

Camden Downtown Master Plan

April 11, 2012

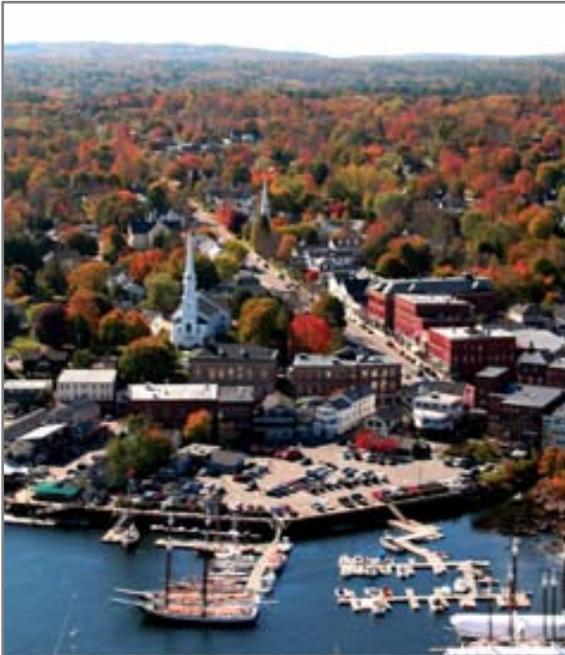
Prepared in partnership with the Town of Camden by:
The Downtown reVitalization Collaborative

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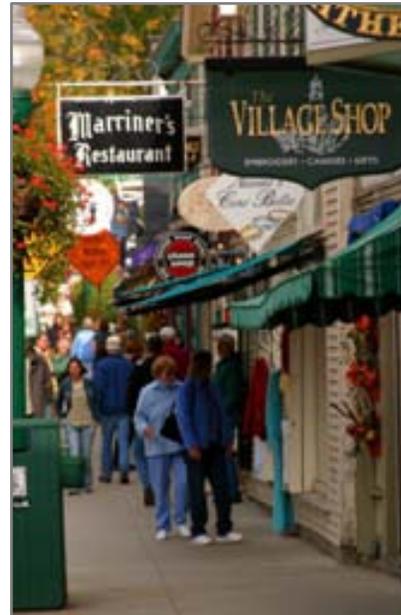
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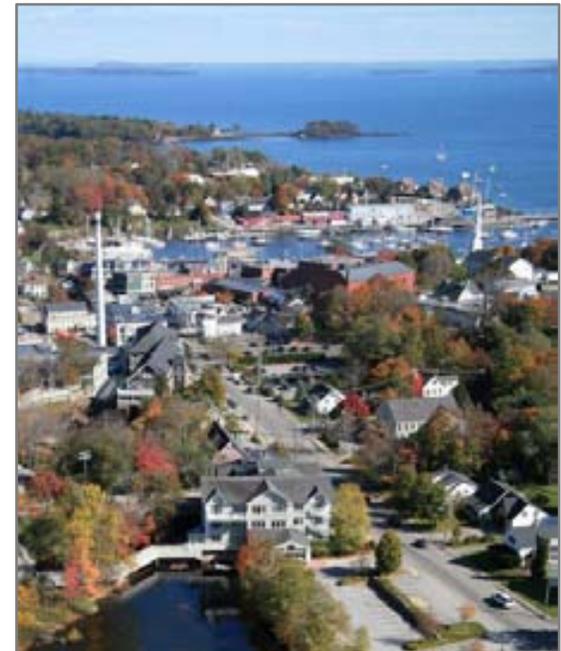
Mike Sabatini, P.E, Landmark Corporation Surveyors & Engineers
(with support from Megan Cullen, Architectural Preservation Planning)



where the **Mountains**



meet **Downtown**



& the **Sea**



Camden's Common Vision for Downtown

Communities make great progress promoting downtown vitalization when they establish a common purpose and vision. Camden has uniquely achieved a consensus about the importance of its downtown AND a common vision for its character, eloquently described in The Camden Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 4 – Downtown:

“The encouragement of a year-round business district is the best strategy to maintain the economic health of the Town, and to create a core where the human dynamics of daily living finds variety, interest, and a sense of shared community. A thriving downtown preserves a sense of place and promotes the economic well-being of its residents.”

This vision evolved through a series of studies, reports, and plans in the recent past including An Economic Vision for Camden (2009), Camden Downtown Municipal TIF District (2010), Economic Development Analysis and Action Plan (2011), Strategic Economic Development Action Plan (2011). These documents were generated by a series of community meetings aimed at (1) improving communication between the town and the public, (2) identifying shared values within and among Camden's communities, (3) building a consensus on Camden's opportunities and issues, and (4) setting priorities for the Town's future policies and initiatives.

Camden is a Year-round Town

In addition to a consensus that downtown should be revitalized, there is further consensus that Camden is a year-round town - that “gears up” to accommodate tourists, rather than a seasonal town that “shuts down” after tourists leave. This approach is fundamental to the vision of Camden as a 4-season community with “a year-round business district”.

A Cohesive Strategy

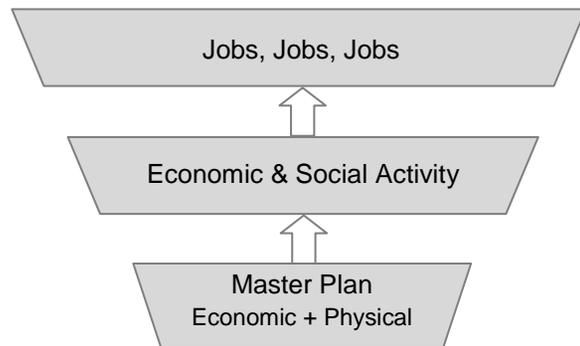
While some of the previous studies addressed components of a Downtown Plan, such as economics and streetscapes, opportunities mentioned were fragmented - resulting in no cohesive strategy for the Downtown. In addition, many grants designed to support downtown revitalization efforts require that a Downtown Master Plan be adopted.

To create a cohesive strategy, the Select Board in September 2011 unanimously approved the allocation of \$20,000 from the Economic Development Reserve Fund so that a Downtown Master Plan could be created through the services of a consulting firm. This Downtown Master Plan is a “capstone” to previous studies that accomplishes the following:

1. Integrates the Past – builds on previous reports and studies by coordinating concepts into a single comprehensive document
2. Integrates Present Economic Considerations with Physical Conditions – no previous studies integrated economic considerations with physical conditions - to create the comprehensive whole essential for downtown revitalization
3. Sets the Stage for the Future – a road map for the future based on past recommendations, current analysis and future trends

The Master Plan “Sets the Stage” for an Economically and Socially Robust Downtown (including jobs)

There is no short cut to downtown vitalization, only sustained effort guided by a common vision which “sets the stage” for economic, political and social variables to align for common purpose – leading to great progress. The purpose of this plan is to “set the stage” for an economically and socially robust downtown – including jobs.



The Plan accomplishes this by developing a cohesive, incremental, practical strategy to bring new business and public activities to the downtown village, improve buildings, streetscapes and public infrastructure, and better market the historic downtown. In addition the Plan identifies jobs that can be created such as computer support specialist; action steps for creating new job opportunities as would occur with the development of a business incubator; and shows how to create an environment where businesses would want to expand and locate, especially in a community that has embraced and new technologies. The Plan proposes recommendations to evolve downtown towards prosperity, rather than radical concepts promised to transform it.

The Point of Departure

The Plan is a roadmap to vitality and prosperity and the point of departure - and the foundation upon which this Downtown Master Plan was built - is *An Economic Vision for Camden*.

We recommend this fitting and well articulated statement also be the starting point for the Town and its citizens as they progress from Great Ideas to Ribbon Cutting.

An Economic Vision for Camden

The Camden Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 4 – Downtown:
“The encouragement of a year-round business district is the best strategy to maintain the economic health of the Town, and to create a core where the human dynamics of daily living finds variety, interest, and a sense of shared community. A thriving downtown preserves a sense of place and promotes the economic well-being of its residents.”

Our Premise

A year-round core business district is the key to the vitality of the town. Many other good things flow from that.

Our Vision

Downtown Camden as a dynamic and compact center of the community opening up onto a picturesque harbor. A unique sense of place would be fostered by access corridors to the harbor, harbor-side parks, and attractive architecture with protected pedestrian access. Residents and visitors would be drawn to the center by essential public services and a balanced mix of vibrant year-round businesses that support good livelihoods and that cater to residents, tourists and markets outside of Camden.

Our Goal

Assist in the retention and creation of interesting, year-round, higher-income jobs within walking distance to a pedestrian-friendly downtown and harbor. Attract 21st century knowledge workers.

Integrate Both Economic and Physical “Stages”

Economic AND Physical considerations are both essential and mutually beneficial. Success on the physical stage (*pedestrian-friendly downtown and harbor*) attracts year round citizens and visitors, which in turn fosters *the retention and creation of interesting, year-round, higher-income jobs*, which in turn generates public and private revenue, which in turn provides resources to make further physical improvements – in a self-perpetuating upward spiral.

Public or Private Leadership

Who leads the progression from Great Ideas to Ribbon Cutting? Since revitalization does not just happen by itself, it requires initiative which in turn depends on leadership. The municipality or the private sector, or both, must take initiative in order to advance and avoid stagnation, or even decline.

The private sector is often reluctant to take a first step, being cautious of the inherent risks of investment, and consequently municipalities typically assume leadership roles to encourage progress.

Public improvements projects, such as those recommended in the Downtown Master Plan for Camden, are important first steps in leveraging future business and investments in the downtown. A typical infrastructure improvement project requires substantial design and engineering - and often times substantial funding, and consequently they must be planned over a longer period of time. The Maine State Planning Office and The Maine Downtown Center agree in their August 2008 Downtown Revitalization report that communities seeking to draw private investment into downtowns must “set the stage” for redevelopment by taking leadership.

How Great Ideas are Financed

The most vexing issue facing vitalization is how to pay for its implementation? Great ideas and plans are nice but without money to back them up, that’s about all they are. Most plans either ignore this core issue or address it in sketchy manner believing that the power of the plan will carry it forward on its own accord. Unfortunately, this is not reality planning.

This plan lays the foundation for part of the town’s future economy by identifying **7 economic development clusters**. Their purpose is to increase economic interest in the Downtown, provide the Downtown with branding options as well as promoting a livable and viable community that sustains year-round jobs over the period of the next 20/25 year economic cycle.

Each economic cluster has its own funding formulas and financing strategies; which, can often be used to finance the implementation of two or more clusters. Since the voters will most likely not support the use of the Town's General Fund Tax Revenues to pay for plan implementation, progress is dependent on other grants, programs and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, with TIFs funding the largest share.

Importance of TIF Funding

TIFs are common powerful economic strategies by which increased revenues accrue to the Town for the purpose of public improvements, which in turn “set the stage” for improved business and commercial activity. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate building or facilities improvements and/or public infrastructure improvements through the issuance of municipal bonds with the TIF revenues set aside for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The advantage is that the Town would not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time before undertaking the improvements.

No Need to Reinvent Revitalization

Like many other Maine communities and villages, Camden is poised to pursue unique, independent, revitalization efforts. However there is no need for Camden to “reinvent revitalization”. Fortunately there is **the Maine Downtown Center** which coordinates a well established time tested process for downtown and village revitalization - called the Main Street Program.

The Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points Approach, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. The MDN is ideal for communities working toward achieving “Main Street” designation and would be an excellent step for Camden. MDN services help communities build an appropriate organizational and funding base for a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program. In addition MDN designated communities are awarded one bonus point when applying for a CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grant (DTR).

Evolution, not Revolution (Start Small, Start Now for Incremental Improvements)

As stated by the Maine Downtown Center, downtown revitalization happens in incremental steps rather than large leaps. The Town may be required to do the initial heavy lifting, so to speak, in order to demonstrate its commitment to redevelopment and to set the stage for private investment. Planning for larger, more expensive projects is imperative, but the Town should plan for implementing smaller projects immediately to demonstrate its commitment to progress to citizens and business owners through “concrete” changes.

The “Revitalizing Maine’s Downtowns” report recommends high impact, low cost, “early wins” to show progress and build support for the downtown revitalization effort. Our recommendations for early wins related to this section are highlighted under the Action Plan section of this report.

Engaged Citizens

Mid-coast Maine area is known for its long tradition of community involvement in public issues going back to when it opposed inclusion in the new County of Waldo, and instead agitated the State Legislature for the creation of newer county called Knox. This tradition of political discourse helped set the stage for interested and concerned long-time residents, natives and newer residents to join for an unusually high degree of engagement throughout the Master Planning process. All stakeholders recognized the social, cultural and economic importance of a vibrant downtown. This in turn allowed the Town and its citizens to constructively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER downtown should be revitalized.

Camden’s Own Plan

Ultimately, this Master Plan belongs to Camden’s citizens, businesses and their elected leaders. While the Master Plan “sets the stage”, stakeholders must assume ownership by engaging the plan’s contents, prioritizing the many opportunities, then generating momentum leading to action. On with the show!!



Acknowledgments

Collaborative Effort

The Master Plan was a collaborative effort, and its success is due to participation of many, especially the following:

The Select Board supported the effort by dedicating funds and committing Town resources.

- Martin Cates, Chair
- John French Jr.
- Morgan Laidlaw
- James Heard
- Donald White Jr.

The Master Plan Work Group's dedicated members (Camden's Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC); Camden Downtown Business Group, Executive Board; Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce) guided the effort with wisdom and patience.

Development Director, Brian Hodges, provided exceptional leadership. Without his guidance, this effort would not have been possible.

Town Planner, Code Enforcement Officer Steve Wilson provided invaluable assistance and support.

Town Manager Patricia Finnigan provided support throughout and commitment to advance Great Ideas to Ribbon Cutting!

Many Downtown Business and Property Owners shared their thoughts and interest in the process as well as Citizens who participated in the Public Forums. Their input is appreciated and their contributions were critical, ensuring that the plan reflect the needs of the community. Individuals Beth Doan, Judy Emery, Kerry Hadley, Emily Lusher, Cathleen Moore, Dave Morrison and Michael Nash as well as Community Meeting Facilitators John Arnold, Rick Bates, Bernice Berger, Pete Brown, Dale Bruce, Martin Cates, Ellis Cohn, Deb Dodge, Pat Finnigan, Peter Gross, Dave Jackson, Barrie Pribyl, Lowrie Sargent, Don White and Steve Wilson provided valuable assistance. Note-taker Extraordinaire Jeanne Hollingsworth provided outstanding meeting notes.



The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative is Maine's premier revitalization team. Founded on the four cornerstones of Downtown Revitalization – Economics, Streets, Buildings and Citizen Participation, the Team purposefully integrates the allied disciplines of Planning, Design, Engineering, Funding, Financing and Implementation to provide comprehensive services - from Great Ideas to Ribbon Cutting!

The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative includes:

- Denis Lachman, Lachman Architects & Planners – Team Leader, Buildings & Citizen Participation (with support from Megan Cullen, Architectural Preservation Planning)
- Rodney Lynch AICP – Community & Economic Development Planner
- Regina Leonard - Landscape Architecture & Design
- Mike Sabatini, P.E, Landmark Corporation Surveyors & Engineers



Preface and Acknowledgments

Introduction

- Assets & Challenges > Success ◇
- Master Planning Process ◇
- Study Area Map ◇
- Main Street Approach ◇
- Funding Strategies & Action Items ◇
- Select Board Goals 2012 ◇

Chapter Summaries

**The Master Plan is founded on the cornerstones of Downtown Revitalization
Economics + Streets + Buildings + Citizen Participation = Progress!**

- Economic Revitalization, Funding & Implementation **1**
- Streetscape, Parking & Circulation **2**
- Buildings **3**
- Citizen Participation **4**

Chapters

- Economic Revitalization, Funding & Implementation **1**
- Streetscape, Parking & Circulation **2**
- Buildings **3**
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Supplemental Information

- Economic Revitalization, Funding & Implementation **S1**
- Streetscape, Parking & Circulation **S2**
- Buildings **S3**
- Citizen Participation **S4**

Resources



Assets & Challenges > Success

Camden's downtown, like many others in Maine, has struggled to retain its former vibrancy as the center of the town's economic, social and civic activities. The town has numerous **Assets** as well as some **Challenges**.

Natural & Physical Assets

Camden is famously blessed with outstanding natural resources as advertised by its logo – *Where the Mountains meet the Sea*. Nestled between Camden Hills and the protected and picturesque Camden Harbor, the town projects charm.

Conspicuously missing from this image is the Downtown. The downtown is a concentrated commercial core with historic integrity, civic destinations (such as the Camden Opera House, Camden Public Library, the Post Office, and Knox Mill Complex and others, and supported by fairly dense residential neighborhoods and housing with good sidewalks. It is a quintessential traditional New England small town with a walkable Main Street reinforced by street trees and historic architecture.

Also conspicuously missing from this image is the Megunticook River that threads through downtown from the hills to the harbor, perpendicular to Main Street. The river is an outstanding yet untapped asset near and in Downtown, but it also the source that powered Camden's significant industrial heritage.

People Assets

Throughout the second half of the 20th century Camden has been departing from its humble former industrial heritage. Under influences "from away" such as MBNA and influx of many retirees (who brought with them affluence and expectations for "Quality of Life") engagement in civic life, stewarding attractive natural surroundings, improving the downtown, arts and cultural activities such as conferences, performances and quality culinary experiences all gained importance.

Traffic and Parking Challenges

Route 1 is both an asset and a notorious challenge, as it brings many people - and much traffic – to downtown causing infamous "bottle necks" in summer. Many towns struggle to attract people to downtown, yet Camden has the fortunate challenge HOW to manage its overabundant summer activity.

While the village does have several public parking areas a comfortable walking distance to the downtown, these lots are not well marked, can be difficult to find, and are not adequately linked to downtown destinations with clear, safe routes for pedestrians.

Bottlenecks and confusing intersections discourage pedestrian activity that is necessary for the vitality of the downtown. There are no visual or physical cues to designate a high pedestrian zone or to calm traffic

Building and Development Challenges

The compactness and density of buildings contribute greatly to downtown's attractiveness. Contained within these "street walls" is the resulting public realm, which is comfortably scaled for people. However this same density also severely limits development opportunities for new buildings or expansion of existing ones. By necessity, Camden must focus on rehabilitating and improving its existing buildings.

Another consequence of this compactness is for Camden to focus on activities that benefit from its density, such as conferences, rather than activities that requires open space, such as big festivals and concerts.

Poised for Success

Camden is in a great position to capitalize on its existing natural, physical and people assets to achieve its goals for a vibrant, four-season downtown. The downtown retains most of its original structure and charm, has engaged merchants and business owners, capable service committees, and dedicated Town administrators and officials.

Master Planning Process & Citizen Participation



This master plan was guided by significant input from many sources, including meetings with the Downtown Plan Working Group and interviews with many Downtown Business and Property Owners who shared their thoughts and interest. In particular there were multiple opportunities for Citizen Participation, which fostered an unusually high degree of engagement. Collectively their input is appreciated and their contributions were critical to ensure the plan truly reflects the community. Camden's consensus that "*a thriving downtown preserves a sense of place and promotes the economic well-being of its residents*" allowed citizens to productively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER downtown should be improved.

The Master Plan purposefully followed an iterative process consisting of: sharing information - listening to feedback – adjusting – sharing new and revised information – listening to new feedback etc. Specific concepts were “tested” with the Working Group, then after guidance, presented to citizens for feedback. The following outlines and describes the process.

Nov 22	Work Group Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
Jan 11	Work Group Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
Jan 26	Public Forum #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended this meeting at the Camden Opera House.
Feb 15	Public Online Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online survey was launched on 02/15/2012 and closed on 03/07/2012. A total of 332 responses were collected. The survey asked a total of 20 questions.
Feb 21	Work Group Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
March 14	Public Forum #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended this meeting at the Knox Mill Complex
March 27	Work Group Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
April 17	Select board Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of the Downtown Master Plan by the consultant team and members of the Downtown Master Plan Work Group. Open to the public, in the Camden Opera House and broadcast live on Time Warner Channel 22.



Study Area Map





No Need to Reinvent Revitalization

Like many other Maine communities and villages, Camden is poised to pursue unique, independent, revitalization efforts. However there is no need for Camden to “reinvent revitalization”. Fortunately there is **the Maine Downtown Center** which coordinates a well established time tested process for downtown and village revitalization - called the Main Street Program. The Project Team has worked with the Maine Downtown Center and the Main Street Program for years. We believe it is a highly appropriate and effective approach for Maine’s Downtowns and Village Centers, including Camden.

Maine Downtown Center

Established in 1999, the Maine Downtown Center’s mission is to advance preservation-based economic development in Maine downtowns. The Center and its Advisors serve as a resource for all Maine communities undertaking downtown revitalization projects or developing sustainable programs. Currently there are 9 Main Street Maine and 13 Maine Downtown Network communities, representing every county.

The Maine Downtown Center serves as the state coordinator for the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s **Main Street Program**. Developed by the Trust in 1980 it has a reputation as one of the most powerful economic development tools in the nation for vibrant, healthy downtowns. The Main Street Program is currently used in 44 states and proven successful in over 1,200 communities.

The Main Street Approach is a community-driven, comprehensive and common-sense methodology to address the variety of issues and problems that revitalizing older,

traditional business districts. The underlying premise of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development, within the context of historic preservation that is appropriate to today’s market place. This approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, empowerment, and the rebuilding of commercial districts based on its traditional assets: unique architecture, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community.

Incremental Approach

The Main Street approach is incremental and will not produce wholesale, immediate change. Expensive improvements often fail to address the underlying causes of commercial district decline and do not always produce the desired economic results. If a long-term revitalization effort is to succeed, it will require careful attention to every aspect of downtown – a process that takes time and requires leadership and local capacity building. The Main Street program should be seen as one of many tools that a community utilizes to generate economic and entrepreneurial growth. Both the public and private sectors of the community must be involved and committed for a local Main Street program to succeed. Each sector has an important role to play and each must understand the other’s needs strengths and limitations so that an effective partnership can be created.

The Maine Downtown Network (MDN)

Sponsored by the Maine Downtown Center, the MDN was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. The MDN is ideal for communities already engaged in downtown revitalization and possibly working toward achieving “Main Street” designation.



Select Board Adopted Goals

Strengthen Camden's Business Climate

Long term/on-going: Work to ensure Camden is a business friendly place to do business

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Market Camden as a business friendly place to do business in | Oct. 2012 |
| 2. Periodically review the Town's rules and regulations to ensure there is a balance between having a streamlined and practical approach to the review and permitting process while preserving Camden's unique character | on-going |
| 3. Complete, adopt, implement the Downtown Master Plan | March 2012 |
| 4. Optimize use of technology, web site, cable TV, and social media | Oct. 2012 |

Development

Long term/on-going: Enhance Camden's strengths; preserve what makes Camden "Camden"

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Actively market the Tannery property; refresh and rebrand the effort; focus on "green businesses" | Dec. 2013 |
| 2. Resolve signage issue | June 2012 |
| 3. Downtown Business Plan implementation | March 2013 |
| 4. Develop a plan to create workforce housing in Camden | March 2012 |
| 5. Create a development/funding plan for Camden Opera House (3 rd floor) | June 2012 |
| 6. Explore downtown parking garage; develop cost estimates | Dec. 2012 |

Quality of Life

Long term/on-going: Continually assess Camden's strengths and what sets us apart and enhance those assets

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Move the "kingdom trails" idea forward | 2014 |
| 2. Ragged Mountain Development Project | Begin Spring 2013 |
| 3. Make the Public Landing greener: develop a parking plan to allow for the phase out of parking | Fall 2012 |
| 4. Re-visit the bridge from the library grounds to the public landing | Spring 2014 |

Transportation

Long term/on-going: Create a sustainable transportation network that connects people and places while reducing reliance on cars.

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Work to establish a regional, regular transit/bus system | Spring 2014 |
|---|-------------|

Town/Government Operations

Long term/on-going: Ensure Camden's Town government is a high performing and effective organization

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Establish Goals: Municipal Management - Board – Committees | Complete by January 2012 |
| 2. Explore regionalization of Fire/Police | Spring 2012 |
| 3. Explore energy savings for town-owned property | June 2012 |



Probably the most important issue facing the Master Plan is how to pay for its implementation? Great ideas and plans are nice but without money to back them up, that's about all they are. Most plans either ignore this core issue or address it in sketchy manner believing that the power of the plan will carry it forward on its own accord. Unfortunately, this is not reality planning. For this reason each economic cluster has its own funding formulas and financing strategies; which, can often be used to finance the implementation of two or more clusters. Since the voters will most likely not support the use of the Town's General Fund Tax Revenues to pay for plan implementation, implementation is dependent on other grants, programs and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, with the TIFs funding the largest share. TIFs are common economic strategies by which increased revenues accrue to the Town for the purpose of public improvements, which in turn "set the stage" for improved business and commercial activity. This means growing property tax valuations in the Downtown so that the additional captured property taxes can flow to the coffers of the TIFs to assist with plan implementation.

Chapter 1 Economic Revitalization Funding Strategies & Action Items (Please see Chapter 1 Summary and Chapter 1 for complete description of Economic Development Clusters)

1a Tourism and Visitors Cluster

- All of the below.

1b New Business Growth Cluster

Capitalize a Business Incubator

- The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan does not allow for the use of TIF revenues to be used for the redevelopment of privately owned buildings and upper level spaces. For the purposes incubator financing, this can be address through the creation of a new Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for the redevelopment of privately owned properties. A CEA TIF is a contract between the municipality and company to assist with the development of a project by using all, or a percentage of, the tax revenues generated by new or increased investment to pay certain authorized project costs with payments made directly to the company.
- Federal and State and Historic Tax Credits. These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for the substantial rehabilitation of a building or space for a business incubator providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For buildings not within one of these districts such as on Bay View Street there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District.

- The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan allows for the costs of establishing and capitalizing a revolving loan program to provide gap financing to support the retention and expansion of local businesses.

Incubator Business Assistance Programs

- The Knox County Regional Micro-Loan Program is available to assist new and expanded small businesses with acquisition, working capital, building renovations and leasehold improvements. The primary criteria are job retention and creation for low to moderate income persons. The Select Board can join the pool by petitioning the Loan Review Committee and securing approval from the member communities. Knox County communities which have utilized this program include Rockland, Union, Thomaston, Rockport, Warren and Washington. Belfast also belongs to the consortium.
- The Midcoast Economic Development District located in Bath offers the following loan programs for businesses located Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox and portions of Cumberland and Waldo Counties: the Business Loan Program for up to \$150,000 and the Micro-Loan Program for up to \$25,000. These are fixed rate loans for up to five years and may be used for real estate acquisition, building improvements, equipment and inventory as well as for working capital. Collateral may consist of the assets being financed, other personal assets, or personal guarantees. To be eligible a business must be unable to finance the project from his/her own assets or through commercial lenders or by other Federal, State or local programs at reasonable rates and terms. Contact information is 7 Park Street, Bath, Maine 04530, telephone: 207-443-5790.
- The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) is an industry-led, publicly-funded through state bonds, non-profit corporation that offers early-stage capital and commercialization assistance in the form of competitive grants, loans and equity investment for the research, development and application of technologies that create new products, processes and services, generating high-quality jobs across Maine. The MTI Seed Grants support early-stage research and development activities for entrepreneurs to bring new product to market.
- Blackstone Accelerates Growth is a \$3 million, three-year initiative that will help Maine entrepreneurs leading start-ups and existing companies get the coaching and training that they need to accelerate the growth of their company and create more good jobs across the state. The initiative will create a support system for entrepreneurs across Maine that leverages Maine's natural resources, skilled and hard-working talent, R&D assets and innovation and entrepreneur support programs.

Strategies for Marketing Camden

- The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan allows for the use of TIF funds for economic development marketing, including marketing for the Opera House, the Camden Snow Bowl and other economic drivers in the community.
- State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: include implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal sustainability.
- Governor's Certified Business Friendly Community Program. The Certified Business Friendly Community Program is an effort to encourage business development and growth in communities throughout Maine. The Certified Business Friendly Community

Program seeks to identify, recognize and promote communities that show a true commitment to business development. Certified Business Friendly Communities may be eligible to receive bonus points in the State of Maine Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs (beginning in 2013).

- Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points Approach, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district by marketing a district's unique characteristics to businesses, residents and visitors, through advertising, promotional activity and special events.
- Participation in the Maine Products Marketing Program. This is the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development's official marketing program to support the wide variety of high-quality and unique products crafted in Maine. The program provides free or low-cost branding support to member companies through its "Maine Made America's Best" logo, and provides free internet exposure to Maine companies through www.mainemade.com.
- Initiate a Buy Shop Local marketing and/or branding program specifically targeting the Downtown so as to create more reasons to make the Downtown a year-round destination; especially, for the residents.

1c Technology Economy Cluster

- The Maine Community Foundation Community Building Grant Program: Knox County Fund seeks to support organizations and programs that recognize and build on a community's strengths and assets. These matching grant awards are made by the Maine Community Foundation's county committees and range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Examples include use of technology to improve program delivery or operations.

Creative Economy Cluster

1d Camden Library Complex + 1e Camden Opera House + 1f Camden Movie Theater

- There are two approved 20-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts within the village - Business Highway Municipal Development and Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development – which were adopted by a Town Meeting vote on February 23, 2010. These are municipal TIFs in which the increase revenues accrue to the Town for public improvements, and not to private investors or private property owners. The approved Development Programs or public investment plans for the municipal TIFs allows for TIF funding for the Mechanic Street Movie House Renovations and for Opera House Improvements, an impact analysis and a marketing program. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate building or facilities improvements and/or public infrastructure improvements through the issuance of municipal bonds with the TIF revenues set aside in a development sinking account pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The advantage is that the Town would not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time before undertaking the riverfront improvements. Helpful to the cause is the fact that TIF revenues from the neighboring Business Highway Municipal Development TIF can be used to financially support the Downtown Municipal Development Program investment plan activities.
- Maine's State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for the rehabilitation of a building or space providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Please note – The Maine Program specifically allows non-profit

organizations to participate in the Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. For buildings not within one of these districts such as on Bay View Street there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District.

- Depending on the final structure for owning and operating the theater, it may be eligible for to apply for a Community Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facilities (PF) application to provide for gap or leveraged financing for public facilities involving building rehabilitation, reconstruction, or historic preservation projects which are part of a community development strategy or plan. The Movie Theater project or the Opera House may be eligible to apply for up to \$300,000 for the removal of architectural barriers, or \$300,000 for historic preservation as a stand-alone project. Criterion includes a 25% match and applicants must demonstrate that the project meets the National Objective of the prevention and elimination of slum and blighting activities. For the Opera House this can be accomplished by submitting documentation substantiating the conditions of the building as "blighted". An example of blight is that the third floor bathroom is antiquated and essentially an old fashion single commode wooden closet.
- Depending on the final structure for owning and operating the theater, the project may be eligible for to apply for funding from the CDBG Community Enterprise (CE) Business Façade Grants Program which allows for-profit and non-profit entities to apply for up to \$25,000 for exterior building façade improvements. Criterion includes demonstrating that the project meets the National Objective of the prevention and elimination of slum and blighting activities. For the movie theater this can be accomplished by submitting documentation substantiating the conditions of the building as "blighted".
- The first step to obtaining Federal and State Historic Tax Credits is listing the movie theater site on the National Register of Historic Places. Apply to the Maine Community Foundation (MCF) Community Building Grant Program Knox County Fund to hire consulting services to perform the deed research on the building and prepare the nomination forms and documentation for submission to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for listing the movie theater building on the National Register as either part of an existing expanded historic district or as a stand-alone historic building.
- Creative Communities = Economic Development (CCED) Grant. The Maine Arts Commission is offering this new grant program to activate the concept that Maine's quality of place is as an economic asset. The CCED grant is designed to function locally to meaningfully support dialogue and partnership between municipalities and the cultural sector regarding the economic development of their communities. CCED will provide the cultural sector with significant funds to contribute to mutually agreed upon plans and initiatives that stimulate the local economy, strengthen the role of arts and culture, and enhance their community's quality of place.

Successful applications will come from communities that have vibrant cultural nonprofits. The communities themselves must be poised for growth and engaged in economic and community planning as well as development using other funding sources. They will include an active network of involved citizens including youth and elected leaders in a comprehensive revitalization effort. A consortium is required of at least two nonprofit cultural organizations from the same community or region. Consortiums are encouraged to have proven, significant partnerships with community development initiatives such as Maine Downtown Center's Main Street Maine program, the Orton Foundation, or Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). CCED grants are viewed as grants to foster the development of the creative economy of the community as a whole, rather than to a single organization.

The consortium must provide a minimum of a 1:1 cash match or in-kind match. This demonstrates the consortium's ability to take on the project. The Belfast Creative Coalition was a 2012 recipient of a \$50,000 CEED grant as a way to connect the many art-related organizations in Waldo County. Camden should be able to do the same.

1g Events Economy Cluster

- The Maine Community Foundation Community Building Grant Program: Knox County Fund seeks to support organizations and programs that recognize and build on a community's strengths and assets. These matching grant awards are made by the Maine Community Foundation's county committees and range from \$3,000 to \$5,000
- State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are expected to range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities Examples of projects fitting this category: Implementation economic development strategies related to coastal tourism and marine-related sectors.

1h Recreational Economy Cluster

- The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) allows for funding for the construction of a riverwalk along the Megunticook River between the tannery site and the downtown. This roughly two mile circle will ultimately connect to the downtown boardwalk paths, the waterfall bridge, and the pathways that skirt the Knox Mill and the tannery sites. The intent of which is to further strengthen pedestrian networks throughout the downtown supporting both the tourist industry as well as providing an amenity for residents. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate riverwalk construction through the issuance of municipal bonds with TIF revenues set-aside and pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The advantage is that the Town would not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time before undertaking the riverfront improvements.
- Expanded or New Town of Camden Municipal Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Presently, because the Knox Mill Complex is not in a TIF district the increased property tax revenues currently gained from the new captured values at the site resulting from the redevelopment of the former mill site are not now available to assist with financing the construction of the Riverwalk in the vicinity of the Knox Mill Complex; nor; are they available for follow-up maintenance and upkeep. In order to address these issues the Town can consider extending the boundary of the adjacent Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to include the area of the Knox Mill Complex; create a new Knox Mill Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to include the present area of the Knox Mill Complex; or, the creation of a new Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA) TIF District. A CEA TIF is a contract between the municipality and company to assist with the development of a project by using all, or a percentage of, the tax revenues generated by new or increased investment to pay certain authorized project costs with payments made directly to the company.
- Department of Conservation (DOC) Bureau of Parks and Land, Recreation Trail Program (RTP) Grants The proposed riverwalk would be eligible for a Development Grant application for up to \$35,000 with a 20% local cash or in-kind match or other state and local grants, and certain federal grants match. Eligible Development Grant activities include: development or rehabilitation of any trailside or trailhead facility; construction of new recreation trails including new trail bridges and trail signage; acquisition of

easements and fee simple title to property for trail purposes, or the creation, expansion, or improved water trails which may include construction/restoration of, kiosks/signage.

- Department of Conservation Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal grant program through the National Park Service (NPS), authorized by Congress to fund on a reimbursement basis up to 50% of allowable costs (maximum grant award is \$75,000.00 as established by the State) for the acquisition, development, and/or renovation of public outdoor recreation facilities.
- National Park Service's (NPS) Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) located in Brunswick, Maine. RTCA often acts as a catalyst to help assemble the necessary pieces of a river trail planning project, helping to identify resources, navigate the planning process, and convert ideas into actions. Program staff can provide technical assistance in conceptual planning, organizational development, grant research and writing assistance, and capacity building at no cost.
- State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal tourism and marine-related sectors.
- Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points Approach, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. The MDN is ideal for communities working toward achieving "Main Street" designation. . MDN services help communities build an appropriate organizational and funding base for a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program. , MDN designated communities are awarded one bonus point when applying for a CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grant (DTR).

1i Historic and Architecture Cluster

- State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: include implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal tourism.
- Quick Response Codes (QRC). QRCs are bar codes that when scanned or photographed from an appropriate mobile device that connects the user with information. Based on this technology Executive Director Dan Bookham of the Penobscot Chamber of Commerce and the Camden Historic Resources Committee thought using QRCs plaques around town for a guided history tour would be a novel way to show Camden's long past and to demonstrates its willingness to embrace Camden's future; a future involving the new technologies.
- Maine Downtown Network (MDN).

Chapter 2 Streetscape, Circulation & Parking Funding Strategies & Action Items

There are two approved 20-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts within the village - Business Highway Municipal Development and Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development – which were adopted by a Town Meeting vote on February 23, 2010. These are municipal TIFs in which the increase revenues accrue to the Town for public improvements, and not to private investors or private property owners. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate building or facilities improvements and/or public infrastructure improvements through the issuance of municipal bonds with the TIF revenues set aside in a development sinking account pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The advantage is that the Town would not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time before undertaking the riverfront improvements. Helpful to the cause is the fact that TIF revenues from the neighboring Business Highway Municipal Development TIF can be used to financially support the Downtown Municipal Development Program investment plan activities.

Action & Funding Strategies

Policy & Partnerships

- Action Item – Negotiate preliminary shared parking agreements between the town and select property owners
- Action Item – Initiate zoning and policy changes related to off-street parking requirements.
- Action Item – Work with the business community to simplify “identity” districting of downtown into River District, Harbor District, and Central District or others that can be coordinated with wayfinding.
- Early Win - Mark bike routes and sharrows; install route signage.
- Early Win - Install bike racks downtown.
- Action Item – Develop a parking overflow strategy in collaboration with event and conference organizers
- Early Win – Create a Parking & Transportation website

Action & Funding Strategies

Survey, Design & Engineering (Next Steps):

- Action Item – Hire an environmental design consultant to prepare a comprehensive signage & wayfinding design for Camden. Budget: \$20,000 - \$25,000.
- Action Item – Update existing topographic data for the downtown to include areas encompassing the defined streetscape improvements projects. Budget TBD.
- Action Item - Engage a consultant to prepare Design Development Plans for the Gateways and Downtown Center Hub projects. The Design Development Plans will be utilized for funding applications and will serve as the basis for future bid documents once the projects are funded. Budget: \$20,000 - \$25,000.
- Action Item – Engage a consultant for Schematic Design services related to the Public Landing redevelopment project. The Design Development Plans will be utilized for funding applications and will serve as the basis for future bid documents once the projects are funded. Budget: \$10,000 - \$15,000.

Action & Funding Strategies

Implementation - Construction

- Early Win – Purchase and install parking directional signage along Route One and to off-street parking lots.
- Action Item – Implement the first phase of the River Walk Project between the Tannery site and the downtown, as designed by others. Budget: \$30k, See TIF
- Action Item –Purchase and install multi-space meters for curbed parking on Main Street block (2 sides), Elm Street (from Wood Street, 2 sides), Bayview (to Frye Street) and Mechanic (diagonal spaces)Infrastructure improvements (sidewalks); Scope TBD

Action & Funding Strategies

“Warm & Fuzzy” Projects

- Early Win Project – Establish Co-Op Tree and Tree Trust Programs (Refer to City of Portland Forestry Division for models); Advertise Camden as a Tree City USA (National Arbor Day Foundation)
- Early Win Project – Work with the Downtown Business Owners to establish window art contests to celebrate holidays, local heritage themes or special community events.
- Early Win Project – Establish a bench donation and endowment program (Refer to the City of Seattle’s Bench Donation Program as a model). Purchase new benches and place them in prominent temporary locations, if necessary, until streetscape improvements are completed. Plaques could include interesting historical or other facts of community interest, thus incorporating interpretive elements into the streetscape.
- Early Win Project – Join the “Pink Tulip Project” of the Maine Cancer Foundation by planting pink tulips in the downtown. Work with local community organizations and businesses.

Additional Funding Opportunities:

- MaineDOT Quality Community Program: MaineDOT’s Quality Community Program includes federal and state funding opportunities to improve community transportation facilities and other “quality community Improvements.” The program encompasses the Transportation Enhancement Program (80% funding with a 20% match) and the Safe Routes to School Program (up to 100% funding).
- Maine Downtown Center Green Downtowns Program (For Maine Street Maine Communities): Challenge grants for Main Street Maine communities for environmentally friendly or “green” enhancements related to downtown revitalization, including the reuse of historic buildings.

Future Funding Opportunities:

- Parking Benefit District Funds See Parking & Circulation Recommendations for more information.
- Parking Trust Fund: See Parking & Circulation Recommendations for more information.

Chapter 3 Building Funding Strategies

Federal and State and Historic Tax Credits. These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for the substantial rehabilitation of a building or space for a business incubator providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For buildings not within one of these districts such as on Bay View Street there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District.

Chapter 1 Summary

Economic Revitalization, Funding & Implementation

Introduction

The importance of Camden's economy cannot be underestimated or overlooked as it is reflective of its standing in the region and in the State. The economic goals of the Camden Downtown Master Plan are to provide a framework and reference document for:

- a sustainable year-round economy
- attracting new businesses – which leads to jobs
- strengthening existing businesses – which leads to jobs
- increasing short and longer term employment opportunities
- growing the property tax base, valuations and revenues for the purpose of assistance with financing the implementation of the Master Plan
- promoting a Community Centered Corridor (CCC) economic development strategy as recommended in the 2009 approved *Gateway 1 Corridor Action Plan* with the Downtown as the core economic growth center.

In doing so, the Master Plan describes effective and practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Downtown as well as a realistic public/private funding mix necessary for implementation. The Master Plan in itself cannot create jobs or businesses. It can only give rise to an environment that will foster jobs and business growth.

Step 1 - Identify Economic Values

The first step in this process was to review the previous Town economic development studies-and to identify the supporting or relevant economic values or issues that can be enhanced or built upon, provided with meaning and given substance for the

purpose of translating into priorities, policies and strategies by the Town thereby, meeting the long term goals of the Master Plan. This process involved conducting outreach with Downtown business owners and residents, town and downtown committees and working groups.

Step 2 - Identify Economic Development Clusters

From these identified economic values, along with other input from the outreach effort, the following economic development clusters were derived. Their purpose is to increase economic interest in the Downtown, provide the Downtown with branding options as well as promoting a livable and viable community that includes year-round jobs. These clusters deviate from Camden's previous economies by being more dependent on knowledge and human creativity, more diversified, technological driven, integrated and sustainable over the period of the next 20/25 year economic cycle.

Step 3 – Describe Each Economic Development Clusters

Each cluster is described in detail through the following considerations:

- Policy Statement
- Introduction
- Description
- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Action Steps
- Funding Strategies
- Employment Opportunities
- Relevant Economics Values Addressed

Tourism and Visitor Economy Cluster	1a	Expand the Downtown beyond being a traditional seasonal tourist center to a year-round community and tourist and visitor attraction center
New Business Growth Economy Cluster	1b	Increase the economic interest in the Downtown by promoting and marketing a viable sustainable economy that includes and year-round jobs and business opportunities. Identify a realistic mixture of public and private funding to benefit Downtown property and business owners and for job creation.
Technology Economy Cluster	1c	Ensure that the Downtown possesses the technological capacity needed for 21st Century economy, businesses and jobs
Creative Economy Cluster Camden Library Complex Camden Opera House Camden Movie Theater	1d 1e 1f	Upgrade and/or integrate and connect those artistic, performing and cultural public facilities which contribute to, and are an attraction for the Downtown economy.
Events Economy Cluster	1g	Build upon and expand the Town's growing niche events and visitors industry for the purpose of supporting a year-around local and regional economy
Recreational Economy Cluster	1h	Use new, existing and expanded recreational facilities for the purpose of positively impacting and benefiting the Downtown and Town-wide economy.
Historic and Architecture Economy Cluster	1i	Promote and enhance the awareness of the Town's history and architecture for economic development

Camden is known for its charming downtown on the harbor, its historically significant landscapes, civic attractions, scenic waterfront and beautiful natural areas. The town's commercial center is already a destination for tourists – and deservedly so. But there is a caveat associated with Camden's draw of seasonal visitors – they leave. The community, as a whole, recognizes the need to expand and diversify Camden's local economy beyond tourism to a four-season community. In their "Economic Vision for Camden," the Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee noted that the conditions for retaining and creating interesting, year-round, higher income jobs involved increasing the appeal of downtown as a pedestrian friendly place on the harbor. Studies, surveys and planning data substantiate this goal by demonstrating that quality of life factors, such as walkability and outdoor recreation opportunities, make communities more attractive to potential homeowners and workers.

Walkability, quality of life, and outdoor recreational opportunities are key considerations for attracting new businesses to a community such as Camden – which in turn leads to jobs. Recent surveys of members of the "New Economy" (smokeless industries, high technology and service-sector businesses) workforce showed that quality of life in a community increases the attractiveness of a job by 33%. According to the APA, mobile retirees are also seeking communities that provide scenic beauty as well as leisure and recreational opportunities. ("Retirement Migration" has been defined as a "new, clean growth industry in America today." By 2050, 25% percent of Americans will be aged 65 or older).

Streetscapes, signs, parking, parks and greatly influence the quality of a downtown experience. Together with the buildings, these elements and features establish the human scale environment necessary to promote higher levels of activity and enjoyment, and they greatly influence the overall character of downtowns as distinctive and special places. The future viability of Maine's Quality of Place, according to the Governor's Downtown Revitalization Task Force, requires planning and investment in the physical and experiential qualities of Maine's traditional downtowns, in part through the integration of parks, public open spaces and trails as well as infrastructure and streetscape enhancements.

Camden is in a great position to capitalize on its existing natural, physical and cultural assets to achieve its goals for a vibrant, four-season downtown. The downtown retains most of its original structure and charm, has engaged merchants and business owners, capable service committees, and dedicated Town administrators and officials. The recommendations for Streetscapes, Circulation & Parking seek to resolve issues related to four major areas of concern: Pedestrians, traffic, parking and signage.

- *Pedestrians.* Parking and traffic have relegated downtown pedestrians to a subservient role to transportation and parking needs. The pedestrian environment has been over-shadowed and compromised in order to maximize convenience for automobiles. The recommendations seek to improve pedestrian experience, safety and connectivity within the downtown by creating a pedestrian-focused streetscape.

- *Traffic.* The Route One arterial bisects Camden's downtown. Traffic and congestion through the center of town cause gridlock, preventing visitors from stopping, frustrating residents, and intimidating pedestrians seeking to cross Route One. Traffic patterns at the Southern arrival zone into town are confusing and dangerous.
- *Parking.* Parking, or the perceived lack of it, has been a real issue in town. There are few available spaces on Main and Elm Streets and off-street parking lots are both inadequate and not well advertised.
- *Signage.* Better signage is needed to inform motorists about parking and businesses located off the main thoroughfare. Current signage is inadequate.

The recommendations for Streetscapes, Parking & Circulation respond to the vision for downtown redevelopment outlined by the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality of Place, the findings of the Brookings Institute, and the Maine State Planning Office as well as the previous findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, the 2009 Vision for Camden by the Camden Economic Development Committee, the Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, the 2011 Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, and the 2007 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The recommendations encompass many layers of design and planning considerations that collectively address the stated goals for the downtown and include both physical improvements and policy recommendations. Following is a brief summary, organized by section:

Streetscape Recommendations:

- Expand the existing streetscape treatment area to the proposed Gateways and further into the River and Harbor Districts
- Develop a comprehensive signage and wayfinding system
- Create gateways or arrival zones into the downtown
- Reorganize and highlight the downtown center hub
- Make improvements to Mechanic Street
- Better Integration Washington Street, Knox Mill and Tannery Lane into the downtown area
- Improve the public landing alley and Commercial Street
- Consider changes along Sea Street
- Make Improvements to the boat launch

Parking & Circulation Recommendations:

- Install multi-space meters for curb parking and do away with time limits
- Establish a Parking Benefit / Business Improvement District
- Develop specific loading zones and policies for the downtown
- Rethink off-street parking requirements in the downtown districts
- Increase shared parking opportunities
- Develop a parking wayfinding system
- Beautify parking lots and enhance pedestrian circulation routes
- Implement the River-to-Harbor Walk and park improvements
- Promote alternate forms of transportation and regional connections
- Devise a parking overflow strategy

The Maine State Planning Office and The Maine Downtown Center , in their August 2008 Downtown Revitalization report noted that communities seeking to draw private investment into downtowns must set the stage for redevelopment by making necessary upgrades in downtown infrastructure. Recent findings of the Brookings Institute support this recommendation, reporting that for downtown revitalization to be successful, private sector investment must be reestablished. While studies suggest that every \$1 of public investment is typically matched by \$10-15 of private money, there is an important caveat. Public investment is required early in the revitalization process in order to attract these private investments in the downtown. Public improvements projects, such as those recommended in the Downtown Master Plan for Camden, are necessary first steps in

leveraging future business and investments in the downtown. A typical infrastructure improvement project requires substantial design and engineering - and often times substantial funding, they must be planned over a longer period of time.

It is essential, in the meantime, to demonstrate concrete steps toward revitalization. The “Revitalizing Maine’s Downtowns” report recommends high impact, low cost, “early wins” to show progress and build support for the downtown revitalization effort. Our recommendations for early wins related to this section are highlighted under the Action Plan section of this report.

Downtown is a Compact and Dense Commercial Core

Camden's downtown is a concentrated commercial core with historic integrity, civic destinations (such as the Camden Opera House, Camden Public Library, the Post Office, and Knox Mill Complex and others, and supported by fairly dense residential neighborhoods and housing with good sidewalks.

It is a quintessential traditional New England small town with a Main Street reinforced by street trees and historic architecture. All of these components support the concept of walkability, which is essential for downtown revitalization.

The compactness and density of downtown buildings contribute greatly to its attractiveness. Contained within these built up "street walls" is the public realm, which is scaled for people to feel comfortable. However this same already built compactness also severely limits development opportunities for new buildings or expansion of existing ones. By necessity, Camden must focus on rehabilitating and improving its existing buildings.

National Register Historic Districts

Probably one of the least promoted but much appreciated Downtown assets is its history as told through its distinctive 19th and 20th Century architecture. Within the Downtown there are three Historic Districts, or portions thereof, on the National Park Service's (NPS) National Register of Historic Places containing numerous contributing buildings and houses, generally in good to excellent condition.

Property & Building Inventory

To fully understand the role of downtown buildings to the Master Plan, all 164 properties within the study area were inventoried and most were photographed. The resulting data was consolidated in a single spreadsheet which in turn was analyzed to extract trends about Physical Data and Occupancy/Business Data. Understanding downtown buildings' physical characteristics, then extracting appropriate data provides the background for fact-based discussions to support informed conclusions which in turn can guide Town policy. Please note: The purpose of the inventory and analysis is to identify trends which can be used to support general policy discussions, rather than generate precise data.

Physical Data Summary

Within the downtown study area there are (19) 1-story buildings, (88) 2-story buildings, (19) 3-story buildings and (4) 4-story buildings. Totaling 974,828 sf of net leasable area, 1st floors contain 478,558 sf, 2nd floors contain 286,241 sf, 3rd floors contain 21,385 sf and 4th floors contain 11,969 sf. Public parking lots cover 16,700 sf of area while private parking lots cover 72,500 sf.

Occupancy/Business Data Summary

Within the downtown study area there are 15 types of occupancy /business with 804 employees - ranging from Office (19.9% of businesses with 344 employees) to Retail (17.4% with 209 employees) to Restaurant (9.6% with 169 employees) to Marine (4.3 % with 39 employees).

Chapter 4 Summary

Citizen Participation

Many Opportunities for Participation and High Engagement

This master plan was guided by significant input from many sources, including meetings with the Downtown Plan Working Group and interviews with many Downtown Business and Property Owners who shared their thoughts and interest. In particular there were multiple opportunities for Citizen Participation, which fostered an unusually high degree of engagement. Camden’s consensus that “*a thriving downtown preserves a sense of place and promotes the economic well-being of its residents.*” allowed citizens to productively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER downtown should be improved.

The Master Plan purposefully followed an iterative process of: sharing information - listening to feedback – adjusting – sharing new and revised information – listening to new feedback etc. Specific concepts were “tested” with the Working Group, then after guidance, presented to citizens for feedback. The following outlines and describes the process.

Nov 22, 2011	Work Group Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting, 21 attendees • Agenda: Introductions; Study Area; Goals & Objectives; Work Plan; Questions; Early Streetscape Information; Early Economic Information; Closing
Jan 11, 2012	Work Group Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting • Agenda: <u>Part 1</u> – Setting the Stage; <u>Part 2</u> – Activity to Date (Buildings, Economics, Streetscapes); <u>Part 3</u> – Master Plan Web Site; <u>Part 4</u> – Community Meetings
Jan 26, 2012	Public Forum #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended this meeting at the Camden Opera House. • Agenda: <u>Introduction</u> - What, Why, Where, Who When; <u>Part 1</u> – Laying the Foundation; <u>Part 2</u> - Large Group Feedback; <u>Part 3</u> - Activity to Date; <u>Part 4</u> - Small Group Discussion; <u>Part 5</u> - Small Group Reporting. • <u>Top Hopes</u> - Maintain Camden’s unique quality of life, which draws businesses and residents to the area, while making this a better place to live and work, generating consistent activity in town, establishing a college campus, supporting green energy opportunities, identifying and attracting businesses locals want and need, focusing on a movie theater, reexamining parking including signage, making the downtown more pedestrian friendly including the public landing, improving streetscapes, incorporating technology (e.g. GPS, Google maps, smartphone apps). • <u>Top Concerns</u> - JOBS! JOBS! JOBS! The downtown needs to be vital year round, the town needs to be vital year round, and we need good, well-paying, year-round jobs – lots of them,

		economic/business development atmosphere for businesses, rush to change character of town, dark houses/neighborhoods, poor lighting, evening activities, employer/employee parking in “prime” spaces, pedestrian safety, high rents, keep schools in town, signage including clarity and aesthetics, reliance on tourist economy, better uses of town owned properties, heavy traffic, insufficient activities for young people, zoning.
Feb	Public Online Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See below
Feb 21, 2012	Work Group Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting • Agenda: <u>Part 1</u> – Where We Stand; <u>Part 2</u> – Review Forum #1 & Survey; <u>Part 3</u> – New Activity; <u>Part 4</u> – Forum #2
March 14, 2012	Public Forum #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location - Knox Mill Complex, 95 attendees • Agenda: <u>Part 1</u> – Recap, Forum #1 & Survey; <u>Part 2</u> – Updates & Recent Activity; <u>Part 3</u> – Small Group Discussion; <u>Part 4</u> - Small Group Reporting • Topics – Streetscape, Curb Extensions, Crosswalks, Gateways, Parking, Pay for Parking, River walk, Signage, Year-round jobs, Public Landing, Zoning, Opera House 21st Floor, Youth, Farmer’s Market.
March 27, 2012	Work Group Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting • Agenda: Review 90% Draft Report
April 17, 2012	Select Board Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Select Board will be given a presentation of the Downtown Master Plan during their regularly scheduled meeting on 04/17/2012. This will be given by the consultant team and members of the Downtown Master Plan Work Group. • The presentation will be open to the public as part of the Select Board’s agenda but will not necessarily be considered a public hearing as this will be a first unveiling of the Downtown Master Plan; the public will not have had an opportunity to sufficiently review the Plan in advance of the Select Board meeting. The Select Board will have the ability to accept the plan in its entirety that evening or schedule a subsequent, public hearing for members of the public to voice their input before deciding whether to accept the Plan as written. • The ultimate goal will be for the Select Board to accept a version of the Downtown Master Plan so that it can be used primarily by Town staff as a guidance document for implementing the recommendations contained within. • The meeting will be open to the public and likely held in the Camden Opera House. It will also be broadcast live on Time Warner Channel 22.

Public Online Survey

The survey was launched on 02/15/2012 and closed on 03/07/2012. A total of 332 responses were collected. The survey asked a total of 20 questions. Areas covered in the survey included feedback from those attending the 1st community meeting in terms of the meeting content/structure.

The survey also provided respondents the ability to rate from very important to not important the following topics: quality of life, outdoor activities, pedestrian friendliness, arts and historical events, ,more regular shops in the downtown, involve locals in planning decisions, lighting, nightlife, children’s activities, jobs and river/harbor walk.

