



Strategic Plan, 2022-2026

In July 2022, after more than a year of deliberation, the Strategic Planning Committee of the Maine Community Foundation presented the board of directors a plan that builds on the foundation's nearly 40 years of work to improve the quality of life in Maine. This five-year roadmap charts the organization's path to 1) drive greater community impact, 2) mobilize additional philanthropic resources, and 3) strengthen operations and align the organization.

Building on Success

MaineCF is perfectly poised to take this next step. It has significant assets (\$680 million in July 2022), is financially stable with a sizable operating reserve, and has 47 skilled professionals on staff. The foundation also has a strong reputation and is trusted and respected by its stakeholders. Six years ago, it stepped into a leadership role through five program priorities. While the strategies in each area varied, MaineCF connected partners and focused on strengthening systems, not just particular organizations. In the racial equity area, the community foundation is acknowledged for trailblazing work to raise awareness about the importance of the issue to the growth and well-being of the state. MaineCF also has been praised for its rapid and visible response to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is much good to build on.

The Next Chapter

This new strategic plan carries the organization into its next chapter. It positions MaineCF to take on a bigger and more intentional community leadership role that employs the foundation's considerable influence to tackle some of Maine's most critical issues. This means going beyond making good grants. In a community leadership role, community foundations:

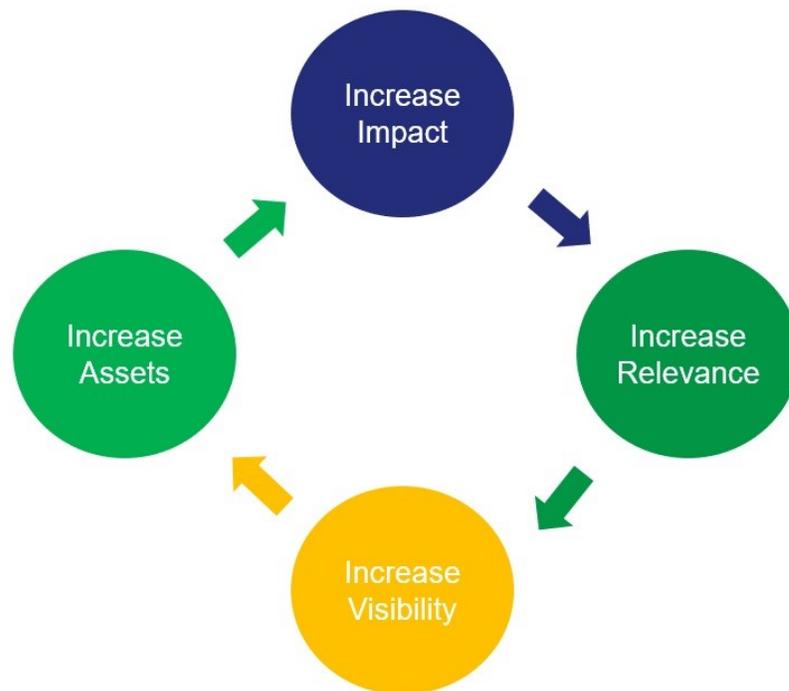
- Lift the voices of residents to capture their hopes and aspirations for their communities,
- Commission and disseminate data and research to better understand an issue,
- Convene cross-sector conversations to bring a diversity of perspectives to solve problems and build a brighter future,
- Influence public policy to shape the systems that affect all Mainers, and
- Marshal resources from philanthropy, business, and the public sector to aggregate assets for the common good.

Most community foundations across the country have chosen this direction. A 2019 CFLeads survey found that 98% of community foundations said that they were likely or very

likely to devote more resources to community leadership in the coming years. Community foundations are taking advantage of their unique attributes – their local relationships, independence, permanence, public charity status, and broad mandates – to measurably improve any number of issues important to the communities they serve. As the second largest foundation in the state with a strong local as well as statewide reputation, MaineCF is in the enviable position to be able to step up.

