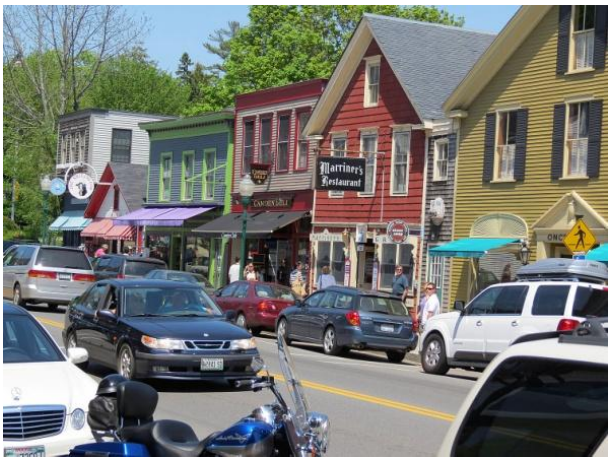

Walkability Audits
Thomaston and Camden, Maine

May 21 and May 22, 2012

Sponsored by

Friends of Midcoast Maine

&

The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute

In collaboration with

The Town of Thomaston, Maine

The Town of Camden, Maine

The Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Camden Downtown Business Group

The Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee

Friends of Midcoast Maine 5 Free Street Camden, Maine 04843
Ph. (207) 236-1077 Email: info@friendsmidcoast.org

On May 21 and May 22, 2012, Friends of Midcoast Maine (FMM) hosted two day-long walkability workshops in the towns of Thomaston and Camden, Maine. These workshops were held in collaboration with the two towns, and in Camden, with the Downtown Business Association, the Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee, and the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce. Dan Burden, Executive Director of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, was hired to lead walk audits in each community and assess opportunities for improvements to walkability.

In Thomaston, the workshop was advertised as a *"Sidewalks, Streets, and Stores: Ideas for a Thriving Downtown from the Walkable and Livable Community Institute - A workshop to share your ideas and explore potential improvements to Thomaston's downtown to improve retail life, downtown walkability, traffic flow and social interaction."*

In Camden, the workshop was advertised as "*Walkability Workshop - Making it happen: A walkable downtown that creates economic vitality. This is an interactive, hands-on workshop designed to turn recommendations into action. A walkable downtown enhances job creation, social interaction, and the economic vitality of a community. Building upon the goals and recommendations in Camden's Downtown Master Plan, workshop leader Dan Burden of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (www.walklive.org) will take participants on a "walk audit" of Camden, and explore ways to improve existing conditions. Participants will leave with specific ideas to put into action."*

Over thirty people attended each workshop with several people participating both days. This report summarizes:

- The existing conditions
- What we heard
- Recommendations for each community
- Appendices with technical information

A special thank you is given to all the participants who made these two days a success as well as the following people who contributed organizational time and effort.

In Thomaston

- Jonathan Eaton, Selectman and the Board of Selectmen
- Val Blastow, Town Manager

In Camden

- Brian Hodges, Economic Development Director
- Stephen Wilson, Town Planner
- Peter Gross, Chairman, and the members of the Camden Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee
- The Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce
- The Camden Downtown Business Association

At the workshops

- Stacy Benjamin, Maine Collaborative Planning
- Sarah Lafleur, Volunteer

Appreciation is also given to the members and donors to FMM including a generous grant from the Environmental Funders Network Quality of Place Initiative and in-kind support from the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute.

Thomaston, Maine Walkability Workshop and Audit

Camden, Maine Walkability Workshop and Audit

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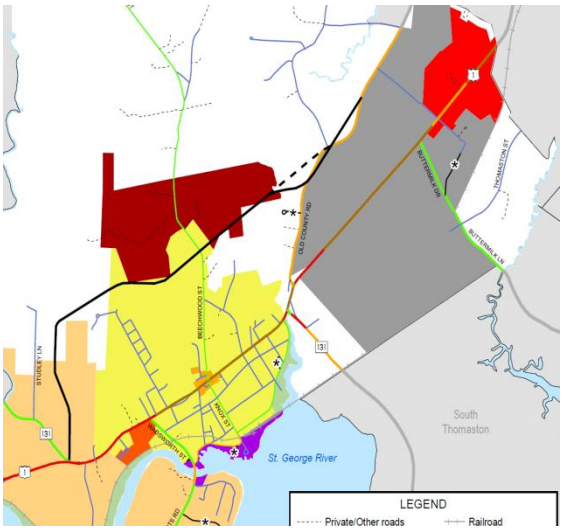
THOMASTON
Existing Conditions

Downtown Thomaston is a beautiful historic downtown of brick multi-story structures, mixed uses with retail on the ground floors and offices and apartments on upper levels. U.S. Route 1 travels through the center of downtown Thomaston, providing opportunities for and challenges to the community. Residents and community leaders note that their Main Street, instead of being the tie that binds, actually acts as a barrier between downtown blocks and the residential neighborhoods to the north and south. The community is seeking guidance on how to transform the impact of Route 1 in Thomaston's downtown to improve retail life, in-town walkability, traffic flow and social interaction.

This challenge is not unique to Thomaston. Four of the 20 towns that straddle the 100-mile-long Route 1 corridor through Midcoast Maine have Route 1 as their Main Street without a viable downtown bypass. These towns, including Thomaston, exhibit negative impacts of traffic congestion, struggling downtowns, and high turnover of village homes. The solutions found for Thomaston could help any community that is bisected by a regional highway.



- Thomaston's Route 1 traffic is increasing and, as of 2011 (the most recent estimate), averaged 12,860 vehicles per day (at Beechwood) and through the center of town. Route 1 in Thomaston is rated as a poor service road segment by the Maine Department of Transportation due to high traffic density. A one-block length of Route 1 through the downtown has been designated a high-crash location by MaineDOT.
- On-street parking is available with head-in parking on one side and parallel parking on the other.
- Sidewalks are lacking on one side of Route 1, south and north of the downtown village area, and existing sidewalks are very narrow measuring 2 - 4 feet in some places.
- Thomaston residents living north of Route 1 have no east-west alternative to Route 1. All trips by automobile therefore require these residents to travel Route 1 through the center of town.

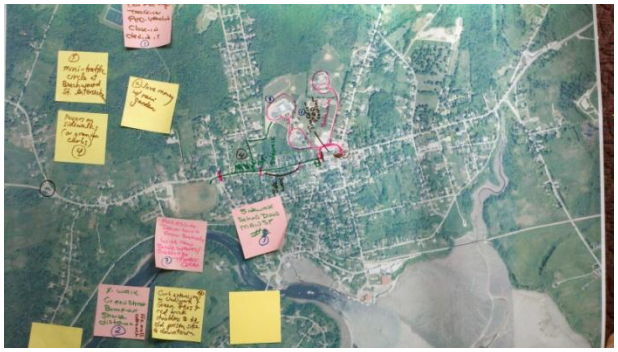
- Residential development has extended north of town in single-family homes and subdivisions along two north-south streets, but these are not connected with each other except through Route 1. An adequate neighborhood street grid is lacking north of Route One.
- Trucks carrying gravel from a quarry north of Route 1 must also travel through the downtown to reach their destinations, contributing a significant overlay of locally generated truck traffic.
- If a traffic accident closes a 0.15-mile segment of Route 1 at the east end of the town's core growth area, emergency services and all other traffic between Thomaston and Rockland must make a 17-mile detour—another consequence of the lack of an east-west alternative to Route 1.
- Thomaston's principal downtown intersection is transited by most of this traffic and is dangerously inadequate. Poor visibility both east and west along Route 1; a dogleg between the streets (Beechwood Street and Knox Street) joining Route 1 from the north and south; a configuration that forces cars and trucks from two parking lots (a convenience store and the post office) to enter Route 1 in the middle of that dogleg; and heavy traffic from all directions conspire to make this intersection difficult and unpredictable for vehicle and pedestrian traffic despite its traffic signals.
- Main Street (Route 1) of Thomaston either side of the historic downtown business blocks is lined with handsome nineteenth-century ship captains' homes that help to give the town a gracious residential character. Lacking the size and deepwater ocean access to compete with neighboring communities such as Rockland, Camden, and Belfast as a retail and tourist center, Thomaston depends on residential desirability for its distinctive character. But there is high turnover of these Main Street homes, whose owners struggle with road noise, dust, and the difficulty of leaving their driveways. A decline of Thomaston's residential Main Street would trigger the decline of the town as a whole.
- There is a long-established grid of streets south of Route 1, but few buildable lots remain there. Nearly all of the remaining land for residential development lies north of Main Street, where the lack of an adequate village street grid is an impediment to rational development of homes at a range of price points including affordable housing.
- The eastern end of town along Route 1, abutting the town line with Rockland (the next town to the east and a regional retail center) is zoned Highway Commercial and has experienced some large-scale, big-box development in recent years. A 150,000-square-foot Super Wal-Mart was approved by the planning board in September 2011 and is slated to be constructed in 2012. While it is hoped that this Wal-Mart (together with a Lowe's, an Appleby's Restaurant, a multiscreen movie theater, a hotel, a MacDonald's /gas station convenience store, car dealerships, and other businesses in this zone) will reduce the property tax burden on local homeowners, it can also be expected to further increase traffic on Route 1 (and on the Old County Road, which serves as a Rockland by-pass), and may impact downtown village businesses as well. Along Main Street in the village core, some essential-service businesses have closed although recently a few new businesses have opened including a coffee shop. [1]

[1] Smart Growth Letter of Interest, Jonathan Eaton. 2012.

