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**GrowSmart Maine Announces**

**“MAKING A DIFFERENCE” AWARDS**

**For leadership and commitment to smart growth practices**

Augusta, Maine—GrowSmart Maine announced today the winners of “Making a Difference Awards in four categories.” Each winner was nominated through GrowSmart Maine’s 1,100 supporters and through public promotion of the recognition program. Winners were cited for their leadership and commitment to smart growth practices and for being role models for other individuals, organizations, businesses, and towns. Award recipients include: Theo H.B.M. Holtwijk, Director of Planning and Development, Town of Brunswick; Reny’s Stores based in Newcastle with 13 stores in Maine downtowns; Friends of Midcoast Maine of Camden, a model of regional cooperation; and the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn for leading the way in multi-town cooperation.

**Individual Award Winner: Theo H.B.M. Holtwijk, Director of Planning and Development, Brunswick**

Theo has been with the Town of Brunswick since 1997. Before that he worked as Planning Director for the Town of Sanford, Maine as well as in the private sector. His work includes planning for Cook's Corner, Downtown Improvements, Development of a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, Maine Street StationSite, and the New Meadows River Watershed Project.

### **Business Award Winner: Reny's Stores**

Reny's department stores wins the award for their longstanding commitment to locating in Maine's historic downtowns. Headquartered in Newcastle, Reny's operates a chain of discount stores in the communities of Damariscotta, Bridgton, Gardiner, Farmington, Dexter, Madison, Pittsfield, Bath, Camden, Belfast, Ellsworth, Wells and their newest store in Saco. Reny's prides itself on being a Maine adventure. We appreciate the commitment Reny's has demonstrated to preserving the downtown shopping experience.

### **Organization Award Winner: Friends of Midcoast Maine**

Friends of Midcoast Maine, headquartered in Camden and covering the Brunswick to Bucksport coastline, wins the award for an organization for their work demonstrating regional work on growth management issues. Headed by Jane Lafleur, Friends of Midcoast Maine has worked at presenting and working with neighboring communities to visualize and assist with smart growth solutions in response to rapid residential growth. They are a model of a regional-level organization.

### **Town Award Winner: Lewiston-Auburn**

The Cities of Lewiston-Auburn receives the award for leading the way in multi-town cooperation in Maine. Working closely together has yielded 23 intercity services agreements. Both cities have been working on rezoning modeled on smart growth strategies, including density bonuses for affordable housing, small minimum square foot requirements for residential projects, and favorable standards for multi-family housing. Both cities have enjoyed a renewal of their walkable downtowns with pockets of arts and cultural venues, festivals, and fine eateries. Reuse of historic buildings has meant major investments in both cities with more planned for the immediate future. The two downtowns are linked by a riverfront bike/pedestrian trail. Several other trailways have been built linking residential areas with the downtowns.