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The Downs, Scarborough

M&R Development

Photo credit: PCA

Photo credit: PCA

Photo credit: CA Smith Photography

One of Maine's largest redevelopment projects, The Downs in Scarborough stands as a transformative and replicable model for how communities can grow with purpose, intention, and care. Set on 577 acres that was once home to a historic Maine landmark, the new development has brought vitality to a beloved destination, created opportunity for the state's workforce and economy, and delivered critically needed housing.

In less than a decade, The Downs has evolved into one of Maine's most impactful economic engines and a thriving residential neighborhood. At its center, Maine's first newly constructed Town Center is taking shape – delivering new vibrancy to one of the state's oldest communities, and fulfilling a vision Scarborough residents have shared for more than two decades.

The Downs – Scarborough's Newest "Borough" Expanding housing opportunities across all demographics remains one of Maine's top priorities. With 2,000 units planned, The Downs creates opportunity for people of all incomes, ages, and stages of life. Its diverse housing mix includes workforce, market-rate, and affordable options ranging from tiny homes and apartments to condominiums and memory care residences. It is also home to Sturgeon Place, Maine's first affordable housing complex designed specifically for individuals with physical disabilities. As of 2026, more than 700 units have been completed, with approximately 1,000 residents now calling The Downs home.

Economic Prosperity In just a few short years, The Downs has become a powerful driver of economic growth. The Innovation District has attracted major employers and iconic brands, supporting more than 50 businesses and creating approximately 1,500 jobs. Its rapid success has attracted Maine's first Costco, Allagash Brewing Company, InterMed, Market Basket, IDEXX, and offered many others the unique opportunity to build and grow their business here in Maine.

Community Benefit Since 2006, Scarborough residents have consistently identified the need for a true Town Center – a vision clearly articulated in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Today, that vision is becoming reality. Designed as a vibrant, walkable gathering place centered around shared green space, the Town Center will serve as a dynamic destination while remaining deeply rooted in community character.

Beyond private development, The Downs sets a new benchmark for public-private partnership and infrastructure investment. More than $115 million in private capital has been committed to Scarborough's roads, utilities, and fiber connectivity, alongside a $25M traffic improvement initiative which addresses longstanding traffic issues plaguing the region. The Downs also enhanced regional mobility by expanding public transit to provide connections from Falmouth to Biddeford, and created 10+ miles of off-road pedestrian and bike trails.

Environmental stewardship remains central to the project's mission. One-third of the land will be permanently conserved, including a 25-acre donation to the Scarborough Land Trust, ensuring lasting preservation of open space.

In just eight years, The Downs has increased in value from $7 million to $353 million and now generates approximately $4 million annually in new tax revenue for the Town of Scarborough. The Downs is more than a project, it is the realization of a shared vision which has been shaped by smart growth, community input, and the commitment to create a sustainable and successful path for Scarborough.

Developer: M&R Development
General Contractor: Risbra Bros. Construction
Architects: PCA, Woodhull, Gawron Turgeon, Dirigo Architectural
Engineers: Gorrill Palmer, Acorn, TYLIN, St. Clair Assoc, Summit
Landscape Architects: ALKA
Environmental: Flycatcher

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Estabrook's Pownal Production Facility, Pownal

Estabrook Farm & Greenhouses, Inc.

Photo Credits: Jonathan Kinsman

The Estabrook's Pownal Production Facility represents a major investment in Maine's horticulture industry and in the future of locally grown plant production. Designed as a modern, high-efficiency greenhouse complex, the facility significantly expands Estabrook's ability to grow plants locally for both its retail garden centers and its wholesale customers throughout the region.

Estabrook's has served Maine gardeners and landscapers for many decades, and the Pownal facility continues that legacy by strengthening the local supply chain for horticultural products. The project was developed as part of a long-term strategic plan to increase production capacity while reducing reliance on plants shipped from distant growing regions. By producing more plants in Maine, Estabrook's can deliver fresher products, shorten transportation distances and respond more quickly to the needs of customers across the state.