What We Heard

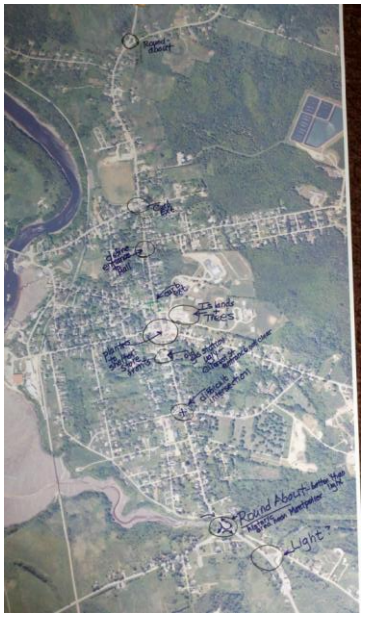
- Residents want greater walkability downtown – from the former State Prison Property to Thomaston Academy and possibly further north along Route 1.
- Residents are looking for ideas to support and grow more downtown businesses by offering more opportunities for people to shop and stay downtown.
- Residents and community leaders are interested in improvement, increased safe walkability and redevelopment along the backside of the buildings on the northern side of Route 1.
- The Town has developed plans and engineering for Infrastructure and Streetscape Improvements downtown including several blocks of buildings on Main Street and received funding for several phases of redevelopment. See Appendix 1.

Comments from workshop participants included the following:



Group 1

- Build a roundabout by the flagpole and add flowers by the flagpole.
- Get more public information about the proposed masterplan for the Union Block. (see appendix 1)
- Add a highway island break by the Thomaston Green to slow down the traffic coming in to town.
- Fix Wadsworth and Water Street intersection to reduce the width. (May be part of the proposed bridge project)
- Add speed tables to slow speed on Cushing Highway.



Group 2

- Fix the Knox-Route 1 intersection with sidewalks and bump-outs.
- Add back-in parking on Route 1.
- Slow the traffic on the side streets with bump-outs at Gleeson/Knox Street and Wadsworth/Route 1 intersections.
- Add sidewalks in many places on both sides.
- Implement Union Block Masterplan.

Group 3

- Consider roundabouts at Route 131/Route 1 (both ends of town, i.e. Stubby's and Montpelier).
- Curb Extensions at Wadsworth/Route 1 and Green/Route 1.
- Knox and Beechwood, Thomaston Café Block, have less pavement and add planters and island in front to shelter entrances to stores.
- At mall - Southern end at School Street/Route 1, extend mall for clearer intersection and less pavement.
- At back of business block, define with islands and trees. Add outdoor seating north of business block with walks and greenery.

Group 4

- Roundabouts at Stubby's and Montpelier (connect to a potential alternate route)
- Add Eastern gateway roundabout
- Add Curb Extensions at Green/Main and Wadsworth/Main Street intersections.
- Alternative by-pass with developers required to build it.
- Add connector to North side of Georges and Kossuth Streets.
- Add back-in parking on Main Street.
- Address the Booker Street bottleneck.

Group 5

- Fix traffic/pedestrian snarl behind business block.
- Add curb extensions with red brick shoulders to connect proposed Thomaston Green to downtown.
- Add pavers on sidewalk out to Thomaston Green.
- Add Tree islands in parking lanes at Green/Wadsworth.
- Consider Mini traffic circle at Beechwood/Knox/Route 1 .
- Add raised crosswalks with colored pavers.
- Consider roundabout/travel circle on Oyster Road near bridge.
- Employ back-in Parking.

- Route 1 bisects the town; how do we connect it? Marked crossings will go a long way to slow speeds and bring civility.
- Abandoned gas station could be a farmers' market with raised beds.
- Most important is to get a vision in place for future projects in a different economy. Protect and defend that vision. Towns that work together do best.

See additional public comments in Appendix 2.

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Recommendations

Information about specific strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

- Intersection at Thomaston Café/Route 1 could be improved with more trees and flowers.

- Undergrounding utilities should be considered during any major reconstruction and using partners to fund it. It is often less than $1 million per mile and less when trenching is already planned as part of the project.

- Signal set up is "weird" at this intersection and needs revamping. The pedestrian should never have to request a cross signal by pushing a button. Pedestrians should be built into the cycle at a downtown Main Street.

- Roundabouts can help traffic flow and make areas safer for pedestrians. Consider using roundabouts at the Route 1/Route 131 intersection and the Route 1/Knox Street intersection.

- Green Street is 48 feet wide at intersection. Designed correctly, it should be no wider than 30 feet. The best way to improve this is to add curb extensions that include Route 1. Have 11 foot wide lanes in Route 1. All turns can be made and snow plows accommodated in 30 feet. It is dangerous as it is currently designed.

- A raised island with outdoor dining should be considered to transform this area into a place for people and not just cars to redefine the downtown identity.

- Along the village green/Main Street Mall, the sidewalks are only 3 feet in width; this accommodates only one person walking at a time. The minimum width is five feet. Over time, sidewalks should be widened and streets narrowed. The access street is 20 feet wide but could be moved closer to Route 1 and the sidewalk widened. It is more important to widen the sidewalk along the green rather than add one to Route 1 because it will be a more pleasant walk than along Route 1.

- Asphalt sidewalks are often preferred in New England but concrete in the downtown is recommended. Concrete will last.

- The extensive asphalt tends to speed up traffic and bad behavior from motorists, such as high speed turns. Decide what community wants and present it to MaineDOT so it reflects the community's desires.

- The Prison Museum Store showroom intersection includes the main road to Cushing. Visibility is poor to get across the street. Curb extensions will improve this. Work on preliminary designs to get this intersection correct during this survey phase of the MaineDOT design work. Get involved early in the process. (Preliminary designs will be ready in the fall so get involved now; the sooner the better.) Be willing to work to get the right design because you have to live with it for thirty years. You have a lot of influence and should use it to get it right.

- In Thomaston Green, people are concerned about the lack of public use at the present time. People are concerned about future development precluding public access. The place should remain open for public access to the view.

- Commercial activity at Thomaston Green, whether the YMCA or other uses, should be included. It is most important that any road terminates at the vista. This will invite the public to come to the view-shed by terminating roads at the vista. Roads should connect in a grid.

- There could be hundreds of rooftops in 15 acres but also have lots of commercial life and activity. Inset parking should be included. Strive to maintain a commanding row of trees that line up with the view.

- The rail line offers potential, especially if a bike rail-with-trail is included. Rail-with-trail should not be ruled out.

- Direct growth to places where it is most meaningful and where services are. Do not choose places to grow and develop that are outside the village area. Farmland preservation should be for preservation purposes, not to create a new hub or a new growth area.

- Rain gardens can be considered for green trenches along Route 1. Use the most current technology.

- As a high priority, along the connector to school, (the alley), the guard rail is problematic, is ugly and unnecessary. It should be a place of beauty to connect Main Street with the area in back. Sidewalks are planned for this area. Grants have been applied for. Overhead wires are planned to go underground. Town is waiting for grant funding. (Keene, NH has done a beautiful job to build connectors.)

