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State Group Honors Rockland for Housing Solutions

By Stephen Betts
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From left, Rockland City Councilors Nate Davis, Adam Lachman, and Kaitlin Callahan; and Rockland City Manager Tom Luttrell.

Photo courtesy of GrowSmart

The City of Rockland was awarded a 2025 Maine Smart Growth Award for its 2025 \$10 million bond for affordable workforce housing.

In particular, the judges said they were impressed with the City's "unique and new approach" for towns to address the housing crisis. Rockland voters approved the bond referendum in June.

"We're honored to receive this award," commented Rockland City Manager Tom Luttrell in a news release issued by GrowSmart. "The City has completed multiple housing projects in 2025 and has more currently in the works. Housing is a major challenge in the Midcoast, and we're glad our work to address it is being recognized."

"This award is a powerful acknowledgment of the innovative work happening right here in Rockland," said Rockland City Councilor Adam Lachman in the news release. "Our housing bond—the first of its kind in Maine—is a revenue-neutral investment in Rockland's future, designed to create real, lasting solutions to our local housing crisis. Through the City's Housing Task Force, we're bringing together Rockland residents, housing developers, and policy experts to shape programs that meet our community's unique needs. I'm proud that Rockland is leading by example and taking bold, responsible steps to make housing more accessible, affordable, and attainable for everyone who calls this city home".

Rockland has recently seen affordable and workforce housing projects completed at Firefly Field on Talbot Avenue, on Main Street, and on Maverick Street. Development is currently underway at the former McLain School on Lincoln Street, as well as on Elm Street, and White Street.

“We’ve set a goal to create 59 new units of affordable and workforce housing per year for the next 10 years,” said Luttrell. “It’s a tall order, but we hope that the \$10 million bond will provide a significant boost”.

GrowSmart Maine is a non-profit organization that helps communities incorporate smart growth principles into community planning. The awards recognize projects that strengthen communities, protect open spaces, and build opportunities for all Mainer. In judging nominees for the awards, judges consider how a project adapts to climate change, how it may influence its surroundings, and how it involves stakeholders and neighbors.

Stephen Betts

Reporter