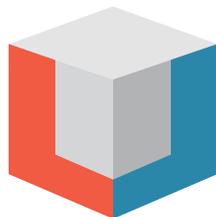


“Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a seed a long time ago.”

— Warren Buffett

Client Draft | July 2014

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**Legacy** | **Lewiston**

City of Lewiston Comprehensive Plan



# Acknowledgements

## 2013-2014 Planning Board

## 2012/13 and 2013/14 City Council

## City Staff

## City Administrator, Ed Barrett

## Department of Planning and Code Enforcement

## Planapalooza Acknowledgements

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This is a **Preliminary Client Draft**. Preliminary Client Drafts are **ROUGH** drafts utilized to begin the conversation about the content of the document and determine if the document is heading in the right direction. It will have typos, missing commas and dangling participles. Put your MLA handbook away. As you saw in the Planapalooza we work fast and furious and we have continued to do so while working on this first version of the Master Plan document. If any of this is concerning to you; wait for the final document.

Thank you for your cooperation!  
The TPUDC Team

*Fun Game: There are 7 typos in this warning. Can you find them all?*

Answers are on page 9

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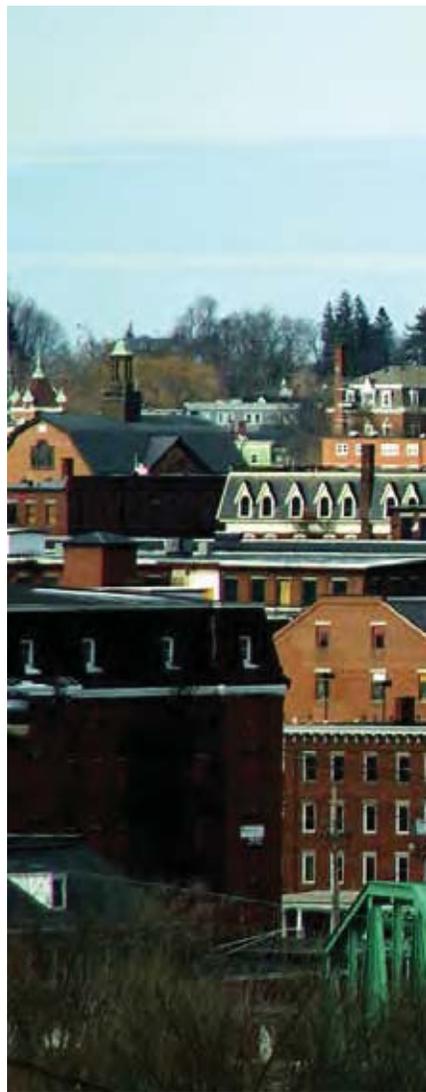
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DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY



# introduction



# Introduction

## Survive to Thrive

As an era comes to an end, even the most successful cities can find themselves facing the difficult task of reinventing themselves. The City of Lewiston is no exception. Following the decline of the textile industry and the closing of the mills in Lewiston, the City worked hard to successfully diversify and recreate its economy while, at the same time, struggling against perceptions of the “old Lewiston.” Today, that era is coming to an end and Lewiston faces a new major challenge: making the additional changes needed to compete in today’s world-wide knowledge and information economy and regaining its rightful role of regional leadership as the state’s second largest city.

In 2013, the City undertook an ambitious effort to redefine and re-imagine its future and change its trajectory - to adjust course and make a tectonic shift from SURVIVING to THRIVING. This effort is manifest in a new Comprehensive Plan that will provide a game plan for creating a legacy of resilience, open-mindedness, and prosperity for the future. This is Legacy Lewiston.

Building on past planning efforts such as the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, the 1999 Downtown Master Plan, the People’s Downtown Master Plan of 2008, the 2009 Third Place Plan, the 2010 Strategic Plan, and the 2012 Riverfront Island Master Plan, Legacy Lewiston (hereinafter referred to as “the Plan”) seeks to implement a vision that preserves the historic character of Lewiston and combats the negative perceptions many hold about Lewiston, while addressing growth in an explicit way that provides, protects, and improves upon quality of life for all residents.

Patience will be needed for many aspects of the Plan since it sets a bold, long-term vision to guide

growth. However, the Plan is also full of strategies, concepts, and elements that may be implemented right away with minimal investment.

Legacy Lewiston focuses on sustainable development — measured by environmental

### WHAT IS THE LEWISTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Comprehensive Plan is the official adopted statement for future development and conservation in the City. It establishes a vision and guiding principles, analyzes existing conditions and emerging trends, describes and illustrates a plan for future development and supporting infrastructure, provides the City with strategies for sustainable growth, and outlines steps for implementation. It will serve as the foundation for determining effective public policy and making land use decisions for the future, and will provide an ongoing framework for informed and directed public investment and private development. The long-term horizon for the Plan keeps the document somewhat general. However, the broad range of development issues and city services addressed makes it a true blueprint for smart, sustainable growth that reflects the priorities, values, and requirements of Lewiston’s residents, safeguarding the city’s history and sense of place but stimulating the conditions for short- and long-term needs and desires of Lewiston. Data was collected and reported for the City consistent with the intent of rules and requirements as set forth in the Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312 - 4350) and Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule.

stewardship, economic prosperity, and distribution of community resources and social capital — that reflects the community’s unique character and local values. Legacy Lewiston acknowledges the many challenges facing the city, but contains the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of citizens and public officials and seeks to align the City’s assets with opportunities. This plan suggests a new way of thinking about the City and a guide to decision making that is not just for one generation, but for all future generations.

Lewiston has no less than four universities and colleges. Each provides an excellent education to students from a multitude of socioeconomic and primary educational backgrounds. These institutions provide Lewiston with a constant supply of fresh ideas, youthful energy, and potential new residents and entrepreneurs. Many stay for only two to four years, some longer, but a small number plant roots and make Lewiston their home. As Legacy Lewiston is implemented, the City will be able to capture and retain more of these graduates and others like them, both home grown and from away.

The Legacy Lewiston plan was developed through an intensive public process that gathered input from hundreds of residents of Lewiston, both those who have lived here for generations and those new to the City and even the country, as well as technical experts from away and local experts from close to home. Critical data has been collected, analyzed, and synthesized, and vital insights have been mined through a holistic approach that considers anecdotal, empirical, and technical contributions from all sources. Rather than a static set of steps to follow, the Plan is intended to be a living framework or playbook for change and development. It allows for dynamic, real-time adjustments to current events as well as for complete paradigm shifts, such as was required by the economic upheaval of 2008.

The Plan provides a vision and a policy framework to guide future changes to the zoning ordinance, site and subdivision regulations, capital improvement planning, and annual budgeting. It also helps manage municipal service areas and informs past and future planning documents. It should be used by elected officials and appointed board members to evaluate development applications, amend ordinances, and plan future expenditures. Together, the Plan and its implementation tools ensure future development related-decision-making that is consistent with the community’s vision and residents’ expectations for a higher quality of life.

Ultimately, the relevance and success of Legacy Lewiston will be measured by its use during everyday decision-making. Monitoring the Plan’s implementation should be an open and ongoing process, summarized each year in a community report card that examines performance, measures achievement, and reflects change generated by the Plan. This document marks the beginning of a new, focused renaissance for Lewiston. We challenge each citizen to participate and take on a role - no matter how large or small. Today, the City has limited financial resources to implement many of the concepts in this document. That is why it is up to the people of Lewiston to will this change into existence with their time, sweat, passion, and perseverance. Working together, citizens, elected officials, and staff can accomplish remarkable feats from both the top down and the grass roots up. Embrace the challenge. Help write the next chapter in Lewiston’s history.

# A Place of Diversity and Change

Lewiston has a long history of resilience; with people from around the world coming together to build a better future for themselves and each other. While the City may have a negative image to some in the region, those from away often respond positively and are impressed by its multicultural and diverse population.

Interestingly, some locals see this unique aspect of the City as a detriment, perceiving new residents as competition for limited jobs and public resources even though lack of jobs is one of the main reasons that many of Lewiston's immigrants leave. The recent influx of new Americans has challenged the sense of familiarity felt by many longtime residents. Unlike many new residents who easily blend in, immigrants from across the decades, whether Irish, Italian, or Somali, stand apart because of their unique appearance or speech, making them easy targets particularly in tough economic times. However, the City is once again learning to accept its diversity and move forward collectively to solve new challenges faced by all of its residents.

## A Brief History of Lewiston

by local historian Douglas I. Hodgkin



"As late as the 1840s what is now Lisbon Street was undeveloped, but the community soon changed. Boston investors financed the construction of the canal system and several textile mills. Many Irish immigrants were employed in the construction. These mills prospered during the Civil War, as the owners correctly foresaw that the war would be long; they had stockpiled sufficient cotton to maintain production. In the 1870s Lisbon Street became the main commercial center. A new impressive city building was constructed in 1873 across from a park donated by the Franklin Company; after an 1890 fire, the current city hall replaced it. After fire destroyed several stores on Lisbon Street, leading citizens decided to construct 'the best opera house east of Boston.'"

# The Four Faces of Lewiston

Today there are four primary types of Lewiston residents defined by age, experience, and country of origin. These are the “Four Faces of Lewiston”. In order to thrive as a City, all citizens and the municipal government must find ways to work together; embracing accountability and trust, and cultivating transparency and open dialogue.



## Established Lewistonians

This population, which includes the Baby Boomers and perhaps their parents, knew Lewiston in its heyday as a thriving industrial City. Established Lewistonians might have even worked in the Mills or manufacturing industries of days gone by. They like to remember their City for what it was before the decline of traditional industries. Some Established Lewistonians may find it difficult to get excited about Lewiston again, while others see the potential in change. They may see limitations rather than surmountable obstacles, but can provide a wealth of knowledge about the history and unique characteristics of their hometown.



## Next Gen

These young professionals, generally aged 20 to 35, are in Lewiston either to live close to family or to make something of themselves professionally. They often hold a 4-year college degree and include working-class singles and families. The Next Gen group are more likely to see potential than liability when facing adversity. They think the mills and other brick industrial structures are cool spaces for lofts and restaurants. These young people are ready to make change happen and have the time, energy, and knowledge to do so. Due to their inexperience, they benefit from partnerships, particularly with forward thinking Established Lewistonians who understand the intricacies of the City.



## Children

Lewiston’s children, from tots to teens preparing for college, are unaware of the economic transformation Lewiston is undergoing. They may learn about the City’s industrial history in class, but think little of it. New Americans are simply a part of their life, with each child’s impressions shaped by their personal experiences with peers, interactions at community events, and the opinions expressed by the adults in their life. They are enthusiastic, curious, and honest. As Lewiston becomes the kind of place where people want stay or return to, these children and the values they bring can carry Lewiston into the next half century.



## New Americans

The New Americans, mostly Somali, many of whom are refugees, chose to settle in Lewiston because of its low crime rate, safety, good schools, strong sense of community (including a growing population of their own ethnic groups and extended families). These immigrants and refugees often come from violent and disenfranchised parts of the world and are thankful for the opportunity to be in Lewiston. When first arrived, many are on some form of social assistance. But this population has survival skills, life perspectives, and relentless entrepreneurial spirit. They are motivated to quickly become contributors to the local economy. However, the vast majority of New Americans aren’t completely sure where they stand, how much acceptance they can expect, and whether they will be subject to discrimination. Because of this uncertainty and a reasonable distrust of authority based on experience in their countries of origin,, they may not feel comfortable participating in City-led efforts or community initiatives and must be actively welcomed, encouraged, supported, and mentored.

## How to Use the Plan

### **Be a champion of the Plan even if you don't like ALL of the ideas.**

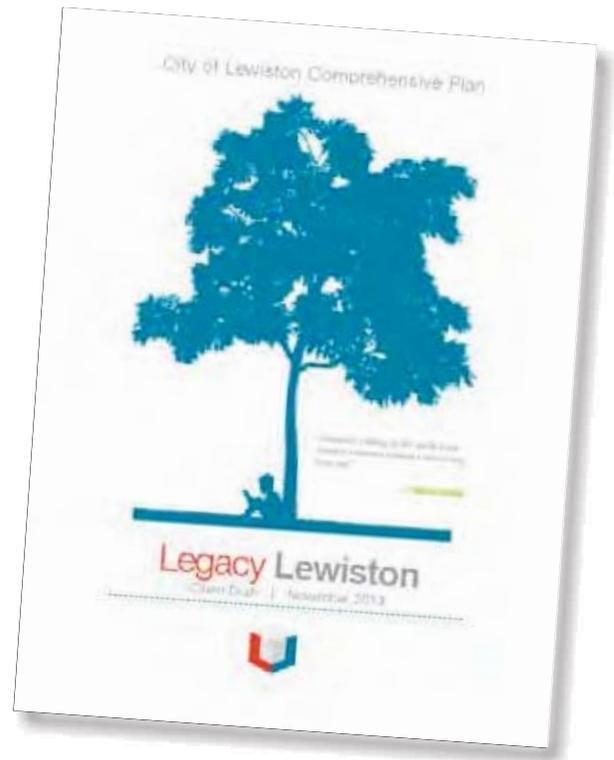
The Common Vision and Guiding Principles in this Plan reflect the ideas of an entire community and include many differing points of view — a bit of something for everyone. You don't have to love everything in the Plan, but consider the big picture and whether the Plan as a whole takes Lewiston in the right direction.

### **Be a champion of the Plan even if all of your ideas aren't included.**

This Plan is the culmination of an extensive and transparent community planning process. It is possible that not all ideas were included in this document because (A) there was disagreement on the topic and the decision was made to go with the consensus of the community, (B) the idea was tested and deemed to be unrealistic at this time, or (C) there was simply not enough room to include ALL the good ideas. But remember, there is something for everyone!

### **Citizen as a Verb**

A recurring theme throughout the Planapalooza was how to make sure the planning work would be acceptable to those who didn't participate. Agreement was reached among participants that it is each citizen's duty to participate and create a plan that they are happy with. Citizenship is an active, not passive, endeavor. Because this project's outreach process provided so many ways and opportunities for people to get involved, simply complaining about the Plan is not an option.



### **Take responsibility and be a part of the implementation team.**

Although we all wish our tax dollars bought us unlimited City services, the reality is that there is more work to be done than staff to do it. This is the reality of the new economy. All of these great ideas take time, money, and capacity. For this Plan to become a reality, a large number of people must care enough to get involved and help execute it. Communities that work together - and work smartly - succeed.

### **Understand the element of time.**

At first glance, the Plan can seem ambitious, daunting, and even a little frightening. Some big ideas are included that would bring about transformative change. Not everything in this Plan will happen at once, or perhaps at all. Some things will happen right away; other ideas will take years or decades to come to fruition. Ultimately, the success of this Plan will be measured by its implementation. Challenge yourselves and your public officials to make this community vision a reality.

# the process



# Public Outreach

## Think Tank Committee

The City assembled a Think Tank Committee to work on the Plan. Its primary duties included community outreach, serving as a sounding board for the planning consultant, reviewing draft materials, and helping to facilitate plan implementation. Membership included elected officials, business owners, dedicated citizens, and representatives of local boards, commissions, and organizations.

The Committee met several times prior to the Planapalooza, lead a bus tour of Lewiston for the consultants, played an active role in the Planapalooza, and met again following the event to review the Plan and help ensure that all relevant information was incorporated into it.

## Bates Survey

Following a suggestion from a Think Tank member, City Staff and the TPUDC team put together an online survey for Bates students. Questions related to their experience living in Lewiston, whether they intended to stay after graduation, and, if not, what it would take to get them to remain in the City. Over 20 students responded, providing insights important to the development of the Plan. See the following page for the results of the survey.

## Social & Online Media

TPUDC and City Staff maintained a web presence and a project Facebook page. The City's website was used to post documents, reports, and static resources. The Facebook page served as an interactive platform for obtaining feedback on the work in progress, providing information, and building support. It remained active throughout the Planapalooza events with more than 150 users "liking" the page.

## News Media

The City successfully contacted several state-wide news media, including WCSH-6 and WGME-13, which both did stories at the beginning of the Planapalooza covering the event and the creation of the parklet. This coverage was reposted on Facebook, expanding the reach of the story.

## Print Media

City Staff supplied press releases to local media that resulted in coverage of events. Prior to the Planapalooza, the Lewiston Sun Journal published editorials encouraging public participation. Reporters from the Sun Journal wrote about the Planapalooza meetings and events throughout the process.

TPUDC and City Staff designed and produced posters that were displayed in prominent locations throughout town and provided during events leading up to the Planapalooza.

## Personal Outreach

Emails were sent to community stakeholders inviting them to participate in the Planapalooza. In the weeks leading up to it, TPUDC interviewed policy makers, including members of the Planning Board and City Council. Internally, Think Tank members who served on other boards, committees, or organizations created their own "word of mouth" campaigns, sending emails soliciting participation in all of the planning events.

## Tactical Urbanism

With City support, Think Tank members and citizens took the public outreach campaign to the street, installing a temporary green space in a parking spot in front of the design studio. This “parklet” remained in place for the duration of the Planapalooza, drawing additional attention to the project and providing a place for people to gather. See the “Tactical Urbanism Parklet” section for more information.

## City Council Workshop

On June 4, 2013, TPU DC made an introductory presentation at a City Council Workshop describing the Planapalooza process, the unique approach being taken to writing the Plan, and answering questions from the Council and the public. Over 20 participants discussed their hopes for the future of the City and asked questions about how the process would work.

**RIGHT: FORMER COUNCILMAN, JOHN BUTLER, TOOK THE LOGO DESIGNED FOR THE PROJECT AND MADE A SWEATSHIRT, WHICH LATER EVOLVED INTO GREEN T-SHIRTS WORN BY ALL CITY STAFF TO PROMOTE THE EVENT.**

**BELOW: BUS TOUR OF LEWISTON LED BY THE THINK TANK HELPED TO ORIENT THE CONSULTANTS AND BEGIN A DIALOGUE AROUND ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE CITY.**

## T-Shirts

The Legacy Lewiston logo debuted on a blue sweatshirt at the City Council Workshop. This was taken to the next level when t-shirts were made for City Staff to wear on casual Friday. The t-shirts were worn again during the Council meeting prior to the opening night of the Planapalooza and throughout the event, helping to promote the Planapalooza and generate a level of intrigue and energy around the planning effort.



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# Bates College Survey

During the lead up to Planapalooza, the Think Tank Committee suggested surveying the students of Bates College, Lewiston's private liberal arts college. The intent was to capture the students' perspectives of the city, as they and the college considerably influence the City's culture. This segment of the City's population may not have otherwise participated in the planning process. Due to the timeline of the project, it was necessary to administer the survey during the final week of classes, just before students were to leave for summer break. This made the total number of participant low but the data was consistent and relevant so we included it here. The survey is not scientifically supported, but rather anecdotal and should not be assumed to represent the ideas and thinking of all Bates students. This is what the students that participated had to say:

## What's your dream job?

The students, or "Batesies" as they like to call themselves, dream of being writers, editors, artists, journalists for National Public Radio and the New York Times, educators, revolutionaries, farmers, small business owners, designers, clinical psychologists, architects and, most importantly, urban planners.

## Are you planning to stay in Lewiston after graduation? Why or why not?

The vast majority of respondents have no interest in staying in Lewiston after graduation. Economic reasoning included notions that Lewiston doesn't provide enough job opportunities in their field, simply doesn't offer the jobs they seek, local real estate isn't worth investing in, and the local school system isn't what they want for their children. Social reasons for leaving Lewiston include a lack of social scene for young professionals, an empty downtown, because their friends aren't planning on staying, they don't feel their family would be safe in Lewiston, the City is too far from family, there isn't much to do, a lack of bicycle paths, and too few environmental responsibility programs. Many simply wanted to live elsewhere for the sake of living somewhere new or in a larger City.

## Where would you like to live after graduation?

While most wished to go or return to major cities in New England, some are looking forward to making their world a little bigger. New addresses include places like San Francisco, California; Portland, Oregon; China; the Pacific Northwest; Seattle, Washington; and East Africa. Few respondents either aren't sure where to go or are willing to go wherever their career takes them. No respondents expressed an interest in staying in Lewiston.

## What is Lewiston missing?

The vast majority of respondents suggested more college-student-friendly small businesses like pubs, clubs, cafes, thrift shops, a bowling alley, a yoga studio, retail clothing stores like Patagonia, a farmer's market, and restaurants. Individual respondents suggested: people and diversity among the population; a greater sense of understanding between the Somali refugees and the general public; public art; a large attraction downtown; mixed-use buildings; parks and recreation opportunities; wealth; city busses that run from the college to Lewiston, Auburn, and local grocery stores; and funding for schools, roads, and smart growth initiatives.

## What do you do for fun?

Most respondents listed reading, hanging out with friends, being a foodie, watching movies and TV shows, and going to bars and concerts as favorite hobbies. Outdoor hobbies mentioned include hiking, skiing, gardening, golfing, playing hockey, taking photos, running, driving, playing Frisbee, adventuring, sailing, paddling, and general sports. Respondents spend time at Taylor Pond, Range Pond, Lake Auburn, restaurants, bars, cafes, bookstores, shops, thrift shops, Carlson's apple farm, and clam bakes. Nearly all of the respondents listed huddling on campus, going into the wilderness, and going to another city as their weekend relaxation methods.

# According to the Bates College Survey:

What needs the most improvement...

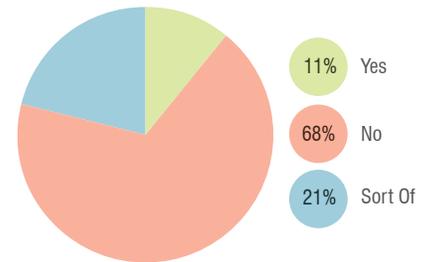
**Mills**  
**Parks**  
**Refugee & Citizen Relations**  
**Sustainability**  
**Housing and Appearance**

Top places students would like to live after graduation...

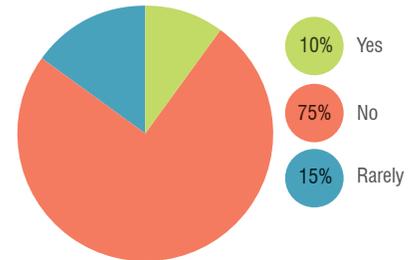
1. Chicago
2. San Francisco
3. Boston
4. New York City
5. Portland (ME)
6. Portland (OR)
7. China
8. Pacific Northwest
9. Vermont
10. Seattle
11. East Africa
12. South Africa
13. Cambridge
14. Not Sure Yet
15. Depends on job

**10%**  
of students would like to stay in Lewiston after graduation  
**25%**  
would like to stay elsewhere in Maine

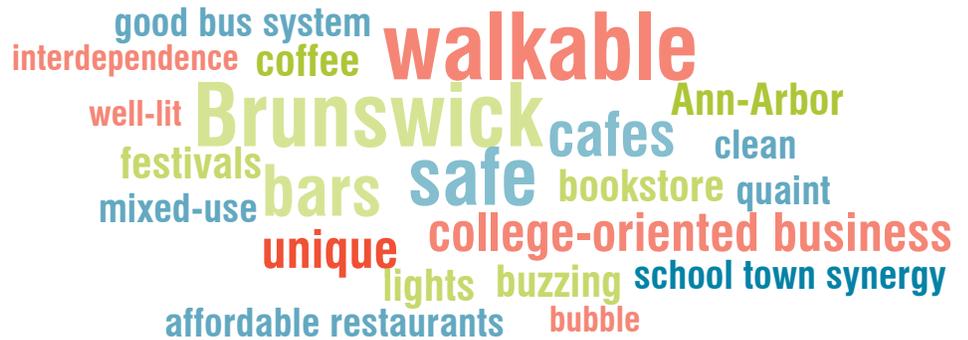
Would you consider Lewiston to be a "cool" city?



Do you use the Lewiston bus system?



How would you describe a college town?



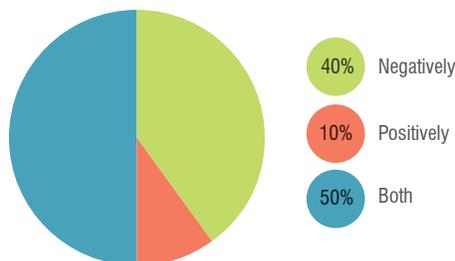
The best things about Lewiston...

**Cultural Diversity**  
**Forage & Mother India**  
**Service Opportunities**  
**Farmers Market**  
**Lewiston Library**

**Almost All**

student respondents stay on campus, go to the wilderness, or go to another city on the weekends. They rarely stay in Lewiston unless they are doing volunteer work.

How did the city affect your decision to attend Bates?



**26%** of students have a car

# Planapalooza!



From June 20 through 25, 2013, the citizens of Lewiston were invited to participate in a multi-day planning and design event to develop a vision for the future of the City using smart growth and sustainable design principles.

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Planapalooza, an intensive and fun community planning and design event, brought together the citizens of Lewiston to think about the future of the City. This interactive engagement process provided an open forum for the public to work closely with Planning Staff and consultants from TPUDC to identify big ideas and generate a vision that will drive policy decisions for the City while also building local capital and community-driven action.

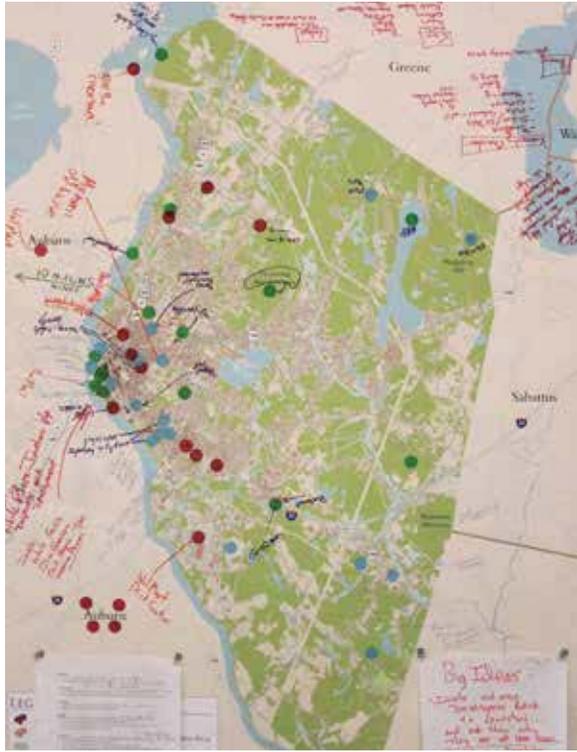
Planapalooza was held in the heart of Lewiston at 219 Lisbon Street, the former Downtown Education Collaborative Building. The consulting team set up a fully functioning office and studio for the duration of Planapalooza, welcoming in the community and generating interest among a broad spectrum of citizens and local stakeholders.

Planapalooza kicked off at the Lewiston Public Library's Callahan Hall with an introductory presentation that described a range of options available to the community to improve quality of life, enhance economic development, and provide greater choice for local residents and business owners.

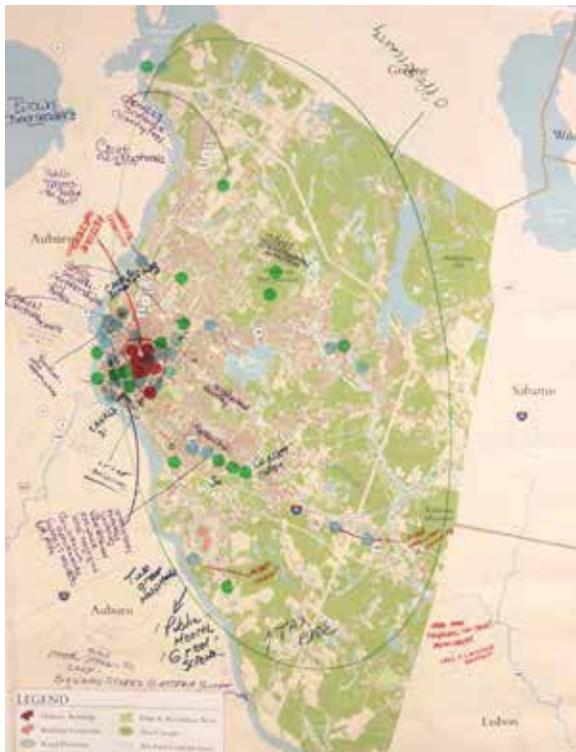
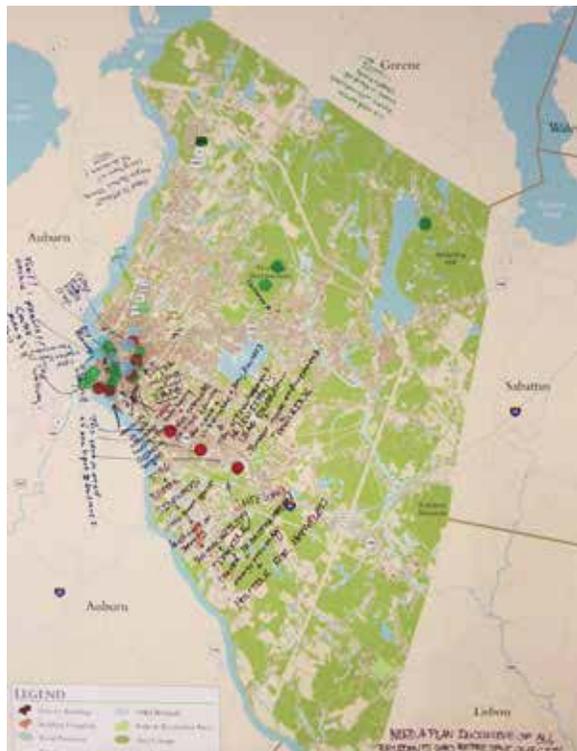


# Hands-On Workshop Table Exercises

The maps below were produced by small groups of participants during the Hands-On Community Workshop that took place on the first night of the Planapalooza. Many of the ideas generated by the individual tables are consistent and share common themes, which helped to build consensus around



a preferred vision for the future. Comments from this exercise and other public input received during the Planapalooza is recounted in the Reflections section of this Plan and are also embedded in the Common Vision and Guiding Principles.



Immediately following the presentation, the consultant team facilitated a hands-on design workshop where about 100 participants were invited to roll up their sleeves and brainstormed ideas while working over base maps. Participants identified key areas of concern and opportunity throughout the City. Big ideas were presented by each small group, highlighting for the participants how many ideas people held in common and helping the design team understand some of the community's priorities and areas of focus.

On the second day of Planapalooza, the team conducted Round Table meetings in the studio on topics important to Lewiston and related to the Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Round Tables were held for Business Owners and Developers; Public Facilities and Services; Transportation; Parks, Open Space, and Environmental Concerns; Arts and Culture; Elected and Appointed Officials; and

Housing, Demographics, and Economy. Meetings were well attended. In a few cases, they were standing room only as citizens, elected officials, and City Staff all sat together to discuss important topics in greater detail, including the Plan's vision, critical questions, potential policy improvements, and strategies for moving forward both big and small ideas.

Meanwhile, members of the planning team began developing guiding principles, an overall planning framework, and illustrative plans that responded to community input, pulling ideas from the planning workshop, citizen drop-ins, and the Round Table meetings.

On the second night of the Planapalooza, over 30 people attended a pin-up in the studio giving the team a chance to present preliminary illustrative



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plans, a draft set of guiding principles, and other work products produced in the first days of the Planapalooza. A varied group of citizens provided feedback on what they liked about the ideas presented and where further work was needed.



During the remainder of the Planapalooza, members of the public continued to filter into the studio to talk to the team. Feeding off this buzz of activity, the team entered production mode, synthesizing ideas, collaborating over design challenges, preparing renderings, compiling precedent images, refining the illustrative plans, and drafting the Elements of the Plan.



A final presentation took place at on the last day of the Planapalooza, at which time all of the work produced during the week was presented and explained. The meeting was attended by over 80 community members.





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At the final presentation, there were tough questions along with an enthusiastic showing of support for the vision as presented, an indication that the community achieved consensus with a clear idea of what it wants for the City's future.

During the entire Planapalooza, over 400 members of the public engaged in the process in some way. People attended public events or meetings and an unprecedented number of citizens stopped by the studio to talk with the design team and provide their thoughts. Not only was the process well attended, but it attracted a diverse range of citizens including longtime residents and immigrants, people from both downtown and outer neighborhoods, students and retirees, and skeptics of the process who turned into supporters, making this one of the most successful events of its kind anywhere.

Lewiston's successful Planapalooza is an example for how a community can embrace and take advantage of planning resources to generate local excitement and engagement around an important project. Not only did City staff and citizens produce sweatshirts and t-shirts to create interest at the beginning of the process, but citizens also made "We Love Planapalooza" signs for the closing presentation, making it clear that this process worked particularly well for the Lewiston community.



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# Tactical Urbanism Parklet

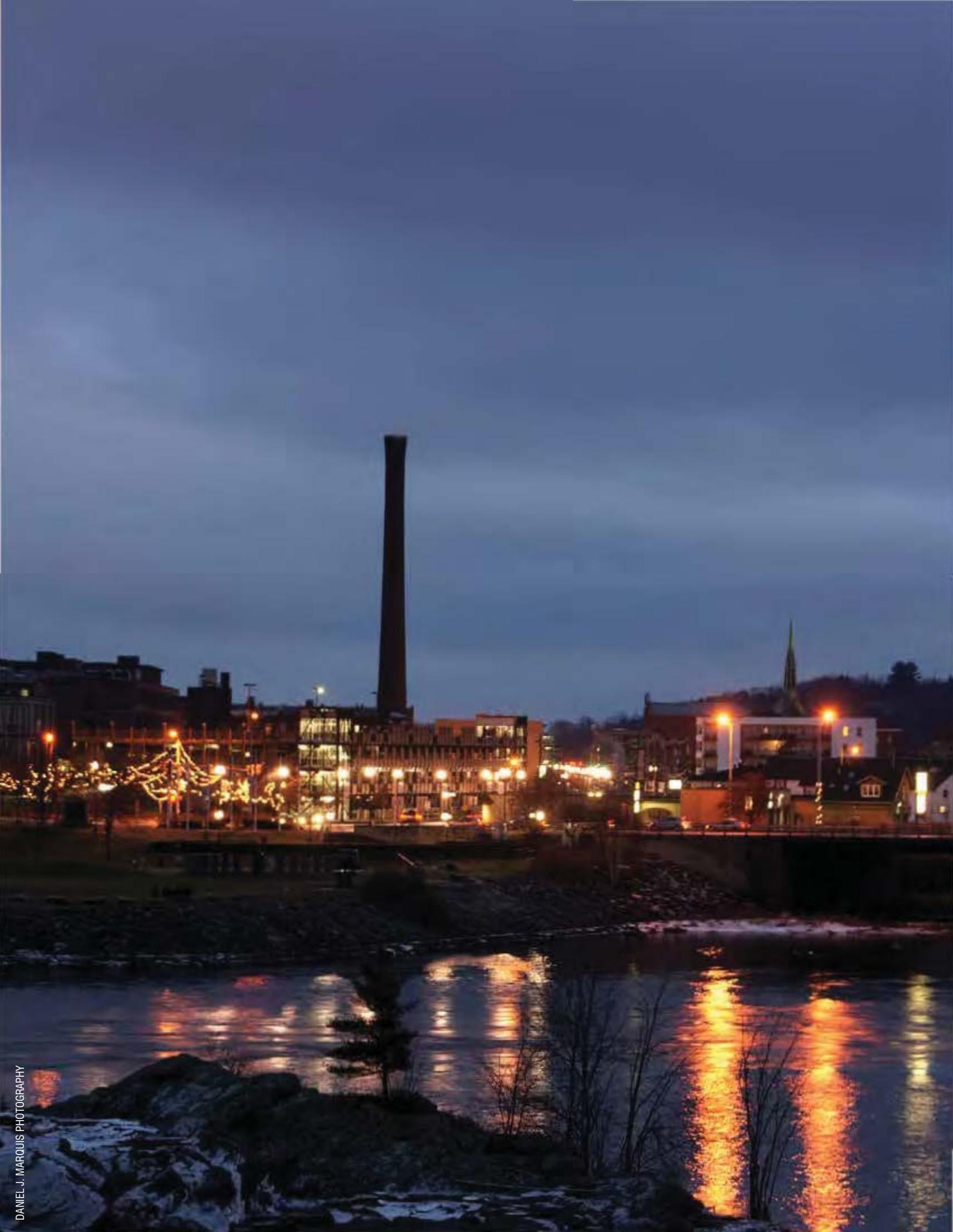
As part of the public outreach strategy for the Planapalooza, a group of volunteers organized a city-sanctioned tactical urbanism project highlighting how short term change can have a potentially long-term impact. A parking space in front of the studio was transformed by citizens into a parklet, or tiny park, in order to generate additional attention and participation in the event. This kind of small change in the street, which was noticed by everyone who walked, biked, or drove by, helped communicate that although the Comprehensive Plan project is focused on long range planning, it also embraces short



TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, LLC

term, actionable plans, demonstrated by the quick transformation of a hardscape parking space into a park-like gathering place. The parklet acted as an extension of the studio and ended up serving as a place where people lingered, chatted with friends, and helped to promote the process through live marketing. The parklet was a free and easy way to generate media attention drawing two television stations, a photo shoot for the cover of Lewiston Auburn Magazine, and Facebook posts. The evolution and use of the parklet over the course of the Planapalooza is shown below.





DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

# reflections

# Regional Context



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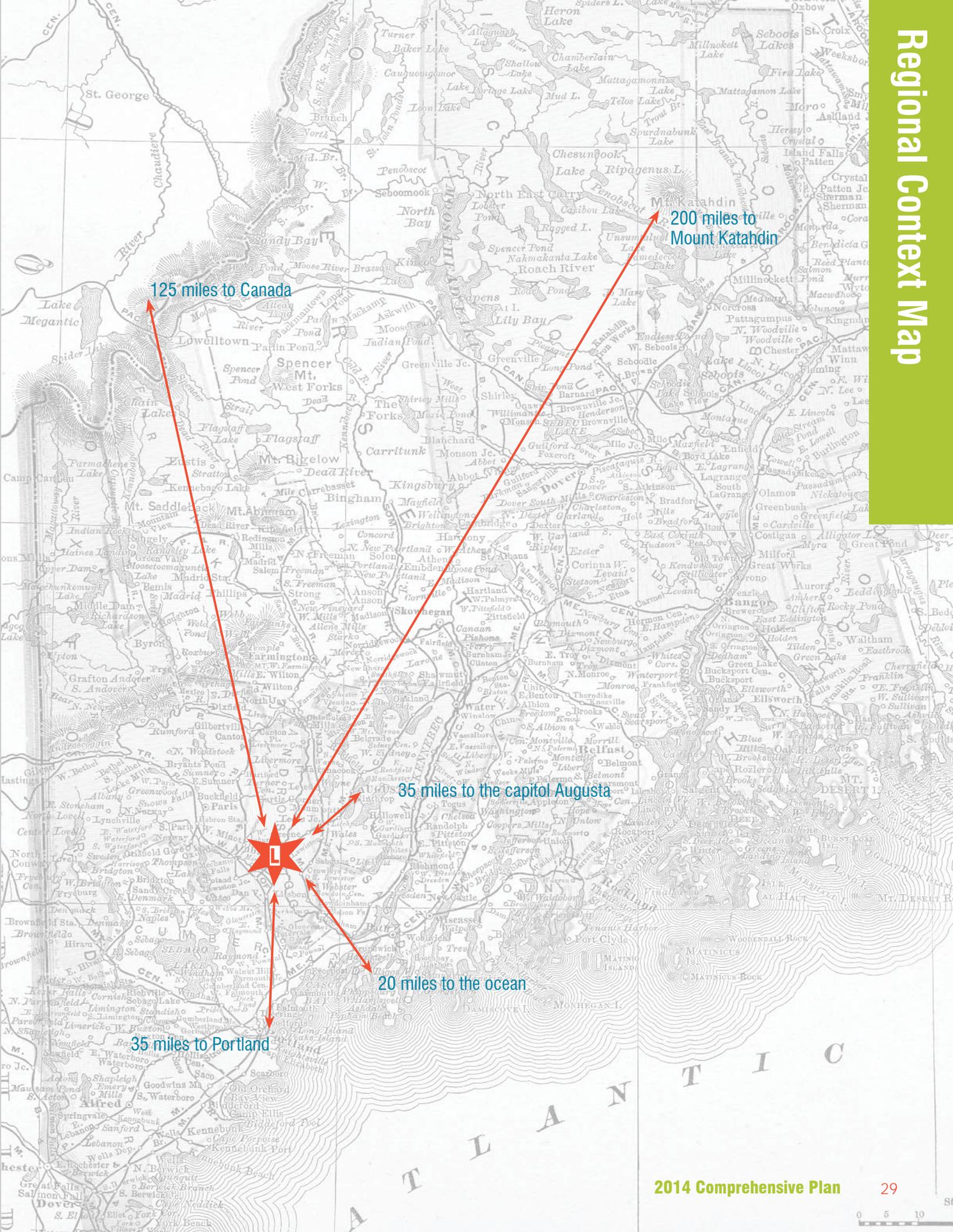
Lewiston is centrally located in Maine within proximity to Portland, coastal beaches, and the lakes and mountains region to the north and west. Numerous rail lines and an interstate enhance Lewiston's position within the region both for business and potential future tourism. In addition to a strong hospital system, the City benefits from a highly regarded public school system and nationally-renowned universities. These, in addition to public libraries and cultural venues, enhance a regional center that has the potential to attract visitors from near and far.

The City is situated along the shores of the Androscoggin River and shares borders with the communities of Lisbon, Durham, Sabattus, Greene, and Auburn. The City encompasses 35.5 square miles. Following the mid-twentieth century decline of the City's industrial and textile industries, Lewiston's population has stabilized between 35,000 and 40,000, making it Maine's second largest City.

Lewiston is conveniently located on Interstate 95 approximately 35 miles from both Portland and Augusta, respectively Maine's commercial and governmental hubs. Route 202/100 via Main

Street, Route 126 via Sabattus Street, and Route 196 via Lisbon Street give motorists access to Auburn, the Kennebec Valley, Brunswick, and Topsham. Lewiston serves as a gateway to western Maine and some of the state's highest peaks. Numerous ski resorts and ample recreational opportunities in the popular Rangeley Lakes region and beyond can be accessed through Lewiston.

Pan Am and the St. Lawrence and Atlantic railroads provide freight service into Lewiston and Auburn. An effort is currently underway to bring passenger rail to the metro area by extending passenger rail service from Portland. A municipal



125 miles to Canada

200 miles to Mount Katahdin

35 miles to the capitol Augusta

20 miles to the ocean

35 miles to Portland



airport jointly funded and operated by Lewiston and Auburn serves local and regional aviation.

Lewiston is home to a diverse population including French Canadians, many of whom worked in factories during the City's industrial heyday. In 1999, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees successfully resettled 12,000 refugees from the Bantu ethnic group in Somalia to many carefully chosen cities in the United States. Subsequently, many of these refugees relocated to communities, including Lewiston, seeking a better quality of life. While this secondary migration of refugees to Lewiston was initially controversial, Somali entrepreneurs have helped to revitalize Lewiston's downtown by opening shops and injecting new life into downtown neighborhoods.

As a regional service center, Lewiston provides medical facilities, unique educational opportunities, a thriving arts scene, and a multitude of shopping venues. In 2007, the City earned an All-America City Award from the National Civic League. The award "recognizes communities whose residents work together to identify and tackle community-wide challenges and achieve measurable, uncommon results."

Through telecommunications infrastructure improvements and a multitude of community building efforts, downtown Lewiston has become a growing economic center. A number of large national and regional companies are headquartered in the City. Lewiston's top 10 employers put 8,515 to work while fledgling boutiques and small businesses are beginning to show a strong presence in the City.

Central Maine Medical Center and St. Mary's Health System, both located in or near the downtown, are at the forefront of New England health care. The Patrick Dempsey Center for Cancer Hope and Healing at Central Maine Medical Center is also located in downtown Lewiston. Since 2008, the Center has helped countless patients lead the most well-rounded life possible while battling cancer.

Lewiston benefits from a strong public school

system and a nationally recognized institution for higher education, Bates College. Bates is the oldest continuously operating coeducational institution in New England and was ranked the 22nd Best Liberal Arts College by US News & World Report in 2013. Lewiston's Little Ivy continues its progressive legacy today by offering a stunning study abroad program in partnership with over 80 countries. The University of Southern Maine's Lewiston/Auburn campus, Central Maine Community College's Auburn campus, and a Kaplan University campus also call the Lewiston area home.

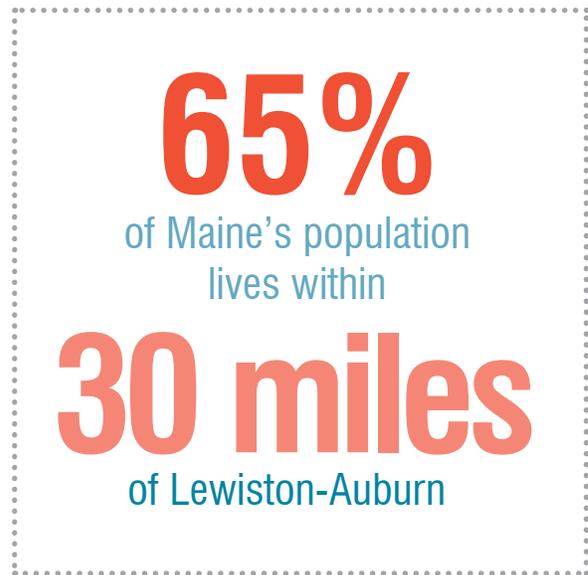
Lewiston hosts several annual events. The Lewiston Auburn Film Festival presents films from around the world, including local works. The Great Falls Balloon Festival, Lewiston's most popular event, offers balloon launches, carnival games, and rides in parks along the Androscoggin Riverfront in August. Every October since 2009, the City has hosted The Dempsey Challenge, a bike, walk, or run event to raise money for cancer research. The Liberty Festival, Lewiston and Auburn's 4th of July celebration, boasts a fantastic fireworks show.

The Marsden Hartley Cultural Center at the Lewiston Public Library presents a variety of lectures, performances, and other cultural events, as does the Franco-American Heritage Center. Museums and art galleries are offered both in the community and on University campuses. The Public Theatre, Maine's only equity house, presents several plays throughout the year. Outdoor educational opportunities are offered in Lewiston via the Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary, the largest urban bird sanctuary in New England. Lewiston is also home to the largest all-concrete skate park in the state.

Since 1996, Lewiston and Auburn have discussed sharing services and the potential of merging into a single city. This effort has become more serious recently. While some City Councilors from both cities are enthusiastic about the possibility, others argue that neither City's citizens are likely to be supportive and the issue should be dropped. In 2009, a study estimated that the cities would save \$2 million per year after a five year phase

in period of administration, police, public works, equipment purchases, and economic development departments were merged. A Commission to write a merged charter will be elected in 2014. Once this charter has been written, it will be submitted to the voters of both communities, each of which must separately approve for it to go into effect.

To remain competitive in the region, Lewiston needs a clear vision that supports and builds on the City's municipal advantages and prepares the community for a long and sustainable future. Maintaining Lewiston's reputation as a center for quality health care, education, and housing is of critical importance as is continuing to grow businesses and maintaining a strong tax base to adequately fund the City and the School Department.



SOURCE: AUBURN LEWISTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

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## What We Heard . . .

Desire to maintain community connections.

Merge with Auburn.

Want to see more commercial opportunities in Lewiston, so don't have to shop in Auburn.

Make Lewiston more like Gardiner, ME or Franklin, TN.

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“ We have the potential to be the  
**greenest city** in New England. ”

— Lewiston resident

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# Population & Demographics



While Lewiston’s population is expected to remain relatively stable at between 35,000 and 40,000 through 2030, the City’s demographics have shifted over the last decade as a result of immigration and increasing diversity, a trend enhanced by the City’s many educational and medical institutions. Today, Lewiston is one of the most diverse communities in Maine. Since “demography is destiny,” a review of the City’s population and its characteristics can provide insight into not only its present, but its future.

Lewiston is the second largest city in Maine with a 2010 population of 36,592. After an early period of relatively rapid growth tied to the rise of industrialization and an influx of French Canadian and Irish immigrants, Lewiston’s population has fluctuated between 35,000 and 42,000 since the 1930s. Since the 1980s, Lewiston’s rate of growth has lagged behind the state’s rate by between 2% and 10% per decade. While the City matched the state’s 2.4% rate in the 1970s, it lost over 10% of its population during the 1990s while the state grew by 3.8%.

These changes reflect a number of trends including industrial competition, first from the American South and then overseas, the growing suburbanization of the region, and a continuing

drop in household size as the number of children per family has fallen and the traditional nuclear family has been augmented by a wider range of household types.

Over the first decade of this new century, the trend reversed as the City saw a steady 2.5% annual rate of population growth. This is particularly welcome given the 15% population decline experienced between 1970 and 2000. Countervailing forces emerged to bend the population curve upward, including the influx of new immigrants, the increasing age of the population with older individuals and empty nesters desiring to live in close proximity to urban services, and the growing interest of younger people in settling, at least

originally, in an attractive urban core.

It should be noted that Lewiston does not see significant seasonal population variation. While a home to educational institutions, most students, other than those attending Bates, are commuters, and Bates' 1,750 students represent only about 4.7% of the population. Similarly, while the City is a gateway to Northwestern Maine, it is not home to many seasonal residents, further limiting seasonal fluctuations. As the downtown and Riverfront Island areas are redeveloped, the City may find itself becoming a popular "main street" and cultural destination for visitors from the surrounding region including nearby cities like Portland and Augusta .

Overall, the City's population is projected to grow an additional 5% by 2030 to about 40,000, a 1.8% annual growth rate. If this projection holds, Lewiston will have nearly returned to its 1970 record high of 41,800 residents. At this rate, 2030's population density will rise by 95 people per square mile, reaching a total density of 1125, just 36% of Portland's density of 3106 inhabitants per square mile.

## What We Heard . . .

The people of Lewiston love their uniquely and richly diverse population.

Diversity includes Old Mainers counting those with French-Canadian descendants and New Mainers which includes a significant Somali and Bantu population.

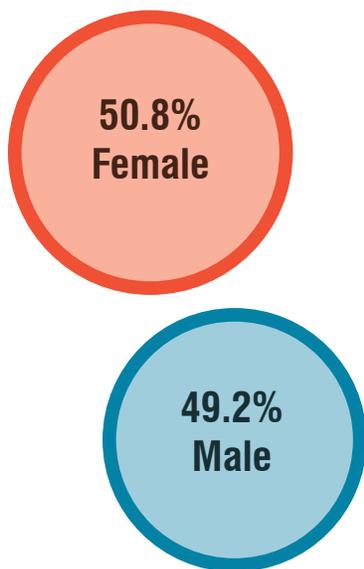
Tapestries of color walking down the street.

Plan for Lewiston needed to be inclusive of all residents who represent Lewiston

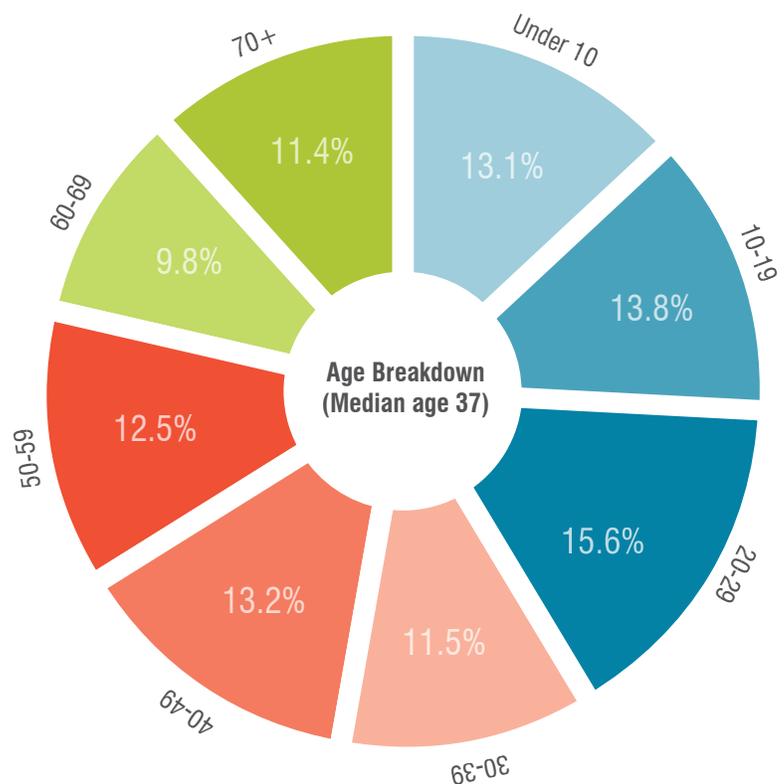
Plan needs to nurture the most vulnerable or those perceived to be weak.

"We need a plan inclusive of all residents who represent our city to nurture our most vulnerable or those perceived to be weak. This is a human right."

## Lewiston Gender Breakdown



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Lewiston-Auburn metro region is one of the most diverse in the state with over 15% non-white residents compared to the state's just under 2%. A significant portion of the African American population in Lewiston is Somali with an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 living in the City. This is a direct result of the 2000 agreement by the United States government to resettle approximately 12,000 Somali Bantu refugees in the United States. According to a Maine Department of Labor Report, many chose to settle in Maine due to the low crime rate, good school systems and inexpensive housing options.

Median household income is a prime indicator of economic success. Lewiston has a lower median household income (\$35,982) than the state (\$47,344) and Auburn (\$42,654) (2012 ACS). Slightly more than 20% of households have annual incomes below \$15,000. At the same time, about 33% have incomes of \$50,000 or more, showing that in spite of low median income the City has retained a significant middle and upper income population.

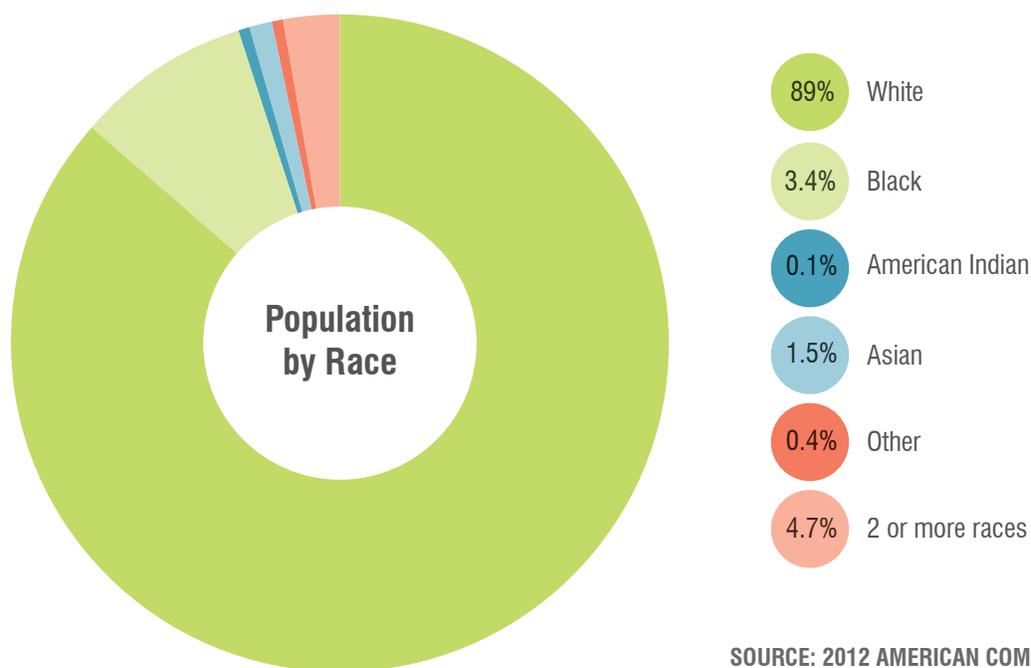
According to the Maine Department of Labor, more than half of all jobs in Androscoggin County are located in Lewiston. Major industry sectors include healthcare, financial services, education, warehousing and distribution, telecommunications, and precision manufacturing. This wide range of industries attracts workers from a variety of educational

backgrounds, age ranges, and income levels.

Lewiston's population has a median age of 37, considerably below the state as a whole. As of the 2012 American Community Survey, the two largest age groups are those 20 to 29 and under 10 respectively. The third largest age group in Lewiston is 40 to 49, indicative of families with primary or secondary school-aged children.

These demographic trends pose both challenges and opportunities for the City. With the exception of the school system, the City's existing infrastructure and its developable land can easily handle projected population growth through 2030. Lewiston's public schools will see increased enrollment through 2020. Between now and 2024, annual enrollment will increase by about 1,050. Most of these new students will arrive prior to 2018 and will require the addition of an estimated 27 new classrooms to maintain current student-teacher ratios. In addition, population increases, even at a moderate rate, will spur demand for new employment opportunities, housing options, and effective municipal services.

Increasing population diversity brings further challenges and opportunities. Some see growing diversity as detrimental due to demands placed on public resources, competition for scarce jobs, and the impact this change has on the sense of familiarity of long-time residents. At the



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

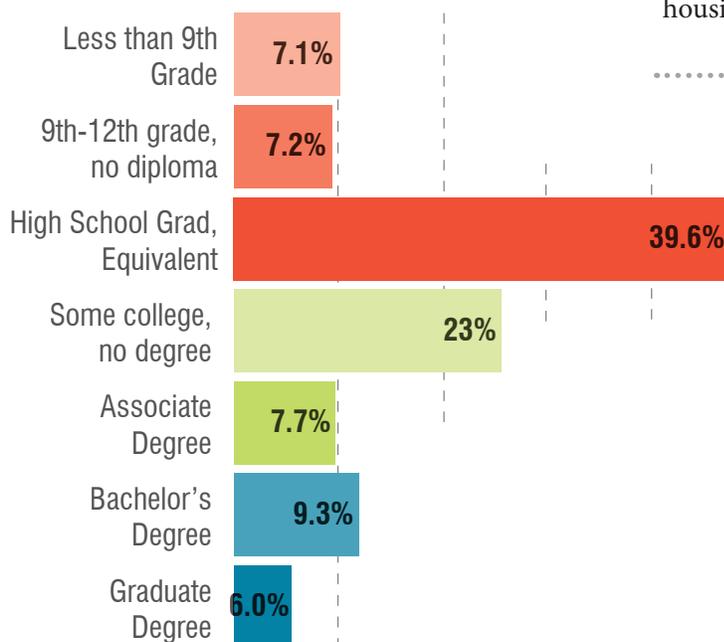
same time, diversity is more the norm than the exception in today's United States and lack of diversity can be detrimental to a community's economic growth when companies or highly skilled individuals seek places to locate. Visitors from outside of the region often react positively to the City and are impressed by its multicultural and diverse population. While Lewiston has been recognized for its successful efforts at integrating its immigrant population into the community, this task is not complete and will continue to challenge the City's leaders and citizens for years to come.

Low median income and high poverty rates must also be addressed through a continued strong emphasis on economic and community development. As a service center, Lewiston faces additional burdens because economically challenged individuals are often drawn to such communities for social and medical services. While working with others to address the issues of poverty and income, the City must also work to attract and retain middle and upper income individuals through offering a quality school system, appropriate housing options, high quality public services, and comprehensive urban amenities. Lewiston must become a community where these groups continue to choose to live.

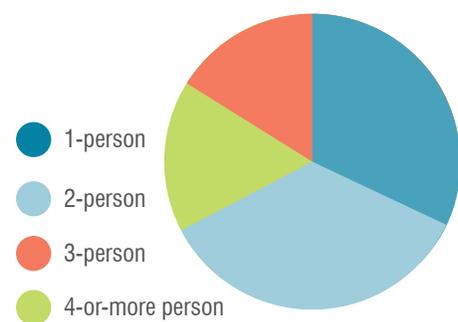
Lewiston's age distribution is a final area of opportunity and challenge. Unlike Maine, Lewiston has a younger population, more reflective of the country as a whole. The City's young adult cohort likely represents both growing population diversity and the expanded two and four year college opportunities created in the region over the last several decades. Each of the universities and colleges in Lewiston provides an excellent education to a variety of students from a multitude of socioeconomic and primary education backgrounds. These institutions can be sources of fresh ideas, youthful energy, entrepreneurs, and potential new residents. The young of Generation Y, those born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s, are at the forefront of the "Creative Economy" Lewiston is seeking to expand. The Creative Economy encompasses a range of activities centered on the generation or use of knowledge, information, and ideas. This economy extends beyond the performing arts to include the media and publishing industry, design and architecture, information services, entertainment, and others, all of which require creative or entrepreneurial skills which are in growing demand. Lewiston will be challenged to attract those in Generation Y and to keep them here after graduation.

At the same time, Lewiston's significant over 40 population will continue to age. Over the next several decades, this cohort will require more senior-focused services, infrastructure, and housing types than the City currently provides.