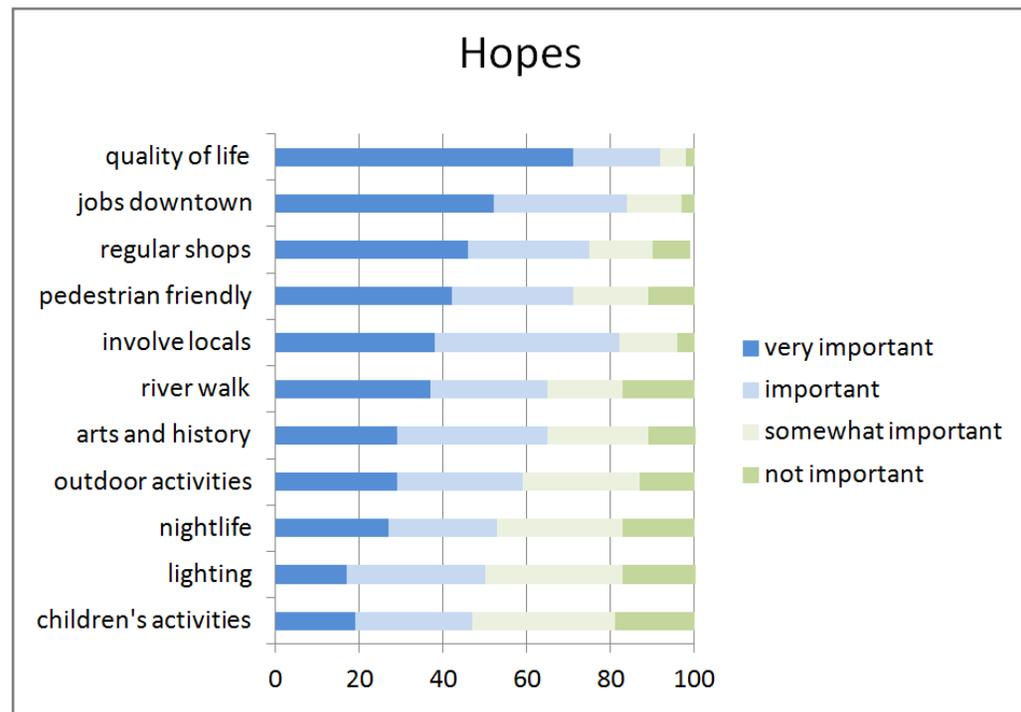
Other topics included the survey were thoughts on whether parking was sufficient, willingness to enhance to streetscapes, a parking garage, a movie theater including types of films shown and frequency of attendance, best location of the Town Office, and then two open ended questions concerning new business in the downtown and the most important item to consider as the Downtown Master Plan project continues.

Conclusions

The overall response rate was good, enough to reasonably draw conclusions. Publicity around town appears to have been sufficient to draw people to the survey.

1. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of eleven “hopes” expressed in the meeting. Number one in importance by a large margin is preserving the current quality of life in the town. Two economic hopes were next – more jobs downtown and more “regular” shops. Involving locals in planning decisions and making the town more pedestrian friendly were also considered important. Specific kinds of activities including a river walk round out the list.
2. Somewhat surprisingly, parking was not a big a problem as expected. 8 in 10 respondents felt there was enough except at the height of summer.

(This is a partial listing. Please see Chapter 4 for a complete documentation).





Economic Revitalization, Funding & Implementation	1
Streetscape, Parking & Circulation	2
Buildings	3
Citizen Participation	4

Introduction

The importance of Camden's economy cannot be underestimated or overlooked as it is reflective of its standing in the region and in the State. The economic goals of the Camden Downtown Master Plan are to provide a framework and reference document for:

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- growing the property tax base, valuations and revenues for the purpose of assistance with financing the implementation of the Master Plan
- promoting a Community Centered Corridor (CCC) economic development strategy as recommended in the 2009 approved *Gateway 1 Corridor Action Plan* with the Downtown as the core economic growth center.

In doing so, the Master Plan describes effective and practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Downtown as well as a realistic public/private funding mix necessary for implementation. The Master Plan itself cannot create jobs or businesses. It can only give rise to an environment that will foster jobs and business growth.

Step 1 - Identify Economic Values

The first step in this process was to review the previous Town economic development studies and to identify the supporting or relevant economic values or issues that can be enhanced or built upon, provided with meaning and given substance for the purpose of translating into priorities, policies and strategies by the Town thereby, meeting the long term goals of the Master Plan. This process involved conducting outreach with Downtown business owners and residents, town and downtown committees and working groups. The following are some the identified economic values garnered from the outreach project. The values are listed more or less in the manner in which they were received:

- Wayfinding and signage.
- Enhancing Town's distinctive character and exceptionalism.
- Getting people traveling through to stop, look, shop and dine + downtown to walk to generating a sense of activity.
- Getting more people down to Bay View Street businesses.
- Promote Maine-made produced products, goods.
- Diversified small businesses to avoid the impact on the community of the closing of a large business.
- Support Wayfarer Marine because of economic impact on waterfront, its spin-off and support to local businesses and services.
- Integrate Knox Mill complex into the downtown.

- Library, Amphitheater and Harbor Park as public facilities are destinations that generate foot, vehicle traffic and activity and have value because of events (Windjammer Days and weddings) which utilize these facilities and bring people to town.
- Treat the library and grounds as part of Downtown.
- Riverwalk pathway from Mill Pond to the Harbor and integrate of the river into the Downtown.
- Parking, especially off- Main and Elm Street onto Mechanic Street and how to access this parking.
- Utilizing public owned facilities and properties for their appropriate and suitable uses.
- Use of the internet for popular on-line selling for out of town buyers and connection to the global market place.
- Bring in younger entrepreneurs and start ups.
- Municipal incentives for businesses.
- Human capital of people who have located to the area.
- Enthusiasm of Town and Downtown businesses and groups.
- Primarily a tourist/visitor community and what drives most businesses.
- Attracting people to come here, stay and return.
- Early older active persons or retirees who move here who buy or start a business.
- Bring more office workers into the downtown.
- Ensure downtown maintenance and upkeep.
- Handicapped accessible sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Street amenities including bike racks, tree plantings, seating, and trash containers.
- Reliability and convenience of parking.
- Available office space that is technologically updated, suitably wired and internet connected.
- Having a year-round downtown and year-round jobs.
- Hold and increase event venues such as the Camden Conference, PopTech, and etc. which bring visitors downtown year-round.
- Bringing the movie theater back to town.
- Quality of life, sense of place and beauty of the town.
- Opera House third floor and second floor renovations.
- Historic and Architecture, including National Register Districts
- Downtown's compact layout, the short distances between public facilities and the built and natural resources points of interest provides for a ready-made campus style Downtown.
- A preserved quintessential Northern New England village.
- More choice of night time activities
- Accessible to recreational facilities, activities and offerings
- Opera House and Library with its broadband capacity and Wi-fi hotspots allowing digital connection to the internet which is important to the creative economy.

Step 2 - Identify Economic Development Clusters

From these identified economic values, along with other input from the outreach effort, the following economic development clusters were derived. Their purpose is to increase economic interest in the Downtown, provide the Downtown with branding options as well as promoting a livable and viable community that includes year-round jobs. These clusters deviate from Camden's previous economies by being more dependent on knowledge and human creativity, more diversified, technological driven, integrated and sustainable over the period of the next 20/25 year economic cycle.

Tourism and Visitors Economy Cluster	1a
New Business Growth Economy Cluster	1b
Technology Economy Cluster	1c
Creative Economy Cluster	Camden Library Complex 1d
	Camden Opera House 1e
	Camden Movie Theater 1f
Events Economy Cluster	1g
Recreational Economy Cluster	1h
Historic and Architecture Economy Cluster	1i

Step 3 – Describe Each Economic Development Clusters

Each cluster is described in detail through the following consideration Policy Statement, Introduction, Description, Challenges, Opportunities, Action Steps, Funding Strategies, Employment Opportunities and Relevant Economics Values Addressed.

Policy Statement

Expand the Downtown beyond being a traditional seasonal tourist center to a year-round community and tourist and visitor attraction center.

Introduction

During the several outreaches and public meetings and forums it was clear from the residents that they wanted Camden perceived as more than a seasonal tourist community but as a vibrant year-round community and tourist and visitor center in addition to its other assets.

Description

The forthcoming sections of this chapter appropriately describe in detail various approaches to bringing more tourists, visitors and new residents and businesses to the Town on a year-round basis. For the following reasons it is important for the Downtown to continue to attract people. Between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses the population declined from 5,254 to 4,850 or by 7.7%. According to Locke's History of Camden, Maine the population of Camden in 1959 was about 5,000 people. In addition the 2010 Census showed there were 583 seasonal dwellings or 17% of the total number of dwellings. In summary, a declining population and a growing number of seasonal dwellings can not support a viable full service year-round Downtown thereby necessitating the need to attract more year-round tourists, visitors and residents in order to sustain the Downtown.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take.

We believe that if implemented, the Master Plan will assist in creating an environment for people to come, visit, recreate and stay and even open up a business and create new jobs.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Getting more people downtown to walk generating a sense of activity.
- Enticing people traveling through town to stop, look, shop and dine.
- Attracting people to come here, stay and return.
- Primarily a tourist/visitor community and what directly and indirectly drives most businesses in the community from contractors to restaurants to retailers.

1b

New Business Growth Economy Cluster

Policy Statement

Increase the economic interest in the Downtown by promoting and marketing a viable sustainable economy that includes and year-round jobs and business opportunities.

Identify a realistic mixtures of public and private funding to benefit Downtown property and business owners and for job creation.

Introduction

From the results of the Camden Downtown Master Plan Survey 84.1% of the respondents felt that the creation of more jobs in the Downtown was very important to important. The longer term viability or sustainable of the Downtown economy will in part depend on jobs creating new businesses, products and services and marketing. These include business incubators, sale of Maine brand line products, goods and services, business spin-offs and marketing the Town and its numerous and varied assets.

Description

From the Building Inventory conducted by Architectural Preservation Planner Megan Cullen, the Camden Downtown Business and Occupational Use Type Analysis was prepared for the purpose of providing as overview of the existing Downtown economy and for future employment trends. The Town of Camden Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District which coincides with the commercial core of the Master Plan study area consists of several main types of businesses:

- Offices of Professional & Business Services
- Restaurant Food Service
- Retail Trade
- Hospitality/Accommodations
- Marine Industry

The Professional Offices, which employ close to 350 people, offers the largest amount of employment opportunities. They consist of a wide variety of occupational types, such as: financial; government; real estate; legal; healthcare; social services; and non-profit foundations.

The single occupational type which employs the most persons in downtown Camden is the Retail sector. It has 209 year-round employees which amount to over 25% of the total employment population. There are over 45 retail shops; most of them moderate in size, with the owner(s) being the principle management and 1-4/5 year-round employees. The amount of part-time seasonal help can come close to doubling the number of workers in this occupational type.

The Restaurant-Food Service Industry is the second largest employer. There are currently 22 Restaurants employing 169 persons, with that number increasing by up to 50% seasonally as a result of tourism. Most of the seasonal positions are part-time and are filled by a single employee working for more than one restaurant in order to gain full-time employment.

The Marine Industry offers a moderate amount of full-time, year-round positions. However, during the warmer weather months the number increases by 100%, with many seasonal employees working full-time. Additionally, there are a number of vessels that operate seasonally from the waterfront district in Camden. The marine charter business offers an opportunity for up to 50 full and part-time positions, both on land and at sea.

Business travelers and tourists have a variety of accommodation choices within walking distance of the downtown. The Inns and Bed & Breakfasts are of modest size.

The two largest of these Inns share ownership and staff which result in a greater number of opportunities for full-time and year-round employment. The condominiums and other seasonal rental units also offer opportunities for employment in both management and service occupations.

Generally for low to moderate income persons working in the visitor and tourist industry, shared employment is an acceptable life-style substitute for full-employment, and a way for the employers to remain competitive and draw from an experienced work pool.

It anticipated that for the next 20-25 year economic cycle, professional, retail, food service and hospitality and marine related will continue to be the basis for the Downtown economy.

The Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, Camden, Maine, January 2011 revealed that Camden should look forward towards opportunities to accommodate and support businesses in multiple stages of growth; that is, from start-up to maturity. This will assist Camden in the recruitment of new businesses. The *Analysis* goes on to state that the first step is to establish a business incubator, as incubators accelerate the development of new companies and organizations through shared support resources and services. Successful completion of a business incubator program increases the likelihood that a start-up company will stay in business for a long time. According to the *Analysis* report, roughly 87% of incubator graduates stay in business. If such a facility were made available for start-ups and early stage companies, complete with business assistance programs, combined with Camden's quality of life draw and other amenities (cultural, technological, physical and recreational) it could pull entrepreneurs to the community. Likewise the *Analysis* recognizes that setting up a business incubator is no easy chore and will require time and most importantly, properly planned financing and significant public and private investments. Realistically it requires not only funding to capitalize the incubator but on-going funds to subsidize the facility as well as for business assistance programs. Because of this, these latter challenges are the most difficult to deal with, and the planning for such an incubator must involve a financial plan for the initial set-up along with assistance to the businesses that eventually locate in the facility. Even though the *Analysis* lists a number of different available funding resources available for incubator set-up and business location they are general descriptions.

The Master Plan seeks to give these resources legs, and to explain how they can actually work in Camden. Potential incubator space can involve the redevelopment of an existing vacant or underutilized building, or for the purpose of filling in upper level floor spaces. The array of possible tenants is almost endless: the start-up and expansion of home grown technology businesses, new product line R&D; small consulting firms which have outgrown their home offices; and Maine-line products, goods and services which have moved beyond the part-time or hobby stages and now need more space, resources and business mentoring. In summary an incubator would expand the base of the Downtown economy by providing space and opportunities for new businesses to be nurtured and to mature.

Increasingly important to local new business and job creation is Maine-made products, goods and services. As part of the Master Plan's focus on economic development, the Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce staff conducted a survey of the number of individuals, businesses and companies in the Midcoast which are engaged in producing and/or selling Maine-made products, goods and services. Often the sales are direct and increasingly on line, made easier with websites and high-speed internet. The intent of the survey was to demonstrate that their inclusion in the Downtown economy is important for long term sustainability. In doing so they identified nearly 300 businesses from the Town of Waldoboro to Waldo County. The list of products and services is almost never-ending. The following is a sampling: farm produce and orchards, wood-based products, foods, natural soaps, woolen blankets, jewelry and pottery, art galleries, designers, breads and wines, photography, boat works, etc.

During one of the retail business interviews, one store owner and third generation proprietor related that approximately 20% of the products displayed and sold in the store such as food, wooden toys, soaps and jewelry are either Maine or Midcoast-made. Furthermore, when shoppers come into the store, whether tourists, visitors or locals they often ask for Maine-made products. An example of another Main Street business that displays and markets Maine-made products and goods is Glendarragh Lavender. Classic lavender sachets, handmade linen and vintage grain sack pillows are retailed in the Main Street store as well as by shopping online. From culinary lavender to natural body lotions, salves and soaps, to lavender and beeswax candles, natural, synthetic-free lavender products can be found at Glendarragh. The lavender or ingredient for the lotions, soaps and oils are cultivated naturally on a restored 26 acre farm located in Appleton along the fertile Saint Georges River. The pillows, sachets, bath salts and more are made at the farm involving family members, friends and neighbors. In addition to a line of natural products both the physical and the simulated on-line stores also offer hand woven Irish wool throws to the merino wool scarves which all are made in Maine.

In summary the Chamber's survey along with the aforementioned examples demonstrates that the demand is out there for things Maine-made and for the Pine Tree State brand and that the Downtown needs to embrace and make space available for these products for the purpose of remaining competitive by offering new and different merchandise and for the jobs they create.

More difficult to identify, sort out, and to quantify their contribution to the Downtown economy are the secondary spin-offs from existing businesses. One of the best examples of the importance of secondary impacts is Wayfarer Marine. As an economic development enabler the boat facility brings in pedestrian traffic and serves as an economic driver for local businesses providing services to the boat crews including lodging, provisions and laundry; these being independent of the traditional tourist industry.

Problems

- Realizing the funding necessary to capitalize an incubator; on-going funds to subsidize the facility; and, the means to fund incubator business assistance programs.
- Incubators are speculative and are based on Kevin Costner's 1989 Fields of Dreams premise that if you build it they will come.
- The Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment (TIF) Financing District Development Plan does not allow for TIF revenues to be used for the redevelopment of privately owned buildings and upper level spaces for business incubators. This can only be done by a Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.
- There are challenges for the small Maine-made producers and entrepreneurs: lack of being able to properly market their products and how much should price them at; need to do an improved job of packaging products; and they have to be products that have a use and can sell. These aspiring entrepreneurs need more business training.
- No current program for marketing Maine-made products in the Downtown.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in New Businesses

- Development of a business incubator in an existing vacant or underutilized building or, for the purpose of filling in upper level floor spaces.
- Funding business assistance programs for incubator entrepreneurs and businesses.
- Adoption of a Credit Enhancement TIF policy for the Town.
- Development of Downtown marketing program utilizing available programs.

Action Steps

- Development of a financial plan and funding strategies for a business incubator and tenants and occupants composed of a realistic public/private mix.
- Develop and adopt a CEA TIF policy for the creation and retention of jobs, private capital investment and broadening the tax base.
- Participate in the Governor's Certified Business Friendly Communities Program.
- Participation in the Maine Products Marketing Program sponsored by the Maine Department of Economic and Community.
- Initiate a Buy Shop Local marketing and/or branding program.

Funding Strategies to Capitalize a Business Incubator

The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan does not allow for the use of TIF revenues to be used for the redevelopment of privately owned buildings and upper level spaces. This is the type of TIF in which any property tax revenues resulting from additional or "increment" captured valuation accrues to the Town for public improvements as defined in the Development Plan. For the purposes incubator financing, this can be addressed through the creation of a new Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for the redevelopment of privately owned properties. This can only be done by either establishing or amending a TIF's Development Program to allow for Credit Enhancement Agreements (CEAs). CEA TIFs can be for up to 30 years.

A CEA TIF is a contract between the municipality and company to assist with the development of a project by using all, or a percentage of, the tax revenues generated by new or increased investment to pay certain authorized project costs with payments made directly to the company. Cost may also include payment of indebtedness (up to 20-year notes, bonds) incurred to finance the redevelopment of the property. Eligible uses for CEA TIF revenues include but are not limited to: acquisition or construction of land, improvements, buildings, structures, fixtures and equipment and the demolition, alteration, remodeling, repair or reconstruction of existing buildings, structures and fixtures. Like a municipal TIF, Town Meeting enactment is required as is approval from the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, after municipal adoption.

Although not commonly perceived there can be a CEA TIF for specific properties within the Municipal Downtown Development TIF in which the latter acts like an overlay TIF!

A CEA TIF can only be done by either establishing or amending a TIF's Development Program to allow for Credit Enhancement Agreements (CEAs). For each CEA proposal, a TIF study will need to be undertaken by the Camden Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee and the Development Director for the purpose of developing a CEA TIF policy for the Town; determining the District boundary for a stand alone CEA TIF; calculation of the tax shift/shelter and revenue stream; conducting a public educational program; holding a public hearing; and securing Select Board and Town Meeting approval. A study for one or two properties can cost \$7,000-\$10,000. The Town can up front the money and be reimbursed from the initial CEA TIF revenues before any payments are distributed to the private owner; resulting in no cost to the Town.

Federal and State and Historic Tax Credits

These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for the substantial rehabilitation of a building or space for a business incubator providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For buildings not within one of these districts such as on Bay View Street there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District.

Key Funding and Strategies for the means to fund Incubator Business Assistance Programs

The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan allows for the costs of establishing and capitalizing a revolving loan program to provide gap financing to support the retention and expansion of local businesses.

The Knox County Regional Micro-Loan Program is available to assist new and expanded small businesses with acquisition, working capital, building renovations and leasehold improvements. The terms of these loans are for 5-years with 1-4% interest rate for up to \$25,000 collateralized by a mortgage deed on real estate along with a promissory note. The primary criteria are job retention and creation for low to moderate income persons. The Select Board can join the pool by petitioning the Loan Review Committee and securing approval from the member communities. This is an easy process and can be accomplished rather quickly. The program is administered by the City of Rockland Community Development Department. The Town will need to contact the Rockland Community

Development Department to initiate the process. Knox County communities which have utilized this program include Rockland, Union, Thomaston, Rockport, Warren and Washington. Belfast also belongs to the consortium.

The Midcoast Economic Development District located in Bath offers the following loan programs for businesses located Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox and portions of Cumberland and Waldo Counties: the Business Loan Program for up to \$150,000 and the Micro-Loan Program for up to \$25,000. These are fixed rate loans for up to five years and may be used for real estate acquisition, building improvements, equipment and inventory as well as for working capital. Collateral may consist of the assets being financed, other personal assets, or personal guarantees. To be eligible a business must be unable to finance the project from his/her own assets or through commercial lenders or by other Federal, State or local programs at reasonable rates and terms. Contact information is 7 Park Street, Bath, Maine 04530, telephone: 207-443-5790.

The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) is an industry-led, publicly-funded through state bonds, non-profit corporation that offers early-stage capital and commercialization assistance in the form of competitive grants, loans and equity investment for the research, development and application of technologies that create new products, processes and services, generating high-quality jobs across Maine. The MTI Seed Grants support early-stage research and development activities for entrepreneurs to bring new product to market. Seed grants are awarded in five of the State's seven technology sectors including: marine technology, environmental and bio-technology and information technology. Business and entrepreneurial participants are required to make a minimum 1:1 match. Camden and Rockport start-ups have been recipients of these awards. As they move forward with the development of their ideas and products MTI continues to work with them to achieve sales and grow good jobs.

Blackstone Accelerates Growth is a \$3 million, three-year initiative that will help Maine entrepreneurs leading start-ups and existing companies get the coaching and training that they need to accelerate the growth of their company and create more good jobs across the state. The initiative will create a support system for entrepreneurs across Maine that leverages Maine's natural resources, skilled and hard-working talent, R&D assets and innovation and entrepreneur support programs. Maine's entrepreneurs leading these start-ups and existing companies will become part of a peer network, with innovation hubs or networks in different regions of the state, so they can learn from each other and cost-effectively access entrepreneurial support resources.

Funding Strategies for Marketing Camden

The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) development program and investment plan allows for the use of TIF funds for economic development marketing, including marketing for the Opera House, the Camden Snow Bowl and other economic drivers in the community.

State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and applications are due in March. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: include implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal sustainability.

Governor's Certified Business Friendly Community Program. The Certified Business Friendly Community Program is an effort to encourage business development and growth in communities throughout Maine. An important part of showing that Maine is Open for Business is recognizing communities that provide exceptional service and streamlined regulatory processes for business owners.

The Certified Business Friendly Community Program seeks to identify, recognize and promote communities that show a true commitment to business development. Certified Business Friendly Communities will receive:

- An award of certification presented by the Governor
- Recognition on the State of Maine DECD Website
- “Open for Business” sign
- Two-year certification; communities may reapply

In summary, Certified Business Friendly Communities will become a key part of Maine’s Business Attraction strategy. Certified Business Friendly Communities may be eligible to receive bonus points in the State of Maine Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs (beginning in 2013). Applications can be submitted at any time. Business Friendly Communities will be certified on a quarterly basis, beginning May 2012. For more information about this program and how to become a Certified Business Friendly Community contact the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development

Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Development Foundation’s Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. The MDN is ideal for communities working toward achieving “Main Street” designation. MDN communities are not authorized to use the Main Street trademarked name, nor are they required to have paid staff. MDN services help communities build an appropriate organizational and funding base for a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program. A core feature of the service to MDN communities is access to training by state and national downtown development experts. MDN communities will have the opportunity to learn about best practices in the field and to network with peers from around the state. Also, MDN designated communities are awarded one bonus point when applying for a CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grant (DTR). Applications are due in March. Camden’s annual fee for joining is \$500.00. Included amongst the Four Points Approach is Promotion. Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district by marketing a district’s unique characteristics to businesses, residents and visitors, through advertising, promotional activity and special events.

Participation in the Maine Products Marketing Program. This is the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development’s official marketing program to support the wide variety of high-quality and unique products crafted in Maine. The program provides free or low-cost branding support to member companies through its “Maine Made America’s Best” logo, and provides free internet exposure to Maine companies through www.mainemade.com. Over 2000 Maine companies are members of the program, and over 100 new companies join each year. The State’s marketing program includes print and earned media promotion of the “Maine Made” brand, as well as annual sponsorship for the annual New England Products Trade Show in Portland.

Initiate a Buy Shop Local marketing and/or branding program specifically targeting the Downtown so as to create more reasons to make the Downtown a year-round destination; especially, for the residents. Although it may be more expensive in the short term to buy local and Maine-line products, there are long term sustainable benefits: buying locally helps build the community by supporting local businesses and services and increasing employment; quality of local food and goods are often of a higher quality; and a higher percentage of money stays in the community. A Downtown marketing or branding program may include: *By Choice Buy Locally: It Only Gets Better.*

Employment Opportunities

- Incubators are natural job creators.
- Research and product development.
- Marketing
- Year-round employment at the Downtown stores, restaurants and shops servicing locals, tourists and visitor.
- Employment opportunities for low to moderate income persons.
- Jobs in providing Maine-made products, goods and services usually 1-4/5 person companies.
- Spin-off employment from existing businesses.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Diversified small businesses with owner in the store and 1 to 4/5 employees or more employees to avoid the impact on the community of the closing of a large business.
- Having a year-round downtown and year-round jobs.
- Bringing in younger entrepreneurs and start up businesses.
- Growing the local creative economy.
- Attracting people to come here, stay and return.
- Getting more people down to Bay View Street businesses and up Mechanic Street businesses.
- Bring more office workers into the downtown.
- Promote local, regional and Maine produced products, goods and services.
- Use of the internet for popular on-line selling for out of town buyers and connection to the global market place.
- Use of municipal incentives for business location and expansion.
- Support Wayfarer Marine because of its economic impact on the waterfront and its spin-off and support effect on local businesses and services.
- Getting more people to walk downtown generating a sense of place and activity.

Policy Statement

Ensure that the Downtown posses the technological capacity needed for 21st Century economy, businesses and jobs.

Description of Cluster

The most difficult of the identified economic clusters to be enumerated upon is new technology, as technology is the overriding link which connects each of the various economic clusters together forming the theme that the utilization of new technologies provide communities with the competitive edge for business attraction and job creation, and the failure to understand and appreciate them and to use them effectively will put a community at an economic disadvantage. The goal here is to provide a better understanding of the available technologies and their importance for economic development The three primary legs of technology are broadband, Wifi and high-speed internet accessible by personal computer stations, laptops and mobile hand held digital devices such as smart phones, iPhone, iPads, touch computer tablets, notebooks, Kindles and e-book and cell phones.

Introduction

In general, broadband refers to telecommunication in which a wide band or width of frequencies is available to transmit information. Because a wide band of frequencies is available, information can be multiplexed allowing for multiple transmissions to be sent on many different frequencies or channels within the band or width concurrently, vastly allowing more information to be transmitted in a given amount of time (much as more lanes on a highway allow more cars to travel on it at the same time). The internet is an interconnected system of networks that connects computers, and computer networks, and hand held electronic devices around the world. It is a worldwide system of computer networks - a network of networks in which users at any one computer can get information from any other computer. The internet relies on broadband or fiber optics for the quick access and rapid and voluminous transmission of data. WiFi is a mechanism that allows electronic devices to exchange data wirelessly over a computer network. A wireless access point (WAP) is a device that allows wireless devices to connect to a wired network using. Following is an example what it looks like. The number of WAPs installed in a building is dependent on its range, frequently necessitating several devices to be placed at one building. In addition to wireless there is black fiber optics strung on a telephone pole. Fiber optics is like a larger storm water pipe allowing for more and faster data to flow through unhindered without backing up from an overflow of data.

From wireless and fiber optics we made happen websites and on-line video streaming. Websites are a set of interconnected web pages consisting of a homepage, text information and graphics. They are interactive allowing for the exchange of instructions, such as purchases, between a person and computer maintained by a person, business or organization. On-line streaming enables one to watch a video or listen to a sound file while it's being downloaded to a computer. With high speed Internet connection resulting from the installation of fiber optic cable one can stream live audio or video to a computer.

Another convenient service is the popular and easy to use Skype. Skype is an IP telephony or transport of telephone calls over an internet service provider that offers free calling between subscribers and low-cost calling to people who don't use the service. In addition to standard telephone calls, Skype enables file transfers, texting, video chat and voice video conferencing. The service is available from desktop computers, laptops, iPads notebook and tablet computers and other mobile devices, including mobile phones. All you need is a computer or mobile device with video and sound capacity and a Skype account and you are ready to go. However, a number of companies, including Skype, produce dedicated Skype phones.

