



A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Workplan with Lewiston-Auburn 2022-2024 (Pilot)

ELMINA B. SEWALL FOUNDATION | NOVEMBER 2021

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Executive Summary

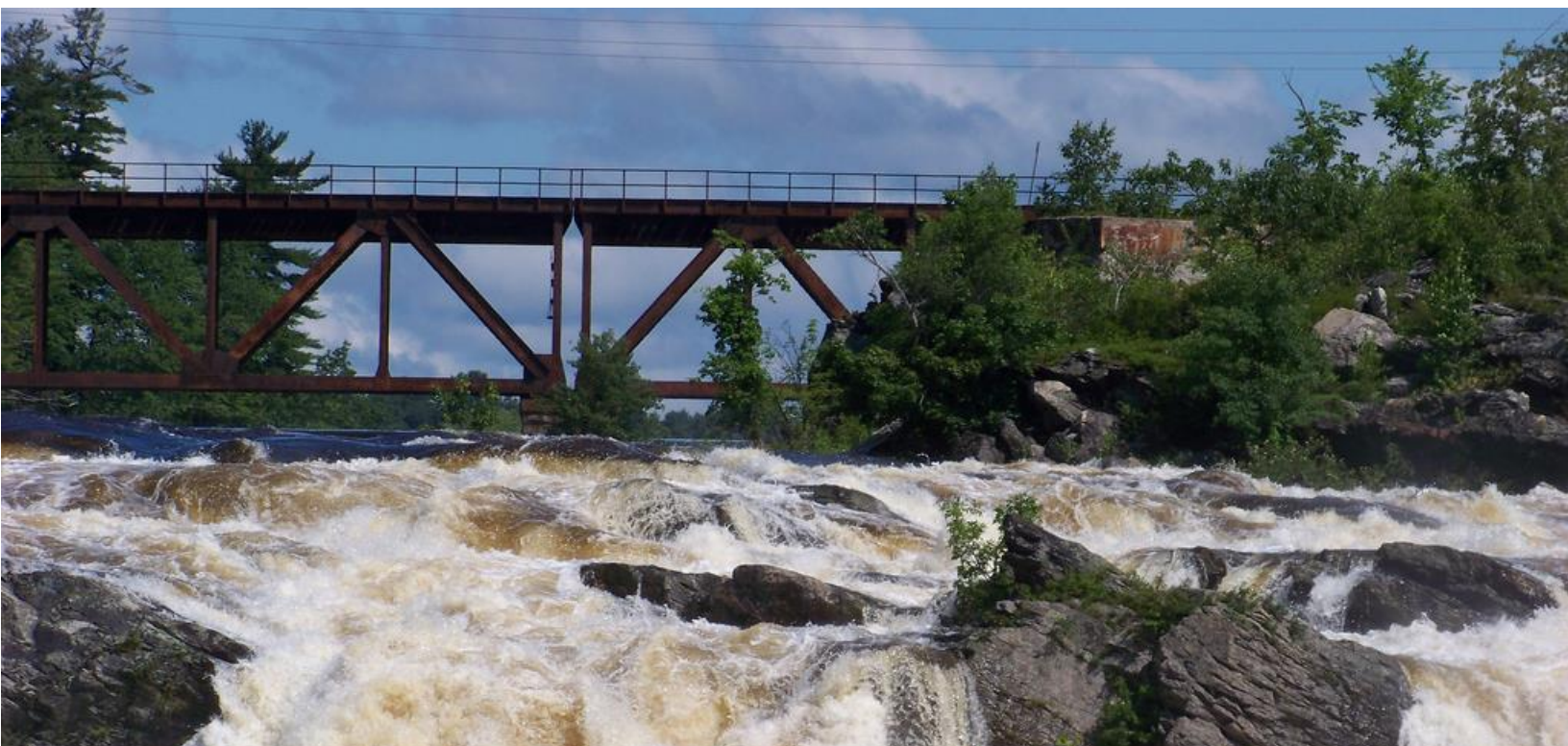
A lot of good work is currently underway by community organizations and municipal agencies in Lewiston and Auburn, Maine – and they're gearing up to do a lot more! Over the past two years, about 80 organizations have participated in community engagement processes to explore ways to boost long-term resilience and vibrancy for L-A communities.

The systems approach presented in this workplan is designed to support better collaboration and build the capacity of L-A organizations to work collectively to achieve goals in 5 priority areas: Equitable Civic Systems; Workforce Access and Economic Development; Community Health and Wellness; Healthy Affordable Housing; and Healthy Local Food System.

This workplan outlines a three-year pilot, to cultivate groundwork for a systems approach, with support from Elmina B. Sewall Foundation and other philanthropic and public sector partners.

Work to be done

- ***What is the work?*** There are two overarching components in the work of L-A organizations to be developed during this pilot period:
 - *Shifting systems* – by working collectively to address structural, relational, and transformative levels of systems in each of the 5 priority areas
 - *Strengthening connections* – by reducing competition, shifting power dynamics, facilitating communication and collaboration, and supporting development of a new narrative for L-A
- ***How will the work be done?*** Taking a systems approach means expanding the focus of the work from an individual organizational level to include a collective system-wide level by:
 - *Supporting collaboration* – for organizations to work collectively to deepen equity and advance shared goals
 - *Building capacity* – to strengthen organizational and system-wide efforts



Timeline

The workplan lays out a three-year pilot to lay the foundation for ongoing work in L-A as follows:

- **Year 1 – Getting organized:** Supporting L-A organizations to develop a collaborative structure and further relationship-building to support collective work in each priority area; identify capacity needs of L-A organizations and resources to address them.
- **Year 2 – Getting equipped:** Sector-appropriate racial equity training across priority areas, to address power dynamics, and community outreach for increased engagement (especially with youth and BIPOC – Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) for more effective collaboration
- **Year 3 – Sustaining efforts:** Expanding shared leadership across priority areas, and exploration of narrative change work, to build interest in scaling up this approach.

Resources

Many philanthropic partners, as well as state and federal programs, are providing critical support for this work. Funding partners are exploring ways to work more effectively together, to provide resources in the form of grant funding, technical assistance, investments, opportunities for shared learning, and planning for sustainability. Process facilitation and collective leadership training will be provided by community engagement consultant Tamarack Institute in partnership with evaluation consultant S.E. Foster Associates; additional consultancy resources will be engaged as appropriate for equity training, youth leadership development and other interests that may emerge during the pilot period.

Next steps

A desired outcome of work outlined in this document is for equitable leadership and decision-making processes to shift to L-A organizations. Annual convenings are proposed to provide an opportunity for shared learning, reflections, and revision of the workplan. Those convenings, as well as periodic check-ins as needed, will also allow time to explore interest and begin plans to scale up a long-term strategic systems approach to work in Lewiston and Auburn beyond the pilot period.

Introduction

This workplan supports exciting collaborative initiatives that are already underway or are envisioned, by dozens of organizations working together to enhance the health and well-being of people and the environment in Lewiston and Auburn, Maine. The ideas outlined in this proposal were collected through two virtual community engagement processes hosted by Elmina B. Sewall Foundation and designed and facilitated by Tamarack Institute, in partnership with S. E. Foster Associates.



The first of those processes took place in 2020. Eleven members of the L-A community were invited to **co-design** Sewall’s Healthy People Healthy Places program in L-A. They identified (in order of importance for Sewall’s role) **five Priority Areas** to be addressed through a systems approach: **Equitable Civic Systems, Workforce Access and Economic Development, Healthy and Affordable Housing, Community Health and Wellness, and Healthy Local Food Systems**. The co-design team also identified two general approaches that would be necessary for systemic impact: to **support collaboration** and **build capacity** of organizations to work effectively together. A [report](#) on the process and recommendations of the co-design team was shared in October 2020.



In 2021, the first of the co-design recommendations was implemented: a **systems-mapping process** of four of the Priority Areas. Since much of this initial planning work had already been done in the fifth Priority Area, organizations working in food systems were invited to participate in mapping systems related to their work, especially Workforce Access and Economic Development and Community Health and Wellness.