### Educational Attainment

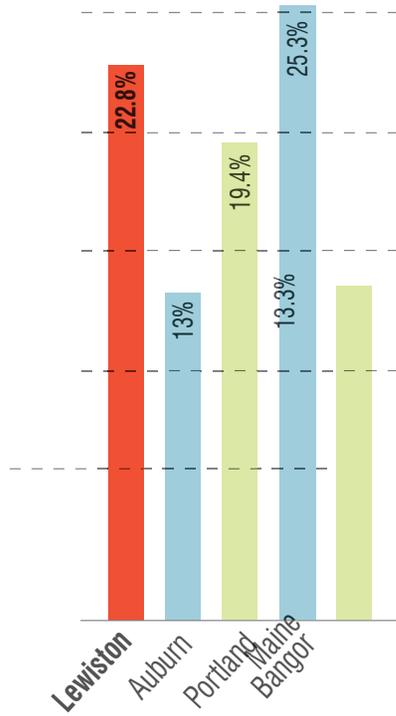


### HOUSEHOLD SIZE



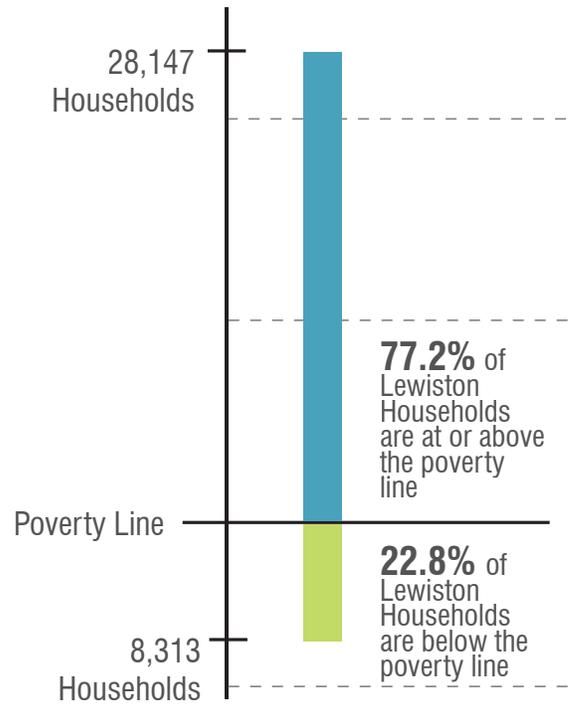
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

## Regional % of population below Poverty Level

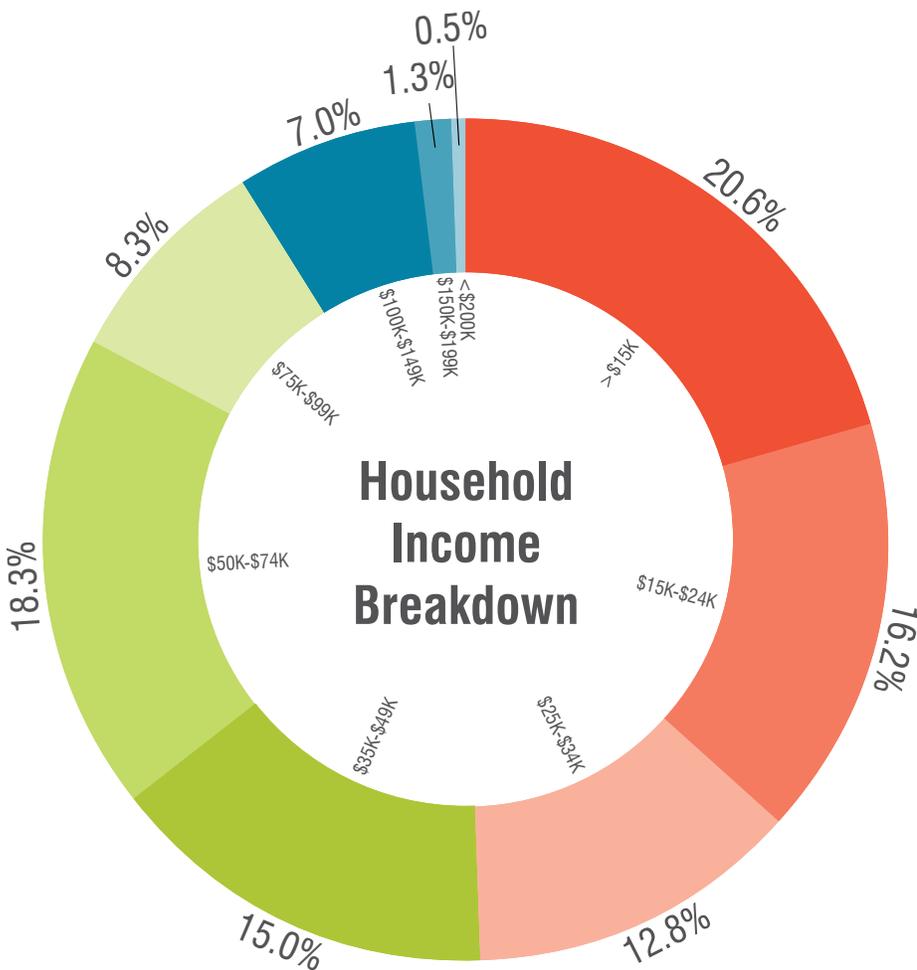


SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

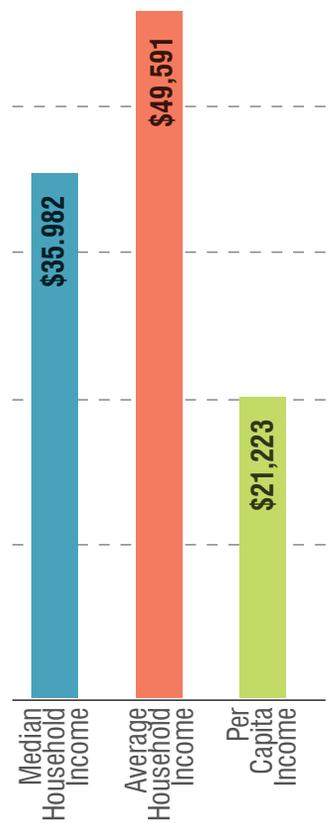
## Lewiston % of population below Poverty Level



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

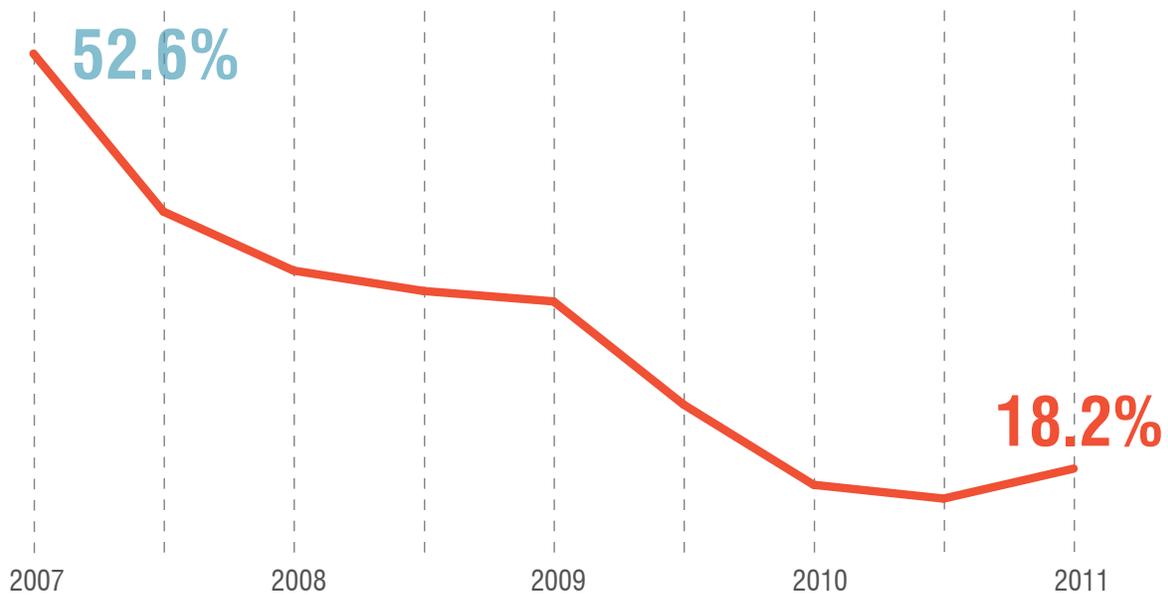


SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

## Percent of City of Lewiston General Assistance Budget spent on Refugees/Asylees

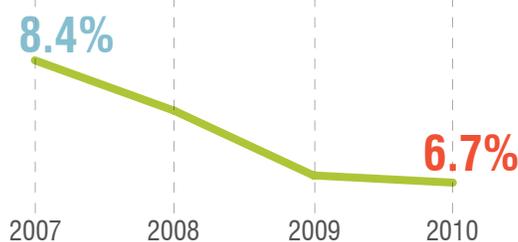


SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

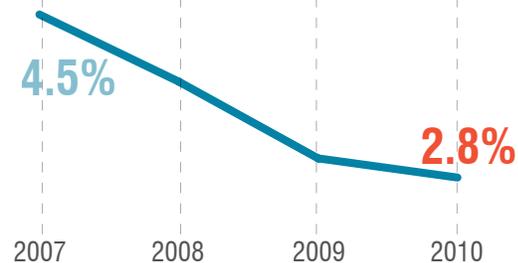
## Insight:

Contrary to public belief, the majority of public assistance is not directed toward immigrant populations at this point in time. Although in 2007, this was the case, immigrants are now only responsible for less than 20% of assistance dollars, which shows the remarkable ability for this population to move to self-sufficiency, in less than 5 years time.

### % of TANF (temporary assistance) funds spent on noncitizens



### % of SNAP (food stamps) funds spent on noncitizens



SOURCE: US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

# Community Character & Land Use



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Lewiston's physical character has been defined over decades by many forces including topography, economic and demographic shifts, and development patterns. Older, more urban neighborhoods near the river are dense and walkable while the City's urban edge is still largely rural. The City's core has a high quality urban fabric and beautiful natural settings that, although compromised by years of depopulation and disinvestment, has the potential to attract new investment and vitality. Zoning ordinances that regulate where uses can be placed have dictated the City's development pattern resulting in suburban neighborhoods and strip highway development. Suburban gateways in particular provide an opportunity for redevelopment better reflecting the City's guiding principles and sense of place.

Nestled on the banks of the Androscoggin River near the Great Falls, Lewiston boasts a dramatic natural setting. Canals dug during the industrial period of Lewiston's history wind through the downtown, pulling the beauty of the river into the core of the City's urban center. The remnants of Lewiston's industrial past are evident through many mill and factory buildings, some of which are being reused or remain available for adaptive reuse.

The core of Lewiston, a historic, dense downtown, is still largely intact; but a weak economy has taken its toll. Over the past 50 years, many buildings have declined and a large number have been demolished due to lack of care. The resulting surface parking lots and vacant lots have further degraded the downtown's character. However, its walkable and mixed use nature has the potential to be revived. Kennedy Park, a formal green space within the core of the City, is well utilized and supports the existing urban structure.

The first ring neighborhoods are home to densely populated districts consisting of buildings that represent several historic architectural periods. Portions of the abundant multi-family housing in this area have deteriorated due to a number of factors including age; high utility costs; high vacancy rates and relatively low rents leading to disinvestment; and some tenants who are unable to reliably pay rent and who may not take adequate care of their units.

Lewiston is also shaped by a number of campus areas including Bates College and area hospitals. These institutions help anchor the City and provide a sense of strong history and civic pride.

Further from downtown, neighborhoods take on a suburban pattern with cul-de-sacs and limited entry points. These low-density neighborhoods started developing in the 1950s, utilizing a suburban form that was supported by the City's zoning and land use codes. These neighborhoods are reached by arterial roads geared toward automobiles and strip mall development. Unfortunately, these roads, with their traffic congestion, suburban development pattern, and formula architecture, provide the primary access to and first impression of the City.

Further from downtown, bird and nature preserves, farms, and undeveloped lands provide a natural backdrop to the City and easy access to nature. Agricultural operations persist along winding country roadways, preserving the City's rural edge.

Nearing the Interstate 95 interchange, industrial operations in the form of conventional business parks take advantage of proximity to the City's major transportation artery. Opportunities exist to incorporate more cutting edge regulations to better position the City to capture a greater share of the region's industrial activity.

## What We Heard . . .

Community of good earnest people with a history, a struggle, and a vision.

People feel Lewiston has lost its reason for being.

Portions of Lisbon Street do not make the best first impression due to oversized signage, run down or empty strip style shopping centers, and a general look of disrepair.

Strong desire to create gateways into the city that better reflect the character of the City.

Part of the charm and character of Lewiston is the clear distinction between the urban core and the surrounding rural edges.

Interest in redeveloping and revitalizing the urban core and surrounding neighborhoods.

When new public facilities are built, such as schools, they should be appropriately located within existing neighborhoods.

Development in rural areas should be restricted. Low density development should not be supported by the City. Conservation/cluster subdivisions should be used to preserve more open space and keep the edges of the City rural in perpetuity.

Build a stronger connection between Bates College and the Downtown, as well as between neighborhoods.

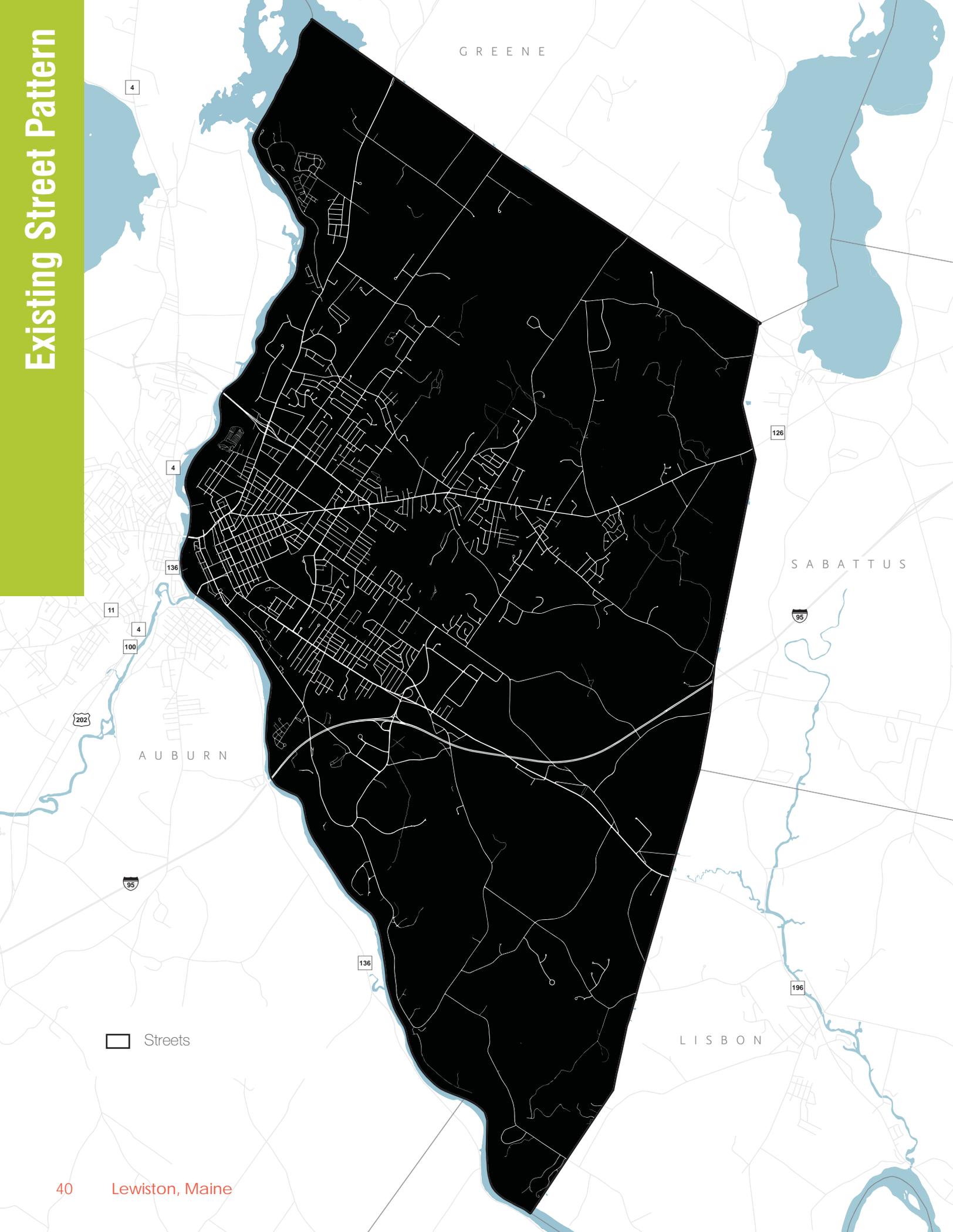
Refocus on urban core and existing suburban neighborhoods.

There is a need to change Lewiston's image.

There needs to be a defined use of form Vs. code in the built urban environment.

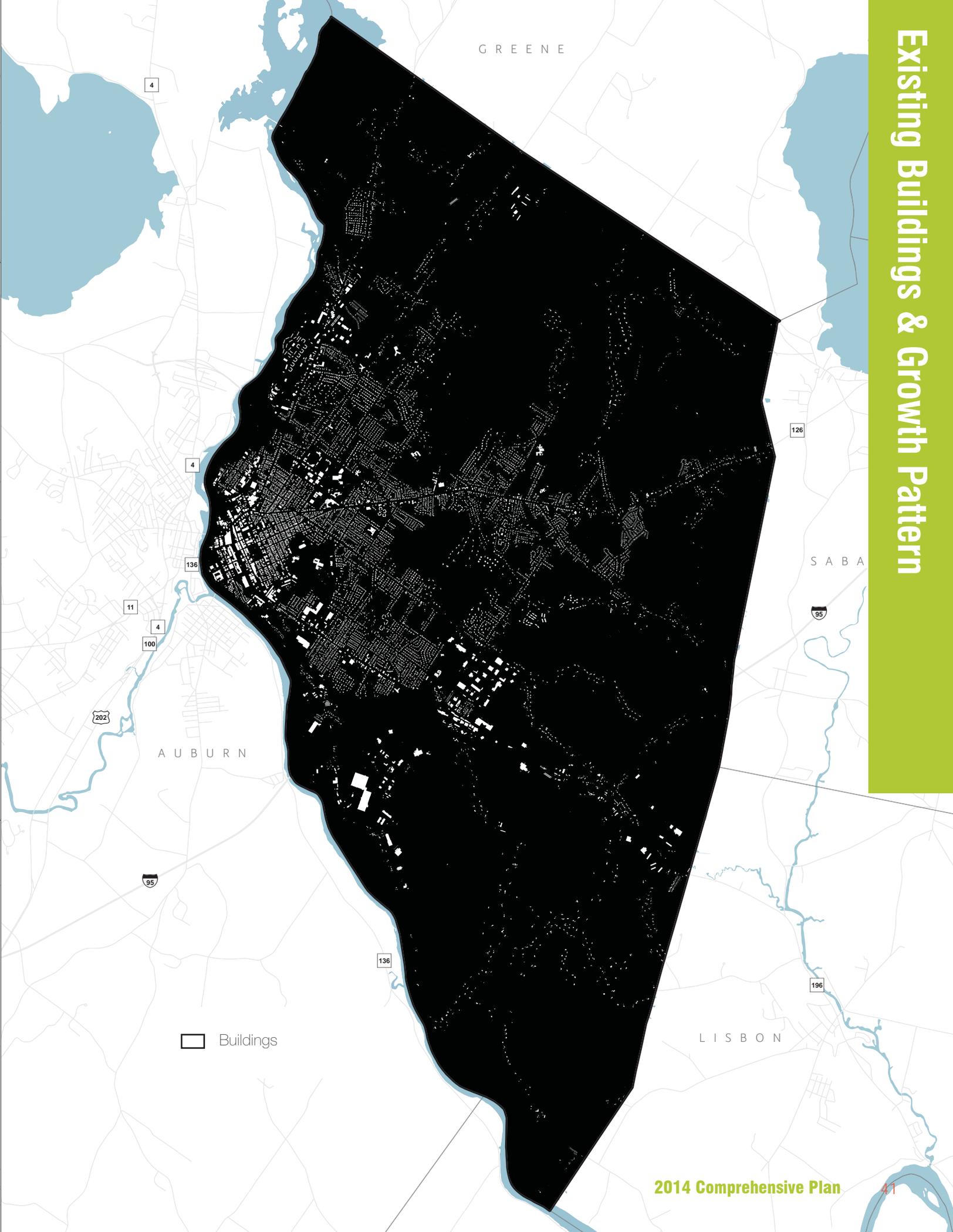
Restrict future rural development.

# Existing Street Pattern



Streets

# Existing Buildings & Growth Pattern



Buildings



## Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is comprised of dense, mixed use buildings that composed the City's original commercial center. These multi-story buildings typically abut the property line and often cover 100% of their lots. There are gaps in the urban fabric are the product of fires and the city's revitalization proactive efforts to remove blighted buildings. Parking is available via the street, rear spaces, alley lots, and parking garages.



## Urban Neighborhood

Urban Neighborhoods are characteristically composed of single family houses, apartment buildings, commercial buildings, and urban parks. Most of these structures are built to the street and cover most of the lot. Parking is available via the rear or alley. Apartments are located above commercial uses within the mixed use buildings located primarily in neighborhood centers. Residential buildings take the form of apartments, row houses, and single family homes.



## Suburban Retail

Suburban Retail is characterized by diverse commercial developments arranged in long, narrow buildings that may house any given number of tenants in varying spaces. They can also include medium-sized box stores. They are usually oriented towards highways and advertise their services with large signs. Surface Parking tends to be located between the road and buildings. Though typically homogenized in design, this format allows for quick, convenient shopping and access to a multitude of services at one location via automobile.



## Suburban & Rural Residential

Suburban and rural residential is a limited-access, low-intensity, development pattern consisting primarily of single-use subdivisions and individual homes built along rural roads. There are usually limited connections between neighboring areas that result in increased travel distances and congestion. Where there are street connections, they tend to be indirect with disorienting geometries or are physically cut off. Uses are almost exclusively single family residential with homes of a consistent shape, size, and aesthetic on large lots (usually 1 acre or greater).



### **Industrial Park**

The Industrial Park is a single-use development dedicated to businesses that require large building footprints, extended business hours, and a heavy reliance on truck traffic. Characteristics include functional design for buildings, wide roads, and easy highway access. Due to technological advances, few of today's industrial uses are noxious to adjacent properties, though residences are seldom within walking distance. These parks are visited by large numbers of workers. Industrial parks are not commonly designed for public access and enjoyment.



### **Office Complex**

Office Complexes range from single-story buildings to multiple-story buildings in a campus setting. Buildings are often scattered along an access road. Access is typically limited to employees. Parking is arranged around the site in equal distributions. These complexes are usually in remote locations or in proximity to other uses such as homes and commercial areas. Separation is achieved via trees and natural buffers. These complexes can be suitable for a variety of uses given their versatile form.



### **Apartment Complex**

Apartment Complexes are high-density residential developments that are commonly designed to be “stacked flat” developments, with buildings scattered throughout a park-like setting. These developments include shared parking areas typically located in front of the buildings, multi-story designs, and easy access from major roadways. They vary greatly in quality and are often isolated from the urban fabric by landscaping and streets. Due to their design and separation, they are often not integrated into the town pattern.



### **Institutional**

Institutional uses include educational, health care, religious, and certain civic uses. These uses are often in the form of campuses comprised of many low-density buildings and outdoor spaces. They are often connected to the existing traffic ways at varying points but have their own traffic and pedestrian management systems. Parking is on-site in lots, garages, and on the streets. There is usually space within the campuses, most commonly outdoor, set aside for public uses.

# Economy



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

After relying on a few major employers for decades, Lewiston continues to adjust its economic landscape to fit 21st century realities. Like other historic mill cities, Lewiston is pursuing greater investment in its physical assets, growth in new creative sectors, and a continued push for greater economic diversity and capacity. A number of planning efforts aimed at stimulating economic growth have been completed recently, including the Riverfront Island Master Plan (2012), the 2010 Strategic Plan, the People’s Downtown Master Plan (2008), and the Downtown Neighborhood Action Plan (2009). These city-led plans, combined with the investments of large- and small-scale businesses, are working together to actively move Lewiston into a new stage of economic expansion.

## Current Job Climate

Lewiston has seen \$509 million dollars of investment since 2000 and is working to strategically build upon this foundation. Today, the City is home to many corporate offices and headquarters, including major employers in the health care and education industries.

Over 80% of Androscoggin County’s jobs are in the Lewiston/Auburn metro area (according to the Riverfront Island Master Plan). Currently,

downtown Lewiston supports 4,410 jobs. The City’s major employers include health care, office and administrative support occupations, sales, production occupations, and the food service industries. Central Maine Healthcare is the tenth largest employer in the state. This wide range of industries attracts a variety of educational backgrounds, age ranges, and income levels to Lewiston’s local economy. According to projections developed by Moody’s Analytics, there will be approximately 2,000 more jobs in Androscoggin County by 2020. Health care, professional and

business services, accommodations, and food service sectors will see the most growth. The manufacturing industry remains strong and could redefine itself by making products that meet the needs of the growing health and education sectors.

## Retail and Restaurant

According to the Riverfront Island Master Plan, downtown Lewiston captures 4.7% of the trade area's eating and drinking sales, which is on the low side compared to destination downtowns that typically capture between 5 and 10 percent. The city could capture more of these sales and has the potential to attract an additional 14,000 square feet of total restaurant space, or about two full restaurants and two to five smaller eating and drinking establishments by 2021 (Riverfront Island Master Plan).

In addition to local residents, parents of Bates College students, business travelers, and visitors to Lewiston's periodic festivals make up the majority of diners at three of Lewiston's most popular restaurants. As increased investment and a wider range of housing occurs in the Downtown, new restaurants will be supported, generating more street activity and spin off retail.

A number of pioneering retailers have opened specialty businesses on Lisbon Street including Rainbow Bicycle, Forage Market, and the Bread Shack Cafe, all of which have capacity for increased sales. A section of Lisbon Street is occupied by almost 30 Somali-owned and operated stores and restaurants that have brought street life and some spin-off business activity back to downtown Lewiston.

## Office

The office market will follow the development of other sectors, especially health and information. Improvements and additions are already planned at Central Maine Medical Center and throughout St. Mary's Health System. These expansions will come with auxiliary demands and more professional services jobs that could drive office growth. Current local office space rental rates of \$15 to \$20 per square foot are not high enough

## What We Heard . . .

Perceived by some as a gritty, run-down community that no longer has a real reason to exist.

Need a public relations campaign, created to inform both the community and outsiders of everything Lewiston has to offer, including the trail along the riverfront, the farmer's market, Bates College, St. Mary's Hospital, the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul (one of less than 100 basilicas inside the US built to the standards for an official papal visit), Davis Mountain, Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary, Island Point, Wiseman Bridge, and access to cross-country skiing to name a few.

Also a need for the City to focus on land development regulations to make them more business and developer friendly, a focus on bringing in high-tech employers, and opening up the waterfront for development and civic use.

City's greatest assets include the large mill buildings, the river and canals, and the underground fiber optic cable.

These assets should be used to draw both employers and employees to the City for high-tech industry jobs and draw both tourists and future residents.

Desire to help disadvantaged workers in the City find steady, reliable employment options.

Want to help residents on welfare find long-term time employment.

Interest in micro-loans, increased job training, and making the community more business-friendly by removing obstacles to opening new small businesses.

The City needs to "invest in and create assets in the downtown to draw outside people revenue."

to warrant new construction. According to the Riverfront Island Master Plan, even with this current limitation, 110,000 additional square feet of office space will be required by 2020 to house an anticipated 500 new general office positions (Moody's Analytics, 2013). Doctors' offices and various other health specialties such as physical therapy add additional space demands. Much of the needed office space can be accommodated within the existing footprint of Bates Mill and along Lisbon Street near the Southern Gateway through infill development. The proposed Industrial Village and interstate gateways may also be attractive to certain employers if parking is of principal concern.

It is likely that most of this growth will be absorbed in existing vacant or underutilized office space. Logical locations for Downtown offices are the Bates Mill complex and other existing space in Downtown Lewiston and Auburn. Given current rent levels, it is unlikely that a new multi-tenant office building will be feasible until demand increases to the point where new construction can garner the rents needed to offset construction costs. There may, however, be an opportunity for new build-to-suit office buildings on available downtown land. Riverfront Island (particularly sites on Lincoln Street or facing the River) is an excellent location for new owner occupied office buildings.

## **Industrial**

Lewiston has a number of large industrial enterprises including the Walmart Distribution Center. However, the City has the opportunity to attract a greater number of artisan industrial businesses by building on the City's ever-growing collection of small to medium-sized specialty and craft industrial operations. By example, these now include the Rancourt & Co. shoe factory, Baxter Brewing Company, and Maine Bucket Company.

The re-use of existing and historical industrial infrastructure has been important to Lewiston's light industrial revival. The 250,000 square-foot Hill Mill has been partially occupied with craftsmen and light industrial uses including

cabinet makers, guitar makers, and t-shirt printers. This Mill should continue to add more light industrial and artisan tenants.

## **Self-Employment**

In Androscoggin County, 20.5% of the workforce is self-employed. Though this is an increase from 1999's self-employment rate of 16.1%, this rate is still lower than Maine's 23.6%. As an urban area, Lewiston has the potential to attract an even greater number of self-employed individuals, indicative of a strong creative economy. Building on the City's historic assets and marketing the local arts and cultural scene will help Lewiston draw more Gen X and Millennials, both of which will help diversify the City's job market through creative individual enterprise.

## **Tourism**

Although Lewiston is not typically thought of as a tourist destination, it could become a stop for those traveling in the area. Presently, Lewiston's popularity among tourists is integrally connected to annual events and festivals such as the Dempsey Challenge, the Great Falls Balloon Festival and the Liberty Festival. As the City continues to invest in revitalizing downtown landmark buildings and increased marketing efforts to rebrand the city, year-round tourism should continue to rise.

## **Tax Increment Financing**

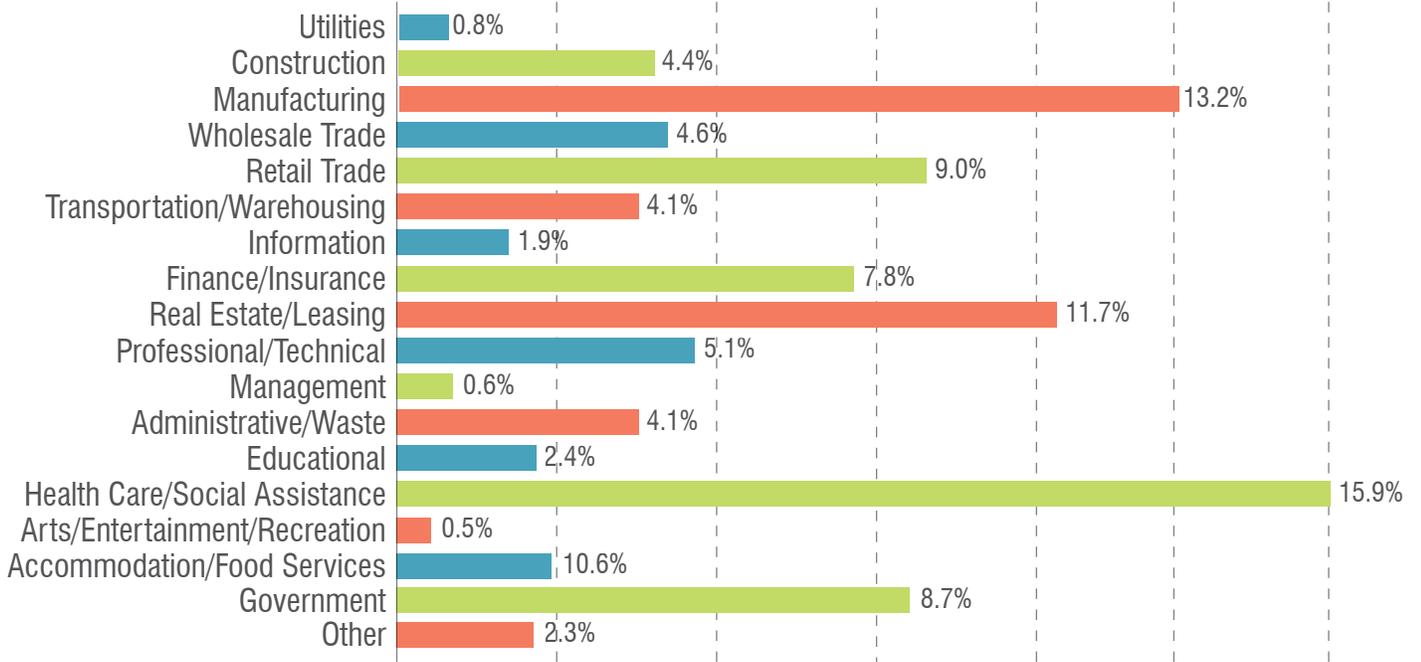
The City has successfully used tax increment financing (TIF) districts. Since 2001, Lewiston has created 8 such districts, most of which were established to promote the development of large retailers and/or employers. In the past, the City has focused the majority of TIF efforts on single businesses as opposed to multiple establishments within larger districts, as TIF efforts are sometimes applied.

Androscoggin County Population **107,702**  
 Per capita Income **\$22,577**<sup>x</sup>

Total Potential Income **\$2,431,588,054**

SOURCE: 2010 CENSUS DATA FOR ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY

**Lewiston GDP by Industry**



SOURCE: MOODY'S ANALYTICS

The Lewiston-Auburn Metro Area will need

**96,000**

square feet of new or rehabilitated office space by 2020. It will also need an additional

**75,000**

square feet of medical office space, bringing the total to almost

**200,000**

square feet of office space needed by 2020

SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN, MOODY'S ANALYTICS

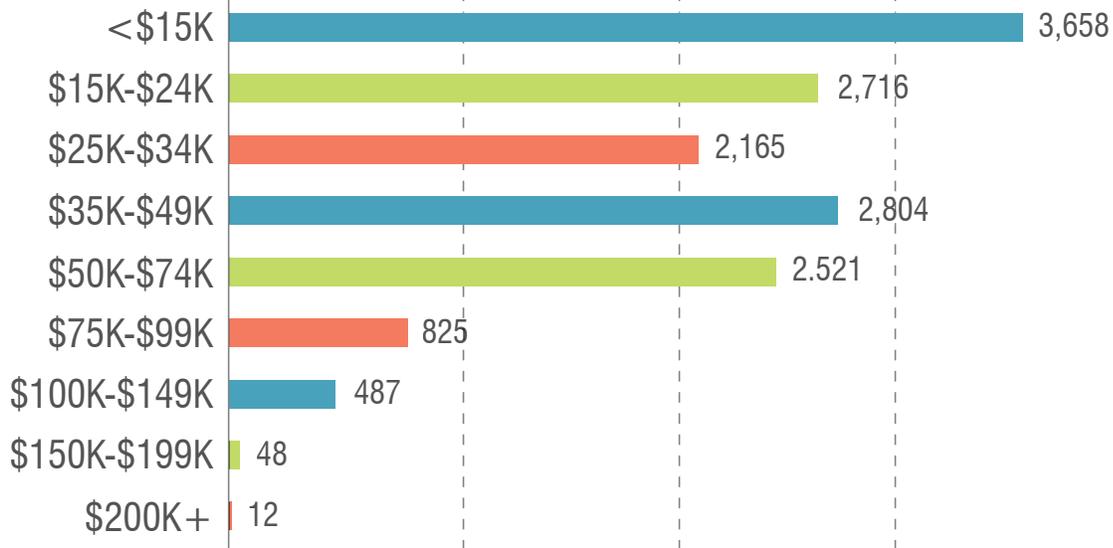
**5%** of Lewiston's income is spent on restaurants.

Local restaurants are estimated to make **78%** of their sales from local residents

**22%** of sales come from visitors

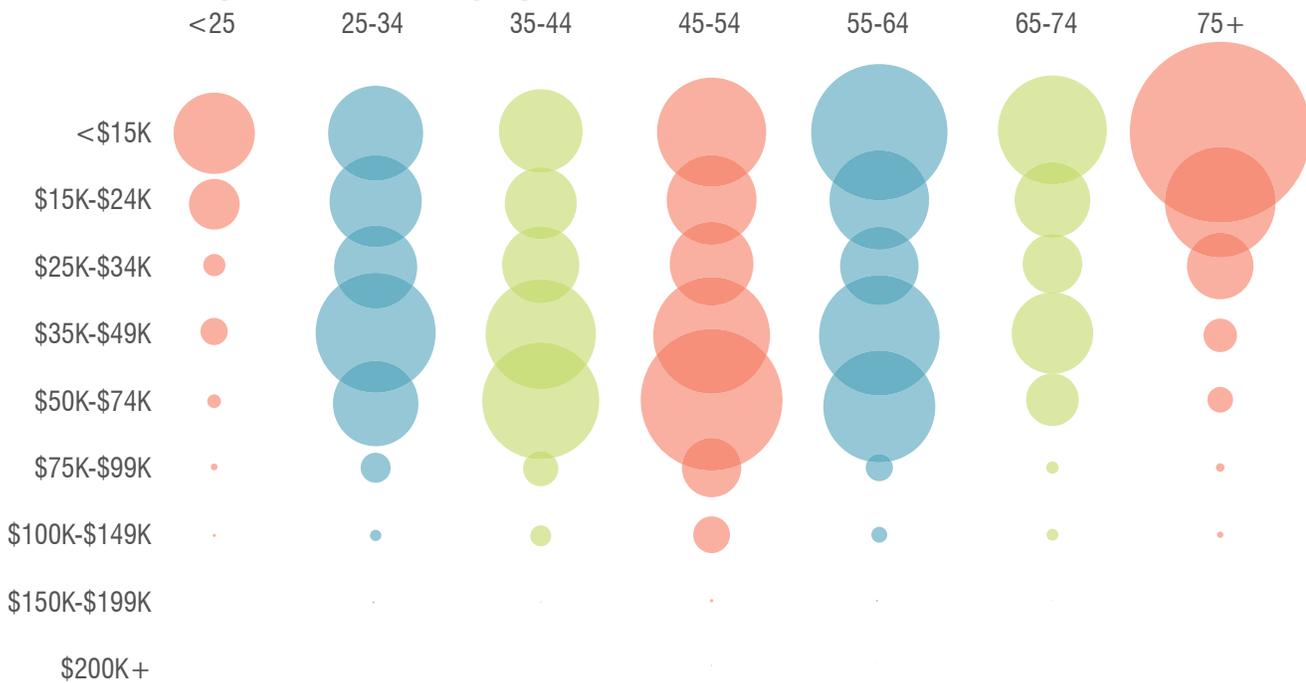
SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN

## Households by Disposable Income



SOURCE: 2000 CENSUS DATA FOR LEWISTON

## Disposable Income by Age (● = 100 people)



SOURCE: ESRI COMMUNITY ANALYST, 2012 DATA

# 0.88

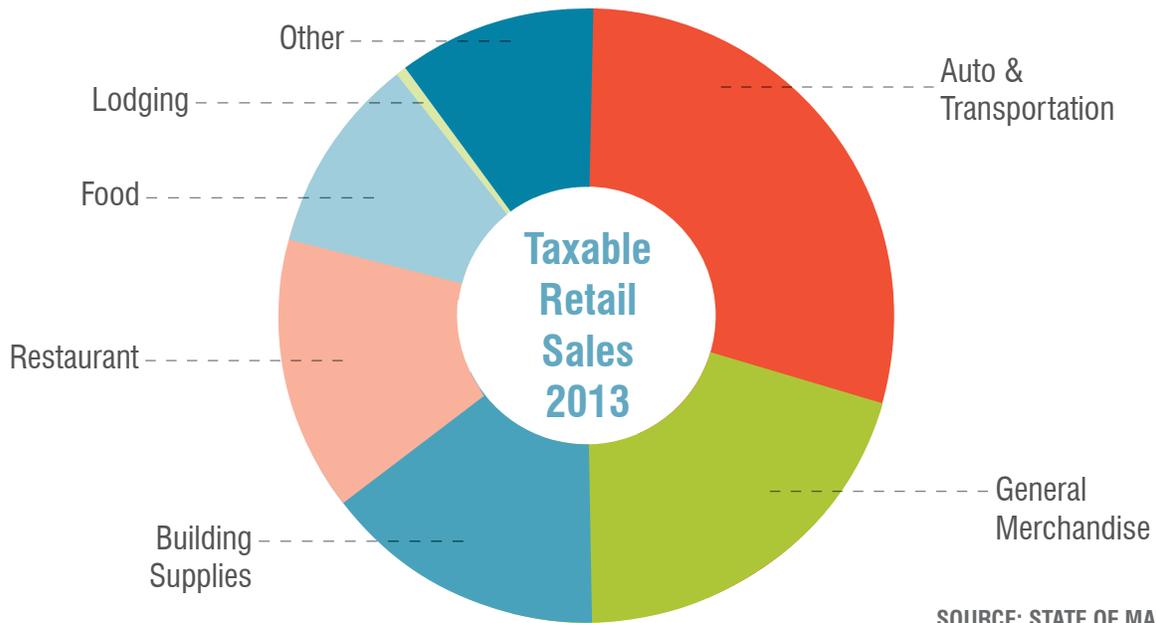
Androscoggin County's jobs-to-labor ratio, indicating that most residents don't travel outside the county for work

SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN APPENDIX A

nearly **1/3**  
of Downtown  
Lewiston  
or about 150 acres  
is underutilized land,  
ripe for development  
and redevelopment.



Despite having many remaining buildings, Lewiston has lost density and a significant amount of its urban fabric over the past 50 years. Though the city may appear built out because of the lack of large undeveloped parcels, there are numerous small and medium size parcels that are underutilized. This includes vacant lots, parking lots, buildings with suburban setbacks, and lots with an excessive amount of parking and brownfield sites. All of these conditions lead to unrealized potential.



SOURCE: STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

**20%**  
or  
**\$175 million**  
of local spending in Lewiston is in  
general retail.

Lewiston's retail market sees over  
**\$850 million**  
in annual sales

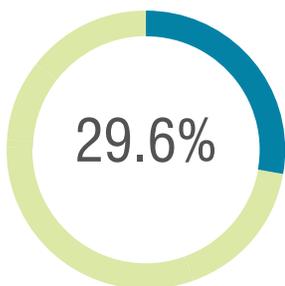
SOURCE: STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

**\$675**  
Most expensive shoes  
made in Lewiston  
(Rancourt & Co., made to  
order boot)

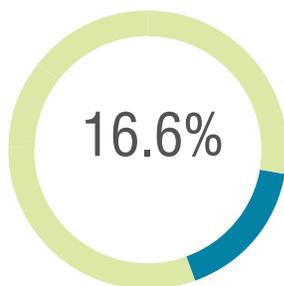
SOURCE:  
WWW.RANCOURTANDCOMPANY.COM  
WINTER 2013 ONLINE CATALOG

### Employment by Occupation

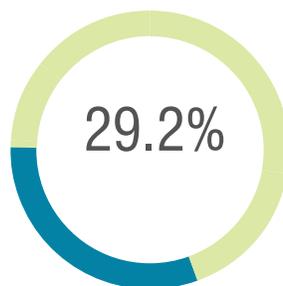
Management:



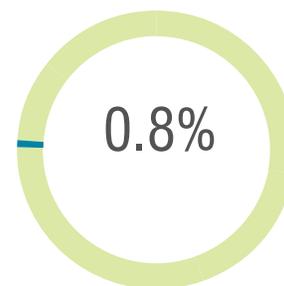
Service:



Sales, Office:

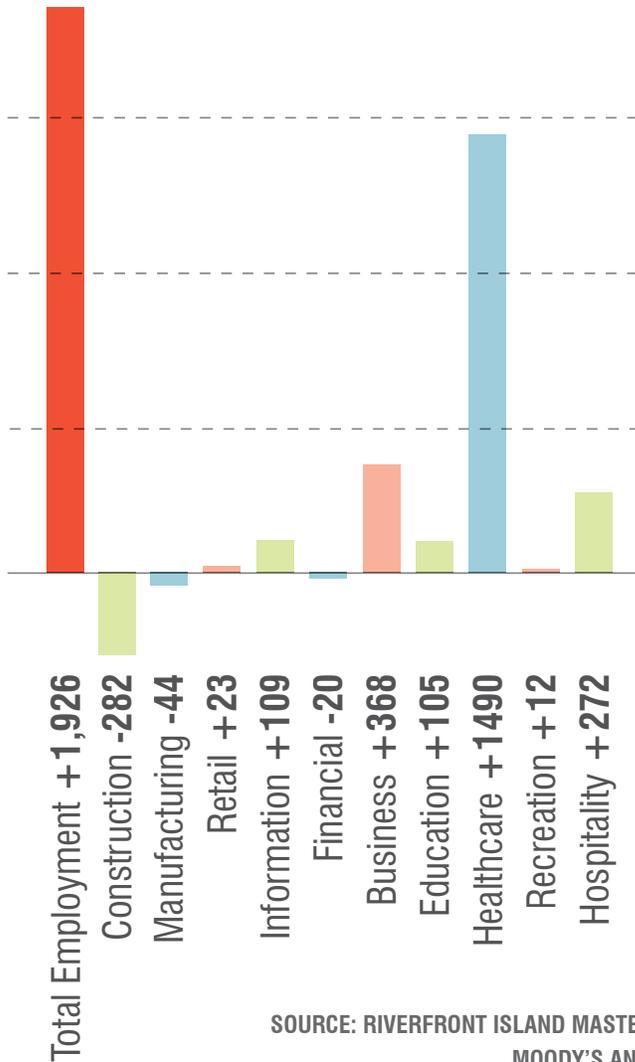


Farming, Forestry:



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

## 2020 Employment Projections



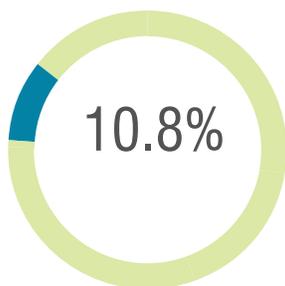
SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN, MOODY'S ANALYTICS

# 480

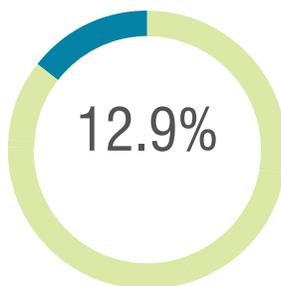
Office jobs are expected to be added by 2020

SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN, MOODY'S ANALYTICS

Construction, etc:



Production, Transit:



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (CONTINUED FROM FACING PAGE)

# 29,770

residents 16 & older in Lewiston

# 16,255

civilians 16 & older employed in Lewiston

Assuming linear growth, the Lewiston-Auburn Metro area will continue to contain

# 80%

of Androscoggin County's jobs.

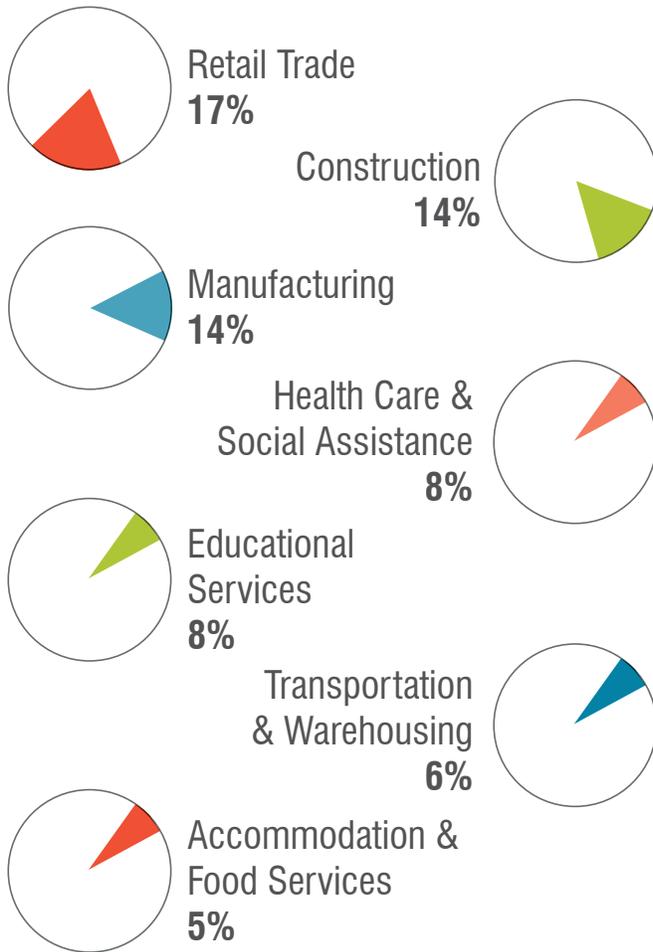
The area will need **96,000 sf**

of new or rehabilitated office space by 2020.

SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN

## Most Common Industries



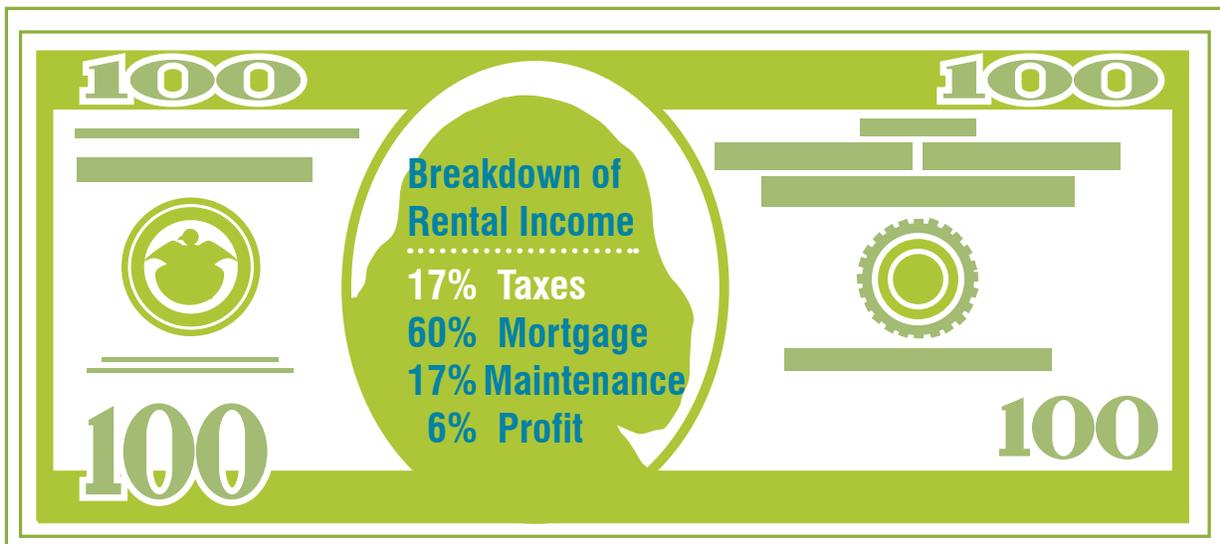
SOURCE: CITY-DATA.COM 2007-2011 DATA

## Insight:

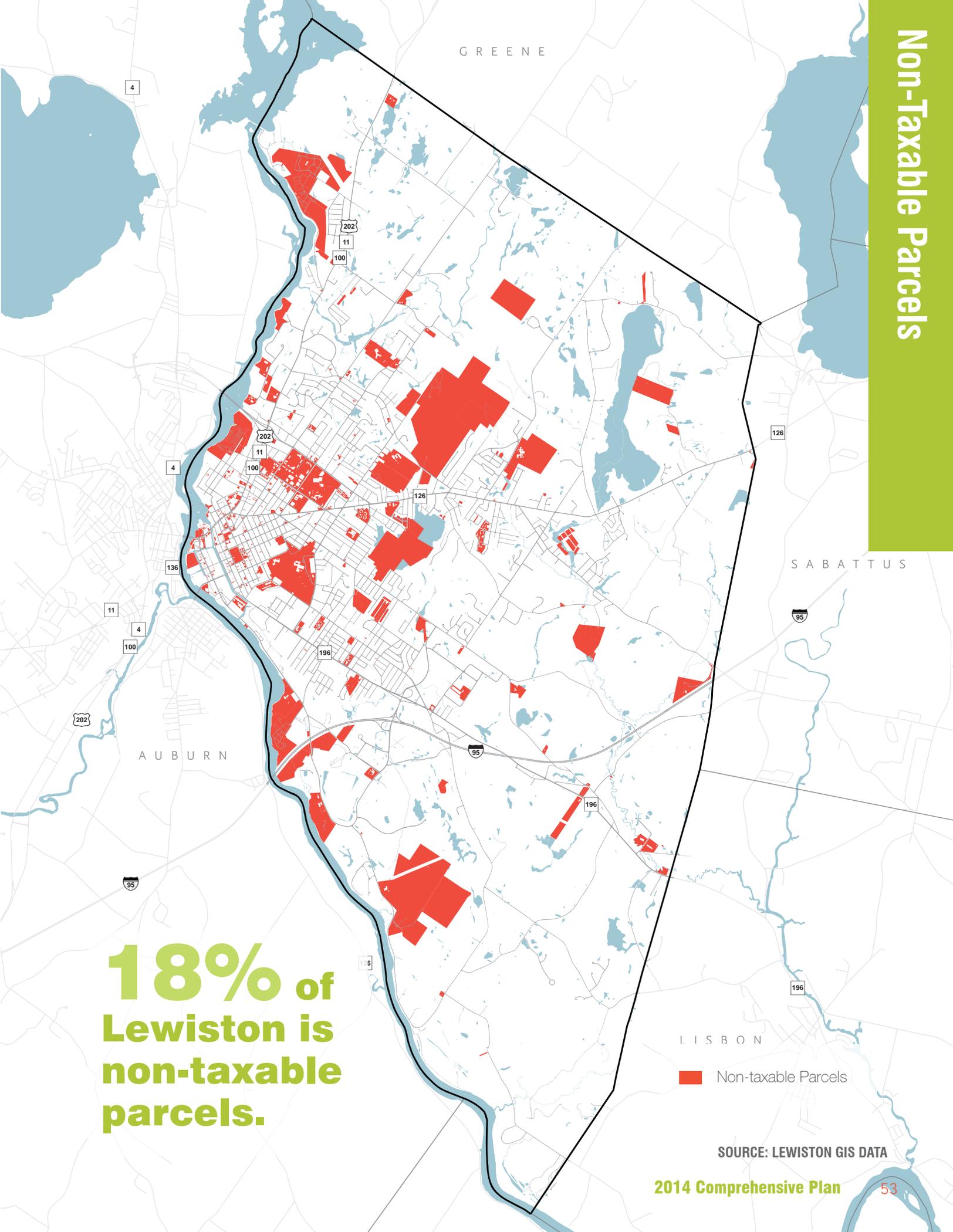
Although 18% of total area in Lewiston is non-taxable property, almost 33% of the downtown is comprised of underutilized parcels. The City should first prioritize the development and redevelopment of the large number of unproductive parcels owned by the private sector.

## Renters Do Pay Taxes!

How renters indirectly contribute to property tax



SOURCE: RENTAL PROPERTY OWNER IN LEWISTON



**18%** of  
**Lewiston is**  
**non-taxable**  
**parcels.**

L I S B O N  
■ Non-taxable Parcels

SOURCE: LEWISTON GIS DATA

# Arts & Culture



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Lewiston has numerous arts and cultural events and venues. From annual, headline events to smaller, more specialized performances, there are opportunities for people of all ages to both get involved and be entertained. Nevertheless, many residents have expressed the desire for more nightlife, restaurants, and art events, especially downtown. Many see bringing these events to downtown as a way to help revitalize the urban core and give Lewiston an identity.

The arts are the manifestations of human intellectual achievement. They are one way we define, challenge, and make ourselves distinct. An active arts community and unique local culture is essential to achieving a high “quality of life” and attracting people and businesses. Perhaps most importantly, a strong cultural identity empowers a community by nurturing self-respect and self-esteem, enhancing ethnic and cultural sensitivity, and making the learning process more broadly accessible.

Lewiston and Auburn share much of their arts scene and cultural identity. The two cities often collaborate and identify themselves as Lewiston-Auburn or L/A. Lewiston and Auburn are

located in the midst of natural beauty along the Androscoggin River with rugged mountains and lakes to the west and picturesque rocky coastlines and beaches to the east. The Great Falls of the Androscoggin River host not only spectacular views and recreational opportunities but numerous historic mill and factory buildings that define the City in many ways. This setting creates a remarkable backdrop for activities and cultural offerings provided in Lewiston.

Lewiston has numerous year-round cultural venues and activities. Lewiston hosts annual events and festivals such as the Bates Dance Festival, the Dempsey Challenge, and the Greek Festival. In addition, Lewiston and Auburn cohost events

such as the Great Falls Hot Air Balloon Festival, the Liberty Festival, the Ice Festival, the Festival of Arts & Lights, and “Wednesdays in the Park,” a program which offers numerous entertainment, arts, and cultural performances throughout the summer.

Lewiston has a strong and long standing tradition in the performing arts including the Public Theatre and Community Little Theatre. The Franco-American Heritage Center and LA Arts Musical offerings include the Maine Music Society, Maine Chamber Orchestra, Mid-Coast Symphony Orchestra, and the Androscoggin Chorale. Other cultural venues include Museum L-A and the Marsden Hartley Cultural Center. Lewiston-Auburn’s numerous cultural and artistic offerings have brought a high level of recognition to the region, which has been named one of the “Top 100 Best Small Art Towns in America” by John Villani in his book *Top 100 Best Small Art Towns in America: Where To Discover Creative Communities, Fresh Air, And Affordable Living*.

However, these numerous offerings and opportunities are not always well-known in the wider community or outside of the Lewiston-Auburn area. Activities and events often compete with one another for the limited number tuned into the arts community.

### Art Walk Lewiston Auburn

Originally started as a grassroots endeavor, Art Walk Lewiston Auburn has become a great cultural event for the Twin Cities. Once a month from May through September, the downtown is turned into an arts district. The mission of the organization is to foster a sense of community and celebrate the vitality of Lewiston and Auburn’s downtowns by promoting self-guided tours of local arts venues and temporary exhibits.

### Arts & Culture Lewiston Auburn

Arts & Culture Lewiston Auburn was created to strengthen and support the arts & culture in the Lewiston-Auburn area as a central component of furthering economic and cultural development and to enhance the quality of life for local

## What We Heard . . .

Create a social scene, steeple tour, and artist colony.

Attract the creative class.

Find a permanent place for the Farmer’s Market.

Need to redevelop downtown music spaces and houses.

“Growing up in a small town it was a great step up without too much shock. Community base, diversity.”

Lewiston is “home, roots, family, history.”

Need more nightlife, music options, community events, summer concert festivals, and activities for kids.

Wants to make the city more liveable for everyone—low income, new Mainers, LGBT, and have more livable wage jobs.

Develop a cultural plan for the inventory of unused buildings.

The city can guide the arts and cultural message even if they can’t support it financially.

residents. The organization is made up of many different organizations whose independent goals are focused around culture and the arts.

### Atrium Art Gallery at Lewiston/Auburn (L/A) College

The Atrium Art Gallery, located in the center of USM’s Lewiston-Auburn College, presents a year-round schedule of exhibitions highlighting Maine artists through solo and group exhibitions of painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, and contemporary crafts. A biennial exhibit, in an open-juried format, features work by artists in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties.

## **Bates College Museum of Art**

The Bates College Museum of Art (MoA) brings a world of ideas to the City and the region. Through temporary exhibitions, the permanent collection, programming and education programs, the MoA is an integral part of the intellectual and cultural life of Bates College. The education program is focused on curricular involvement with both the College and surrounding communities. Through programs like the Thousand Words Project, which uses exhibitions and collections to teach writing skills and visual literacy, the museum serves as a tool for educators and students. The museum reaches every middle school student in Lewiston and Auburn. Whenever possible, outreach programs include a community-engaged learning component to capitalize on the expertise of Bates students.

## **Franco-American Heritage Center & Performances**

The Franco-American Heritage Center is a key anchor within the riverfront area. As a cultural destination and event venue, the Center draws more than 20,000 people annually for over 140 events ranging from Mid-Coast Symphony performances to rock bands, dance parties, galas, and weddings. The mission of the Center is to celebrate and preserve Franco-American heritage while “welcoming the cultures of our neighbors.” The Center preserves the local Franco heritage by offering French classes to children and adults and tours of the museum that depict the Franco immigrant culture.

## **L/A Arts**

L/A Arts is a non-profit organization that has been serving the community for over 35 years, by helping to revitalize and re-establish cultural interest and connections in the Lewiston/Auburn community. L/A Arts’ agenda has always been to promote the power of the arts, use its credentials to stimulate economic revival, maintain a diversity of programming, and realize a high quality of life for everyone within the community. In the 1990s, both Lewiston and Auburn recognized the organization’s role in advancing cultural development and designated L/A Arts the area’s Local Arts Agency.

## **LA Community Little Theatre (in Auburn)**

Community Little Theatre is a volunteer run theatre and is one of the oldest continuous community theatres in Maine. Their mission is to provide education and personal exposure to the performing arts in the form of both musicals and non-musical productions. Community Little Theatre operates out of the Great Falls Performing Arts Center. Although located in Auburn, many Lewiston residents participate in and attend performances at the Theatre. The Theatre runs several productions each year including summer youth programs.

## **LA Film Festival**

The LA Film Festival is an annual spring event. The film festival issues an open call for submissions for featured movies as well as student competitions. The main festival spans three days. Past years’ festivals have included over 20 events and screenings of 75 films at six different locations, making it one of the largest film festivals in Maine.

## **LA Magazine**

First published in 2010, LA Magazine runs features on the people, businesses, and local community scene in Lewiston and Auburn, including articles on current events, entertainment, culture, food, recreation, education, and health and wellness in the twin cities.

## **Downtown Galleries**

Several small galleries are located on Lisbon Street. They feature a variety of works, including contemporary artists from Maine. They help support local resident artists and provide open studios to see artists working. They participate in LA Art Walk and local jazz nights.

## **Maine Music Society**

The Maine Music Society is a source of civic pride that connects area residents with the broader world of musical arts and culture. The society supports the volunteer singers of the Androscoggin Chorale and the professional musicians of the Maine Music Society Chamber Orchestra.

The organization engages with the community by offering educational and youth oriented activities as well as professional performances and imaginative programming in the musical arts. The Music Society holds performances at the Franco-American Heritage Center in Lewiston, the First Congregational Church in Paris, and the Hilton Garden Inn in Auburn.

### **The Mid-Coast Symphony Orchestra**

The Mid-Coast Symphony Orchestra began as a small ensemble, the Mid-Coast Chamber Orchestra, in 1990. It has since grown to become a full symphony orchestra including over 70 volunteer musicians from around the region. It performs both classical and modern pieces. The orchestra's mission is to "provide opportunities to talented amateur musicians to study and perform quality orchestral music and to share that experience with the communities we serve." The orchestra performs at the Orion Performing Arts Center at the Mt. Ararat Middle School in Topsham and at the Franco-American Heritage Center in Lewiston.

### **Museum L-A**

Museum L-A is a nonprofit organization dedicated to telling the story of over 200 years of work, industry, and community in Lewiston-Auburn. Museum L-A currently located within the Bates Mill Complex, hosts a range of award-winning exhibits and events for people of all ages. The museum has ambitions of relocating to the former Camden Yarn Mill adjacent to Simard-Payne Park.

### **Prose Gallery**

Prose Gallery is located in downtown Lewiston on Lisbon Street. Prose Gallery showcases creative works from both local artists in Maine and from around the world with regularly changing exhibits. The gallery is a dynamic space with a range of exhibits including fashion design, photography, paintings, and even comedy nights. The Gallery is an endeavor of the same creative minds that started LA Magazine.

### **The Public Theatre**

The readers of the Portland Phoenix have

four times voted The Public Theatre the "Best Theatre Company" in Maine. The Public Theatre brings high quality theatre to central Maine at an affordable price featuring Broadway, Off-Broadway, and new scripts with actors from all over New England and New York. The Public Theatre is located on Maple Street in Lewiston.