Least we also not forget the growing reliance on social media. Social media includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. Social media can also be used effectively for economic development:

Challenges

- Rapid technological changes and the inability to keep up with these changes or to pay for them.
- Difficulty in understanding by laypeople as to how various digital machine and devices operate and how they are interconnected.
- Because we now live in a complicated digital world reliant on broadband, high-speed internet, WiFi, and fiber optics capabilities people will not come to Camden as visitors, tourists, future residents nor will events and businesses expand or locate here without these assets; and, instead they will all go elsewhere.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Technology Economy:

- The Town become a leading enabler, facilitator and advocate for technological changes in the Downtown.
- Town facilities become technological hubs and showcases for what technology can do.
- Ensure any Town assisted incubator has broadband capacity, fiber optics availability, WiFi connection to the internet, high speed internet, on-line streaming capabilities, and are set-up for Skype video-conferencing.
- The Town website be expanded to host information on Downtown businesses supported by the inclusionary businesses.
- On-line internet sales and purchases.

Action Steps

- Town facilities have access to broadband, fiber optics, Wifi enabling computers and handheld electronic devices to access the internet and perform on-line streaming. For example, PopTech depends on a combination of broadband, lap tops, smart phones, iPhone, iPads, and WiFi access to the internet and on-line streaming in order to carry out its mission. It was these tech savvy folks who installed the WiFi devices in the Opera House at no expense thereby expanding the Opera House and Town's electronic capabilities.
- For businesses, internet websites allow for their products to be displayed in virtual stores. Because websites are interactive products can be purchased on line and shipped to their destination without ever having to come into the store. Presently Once – A-Tree and Gelndarragh Lavender have virtual on-line stores.

Funding Strategies

- The Maine Community Foundation Community Building Grant Program: Knox County Fund seeks to support organizations and programs that recognize and build on a community's strengths and assets. These matching grant awards are made by the Maine Community Foundation's county committees and range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Capacity Building Grants provide support for activities focused on strengthening their operations or strategic focus or improving program effectiveness in specific areas. Examples include use of technology to improve program delivery or operations. Applicants need to explain how the proposed activities are expected to improve the organization's impact. Applications are due in February. They are submitted on-line.

Employment Opportunities

- Computer support specialists who help people use computers. These are usually well paying jobs. When something goes wrong, support specialists troubleshoot the cause and then, they try to fix it. Many support specialists answer questions over the phone or by e-mail. Others also help people face-to-face. Computer support specialists also install printers, software, and other computer tools. Then, they teach people how to use them. More of these workers will be needed in the future as the number of computers and related devices become more numerous and sophisticated. Workers will also be needed to teach people how to use new tools and programs. In fact, support specialist jobs are expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations between 2008 and 2018.
- Web designers are responsible for creating the look and feel of WebPages for a client's Website. This involves developing a graphic design that communicates the ideas being promoted by the Website, such as laying-out and organizing photos, illustrations, videos, etc. to be use on the Website. In summary, Web designers must have an understanding of software functionality as well as graphic design skills in order to create successful Web pages.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed by This Cluster

- Opera House and Library with its broadband capacity and Wi-fi hotspots allowing digital connection to high speed internet which is important to the creative economy and for creative and talented people.
- Having a year-round downtown and year-round jobs.
- Getting people to come here, stay and return.
- Utilizing public owned facilities and properties for their appropriate and suitable uses.
- Use of the internet for popular on-line selling for out of town buyers and connection to the global market place.
- Available office spaces that are technologically updated, suitably wired and internet connected.

The Creative Economy

Although the definition of the creative economy or creative industries is elusive and can mean different things to different people, for the purpose of the Master Plan it more narrowly refers to those artistic, culturally and knowledge based economic development activities which provide for employment and attract people to the Downtown. More specifically the performing arts which involves the type of creative activities that are performed in front of an audience, such as drama, music, dance, film and public forums or events; cultural activities relating to knowledge and the development and education of the mind often dependent on digital devices; and efforts for the preservation of a community's buildings and architectural heritage. Paraphrasing Richard Florida and others, "increasingly the jobs and economies of the 21st century will trend towards creativity, knowledge, and quick access to information which are often labor intensive creating employment opportunities." The effective and practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Downtown in the creative economy involves (1b) incorporating the Public Library as an integral part of the Downtown economy, (1c) the Camden Opera House renovations and (1d) restoration of the former Movie Theater.

Policy Statement

Upgrade, integrate and connect those artistic, performing and cultural public facilities which contribute to Downtown's economy.

Introduction

Although not often thought of, the Library with about 180,000 people going through its doors every year is integral to the Downtown economy: a draw for local businesses; part of the shopping experience and a reason to go downtown; the Children's Garden cement benches in front of the entrance are used as a resting area for shoppers and visitors; tourist use the library to escape the heat, for its comfort stations and, as a resting and gathering place; availability of WiFi for laptops, ipads and smart phones for connecting to the internet and email; and of course a destination for rainy days. In addition to checking out books, library staff members also provide concierge services for visitors by providing directions as to where things are located, activities to do and event happenings.

Description

The Camden Library Complex on Main Street and Atlantic Avenue consists of the Main Library Building and addition, the adjacent Bok Amphitheater, and Harbor Park across the street. Because of where the library sits on the hill on the top of Main Street, it is the most visible building in the downtown serving not only as the northerly gateway to Main Street and a gathering place, but also as one of the three predominant downtown public spaces nodes or historical landmarks (the other two being the Post Office and the Opera House) connecting people and places and by which the built or physical environment of the downtown is arranged around. Because of its location, the up kept buildings and grounds, and the diversified cultural, literary and event offerings, the complex gives people an excuse to stop in Camden while going through, a motivation to return to town, a raison d'être to stay and become residents, and a motivation for the locals to come downtown.

Challenges

- Signage, parking and connection to the redevelopment taking place on of the edge of the downtown on Mechanic and Washington Streets. More specifically, the need for universal library directional sign, and signage for the front entrance on the 1st floor on Atlantic Avenue noting that it is not on Main Street.
- The angled parking on Atlantic Avenue.
- The growing residential and commercial redevelopment at the Knox Mill Complex and the need to connect it to the Library Complex for use by its residents and patrons.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Library Complex:

- Create a universal and “easy to use” visual directional or wayfinding system for the library complex so that every resident or visitor can easily reach them and learn about their offerings.
- Capitalize on Camden’s natural, historic and recreation resources to connect the Library Complex to other parts of the downtown.
- Follow the Master Plan’s Downtown Concept Diagram or Strategy. Enhance downtown links to downtown parks and open spaces

Action Steps

- Library wayfinding signage and kiosk with mapped routes and destinations.
- Integrate the Riverwalk and the Harborwalk into the Downtown.
- Provide Connections to Downtown parks and open spaces.
- Connect the Knox Mill Complex and the Library Complex and open spaces by the Riverwalk and the Harborwalk.
- Develop a financial plan and funding strategies composed of a realistic public/private mix.
- While evaluating the current Sea Street parking and pedestrian travel situation, also review the angle parking on Atlantic Avenue .

Funding Strategies

- (See Recreational Economy Cluster)

Employment Opportunities

- The Library is fully staffed and the Library has an Amphitheater Director.

Relevant Economic Values Address by this Cluster

- Treating the library and its grounds as an integral part of the Downtown economy.
- Riverwalk pathway from Mill Pond to the Harbor.
- Library and amphitheater and Harbor Park as public facilities are destinations which generate foot and vehicle traffic and activity and have value because of events such as Windjammer Days and weddings which utilize these facilities and bring people to town.
- Downtown’s compact layout, the short distances between public facilities and the built and natural resources points of interest provides for a ready-made campus style Downtown.

Policy Statement

Upgrade and/or integrate and connect those artistic, performing and cultural public facilities which contribute to, and are an attraction for the Downtown economy. The value of more than one cultural facility is to foster a synergy – which “sets the stage” for valuable and much enjoyed evening activity.

Description

The Camden Opera House is a 41, 832 square foot 3 ½ story red-brick building built in 1893 after the downtown was mostly burned in 1892. It is an example of Richardson Romanesque architecture and a contributing structure to the Great Fire Historic District. The first floor functions as the Town Offices with the remaining 2 ½ stories are devoted to the performing arts and public gatherings.

Problems

Presently the biggest issue is the 3rd floor renovations for the purpose of better utilizing the space for conferences, events and meetings. The bathroom is antiquated, not handicapped accessible, and essentially an old fashion single commode wooden closet. In addition the kitchen is inadequate and too small and out date for providing more than basic food services for conferences and meeting functions. As result in its present condition the 3rd floor facility is not fully functional limiting its utilization. Utilization of this space is important because it fits the need for a smaller room for those functions, venues and forums where the Opera House auditorium would be too large and too expensive to operate.

Also, the second floor off the stage is inadequate and used as dressing room facilities. The bathroom is a single old fashion stall and there are no shower facilities for performers-many of who are from outside the community and well recognized in their artistic fields.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Opera House and the Performing Arts

- Interior improvements to improve its venue capacity and enhance its ability to function as performance center; more specifically, the completion of the proposed 3rd floor renovations and second floor remodeling.
- Financial analysis as to its impact on local economy and ways to make its events business part of the sustainable Downtown economy.
- Development of a marketing and visibility branding program for the facility.

Action Steps

- The conceptual floor plans were completed in December 2011 and the project is ready to move on to cost estimating, financing and the preparation of detail construction plans for bidding.
- Prepare 2nd floor remodeling plans and cost estimates.
- Recommendation of the Camden Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee to the Select Board and Budget Committee to use TIF revenues for the 3rd floor renovation and the 2nd floor remodeling projects.
- Placement of the Opera House improvement project on an appropriate Town Meeting warrant to appropriate the TIF funds for the projects.

Funding Strategies

Probably the most important issue facing the Master Plan is how to pay for its implementation? Great ideas and plans are nice but without money to back them up, that's about all they are. Most plans either ignore this core issue or address it in sketchy manner believing that the power of the plan will carry it forward on its own accord. Unfortunately, this is not reality planning. For this reason each economic cluster has its own funding formulas and financing strategies; which, can often be used to finance the implementation of two or more clusters. Since the voters will most likely not support the use of the Town's General Fund Tax Revenues to pay for plan implementation, implementation is dependent on other grants, programs and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, with the TIFs funding the largest share. This means growing property tax valuations in the Downtown so that the additional captured property taxes can flow to the coffers of the TIFs to assist with plan implementation. For this reason, the Master Plan should also be viewed as a plan to increase property valuations, and therefore tax revenues for TIFs.

- Presently there are two approved 20-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts within the village; namely, Business Highway Municipal Development and Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development. They were adopted by a Town Meeting vote on February 23, 2010. These are municipal TIFs in which the increase revenues accrue to the Town for public improvements, and not to private investors or private property owners. The approved Development Programs or public investment plans for the municipal TIFs allows for TIF funding for Opera House improvements, an impact analysis and a marketing program. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate building or facilities improvements and/or public infrastructure improvements through the issuance of municipal bonds with the TIF revenues set aside in a development sinking account pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The term of the bond indebtedness is 5-years. The advantage of bonding is that the Town does not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time in a project cost subaccount before undertaking public facilities improvements. Before utilizing this financing option, there should be several years of revenue history to ensure that there will be enough of an income stream to pay off the bond. Helpful to the cause is the fact that TIF revenues from the neighboring Business Highway Municipal Development TIF can be used to financially support the Downtown Municipal Development Program investment plan activities.

- A Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facilities (PF) application to provide for gap or leveraged financing for public facilities involving building rehabilitation, reconstruction or historic preservation projects which are part of a community development strategy or plan. The Opera House may be eligible to apply for up to \$300,000 for the removal of architectural barriers or, for \$300,000 for historic preservation as a stand-alone project. Criterion includes a 25% match and applicants must demonstrate that the project meets the National Objective of the prevention and elimination of slum and blighting activities. For the Opera House this can be accomplished by submitting documentation substantiating the conditions of the building as "blighted". An example of blight is that the third floor bathroom is antiquated and essentially an old fashion single commode wooden closet. Please see documentation of spot blight in Supplemental Information.

Creative Communities = Economic Development (CCED) Grant

Maine's distinct quality of place is its primary economic asset. In addition to its spectacular lands, waters and coastlines, Maine's picturesque towns and villages containing historic buildings and working waterfronts also contribute to Maine's palpable charm. All of these characteristics have attracted artists to Maine for decades and they continue to do so. The presence of artists, art organizations, and art-related businesses that have come into being as a result of this rich artistic and cultural heritage, has contributed significantly to Maine's quality of place.

The Maine Arts Commission is offering this new grant program to activate the concept that Maine's quality of place is as an economic asset. The CCED grant is designed to function locally to meaningfully support dialogue and partnership between municipalities and the cultural sector regarding the economic development of their communities. CCED will provide the cultural sector with significant funds to contribute to mutually agreed upon plans and initiatives that stimulate the local economy, strengthen the role of arts and culture, and enhance their community's quality of place. Successful applications will come from communities that have vibrant cultural nonprofits. The communities themselves must be poised for growth and engaged in economic and community planning as well as development using other funding sources. They will include an active network of involved citizens including youth and elected leaders in a comprehensive revitalization effort.

The nonprofit arts organizations are expected to plan and oversee project direction, management and implementation side by side with their municipalities. It is anticipated that the CCED project will have a designated part-time coordinator to communicate with the public, partners, artists and others involved with the project. This coordinator should be seen as a "neutral" member of the community equally adept at relating to the governance and artistic sides of the equation. The coordinator will function as a liaison to the municipality or other agencies receiving community building funds.

The Opera House could act as the central coordinating non-profit organization bringing together the municipality and the cultural sectors of the Town: artistic performances at the Opera House , conference centered at the Opera House but venues held at different locations in the Town and in neighboring communities thereby assisting their economies, the growing Camden Film Festival and etc. Funding from this source would strengthen the role of these existing programs and 1) allow for their expansion and branching out and for spin-offs, and 2) provide seed or start up money for new conferences and festivals there bring more people into Camden and the area thereby further stimulating the Town and the regional economy.

A consortium of at least two nonprofit cultural organizations from the same community or region, one of which will serve as lead applicant and will retain fiscal oversight and is:

- A nonprofit organization, legally established in the State of Maine,
- (and has) Tax exempt status 501(c)(3) from the Internal Revenue Service, and
- (has) Completed and filed all final reports required for previous Maine Arts Commission grants

Consortiums are encouraged to have proven, significant partnerships with community development initiatives such as Maine Downtown Center's Main Street Maine program, the Orton Foundation, or Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). CCED grants are viewed as grants to foster the development of the creative economy of the community as a whole, rather than to a single organization.

An applicant must demonstrate a fiscal structure that allows them to legally and responsibly utilize grant funds. The consortium must provide a minimum of a 1:1 cash match or in-kind match. This demonstrates the consortium's ability to take on the project. This match must be documented as part of the application package. The Belfast Creative Coalition and a group composed of Waterfall Arts, Our Town Belfast and the City of Belfast was a 2012 recipient of a \$50,000 Maine Arts Commission "Creative Communities = Economic Development" grant as a way to connect the many art-related organizations in Waldo County. Camden should be able to do the same.

Employment Opportunities

- Short-term construction employment opportunities for a general contractor and local tradesmen and laborers providing winter time employment and an immediate stimulus to the Downtown economy. According to the Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, Camden, Maine, January 2011 there are 22 construction related establishments in Camden, and that the construction industry is a potential growth area; although, largely dependent on rival of the home and some home market.
- Currently the Town employs a full time Opera House Manager and a full time Tech Manager. An expanded facility with more cultural and artistic offerings and bookings would necessitate an additional full-time administrative clerical type person, and on-call part-time or contract "providers" to assist the Tech Manager.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Opera House third floor and second floor renovations.
- More choice of night time cultural and art activities to show town is alive and reason for people to stay in the evening.
- Utilizing public owned facilities and properties for their appropriate and suitable uses.
- Holding and increasing event venues such as Camden Conference, PopTech and etc. which bring visitors downtown, and on a year-round basis.
- Three historic districts listed on the National Park Service's (NPS) National Register of Historic Places, and the unique architecture of the commercial buildings.
- Preserved quintessential Northern New England village.

Policy Statement

Upgrade and/or integrate and connect those artistic, performing and cultural public facilities which contribute to, and are an attraction for the Downtown economy.

Introduction

The importance of restoring the movie theater to Camden can be measured by the 2012 Camden Master Plan Survey in which 55.8% of the respondents stated that a movie theater was an important goal for Camden. Movies started in Camden in the early 1900s with short shows at the Opera House and at the Fairyland Theater on Mechanic Street. Silent movies were shown there as early as 1908. In 1913 it was replaced by the Comique Theater at the Mechanic Street site. The Comique was in turn torn down after the last picture show on February 10, 1941 to be replaced again on the same site by the Camden Theater, which held its grand opening on May 3, 1941. The Camden Theater closed in 1964. Seeing the need for a movie theater in Camden, Doug Hall opened the Bayview Cinema in 1975 which closed in August 2007. The Cinema was located over the office of the former Camden Herald. With its closing, the facility is now only in use during the Camden International Film Festival as an off site venues.

Description

The re-establishment of the former movie located at 10 Mechanic Street was an outcome and recommendation of the Camden Future's Group. The original intent was to re-open the recently closed Bay View Cinema but the effort was not able to get off the ground. For this reason, the effort to re-establish a movie theater in Camden was re-focused to the original movie site on Mechanic Street which has been turned into retail use. To follow through on this the Camden Cinema Group was formed. The group has developed concept plans for the theater's restorations which includes a 2-theater layout that would be smaller than the original theater along with a programming and mission plan. The mission is not for the theater to compete with the Strand Theater in Rockland or the Flag Ship Cinema in Thomaston or even the Camden Opera House but to focus on education by showing documentaries, independent, art, foreign and second-run films; an outlet for Maine's film industry; holding festivals for historic and archival films distributed by the American Film Institute; serving as a screening venue for the Camden International Film Festival and as a screening facility for Maine Media College students and the Maine Media Workshop Young Artists Program to show their final film projects as the present screening facility is cramped and not comfortable; a film workshop for local high school students which few schools offer; a satellite off-site break-out facility for supporting the Camden Conference, Camden International Film Festival, and other events; and, staging for smaller the performing arts and other activities more suitable for the movie theater than for a larger facility; and capacity to stream-in shows from New York, Boston and elsewhere. In summary, the theater's focused niche would be on being multi-facet, retro, non-traditional and even avant-garde.

Problems

- After the Camden Theater was closed in 1964 it was subsequently renovated for retail uses as a 5 & 10 store, shoe store and now an antique mall. According to an informal opinion from the Maine State Historical Preservation Commission when the Great Fire Historic District nomination was being prepared for listing on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, the Commission did not find the building to be eligible for listing, and specifically omitted it from the district. The problem is that the building has suffered a significant loss of integrity of design (with the flanking half walls brought forward flush to the front wall). After seeing some photographs the interior had a fair amount of original material – and this is a point in the building's favor for nomination to the National Register. On the other hand, the concept of putting a little theater within the original theater space would be detrimental to the building's integrity. Ultimately, the building's eligibility is going to come down to how it is restored (flanking walls removed) and rehabilitated on the interior. Since federal and tax credits are crucial to restoration financing, the building will either need to be within an Historical District listed on the National Register of Historic Places or be nominated for listing on the National Register as a stand-alone project.
- Coming up with a financial plan is another significant challenge. 10 Mechanic Street has been established as an LLC or limited liability company that blends elements of partnership and corporate structures. It is a legal form of company that provides limited liability to its owners. LLCs do not need to be organized for profit. The movie theater corporation is now applying for to be tax-exempt under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code for the purpose of receiving donations. Under the proposed hybrid financing plan the LLC would be the developer (of last resort) and owner enabling the facility to apply for state and federal tax credits for historic rehabilitation. The hybrid is in place for a future buyer and private developer if this should be the case.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in a Movie Theater

- Restore of the former movie theater building on Mechanic Street
- Ensure any theater is year-round.
- Create a sound financial plan for funding the restoration work.
- List the building on the National Register of Historic Places for tax credit purposes.
- Have design stage plans and cost estimating information ready for funding agencies.
- Wire for broadband, fiber optics, WiFi and on-line streaming.

Action Steps

- Develop a financial plan and funding strategies composed of a realistic public/private mix.
- Hire Architectural Historian services to perform the deed research on the building and prepare the nomination forms and documentation for submission to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for listing on the National Register either as part of an existing expanded historic district or as a stand-alone historic building.
- A conceptual floor plan for building renovations has been completed and it now needs to be moved to the design stage for cost estimating for funding agencies and programs.

Funding Strategies

Presently there are two approved 20-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts within the village; namely, Business Highway Municipal Development and the Downtown Municipal Development. These are municipal TIFs in which the increase revenues accrue to the Town for public improvements, and not to private investors. The approved Development Programs or public investment plans for the municipal TIFs allows for TIF funding for the Mechanic Street movie house renovations. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate renovations through the issuance of municipal bonds with TIF revenues set aside in a development sinking account pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The term of the bond indebtedness is 5-years. The advantage is that the Town does not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time in a project cost subaccount before undertaking the restoration improvements. Likewise, a Town Meeting vote is required before TIF funds can be spent on a new theater.

The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is the nation's largest federal incentive program for downtown and village economic development involving private investment in the re-use historic buildings and, the single most powerful financial incentive available to private property owners in Maine. Companion to the Federal Tax Credit is Maine's State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, which consists of (1) The *Substantial Rehabilitation Credit*, a "piggyback" onto the 20% Federal tax credit and (2) the *Small Project Rehabilitation Credit* for projects with qualified rehabilitation expenditures of between \$50,000 and \$250,000 and do not need to be eligible for the Federal credit. Please note – The Maine Program specifically allow non-profits organizations to participate in the Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.

The Maine program is available through 2023 and the rehabilitation must meet all of the requirements of the Federal tax incentive program. The 25% and 20% State and Federal programs respectively, provides tax credits for qualifying exterior and interior improvements to contributing income producing in National Register Historic Districts, or listed or pending listing on the National Register individually as a stand alone historic building. Historic districts generally have two types of properties, contributing and non-contributing. Broadly defined, a contributing property is any property, structure or object which adds to the historical integrity or architectural qualities that make a historic district, listed locally or federally, significant. The programs are administered at the state level by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC).

The former movie theater at 10 Mechanic Street is not on the National Register and therefore is not eligible for any tax credits. In order to be eligible for the tax credits the boundary of the existing Camden Great Fire District which is located in the core of the Downtown will have to be increased to include 8, 10 and 12 Mechanic Street as a contributing property to the district, or else the building will have to be listed individually on the National Register. Please see the map in Supplemental Information showing an expanded Great Fire Historic District inclusive of the former movie house.

Depending on the final structure for owning and operating the theater, it may be eligible for to apply for a Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facilities (PF) application to provide for gap or leveraged financing for public facilities involving building rehabilitation, reconstruction, or historic preservation projects which are part of a community development strategy or plan. The movie theater project may be eligible to apply for up to \$300,000 for the removal of architectural barriers, or \$300,000 for historic preservation as a stand-alone project.

Criterion includes a 25% match and applicants must demonstrate that the project meets the National Objective of the prevention and elimination of slum and blighting activities. For the movie theater this can be accomplished by submitting documentation substantiating the conditions of the building as "blighted". Examples of blighting includes the attempt to repair the deterioration and cracks in the north and south facing walls by the spotty and haphazard application of cement plaster. Please see documentation of spot blight in Supplemental Information.

Likewise, depending on the final structure for owning and operating the theater, the project may be eligible for to apply for funding from the CDBG Community Enterprise (CE) Business Façade Grants Program which allows for-profit and non-profit entities to apply for up to \$25,000 for exterior building façade improvements involving re-pointing brickwork, repairs to cracking and rutted walls, entranceway renovations, new historically accurate windows, new awnings and painting. Criterion includes demonstrating that the project meets the National Objective of the prevention and elimination of slum and blighting activities. For the movie theater this can be accomplished by submitting documentation substantiating the conditions of the building as "blighted".

The first step to obtaining Federal and State Historic Tax Credits is listing the movie theater site on the National Register of Historic Places. Apply to the Maine Community Foundation (MCF) Community Building Grant Program Knox County Fund to hire consulting services to perform the deed research on the building and prepare the nomination forms and documentation for submission to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for listing the movie theater building on the National Register as either part of an existing expanded historic district or as a stand-alone historic building. Applications are due in February. For a reference on how to complete a Community Building Grant Application please see the Supplement and Resources which contains a copy of the Town of Waldoboro MCF grant application for funds the hire an architectural historian to undertake the listing work. The application was prepared by the Downtown Master Plan team.

Employment Opportunities

- Short-term construction employment-related opportunities include architectural and CAD services and about a year's work for a general contractor and local tradesmen and laborers providing an immediate stimulus to the Downtown economy.
- Once the theater is up and running with more cultural, film and artistic offerings a full time Theater Manager will be needed to handle the bookings and for arranging and scheduling events. Year-round part-time employment would include food service, ticket purchases and cleaning and maintenance.
- Computer support specialists.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Bringing the movie theater back to town.
- Getting more people downtown generating activity and getting more people up to Mechanic Street businesses.
- More choice of night time cultural and art activities to show that the town is alive and reason for people to stay in the evening.
- Holding and increasing event venues such as Camden Conference, Camden Film Festival, etc. which brings visitors downtown, and on a year-round basis.
- Use of municipal incentives for business location and expansion.

Policy Statement

Build upon and expand the Town's growing niche events and visitors industry for the purpose of supporting a year-around local and regional economy.

Introduction

The event economy is a niche market consisting of anything that takes place or happens, especially something important like conferences, symposiums, seminars, meetings, forums, festivals, or workshops requiring supporting facilities, current technologies, accessible parking, local lodging and dining as well as leisure after-hour activities. For Camden it is PopTech (October), Camden Conference (February), Juice (November), Camden International Film Festival (October) which are all 2/4 day events held in the Opera House and at other approved local and regional satellite outlets.

Description

The mid-coast Maine area is known for its long tradition of community involvement in public issues going back to when it opposed inclusion in the new County of Waldo, and instead agitated the State Legislature for the creation of newer county called Knox. This tradition of political discourse combined with the area's quality of life has also attracted an influx of year-round residents who have retired from distinguished careers in the State Department and the military, the nation's intelligence agencies, domestic and international businesses and academia, bringing with them long lists of national and international contacts. The combination of interested and concerned long-time residents, natives and newer residents interested in foreign and domestic affairs, and the need to provide a winter attraction that would give people a reason to come to Camden in the middle of the winter to provide much needed revenues for local businesses during the hard shoulder months, resulted in the creation of a platform for the examination of publicly announced policies reminiscent of the Great Hall at Cooper Union. Out of these twin goals came the Camden Conference founded in 1987 as a nonprofit, non-partisan educational organization whose mission is to foster informed discussions on world issues. In the years since, it has convened its annual Conference on the third weekend of February in the historic Camden Opera House, drawing some of the best minds on foreign and internal affairs to share their insights and expertise on a range of global issues with the community, visitors and guests. Because of its popularity it outgrew the capacity of the Opera House to handle all of the attendees necessitating franchising the conference, along with the following money, to Rockport's Opera House, Rockland's Strand Theater, Belfast's Colonial Theater and Ellsworth's Art Deco-style Grand Theater resulting in a significant monetary impact on their downtown and village economies whilst much needed during the colder wintry months. From the perspective of a year-round village its importance can not be understated as it has spurred off a whole new industry for the town-events dependent on knowledge and a person's own intellectual property; sometimes, referred to as the brain.

Of all the conferences, PopTech is the most popular, best attended and most technology dependent thereby limiting to where it can be held in Maine. The conference was conceived by three part-time residents of Camden and Lincolnville in the early 1990s. Former Apple Computer president John Sculley, IT systems guru Tom DeMarco, and Ethernet inventor Robert Metcalf joined to create a summit on technology which later spawned PopTech. Each October, academics, techies, people with expertise in computers, the internet and the web and ordinary people who believe that technology and multi-disciplinary wisdom can transform almost anything come to Camden for New England's brainiest and most wired gathering. For four days they are tasked with the world's most difficult challenges whether it is water scarcity and quality or global economics, based on the premise that technology along with vision and human effort can solve any seemingly obstinate problem whatever its magnitude, with imagination the only limitation.