The Path Forward

The plan sets MaineCF on this path by broadening its vision and mission and adopting seven strategic goals. In addition to taking on a larger and more intentional community leadership role, the plan sets out a course for substantially growing flexible assets to address the changing needs of the state. It commits the organization to a re-thinking of its fundraising strategies and better engagement of existing donors. To accomplish this, the plan calls for a greater investment in communications and a strengthening of operations and governance. It assumes that there is a virtuous circle that begins with a focus on impact, which leads to greater relevance, increased visibility and greater assets -- and then greater impact. Ultimately, the greatest gains will be made when we are outcomes-focused, and the community drives us, research guides us, philanthropy propels us, and our partners sustain us.



The broad structure of the plan is summarized on the next page and the detailed plan with strategic objectives and desired outcomes is attached.

2022-26 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Vision

Maine is a vibrant and equitable place where people and communities thrive.

Mission

Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine.

Values

Integrity: We earn trust by being honest and open in everything that we do.

Respect: We treat everyone with dignity and civility.

Stewardship: We responsibly manage the resources entrusted to us

Equity: We promote just and fair access to opportunities for all people.

Collaboration: We work with others to achieve common goals.

Five-Year Strategic Goals

Drive greater impact

- Use the full range of MaineCF's tools, resources, relationships, and skills to achieve the greatest community impact.
- Maximize MaineCF's impact across the state through a reimagined and reinvigorated County and Regional Program.

Mobilize philanthropic resources

- Attract new relationships and charitable resources to build a better Maine and focus on doubling Maine Community Foundation's flexible assets from \$100M in July 2022 to \$200M by 2026.
- Position MaineCF to fully serve fundholders throughout the state of Maine.

Strengthen operations and align the organization

- Invest in the systems, processes, improvements, and environment of continuous learning to achieve MaineCF's mission of connecting people and resources to build a better Maine.
- Determine and distill MaineCF's "big message" and brand to permeate all foundation communications to emphasize our community leadership role and reach the target of \$200M in flexible assets.
- Ensure that the board composition, skills, policies, and practices advance MaineCF's mission to build a better Maine.

MAINECF STRATEGIC PLAN – FULL PLAN

DRIVE GREATER IMPACT

Community Leadership and Grantmaking

Goal: Use the full range of MaineCF’s tools, resources, relationships, and skills to achieve the greatest community impact

Objective 1: Maintain MaineCF’s existing community leadership footprint by continuing existing programmatic priorities through 2022

Desired outcome: Award grants to and participate in partnerships with promising and/or impactful programs in each of the 2016-2021 strategic initiative goal areas

Objective 2: Engage residents throughout the state in developing MaineCF’s community future leadership priorities and the pursuit of its mission

Desired outcome: Data collected through a minimum of three in person and/or virtual community conversations, and other sources, such as focus groups, interviews, surveys, and reports about existing and potential strategic priorities through 2028

Objective 3: Assess MaineCF’s programmatic resources, strengths, gaps, and challenges to inform development future community leadership work

Desired outcomes:

- A comprehensive review of all program-related funds and their purposes, staff expertise, partnerships, and lessons learned about effective practices and programs, including those from recent strategic initiatives.
- Ongoing analysis of grantee and applicant data from foundation-initiated and competitive grant programs

Objective 4: Develop MaineCF’s community leadership priorities, including building on previous work and/or adopting new areas of focus

Desired outcomes:

- By Q3 2023, the information collected in objectives 2 and 3 is used to identify what critical community challenges MaineCF is best positioned to address and that will produce widely shared, lasting, and measurable results
- MaineCF community leadership efforts include fundamental leadership strategies of engaging residents; collecting data; working across sectors; shaping public policy and gathering resources

- Competitive grant programs and flexible funds that can and should be aligned with leadership priorities are identified and changed as needed (and possible) to best support our leadership efforts
- Continue strategic learning priorities of reviewing work to identify lessons learned, sharing those lessons internally, across MaineCF departments and with donors, and externally in the field and with partners, and using those lessons to improve our work
- Strategies developed for working with Maine Women’s Fund and with Wabanaki Nations that demonstrate and exercise MaineCF’s community leadership

Objective 5: Increase the reach and potential impact of MaineCF’s competitive grant programs, particularly for under-served and under-resourced people and communities