### **Schaeffer Theatre at Bates College**

The Schaeffer Theatre at Bates College is a 16,000 square foot venue that seats over 200 patrons built on College Street in 1960. The theatre hosts regular theatre, music, and dance performances, including the annual Bates Dance Festival. It features full set-construction and costume workshops.

### **Youth Orchestra of Lewiston/Auburn, Maine**

The youth orchestra provides orchestral training and music education to young musicians in the Lewiston-Auburn area. They are committed to creating excitement and passion for music by providing an opportunity for children to perform in public.

# Housing & Neighborhoods



Lewiston benefits from a mix of historic downtown neighborhoods with walkable streets in proximity to an evolving commercial core as well as modern single-family neighborhoods in the outer sections of town. While there is an abundance of rental housing units in town, the quality is often poor. Changing household structures call for more high-quality multi-family units, including those built with the growing senior population, baby boomers, and young families in mind.

## Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are the backbone of community. Besides being a place to live, they provide places to work, shop, go to school, and socialize. Lewiston is made up of a number of neighborhoods, although there is little agreement on their geographic boundaries or names.

The City is generally composed of three neighborhood types. The oldest neighborhoods are found in the greater downtown area, developed around a traditional street grid. A broad mix of housing types can be found there, including mixed use structures, lofts in converted mills, triple-deckers, large apartment buildings,

duplexes, and single-family homes. A majority of the housing in this area is rental, often carved out of late 19th and early 20th-century mill housing. Many of these structures are in a state of disrepair. This urban area includes neighborhoods loosely identified as the “Downtown,” Sunnyside Park, Little Canada, and the Tree Streets.

The downtown is surrounded by inner ring residential neighborhoods that include a mix of single-family homes and apartment buildings, still largely organized around a street grid. This area includes the Pettingill School/Park neighborhood, Farwell School neighborhood,

Ware Street Neighborhood, and the Webster Street neighborhood.

The outskirts are developed with suburban neighborhoods made up primarily of single-family homes built post-WWII. This area includes approximately half of the city's total housing stock and includes the Pond Road neighborhood, McMahon School neighborhood, and the Geiger School/Elliot Avenue neighborhood.

## Housing

According to the 2012 American Community Survey, Lewiston has 17,054 total housing units, 15,535 of which are occupied. Approximately one third of these units were built prior to WWII. The other two thirds are primarily detached, single family homes constructed in the last 50 years as the City expanded outward from the core. In Lewiston, 8.9% of the total housing units are vacant, which is lower than the national vacancy rate of 12.8%. The downtown vacancy rate, at almost 15%, is about double the City's average. This higher rate may be the result of several factors including housing age and quality and the negative perception some have of the area. Lewiston has a lower rate of homeownership (49.4%) than both the state (71.6%) and Auburn (59%). Conversely, the majority of occupied units in the city are rental (50.6%) compared to the national average of 35.3% (all homeownership data from the 2012 American Community Survey).

Despite a reputation as an inexpensive City, three out of five households (60.9% according to the 2012 American Community Survey) cannot afford a median priced home or apartment. While affordability has improved somewhat as a result of the decline in housing prices associated with the recent recession, low overall income levels remain the primary reason why a portion of the population struggles to find affordable housing or must rely on financial assistance to meet basic needs.

According to the Maine State Housing Authority, the median home price in Lewiston in 2013 was about \$125,000. Under typical loan conditions, such housing is affordable to a two person, two-income household earning \$40,528. The majority

## What We Heard . . .

Housing in Lewiston is a point of contention for many residents.

Perceived issues (which may or may not be true) include absentee landlords, difficult tenants, a lack of building code enforcement, trash on the streets, dangerous lead levels, and crime.

Need to clean up and repair the housing stock in the neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown.

Concern about number of buildings being torn down and left as vacant lots.

Greater enforcement of the existing codes could help build stronger neighborhood pride, but also potentially lead to an increase in taxes or rental housing costs.

Requiring owner occupied rentals was suggested.

Need improved public transportation so people who cannot afford a car can still have a reliable way of getting to work.

Lewiston lacks sufficient housing for all generations.

While there are numerous single family homes, there are few options for elderly people who want to live in a smaller condominium unit.

Many seniors remain in a home that is too large and difficult to maintain or move to another City.

"Downtown needs safer housing and safer sidewalks."

There needs to be a better relationship between tenants and landlords, and better ways of dealing with problem tenants.

of the housing issues in Lewiston are in the city's downtown core where 70% of the households are low-income. With continuing demographic shifts, the City will see a greater number of single-earner families along with new graduates, young families, public servants, and blue-collar workers who don't earn enough to afford a modestly priced single-family home. Currently, there are few high-quality alternatives to single family homes available in the market. Home ownership and long-term tenancy are foundational to community investment. Increasing homeownership rates is an important goal of many of the City's housing agencies and community groups.

## Demographic Trends

National housing trends can be helpful when reviewing Lewiston's housing choices. Census data shows that Lewiston's demographic makeup reflects an emerging "modern family" structure. Generation Y (born between early 1980s and early 2000s) represents the City's largest demographic group and accounts for the majority of new household formations. Baby boomers are the second most represented group, both nationally and in Lewiston. Lewiston has more non-traditional families, in the form of both singles and single parents, when compared to both the state and the nation. While 25% of national households consist of married couples with children, they represent only 12.5% in Lewiston.

Collectively, these groups seek smaller, less expensive, higher quality, and more conveniently located housing. There is also an increasing preference for rental units in the new economy, a trend that is not limited to low-income populations. For Generation Y, Baby Boomers, and college students, renting is often a more attractive housing option.

Despite these trends, almost all recent home construction has been detached single-family located in areas that require residents to drive to shopping, work, and recreational opportunities. This growth pattern presents a significant challenge to the City given that almost 20% of Lewiston households do not own a car.

The City has an opportunity to initiate actions and adopt policies to provide incentives to encourage

investment in struggling but well-positioned residential neighborhoods in and within close proximity to the downtown core. These neighborhoods can accommodate additional population through redevelopment, infill, and rehabilitation of existing housing stock and vacant or underutilized former mills. Actively pursuing a balance between rental and home-ownership, historic and new construction, and market rate and affordable units, will inject new energy and life into these central neighborhoods and offer residents desirable housing options.

## Senior Housing

There are not enough options for seniors who need assistance or wish to live independently. According to a 2013 report by the Lewiston Housing Authority, there are approximately 391 elderly/disabled public housing units in the City. With a population of nearly 6,000 residents aged 65 and older as of 2012 American Community Survey data, there is a clear shortage of housing options for this demographic. A recent article in the Portland Press Herald states that there are more than 100 seniors on waiting lists for openings in these units. Many seniors move from the City because there are few senior-specific housing choices, especially for those who no longer drive. Because of the lack of senior housing, others end up owning or renting homes that are bigger than they need and require more for upkeep and maintenance than they can afford. Senior housing needs will continue to grow as the population's overall age increases. Lewiston can enhance its ability to attract and retain seniors by expanding their available housing options.

## Immigrant Housing

From 2001 to the present, approximately 4,000 immigrants (referred to as "New Mainers") have moved to Lewiston and Auburn. Most of these immigrants are secondary immigrants from Somalia, relocating from their initial placement elsewhere in the United States. A significant portion of the immigrant/refugee/asylee population lives in subsidized housing. These groups are heavily represented (>50%) at Hillview, a Lewiston Housing Authority property, and at River Valley Village, a non-profit owned low-income housing complex. In downtown

## Local Housing Assistance Organizations

### **Lewiston Housing Authority**

The LHA owns and operates over 450 federally subsidized residential units for the elderly and families.

### **Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for the Homeless**

Alliance of service providers, volunteers, and others working for affordable housing, services for homeless people and a safe place during daytime hours.

### **Trinity Jubilee Center**

They offer a range of assistance for Somali and Sudanese refugees, including as liaisons between tenants and landlords. There are resource and warming centers available for all community members. The centers offer meals, assistance accessing local social service centers and other services, donated clothing and household items, as well as free medical clinic services.

### **Safe Voices**

Offers confidential emergency shelter services to victims of domestic violence regardless of gender.

### **The Visible Community's Neighborhood Housing League**

A project to empower residents to get involved in advocating for safe and affordable housing in downtown Lewiston and develop leadership in advocating for their housing needs. Offers help for tenants with legal matters, tenants and landlords to communicate with each other, and community organizing.

### **The City of Lewiston**

Advocates for affordable housing, uses regulatory tools to encourage affordable housing development, and enforces the building and housing codes. The city also gives to many other of the organizations listed here on an annual basis.

### **Auburn-Lewiston Home Consortium**

Offers zero interest loans to low to moderate income households (or landlords of structures up to four units) to rehabilitate their homes to become more liveable, improve energy efficiency, and meet code requirements.

### **New Beginnings**

New Beginning's mission is to assist and advocate for people in crisis due to unstable or conflictive living situations, resulting in increased stability and more productive lives.

### **Hope Haven Gospel Mission**

Offers, among other things, emergency and temporary housing for the homeless.

### **Western Maine Community Action**

Employment and training support, health services, senior services, energy and utility assistance, home ownership education, weatherization aid, septic system loans, financial counseling, and improvement loans over the phone.

### **Community Concepts**

Alliance of service providers, volunteers, and others working for affordable housing. Offers a variety of housing, economic development, and social services for many nearby communities. Offer numerous types of aid services.

### **Avesta Housing**

Construction, maintenance, and operation of affordable housing developments, homeowner education, and foreclosure prevention counseling.

## Regional Housing Assistance Organizations

# Understanding the Housing Conundrum

Lewiston, rough estimates are that this population may be about 25% of all residents. The majority are in private housing with rents often subsidized by Section 8 or City general assistance vouchers.

The downtown housing stock lacks the number and types of units needed by that portion of the immigrant/refugee/asylee population that has large families requiring 4, 5 and 6 bedrooms. This is one reason that the Somali Ethnic and Somali Bantu families reside in Hillview and other Lewiston Housing Authority's family housing units. These units have the larger bedroom apartments – often 4-5 bedrooms in family public housing. There is a lack of larger sized units often causing families to split up and reside in two units that are on the same floor or side by side. As with other downtown residents, some of the housing they occupy is old and may be poorly maintained. Oftentimes, language and cultural barriers prevent residents from asking for and/or receiving repairs or improvements to their apartments. Similarly, some members of the immigrant community lack experience living in western style housing, which can lead to poor treatment of their apartments. This creates a challenging dynamic with considerable potential for miscommunication and cultural friction.

There are households, both immigrant and non-immigrant, that do not receive subsidies, either because they have been disqualified based on program regulations or because they exceed income qualifications. Other families have no or very small incomes and are hard pressed to cover rent and basic necessities. These groups seek out the lowest cost housing they can find. Given downtown vacancy rates, some landlords reduce rents, affecting cash flow and often resulting in under-investment and deferred maintenance. This cycle of vacancy, reduced rents, and under-investment produces neglected and substandard buildings. No heat, broken windows and stairs, and other complaints largely come from residents of such properties. These families only have code enforcement as recourse and often look to a tenant's advocacy group for help since they may not speak English, are unfamiliar with the reporting process, and may fear authority.

The Somali Bantu Community Mutual Assistance Association (SBCMALA) provides a number of

The declining condition of the housing stock and the prevalence of vacant properties within the downtown is Lewiston's most pressing housing issue. An unfortunate and not entirely unique string of events over the past 60 years have led to the City's housing conundrum. Much can be learned from understanding how these events unfolded.

Following the post WWII period of suburban expansion and the closing of Lewiston's textile mills starting in the 1950s, Lewiston's downtown, like downtowns across the country, experienced a period of neglect and decline. From the late 1970s through the early 1980s, substandard and non-code compliant apartment buildings were a common problem. During the real estate boom of the 1980s, many owner-occupied buildings were sold to speculators at relatively high prices.

Many properties in the city are in a cycle of decline where landlords have purchased buildings (perhaps at too high a price) and then experienced increasing utility costs (particularly for heating oil), rents that have been static or fallen, and a decline in occupancy. This leads to lack of maintenance and reinvestment, which leads to further increasing vacancy or renting to unscreened tenants at very low rates. Many of these unscreened tenants often worsen the situation due to poor housekeeping, vandalism, and failure or inability to pay rent. As this cycle continues, the property begins to lose money and the owner, at the logical end of the cycle, abandons the property.

In response, the City adopted a policy of identifying problem buildings, encouraging or requiring owners to either bring them back to a liveable condition, or demolish them. During the 1990s, the City reaffirmed the position that codes should be enforced and that buildings not maintained in a safe, decent, and sanitary condition should be demolished.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, many of the landlords with the most of the real estate holdings began to accumulate properties, some of which

began LLC's and property management companies that sought absentee investors. By the mid-2000s, only a handful of landlords held the majority of the properties in downtown Lewiston, with little or no incentive to spend money on improving the properties. As the City continued to condemn and demolish buildings, the supply of total units decreased, allowing these remaining landlords to charge higher rent, making it increasingly more difficult for many to afford living in the City.

In 2004, the City's Heritage Initiative Plan sought to decrease density by 25% and increase green space by five acre in parts of six downtown blocks (sections of Park, Knox, Bates, Blake, Spruce, Maple, and Birch) by replacing 19th-century mill housing with lower density housing and develop a new road network. This plan never came to fruition, but prompted the formation of a neighborhood group called "The Visible Community." The group's Downtown People's Master Plan envisioned a downtown community that has a mix of low-income and multi-unit housing to provide affordable rents and small business locations to spur economic opportunity. The failure of the Heritage Initiative and the concerns expressed by downtown residents led the City to form a Downtown Neighborhood Task Force which produced a report incorporating portions of the Downtown People's Master Plan and indicating a shift in City policy toward the downtown residential neighborhood. Today, the City's Downtown Neighborhood Action Committee continues this work and has been charged with working to implement the plan.

Despite the failure of the Heritage Initiative, Lewiston has demolished over 583 substandard housing units in the past 30 years, at a cost to the City of over \$4 million.

In addition to vacant or condemned structures, empty lots are a problem for the City. After the City has condemned and demolished a structure, the now vacant lot remains in private hands. While a special tax is levied in an effort to recover demolition and legal costs, private owners can and at times do maintain ownership by paying this tax. In most instances, the City can only take ownership if the

special tax and/or regular property taxes remain unpaid for a period of about two years. As a result, many vacant parcels remain owned by banks or absentee landlords. City officials often have great difficulty contacting and negotiating with owners or even forcing owners to take such minimal steps as clearing rubbish and debris or mowing overgrown weeds. .

In the past, Lewiston has struggled with how to most appropriately enforce its building codes. The City is one of a small number of municipalities in the State of Maine that has adopted the International Property Maintenance Code and has allocated resources to enforce this critically important document. Rigorous enforcement has been used sparingly out of concern that it would force additional buildings to be abandoned and leave tenants homeless. Generally, the Code Enforcement Office has placed a premium on working cooperatively with landlords in an effort to address the most serious issues without forcing abandonment. The City has periodically been criticized by both landlords and tenant advocates for this approach – some complaining it is too strict; others that it is too lenient.

In the mid 1980s the City had three code enforcement officers engaged on a full time basis in existing housing enforcement; however, staffing has been reduced over time. In 2011 there were two code enforcement officers assigned to housing; however, they were and continue to be responsible for a number of other important duties. At that time a police officer was assigned to the Department of Planning and Code Enforcement to help address the increasing number of deteriorated and abandoned buildings, the bulk of which continues to be found in the City's urban neighborhoods.

To change the trajectory of these neighborhoods, more needs to be done to address the decline associated with buildings which were not intended for over 100 years of use. Efforts should be made to preserve those of architectural and historic merit and in cases where the only option is demolition, the replacement structure should be enhance the character of the neighborhood through its design and craftsmanship.

important services to Lewiston's Somali Bantu population. The SBCMALA helps refugees and their families find and apply for subsidized and low-income housing. It offers interpretation services for many occasions, including the process of applying for and finding subsidized and low-income housing. Additional support and assistance is provided to the immigrant population by Catholic Charities, Somali Women of Maine, and the two local mosques.

The immigrant population in the City of Lewiston can become a stabilizing force. Unlike the Caucasian residents of downtown, whom a recent Community Concepts survey found not to think highly of the neighborhood, questioning of its

safety and not seeing themselves living there in 10 years, the immigrant and refugee populations reported that the downtown is safe and that they look forward to making it home for the long-term.

### Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is provided through a number of programs in Lewiston. The Lewiston Housing Authority (LHA) is the largest affordable housing entity in Lewiston managing approximately 459 public housing units and administering approximately 1,223 Section 8 tenant based vouchers and Project Based Section 8 housing. Of approximately 8,000 rental units in the city, approximately 34% are classified as affordable.

**50%**

of all housing units are in multi unit structures

SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

As of December 2013 there were

**64**

condemned residential structures in the City of Lewiston

SOURCE: PORTLAND PRESS HERALD

### Demolition Process

- 1 The Planning and Code Enforcement Department condemns buildings pursuant to the International Property Maintenance Code that are deemed to be unsafe and not suitable for occupancy. The Lewiston Fire Department places signs with white backgrounds emblazoned with red X's at the second story level of some condemned buildings that are deemed too dangerous for firefighters to enter.
- 2 As a result of the spring 2013 arson fires that rocked the community the Lewiston Police Department Community Resource team has and continues to be on the lookout for dangerous buildings that need to be secured, etc.
- 3 The Planning and Code Enforcement Department takes the lead to ensure that abandoned unsecured buildings are secured via private vendors.
- 4 In general properties that have been abandoned, unsecured numerous times, subject to vandalism, and/or are a blighting influence, etc. on the community are demolished by the City.
- 5 The City orders the demolition of a dangerous building and once demolished the City makes a demand for payment to recover its demolition and legal expenses. If payment is not made the City files a special tax assessment followed by a tax lien. If the lien is not paid within 18 months the lien matures and the City then owns the property. The process from the demand for payment to City ownership takes approximately 22 months.

SOURCE: CITY PLANNING DIRECTOR

This includes public housing, project based Section 8, and the tenant based Section 8 which allows the family to pay 30% of their income for rent with the balance of the rent paid by federal subsidies. Existing landlords are then found competing for these tenants and their voucher dollars. A majority of the Section 8 units are in housing developments rather than integrated into the historic urban fabric of the City. River Valley on Strawberry Avenue contributes the largest number of units (296). There are ten other complexes that each have over 25 units.

A number of smaller organizations have also constructed and are operating affordable housing complexes in the City. These include Coastal Enterprises, Community Concepts, and Tedford Housing, which are committed to creating quality affordable housing.

There are households, both immigrant and non-immigrant, that do not receive subsidies, either because they have been disqualified based on program regulations or because they exceed income qualifications. Other families have no or very small incomes and are hard pressed to cover rent and basic necessities. These groups seek out the lowest cost housing they can find. Given downtown vacancy rates, some landlords reduce

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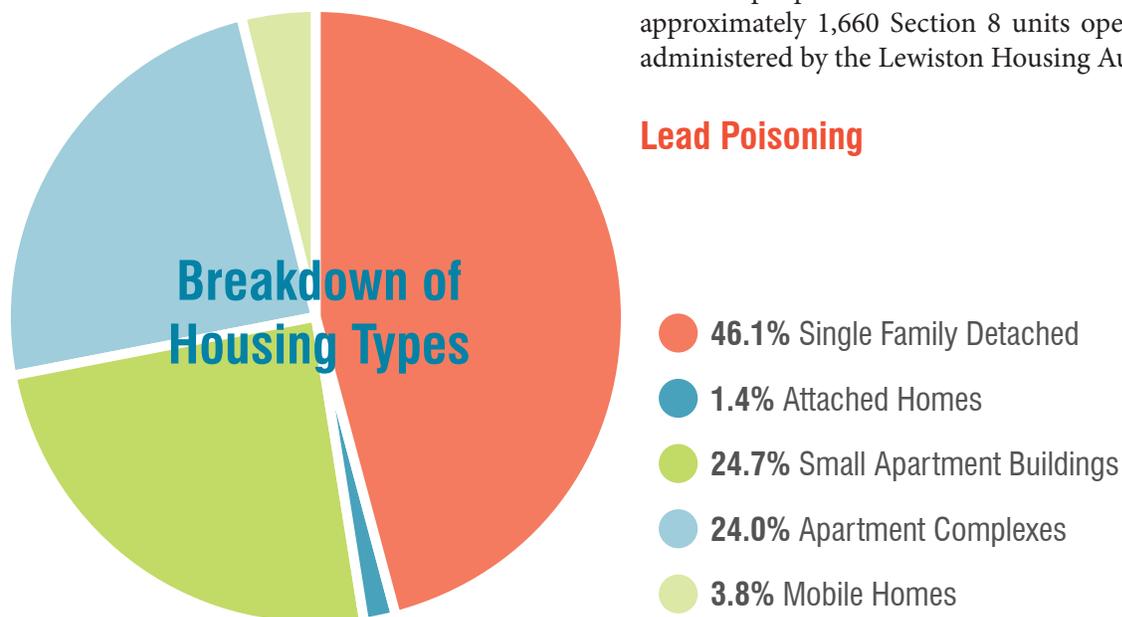
## Current Affordable Housing Regulations

<To Be Inserted> ???

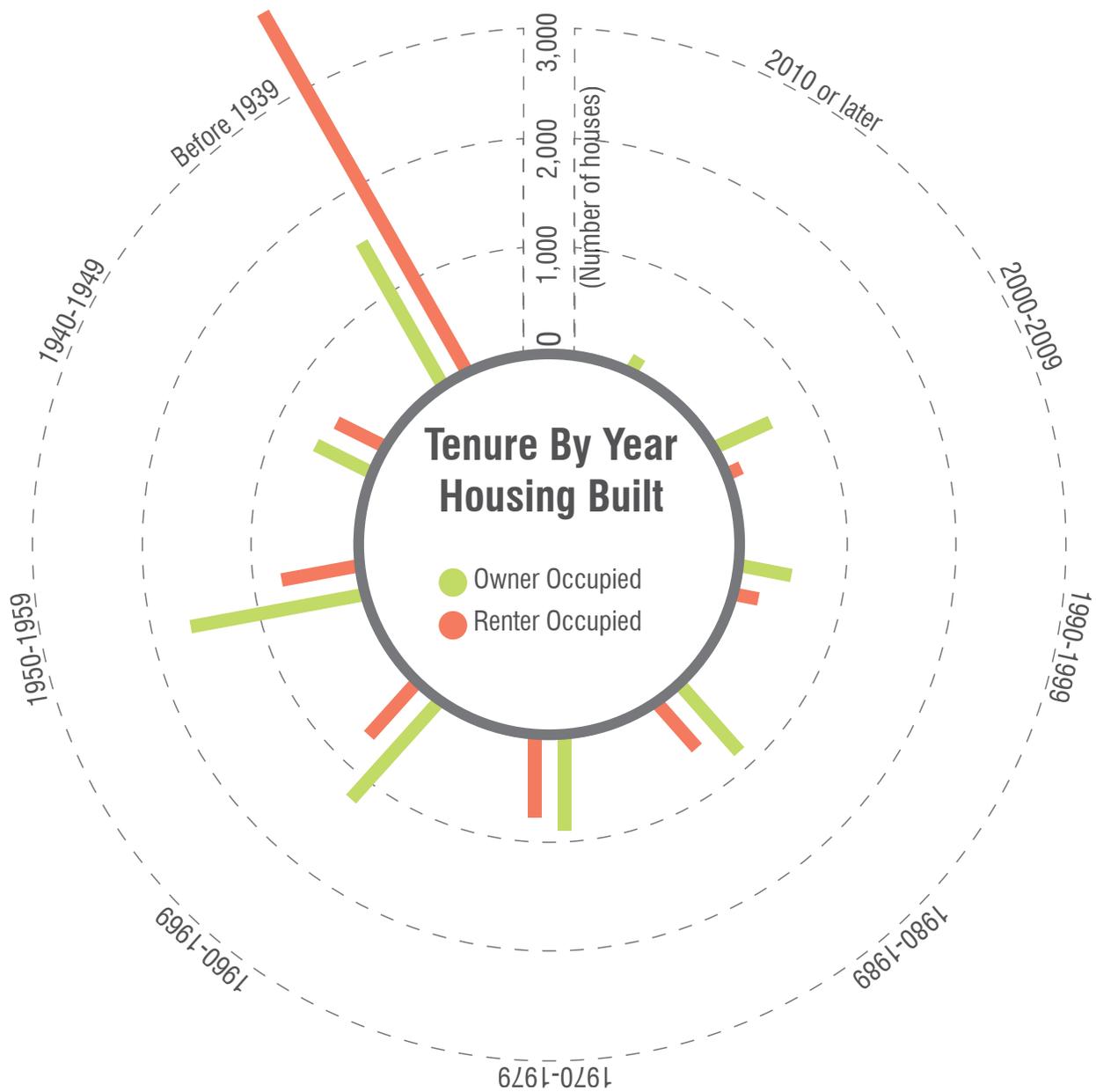
## Homelessness

A lack of affordable housing and a consistent homeless problem have challenged Lewiston for many years. In 2009, a 'Point-in-Time' survey conducted by the Maine State Housing Authority showed that there were 110 homeless on the street on any given night in the Lewiston-Auburn area. In 2010, this number grew to 127. Of those counted, a third was severely mentally ill and almost a third was survivors of domestic violence. In 2010, well over 450 people were on wait lists for one of the approximately 1,660 Section 8 units operated or administered by the Lewiston Housing Authority.

## Lead Poisoning

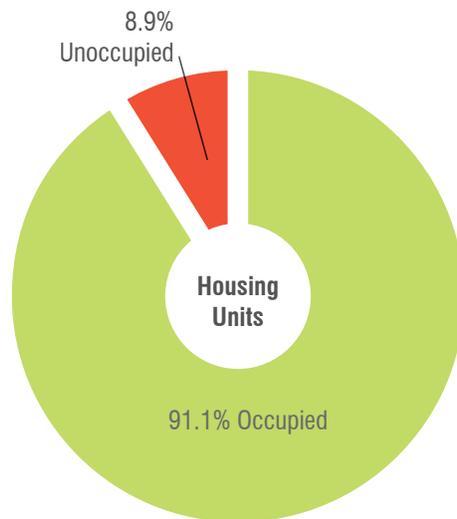


SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

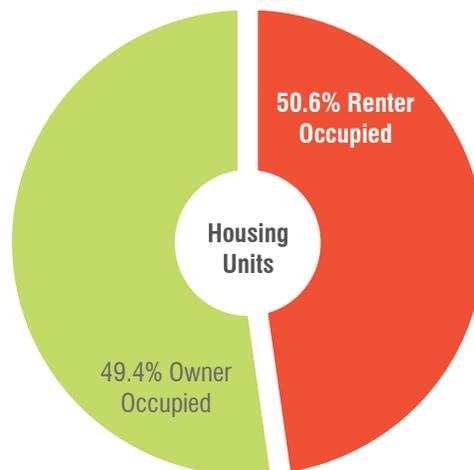


SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

#### Occupied vs. Vacant Units



#### Owner-Occupied vs. Rental Units



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Childhood lead poisoning continues to be a health issue in downtown Lewiston. The housing in this area is often severely distressed and is home to some residents with a poverty rate 3-4 times higher than that of the rest the City, County, and State. There is a known correlation between poverty and severely distressed housing and childhood lead poisoning. Rental housing built before 1940 accounts for more than two-thirds of total rental housing in the downtown. Outside of the downtown, the percentage of rental housing built before 1940 is between 22% and 26%. Older housing is more likely to have lead paint. Lewiston's target area within the downtown has three times the state average of children with lead poisoning. Over 50% of lead poisoning in the downtown occurs among immigrant children, and 90% occurs in rental housing. Maine public health officials have determined that most of the lead poisonings are from lead dust which may be caused by the lack of cleanliness in the apartment as well as the common areas and poorly maintained housing.

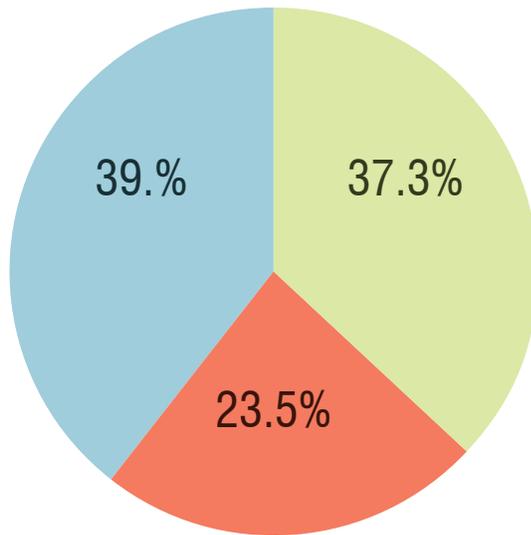
Recognizing the severity of the Issue, the cities of Lewiston and Auburn were recipients of two HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control Grants in 2002-2005 for 2M and again recently 2009-2012 in the amount of \$2.2 million to rehabilitate private rental housing in the downtown to make them lead-safe for young children.

### **Tax-Increment Financing**

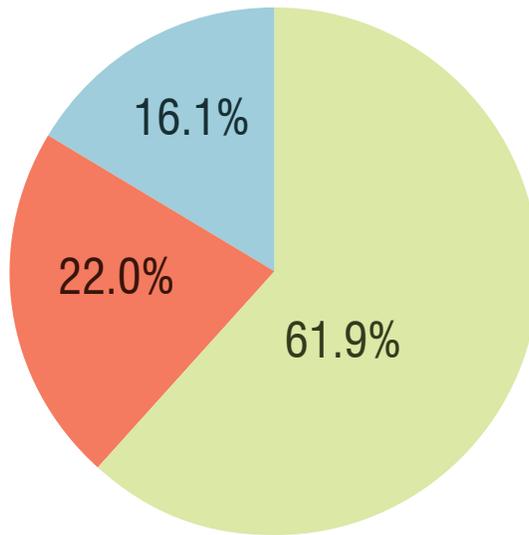
The City has used TIF districts as a public financing method to subsidize community development goals. Currently, the City operates four housing TIFs that help fund both new construction and the rehabilitation of historic buildings into either senior housing or affordable units, either stand alone or within a larger mixed-income housing project.

## Market Rate Residential Potential:

Target Markets:



Target Markets Expected to move in Next 5 Years:



- Young Households
- Empty Nesters
- Retirees

SOURCE: RIVERFRONT ISLAND MASTER PLAN

## Housing Tax Increment Financing in Lewiston

### Bates St. Senior Housing

The city created an affordable housing TIF in 2005 for 30 units of senior housing built at 250 Bates St. For years 1-5, 80% of taxes paid are returned to the project for operational expenses; for years 6-10, 65%; 11-20, 25%.

### 81 Ash St. Senior Housing

In 2010 the city approved a 17 year TIF district to provide operational cost support for a 32 unit senior housing historic rehab of the former Healey Asylum. The time frame TIF revenues will flow back to the project in 15 years.

### Birch Hill Senior Housing

In 2007 the city approved a 17 years TIF, including 15 years of operational financing. TIF revenues cover operational expenses and they will vary from a high of 72% in the first year to the developer to 59% in year 15. TIF revenues retained by the city in year 1 are \$5,000. Taxes retained by the city increase 2.5% each year.

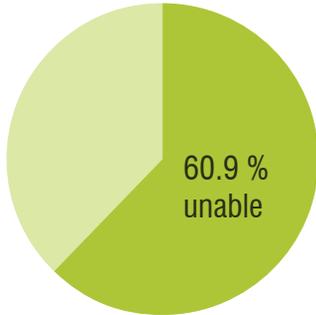
### The Lofts at Bates Mill

This project included a 60% TIF for 17 years, with 15 years of operational funding. Funds will be used to offset operational expenses. It is a 48 unit mixed income project.

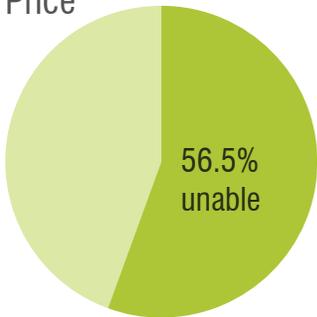
SOURCE: MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

## Affordability of Lewiston Housing

Ability to afford 2 BR Rental

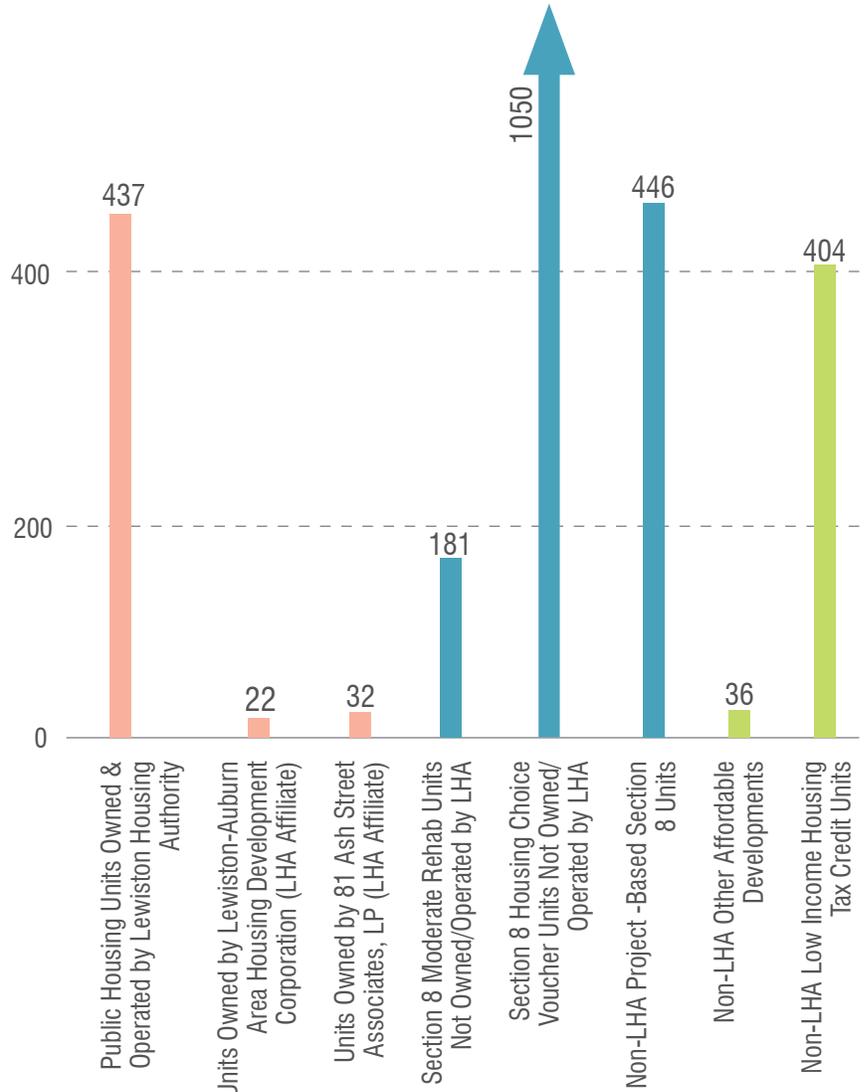


Ability to afford Median Home Price



SOURCE: 2013 MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY REPORT

## Affordable Housing Developments



SOURCE: LEWISTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

**\$772**

Average 2 Bedroom Rent in Lewiston

**\$125,000**

Median Home Price in Lewiston

**\$826**

Average 2 Bedroom Rent in Maine

**\$169,900**

Median Home Price in Maine

SOURCE: 2013 MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY REPORT

# Historic & Archaeological Resources



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Home to many historic industrial and civic buildings and other regionally important structures, from a distance Lewiston resembles a European hill town: dotted with smoke stacks, cupolas, and church steeples. The mills, canals, and bridges give the City a sense of permanence. As these historical assets continue to be reused and repurposed, they will strengthen the community's sense of resilience. Preservation of Lewiston's historic, architectural, and archeological resources will retain a sense of local history; promote curiosity, economic development, and tourism opportunities; and engender a greater sense of local pride, allowing future generations to better understand the roots of local culture. During the Planapalooza, it was evident that adapting, reusing, and enhancing the City's historic buildings and structures is a key priority for citizens, staff and elected officials. Overcoming the financial barriers that stand in the way of protecting and honoring Lewiston's built heritage will be one of the City's greatest challenges in the years to come.

## Notable Historic Resources

Downtown contains the majority of Lewiston's historic resources including the Lisbon Street Historic District, the Lewiston Mill District, Little Canada, and a number of individually listed buildings. These areas have been the focus of the City's recent preservation and revitalization efforts. There are also many significant historic

structures outside of the downtown area that should be inventoried and added to both the local and national registers, including schools, churches, and other significant buildings.

## Canals and Bridges

Lewiston's canal network harnessed the River to power the City's mills. Today, the canals contribute

nothing to Lewiston's power generation, but continue to be owned by a private power company that generates electricity at upstream dams in Lewiston. Once lined with trees and paths, the canals are now hidden behind chain link fences and overgrown vegetation. The canals are recognized safety hazards due to the depth of the water. The City is currently working with the private owner to acquire the canal network, opening the possibility of reestablishing the canals as attractive and unique community amenities.

### The Mills

The City's location on the Androscoggin River encouraged the construction of mills, dams, locks, and canals in the early 1800s. In 1809, Michael Little built a large wooden building with saw and grist mills which were the first mills next to the falls. While victim to arson in 1814, new mills soon took its place.

In 1836, local entrepreneurs, primarily the Little family, organized a company to build dams, canals, and mills, but they lacked the capital to achieve their goals. In 1848, the company became known as the Lewiston Water Power Company. It was taken over by the Franklin Company in 1857. As late as the 1840s, what is now Lisbon Street was undeveloped. But the community soon changed. Boston investors, including Benjamin E. Bates, financed the construction of a canal system and several textile mills. Many Irish immigrants were employed in the construction, under the supervision of Capt. Albert H. Kelsey. These mills prospered during the Civil War, as the owners correctly foresaw that the war would be long and had stockpiled sufficient cotton to maintain production.

Mill owners constructed tenements to provide supervised housing for Yankee farm girls who provided much of the early work force and then to accommodate the rapid population growth drawn to available jobs. These blocks were located along Canal, Park, and Oxford Streets - right across from the mills.

## What We Heard . . .

Lewiston has a long and proud history.

People want to see the City grow and develop.

Strong interest in building on the City's historical assets.

Numerous structures are in need of repair like the Wiseman Bridge and the gazebo in Kennedy Park. Residents would like to see other significant structures, like the Mills, adaptively reused to breathe new life into the City while preserving the past.

Island Point and the canals are unique opportunities in Lewiston.

City should gain control of the canal, remove the fences and open it up to recreational use.

This, along with a plan to redevelop Island Point, will help to create a stronger draw to the City.

There are numerous historic churches and other high quality buildings that have been neglected and are in danger of being torn down.

Residents expressed a need to preserve these buildings, feeling that they reflect the City's past but are also critical for attracting new people and business who crave this kind unique and distinctive urban landscape.

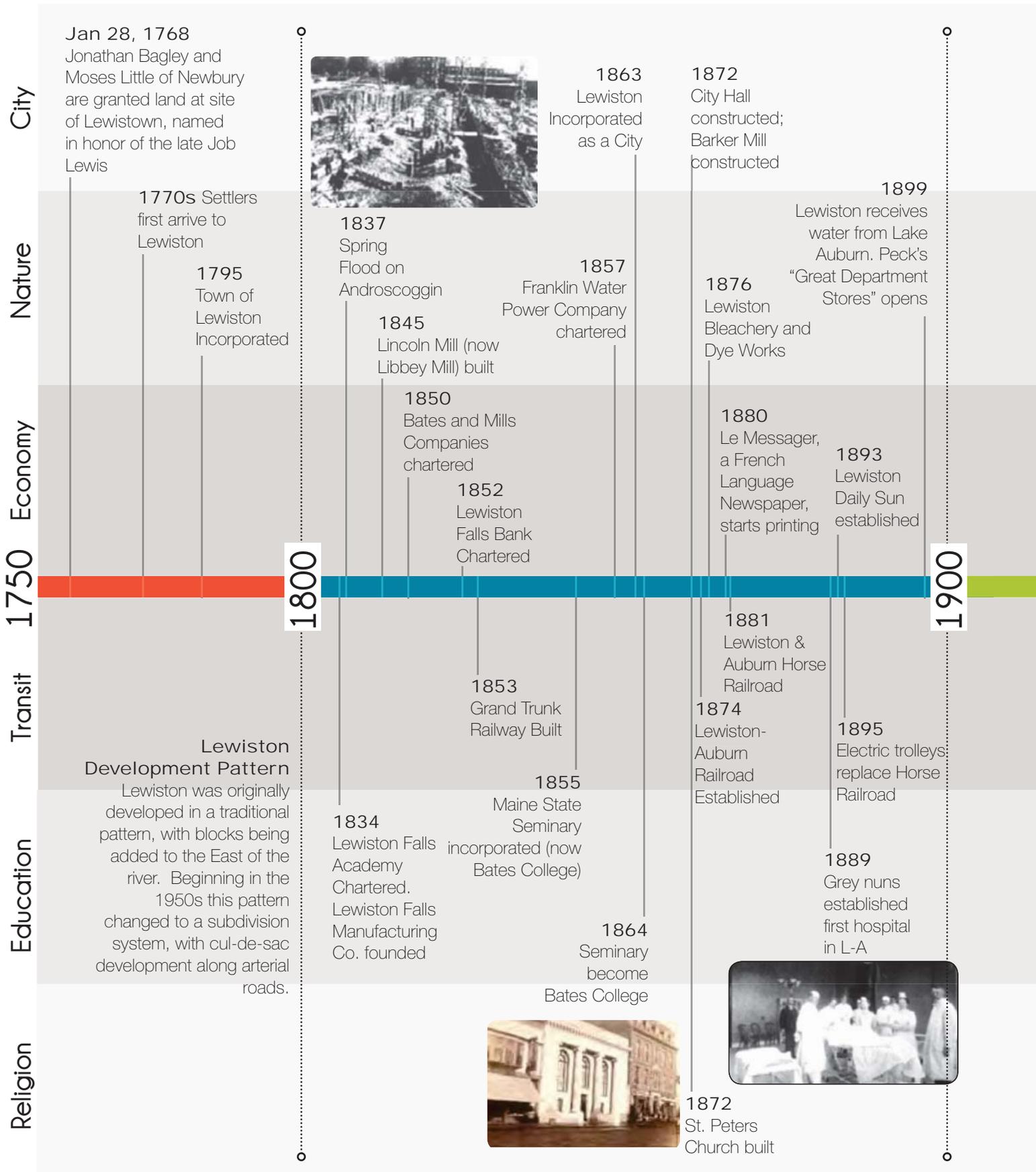
Restore the gazebo.

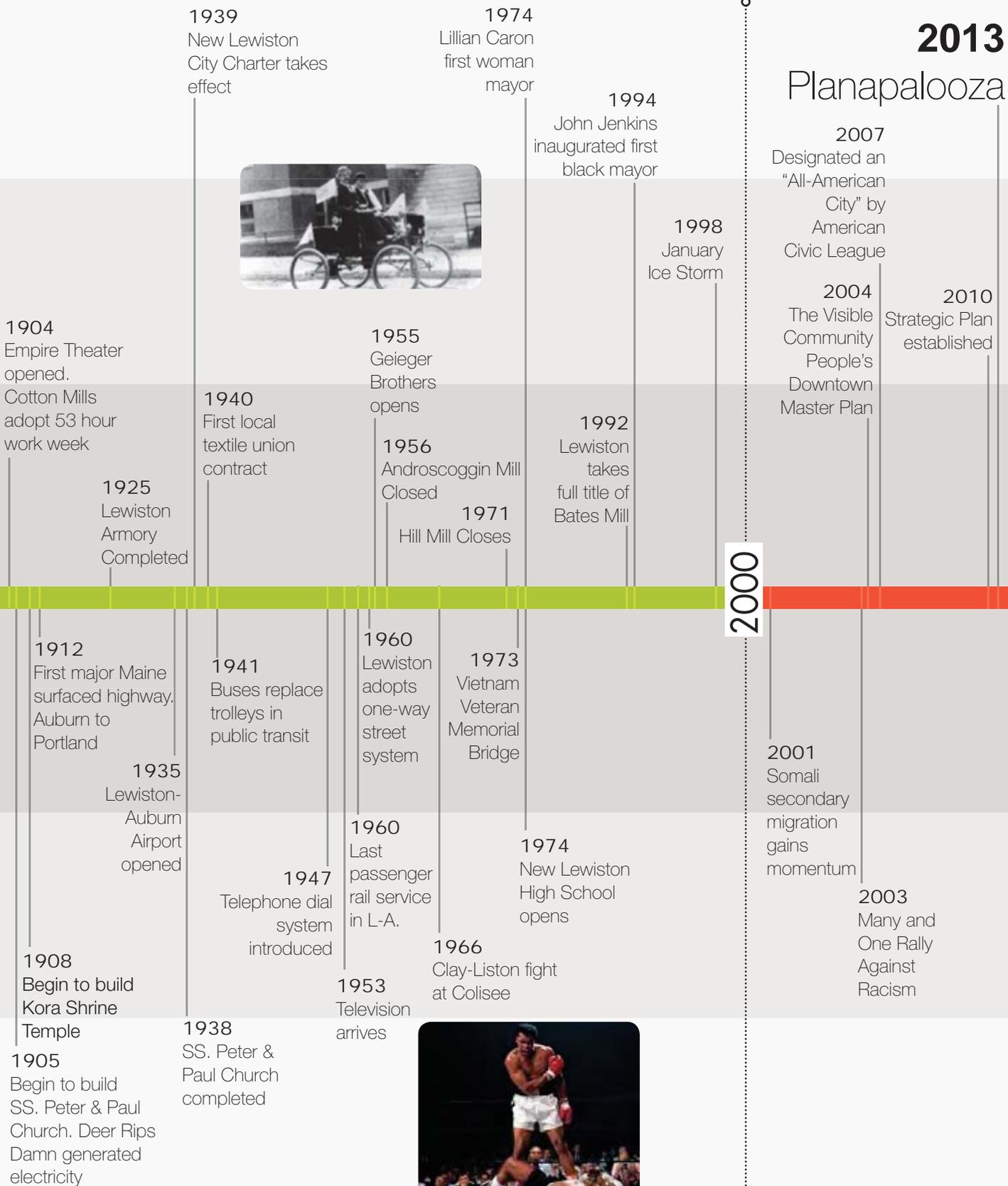
Wiseman bridge needs to be restored.

Lewiston has many historic churches and buildings that could be restored.

# Timeline of Lewiston, ME

1750s to Today





## Island Point

Island Point is the former site of the Libby and Cowan Mills, both of which were lost to arson. The City owns a significant portion of Island Point and has been negotiating with a local company to redevelop it. The site is at a critical location adjacent to Great Falls. The City should take great care to ensure a high-quality redevelopment. Issues with grades, vehicular access, brownfields, and an oil leak recently found to have migrated into the river make redevelopment a significant challenge.

## Downtown Neighborhoods

Lewiston's unique character is in large part due to its immigrant history and the development of neighborhoods intended for worker housing. A significant portion of all downtown housing was associated with the mills. A particularly unique example of these urban neighborhoods was primarily settled by Canadians and became known as "Little Canada". By the year 1880, "Little Canada" and the areas around it were the home to one of the largest parts of the work force in the Lewiston mills. Following the closing of the mills in the 1950s, this and other nearby neighborhoods began a period of dramatic decline as residents began the outward migration to the suburbs. Once thriving and prosperous, these cherished and often

predominantly Franco-American neighborhoods went from having one of the best reputations in the City to one of the worst. Aging multiplexes, vacant lots, and struggling businesses are the product of disinvestment and have contributed to the struggle of these neighborhoods.

## Churches & Schools

Despite having lost a number of church buildings to demolition, Lewiston boasts over 15 significant churches. Its most prominent landmark, the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, is Maine's largest Roman Catholic Church and was constructed through donations from Lewiston residents. All of the City's historic churches are considered to be important landmarks by local residents.

## Kennedy Park and The Bandstand

Kennedy Park is a classic urban green located in the heart of the City. A rectangular site encompassing approximately 7.5 acres, the park featured paths that cross from corner to corner and side to side. In 1964, the park was renamed for John F. Kennedy, who spoke there just prior to his presidential election.

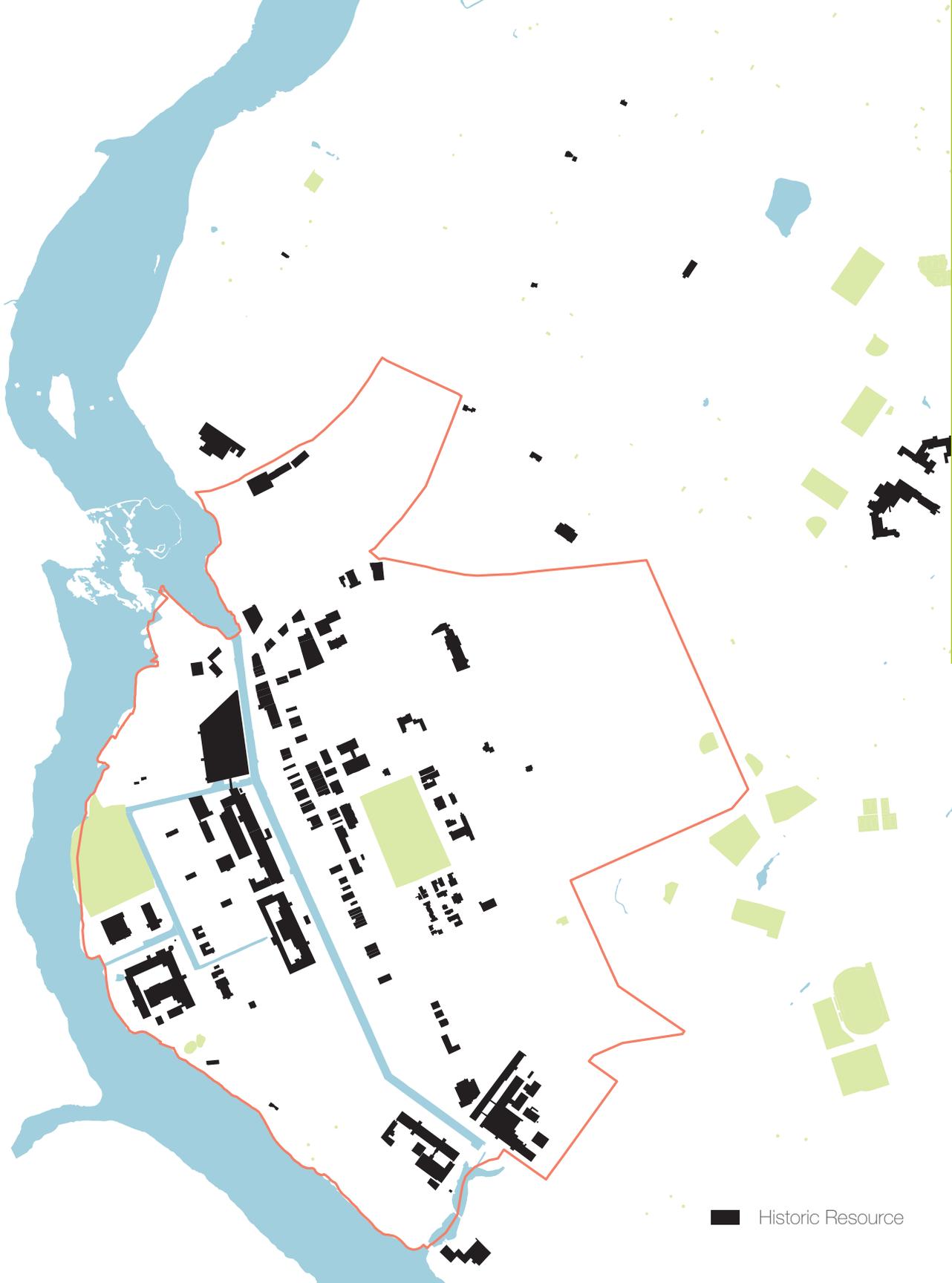
While the south quadrant of the park has been redesigned to add parking, a playground, tennis and basketball courts, a swimming pool, and a skateboard park, portions of the park have not been addressed. The grand elm trees have died and the original fountain and perimeter fences are no longer present.

The current bandstand in Kennedy Park, built in 1925, has been a valued part of Lewiston's history. It has been the site of political rallies, musical events, and festivals since the park's creation. The poor condition of the bandstand has rendered it unusable since the spring of 2010. The City Council has allocated \$75,000 toward restoration in the hopes that a private fund raising effort now underway can match these funds with two donated dollars for each City dollar.

The City has also developed an overall master plan for the park that can guide future improvements..



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY



Lewiston is home to many historic buildings and other significant structures. These include historic mill buildings, important civic buildings, commercial buildings, bridges, churches, and more. Many of these resources are officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places or on the City's local list of historically significant resources.

## Downtown

Downtown Lisbon Street is the commercial and governmental center of Lewiston. It features many charming and grand historic buildings, the city library, the district court, and a number of architecturally distinctive commercial buildings. Downtown Lisbon Street faced hard economic times in the 1980s and 1990s, leaving many buildings vacant and subject to façade changes that reflected the style and economic environment of the time. In recent years, the economy has recovered and new money has been invested in reviving the appearance of these buildings, though many are still in need of exterior and interior renovation.

## Historic Preservation Review Board

The Historic Preservation Review Board is an appointed City regulatory board that works with City staff to preserve, protect, and enhance buildings and areas that reflect distinctive and important elements of the City's architectural, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, ethnic and political history. Established in 1991, the Board works to safeguard the City's architectural, historic, and cultural heritage. It provides procedures for local review of changes to historically designated structures and districts, including new construction, reconstruction, and exterior building alteration and demolition. The Historic Preservation Review Board has seven members and two associate members appointed by the mayor who each serve without compensation for a term of three years.

The Board takes to heart its responsibility of protecting important historic structures and maintaining the integrity of historic buildings. However, it also tries to maintain a balanced approach and work hard not to be an obstructionist body.

## Lewiston Historical Commission

The Lewiston Historical Commission (not affiliated with the City of Lewiston) was created in 1969 as a permanent civic body engaged in the ongoing research and preservation of the City. The commission has written and produced a number of publications, including histories of Lewiston's government, the Lewiston Schools, the Franco-American community, the City's architectural

heritage, the fire department, the Bates Mill, and the Lewiston Grange.

## Façade Grant Program

Lewiston is an entitlement community that annually receives Community Development Block Grant funds. A portion of these funds go to an established façade program that is actively utilized. The Downtown Façade Improvement Program is only available to structures within a designated Priority Area that includes most of the Lisbon Street Historic Commercial District. CDBG funds are provided as a 50% grant / 50% loan at 3% interest for up to 10 years and must be matched on a 1:1 basis with private investment. The program is capped at two façade grants and/or loans per building, with a maximum of fifty thousand dollars per structure. Since 2000, the City has dispersed over \$750,000 in grants and loans for façade improvements.

## Protective Measures

The City has measures in place for the preservation of historic buildings through the Zoning and Land Use Code (Ordinance No. 90-16, Article XV, "Significant Buildings and Districts). The stated purpose is "to preserve, protect and enhance buildings and areas which represent or reflect distinctive and important elements of the City's architectural, archeological, cultural, social, economic, ethnic and political history; to safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage; and to provide procedures for local review of changes to significant structures and of new construction, reconstruction, building alterations, and demolition, within historic districts." The Historic Preservation Review Board is empowered to evaluate applications for preservation, alteration, or demolition of historic structures. However, the Board has only limited authority to prevent a historic building from coming down.

A Certificate of Appropriateness must be obtained if an owner intends to make any changes to the exterior of the building or structure, construct a new building within a designated district, demolish or move an individually listed or contributing structure within a historic district, or is considering replacing an exterior building material and/or architectural detail that contributes to historic value and integrity. Additional structures and

districts can receive local historic designations by applying to the Historic Preservation Review Board. After review, the Board may or may not make a recommendation to the City Council for official designation

### Designated Historic Districts and Buildings

Though much of Lewiston's building stock might be considered historic, only a limited number of buildings are designated as historic or as contributing buildings within historic districts. Currently, Lewiston has a number of distinct historic designations, including buildings on the National Register and those with local designations. Some of the structures subject to demolition delay are not required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications or improvements to the exterior of their buildings. In addition, buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places are not necessarily on the City's local list of significant properties. This subjective application of regulatory oversight, much of which may be somewhat ineffective at protecting historic structures, makes for an overly complex and challenging set of regulations.

The official list of historically designated buildings resides in Article XV of the City's Zoning Code (Significant Buildings & Districts). This means that every time a building is added to the list the regulations must be updated. To complicate matters further, Article XV also references another preservation list, the Lewiston Historic Preservation Plan's "Preservation Index."

There are two National Historic Districts in Lewiston: the Lower Lisbon Street Historic District and the Main Street Frye Street National Historic District, which is not designated locally. The contributing properties are not subject to local demolition delay or any other local review. In the Lisbon Street Historic District, three of the contributing structures were deemed to be dangerous buildings and were condemned and demolished (i.e. 323, 343, and 359 Lisbon Street), and the upper floors of one building were destroyed by fire and consequently removed (I.e. 311 Lisbon Street).

The City also has three locally designated historic districts: the Bates Mill Historic District, the

Lewiston Mill System District, and the Kennedy Park Historic District. There are 18 listed properties within the Lewiston Mill System District. Two have been partially demolished and 5 have been completely demolished.

There are a number of individual buildings listed on the National Register. In addition, a number of properties have been locally designated as "having significant value" or as Buildings of Importance or Major Importance, within the Lewiston Historic Preservation Plan's "Preservation Index." Buildings that have "significant value" are both on the National Register of Historic Places and locally designated. These are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board. Properties not on the register are not subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board but are subject to demolition delay. And finally, the "Building of Importance of Major Importance" is a separate local designation, where structures are subject to demolition delay but not required to seek approval for building modifications. Of these designated structures, 11 have been demolished.

### Demolition Delay

A 90-day demolition delay period is triggered once the Board determines that the current physical condition of the building makes the continued upkeep of the building, or important portions or features thereof, uneconomical; or the building has been determined by the director of planning and code enforcement to represent an immediate hazard to the public health or safety, which hazard cannot be abated by reasonable measures. Furthermore, the Board must also find that the reuse of the site and the character of the proposed buildings or structures will be compatible with the character of the district and the architectural design criteria. During this 90-day delay period the applicant shall work with the City to find alternatives to the demolition of the structure, preservation of its artifacts and proper recordation of its site. The exemption for economic hardship and public safety has led to the demolition of many of Lewiston's significant historic structures. At this point in time, the City's demolition delay process has never prevented a building from being torn down, and a ruling of the Review Board has never been challenged.

## **Downtown Development District Preservation Plan**

The City's Preservation plan partially fulfills Federal and State standards that allow the State Historic Preservation Office to declare a municipality a Certified Local Government (CLG). Such a designation allows a CLG access to grants made to states annually from the Historic Preservation Fund established by the National Historic Preservation Act. The City has been certified as a CLG and has satisfied its mandated responsibilities to maintain an historic preservation commission; survey local historic properties; enforce State or local preservation laws; provide for public participation; and enforce historic preservation ordinances or zoning restrictions.

## **Lewiston Historic Preservation Design Manual**

In 1999, the Lewiston Historic Preservation Review Board, in partnership with Russell Wright, produced the first Lewiston Historic Preservation Design Manual. The Manual helps the Board, City officials, and owners of historic properties understand preservation guidelines and standards. The Manual is also available as a public reference book available to property owners throughout the City who are considering either changes to an older structure or new construction within a designated district.

While the manual contains standards meant to help with the preservation of Lewiston's architectural and historic resources, it is broadly written and requires interpretation. Because the Manual is not regulatory in nature, the Board has a degree of discretion when evaluating modifications to historic buildings. The Board and property owners might welcome additional tools, potentially including a set of complementary, clear, predictable, and reasonable design standards that could provide additional predictability.

## **City Demolition Practices**

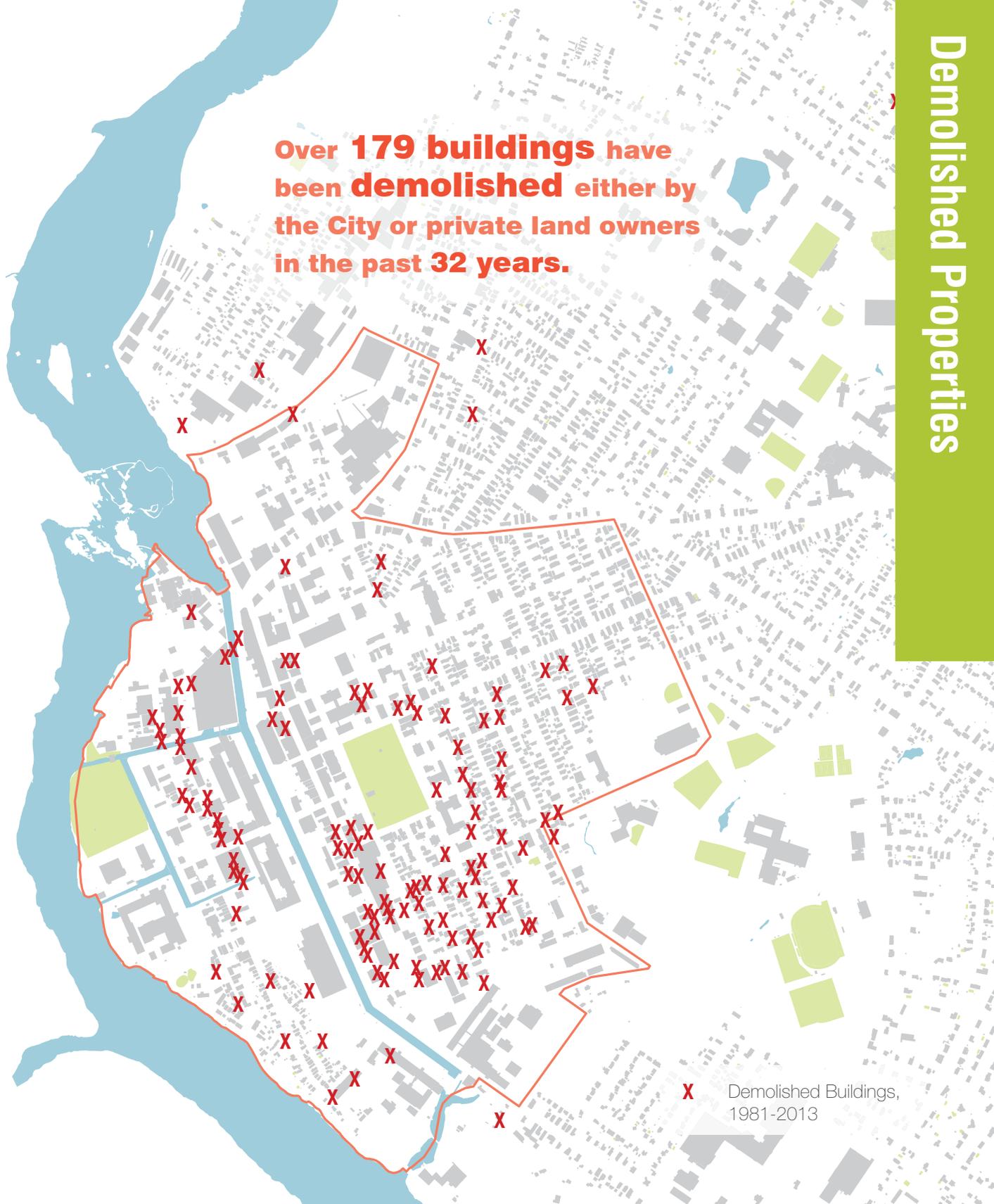
The City of Lewiston has struggled to maintain the century-old downtown building stock, some of which has deteriorated as jobs and residents have left the City center. A significant number of

buildings have been preserved and enhanced over time through the efforts of private owners, often assisted through City financing or Incentives. Efforts have also been made to stabilize some of the City's larger mill buildings. However, the cost of building stabilization is significant. Heating, insurance, required roof and structural repairs, and liability all drive up costs. The City is not expressly interested in knocking down buildings, but it also does not want to spend taxpayer money on maintaining those that are in disrepair and unlikely to be economically preserved. Over the past 32 years, Lewiston has seen the demolition of over 583 dwelling units at a total cost to the City of approximately \$4 million. At the present time, a number of other buildings, primarily in the downtown, are slated for demolition in the near future.