- At the raised sidewalk downtown, make the area inviting and welcoming. The height is good. The angled parking is important. Changing the angle is under discussion but this might be a problem. Back-in angled parking might be a better tool so spaces are not lost and it will be a guaranteed increase in parking safety.

- A Main Street requires active use of parking. Be sure to not lose parking spaces; back-in is often better. One parking space in a thriving downtown is worth $200,000 per year to the retailers.

- The first two feet from the edge of the building is called the shy zone. The area where all the furniture is placed is the furniture zone. The space between is called the walk-talk zone and it is about 7 feet in Thomaston. Larger awnings will be a good addition to add color and articulation to the street.

- When we rate a Main Street we look at five things: (see appendix 4)
    - **Enclosure:** the degree to which streets and other public spaces are visually defined by buildings, walls, trees and other elements. The more enclosure, the more comfortable we feel.
    - **Transparency:** The degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or other public space and the degree to which people can perceive human activity beyond the edge of a street or other public space. The goal is to have 70-90% glass. (The police department needs more transparency and orient better to the street.)
    - **Image-ability or memorable-ness:** The quality of a place that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable. Thomaston has a high level of memorable-ness. The church and the sidewalk are memorable.
    - **Complexity:** The visual richness of a place. If we walk downtown 100 or 1000 times, do we see new things?
    - **Human Scale:** The size, texture and articulation of physical elements that match the size, proportions of humans and correspond to the speed at which humans walk. This block has good human scale. Others north do not have as good human scale.

- Behind the buildings on Main Street, there are great opportunities. It is worthwhile to make an investment to add to and embellish this area to make the area more beautiful; this will enhance Main Street. Add/maintain double-front stores, so that there are good eateries that can extend the outdoor season to November with heating, etc., like in Toronto. It could become unique and alive for a long season. The trade will be brought back to this area; it is quieter here.

- Think about the possibility of a second deck. You can have shops and other uses that could be serviced with one elevator. Residential units could have added access. It is unique that these almost all have the same elevation.

- Thomaston has good "bones" and a timely opportunity to increase walkability and safety while improving the retail presence and environment downtown. The eminent reconstruction of Route 1 through downtown presents a real opportunity to make a difference that improves the town for many years to come. Thomaston residents and community leaders should capitalize on this to build the best community that can be built for decades to come.

In summary,

- Thomaston's Main Street is its "canvas" – excellent buildings, some sidewalks, opportunity for more.
- Livable communities are built with lovable streets.
- Buildings are important – the elements of buildings contribute to "place" – can be simple buildings in small places.
- Need to build value in adjacent buildings to "create place"
- Unique streets are created through acts of love – and show who you really are
- What is missing in the downtown? What types of stores? Evaluate this and recruit these businesses.
- An alternate route can alleviate traffic – can reroute if big emergency
- What is target speed? Can shrink roads visually with lines, color and trees to slow cars down
- Roundabouts move more traffic and are safer for pedestrians – can transform the identity of a place
- Think seriously about adding curb extensions with inset or straight in parking and tree wells every 3-5 cars
- Snow plowing is an issue but can be dealt with
- Rain gardens and vegetated swales can help get water off of the road – need salt tolerant plants
- Big opportunity on back side of buildings – add awnings and balconies
- Make alleys more attractive and safer with bollards
- Brick can create an authentic atmosphere in special locations
- Back-in angled parking can reduce crashes – start on side street to get locals used to parking that way – it is the easy part of parallel parking (leave a "dummy car" for a while)
- Trees are important - people spend more money when shopping under a canopy of "green"
- Still opportunity to influence MaineDOT's plans – still in preliminary stage
- State legislators can help the town work with MaineDOT.

Dan Burden's Top Action Items for Thomaston

Information about specific strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

1. Reprogram traffic signal to have walk signals during each cycle that do not require pedestrians to push a button.

2. Add curb extensions at Green Street and similar side streets, to make the opening no wider than 30 feet.

3. Add back-in angle parking on a side street to start training the locals to use it. This should be done on a block immediate to the principal shopping district, and introduced where it will add parking (replacing parallel parking).

4. Meet with MaineDOT right now to get input into the design process before final plans are developed – involve local legislators.

5. Seriously consider investing in underground utilities – at least in some areas of the downtown.

6. Fix the alley way from Main Street to the schools and the backside of the Union Block – make it safe, comfortable and welcoming for pedestrians.

7. Redevelop the back of buildings on Main Street to make this area inviting to people; consider outside dining, double front stores, shade and developing a park-like area. Create strong, well defined edges.

8. Consider roundabouts at Route 1/Knox Street and Route One/Route 131 intersections.

9. Create a wayfinding system to invite people to discover the more hidden treasures of Thomaston.

10. Work with the MaineDOT to reduce speeds through the town center. This can include additional street trees, stronger, bolder (wider) edge lines through downtown, and better marked crossings.

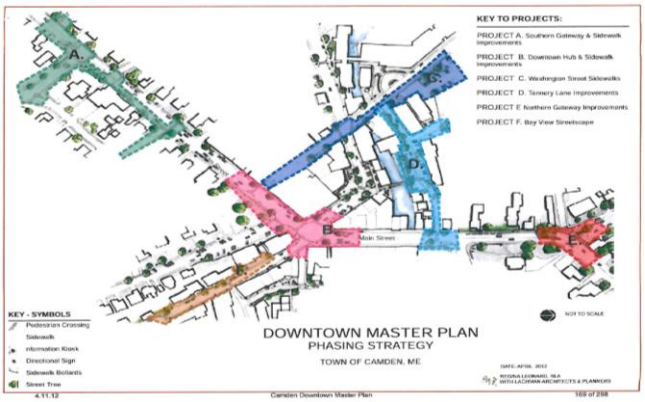
CAMDEN
Existing Conditions

Camden has just completed a Downtown Master Plan that focuses on the downtown area and contains a robust plan of goals, strategies, funding and implementation steps "to create and economically and socially robust downtown, including jobs." Downtown Camden has a healthy mix of offices, retail and upper level residential units. The harbor attracts a vibrant social life of sailors, tourists and locals who keep shops and businesses and the sidewalks filled during the summer months. Locals want to ensure and improve the year-round economy with jobs and commerce to serve local needs.

- In 2010, the annual average daily traffic count on Route 1 northeast of Curtis Street was 13,340. The count southwest of Washington Street was 12,300.

- Chapter 2 of the Downtown Master Plan includes "Streetscape, Parking and Circulation" analysis, problems and opportunities and recommendations, some of which have been validated and corroborated by Dan Burden of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute during this walk audit.

- The Downtown Master plan developed a phasing strategy that focused on 6 opportunity areas:



What We Heard

Group 1

- Consider roundabouts at Subway/McDucks, at the Northern Gateway and a mini-roundabout downtown.
- Consider a one way street at post office from Frye to Chestnut Street, on Bayview Street, and reverse Chestnut Street one way.
- Investigate the roundabouts carefully.
- Put a farmers' market at the Tannery Site with bike paths along the river and connect paths to Rockport.
- Connect the two town-owned parking lots with steps and plantings.
- Develop a wall mural with the history of Camden.

Group 2

- Investigate roundabouts at all three intersections. What will work? Will they be safe and welcoming?
- Change the public landing to have parking and green space. Develop the view shed better; improve public restrooms; where is the best location for the Chamber of Commerce?
- Make the walkway up the hill safer for pedestrians with steps and handrails.
- Put a mural on Mechanic Street wall downtown.
- Make Mechanic Street one way.

Group 3

- Consider a mini-roundabout at Route 1/Chestnut/Washington St/Bayview intersection.
- Change Mechanic Street to one way from Washington St to create a one way loop.
- Redesign the public landing but consider the needs of the fishermen, the snow dumping, the scenic view from Main Street and a possible bridge from the public landing to harbor park.
- Develop a park at the Mill Pond below the parking.

Group 4

- Install roundabouts at three major intersections downtown.
- Change the direction of the one way system; reverse Bay view direction to Frye St. Make a right turn only on Frye and Chestnut streets.
- Improve the connection to the Mill Pond complex; build out the parking lots so the shops and activity can be seen.
- Move the town offices to the second floor across Washington Street to allow the opera house to have the entire building. Consider a possible roof garden.
- Narrow Commercial Street entrance; change the harbor master's office; add landscaping.
- Find additional parking with back-in parking at Chestnut and Bayview streets.
- Make connections to the mill parking with signage and way-finding.