About 80 different organizations participated in one or more of the systems-mapping sessions. Through small group discussions, participants identified which organizations were working, individually and collaboratively, in the system they were mapping. They also identified the kinds of work those organizations were doing, locating on a “map” of the system where efforts were focused on structural (resources, practices, and policies), relational (relationships and power dynamics), and transformational (mental models) levels of the system. Opportunities to **shift systems** and **strengthen connections** among organizations working in them were identified for each Priority Area. A [report](#) on the systems mapping process, including links to the lists of participants and to the Mural visualizations of connections and levels of systems impacts, was shared in July 2021.

Two common themes emerged in the co-design process and were echoed in all of the systems mapping sessions. One is “youth at the center” – meaning that youth need to be included in planning and carrying out the proposed initiatives, not just as a short-term fix, but as a step toward



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building a future for generations to come. The other is building equity, especially with regard to L-A's BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). These two themes shape the lens through which all the work is seen, not to the exclusion of other populations (ex. seniors and American-born residents), but rather as focal points for an approach called Targeted Universalism, which proposes that, if measures are taken to ensure equity for groups experiencing negative impacts from existing conditions, then those measures will benefit all others as well. (For more background on Targeted Universalism, [click here.](#))

The process of drafting this proposed workplan has revealed a vision for the Lewiston and Auburn communities that spans the work of many organizations across sectors and issue areas, and that invites further partnership and coordination among philanthropic and public-sector entities, including Sewall, who are supporting it. Therefore, this workplan is offered with three important points of clarification.

- First, it focuses on the work of organizations in Lewiston and Auburn, reflecting their priorities and forms of support they have identified as necessary to advance their work.
- Second, much of this work is already being supported by several Maine-based foundations as well as regional and public-sector funders.
- Third, as was clear from the feedback at the Open House, the work outlined in this workplan will take much more than three years to accomplish. Therefore, activities described in this document should be treated as a pilot to lay the groundwork for long-term change.

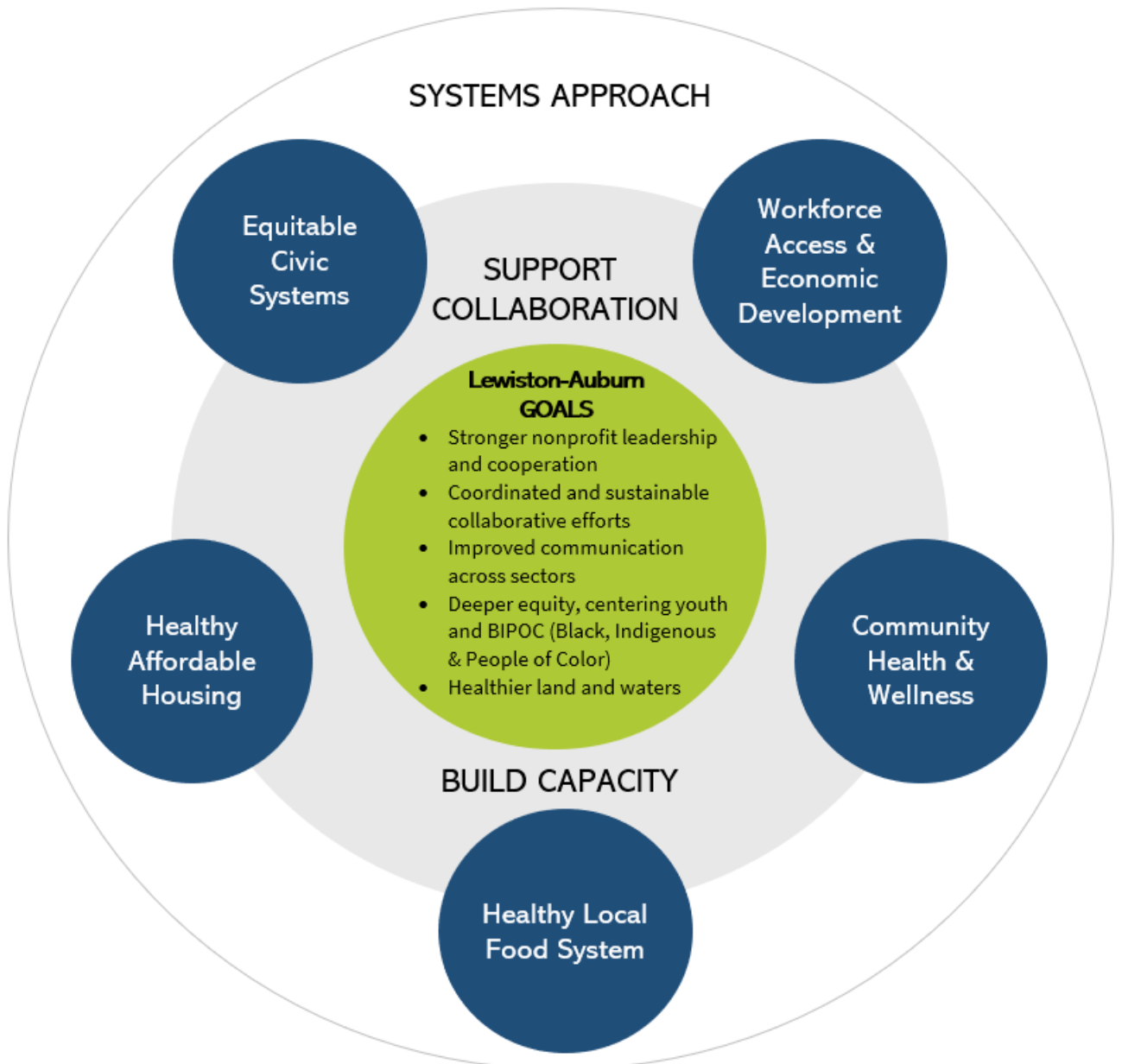
Great things are happening in L-A! Sewall welcomes opportunities to work with others from the philanthropic, nonprofit, public and private sectors in helping Lewiston and Auburn to make their vision a reality.

OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK SESSIONS

Sewall hosted a virtual open house on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, for collective reflection and feedback on this workplan. Nearly all of the L-A organizations that contributed to these processes attended and their input has been inserted at the end of each relevant section of this workplan. Other funders as well as Sewall staff were invited to join the sessions “in listening mode,” to learn more about this work and to begin exploring ways we can work collectively to more effectively support these efforts.

Overview of the Workplan

This workplan is designed to guide work to achieve the overarching goals of supporting collaboration and building capacity in five Priority Areas: Equitable Civic Systems; Workforce Access and Economic Development; Community Health & Wellness; Healthy Affordable Housing; and, a Healthy Local Food System.



Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for ecosystems and processes to deepen equity and strengthen collaboration. In the systems mapping process they named opportunities to advance their work in two overarching ways:

- **Shift systems** – by working collectively to address structural, relational, and transformative levels in the five Priority Areas
- **Strengthen connections** – by working in ways that reduce competition, shift power dynamics, facilitate communication and collaboration, and support development of a new narrative for L-A

Organizations in L-A have expressed a desire for greater coordination and collaboration among entities that support their work to lower barriers wherever possible and ensure more equitable distribution of resources. Several funders, including John T. Gorman Foundation, Maine Community Foundation, Maine Health Access Foundation, Maine Initiatives, Onion Foundation, United Way of Androscoggin County, and Sewall, have made significant commitments to supporting work in the Lewiston-Auburn community. In addition, state and federal programs (ex. DHHS, USDA, and HUD) and CDFI's (designated Community Development Finance Institutions, such as Genesis Loan Fund, Coastal Enterprises, and Community Credit Union) are providing critical support for community development initiatives in Lewiston and Auburn.

Sewall and our funding partners recognize the importance of continuously improving and increasing collaboration and coordination of our efforts for the benefit of the communities we serve. We will continue to seek ways to collectively leverage our connections and shift our systems to better support collaboration and increase capacity of organizations working together in L-A.