Produced by Midcoast Magnet Juice is a conference designed to generate energy, to be a conductor for ideas and action thus, the term "juice". Taking place over a fall weekend in November at the Opera House it connects talented people together from widely different backgrounds of the creative economy to discuss, debate and decide on action plans for Maine's future economy based the arts, technology, and entrepreneurship. It is a forum where attendees can learn from speakers who are leaders in their respective fields, exchange ideas; share successes stories and provide input to shape the development of strategies for Maine's economy. This event can attract 800 participants from throughout New England and the Canadian Maritimes.

The Camden International Film Festival is an annual film festival held in late September and/or early October based in Camden and created in 2004 to support and generate interest in independent documentary films .Over 100 documentary films (features and shorts), and 50 regional premiers from over 20 countries have been screened in venues in Camden Opera House, Rockport's Opera House; and Rockland's Strand Theater. Screenings are followed by Q&A sessions with directors and industry professionals. Festivities over the weekend also include a panels, workshops, photographic exhibits, musical concerts and parties. One of the popular venues for the festival is the site of the former Bay View Cinema on Bay View Street. Presently there is no base home for the growing festival.

Problems

- Conference attendees and participants take up a lot of parking space. It is more or less a free for all.
- Presently the conferences and festivals may not be that helpful to the retail trade as the participants and attendees are kept so busy with workshops and meetings with little time to shop in the downtown and spent money.
- Because of Maine's increasing focus on the conference and festival aspects of the creative economy along with the people and money they bring into a community, there will be more competition for these events either from new entries or from the communities and/or facilities which now serve as off-shoots and beneficiaries of the Camden's events industry.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Events Cluster

- As part the conference package the attendees or registrants should be provided tickets for parking in designated satellite parking places and brought to and from the conference center in shuttle buses.
- Conference and festival planners need to meet with downtown business people so as to allow more free time for shopping so that the Downtown retailers can benefit from the increase foot traffic and disposal incomes.

- Formation of a study group consisting of the appropriate parties and players to formulate strategies, recommendations, and to develop facilities and funding resources for either new events, or spinning off additional venues from existing conferences and festivals for the purpose of ensuring the Town’s continued niche in this area of the region’s creative economy.
- Establish an Events and Visitors Office.

Action Steps

- Inform event planners of the parking and time allocation concerns.
- Either: 1) Select-Board appoint and charge the task of recommending new events to an hoc study group; 2) assign the task to the Camden Economic Development Advisory Committee and Midcoast Economic Alliance; or, 3) request the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce or the Midcoast Economic Alliance to take on the challenge as a project with potentially significance regional economic benefits.
- Develop the Maine-made and Northern New England conference market with event packages for enticing Maine-made and regional conferences and meetings to the Downtown such as the Maine Downtown Conference, Maine Historic Preservation Society, Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association, etc.; especially, from October to May.
- Relocate the PenBay Chamber of Commerce office from the Public Landing, freeing up the space for other uses, to Main or Elm Street and establishing a Downtown Events and Visitors Office.

Funding Strategies

The Maine Community Foundation Community Building Grant Program: Knox County Fund seeks to support organizations and programs that recognize and build on a community’s strengths and assets. These matching grant awards are made by the Maine Community Foundation’s county committees and range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. The Community Building Grant Program will only support projects that clearly meet all three of the following core criteria:

- Use of existing community resources: The proposed project uses the skills, services, materials, and/or time that people and organizations in the community can and will provide.
- Ability to strengthen community life: The proposed project makes the community stronger by helping it address current or future challenges.
- Sustainability: The proposed project will continue to affect the community after community foundation funding has been exhausted. This is because the project is designed to have long-term impact and/or because there are realistic plans to acquire future funding.

To be considered for funding, proposed projects must also meet one or more of the following priorities:

- Develop community relationships: The proposed project uses new partnerships or collaboration between the applicant and other community organizations. These new partners will help plan and develop the project.
- Involve community members: The proposed project engages community members who will benefit from the project. These community members are included in the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of the project.
- Advance community leadership

The Community Building Grant Program awards two types of grants: Project grants for new and expanding programs and grants to improve organizational effectiveness, also known as capacity building.

Grants for New Program Development or Program Expansion: Organizations may request support to develop and implement new programs, or for the expansion of an existing program that is proven to be successful at meeting its stated objectives. In addition, organizations seeking support for program expansion should use program practices that have been proven to be successful in earlier implementations of that project.

Capacity Building Grants: Organizations may request support for activities focused on strengthening their operations or strategic focus or improving program effectiveness in specific areas. Examples include long-range planning, use of technology to improve program delivery or operations, or board development. Applicants need to explain how the proposed activities are expected to improve the organization's impact. Applications are due in February. They are submitted on-line.

State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are expected to range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and applications due in March. Projects must be able to document significant progress during the initial six months of the grant award. 25% cash or in-kind match is required. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: Implementation economic development strategies related to coastal tourism and marine-related sectors.

Employment Opportunities

- Camden Conference has a Conference Manager with an office on Bay View Street
- PopTech is not only focused on wider macro economics but micro as well. It has a year round office in Camden on Elm Street, and instead of employing exhibit-style food vendors, they provide redeemable tokens at local eateries contributing to year-round employment.
- All venues contribute to travel, lodging and dining, and retail businesses and employment.
- A Chamber Events and Visitors Office in Camden will necessitate part to full time staffing.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Attracting visitors to come here, stay and return.
- Growing local creative economy with a year-round downtown and year-round jobs.
- Hold and increase event venues such as the Camden Conference, Camden Film Festival and etc. which bring visitors downtown and on a year-round basis.
- Opera House and Library with its broadband capacity and Wi-fi hotspots allowing digital connection to the internet which is important to the creative economy and holding events.
- Getting more people to walk downtown generating a sense of place and activity and getting more people to Bay View Street businesses
- Utilizing public owned facilities and properties for their appropriate and suitable uses.

Policy Statement

Use new, existing and expanded recreational facilities for the purpose of positively impacting and benefiting the Downtown and Town-wide economy.

Introduction

The results of the Camden Master Plan Survey showed that 49.2% of the respondents felt that the creation of more outdoor activities in Town was either very important or important. Within the recreational economy there are two facilities which, if constructed or expanded, can further the goal of a vibrant year-round Downtown and Town-wide economy while promoting pedestrian scale recreational activities. These include the construction of a riverwalk along the Megunticook Stream leading from the Knowlton Street Mill Pond to the harbor for the purpose of integrating the growing residential condominium community and the existing and new businesses at the Knox Mill Complex into the Downtown economy whilst bringing those residents and patrons to Main Street for shopping, dining or for visiting the library; all, on a year-round basis. The second is the Town-owned Ragged Mountain complex built as the Snowbowl in 1936 on Hosmer Pond. This is a multi-use recreation facility which was started by the local Camden Outing Club.

Description

The Downtown Concept Diagram or Strategy laid-out by Landscape Architect Regina Leonard and Lachman Architects of Portland in the Streetscape Planning and Design illustrates the conceptual route of the Downtown segment of the Riverwalk. The segment starts at the Mill Pond, moves across the Knox Mill Complex to connect onto Washington Street and thence along Tannery Lane and out-letting on Main Street.

Ragged Mountain is a predominately winter recreational facility with Alpine and Nordic skiing trails, a base lodge, a tubing slope, skating arena and most importantly the home of the U.S. National Toboggan Races where thousands of people come the second weekend of every February for the Championship shoots out the chute and a frolicking good times, spending money on lodging, food and spirits in the Downtown. Although the facility also hosts a football field and tennis courts, it is underutilized in the off-season, especially its extensive and challenging trail system. Since the Camden Parks and Recreation Department sees economic development as one of its mission, through the use of these trails and supporting facilities they too could similarly contribute to the Downtown economy on year-round basis instead of predominately in the winter. One of the growing recreational outdoor activities is mountain biking, including both downhill (lift chair served) mountain biking and cross country biking. Ragged Mountain has been taking advantage of this growing industry by running the chairlift for bikers regularly during the summer and hosting Mountain Bike Races and Festivals in the summer and fall. The infrastructure and facilities are already in place to take more advantage of this growing sport: A base lodge with parking, bathrooms and food service; extensive system of mountain trails; and chair lifts for downhill races. However because of the nature of the sport and equipment being used on the trail, biking trails have to be specifically designed to be attractive to the bikers.

Compared to other sporting opportunities investment in biking trail development, construction and maintenance is less. The Midcoast Maine Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association presently works with the Parks & Recreation Department, Coastal Mountains Land Trust, and Camden Hills State Park to design, build and maintain these trails. The economic attraction for this sport is as follows:

- Mountain biking enthusiasts are affluent and these visitors often bring their families and groups of friends. They are attracted to trail systems with varying levels of difficulties for different ages and abilities.
- Bike purchases, accessories and maintenance are expensive so need high incomes in order to participate in the sport. The economic profile of mountain bikers is similar to alpine skiers.
- Destination mountain bike visitors spend money over several days on lodging, dining and purchase of biking equipment and accessories.

Often overlooked as part of the Town's recreational offerings to visitors and tourist, are the hiking and other cross county skiing trails within relatively easy reach of the Downtown by either foot and/or vehicle. For hikers there are the Camden Hills State Park Mount Battie road to the summit and the tableland and shoreline trails all of which are accessible from off Route 1; the Carriage Road and Mount Battie Trails handy from Mountain Street or Route 52; and Maiden's Cliff, also off Route 52 by Megunticook Lake and before the turnpike. Maiden's Cliff is a particularly popular destination with the cross and the story of the young girl's tragedy associated with its placement. For those who are looking for longer and more challenging hiking opportunities there are the Georges Highland Trails crossing several towns and reachable from Route 17 and the Barnstown Road.

Nordic or cross-country skiing is becoming popular once again resulting from new technologies, numerous available trails, and the high price of Alpine skiing tickets; often, unaffordable for families and fixed income younger people and retirees. In addition to the new Ragged Mountain Nordic trails we have the Coastal Mountain Land Trust's spur connecting to their trails; the Tableland and Shoreline Trail loops at the State Park; and, the Merry Spring Nature Center and Fernald's Neck Preserve in Lincolnville. Least we not forget that new rediscovered wintertime activity-snowshoeing- found at Ragged Mountain, Coastal Mountain Land Trusts, Merry Spring Nature Center, and at Fernald's Neck.

Problems

- Portions of the Riverwalk to Harborwalk are on private property and will need their permission in order to construct and maintain the Riverwalk.
- Segments of the existing boardwalk at the Knox Mill Complex are in need of repair and maintenance.
- Any new riverwalk improvements will need maintenance and upkeep.
- The condition of the existing base lodge facility at the Snowbowl. The lodge is over 40 years old, inadequate with an uninviting worn and tired appearance.
- The Camden area is not commonly perceived as one of Maine's popular four-season recreational destinations.
- Such destinations although close by are often hard to find; even, for locals.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Recreational Economy Cluster

- Construct the Riverwalk as laid out in the Streetscape Planning and Design Downtown Concept Diagram - Strategy developed by Landscape Architect Regina Leonard and Denis Lachman Architects of Portland in the.
- Develop a Riverwalk construction and maintenance financing plan.
- Market the Camden area as Maine's Coast premiere 4-Season Recreational area.
- Create a universal and "easy to use" recreational visual directional or wayfinding system for the area's recreational sites so that resident or visitor can find and easily reach them.

Action Steps Strategies

- Work closely with the owners of Knox Mill Complex and Tannery Lane properties and accommodate their concerns for the purposed gaining their buy-in for the Riverwalk, with the goal of being granted riverwalk easements.
- Development of a financial plan and funding strategies composed of a realistic public/private mix.
- Construction of a new base lodge facility at Ragged Mountain.

Funding Strategies for the Riverwalk Construction and Maintenance

The Town of Camden Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) allows for funding for the construction of a riverwalk along the Megunticook River between the tannery site and the downtown. This roughly two mile circle will ultimately connect to the downtown boardwalk paths, the waterfall bridge, and the pathways that skirt the Knox Mill and the tannery sites. The intent of which is to further strengthen pedestrian networks throughout the downtown supporting both the tourist industry as well as providing an amenity for residents. In addition, the Town can incur debt to facilitate riverwalk construction through the issuance of municipal bonds with TIF revenues setaside in a development sinking account pledged for the relief or payment of the indebtedness. The term of the bond indebtedness is 5-years. The advantage is that the Town would not have to wait for sufficient TIF revenues to accrue over time in a project cost subaccount before undertaking the riverfront improvements. Likewise, a Town Meeting vote is required before TIF funds can be spend on the riverwalk.

Expanded or New Town of Camden Municipal Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Listed under *Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the recreational economy* is the construction of the Riverwalk as laid out in the *Streetscape Planning and Design: Downtown Concept Diagram – Strategy*, and to develop a Riverwalk construction and maintenance financing plan. Cited Problems included segments of the existing boardwalk at the Knox Mill Complex needing repair and maintenance, and the upkeep of the new riverwalk improvements. Presently, because the Knox Mill Complex is not in a TIF district the increased property tax revenues currently gained from the new captured values at the site resulting from the redevelopment of the former mill site are not now available to assist with financing the construction of the Riverwalk in the vicinity of the Knox Mill Complex; nor; are they available for follow-up maintenance and upkeep. In order to address these issues the Town can consider extending the boundary of the adjacent Downtown Municipal Development and TIF District to include the area of the Knox Mill Complex; create a new Knox Mill Downtown Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to include the present area of the Knox Mill Complex; or, the creation of a new Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA) TIF District.

A CEA TIF is a contract between the municipality and company to assist with the development of a project by using all, or a percentage of, the tax revenues generated by new or increased investment to pay certain authorized project costs with payments made directly to the company. Cost may also include payment of indebtedness (up to 20-year notes, bonds) incurred to finance the redevelopment of the property. Eligible uses for CEA TIF revenues include but are not limited to: acquisition or construction of land, improvements, buildings, structures, fixtures and equipment and the demolition, alteration, remodeling, repair or reconstruction of existing buildings, structures and fixtures. Like a municipal TIF, Town Meeting enactment is required as is approval from the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, after municipal adoption.

For each of these three options, a TIF study will need to be undertaken by the Camden Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC) and the Development Director for the purpose of developing a new TIF policy for either expanding an existing or creating a new Municipal Downtown TIF or the establishment of a stand alone CEA TIF district; determining the new District boundaries; calculation of the tax shift/shelter and revenue stream; conducting a public educational program; holding a public hearing and securing Select Board and Town Meeting approval. A study for one or two properties can cost \$7,000-\$10,000. The Town can up front the money and be reimbursed from the initial CEA TIF revenues. This is eligible reimbursement expenditure from the new TIF, resulting in no cost to the Town.

Department of Conservation (DOC) Bureau of Parks and Land, Recreation Trail Program (RTP) Grants The proposed riverwalk would be eligible for a Development Grant application for up to \$35,000 with a 20% local cash or in-kind match or other state and local grants, and certain federal grants match. Eligible Development Grant activities include: development or rehabilitation of any trailside or trailhead facility; construction of new recreation trails including new trail bridges and trail signage; acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for trail purposes, or the creation, expansion, or improved water trails which may include construction/restoration of, kiosks/signage. Timeframe involves pre-approval site inspection of a potential project is required by state staff in August, with applications due in December.

Department of Conservation Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal grant program through the National Park Service (NPS), authorized by Congress to fund on a reimbursement basis up to 50% of allowable costs (maximum grant award is \$75,000.00 as established by the State) for the acquisition, development, and/or renovation of public outdoor recreation facilities. The program is administered under the direction of the State Liaison Officer (SLO) appointed by the Governor. All correspondence must be directed through the office of the SLO in the (BP&L), Maine Department of Conservation. Grants may be awarded to municipalities. Only projects in accordance with the current (2009-2014) State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) may be considered. The Riverwalk and Harborwalk will need to be evaluated as to their conformance with the SCORP. A pre-approval site inspection of a potential project is required by DOC state staff in August, with an application due in December

National Park Service's (NPS) Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) located in Brunswick, Maine. RTCA often acts as a catalyst to help assemble the necessary pieces of a river trail planning project, helping to identify resources, navigate the planning process, and convert ideas into actions. Program staff can provide technical assistance in conceptual planning, organizational development, grant research and writing assistance, and capacity building at no cost. RTCA applications are due in August.

Funding Strategies for Marketing the Camden area as Maine’s Coast premiere 4-Season Recreational area:

State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and applications are due in March. Projects must be able to document significant progress during the initial six months of the grant award. 25% cash or in-kind match is required. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal tourism and marine-related sectors.

Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Development Foundation’s Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points Approach, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. The MDN is ideal for communities working toward achieving “Main Street” designation. MDN communities are not authorized to use the Main Street trade mark name, nor are they required to have paid staff. MDN services help communities build an appropriate organizational and funding base for a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program. A core feature of the service to MDN communities is access to training by state and national downtown development experts. MDN communities will have the opportunity to learn about best practices in the field and to network with peers from around the state. Also, MDN designated communities are awarded one bonus point when applying for a CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grant (DTR). Applications are due in March and Camden’s annual fee for joining is \$500.00.

Included amongst the Four Points Approach is Promotion. Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district by marketing a district's unique characteristics to businesses, residents and visitors, through advertising, promotional activity and special events.

Employment Opportunities

- Year-round employment at the Downtown stores and shops servicing recreational visitors.
- Year-around employment at the Snowbowl and Ragged Mountain.
- Spin-off employment for the lodging and dining industry.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Enhancing the Town’s distinctive character and exceptionalism that makes it unique from all other mid-coast and Maine communities.
- Integration of the Knox Mill residential and commercial complex into the Downtown.
- Riverwalk pathway from Mill Pond to the Harbor.
- Getting more people up to the Mechanic Street businesses.
- Accessibility to recreational facilities, activities and offerings at the Snowbowl, conservation lands, and state park.
- Wayfinding and signage.
- Attracting people to come here, stay and return;
- Enticing people traveling through town to stop, look, shop and dine.

Policy Statement

Promote and enhance the awareness of the Town's history and architecture for economic development.

Introduction

Probably one of the least promoted but much appreciated Downtown assets is its history as told through its distinctive 19th and 20th Century architecture. Within the Downtown there are three Historic Districts, or portions thereof, on the Federal National Park Service's (NPS) National Register of Historic Places containing numerous contributing buildings and houses. However except for the Historic Downtown Camden Walking Tour Map on the north facing exterior wall of French and Brawn put together by Camden author and historic researcher Ann Morris for the Camden Downtown Business Group, there is no official signage noting the location of each district or building plaques depicting their architectural style, historic significance and former occupants. Other area communities have accomplished this through a local Museum in the Streets program, albeit gaudy at times and distracting from the architectural significance of the building; whereas, Camden has nothing in place that is similar to it. This is changing.

Description

The three districts consist of the High Street Historic District established in July 1988 and added to in October 2005 to include Harbor Park; the Chestnut Street Historic District approved in January 1991; and the most recent, the Camden Great Fire Historic District included in July 2006. Maps showing each of these distinct districts are contained in Supplement Information.

The High Street Historic District contains well preserved 19th and 20th Century architecture including Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, along with houses containing some aspects of Italianate detail. Probably the most visible architecture in the district and in the Downtown is the Colonial Revival Camden Public library. The grounds of the Camden Library create a distinctly unique, highly articulated series of landscape experiences, the centerpiece of which is a public outdoor garden amphitheater. Designed by the renowned landscape architect Fletcher Steele, this landscape is one of his best works of art. Designed and constructed between 1928 and 1931 and employing local people, and funded by a local patron of the arts, Mrs. Mary Louise Curtis Bok, Steele's landscape design blends elements of traditional Neo-classical with the then 'new' ideas of the French Moderne or Art Deco and successfully marries the ideals of the Renaissance Italian garden theater with the richness of Maine's native vegetation. When first conceived, the entire site was simply known as "Camden Library." However the popularity and unique qualities of the Amphitheater immediately rechristened the site "Camden Amphitheatre". Some natives still refer to it as the Bok Amphitheater, having grown up with that name, participated in high school graduation ceremonies at the site, and which is best known to the locals as the graduation backstop for the movie classic Peyton Place filmed in Camden in 1957. Presently the site is pending nomination as a NPS National Register of Historic Places National Landmark as a place that has special historical, architectural, or cultural significance thereby given it legal protection from alteration and destruction.

Chestnut Street Historic District architecture covers the period from the mid-18th Century Federal style to the architectural peevess of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century cottage movement. Architectural forms include Greek, Gothic and Dutch Colonial Revival, along with a dash of Italianate details. The most visible features of the district are the U.S. Post Office built in 1913 with its large Renaissance Revival façade, and the Village Green designed by the Olmsted Brothers.

The only district entirely situated in the Downtown is the Camden Great Fire District encompassing the area destroyed by conflagration of 1892. Rebuilt after the fire with brickwork we see an eclectic mixture of architectural expressions notable amongst them: Renaissance, Colonial, and Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Romanesque.

For reason uncertain, not all of the Downtown is located within one of the three historic districts. The gap includes lower Bay View Street and the east side of Main Street as shown on map in Supplement Information prepared by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Problems

- No signage identifying the historic districts or the historic or architectural significance of the contributing structures, buildings and sites.
- Not all of the Downtown is situated in a historic district.
- No current program for marketing the Town's unique and distinctive historic and architectural resource.

Opportunities - Effective, practical measures the Town can take to increase economic interest in the Town's Historic and Architectural Assets

- Develop a Camden History Trail or Historic Camden Tour.
- Design appropriate simplified signage identifying each history district.
- In lieu of the Museum in the Street format of placing descriptive and often distracting signs in front of historical significant buildings thereby blocking their views, embrace the new technologies by developing a history tour app for laptops and mobile hand held digital devices such as smart phones, iPhone, iPads, touch computer tablets, and notebooks. App is an abbreviation for application. An app is a piece of software. It can run on the Internet, on a desktop computer, or on a smart phone, iPhone or other electronic device.
- Increase the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District and/or create a new Bay View Street Historic District so the entire Downtown is covered by historic districts.

Action Steps

- Work with the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce, Camden History Center and Camden Historic Resources Commission (HRC) in laying out the trail's route and composition.
- Work with the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce and the HRC in the development of an electronic tour app or application and placement of building plaques linking the historic building or site to a mobile electronic device.
- Market the Town's quintessential Northern New England village brand with historic and architectural assets.

Accessing Federal and State and Historic Tax Credits by Expanding Existing National Register Historic Districts or Create a new Historic District

These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for rehabilitations of buildings providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Contributing properties have characteristics that, together with other nearby similar properties, enable a district eligible to be listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Non-contributing properties may be of the same age as nearby contributing properties, but have lost their historic integrity due to renovations, alterations and repairs over the years, or within the same district but from a more recent era. Within National Register of Historic Districts, contributing properties are eligible for state and Federal tax credits; whereas non-contributing structures are not eligible.

For buildings not within one of Camden's districts, such as on Bay View Street, there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District. For the purpose of moving this financing option forward the Maine Historic Preservation Commission was contacted concerning this issue. In reply they provided a map illustrating potential contributing properties to a new or increased historic district. The map and potential properties are found in the Supplement and Resources. The following is listing of potential individual properties for inclusion in an increased Chestnut Street Historic District or for a new Bay View Street Historic District:

- #1 Main Street - Cappy's Restaurant – property needs further evaluation as to Contributing or NC
- #7 Main Street - property needs further evaluation as to Contributing or NC

Easterly or waterside of Bay View Street

- #2 Bay View Street-New England Realty Co. –Contributing
- #4/6 Bay View –Camden Jewelry and Sage –NC
- #8 Bayview-Maine Gathering –NC
- #10 Bay View-Leslie Curtis Design, Paolina's Way (former Camden Herald building)-Contributing
- #12 Bay View –Peter Ott's tavern and former Bay View Garage-Contributing
- #20 Bayview –Cashmere goat and Fresh Restaurant –NC
- #24 Bay View-Camisole Co.-Contributing

West side of Bay View Street

- #33 Bay View-Bayview Gallery-Contributing
- #25 Bay View –Sugar Tool Co., Goose River Exchange-Contributing
- #21 Bay View –Cuzzy's –NC
- #2 Elm Street-Camden National Bank-NC.

Funding Strategies for Camden's Historic and Architectural Assets

Critical to obtaining Federal and state historic tax credits are listing the new or extended historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. Apply to the Maine Community Foundation (MCF) Community Building Grant Program Knox County Fund to hire consulting services to perform the deed research on the building and prepare the nomination forms and documentation for submission to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for listing the new or expanded district on the National Register. Applications are due in February. For a reference on how to complete a Community Building Grant Application please see the Supplemental Information which contains a copy of the Town of Waldoboro MCF grant application for funds the hire an architectural historian to undertake the listing work. The application was prepared by the Downtown Master Plan team

State Planning Office (SPO) Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant. Grants are can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 and applications are due in March. Grant categories include ensuring sustainable, vibrant coastal communities. Examples of projects fitting this category: include implementation of economic development strategies related to coastal tourism.

Quick Response Codes (QRC). QRCs are bar codes that when scanned or photographed from an appropriate mobile device (a smart phone, Blackberry, iPhone, iPad, tablet computer or any other wireless and touch or keyboard mobile handheld electronic device) connects the user with information (from a website, text message, audio file, etc). Based on this technology Executive Director Dan Bookham of the Penobscot Chamber of Commerce and the Camden Historic Resources Committee thought using QRCs plaques around town for a guided history tour would be a novel way to show Camden's long past and to demonstrates its willingness to embrace Camden's future; a future involving the new technologies. Following discussions between the Chamber and the Historic Resources Commission on the idea of wireless guided historic tours the Commission offered to request funding to help create copy for the tour. The funding was approved at town meeting in June 2011. With the support of the Town Meeting, Peter Palermo of Elm Street Printing developed a series of mobile websites (that is, sites optimized to work on a mobile phone screen): one each for six locations (the library, Harbor Park, the amphitheater, Opera House, Public Landing, and the Village Green). Camden Architectural Historian Anne Morris wrote the copy on contract with the Historic Resources Commission, and photos were supplied with the help of the Camden History Center. Each site contains historic and contemporary information on the location (including links) and also links to each other encouraging foot traffic between locations. The websites were paid for by the Chamber of Commerce and are still in beta format (i.e. not available to the public). The next issue was designing the plaques to be noticed and visible but well-designed and in keeping with the character and style of the buildings and locations on the tour. Ceramic white tiles were selected for the plaques as a white tile is handsome, easily affixed to a building or post without damaging screws etc., more durable than a decal, and easily printed upon. The tiles are currently being field tested for durability and for the printed information. Provisionally, when the Chamber and the Historic Resources Commission roll this out the tile it will say "Historic Camden Tour, scan the code", then the QR code, then a link to the specific historic site for that location. When the tile testing is completed, the owners of the identified locations will then be approached to ascertain their interest in hosting a plaque (there is no cost to the initial locations as the Chamber is bearing the cost). It is anticipated that participation will be high with installation beginning in Spring 2012.

Maine Downtown Network (MDN), sponsored by the Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center was launched in 2009 as a sister-program to Main Street Maine using the same Four Points, but at a lighter, less rigorous pace. Included amongst the Four Points Approach is Promotion. Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district by marketing a district's unique characteristics to businesses, residents and visitors, through advertising, promotional activity and special events.

Employment Opportunities

- Cultural tourism (or culture tourism) is a sub-area of tourism concerned with a region's or community's culture, specifically their history and architecture. Generally cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists do. This form of tourism is also becoming more popular throughout the world. A recent OECD report has highlighted the role that cultural tourism can play in regional development in different world regions. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international economic development organization of 34 countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. In summary, cultural tourism has the potential to attract foreign as well as domestic tourists to Camden; especially those younger tourists who are tech savvy and who would be at ease with electronic touring.
- Maintenance, up-dating and repair of the app touring applications.
- Marketing and advertisement.

Relevant Economic Values Addressed

- Three historic district on the National Park Service's (NPS) National Register of Historic Places and the unique architecture of the commercial buildings.
- A preserved quintessential Northern New England village.
- Wayfinding and signage.
- Attracting people to come here, stay and return.
- Enhancing the Town's distinctive character and exceptionalism that makes it unique from all other mid-coast and Maine communities;
- Getting more people downtown to walk generating a sense of activity;
- Enticing people traveling through town to stop, look, shop and dine;
- Getting more people down to Bay View Street businesses and up Mechanic Street businesses.

Introduction

Over the past decade, downtowns across America have begun to experience a renaissance of sorts. In its recent study on downtown revitalization, the Brookings Institute found a trend toward growth and development. In a survey of 45 communities, the Institute found a 13% increase in households living in their downtowns between 1990 and 2000. So what sets these traditional downtowns apart from other, typically suburban places to live and shop? The defining characteristic, according to the report, is “walkable urbanism,” a term used to describe the idea that the safety, density and diversity of experiences within a vibrant downtown both invites and engages pedestrian activity. For traditional downtowns, high pedestrian activity translates to consumer dollars and long-term economic sustainability.