Desired outcomes:

- Improved accessibility of grant applications, outreach, and support materials by making them easier to find and to understand, including updates to website and other communications and translating materials into languages commonly spoken in Maine (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Portuguese).
- Grantmaking advisors, across grant programs, receive racial equity training and use racial equity lens in their grantmaking
- Community and BIPOC involvement in review process broadened by implementing participatory grantmaking strategies, including the use of stipends and open calls for readers.
- Programmatic improvements implemented in accordance with MaineCF’s Racial Equity Vision and Approach document

Objective 6: Assess the benefits and costs of all grant programs and revamp, as needed, to increase impact and align with leadership priorities, as appropriate

Desired outcomes:

- A comprehensive review of program-related and discretionary funds; their purposes, the process for grant solicitation, evaluation, and selection; the community impact of the grant and the award process and the cost of administration
- New efficiencies increase staff time and other resources available to support community leadership efforts and other new work
- Program staff have more opportunity to deepen and expand issue- and field-related expertise, cultivate community relationships, and gain and share local knowledge internally with other departments and donors, and externally with others in the field
- Program workload is more sustainable, and it is easier to cover programs during staffing changes or shortages

Objective 7: Embed community leadership goals and practices across all aspects of the organization, including MaineCF’s board of directors, investments, philanthropy, donor services, and financial operations

Desired outcomes:

- Board and department heads complete and regularly use the Community Leadership Assessment tool to assess leadership across all aspects of the foundation
- Strategies developed and implemented to use the strength of the investment program to establish partnerships, increase MaineCF visibility, and have a greater impact on Maine’s communities

Objective 8: Continue MaineCF’s community leadership work related to racial equity by embedding racial equity-focused practices across all aspects of the organization and its work

Desired outcomes:

- All departments regularly review MaineCF’s Racial Equity Vision and Approach document and use core questions to improve their practices
- Continued staff education related to racial equity through “Five Minutes for Equity” presentations at monthly staff meetings, quarterly lunch and learns, and annual staff trainings
- MaineCF implements educational programming focused on Wabanaki history and issues throughout 2023

County and Regional Program

Goal: Maximize MaineCF’s impact across the state through a reimagined and reinvigorated County and Regional Program

Objective 1: Strengthen MaineCF’s philanthropic outreach by creating separate County and Regional outreach committees that will proactively connect with prospective donors and professional advisors

Desired outcomes:

- New outreach committees established in every county or region by fall 2023
- Defined roles and responsibilities for new outreach advisors and updated responsibilities of grantmaking advisors reflect this change
- New committee meeting schedules and content reflect separate roles and responsibilities of grantmaking and outreach committees

Objective 2: Strengthen grantmaking committees by redefining their responsibilities to include a commitment to equity, learning about local communities, including their needs and emerging trends, and constant improvement in their grantmaking practices

Desired outcome: Roles and responsibilities of grantmaking advisors revised and practices related to community education and sharing implemented across all committees by the Q4 2023

Objective 3: Reshape grantmaking committees to look more like the communities they serve by implementing equitable recruitment and meeting practices and engaging people with a broad range of lived experience

Desired outcome: Updated recruitment and outreach strategies for engaging new advisors and clear goals to guide committee composition and management implemented by Q4 2023

Objective 4: Redefine County and Regional grantmaking advisor terms to optimize advisor experience and increase opportunities to engage more people as advisors

Desired outcomes:

- New terms and term limits defined and implemented by Q4 2023
- Transition plan phases in new term

Objective 5: Eliminate the roles of chair and vice chair within County and Regional committees, and maintain but redefine County Council gatherings

Desired outcome: County Council officially restructured (and documented) to match practice of including the participation of all advisors instead of chairs and vice chairs only, with meetings focused on cross-county and statewide learning.