Taking a systems approach

Through the co-design process (2020) and systems mapping sessions (2021), community organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have asked for support to develop a systems approach to strengthen their work in two ways: by supporting collaboration and building capacity. Sewall looks forward to working with other L-A funders to pilot this effort over the next three years by supporting collaboration and building capacity as laid out by L-A community organizations.

Support Collaboration by providing resources that encourage organizations to work collectively to deepen equity and advance shared goals. Those resources include:

- *Structure*: support a community-driven process to select (as needed) a [collaborative model](#) to coordinate and sustain collective work in each priority area
- *Grants*: develop an approach to funding that lowers competition and supports nonprofit organizations to work collectively and cooperatively
- *Equity training*: tailored to organizations in different sectors and at different points in their equity learning journeys
- *Policy support*: to promote fair and equitable access to resources and opportunities
- *Communications resources*: to shift the narrative and cultivate a culture of cooperation
- *Facilitated processes*: for shared learning, reflection, and decision making

Build Capacity by combining grants with other critical resources to strengthen organizational and system-wide efforts. Those resources include:

- *Restructured resource allocation*: modest, non-competitive operating support for nonprofit organizations, as needed, and more substantial collective initiative grants for nonprofits to do collective work
- *Technical assistance*: to strengthen nonprofit capacity for grant-writing, financial management, leadership, planning, and other aspects of organizational development
- *Shared leadership training*: to improve collective decision-making processes within organizations and across systems
- *Values-aligned investments*: to complement grant funding and boost economic development
- *Convenings*: for shared learning and skills building

Annual Convening

As appropriate, Sewall invites and offers support for L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five priority areas to host an ***annual convening***, for ***shared learning, reflection, and revision*** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of this Overall Approach

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
<p>Collaboration emphasis, connected to goals of decreasing competition, investing in leadership, reducing duplication, and building sense of community.</p> <p>Collaboration benefits: working toward same goals; less competition, less pressure on organizations; strength in numbers; shared learning, better communication and awareness of services, resources. All of this in turn leads to greater scale, increased impact, and sustainability</p>	<p>Cautions about collaboration: need to examine power dynamics; get the right partners, identify people not yet engaged; retain members; continue to name/address competitiveness; how to connect organizations strategically. Focus on assets, strengths. Set up a networking and communication system among relevant entities to ensure effective collaboration</p> <p>How will we track which voices stay involved and which are missing?</p>	<p>Concerns about collaboration: mindsets against collaboration, the need to change behavior</p> <p>How do people working across systems/sectors/issues participate without being overburdened?</p>
<p>Systems approach: a clear understanding of how the system works will increase impact</p>	<p>How to work across areas efficiently? Across funders?</p>	<p>Categorization: where are the intersections between areas? Ex: Where is early childhood addressed? Intersects with multiple areas. Where is financial education? Education, juvenile justice/DOC, and child welfare need to be under equitable systems. More fulsome understanding of workforce development.</p>
<p>Operating grants (no further comments)</p>		
	<p>Terminology: Unclear terms in the workplan include: “Shared leadership based in equity and community-building” “Values-aligned investing”(there is a comment on this: CDFIs need help capitalizing loan pools that could be targeted toward underserved communities. ECBOs could help get the word out.)</p>	
	<p>Build on what we have.</p>	
	<p>How to track progress? Another idea shared on “decolonized reporting on learning/sharing.”</p>	
<p>Centering New Mainers and youth</p>	<p>Also support people with disabilities; consider Adverse Childhood Experiences</p>	<p>How to be inclusive of others (e.g., BIPOC, those with lived experience)?</p>

The following pages describe the current state, desired state, work to be done, workplan outline, and proposed timeline to pilot each of the five priority areas:

1. Equitable Civic Systems
2. Workforce Access and Economic Development
3. Community Health & Wellness
4. Healthy Affordable Housing
5. Healthy Local Food System





Priority 1: Equitable Civic Systems

Current state

- Significant shifts in demographics of Lewiston and Auburn are not reflected in civic leadership and participation.
- Community residents, especially youth and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color), have been underrepresented in priority-setting and decision-making processes.
- Schools and municipal agencies have been slow to shift structures, processes, and services, to effectively engage L-A's diverse population.
- Work to remove structural barriers, including systemic racism, has been mainly through individual relationships rather than at the organizational and structural levels.
- Lewiston and Auburn have different and related historical and current equity challenges.
- Through the work of City Spirit, both cities have adopted equity statements as an early step in advancing this work.

Desired state

Municipal departments, including schools, and police, and other public-sector agencies in Lewiston and Auburn will operate in ways that are fair, just, and inclusive of all L-A residents, especially youth and BIPOC; and all L-A residents, especially youth and BIPOC, will participate fully in civic life and leadership.

Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for processes to deepen equity in the civic systems of Lewiston and Auburn in order to:

- **Shift systems** – by removing barriers and shifting mental models to increase leadership and participation in civic systems of Lewiston and Auburn, especially by youth and BIPOC.
- **Strengthen connections** – by addressing harms, shifting power dynamics, and supporting development of a new narrative for L-A

L-A community organizations and collaboratives will take the leadership role in this work, with Sewall and others providing support and partnership, to advance equity in the civic systems of Lewiston and Auburn.

Workplan

Support collaboration, by providing resources to:

- *Strengthen partnerships:*
 - Between municipal systems (including city agencies, schools and police departments) and community organizations in L-A, supported by a community-driven selection of an appropriate collaborative model
 - Between organizations and agencies working in this priority area and those working in other systems (Workforce, Health, Housing, and Food)
- *Support collective work*, in coordination with existing initiatives such as City Spirit, to increase equity and diversify leadership in Lewiston's and Auburn's:
 - City agencies – through barrier removal and development and adoption of structures and policies that support fair and equitable access to services, resources and leadership opportunities in city halls and police departments, centering youth and BIPOC
 - Public schools – by shifting curriculum and services to better respond to student needs and interests, and strengthening connections between schools and parents and community, centering youth and BIPOC
 - Civic engagement and leadership – by expanding community voice, especially of youth and BIPOC

Build capacity, by providing resources for:

- *Technical assistance* for organizations to address capacity needs
- *Modest operating support* for nonprofits combined with support to plan for sustainability
- *Collective initiative grants* for nonprofits (and limited funding for municipal agencies to pilot equity-building initiatives) to work collectively
- Extensive, sector-appropriate *training to deepen equity* and eliminate racial and other forms of implicit bias in municipal policies and practices
- Exploration of models for *shared leadership* and equity-based community building



Timeline

The work outlined above will be carried out roughly according to the following timeframe. Periodic and annual reviews will provide opportunities to adjust these plans, by incorporating new collaboratives that might develop and new funding partners that might join in supporting these efforts, as L-A's work continues to take shape over the next 3+ years.



- Facilitate selection of an appropriate **collaborative model**
 - Facilitate formation or further development of **groups doing collective work**
 - Provide modest **operating support**, combined with **technical assistance**, for nonprofits doing collective work
 - Provide **collective initiative grants**, as readiness allows, for collective work
 - Provide an opportunity to begin **exploring innovative models of shared leadership** and community development
 - Provide support to begin sector-appropriate **equity training** process
 - Explore ways to **strengthen connections** between organizations working to deepen equity in L-A's civic systems and those working in other L-A systems
-
- **Continue Year 1** collaboration and capacity-building work, as needed
 - Provide support for **leadership training for L-A residents** – especially youth and BIPOC – to boost civic participation, including serving in public office and working in municipal agencies and departments
 - Provide support for **training in shared leadership** and decision making, centering youth and BIPOC
-
- **Continue Year 2** collaborative and capacity-building work, as needed
 - Explore readiness for a **communications initiative** to shift the narrative to build a culture of equity and inclusion
 - Continue building **shared leadership** and shifting **decision making** to community, centering youth and BIPOC

PROPOSED ANNUAL CONVENING

Sewall invites, and will help support, L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five priority areas to host an **annual convening**, for **shared learning, reflection, and revision** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of work towards Equitable Civic Systems