Recommendations

Information about specific strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

- A normal width of a parking space is 8 feet and on Washington Street, near Route 1, the parking space is 8 feet wide. The travel lane is 13 feet wide. If there is a problem, make the travel lane at ten feet and set that as a default. Allow it to go wider if there is a delivery zone or an industrial zone.

- Do the right things on local roads first and work with MaineDOT to get the state roads correct. Local communities must be the pioneers.

- At the parking lot on Washington Street downtown, people like the tree but little else here. The area is a "B" street. Route 1 is an "A" street. There are more functional things, utilities, added parking etc. on a "B" Street. This is a great opportunity to have many things and to create a place. It is a nugget of gold that is waiting to be polished. Enhance this area with a local theme for the area that all the partners to the street can start to reflect. Celebrate a brand of Camden here. It is a fantastic place waiting to be transformed. Many things could be done; add brick pavers (could cost $1 million for a block); it transforms an area. Paving speeds up traffic but good brick is as easy to plow as asphalt as Grand Rapids Michigan has found.

- Consider places to sit, places for kids, create a place of magic.

- Keep the parking and it can be wonderful with the parking. Grandville Island in Vancouver, BC is a good example. A *woonerf*[2] might work here. Every off street space created needs three times as much space as an on street place. Consider on-street angled parking.

[2] A *woonerf* is street where pedestrians and cyclists have legal priority over motorists. Since the invention of automobiles, cities have been predominantly constructed to accommodate the use of automobiles. The techniques of shared spaces, traffic calming, and low speed limits are intended to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety.

- The trash cans in Camden are not equal to the rest of the standards in town. Consider revising them. (Ideas shown below)

- The equipment along the side of the telephone substation needs to be screened.

- The telephone booth needs to be highlighted. It is an antique!

- At the Stop-N-Go intersection, it is a natural place for a Gateway. A roundabout would slow all the traffic but keep it moving, eliminate the crazy pattern that we have created and bring a distinguishing feature to the town. It will be safer for pedestrians. It is an opportunity waiting to happen. It can be done without removing the large tree. The gas tanks might have to be moved. It is the prominent corner of entry into the town. We can judge if it would fit. It will probably be a mini-roundabout with incredible gateway features.

- Consider making Mechanic Street (at Route 1) one-way out and get angled parking on both sides of the street; there will be a significant increase in parking. At one way, we could get the street opening down to 14 feet instead of the 83 feet it is at presently. Washington Street would be one-way in. (Dan Burden is not a proponent of one way streets but noted that they can be a powerful tool in the right location.)

- Mechanic Street/BayView/Chestnut Street is good location for a mini-roundabout.

- The staircase alongside the Post office could be a grand staircase park. It is semi-attractive and could become wonderful discovery and a hidden gem. It will never be ADA accessible but it can be enhanced to be a beautiful feature of town.

- On Chestnut Street and elsewhere, as the Town develops a parking strategy, think through how to get additional parking spaces. In a thriving downtown, one space is worth $200,000 per year. The lot to the right of the Post Office should have some parking in front of it by making a deal with the property owner for parking in exchange for plantings or grassy space. It is better to do this than to have a parking structure. Keep the parking on street. There is a lot of opportunity for additional on-street parking in Camden.

- On Commercial Street, leading to the Public Landing, consider a woonerf; a motorist could come in at 5 mph, but no faster. Extend the edge out with curb extensions and have a narrow opening. Have a curb extension that comes out 10-12 feet, with a colorized area that is not supposed to be driven on but can be driven on if needed. It becomes a festival street with certain hours for delivery, etc.

- The grade might be changed with steps and a landing so it is less treacherous for pedestrians. A series of bollards with a rail might be added for stability for people. The view and orientation invites a pedestrian way.

- The Public Landing emphasizes the view of the Harbor Masters Shack. It could have a greater place for the eye to come to rest. The Harbor Master's shack is not the most attractive terminating vista. The backs of the buildings should be emphasized as a great place to live, shop, see, and anchor. The parking lot is only a 2 on a scale of 1 - 10 and deserves to be a 10. The parking lot should not be an asphalt deck. It does not need to have a wide entry and have a beautiful walkway. Have a landscape architect class redesign this place as a great project.

- At the Public Landing, make sure not to make it cutesy. It must be real. The parking lot is our front porch and should be great.

- In the alley next to the Village Restaurant, the pedestrian traffic sign is not needed. Create a barrier, if needed, without an ugly sign. Put a piece of art in instead, or a bench. Consider a railing on either side or down the center to assist walkers. A nautical rope perhaps, built into the side.

- At Atlantic Ave, the width is 14 feet at the opening, which is fine. The curb extensions are good at the Route 1 corner. Measure how wide places are that you are in love with and replicate them.

- The library on a scale of 0-10 is a 10. It is an act of love. You worked with your terrain. It is an incredible example of good work.

- The library seating areas are fantastic.

- At Route 1/Mountain Street, a roundabout ellipse could be built to create an incredible gateway because of its height and prominence. Pedestrian crossings from complex to simple. Could have a key feature in the center that wants to be celebrated.

- How to welcome people for an arrival? A kiosk could be added and probably should be on Mechanic and be a work of art.

- On Tannery Lane by the Camden Riverhouse Hotel and by the pedestrian bridge, make it a place for pedestrians; it could become a great street. Use paver stones, bollards to designate areas that are specific for pedestrians.

- On Washington Street, by the Fire Station, on-street parking will take up 1/3 of the space as off-street. Make the road bend a little and add in-set angled parking on both sides. This could pick up 10-20 parking spaces for future growth.

- The double yellow line is not needed, even if it is a state highway. Take over the designation so that we can control it and get the maximum pay out from the street. A street cannot be built for a single purpose any more. We must use these investments more than one use. The double yellow line increases speed. Until we get to 6000 vehicles per day, we do not need double yellow lines. Look seriously at acquiring the road and designing it to benefit the community. Don't be exotic; use common sense to make the best use of limited town funds.

- On the pedestrian bridge along the river, near the Mill parking lot, there is an opportunity to make this a great public place with things to see and do.

In summary,

- Camden's Downtown Master Plan is good but there are many opportunities to make it better
- We can tell it is a successful place if artists come to draw/photograph the community.
- Trash cans can make a difference.
- If locals don't have to drive, traffic is reduced.
- Love the curvature of the road coming in to town and how it showcases the buildings – creates harmony with color and unique materials.
- There are waiting opportunities – like view down to the harbor – move harbor master's shed - Camden's front porch is the waterfront!
- Think about incubator shop space – cheap, short-term – creates chemistry, always changing.
- Identify target speed – lower speed means higher retail sales – 20 mph downtown.
- The gateways need improvement.
- The goal is to draw people out of cars with easy parking, color, banners, plantings.
- Create terminating vistas to draw people down streets.
- Consider grass-crete along 10' wide roads.
- Use curb extensions, roundabouts, narrowing, lines, color and trees to shrink roads visually and slow cars down (many opportunities for curb extensions).
- Roundabouts move more traffic and are safer for pedestrians – can transform the identity of a place.
- Trucks – set up practices (e.g., timing restrictions, temporary cones) – accommodate but don't let them dictate.
- Alternate trees and lamps – trees create edge.
- Use up-lighting to highlight plants, trees or special architectural details to create a new place at night – one that looks very different than in daylight.
- Snow plowing is an issue but can be dealt with.
- Rain gardens and vegetated swales can help get water off of the road – need salt tolerant plants.
- Make alleys more attractive with art, sculpture; and safer with bollards, rails.
- Brick can create an authentic atmosphere in special locations.
- Back-in angled parking can reduce crashes – start on side street to get locals used to parking that way – 9'x15' (Congress can do it).
- Trees are important - people spend more money when shopping under a canopy of "green" (12-20% more) – that is 12-20 cents more on the dollar!

- There are many opportunities for tree wells in Camden (every 5th parking space) – use inset parking.
- Install remote parking with a convenient shuttle to downtown.
- On the "B" streets –
    - Create theater
    - Hide utilities (screen or bury)
    - Create terminating vistas
    - Make spaces cozy
- Think about mini roundabouts with anchor or compass in the center – need truck apron for turning.
- DOT is the freighter and the town is the tugboat – town should head that freighter to the right port (Camden).
- State legislators can help with MaineDOT.
- Local money is important (consider wealth transfer approach – endowments for special projects).
- Don't let a vocal minority run the town – if 90% support a project, don't let the 10% rule.
- Set strategic plan and initiate fundraising.