The greenhouse complex incorporates state-of-the-art growing systems that emphasize efficiency and environmental responsibility. A closed-loop irrigation system captures, treats and recycles water and fertilizer used in plant production, minimizing waste while maximizing resource use. This system allows nutrients to be reused rather than leaving the site as runoff.

A key feature supporting this system is a two-million-gallon water capture pond constructed as part of the project. The pond collects and stores water for use throughout the facility, creating a reliable irrigation source while significantly reducing overall water consumption. Combined with the recycling systems within the greenhouse itself, the project demonstrates a strong commitment to responsible environmental stewardship.

The greenhouse structures also incorporate energy-efficient design elements and modern environmental controls that allow growers to precisely manage temperature, light and humidity conditions. These technologies improve plant quality while reducing energy usage compared to older greenhouse systems.

Planning for the project spans decades. Early discussions about expanding production capacity began in 1994 as part of Estabrook's long-range growth strategy. The land for the Pownal facility was purchased in 2002, providing the space and resources necessary for a large-scale production operation. As the Maine market continued to grow, the company refined its vision for the facility and ultimately developed the greenhouse complex that stands today.

Despite challenges related to pandemic-era permitting delays and global supply chain disruptions, the project was successfully completed through close coordination and a hands-on development approach by the Estabrook's team.

Today, the Pownal Production Facility stands as an example of forward-thinking agricultural infrastructure in Maine. By combining modern greenhouse technology with a focus on sustainability and local production, the project supports regional growers, garden centers and consumers while strengthening Maine's horticultural economy for years to come.

- **General Contractor**: Estabrook Farm & Greenhouses, Inc.
- **Engineering Team**: Sevee & Maher Engineers | **Architectural Team**: CWS Architecture + Interior Design
- **Supporting Partners:** AH Grover, Bennett Engineering, ATTKO Greenhouses, Keeley Electrical, Erfgoed, BioTherm Solutions, Dramm, Farm Credit East, Eason Horticultural Resources, TC Control Group, Project Resources Inc.

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UNE Harold & Bibby Alfond Center for Health Sciences, Portland

SMRT Architects & Engineers

Photo Credit: Blind Dog Photo Associates

Photo Credit: Ryan Bent Photography

Photo Credit: Blind Dog Photo Associates

The Harold and Bibby Alfond Center for Health Sciences (UNE) consolidates the University of New England's health sciences programs, osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, nursing, and allied health, into a 112,000-square-foot facility on UNE's Portland campus. The project relocates the College of Osteopathic Medicine from Biddeford to Portland, uniting Maine's only medical school with complementary healthcare programs to create the state's first integrated hub for interprofessional education.

UNE's vision required more than programmatic consolidation. The building needed to support team-based learning across disciplines while preserving distinct program identities, accreditation requirements, and operational workflows. SMRT addressed this through a clear organizational strategy: two interconnected wings linked by a central commons. One wing uses steel framing to serve donor labs, simulation environments, and standardized patient suites; spaces requiring large clear spans, durable finishes, and tightly controlled building systems. The other wing features exposed mass timber construction with glulam beams and CLT decking, creating warm, daylit commons, flexible classrooms, and collaboration spaces designed to support student wellness and reduce isolation in a high-intensity academic environment.

This hybrid structural approach advances sustainability while delivering measurable performance. Lifecycle assessment validated that the mass timber system significantly reduces structural embodied carbon compared to conventional steel framing. High-efficiency building systems, including specialized energy recovery in donor labs, achieve substantial energy use reduction despite energy-intensive laboratory programming. The building is designed for a century of service, with durable materials and adaptable infrastructure supporting long-term institutional performance as curricula and healthcare delivery models evolve.

The project responds directly to Maine's healthcare workforce challenges. By expanding the College of Osteopathic Medicine's capacity and prioritizing interprofessional education, the facility prepares graduates to serve rural and underserved communities across the state. Digital health and telehealth teaching environments reflect Maine's geography, equipping students to deliver care across distance and limited-access areas. As Maine's only independent medical school physically located in the state, UNE plays a critical role in workforce development, and this facility directly strengthens that pipeline.