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
<p>The emphasis on collaboration is positive (between civic and community-based entities) Involving city agencies builds trust</p>	<p>Collab: Need to include education, juvenile justice, and child welfare; Include different lenses: center all BIPOC while including existing /traditional leaders. Need to attend to power differentials between police and other stakeholders, especially youth.</p>	<p>Collaboration: Fear of change Political challenges Outreach to community Orgs will need sustainable support Transparency</p>
<p>The emphasis on civic engagement/participation</p>	<p>How to address apathy and make civic engagement compelling? Get more people to run for office? How to sequence: build foundation for civic participation, then define and build leadership, or the other way around?</p>	
<p>Youth leadership is at the center</p>	<p>Should there be a youth academy? Need for civics education-changing curriculum is complex We need parent leadership liaisons between schools/youth and community</p>	<p>How can youth meaningfully participate and lead?</p>
<p>Timeline is reasonable</p>	<p>Need to move from training to actualization (note: no one mentioned training as a rose)</p>	<p>Can we make this 3+ years vs. 3 years? Worry that the time frame will allow good things to start and then it will fizzle out.</p>
<p>Convenings and annual check-ins prevent the phenomenon of “funded and done”</p>	<p>The collaborative can determine frequency of convening</p>	<p>Need to better understand difference between collaborating and convenings</p>



Priority 2: Workforce Access and Economic Development

Current state

- Several strong collaborative efforts (ex. Strengthen L-A and Androscoggin Collaborative) already support portions of this work across sectors (public and nonprofit) and between the two cities.
- An initial planning grant from Working Communities Challenge offers potential to leverage significant resources to boost economic development in Lewiston and Auburn.
- Barriers such as lack of transportation and childcare, language and cultural differences, job readiness and training opportunities, and employer-centered policies, practices, and cultures, are a challenge to all aspects of this work.
- Enormous workforce potential exists among current L-A residents; barrier removal is one key to unlocking that potential.
- Education-to-employment efforts are needed to build stronger, more equitable connections between sectors and communities.

Desired state

All L-A households will be able to earn a livable wage by participating in a thriving local economy that is equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and just.

Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for an ecosystem of organizations and collaboratives to work collectively to:

- **Shift systems** – by removing barriers and shifting mental models, to increase equitable access to economic opportunity, especially for youth and BIPOC
- **Strengthen connections** – by supporting relationship building, addressing power dynamics, promoting equitable inclusion, and coordinating efforts across sectors, organizations, and communities

Community organizations and collaboratives in Lewiston and Auburn will take the leadership role in this work. For example, Strengthen L-A is a collective effort of nonprofit, for-profit, and public-sector organizations, coordinated by the L-A Metro Chamber of Commerce, with substantial support from John T. Gorman Foundation, to advance L-A's economic development goals. Sewall will work in partnership with Gorman and others to support a broad range of initiatives to boost and sustain work in this Priority Area.

Workplan

Support collaboration, by providing resources to:

- *Strengthen partnerships*
 - Within L-A's workforce and economic development ecosystem, through a community-driven selection of an appropriate collaborative model
 - Between organizations in this Priority Area and those working in other areas (Equitable Civic Systems, Health, Housing, and Food)
- *Support collective work*, in coordination with existing collaboratives such as Strengthen L-A, Androscoggin Collaborative, and Working Communities Challenge leadership team, to deepen equity in:
 - infrastructure – through barrier removal, policy work, improvement of resource flows, and relationship building among organizations working in this area, centering youth and BIPOC
 - education-to-employment pathways – by connecting employers (current and anticipated) and those providing employment preparation (schools, colleges, training programs), centering youth and BIPOC

Build capacity, by providing resources for:

- *Technical assistance* for organizations to address capacity needs
- *modest operating support* for nonprofits combined with support to plan for sustainability
- *collective initiative grants* for nonprofits to work toward shared goals
- sector-appropriate *learning opportunities* that deepen equity and eliminate racial and other forms of implicit bias in hiring and employment practices
- opportunities for *shared learning and skills building*
- exploration of models for *shared leadership* and equity-based community building



Timeline

The work outlined above will be carried out roughly according to the following timeline. Periodic and annual reviews will provide opportunities to adjust these plans, by incorporating new collaboratives that might develop and new funding partners that might join in supporting these efforts, as L-A's work continues to take shape over the next 3+ years.



- Facilitate selection process of an appropriate **collaborative model**
- Facilitate formation or further development of **groups doing collective work**
- Provide modest **operating support**, combined with **technical assistance**, for nonprofits doing collective work
- Provide **collective initiative grants**, as readiness allows, for collective work
- Provide an opportunity to begin **exploring innovative models for shared leadership** and community development
- Begin sector-appropriate **learning opportunities to deepen equity**
- Explore ways to **strengthen connections** between organizations working in workforce and economic development systems and those working in other L-A systems

- **Continue Year 1** collaboration and capacity-building work, as needed
- Explore additional ways to **increase equitable access** to resources and opportunity
- Provide **training in shared leadership and decision making**, centering youth and New Mainers

- **Continue Year 2** collaborative and capacity-building work, as needed
- Explore readiness for a **communications initiative** to shift the narrative about L-A's economy
- Continue building **shared leadership** and shifting **decision making** to community

When appropriate:

- Make **strategic values-aligned investments** supporting economic development that reduces barriers and is equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and just

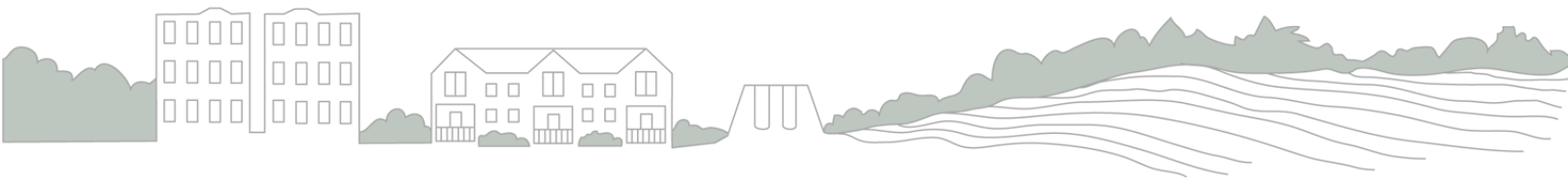
PROPOSED ANNUAL CONVENING

Sewall invites, and will help support, L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five priority areas to host an **annual convening**, for **shared learning, reflection, and revision** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of work towards Workforce Access & Economic Development

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
<p>Collaborative approach: We need more voices. Love that this is seen as a community-wide effort.</p> <p>Need to name and build on current efforts</p> <p>Like the emphasis on infrastructure work, education-to-employment</p>	<p>Need to support existing momentum, avoid duplication; a goal of collaboration should be to learn about current models; learn about who is doing what, share best practices; start pilot projects using evidence-based practices; communicate with those who are not already invited to this conversation. Need active buy-in from the private sector</p>	<p>Sustaining engagement; need TA/facilitation to coordinate; need metrics around collaboration</p> <p>How to keep track of activities and which individuals and groups stay engaged, and in what ways</p> <p>How to move quickly to address urgent needs?</p> <p>Need to understand the difference between workforce (person-centered) and economic development (long-term, project or investor-driven) and how that affects collaborative goals</p>
<p>Capacity building: like the focus on facilitation and training to empower/support organizations and collaboratives</p>	<p>Help small nonprofits build capacity</p> <p>What does shared leadership training look like in years 2 and 3?</p> <p>How can we elevate the importance of an educated workforce?</p>	
<p>Operating support</p>		
<p>Reduce barriers: love the focus on overcoming existing barriers (e.g., child care, transportation, food access, language) and more equitable solutions so all people can work</p>	<p>Build on what's already happening; importance of childcare, transportation, other supports for kids, parents</p>	<p>Need for childcare support for anyone in a workforce program; state budgets are volatile; some organizations don't want to change to remove barriers</p>
<p>Employment pathways</p>	<p>Start with collaborating on L-A-focused recruiting for jobs</p>	
<p>Centering youth, New Mainers</p>	<p>But needs to be inclusive of BIPOC, LGBTQ in design, not just as end users</p>	<p>Include disconnected youth, formerly incarcerated</p>
	<p>Defining workforce development: entry-level vs. professional?</p>	<p>Workforce development and economic development are two different things</p>
	<p>Understanding regulations</p>	<p>Dynamic workforce environment (instability, remote work)</p>



Priority 3: Community Health and Wellness

Current state

- Multiple collaboratives, often of individuals rather than formal, organization-level partnerships, are working in this area.
- Language and cultural barriers, as well as implicit bias, significantly impact access to facilities and services to support health and wellness.
- Lack of transportation and access to open space, and inadequate facilities pose barriers to appropriate recreation opportunities, especially for seniors, youth, BIPOC, and people with disabilities.

