Civic Problem-Solving for the 21st Century:
A Vision for Maine

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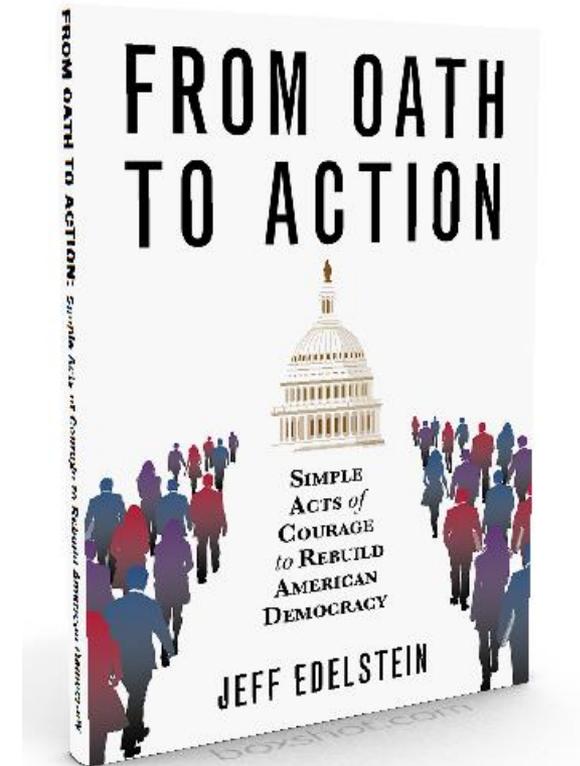
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Maine Civic Innovation Initiative

Jeff Edelstein

Maine Civic Innovation Initiative

How Did This Start?

Maine at a Glance

>500 Municipalities

12 Largest Cities and Towns =

- **24% of population.**

- **43% of all jobs**

Maine's municipalities spend an equivalent of >100% of the entire state government budget

Civic Innovation Focus Areas

1. Budget innovations

Participatory budgeting , Priority-based budgeting, Outcomes-based budgeting.

2. Organizational approaches

Innovation Teams, Innovation Field Labs, Chief Innovation Officers.

3. Entrepreneurial Approaches

Innovation contests, Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, Civic Startups

Civic Innovation Focus Areas

4. Civic technology

Open-source data, Digital community engagement, Smart city technologies

5. Conflict resolution

Mediating community conflicts, Consensus-building for policymaking, Social marketing to create behavior change.

Other focus areas:

Ombudsperson positions

Youth Advisory Councils

Chief Resiliency Officers

Lean Management

Survey Results – Learn more

Budget innovations (89%)

Participatory budgeting , Priority-based budgeting, Outcomes-based budgeting.

Organizational approaches (89%)

Innovation Teams, Innovation Field Labs, Chief Innovation Officers.

Entrepreneurial Approaches (83%)

Innovation contests, Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, Civic Startups

Survey Results – Learn more

Civic technology (94%)

Open-source data, Digital community engagement, Smart city technologies

Conflict resolution (70%)

Mediating community conflicts, Consensus-building for policymaking, Social marketing to create behavior change.

Survey Results - Tools

On-line portal to civic innovation resources in Maine and elsewhere (72%)

Maine-based online and/or in-person civic innovation network (56%)

Survey Results - Tools

New England-based online and/or in-person civic innovation network (50%)

**Annual meeting/conference on civic innovation in Maine and/or New England
(72%)**

Tools for Idea Generation

- Examine and question assumptions

- Challenge beliefs

- View differently - Assume the opposite, we need more, we need less, use different contexts– what if hospitals operated like airports (and vice versa)?

- Find unexpected assets – seniors, youth, immigrants, homeless, labeled populations.

- Learn from unusual sources – a poet, a police officer, an electrician, an astrophysicist, an artist, an engineer and a banker.

Maine Civic Innovation Initiative

Our mission: help foster and improve "innovation cultures"

1. Cities and Towns: Provide guidance, solve problems, resolve conflict.

2. Funders and Non-profits: Leverage funds. Assess problems and experiment with solutions.

3. Private sector: Corporate citizenship – more than just writing checks.

4. Education: Teaching innovation and assisting communities

Creating an Innovation Environment

- Reward new ideas

- Foster accountability

- Provide tools and spaces for creativity

- Bring new perspectives to the table

- Don't just tolerate failure, reward (smart) failure

- Close – Far: sometimes those closest to the problem know solutions if we would just listen. Sometimes they are too close to see the solution.

- Separate ideas from implementation

Maine Civic Innovation Initiative

- Workshops and one-on-one assistance to cities, towns and organizations.

- Statewide Innovation Network for peer-learning, support and assistance.

- Annual daylong conference/convening.

- Innovation Field Labs.

- Leveraging Maine's knowledge economy….

52 x 52 for Maine

Maine has a sizeable knowledge export economy.

- WEX
- IDEXX
- Cashstar
- WinXnet
- Kepware

Tyler Technologies is the largest public sector software company in the nation . Integrated software and technology services to the public sector — cities, counties, states and school districts. ~ 500 employees in Maine.

52 x 52 for Maine

52 innovation workers

X 52 hours per year

X $200/hour

$540,000/year in-kind innovation for Maine civic challenges

Maine Civic Innovation Initiative

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