Information about specific strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

Dan Burden's Top ACTION ITEMS for Camden

1. Honor traffic on U.S. Route 1, but don't baby it. Set and achieve target speed for 20 mph inside of gateways.

2. Build attractive gateways:
    a. Rt 1/Elm Street at Union Street
    b. Rt 1/Main Street at High and Mountain Streets

3. Add more on-street parking
    a. Near post office (Chestnut)
    b. On Washington Street
    c. At the Mechanic Street corner

4. Use back-in angled parking (starting on a side street).

5. Plant 1,000 trees.

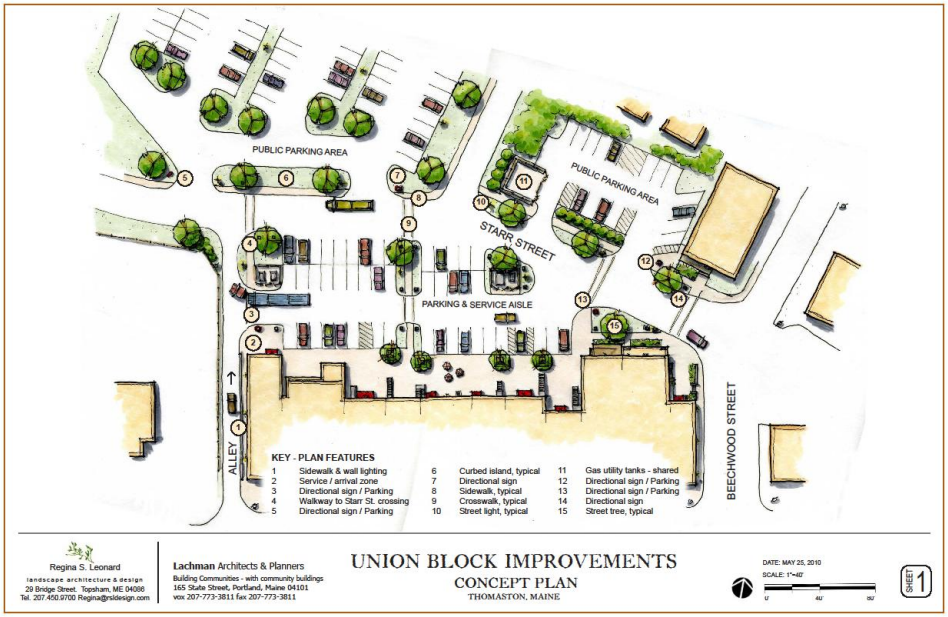
6. Consider a mini-roundabout for Main/Elm/Mechanic/Commercial intersection.

7. Create a visual terminus on the public landing.

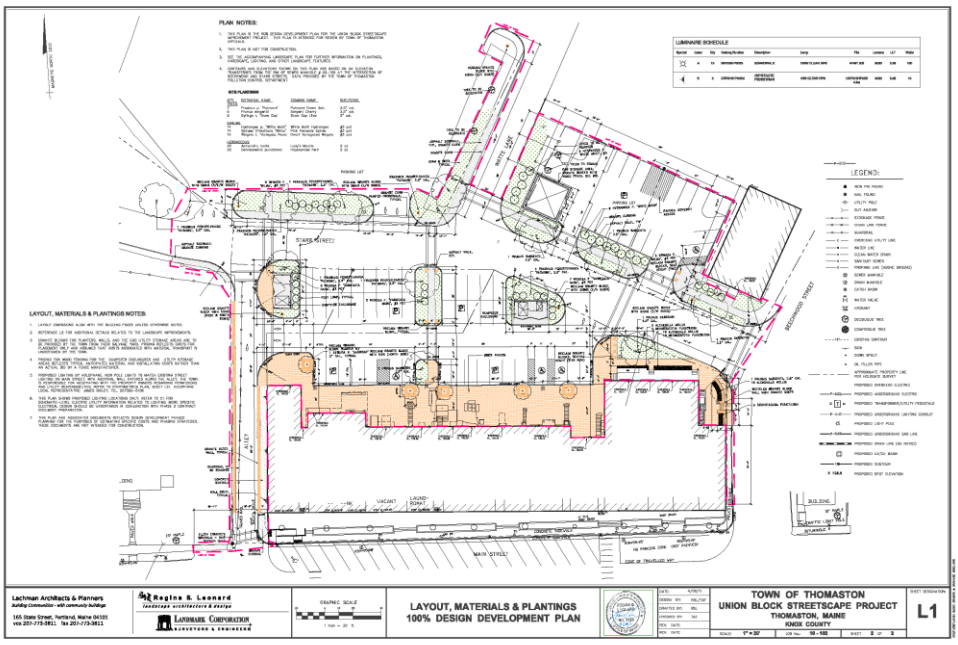
8. Rebuild, reconstruct the working waterfront parking area and walk.

Appendix 1: Thomaston Plans

The Main Street Thomaston Business Block (Union Block) Streetscape Improvement project
A master conceptual plan has been prepared by Regina Leonard.



Preliminary engineering design prepared by Tom Fowler at Landmark Surveying and Engineering



Regina Leonard was involved in assisting Landmark with cost estimating and will continue to be involved under Phase II. The conceptual plan has received Town acceptance.

Thomaston applied for several grants including the following:

2011 Phase I Streetscape Improvements consisted of the relocation of the several unsightly propane gas tanks or pigs located behind the block to an enclosed area town-owned area across Start Street. This involved the installation of a new gas line going from the rear of building block to a granite block enclosure across Starr Street owned by the Town. 179-181 and 183-185 Main Street were connected to the relocated tanks, and for the remaining buildings risers or stubs were put in place for future gas connections by the other building owners. Project Funding was provided by 2009 CDBG Community Enterprise Streetscape grant for $50,000, with a local match in the amount of $21,972 provided by the Downtown TIF and Economic Development funds. Phase I was completed in December 2011. Under Phase I all project surveying, design and preliminary engineering and cost estimating were completed. Rodney Lynch administered the grant and John Fancy was the town's project manager.

Phase II planning and cost estimating as well as the design and preliminary engineering are complete. Phase II consisted of the following: the installation or placement of underground conduits for the future removal of the overhead utility wires in the parking lot area behind the Thomaston Business Block (Union Block); construction of a new handicapped accessible sidewalk and granite curbing and the erection of new period or decorative street lighting along the alley way located westerly of the Block as well as removal of the fencing; final engineering design and project bidding.

Presently a 2012 CDBG Community Enterprise Streetscape grant is pending before the MeDECD for the amount of $121, 347. There is a local match of $61,636 for storm drainage work. The work needs to be performed in the parking lot area before the conduit, sidewalk and street lighting work is done. There is funding as well for grant administration. The matching funds will come from the Downtown TIF and Economic Development funds. The Town feels the application is competitive, was pulled together by a great team and has a good chance of being funding. Thirteen towns are applying for the grant and only 5/6 will be selected. Rodney Lynch will administer the grant and John Fancy will the town's project manager.