Desired state

All L-A residents will have what they need to maintain good health and wellbeing.

Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for an ecosystem of organizations and collaboratives to work collectively to:

- **Shift systems** – by removing systemic barriers (ex. transportation, health insurance) and shifting mental models (ex. expanding cultural views of health and wellness)
- **Strengthen connections** – by supporting relationship building, addressing power dynamics (including implicit bias), promoting equitable inclusion, and coordinating efforts across sectors, organizations and communities

L-A community organizations and collaboratives will take the leadership role in this work. Sewall will continue to partner with Maine Health Access Foundation, Maine Initiatives, and others to support work in this priority area. We welcome others to join our efforts to coordinate and leverage resources for deeper and sustainable impact.

Workplan

Support collaboration, by providing resources to:

- *Strengthen partnerships*
 - Within L-A's community health ecosystem through community-driven selection of an appropriate collaborative model
 - Between organizations working in this priority area and those working in other areas (Equitable Civic Systems, Workforce, Housing, and Food) as a strategy for addressing social determinants of health
- *Support collective work*, in coordination with existing collaboratives such as L-A Task Force and Barefoot Community Health, to increase equity in:
 - Public health and wellness – by supporting research and advocating for changes in policies, practices, misconceptions, and systemic barriers to good, affordable, culturally appropriate health-related services, especially for youth and BIPOC
 - Social services – by helping to connect resources to support collaborative, systemic approaches to social services (including mental health and substance use services) that are culturally appropriate, linguistically accessible, and easy to navigate, especially for youth and BIPOC
 - Recreation and fitness – by supporting collective efforts to remove barriers to outdoor and indoor recreation opportunities, especially for youth and BIPOC

Build capacity, by providing resources for:

- *Technical assistance* for organizations to address capacity needs
- *Modest operating support for nonprofits* combined with support to develop sustainability
- *Collective initiative grants* for nonprofits to work toward shared goals
- Sector-appropriate *learning opportunities* that deepen equity and eliminate racial and other forms of implicit bias in health-related organizations and services
- Exploration of models for *shared leadership* and equity-based community building



Timeline

The work outlined above will be carried out roughly according to the following timeframe. Periodic and annual reviews will provide opportunities to adjust these plans, by incorporating new collaboratives that might develop and new funding partners that might join in supporting these efforts, as L-A's work continues to take shape over the next 3+ years.



- Facilitate selection process of an appropriate **collaborative model**
- Facilitate formation or further development of **groups doing collective work**
- Provide modest **operating support**, combined with **technical assistance**, for nonprofits doing collective work
- Provide **collective initiative grants**, as readiness allows, for collective work
- Provide an opportunity to begin **exploring innovative models for shared leadership** and community development
- Begin sector-appropriate **learning opportunities to deepen equity**
- Explore ways to **strengthen connections** between organizations working in community health and wellness systems and those working in other L-A systems

- **Continue Year 1** collaboration and capacity-building work, as needed
- Offer opportunities for **shared learning and skills building**, especially to deepen equity throughout the work in this area
- Provide **training in shared leadership** and decision making, centering youth and New Mainers

- **Continue Year 2** collaborative and capacity-building work, as needed
- Explore readiness for a **communications initiative** to shift the narrative and build shared understanding about what a “healthy L-A” looks like
- Continue building **shared leadership** and shifting **decision making** to community

If/when appropriate:

- Make **strategic values-aligned investments** to increase access to resources that boost community health and wellness

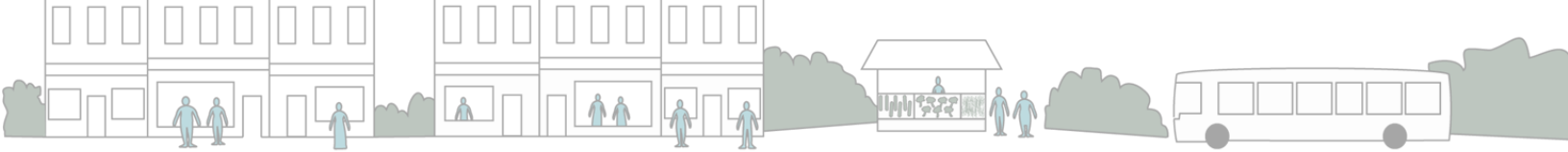
PROPOSED ANNUAL CONVENING

Sewall invites, and will help support, L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five Priority Areas to host an **annual convening**, for **shared learning, reflection, and revision** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of work towards Community Health & Wellness

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
Focus on recreation and access to outdoors; outdoor spaces are critical to health	Nature-based education needed for youth, New Mainers. Address land access, more equitably built outdoor spaces, increase awareness, remove barriers, and welcome people to existing spaces Need for knowledge-building: identifying barriers and how they connect to other areas, what other places are doing about health, 'no wrong door' models (no matter where you enter system, you know what's available)	Outdoor spaces need to be truly public Transportation and childcare are barriers to health and wellness services
Collaboration, especially between public health, MH, and physical health. Collaboration goals should include building community awareness of resources, statewide advocacy for healthcare access, and changing the narrative to make collaboration (vs. turfism) acceptable	Mainstream orgs need to work more closely with I&R orgs; how to be strategic, connect orgs that don't know each other. Engage hospitals and colleges	Recognize and respect different organizations' organizational plans and policies Lack of hospital engagement in public health Creating sustainable programs is missing-need to codify wins at the policy and local levels around land use/access
Youth-centered, youth leadership focus	Notions of collaboration, a community center, leadership; how to truly engage youth and actually listen?	Youth leaders need to be compensated
Remove barriers	Identify barriers that exist/connect to other areas (childcare, finances, work; break language barriers	Add sustainable programs as a focus
Learning opportunities	Learning issues: how to leverage existing funds; need for community-based research around health	Address SUD
Culturally appropriate definitions of what health looks like	Need to focus on New Mainers, understand root causes of poor health, encourage health promotion and linguistically, culturally responsive direct services. Support ECBOs already working on this. Don't reinvent the wheel	Address culturally based needs of women/maternal and child health
		Lack of public health infrastructure



Priority 4: Healthy and Affordable Housing

Current state

- Many organizations are working to increase supply and access to affordable housing.
- The systems impact maps suggest that most of the work in housing systems is focused on the structural level (ex. programs, service delivery, and resource flows), with little work focused on relational (ex. power dynamics) and transformational (ex. mental models) levels of the system.
- There are good partnerships and collaboration in Lewiston's Tree Streets Neighborhood. More collaboration is needed to support affordable housing opportunities in L-A beyond the Tree Streets neighborhood.
- Creative exploration is underway for new models of housing and financing.
- Systemic barriers impede equitable access to housing and perpetuate lead poisoning, with multiple negative consequences.
- Stronger connections are needed between municipal agencies and community organizations.

Desired state

All L-A residents will have a safe, healthy, and affordable place to live, that supports family sizes, reflects cultural preferences, and provides access to community gardens, outdoor recreation facilities, and other healthy green space.

Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for an ecosystem of organizations and collaboratives to work collectively to:

- **Shift systems** – by supporting policy work, streamlining navigation of housing-related systems, and changing mental models, centering youth and BIPOC throughout
- **Strengthen connections** – by extending relationship building beyond the Tree Streets, across neighborhoods in Lewiston and Auburn, addressing power dynamics and centering youth and BIPOC in all aspects of the work

L-A community organizations and collaboratives, including those connected to Healthy Neighborhoods and the Growing Our Tree Streets (GOTS) initiative, will take the leadership role in this work. John T. Gorman Foundation provides considerable support in this area through GOTS, and significant federal support has been awarded for housing and economic development in the Tree Streets neighborhood. Housing is a complex system with many players, including state and federal funders and CDFI's (Genesis Loan Fund, Coastal Enterprises, Cooperative Fund of New England, and others). Sewall seeks to complement and enhance these varied efforts, in ways that support sustainable housing solutions that work for people and the environment in Lewiston and Auburn.

Workplan

Support collaboration, by providing resources to:

- *Strengthen partnerships:*
 - Within L-A's housing ecosystem through community-driven selection of an appropriate collaborative model
 - Between organizations working in this priority area and those working in other areas (Equitable Civic Systems, Workforce, Health, and Food)
- *Support collective work*, in coordination with existing collaborative initiatives such as Healthy Neighborhoods and Growing Our Tree Streets Transformation Plan, to increase equity through:
 - Service coordination – by supporting development of a Housing System and Service Navigation Hub to increase the flow of data and resources, and to improve the human experience at each point in the affordable housing spectrum: shelter → transitional housing → rental → homeownership
 - Barrier removal – by supporting advocacy efforts at state and local levels to address lead and other code violations, inequitable zoning, and financing restrictions, centering youth and BIPOC
 - Innovation – by exploring alternative models for financing (including Shariah-compliant approaches), protection against displacement, and opportunities for green housing construction and rehabilitation

Build capacity, by providing resources for:

- *Technical assistance* for organizations to address capacity needs
- *Modest operating support* for nonprofits combined with support to develop sustainability
- *Collective initiative grants* for nonprofits to work toward shared goals
- Sector-appropriate *learning opportunities* to deepen equity
- Exploration of models for *shared leadership* and equity-based community building



Timeline

The proposed work outlined above will be carried out roughly according to the following timeframe. Periodic and annual reviews will provide opportunities to adjust these plans, by incorporating new collaboratives that might develop and new funding partners that might join in supporting these efforts, as L-A's work continues to take shape over the next 3+ years.



- Facilitate selection process of an appropriate **collaborative model**
 - Facilitate formation or further development of **groups doing collective work**
 - Provide modest **operating support**, combined with **technical assistance**, for nonprofits doing collective work
 - Provide **collective initiative grants**, as readiness allows, for collective work
 - Provide an opportunity to begin **exploring innovative models for shared leadership and community development**
 - Begin sector-appropriate **learning opportunities to deepen equity**
 - Explore ways to **strengthen connections** between organizations working in housing systems and those working in other L-A systems
- **Continue Year 1** collaboration, and capacity-building work, as needed
 - Offer opportunities for **shared learning and skills building**, to deepen equity throughout the work in this area
 - Provide **training in shared leadership and decision making**, centering youth and BIPOC
- **Continue Year 2** collaborative and capacity-building work, as needed
 - Explore readiness for a **communications initiative** to create a sense of welcoming in L-A for youth and BIPOC and others facing housing challenges, and to build interest in affordable housing with a low negative environmental impact
 - Continue **building shared leadership and shifting decision making** to community

If/when appropriate:

- Make **strategic values-aligned investments** to support community-driven developments that provide safe, healthy, and affordable places to live

PROPOSED ANNUAL CONVENING

Sewall invites, and will help support, L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five Priority Areas to host an **annual convening**, for **shared learning, reflection, and revision** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of work towards Healthy & Affordable Housing

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
Collaboration: likes the idea of partners using their skills in the right way, communicating better, focusing on innovation. Likes “improve the human experience” at each point in the affordable housing spectrum Likes that shelters are included in the spectrum.	Collab with social services; collab to increase access. Need to promote collaboration across L and A, between city housing authorities and landlords. Build on current committees, coalitions; include for-profit housing providers?	Lack of collaboration between L and A at the municipal level Getting funding is competitive Concern that new investments downtown will drive folks out Lack of affordable first apartments
	Leverage ARPA funds	
Operating support is important to small non-profits and will get the work done		
Technical Assistance	Education and training needs: financial management, budgeting, risks and benefits of renting vs. owning, grant writing, reporting	
The focus on reducing barriers	Address poverty, link with workforce development. Need to understand and work on the chicken and egg problem: how to get housing without work? Stable housing is critical to moving forward	
Support housing innovation (e.g., alternative, equitable funding approaches)	Housing issues to include maintaining new buildings; home ownership/down payment assistance (loan pools, Sharia-compliant lending);	Build affordable AND high-quality housing; rehab beautiful buildings; support non-traditional alternatives to single family homes/apartments (ADUs, tiny houses, co-ops)
Healthy housing is part of the discussion	Lead is an emergency	Increase awareness of lead remediation programs; barrier of cost, lack of contractors
Inclusion of shelters: Unhoused people deserve dignity and respect	Include homeless population.	Support Housing First; need for low-barrier, non-denominational shelters (will take a lot of coordination, capital, and operating support)
	Need for foundations to advocate for increased resources/barrier reduction	



Priority 5: Healthy Local Food Systems

Current state

- Guided by the Local Food, Local Places Action Plan, several organizations (including some that are immigrant-led) and collaborations are providing strong, creative, and collaborative leadership in L-A's food system.
- L-A's community garden programs increase community cohesion and access to healthy, culturally preferred foods. These programs should be expanded and land access should be increased (especially in Auburn) so that these programs bring full benefit to the community.
- Policy support for urban agriculture and food sovereignty, and other strategies – such as connecting owners of farmland and farmers seeking access, and helping provide funding for land acquisition and transfer – would greatly boost L-A's food economy.
- Nutrition education, expanded food access (including food pantries and grocery stores), and an easy-to-navigate food system are needed by many challenged by food insecurity in L-A, including youth and BIPOC.
- Stronger connections between food buyers and producers, as well as other stakeholders, are needed to strengthen L-A's food system.
- More work is needed to support youth in developing aspirations and pursuing careers in all aspects of L-A's food system.

Desired state

All L-A residents will have healthy, affordable, culturally preferred food to eat, and L-A's local food economy will thrive!

Work to be done

Organizations in Lewiston and Auburn have requested support for an ecosystem of organizations and collaboratives to work collectively to:

- **Shift systems** – by removing barriers to reduce food insecurity and deepen equity in L-A's food system, especially for youth and BIPOC
- **Strengthen connections** – by expanding relationships, addressing power dynamics, and building infrastructure to boost L-A's food economy

L-A community organizations and collaboratives will take the leadership role in this work.¹ Several funders are supporting work in this priority area, including state, regional and national foundations, and state and federal public-sector funding agencies. Sewall will continue in partnership with them and welcomes others to join!

¹ Some organizations in L-A, such as Good Shepherd Food Bank, that are involved in statewide advocacy and systems-level work, are being supported through Sewall's Food Systems Focus Area, instead of the Lewiston-Auburn Focus Area, of Sewall's Healthy People Healthy Places program. Overlap between L-A's Food System work and the Food Systems Focus Area will strengthen connections between the food work in L-A and food work statewide.

Workplan

Support collaboration, by providing resources to:

- *Strengthen partnerships:*
 - Within L-A's already established food ecosystem, the Good Food Council of Lewiston-Auburn and Local Foods Local Places, as needed
 - Between L-A's local foods work and statewide and regional collaboratives and initiatives, including the Maine Food Convergence, Ending Hunger by 2030 Initiative, and Food Solutions New England.
 - Between organizations working in this priority area and those working in other areas (Equitable Civic Systems, Workforce, Housing, and Health)
- *Support collective work to strengthen:*
 - *Food security and nutrition efforts* – by supporting community outreach, nutrition education, and advocacy at the state and local levels, to increase consumption of healthy, locally sourced (when possible) and culturally preferred food
 - *Local food economy* – by supporting development of infrastructure for farming and food-related careers and business, centering youth and BIPOC

Build capacity, by providing resources for:

- *Technical assistance* for organizations to address capacity needs
- *Modest operating support* for nonprofits combined with support to plan for sustainability
- *Collective initiative grants* for nonprofits to work toward shared goals
- *Sector-appropriate learning opportunities* that deepen equity and build skills
- Exploration of models for *shared leadership* and equity-based community building



Timeline

The work outlined above will be carried out roughly according to the following timeframe. Periodic and annual reviews will provide opportunities to adjust these plans, by incorporating new collaboratives that might develop and new funding partners that might join in supporting these efforts, as L-A's work continues to take shape over the next 3+ years.