Objective 6: Reevaluate and reallocate staff resources to the County and Regional Program as needed

Desired outcome: Balanced assignments that maximize efficiency and provide appropriate level of coverage in the event of staffing illnesses, absences, and other changes

Objective 7: Establish new targets for all counties where county fund development targets have been met

Desired outcome: New targets established by December 2022, where applicable

MOBILIZE ADDITIONAL PHILANTHROPIC RESOURCES

Asset Development

Goal: Attract new relationships and charitable resources to build a better Maine with a focus on doubling Maine Community Foundation's flexible assets¹ from \$100M in July 2022 to \$200M by 2026

Objective 1: Develop strategy to build flexible funds for Maine

Desired outcomes:

- Number of flexible gifts received annually
- Total dollars received annually as flexible funds
- Number of new funds with flexible assets opened annually
- Increase in percentage of total flexible assets annually
- Increase of \$25M in unrestricted assets

Objective 2: Organize MaineCF outreach efforts around building flexible assets while also attracting new donors to partner with MaineCF on their philanthropy

Desired outcomes:

- Clarification with staff and development committee on the options for building flexible funds
- Conduct training with staff and board on how to listen for opportunities to recommend MaineCF's flexible funds
- Increase visibility of flexible funds and our statewide impact in MaineCF publications and website (ongoing)
- Increase the emphasis on flexible funds during conversations with prospects, donors and bequest donors by educating them about the importance of those assets for Maine and the ways in which those assets increase MaineCF's leverage to achieve its mission
- Accelerate relationship-building approach to prospective donors capable of seven-figure unrestricted gifts
- Engage regional advancement staff in outreach efforts throughout the state, i.e., building relationships with flexible-fund donors to increase their gifts and prompt bequest gifts, meeting with professional advisors to generate new referrals, seeking introductions to new high-net-worth philanthropic prospects, speaking at events, and hosting regional awareness events (ongoing)
- Build regional networks of ambassadors to help with outreach efforts (including board, former board, and former county advisors) and plan awareness events (spring 2023)

¹ Defined as broad field-of-interest funds and unrestricted endowment

Objective 3: Invest in coordinated marketing targeted to Maine professional advisors (PAs) and potential donors about the benefits of flexible assets and their importance to Maine, along with messages regarding how MaineCF can help PA clients and be a resource for donors' philanthropy

Desired outcome: Refine existing dual messaging to professional advisors and potential donors once communication consultants complete their work, anticipated Q2 2023

Objective 4: Develop and communicate MaineCF's Statement of Responsible Investing to attract new donors and fundholders

Desired outcomes:

- Board approval of responsible investment policy by May 2022
- Policy communicated to donors by end of 2022

Objective 5: Fully engage all MaineCF board members as fundholders and/or donors to the foundation who share responsibility for intended asset growth and actively act as ambassadors to potential donors

Desired outcomes:

- Number of board members actively engaged in outreach efforts to five prospective donors each year
- 100% of board members make an annual contribution to Invest in Maine
- At least 30% of board members are MaineCF fundholders
- At least 30% of board members are members of MaineCF's Friends of Maine and have included the foundation in their estate plans
- Board members' shared responsibility for asset growth is supported and monitored by the Governance Committee as part of overall governance effectiveness

Objective 6: Promote donors' ability to retain their outside financial managers for funds of greater than \$500K

Desired outcome: Practice adopted and communicated to donors and professional advisors by December 2022

Objective 7: Prioritize growing MaineCF's BIPOC fund consistent with MaineCF's stated vision and values with respect to equity

Desired outcome: Double the size of BIPOC Fund from \$1.8M in 2022 to \$3.6M by 2026

Donor Services and Engagement

Goal: Position MaineCF to fully serve fundholders throughout the state of Maine

Objective 1: Conduct donor survey to identify gaps in services and test new ideas

Desired outcome: Conduct survey by 2Q 2023 and review results and identify areas for improvement by 4Q 2023

Objective 2: Increase the total dollars from DAF grants and transfers aligned with the current strategic plan

Desired outcomes:

- Increase in total dollars directed annually by DAFs to flexible funds, including County Funds and Invest in Maine
- Increase in total dollars directed and number of DAFs annually contributing through Giving Together
- Racial equity conversations continue with donor advisors and increased dollars are directed to BIPOC Fund from DAFs
- Add regular activity goal for DAFs to include conversations about flexible funds, Giving Together, and racial equity (as appropriate)