## **Archaeological Resources**

The Preservation Plan also included the first archeological survey accomplished by the City. The focus of this reconnaissance-level survey was the current Simard-Payne Park adjacent to the Androscoggin. A team led by archaeologist Steven Cox did multiple test borings in this area in search of prehistoric artifacts. Reconnaissance-level surveys were also conducted in South Lewiston as part of this effort.

**Over 179 buildings have been demolished either by the City or private land owners in the past 32 years.**



The City demolishes buildings that are beyond or too costly to repair over spending taxpayer money on stabilizing buildings for potential future private or public/private investment. Though this policy has made sense during periods of economic instability, the City is now experiencing renewed interest in the downtown, in part because of the rich urban historic fabric. A shift in policy to place greater priority on stabilizing remaining historically significant and buildings of historic character may make good economic sense as the economic client begins to improve and Lewiston continues to attract interest from entrepreneurs and investors who see value in older buildings with character even it requires greater up front investment than demolition and new construction.

# Natural Environment



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Despite its status as one of Maine’s largest municipalities, Lewiston benefits from a close and intimate connection to the natural environment. Unlike many urban areas, the City has dramatic views of the river and maintains close ties with interior lakes, streams, forests, and bogs, with a partial network of trails in place. A largely undeveloped edge, with working farms and forests surrounds the urban core, providing residents with easy access to rural and natural settings that have seen relatively minimal intrusion from large scale suburban development. This combination of town and country provides Lewiston with a competitive advantage for those looking for both the urban and outdoor experience.

## Water Resources

The Androscoggin River stretches 178 miles as it travels through Maine and New Hampshire joining the Kennebec River before emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. Its many Lewiston tributaries include No Name Brook, Hart Brook, Salmon Brook, Moody Brook, Jepson Brook, and Stetson Brook.

The Androscoggin was once known for high pollution levels caused by textile mills, paper

mills, and other heavy industries. In recent years, the water quality of the River has dramatically improved, in large part due to increased state and federal regulations and efforts of local municipalities and groups, including the Androscoggin Watershed Council and the Androscoggin Land Trust. Although much progress has been made, according to a report from the EPA and USGS, the river still has high mercury levels. As a result of improved conditions, use of the River has increased along with a greater public commitment to its preservation.

The Androscoggin Land Trust, through its Greenway efforts, is helping make the river accessible to everyone through a focused trail-creation effort and working to open access to it. Today, the River offers a convenient and high quality outdoor experience for canoeing, kayaking, and boating as well as hiking on the many trails along the river's edge. The Great Falls, located in the heart of the City, provides a remarkable juxtaposition between the urban landscape and the power of the river and a picturesque landmark of regional significance. The entire ecology of the Lewiston area and its natural systems are linked to the health of the river.

Away from the river, ponds, bogs, and wetlands in Lewiston's interior contribute to the City's rural character while preserving the health of the watershed and providing high value plant and animal habitats. Waterfowl, wading birds, and various animals (some threatened or endangered) inhabit No Name Pond, Garcelon Bog, and the Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary. Woodlands and meadows around these natural areas protect water bodies and their surrounding habitat from contaminated runoff.

There are two impaired urban streams in Lewiston, Hart Brook and Jepson Brook. State stormwater regulations require that additional actions must be taken to meet the water quality designations of these streams. Lewiston has one great pond, No Name Pond, which has additional protection under the No Name Pond Conservation Overlay District, the goal of which is to protect the pond's water quality by controlling the surface runoff of nutrients and other pollutants into the lake.

Lewiston's water supply comes from Lake Auburn. The Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission currently owns 1,600 acres within the 9,792-acre watershed, none of which is within the boundaries of Lewiston. Limited recreational activities are allowed on the lake, with a no bodily contact rule. While there are no municipal wells within Lewiston, there is an aquifer protection overlay limiting specific development activities. The only other privately maintained water supply is for the Sunset Gardens mobile home park at 2161 Lisbon Street.

## What We Heard . . .

Riverfront should be opened up and celebrated.

The canal is an underutilized resource for recreation, civic engagement, economic development, and tourism.

The City should gain control of the canal, remove the fences, and beautify and activate this unique asset. The greenway along the riverfront should be completed, providing a seamless multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trail that links into the City's network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The trail system should better connect to Auburn and other surrounding areas.

Residents love Kennedy Park and see it as a beloved treasure that needs to be reactivated and restored to its former grandeur. Suggestions included a positivity campaign, restoring the gazebo, adding drinking fountains, and renewing the park with a distinct hierarchy of greenspaces.

Desire for Lewiston to reposition itself as a green city, with an emphasis on local food, stores, business, and entrepreneurs.

City should install alternative power such as solar panels on buildings and utilize the river for the generation of hydroelectric power.

A tree planting campaign by businesses and residents should be initiated to help re-green the city.

Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary is an incredible asset and should be protected.

Future development should be limited in the rural parts of the City

Remaining open land should be utilized to grow more local food.

An urban farm, additional community gardens, and another farmer's markets could also help build the City's green brand.

"We have the potential to be the greenest city in New England".

## Agricultural Resources

Lewiston contains large tracts of agricultural land, primarily located in South Lewiston near the Interstate and the Androscoggin River. There are two large commercial farms, including Bell Farms on Ferry Road and Belanger Farms, a third generation family farm, located on Cotton Road. Bell Farms and Belanger Farm are major contributors to local food production. There are also two orchards operating in South Lewiston, Benoit's and Stukas Farms.

Most of the City's agricultural lands are in the Rural Agriculture zone, which allows for low-density residential growth while also encouraging the retention of forest and agricultural lands. This zone is where the majority of large lot subdivisions are located. There are currently no provisions in place to effectively protect agricultural land. To date, the proximity of new homes or other incompatible uses have not affected farming operations.

Lewiston has a number of community gardens that use vacant lots as garden space. Lots to Gardens, a community program of St. Mary's Nutrition Center, has built more than a dozen gardens in four neighborhoods within Lewiston. Since 1999, the organization has used sustainable urban gardening to provide access to fresh food, nurture youth, and build a healthy community.

There is a summer farmers market from June through October one day a week in both Kennedy Park and at the Bates Mill 5 parking lot. A once a month winter market is held at the St. Mary's Nutrition Center adjacent to Kennedy Park from November through April. These markets provide locals with an opportunity to purchase locally grown, seasonal produce.

## Forest Resources

Forestry and timber harvesting are allowed uses in Lewiston. However, this is not a significant local industry with most harvesting done to clear land for development or for firewood. Nine parcels (535 acres) are enrolled in the state tree growth tax program. In the last ten years, five taxpayers have enrolled a total of 346 acres in the program. The City has established forestry management plans

on a number of municipal properties, including some associated with schools. In recent years, selective harvesting has begun on these properties to promote healthy forest growth, provide a source of income, and open these areas for recreational uses. The Lewiston/Auburn Forestry Board advises the City Arborist on forest management and other public tree issues. The City also oversees an active inventory of street trees maintained by the City.

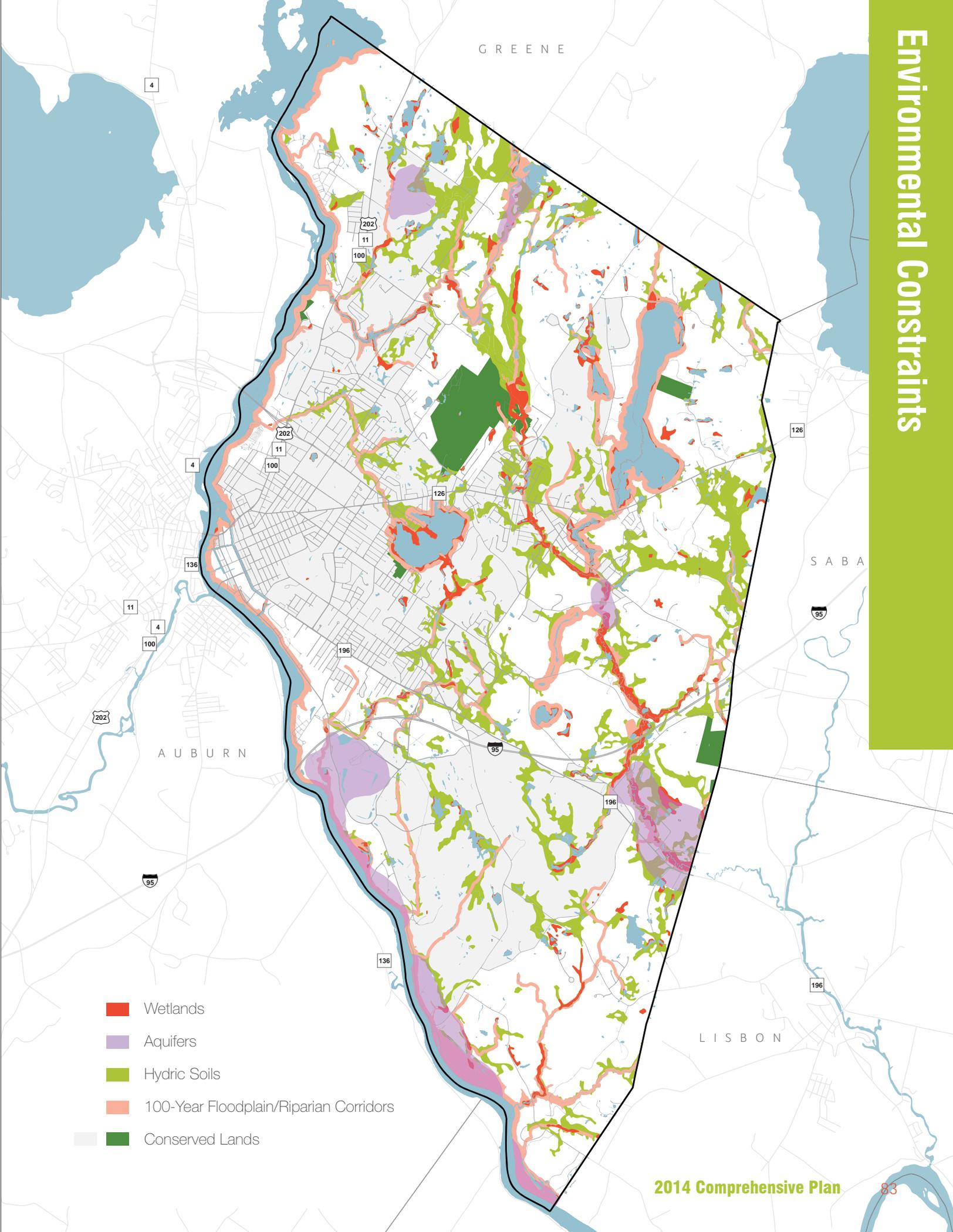
The majority of industrial forest lands are in the Rural Agriculture zone, which allows for low density residential growth while encouraging the retention of forest and agricultural lands. Lewiston has a timber harvesting ordinance that offers some environmental protection, but is primarily in place to provide the City with advanced notice of timber cutting. Maintaining large tracts of undeveloped land in appropriate areas in Lewiston is vital to supporting habitat and the existing rural nature of the City's edge.

The National Recreation and Park Association recommends between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of park land, per resident, Lewiston has 11.6 acres per resident

## Resource Protection

Many regulatory and non-regulatory measures have been taken to protect critical and important natural resources. There are two local land trusts working to protect critical resources in the City. These include the Androscoggin Land Trust, the stewards of a large 180 acre City owned Garcelon Bog conservation easement, and the Stanton Bird Club, which manages over 380 acres at the Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary. There is also a 40-acre conservation easement within the No Name Pond Watershed.

While Lewiston has many point and non-point sources of water pollution, steps have been taken and are continuing to manage stormwater runoff



into surface water bodies. The City is nearing completion of a fifteen year multi-million dollar effort to control combined sewer overflows. It has adopted regulations within its land use ordinance to control and manage stormwater runoff from private property, mitigate stormwater runoff through on-site stormwater management, and prohibit non-stormwater discharge to the storm drainage system. The City has a post-construction Best Practices Maintenance and Inspection ordinance in place.

The City prepares a Stormwater Management Plan every five years to help guide its management efforts. Every year, the City prepares a progress report and updates the plan in accordance with requirements of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Special efforts have been devoted to the No Name Pond watershed, including upgrading and installing compliant septic systems, regular street sweeping and catch basin cleaning, and participating in and funding volunteer trainings for on-going water quality sampling at No Name Pond and No Name Brook. As a result, the conditions in No Name Pond have greatly improved. The City continues to implement watershed conservation practices to manage stormwater runoff to the pond.

The Lewiston Auburn Sabattus Stormwater Working Group (LASSWG) continues to explore opportunities for partnerships between area municipalities and other local organizations, specifically Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Androscoggin River Watershed Council (ARWC) and Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (AVSWCD). The focus of this effort is public education, including posting and distributing stormwater information; organizing, advertising and presenting workshops; and sharing expertise and manpower. The City has conducted “Stormwater Drainage 101” education presentations, with information on Downspout Disconnection and explanations of the damage caused by dumping pollutants into the drainage system. The City is currently in the process of developing a revised “BMP Adoption Plan”. Incentives are available for citizens who engage in these activities, reducing their impervious

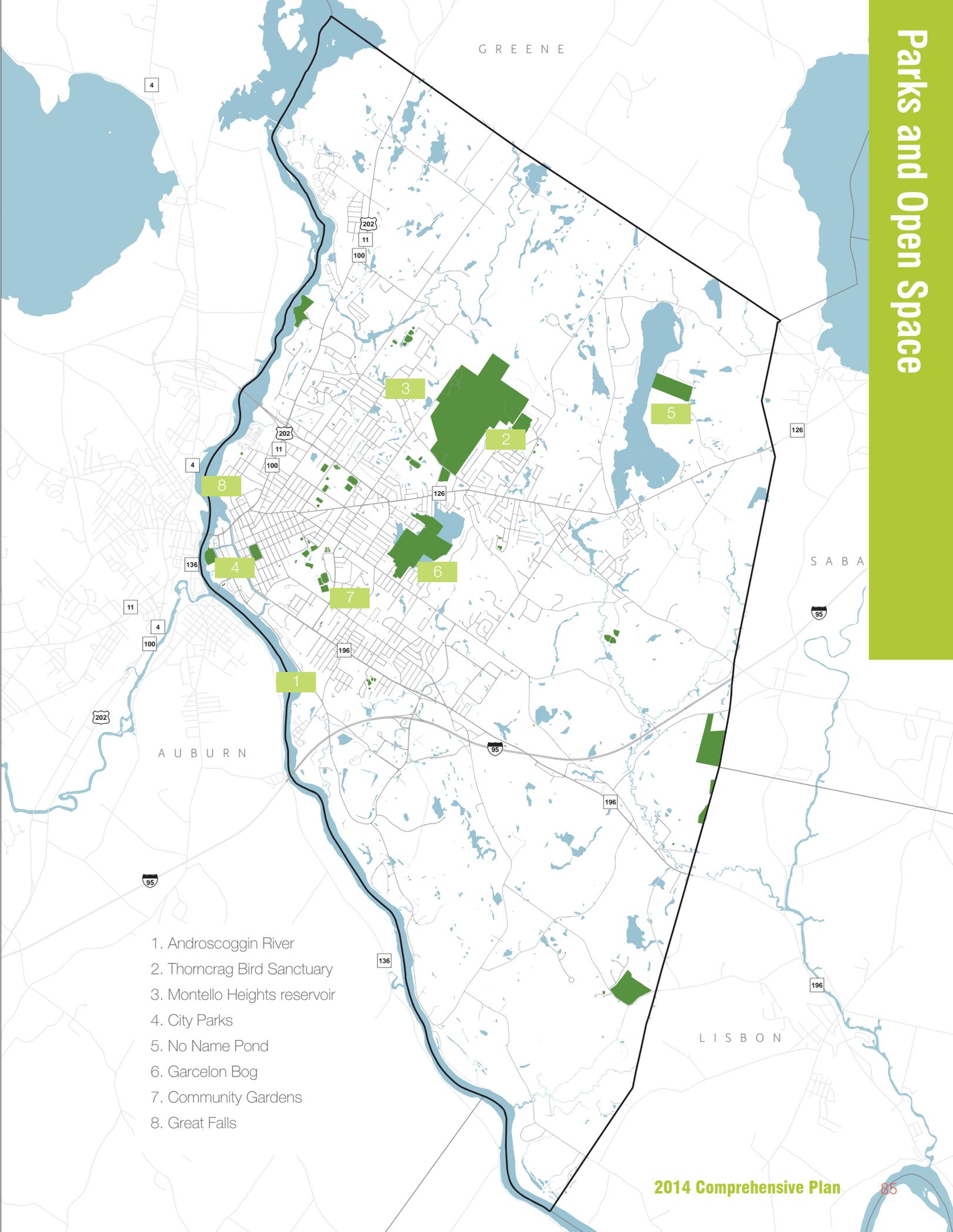
cover and reducing their runoff. The City also has a geocaching effort in the Hart Brook area, bringing community participants to interesting spots within the watershed where stormwater information is provided. The geocaches have been visited regularly and received positive feedback.

Questions from citizens regarding rain gardens, rain barrels, and other stormwater-friendly activities appear to be on the rise, suggesting that residents are paying more attention to stormwater issues.

Shoreland buffers, which reduce the effects of polluted runoff and prevent erosion, thus protecting the quality of lakes and streams, are also in place, as required by state law. Buffering is considered during local land development review, at times in conjunction with state agencies. Within Lewiston’s river corridor, long-existing structures encroach into adopted buffer areas. The state of Maine’s Buffer Handbook describes how buildings close to the water’s edge can use mechanisms to control water runoff and minimize the effect on river systems. Currently, the City’s local Shoreland Zoning standards have not been updated to comply with the most recently adopted state standards.

Lewiston is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program and complies with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. This participation as a Community Rating System community within this program entitles holders of flood insurance a discount on their premium. Permits are required for any structures within special flood zone hazard areas.

The City has made cutting edge improvements to wastewater treatment by installing new, efficient methane-burning generators at the Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority treatment plant. The new system digests solids to capture and create burnable methane. The methane, in turn, powers electric generators that are expected to produce more than three million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, enough to produce 60% of the plants energy needs and save \$15,000 to \$20,000 per month in purchased power. The facility will process the solids from 11 million gallons of wastewater daily, cutting the amount of solids that need to be composted or landfilled in half.



1. Androscooggin River
2. Thomcrag Bird Sanctuary
3. Montello Heights reservoir
4. City Parks
5. No Name Pond
6. Garcelon Bog
7. Community Gardens
8. Great Falls



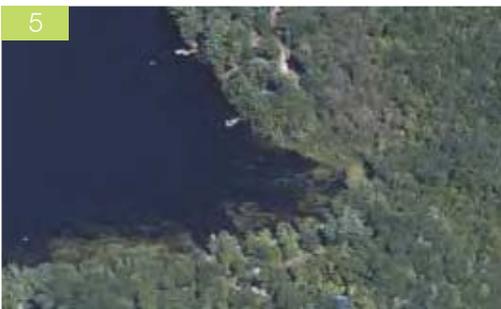
### Androscoggin River, Tributaries

This 178 mile long river travels through Maine and New Hampshire, joining the Kennebec River before emptying in the Atlantic Ocean. The Androscoggin was once known for high pollution levels caused by textile mills, paper mills and other heavy industry. Despite dramatic improvements in water quality, the river still has high mercury levels. Though the river is still a popular destination for anglers of river fish it remains an underutilized recreational resource. The many tributaries of the river that travel throughout Lewiston include No Name Brook, Hart Brook, Salmon Brook, Moody Brook, Jepson Brook and Stetson Brook.



### Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary

The 372 acre wildlife sanctuary is New England's largest urban bird sanctuary. It has been maintained and managed by the Stanton Bird Club for over 90 years. The sanctuary contains the highest point in Lewiston and home to "The Crag," a beloved historic landmark. Thorncrag has been used by humans for uses ranging from scientific to recreational. The preserve features walking trails and guided nature walks that are open to the public. Cross country skiing, picnicking, show shoeing, and other non-motorized recreation is allowed, however dogs are not.



### No Name Pond

No Name Pond is a 145 acre warm water pond. With a maximum depth of 35 feet, it is quite shallow for its size. It is accessible over private land owned by the No Name Pond Association. While there are a few houses with docks on the lake, most of the shoreline remains undeveloped. The most common types of fish include rainbow smelt and large mouth bass. The pond could close to the public at any time.



### Garcelon Bog

At over 100 acres, the bog provides critical waterfowl and wading bird habitat for nesting and feeding. The varied landscape provides support for many types of plants and animals. Garcelon Bog could become a public asset if better public access could be provided while still protecting wildlife, flora and the privacy of adjacent landowners. The property can be traversed by using a systems of trails and boardwalks, and is owned and managed by the Androscoggin Land Trust.



### Montello Heights Reservoir

Located adjacent to the Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary, this reservoir is fenced and closed to the public. It features both natural and man made elements. If opened to the public, the reservoir could become a public swimming hole.



### City Parks

There are numerous small city parks located throughout Lewiston, however not enough to support neighborhood scale street life. Many parks have playgrounds and paved trails. There are also numerous sports parks, containing ball fields and their support structures. These small parks are concentrated near downtown and the river front, and therefore are not supporting the medium density neighborhoods to the West.



### Community Gardens

There are many community gardens in Lewiston, most of which are a product of the work Lots to Gardens has done to convert empty lots into community space. The youth and community group works to cultivate gardens in areas where there is a need. They use sustainable and green practices, and distribute the produce through various programs. These spaces act as both youth education centers and community gathering spaces.



### Great Falls

The Great Falls, located on the Androscoggin River separating Lewiston and Auburn, provide a backdrop for numerous public events. The annual Great Falls Balloon Festival attracts visitors from around the state. Just upriver from the falls, old mills remain from Lewiston's industrial past. Various parks on either side of the falls provide viewing opportunities and paved walking trails.

# Transportation



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

As a service center, Lewiston faces significant pressures on its roadways. A fine-grained network of local streets provides a secondary means of moving around the City, though much of this connectivity is compromised by the prevalence of one-way streets and dead-end roads. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities have become a greater priority, as demonstrated by the 2013 adoption of a Complete Streets Policy. More can be done to provide safe and comfortable facilities for alternative travel modes that can tie together schools, the downtown, and neighborhoods with jobs and other destinations throughout the City. Local bus service can be improved and augmented with additional service hours, new routes, and needed intra-city service.

## Street Network

The street network in Lewiston includes a hierarchy of arterial, collector, and local streets focused on moving automobiles efficiently throughout the City. Interstate 95 is a limited access highway that serves as a long-distance travel corridor to destinations south toward Portland and north toward Augusta. Major arterial routes converge on the downtown in a radial pattern and include Lisbon Street (ME 196), Sabattus Street (ME 126), and Main Street (ME 202). Outside of the

immediate downtown, these major streets are lined with suburban commercial development and vary in width from two to four lanes with some center left turn lanes in places. Miles of two-lane local neighborhood streets and collector streets create a fine-grained network connecting these regional thoroughfares. A number of rural roads serve more rural areas, peppered with low-density housing and subdivisions.

Lisbon Street, Sabattus Street, and Main Street, built as the primary points of access from nearby

towns to Lewiston's city center, worked well when road segments outside of the core remained rural in character. Today, suburban development, numerous curb cuts, and conventional roadway design have led to congestion, high speeds, and uncomfortable driving conditions in some places. Traffic volumes are highest on these roads, with a Level of Service ranging from C to E. The large number of signalized intersections and prevalence of driveways contribute to traffic congestion and make it challenging to retrofit them for safer pedestrian and bicycle use.

Local streets carry only modest traffic volumes, typically below 2,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day. None of the City's streets and highways are "over capacity" based on a link analysis using 2010/11 daily traffic volume.

### **Sidewalks and Bikeways**

As a travel mode and recreational activity, walking offers the potential to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and contribute to healthier citizens. Lewiston benefits from a traditional pattern of growth, with residential neighborhoods located in proximity to job and service centers, making it feasible for people to walk in many locations. An extensive system of sidewalks exists on local streets, although sidewalk conditions and pedestrian safety at intersections needs to be improved at some locations. Given sidewalk conditions, walking is difficult in some areas.

Outside of the downtown, walking becomes less desirable along commercial arterials that often lack sidewalks or have sidewalks that feel unsafe because of high traffic speed, numerous driveways, and extensive parking lots. In these areas, sidewalk deficiencies and a largely inhospitable pedestrian environment contribute to a reliance on the automobile, even for short trips.

There are currently a number of bike lanes in Lewiston, including along portions of Adams, Hogan, College, Central, Park, Lincoln, and Ash Streets. Current bike facilities have seen moderate use and can be improved through more nuanced design to increase cyclist safety and comfort. Intersection improvements, clearer markings, and the integration of bikeway types that provide

## **What We Heard . . .**

Lisbon Street is a bad first impression of the City. Sabattus Street where it intersects with Russell Street and then East Avenue needs to be addressed. These corridors are the main routes to the Downtown and should be improved for all modes of travel.

Repair pot holes and damaged roads.

Context sensitive streets or complete streets should be the norm, so pedestrians and cyclists are given more consideration.

Return the streets from a one-way to a two-way system to help simplify navigation and make streets safer for all users.

Expand the interconnected system of trails to help connect rural to urban settings, to get to and through town, and to Auburn.

Simard Payne Park and the paths that connect to it are a good start but the system needs to be expanded. More and better designed bike lanes throughout the Downtown.

Need more bike racks in the Downtown.

Residents would like more bike wayfinding or at least a bike route map so that the existing bike trails and best streets for biking are identified.

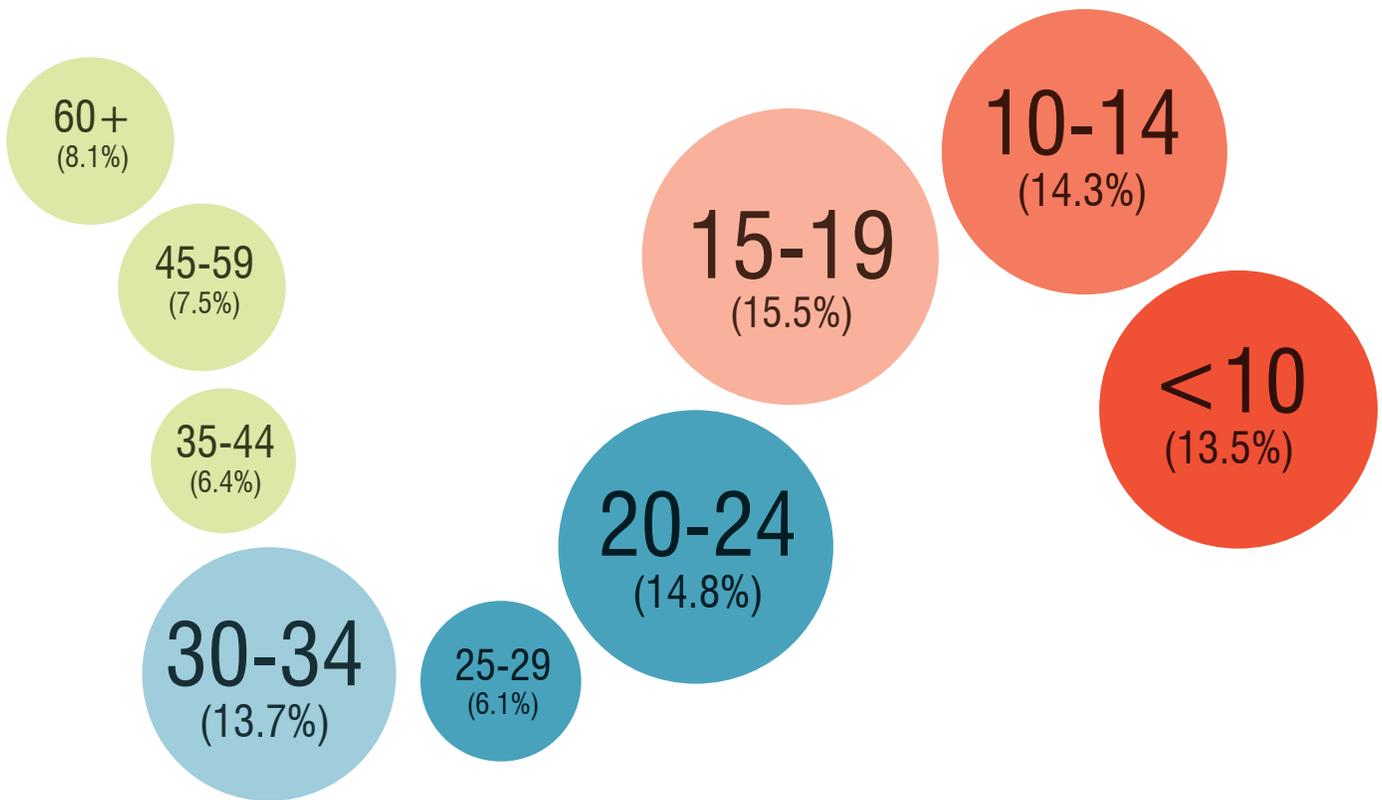
Bates College has a bike share program for use on campus; expand this system throughout the community.

Transit and bus service in the City is generally regarded as inadequate and an impediment to people being able to get to and from work.

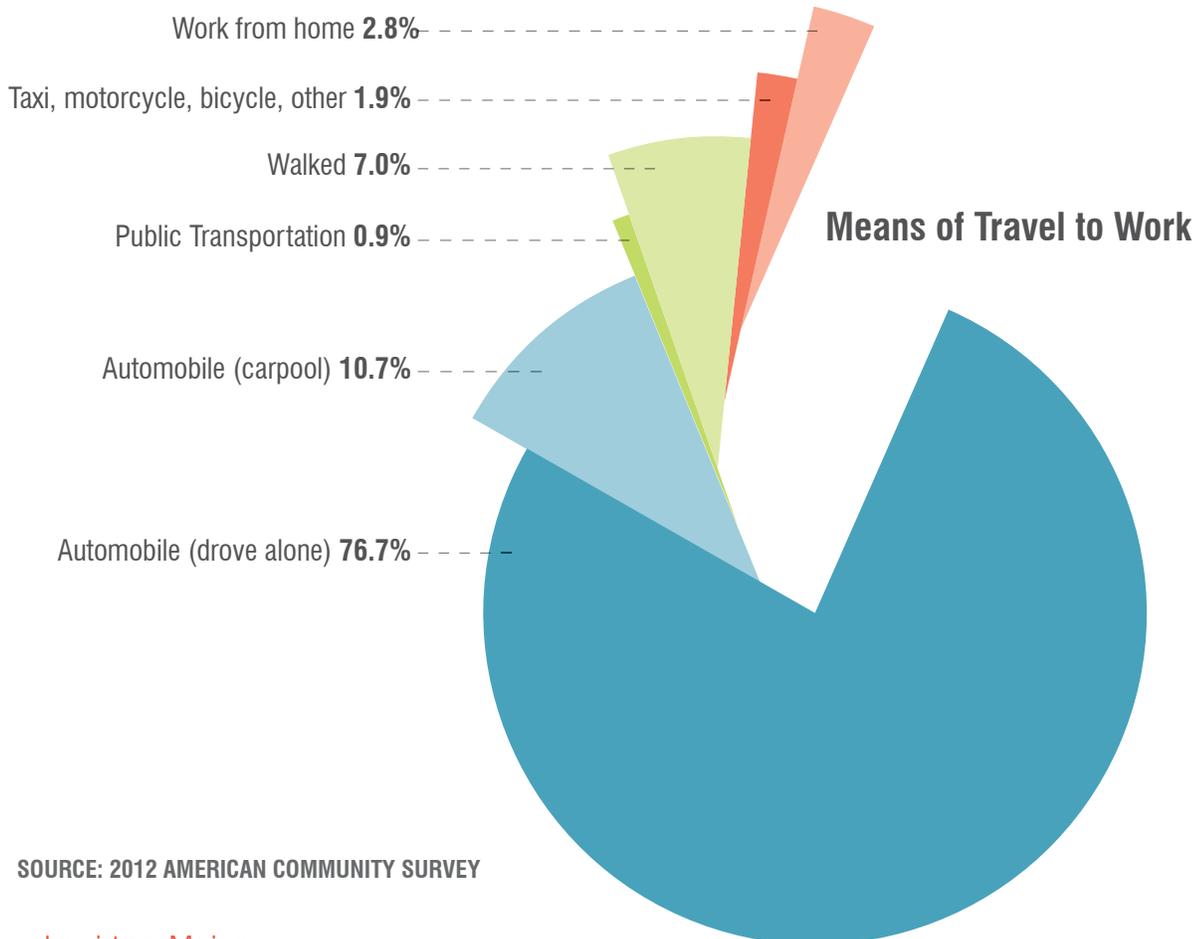
Increase the frequency of buses and extend the hours of operation so that workers can get home at night.

Need commuter buses to other cities and the Portland International Jetport.

## Length of Commute by Lewiston Residents in Minutes



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



SOURCE: 2012 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

separation between bikes and vehicles, would better serve children, the elderly, and other users who don't feel comfortable riding close to high speed traffic.

There are three vehicular bridges and one pedestrian bridge connecting Lewiston and Auburn. The Longley Bridge and the Lown Bridge each have four lanes of traffic with narrow sidewalks. While the Longley Bridge sidewalk provides little buffer between pedestrians and high-speed traffic, the Lown bridge sidewalks are outside the bridge's truss structure making it feel safer for pedestrians. No bike facilities are currently provided on either of these bridges.

The Veterans Memorial Bridge is designed to highway standards with grade-separated access and an uninterrupted flow of high-speed traffic. Cyclists and pedestrians must navigate ramps and high speed merging traffic. The bridge and the roads leading to it are challenging to navigate and require dangerous movements across high speed traffic. Because this is an important connection to services across the river, as well as a popular road biking route, the safety of this bridge needs to be addressed and is considered a high priority

The existing pedestrian bridge accessed via Simard-Payne Park provides a pedestrian and bicycle connection between Lewiston and Auburn. However, it is not well lit, lacks surveillance, and is perceived to be unsafe, especially at night.

## Off-Street Trails

There are few bike paths in town; however, citizens generally consider the ones that do exist to be good amenities. A number of popular trails exist along the River, although more work is needed to connect trail segments. The City is moving in that direction, with work underway to improve and connect trails along the Androscoggin and construct a major new multipurpose trail running north from Sunnyside Park.

Inland, there has also been a strong interest in creating better connections between neighborhoods and open spaces, building upon existing trail systems such as that found in the Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary.

## The Greenway

Starting in 1992, the Androscoggin Land Trust initiated the Androscoggin Greenway project with the goal of transforming the Androscoggin River from a polluted impediment to a treasured community asset. This effort recently moved forward with the 2013 Androscoggin River Greenway Plan, which identifies specific opportunities for a system of on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle routes along the river together with critical connections across the River to Auburn and in-land within both communities. The plan also envisions a water trail providing continuous access south to Lewiston from the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park in Turner.

## Public Transit

The citylink bus system is a joint venture of Lewiston and Auburn managed by the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee and operated by Western Maine Transportation Services, Inc. The system provides approximately 32 miles of routes in Lewiston. Route headways are 60 minutes. Service begins at 6:00 AM and ends at 6:15 PM Monday through Friday and operates from 9:15 AM to 5:15 PM on Saturday.

Ridership in 1998 was less than 200,000 and has grown to about 350,000 in 2013.

The citylink bus system could be improved to better meet the needs of elderly, low income, and rural populations. There appears to be a demand up demand for increased service, with a need for higher frequencies, extended hours of operation, and improved routes to better serve current and potential users.

## Parking

The City of Lewiston has been proactive in developing surface and structured parking within the downtown area to advance economic development goals. The City boasts some of the most attractive parking garages in the region, if not the state. Five public parking structures serve the downtown area, providing upwards of 2,000 parking spaces.

In addition to parking structures, the city also contains an overabundance of surface parking lots, in most cases located where buildings once stood.

Surface parking lots and associated infrastructure cover 23% of downtown's real estate.

Numerous on-street spaces are also provided, although some downtown streets have been redesigned with bump outs that have reduced on-street spaces in several areas of high demand.

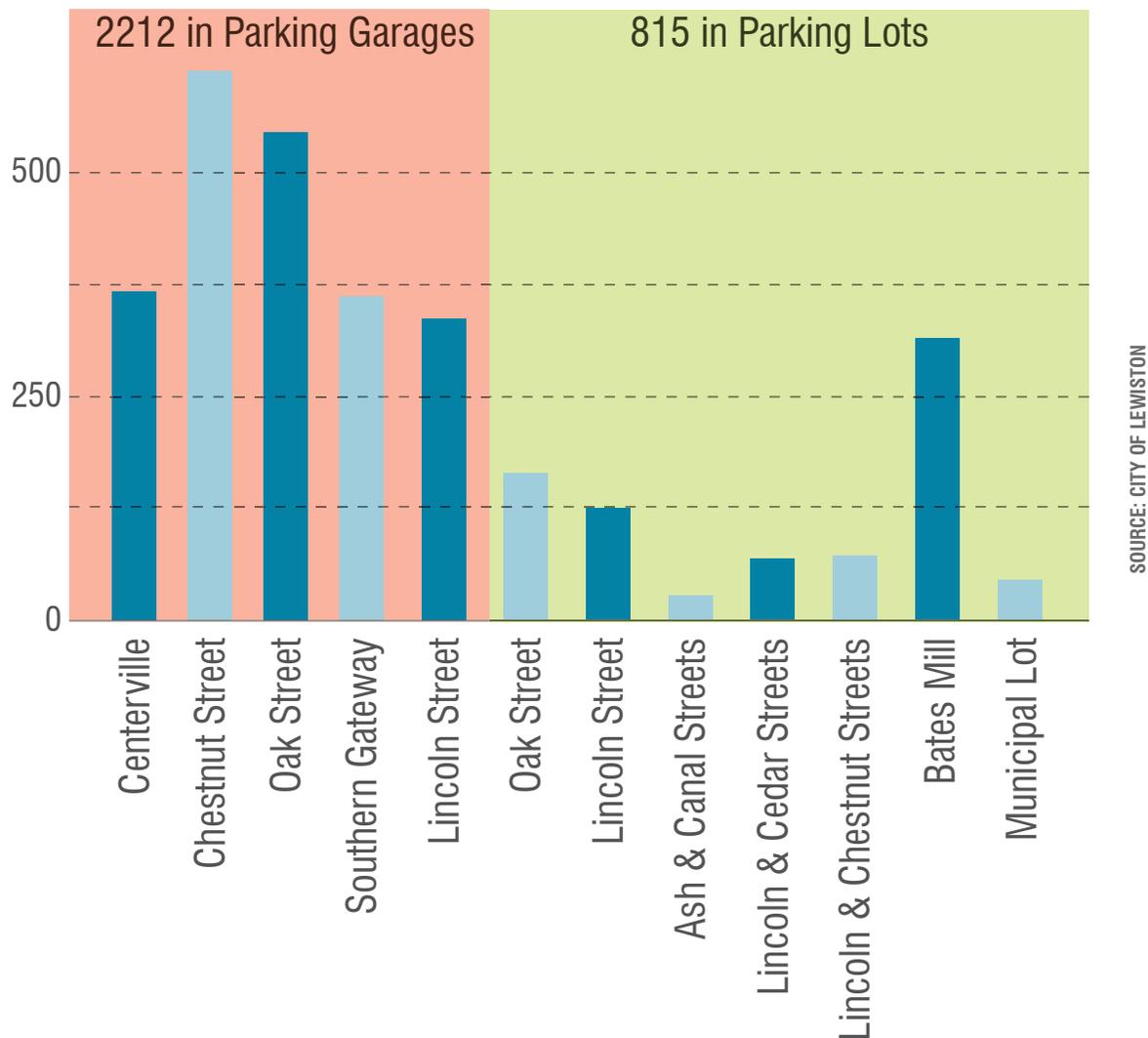
### Airport

The Auburn-Lewiston Municipal Airport is located in Auburn. It supports local and regional general aviation, flight training, cargo, and a large volume of corporate activity.

Auburn and Lewiston jointly own the airport.

Both cities provide annual support to the airport. A Board of Directors manages overall operations and appoints an Airport Director who oversees day to day operations. Recently, the Airport has taken over as Fixed Base Operator in anticipation of increasing revenues. The Airport terminal was recently expanded and rehabbed with growth in mind, particularly in the area of corporate aviation and charter travel. The airport is working to attract additional private business, including cargo transports and tourism. In addition to the terminal, the Airport has excess developable land that could be carefully planned for high quality development that provides complementary support services.

## Existing Parking Spaces



**23%**  
of downtown  
land is  
devoted to  
parking.



As a result of years of disinvestment and a policy of demolishing buildings without market interest in new investment, the City of Lewiston has an over-abundance of surface parking lots. This creates gaps in the urban fabric and results in parcels that produce little revenue. Lewiston benefits from a number of well-spaced and beautifully designed parking garages. Combined, these surface and structured lots provide the city with a surplus of parking. Many of the surface lots could be shared or better managed in order to provide ample opportunity for redevelopment within the downtown.

recently expanded and rehabbed with growth in mind, particularly in the area of corporate aviation and charter travel. The airport is working to attract additional private business, including cargo transports and tourism. In addition to the terminal, the Airport has excess developable land that could be carefully planned for high quality development that provides complementary support services.

44

Lewiston's **walkability score** (out of 100), making it somewhat walkable

SOURCE: WALKSCORE.COM

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## LEWISTON'S THOROUGHFARE NETWORK

### Customer Service Level

Maine DOT initiated an Asset Management system where capacity of a roadway is only one part of the measurement to determine Customer Service Levels. In addition to Customer Service Levels they also track and maintain information of the Condition of each roadway. They assign grades to each roadway ranging from A to F with A being a relatively new street and F being a failing street needing significant attention.

Customer Service Level is not related to the grading system people are familiar with in the academic world. For instance a street with Service Level D can function moderately well. More importantly, only service for automobiles are accounted for in the analysis, meaning that thoroughfares with a higher automotive Service Level may be substandard or even failing for pedestrians and cyclists. Based on the auto oriented Customer Service Level standards the map at the right shows roads in Lewiston with Service Level F. Specific roadway and intersection improvements are discussed in the Promote Transportation Choice & Mobility section, with strategies for promoting better pedestrian and cyclist Service Levels, as well as for the automobile.

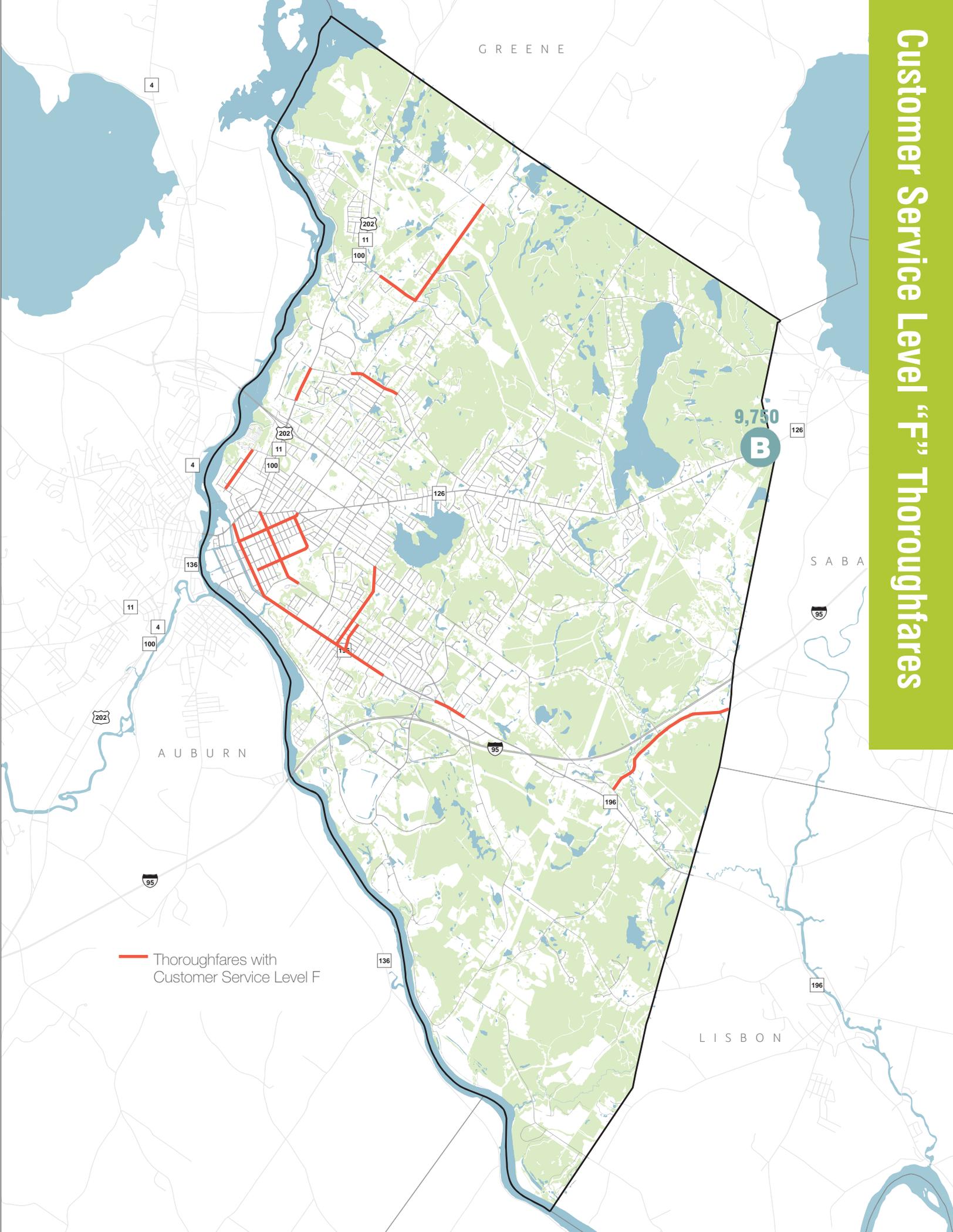
**THE FOLLOWING STREETS IN LEWISTON CURRENTLY HAVE AN "F" RATING ACCORDING TO MAINE DOT:**

- LISBON ST (MAIN ST TO LUCILLE AVE AND QUIMBY ST TO DREW ST)
- WEBBER AVE (WEBSTER ST TO PLEASANT ST)
- SOUTH AVE (PLEASANT ST TO LISBON ST)
- BARTLETT ST (SABATTUS ST TO WILLOW CIRCLE)
- BIRCH ST (PARK ST TO JEFFERSON ST)
- JEFFERSON ST (ASH ST TO BIRCH ST)
- ASH ST (SABATTUS ST TO LISBON ST)
- SUMMER ST (WEST BATES TO RIVERSIDE ST)
- MAIN ST (STRAWBERRY AVE TO LANDRY RD)
- MONTELLO ST (BARIL ST TO HOGAN RD)
- STETSON RD (RAICHE ST TO COLLEGE ST)
- COLLEGE ST (STETSON RD TO MERRILL RD)

**FOR ROAD CONDITIONS, THE ONLY STREET TO BE ASSIGNED AN "F" RATING IS:**

- CROWLEY RD (SOUTH LISBON RD TO THE SABATTUS TOWN LINE)

# Customer Service Level "F" Thoroughfares



— Thoroughfares with Customer Service Level F

9,750  
B

GREENE

AUBURN

SABA

LISBON

# Community Facilities & Services



TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, LLC

Community facilities and services are provided by government or non-government agencies, and generally are the most visible signs of the city's ability to sustain a community. They define a sense of place and provide many of the elements important for residents' quality-of-life. The location, timing, and capacity of new facilities and services influences future development patterns and intensities, and together with other plans and ordinances, positions the City for sustainable growth. A summary of current conditions and emerging trends for key community facilities and services is provided below.

## Lewiston Public School Department

The Lewiston Public School System is a city department that is primarily governed by a separately elected school committee but must seek budget and capital expenditure approval from the City Council. The school system includes eight facilities: Farwell Elementary School, Raymond A. Geiger Elementary School, Governor James B. Longley Elementary School, Louis J. Martel Elementary School, Thomas J. McMahon Elementary School, Montello Elementary School, Lewiston Middle School, and Lewiston High School (total enrollment of all 8 schools: 5,123

as of September 2013). The Lewiston Regional Technical Center and three Lewiston Adult Education Centers also provide education and training in the community.

The System is led by a School Committee that hires a superintendent to oversee daily operations. Committee members collectively make decisions about the scope and nature of the education program, secure sites and build new facilities, and prepare the annual budget for implementing instructional and support services. The Lewiston City Council and registered voters of Lewiston review and approve the School District's budget

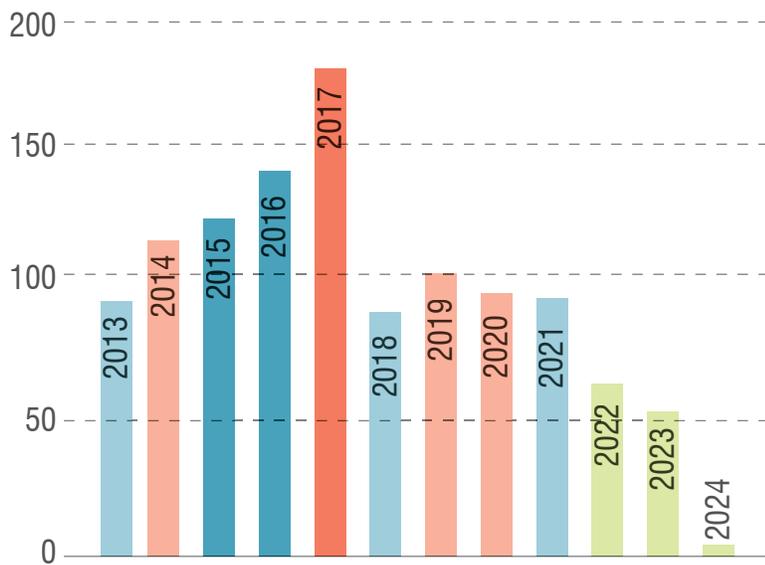
each year. The average cost per student was approximately \$10,148 for the 2012/13 academic year, excluding transportation costs (Maine Department of Education, 2013).

Students are assigned to schools using attendance boundaries, but families may petition the superintendent to place their children in any school in the system subject to availability. Continued student population growth is stressing some elementary schools, and new classrooms or modular classrooms may be periodically needed to keep pace. Two elementary schools (Longley and Martel) are on the State’s priority list for funding replacement. New school construction requirements in the Public School Standards and Guidelines for New School Construction and

Major Renovation Projects (Maine Department of Education) favor suburban-style construction; however, local officials believe there is enough flexibility in the requirements to build more compact, walkable neighborhood schools, reflecting the preference of the community.

School officials believe adequate capacity exists within the school system for the foreseeable future if the State of Maine funds a new elementary school in the near future and if we are able to establish an alternative school for an alternative program serving 100 to 200 students in grades 7-12. Continued coordination between the City and the School Department will ensure efficient and high-quality service into the future.

### Annual Enrollment Increase



**5,752**

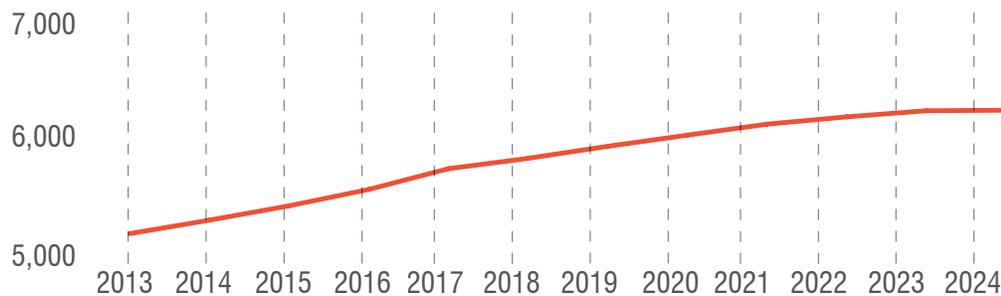
students total are projected to be enrolled in 2017

**47**

new classrooms needed in the next 10 years

SOURCE: DATA PROJECTION

### Projected Total Enrollment



SOURCES:  
CITY OF LEWISTON

## Stormwater Management

Impervious surfaces (roads, parking lots, building rooftops, etc.) interfere with the ability of rain water to soak into the ground. Stormwater run-off from a rain event travels quickly across impervious surfaces, picking up pollutants, and carrying them to nearby lakes and streams. The simultaneous increase in both water quantity and suspended water pollutants leads to stream erosion and degraded water quality. Stormwater runoff is one of the largest contributors to water quality violations recorded in urban and suburbanizing areas of Maine.

Federal mandates in the Clean Water Act require cities to obtain permits to meet the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System's (NPDES) requirements, including a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II Permit and strategies to address Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) occurrences. Specifically, the NPDES MS4 Phase II Program requires Lewiston to address six minimum criteria:

- 1 Public education & outreach:** Think Blue Campaign
- 2 Public participation & involvement:** Household Hazardous Waste Program, No Name pond Volunteer Monitoring
- 3 Illicit discharge & detection:** Stormwater Ordinance, Outfall Inspections
- 4 Construction site run-off:** Inspection Program, Site Development Permits
- 5 Post construction run-off control:** Best Management Practices manual for Developers & Planners
- 6 Pollution prevention and good housekeeping:** Facility Maintenance, Pipe Inspections, Catch basin cleaning, street sweeping, employee education, hazardous material storage and disposal

In addition, the US Environmental Protection Agency, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and the City entered into an agreement in 2000 that sets out a schedule for addressing all

CSO occurrences by 2015. Progress continues toward the goal of separating stormwater from sewage in the City's collection system to avoid overflows into the Androscoggin River during periods of heavy rain. The Annual CSO Progress Report for 2012 noted a 44% reduction in the number of CSO locations throughout the city (32 original locations vs. 18 current locations). Approximately 20% of the City's overall sewer collection system (in lineal feet) is still combined.

A Stormwater Utility was created in 2007 to help fund the work required to meet federal mandates for stormwater management and to maintain the stormwater system. The stormwater utility fee is based on the amount of impervious surface on a property, which directly correlates to the amount of run-off expected from the property. Fees are set periodically when the City Council updates the Stormwater Utility Fee Schedule and Credit Policy. The local stormwater utility provides general property tax relief for citizens by transferring stormwater costs to a fee for service that all properties, including those that are property tax exempt, must pay.

## Water Service

The City's Water Division provides drinking water to over 23,000 accounts a day. Bulk water for the system comes entirely from Lake Auburn, which continues to meet the water quality standards required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Water from the lake is not filtered under an exception provided to surface water treatment rules. However, the City applies a six-step treatment process (i.e., chlorination, ultra violet, fluoride, pH balance, corrosion inhibitors, and alkalinity) before it is released to customers. Lewiston withdrew approximately 4.4 million gallons per day (MGD) from the lake in 2013.

Maintaining the filtration waiver is dependent upon maintaining the water quality in Lake Auburn and consistent and professional management of the treatment systems employed. Should filtration ever be required, the capital and operating expenses will be significant and have a major impact on water rates.

Nearly 160 miles of water mains distribute water to residential, commercial, office, and industrial uses

throughout the city. Two pumping stations and two water storage facilities (4.3 MGD capacity) maintain system pressure. Water for firefighting is provided by 740 public fire hydrants.

The Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission was formed in 1993 to protect the lake as a long-term water supply. It started as a partnership between the Auburn Water District and the City of Lewiston Water Division, but now includes representation from the Town of Turner and the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments. The Commission currently owns 1,600 acres in the 9,792-acre watershed (approximately 16%). The Auburn Water District and Lewiston Water Division maintain separate water intakes at the lake as well as separate crews to maintain their distribution systems. There is no redundancy (i.e., system interconnections) between the two cities' distribution systems, which means a major failure in Lewiston's system for transmitting water from the lake could not be addressed by accessing water from the Auburn system while repairs are being done. Aging water infrastructure in Lewiston will continue to tax future capital improvement plans.

## Sewer Service

The Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority (LAWPCA) was created in 1967 to operate the wastewater treatment facility for the twin cities. Under the partnership, LAWPCA operates the wastewater treatment facility on River Road in Lewiston and a sludge composting facility in Auburn. The sewage collection systems remain the responsibility of the respective community. The Lewiston collection system includes approximately 150 miles of mains. The treatment plant is designed for an average flow of 14.2 million gallons per day (MGD). Wastewater is transported to the plant through a sewer collection system that includes both separated (sewage only) and combined (sewage and stormwater) mains. The Authority aggressively works with those industrial customers who are required to pretreat their wastewater on site, thus limiting spikes in sewage loadings that could significantly affect treatment capacity.

Septic and holding tanks located outside the sewer service area are served by the Authority.

## What We Heard . . .

City needs to increase recycling efforts and minimize litter.

City could provide additional trash containers throughout the downtown and increase frequency of trash pick up.

Some feeling that City needs to respond faster to the needs of the community.

More building code enforcement and potentially stronger building codes are needed in order to create safe, affordable, habitable housing for current buildings and new buildings in the downtown, 'little Canada', and for the homeless.

People feel that better and more enforcement of the code would lead to stronger neighborhood pride and removal of the stigma that the community is neglected and that no one cares.

The riverfront should be opened up and celebrated as one of the most renowned features of the City.

The greenway along the riverfront should be completed with multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trails.

An interconnected greenway system should be created with multiuse trails throughout the City to provide pedestrian and recreation interconnectivity.

Underutilized vacant lots that are not redeveloped should be converted into pocket parks, dog parks, and urban gardens.

There needs to be more access points on No Name Pond and other water features for the entire community to enjoy.

An urban farm & education center should be opened and community gardens need to be opened along the waterfront and throughout the City.

Sports recreation facilities need to be updated and expanded for residents.

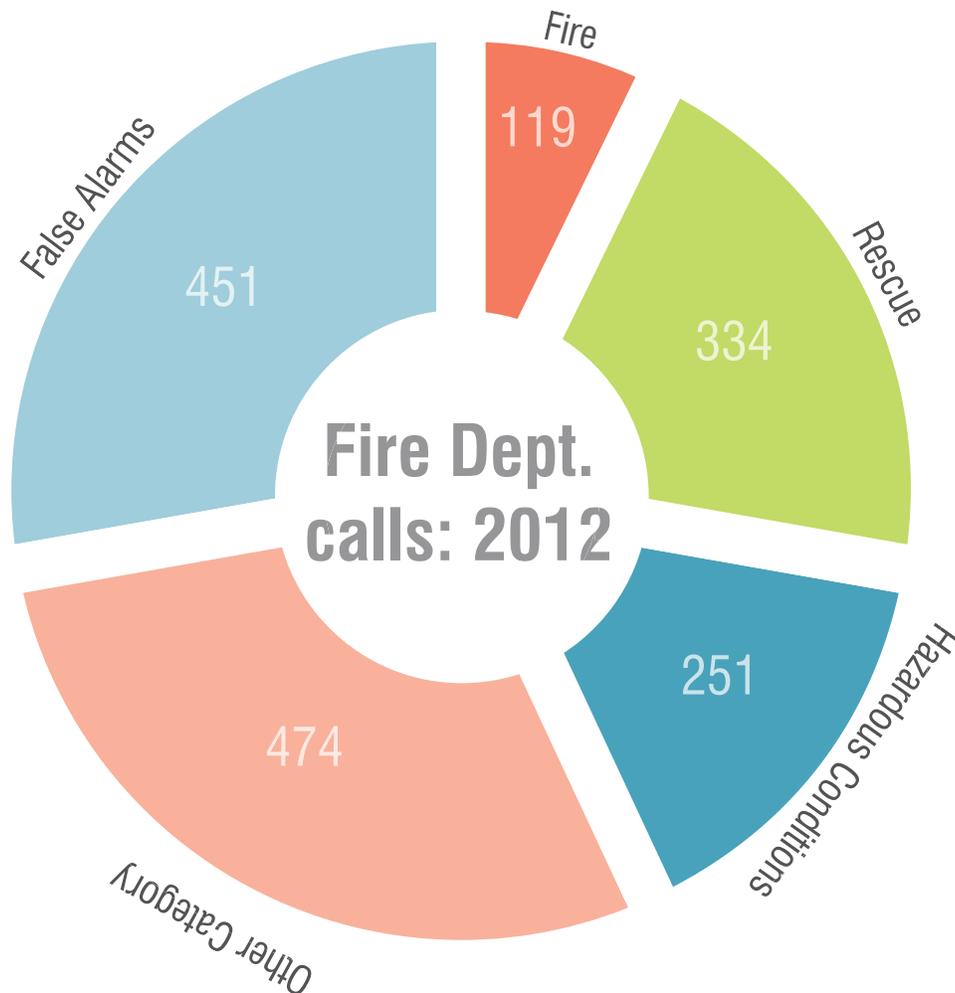
A compost facility and land application program returns bio-solids to the surrounding area, including bio-solids provided to local farmers for fertilizing their soils. In 2013, the average daily flow at the treatment plant was 12.0 MGD with peaks well beyond daily average design capacity (up to three times higher) in wet weather months. Excess demand in the collection system bypasses the treatment facility and discharges directly into the Androscoggin River. No dry weather overflow events have been reported recently. Stormwater inflow and infiltration issues (i.e., ground water that enters pipes) are actively being addressed as part of a ten year capital program to reduce excess demands on the system.