Walkability, quality of life, and outdoor recreational opportunities are key considerations for attracting new businesses and residents to a community such as Camden. Recent surveys of members of the “New Economy” (smokeless industries, high technology and service-sector businesses) workforce showed that quality of life in a community increases the attractiveness of a job by 33%. According to the APA, mobile retirees are also seeking communities that provide scenic beauty as well as leisure and recreational opportunities. (“Retirement Migration” has been defined as a “new, clean growth industry in America today.” By 2050, 25% percent of Americans will be aged 65 or older).

A 2009 study funded by CEOs for Cities also demonstrated a positive correlation between walkability and home values. In the metropolitan areas studied, houses with above average levels of walkability typically commanded a premium of between \$4,000 and \$34,000 over similar houses in less walkable neighborhoods. The study concluded “urban leaders should pay close attention to walkability as a key measure of urban vitality and as impetus for public policy that will increase overall property values – a key source of individual wealth and of revenues for cash-strapped governments.”

Increased public desire for “walkable urbanism” combined with the growing pressures on suburban commercial areas provides an unprecedented opportunity for the economic and social revitalization of traditional downtowns such as Camden. The importance of setting the stage for redevelopment cannot be understated. Walkable urbanism relies upon a physical definition of place which often requires a comprehensive planning strategy created and the financial support and determination to see it through.

Here in the State of Maine, the Downtown Focus Group of the Governor’s Council on Maine’s Quality of Place recently reported that healthy traditional downtowns are vital to sustaining Maine’s Quality of Place by limiting sprawl and preserving natural land and waters. Their visionary goals for Maine Downtowns included a renewed sense of civic engagement, distinctive historical and architectural structures, housing, thriving storefronts, public gathering spaces, and a walkable interface between the natural and built environments.



Image: View of Elm Street looking north.



Image: View of Camden Harbor from Harbor Park.

The future viability of Maine’s Quality of Place, according to the Council, requires planning and investment in Maine’s traditional downtowns: acquisition of land and easements for urban parks and trails, the rehabilitation of historic community buildings, and physical enhancements, such as sidewalks, street lamps and benches. The group called for an integration of parks, open spaces, and greenways into urban centers to provide “healthy, natural settings that make downtowns more attractive and invoke our natural heritage.”

These recommendations are supported and echoed by the Maine State Planning Office. Their August 2008 Downtown Revitalization report noted that upgrading infrastructure, such as lighting, landscaping, roads and parking are necessary investments for communities seeking to draw private investment into downtowns. The Brookings Institute backs up this premise. For downtown revitalization to be successful, the Institute reports, private sector investment must be reestablished since for every \$1 of public investment, there will typically be \$10-15 of private money. The bulk of the public investment is required early in the revitalization process in order to attract private development and investment in the downtown. Public improvements projects, such as those recommended in the Downtown Master Plan for Camden, are therefore necessary first steps in leveraging future business and investments in the downtown.

Streetscape	Description of Problems & Opportunities	2a
	Recommendations	2b
Parking & Circulation	Description of Problems & Opportunities	2c
	Recommendations	2d

Description of Problems & Opportunities

Ask most Mainers to name a thriving traditional downtown, and they might point to Camden, with its variety of shops, historic buildings, sidewalks and public open spaces on the harbor. As noted in the Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, Camden is in the top tier of Maine communities when it comes to quality of life based amenities. Of the survey conducted as part of the Master Plan process, respondents overwhelmingly indicated that preserving the current quality of life was of great importance. Camden has a unique sense of place and identity: it has a compact, walkable downtown with historic architecture and a mix of shops, inns and restaurants situated on a beautiful harbor.

According to a recent article in the Downtown Idea Exchange, there are several anticipated post-recession trends that are expected to reshape economic development strategies for downtowns. Quality of life factors and job proximity will play a greater role in selection of places to live, particularly for younger people. Place-making efforts to increase quality of life, especially in central business district, are expected to become a high priority in efforts to attract young, talented workers and their families. The Project for Public Spaces identifies the following benefits of “Place.” Place builds and supports the local economy, nurtures and defines community identity, fosters frequent and meaningful contact, creates improved accessibility, promotes a sense of comfort and draws a diverse population. It makes sense, therefore, that “place management,” the process of making places better is a key revitalization objective.

Pedestrians

While the Camden downtown offers a good pedestrian environment, the high volume of traffic on Route One, particularly in the busy summer months, has a direct negative impact on pedestrians trying to cross Main and Elm Streets. In Camden’s downtown, pedestrians have taken a back seat to cars, figuratively speaking.

Sight lines between vehicles and pedestrians are blocked by cars parked too close to crosswalks, and pedestrians are typically not seen until they emerge from behind a parked car into the travel lane. The MDOT Guidelines for Crosswalks require that on-street parking shall be a minimum distance of 20 feet away from un-signalized crosswalks in order to ensure adequate visibility between pedestrians and vehicles. The crosswalk across the Mechanic Street and Main Street intersection is particularly intimidating because of confusing traffic patterns, low visibility and long crossing distance.



Image: Long crossing distance for pedestrians at Mechanic Street intersection.



Image : Parked cars block visibility and create unsafe conditions for pedestrians in crosswalks. Maine DOT requires a clear zone of 20 feet.

Sidewalks and streetscape elements are very consistent and strong throughout the central corridor of the downtown, but disappear on downtown side streets. As a result, the center spine of Main Street and Elm Street feels distinct in its character and sense of place, while side areas like lower Bay View, Washington and Mechanic Streets feel incomplete in comparison and less an equal part of the downtown. As a result, these areas draw less pedestrian foot traffic and businesses struggle for their share of customers. Other streets, such as portions of Tannery Lane and upper Washington Street, lack sidewalks completely. As a result these areas feel “off limits” to pedestrians, which is especially troublesome for the inns and their guests in these sections of the downtown.

Traffic & Intersections

Camden’s downtown is centered upon the state-owned Route One arterial, which brings an inordinate amount of traffic volume through the heart of the commercial business district. Already slowing through town, traffic flow is further disrupted by vehicles negotiating to and from curbside spaces, pedestrian crossings, and intersection activity. The magnitude of traffic is both a blessing and a curse to the downtown. On one hand, it presents an opportunity to showcase the downtown to the many travelers heading to other destinations, inviting them to stop or return to Camden – a sort of “windshield marketing campaign.” On the other hand, the traffic creates a whole host of issues that compromise the quality and function of the downtown: an impaired pedestrian environment, unsafe crossings, isolated businesses, traffic congestion, restricted travel routes and headaches for residents.

Confusing traffic patterns and intersections at key locations add to the traffic melee of downtown Camden, which further impairs the pedestrian environment, introduces unnecessary traffic hazards and deters spontaneous stopovers.

- Elm Street – Union Street Intersection:
The Union Street and Elm Street intersection is particularly confusing to out-of-towners and dangerous. The through-moving traffic from Union Street is counter-intuitive and difficult to anticipate. Traffic patterns are completely unclear and only made more confusing by the posted signage.
- Washington Street – Mechanic Street Intersection:
A similar traffic pattern at the corner of Washington and Mechanic Streets is equally confusing and dangerous as it is unclear that traffic heading into town from Washington Street has the right-of-way. While this intersection treatment is intended to accommodate emergency vehicles from the nearby fire and police station, this type of traffic could be accommodated in other, safer ways.



Image: View looking north at the intersection of Union and Elm Street. The traffic pattern at this intersection and the signage is confusing.

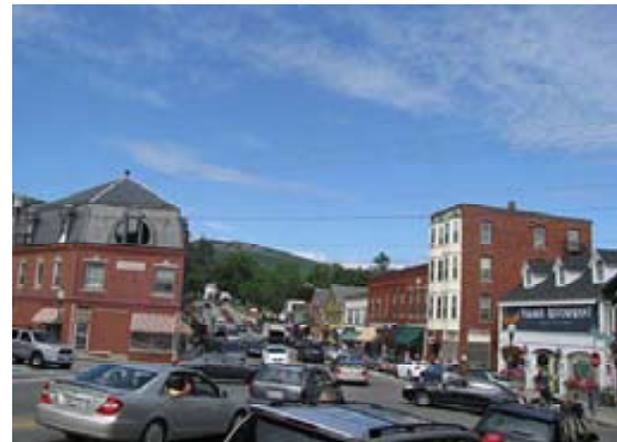


Image : Typically congested traffic within the center of Camden's downtown. The area is marked by the intersection of five streets.

- Downtown Center Hub - The downtown center of Camden is marked by a confusing four-way intersection connecting Main Street to Mechanic Street to the west and Bay View and Commercial Streets to the east. A number of factors make this intersection particularly troublesome. Mechanic Street intersects Main Street at an acute angle. The required turning radius and added turning lane widen the paved roadway considerably, severely compromising pedestrian safety at the crossing of Mechanic Street. The "death lane" of traffic attempting to take a left across Route One and curbside parking along the intersection adds to the chaos and safety issues. Traffic movement at Bay View and Commercial Streets is complicated by limited visibility, topography, the awkward intersection alignment of the two streets, and the narrow travel lanes. Vehicle activity to and from the public landing is not well supported by the road or intersection configuration.

- Main Street – Mountain Street Intersection:
The intersection of the Main Street and Mountain Street at the northern end of the downtown is located at the “elbow” of Route One. The alignment of the streets, addition of turning lanes and accommodation of turning radii widens the pavement at the intersection considerably. This expanse of pavement marks the arrival to the downtown and its scale juxtaposes awkwardly with the adjacent buildings, including the public library, one of Camden’s most precious historic assets.

Signage & Wayfinding

“Signage and wayfinding are most commonly expressed in unified sign programs that informationally and visually knit together a site.” – Chis Calori, Signage and Wayfinding Design

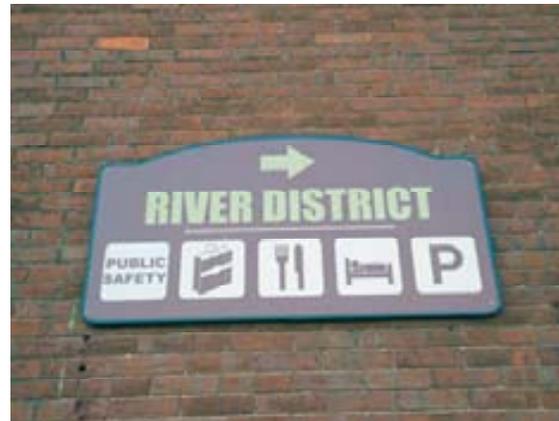
Signage and wayfinding are important tools for place-making that can greatly influence how visitors perceive and navigate through the downtown. Good signage and wayfinding programs not only help brand a community identity, they can also positively influence a sense of well-being, safety and security. Although the terms signage and wayfinding are often used interchangeably, there are important distinctions related to the scope and intended objectives. Sign programs are more straight-forward, using signage to help people navigate their surroundings. Wayfinding solutions, on the other hand, often require a more nuanced approach that incorporates signage as well as other physical and visual cues, graphic design and digital tools to help users intuitively find their way through their environment.

The Camden Planning Board and several Sign Working Groups have invested much time, thought and energy on the subject of signage within the downtown area over the last several years. A Working Group established in 2008 worked on various revisions to the existing sign ordinance and created a plan for the downtown directional signage. Subsequently, the Town installed directional signs at the northern and southern arrival zones and within the downtown center.

Image: Existing free-standing directional sign at the southern approach to Camden. The sign has not been effective due to poor readability.



Image: Directional sign mounted on the side of a downtown building is not readily visible to vehicles.



While attractive and informative, the existing signs have not proven to be effective. The mandated maroon background of the signs is not visible enough and disappears against the brick buildings in the center of town. As well, the purpose and intended audience of the signs are not well-understood or coordinated. Signs which should be geared toward vehicles are not adequately sized and contain too much information to be useful to passing motorists. Other signs intended for pedestrians, are more accurately scaled, but not readily visible.

Most recently, the Planning Board has convened a new Sign Working Group, including representatives of the regulatory boards, Town staff, as well as business and property owners. Much of this recent effort is aimed at pulling more activity from the main corridor into lesser visited parts of the downtown. Merchants and Restaurant-owners along Bay View and Mechanic Streets, in particular, have pushed for better and more effective signage to direct more business their way. The group is also planning temporary directional sign improvements to address deficiencies in existing signage as well as new parking directional signs. These steps are intended to address immediate needs for signage in advance of a more comprehensive signage and wayfinding program.

Recommendations

The recommendations for streetscape and related improvements respond to the vision for downtown redevelopment outlined by the Governor’s Council on Maine’s Quality of Place, the findings of the Brookings Institute, and the Maine State Planning Office as well as the previous findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, the 2009 Vision for Camden by the Camden Community & Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC), the Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, the 2011 Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, and the 2007 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The Streetscape recommendations included below encompass many layers of design considerations that collectively address the stated goals for the downtown. The following recommendations have been organized for ease of understanding and use by Town staff. Supplemental information, such as schematic plans, design details, costs and phasing recommendations have been provided in the Supplemental Report.

Expand The Existing Streetscape Treatment Zone

Expand the existing streetscape treatment from the downtown center along Route One to the northern and southern gateways to reinforce the downtown zone as a pedestrian-oriented place. Streetscape elements provide important visual cues necessary for traffic calming and help to establish a sense of place that is unique to the downtown. Streetscape improvements should include shade trees, street lighting, site furnishings and signage. Implement the sidewalk improvements outlined in the Camden Downtown Municipal TIF and Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan documents. Continue to coordinate these efforts with the Camden Pathways Committee.

Develop A Comprehensive Sign And Wayfinding System

As stated previously, a comprehensive sign and wayfinding program is an essential step in guiding visitors to destinations and enhancing the overall downtown experience. Signage and wayfinding are essential components of the built environment and our experiences of it. In a post-recession economy, a comprehensive signage and wayfinding program offers a unique marketing advantage by branding and communicating Camden’s unique identity and sense of place.

The Town should engage an experienced architectural or environmental graphic designer to develop a comprehensive signage and wayfinding design system. This effort should include appropriate outreach with the public, the Sign Committee, and City officials to tailor the outcome to the community’s needs. The existing zoning ordinance should be updated as required to support the implementation of the final sign and wayfinding recommendations.



Image (far left): Example of a directional sign geared toward drivers, orienting them to parking and key destinations. This sign is on the Bowdoin College campus in Brunswick, Maine.

Image (left): A directional sign in Freeport, Maine. The sign orients visitors to parking and destinations using simple universal symbols and limited text.

Create Gateways Into The Downtown:

- Southern Gateway:

Establish a pedestrian-scaled visual arrival zone to the downtown at the intersection of Union Street and Elm Street. Provide streetscape elements to set the tone for the downtown as a pedestrian-oriented place – visual cues that will help to calm traffic and stimulate driver awareness. Line and mark bicycle travel lanes as key connections to the multi-use trail from Route One. Reduce curb cuts and incorporate curb extensions to make pedestrians more visible to traffic and to reduce crossing distances. Switch to ladder style crosswalks to enhance safety and visibility of pedestrians. Work closely with MDOT to assess and appropriately modify vehicular traffic patterns to provide for a safer and more intuitive intersection. Introduce gateway and directional signage as part of a comprehensive wayfinding program.



Above images, left to right: Existing view of the Union Street and Main Street intersection, the proposed Southern Gateway to the downtown; Image showing the effective use of curb extensions, crosswalks and streetscapes in defining a pedestrian-scaled arrival zone (image credit: EDAW); Concept Plan for the proposed Southern Gateway Improvements. Refer to the Supplemental Report for more information.

- Northern Gateway:
Establish a second gateway arrival zone at the intersection of Mountain Street and Main Street. Due to MDOT restrictions, the road and intersection alignment cannot be significantly modified. To the extent possible, pavement should be reduced through the combined use of curb extensions and expansion of the existing traffic island. Incorporate streetscape elements to set the tone for the downtown as a pedestrian environment and to provide important visual cues for calming traffic and stimulating driver alertness. Continue to work closely with MDOT to assess traffic patterns and to find opportunities to make the scale of the intersection more appropriate to the scale and character of its setting through context-sensitive design solutions. Introduce gateway and directional signage as part of a comprehensive wayfinding program.



Image (far left): Aerial view showing the existing intersection at Mountain Street and Main Street, the proposed Northern Gateway to the downtown.

Image (left): Concept sketch for the proposed treatment of the Southern Gateway. The improvements include a defined pedestrian zone that also reinforces the edge of the main travel-way.

Reorganize And Highlight The Downtown Center Hub

Realign intersections within the downtown center hub to clarify vehicular circulation and to reduce confusion and driver distractions that could compromise pedestrian safety. Eliminate the left hand turning lane at Mechanic Street to reduce congestion close to the intersection and more clearly delineate the center hub travel way to calm traffic. Utilize the curb extensions to improve visibility between cars and pedestrians, reduce crossing distances and create larger enhanced pedestrian spaces with new wayfinding signage and kiosks, site furnishings and street trees. Use streetscape elements to establish the hub as the visual center of the downtown. Reorient and simplify crosswalks to clarify pedestrian zones. Use ladder style marking to improve visibility and alert drivers of possible pedestrian activity.



Images, left to right: View of Camden’s “Downtown Hub” looking toward Mechanic Street; Concept Plan showing intersection and pedestrian improvements; View of Front Street Bath streetscape, looking from Center Street (Image Credit: Main Street Bath).

Make Improvements To Mechanic Street

Retain most of the diagonal parking on the north side of Mechanic Street, introducing curb extensions at the block ends to clarify and separate vehicular and pedestrian zones. Add street trees, lighting and site furnishings to enhance the streetscape. Work with property and business owners to reinforce the street edge and improve pedestrian connectivity by reducing curb cuts and relocating a portion or all of the off-street parking off site. Use the enlarged space for landscaping, street trees and pedestrian amenities, such as outdoor dining. Work with merchants and property owners to incorporate a shared bus drop-off and limited time loading zone along Mechanic Street, if possible. Retain some parking in the Five and Dime lot for the time being.



Images, left to right: View down Mechanic Street facing Main Street; Concept plan showing long-term improvements to the Mechanic Street business block.

Once the parking management program has been successfully implemented, investigate opportunities for an infill building to re-establish the street edge and introduce additional shops and businesses that will help to stimulate greater economic activity within the River District. The Five & Dime property may also be a suitable location for a visitor center with restrooms. The lot could also accommodate a small pedestrian plaza with seating and visitor information. Such a space would serve to enhance the pedestrian environment on Mechanic Street and provide an important open space connection to the River-to-Harbor Walk route. Consider branding the River District as a unique identity to draw visitors to this area of town. Tie this identity in with wayfinding, particularly as it relates to the River-to-Harbor Walk.

Better Integrate Washington Street, Knox Mill & Tannery Lane Into The Downtown Area

- Knox Mill Area:
Extend streetscape improvements along Mechanic Street to Knowlton Street to better integrate the Knox Mill and Mechanic Street areas into the downtown. Introduce street trees with limited curb extensions, if possible.
- Washington Street:
Improve pedestrian connections along Washington Street in front of the Town parking lot and fire station and Public Safety buildings with new sidewalks and specialty paving patterns. Reduce curb cuts near the parking area to the extent possible, and consider removing the parking in front of the entrance to the Public Safety building since it interrupts the pedestrian connectivity along the street. Simplify drainage solutions in this area. In the longer term, relocate existing off-street parking from the vacant lot off Washington Street and consider alternatives for infill development. Extend streetscape treatment along Washington Street from Mechanic Street to Main Street. Replace the bituminous sidewalk with concrete and consider re-grading the street to reestablish the full curb elevation.



Images, left to right: View showing area of proposed new curbing and sidewalk; Parking in front of the Public Safety Building, which disrupts the sidewalk. See the recommendations for the River District in the Supplemental Report.

- Tannery Lane:
Improve Tannery Lane as a shared pedestrian-vehicle travel-way with the reestablished Town right-of-way. Work closely with the property and business owners to carefully integrate entrances, drives, parking and service access. To the extent possible, add streetscape elements, such as ornamental street lighting and trees to visually establish the corridor. Incorporate elements of the River-to-Harbor Walk, such as marked bollards, signage, and pavement markings. Create a public-private partnership to subsidize improvements to the pedestrian bridge over the canal to reinforce the connection from the downtown to the River-to-Harbor Walk and Inn.



Images, left to right: View down Tannery Lane looking toward the Knox Mill building; Concept Plan of the proposed streetscape treatment for a shared pedestrian and vehicle way on Tannery Lane. The parking for the Inn has been reorganized for better efficiency of space, which allows for the integration of a new pedestrian plaza space overlooking the river.



Make Improvements To Bay View Street

Provide wayfinding signage at the intersection of Main and Bay View Street to direct people to the Harbor District shops and restaurants. Consider branding the Harbor District to establish a unique identity that will serve to draw visitors to this area of the downtown. Tie this identity to the wayfinding program and especially the River-to-Harbor Walk.



Images, left to right: View down Bay View Street showing the loading zone for the Postal Service to the right; Concept for the Bay View streetscape improvements, which include recommendations for reducing curb cuts to improve sidewalk continuity.



Improve The Public Landing Alley And Commercial Streets

Consider future renovations to the Public Landing alley and Commercial Street in association with the schematic design project for Public Landing redevelopment. Improvements to the pedestrian alley might include special paving, lighted bollards, plantings and signage. Consideration will need to be given to access points to the buildings, stairways, service and utility areas. Assess the viability of a shared pedestrian-vehicle travel-way along Commercial Street and other opportunities to enhance the safety and environment of this pedestrian connection. Treatment of Commercial Street will ultimately respond to the treatment of the Public Landing and the balance of parking and open space.

Consider Parking Changes Along Sea Street

Ask the Parking Committee to consider temporarily restricting curbside parking to the west side of Sea Street during the busiest summer months in order to provide adequate road width for emergency vehicle access and Wayfarer-related commercial traffic. Survey residents and property owners to better understand their needs and concern related to parking and traffic on Sea Street. Monitor the street through the peak season to determine on-street parking needs and evaluate the appropriateness of resident and permit parking to alleviate congestion. Alternate traffic patterns should also be evaluated if parking cannot be restricted during summer months, but the impacts on other residential areas should be understood before implementing changes.

Make Improvements To Boat Launch

Work with Wayfarer to evaluate opportunities for expanding parking near the public boat launch off Steamboat Landing in a way that minimizes impact to residents and pulls vehicles away from the launching area. If possible, separate trailer and single vehicle parking areas. Provide pull-through spaces for vehicles hauling trailers provided there is adequate space available. Pave and stripe the existing parking area and provide a well-marked pedestrian route from the Boat Launch area to the lot and along both sides of Steamboat Landing. Install crosswalks and directional signage. To the extent possible, minimize the width of the paved right-of-way and preserve a vegetated buffer between the public right-of-way and private properties.



Images, Left: View toward boat launch from Steamboat Landing showing the proximity of residential housing and access. The Wayfarer property to the right may offer an opportunity for off-street parking. The Town should work with the property owner to partner for solutions to the congestion near the launch; Right: View of the launch.



Description of Problems & Opportunities

Few would deny that Camden is “parking-challenged.” As noted in the recent Economic Development Analysis and Action Plan, “at peak times parking can be difficult enough to dissuade visitors from stopping.” This is a concern echoed by downtown business owners who recognize that the ready availability of parking, particularly curbside, is integral to their customer base and ultimate bottom line. The visible congestion of curb parking on Main Street, in particular, creates the perception of a parking shortage, regardless of whether or not off-street spaces are available. This high occupancy rate of on-street parking in the downtown and the lack of an effective parking management strategy present a significant hurdle to economic development goals.

To date, Camden’s parking issue has been primarily couched as a supply and demand problem. Namely, in order to resolve downtown parking issues, the assumption has been that town must provide MORE free parking. The optimal supply is calculated using a “predict and provide” approach that extrapolates past trends to predict future demands using the same conventional standards that inform most zoning codes. These standards, such as those by the International Transportation Engineers (ITE), set parking requirements for land-use categories based on limited, peak-demand observations. In other words, these small data sets of “maximum observed parking demand” become the “minimum required parking supply” dictated within most land-use codes. Since most data sets are for single-use destinations in auto-dependent, suburban settings, these conventional parking standards, which already err toward over-supply, are especially excessive for walkable, compact downtowns where parking ideally serves multiple destinations. In these settings, parking standards are typically 20-40% higher than actually required, according to the Smart Growth Index Model by the US EPA. Excessive parking will not solve Camden’s parking problem, but it will waste valuable downtown land resources, increase automobile reliance, raise the cost of downtown home ownership, hinder redevelopment opportunities, and exacerbate sprawl.

Numerous studies have shown that that existing supply is often underutilized. According to Todd Litman, author of *Parking Best Management Strategies*, parking problems often consist of conflicts over the most convenient, high demand curb spaces, even if less convenient parking is nearby. Therefore, increasing the supply of less convenient off-street parking spaces does not generally solve parking problems. The solution lies in shifting demand from these most desirable spaces to the less utilized ones through a comprehensive parking management strategy. Initiated with new directional signage, activities promoting more efficient use of transportation resources, alternate forms of transportation and general circulation improvements, such a program can have enormous positive impacts within a community.

Curb Parking

Availability of parking is a key necessity for attracting customers to the downtown, and the most highly valued spaces are the most convenient on-street spots. To date, Camden has offered free curbside parking throughout the downtown, which has had unintended consequences. Free curb parking increases the number of cars cruising for spaces and the time required to find parking, reduces the number of new parking vacancies each hour, and fails to capitalize on an important revenue source for public services and improvements. Since the Route One corridor moves through the heart of Camden's downtown, unnecessary traffic congestion and the lack of visible curbside parking on Main and Elm Streets serve to exacerbate efforts to draw more visitors and shoppers to the downtown.

Time Limits

Time limit parking, as Camden relies upon in its downtown, is not only a politically unpopular revenue source, it is also fairly ineffective. A recent Study in Seattle found that the average duration of stay for cars parked in one-hour limit spaces was, on average, over two-hours. Surveys have also shown that over 50% of all cars parked in time-limit zones are either in violation of the time limits or are parked illegally. According to the Parking, Traffic and Transportation Committee, the two-hour limit for curbside and Public Landing spaces was initiated to deter employees and business owners from taking up spaces all day, but the limits pose restrictions on the visitors the Town is hoping will stay longer. Regulating parking through tickets could also be bad for business, "some people believe tickets are offensive after [visitors] have spent large quantities of money in town," noted one committee member.

Off-Street Parking Requirements

"The right to have access to every building in the city by private motorcar in an age when everyone possesses such a vehicle is the right to destroy the city." – Lewis Mumford

The New York Times recently reported that there are somewhere between 105 and two million parking spaces in the United States, and, of those, approximately a third of them are in parking lots. There are eight parking spaces for every car in the United States according to one cited source. A recent study by M.I.T. shows that, in some cities, parking lots cover thirty percent of the land use area, "becoming the single most salient landscape feature of our built environment." Off-street parking requirements, in particular, significantly impact land-use patterns, degrade the environment, reduce density, constrain economic development, and thereby limit the growth and vitality of our downtowns. Worse still, parking lots created in response to these requirements do little to satiate public parking needs since they typically serve single uses. This model is counterproductive to a diverse and dense downtown, where one space best serves multiple destinations and walkability is the focus. Rather, the high parking requirements serve to disfigure urban design and advance sprawl. Renowned New Urbanists Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zybek have called parking requirements "the single greatest killer of urbanism in the U.S. today."

Downtown Camden has avoided many of the repercussions from applying conventional off-street parking standards because many of the properties within the commercial core are grandfathered from the restrictions. But these grandfathered properties are also limited in their redevelopment or use options. “Parking requirements increase the cost of opening businesses in old buildings and reduce returns to investments in historic preservation,” according to one source. As in most communities, Camden’s required off-street spaces follow the ITE standards, which studies have proven to be significantly over-stated, particularly for dense central business districts. Currently businesses in Camden’s downtown can meet their parking requirements on-site or off-site by owning or renting spaces within 1,000 feet of the principal use. The ordinance states that spaces must be leased to the principal use and “in the continuous possession of the lessee and for the lessee’s exclusive use.” There is a provision for shared use of these leased parking spaces however such joint use has to be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), which creates a hurdle and may inadvertently deter creative solutions for a more efficient use of off-street parking. Camden’s ordinance makes provisions for waiving the off-street parking requirement for uses located in the downtown districts, which is a step in the right direction. These waivers must be approved by the ZBA.