- Support continued development of **groups doing collective work**
- Provide modest **operating support**, combined with **technical assistance**, for nonprofits doing collective work
- Provide **collective initiative grants**, as readiness allows, for collective work
- Provide an opportunity to **explore innovative models for shared leadership** and community development
- Support sector-appropriate **learning opportunities to deepen equity**
- Explore ways to **strengthen connections** between organizations working in food systems and those working in other L-A systems

- **Continue Year 1** collaboration and capacity-building work, as needed
- Explore additional ways to **increase equitable access** to resources and opportunity
- Deepen **training in shared leadership** and decision making, centering youth and BIPOC

- **Continue Year 2** collaborative and capacity-building work, as needed
- Strengthen **connections with those working in other systems** (Equitable Civic Systems, Workforce, Health, and Housing)
- Continue building **shared leadership and shifting decision making** to community

When appropriate:

- Make **strategic values-aligned investments** to increase access to healthy, culturally preferred food, and to the land and resources needed for a thriving local food economy

PROPOSED ANNUAL CONVENING

Sewall invites, and will help support, L-A organizations and collaboratives working in the five Priority Areas to host an **annual convening**, for **shared learning, reflection, and revision** of this workplan. Periodic check-ins will also be supported throughout the year.

Considerations for Implementation of work towards Healthy Local Food Systems

Community organizations provided the following feedback to the workplan which should be used to guide the implementation of this work:

Rose Things we like about the proposed approach in this priority area	Bud Questions, additional ideas, or areas that need to be developed further	Thorn Potential issues, challenges, or concerns
Systems approach, especially including a network of organizations and bridging gaps between workforce development and food systems work. Engaging current networks will ensure communication and long-term cooperation. Strengthening local food economy will have ripple effects to other priority areas. Likes the focus on sustainability.		Will funders steer development of the food system? Must have staff who understand community needs, are a bridge, and listen to feedback
Culturally preferred foods: including nutrition access, locally-sourced food and linking them to cultural relevance is critical	Understand what is in the food that is served (e.g., in schools to avoid eating culturally forbidden foods); develop community vision re: culturally specific food needs	How to facilitate cultural relevance in meals/food when outside forces are at play (e.g., with USDA regulations/school meals?)
Sustainability		Debt financing can be a barrier for food system organizations; need for food storage; need for market access; need for more paid positions in addition to volunteers
Nutrition education	Increase emphasis on healthy foods and living. What will learning look like?	
Recognition of existing relationships and infrastructure	Build on what exists; invest in re-imagining food justice	
Collaboration	With other areas (workforce, health). Lots of mapping already done-need to move to integration and shared work. Strengthen relationships between buyers/producers, city economic development Engage current networks	
Operating support	How will Sewall balance operating support and environmental sustainability?	
Questions for Sewall	Define what is meant by the focus on policy/advocacy at state/local levels How much of your support is focused on operations, and does it have to be combined with environmental sustainability, or just organizational sustainability? What does sector-appropriate learning look like to you?	Will funder collaboration have the power to steer development of food system work? Will funders ensure that the right priorities are in place?

Next Steps

On Tuesday, October 5, Sewall hosted a virtual open house for organizations in Lewiston and Auburn. This provided an opportunity for L-A organizations to offer feedback and further input, to ensure that this workplan aligns with community priorities. As with previous community conversations, the open house was facilitated by Lisa Attygalle from Tamarack Institute and supported by evaluation consultant Susan Foster. The text of the workplan has been revised according to input from open house participants, and a summary of their feedback has been inserted at the end of each section, as further guidance for implementation.

In addition, at the open house philanthropic partners were introduced to the work envisioned by organizations in L-A. Sewall welcomes further opportunities for further connection and exploration of interest in more coordination and collaboration among funders to better support this work.

Sewall staff will continue working with L-A organizations and with funding partners, to support initial preparations to implement the workplan.

Next steps include:

- **Identifying resources to support *facilitated processes*** to assist L-A organizations in working collectively to address shared goals
- **Identifying resources for *technical assistance*** for individual nonprofits and ***equity training and shared learning opportunities*** for groups of organizations within and across Priority Areas
- Being available throughout the year for virtual and in-person meetings (as COVID allows) for ***ongoing guidance and support***
- ***Exploring interest among organizations*** in Lewiston and Auburn to host an ***annual convening each fall***, to provide an opportunity for those working in each Priority Area to showcase their collective work, to share updates and lessons learned, and to adjust plans for the following year as needed. An annual convening could offer a way to strengthen connections across Priority Areas and sectors and to engage in shared learning and reflection.



Resources

Budget

This proposal is ambitious and achieving the desired state in each of L-A's Priority Areas will require resources that far exceed the capacity of Sewall Foundation or any other single funding source. We look forward to continued partnership with other funders to supporting L-A organizations working collectively to enhance the health and wellbeing of the people and environment in Lewiston and Auburn.

Sewall's Grants Budget for Lewiston and Auburn

The priorities noted in this workplan are not a reflection of the breadth or importance of work in each priority area. Rather, rankings indicate funding that is needed from Sewall, in recognition that other funders are playing a significant role in supporting some priority areas already. Based on guidance from the co-design process, and subject to adjustments as needed during implementation of the 3-year pilot, Sewall proposes allocating its grant funding in the Lewiston-Auburn focus area, according to these rough percentages:

21% – Priority 1: Equitable Civic Systems

24% – Priority 2: Workforce Access and Economic Development¹

18% – Priority 3: Community Health and Wellness

15% – Priority 4: Healthy and Affordable Housing

12% – Priority 5: Healthy Local Food Systems

10% – for contingencies (to support unanticipated opportunities in one or more Priority Areas, to be expended by the end of each year)

100% – Total Grants for Lewiston-Auburn in each year

¹The reason for the slightly larger allocation for Priority 2 compared to Priority 1 is that currently more nonprofit organizations are engaged in Workforce Access than in Equitable Civic Systems. If that situation changes, the

Included in the annual allocation will be **modest operating support** plus **collective initiative grants** to support nonprofits working collectively toward shared goals in one or more priority areas. We recognize the systems approach proposed for L-A will require organizations in Lewiston and Auburn to develop feasible plans for sustainability. The prioritized grant allocation proposed here is intended to complement resources available from other sources. Sewall will continue to work closely with funding partners to help organizations in L-A to identify resources to sustain their collective efforts.

To strengthen the capacity of organizations to work collectively, in Year 1 Sewall will play a more proactive role in determining our grant allocations. We will support facilitated processes and shared leadership training so that in future years more of the decision making regarding our grant allocations may shift to the organizations working in each priority area.

Non-Grant Support in Lewiston and Auburn

Grants alone are not sufficient to advance the work outlined in this proposal. Pending approval by the Sewall board and further conversation with funding partners, resources will be made available to support technical assistance, process facilitation, trainings, convenings, and other non-grant expenses to ensure greater impact.

Consultants and Technical Assistance

Lisa Attygalle from Tamarack Institute and Susan Foster from S.E. Foster Associates have provided valuable guidance in the co-design, systems mapping, and workplan development to support the work in Lewiston and Auburn. Other philanthropic and public-sector funders similarly provide access to consultants and technical assistance. Sewall staff is committed to complementing these resources by assisting organizations in each priority area to identify trainers and facilitators best suited to support their collective work going forward.

Sewall will continue to offer [Catchafire](#) in 2022, to provide a broad range of technical assistance services free-of-charge to nonprofits doing collective work in Lewiston and Auburn. Examples of services offered by Catchafire include: organizational development and staffing; accounting, finance and data-base systems; fundraising, communications and marketing; professional coaching; and strategic planning.