In 1983, the voters of Lewiston decided to no longer spend public money to expand the wastewater collection system. New sewer mains or lateral connections in the City are built by developers in conformance with the City’s design standards.

## Fire Protection

The City of Lewiston Fire Department provides fire protection with resources based at Central Station and three substations on Lisbon Street, Sabattus Street, and Main Street. Each station houses a “first run” engine company. Central Station also has a ladder company and administrative vehicles. Engine 4 at Sabattus Street carries the department’s extrication equipment. The three substations are each 60+ years old and they are situated on small lots. The Capital Improvement Plan includes a schedule to address necessary upgrades and expansions.

The department is staffed by seventy-two full-time and one part-time employee. They are assigned to four divisions: administration, fire suppression, maintenance, and fire prevention. Paramedic and EMS Transport services in Lewiston are provided



SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

# Mutual Aid

Response is coordinated with other fire departments in the area under a county-wide agreement

# \$1,093,889

in property and vehicles were lost in fire incidents in 2012.

SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

by a private ambulance service.

Firefighters work a 24 hours on / 48 hours off shift rotation as part of their 42 hour workweek with an earned day off each fourth day. Sixteen firefighting personnel are on duty at any one time.

The department responded to 119 fire protection calls, 334 rescue calls, 251 hazardous conditions calls, and 474 'other category' calls in 2012. There were also 451 false alarms in the same year. The monetary value of lost properties at fire incidents was roughly \$1,093,889 in 2012, including structures and vehicles. Mutual aid response is coordinated with other fire departments in the area under a county-wide agreement.

The department completed a station location analysis in 2009 to determine how many stations might be needed based on low-density development patterns in rural areas, minimum emergency response times, and available equipment. It concluded a fifth station (and ideally a sixth station) might be needed in the southern and western areas of the city to serve possible growth. It is not expected that increased development in the core area of the city will exceed available resources.

Primary focus issues for the fire department are the fire hazards associated with the City's aging housing stock ensuring vacant buildings are inspected and secure, meeting the demand for fire inspections, and the updating or replacement of

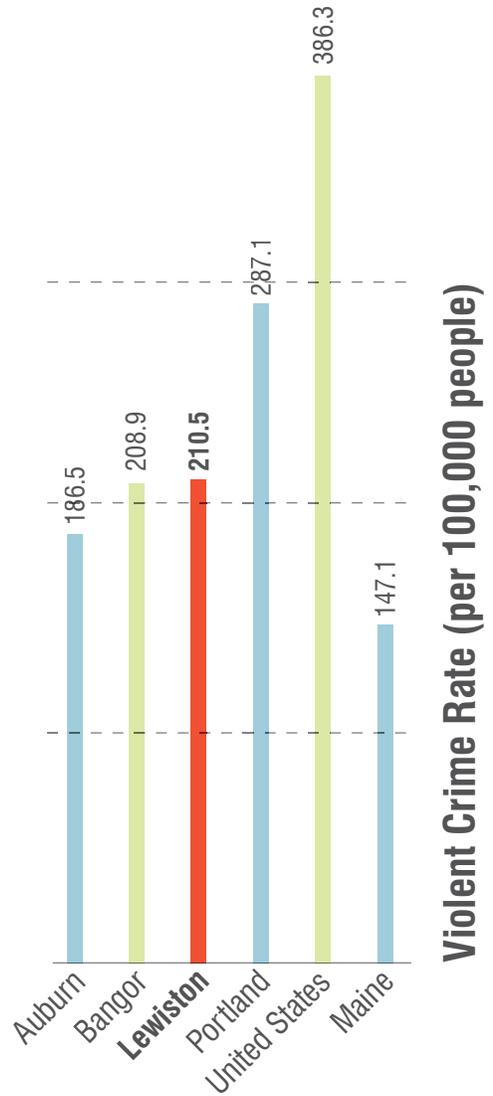
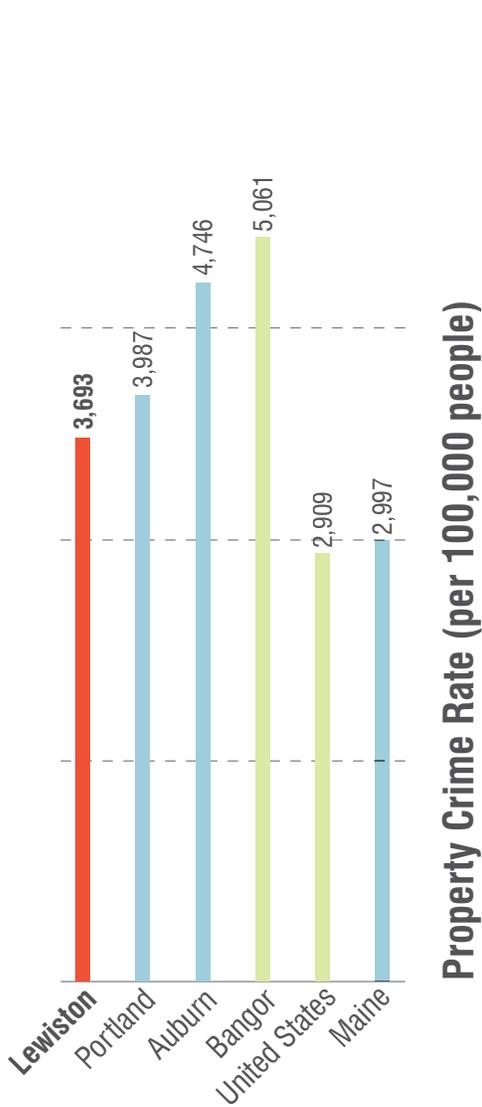
the three older fire substations.

## Police Protection

The City of Lewiston Police Department provides police protection based from its headquarters building at 171 Park Street. Eighty-two full time and thirteen part-time employees serve in four divisions: administration, criminal investigations, patrol, and support services. The department also sponsors several community programs including a citizens' police academy, drug abuse resistance education program, the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) program and the Lewiston Police Athletic League (PAL) which serves not only Lewiston but all of Androscoggin County.

The department responded to 39,843 calls for service in 2011 (including 8,804 parking citations). There were 1,467 violent and non-violent crimes in 2012 yielding a crime rate of 40.09 per 1,000 residents. This was half of the citywide crime rate reported for 1985, and was lower than Maine's other major cities - Portland, Bangor, Augusta, and Auburn - in 2011. This trend continued in 2013 with a crime rate of 35.82 and 37,363 calls for service. The average police response time was 8.3 minutes in 2012.

In the downtown, annual crime statistics have trended downward since 2007. However, the City remains proactive with programs (like Operation Hot Spots and the Community Resource Team) targeting downtown which has led to numerous arrests. The department and area residents believe these programs are successful and have lowered



SOURCE: FBI "CRIME IN THE UNITED STATES 2011"

## Insight:

Despite Lewiston's reputation, the City has a lower violent crime rate than Portland and only marginally more crime than Auburn or Bangor. Lewiston also has the lowest property crime of any of Maine's major cities. More work needs to be done to rebrand Lewiston and to improve the City's self-image and reputation regionally.

crime rates in the area.

## Health Care and Social Services

Health care and social services provide a safety net for the community. Access to health care, disease prevention, or health education services extend life expectancy and overall quality-of-life. Convenient access to “fast service, when we need it” is essential. Social service programs respect the inherent dignity and worth of all City residents, working to provide basic services that help people move to full employment and self-sufficiency.

Two hospitals provide health care services in Lewiston. *Central Maine Medical Center* is located at 300 Main Street. General services provided include: birthing rooms, heart services, elderly nursing care, pain management, infectious disease control, neonatal intermediate care, cancer services, and psychiatric care. Numerous outpatient services, family support services, and imaging services are also provided. The hospital includes 190 patient beds. In 2012, the hospital admitted 9,854 patients, completed 2,095 patient surgeries, welcomed 768,907 outpatient visits, served 46,743 emergency room patients, and delivered 772 newborns.

*St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center* is located at 93 Campus Avenue. General services provided include: birthing rooms, elderly nursing care, infectious disease control, cancer services, and psychiatric care. Numerous outpatient services, family support services, and imaging services are also provided. The hospital includes 171 patient beds. In 2012, the hospital admitted 6,507 patients, completed 1,295 patient surgeries, welcomed 357,666 outpatient visits, served 33,905 emergency room patients, and delivered 655 newborns.

The City of Lewiston Social Services Department operates a general assistance program that assists eligible Lewiston residents who are unable to provide basic necessities essential to maintain themselves or their families. Eligibility is determined according to income and other guidelines established by the US Department of Health and Human Services policy and Maine

State Statutes.

Payments for rent, food, and other basic necessities are issued to vendors in the form of vouchers, which must be signed and returned for reimbursement. Education materials about the program are available in both English and Somali. Other duties of the Social Services Department include case management, a work fare program, and a representative payee program.

### Case Management

Employees assist clients with securing available and potential resources including social services, financial assistance, training and education, rehabilitation, and employment opportunities. Many of these opportunities are secured in partnership with other social service agencies, non-profit groups, or the New Mainers Partnership operating in Lewiston. The goal is to move clients toward self-sufficiency.

### Workfare Program

The workfare program requires able-bodied residents to work in exchange for the assistance they receive, learning the skills necessary to obtain and maintain permanent employment. Training and education requirements assist clients in securing employment.

### Representative Payee Program

The representative payee program provides case management and assistance with financial budgeting for recipients receiving SSI / SSD (federal disability program) benefits. These services ensure that the recipient’s basic needs are met, including food and safe housing.

The City is reimbursed 50% of its General Assistance (GA) expenditures up to \$685,620 (not including administration cost) from the State of Maine until the municipal obligation is met (based on property values) and then the city is reimbursed 90% of the expenditures. City leaders are cognizant of their responsibilities to both the residents in need and the property taxpayers; and they continue to seek ways to be more efficient and effective with social service programs.

## Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation programs in Lewiston contribute significantly to a healthier lifestyle and higher quality-of-life. A detailed assessment of the City's parks and recreation programs is summarized in the 1999 Lewiston Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and 2003 Lewiston Recreation Recovery Plan. Both plans are aging and in need of an update; however, they remain relevant. A summary of key data and recommendations from the two documents follows in the paragraphs below.

The City of Lewiston maintains a wide variety of parks and recreational facilities including parks, indoor & outdoor athletic and recreation facilities, playgrounds, natural green areas and walking trails. The YWCA, Bates College, and other private organizations provide additional opportunities for fun and fitness throughout the city (e.g., Thorncrag Sanctuary, Elliot Field, Garcelon Bog Conservation Area, river and railroad trails, public school playgrounds, golf courses, private sport clubs, etc.).

Special events hosted by both public and private organizations celebrate the arts, road races, sporting tournaments, and holidays throughout the year. Parks and recreation responsibilities are divided between the Recreation Department, which focuses on active recreation programs such as soccer, gymnastics, and softball and the Public Works Department Landscaping and Tree Work Division which is responsible for all public open space maintenance (not privately owned), including but not limited to all turf, landscaping, trees, building and structures for the following: cemeteries, parks, athletic turf and game preparation, ROWs, traffic islands, walking paths/nature trails and pedestrian green spaces.

Emphasis is placed on existing facilities. Rehabilitation of tennis courts, athletic fields, and playground equipment are the highest priority. Additional energy is focused on trails and greenways linking parks and nearby water destinations, including those in the City of Auburn and Androscoggin County. Important partnerships with LA Trails and other bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups will be critical for

## The City of Lewiston Maintains a Variety of Parks & Recreational Facilities including:...



SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON

implementing a greenway system in Lewiston, including a portion of the East Coast Greenway planned to connect Calais, ME to Key West, FL.

In the short term, new parks or open space may come about through partnerships with community groups such as the Friends of Pettingill or the Androscoggin Land Trust. Although outside city limits, Mount Apatite, Range Pond State Park, Riverlands State Park, and a number of other nearby ponds and lakes provide recreation opportunities.

Demand for new or improved parks and recreation facilities will rise as population (both young and old) increases, and the City will need to rely on internal resources and partnerships with other state, regional or local governments and/or private organizations to expand its services. Financial investment by the City should focus on leveraging these other resources to maximize all of its programs. Land dedicated for parks or recreation activities in new development projects could significantly lower capital costs for building new facilities in the future. Ultimately, budget limitations will continue to be the biggest concern in moving forward initiatives to improve or expand the existing parks and recreation system. In addition, the City must continue to serve the needs of its diverse population as by:

- Acknowledging that the needs of downtown residents and those from the immediately surrounding area are largely influenced by low-income, young adult, or single-parent households. Improvements targeted for these areas should focus on appropriate facilities to serve these demographics as well as safe, efficient linkages between them for a non-auto dependent community.
- Acknowledging that the needs of residents in more suburban areas of the city are largely influenced by middle-income, less walkable, or two-parent household conditions. Improvements targeted for these areas should focus on appropriate facilities to serve these demographics, auto and non-auto linkages between destinations, and incentives to promote a healthy lifestyle.

## Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for day-to-day management of public facilities and infrastructure. Divisions include: building, engineering, highway, solid waste, electrical services, dispatch, landscaping and tree work,

.....

in 2013 **12%**  
of residential trash was diverted  
from disposal at MidMaine Waste  
Action Corp. (in Auburn, ME),  
saving the citizens of Lewiston

**\$53,000**  
in avoided disposal costs.

SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON

.....

and water and sewer. Snow removal, on-street parking, and operation of municipal parking garages in downtown are also the Public Works' responsibilities.

Eighteen municipal buildings (representing over 1 million square feet of occupied building space and accompanying grounds) are managed by the Public Works Department: City Hall, Violations Bureau, Library, Police Department, Solid Waste Facility, five parking garages, four Fire substations, Armory, Public Works Complex, and the Public Works Operations Center. The Department also maintains 188 miles of road (340 lane miles), 170 miles of water transmission and distribution lines, 86 miles of sidewalk, 300 crosswalks, eight bridges, 3,000 street lights, more than 50 traffic signals and many additional infrastructure improvements. Lewiston and Auburn partner for solid waste disposal. Garbage is sent to Auburn, incinerated, and sent back as ash to the City's landfill. Adequate landfill capacity is projected for the next 40 years based on current disposal rates. In 2013, 12% of residential trash was diverted from disposal at MidMaine Waste Action Corp. (located in Auburn, Maine). This saved the citizens

of Lewiston, \$53,000 in avoided disposal costs.

Planning, designing, and programming future projects are the responsibility of the Engineering Division, including compliance with state and federal requirements for stormwater, combined sewer overflows, drinking water, and transportation. As of the 2014 fiscal year, 81 employees staff the department.

The Public Works Department will likely expand as population increases and new public facilities are added to the City's infrastructure. Available City office space appears adequate for the ten year planning horizon. City officials may consider a space-needs study for the long-term planning horizon (2030) to keep pace with development and changes in technology. Equipment to support operations and maintenance activities throughout the City should be monitored through the five-year capital improvements plan.

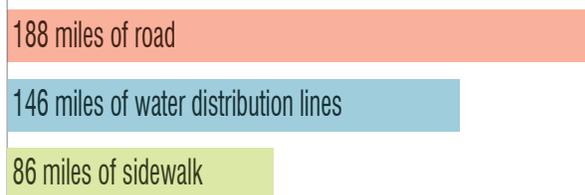
### Landscape & Tree Program

Within the City's Public Works Department, the Landscaping and Treework Division maintains

#### Lewiston Public Works maintains...

**18**  
Municipal Buildings totalling  
**over 1 million**  
square feet of occupied space

**5** parking garages  
**8** bridges  
**1** landfill



SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON

#### The City has...

**over 4,000**  
trees in Maine's only working tree inventory

**with**  
new trees planted  
each year

SOURCE: CITY OF LEWISTON

all of the trees and landscaping on city property and rights-of-way (street trees). The Division is supervised by a City Arborist with a three-person crew.

The City maintains one of the only working tree inventories in the State of Maine. It is updated regularly to track the location and health of over 4,000 City trees. Linked to GIS, the database is used by other Public Works' Divisions to plan and design future projects. Community programs and classroom projects administered throughout the year improve the appearance of the City; adding green elements to the built environment and teaching children and volunteers about the benefits of trees. One of the most successful programs (Adopt a Spot, facilitated through the Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce) has added over 25 community flower gardens throughout Lewiston. Combined with the 20 plus locations Landscape and Treework crew plants with annual flowers each summer, the City is responsible for the landscape maintenance of 96 locations. The City continues with efforts yearly to plant trees throughout the community.

The efforts of the City's Landscaping and Tree Work Division significantly promote the State's Project Canopy effort. The City has been recognized under the Tree City USA program since 2003. The City of Lewiston also received a grant in 2009 to create a forest management plan. The objectives of this plan were to improve the health of City owned forests, create recreational opportunities and generate revenue. .

## Library

The Lewiston Public Library is a fixture in the community, providing services to residents young and old. The existing collection exceeds 160,000 items including books, movies, historical newspapers, genealogical resources, animated kids' books, and e-Readers. Conference rooms and meeting space support regular community meetings. The library also provides programming to assist in integrating residents into American life.

A library board, department staff, and volunteer team support year-long book clubs, children's story times, homework help for teenagers, a computer lab, language learning, and the Great Falls Forum. This free lunch-and-learn event is popular and covers a wide range of topics important to the community.

The library will continue to be a resource as the City grows, and the services provided should expand to meet the needs of its patrons. The physical location in downtown is appropriate and should allow the library to place a priority on serving the needs of downtown residents, while technology and mobile resources, such as book fair events in public schools, could further expand the geographic reach of the library.

## Power and Communications

Central Maine Power is the electricity provider in Lewiston. Three-phase power is available for industrial customers. Phone service is provided by FairPoint. FairPoint, Time Warner Cable, and Oxford Networks offer high-speed and broadband internet. Time Warner Cable provides cable television service. Until provides natural gas service. These services are deemed adequate to meet future growth needs. City officials should continue to coordinate with these providers as development continues.

## Information Technology

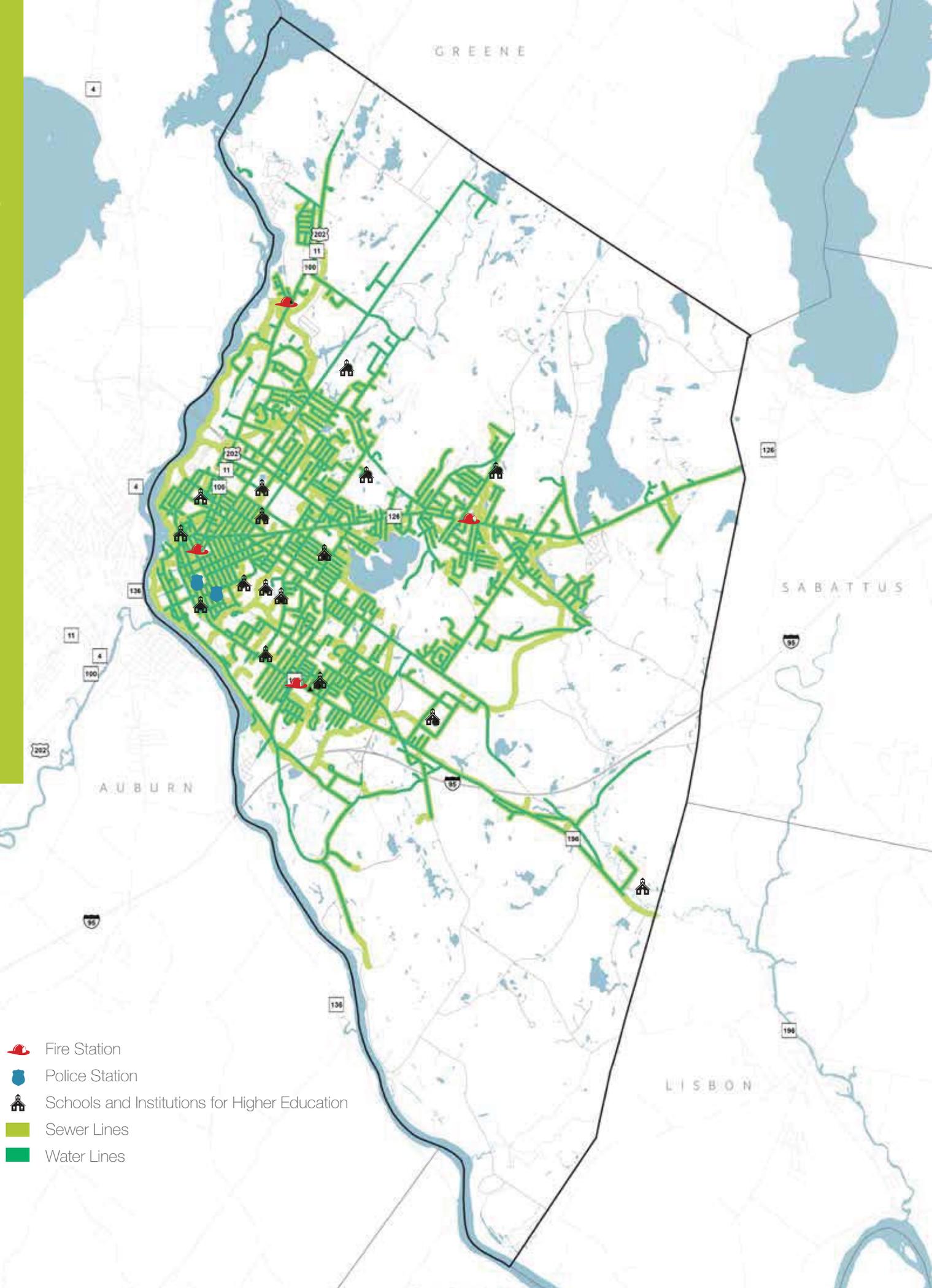
Lewiston has gigabit capability in areas of the community with the potential to expand the

service to reach a greater number of potential users and the capacity to 10 gigabits. Lewiston is one of a growing number of communities in Maine to have this technology. Unfortunately, Lewiston's high-speed internet service is not well known, which provides an opportunity for the City to market this capacity in the future. Utility service is often a factor in the site selection process. Locations are routinely eliminated due to issues pertaining to inadequate electric, gas, water, sewer, or telecommunications infrastructure. Advances in technology have elevated the importance of the Internet in economic development and site selection. The availability, quality, and competitiveness of broadband service have become an important factor in many locations.

People want to live where there is broadband service. It has become an essential amenity for many providing access to entertainment and communication options like downloading or streaming movies and television shows, accessing music, and video conferencing. Broadband allows for a more flexible lifestyle by providing greater access to education through distance learning programs, remote employment, healthcare and other public services.

Corporate site selectors also expect broadband. For communities, it is a piece of infrastructure for attracting new investment. Locations with insufficient or lacking connectivity are passed over for projects requiring broadband. In advance of the Planapalooza, the City initiated conversations with a local internet service provider to better understand the shared opportunities for expanding gigabit fiber and improving coordination in advance of roadway construction projects and building development or redevelopment. Work is needed to improve connectivity in the city in effort to improve the quality of life for its residents and advance economic growth.

# Community Facilities



-  Fire Station
-  Police Station
-  Schools and Institutions for Higher Education
-  Sewer Lines
-  Water Lines

# principles



DANIEL J. MARQUIS PHOTOGRAPHY

# Guiding Principles



TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, LLC

The Common Vision and Guiding Principles generated by the community during the Planapalooza set priorities for moving the City in a new direction. The value of the recommendations contained within this Plan depends on local leaders incorporating the intent of the Vision and Principles into the community's decision-making culture.

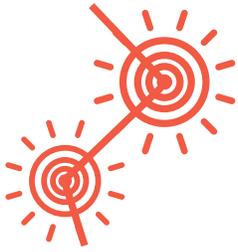
## Common Vision

Building on the City's rich heritage, the vision for Lewiston is to generate new vitality and innovation within its urban core and neighborhoods. Lewiston aspires to be more than it is today through smart land use decisions, diverse transportation options, and an enthusiastic community that supports the local economy. Cultural differences will evolve to be the City's greatest strength, achieved by celebrating history, promoting art, and sharing the stories of all residents.

## Guiding Principles

TPUDC worked with the public to identify a set of enduring Guiding Principles critical to Lewiston's current and future quality of life. These Principles embody the core philosophy and Common Vision expressed by the community. Though the local context and approach for achieving these goals may change over time, the Guiding Principles should endure for generations.





## PROMOTE MIXED-USE ACTIVITY CENTERS

**Strengthen and encourage the development of unique activity centers within walking distance of residential neighborhoods while protecting the City’s rural character, making efficient use of public services, and removing incentives for sprawl.** Provide a mix of uses located close together so that people have options for places to live, work, shop, and participate in civic life. Centers should vary in scale, use, and intensity, represented by a hierarchy of hamlets, walkable neighborhoods, mixed-use village centers, and the Downtown, all of which reflect the character of Lewiston. The presence of activity centers should further the economic vitality and sustainability of the City while promoting social interaction and community building.



## STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS & EXPAND HOUSING CHOICE

**Promote distinct, safe, and vibrant neighborhoods with greater access to a diverse range of affordable and market rate housing types to meet Lewiston’s evolving population.** Encourage creative investment strategies that help to reinforce positive neighborhood identities and provide employment, recreational, and civic opportunities within walking distance of homes. Provide a greater range of housing choices to meet the needs of young adults, families, retirees, seniors, immigrants, refugees, and people of different income levels. Housing types should include small houses, multi-family buildings, live-work units, accessory dwelling units, and single-family homes. A more intentional and diversified housing strategy is critical to the City’s quality of life and the economic growth.

## CELEBRATE HISTORY, ARTS & CULTURE

**Preserve, celebrate, and promote Lewiston’s historic heritage, emerging diversity, and distinctive arts and cultural scene, understanding that they are central to the economic renewal of the City.** Take a stronger and more proactive stance on the preservation and creative adaptation of the City’s historic structures as well as protecting archaeological resources. Celebrate Lewiston’s creative spirit and the strong local pride that has made the City one of Maine’s incubators for culture and the arts. Continue to emphasize collaboration between non-profit organizations and the City to further support the arts, locally-produced products, and the emerging creative economy that is central to Lewiston’s identity and economic vitality. Use public art to help build a sense of community among City residents while providing an opportunity for all people to experience and explore the arts.



## GROW THE ECONOMY

**Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment by investing actively in efficient infrastructure, providing favorable incentives, and building a community that is attractive to employers and their workers.** Continue to promote Lewiston and enhance the City’s competitive advantage in order to attract high quality companies, entrepreneurs, and knowledge-based businesses to the area. Investment and recruitment initiatives should realize “triple bottom-line” benefits for City residents by seeking to improve the tax base, promote economic vitality for local businesses, and increase access to employment opportunities and living wage jobs within City.



## PROMOTE TRANSPORTATION CHOICE & MOBILITY

**Provide a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that balances all modes of transportation including walking, biking, public transit, and motor vehicles.** Consider land use and infrastructure together, promoting complete streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the thoroughfare and the private realm. Emphasize both destination-based and recreational trips, with special attention given to the mobility of children, seniors, and low-income residents. Capital improvements and investment in the transportation system should favor multi-modal travel solutions, especially in the downtown, around schools, between neighborhoods, and along the gateway corridors.



## FEATURE ALL THINGS GREEN & HEALTHY

**Promote and expand opportunities for people to experience Lewiston’s natural settings, proximity to multiple recreational opportunities, access to local foods, and a safe and healthy lifestyle.** Safeguard the City’s natural resources including lakes, ponds, river, aquifers, wetlands, woodlands, trails, agricultural lands, tree canopy, and the services they provide. Strive to create interconnected green spaces that conserve these areas, provide recreational linkages, protect water quality and quantity, and celebrate local foods as a centerpiece of the City’s identity and sense of place.



## UNITE AS ONE COMMUNITY WITH ONE VOICE

**Continue to improve quality-of-life for all residents by building a greater level of understanding between the diverse groups within the City.** Overcome divisions within the community through greater communication and a renewed sense of local pride. Forge partnerships, embrace diversity as an asset, and build a stronger community by recognizing unique viewpoints and life experiences. Advocate for a community-wide approach to tackling complex local issues that impact the lives of all residents including crime, health, mobility, poverty, and safety. Respect the needs, opinions, and contributions of all individuals, recognizing that these unique perspectives enable innovative thinking, dialogue, and action.



## PROVIDE RELIABLE SERVICES & OPEN GOVERNANCE

**Continue to improve quality-of-life for all residents of Lewiston by maintaining and expanding City services while ensuring that elected officials are good stewards of City finances.** Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate future growth and stimulate economic development. This includes focusing infrastructure investment in identified growth areas, sharing resources with Auburn, prioritizing education, and maintaining a strong partnership with the Lewiston Public School Department. Do this work while embracing an expanded approach to open governance that includes creative outreach and effectively solicits community involvement, collaborative partnerships, and resource sharing.



# plan framework

# Conservation & Growth Map

The majority of Lewiston citizens understand that planning for growth will result in a stronger local economy, greater sustainability, and a better quality of life for current and future residents. This section provides a description of the Conservation and Growth Map that sets up a city-wide framework for investing in areas supported by existing infrastructure, retrofitting suburban corridors, and protecting open space. A description of how this map is organized, according to conservation areas and growth areas, is provided. The identified growth sectors include areas for infill, redevelopment, retrofit, and new walkable neighborhoods. A number of these growth areas are illustrated in detail to show possibilities for how development could occur that reflects the goals and aspirations of the community.

## Why a New Framework for Growth?

While Lewiston has remained a vital and desirable place to live, the City struggles to change its perception and generate the kind of neighborhood and economic vitality that was seen 100 years ago. For years, the City experienced population decline while new growth occurred in a suburban pattern along the City's gateway corridors. As a result, Lewiston has seen a decline in investment in the city center while also losing some of its rural land. With an aging downtown housing stock and a newer suburban housing stock, the community lacks high quality housing choices within the walkable downtown core, making it difficult for singles, young professionals, and retirees to find attractive and affordable places to live. Shortfalls in the quality of some elements of the public realm further deter potential residents and visitors. This is combined with a historically evolved regulatory framework that limits the potential for creative investment by the private sector.

In order to respond to these issues, the Plan provides a new framework for growth that addresses quality of life while seeking to have a positive impact on the economy, business climate, tax base, and the sustainability of the City into the future. The community overwhelmingly supports the idea of both preserving and enhancing Lewiston's historic

downtown and identifying strategic ways in which to focus growth within walkable neighborhood centers while leaving existing suburban residential neighborhoods unchanged.

## Conservation & Growth Map

Input from participants at the Planapalooza supported the concept of a conservation and growth approach focusing new development into distinct walkable neighborhoods while protecting remaining rural lands. This approach reaffirms the community's feeling that development should grow outward from the core older established neighborhoods in order to make the most efficient use of city services. The Conservation & Growth Map organizes the community into Sectors prioritized for varying degrees of land conservation, including both permanently and partially protected open spaces, and growth sectors that support existing and proposed walkable, complete neighborhood centers that vary in scale and character.

Existing suburban residential areas are not recommended for a form-based zoning approach and would remain in their current land use designations with the possibility of minor modifications to better meet the City's land conservation and tax base goals.

The Conservation & Growth Map will guide near-term revisions to the City’s zoning ordinance to assure that the City’s land use regulations are consistent with the vision set forth in this Plan. The assignment of growth sectors provides a framework for a new form-based approach either city-wide or within certain identified sections of the City, to more effectively help Lewiston realize the goals of the community and increase both economic potential and quality of life goals. By organizing the City according to conservation and growth sectors, intentional and informed decisions can be made about how to most efficiently spend municipal dollars on infrastructure improvements that will support the Comprehensive Plan.

The Conservation & Growth Map graphically illustrates how the City’s land use policies apply to the physical landscape of the community and where and how growth and development should and should not be accommodated over the next decade. The Map is not a zoning map. It is intended to show, in a general sense, the desired pattern and location of future development. The boundaries shown are imperfect and intended only to reflect the general pattern of desired future development. A more detailed zoning map will need to be generated with significant public involvement as a part of a larger zoning ordinance update to achieve a more fine-grained assignment of zoning classifications in the form of Character Districts rather than the conventional

classification of land based on uses, building type or density designations.

### Organization of the Map

The Conservation & Growth Map is organized around conservation and growth sectors. These Sectors set out conservation priorities and inform the intensity and the character of new growth. This varies from the approach used by a conventional Future Land Use Map that focuses primarily on land use. Sectors are used to guide where and to what extent conservation and growth are to be encouraged and directed. A number of factors drive the assignment of sectors, including location of valuable open space, presence of existing neighborhoods, and availability of planned and existing infrastructure.

There are two (2) conservation sectors: C-1 Critical Natural Resource Sector and C-2 Rural Sector. There are five (5) growth sectors: G-1 Restricted Growth Sector, G-2 Controlled Growth Sector, G-3 Intended Growth Sector, G-4 Retrofit Growth Sector, and G-5 Infill Growth Sector. Specific descriptions of each sector’s attributes will follow on subsequent pages.

Within each of the two conservation sectors, there is a varying degree of resource conservation. The C-1 Critical Natural Resource Sector includes those areas most vulnerable to impacts from



incompatible development. It includes critical natural resources such as surface waterbodies, protected wetlands, protected habitat, riparian corridors, purchased open space, conservation easements, wildlife transportation corridors, and areas left permanently natural as a part of conservation subdivisions. This sector directly responds to the state's Growth Management Law with respect to identifying the location of critical natural resources.

The C-2 Rural Sector includes areas that are deserving of some level of regulatory protection but that are currently not protected from development and where some development would be allowed. This sector includes agricultural and forestry lands, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, and scenic lands. It directly responds to the state's Growth Management Law with respect to identifying rural areas deserving of some level of regulatory protection from unrestricted development.

Within each of the growth sectors, new development is anticipated in the form of infill, retrofit, or new complete neighborhoods that provide for a mix of uses and housing types. These sectors are oriented toward a center of activity, with primary focus, in most cases, on maintaining existing character except where the community has indicated that an alternative growth pattern is desired. These neighborhoods will occur at a variety of scales with conservation subdivisions in rural living areas (Restricted Growth Sector, G-1), primarily residential neighborhoods in suburban areas (Controlled Growth Sector, G-2), new neighborhoods or expanded neighborhood centers in areas where there is existing or planned infrastructure (Intended Growth Section, G-3), suburban retrofit along corridors (Retrofit Growth Sector, G-4), and downtown and downtown neighborhood infill (Infill Growth Sector, G-5).

An interconnected network of streets provides structure for the growth sectors and promotes walking and cycling while distributing traffic. Future development within growth areas will also meaningfully take into account protection of critical resources. The G-3 through G-5 growth sectors directly respond to the state's

Growth Management Law with respect to identifying locations for growth areas suitable for orderly residential, commercial, or industrial development and into which most development projected over ten years and a minimum of 75% of dollars for growth-related capital investments will be directed.

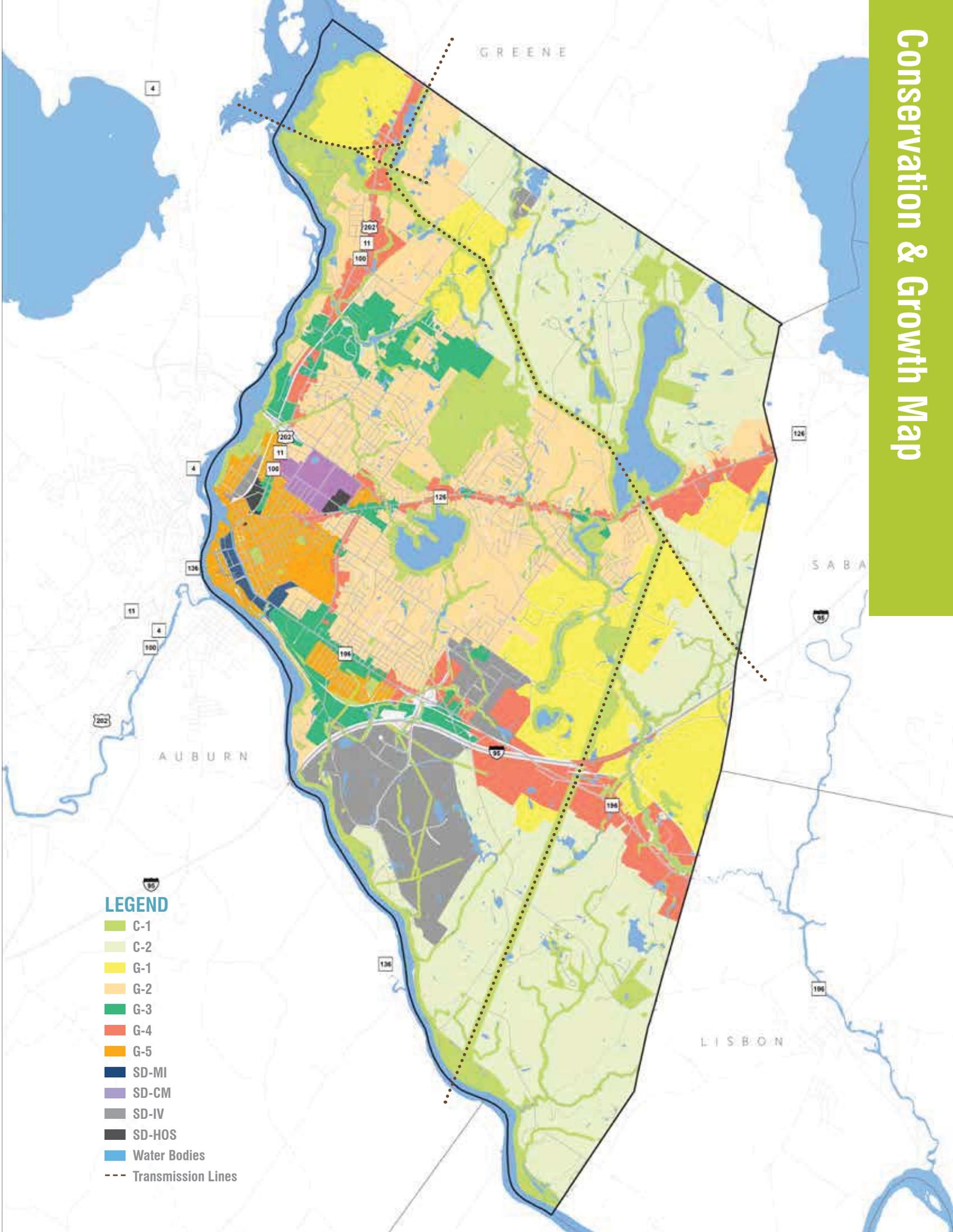
Each growth sector anticipates one or more complete neighborhoods with their own character and composition. The "Promote Mixed-Use Neighborhoods" section of this Plan illustrates a number of potential development scenarios for the various growth sectors, including the Geiger School Neighborhood (an example of G-3), the Sabattus Crossroads Redevelopment (G-4), Lisbon Street Suburban Retrofit (G-5), and the Industrial Village (G-3). These development scenarios are not intended to be prescriptive; rather, they are descriptive of the types of development that this new approach would allow and encourage.

The Conservation & Growth Map also contains Special Districts, areas that, by their intrinsic size, use, or configuration, may not conform to the requirements of a walkable or complete neighborhood. Special districts are assigned to the mills, the industrial area near Interstate 95, the Bates campus, and the hospital, as shown on the Conservation & Growth Map.

## Utility Service

In order to make the best use of the City's limited resources and encourage development in areas that the community has indicated they want to see growth and redevelopment occur, the City should not extend utility services beyond their current extents. Focus should be made on infill development and redevelopment in areas already served, especially in the Downtown, first ring neighborhoods and adjacent underutilized and greenfield properties.

# Conservation & Growth Map



## LEGEND

- C-1
- C-2
- G-1
- G-2
- G-3
- G-4
- G-5
- SD-MI
- SD-CM
- SD-IV
- SD-HOS
- Water Bodies
- Transmission Lines

# Conservation Sectors

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## **C-1 Critical Natural Resource Sector**

These areas protected from development in perpetuity include areas under environmental protection by law or regulation as well as land acquired for conservation through purchase, by easement, or by Transfer of Development Rights. These include surface waterbodies, protected wetlands, protected habitat, riparian Corridors, purchased open space, conservation easements, wildlife transportation Corridors, and areas residual to Conservation Subdivisions as well as transmission line corridors and cemeteries. This sector includes the City's current Resource Conservation Zone as well as the lands subject to the protections listed above.

## **C-2 Rural Sector**

These are areas that should be, but are not yet, protected from development. These areas deserve regulatory protection from unrestricted development for purposes such as supporting agriculture, forestry, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, scenic lands conservation cluster development. They also include steep slopes, important viewsheds, and additional buffers. In this area, projected development should be diverted to growth sectors. This area would serve as the sending zone for transfer of development rights (if applicable). This sector includes lands that are deemed unbuildable or inappropriate for development for the reasons listed above as well as the City's current Rural Agricultural zone, with expected modifications to the existing standards to better preserve the rural character of the City's edge.

# Special Districts

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## **SD-MI Mill Special District**

The Mill Special District includes areas historically developed with large industrial brick buildings along the river and canals. Because of the unique size and configuration of these structures and the importance of a careful and artful approach to site planning and the incorporation of appropriately scaled and designed new structures, this district requires a unique set of standards. This sector includes the City's current Mill zone, which would be rezoned as a form-based Special District.

## **SD-IV Industrial Village Special District**

The Industrial Village Special District is comprised of land adjacent to the I-95 interchange currently zoned for conventional industrial development. This particular industrial land is envisioned as a self-sustaining industrial village with a mix of industrial, office, retail, and other supporting development acting as a sustainable, closed-loop eco-village where businesses interact with each other for productivity. This district requires a unique set of standards that accommodates trucks, large building footprints, and other unique requirements of large industrial enterprises. This sector includes the City's current Industrial zone, which would be rezoned as a form-based Special District.

## **SD-CM Campus Special District**

There are several universities within Lewiston that, because of their function and design, require a unique set of standards to accommodate large detached buildings, buildings that face onto internal greens, and other qualities seen in a campus environment. This Special District is assigned to Bates College. It includes the City's current Institutional Office zone, which would be rezoned as a form-based Special District.

## **SD-HOS Hospital Special District**

The Hospital Special District is assigned to the Central Maine Medical Center and St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. Because of large building sizes, extensive parking, and other hospital characteristics, a unique set of standards are needed for these areas including minimizing surface parking lots visible from public thoroughfares. This sector includes the City's current Institutional office and Centreville zone, which would be rezoned as a form-based Special District.

# Growth Sectors

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## G-1 Restricted Growth Sector

The Restricted Growth Sector includes areas with limited development that have value as open space or where the City desires to see little development but which are subject to development under their current zoning. The G-1 area identifies significant tracts of rural land, in many cases land currently zoned for low-density residential development, and prioritizes it for conservation. Clustered developments with standards for significant open space protection, an interconnected street network, and a mix of housing types are encouraged. This sector includes the City's current Low Density Residential zone which is anticipated to remain in its current form as a conventional use-based district, with minor adjustments made to existing standards.

## G-2 Controlled Growth Sector

Controlled Growth Sectors are areas that are developed with low- to medium-density neighborhoods that should remain "as is". Typically conventional suburban development patterns of primarily detached single-family houses with limited multifamily and commercial opportunities define this area. This sector includes some of the City's current Suburban Residential and Medium Density Residential zones as well as the Neighborhood Conservation A zone. All of these zones are anticipated to remain as conventional use-based districts.

## G-3 Intended Growth Sector

Intended Growth Sector areas are largely underdeveloped but are intended for growth and substantial mixed-use development by virtue of proximity to existing or planned infrastructure, a regional thoroughfare, and/or transit. Complete neighborhoods that include both existing and new residential housing as well as some mixed-use development are appropriate. This area would serve as a receiving zone for transfer of development rights (if applicable) and includes the City's current Community Business zone as well as new centers for walkable neighborhood development that should be rezoned as character-based districts.

## G-4 Retrofit Growth Sector

Retrofit Growth Sectors are areas that are mostly developed but still contain underutilized parcels. They were developed in a conventional, auto-oriented suburban pattern. This sector would allow for change in the pattern of development in suburban areas. New development, redevelopment, or the reuse of existing land and buildings should be encouraged to better meet the local goal of achieving more walkable and bikeable corridors and neighborhoods. This area would serve as a receiving zone for transfer of development rights (if applicable) and includes the City's current Highway Business and Office/Residential zones, which should be changed to form-based districts.

## G-5 Infill Growth Sector

Infill Growth Sectors are areas that are mostly or fully built-out in the City's historic development pattern but that still have vacant or underutilized land. Additional growth and development in these areas is desirable due to the presence of existing infrastructure. The plan envisions that most residential and non-residential development over the next ten years will occur in this growth sector. This area would serve as the receiving zone for transfer of development rights (if applicable). This sector includes the City's current Centerville, Riverfront, Downtown Residential, and some of the Institutional Office, Urban Enterprise zones as well as the Neighborhood Conservation A and Neighborhood Conservation B zones located within the downtown core. All of these should be rezoned as character-based districts to more easily enable context-appropriate investment in the City center.

# Character Districts

Lewiston is comprised of areas that have unique and discernible characters and intensity of development. To help understand the elements that make up these areas, the City can be organized by Character Districts, which are the building blocks of complete neighborhoods. Organizing a community based on character contrasts with the existing protocol of regulating land primarily by use, which produces the kind of auto-oriented development that threatens the historic urban and rural character so many love about Lewiston. By looking at character first, zoning can be established that honors and supports the kind of walkable, mixed-use neighborhood centers anticipated within growth sectors.

In addition to allowing the community to more effectively achieve its vision, a form-based approach addresses concerns related to incompatible uses. By allowing most uses to be mixed together, with the exception of certain industrial uses that have discernible odors or noises, conditions along commercial corridors can be improved. The form of existing auto-dependent uses has not been implemented in a way that is compatible with adjacent residential uses. A form-based approach will address the issue of adjacency through nuanced planning and design.

During the Planapalooza, the community described unique aspects that make up the distinct character of the most-loved parts of Lewiston. This input helped to inform a range of customized Character Districts including the CD1 Resource Protection Character District, the CD2 Rural Character District, the CD3 Suburban Character District, the CD4 General Urban Character District, the CD5 Urban Center Character District, and the CD6 Downtown Core Character District.

When Lewiston moves forward with a form-based code, these Character Districts would be assigned to land within each growth sector and shown on a Regulating Plan that would serve as the City's new zoning map. This detailed zoning map must be generated with significant public involvement as a part of a larger zoning ordinance update. That update is intended to achieve a more fine-grained assignment of Character Districts and their standards, including land use, specific density, height, frontage, and other elements related to character and form.

What follows highlights the major policy directions for each of the Character Districts. These would be used as a starting point to further develop standards during the City's zoning ordinance update. Existing conventional residential zones are anticipated to remain as is with current standards in place.

## CD1 Resource Protection



Lewiston residents indicated that the protection of valuable natural resources and the need to provide access to them for public recreation is a high priority. The CD1 Resource Protection Character District consists of lands that are under environmental protection by law or regulation as well as land acquired for conservation through purchase, by easement, or by Transfer of Development Rights.

- Includes significant resources along the river, streams, and high value wetlands in a Resource Protection designation.
- Designates land preserved as conservation land/open space.

## CD2 Rural



Lewiston residents identified protecting working farms and forests and minimizing the development of remaining rural lands as a high priority. The CD2 Rural Character Districts consists of sparsely settled lands used for working farms and forests. Typical buildings are farmhouses and agricultural buildings.

- Continue to protect undeveloped rural areas.
- Continue to allow low-density residential development along some rural roads in accordance with defined criteria.
- Allow flexibility for where and how rural residential development occurs to minimize its impact on rural character and agricultural uses.

## CD3 Suburban Neighborhood



Lewiston contains a number of residential neighborhoods, some of which are within walking distance to the downtown core and others that require a short drive to access daily retail needs. There is strong support for protecting and strengthening these neighborhoods that are defined by an interconnected network of residential streets. The CD3 Suburban Character District consists of low- to medium-density residential areas adjacent to more intense zones that include some mixed use. Home occupations and outbuildings are allowed. Plantings include street trees and other vegetation and setbacks are relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions.

- Allow new residential neighborhoods in areas where municipal services and utilities are provided.
- Use “form-based” requirements for residential development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Allow infill development and redevelopment in established residential neighborhoods that are compatible with traditional development patterns and densities.
- Expand the ability to create an “accessory apartment” in existing single-family homes.

## CD4 Neighborhood General



Lewiston has a number of high-density urban neighborhoods that are in need of attention. The City has pursued a range of strategies in this area with mixed success. A form-based approach will be one piece of the puzzle to help these downtown neighborhoods see appropriate revitalization and redevelopment that provides for a mix of housing types in keeping with the character of the area and supporting Lewiston’s rich diversity. The CD4 General Urban Character District consists of a mixed use but primarily residential urban fabric with ground floor office, retail, and artisan industrial uses. This district may have a wide range of building types including apartment buildings, stacked flats, single family homes, duplexes, live/works, and rowhouses. Setbacks and landscaping are variable. Streets with curbs and sidewalks define medium-sized blocks.

- Use “form-based” requirements for mixed-use development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Require design guidelines for new development.
- Simplify the rules making it easier to develop or redevelop buildings in a way that respects the character of the neighborhood.
- Allow mixed-use development in older neighborhoods adjacent to downtown Lewiston while maintaining the residential character of these areas.
- Encourage reinvestment in older higher density residential neighborhoods by allowing full utilization of existing buildings and flexible parking requirements.

## CD5 Urban Center



Lewiston's downtown is recovering from a period of decline with renewed interest in the historic buildings that line the City's traditional commercial streets. This area is viewed by many as the heart of the community, the epicenter of potential new energy, and the key to Lewiston's transformation. The CD5 Urban Center Character District consists of higher density mixed use buildings that accommodate retail, offices, rowhouses, and apartments. It has a tight network of streets with wide sidewalks, consistent street tree planting, and buildings set close to the sidewalks.

- Use "form-based" requirements for mixed-use development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Require design guidelines for new development.
- Continue to focus retail development in the Downtown.
- Upgrade the Lisbon/Main/Sabattus gateways to the downtown area.
- Promote neighborhood-scale mixed-use development around significant intersections.
- Expand the ability to create residential uses.

## CD6 Downtown Core



There are a number of commercial thoroughfares within downtown Lewiston that are lined with large footprint office buildings, hospitals, and light industry. Some of these streets need to be improved to better accommodate pedestrian activity. The CD6 Urban Core Character District consists of the highest density and height with the greatest variety of uses, including civic buildings of regional importance. It may have larger blocks; streets have consistent street trees and buildings are set close to wide sidewalks.

- Require design guidelines for new development.
- Continue to focus retail development in the Downtown.
- Continue to promote development/redevelopment/reuse of in-town areas that reinforces the traditional development pattern and increases pedestrian activity.
- Expand the ability to create residential uses.

# Supporting Infrastructure

The City's vision for growth and conservation requires that adequate community facilities and services be in place concurrent with the timing and location of future development.

City officials also recognize that growth will continue beyond the 2030 horizon. The Growth and Conservation Map shows that residential and non-residential development can be accommodated in excess of the demand anticipated by 2030. This future growth potential allows for unanticipated growth and/or changing market conditions from those documented elsewhere in this plan. Residents should understand many areas depicted in the Growth and Conservation Map may not develop within the planning horizon. Such development is influenced by a range of factors including private property owner decisions, market trends, lending conditions, or the location and timing of new capital investments.

Below is a summary of future year projections for the planning horizon year of 2030 as well as for full community build out. The State requires comprehensive plans to provide projections for the planning horizon year and for full community

build out. Projections of full build out, even in a stable economic climate are at best, order of magnitude and unlikely to be highly accurate. However, the state requirement must be met regardless of how realistic.

These projections focus on key public service areas including projected water supply needs, sewer treatment demands, additional open space needs, and public safety personnel. It should be recognized that these projections are based on current and anticipated trends and that a wide range of variance to actual can be expected. As a result, these projections should be periodically reviewed and adjusted. The table summarizes conditions for the current year (2013), planning horizon (2030), and full build-out of the Growth and Conservation Map (date uncertain). Impact calculations were tied to population growth estimates developed for each future period and relied on current service delivery standards. The numbers shown below could increase or decrease due to future decisions to change the City's service standards or service areas. Policies and recommendations in this plan focus on the stated 2030 planning horizon.

## Summary of Impacts to Community Facilities & Services Associated with Future Land Use Map

	Current Conditions (2013)	Planning Horizon (2030)	Full Build-Out Potential
<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>			
Population	36,592	40,000	55,939
Employees	19,957	21,800	96,287
Employees to Population Ratio	0.55	0.55	1.72

<b>Impacts to Community Facilities &amp; Services</b>			
Students*	5,140	5,600	7,831
Police Officers**	82	90	125
Park Land***	75 acres	82 acres	115 acres
Protected Open Space****	350 acres	382 acres	535 acres
Water Demand*****	4.40 MGD	4.81 MGD	6.73 MGD
Sewer Demand*****	12.00 MGD	13.12 MGD	18.34 MGD

\* Demand for new students anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current student generation rate (i.e., 5,140 students / 36,592 population = 0.14 students per person in 2013).

\*\* Demand for new police officers anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current service delivery rate (i.e., 82 police officers / 36,592 population = 2.24 police officers per 1,000 persons in 2013).

\*\*\* Demand for new active parkland anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current service delivery rate (i.e., 75 acres / 36,592 population = 2.05 acres per 1,000 persons in 2013).

\*\*\*\* Demand for new protected open space anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current service delivery rate (i.e., 350 acres / 36,592 population = 9.56 acres per 1,000 persons in 2013).

\*\*\*\*\* Demand for new water service anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current service delivery rate (i.e., 4.40 MGD / 36,592 population = 120.25 GPD per person in 2013).

\*\*\*\*\* Demand for new sewer service anticipated in future horizon years calculated based on reported population statistics and current service delivery rate (i.e., 12.00 MGD / 36,592 population = 327.94 GPD per person in 2013).



# transformations



# Promote Mixed-Use Centers

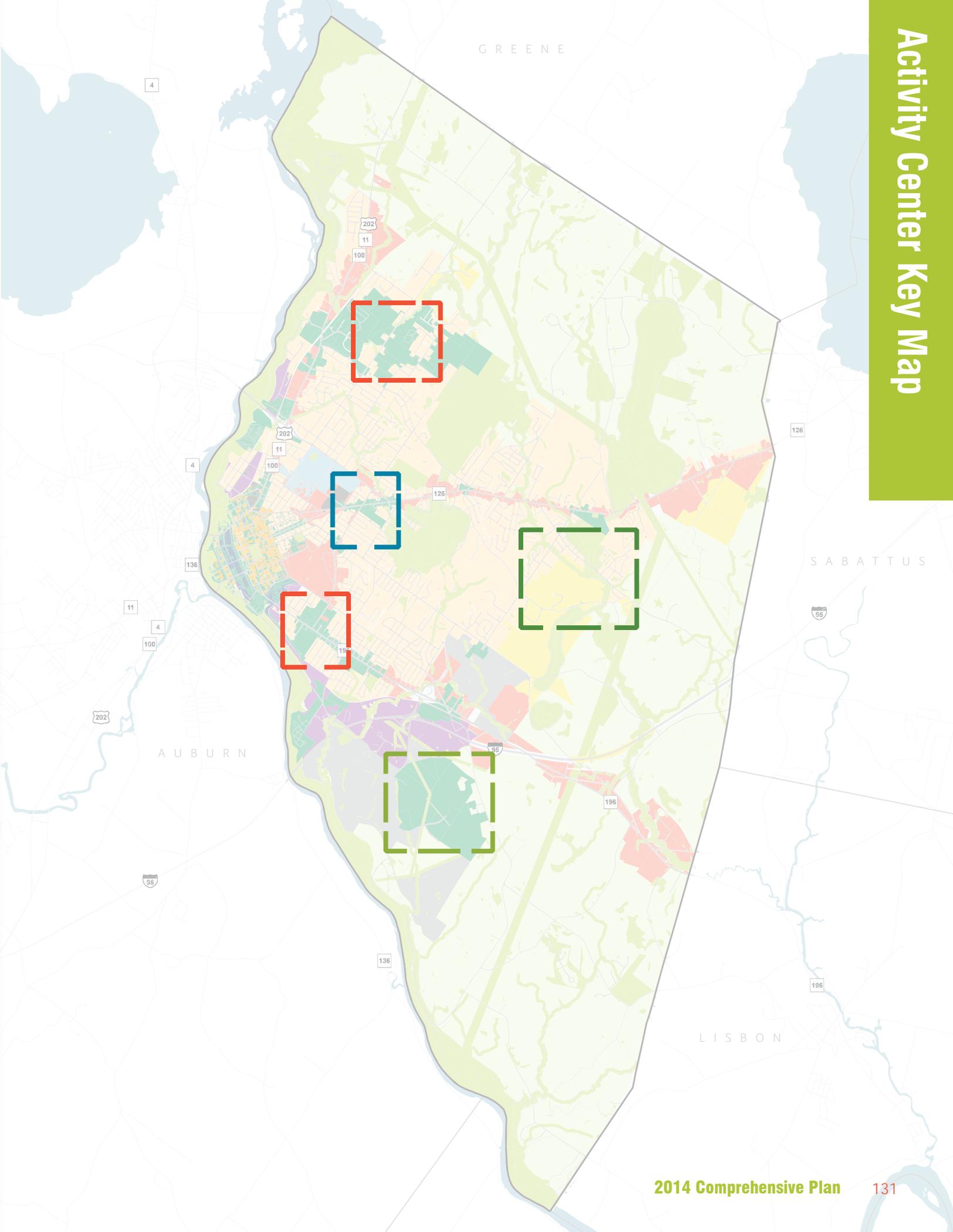
During the Planapalooza, the TPUDC team worked with the community to develop long-range conceptual plans that illustrate many of the big ideas that emerged during the process. The activity center plans detailed in this section show one potential development outcome for four of the growth sectors identified within the City. These plans show the kind of results that might be possible by applying complete neighborhood design principles to specific areas. They are for illustrative purposes only.

The eventual build-out of these areas may and most likely will vary significantly based on landowner interests, zoning regulations, location of available infrastructure, and other factors.

These plans set a standard by which future policy decisions, capital improvements, and development proposals can be measured. They incorporate the ideas and input of city departments, stakeholders, and more than hundred citizens, all of whom will play a critical role in turning this vision into a reality.

-  Responsible Parties  **GEIGER SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD**
-  Responsible Parties  **SABATTUS CROSSROADS REDEVELOPMENT**
-  The Fix  **LISBON STREET SUBURBAN RETROFIT**
-  The Fix  **SOUTH LEWISTON INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE**
-  The Fix  **RURAL LIVING HAMLET**

# Activity Center Key Map



## GEIGER SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD

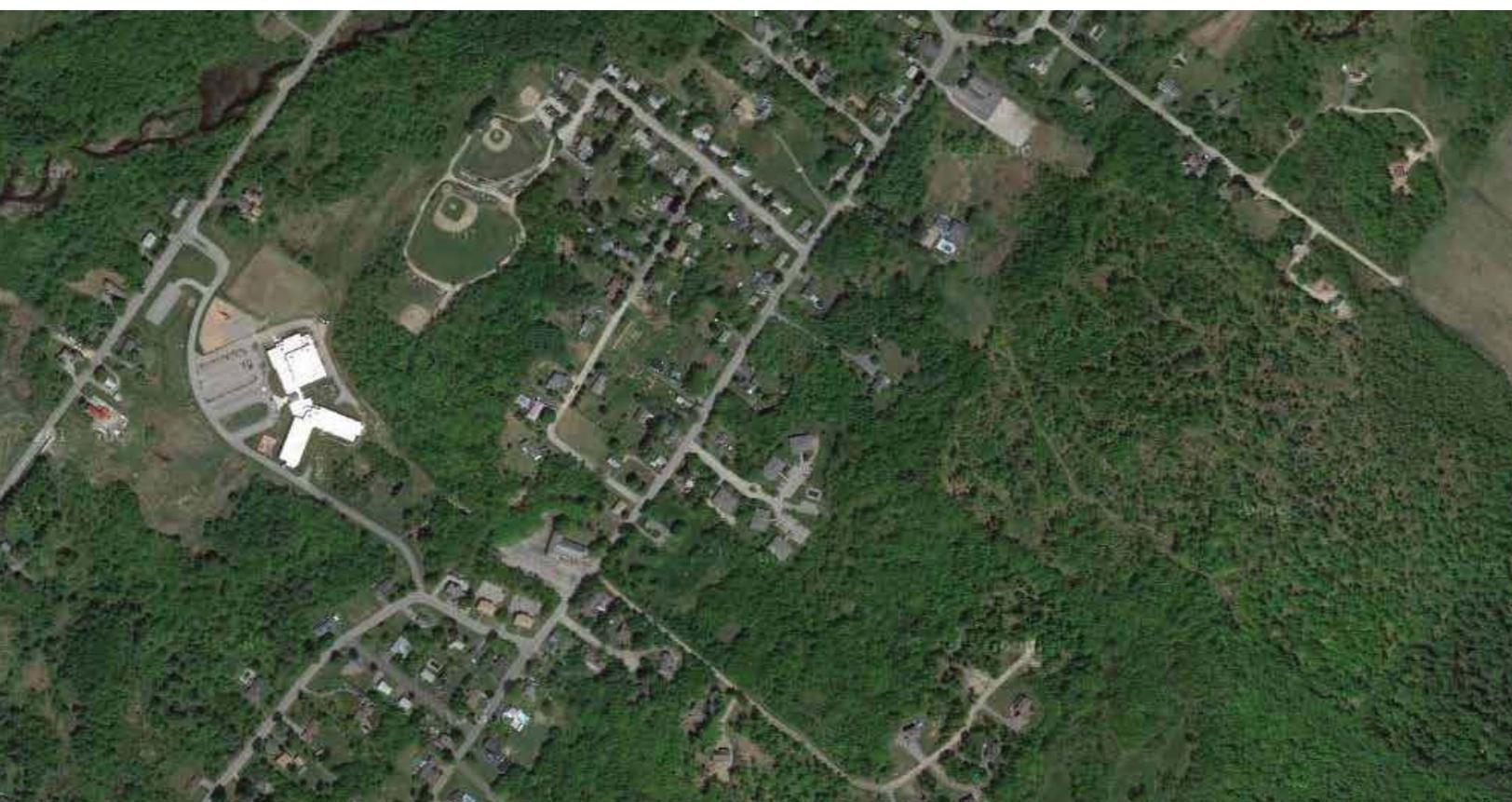
Geiger Elementary School was recently built according to state standards modeled on large suburban schools serving large geographic areas. This is in contrast to other schools in Lewiston, such as Farwell Elementary, which is based on a more traditional, urban model where the school is embedded within a neighborhood. Prior to the middle of the last century, neighborhood schools were the norm. Students could choose to walk or ride their bikes to school rather than being bussed or driven by their parents.