Phase III planning, design, cost estimating and surveying and preliminary engineering has been completed. Project will include installation/construction of new handicapped accessible sidewalks with granite cubing and laddered crosswalks, as show in green on the attached SRTS lay-out map. Presently the town is preparing a 2014-2015 MaineDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) application for $125, 430 in order to perform these sidewalk and cross walk improvements. The application is due August 3, 2012. The town will provide a local 25% match with funding coming from the Downtown TIF and Economic Development funds. Funding notification will be next June 2013. During the last 5 -7 years the town has done a lot to make Thomaston a more walkable community and as well as address some of its infrastructure problems. In addition to streetscape and infrastructure improvements, the town has used the CDBG program and private investment matching funds to make significant façade and interior improvements to the building such as addressing Life Safety Code issues and re-pointing brick work. At 179-181 Main Street the Town was able to use Small Project State Historic Tax credits to assist with funding exterior and interior improvements. [3]

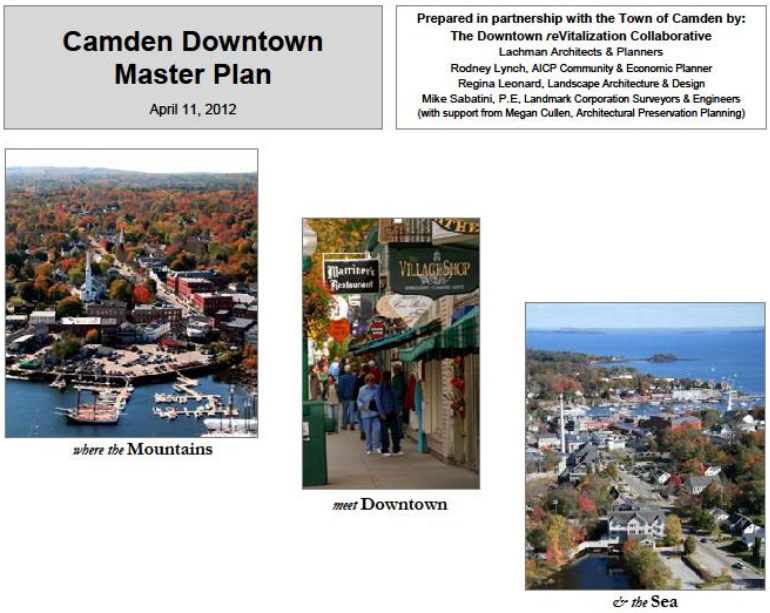
[3] E-mail to Jane Lafleur, 5/26/2012 from Rodney Lynch, AICP, Consulting Community and Economic Development Planner, Downtown reVitalization Collaborative, *Town and Village Planning,* 123 Summer Street, Rockland, Maine 04841.

Appendix 2
Additional Public Comments from Thomaston

- Add a highway break by the entrance to the park.
- Install “no engine brake” signs on northbound side of Route 1 at Showroom.
- Improve street drainage at the corner of Main and Green Street.
- Consider reuse of schools.
- Pursue commercial development.
- Repair sidewalks on Knox Street.
- Surface the parking lot next to Weymouth cross.
- Put “crosswalks ahead” sign on Knox Street.
- Improve Weymouth Cross Park.
- Improve the parking around the Slipway.
- Add a train stop at the old station (Historical Society).
- Rent-a-Dog in cooperation with the Knox County Humane Society.
- Add islands in the center of major highway to help people cross.
- Add bike paths (Especially along River).
- Hire a town planner to get more grants.
- Old County Road is a high Accident location. Fix this intersection.
- Move police station and town offices to another location downtown to allow more storefronts on Main Street.
- Add a Roundabout at intersection of Route 1/Montpelier/Old County Road.
- Add planters to shelter the storefronts.
- Improve the old gas station; beautify it.
- Add islands and trees behind the Storefronts on Main street near school.
- Define the entrance to the mall.
- Add curb extensions at Green Street intersection.
- Add curb extensions at Wadsworth Street intersection.
- Possible traffic light at Old County Road/New County Road intersection.
- Behind the business block, there is conflicting traffic between pedestrians and vehicles. Define it and close it in.
- Fix the entrance to the mall.
- Improve access to downtown from schools with new sidewalk crossings and in the Thomaston Green area.
- Add curb extensions on Wadsworth and Green. Add trees and red brick shoulders to tie the old prison site to downtown.
- Save Money with rain gardens.
- Consider a mini-traffic circle at Beechwood Street intersection.
- Add pavers on sidewalks or granite curbs.

APPENDIX 3: Camden Downtown Master Plan

http://www.camdenmaine.gov/vertical/Sites/%7B12179FA6-CABE-432E-868D-862BE81D9F03%7D/uploads/CamdenFinalDowntownPlanBody.pdf



Appendix 4: **Definitions and Strategies**

Roundabouts

Roundabouts facilitate through-traffic and turning movements without requiring a signal control. Roundabouts allow vehicles to circulate around an island that is oft en used for landscaping, a gateway or for other decorative features, like artwork. The circulating roadway is typically wider than the approach roadways and features an additional 'apron' against the edges of the island; both of these features allow for fire trucks, ambulances and other large vehicles. Roundabouts increase intersection carrying capacity by up to 30 percent. As the only requirement for yielding the right-of-way is to traffic already in the circulating roadway, roundabouts also reduce delays for everyone.

Mini Circles

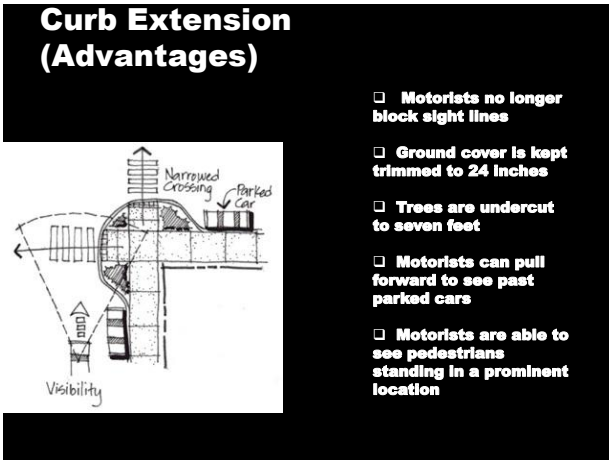
Mini Circles are one of the most popular and effective tools for calming traffic in neighborhoods. Seattle has 1,200 Mini Circles and this has led to a reduction in intersection crashes. They are the best neighborhood safety feature of any treatment type. These inexpensive features do not interrupt drainage. Mini Circles work outward from intersections on all three or all four legs of approaching traffic. Mini Circles bring speeds down to levels where motorists are more courteous to pedestrians, they allow all types of turns, including U-turns, which can assist with school area traffic management. A common engineering mistake is to put in four way stops around a mini circle. Mini Circles require yield signs instead.

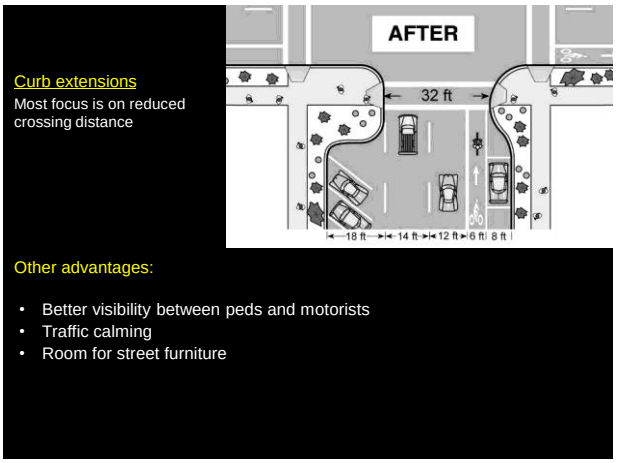
Road Diet

A road diet involves eliminating travel lanes to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Motorist crashes are typically reduced 12 to 30 percent, with some drops as high as 70 percent. High end speeds, especially, are reduced. While there can be more than four travel lanes before treatment, road diets are generally conversions of four-lane, undivided roads into three lanes—two through-lanes plus a center turn lane or median island. The fourth lane may be converted into bicycle lanes, sidewalks, planter strips for street trees, a bus stop, a separated multi -use trail, a wider outside lane or for on-street parking.

Curb Extensions

Curb extensions are a nearly universal tool for school areas. In transforming overly wide streets, curb extensions (also known as bulb outs, elephant ears and nibs) bring down right turning speeds, identify important crossings, and make it much easier for motorists to see children and for children to see motorists. When used in a series, curb extensions can significantly bring motorist speeds to acceptable levels. Curb extensions can be used at intersections, mid-block, inside of parking strips (tree wells) and other locations. Although many curb extensions are kept plain in appearance, at the entry to a neighborhood, they can be landscaped to serve as attractive gateways.





