appreciate your financial and personal commitment to the Aroostook Partnership. It is often difficult and daunting work though protecting and advancing the uniqueness of who we are in the County is worth it.

Matthew R. McHatten
Chair of the Board
Aroostook Partnership



**2019
PRIORITIES**



- ✓ Workforce Development
- ✓ Support/Grow Existing Businesses
- ✓ Legislative Engagement

Advocacy

For more than 15 years the Partnership has been a champion for economic development in the region.

2019 saw the return of Aroostook Day at the Legislature. This event was held February 5, 2019 at the Senator Inn in Augusta.

2019 focus (first session of 129th State Legislature) was on proactively supporting bills advancing three key areas identified and tracked by AP through session – as established at Aroostook Day, while monitoring/engaging other impactful legislation.

Weekly Legislative Calls were more focused and productive – plans to resume calls in coming session.

Discussions underway between Committee Leadership/AP Executive Committee and AP President on what AP's engagement will be in 2020 election cycle to ensure Aroostook's voice is heard and addressed by state and federal office candidates.

Marketing activities and initiatives have included:

1. Addressed numerous civic organizations and briefed town and city managers.
2. Personal contact with business developers and CEO's.
3. Brainstorming activities with Loring Development Authority.
4. Continued newsletter mass e-mailings.
5. Secured news coverage in local and statewide media.
6. Participated in statewide business gatherings.

Aroostook Day at the Legislature





OpportunitiesAroostook.com is up to 7,000 page views a month. Employers are urged to post all job opportunities to this free site provided by Aroostook Partnership.



OPPORTUNITIES AROOSTOOK

A service of:



HOME JOBS COMPANIES INTERNSHIPS WHY AROOSTOOK LOG IN CONTACT US

ORGANIC VS. PAID

FACEBOOK SUCCESS WAS OBTAINED ORGANICALLY: UNIQUE AND CREATIVE POSTS WITHOUT ADDED BUDGET AND BOOSTS.

LIKE SPIKES

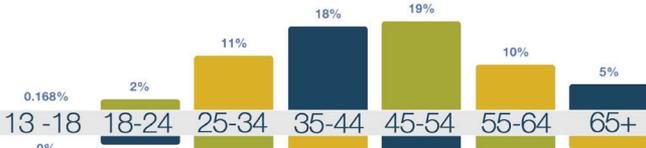
FACEBOOK.COM/OPPORTUNITIESAROOSTOOK EXPERIENCED LIKE SPIKES IN MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JULY, SEPTEMBER & NOVEMBER

TOP CLICK SOURCES

#1 FACEBOOK.COM #2 GOOGLE.COM #3 OPPORTUNITIESAROOSTOOK.COM #4 SEARCH.YAHOO.COM #5 SEARCH.BING.COM

WHO FOLLOWS OUR PAGE?

WOMEN
65%



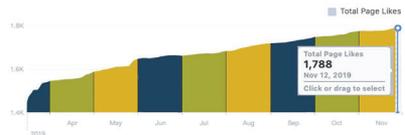
MEN
34%

WHEN ARE OUR FANS ONLINE?



Social Strategy Team, LLC

TOTAL PAGE LIKES AS OF NOV. 2019: 1,788



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Videos rule social media: 60% of Americans who watch do so on FB. Keep it light, short, fast-paced, and optimized to play without sound.

#DIGITALVIDEO
stats from hootsuite

Facebook Live brings viewers behind-the-scenes in a way that feels different than any other form of media. Highlight employers in a weekly feature.

LET'S GO LIVE!

Boosting a post will help get more people to react, share & comment. We will reach new people who are interested in OA, but don't currently follow us.

ADD BUDGET FOR BOOSTS

State Strategic Plan

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Aroostook Partnership



ANNUAL MEETING 2018 — *Left, Dana Connors of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Yellow Breen of the Maine Development Foundation tag team the keynote addresses at the Aroostook Partnership Annual Meeting in 2018. The pair spoke about challenges and opportunities the state faces and how the Partnership can help. Right, AP President/CEO Paul Towle presents on the activities of the previous year, including efforts to help the forest products industry in the region.*



BOD MEETING — *The Aroostook Partnership Board of Directors meets on average six times a year. Although the majority of the meetings are held in Central Aroostook, efforts are made to meet in Southern and Northern Aroostook as well. These photos are from a BOD meeting at the Katahdin Trust Co. Operations Center in Houlton. Above, MSSM Executive Director David Pearson addresses the board about what's new with the magnet school in Limestone. Top right, the board gets down to the business of the meeting. Middle right, Todd Saucier, details efforts to engage educators and businesses to address current and future workforce needs. Bottom right, Katahdin Trust CEO Jon Prescott and AP President/CEO Paul Towle prepare for the meeting to start.*



The logo for Aroostook Partnership. It features a large, stylized blue letter 'A' on the left. A yellow swoosh with a yellow star at its tip curves from the top of the 'A' towards the right. To the right of the 'A', the word "AROOSTOOK" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below "AROOSTOOK", the word "Partnership" is written in a blue, italicized serif font.

AROOSTOOK Partnership

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