By today's urban planning standards and based on the input of many citizens in Lewiston, Geiger should have been built amongst and within walking distance of many homes in the form of a neighborhood school. Since the school was not built in a neighborhood, perhaps the error can be mitigated by bringing a neighborhood to the school.

The school is currently surrounded by large plots of undeveloped land that could be developed with new housing on smaller lots. This transformation would provide additional housing for young families and embed the school within a vibrant new neighborhood.

It is essential that any new development in the area respect the scale and character of existing neighborhoods while ideally providing amenities for the entire community. It is also essential that new development be built as a complete neighborhood, with a neighborhood structure consisting of blocks, streets, and greens that include an appropriately-scaled mix of uses within walking distance. This plan shows how adding new housing around the school can be done in a way that respects the existing residential neighborhoods and creates a livable community while meeting the City's need for additional schools and classrooms.







# GEIGER SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD

## 1 CREATE A CIVIC COMMON

Currently Geiger Elementary School is pulled far back off the road, accessed by a long driveway. The current drop off area and parking lot could be reconfigured to create a civic green that could serve as an amenity for local residents. Having the school face onto a civic green would give this important institutional building a stronger presence within the community. The street directly in front of the school could still be used for a drop off area and the parking lot could be relocated between two wings of the school. School Drive could become a street instead of a driveway that connects to College Street.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 3 NEW PARKS

The large area west of College Road and Stetson Brook can be turned into a large park for the community. Some housing exists on the property but it would be an asset to the community for the area to be designed with formal trails and a way to cross Stetson Brook from the Geiger School. This will provide an opportunity to preserve open space as well as provide a place for the school children and the larger community to access nature.



Determine whether this area should become permanent open space, and secure funding for its purchase.



Recreation Department

## 2 EXPAND THE STREET NETWORK

Creating a network of streets helps to disperse traffic and reduce travel speeds on existing roads by increasing conflict points, which encourages drivers to proceed with caution. A more fine-grained street pattern also provides people with additional options for getting from their home to nearby amenities.

The plan for the Geiger Elementary School neighborhood shows a number of new street connections. Lemay Avenue that leads to the Elliot Little League Ball Fields and Neil Street can be extended and join a network of streets that connect out to College Street. New streets are also shown to the south of the school on land owned by the school district. In addition, another block could be created east of the school by connecting Hartford Street to Central Avenue.

There are also a number of “paper streets” that were planned in the existing neighborhood around Geiger Elementary School that were never built. These paper streets should be constructed with new housing that reflects the character of the surrounding residential areas.

This expanded grid of streets begins to embed the school within a neighborhood, enabling more children to walk or ride their bikes to school without having to cross any large roads.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 4 PROVIDE MORE HOUSING CHOICES

The City of Lewiston owns a large parcel of land to the south of the existing school, which is an attractive location for development given its walking distance to the school and proximity to Route 202. By developing this large parcel as a traditional residential neighborhood, over 50 new units of housing could be added within a short walk of the school.

New development in Lewiston on large single tracts of land such as this one should take the form of complete neighborhoods and provide a wide range of housing types in order to create the kind of social networks only possible where there is a diversity of ages and incomes. Life-cycle housing provides options within one community to meet a person’s needs throughout the stages of life and must include a range of rental apartments, condominiums, live/work buildings, rowhouses, cottages, small houses, large houses, and large mansion apartments. A complete new neighborhood will require an innovative developer and a commitment from the city and the surrounding neighbors. However, such a development would attract more residents to Lewiston and add to the quality of life in the city.



Secure funding and work with the Lewiston School Committee and neighbors to prepare a Master Plan for the City-owned land adjacent to Geiger Elementary School. Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character to promote housing other nearby property.



Planning & Code Enforcement

Economic & Community Development

Lewiston School Department



**5 COTTAGE COURTS**

There are deep lots along Nell Drive that could be used to introduce a new single-family housing type called cottage courts. Small greens could be developed with small cottage lots facing in toward them. The homes would be serviced by a series of alleys that cut through the rear and define the center of blocks. Having garages and parking off of the alley would allow the homes to have front porches that look out onto the street and the green.

 Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character and that permit cottage courts as an allowed building type.

 Planning & Code Enforcement

**6 EYES ON THE BALL FIELDS**

Just like the existing Geiger Elementary School, the Eliot Little League Ball Fields are removed from the street. A civic green along the edge of the little league fields could be fronted with new homes. These homes would have front porches that look out across the green and the ball fields. Having homes looking out onto this open space will create “eyes on the ball fields”, improving the safety of this area.

As new development around the school occurs, connections between the ball fields, the surrounding neighborhood, and major roads, including College Street and Hogan Road, should be created, further improving the visibility of this area.

 Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.

 Planning & Code Enforcement





THIS BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE GEIGER SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD SHOWS A MIX OF NEW HOUSING TYPES THAT PROVIDE LIVING OPTIONS FOR ALL STAGES OF LIFE AND INCLUDE SINGLE FAMILY HOMES, DUPLEXES, SMALL TRADITIONAL APARTMENT BUILDINGS, AND COTTAGE COURTS. NEW RESIDENTIAL STREETS ARE CAREFULLY INTEGRATED INTO EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS, PROVIDING ADDITIONAL INTIMATE, SLOW FLOW STREETS THAT INCREASE THE CONNECTIVITY OF THIS AREA AND MAKE IT EASIER AND MORE APPEALING FOR PEOPLE TO WALK TO THE SCHOOL AND ITS ASSOCIATED AMENITIES. THE CENTERPIECE OF THIS PLAN IS PHYSICALLY TYING THE SCHOOL INTO A NEIGHBORHOOD, GIVING IT A PROMINENT PLACE ON A CIVIC COMMON, RATHER THAN HIDDEN AT THE BACK OF A LOT AT THE END OF A DRIVEWAY. THIS TRANSFORMATION WILL STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND CREATE A SPECIAL NEW NEIGHBORHOOD WITHIN LEWISTON, MEETING THE PREFERENCES OF A BROAD SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION THAT DESIRES NEW CONSTRUCTION IN A TRADITIONAL LAYOUT.

## SABATTUS CROSSROADS REDEVELOPMENT

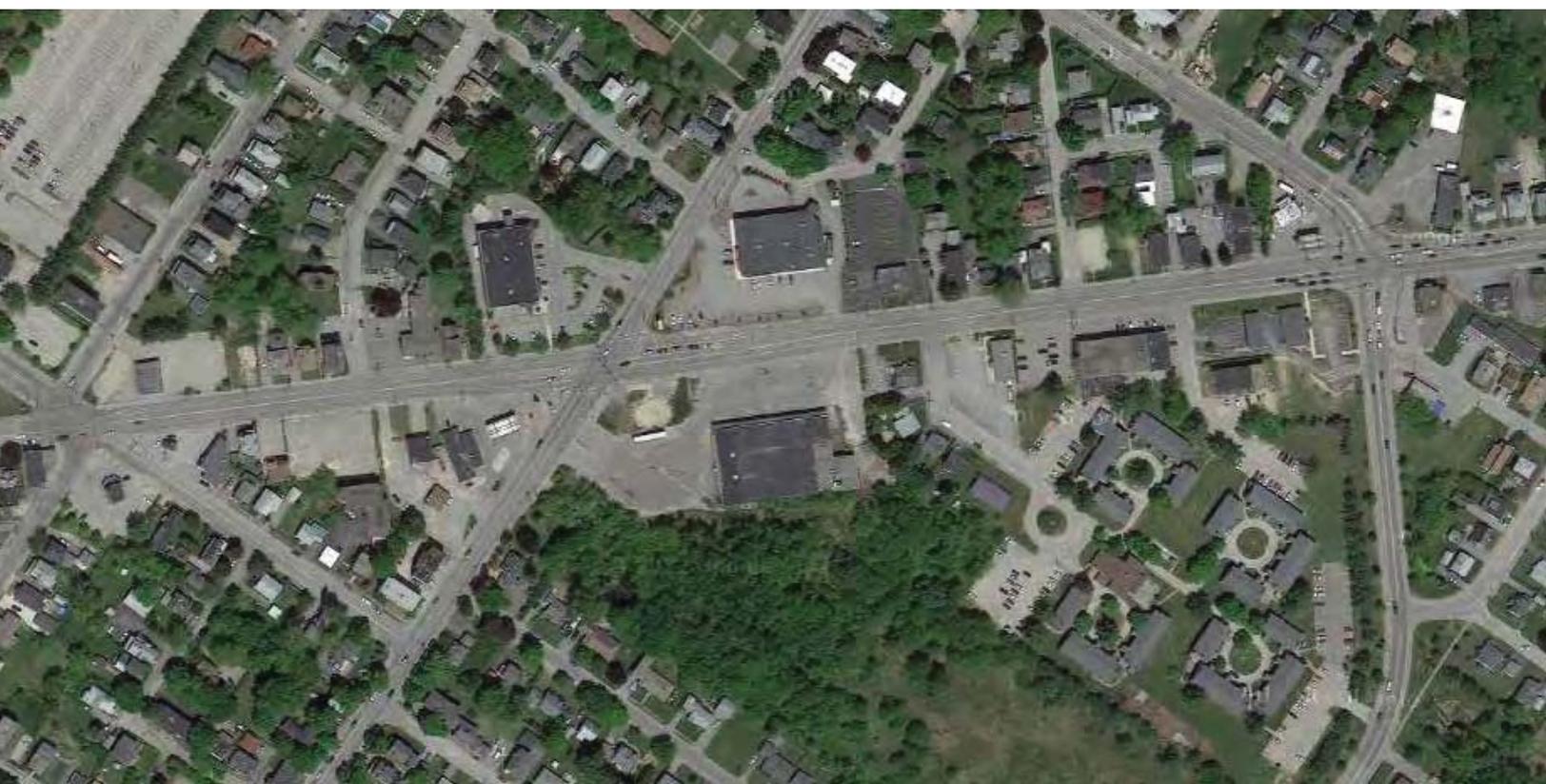
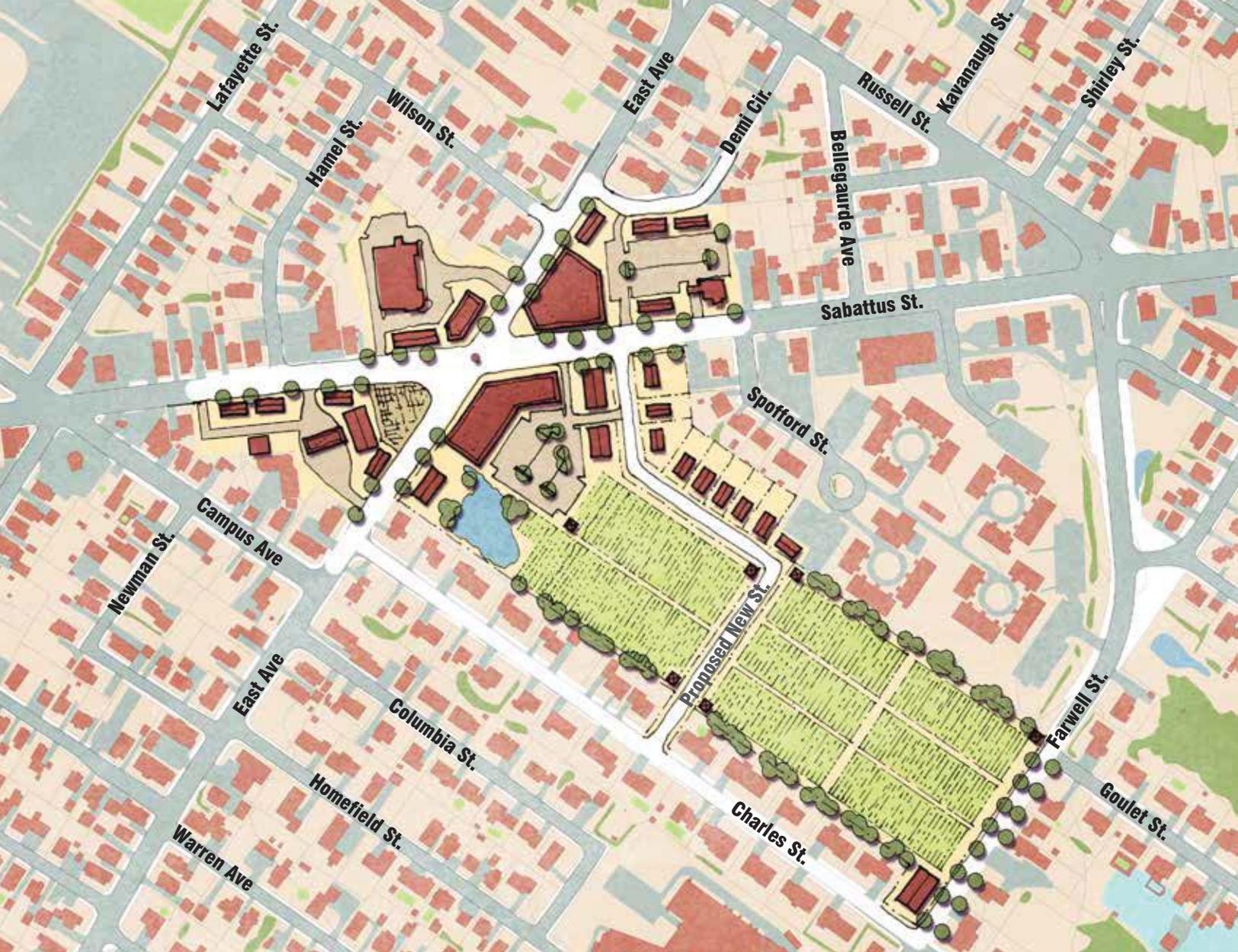
Sabattus Street is a high-traffic regional road lined with a mix of residential buildings and suburban commercial development characterized by one-story buildings with parking lots in front. These suburban interventions and the design of the street itself, which prioritizes the free flow of traffic, has created an environment that is unfriendly for walking and biking, while also impacting the quality of life for residents in abutting neighborhoods.

The intersection of Sabattus Street and East Avenue is fairly typical in Lewiston with multiple turning lanes, long crossing distances for pedestrians, and large swaths of asphalt. This mixed-use plan shows how this and similar intersections could be civilized by creating activity nodes at important urban crossroads. Such intersections can be transformed into destinations and centers of activity by making a number of changes, such as reducing the number of traffic lanes, adding robust bike and pedestrian infrastructure, pulling multi-story buildings closer to the street, and creating civic spaces. By improving the quality of these important places, new economic energy can be generated, drawing city residents and students from Bates College into the area.

This plan also shows how large scale local food could be integrated into the City, a theme heard throughout the Planapalooza. Lewiston has a prevalence of community gardens and a farmers market—especially within downtown neighborhoods. Residents expressed an interest in agriculture on a larger scale to provide even greater access to local food.

Land around the intersection of Sabattus Street and East Avenue provides an opportunity for an Urban Farm. There are approximately seven acres of land that could be converted into an Urban Farm, growing food for the community at a much larger scale than individual community gardens.







# SABATTUS CROSSROADS REDEVELOPMENT

## 1 CREATE AN URBAN FARM

Finding a way to integrate a large farm into the urban fabric of the City could create an asset for Lewiston with far reaching effects. An urban farm of approximately 7 acres could produce over 200 Community-Supported Agriculture shares and provide space for bees to help pollinate vegetables, fruit bearing trees that could be used around the perimeter or in an orchard, and pigs or chickens that could be utilized for meat or eggs.

Greenhouses could be set up and used during the winter months to grow winter crops and provide fresh vegetables year-round.

A barn to store tools and house animals could be built at the intersection of Charles and Farwell Streets, creating an important civic presence in the neighborhood.



Amend zoning regulations to emphasize building form and ensure that agriculture is allowed as a permitted use.



Planning & Code Enforcement

Lots to Gardens

Community & Neighborhood Organizations/Associations

## 2 YEAR ROUND FARMERS MARKET

When the weather is good, shares and extra produce from the urban farm could be sold at the weekly farmer's market. However, when the weather is rainy or cold, a more permanent farmer's market building could be used to store and sell food from the farm. To be economically viable, the building should be constructed of simple low cost materials, while still adhering to the principles of an urban street oriented building.



Develop feasibility and design study for a new market building.



Economic & Community Development Department

Lots to Gardens

## 4 PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HOUSING

New single family or attached homes could be built facing a proposed new street. Having residential units in close proximity to this kind of large open space will help to put eyes on the farm as well as create a type of housing and amenity that is not found elsewhere within the city.



Amend zoning regulations to emphasize building form and character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 3 PARKING IN MID-BLOCK LOCATIONS

The plan relocates parking from between buildings and along the street to mid-block locations. This allows parking areas to be utilized by multiple businesses and brings buildings up to the sidewalk to create an activated pedestrian environment. New mixed-use buildings could be built to define blocks and activate walkable streets.



Amend zoning regulations to emphasize building form and character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 5 RECONFIGURE THE INTERSECTION

The intersection of Sabattus Street and East Avenue tends to be dangerous due to the angle that Sabattus Street cuts across the typical grid of streets and intersects with East Avenue. The intersection could be reconfigured to slow traffic along Sabattus Street by creating a center monument that drivers will have to go around. By slowing drivers, this area would be safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.



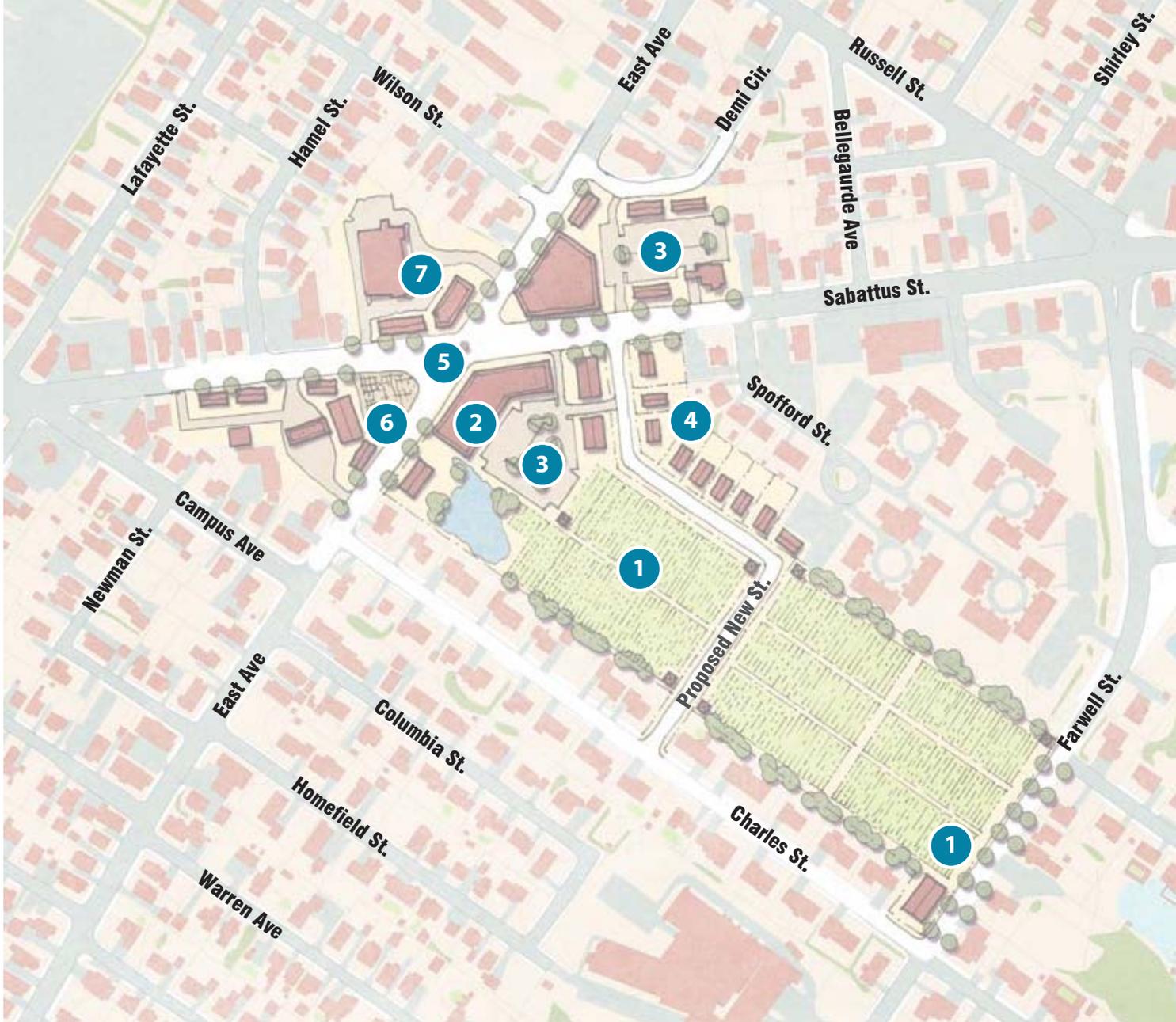
Program funding for the design and reconstruction of gateway streets.



City Council

Maine Department of Transportation

Public Works



**6 GAS BACKWARDS**

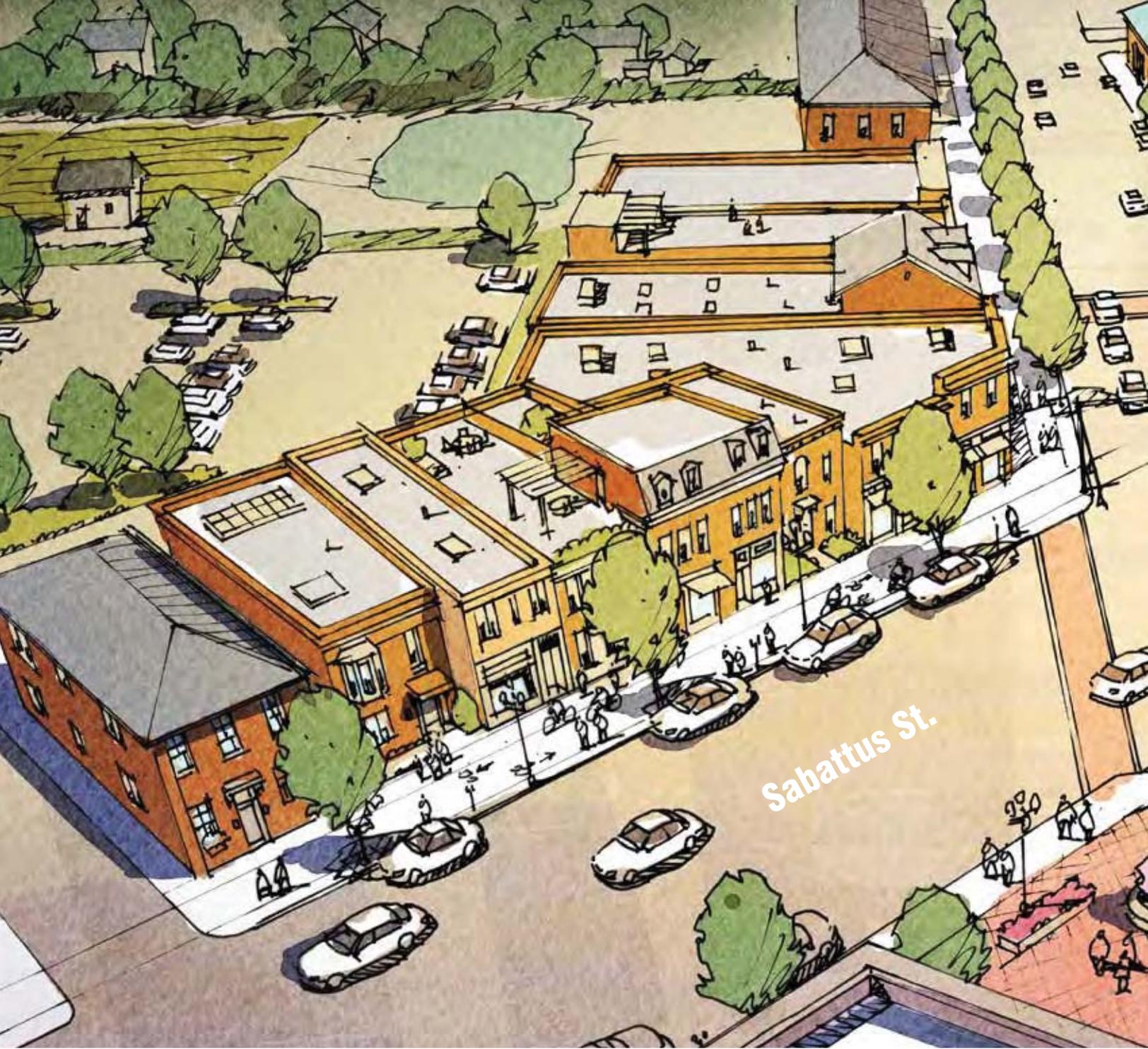
The plan proposes redeveloping an existing gas station with mixed use buildings facing onto a new civic plaza. This kind of change is critical to transforming what is now a suburban, drive-by intersection into a destination and place where people want to spend time.

-  Amend zoning regulations to emphasize building form and character.
-  Planning & Code Enforcement

**7 BRING BUILDINGS TO THE STREET**

The intersection of Sabattus Street and East Avenue is defined by parking lots and asphalt. By bringing buildings up to the street and relocating parking areas to the rear of buildings, this new node could feel like a special place safe for walking and cycling. Moving buildings to the front of lots also helps to address conflicts between commercial uses and abutting residential properties by putting more distance between the noise and light producing buildings.

-  Amend zoning regulations to emphasize building form and character.
-  Planning & Code Enforcement





THIS VIEW OF THE TRANSFORMED INTERSECTION OF SABATTUS AND EAST STREETS HELPS TO ILLUSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF PULLING BUILDINGS UP TO THE FRONT OF THE LOT IN ORDER TO CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT. EQUALLY IMPORTANT IS CIVILIZING THE STREET ITSELF BY REDUCING AND NARROWING TRAVEL LANES AND MAKING THE SHIFT FROM FREE FLOW TO SLOW FLOW TRAFFIC MOVEMENT. WHEN TRAFFIC IS MOVING SLOWER, THE STREET WILL FEEL SAFER FOR WALKING AND BIKING, MAKING IT MORE LIKELY THAT PEOPLE WILL USE SIDEWALKS AND BIKE LANES. MULTI-STORY BUILDINGS SHOULD ALSO BE PROMOTED TO HELP ACTIVATE THESE NEW NODES OF ACTIVITY AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HOUSING OPTIONS FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONS, STUDENTS, SENIORS, IMMIGRANTS, OR OTHERS WHO WANT THE CONVENIENCE OF LIVING WITHIN WALKING OR BIKING DISTANCE OF SERVICES. BY MAKING LEWISTON'S KEY CROSSROADS MORE LIVABLE, IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE WANTING TO SIT IN A PLAZA ALONG SABATTUS STREET WATCHING THE FLOW OF DAILY LIFE.

## LISBON STREET SUBURBAN RETROFIT

The intersection of Lisbon Street and East Avenue has long been a key intersection in Lewiston. It is the location of the Lewiston Mall Shopping Center, Promenade Mall Shopping Center, and Martel Elementary School. Many Lewiston residents have fond memories of the area as a gateway into downtown and remember shopping and meeting with friends here. Today, the malls have high vacancy rates and Martel Elementary is being considered to be repurposed for other school department uses or closed.

In order to establish a physical presence to match the emotional center created at this intersection, a new vision is needed. This suburban retrofit plan illustrates how a civic space may become the heart of a new mixed-use neighborhood center. Empty parking lots can be filled with street oriented buildings and vacant buildings can be replaced by a new neighborhood fabric.

This plan reflects a change in preference from suburban auto-oriented development to a more traditional mixed-use form, where people can and will want to walk between new residences and a range of small and large businesses, offices, and recreational opportunities. This plan also shows how to address existing conflicts between commercial and residential zoning districts by carefully transitioning from lower scale to larger building types.





# LISBON STREET SUBURBAN RETROFIT

## 1 CREATE A CENTER

Incorporating civic spaces at key nodes within the city would create an important presence for each sector of the City. This plan shows a large civic green at the intersection of Lisbon Street and East Avenue, which if built, could start to make the transition from old vacant malls into something new and exciting for the community to enjoy.

This public space could provide a location for outdoor dining and gathering, promoting investment in new mixed-use buildings. It would create a destination and place for daily civic life for both the community and passersby. The open space could become a neighborhood center and help establish this area as a physical gateway into Lewiston.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

Economic & Community Development

## 3 PRESERVE MARTEL AS A LANDMARK

Martel Elementary School is scheduled to be closed. The building has been a community landmark for generations and should be preserved. The City should carefully consider the possibility of converting the school into a community center. With a new civic space across East Avenue, this historic landmark can be given new life and become a prominent new civic building within the community. Preserving this building is critical to retaining Lewiston's heritage and will provide an important visual contrast to new buildings that are constructed in this area.



Complete a formal study to move forward the rehabilitation and reuse of the Martel School building and identify a plan for the management of the community center.



City Council

## 2 MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

This plan illustrates how an existing strip shopping center can be “turned inside-out”. The orientation of new mixed-use buildings defines blocks, creates walkable streets, and brings buildings up to the sidewalk to create an activated pedestrian environment.

To make this area more vibrant, the plan shows new residential streets within walking distance of existing and potential new businesses. Having homes and apartments within close proximity provides businesses with the benefit of additional customers who can access shops on foot or by bike.

A complete neighborhood is created, with an interconnected system of narrow streets, sidewalks, street trees, parallel parking, and slow traffic speeds. This kind of block structure is flexible and can accommodate a variety of potential development scenarios. The result should be a real place that is walkable, safe, and interesting.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

Economic & Community Development

## 4 ADDRESS LAND USE CONFLICTS

The large commercial development of this area with 1950s era strip malls cut off some of the streets that were part of the City's historic grid. As the area redevelops, these truncated streets could be reestablished, especially Hackett Street and Cumberland Avenue.

Re-establishing street connections would provide alternate routes to the main roads, reducing traffic congestion. It would also provide opportunities for a finer grained pattern of development, providing for a smoother transition between the commercial businesses and nearby homes.

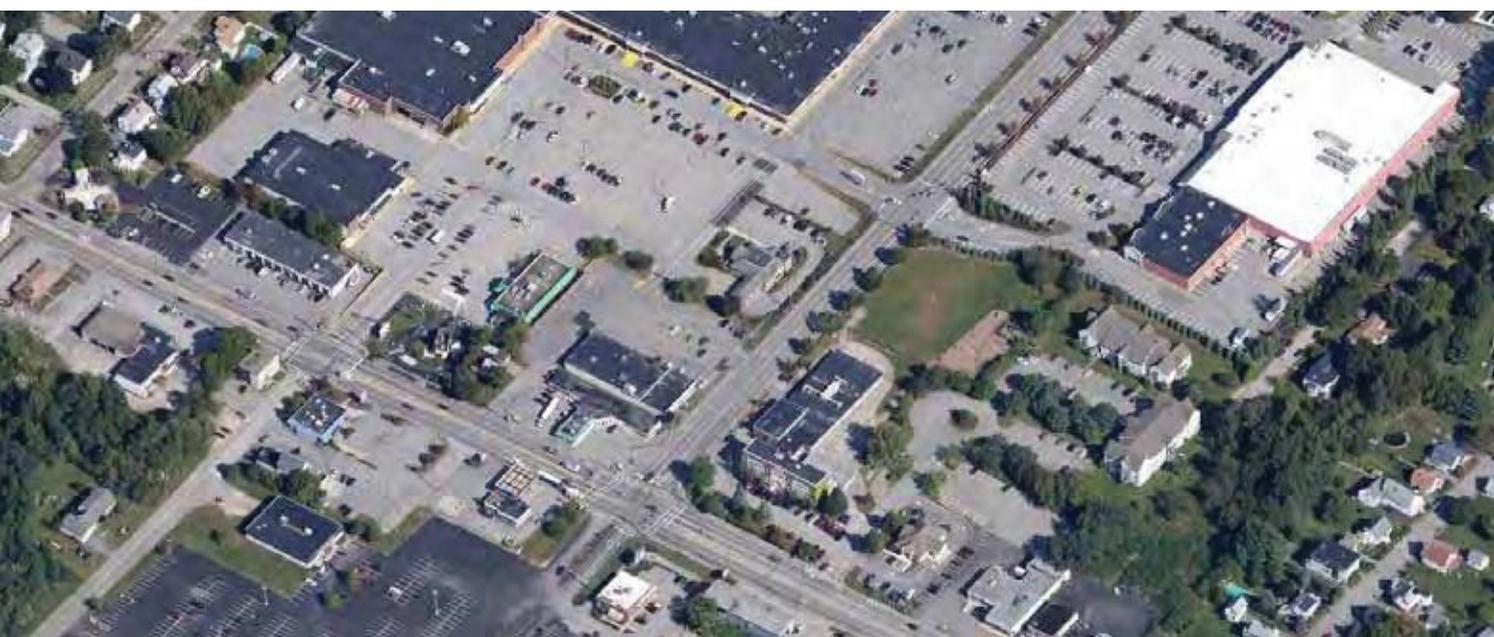


Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form and community character.



Planning & Code Enforcement







THIS BIRD'S EYE VIEW SHOWS A FRESH VISION FOR THE INTERSECTION OF LISBON STREET AND EAST AVENUE. A NEW CIVIC GREEN ANCHORS THIS TRANSFORMED NEIGHBORHOOD, PROVIDING THE COMMUNITY WITH AN IMPORTANT GATHERING PLACE THAT WILL STIMULATE REDEVELOPMENT AND ADDITIONAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN THE FORM OF SMALL-SCALE MIXED USE BUILDINGS. IN THE FOREGROUND, THE MARTEL SCHOOL CAN BE SEEN, REHABILITATED AS A COMMUNITY CENTER, WITH COMMUNITY GARDENS ACTIVATING THE SPACE BETWEEN THIS HISTORIC LANDMARK AND LISBON STREET. IN THE BACKGROUND, THE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS GRADUALLY STEP DOWN IN SCALE AND INTENSITY TO APPROPRIATELY INTERFACE WITH EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

## SOUTH LEWISTON INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE

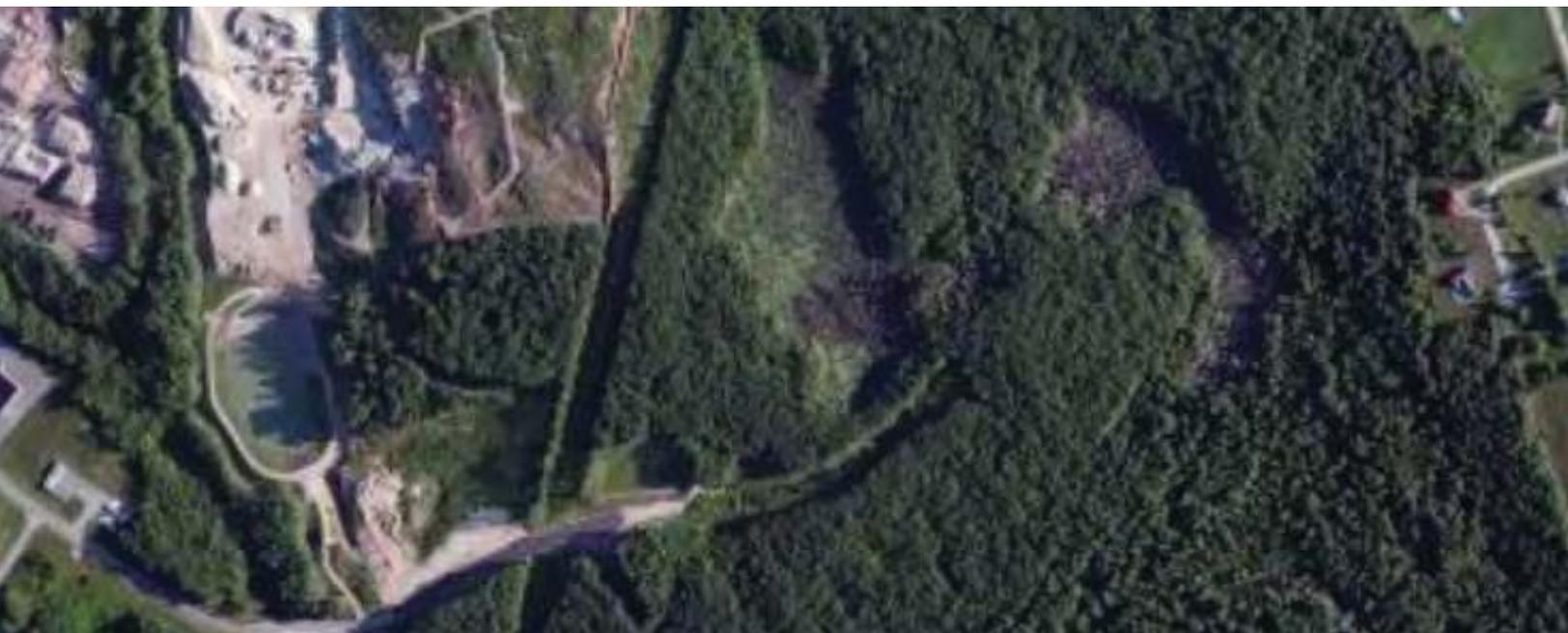
The land around Alfred A. Plourde Parkway is accepted by the community as a desirable location for growth given its industrial zoning, proximity to the highway, and relative distance from residential neighborhoods.

This plan abandons the idea of the conventional industrial park and instead imagines it as a self-sustaining industrial village. Those who work in this area must drive to meet all of their daily needs. The Industrial Village would accommodate a variety of manufacturing, office, and industrial uses, as well as the services and recreational opportunities needed to support workers and reduce the number of car trips.

Taking it one step further, this Village could be planned as a national model for a sustainable, closed-loop eco-village, where the businesses feed from and service each other. Imagine one factory using the waste from another.

Designed around a network of interconnected streets, the Industrial Village would not only provide a healthy and convenient place for employees, but could also become a tourist destination, like similar models in other parts of the world.







# SOUTH LEWISTON INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE

## 1 OFFICE USES

This plan accommodates a number of large format buildings that could be used for office space or light industrial uses. A plan organized around a block system is extremely flexible and can accommodate for a variety of building footprints and sizes, allowing for the full range of office and industrial users.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 2 FACTORY BUILDINGS

The plan includes locations for clusters of manufacturing and warehouse buildings, for both large-scale and medium-sized footprints. This arrangement allows for these industrial uses to be physically separated from office, residential, and retail. It accommodates for potential noise and fumes, while still being close enough to be a reasonable walk to nearby support services. Like historic factories, the Industrial Village Plan shows the buildings pulled to the street and located close to adjacent buildings to enable this area to remain convenient for walking. Light Imprint design principles have been incorporated to promote sustainable stormwater solutions.



Develop zoning regulations that emphasize building form. Consider adopting architectural standards to ensure a high quality pedestrian realm consistent with a strategy for recruiting target industries to the area.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 3 SUPPORT SERVICES

The Industrial Village is intended to function as a place where office and factory workers can meet their daily needs within a 5-minute walk. These services might include restaurants, dry cleaners, florists, and other services that are often performed during lunch breaks or after work. It is likely that these service businesses would also attract the community at large because of the interesting activities taking place and the attention to the quality of the public realm. This area might also serve as a viable location for nightlife, with its separation from residential areas and ample parking made available when office workers leave at the end of the business day. Some of the smaller format buildings could also serve as business incubator space.



Amend zoning regulations to allow a wider mix of uses and the type of support services recommended for the Industrial Village.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## 4 PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ROAD NETWORK

The Industrial Village plan includes a primary road network geared toward pedestrians and cyclists, with continuous sidewalks, buildings pulled up to the street, high quality architecture, and slow traffic. A secondary road network to accommodate truck traffic is located to the rear with direct access off Gendron Drive.



Revise typical street section requirements in the Subdivision Ordinance to promote more walkable streets in the Industrial Village; emphasizing complete street design.



Planning & Code Enforcement

Public Works Department



**5 CIVIC & RECREATIONAL SPACES**

A park or plaza is located within a 5-minute walk of every building, with one outdoor civic space provided in each of the quadrants of the plan. In the manufacturing and warehouse district, the plan includes a soccer field and a fitness center to provide for active team recreation and convenient workout space.



Amend zoning regulations to allow a wider mix of uses.



Planning & Code Enforcement

**6 RECREATIONAL TRAIL**

The Industrial Village is knit together with a swath of green conservation land and a potential trail along the power corridor. This trail will provide a quality open space for workers to run or walk and will allow the fitness enthusiast to commute to work by bicycle.



Determine whether this area should become permanent open space, and secure funding for the trail.



Recreation Department

Public Works

Androscoffin Land Trust





THIS BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE SOUTH LEWISTON INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE SHOWS A WORLD CLASS CENTER FOR MANUFACTURING, INDUSTRY, OFFICE, AND SUPPORTING RETAIL SPACE, BALANCED WITH RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND LAND CONSERVATION.

IN THE CENTER OF THIS VIEW, YOU CAN SEE ONE OF THE SERVICE CENTERS SHOWN IN THE PLAN. A CIVIC GREEN IS SURROUNDED BY SMALL-SCALE MIXED-USE BUILDINGS WITH SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, AND ARTISAN INDUSTRIAL SPACES LOCATED ON THE GROUND FLOOR AND OFFICE AND OTHER USES LOCATED ABOVE.

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE GREEN IS A HOTEL TO SERVICE TRAVELERS, TOURISTS, AND BUSINESS EXECUTIVES.

IN THE DISTANCE, YOU CAN SEE AN AREA OF LARGE MANUFACTURING AND WAREHOUSE BUILDINGS ORIENTED AROUND A SOCCER FIELD. A FITNESS CENTER IS FACING ONTO THE FIELD, PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR WORKERS TO FIT IN A WORKOUT WITHOUT HAVING TO TAKE AN EXTRA CAR TRIP.

THE VILLAGE IS SURROUNDED WITH CONSERVATION LAND. GREEN ROOFS ARE SHOWN ON LARGE BUILDINGS TO MINIMIZE THE HEAT ISLAND EFFECT AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS.

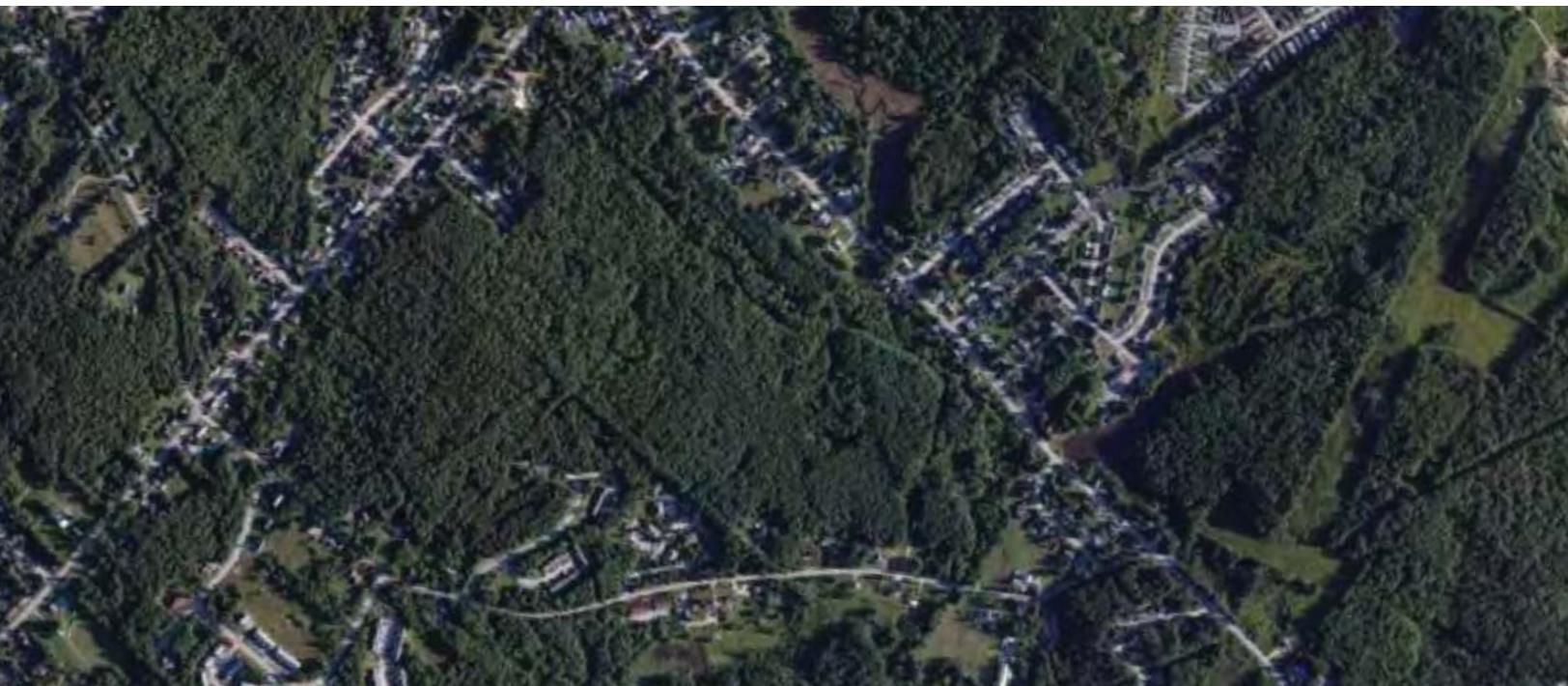
## RURAL LIVING HAMLET

The Rural Living Hamlet is an illustration of a land use strategy that refines the City's conservation cluster development along the rural edge of Lewiston. The intent is to create a more tight-knit community with a range of housing choices, while permanently protecting meaningful tracts of open space. This later goal is achieved through regulations that require development in a traditional pattern of small neighborhoods, surrounded by conserved natural areas and forestland. In contrast to conventional and cluster subdivisions, which divide land into large lots and leave fragments of leftover open space, the rural living hamlet follows a more sustainable pattern that can help preserve larger areas of significance. This allows all residents to benefit from living near open space that can be integrated into a public trail system.

In order to create a safe and beautiful neighborhood, roads in the Rural Living Hamlet should be built to a standard that promotes walkability and slows traffic movement, avoiding conventional standards that require oversized streets and an excess of stormwater infrastructure.

By locating houses closer together, the cost of new infrastructure, like roads, sidewalks, utilities, and telecommunications lines is reduced, as are overall development costs. Common open space is critical for preserving Lewiston's natural features, protecting wildlife cover, and promoting outdoor recreation.







THE ABOVE VIEW SHOWS A RURAL HAMLET WITH A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES ORGANIZED AROUND A LOOSE STREET GRID, WITH COMMON CIVIC GREENS THAT MIGHT CONTAIN COMMUNITY GARDENS OR PLAYGROUNDS. STREETS ARE DESIGNED WITH SWALES AND SIDEWALKS, IN THE CHARACTER OF A RURAL PLACE. AT THE TOP OF THE IMAGE YOU CAN SEE A DISTINCT EDGE BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED AREA AND THE CONSERVED NATURAL LANDS.



Refine the standards in the City's Cluster Subdivision regulations to facilitate the constructions of Rural Hamlets or adopt a Form-Based Approach to more easily achieve this character.



Planning & Code Enforcement

# Prioritize Economic Vitality

Lewiston can look forward to a bright economic future thanks to a close partnership between private businesses, the City, and the community. Numerous groups are working together to define a new economic identity that builds on the City's unique heritage and capacity for attracting a productive, urban population. Bottom-up efforts paired with top-down policies can meet in the middle to create a sustainable, place-based economy that spans all sectors. Lewiston must build on its growing momentum to actively invite new investment and create the critical mass of economic energy needed to launch the City into a new era of growth and productivity. A critical piece of the City's potential expansion is transforming downtown and providing a greater diversity of attractive housing options for future employees.



TOWN PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, LLC

REAL-ESTATE OFFICE FOCUSED ON PLACE-BASED BUSINESS

## Market Shifts

### Invest Wisely

In order to make the most efficient use of limited municipal funds, Lewiston should take a hard line position on infrastructure investments, focusing on the growth areas identified in the Planning Framework section of this Plan. Expenditures made in a suburban context result in a negative fiscal impact on municipal budgets, while investments made in mixed-use downtowns and urban cores have far greater long-term returns. According to a

2012 study of 15 cities across the nation by Asheville firm Urban3, a two-story, mixed-use building will earn the average city 6.9 times more property taxes per acre than a suburban-style mall or strip commercial development. A three-story mixed-use building will earn 13.6 times more property taxes per acre and a six-story mixed-use building will earn 53.2 times more property taxes per acre. Additionally, studies have shown that mixed use development requires lower per-unit infrastructure and public service costs ("Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development," Robert Burchell, 2005).

Lewiston has over 6,702,231 square feet, or 150 acres, of underutilized land within the downtown core, into which future investment could be directed for many decades. Locating new development within the downtown, as well as other identified growth areas supported by existing infrastructure, makes efficient use of municipal resources and will stimulate the transformation of the City's economy and regional reputation.



Encourage infill and redevelopment within the downtown, existing service areas, and designated growth areas.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development

## Emphasize the Heart of Lewiston

A downtown is the economic and psychological heart of a community. It provides a place to gather, shop, recreate, and celebrate. Despite many years of economic decline, Lisbon Street remains charming and is slowly regaining its economic traction partially because of the millions of dollars of investment the City has made for streetscape improvements and façade grants. It is well suited for specialty stores, boutiques, and upscale restaurants. These types of businesses have the potential to carve out a successful niche market that is geared toward small footprint retail spaces in a main street environment. Additional investment downtown is needed to help generate more stable, year-round activity for these emerging businesses. This includes improvements to street circulation, attractive infill of vacant lots, additional office and business activity, and increased mixed-income residential development.



Develop a Master Plan, marketing strategy, and branding strategy for the Downtown



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development

## Rethink Lewiston's Suburban Gateways

To become more competitive, Lewiston's commercial corridors can be re-imagined as mixed-use activity centers that increase the quality of the retail experience and capture a greater proportion of regional sales. Suburban areas at key crossroads can be strategically redeveloped as mixed-use centers that provide additional reasons for both locals and travelers to frequent these out-of-core areas. Less suburban and auto-oriented streets with slowly moving traffic and accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists would improve the viability of businesses along Lewiston's gateway corridors.



ARTISAN INDUSTRIAL SPACE IN A REHABILITATED HISTORIC MILL BUILDING



Develop Master Plan for suburban gateways and neighborhood centers



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development

## Capture a Greater Share of Major Retailers and Employers

A large number of Lewiston residents do their shopping at new, large-scale shopping centers in Auburn. Efforts should be made to identify redevelopment sites within the City's core or gateway corridors that are suited for mid-size retailers and employers. The Industrial Village and Interchange areas, both located within close proximity to the I-95 corridor, would be ideal locations for large-format retailers and employers. Distribution operations and some major business offices will prefer to locations with I-95 access and rail and freight access to cut shipping costs and lower commute times for out of town employees. The City can capitalize on this by planning for employment centers in these locations in a way that encourages walkability and a diverse mix of uses. The City and property owners should take proactive steps to prepare detailed master plans for both the I-95 Interchange and the Industrial Village and undertake branding and public relations campaign designed to target national retailers and major office and distribution employers interested in a high quality, mixed-use regional center.

Lewiston should also actively market its gigabit capability to businesses that could benefit from and fully utilize advanced high-speed internet technologies. This attractive feature is often considered a must-have for corporations and businesses looking to relocate or open new locations.



Develop master plans, marketing strategies, and branding strategies for the I-95 Interchange and the Industrial Village that emphasize both Lewiston's location and technological resources.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development

## Make Lewiston a Hub for Artisan Industry

When most people think of industrial land uses, they typically envision smokestacks and warehouses. That narrow definition is no longer applicable in the new economy. With the advent of 3D printing, niche/small-scale manufacturing, and cleaner industrial and manufacturing processes, light industry can have a place within modern commercial districts and downtown cores. The City should build on its growing artisan industrial sector and provide incentives and a marketing and branding effort centered on attracting small-scale industry to downtown.



Prepare incentives packages and branding material that showcase existing industry



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic and Community Development

## Build Lewiston's Creative Economy

The Creative Economy, as it is known in the planning and economics professions, refers to a range of economic activities that are centered on generating or using knowledge, information, and ideas. As it is, Androscoggin County has half of the entire state's arts and culture employees. Much of Lewiston's future success will come from

attracting and keeping the attention of the Creative Economy. Recognition of the shift in the market that favors authenticity, social, and environmental responsibility, and a sense of community is needed. This economy is fueled by dynamic interactions between technology, arts, culture, nature, work, play, and the home. There is pent-up demand for the value-added industries supplied by creative folks. Main street retail shops, the arts scene, and affordable, hip housing will help to attract creative and entrepreneurial individuals who can restore the critical mass of activity Lewiston once had.

Lewiston can proactively seek out this kind of fresh economic activity and the Creative Class, that is attracted to a certain identity and amenities. Authenticity and local flair should be at the root of the City's new identity and brand.



Define and promote a creative brand for Lewiston so residents, current and prospective employers, creative workers, and visitors understand the City's unique and authentic identity.



Economic & Community Development

## Partner with Educational Institutions to Build a Skilled Labor Force

The City should cooperate with local educational institutions, businesses, state government, and others to develop training and educational opportunities that meet current and projected future industry demands and to identify skills that could attract new businesses to the area. Lewiston could lead the county in championing the importance of post-secondary education and continue working with others in the community to increase attendance and improve access to educational opportunities for all ages. The City should explore partnership opportunities with USM's Lewiston-Auburn College, local high schools, technical schools, community colleges, local hospitals, and Bates College to promote economic growth through formal education and "real-life experience" including internships, volunteering, and on-the-job training. A newly skilled labor market would cultivate a fresh economic and job market for Lewiston.



TOWN PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, LLC

TOURISTS PARTICIPATE IN APPLE PICKING



Create a Skilled Labor Education Plan that will in turn create program(s) to ensure a skilled labor force in Lewiston for future businesses.



Economic & Community Development



Utilize an intern's enthusiasm to conduct interviews of local businesses to find out what inputs they need that could be provided locally. Make this list available to entrepreneurs.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic and Community Development

## Strive to Become Self-Sufficient

When entrepreneurs are selecting a location for their new enterprise, proximity to desirable places to live as well as their suppliers and business services can be a deciding factor. Local support systems may mean the difference between professional survival and bankruptcy. Lewiston should help foster a local network of businesses that can build off of each other to move the City towards greater self-sufficiency. The modern global economy chooses cheap over local. The new economy counters this behavior by supporting the growing public interest in high quality local goods that keep jobs and money close to home. Great local examples include the local food movement with the proliferation of farmers markets and community sustained agriculture, as is the buy local movement and emerging crowd-sourcing efforts aimed at supporting local shops and businesses.

## Reform the City's General Assistance Policy

The City's General Assistance policy is helpful to very low to no income families and individuals in the short term and offers some help to get residents back on their feet through the workfare program and job search and educational requirements, including English as a second language. The City brokers connections to organizations that specialize in job skills, education, financial advice and life skills. The City continues to work with the state to expand proactive strategies for moving people out of both the General Assistance and overall State welfare systems.



Revisit the General Assistance policy to include a section that discusses ways to encourage those getting assistance to become independent from the system.



General Assistance

# Small Business

## Support Local Incubators

The City should consider partnerships with local and regional arts groups and economic development organizations to support the creation of startup incubator space. Empty ground floor retail, an open concept multi-use space, or even a fully-equipped kitchen and dining area for start-up restaurants could generate local and regional buzz and help Lewiston provide direct support to people with solid business plans. Regional organizations that have helped successfully incubate businesses include the Maine Center for Enterprise Development (MCED), Maine Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Maine Women's Business Center at CEI (WBC).



Engage in conversations with local arts and economic development groups to create a plan and strategy for a local incubator space.



Economic & Community Development Department

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments

## Start an Annual Incubation Conference

If a full-on local incubator is too much of an initial commitment, Lewiston is a great candidate for hosting national idea incubators like "StartUp" Weekend. This 54-hour event brings together local entrepreneurs with those involved in design and technology. StartUp has taken place in almost 500 cities and has generated 8,000 startup businesses. Startup weekend is the ideal creation and collaboration platform. These events could attract Bates College students, young professionals in

L/A, and the many regional entrepreneurs seeking investors and advice for their ventures. Centering this event on the Mills and the downtown core would bring life to the area and feature one of Lewiston's strongest assets.



Attract an incubation conference to provide temporary space for local entrepreneurs to refine their ideas through the advice and feedback of others.



Economic & Community Development Department

## Open a Co-Working Office

Maine has an increasing number of shared offices, with several in Portland and one in Gardiner. A co-working space is a relatively simple venture that provides an opportunity for knowledge workers and creative folks, including writers, graphic designers, software engineers, freelancers, and others who work remotely, to afford an office outside their homes at an affordable price. Co-working spaces typically include shared desks and private offices, as well as a conference room, lounge, professional copier, high speed internet, lockers, and showers for bike commuters. Regular events are often held to help users meet, collaborate, and develop professionally. Users pay a reasonable monthly or per-hour fee to use the facility and its resources.



Seek out local business-minded entrepreneur to start and manage a shared working space in downtown Lewiston.



Economic & Community Development Department

## Promote Grassroots Initiatives

Smaller, incremental, and uniquely Lewiston initiatives are just as important to economic growth as large-scale investments. Lewiston has a significant population of young adults known as Generation Y. This age group has untapped potential and will likely be a driving force behind

future grassroots planning and business initiatives.

During the Planapalooza, volunteers grassed over a parking spot. This small act of tactical urbanism brought out musicians, sun bathers, friends meeting for picnics, and was used to stage a professional photo shoot. When multiple small efforts are joined together, people notice, perceptions begin to change, new small-scale investments are made, and the larger economy begins to shift. These “micro efforts” have the potential to gain traction and should be proactively supported by the City.



Initiate an annual summit to encourage grassroots initiatives and tactical urbanism projects.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic and Community Development

## Policies & Programs

### Initiate a Downtown Development Revolving Fund

To help facilitate investment in their downtowns, several cities around the country have created successful development revolving funds oriented toward supporting redevelopment of historic buildings and encouraging appropriate infill construction in commercial districts. These funds come primarily as loans (although some are made in the form of grants). Borrowers must demonstrate that their project meets previously defined financial, design, and social requirements in order to qualify. Creating affordable housing and supporting locally owned businesses can be encouraged, often in partnership with housing finance agencies or other programs. Financing can be made available to for-profit and non-profit property owners, as well as commercial tenants. The

City should explore the benefits of establishing a similar fund for use in the downtown as a means to leverage private investment as well as build in mechanisms to ensure that appropriate design and materials standards are met.



Explore the creation of a Downtown Development Revolving Fund to help finance capital investments, programs, and services.



Economic & Community Development Department

### Create a Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District (BID) can provide many services that go above and beyond what the City currently offers, including enhanced street lighting, more frequent street cleaning and plowing, special plantings, (similar to what is being done in the downtown core of Lewiston), management of street vendors and musicians, special events and promotions, and joint marketing between businesses. The BID could encompass the entire downtown as a way to enhance the Lewiston experience for downtown visitors, workers, and businesses. In addition to the kinds of services already provided by the downtown, a BID might also include retail recruitment, service and hospitality training, visitor ambassadors, and parking and transportation demand management. Creating a BID of appropriate size and scope has the potential to help implement many of the ideas and initiatives critical to the growing success of the downtown.



Create a Business Improvement District (BID) to provide enhanced community services and management across the entire downtown and Riverfront Island.



Economic & Community Development Department

### Set up a Tax Increment Financing District for the Downtown

Lewiston has historically used economic development TIF districts for large single businesses and suburban development projects. The City should consider using this powerful financial tool within the downtown core to support local enterprises and small businesses. Lewiston’s downtown core would benefit greatly from a TIF district to fund streetscape improvements, improve wayfinding signage, upgrade the parking system, and provide other enhancements that would improve the business climate and shopping experience for customers.



Establish a TIF district in the downtown to support local businesses.



Economic & Community Development Department  
Planning & Code Enforcement

### Pursue Revitalization Loans

A number of Maine companies seek out obscure federal tax credit programs to spur private investment in economically distressed communities, with a focus on social investing and financing locally based enterprises. Lewiston should continue to partner with companies, such as CEI Maine, that can help introduce low-interest and project-specific borrowing methods like “revitalization loans” that target creative redevelopment challenges. These kinds of innovative tools can be partnered with general, local financing opportunities like the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) which channels state programs through traditional lending channels for business and education.



Collaborate with state and regional organizations and programs that focus on social investing and small business investment.



Economic & Community Development Department

### Expand Reach of Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council

The Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council (LAEGC) works with businesses to help them identify tax breaks, assist with permitting, and other services. However, it currently does not provide support or assistance to housing ventures. The LAEGC should consider the addition of this market sector as part of their program. Housing is essential to a healthy economic climate and is a keystone for attracting the type of skilled laborers that Lewiston needs.



Encourage the LAEGC to provide support for housing clients to ensure a well-rounded future economy for both Lewiston and Auburn.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development Department

## Regional Coordination

Lewiston and Auburn have strong ties in many

areas, including economic development. As the regional employment center, the communities should consistently collaborate to promote and expand economic opportunities for both cities. This partnership should be nurtured to ensure that the cities continue to retain and attract appropriate businesses to the region that provide livable wage job opportunities for area residents.