Site planning reinforces UNE's Portland campus identity while respecting historic Westbrook College context. Building form, scale, and massing strengthen pedestrian connections and create a cohesive campus edge. Transparent ground-floor commons and welcoming entries project an open, civic presence, supporting strong town-gown relationships with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Completed in October 2025 at a total project cost of $93 million, the Harold and Bibby Alfond Center for Health Sciences demonstrates how integrated planning and performance-based design can deliver institutional value, environmental stewardship, and community impact. The building positions UNE to meet Maine's healthcare needs for generations while establishing a model for complex, mission-driven facilities that balance program intensity with occupant wellness and long-term adaptability.

- **General Contractor**: Ledgewood, Inc.
- **Engineering & Architectural Team**: SMRT Architetcs & Engineers
- **Additional Support Staff**: Timber Fabricator: South County Post & Beam; Acoustic Specialist: Acentech; Site Design Specialist: Site Design Associates

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Wedgewood, Lewiston

Avesta Housing & Lewiston Housing

Photo Credit: Avesta Housing and Christian Phillips Photography

Wedgewood is a cornerstone of Lewiston's Choice Neighborhoods initiative and a rare example of large-scale, community-driven redevelopment in a small city. Developed by Avesta Housing for owner Lewiston Housing, this 82-unit, mixed-income project transforms vacant lots and distressed housing into thoughtfully designed homes. Wedgewood was envisioned as a "model block" to replace vacant, distressed properties in the Tree Streets neighborhood with a walkable residential community. The development reflects Maine's values of contextual design, historic preservation, and durable construction. The site includes nine buildings designed to complement Lewiston's architectural character: eight new buildings echoing the city's iconic triple-deckers, and one restored landmark — the Dr. Milton Wedgewood House, a c.1873 Victorian listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Once in severe disrepair, the house now anchors the development, blending award-winning preservation with modern living. The project was made possible by a collaborative effort with its project partners, including Kaplan Thompson Architects, Hebert Construction, Barba + Wheelock, Acorn Engineering, MaineHousing, Evernorth, Norway Savings Bank, and the City of Lewiston. By blending new construction with neighborhood character, Wedgewood delivers significant housing volume and sets a precedent for inclusive, community-driven, context-sensitive development.

- **General Contractor**: Hebert Construction

- **Architectural Team**: Kaplan Thompson Architects, Barba + Wheelock, Carroll Associates

- **Engineering Team**: Acorn Engineering, Allied Engineering

- **Additional Support Staff**: City of Lewiston, MaineHousing, US Dept of Housing & Urban Development, Evernorth, Norway Savings Bank, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston (FHLBB), John T. Gorman Foundation, Building Works LLC, HaleyWard, ReVision Energy

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University of Maine Shawn Walsh Hockey Center and Harold Alfond Sports Arena Renovations and Additions, Orono

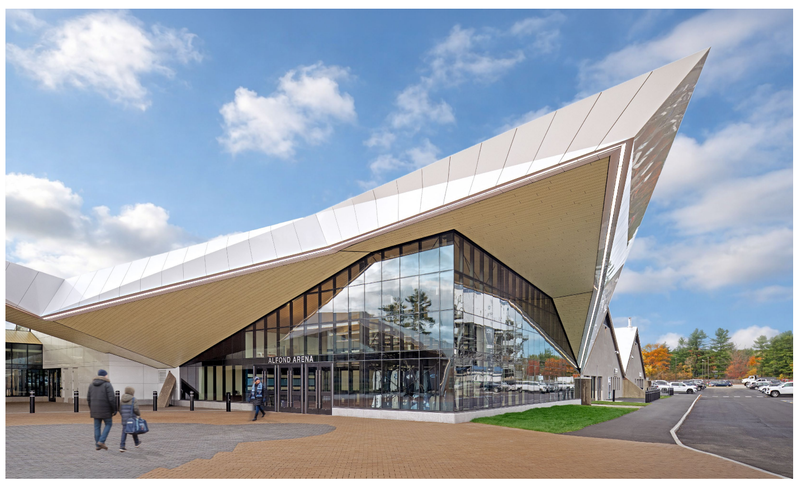

Photo Credit: Ryan Bent

The $40.1 million renovation and expansion of the University of Maine's Shawn Walsh Hockey Center and Harold Alfond Sports Arena represents the most significant transformation of the state's only NCAA Division I hockey venue in its 46-year history. Designed by WBRC in collaboration with sports facility specialist Crawford Architects and constructed by PC Construction, the project redefines the Alfond Arena complex as a unified, high-performance athletics and community destination while preserving its iconic identity.