Images, left to right: Existing Camden Parking lot looking toward the Knox Mill; View of the outdoor dining area at the Hogs Breath café, one of the many quaint nooks within Downtown Carmel, California. Downtown of off-street parking has allowed the redevelopment of valuable downtown space to enhance the pedestrian environment

Many other communities are rethinking off-street parking requirements in their commercial cores to stimulate redevelopment of historic properties, attract new businesses and investment, and to enhance the built environment. For example, Carmel, California prohibits all off-street parking in its central commercial district in order to reduce curb cuts, improve pedestrian flow and create opportunities for interior courts and walkways. While Carmel does have parking requirements, developers in the central commercial district pay in-lieu fees, which collectively support shared public parking spaces bordering the downtown. Most importantly, it is the absence of off-street parking that contributes to Carmel’s unique pedestrian environment that makes the town a wonderful place to live and visit. To quote a Carmel town official, “If our real problem is too many cars rather than too few parking spaces, minimum parking requirements make everything else worse.”

Circulation: Streets

“Streets have become a void in the mind of city planners. Transportation planning has been made separate from city planning and, accordingly, streets separate rather than link the different pieces of the city.” – Anne Vernez Moudon, Professor of Urban Design, University of Washington.

As stated in the 2011 Economic Development Analysis and Action Plan, Camden’s Business District is a good pedestrian environment, but it isn’t an ideal one. The Route One arterial bisects Camden’s downtown, and traffic often interferes with pedestrian activity between the River and Harbor Districts by restricting movement across Main Street. A survey conducted by the MDOT in connection to the Gateway 1 program found that residents in the Midcoast Region widely consider traffic levels and safety along Route One to be serious, worsening problems, a belief substantiated by current development trend projection models. Past planning trends have undervalued non-motorized travel and focused street design on moving vehicles more efficiently. Yet, these practices have not necessarily created environments conducive to people, traditional downtowns or alternate modes of transportation. Camden’s Comprehensive Plan raised the important concern that the character of Camden’s downtown not be “sacrificed to an arterial highway role,” and supported traffic calming, noting that “low speed traffic should be considered part and parcel of the functioning of the downtown.”

Circulation: Alternate Transportation, Bicycle & Pedestrian Routes

In examining future trends for traffic and growth along the Route One corridor, the Gateway 1 Steering Committee saw alarming potential changes: an 86% increase in miles of traffic congestion, increased linear sprawl and loss of natural areas. In response, the committee advocated for a Transit-Oriented Corridor (also referred to as a Community-Centered Corridor) pattern that would support alternative forms of passenger and freight transportation connecting defined compact growth areas, which would capture very large shares of all new housing over the next 25 years. As part of this model, the Gateway 1 Corridor Action Plan called for a significant reduction in single-occupant automobile commuting trips as well as a reduction in vehicle miles traveled per dwelling unit.

Studies have shown that 95% of the time our cars are immobile – usually parked in a small rectangle of paved space. Ironically, though, we have designed our environments largely to accommodate them. While most parking regulations dictate minimum standards for the number and size of parking spaces, there is little if any consideration given to moving pedestrians to and from them. Our cities and towns have become so auto-centric that there has been little comparative accommodation made for alternate choices of transportation, bicycle or pedestrian routes. The great irony is that these things – connectivity, walkability, and the promotion of recreational activities and non-motorized travel – all support rather than conflict with Maine’s stated quality of life objectives and Camden’s downtown revitalization goals.

Bicycle and pedestrian routes, including trails and greenbelts, offer social, recreational, environmental and economic benefits for their communities. A 2006 study by the Outdoor Industry Foundation found that “Active Outdoor Recreation” contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supports 6.5 million jobs, and generates \$88 billion in annual state and tax revenue. Hiking is one of the fastest growing recreational activities. The USDA Forest Service predicts a 26% increase in backpacking and hiking in the next

40 years. Trails close to economic centers, such as Camden’s downtown, stand to benefit from the increased consumer spending related to recreation, entertainment and lodging associated with “trail tourism.” According to the American Hiking Society, “well-managed trails running through communities can foster substantial sustainable economic activity through business development and tourism.”

Studies estimate that the bicycle industry supports 1.1 million jobs, generates \$18 billion in federal, state and local taxes, and contributes \$133 billion annually to the U.S. economy. A recent study of the economic impacts of bike tourism in Colorado, for example, demonstrated that over 50% of summer visitors engaged in bicycling. The study also found that ski areas, typically underutilized in the summer, offered untapped opportunities for catering to bike tourism.



Images, left to right: Boston Harbor Walk marker; Sharrow bicycle route sign; Portland Trails trail map showing network of trails; Back Cove, Portland trail marker.

Recommendations

The recommendations Parking & Circulation respond to the stated issues, goals and objectives for the Downtown Master Plan as identified by CEDAC. The recommendations also consider the following studies and reports: the 2009 Vision for Camden by CEDAC, the Economic Development Analysis & Action Plan, the 2011 Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, and the 2007 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The Parking & Circulation recommendations include overlapping design and planning objectives that are intended to be comprehensively applied and coordinated as part of an Integrated Parking Management Strategy for the downtown. The following recommendations have been organized for ease of understanding and use by Town staff. Additional information, where required, has been provided in the Supplemental Report.

Install Multi-Space Meters For Curb Parking & Do Away With Time Limits

Curb parking is a rival in consumption, or a “first come-first served” commodity, the price of which can either be borne by the community or by the individual drivers willing to pay for the convenience. The purpose for charging market prices for curbside parking is not to maximize revenue from meters, but to balance demand with the fixed supply and to create incentives for parking in farther locations where demand is less intense. Studies have shown that properly priced curb parking ensures a balance of vacant spaces, reduces the time required to find a curb parking, and mitigates the uncertainty of travel time. Pricing based on performance goals, such as maintaining a 15% - or one space per block – vacancy rate, responds appropriately to shifting demand by the hour or season: higher during times of peak demand times and lower at other times. Newer, multi-space electronic meters are user friendly and more convenient, with interactive screens and cashless transactions. They easily accommodate variable rates and can be managed wirelessly from a single, remote location. With one per block, these meters do not clutter the sidewalks or require marking individual parking spaces. In fact, studies have shown that unmarked curbs can typically accommodate 10-15% more cars in any available space. Many communities manage on-street parking without lining individual spaces, including the City of Portland.



Images of electronic multi-space meters located in a central business district. Shown is the Luke II by Digital Payment Technologies.

Establish A Parking Benefit / Business Improvement District.

According to one planner, “curb parking revenue is a benefit in search of a beneficiary: the funds need the right recipient to generate political support for market prices.” The best way to do this is to establish a Parking Benefit District that is associated with a Business Improvement District (BID). In a BID, the property owners assess themselves to identify and pay for public services beyond those provided by the City. These assessments are roughly proportionate to the benefits received, and the costs borne by each property owner are relatively small. Since individual assessments are typically exceeded by the commercial return, there is great economic incentive for establishing a BID. Dedicating curb parking revenue collected within the Parking Benefit District to the associated BID matches property owner investment in the downtown. Spending the revenue to benefit residents and business owners in visible and meaningful ways also creates a powerful new constituency for market pricing of parking, particularly since non-residents bear the majority of the cost.

Develop Loading Zones & Policies

Areas of commercial activity require designated loading zones and/or policies to ensure a proper integration with other downtown uses. Camden is especially challenged by the volume of its summer traffic flow, the width and orientation of side streets and topography. Main Street, in particular, poses a challenging dilemma in terms of traffic flow, pedestrian activity, and the necessity of curbside parking for visitors and shoppers. The Town should work with downtown merchants and suppliers to identify specific needs and to assess the best strategies for managing delivery activities, particularly during the busy summer and fall months.

Several strategies for on-street loading zones are recommended in a recent report examining freight movement in Central Business Districts. On-street curbside cutouts have been cited as promising solutions for accommodating loading and parcel delivery activities with minimal interference with the travel lanes, parked vehicles or pedestrians. The solution typically requires retrofitting of the street infrastructure. In general, studies suggest that loading zones are best located at the ends of street block in the direction of travel or at the entrances of alleys, where a driver can access multiple destinations from a single location. The minimum recommended length for a loading zone is thirty feet. Ideally, there should be one loading zone per block, oriented to support “front-in, front-out” travel that does not require the driver to back up.



Images, left to right: Loading zone sign with decal requirement to deter non-commercial uses; Loading activities on Washington Street.

Curb management policies for loading zones include the use of hang tag parking permits, which allow contractors to use any metered space for the duration of their work. Permits for half-day and full day parking can be purchased in advance for reasonable set fees. A number of cities have also initiated loading zone meter fees in order to encourage turnover of commercial vehicles. Other cities allow the use of leased “meter bags” to temporarily designate short-term loading zones in metered spaces.

Many communities with congested Central Business Districts restrict deliveries to off-peak hours. New York City, for example, is currently weighing policies for encouraging delivery drivers to operate during off-peak hours between 7pm and 6am. It should be noted, however, that accepting off-hour deliveries may be problematic for many of the small businesses in Camden.

Finally, communication and enforcement are essential components for managing loading zones in the downtown. A municipal point-of-contact and online parking information resources can be very helpful to delivery companies trying to manage logistics. Enforcement of loading zone policy and use is also important to ensure that the spaces are available and managed appropriately.

Rethink Off-Street Parking Requirements In The Downtown Districts

Quoting Michael Kimmel, author of the article *Paved, but Still Alive*, “it is high time to abandon outmoded zoning codes from the auto-boom days requiring specific ratios of parking spaces per housing units, or per square foot of [commercial] space. These rules about minimum parking spaces have driven up the costs of apartments for developers and residents, damaged the environment, diverted money that could have gone to mass transit, and created a government-mandated [downtown-scape] that largely underused.”

Camden’s current zoning language around the “Methods of Meeting Parking Requirements,” is evidence that the Town understands the need for flexibility around parking requirements in the downtown. As referenced under Article 5.i, the Town should proceed with the development of a special parking district that includes all of the B-1 and B-Th zones and a portion of the B-TR zone (properties to the east of Washington Street). Off-street parking requirements in the special parking district would be significantly reduced or eliminated in order to stimulate redevelopment of historic properties, to support changes in use and new business development, and to promote infill projects – all of which will support the character and qualities of a dense, walkable downtown and the variety of shops, offices, residences that support it. Camden should remove the hurdles of the ZBA process to the extent possible.

Camden should also reconsider its current \$4,500/space Parking Trust fees, which have reportedly been a significant deterrent to small business development. While these types of in-lieu fees can provide important sources of revenue for financing shared parking, such fees typically apply to the construction and maintenance of public parking structures, which help justify the high cost. Where Camden has no immediate plans for a parking structure, the Town may wish to consider a less costly Parking Credit Program, in which businesses pay a modest fee in-lieu of providing the required off-street spaces – for example, a fee used in one small town yielded \$125/year/space. The low fees reduce the barriers to new business establishment and adaptive reuse of existing buildings and create options to the high up-front costs of providing those parking spaces on-site or paying the more substantial in-lieu fees. Income from the program would be dedicated to the Town’s existing Parking Trust Fund for the maintenance and provisions of public

parking facilities, much the same way as the Parking Trust Fee is allocated. The parking credit programs do not relieve costs associated with leasing spaces or paying for off-street parking, so businesses or their employees pay for spaces as needed – just as other drivers.

Increase Shared Parking Opportunities

Shared parking is a key strategy for increasing off-street parking facility efficiency and use. Parking lots that serve multiple users or destinations are much more efficient than reserved or single-use spaces. As other towns, Camden has an abundance of underutilized private parking facilities. Sharing parking can reduce parking demand up to 30% and can provide great benefits for the Town as well as property and business owners. Shared parking addresses a public need, reduces traffic congestion, provides a potential revenue source for lot owners, and supports the goals for downtown development. The Town should negotiate shared parking arrangements with owners of large, private lots to meet peak demands for parking and to reduce traffic congestion in the downtown. These steps should dovetail with the necessary sign and streetscape improvements.

Shared parking can work seamlessly with the Parking Credit Program by allowing business and property owners to pay in-lieu fees to fund public parking instead of private, single-use destination parking at each site. The zoning codes should be updated to specify provisions for shared parking related to Off Street Parking and Loading Standards. At its discretion, the Town can allocate funds for improvements to existing lots providing public parking, forming private-public partnerships when necessary to further the objectives of the parking management strategy.

As stated previously, the key objective in the parking strategy involves shifting much of the demand for curbside parking to off-street public lots. The Mechanic Street parking facilities owned by Camden Parking Company, with its large capacity and strategic location between Elm and Mechanic Streets, has the greatest potential for use as a paid public parking facility yet most of its spaces are leased long-term and unavailable for hourly paid parking. The Town should work closely with the Camden Parking Company to shift leasing to the Town lot behind the fire station or to another nearby location in order to free up opportunities for public parking close to the downtown. As an incentive to lessees, the Town could initially offer free parking in these locations, later charging a nominal fee for permit parking (As a side note, the recommended reductions in off-street parking requirements may, in fact, reduce the number of leased spaces). Camden should also consider forming a public-private partnership with the Camden Parking Company and fronting the cost of making physical improvements to the Mechanic Street parking lot to make it more efficient, visible, attractive, and connected to the downtown. A percentage of the hourly parking charges could be used as a return on a share of the investment. An escrow account using funds from the Parking Credit Program could be used to subsidize upkeep and future improvements as part of the partnership agreement. Parking fees should be synchronized with the performance pricing of the curbside meters as part of the management strategy.

Develop A Parking Wayfinding System

Many of Camden's parking issues have resulted in part because information about parking locations, regulations, price and other helpful user information has been greatly inadequate. Development of a parking wayfinding system to direct cars from main

transportation routes to designated parking lots is a key component of the overall parking management strategy. Parking information can be incorporated in visitor materials, kiosks, or digitally on a parking-and-transportation specific web site. The Town should endeavor to establish regular communication with area merchants and event organizers to collaborate on appropriate parking solutions that respond to anticipated regular traffic volume.



Images, left to right: Downtown Freeport directional signage for public off-street parking lots; Nashville’s Park It Downtown Express bus; Park It! Downtown logo and example map from the Park It! Downtown website for the City of Nashville.

The Town should engage an environmental graphic design firm to develop a coordinated signage program that includes parking wayfinding and possibly branding. A well-developed parking system brand conveys a positive message to visitors and residents about the quality and management of parking facilities, which helps parking to emerge as a positive and marketable asset. As a short-term measure, the Town should install parking directional signs using the blue international symbol and arrows at designated locations on Route One and specified routes. Consideration should be given for motorists leaving the lot as well, with signage indicating directions back to Route One north and south. To orient visitors, off-street lots should include directional information to important destination points in the downtown.

Beautify Parking Lots And Enhance Pedestrian Circulation Routes

It could be said that parking lots are often a visitor’s first and last impressions of the downtown. Camden can make a difference in that experience by offering clean, safe and attractive parking areas. Combined with branding and wayfinding improvements, the beautification of parking lots and enhancement of pedestrian connections would greatly enhance Camden’s competitive advantage as a downtown destination. An important part of the parking management strategy includes enhancing perceptions of safety in off-street parking areas and improving the quality and connectivity of walking conditions from the lot to destinations. A pedestrian-oriented environment with complimentary streetscape elements, landscaping and signage has a powerful impact on its users. Studies show a strong correlation between safety and beauty – well-maintained and landscaped spaces generally elicit a greater

sense of security in both men and women. Improvements to pedestrian circulation routes and the parking lots themselves is therefore an important factor in raising their level of use and convincing drivers that these off-street lots offer a safe and good alternative to curbside parking.

Implement The River-To-Harbor Walk And Park Improvements

- River-To-Harbor Walk:

Over recent years, the River Walk idea has gained increasing support from City officials and community members. In 2011, CEDAC, EDD, the Chamber of Commerce and various committees supported the River Walk as a high priority within the Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, stating that “River walk along the Megunticook River is a key piece of the tourist accommodation factor, as well as moving visitors from the deep downtown to other parts of the community. It represents a key element in the eco-tourism/visitor experience that should expand reasons for visitors to stay longer in Camden.”



Images, left to right: Graphic showing the proposed River-to-Harbor Walk route; Custom Riverwalk sign denotes river heritage of Newport, Kentucky.

The walk plays an integral role in achieving the stated goals for economic development because it leverages Camden’s spectacular natural, scenic and cultural assets to showcase the town’s exceptional quality of life and unique sense of place, both of which are key factors for attracting businesses, workers, residents, and tourists. Connectivity and public open space are two important considerations of the River-to-Harbor Walk. These recommendations include a pedestrian connection between Harbor Park and the Public Landing as well as creation of a small park space on Mill Pond adjacent to the Knox Mill.

- Mill Pond Park:

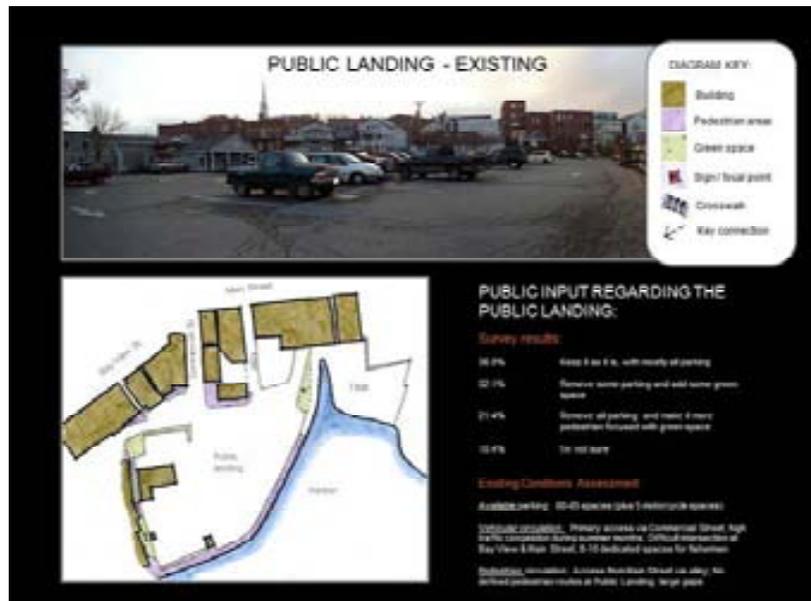
Development of the Mill Pond Park, a joint project between the Town and property owner, would introduce a wonderful new public natural space and community asset to a lesser visited part of the downtown along the River-to-Harbor Walk. Park development is also complimentary to the other activities and uses on site and nearby, such as the farmers' market and residential housing.



Images, left to right: View of Mill Pond looking toward the Knox Mill building; Concept sketch for a new public open space and trails at Mill Pond. See Supplemental Report for more details.

- Public Landing:

The Master Plan outlines conceptual redevelopment scenarios for the Public Landing, which demonstrate various ratios between parking and pedestrian/open space, but it does not go so far as to make specific design recommendations. CEDAC's "Economic Vision for Camden" includes a more pedestrian friendly landing to improve the appeal of the downtown. Changes proposed included limiting parking, "greening" measures and limited vehicle access. Goals outlined in the Strategic Economic Development Action Plan supported more functional aspects of the harbor as a place to visit by water and land. These ideas and others, such as a bridge between Harbor Park and the Public Landing, should be further investigated through a comprehensive schematic design process that includes significant coordination and outreach with Town working committees, business and property owners, waterfront users, the Harbor Master, Chamber of Commerce and members of the general public to find workable solutions for the Public Landing. There has been much discussion of the need for parking at the Public Landing, which may be mitigated somewhat by the initiation of the integrated parking management strategies proposed by the Master Plan. Traffic patterns and access, restroom facilities, alleys, service and utility provisions, views, accessibility, waterfront uses and needs, and the Chamber of Commerce building will also be important considerations.



Images, left to right: Existing conditions assessment of the Public Landing; Concept Diagrams showing alternate approaches to land-use at the Public Landing. The recommendations call for an outreach and design effort for the redevelopment of the facility. Refer to the Supplemental Report.

Promote Alternate Forms Of Transportation & Regional Connections

The 2011 Strategic Economic Development Action Plan strongly recommended implementing the Pedestrian Bikeway Report’s recommendation for increasing neighborhood connectivity, including improvements to trails, sidewalks and bicycle routes as a “critical component of [the Town’s] commitment to local and tourist accommodations.” These improvements greatly support the stated objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by enhancing quality of life and supporting alternate modes of travel. Well-marked and connected routes for bicyclists and pedestrians provide important links to the downtown and greatly enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation and alternate modes of travel. The Town should endeavor to implement the recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and work with the Coastal Mountain Land Trust, the Conservation Commission and others to support and enhance the network of trails and conservation lands.

Making accommodations for bicycle travel with clear signage, route markings and maps is an imperative first step in improving the safety and convenience for cyclists. In association with these provisions, the Town should provide bicycle racks in the downtown, at shared parking facilities and on shuttles to encourage bicycle commuting, touring and sight-seeing. Camden should look to examples in communities that have initiated bike sharing programs. Programs such as Boston’s New Balance Hubway bike sharing system promote “green transit options” by providing fleets of bicycles-for-lease at transit hubs throughout the city. Boston’s program is underwritten by Mass DOT and New Balance. Such a system would be a wonderful supplement to bicycle route improvements. Revenue from the rentals could be dedicated to a maintenance and replacement fund managed by the Town or a cooperative entity.



Images, left to right: Typical layout and markings for a dedicated bike lane; Posted bike route map; Bike route marker and directional signage for key destinations.

The Strategic Economic Development Action Plan of 2011 called for implementing a transit system to remove commuter, local traffic from the transportation system during summer months, when high traffic volumes congest the Town’s streets. This is an important first step in implementing regional transportation connections that offer local residents alternatives to personal vehicle use.

Devise A Parking Overflow Strategy

A parking overflow strategy is essentially a contingency-based planning solution for monitoring and managing the downtown's needs for additional supply. Peak parking demand in Camden is limited to a few weeks out of every year, so rather than expand parking capacity within the downtown, the Town should designate large, remote lots that can handle the extra capacity and be linked to the downtown via a shuttle service. Parking for conferences and other events hosted in the downtown, for example, should be moved out of the downtown during seasons of higher demand to alleviate traffic congestion and competition for parking spaces. It is important that these lots be actively managed during overflow parking. This includes installing appropriate wayfinding signage to direct drivers to the lots.

Introduction

Camden's downtown is a concentrated commercial core with historic integrity, civic destinations (such as the Camden Opera House, Camden Public Library, the Post Office, and Knox Mill Complex and others, and supported by fairly dense residential neighborhoods and housing with good sidewalks. It is a quintessential traditional New England small town with a Main Street reinforced by street trees and historic architecture. All of these components support the concept of walkability, which is essential for downtown revitalization.

The compactness and density of downtown buildings contribute greatly to its attractiveness. Contained within these built up "street walls" is the public realm, which is scaled for people to feel comfortable. However this same already built compactness also severely limits development opportunities for new buildings or expansion of existing ones. By necessity, Camden must focus on rehabilitating and improving its existing buildings.

Property & Building Inventory and Methodology

To fully understand the role of downtown buildings to the Master Plan, all 164 properties within the study area were inventoried and most were photographed. The resulting data was consolidated in a single spreadsheet which in turn was analyzed to extract trends about Physical Data and Occupancy/Business Data. Please note: The purpose of the inventory and analysis is to identify trends which can be used to support general policy discussions, rather than generate precise data.

The methodology is based on the integration of several data sources. The initial building inventory information was generated by Camden's Planning, Development, and Assessing Office. This data set included information for individual properties such as: address; tax map; zoning; acreage; elevator access. Further details relating to the number of floors, square footage, and use type were then compiled by referencing the online Assessors database.

Information regarding current use and number of employees was gathered from the Chamber of Commerce and the Assessors Office. The Maine State Historic Preservation office provided information for properties listed on the National Register, and those having the potential to be eligible for National Register Nomination.

Occupancy and Use Data was confirmed by way of Field Surveys. Onsite analysis was made by comparing the initial data against existing conditions. Quantitative information regarding occupancy use type, employment type and number employed was provided by building owners and business tenants. Data was then sorted according to types to obtain percentages of occupancy and occupational use types.

By understanding downtown buildings' physical characteristics, fact-based discussions can lead to informed conclusions which in turn guide Town policy. For example: Residential uses on ground floors are sometimes considered a detraction from valuable activity on the street. Extracting appropriate data provides the background for a fact-based discussion, which may lead to an informed policy review.

Physical Data Summary

Buildings - Inventoried within Study Area	130	Existing Elevator Access
1-story buildings	19	(0) NA
2-story buildings	88	(6) 2-story buildings
3-story buildings	19	(6) 3-story buildings
4-story buildings	4	(1) 4-story building
Total Properties - Inventoried within Study Area	164	13 buildings w/elevators

Buildings - Total Net Leasable Area	974,828 sf
1 st floor	478,558 sf
2 nd floor	286,241 sf
3 rd floor	21,385 sf
4 th floor	11,969 sf

Public Parking Lots – within TIF District	16,700 sf
Washington Street, paved, not lighted	4,700 sf
Mechanic Street, paved, lighted	6,000 sf
Mechanic Street, paved, not lighted	6,000 sf
Private Parking Lots – within TIF District	72,500 sf
Chestnut Street, paved, not lighted	10,800 sf
22 Mechanic Street, paved, not lighted	3,600 sf
26 Mechanic Street, paved, not lighted	40,000 sf
30 Mechanic Street, paved, not lighted	16,000 sf
Washington Street, paved, not lighted	2,100 sf

Occupancy/Business Data Summary

Occupancy/Business Type by Floor					by Percent		Occupational Type & # Employees	
Occ. Type	1st Floor	2nd Floor	3rd Floor	4th Floor	Total Businesses	% of Total Businesses		
Office	21	29	4	2	56	19.9%	Office: Professional & Business Services	344
Condominium	27	20	3	0	50	17.7%	Offices & Business Services	117
Retail	45	4	0	0	49	17.4%	Finance & Insurance	98
Apartment	1	20	10	0	31	11.0%	Municipal / Federal Offices	45
Restaurant	19	7	1	0	27	9.6%	Real Estate / Legal Services	40
Single Family	9	8	1	0	18	6.4%	Healthcare / Social Services	28
Hotel	3	6	3	2	14	5.0%	Non-Profit / Foundations	16
Shop	6	0	0	0	6	2.1%		
Marine	10	2	0	0	12	4.3%	Retail	209
Bed & Breakfast	2	2	1	0	5	1.8%	Restaurant Food Service	169
Bank	2	1	0	0	3	1.1%	Hospitality/Accommodations	43
Grocery	1	0	0	0	1	0.4%	Marine Industry	39
Church	2	2	0	0	4	1.4%		
Auditorium	0	1	1	0	2	0.7%		
School	1	1	0	0	2	0.7%		
Post Office	1	1	0	0	2	0.7%		
Total Types Per Floor	15	14	8	2	282	100%	Total	804

Inventory Database and Property Photographs

Please see [Chapter S3 – Buildings Supplemental Information](#) for Inventory Database and Property Photographs and the Town for original higher quality documents.

National Register Historic Districts

Introduction

Probably one of the least promoted but much appreciated Downtown assets is its history as told through its distinctive 19th and 20th Century architecture. Within the Downtown there are three Historic Districts, or portions thereof, on the National Park Service's (NPS) National Register of Historic Places containing numerous contributing buildings and houses, generally in good to excellent condition.

Description

The three districts consist of the High Street Historic District established in July 1988 and added to in October 2005 to include Harbor Park; the Chestnut Street Historic District approved in January 1991; and the most recent, the Camden Great Fire Historic District included in July 2006. Maps showing each of these distinct districts are contained in the Supplement and Resources.