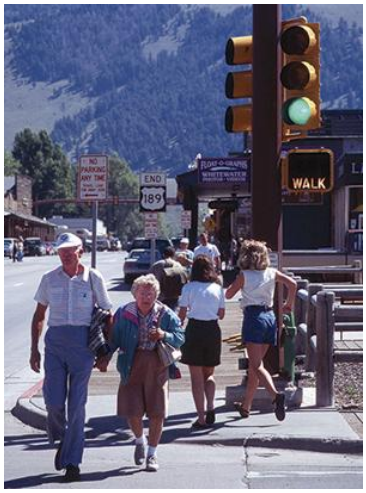
Bike Lanes

One of the most cost effective ways to reduce speed while improving overall vehicular flow and creating improved conditions for bicycling and walking, is the conversion of overly wide roads to bike lanes. Generally, travel lanes can be reduced to 10 feet. Narrower travel and storage lanes are proving to be slightly safer. Motorists appear to become more attentive when lanes are narrowed from 11-12 feet to 10 foot travel lanes. Bike lanes should be at least 5 feet wide and seamless. Thick striping and regular markings remind drivers to anticipate bicyclists. Bike lanes have an added benefit to pedestrians in that they provide a buffer to moving traffic.

Plazas, Parks and Paseos

Transforming a street, sidewalk, plaza, square, paseo, open lot, waterfront or other space into a community source of distinction, brings joy to the community. Good places make good experiences possible and they have consequences in our lives. People want to be in attractive, well designed and cared for public places. Investment in streets and other public spaces brings added value to all buildings and homes in an area. A compelling sense of place allows the time spent there to be rewarding and memorable. Converting alleys, sidewalks and streets into pocket parks, plazas and paseos creates lively places for people to gather, celebrate, eat and enjoy being together.

Signalized Intersections



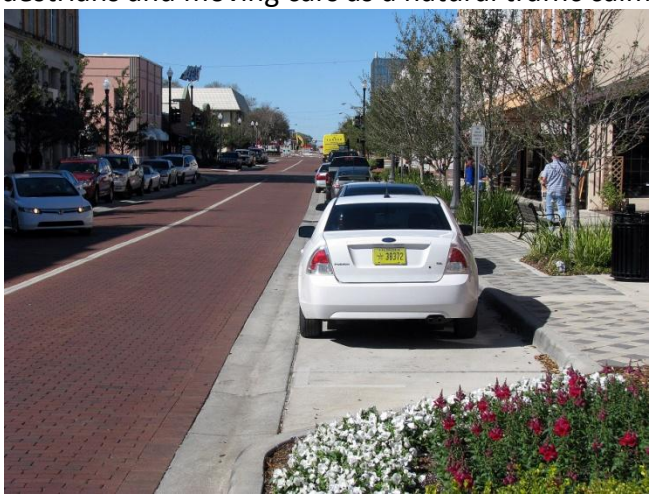
Intersection control devices are critical if walking, bicycling and motoring are to work, and work together. People who cross at intersections, when they are signaled to do so, are most predictable. Drivers appreciate predictable and compliant behavior. When intersections become so complex and challenging that signals are added, there is oft en ample justification to go beyond conventional standards to address the needs of people walking and bicycling. Signal timing should be automated for inclusion of walking cycles. Signal timing should be adjusted so that signals recall to WALK during the cycle, minus the clearance interval.

Sidewalk Design

Sidewalks require high levels of design and care. It is within the protected spaces of a sidewalk where people move freely, but also spend time engaging others and enjoying their public space. Sidewalks work best when they are fully buffered from moving traffic. Color, texture, street furniture and other materials can distinguish functional areas of sidewalks. Using saw cuts rather than trowel cuts provides a better surface for wheelchairs and wheeled devices. Sidewalks have three parts: the shy zone, furniture zone and the walk/talk zone. If driveways must interrupt, keep these to minimal widths (14 feet for one way and 26 feet for two way). Use contrasting colors and materials and keep sidewalks fully fl at across driveways.

On Street Parking

On-street and inset parking (shown below) visually narrows streets and brings down traffic speeds, while providing the most sustainable and affordable parking. Speeds are brought down even more when tree wells are used to provide a canopy to the street. Since it already has its own turn radii into each spot and access, on-street parking only takes up one-third of the land of off –street parking. But the primary reason for maximizing parking on street is to help civilize streets that were overbuilt for speed. On-street parking belongs on center city streets, serving as a buffer between pedestrians and moving cars as a natural traffic calming tool.



Back in Parking

Back-in angle parking provides motorists with better vision of bicyclists, pedestrians, cars and trucks as they exit a parking space and enter moving traffic. Back-in angle parking also eliminates the risk that is present in parallel parking situations, of a motorist may open the car door into the path of a bicyclist. Back-in angle parking also removes the difficulty that drivers, particularly older drivers, have when backing into moving traffic.

The concept has many benefits over other parking types. Some of these benefits include increased parking capacity (10 to 12 feet of lateral curb per vehicle, versus 22 feet per vehicle for parallel parking), clear sight lines when pulling out, better maneuverability on snowy days, ease of loading and unloading cargo and helping children in and out of car seats, and protection for children because the open car door now directs young children back to a point of safety rather than out into the street.

Installation and conversion to back-in angle parking requires careful site planning to ensure that the car stops before encroaching into the pedestrian space. Engines should not idle as tailpipe emissions are now directed to the sidewalk, which is particularly undesirable near a sidewalk café or other sensitive location. (See U.S. EPA listing of state and local communities with anti-idling laws at http://www.epa.gov/SmartwayLogistics/documents/420b06004.pdf). The change should be publicized prior to implementation, as people are more likely to accept a program that they understand. A learning curve should be expected, thus parking a city vehicle in one of the spaces each morning can help drivers understand the action.

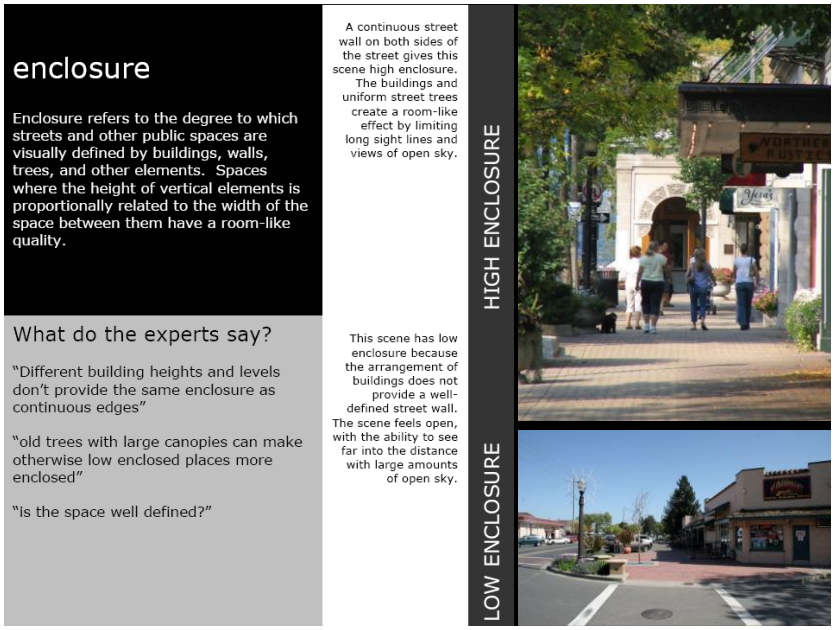
Many communities install curb extensions to shorten pedestrian crossing distance as part of a back-in angle parking project. Typical dimensions are: 60-degree angle stalls about 10 feet wide (which works out to 11 feet of curb length), and 20 feet deep (measured perpendicular to the curb). As a general rule, back-in angle parking should be installed on side streets first. It should also be considered on non-arterial streets where speeding is a problem and increased parking is a need. Over time and with community acceptance, there may be reasons to expand the concept to major streets. Bonuses of back-in angle parking include potential calming of traffic

speeds, especially around schools and in downtowns or other commercial areas. Its use on downhill grades should be studied carefully and it may have limited usefulness on single lane, one-way streets. (Source: www.walkinginfo.org)

Character

Enclosure

- Enclosure: the degree to which streets and other public spaces are visually defined by buildings, walls, trees and other elements. The more enclosure, the more comfortable we feel.



Transparency

- Transparency: The degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or other public space and the degree to which people can perceive human activity beyond the edge of a street or other public space.