At the core of the project is a comprehensive reinvestment in the Shawn Walsh Hockey Center, delivering state-of-the-art environments that support the full spectrum of student-athlete development. New locker rooms for both the men's and women's programs establish equity in space, quality, and experience. A dedicated player development center integrates strength and conditioning, sports medicine, and recovery functions, while expanded equipment rooms, team lounges, a 42-seat film room, and renovated coaching and staff offices create a cohesive and efficient performance ecosystem.

Within Alfond Arena, renovations focused on elevating the fan experience while improving accessibility and operational flow within the historic structure. A new entry sequence and expanded concourse introduce dedicated areas for concessions, retail, and ticketing, along with the UMaine Hockey Hall of Champions, reinforcing the program's legacy while enhancing game-day engagement. These interventions improve comfort, visibility, and circulation for a broad spectrum of users, from students and alumni to families and community visitors.

Sustainability was a guiding principle throughout the project, aligning with the University's campus-wide environmental goals. By prioritizing renovation and targeted expansion over replacement, the design preserves embodied carbon while extending the life of a culturally significant facility. Energy-efficient systems, improved building envelope performance, and careful material selection contribute to reduced operational demand and enhanced occupant health in a building that operates year-round at high intensity.

Equally critical was the project's execution. Construction was carefully phased around academic schedules and active hockey seasons, allowing the facility to remain operational throughout. This approach minimized disruption to athletes, preserved revenue-generating events, and maintained the arena's role as a central gathering place for the university and broader community.

The project encompasses approximately 31,000 square feet of renovations and 21,000 square feet of new construction. Completed with nearly 30,000 labor hours and zero recordable safety incidents, it reflects a high level of coordination and commitment across the entire team.

The revitalized complex strengthens the University of Maine's competitive position in Division I hockey, enhances the fan and community experience, and ensures that Alfond Arena remains a vital cultural and athletic landmark for decades to come.

- **General Contractor**: PC Construction
- **Architectural Team**: WBRC Inc. with Crawford Architects
- **Engineering Team**: WBRC (structural, civil, mechanical) ME Engineers (electrical)
- **Additional Support Staff**: 49 Degrees – Interior Branding/Signage, Wayfinding, WJHW - Audiovisual

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Boyd Block (178 Middle Street), Portland

East Brown Cow

Photos courtesy of East Brown Cow

Located at the prominent intersection of Middle and Exchange Streets in Portland's Old Port, the Boyd Block is a five-story Italianate commercial building originally constructed in 1866–1867 following the Great Fire of Portland. Designed by architect George M. Harding, the building has long served as a cornerstone of the city's financial and professional district.

Over time, the building underwent significant alterations, most notably in the 1920s when a fifth floor was added, original roof elements were removed, storefronts were reconfigured, and windows replaced. Additional mid-20th-century interventions further compromised the building's architectural integrity, reflecting a broader period of downtown disinvestment. In the 1990s, the Boyd Block began to reclaim its status as an epicenter of the Old Port as Starbucks, the biggest national retail brand in the Old Port at the time, opened in the building's iconic corner retail space.

From 2021 through 2025, East Brown Cow undertook a comprehensive, 22-million-dollar renovation and rehabilitation of the Boyd Block, returning the building to Harding's original vision while upgrading it to meet modern building performance standards. The project involved full structural stabilization, excavation and lowering of the basement, complete replacement of building systems, restoration of masonry and facades, and the recreation of historically accurate windows and finishes. The building was quite literally taken apart—at one point, you could stand in the basement and see the roof rafters—and reconstructed to meticulous detail.