Objective 3: Review and talk with bequest donors about their bequest intentions and, when appropriate, encourage them to lessen restrictions on their planned gift intentions

Desired outcome: Regular review and conversations with donors with known bequest intentions with a new minimum standard of every three years

Objective 4: Restructure and expand capacity of MaineCF's Donor Services, Philanthropy, and Program staff to fully achieve donor services and engagement goals and increase relationship intensity with MaineCF donor community

Desired outcomes:

- Plan ² for reorganization/realignment/new positions completed by January 2023
- Reorganization/realignment completed, and new positions hired as budget permits
- Capacity increased to develop strong relationships; offer philanthropic advising and make connections to nonprofits of interest; develop and host educational materials and programs; make direct asks for outright and planned gifts in line with current strategic goals; and keep accurate and current records of various interactions and donor preferences

² Plan to include DA-to-Donor Services staff ratio of no greater than 50:1.0 FTE for highly engaged funds and 100:1.0 FTE for transactional funds

- Support and expanded relationships with other fundholders, including agency funds, designated funds, and scholarship funds

Objective 5: Revise and communicate tiered level of services and associated fees and fund minimums for fundholders based on outcome of activity-based cost analysis (ABCA)

Desired outcome: After ABCA completed, anticipate three to six months to revise tiered services and outline strategy and communication plan for fundholders and an additional 12 to 18 months for implementation

STRENGTHEN OPERATIONS AND ALIGN THE ORGANIZATION

Business Model

Goal: Invest in the systems, processes, improvements, and environment of continuous learning to achieve MaineCF's mission of connecting people and resources to build a better Maine

Objective 1: Undertake the activity-based cost analysis (ABCA) to establish the actual cost to support all of MaineCF's funds and services, and the role of fees, fund minimum, and other variables in MaineCF's cost modeling

Desired outcome: A better understanding of our profit margins and subsidies in six to 12 months.

Objective 2: Using established data, reset MaineCF's fund minimums and fees for funds, including possible additional fees based on transactional volume. Determine which, if any, fund types should be eliminated and then convert or close existing funds to achieve compliance with new business modeling

Desired outcome: Once the ABCA is complete, the analysis can be applied late 2023

Objective 3: Maintain timely, accurate, and efficient turnaround of grants, scholarships, disbursements, and statements

Desired outcomes: Starting Q1 2023, driving donors and constituents to find all statements accessible online. Moving to ACH in four stages: employee reimbursements **complete**, AP vendors **in process**, grants **forms available** (will push Q1 2023), scholarships **will start Q2 2023**

Objective 4: Invest in needed risk and technology assessments of all existing business systems and plan for change management to improve all areas of operations

Desired outcomes:

- Technology assessment will wrap up January 2023
- Q1 2023 recommendations for new vendor
- Q3 2023 begin conversion timeline
- Q1 2024 should be rollout of new software
- Risk assessment expected early 2023

Objective 5: Make needed investments and training in technology related to MaineCF's website, donor relations, and communications

Desired outcomes:

- Investigation of technology alternatives completed by January 2023

- Alternatives selected and implemented during 2023 with full conversion January 1, 2024
- Overall increases in efficiency measured, documented, and reported to the board by June 2026

Objective 6: Streamline all operational systems including, but not limited to, ACH, check processing, due diligence, advised grant requests, database, electronic transfers, wire transfers, website, etc.

Desired outcome: Beginning phases in the works. Awaiting technology assessment completion and donor survey. This will be ongoing throughout the Strategic Plan process

Objective 6: Review and align all existing board policies to address obsolescence and achieve operational efficiencies

Desired outcomes: Governance Committee beginning phases Q4 2022. May need bylaw revision in 2023; ongoing throughout the Strategic Plan process

Objective 7: Invest in additional staff throughout the organization to fully address the breadth and scale of new work envisioned in the strategic plan and to allow for a healthy, functional, and emotionally supported staff environment

Desired outcomes:

- Fill vacant roles remaining in 2022
- 2023 budget hopes to address shortages in programming, donor services, and possibly communications
- Q1 2023 will engage in Race Forward training with entire staff and revise onboarding schedule; ongoing throughout Strategic Plan

Objective 8: Continually optimize the primary pool portfolio

Desired outcomes:

- Ensure sufficient resources to achieve philanthropic goals of all fundholders and meet strategic goals of the foundation
- Express MaineCF's values in the investment program

Objective 9: Continue MaineCF's commitment to racial equity by updating and fully implementing racial equity training and onboarding for all existing staff and new staff moving forward

Desired outcomes:

- By Q4 2023, all MaineCF receive the same training in the basics of racial equity, systemic, and historic racism
- At least one member of MaineCF's Equity Leadership Team provides introduction to MaineCF's racial equity work to new staff and provides information and/or resources about racial equity in the state of Maine

Communications and Marketing

Goal: Determine and distill MaineCF’s “big message” and brand to permeate all foundation communications to emphasize our community leadership role and reach the target of \$200M in flexible assets³

Objective 1: Engage communications consultant to guide planning on new brand and “big message”

Desired outcomes:

- Hire consultant by end of year 2022
- Analyze our current and new audiences and how and where we reach them by May 2023
- Confirm new messages by Q2 2023

Objective 2: Reorient MaineCF’s branding and communications and marketing strategies in line with outcomes in objective 1

Desired outcome: Reorientation of communications implemented by December 2023

Objective 3: Improve and enhance overall brand of MaineCF including, but not limited to, the logo, signage, physical office space, and other aspects of the organization that influence public perception

Desired outcome: Needs assessed, and implementation plan developed by December 2023

Objective 4: Create consistent, ongoing board education on communications and marketing to deepen and support engagement with MaineCF’s core messages

Desired outcomes:

- Provide board training and talking points on strategic communications and marketing by June 2023
- Incorporate refined messaging and talking points into regular board interactions and meetings by June 2023

Objective 5: Develop talking points for county and regional advisors so they can understand and use consistent language aligned with MaineCF’s messaging priorities

Desired outcome: Uniformity of County Program communications tied to MaineCF’s core messages achieved by December 2023

³ Defined as broad field-of-interest funds and unrestricted endowment

Objective 6: Continually assess how we relay MaineCF’s community impact through our diverse communications channels, including advertising, direct mail, publications, underwriting

Desired outcome: New messaging, with a focus on impact reflected in communications and marketing channels by December 2023, and continually refined and sustained thereafter

Objective 7: Invest in MaineCF’s communications and marketing to support our mission and achieve our goals

Desired outcomes:

- New investment in communications in place effective with the FY 22 budget and sustained throughout strategic plan period
- Refresh of MaineCF’s brand, staffing analysis (in-house vs. outsourcing), and adequate marketing budget in forthcoming fiscal years

Governance

Goal: Ensure that the board composition, skills, policies, and practices advance MaineCF’s mission to build a better Maine

Objective 1: Adopt updated governance best practices to support organizational excellence and contribute toward meeting strategic plan goals

Desired outcomes:

- Governance Committee develops and commences on work plan for all governance adjustments by July 2022 and reports progress to board quarterly thereafter
- Expectations for directors clearly articulated, including expectations for personal giving, asset development, and what it means to be an inclusive board
- MaineCF’s board matrix refined to prioritize needed skills, attributes, and representations consistent with realizing the strategic plan
- Board member identification, cultivation, vetting, and nominating processes clearly defined and updated
- Plan for ongoing board development and continuous learning
- Bylaws revised to support organizational effectiveness and excellence

Objective 2: Build a board and organizational culture of dialogue, mutual respect, participation, joint learning, and a focus on impact

Desired outcome: Board and committee agendas reflect, in practice, an orientation toward discourse, learning, and respectful partnership with staff

Objective 3: Revise MaineCF’s board structure to address the foundation’s increasingly sophisticated governance needs

Desired outcomes:

- Consideration of formation of additional committees (i.e., development) by February 2023
- Work plan in place to standardize practices across all board committees, including committee norms and terms of service, by September 2022; implementation of work plan by January 2023