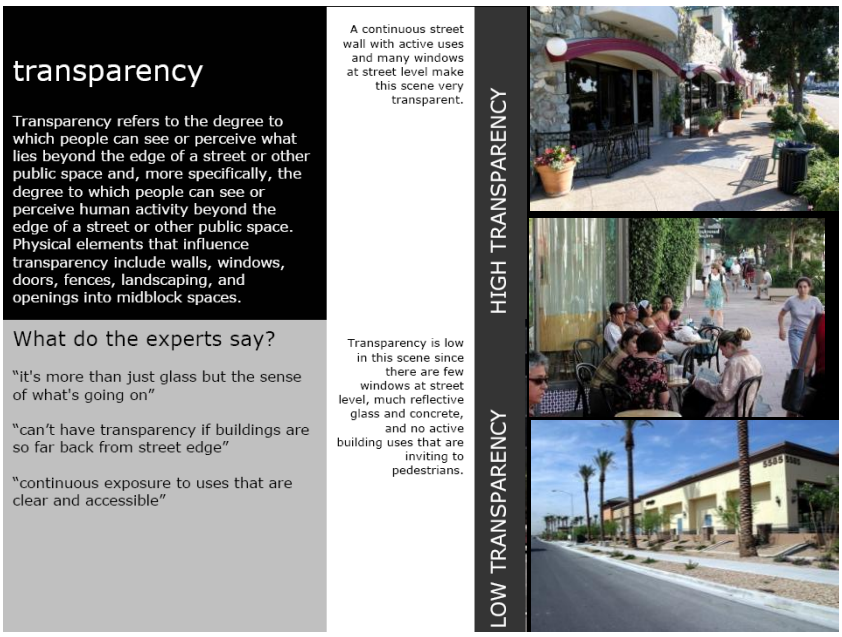
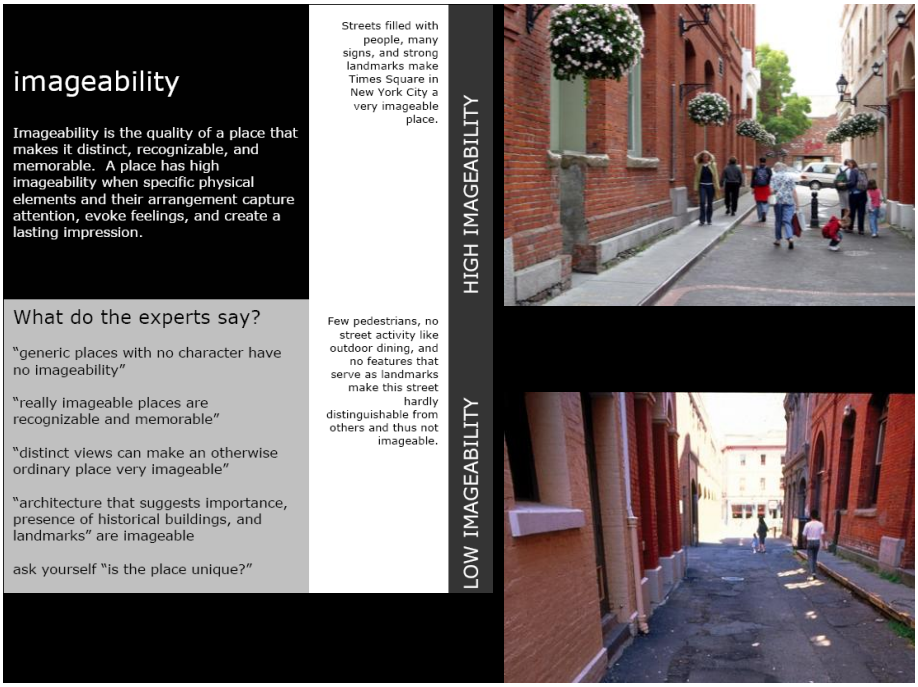


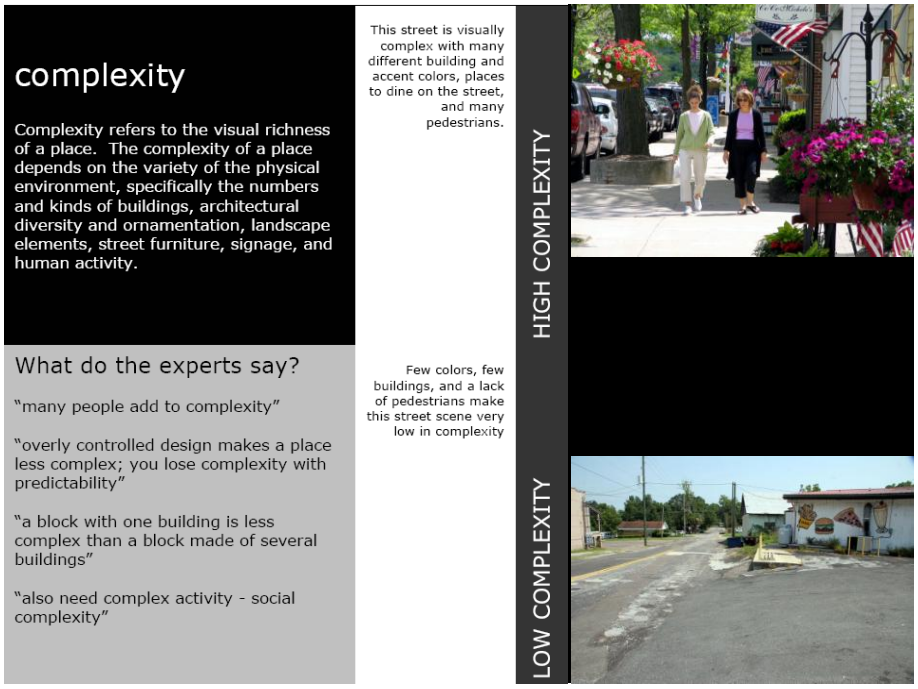
Image-ability

- Image-ability or memorable-ness: The quality of a place that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable.



Complexity

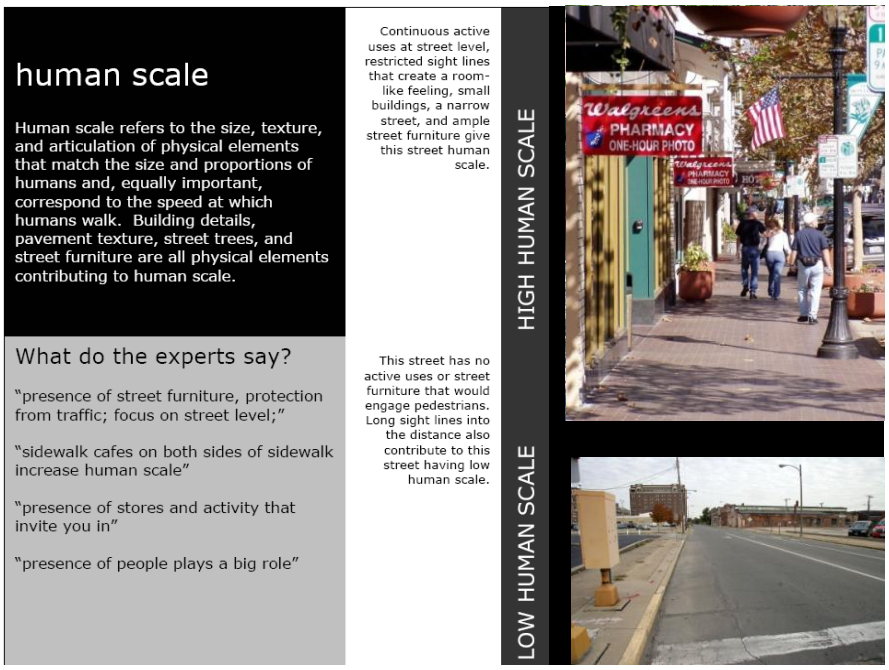
- Complexity: The visual richness of a place. If you walk 100 or 1000 times, do we see new things?



Friends of Midcoast Maine 5 Free Street Camden, Maine 04843
Ph. (207) 236-1077 Email: info@friendsmidcoast.org

Human Scale

- Human Scale: The size, texture and articulation of physical elements that match the size, proportions of humans and correspond to the speed at which humans walk.



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Ph. (207) 236-1077 Email: info@friendsmidcoast.org

For more information or to arrange a walk audit in your community contact:

Friends of Midcoast Maine
Jane Lafleur, Executive Director
5 Free Street
Camden, Maine 04843
(207) 236-1077
info@friendsmidcoast.org
www.friendsmidcoast.org

Walkable and Livable Communities Institute
Dan Burden, Executive Director
1215 Lawrence Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368
(360) 385-3421
sarah@walklive.org
www.walklive.org