The High Street Historic District contains well preserved 19th and 20th Century architecture including Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, along with houses containing some aspects of Italianate detail. Probably the most visible architecture in the district and in the Downtown is the Colonial Revival Camden Public library. The grounds of the Camden Library create a distinctly unique, highly articulated series of landscape experiences, the centerpiece of which is a public outdoor garden amphitheater. Designed by the renowned landscape architect Fletcher Steele, this landscape is one of his best works of art. Designed and constructed between 1928 and 1931 and employing local people, and funded by a local patron of the arts, Mrs. Mary Louise Curtis Bok, Steele's landscape design blends elements of traditional Neo-classical with the then 'new' ideas of the French Moderne or Art Deco and successfully marries the ideals of the Renaissance Italian garden theater with the richness of Maine's native vegetation. When first conceived, the entire site was simply known as "Camden Library." However the popularity and unique qualities of the Amphitheater immediately rechristened the site "Camden Amphitheatre". Some natives still refer to it as the Bok Amphitheater, having grown up with that name, participated in high school graduation ceremonies at the site, and which is best known to the locals as the graduation backstop for the movie classic Peyton Place filmed in Camden in 1957. Presently the site is pending nomination as a NPS National Register of Historic Places National Landmark as a place that has special historical, architectural, or cultural significance thereby given it legal protection from alteration and destruction.

Chestnut Street Historic District architecture covers the period from the mid-18th Century Federal style to the architectural peevess of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century cottage movement. Architectural forms include Greek, Gothic and Dutch Colonial Revival, along with a dash of Italianate details. The most visible features of the district are the U.S. Post Office built in 1913 with its large Renaissance Revival façade, and the Village Green designed by the Olmsted Brothers.

The only district entirely situated in the Downtown is the Camden Great Fire District encompassing the area destroyed by conflagration of 1892. Rebuilt after the fire with brickwork we see an eclectic mixture of architectural expressions notable amongst them: Renaissance. Colonial, and Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Romanesque.

For reason uncertain, not all of the Downtown is located within one of the three historic districts. The gap includes lower Bay View Street and the east side of Main Street as shown on map in the Supplemental Information prepared by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Historic Properties – within National Register Districts	
Camden Great Fire Historic District	
Contributing properties	20
Non-Contributing properties	1
Chestnut Street Historic District	
Contributing properties	10
Non-Contributing properties	1
Historic Properties – Individually Listed in the National Register	2

Accessing Federal and State and Historic Tax Credits by Expanding Existing National Register Historic Districts or Create a New Historic District

These tax credits are available for assisting with funding for rehabilitations of buildings providing the structure is a contributing building to one of the three Historic Districts in the Downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Contributing properties have characteristics that, together with other nearby similar properties, enable a district eligible to be listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Non-contributing properties may be of the same age as nearby contributing properties, but have lost their historic integrity due to renovations, alterations and repairs over the years, or within the same district but from a more recent era. Within National Register of Historic Districts, contributing properties are eligible for state and Federal tax credits; whereas non-contributing structures are not eligible.

For buildings not within one of these districts such as on Bay View Street there are two options available: increasing the boundary of the Chestnut Street Historic District to include contributing buildings located on streets not served by an historic district like Bayview Street, or the creation of a new Historic District. For the purpose of moving this financing option forward the Maine Historic Preservation Commission was contacted concerning this issue. In reply they provided a map illustrating potential contributing properties to a new or increased historic district. The map and potential properties are found in Supplemental Information. The following is listing of potential individual properties for inclusion in an increased Chestnut Street Historic District or for a new Bay View Street Historic District:

- #1 Main Street - Cappy’s Restaurant – property needs further evaluation as to Contributing or NC
- #7 Main Street - property needs further evaluation as to Contributing or NC

Easterly or waterside of Bay View Street

- #2 Bay View Street-New England Reality Co. –Contributing
- #4/6 Bay View –Camden Jewelry and Sage –NC
- #8 Bayview-Maine Gathering –NC
- #10 Bay View-Leslie Curtis Design, Paolina’s Way (former Camden Herald building)-Contributing
- #12 Bay View –Peter Ott’s Tavern and former Bay View Garage-Contributing
- #20 Bayview –Cashmere Goat and Fresh Restaurant –NC
- #24 Bay View-Camisole Co.-Contributing

West side of Bay View Street

- #33 Bay View-Bayview Gallery-Contributing
- #25 Bay View –Sugar Tool Co., Goose River Exchange-Contributing
- #21 Bay View –Cuzzy’s –NC
- #2 Elm Street-Camden National Bank-NC.

Expanding Existing or New National Register Historic District Maps

Please see Chapter S1 – Economics Supplemental Information for maps describing expanding existing or new National Register Historic Districts.

Engaged Citizens

Mid-coast Maine area is known for its long tradition of community involvement in public issues going back to when it opposed inclusion in the new County of Waldo, and instead agitated the State Legislature for the creation of newer county called Knox. This tradition of political discourse - combined with the area’s quality of life which has attracted an influx of year-round residents who have retired from distinguished careers in the State Department and the military, the nation’s intelligence agencies, domestic and international businesses and academia - helped set the stage for interested and concerned long-time residents, natives and newer residents to join for an unusually high degree of engagement throughout the Master Planning process. All stakeholders recognized the social, cultural and economic importance of a vibrant downtown. This in turn allowed the Town and its citizens to constructively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER downtown should be revitalized.

Many Opportunities for Participation and High Engagement

This master plan was guided by significant input from many sources, including meetings with the Downtown Plan Working Group and interviews with many Downtown Business and Property Owners who shared their thoughts and interest. In particular there were multiple opportunities for Citizen Participation, which fostered an unusually high degree of engagement. Collectively their input is appreciated and their contributions were critical to ensure the plan truly reflects the community. Camden’s consensus that “*a thriving downtown preserves a sense of place and promotes the economic well-being of its residents*” allowed citizens to productively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER downtown should be improved.

The Master Plan purposefully followed an iterative process consisting of: sharing information - listening to feedback – adjusting – sharing new and revised information – listening to new feedback etc. Specific concepts were “tested” with the Working Group, then after guidance, presented to citizens for feedback. The following outlines and describes the process.

Nov 22	Work Group Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
Jan 11	Work Group Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Meeting
Jan 26	Public Forum #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended this meeting at the Camden Opera House.
Feb 15	Public Online Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online survey was launched on 02/15/2012 and closed on 03/07/2012. A total of 332 responses were collected. The survey asked a total of 20 questions.

Feb 21	Work Group Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting
March 14	Public Forum #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended this meeting at the Knox Mill Complex
March 27	Work Group Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Meeting
April 17	Select board Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Downtown Master Plan by the consultant team and members of the Downtown Master Plan Work Group. Open to the public, in the Camden Opera House and broadcast live on Time Warner Channel 22.

Public Forum #1, January 26, 2012

Overview: Nearly eighty citizens attended Forum #1 and were asked to break into groups to discuss their most pressing concerns, as well as their highest hopes for the future of Camden. These are the results, reported to the meeting from the break-out groups, and arranged here in alphabetical order. This listing is not an indication of the priority of important these issues were assigned by the participants, but readers should know that many of the hopes, as well as many of the concerns, were shared by most of the attendees.

Agenda: Introduction - What, Why, Where, Who When; Part 1 – Laying the Foundation; Part 2 - Large Group Feedback; Part 3 - Activity to Date; Part 4 - Small Group Discussion; Part 5 - Small Group Reporting



TOP HOPES: (These outstanding notes by Jeanne Hollingsworth)

#1: **QUALITY OF LIFE:** Maintain Camden's unique quality of life, which draws businesses and residents to the area, while making this a better place to live and work.

Activity: Create high-visibility activities downtown year-round

- Bring more activities to Town: Think of closing an area to vehicular traffic one day a week to create an area for the Farmers Market to be right Downtown.
- Create a Historical Museum.
- Create an Arts Commission to bring more art and art events to Town; they are popular now and the Town should do more events like sidewalk art shows.
- Embrace recreational themes: Take advantage of the Snow Bowl, State Park, Pathways, and create outdoor activities year-round.
- Utilize the "campus concept" for multi-layered activities and events. Think of shutting off side streets to host certain events downtown.
- Create more outdoor events year round like the Winter Festival and Christmas by the Sea.
- We need a sense of pedestrian energy – visible activity – on the streets and sidewalks to attract visitors to stop and to attract locals downtown.
- Work to "keep the lights on" after conferences have ended with follow-up activities and events making visitors extend their stay.

College Campus: Establish a Community College.

Green Energy:

- Use a bio-fueled trolley to shuttle people around town including to and from outlying parking areas.
- Create opportunities to develop hydro-power at the Megunticook River Dams to attract green industries and businesses.

Locals:

- Establish businesses locals want and need downtown – a moderately priced clothing store and other useful stores – to bring locals back downtown to the shops year-round. Bring a retail mix back to Town.
- Involve locals and engage them in these decisions: work especially to reach those with dissenting opinions so they can be heard.
- Work to maintain a sense of community and find shared goals; motivate others to join in efforts.
- Find those with common interests and form coalitions to work toward common goals.
- Make the downtown very livable and walk able for downtown residents; encourage people to live downtown; reduce traffic and walk everywhere. Provide the services people need within walking distance. Rents need to be reasonable for residents as well as for businesses.
- Need a place to hold forums to discuss issues – divisive and otherwise – to work problems out before they escalate.
- Locals need to collaborate on making decisions, but when a decision has been made the Town needs to embrace the wishes of the majority and not continue the fight.

Movie Theatre:

Parking: Parking garage with new and modern office spaces on ground floor.

- Better signage to parking areas. Two hour parking limits in some areas isn't business friendly (schooner rides take longer than allowed parking).

Pedestrians:

- Create pedestrian traffic with new pathways, a River Walk, a Harbor Walk - inter-connected and leading to various parts of Town, as well as linking to outlying areas like the Snow Bowl, the State Park and the Tannery as well.
- Get people out walking on the streets – including locals.
- There is a lot of pavement at the intersection of Mechanic and Main – do we need it all or is this an opportunity to create a welcoming, pedestrian oriented central space – a hub.

Public Landing: Make the landing a gathering place for people instead of parking.

Streets and Sidewalks:

- Bring activity and life to the streets, sidewalks and parks: More outdoor seating opportunities (benches); outdoor café tables; art at intersections as part of streetscape and in the park.

Technology-based information systems (GPS, Google Maps, Phone Apps):

- This could be used to provide information to supplement signage to show where parking is located in Town among other things.
- The Town could develop a Downtown Merchants App
- The Town should bring Broad Band – free Wi-Fi – to Town for locals and visitors alike.
- Encourage more technology-based conferences and events to come to Town.
- Encourage technology-based businesses to come to Town by providing state-of-the-art office space.

Tourism Bureau: Instead of the Chamber, have an office just for tourism providing information and directions – not just to Chamber members but to everyone.

TOP CONCERNS

#1: JOBS! JOBS! JOBS! The downtown needs to be vital year round, the town needs to be vital year round, and we need good, well-paying, year-round jobs – lots of them.

Economic Development/Business atmosphere:

- Many businesses have closed in the last six months of 2011: how many and why? This information needs to be gathered and assessed.
- Create a business incubator.
- Marry the friendly atmosphere of Camden with responsible business development.
- Work hard to find a way to help Camden's businesses compete with other tourist destinations.
- Camden's Ordinances restrict business development.
- The current Select Board is more business friendly – make changes.
- Concerns are sometimes created instead of evolving naturally – resist changes made just to change.

- The Downtown Plan should focus on what happens here in winter to bring about year-round development; businesses do OK in the summer – we need to work first on becoming a year-round Town.
- Camden needs to define a brand – a unique identity – in order to remain competitive.
- Take advantage of all the other studies that have already been done instead of doing that work all over again.

Character of the Town:

- Don't throw the baby out with the bath water in trying to "improve" the Town: Avoid mistakes made by other towns trying to improve traffic or pedestrian safety and losing what is unique – don't use traditional solutions but find solutions that fit this Town; Maintain the look of the Downtown as it is now; Changes should evolve not be created "evolution not revolution";
- We can't do "nothing" and resist change; we must find what we can do to create business year-round and keep the character of the Town and then do it.
- Market the Historic character of the Downtown specifically; the B&B's in particular are in historic buildings – this is a valuable asset that should be stressed.
- We are a small Town with a limited Downtown area; recognize our physical limitations and don't overdevelop.

Dark Houses and Dark Neighborhoods:

- Many close in neighborhoods are summer only residences now and many are rented most of the season; this takes business away from B&B's and owners don't contribute to the Town as participating residents, don't own businesses or support them year round. They are not functioning households and the trend is harmful to the Town.

Jobs:

- Create incentives to encourage small start-up businesses to set up here.
- Work to fill need for year-round good jobs downtown.
- Provide good office spaces with parking.
- Good jobs won't come without amenities – which comes first? Provide the amenities and employers will come; or, create jobs and the amenities will follow. What can the Town do?
- Jobs continue to be lost downtown: Work to attract businesses with good jobs; work to attract year-round small businesses.
- Work to retain our young people and to attract young families.
- Create shared office-space concept for small businesses.

Lighting: This is not a friendly Town at night; we need better lighting as well as places to shop or walk.

- Very poor pedestrian lighting: hard for pedestrians to see where they are walking and harder still for drivers to see pedestrians.

Night time Activities: Movies, movies, movies – everyone want the theatre back.

- There is nothing to do at night for visitors and locals alike. Young people won't come to stay if there is nothing for them to do. Visitors to B&B's are always asking what they can do.

Parking: Existing parking should be better used. Educate employees and employers about free up parking on downtown streets.

- Provide parking on outer Union Street with bike rentals to get around Town.
- We need a parking garage – preferably on Town property at Mechanic Street.

Pedestrians: Improve Mechanic Street and Bayview Street intersections for pedestrians.

- Create an actual physical walkway to move pedestrians off Main Street and around various parts of Town.
- The Town needs to be more pedestrian friendly day and night.
- There needs to be recognition of public v. private property when developing pedestrian walk ways.
- The pedestrian pathways evolve instead of being created suddenly; planned but perhaps not implemented all at once.

Rents: Camden is losing businesses to Rockland and Belfast due to highest rents around.

- What can be done to help bring them into line? Young people from Town want to stay and start their businesses here but just cannot afford the rents.

Schools: Keep the elementary and middle schools in Town.

Signs: A major concern is improving signage both to improve traffic flow and help people find their way around Town. In addition to several comments along these lines people added:

- No billboards! All signage should be in good taste.
- Monitor the size of signs.
- Work on directional signage first.
- There is an over-emphasis on the need for parking and signs to parking.
- Use visual clues instead of signs – or in addition to signs – to help direct people. There are things that can be done with streetscapes to get people to turn corners instead of more signs – Rockland has done well with this with planters, benches, etc.

Tourism: Don't accept that Camden can *only* be a tourist town.

Town Property:

- Chamber-of-Commerce: The office should be relocated to one of the Gateways, or at the entrance to Town, to make the services more accessible and free up valuable space on the
- Public Landing. The Public Landing is underutilized: take advantage of this spectacular space. This would be a good night-time destination for people walking if there were lighting and some café tables – a gathering place.
- Town Office: Find the highest and best use for the building, relocate Town Office and return the building to retail as before.
- Utilize the entire Opera House including redoing the third floor; the concept under discussion is exciting.

Traffic:

- Congestion caused by double-parked delivery trucks on Route 1.
- Don't muck up the intersection at French and Brawn.
- Fix the intersections at the Gateways to make them more welcoming, safer and easier to travel through: The Stop sign at Stop-and-Go is not very welcoming.
- Make traffic flow better by working on pedestrian crossings so everything flows better.
- Be creative in finding an interactive solution to the traffic/pedestrian situation at the bottlenecks.

Young People: There are no activities for young people here.

- Make the Town child-friendly with activities geared toward children and families.

Zoning: Establish consistent zoning for downtown permitting retail on the first floor.

- Save ground floor space for retail and not for residential.

This text and graphic synopsis provide by Emily Lusher.

Overview: The overall response rate was good, enough to reasonably draw conclusions. Publicity around town appears to have been sufficient to draw people to the survey.

1. Over a third of the respondents to the survey did not know about the initial meeting which indicates that the publicity around the survey reached a wider audience. Almost half of the respondents knew about the meeting but did not go which suggests that a good sized group was willing to express opinions without going to the meeting. The fairly small percentage of respondents who went to the meeting probably represent the most active component of the community.
2. 8 in 10 meeting attendees were satisfied or very satisfied with the format and information. The meeting was a success in that regard.
3. The space was a bit problematic.
4. On the whole most people felt that the plan and process were well described.
5. Most felt that there was enough time allocated.
6. The breakout sessions were useful.

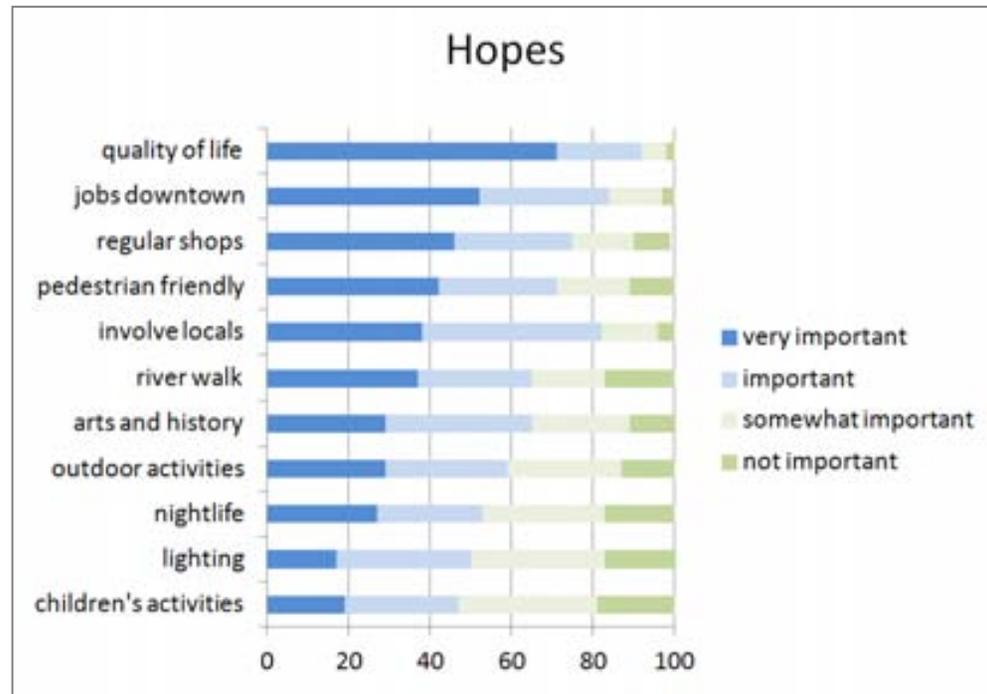
Summary: The meeting can be considered a success.

7. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of eleven “hopes” expressed in the meeting. Number one in importance by a large margin is preserving the current quality of life in the town. Two economic hopes were next – more jobs downtown and more “regular” shops. Involving locals in planning decisions and making the town more pedestrian friendly were also considered important. Specific kinds of activities including a river walk round out the list.
8. Somewhat surprisingly, parking was not a big a problem as expected. 8 in 10 respondents felt there was enough except at the height of summer.
9. Given that, 4 in 10 respondents felt that it would be okay to remove some parking for signage or amenities. A similar number felt some spaces could be removed if they were available elsewhere and the same number felt no spaces should be removed. While parking is not a big issue, planners should use care in removing much.
10. There is not strong support for a parking garage but not strong disapproval either
11. Similarly, respondents were ambivalent about whether such a garage should have office or retail space.
12. Responses to the public landing were quite mixed. Just over a third wanted no change, another third would go for removing some parking and just under a quarter would go for removing all parking. 1-10 was not sure. This idea clearly needs further explanation and exploration before action.
13. Over half of respondents see a movie theater as an important goal for the town.
14. All types of movies were suggested with a preference for independent films and first run films.

15. 6 in 10 respondents said that they would go to a movie theater often (defined as once or twice per month). However, these figures are inconsistent with national averages.
16. Responses to move the Town Office were almost evenly divided between yes, no and maybe, suggesting that there is not strong support for this option.
17. When asked what type of restaurant or retail business they would like to see in the downtown, answers were very diverse and of varying degrees of practicality.

- On the restaurant side mostly frequently mentioned were ethnic restaurants primarily Italian, Mexican, Indian Chinese, or Greek; sandwich/lunch shop; healthy food and affordable, family food. Some wanted Dunkin Donuts and other chains. A fair number said that there were enough restaurants. A few mentioned a bakery and a coffee shop (particularly one open evenings).
- On the retail side, answers reflect the importance of “regular” stores as listed in the hopes. Top of the list were affordable, family clothing and shoes. Also mentioned was a department store or general store with household items, hardware and linens. A green store or coop was also mentioned as was a marine supply. Other possibilities listed by a few respondents each were antique stores/consignment stores, grocery/gourmet foods, Maine made products, LL Bean outlet and low end retail like a 5 and 10.

18. Wide ranging, but focus similar to the hopes – preservation of the atmosphere, pedestrian friendly, jobs, focus on year round residents, keep takes down and deal with the traffic.



Public Forum #2, March 14, 2012

Overview: 95 citizens, business owners, property owners, town officials, and other interested parties attended Forum #2 at the Knox Mill Complex to review Streetscapes. After a presentation they were asked to break into groups to discuss their impressions and hesitations. These are the results, reported to the meeting from the break-out groups. This listing is not an indication of the priority of important these issues were assigned by the participants, but readers should know that many of the hopes, as well as many of the concerns, were shared by most of the attendees

Agenda: Introduction - What, Why, Where, Who When; Part 1 – Laying the Foundation; Part 2 - Large Group Feedback; Part 3 - Activity to Date; Part 4 - Small Group Discussion; Part 5 - Small Group Reporting



Jeanne Hollingsworth provided the following outstanding notes.

1. What are your first impressions of the Streetscape Concept?

Overall Impressions:

Positive: #1 – wholehearted support, but using streetscape design elements effective in Belfast, Rockland and Bath as examples that worked to control traffic and create pedestrian atmosphere doesn't relate to Camden – they all have by-passes; #2 – streetscape design very positive for residents; #3 – good 1st impression especially like downtown bump outs with trees & benches, but not the resulting loss of parking; #4 – like the softening of downtown appearance with visually appealing design like bump outs and trees, and like that Plan stresses our quality of life – this can be used to attract jobs; #5 – Excellent design that will work; #6 - Strongly favor bump outs and promoting pedestrian-friendly concept; #7 – Good concepts but don't overuse bump outs – too many is confusing to the driver; #8 – Some examples used won't work in Camden because traffic pattern here is different. Too many ideas to implement all at once – move slowly; #9 – Liked the Plan and the presentation, but it is a hard concept to imagine in place. Maintain the integrity of the Downtown and don't carry the theme too far; #10 – Concerned that too much streetscape and landscaping will make Camden look like other larger Towns, but changes are needed for pedestrians;

2. What aspects do you support and why? Do you have a favorite?

Bump Outs: Like idea for making pedestrian safer (3);

Like seating areas and plantings (4);

Like traffic-calming results;

Helpful intersection improvements;

Safety benefits: defines traffic and pedestrian spaces;

Combine brick sidewalks with concrete bump outs perhaps to further define areas;

Crosswalks: Ladder style: Yes - more visible and safer for pedestrians; make the crosswalks concrete with brick set in as detail;

Gateways: Like the concept (all);

Firm up where the edges of Downtown are;

Critical to setting the stage for entering Downtown;

Parking: Loss of parking spaces: In favor of restricting parking to enhance Downtown;

Like trolley route between parking areas;

OK to give up some space for the streetscape design – benefits are worth it;

Pay for parking/meters: Raises “parking awareness” of value-added parking;

Support parking restrictions – timed spaces, etc;

Support parking fees;

Create financial incentives to limit vehicular use;

Like parking meters – many Downtowns have meters;

Charging for parking keeps people from driving around Town looking for spaces after 2-hour limit is up – will help with traffic;

Other: Like designated delivery zones – but where will they be and will there be enough room;
Designate delivery times as well;
Like idea of on-line apps for parking;
Try un-lined parking concept to increase spaces available (2);
Like development of shared parking concept;
“Encourage” Downtown employees to use more remote parking;

River Walk/Other walks: Great way for downtown workers to get exercise;
Like walking trails linked to outlying areas concept;
Like development of on-line walking tour apps;
Like River Walk to Mill Pond Park very much;
Like Mill Pond Park idea – would like more parks – keep walk going to a park at the Tannery;
Like River Walk to bring Downtown energy toward Mill;
Great pedestrian enhancement;

Signage: Like consistency of design; like color-coded concept;
It is important to help people get where they want to go;
Need this kind of organized sign program;
Good simple concept for signage – especially need directions to parking;
Signage directing to parking areas can help free up Route 1 parking;
Like business directional signs on kiosks in bump-outs;

Other: Like the Opera House proposed improvements – will increase use of facility;
Streetlights: Don’t copy the current design – make all of the lamps down-lighted – will encourage more people to live Downtown if lighting isn’t intrusive;
Current lighting is too bright;

3. Which aspects concern you – and why?

Bump Outs: Loss of four lanes of traffic on Mechanic at Route 1 not good;
Winter road maintenance impacted by bump-outs that won’t be used for sitting - perhaps there is a way to make them seasonal? How do you deal with snow removal?
Take away too many prime parking spaces - Locals like the 15 minute spaces (2);
Keep size and number to scale for a small Downtown;
Try in one area first to see if it works and is accepted;
Is one needed at Atlantic Ave as well?

Crosswalks: Boxed design of multiple crosswalks: not attractive; confusing.
Ladder style: No (5)

Gateways: Concerned that creation of curb cuts at Stop & Go will make traffic worse;
Move South Gateway location further south – perhaps to Town Line (4);

Move Chamber to new Gateway – call it a welcome center (3);
Make Chamber building into a Visitors' Center - not the Chamber (2);
Redesign at Stop & Go makes intersection even more confusing;
Southern Gateway design needs re-working;
Union Street and Belmont intersection is dangerous and should be addressed in the Plan;

Parking:

Loss of parking spaces:
Results will create an inconvenience for residents;
Businesses won't like this because it will take visitors away from their storefronts;
Need to keep parking on Public Landing (2) – instead plant more trees, design a better lay-out, make walking there safer, soften the design;
Create more very short-term parking spaces where they make sense – where people do quick errands;

Pay for parking/meters:

Need discounted rates or Parking Cards for locals;
No to meters (5) - include plans for a parking kiosk where people can buy parking tickets – locals get discount;
No to any pay for parking – too complicated to manage;
Presence of meters is not welcoming;
Parking meters are less negative than a parking ticket - but both are negative;
Be thoughtful in developing a charging system for parking – look at other Towns for lessons learned;

Other:

Leave parking alone – there is no problem;
Don't need a shuttle – it doesn't work;
Parking requirements of Zoning Ordinance need to be removed – they restrict growth and development in the Downtown and are not necessary;
Need to pin point locations of outlying parking areas;

River Walk/Other walks: Concerned that Harbor Walk has disappeared from Plan;

Work on links to Snow Bowl and Lake Megunticook;
Need to see more detail on how the River Walk links to Main Street;
Include pedestrian connectivity to parking from River Walk;

Signage:

Stop sign at Union and Route 1 – language needs clarity – current design dangerous;
No to signs for walking trails – at least not painted stripes on sidewalks.
No to too many signs (5);
One large map instead (2);
Sign concept will complicate finding the way; too many already - too cluttered;

Other:

Keep signage simple and clear – this is a small Town, no complicated program needed;
Keep design simple; keep authenticity and preserve historic character – no “Disney World” here;
More street trees (2) – perhaps small flowering trees as an added attraction;
Implement overall streetscape design in phases;

4. Are there additional considerations that have not been addressed that you believe should be?

#1 Complaint: Not a Year-round jobs Plan:

No year-round business focus to Plan (8); where are the year-round jobs; need to stress bringing year-round regular shops and stores back to downtown; bring back self-sufficiency of Town – ability to get what you need in town; Economics not addressed sufficiently; Economics needs to address regional issues not just Camden; No mention of implementation of implementation of the Economic Plan;

Public Landing: Should be addressed (3) – one of best parcels in Town and underutilized as parking; want a Harbor Park there; protect fishermen's access;

Address use of first floor of Opera House (2).

Address use of Tannery Site – park, location of Farmer's Market – draw people out that way as well (2).

Expand development of on-line apps;

Current condition of sidewalks (lack of maintenance): Will the Town be able to take care of even more sidewalks and curbing?

No changes should be made that require a change in zoning away from industrial or commercial; Plan should include recommendations for changes to Zoning to make Plan work;

Make Bayview Street 1-way

Include Public Landing and Harbor Walk in Plan again (2)

Address ways to attract younger tourists – nightlife, a theatre – how to fund?

Business groups from outside Downtown should be included and involved

The Farmer's Market should be made more visible

How do we encourage incubator businesses?