A defining aspect of the rehabilitation was the restoration of original interior millwork. Previously concealed architectural elements (including window casings, baseboards, trim, chair rails, and picture rails dating to 1867) were uncovered and restored. Where materials were missing, they were replicated to match the original profiles, ensuring continuity with Harding's design.

Today, the ground floor is home to Bangor Savings Bank and Rough & Tumble, a Maine-based maker and retailer. The upper floors have been transformed into The Docent's Collection, an award-winning hospitality offering. Its private lofts blend historic architectural detail with contemporary furnishings, welcoming visitors from around the world into the historic heart of downtown Portland. This project has helped to preserve and uplift the urban fabric and architectural history of Portland's Old Port.

- **General Contractor**: Consigli Construction
- **Architectural Team**: Simons Architects: Ryan Kanteres, Partner & Principal (Architect of Record), Amelia Golini, Staff Architect (Architect of Record), Steve Hoffman, Associate (Architect of Record)
- **Engineering Team**: Thornton Tomasetti: Chris Williams, Associate Principal (Structural Engineer) Woodard & Curran: Lauren Swett, Senior Technical Manager (Civil Engineer)
- **Additional Partners**: Ealain Studio, Lam Partners, Hanson Historic Consulting, Saco & Biddeford Savings, M.R. Brewer, Green Mountain Window, Knowles Industrial Services Corporation, Heritage Co. Coppersmiths, Vintage Glass Works

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Gehring House, Bethel

Northern Forest Center

Photo Credit: Trent Bell Photography

Woodhull's rehabilitation of the Gehring House (1896) in Bethel, Maine, preserves one of the town's most signifi cant historic structures while addressing a critical need for high-quality, year-round housing. The three-story, 13,000-square-foot landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, had experienced decades of deferred maintenance, outdated systems, and interior layouts that no longer supported contemporary living.

Woodhull provided full architectural design and construction services, transforming the building into nine thoughtfully integrated apartment units without altering the historic fabric. The work required a careful balance between preservation and performance, including structural reinforcement, modern mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and comprehensive energy upgrades. Throughout the project, the team prioritized the restoration of character-defi ning features, salvaging and reusing original woodwork, fl ooring, and millwork wherever possible. Over 14,900 square feet of historic material was preserved, minimizing waste while retaining the building's embodied carbon and craftsmanship.

The project's scope also included upgrading life-safety systems, meeting current building codes, and integrating new systems within a historic structure, which required close coordination with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the National Park Service. Working alongside the Northern Forest Center and a network of skilled local tradespeople, Woodhull implemented a design-led construction process that ensured each intervention was both technically sound and historically appropriate. Federal and Maine State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits were instrumental in making the project fi nancially viable.

Sustainability was central to the project's approach. In addition to material reuse, new products were sourced locally where possible, including Maine-manufactured wood fl ooring and siding. The introduction of wood-fi ber insulation reduced embodied carbon, while the replacement of an outdated oil boiler with a high-effi ciency wood pellet system is projected to reduce heating emissions by approximately 54 percent. These strategies demonstrate how adaptive reuse can advance environmental performance while preserving historic character.

Beyond the building itself, the Gehring House has had a measurable impact on the Bethel community. The addition of nine high-quality apartments helps address a shortage of workforce housing, supporting teachers, healthcare professionals, and service workers who are essential to the local economy. Construction engaged local contractors and suppliers, circulating investment within the region and supporting skilled labor.

The Gehring House stands as a model for rural redevelopment, demonstrating how thoughtful preservation, integrated design and construction, and strategic investment can strengthen communities while ensuring historic buildings continue to serve meaningful, lasting purposes.

- **General Contractor**: Woodhull (Team: Michael Cleary, Mark Sturgeon, Shawn Couture, Molly Perry)
- **Architectural Team**: Woodhull (Patrick Boothe, AIA, NCARB, Anna Pajulo, AIA)
- **Engineering Team**: Haley Ward Engineering
- **Additional Support:** Historic Consultant: Margaret Gaertner, Mitchell and Associates Landscape Architects