Additional resources for sector-specific equity training and shared learning will be explored in conversation with L-A organizations, as appropriate.

For Further Learning

Resources that have informed this workplan

[Being the Change](#) – by FSG. Offers guidance for how foundations can mobilize more of their resources, in addition to grants, to advance their missions

[Building Collaboration from the Inside Out](#) – Grantmakers for Effective Organizations. Describes steps that foundations can take to shift how they work internally to support more effective collaboration with nonprofit partners externally

[Power Moves](#) – by National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy and Philamplify. Provides guidance to deepen equity and advance justice by addressing power dynamics between the philanthropic sector and communities most impacted by the work they support

[The Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#) – Offers ongoing guidance and support for funders committed to deepening equity by developing practices and policies that build trust internally and externally

Resources to support collective work by organizations in Lewiston and Auburn

[Emergent Learning](#) – by Fourth Quadrant Partners. An approach for learning as you go, to gain rapid feedback about collective work, generate insights, and adapt plans to improve future results.

[Forms and Features of Collaboration](#) – by Dartington Service Design Lab and Collaborate for Social Change. Presents several different models of collaboration to support collective work

[A Guide for Meaningfully Engaging Youth](#) – by Tamarack Institute. Shines a light on the principles and practices that lead to meaningful youth engagement

[Targeted Universalism](#) – A brief Youtube video that explains a principle that builds equity by using strategies designed to address negative impacts on specific groups so they and all others can achieve universal goals

[Water of Systems Change](#) – by FSG. Describes the concept of systems change and approaches to addressing it

Examples of community-wide initiatives that advance equity-based approaches to systems change

[Blandin Foundation](#) (rural Minnesota) – centers leadership development, especially for immigrant and indigenous populations, as a strategy for promoting vibrant rural communities

[Communities Building Youth Futures](#) (Canada) – develops system-wide solutions for supporting youth as they build and act upon plans for their future

[Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative](#) (Boston) – elevates youth voice and empowers residents to exercise civic leadership to achieve neighborhood “development without displacement”

[Headwaters Foundation](#) (western Montana) – community-driven solutions to community transformation

[Healthier Together](#) (Palm Beach County, Florida) – transforming health systems by centering and shifting power to community residents

Some philanthropic partners supporting work in Lewiston and Auburn

[Coastal Enterprises, Inc.](#)

[Cooperative Fund](#)

[Elmina B. Sewall Foundation](#)

[Genesis Fund](#)

[Harvard Pilgrim Foundation](#)

[Henry P. Kendall Foundation](#)

[John T. Gorman Foundation](#)

[Maine Community Foundation](#)

[Maine Health Access Foundation](#)

[Maine Initiatives](#)

[Onion Foundation](#)

[United Way of Androscoggin County](#)

[USDA \(U.S. Department of Agriculture\)](#)

Glossary

Frequently used terms and an explanation of what they mean in this workplan

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

In this document, “BIPOC” refers to groups of individuals who do not identify as white. The term includes “New Mainers” (those who were not born in the United States – including immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants) and their children, as well as those who identify as Black/African-American, Caribbean, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian. In the co-design and systems mapping conversations that informed this workplan, the term “New Mainer” was used frequently by individuals in L-A who were not born in the U.S. However, feedback from the open house suggested that the more inclusive term “BIPOC” should be used in the workplan, to ensure that a range of communities that face systemic barriers to equity and justice are centered in this work.

Centering

Focusing on an aspect of work (ex. a particular population impacted by conditions being addressed) as a guide to ensure equity in the work.

Collective initiative

A defined body of work to be carried out by a group of organizations, with agreed upon roles and responsibilities in order to address shared goals.

Community

“Community” means a lot of things! Understood broadly, “community” could refer to all the people who live and work an area (ex. Lewiston and Auburn). Practically and more specifically in this document, “community” refers to the nonprofit organizations, as well as some for-profits and public-sector agencies, that work closely with individuals in the broader community. Sewall and other foundations frequently engage with communities of nonprofit organizations who, in term, engage with communities of individuals.

Equity

“Equity” is a broad term that, in the social sector, has to do with justice and fairness, usually understood from an historical and/or structural perspective. A definition that guides Sewall’s work is: “processes that heal, correct unjust conditions and structures, and create conditions for fair access to power, resources, and opportunities.”

Non-profit organization

Private foundations are required to make grants only to organizations that are eligible to receive tax-deductible donations as outlined in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. This includes: 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt organizations; public schools; public agencies working for the State of Maine; Indian tribal governments (and their political subdivisions) recognized by the Department of the Interior. Some foundations may permit organizations that do not meet those requirements to apply for grants through a fiscal sponsor; those funds may only be used to support activities for charitable purposes, as determined by the Internal Revenue Code.

System

A group of related parts (people, programs, organizations, processes, etc.) that interact in a certain way for a certain purpose.

Ecosystem

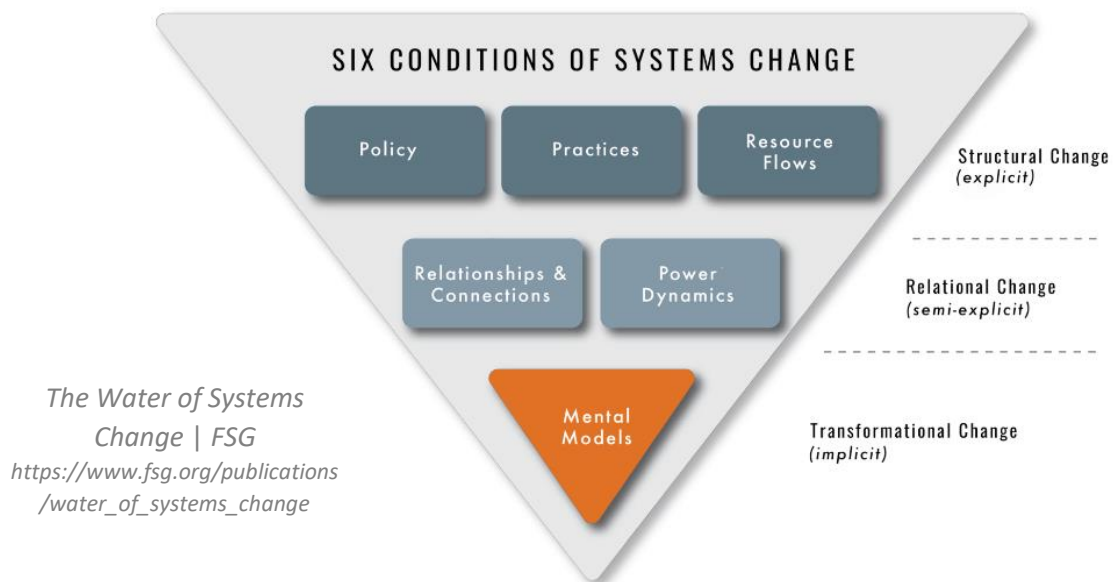
The term “ecosystem” considers how living things (including people, plants, and animals) interact with and within their physical environment. Whereas the term “system” can be thought of as a machine (or group of machines), an “ecosystem” always involves living beings in dynamic relationship with each other.

Systems approach

Instead of considering just one population or organization or program or issue, a systems approach considers all the different elements that interact with each other within a given context.

Systems change

A way of addressing a problem, not only by tackling the immediate challenge and symptoms, but also by addressing the factors (root causes) that have contributed to the development of the problem. This proposal frequently refers to structural (policies, programs, and resource flows that address immediate challenges), relational (relationships and power dynamics) and transformational (mental models, beliefs and values that maintain previous conditions or create new ones) levels of a system.



Targeted Universalism

An approach to systems change that involves removing barriers for specific groups that are negatively impacted within a system as a strategy for making access within the system achievable for all. (Example: Curb cut-outs are designed to facilitate sidewalk navigation specifically for people with physical disabilities; curb cut-outs also benefit people pushing strollers, small children, older people, and everyone else by removing an obstacle at the end of the sidewalk.)