### **Promote the Lewiston/Auburn brand.**

When it is appropriate to promote the region rather than just Lewiston, efforts should be made to feature the Lewiston/Auburn brand. Both municipalities will promote economic growth activities within the region by maintaining membership in and support for the Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council, the Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce, Young People of the Lewiston Auburn Area (YPLAA), and other regional economic development agencies.

### **Strengthen Regional Alliances**

Building upon strong interstate access, the City should take advantage of its proximity to Auburn, Portland, Bangor, and beyond. Building a stronger regional economy would have economic benefits for all of Maine's major economic centers. Attracting larger corporations and industries that fit the Maine brand requires strong partnerships, cohesive messaging, and pooled resources.

# Strengthen Neighborhoods & Expand Housing Choice

Lewiston faces a complex and challenging housing conundrum. If the City is going to capitalize on its urban advantage and renewed interest in walkable neighborhoods, it must respond to shifting demographics that prefer a greater array of housing choices and more urban living options. The City has an opportunity to craft a progressive new housing policy that redirects resources to the downtown and limits the extension of municipal services for suburban, single-family home construction. While housing is provided primarily by the private sector, strong public policies are needed to ensure a healthy balance of mixed-income housing that is located in the right place. Part of this renewed housing strategy may involve the city taking a stronger position on working with landlords and assuming short-term ownership of buildings and lots within the downtown in order to facilitate a coordinated approach to the rehabilitation of the downtown.

## Policy

### Focus Housing within Growth Areas

The Riverfront Island Master Plan estimates that Lewiston will require up to 600 new housing units by 2020. Based on available land area within the downtown, along commercial corridors, and within other identified growth areas, all of this future demand can be accommodated within existing service areas. To better meet current and emerging needs, future development needs to focus on providing new, high-quality, multi-family residences as opposed to the current trend of building single family homes in areas not currently served by water and sewer. Making the decision to shift housing and development policy in this way will have far reaching implications for both the city's pocket book and the future of the downtown, a critical piece of Lewiston's overall success as one of Maine's major urban areas.



Draft a new housing policy statement and seek approval from City Council



Economic & Community Development

### Invest in Downtown Neighborhoods

Though it may be difficult for some to imagine Lewiston's downtown neighborhoods evolving into hip, mixed-income, and desirable places to live, it is possible and likely. Local leaders can facilitate this transformation and enable it to happen more quickly by taking proactive steps. Rehabilitation followed by consistent and careful maintenance needs to become a priority if the City is to once again fill its in-town, walkable neighborhoods, which are the most attractive location for the emerging creative class and baby boomer populations. Other cities in the region have seen a turnaround and transformation in their dense urban neighborhoods, including Portland and Somerville, Massachusetts, where triple-decker, stacked flat condos are priced between \$170,000 and \$1.4 million. Investment from both the public and private sector is critical to reversing the decline of Lewiston's in-town housing stock and redefining the City's reputation.

### Improve the Quality of Affordable Housing

To successfully integrate low-income and subsidized housing into a community, three factors should be taken into consideration. First, the appearance of affordable housing should be analogous to middle-class housing to prevent

stigmatization. Second, affordable housing should not be segregated in particular areas of the city to avoid inadvertently creating pockets of poverty and neighborhoods without access to jobs, schools, and open spaces. Neighborhoods should have a mix of affordable and market rate housing. Third, subsidized housing that is only accessible by car is a major economic burden on those residing there. Currently, a large amount of Lewiston's supply of affordable housing is breaking the first two rules. Large swaths of the downtown are primarily low-rent units, some in a state of disrepair. Other large housing developments, like Strawberry Avenue, contain hundreds of units of exclusively subsidized housing in buildings that have the appearance of a low-income housing project. Lewiston should continue to provide and enhance incentive programs for new infill mixed-income housing downtown, requiring a mix of quality subsidized, affordable, and market rate units. In addition to traditional TIFs, loans and grants, the city can provide land to developers, give density bonuses or enter into public private partnerships. Architectural standards can be adopted and applied to new housing development to ensure a certain level of quality while not significantly impacting construction costs. The City should work with Maine Housing on these standards.

Adopt a form-based code that includes a simple set of architectural standards to allow for a wide variety of building types and housing options.



Continue to provide and enhance incentive programs for new infill mixed-income housing downtown, requiring a mix of quality subsidized, affordable, and market rate units.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Community & Economic Development

### Promote Construction of Mixed Income Affordable Housing

In order to promote the construction or rehabilitation of high quality affordable housing units, the City should consider updating its housing policy to require affordable units. Whenever

a new multi-unit housing development over a certain size is to be built, the City could require the developer to include a reasonable percentage of the units at or below market rate. The affordable units should be indistinguishable from the regular units, both structurally and aesthetically, inside and out. If the demolition of an existing housing development or structure must occur, the City might require the owner replace each affordable, low-income, or subsidized housing unit at a 1:1 ratio within a specified time frame.



Create an affordable housing policy that requires new developments over a certain size to offer units at or below market rate.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Enforcement

### Ramp Up Code Enforcement & Take a Firmer Stance on Fines

If Lewiston is going to become a leader in the region, the City must become an advocate and active partner in maintaining and restoring the quality of mixed-income downtown housing. Additional staff may be needed to keep up with the workload to accomplish this. In response to the extensive loss of buildings within downtown neighborhoods, the City should adopt a more aggressive approach to code enforcement in order to minimize deterioration, condemnation, and eventual loss of residential building stock. Should the City find a structure to be substandard or not up to code, the Code Enforcement Officer should formally notify the property owner of the issue and give them a reasonable amount of time (6 to 12 months) to bring the structure up to code. If the structure is not brought up to code within the allotted time, the City should fine the owner on a monthly basis, either a flat fee or on a sliding scale, depending upon the severity of the code violation.

In an effort to help low-income residents keep rents low, Lewiston has been lenient on enforcing, enabling landlords to avoid penalties. The City's current policy related to fines is not to be punitive, but to have properties brought into

compliance. Staff often decides whether or not to waive the fine, depending on circumstances. To more effectively fight deterioration of the City's downtown neighborhoods, all programs, codes, and regulations must be mandatory in order to change behavior and tip the economic balance for landlords. If fines are not paid and violations continue, the City must begin taking offenders to court to seek judgments. Liens should also be placed on offending properties. In cases where a lien has matured, the City Council should use their power to authorize the City to take possession of the property, with the goal of efficiently moving the properties back into private ownership and safe and productive use.

Fines should be used to fund the increased staff time needed for code enforcement, managing the transfer of properties to new committed owners, and providing support for local affordable housing initiatives overseen by the City.



Make enforcement of existing regulations a priority. Strictly enforce fines and penalties for landlords and building owners.



Planning & Code Enforcement



Hire additional code enforcement and planning staff.



City Council

## Implement Vacancy Licensing

Vacancy licensing is an effective strategy for reducing the problems of vandalism which lessen the opportunity for renovations and reoccupancy of buildings. If a property is vacant or contains a building that is not up to code, a property owner can be required to hold a license to keep the property legally vacant. In Cincinnati, where this strategy has been successfully employed, the license must be renewed every six months. If a property owner does not hold a license for two consecutive months they risk forfeiting their property at 80% the value of the property. Vacancy

licenses can only be renewed four times, or for two years, after which time the property must be returned to service, sold, or demolished. The City should consider a similar strategy to help move properties from vacancy to value.



Create a vacant property licensing process and fee structure.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Hold Landowners Accountable

While many landlords are responsible stewards of their properties, others are not. Lewiston should consider setting up a neighborhood-based, publicly accessible database, rating system or interactive map that reports vacancy and building condition. This would both recognize responsible owners and hold irresponsible owners accountable to the community. Lewiston and Auburn jointly purchased software in part for this to occur; however, it became apparent the product was inadequate to readily achieve these objectives. The City should continue to explore use of this interactive tool to help pressure landlords and absentee homeowners to take better care of their properties. This idea could also be turned into a user-input system for code complaints, to complement the current "report a concern" function on the City's website, streamlining the system, and placing data entry costs and responsibilities on users, not Code Enforcement. The City of Charlotte has created a code enforcement app that allows residents to report code violations real time from their phones.



Create a publicly accessible database or interactive map of land ownership, vacancy, and building condition to hold private owners responsible.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Hold Tenants Accountable

While the majority of the burden for maintenance of a rental property falls to the landlord, tenants should also be held accountable for certain minimal upkeep efforts to ensure that the building does not fall into disrepair due to the tenant's neglect. Examples of some tenant accountability regulations in New York include requiring that the premises be maintained in a clean, safe, sanitary condition; that yards, courts and vacant lots be kept clean and free of hazards; that extension cords be used only for purposes intended and not run or laid under rugs or carpets or used as additional electrical wiring; and that all pet waste be promptly collected and disposed of in a sanitary manner. This program is intended to be simple and focuses preventative practices and personal habits rather than costly building repair. These kinds of programs can be difficult to administer and would require additional staff to handle the workload.



Create a tenant education program to ensure that tenants know how to carry out these preventative measures and are aware of the effects of not doing so.

Create a tenant database to assist landlords in the screening process and hold private owners responsible.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Local Housing Agencies

# Programs

## Set up a Land Bank

Historically, abandoned properties have presented a significant challenge for the City. After going through foreclosure, the liens on a property may exceed the market value, there may be title defects, and others may have claims to the property as well. This results in a title that is not insurable, transferable, or of use to anyone. A property in this condition may become a drain on local taxpayers and lead to the loss of property value for nearby properties.

A land reutilization corporation, or “Land Bank,”

helps communities deal with this problem. A Land Bank could be set up in Lewiston to acquire vacant and abandoned properties through tax foreclosures from lenders and banks, or on the open market. The Land Bank then clears the titles and liens against these properties and redistributes them for productive use. Unlike a common tax foreclosure and auction process, the Land Bank can enter into negotiations and contracts for purchase and development and operate strategically with preferred buyers and developers as part of an overall redevelopment plan.



Create a Land Bank program



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development  
Lewiston Housing Authority

## Consider Setting up a Development District & Plan

The City should consider setting up a development district and plan for the most distressed downtown residential neighborhoods. Such a district would give the City the ability to acquire property and clear title for new development purposes.



Create a Development District Plan



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development  
Lewiston Housing Authority

## Implement Dollar Home Program

In the summer of 2013, the City of Gary, Indiana, announced that they would be selling homes for one dollar each. The program sparked national discussion about local redevelopment and rehabilitation initiatives. Gary bought thirteen homes in a struggling neighborhood after owners fell too far behind on property taxes. Under the Dollar Home Program, a home was awarded to eligible participants, who were required to be Gary residents for at least six months, not be a

current homeowner, have at least \$1,000 in a savings account, meet 80% of area median income standards, and demonstrate the financial ability to rehabilitate a home. The successful buyers received a home for one dollar on the condition that the home be brought up to city building codes within six months and the participant reside in the home for a period of five years. After that time, they received complete ownership of the home. In Gary, over 400 applicants met the short list of requirements, and all of the properties were successfully rehabilitated. In order to implement this kind of program, Lewiston would have to become an active player in downtown rehabilitation. The City could work closely with local organizations and large landowners to identify a priority area in which to purchase properties that have the potential to be renovated and positively impact the values of the neighborhood. This effort would be rolled out in stages, with a marketing campaign to draw attention to the City's new efforts to rehabilitate, rather than demolish, the downtown housing stock.



Hire additional Economic Development staff to help roll out and manage a similar programs.



City Council  
Housing Association  
Landowners

## Assist Landlords in Upgrading their Properties

While many of the City's existing landlords are in large part subsidized through TANF, General Assistance, and Tenant Based Section 8 vouchers, the City should do more to assist landlords who are competing in the private market - subsidized or not. The City should work with private landlords and help them to take advantage of available LIHTC dollars and other CDBG funds to make investments in their properties. The City could also help landlords by setting up TIF districts (though for entire areas, not one property at a time) and by offering tax incentives associated with buildings upgrades.

## Partner with Local & Regional Housing Organizations

In redeveloping a healthy multi-family stock, to the extent possible, ownership should be decentralized amongst numerous credible developers and reputable property managers. The City should maintain and strengthening partnerships with local and regional housing organizations. Working together will allow each of the partners to accomplish things they might not be able to do on their own.

## Lifestyle

### Promote Live-In Property Managers

Live-in landlords are more likely to maintain rental properties than off-site landlords. The City should encourage and continue to recommend live-in or on-site property owners, landlords, or property managers for consistently troublesome residential building types. This could include what is sometimes referred to as tenement housing, or buildings with over 5 apartments.



Continue to encourage and recommend buildings over a certain number of units to have on-site property owners, landlords, or property managers.



City Council

### Incentivize Accessory Units

An accessory unit is a flexible space that shares ownership, site, and utility connections with the principal building on the lot, but has its own entrance. Usually situated over a garage toward the rear of the principal house, the outbuilding increases privacy and enclosure in the backyard by screening the yard from the house next door. Accessory units are significantly different from the "bonus rooms" that are found in conventional suburban subdivisions because they are not connected to the rest of the house. Instead it is much more private—making it well suited for use as a home office, guest room, or rental property. If rented out, the additional "eyes on the street" help

make the neighborhood a safer and livelier place. In addition to providing a potential source of income for the primary mortgage holder, accessory units provide additional low-cost housing options within the community. In Lewiston, permitting accessory units would be a sustainable and cost effective way for the City to encourage affordable housing that complements the character of the existing neighborhoods, by putting the control in the hands of the residents.



Modify zoning to allow for accessory dwelling units



Planning & Code Enforcement

### Support the Growing Senior Population

The third largest cohort in Lewiston today is the 45 to 49 age group, indicative of families with children in secondary or post-secondary school. In the coming decades, this group will continually demand more senior-focused services, infrastructure, and housing. Currently, there are a limited number of suitable age-in-place housing options for seniors. Many seniors prefer to remain in their homes rather than moving to isolated, age restricted developments or assisted living facilities, which can be unaffordable to seniors on a fixed income. The city can help encourage this option by supporting community assistance programs such as Aging Excellence, an organization that currently provides Maine Senior Transportation Services for Lewiston’s at-home seniors who need assistance getting to doctor’s appointments, social events, and the grocery store. Lewiston could also explore programs like Elder Power that use technology to monitor the activity and safety of at-home seniors and has been extremely popular and successful in other communities within the state.



Support local non-profit groups and seek out innovative new strategies to keep seniors in their homes, including Elder Power.



Social Services Department  
Economic and Community Development

### Bring a Graduated Care Facility to Downtown Lewiston

The City should explore the option of a public/private partnership to build a graduated care facility within downtown, providing a high quality and centrally located facility that would be a first of its kind in the state. The facility could provide a range of housing alternatives, both market rate and subsidized, including detached single family independent-living cottages and condos, assisted living units, and related services. Each housing alternative provides a different level of care ranging from independent living to full time nursing and supervision. All of the typical amenities that are found in an assisted living facility, such as a hairdresser, pharmacy, and eye doctor, could be located on the ground floor in storefronts facing onto the street. By sharing these amenities with the public, the quality of the services would need to be higher to meet the level of scrutiny of paying customers who can choose to go elsewhere.

The entire collection of buildings could be situated on one block, located in a prominent position and in close proximity to community centers, hospitals, civic space, and social events. Such a location would allow seniors to remain an integral part of the community even when they can no longer drive.



Actively seek the development of a graduated care facility in downtown Lewiston. Develop regulation and programs to encourage this type of development.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development

### Promote Microhousing

The City should consider updating future codes and ordinances to allow for ‘microhousing,’ or apartments totaling less than 300 square feet. These studio apartments are ideal for households without children, young people, and the elderly. This housing type has been successful in both large and small cities, and would provide a more reasonably priced option that could help many households get off housing assistance and gain financial independence or those who just want

the scaled-down lifestyle small square foot living provides. There is a large supply of industrial buildings or older building stock that could be profitably redeveloped into small unit housing.



Revise minimum unit size limits to allow for smaller inclusive units



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Identity

### Better Define Lewiston's Neighborhoods

Currently, Lewiston has a number of loosely defined neighborhoods. The City could work with residents to clearly identify neighborhood boundaries and determine names for each to help build a renewed sense of community for the residents who reside there. This initiative could include the preparation of neighborhood area plans for prominent neighborhoods and would encourage residents to take active roles in addressing local issues and enhance the quality of life within their neighborhoods.



Convene an event centered around defining Lewiston's neighborhoods.



Economic & Community Development

### Address Parking & Open Space Standards for Downtown Housing

Many downtown residents don't own cars, by choice or because they can not afford one however, the cost of providing parking is indirectly reflected in higher rents. If the number of cars owned by low- to moderate-income households continues to shrink, a good portion of Lewiston's population won't own a car in the coming decades.

The City should consider lowering parking standards or eliminating them entirely in certain

parts of the City to provide flexibility to property owners and lessen the expense associated with new construction. The City should revisit the existing parking requirements that allow use of off-site facilities to further encourage more use of or collect in-lieu fees that could be used to construct small, municipal shared-use lots in central locations. Lewiston's ample on-street parking provides an additional alternative that does not result in higher housing costs and makes the streets safer for pedestrians by increasing the number of parked cars, narrowing the perceived lane width and slowing traffic. The benefit of these options is that infill development will become more attractive for developers by allowing them to design better buildings on small, urban lots.

Similarly, open space standards are a barrier to developing affordable housing. Current zoning regulations require potential developers to meet suburban requirements that are inappropriate in the urban context. The result is leftover slivers of land that don't get used. Open space standards should be eliminated in the City's existing urban neighborhoods, relying instead on appropriate building setbacks and heights to ensure that the density of new building reflects the character desired by the community. Developers should instead be required to contribute a small in lieu fee that the City can apply to constructing, operating, and maintaining community parks, playgrounds, and gardens in target locations within walking distance of all residents.



Revisit the City's parking and open space standards to facilitate investment in the Downtown.



Planning & Code Enforcement

### Provide More Employee Housing

With Androscoggin County looking to welcome 2,000 new jobs by 2020 according to the Riverfront Island Master Plan, Lewiston is bound to see growth among its prominent employers. With an already low vacancy rate citywide, large corporations based in Lewiston might begin to overwhelm the local housing stock, though vacancy rates are higher in the downtown. A broad mix of high-quality new housing and short-

term rentals, particularly for hospital employees, should be provided within proximity of these anticipated jobs. The City should take a proactive role in directing these new housing units into the core, rather than allowing the continued expansion of suburban housing in the outskirts of the City. The City should encourage Employer Housing Assistance Programs, where major employers provide financial support to employees who purchase homes within certain geographic locations or developments. This could help provide the confidence for developers to invest in the Downtown.



Explore the creation of Employer Housing Assistance Programs in partnership with regional hospitals or other major employers to help stimulate new housing construction in the downtown.



Economic and Community Development

# Communications

## Initiate a PR Campaign

This section sets out to transform Lewiston's housing landscape. The recommendations included may not sit well with all Lewiston residents. Thus, a public relations (PR) campaign may be in order to solicit input and generate community support. The City should consider holding a facilitated housing symposium to review the housing recommendations and identify which recommendations have the greatest support among stakeholders, including City staff, landlords, community organizations, and residents. Similar to the unwritten rules of the Planapalooza process, decisions should be made by evaluating the overall temperature of the participants, rather than bending to the loudest or most persistent few.



Create a PR Campaign for the Housing section of this Comprehensive Plan.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Community & Economic Development  
Landlords  
Community Organizations  
Residents

## Improve Housing Policy Communications

Many Lewiston residents and news outlets are confused by Lewiston's demolition practices. If these practices are to continue, the City should provide a clear, step-by-step explanation of why buildings are selected for demolition, including specific threats to life safety and the costs to the City and taxpayers. Ideally, the public would receive information relating to the post-demolition plan, whether the City will pursue purchase of the property, and any incentives for moving the property back to a productive state. This could take many forms, but an infographic or poster would be the most accessible to the general public.



Create a poster or other effective medium to clearly explain the City's current demolition policies to the public.



Planning  
Community Development

# Safety

## Address Lead Poisoning

Childhood lead poisoning continues to be a health problem in Lewiston because of lead paint used in structures built prior to 1978. Lead paint abatement requires continued vigilance. To minimize the presence of paint chips, lead dust, and other particles, rehab of older properties should be prioritized over demolition. Where lead is present in heavy concentrations at prior demolition sites, the City should try to assume ownership for these properties or enter into public/private ownerships, using brownfields money or other available funding to clean up sites and make them more marketable for redevelopment.



Continue lead paint abatement programs with coordination with federal and state agencies.



Healthy Androscoggin



Create an Adopt-A-Lot program to help clean up vacant lots.



Community Development

# Regional Coordination

The City should support establishing a housing committee composed of individuals and stakeholders knowledgeable about the local housing market and housing conditions and charge this committee with developing housing related programs and policies that meet the needs of local and regional residents seeking both market rate and quality affordable housing. Potential stakeholders to be represented on such a committee might include local, regional, and state housing organizations, lenders, property owners, and renters/residents.

The City should seek partnerships with Auburn and regional service providers to implement the recommendations of the Lewiston/Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH) 10-year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The City should provide leadership among regional partners to identify funding and design programs necessary to end homelessness in Androscoggin County.

# Crowdsourcing

## Adopt-A-Lot Program

Many of the recommendations above will take a considerable amount of time to fully implement. In the meantime, an 'Adopt-A-Lot' program for vacant and abused properties and lots would be helpful. The City can work with local groups to set up a volunteer program to clean up properties, remove waste, and generally help neighborhoods bounce back from irresponsible owners by simply keeping things tidy. Certain local sponsors such as collegiate clubs and small businesses could get this program started and keep it alive. This program could also deal with the prevention of illegal dumping on vacant lots.

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# Celebrate History, Arts & Culture

During the Planapalooza, protecting and enhancing Lewiston's historic and cultural resources, and celebrating the community through art and creative expression, rose to the top as key priorities for the City. Citizens united around the idea of protecting neighborhoods, the downtown, landmark buildings, and other historic structures throughout the City (The term "historic" may not necessarily refer to "historically significant" or National Register designated buildings, but instead as long-standing buildings that represent an important part of the City's past or exemplify a historic architectural period). It was widely understood by participants that these assets should be a centerpiece of Lewiston's rebirth and competitive advantage within the region with the understanding that entrepreneurs looking for an opportunity to participate in a local renaissance, are drawn to the kind of place where they can invest and make a difference. The arts are integrally tied to the renewal of the City, attracting a similarly engaged and active citizen who wants to participate in its cultural and political life. The arts community in Lewiston not only celebrates the history of the City, but the present and future, telling the story of this unique place as it unfolds.

## History

### Preserve the Tax Base Through Historic Preservation

In order to preserve the City's tax base, every effort should be made to maximize the number of buildings and residences on the minimum amount of public infrastructure necessary. This makes efficient use of municipal resources and good business sense. A significant component of maximizing buildings and residences is finding ways to allow the private market to rehabilitate structures instead of tearing them down.

The craftsmanship and quality of construction of historic structures is rarely matched by new construction because of building codes and a loss of knowledge about how to design and build timeless buildings (even inexpensive ones). For this reason historic structures should be protected not only as a duty to the past but as a tool for economic development.

In the past five to ten years, Lewiston has started to see the beginnings of a slow renaissance with renewed interest in the City center by a growing number of people who want to help be a part of the change. There is a segment of the population around the country and in Maine that is attracted to old buildings; people who see potential and are willing to spend sweat and cash equity to breathe new life into something old and neglected. In competing for entrepreneurs and the creative class, historic structures may be the City's greatest asset.

This shift in demographics and mindset alters the economic equation and makes a strong case for greater historic preservation. For this reason, Lewiston should consider the economic balance sheet with the long view in mind and pursue creative approaches to moving historic buildings into the hands of people who will invest in them.



The City should consider a moratorium on demolition of buildings of historic significance and/or buildings with the potential to be rehabilitated, so long as they are not creating a health and safety hazard for a period of one or two years while steps are taken to generate investment.



Economic & Community Development

tours could take people not only to see the steeples but the other impressive sights that Lewiston has to offer.



Create a route & brochures for a self-guided or regularly scheduled walking tour of important landmarks in Lewiston.



Economic & Community Development

### Start a Board and Seal Club

Lewiston citizens could start a club to work on “board-and-seals” of abandoned properties. This includes boarding up windows and cleaning out refuse, mowing lawns, and tar-papering roofs. A similar club in Buffalo has held workshops and tours of the properties of individual building owners to illustrate the process by which others can buy abandoned houses.



Organize a structure for a Board and Seal Club



Economic & Community Development

### Provide Stronger Protection for Mills

The City should explore designating the entire Lewiston Mill System as a National Register Historic District, expanding the National Bates Mill District and the area’s current status as a local historic district, providing these buildings the tax incentives that may be available from federal and state governments and the additional review provided by the Historic Preservation Review Board.



Complete district nomination form for the Mill System District.



Planning & Code Enforcement

### Organize a Steeple Tour

Lewiston is home to many great churches including the St. Peter and Paul Basilica, one of less than 75 Catholic churches in the United States so recognized by apostolic grant. Marketing materials for a steeple tour could be created by mapping out the City’s numerous steeples and important churches and creating a simple route between them. Brochures could include information on each of the churches, including times when people can enter and see them from the inside. Either self-guided or guided walking

### Strengthen Demolition Delay

Other cities have reported mixed success with demolition delay as a strategy to save historic buildings, indicating that the imposition of a 90-day waiting period on demolition permits hadn’t been working. In many cases, the procedure simply slows down the demolition process, with the token benefit of requiring photo documentation of the building’s unique elements. In Lewiston to date, no buildings have been saved as a result of demolition delay and no challenges have been issued against

the rulings of the Historic Preservation Review Board. In an effort to better protect contributing historic structures, the City could take a harder line when interpreting the demolition delay standards. The legal ramifications of this should be studied further.



Adopt a tougher stance on Demolition Delay and a more strict interpretation of the evaluation criteria.



City Council  
Historic Preservation Review Board

## Simplify and Improve Historic Preservation Regulations

Currently, Article XV of the zoning code details the rules for significant buildings and districts, but is considered complex and confusing to some. Years of modifications have made the code difficult to understand and use. Steps should be taken to reduce the categories of historic designations, better organize the sections, clarify when properties are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board, and simplify the instances where demolition delay is and is not applicable.

When a building is added to the National Register of Historic Places, the Planning Board must recommend that the City Council vote to add the building to the local register. The City should modify the code to automatically add all nationally designated structures onto the local list to simplify the process and the designation categories and to make the process less arbitrary.



Simplify and Improve Article XV of the Zoning Code.

Automatically add buildings to the local historic register if they are on the National Register



Planning Board

## Improve the Effectiveness and Predictability of Design Review

The City should consider amending the Historic Preservation Review Board Design Manual into a clear and reasonable set of architectural standards, rather than recommendations. The Manual is currently used as guidelines to determine whether the local historic preservation measures are being met. Developing standards would provide developers and land owners with an up front understanding of what is required and would give the Historic Preservation Review Board a more straightforward set of standards by which to evaluate projects. Ideally this would shorten and simplify the time it takes to gain approval while also better protecting the character of Lewiston's historical assets.



Hire consultant to work with the Historic Preservation Review Board on developing Architectural Standards.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Historic Preservation Review Board

## Protect Archaeological Resources

For known historic archaeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archaeology, the City should amend its ordinances to require that developers take appropriate measures to protect potential resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation. The City should also require the Planning Board to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process. The City should work with the local historical society and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for doing additional comprehensive community surveys of the City's historic and archaeological resources.



Amend land use ordinances to provide stronger protections to the City's historic archaeological sites.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Restore the Canal System

During the Planapalooza there was broad-based community support for restoring the canals and making them a centerpiece of the City. The City should continue to explore mechanisms for taking ownership of the canals.



Make restoration of the canals a top priority.



City Council

## Save Bates Mill 5

Despite the challenge of reusing Bates Mill 5 because of its deep footprint and concrete construction and the rounds of failed attempts to save the building, the City should support current efforts to prevent the loss of this structure. Acting as an advocate for its stabilization and reuse would help to reframe the City's reputation as a supporter of historic preservation. The most recent effort to save Mill 5 presents a visionary and forward thinking approach to reusing the mill and generating positive attention for the City.

Should this proposal fail, after thirty years of marketing the property, the City may have exhausted reuse possibilities and will likely need to demolish the mill in accordance with the recommendation of the Riverfront Island Master Plan.



Support the efforts to stabilize and reuse the building.



City Council

## Actively Seek out Microdevelopers

Microdevelopers are people who rehab derelict properties to rent, and potentially sell in an attempt to save them from demolition and preserve a neighborhood. This kind of small-scale entrepreneur could play a significant role

in shoring up the slow decline seen in core residential areas since population and jobs began leaking away more than a half-century ago. Activist microdevelopers are different from those who buy properties in bulk, rent them to vulnerable communities and invest minimally on refurbishment or services. This DIY, roll-up-your-sleeves community-building ethos has the potential to play an influential role in rebirth, with indications that this trend has already begun. With people contributing time and energy to non-profit organizations, City building activities, and creative investment practices, there is an opportunity to expand interest in the process of transforming tired and boarded up buildings into new spaces for life and business.

It is difficult to secure financing from a bank when rehabilitating derelict housing, particularly when buying at auction. The City may be able to help incentivize microdevelopers by providing alternative financing through federal tax credits or tax abatements or through low-interest municipal loans.



Attract microdevelopers through tax incentives.



Economic & Community Development

## Hold and Market an Annual Auction of Foreclosed Properties

The City should consider working with local banks and real estate agents to organize an annual auction of foreclosed properties and market the event broadly. This type of event is held in Buffalo, New York with a growing number of participants each year competing for the City's most derelict buildings. City-owned historic buildings should also be put up for auction so they can be purchased by owners willing to restore the building within a stipulated time-frame and in accordance with the requirements of the Lewiston Historic Preservation Review Board.



Work with local groups to organize an Annual Auction of Foreclosed Properties.



Economic & Community Development

### Use Municipally-Backed Loans to Fund Historic Rehabilitation

The City should continue participating using current resources including CDBG, HOME, lead grants, etc. and consider starting a program that provides municipally-backed loans for historic preservation and building rehabilitation. These loans could be provided at cost, with interest rates as low 1%. These loans could be structured as part of a revolving loan fund. This loan program would allow the City to play a proactive role in maintaining and strengthening property tax values.



Draft a municipal lending ordinance to allow low-interest loans for historic preservation and building rehabilitation.



Economic & Community Development

### Adopt a Restoration Tax Abatement Program

Under normal circumstances, if an owner improves, renovates, or adds on to a building, the assessed value goes up and so do the property taxes. Under a Restoration Tax Abatement Program, the assessed value and the property assessment can be frozen at the pre-improvement level for a specified time frame, resulting in substantial tax savings. The abatements could also be renewed for an additional five years. The tax relief provided by the Restoration Tax Abatement Program is not automatic; it must be granted by the municipality.



Establish a Restoration Tax Abatement Program.



Economic & Community Development

### Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program

The State of Maine offers a Rehabilitation Tax Credit up to 25% of rehabilitation costs for qualified work at income-producing properties that are certified historic buildings. Lewiston could match this tax credit, allowing property owners to benefit from substantial subsidies. Eligible properties should include income-producing commercial buildings, factories, or residential rental properties.



Establish a local Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.



Economic & Community Development

### Historical & Architectural Preservation Tax Credit

Lewiston could offer a property tax incentive program to help owners of historically designated properties save thousands of dollars. Baltimore has implemented this program, generating over \$560,000,000 of investment in Historic landmarks and districts. The program, called the Property Tax Credit for Historic Restorations and Rehabilitations, is a 10-year, comprehensive tax credit program that encourages property owners in these districts to complete substantive rehabilitation projects. The credit is granted on the increased assessment directly resulting from qualifying improvements. The assessment subject to the tax credit is computed once and used for the entire life of the credit. The credit for projects with construction costs of less than \$3.5 million is 100%, and for those projects with construction costs more than \$3.5 million, 80% in the first five taxable years and declines by 10 percentage points thereafter.

# Culture & the Arts

Many of the organizations involved in the recommendations in this section are outside the preview of the City of Lewiston government. However, many of these recommendations are important to the transforming the image of the City and making it a more liveable place and due to the lack of available resources within the City it is important for Lewiston to encourage as many people and organizations as possible to partner to achieve their common goals. Therefore we have included the following recommendations in this document. The City should be as involved as possible in making these recommendations become a reality.

## Cooperate and Coordinate LA Arts and Cultural Efforts

There are numerous groups in both Lewiston and Auburn that put on a variety of performances, art shows, festivals, and cultural events. These institutions and groups should cooperate and coordinate efforts in order to expand outreach and support one another instead of competing against each other for patrons, dates, and venues. One way to accomplish this could be a regular meeting between the organizations to discuss schedules for the upcoming season with a third party mediator to help manage any conflicts that may arise.



Continue to coordinate cultural organizations and initiate annual or more frequent coordination meetings between arts organizations.



Recreation Department  
City Council  
Chamber of Commerce  
Lewiston Public Library

## Set Up a Clearinghouse for all Arts Related Information

Since the arts community crosses the boundaries between Lewiston and Auburn, a third party entity should be responsible for housing in a single place all of the information related to art and cultural activities in the area. Though LA Arts has acted as a local clearinghouse in the past, the organization also hosts its own events, leading to potential

conflicts. Other organizations such as the Arts & Culture Lewiston Auburn have sought to bring the arts community together and provide places for the broader community to connect with the arts. Lewiston should continue to support third party entities that provide information on local events and the local arts and culture scene.



Continue to support a third party entity as the place to get Arts and Culture information.

Provide third party information on community events.



Chamber of Commerce  
Recreation Department  
Lewiston Public Library

## Market Lewiston's Arts & Culture

Efforts should be focused on a broad based, aggressive marketing plan to help those in Lewiston and the surrounding communities learn about the activities that are taking place and entice people to participate. Though efforts are being made to spread the word about local events, information is not reaching a large enough audience. A more targeted effort is needed to market not only individual events, festivals, and offerings, but to market Lewiston-Auburn as a center for cultural tourism. By expanding the reach of cultural offerings and building a broader audience, existing activities will not always be competing for the attention of the same segment of the Lewiston-Auburn community and additional activities can be held. Expanding the reach of Lewiston and Auburn's art scene by initiating a broad based and aggressive marketing plan can support continued revitalization efforts.



Partner with other local organizations to market Lewiston's Arts & Culture.



Chamber of Commerce  
City Council  
Recreation Department  
Lewiston Public Library  
Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council

## Leverage Social Media to Bring the Community Together

Technology is a tool to help bring people together. Social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest, among others, should continue to be used and expanded upon to keep patrons updated on the calendar of events and ways to get involved. As technology evolves and new outlets become popular, they should be used to connect with the Lewiston-Auburn community and help expand the reach of the arts from known patrons to new and younger patrons. Social media can be an efficient and inexpensive way to communicate and advertise.



Utilize social media to connect with the community.



Chamber of Commerce  
Recreation Department  
Lewiston Public Library  
City Administration

## Embrace the Creative Economy

The “creative economy” is driven by people who make their living by thinking and creating. It includes writers, artists, actors, architects, lawyers, engineers, software designers, medical practitioners, educators, fabricators, restaurateurs, entrepreneurs, and many other professionals. In this evolving creative economy, people are able to choose where they want to live based on what attracts and inspires them, rather than moving to a place simply for a job. To capitalize on this growing economic trend, Lewiston should enhance its local “cool factor” by first recognizing that the City already has many of the qualities attractive to creatives, including the gritty urban fabric, cultural diversity, arts, an open minded government, and potential for improvement. The City can build on these strengths by supporting diverse companies and entrepreneurs; quality restaurants, accessible open space, and abundant recreational opportunities; high quality housing options for non-traditional families; public transit and a healthy walk and bike culture; arts and cultural offerings; and a unique sense of place shaped by a mix of historic buildings and tasteful new development.



Adopt a Creative Economy Policy that unites elected officials and departments around an economic mission statement that recognizes the importance of the creative economy as Lewiston’s next major economic driver. Decisions at all levels of government should support alternative and aggressive approaches to attracting and supporting the creative economy.



Economic & Community Development  
City Administration  
City Council

## Encourage Housing & Workspace to Support the Creative Economy

The creative workforce requires space to live, function, and grow. The historic buildings and mills within downtown Lewiston and on Riverfront Island are ideal locations for homes and workspaces for the creative class. Some buildings are already renovated to accommodate lofts and studio spaces at reasonable rates. The City should continue to support these efforts to revitalize downtown and draw more of the creative class into the community.



Support the renovation of existing buildings to house and support the creative workforce with housing, lofts, studio, and office space at reasonable price point.



Economic & Community Development  
City Administration  
City Council  
Planning Department  
Planning and Code Enforcement

## Market Lewiston as a Desirable Place to Live & Work

One of the main items that people look for when deciding where to relocate their families or businesses is the “quality of life” found in a community. Arts and community events give people things to do, provide opportunities to interact with neighbors, and deepen the cultural perception of a city. Lewiston/Auburn already

has strong cultural offerings that are continuing to expand. These assets should be marketed to potential businesses and residents so more people choose to call Lewiston home.

Marketing materials should be developed to make it easier to promote local cultural amenities. These could include print, media, and online sources. The city should lend support to third party entities by providing information on the City website.



Assist in the promotion and marketing of arts and cultural offerings targeted toward potential new businesses and residents.



Chamber of Commerce  
City Council  
Recreation Department  
City Administration  
Lewiston Public Library

### Increase Programming in City Parks

At a glance it appears that there are more than enough recreational, cultural, and arts programs for anyone willing to participate. However, there is an opportunity for increasing the use of city parks by holding more events and activities, especially in Kennedy and Simard-Payne Park. During the Planapalooza, people indicated that the needs of some segments of the community are not currently being met. There is a perception that some programming is scheduled at times that may be difficult for some to attend. Expansion of existing activities on weekend and evening hours, as well as year round events, should be considered. Multi-venue events with programming that uses Kennedy Park, Dufrense Plaza, Marsden Hartley Cultural Center and other nearby public spaces simultaneously might be used to attract wider interest.

The City should partner with the numerous local arts groups from Lewiston, Auburn, and around the region to hold creative and interesting events that can activate these spaces and generate spin-off activity. Having more people use the parks will make them feel safer and more inviting.



Provide more scheduled activities to activate city parks at more convenient times of the day and week and throughout the year.



Recreation Department  
Lewiston Public Library

### Celebrate Lewiston's Numerous Ethnic Cultures

Lewiston's population is made up of numerous ethnicities, from old Mainers with Franco-American heritage to new Somali and other immigrants. Some cultures are celebrated through events like the Franco-American or Greek Festivals. Others are not. All of Lewiston's cultures should be recognized through individual cultural events and through joint events that celebrate diversity, teach people about others around them, break down barriers and stereotypes, and bring the entire community together.



Increase the number of ethnic and cultural celebrations events to break down stereotypes and barriers.



LA Arts  
Chamber of Commerce

### Seek Outside/Alternative Funding for the Arts

Even though federal and state funding for the arts is decreasing, the City should continue to collaborate with existing artistic and cultural organizations to act as a pass through for funding to help support local artists, activities, and resources throughout the Lewiston-Auburn community. The City can help to identify federal, state, and philanthropic funding opportunities, relying on staff of partner non-profits to assemble grant applications. The City should continue to look for opportunities to build public/private affiliations to support the local arts scene, in turn helping to stimulate additional economic activity.



Build public / private partnerships with local arts non-profits to seek federal and state grants.



Economic & Community Development Department

## Make Riverfront Island Lewiston's Cultural District

The redevelopment and enhancements planned for and taking place on Riverfront Island lay the groundwork for transforming this area into Lewiston's Cultural District. Although numerous activities will still take place outside of this district in Lewiston and across the river in Auburn, Riverfront Island can become the center for cultural activities within the region, with a new museum, band shell, hotel, and public performance space. Many of the principles and ideas in the Riverfront Island Master Plan are reflected in this comprehensive plan and should be a central focus for the City going forward.



Support and fund the recommendations in the Riverfront Island Master Plan to make Riverfront Island Lewiston-Auburn's Cultural District.



Economic & Community Development  
City Administration  
City Council

## Support Museum L-A's Move to the Camden Yarns Mill

Museum L-A is currently located in the Bates Mill complex; however, it recently purchased the Camden Yarns Mill beside Simard-Payne Park. The museum hopes to develop this building into its new home. This site would serve as an important anchor to the riverfront and provide the opportunity to tell the story of the Lewiston/Auburn community and serve as another venue for events, programs, and interpretive signage. The City should do everything in its power to support the relocation of Museum L-A, and help catalyze additional energy in the area.



Assist in expediting approvals for renovations of the Camden Yarns Mill.



City Manager  
City Council  
Planning Board

## Promote Arts in Education

There are numerous opportunities to gain exposure to the arts in Lewiston, but including arts in education is essential. Learning the arts inspires creativity, innovation, and empowerment throughout all school subjects. Every student should have access to a well-balanced education that includes the arts. This will help to keep children competitive in a world economy increasingly demanding creative, critical thinkers that can imagine what to do when they don't know what to do. Creative arts include disciplines such as dance, music, theatre, media arts, literature, design, and visual arts. The importance of arts education cannot be overemphasized. LA Arts is already undertaking many of these initiatives. The City should support the local school committee in making a variety of arts education opportunities available to all students from pre-K through adult education.



Provide art education opportunities from pre-K through adult education.



School Board

# Regional Coordination

Lewiston, Auburn, and Androscoggin County have a long history of working together to establish and promote arts and cultural events in the region. Numerous organizations such as the Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council (LAEGC), Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC), Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission, Lewiston Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority, LA 911, Auburn Lewiston Airport, and LA Arts have long bridged the Androscoggin River and recognized the importance of both communities working together. Lewiston should continue these joint efforts and look for ways to expand its partnership with Auburn to reach a broader audience in the region as well as attract new comers to the area.



Lewiston should expand its partnership with Auburn and its regional neighbors to promote and enhance cultural opportunities around the county and encourage arts and cultural events and activities.



Recreation Department  
City Council  
Chamber of Commerce  
Lewiston Public Library

# Promote Transportation Choice & Mobility

As Lewiston works to better serve the needs of local residents, businesses, and visitors, the transportation system should continue to evolve to better meet existing and emerging needs. While there is an interest in improving capacity along regional roads that bring people into the City, there is also a desire to improve these gateway and transform them from suburban strips into safe, reliable, and beautiful complete streets that accommodate all modes of transportation while better serving the businesses along them. An integrated complete street approach that contemplates both the thoroughfares and the form of the built environment will help make Lewiston a more inviting and appealing place, attracting greater energy and investment.

## Connections

### Return to 2-Way Street Network

At one time, Lewiston maintained a two-way street network. However, like cities across the country, Lewiston converted many of its streets to one-way at a time when cities were losing population and moving traffic quickly and efficiently was a priority. With renewed interest in downtown vitality and urban living, the streets can again become a place for everyone, serving a more complex set of functions including walking, biking, shopping and gathering, as well as parking, truck deliveries, and automobile and emergency vehicle movement.

When considering a number of criteria, including safety, business visibility, congestion reduction, and ease of use, a two-way street system may be a better choice. Two-way streets have more friction, which naturally slows down travel speeds as drivers proceed with caution in order to avoid more obstacles, such as oncoming vehicles in this case. On a two-way street, there are also more frequent breaks in traffic that provide opportunities for pedestrians to cross the street. Parallel parking on the left side of a one-way street, where the driver is located on the curb side and has reduced

visibility to see oncoming cyclists and vehicles, is also eliminated.

In addition to the safety benefits, two-way traffic increases business visibility and storefront exposure by slowing traffic speeds and eliminating the loss of morning or afternoon peak traffic that tends to occur on one-way street pairs. A two-way system provides for greater connectivity by providing vehicles more direct routes between locations. Because greater connectivity disperses traffic, a finer grained network reduces congestion and back-ups as well as unnecessary driving caused by one-way diversions, both of which cause increased greenhouse gas emissions. For visitors, one-way streets are particularly confusing and can lead to a loss of business when people can't find their way. The City should enhance wayfinding signage to alleviate this concern.

With all of these factors in mind, Lewiston should consider working toward implementing a two-way street program. More detailed studies should be done using Synchro modeling to test such a system and identify areas for specific intersection and street design interventions. As the heart of the City and the circulation pinch points, Canal, Lisbon, and Park Streets should be the first priority, with the goal of reducing high-speed traffic, improving ease of navigation, and better supporting pedestrian and business activities.

The intersection of Canal and Main Street would need to be redesigned to provide width for two-way traffic and address potential stacking conflicts at the Lisbon Street intersection. There is enough width in the right-of-way along most of Canal Street to accommodate both two-way traffic and a beautiful Canal Walk, as suggested in the Riverfront Island Master Plan. Canal Street could also be contemplated as a woonerf or Shared Street, where equal priority is given to pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicular traffic, using pavers and other design techniques to limit traffic volumes. Lisbon Street may also need to be redesigned, possibly repositioning one or both curbs, while also removing mid-block bulb-outs to retain or increase the supply of on-street parking, which should remain a downtown priority. Cedar Street and other parallel cross streets should also be considered for 2-way conversions, while also looking for opportunities to integrate bikeways and enhanced pedestrian facilities. Finally, Pine and Ash Streets should be studied to ensure that the recent improvements are necessary and achieving the intended results.



Appropriate funds in the Lewiston Capital Improvement Program for two-way street conversions, making Downtown street conversions a priority.



City Council  
Public Works  
Planning & Code Enforcement

## RULES TO LIVE BY:

### Maintain Connections

The City should avoid the loss of street network at all costs. A road cut takes at least a generation to correct. Every effort should be made to avoid the loss of street connections restore lost connections wherever possible.

### Avoid One Way Streets

One-way streets should be considered for return to two-way streets wherever possible, especially in the downtown, which should be inviting to visitors. All downtown streets should be reconstructed as two-ways streets, with slower vehicular speeds and safer pedestrian and bicycle use.

## Connectivity

Unless there are topographic or ecological constraints prohibiting it, every effort will be made to ensure that every street should be connected to another street. By avoiding the construction of dead ends or cul-de-sacs, an interconnected network of streets can be achieved. The street network provides a multitude of routing alternatives to and from all destinations in a neighborhood, dispersing traffic and limiting congestion. Having a street network with a high degree of connectivity also enables individual streets to become more narrow, which slows traffic and increases vehicular and pedestrian safety. High connectivity also allows emergency service vehicles many options to get to the site of an emergency call.

Connectivity standards in Lewiston should not be limited to streets and automobiles. Encouraging a network of connected sidewalks, paths, and passages makes walking more convenient and enjoyable and increases pedestrian access throughout the community. Finally, by increasing the number of routes through the community, pedestrians are provided more interesting walking and jogging alternatives access to a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, and more opportunity for social interaction.

## Improve Connections between Bates College and Downtown

A safe and interesting connection between Bates College and the Downtown is a critical step in promoting stronger interaction between the College and the City and student use of the Downtown. A well designed cycle track or bicycle boulevard between Bates College and the Downtown would be an impressive statement and a clear and visible link between these two centers, marking the first bike infrastructure of its kind in Maine. More work should be done to determine whether this connection makes more sense along College Street or along Central Street/Ash Street. In addition, sidewalks should be widened and improved to promote safe and comfortable walking.



Appropriate funding in the Lewiston Capital Improvement Program for preliminary engineering of a cycle track between Bates and Downtown Lewiston.



City Council  
Public Works

## Civilize the Bridges

With a growing community of walkers and bikers, it is important to civilize the bridges between Lewiston and Auburn to meet the needs of anyone moving between the two cities on foot or bike. Many past planning efforts, including the Androscoggin River Greenway Plan, have identified the bridges as a major priority.

The Longley Bridge and Bernard Lown Peace Bridge (which the City is already considering) are both candidates for road diets and should be redesigned to accommodate a bike lane or cycle track as well as wider sidewalks.

There are two possible alternatives for addressing the Veterans Memorial Bridge, which currently functions as a high-speed thoroughway for traffic. One alternative is to make a philosophical decision that Russell Street and the bridge should be reintegrated into the traditional street system and redesigned for slow flow traffic, with geometries that support pedestrians and bicycles. In its current configuration, Main Street widens from

two to six lanes and Russell Street transitions from a four-lane local arterial to highway geometries with a grade separated intersection and two on ramps and two off ramps that enable cars to maintain uninterrupted flow. The design of this intersection consumes a large amount of land, and discourages pedestrian and bicycle activity.

A second option for addressing Veterans Memorial Bridge is suggested in the Androscoggin River Greenway Plan and involves the construction of two independent pedestrian and bicycle bridges that use Boxer Island, accessed by a new shared use path. Currently the Lewiston Bike Ped Committee is working with the State on some ideas to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the bridge.

Although each of these options would be a substantial, long-term project, this connection is a high priority for connecting Lewiston residents to shopping and recreational cycling opportunities across the river in Auburn.



Appropriate funding in the Lewiston Capital Improvement Program for preliminary engineering of existing bridges for enhanced pedestrian and bike facilities.



City Council  
Public Works

## Improve Bicycle & Pedestrian Connections

The Lewiston Master Plan contemplates a number of potential new pedestrian and bicycle connections that build on work completed as part of the Androscoggin River Greenway Plan, the ATRC Bridging the Gap Plan, and the Riverfront Island Master Plan. Some connections suggested in this plan are intentionally redundant and provide multiple options for moving between different sections of the City. Conceptual and engineered design of the recommended bikeway improvements should be carefully prepared to ensure that the improvements provide the level of comfort and safety required to increase ridership within the City. Which segments move forward will depend on funding availability, road reconstruction schedules, public support, and a number of other factors.



Conversion of one-way to two-way streets is feasible in many locations and would have traffic circulation benefits while also improving accessibility, convenience, safety, and retail sales. The map above shows streets for one-way to two-way conversions as recommended in Appendix B of the Riverfront Island Master Plan, along with supplemental recommendations generated during the comprehensive planning process. As Lewiston's retail main street, Lisbon Street should be considered as a priority for two-way street conversion. In order to civilize Main Street, which currently feels like a traffic throughway, additional connections are also shown.

The Pedestrian & Bicycle Map shows potential locations for various bikeways and detail on the different bikeway types including sharrows, bike lanes, cycle tracks, shared use paths, and shared streets. This map highlights the importance of providing a range of bikeway options for riders with various abilities and comfort levels, aligning infrastructure recommendations with the skill level of the groups likely to use the facilities.

The Map shows the proposed Lewiston Riverside Greenway extending north along the river to the Gulf Island Dam and forming a continuous route stretching from Veterans Park to Mount Hope Cemetery. While segments of the trail have been constructed, completing this on- and off-street network should remain a high priority.

North of the downtown, parallel connections are shown along Main Street, College Street, Ash Street/Central Avenue, and East Avenue. Each of these connections is important for their own reason, whether providing access to shopping along Main Street, connections to Bates, or safe access to elementary and high schools.

Several connections are shown to the south of the downtown, including a rail trail that follows a currently unused rail line and would connect to the new park and ride lot at Exit 80 to communities further south. Additional connections are also shown along Lisbon Street for destination-driven trips and on River Road and an off road trail along the river for recreational biking.

The Map also shows some additional bikeway connections between outer neighborhoods, schools, and green spaces. Pond Road, Montello Street, East Avenue, and Alfred Plourde Parkway provide important secondary connections that ring the downtown.

In addition to bike infrastructure, new trail connections are also shown between neighborhoods, responding to citizen interest in stitching together the community and overcoming existing barriers caused by topography and gaps in the urban fabric. This ambitious, formalized system of overland trails takes advantage of the many paths currently used by hunters, ATV riders, and backcountry hikers, and includes power line easements. Many of the trails could be connected simply by securing permissions

and improving publicly-owned trails, while other key segments would require private concessions. It is important to recognize that big plans are often easier to implement than small ones. While any one segment of trail across private property would be difficult to secure, a City-wide trail system that involves hundreds of individuals may be sufficiently exciting to rally the entire community.



Develop and adopt design criteria, standards, and guidelines in accordance with the City's Complete Street Policy.



Continue to work with the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) to develop the regional trail and bicycle network.



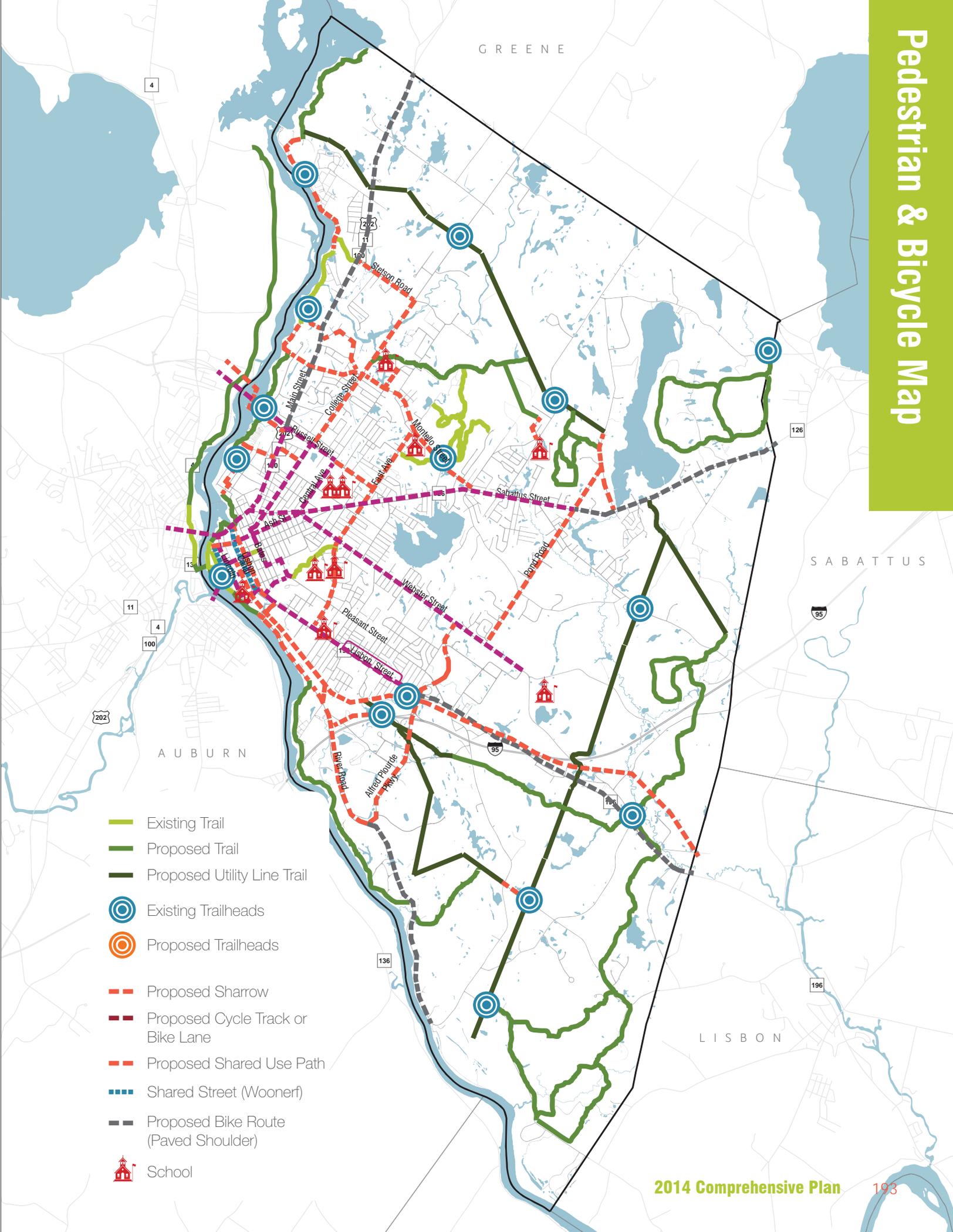
Planning & Code Enforcement  
Public Works

## Infrastructure

### Re-envision Gateway Approaches

In their current form, Lisbon, Main, and Sabattus Streets are not safe for walking and biking. Currently, these streets are configured as suburban arterials, catering to high-speed traffic with wide travel lanes and center turn lanes, making them extremely unsafe for pedestrians and bikers in addition to being uncomfortable for drivers. As the primary points of entry into the City, these important gateways should be reimagined to create a sense of arrival and redesigned as complete streets with slow flow traffic, narrowed travel lanes, bike lanes, cycle tracks or shared use paths, on-street parking, street trees, and buildings that are pulled up to the street with parking in back. A long term plan for the transition of these streets into more welcoming places will be critical if they are to become more than suburban strips. Following up this comprehensive planning effort with a form-based code will incentivize the kind of development desired by the community. The City should consider directing both public and private investment to a priority node along one of these corridors to demonstrate the potential for achieving a high quality outcome and helping to

# Pedestrian & Bicycle Map



-  Existing Trail
-  Proposed Trail
-  Proposed Utility Line Trail
-  Existing Trailheads
-  Proposed Trailheads
-  Proposed Shared Use Path
-  Proposed Cycle Track or Bike Lane
-  Proposed Shared Use Path
-  Shared Street (Woonerf)
-  Proposed Bike Route (Paved Shoulder)
-  School

spur additional investment along these important roadways. (continued on pg. 196)



Appropriate funding for corridor planning and form-based zoning to inform and enable the redevelopment over time of both the thoroughfares and abutting properties.

Review and revise access management measures to limit the number of curb cuts along Gateway Roads and promote the development of shared drives and parking areas.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Public Works

## Improve Neighborhood Streets & Intersections

Neighborhood streets and intersections throughout the city are quite variable in their appearance and functionality for both pedestrians and motorists. The following are general improvements applicable to some streets in Lewiston. Following these standards will create the vibrant, walkable and bikeable streets in Lewiston.

A minimum of 8-foot sidewalks should be targeted within all compact, walkable areas in the City, with sidewalk widths of 15+ feet adjacent to storefronts, where conditions allow.

Streets considered to be unsafe and those that create barriers within the City, preventing children from walking and biking to area schools should be improved. Excessive queues at signals could be addressed by traffic signal integration and control improvements.

Dangerous intersections should be replaced with four-way stops and road restriping should be done. Crosswalks are also needed to improve connections to the river. Streets that feel too wide should be civilized by having vehicular lanes narrowed, on-street parking and bicycle lanes and street trees added where feasible.

By building complete streets, drivers will feel uncomfortable traveling at high speeds, which, in turn, will improve the streets for walking and biking,

thereby tipping the scales in favor of a more balanced distribution of travel modes.

In locations where building setbacks are deep, suburban retrofit should happen allowing for infill of the underutilized property in front of or beside the building to engage the sidewalk.



Hire Urban Design/ Engineering consultant to prepare Compete Street & intersection improvement plan.



City Council  
Planning & Code Enforcement  
Public Works

## Showcase Canals

The City should prioritize the construction of canal walks as indicated in the Riverfront Island Master Plan. Canal Street and Oxford Street/Cross Street should both be considered for conversion to “woonerfs” or Shared Streets, where equal priority is given to pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicular traffic. In such streets, pavers and other design techniques are used to limit traffic volumes and create a shared environment. Typically, curbs are removed, helping to reinforce that the entire street is open to pedestrian and bikes, with vehicles required to yield to these other modes. A cantilevered canal walk could also be constructed along the south end of Mill 5, providing a pedestrian extension of Ash Street to Mill Street and a direct route to Simard-Payne Park achieving the kind of connectivity between Canal Street and Lincoln Street recommended in the Riverfront Master Plan. These kind of special roadway treatments and pedestrian/bicycle improvements, paired with the restoration of the canals, would create high value spaces for people to recreate and gather, generating interest and economic development potential for the properties facing onto these unique cultural assets.



Secure funding for redesigning Canal Street and Oxford / Cross Street as shared streets or “woonerfs”.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Provide More Bike Parking & Storage

Cyclists must have safe and convenient places to store their bicycles at a trip's end. One of the most user-friendly designs is the "u-shaped" bicycle rack, though locally-made options that maintain a high level of function should be encouraged. There are currently not enough bike racks and secure bike storage in Lewiston. A public/private partnership could be created between local non-profits, business owners and the City to fund and install racks and bike storage in proximity to schools, municipal buildings, or other popular destinations.

Racks and secure bike storage should also be available for those who access the City via bike trails and for use during events.

## Encourage End of Trip Facilities

Easily identifiable bike shops, repair stations, cafes, and other businesses that cater to the needs of hungry and thirsty bikers will do much to build the City's reputation as a bike-friendly destination. These kinds of highly functional end-of-trip facilities, combined with primarily employer incentivization programs such as common tax-free employer subsidy for riding to work and other "soft" improvements, would continue to build on Lewiston's bikeability.

# Parking

## Relax Parking Requirements

To set itself apart and to attract needed economic investment, Lewiston should consider taking the bold step of relaxing and, where appropriate, eliminating parking requirements in line with progressive cities around the Country. By eliminating parking requirements in the downtown area and possibly elsewhere in the City, each new development can determine exactly how much parking is needed without wasting land and resources on parking spaces, finding more creative ways to meet resident or customer needs. Simplifying this aspect of the development and approval process would help attract potential developers and increase Lewiston's competitive advantage.



Update the zoning regulations to consider relaxing and eliminating the off-street parking required for new development.



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Unbundle Parking

The cost of parking is typically embedded in residential purchases and rentals, so residents often don't realize the true cost of using valuable land for parking. With unbundled parking, residents buy or rent each parking space separately from the residential unit, helping to reveal the true cost of storing each car. Tying together cost and choice is one of the most effective means of reducing overall parking demand since some residents will opt to give up their vehicle and use transit over paying extra for a parking space. The City can help facilitate this by relaxing or eliminating parking requirements in the zoning ordinance, allowing parking to become a commodity with developers free to build as many or as few spaces as they believe consumers will purchase.



Provide incentives for developers to unbundle parking.



Private Sector

## Facilitate & Simplify Shared Parking

Shared parking allows nearby property owners to share a common parking facility rather than maintaining two separate facilities. It allows for more efficient parking lot design and makes better use of the aggregate spaces that are available. Since uses that share spaces may have peak parking demands that differ by time of day, fewer total parking spaces are typically needed. Shared parking also has the advantage of improving development feasibility, helps increase densities, and promotes mixed-use and pedestrian activity. Shared parking is currently allowed by ordinance. However, the code creates some administrative hurdles that could be removed in order to make the process more simple.



Create a public-private partnership to facilitate sharing between private and public parking spaces to maximize efficiency.



Economic & Community Development

## Improve Parking Management & Pricing

The downtown Parking system is inverted. It is currently metered on low density spaces and timed on high density. According to industry standards, an optimal parking occupancy rate is 85%. Parking occupancy should be monitored on a regular basis to identify areas where parking utilization is highest and opportunities for different management strategies present themselves. The following strategies can be deployed independently or as part of a more comprehensive pricing system.

**Geographical Pricing:** The development of a successful on-street parking management system relies on the development of a coordinated and comprehensive system that prioritizes parking spaces based on convenience and proximity to popular destinations. Just as any business sells its most desirable goods and services at a premium price, the most convenient and prized parking spots—usually on-street parking near popular destinations—should be priced in the same way. When determining the market rate for an on-street parking space, prices should be set so that, at any given time, only 6 or 7 spaces out of every 8 spaces are occupied on a given block. If all of the spaces on that block stay occupied, the price is too low. The highest hourly rates should be assigned to areas around Lisbon and Main Streets, with progressively lower rates as the distance from these areas increases.

**Time of Day Pricing:** A variable pricing strategy can also be employed that changes prices based on time of day with higher cost at peak parking demand times. By using real-time space availability sensors for both on- and off-street parking as well as networked meters, demand can be determined immediately with automatic price adjustments made to meters across the system.

**Length of Stay Pricing:** Price can also be based on the duration of a visit so that each successive time period is more expensive than the last. By charging a higher rate for each additional time increment, short-term parking is encouraged and turnover increases while providing flexibility and convenience to users. Typically, this strategy has no time limit set - it simply relies on the escalating cost as an incentive for turnover, making it ideal for retail streets, where parking turnover equals sales.

**Ultra-Short Term Parking:** To facilitate fast turnover of on-street spaces particularly in front of retail storefronts, some amount of ultra-short term parking should be provided. In some cases a “first 15 minutes free” program could be implemented in which a button on the meter is pressed to provide 15 minutes of free parking without inserting any form of payment. This program could be available for all on-street parking spaces within the downtown core to promote high turnover of on-street spaces.



Conduct a parking utilization study to understand how the parking resources are being used and identify opportunities for different management strategies.



Public Works

Lewiston Police Department

## Redevelop Parking Lots

By reducing the amount of land dedicated to parking spaces and encouraging redevelopment of existing parking lots, Lewiston may make more efficient use of precious urban land for activities that are more affordable, economically viable, and dynamic than car storage.

# Transit

## Improve citylink Bus System

There are many benefits to maintaining a robust public transportation system, including reduction of single-occupancy vehicles, air pollution, reduced traffic and parking, as well as attracting and meeting the needs of people who either can't or choose not to own a car. The L/A region should

adopt an aggressive strategy to re-invigorate the public transportation system. The City should work with ARTC to potentially expand routes and hours of operation, including late evenings to better serve commuter needs and Sundays to better serve the local population. A stronger partnership could be built with Lewiston's educational institutions to better serve student users who take the bus.



Appropriate funds in the LARTC Transportation Improvement Program to fund improvements to the citylink bus system.



Economic & Community Development  
Public Works  
LARTC

### Improve Intra-City Public Transit

The *Vision of Western Maine Rail* includes the concept of extending passenger rail service from Portland to Lewiston/Auburn (to a new intermodal facility located at the Auburn-Lewiston Airport, a facility located in downtown Lewiston-Auburn, or both ) with future extensions to Bethel and eventually Montreal. The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is currently evaluating alternatives for extending the Downeaster Amtrak service to Auburn.

Until passenger rail becomes a more immediate possibility, Lewiston should look into other forms of intra-city public transit. The City should pursue bus companies to provide additional, frequent and regional service to Lewiston and potentially locate a new bus station in the downtown to meet the needs of Lewiston residents and students, and to attract potential new visitors to the city.



Pursue Concord Trailways to provide bus service to L/A with a station in Downtown Lewiston.



Economic & Community Development

## Regional Coordination

As a transportation service center, Lewiston and Auburn play an important role in regional and state plans to expand and improve rail, air, and truck services. These important economic resources should continue to be developed and expanded. Lewiston should also continue to stay involved in regional and state conversations related to expanding and enhancing existing rail, trucking, and air facilities and exploring the potential of adding passenger rail service. The City has strong ties to the turnpike and there is potential for additional turnpike related development to ensure that Lewiston retains its role in providing regional truck transportation services. Areas around Exit 80 have become home to major distribution centers serving Maine, other states in the northeast and the Canadian Maritime Provinces.

### Regional Traffic and Transit Services

The City should continue to work closely with Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) to promote regional and long-range traffic studies and ensure that Lewiston streets can continue to adequately support local and commuter traffic while safely accommodating all modes of transportation and protecting local quality of life. The city should also aggressively pursue regional bus transit as well as rideshare programs to better tie Lewiston to other service centers throughout the state.

### Rail

The City of Lewiston should stay involved in conversations with regional and state agencies and area railroad companies to upgrade rail lines and extend the current high-speed line designation north of Auburn as a means of expanding freight service and possibly establishing passenger rail service throughout Maine and to the Canadian Provinces.

### Transit

In order to promote efficient, cost-effective regional transit programs, the City should work with ATRC and regional transit providers such as the Lewiston Auburn Transportation Committee (LATC) to implement the recommendations of the ATRC's long-range plan *Connecting the Future: Transportation Plan for 2013-2035*.

# Bikeways

Lewiston should customize their approach to integrating bikeways, providing for a diversified system, including cycle tracks, sharrows, and other locally-calibrated solutions. This will ensure that the appropriate treatment is used on each street within the network, avoiding the one-size-fits-all approach and enabling users of different abilities to enjoy a safe and direct route to their destination. Making cycling convenient, safe, and enjoyable will help the City to reduce reliance on the car and move toward a more sustainable biking future.



**BICYCLE LANES** are a portion of the roadway between the parking lane and the vehicular travel lane, that has been dedicated for the exclusive use of bicycles. Bikes can move in the same or opposite direction as vehicular traffic. Bicycle lanes are usually one-way and should be on both sides of the street where feasible. Ash Street is an example of a roadway in Lewiston with a bike lane.



**SHARROW** refers to the condition where cars and cyclists share the same travel lane. Sharrows are typically marked by a bicycle symbol with chevron, making it clear to drivers that the travel lane is a shared space and to expect cyclists. Sharrows are a solution for streets that are part of a continuous bicycle route but are too narrow for conventional bike lanes or cycle tracks. They also have the benefit of being relatively inexpensive to install.



**CYCLE TRACKS** are exclusive bicycle facilities that combine the user experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane. Cycle tracks are separated from vehicle travel lanes with a physical barrier. Cycle tracks can be either one-way or two-way, and on one or both sides of a street. Unlike a more standard bike lane, this design physically protects cyclist from vehicular traffic, which has the benefit of greatly improving rider comfort and safety.



**SHARED-USE PATHS** are independent routes through a city and its green spaces away from vehicular traffic. They are exclusively used for non-motorized travel and recreation. Although typically located in parks, along waterways, and on college campuses, they can also be seen in more urban commercial and residential areas. Lewiston has proposed a Greenway Trail that would be an example of a shared-use path.



**SHARED STREETS** are a haven for non-motorized traffic that may allow limited slow speed vehicular traffic. With shared streets, the whole street is the sidewalk! Pavers, bollards, tree plantings, and other design features help slow traffic and provide a high quality environment for the pedestrian and cyclist. Cafes and small shops typically line shared streets. Lewiston's Oxford Street may be considered for conversion to a shared street.

# Walkability

The term “walkability” has become a buzz word in recent years without much effort to provide definition. As a result, it is often misunderstood to mean a place that would be pedestrian-only or anti-automobile. In fact, the term describes an environment where there is balance between many modes of transportation. Most importantly, it describes an environment in which people feel comfortable walking. In Lewiston, where there is a strong interest in promoting walking and biking, the following information will help clarify how to achieve the community’s goals.

The constituent elements of walkability are referred to as “The 3 D’s”: Distance, Destination, and Design. When each of these elements are addressed, people are more likely to walk.

## 1. DISTANCE.

The average pedestrian is willing to walk up to one-quarter of a mile (1,320 feet) or roughly five minutes to a destination. This ¼-mile walk from a neighborhood to a meaningful destination at the center is called a “pedestrian shed”. For most Americans, distances requiring more than a five minute walk will typically be made in a car rather than by walking. This walking versus driving threshold is locally calibrated.

## 2. DESTINATION.

People will tend to walk more if they have somewhere meaningful to go. Meaningful destinations include civic spaces, schools, meeting halls, and commercial areas like neighborhood or city centers where daily or weekly shopping needs can be met. Often these destinations, when centrally located, become the “heart” of the community.

## 3. DESIGN.

An interesting street and wide sidewalks are critical for a walkable environment. Pedestrian safety and comfort is also directly related to roadway width. Studies have demonstrated that traffic speeds increase in proportion to lane width, regardless of the posted speed limit. Narrow travel lanes, street trees, and on-street parking all act as effective psychological cues, helping to slow automobiles and, in turn, enhance pedestrian comfort.

## COMPLETE STREETS

It is imperative that choices be provided for alternatives to driving, such as bicycling, walking, hiking, and using public transit. While driving is not to be shunned, it should certainly not be the only option. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhood design is important to ensure a greater inclusion of alternative modes of transportation.

Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. Complete streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for children to walk to and from school.

Because complete streets contemplate the context through which they pass, all streets in the City, and especially in the downtown, should be complete streets, incorporating as many of the elements as possible or appropriate.

# Feature All Things Green & Healthy

The condition of the environment has a significant impact on quality of life and personal health. As a slow growth community that has experienced a period of economic retraction, Lewiston has an opportunity to capitalize on its abundance of natural resources within close proximity to its evolving downtown core. Additional protection of open spaces, updated land use policies, and aggressive strategies to limit sprawling development at the outskirts of town are needed to maintain Lewiston's quality of life as more people look to move into the City. Building on the growing interest in agriculture and local food production can help the City become a leader in the region, attracting a greater number of value-added businesses, restaurants, and foodies.

## Moving

### Make Lewiston More Walkable, Bikeable & Hikeable

The terms “walkable,” “bikeable,” and even “hikeable” have become buzzwords in recent years, describing an environment where there is balance between many modes of transportation. Lewiston already boasts a walkable downtown and a variety of trails along the Androscoggin River and on interior protected lands. Along with the growing population, there is a growing constituency of walkers, hikers, and bikers. This presents an opportunity to expand the existing systems to better meet this new demand.



Work with local organizations to produce a walking, hiking, and biking map of high enough quality to help market the City.



Recreation Department  
Androscoggin Land Trust  
Lewiston Public Works

### Improve Park Facilities

Trail systems require trailheads with wayfinding signage, parking, and trail information. In some places, more ample parking, water, and restroom facilities could be made available to improve access to these facilities.



Increase access to existing trail network by improving signage, expanding parking facilities, and providing water and restroom facilities.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Lewiston Public Works

### Support Healthy Events

Adequate exercise is a key element of healthy living and can prevent chronic illnesses like obesity and diabetes. But starting a new exercise regimen can be difficult. Large community events dedicated to health and wellness, like fun runs, marathons, and triathlons, attract people of all abilities to exercise by being a social event as well as an athletic one. Lewiston's Bands on the Run Half Marathon, the Triple Crown race series, and the Dempsey Challenge are both great examples of healthy and fun events, both of which have a regional draw.

Additional events should be created that target the local population, including children and teens.



Continue to sponsor and help organize healthy events for the entire community.



Chamber of Commerce  
City Administration  
Area Health & Fitness Organizations

### Start an Open Streets Event

Lewiston should consider participating in an annual Open Streets event to help promote healthy activity and economic development. Similar to existing Block Parties and National Night Out, the Open Streets Project is a national initiative that promotes community health and supports local businesses by making strategically selected streets no-motor zones and encouraging all manner of human-powered transportation, from a single day to one week every year. The overall goal of the project is to share information about open streets and increase the number, size, and frequency of initiatives occurring across North America. The Alliance for Biking and Walking, a partner of the Open Streets Project, has developed and published a guide to creating such a tradition. If Lewiston were to start an annual Open Streets event, it would be the first of its kind in the state of Maine. Public officials to dedicated Mainers would flock to Lewiston, especially for the first few years, to observe and learn how they might apply an Open Streets initiative in their hometowns. This could become another unique annual event for Lewiston residents to boast about.



Support an Open Streets event in Lewiston.



Recreation Department  
Public Works  
Lewiston Police Department

### Expand Recreational Opportunities Along the River

The City should consider partnering with Healthy Androscoggin to address those in the community who are at risk by offering a variety of programs

such as those which continue to provide public access available along the length of the riverfront. Facilities and access points such as trails, parks, boat launches, and picnic areas should be developed to enhance this natural resource and make it accessible to people across the region. Boat rentals, restaurants, and other support amenities should be encouraged to draw more people to the water.



Make improvements to waterside facilities and access points.



Recreation Department  
Androscoggin Land Trust  
Public Works  
Planning & Code Enforcement

### Lewiston Fitness Challenge

The City should consider supporting a program to engage a mindfully selected at-risk population in healthy behaviors in order to improve their health status. The program should challenge adults who live, work, or attend school in Lewiston to get fit, stay healthy, and pledge to collectively lose more than a ton of weight (2,000 pounds) within a realistic amount of time. Fitness participants would gain access to programs, schools, community centers, and fitness centers throughout the city for little or no cost for at least one month. This month should differ from participant to participant so as to not overwhelm local facilities. The Lewiston Fitness Challenge should encourage businesses and neighborhoods to form teams and compete for the Healthiest Lewiston Business or Neighborhood. The City Council could lead the community by example.



Initiate the Lewiston Fitness Challenge.



City Council  
L/A Health Committee  
Healthy Androscoggin  
Area Health Providers

# Policy

## Update Shoreland Zoning Standards

The City's Local Shoreland Zoning regulations have not been updated to reflect the most recent changes in state standards. The City should consider taking steps to increase setbacks surrounding wetlands that are larger than 10 acres, as well as other adjustments to meet these recently revised state requirements.



Amend Shoreline Zoning Standards



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Create a TDR Program

Lewiston's relatively slow population growth gives the impression that a great deal of land is permanently protected. However, most of Lewiston's woodlands are subject to low-density residential and commercial development. Establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program would allow Lewiston landowners the opportunity to transfer the right to develop from one property to another in order to protect the City's rural character and enable higher density development in the downtown and along commercial corridors. A typical TDR program protects open space and agricultural areas from development by transferring development potential to designated growth zones where additional development rights can help meet a community's goal of investing in areas where infrastructure already exists. In such a scenario, the land where the development rights originate is called the "sending" property. When rights are transferred from the sending property, the land becomes permanently protected for agriculture, recreation, or natural resource or habitat preservation. In this way, property owners in rural areas may sell off development value while still retaining ownership of the land itself. The land to which the rights are transferred is called the "receiving" property. By acquiring additional development rights, the receiving property can be developed at a higher density, allowing for greater development potential in areas that may be underutilized. Development

rights may be transferred by buying and selling on an open market, as in real estate, or through a transfer of development credits (TDC) program run by the City or other non-profit organization. Transfer of development rights programs are common and effective in states like Florida, California, and New York.



Investigate the possibilities for a TDR program in Lewiston.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic and Community Development

## Reduce Cut and Fill

Rather than flattening a site to make it level and uniform, site designers should be encouraged to reduce grading and work with the existing topography. Though it may be simpler to design for a level site, flattening the terrain degrades the character of a site and often requires the use of unsightly retaining walls and loss of mature trees. Intensive grading also destroys surface drainage patterns, thus requiring artificial management of drainage through costly systems. Smaller building footprints modeled on traditional (pre-automobile) building patterns, including rowhouses and live/work buildings, are better suited to conform to varying topographic terrain and should be encouraged when possible.

The City should consider improving current standards that encourage that the landscape will be preserved in its natural state insofar as practical by minimizing tree removal, disturbance and compaction of soil and by retaining existing vegetation insofar as practical during construction, and avoiding extensive grading and filling as far as possible. A common guideline is to restrict development on slopes over 15% to single-family homes and avoid construction completely on lands over 30% grade. Retaining walls over 5 feet in height should be prohibited.



Improve standards to preserve the existing topography during the development phase



Planning & Code Enforcement

# Keeping it Green

## Preserve Tree Canopy

Tree preservation is a necessary step in the site planning process. Lewiston has an active arborist program, a joint Lewiston/Auburn Community Forest Board and both cities have been named tress City USA cities. Early in the design process, the natural landscape of a site should be assessed to identify native tree species and areas of significant tree concentration. These factors can be incorporated into site plan review standards to help determine the location of tree rows, parks, yards, and trails.



Preserve trees to the maximum extent practical during the site plan review process



Planning & Code Enforcement

## Preserve, Install, & Maintain Street Trees

In an urban setting, street trees shade pedestrians, promote slower traffic speeds by creating visual friction that results in more cautious driving, and increase property values. Ecologically, street trees reduce heat island effects. Along an urban street, trees should be in planters and equally spaced along the curb. In front of businesses, species should be selected that are conducive to retail uses and storefront visibility. In less urban locations such as residential neighborhoods, trees should be planted between the roadway and sidewalk or behind the sidewalk within the public right of way in a more natural arrangement.



Preserve street trees during the site plan review process. Install and maintain street trees along all of the City's neighborhood streets.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Forestry Board  
Lewiston Public Works

## Create Pocket Parks

Parks play a vital role in neighborhood life, providing places for children to play and residents to meet. This includes pocket parks, which are small-scale breaks in the urban fabric. They are typically a quarter acre or smaller in size. Parks should be distributed within a five-minute walk of most households. Pocket parks typically include amenities such as shaded seating, play areas, hard and soft surfaces, play equipment, and community gardens. They ideally have daycare locations nearby to ensure consistent usage. Though the City may maintain these parks, non-profit organizations may also be responsible for establishing and maintaining such parks. There are two citizen-initiated efforts underway to create new neighborhood parks in Lewiston, including a 2-acre park at the location of the old Pettingill School.



Seek opportunities to create small pocket parks during the land development process and in areas of the downtown where landowners are amenable.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
City Council

# Food

## Improve Access to Fresh Foods

Lewiston should seek out ways to avoid food deserts, which are areas that have a high residential population but nowhere to buy fresh, healthy food. Convenience stores, gas stations, and drug stores, which have in many ways replaced the traditional corner store, rarely sell the staples of a healthy diet. Wholesome bread, unprocessed meats, and fresh fruits and vegetables should be available to all households. The City should encourage and support neighborhood-based convenience stores and grocery stores to offer fresh food in high visibility locations at competitive prices. Alternatively, food trucks or mobile farm stands could be allowed to sell within Lewiston's residential neighborhoods. The downtown would benefit from a regional grocery store and local whole foods market within walking distance of high-density residential areas. The City should support the efforts of organizations like Grow L+A, which is working toward locating a new market in the downtown.



Provide incentives for existing retailers to sell fresh food or allow mobile farm stands. Support the efforts of non-profit organizations trying to increase food system expansion and diversity.



Economic & Community Development  
Good Food Council of Lewiston-Auburn

## Find a Permanent Home for the Farmer's Market

Lewiston hosts both a winter and summer farmer's market. Participants in this planning process expressed a desire for a permanent year-round location. The new home for the market should be in downtown within walking distance of transit. Ideally, this location could also serve as a drop-off

and pick-up place for local community supported agriculture (CSAs) and include a community kitchen. Finding a well-sited and low-cost space is essential to making a permanent market economically viable.



Locate farmer's market in a permanent and sustainable location.



Planning & Code Enforcement  
Economic & Community Development  
Lots to Gardens

# Families

## Keep Families Together

While anti-incarceration programs are the responsibility of the county/state in Maine. The City should support such efforts through building a partnership between law enforcement and the community that allows people who have committed minor offenses to be rehabilitated in their own communities in a way that is both cost-effective and successful. An Alternative-to-Incarceration program provides education, employment, treatment, and social services to get people's lives back on track. A successful Custody Alternatives Program in Santa Cruz County is geared to trying to reduce unnecessary incarceration for low level offenders. The program allows people who are working to continue working and providing for their children. It not only serves as an alternative to incarceration, but it also provides structure and support for people to make more lasting changes in their lives.



Support a Alternative-to-Incarceration Program in Lewiston.



Police Department  
Social Services  
Safe Voices  
State & County Agencies

### Start a Literacy Campaign

The City should continue to support and make a commitment to literacy by aiming for every child born in one of the City’s low-income neighborhoods to have access to the same opportunities to lead a healthy and successful life as a child born in one of the City’s more affluent neighborhoods. A literacy ambassador campaign brings knowledgeable individuals to maternity wards and to a family’s home so that the opportunity to learn happens where the family lives. The literacy ambassador’s job is to bring educational books and materials and to work with parents to help their child succeed in school.



Partner with local non-profit organizations to initiate a literacy campaign.



Lewiston Public Library  
Lewiston School Department  
Headstart

### Collaborate Around Healthy Schools

Lewiston has good schools embedded within walking distance of neighborhoods, a competitive advantage that the City should capitalize on. The City should expand its focus on schools and Lewiston’s youth through promoting good health along with academic achievement. Innovative physical education classes, activities, and healthy meals that celebrate cultural diversity should be a part of the daily school experience. Attention should be given to planning safe routes to schools and encouraging walking and biking . The new farm-to-school produce is an excellent addition to school lunch programs and this effort to feature locally grown foods should be expanded with Its emphasis on fruits and vegetables. The City and community should ensure that elementary schools

offer recess in safe and engaging playgrounds and make more extensive use of the City’s expand trail network. Health education classes should focus more on building live-long skills and include more lessons on nutrition and physical activity for live. In addition, school-based health services should be available to help a student by every definition of the word “health.” In addition, healthy food options should be promoted in the vicinity of the high school, with City health policies that encourage new healthy restaurants and reward existing restaurants for having or adding health food choices to their menus.



Partner with the schools, parent teacher associations, and wellness teams to make Lewiston’s schools healthy and safe.



School Department

### Provide Many Health Services In One Location

Part of keeping people healthy is getting them healthy in the first place. By reaching out to at-risk populations, Lewiston’s efforts are maximized. The City should support and encourage a multi-vendor health center that low-income people without cars can access easily; similar to the services provided at the B Street Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center and a full-service family medicine practice. This healthcare facility should concentrate a wide variety of resources in one place to ensure that people who need care receive it, no matter what it may be. This one-stop shop should be set up in a central location, such as one of the former mill buildings. The facility could include a pharmacy, dental services, rehabilitative services offered by one of the area hospitals, and other services such as a WIC—or Women, Infants and Children Program—that operates in the same building.



Build partnerships around the establishment of a multi-vendor health center in downtown Lewiston.



Healthy Androscoggin  
Local Health Care Providers

## Crowdsourcing

### Reprogram Yards into Home Gardens

Many residents, especially in the neighborhood surrounding Kennedy Park, take advantage of the space in their yards for small personal gardens. These gardens provide nutritious food, neighborhood pride, and exercise and can also help families reduce household costs. Raised planting boxes can be constructed in areas where soil contamination may be present. Residents should be encouraged to actively seek opportunities to start or join a community garden as a fun way to connect with neighborhoods and grow food. There are an increasing number of community gardens in the City for those who do not have the land for a personal garden.



Transform side and rear yards into home gardens or participate in one of Lewiston's community gardens.

The City should explore what impediments exist with respect to sales and licensing of grown food.

# Regional Coordination

### Protect Lake Auburn Watershed

Protecting the Lake Auburn watershed is critical to ensuring the quality and resiliency of the public water supply. The Lewiston Water Division plays an active role in the Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission (LAWPC) and seeks to maintain partnerships with other communities in the watershed and other conservation organizations to protect this resource. The City should continue to work with LAWPC and surrounding communities to protect and preserve critical land and waterways within the watershed.

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

# Unite as One Community With One Voice

The Lewiston has a long history of hosting immigrants who built the City and by whose sweat and effort the prosperity of the City was enhanced. This is neither the first nor the last decade that Lewiston will see a significant influx of immigrants. What makes the current New Americans different from previous immigrant populations is that they are largely refugees. The overall health and functionality of the City is closely tied to the ability of long-time residents to help speed the process of making this new population feel welcomed.

## Know that It Takes Time

Lewiston's most recent wave of immigration is in many ways similar to other immigration scenarios around, both today and at times in the past. These new people from faraway lands are visibly from a different culture, speak a different language, and may be nervous and scared. It is normal for people to adapt slowly to new surroundings and equally challenging for the local population to adjust to these new neighbors. There is an opportunity for people to learn from Lewiston's recent past and help make these transitions easier for everyone.



Hold events that can help to break down barriers and allow people to more quickly feel compassion, understanding, and interest in people who are different from themselves.



Local Non-profit Organizations



Work with local education programs to give precedence to minorities and immigrants when seeking new teachers.



School Department

## Engage Immigrants in Teaching Roles

Job scarcity and an initial reliance upon social services may make local residents feel as though immigrants and refugees are taking advantage of handouts. However, new people bring with them not only their needs but also their unique skills. These skills can be refined and can become a source for innovation. The New Americans'

## Create a Documentary on Lewiston's Immigrant History

Learning about the history, culture, and struggles of those who have immigrated to Lewiston will serve to educate locals and remove some of the fear that is associated with the unknown. Learning

about the deplorable living conditions, immense struggles, terrifying danger, and great losses these new neighbors suffered prior to settling here will provide a valuable perspective.

A documentary film could be made telling the story of Lewiston's immigrants and feature the history, culture, and conflict in the Somalia juxtaposed with the lives of individuals now here. This could be made in conjunction with a local film festival, broadcast on local access television, and shown periodically in local schools.

To implement this, the City or another local organization could put together a crowdsourcing campaign either locally or through an online service such as Kickstarter. Silent auctions, bake sales, and other fundraising techniques could be used to supplement the crowdsourcing campaign.



Seek funding and award a grant to a local artist to make a documentary on Lewiston's New Americans. Local Education Programs



Local Non-profit Organizations

## Seek Camaraderie Through Friendly Rivalry

Lewiston's public schools' sports teams are rivals with Auburn's teams. It is possible to build camaraderie through rivalry by encouraging everyone, from New Americans to established Lewistonians, to attend and support Lewiston's local sports teams when they play, both at "home games" in Lewiston and "away games" against Auburn. Coming together to support Lewiston's youth will break barriers by forcing Lewiston residents to sit together in the bleachers, giving different social groups a common topic to discuss.



Build enthusiasm around local sporting events by holding a "community night/day" at a home game every year and offer carpooling organization or bussing services to away games.

## Provide Academic Support for All Ages

Tree Street Youth is a treasured asset to Lewiston's youth regardless of social or economic status. However, the organization needs a permanent space to operate. The City should continue to encourage partnerships with organizations that provide academic support for all ages.

There is also an opportunity for Tree Street to work with Lewiston Adult Education and local colleges to offer similar support services to adults within the Lewiston Adult Education program.



Partner with Tree Street to find them a permanent home.



Economic & Community Development

## Volunteer as Cultural Exchange Ambassadors

Assimilation into American culture can be quite a shock to immigrants. Lewiston should consider and encourage a cultural Exchange Ambassadors Program where locals volunteer to be matched with a newcomer that wants help getting acclimated to American culture and traditions. This kind of program would provide a formal and low-pressure opportunity for people to learn about fellow residents and break down cultural barriers.



Develop a Cultural Exchange Ambassadors Program, hold informational gatherings, spread awareness throughout the community and encourage both locals and immigrants to join.



Local Non-profit Organizations

## Promote Empowerment Through Citizenship

Refugees in America are non-citizens. They cannot vote unless they apply for and meet the requirements to become a citizen. Thus, New Americans may feel that they have no control over their or their children's future. One-on-one encouragement and assistance in the process of becoming a U.S. citizen is a critical early step. More can and should be done locally to make citizenship courses affordable and locally available so that New Americans can quickly move from feeling helpless to feeling empowered.



Help immigrants achieve citizenship and thus a better-represented public during voting periods,



Local Non-profit Organizations

## Immigrants' Day

The City should support efforts by local organizations to equally value all cultures by embracing and supporting new settlers and make them feel welcome. A yearly welcome celebration or Immigrants' Day could be planned, and locals and immigrants alike could attend regular welcome parties held throughout the year.



Support and endorse an annual Immigrants' Day celebration that features the ethnic foods and activities of both present and past immigrants.



Recreation Department

Lewiston Public Library

Lewiston Youth Advisory Committee

## MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS

One way to foster interracial interactions that lead to cultural exchange is to hold organized events in public spaces that are natural meeting-areas for City residents. Studies about interracial interactions suggest that to be successful these events should:

### Produce high levels of interaction

One-on-one interaction that encourages a more honest and open conversation is preferred. Avoid anything that includes a passive audience like movies or lectures. The environment should not be competitive. However, mixed teams that share a common goal, such as sports teams or teams of volunteers working on a local project, can produce positive interactions.

### Provide opportunities for cultural exchange

Simply putting people in a room together will not encourage cultural exchange. A multi-cultural festival with performing arts, crafts, food, song, and speakers would be appropriate in Lewiston. Culturally themed films, with films in the native languages of immigrants, could also be integrated into Lewiston's current film festival.

### Maximize accessibility of events

To encourage all types of people to attend events, entrance fees should be minimized without dress code requirements. Events should also be held in public spaces that can be accessed by foot or public transit. Posters could also be made in multiple languages to reach those who are still learning to speak English. Event sponsorship could also be sought from organizations or businesses that are familiar to New American populations.

### Equally value all cultures

The Somali and Bantu populations may be the most recent influx of newcomers, but they are not the only immigrant population or unique culture in Lewiston. Franco-Canadians and Irish Americans should be celebrated as well. City institutions, such as museums, libraries, and organizations that create public art, should give equal attention to the positive aspects of all cultures in the City. Since this often does not occur, events should devote resources to celebrating cultures that are too often degraded or overlooked.

# Provide Reliable Services & Municipal Transparency

During the Planapalooza, many people agreed that there is a continuing need for open and transparent government. True transparency includes thoughtful discussion, an honest dialogue, and the ability for a city and its representatives to listen to local people and hear what they are saying. Accurately documenting discussions and sharing information is essential to making people feel like they are an active and respected part of the process.

## Open Governance

### Creating an Open Governance Plan

Lewiston should create an Open Governance Plan to emphasize the City's commitment to open and fair governance. The plan should include many if not all of the following recommended actions and strategies. The Plan should encompass all municipal departments.

The development of the Governance Plan should also include a strategy to encourage the participation of youth in City decisions, plans, and policies and engage the Lewiston Youth Advisory Council. For each age group targeted, local institutions should help select student representatives to collaborate with the City to help guide the tools and outreach methods to be used. Minority populations and women should also be targeted for involvement in shaping the Open Governance Plan.



Create and Open Governance Plan to encourage a transparent municipal government.



City Council

### Expand and Market the Community Report Card

Lewiston already prepares a monthly self-assessment that is made available as a PDF on the City's website. The City also reflects annually as an element of the City Administrator's evaluation and information on progress/accomplishments is included in the monthly report. What is included in this analysis is up to the City and local residents, with quantifiable targets set that help simplify the process of evaluation, such as number of new affordable and market rate units within the Downtown, reduction in the number of Combined Sewer Overflows, increase in local retail sales, or square footage of new development within designated Growth Areas versus Conservation Sectors. Open public meetings should be utilized to guide the development and updates of the report card. Municipal budget will need to be allocated to fund some of the studies required to assess progress.



Expand and market the Community Report Card. Set aside budget for annual assessment.



City Council  
Department Heads

## Use the Planapalooza Process Regularly

Lewiston should move beyond standard public notice and public hearing practices and embrace a more proactive and progressive form of governance. Planapalooza, initially met with extreme local skepticism, was perhaps the most successful community-building engagement event in the history of the City. People with opposing views sat around tables and engaged in direct dialogue, gaining new levels of understanding around the complexity of certain issues and working together to problem solve. Relationships were built and improved. Trust was established.

If there were ever a municipality that responded well to this open and intensive form of hands-on community engagement, it is Lewiston. The City should continue to use the Planapalooza methods, in its complete or modified form, when working through complex planning or policy-related issues. Having seen how the process works, staff, with limited consultant support, could use a similar forum to work through issues related to housing, historic preservation, zoning, development proposals, and other charged topics. These interactive forums should be advertised as community building events, with notifications going out to local organizations, schools, City listservs, and new media outlets such as Facebook. Posters and post cards translated into Somali should also be prepared and distributed, taking advantage of Lewiston's existing social and organizational networks. Planapalooza-style forums should involve food, fun, and engaging round-table brainstorming events and stakeholder meetings, both facilitated by a third party. Draft ideas should be presented within hours or days of gaining community and stakeholder input in order to maintain momentum and avoid the loss of ideas. City staff, elected officials, and members of City boards and commissions should actively participate alongside citizens and stakeholders in these events. The outcome of this initial, more personal process should be fed into the formal review process.

A regularly scheduled Planapalooza forum could be held annually to check in on the progress of the Legacy Lewiston and update the Community Report cards.



Employ the Planapalooza process for all important or controversial City-led decisions.



Community & Economic Development  
City Council  
City Administration

## Improve the Public Notice Practices

Residents should have access to the same information as the City Council and Boards to help them become better informed of the issues in Lewiston and foster a better dialogue between constituents and City officials. All RFPs, development proposals, demolition notifications, council and planning commission packets, Capital Improvement Projects, Tax Increment Financing Districts, Bonds, and other major City business should be made easily available to citizens. Unlike the current system, where a person must spend a significant amount of time researching and reading the fine print to track down notices and locate information, the City should instead make it difficult for people to avoid knowing about what's happening locally. A weekly or biweekly email blast with updates on unfolding City business should be sent by the City Manager to an open email list.

Partnerships with the local media outlets should be established to improve on the regular reporting of City Business, with summary press releases issued regularly by the City. Local media are an asset to Lewiston's community and should continue to be treated as a dedicated source of unbiased reporting on the City.



Send weekly or biweekly email blasts and regular press releases to all local media outlets that describe all unfolding City business.



City Administration  
Department Heads  
Management Information Services

## Improve the User-Interface on the City's Website

All public documents, including local ordinances, minutes and recordings archives, budgets, public notices, open contracts, and all official forms should be made easily searchable through the City's website. The City could improve the website by creating a Citizen Dashboard, or user-friendly interface that provides access to the City's current bond prospectus, Capital Improvements Plan, Tax Increment Financing Districts, development applications, slated housing demolitions, and more, in the form of an interactive, map-based approach or a searchable database. Features might include charts displaying project status, money spent to date and the ability to browse project applications with links to more information.



Create a citizen dashboard.



Management Information Services

## Expand Remote Public Access

The City should broadcast all public meetings, not just those held in City Council Chambers, via local cable as well as live webcast through the City's website to ensure that all interested parties have the opportunity to inform themselves, even if they cannot physically go to the meeting. These should be archived and searchable online through the City's website. The City may also wish to create a Twitter account to allow remote viewers an opportunity to add to the discussion through an agreed upon hashtag, or labelling tool.



Strengthen and expand relationships with local videographers and the local cable channel.



City Administration

## Publish Municipal Budget and Salaries

The City should continue with the publication of all municipal budgets online, including those of councils and committees. Budgets and spending should be broken down logically and explained in plain English. To make this information easily accessible, the City could seek grant money to set up a City Checkbook platform, in which residents can see where revenues come from, how money is budgeted to the various departments, and where expenditures are going, including City employee salaries. Efforts to make residents aware of published reports will provide residents the ability to see how the City is fiscally maintained, which could have the effect of making people more sensitive to the challenge of balancing a municipal budget.



Publish all municipal budgets online.



Finance Department

# Provide Reliable Services

## Coordinate with Service Providers

The City should continue to coordinate with public, quasi-public, private, and non-profit entities responsible for providing community facilities and services in the planning area to ensure adequate capacity exists to serve the magnitude and timing of development anticipated in the Growth and Conservation Map. Within

the City, this means regular coordination between departments providing water and sewer service, police protection, fire protection, stormwater management, social services, parks, public works, and libraries. Large-scale planning should be coordinated through the City's Capital Improvements Plan; however, routine coordination throughout the year could benefit small projects or unidentified opportunities that present themselves.

Outside the City, officials should continue to coordinate with representatives for the public school system, state and regional transportation agencies, hospitals or health care providers, social service providers, and power and communication providers to ensure their plans and programs reflect the City's desire to promote development types, patterns, and intensities consistent with the official Growth and Conservation Map.



Maintain a Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan for the City of Lewiston and coordinate with other service providers in the planning area for developing their respective investment plans and programs.



City Council  
City Administrator's Office

## Provide High-Quality, Cost-Efficient Water Service

The City should encourage development and redevelopment in areas already served by the City's Water Division. City officials should continue to work with the Auburn Water District around opportunities to introduce redundancy between the two water systems (i.e., system interconnections) to better plan for emergencies, large-scale system maintenance initiatives, etc. Discussions between the two water service providers should also continue to identify other efficiencies — staffing plans, shared maintenance equipment, or purchasing contracts — to improve

water provision services and control the cost of serve for both local governments.



Review and update, as necessary, the City's Water Master Plan to reinforce development patterns, types, and intensities depicted on the Growth and Conservation Map. Also review the City's Capital Improvements Plan and Annual Operating Budget to reflect recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan or updated Water Master Plan.

Contact the Auburn City Council and Auburn Water District to discuss opportunities for system redundancy and/or the potential for service provision efficiencies between the two water systems.



City Council  
City Administrator  
City Public Works  
(Water Division)

## Protect the City's Water Supply

The City should continue as an active participant on the Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission and work to expand the Commission's efforts to protect the 9,792-acre watershed around Lake Auburn. If requested by the City of Auburn, the City's Planning Department should work with Auburn to review/revise rules and standards in the City of Auburn's Zoning and Land Use Code for areas inside the Lake's critical watershed. These might include provisions for greater open space dedication, reduced impervious surface coverage, low-impact development principles, etc., all aimed at protecting the lake's water quality.



Explore funding opportunities to purchase additional land for permanent conservation or implement rules and requirements for future development that minimize negative impacts to the drinking water supply.



Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission  
City Council  
Planning & Code Enforcement

## Provide High-Quality, Cost-Efficient Sewer Service

Encourage development and redevelopment in areas already served by the Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority. Capital investments in the sewer system should continue to place priority on eliminating stormwater inflow and infiltration (water that enters pipes underground) and addressing the physical, financial, and environmental shortcomings of a combined sewer system (the combining of rainwater runoff, human sewage, and industrial wastewater in the same pipes).



Review and update, as necessary, the Authority's Sewer Master Plan to reinforce development patterns, types, and intensities depicted on the Growth and Conservation Map. Also review the Authority's Capital Improvements Plan and Annual Operating Budget to reflect recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan or updated Sewer Master Plan.



Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority  
Auburn City Council  
Lewiston City Council

## Support a Great School System

The City should continue to work with the Lewiston School Department to ensure efficient and high-quality education into the future. Specifically, the two parties should work closely together to coordinate the timing and location of new development depicted on the City's Growth

and Conservation Map with the School District's strategic and capital investment plans, specifically those involving new or expanded school facilities and their location. Efforts should be made to locate new schools in established neighborhoods, rather than rural areas with higher costs of transportation, lack of infrastructure and surrounding community. Lewiston's public schools are expected to grow considerably in the coming decade, requiring the addition of many classrooms to maintain current student-teacher ratios.



Coordinate regularly on items related to growth, development, and the needs of the school district.



City Council  
School Committee

## Improve Stormwater Management

Continue to implement plans, programs, policies, and projects to meet the City's responsibilities under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II Permit. In addition, work with state and regional partners to minimize to the greatest extent possible combined sewer overflow occurrences in conformance with the Clean Water Act Master Plan adopted in 2000. As the City nears the end of the Implementation phase of this plan, conversations should begin with state and federal regulators to update and revise this plan as a guide to future efforts and capital expenditures.



Implement plans, programs, policies, and projects to meet the City's requirements under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II Permit and Clean Water Act Master Plan.



City Council  
City Public Works  
(Stormwater Utility)

## Expand Parks & Recreation Facilities

Continue to implement recommendations in the Lewiston Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan (1993) and Lewiston Recreation Recovery

Plan (2003), but explore the opportunity for new plans and see what has been implemented and needs improvement. Both of these plans are dated and should be updated, but portions remain relevant and important references for the City. Maintenance responsibilities for existing parks and recreation facilities should be a high-priority for City officials while also seeking strategic partners or opportunities to expand the system as residents demand new services or new service locations. Key partners for improving access to parks and recreation facilities in the planning area include the State of Maine, the Lewiston School Department, Bates College, LA Trails, Androscoggin Land Trust, numerous private youth and recreation program providers, and special event sponsors.



Identify ways to ‘do more with less’ for maintaining and expanding the City’s parks and recreation facilities. Financial investments by the City should focus on finding partners and/or leveraging resources to expand services.



City Council  
 Recreation Department  
 Lewiston Public Works  
 Planning & Code Enforcement  
 Lewiston School Department

## Improve Solid Waste Collection & Disposal

Based on current disposal rates, the City’s landfill is estimated to have adequate capacity for the next 40 years. However, solid waste management can be further improved upon by continuing to expand the City’s recycling program to divert residential waste from the landfill.



Renew energy in the City’s recycling program to increase the percentage of residential waste diverted from the landfill under the recycling program from 20% to 30% by 2030.



City Council  
 City Public Works  
 (Solid Waste Division)

## Conduct Space-Needs Study for City Offices & Facilities

Monitor the needs for office space and facility locations as population increases in the future, and consider a space-needs study for the 2030 planning horizon to keep pace with development and changes in technology.



Complete a space-needs study to anticipate where, when, and why new buildings or facilities may be needed to serve future development between 2020 and 2030.



City Council  
 City Administrator  
 Public Works

## Expand Library Services

Community resources and programs provided at the Lewiston Public Library should be expanded (both in scope and variety) to meet the needs of residents. The physical location in downtown should always be a priority to serve need-based populations; while technology and mobile resources (e.g., book mobile, book fair events in public schools, etc.) could expand the geographic reach of library resources.



Invest in the Lewiston Public Library (and its resources) to expand the scope and variety of services available to local residents.



City Council  
 Lewiston Public Library

## Maintain Police Protection

The City’s police department has successfully addressed crime in Lewiston, cutting by half the city-wide crime statistics reported in 1985. While recognizing that data shows crime fluctuating from year to year, Lewiston’s statistics are now lower than those reported for Maine’s other major cities. The department’s success, in part, is the result of proactive policing programs, community education, and partnerships with city, county, state, and federal police programs.



Continue to increase police resources and their presence in the community to permanently reduce from year-to-year annual crime statistics reported for Lewiston.



City Council  
Police Department

## Maintain the City's ISO Rating

The City should plan and program improvements for fire protection to maintain the ISO rating in the primary growth area. A strategy may include new station locations, building or equipment expansion at existing stations, water or fire hydrant location improvements, personal changes, etc. that help maintain the ISO rating as the City continues to grow and develop.



Update the City's Station Location Analysis Study completed in 2001 to evaluate the development types, patterns, and intensities depicted in the official Growth and Conservation Map, and recommend improvements to maintain or improve the ISO rating in the primary growth area.



City Council  
Fire Department

## Capital Project Investments

The City should ensure that recommendations and official maps in the City's Comprehensive Plan are the foundation for funding and scheduling capital projects in the City's Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan. Continue to highlight the 'statement of consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan' as an important component of the CIP planning process. The narrative developed for the consistency review should be prepared by the requesting department,

and reviewed by the City's Planning Department, suggesting edits as necessary. The five year plan should also include a low, medium, high priority ranking to the narrative consistent with the plan implementation matrix included in the City's Comprehensive Plan.



Modify slightly the current CIP planning process to reinforce the 'statement of consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan' as an important consideration for funding and scheduling future year capital improvements.



City Administrator  
Planning & Code Enforcement  
Other City Departments submitting capital projects for the next CIP

## Focus on Kennedy Park

Kennedy Park is a classic American urban park that is used for a wealth of summer activities. Despite heavy use, the park could be even better utilized. Efforts should be made to turn Kennedy Park an "all day, every day" attraction for all Lewiston residents. While the skate park, swimming pool, and basketball courts tend to be well used, especially by local youth, the other three quadrants of the park can support greater use. The bandstand, which is currently condemned, should be restored to its 1925 condition as a point of civic pride and a venue for music and activities. Support should continue for programming that appeals to a larger and more diverse population including seniors, families, and baby boomers that live on the outskirts of town should be enhanced as a way to engage those segments of the population with the center of the City. Thought should also be given to the overall design of the park with continued support for improvements to increase use of the space, including playground equipment, public restrooms, and water fountains. Vending carts, markets, and festivals can also add to the vitality of the space.



Add water fountains and features.

Fully restore the gazebo to its 1925 condition.



City Council  
Recreation Department  
Public Works

## Upgrade Simard-Payne Park

Simard-Payne Police Memorial Park currently houses some seasonal activities such as the launching area for the Great Falls Hot Air Balloon Festival and a staging area for the Patrick Dempsey Challenge. Improvements to the park could be made that would enhance these activities while also increasing the overall use of the space. An early step in the Riverfront Island Master Plan calls for such improvements including a formal walkway near the river to expand the existing Riverwalk. The plan also calls for providing space for concessions and vendors and an amphitheater facing the river near the northern edge of the park that would help activate the space and provide another venue for music and festivals. These improvements should be pursued.



Build formal walkway along the water's edge.

Build formal walkway along the water's edge.

Add temporary seasonal concession and or vendor structures.



Recreation Department  
Planning & Code Enforcement  
Public Works



# barriers to success



# Changing Perceptions

One of the biggest challenges standing in the way of Lewiston reaching its potential and achieving a prosperous future is overcoming the negative perception of the City that has developed over the past 40 plus years. Some of the perceptions are unfounded while others have been rightly earned. It is clear that there are two related issues: the negative self-image held by some local citizens and the stereotypes and labels applied to Lewiston from those outside of the City. Many people feel that Lewiston has higher instances of crime, poverty, and unemployment than other cities in the state. People say there is nothing to do, that the City is not progressive, that it is run down and suffers from racism. Many of these beliefs are not accurate and have become self-perpetuating stereotypes that prevent the City from moving forward. Local leaders must focus time, energy, and resources on changing these perceptions, working with current residents to build a positive self-image and a sense of community pride that will, in turn, position the City to more effectively attract residents, businesses, and visitors.

## What is Lewiston?

For successful economic development to occur, Lewiston needs to rebrand itself, building on the City's unique potential. An energetic and progressive national marketing firm should be hired to help the City package its unique identity. The message must be authentic and represent what Lewiston is now and what it wants to become. As the second largest City in the state, Lewiston deserves more than logos and tag lines like "A great place to live, work, and play," "Come grow with us," or "Exceeding your expectations." It needs a powerful image brand that will set the City apart, attract like-minded residents and businesses, and build a strong presence in the New England market.



Hire a marketing and branding team to create a fresh image for Lewiston.



Economic & Community Development



Hire a public relations team to begin pushing for a more positive view of Lewiston targeted to those outside the community.



Economic & Community Development

Branding a city is no different than branding a corporation or a public figure. If the world is hearing a negative message, reputation is tarnished. Proactive steps, focused energy, and money are required to get out the right message and change perceptions. Lewiston should take its own reputation seriously and hire a progressive national public relations firm to help the City craft a positive and progressive message and spread the word broadly. It is important that the message be current, aggressive, and relevant. Local, regional, and national campaigns should be rolled out to improve the reputation of the City immediately.

## Getting Out the Word

## Self-Help

In order to combat the negative self-image found among elements of the community, a “Self Help” campaign should be initiated. This program can help long-time and new residents move on from past struggles, discover and protect the history of the City, and understand that Lewiston can take its place as one of the pre-eminent communities in Maine, a place with new opportunities arising, including those not yet conceived. A shift in attitudes from “We’re just Lewiston” to “Yes, We Are Lewiston!” is imperative to the success of the City.



Encourage the formation of interest-based community groups by providing free meeting space.



Economic & Community Development

First impressions are everything. Because of the current state of the gateways into the City along Main Street, Sabattus Street, and Lisbon Street, Lewiston struggles with making a good first impression. Areas along these gateways are outdated, unpleasant, and do not reflect the most-loved parts of Lewiston. As a result, visitors and passersby are not enticed to venture further and discover the beauty, history, and culture found in the heart of the City.

The gateways should be transformed into beautiful, active, vibrant places that signal arrival into Lewiston. Placemaking and urban design strategies should be employed that enhance the physical appearance of these areas. Making these improvements will give a positive first impression and improve the City’s image.



Build community gateways at the most trafficked entrances to the City.



Economic & Community Development

## First Impressions

# Regulatory Barriers

The City of Lewiston’s zoning code and land development regulations need an “upgrade” to deliver the community vision articulated by the plan. The City’s existing zoning does not encourage the range of housing, recreational, retail, and civic opportunities sought by residents. In addition, the City’s economic development is hindered by zoning categories which are out of synch with market needs. As a result of the way in which the existing zoning in Lewiston is written, the predominant form of development over the past 30 years has been detached single family homes on large lots with strip commercial development along the main thoroughfares. Because of this zoning, Lewiston has a limited range of lifestyle options, making it difficult for the City to remain competitive in a national market where preferences have changed and more people desire smaller homes and apartments within walking distance of amenities. While improvements are possible within the boundaries of the existing regulatory system, Lewiston may want to consider a more holistic approach, adding form-based coding to the City’s planning and economic development toolkit.

## Why Regulatory Change Now?

During the Planapalooza, it became clear that a majority of the community wants to see additional options and higher quality development in the downtown, along corridors, and in new planned centers of activity. While everyone agreed that existing neighborhoods should be preserved to maintain the lifestyle preference of those who like Lewiston the way it is, there was broad consensus that new growth should occur in the form of clearly defined compact, walkable, mixed-use centers as described in the Plan Framework section. This approach allows for greater lifestyle choice so that there is something for everyone. Unfortunately, the current zoning ordinance has limited capacity to enable, encourage, and promote the diversity of high quality places desired by the community.

Over the years, Lewiston’s existing zoning has been amended in a piecemeal fashion to address specific issues as they have come up, without a major rewrite in the roughly 25 years since it was first enacted. Because of this history of “tacking on” amendments, the zoning has many deficiencies and inconsistencies and is difficult to use.

## Zoning Today

Like most American cities, Lewiston’s current zoning is based in concept on the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act of 1926. Often referred to as “Euclidian” zoning after a 1926 Supreme Court case involving Euclid, Ohio, its primary purpose is to separate uses. At one time in Lewiston’s history, the separation of homes from factories was critical. Today, Euclidian zoning goes too far, separating compatible uses such as homes, businesses, and offices. Because of this mandated separation and the additional requirements for large setbacks and buffers, virtually every errand run outside of downtown Lewiston requires a person to drive. This outcome didn’t just happen. Lewiston’s version of new development looks strikingly similar to new development across Maine and the country as a direct result of conventional zoning codes, all modeled on the same generic zoning template.

## A New Approach

In order to implement this Comprehensive Plan and remove barriers to potential investment, the City should pursue a comprehensive rewrite of its zoning and subdivision ordinances, including form-based components to deal with all aspects of community character and design.

### Creating Mixed Use Centers

A form-based or “character-based” approach to land use regulation will more effectively yield walkable, compact, diverse, mixed-use environments focused in areas where the City has determined growth should occur. The owner of a shop or office can live above their place of work. Children can walk to their school. People can walk from their homes to a corner store, coffee shop, or restaurant.

In contrast with conventional zoning, which emphasizes separating uses, a form-based code uses character — the look and feel of a place — as the primary organizing principle. Form-based codes take the approach that most uses, which fall into the broad categories of retail, residential, office, civic, even light industrial activities, are compatible, having traditionally coexisted happily in communities for centuries. Given appropriate standards, all of these uses can be located close to each other, except in unique cases where smells or extreme noise are an issue, where the conventional approach of separating uses is appropriate.

Just like conventional zoning, form-based codes set rules and expectations for development by placing more emphasis on character and having a greater appreciation for the complexity and nuance involved in protecting and making great places.

Form-based codes focus on the character and feel of a place, allowing land owners and developers to build places that contribute to a more sustainable, healthy, and safe community. This includes: emphasizing sustainable stormwater systems; alleviating traffic congestion by promoting a more interconnected street network when possible; reducing traffic speeds in areas that are

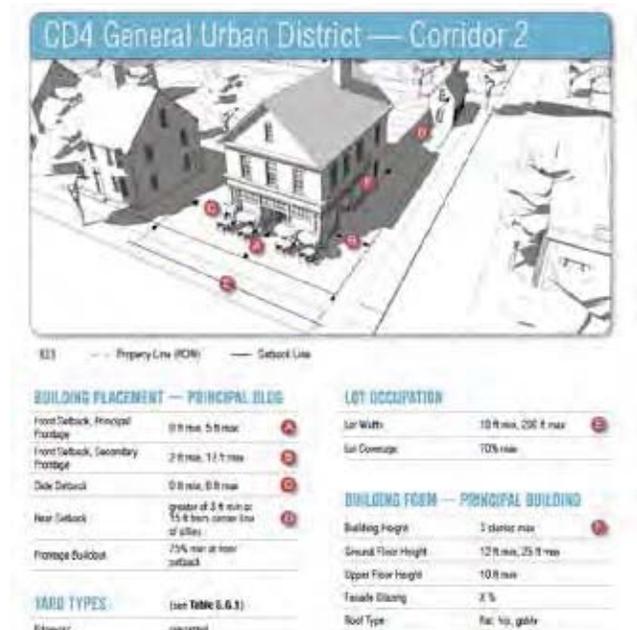
appropriate for pedestrians and cyclists; allowing for easier construction of traditional housing types including civilized apartment buildings and garage apartments; and enabling more intense infill development where there is a local interest in creating centers of activity and maximizing use of existing infrastructure.

### Protecting Neighborhoods

While Form-based codes can be used to promote infill and new investment in activity centers, it can also be a powerful tool to re-enforce and protect existing land use patterns. Where existing suburban neighborhoods already exist, a form-based approach can maintain the current character and existing lifestyle while making it easier for homeowners to make simple modifications to their home and property. As with any zoning change, existing buildings would be grandfathered until such time as a substantial change is made to a property.

### Simplify the Code

Another advantage of the form-based coding approach is simplicity. The code is written in plain English rather than in complicated legal speak and easy to understand diagrams replace pages of text. The goal of a form-based code is to make it clear to the public and to land owners what is allowed. A



form-based approach would also help consolidate, simplify, and update Lewiston’s zoning language to reflect the desires of the community, which would promote private-sector investment and expand lifestyle options.

A form-based code tells you what to do instead of telling you what NOT to do. This is a subtle but important difference, both psychologically and practically. If a developer looking to invest in Lewiston knows what the community wants and submits plans that are in keeping with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, those plans should more quickly move through the approval process, saving time and money.

Because form-based codes emphasize character and the design and context of development, a number of elements are regulated including the height and placement of buildings, the location of parking, the frontage, sidewalk, planting area, drainage, and the street itself. Instead of building setbacks, form-based codes talk about where the front of a building should be placed. Instead of Floor Area Ratios, form-based codes talk about the appropriate scale and massing of buildings. All of this information is conveyed through easy to understand diagrams or other graphic illustrations.

Structurally, a form-based code is organized according to intensity of development, or Character Districts. A Regulating Plan is generated that identifies the location of Character Districts. The code would include standards for by-right, non-permitted, special, and accessory uses as well as Public Space Standards (street/sidewalk/parking), Site Development Standards, Architectural Standards, Signage Standards, and Definitions.

In Lewiston, a form-based code would establish Character Districts within the activity centers identified in the Plan Framework section of this document while retaining the existing character of residential areas in the remainder of City. The character zones would be defined to reflect the unique expression of the desire for development in Lewiston, representing the community’s desires and goals. Within the activity centers, codes can be written to encourage a mix of uses, pedestrian comfort by addressing walkable streets, and a high quality public realm defined by buildings that have great architectural design. If adoption is successful, Site Plan and Subdivision regulations would likely have to be amended to accommodate the new form-based code.

When properly implemented, new development under a form-based code creates a complete community or adds missing uses to existing ones in a way that creates places where people can live, work and play. Having this kind of tool in place makes it easier to transform the built environment over time as the market calls for new development.



Hire a consultant to produce a form based code for Lewiston.



Planning & Code Enforcement

# driving success



# Driving Success

Implementing the City’s comprehensive plan depends greatly on the ability of property owners, developers, City staff, elected officials, and the general public to work together for a common purpose. The “action plan” presented in this document organizes projects and action items important to helping Lewiston meet its economic and quality of life goals while informing future City investments and key decision-making. The intent of the action plan is three-fold. First, it provides decision-makers with a blueprint for implementation. Second, clearly defined projects and action items identify public or private investment opportunities that are healthy, sustainable, and achievable. Third, regularly measuring achievements against the action plan (i.e., a “community report card”) provides stakeholders with the opportunity to track progress and hold elected officials accountable for implementing the plan. The structure of the action plan does not require all projects or action items be completed in sequence. Instead, it promotes flexibility and partnership opportunities between the City and other stakeholders for implementing the vision in phases, consistent with the pace of growth, emerging regional initiatives, or available funding. The information that follows summarizes key components of the City’s action plan.

## Target Setting

Targets in the comprehensive plan define a desired, promised, minimum, or aspirational level of service for the City. They are implemented through specific projects, plans, or initiatives recommended in the plan implementation matrix, each improving conditions consistent with the community’s vision.

## Balanced Budget

Keep a balanced budget for the City (including the school budget) that does not borrow large sums of money from fund balances or reserves to cover regular operating expenses.

## Economic Development

Plan, program, and execute new economic development initiatives and bring in at least 100 new jobs per year through 2030. Jobs should be in targeted industries (especially goods producing or professional service industries) that provide wages to comfortably live in Lewiston (i.e., a salary greater than \$30,000 per year).

## Jobs-Labor Force Ratio

Work to maintain and improve the jobs to population ratio in Lewiston as population continues to grow through 2030.

## Police Protection

Keep a consistent ratio between the number of sworn police officers and population in the City as it continues to grow. The current ratio is 2.24 sworn officers per 1,000 residents. This means eight new officers will be required to keep pace with population growth forecasted through 2030.

## Fire Protection

Allocate resources to the fire department to help maintain the City’s ISO Class 2 fire protection rating. Improvements should be focused on fire department readiness, water supply, or communications. (Note: An Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating is a score between 1 and 10 that rates a municipality’s ability to handle fire emergencies. A lower score indicates better fire protection abilities and generally translates to lower property insurance rates for residents and businesses.)

## Parks & Recreation Facilities

Work with partners in the region to build new parks and recreation facilities to serve future residents. Population growth anticipated through 2030 creates demand for nine additional park or recreation facility acres to maintain the City's current service delivery standards.

## Projects, Plans, Policies, & Initiatives

New or amended projects, plans, policies, or initiatives are recommended throughout this plan to fulfill the community's vision for growth and development. In addition to existing plans and studies including the Riverfront Master Plan, the Downtown Neighborhood Action Plan, the Lewiston Downtown Neighborhood Action Plan, and the Lewiston Downtown Neighborhood Circulation Study, a brief summary of these items follows:

### City Plans & Policies

Many recommendations in this document will require revisions to the City's land development code or supporting policies and ordinances. Additional plans and studies for specific areas or themes may be needed to support their implementation. Plans or policies affected by recommendations in the comprehensive plan are included in the plan implementation matrix.

### Capital Projects

Capital projects identified for the City address existing deficiencies and/or anticipated future year needs. Implementation of the recommended projects provides additional capacity to serve the magnitude and timing of development depicted on the Conservation & Growth Map. Some of the projects listed in the plan implementation matrix will require coordination with responsible state agencies and/or utility service providers.

### City Initiatives

New initiatives led by the City will address a wide range of topics important to promoting economic development, neighborhood revitalization, and improving residents' quality of life. These initiatives are a critical opportunity to build

local capacity by involving active and new members of the community in seeing through the recommendations of this plan.

### Specific Plans & Studies

Some plans or initiatives recommended in the plan implementation matrix will require additional resources to complete. The City's Executive Department should coordinate with other City Departments to program funds and schedule special studies consistent with the time frames presented in the plan implementation matrix.

## Plan Implementation Matrix

The plan implementation matrix helps stakeholders implement recommendations in the comprehensive plan. Each project, policy, or initiative identified in the document is also listed in the matrix. A brief description, budget estimate, funding options, time frame, and responsible party is provided for each item to help guide City officials with implementation.

## Resource Allocation

City officials should budget for outcomes in line with what is recommended in this plan. This includes funding specific projects, plans, and initiatives consistent with the time frames presented in the plan implementation matrix. Together, these expenditures will move forward the vision statement and guiding principles to allow Lewiston to meet its full potential.

## Capital Improvements Plan

The City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) guides future funding, schedules, and construction of capital improvements so that necessary infrastructure is in place consistent with demand. It distributes expensive projects over time, helping decision-makers coordinate improvements for greater efficiency and assess short-term financing requirements in the context of long-term fiscal needs and constraints. A well-coordinated and regularly-updated CIP document protects the community from abrupt tax increases and helps to reduce the City's tax burden for paying down municipal debt.

Projects in the City's five-year capital improvements plan should focus on short-term and long-term investments identified in the comprehensive plan. Other projects recommended from year-to-year should 'buy results that citizens value' (measured by fulfilling the vision and guiding principles) before being included in the CIP document.

Scheduling and funding capital projects should also be done in a way that honors the City's existing debt policies and maintains a reasonable level of municipal general obligation debt as measured against peer communities and bond rating agency guidelines. While it may be necessary at times to approve debt over and above the City's policy limits, those occasions should be minimized and focused on projects required to implement core elements of this plan. Grants or other in-kind solutions for funding capital projects should be maximized to reduce tax burden and/or debt service for the City.

### Annual Budget

Spending for the coming year is authorized by City Council in an adopted annual budget. It authorizes spending, assures the budget is balanced, and levies property taxes for the budget year.

The first year of the capital improvements plan (which should implement specific projects from the comprehensive plan) should become the annual capital budget submitted concurrent with the operating budget for consideration by City Council. The City should also implement a five-year budget strategy to allow for a more comprehensive approach to planning for future expenditures.

### Community Report Card

A community report card will monitor and evaluate progress in implementing recommendations in the comprehensive plan (as a supplement to the City Administrator's current monthly reports to City Council). It should give a full and honest assessment of conditions in the planning area; and be used specifically to monitor performance, measure achievement, and reflect change generated by the plan.

Formal presentation of the document should be made to the City Council at the first of each year.