

1-2000

Town of Winthrop Downtown Revitalization Plan

Kent Associates

Rothe Associates

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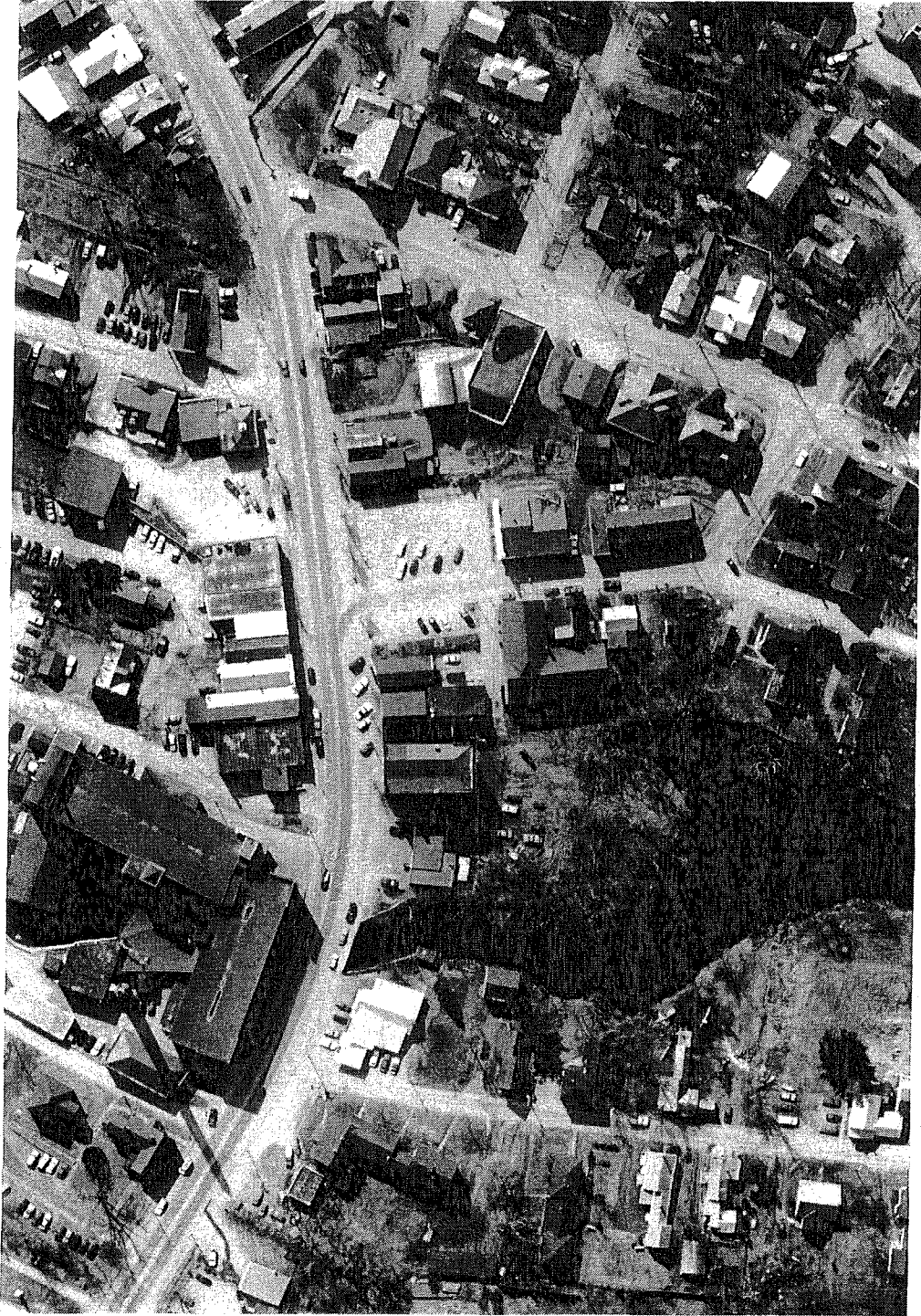
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AERIAL VIEW OF
DOWNTOWN



TOWN OF WINTHROP
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

Prepared by Kent Associates, Planning and Design Consultants, in association with
Rothe Associates, Municipal Planning Consultants

January 2000

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1. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Historical Perspective

Main Street has played a prominent role in the history of the community as shown in these excerpts from "History of Winthrop, Evolution of a Maine Community, 1771-1971," edited by Charles Foster.

"Early Winthrop lived in an economy of scarcity; the role of the retail merchant was to supply the needs of the people. Another assumption underlying merchandising was the understanding that people would not normally come to Main Street to do their buying...Winthrop of the nineteenth century was predominantly agrarian; it was difficult to leave the farm with its day-long succession of chores and responsibilities."

"Of course farmers did come to Main Street to bring their marketable products, and to make bulk purchases...Once arrived on Main Street there was no hurry to leave. The farmer could tie up in front of the store, slip the mare's bridle, and dump some feed in the box provided. Inside the store there were other comforts; the proprietor always had his jug ready; there were good chairs near the stove, and handy spittoons. Once merchant, nicknamed "Grover" had a room upstairs for cards where a farmer could lose the price of a cow in short order."

"The role of the merchant on those early days emphasized adequate stock rather than display and convenience. All goods on hand were in bulk; rum and molasses in hogsheads about the size of the modern oil drum, flour, sugar, crackers were in barrels, and pickles, oysters, salt meats and fish in kegs."

"A number of factors influenced the modernization of Winthrop's Main Street in the twentieth century. One of these was a shift of population which concentrated most of the town's people in the village. Winthrop's population in 1920 was the same as in 1820, but in 1820 most of that population was scattered on farms. While the rural area declined nearly to the vanishing point, the Village grew steadily; by 1920 about 80% of the people lived there. With this change, the peddlers faded away, and their business went to Main Street."

"The revolution in transportation intensified the development of Main Street as a shopping center. Trolley service in 1902 brought Winthrop Center and East Winthrop much closer to Main Street in travel time. But the automobile made the greatest contribution as cars jammed Main Street competing for parking space. Winthrop's two new shopping centers are a response to the need for better parking facilities."

Downtown Winthrop is no longer the important retail center that it once was. The historical concentration of retail businesses has given way to a mixture retail, specialty retail and service establishments. The downtown continues to serve as the center of the community and in that role is host to a number of community events and activities.

Sidewalk Conditions

The condition of Winthrop's village sidewalks is one measure of how safe and "pedestrian friendly" the village is. Unfortunately, the report card is not good. Overall, the sidewalks and curbs on Main Street and in the Bowdoin, Union Street triangle are in poor condition. Curbs are frequently broken and uneven, and the surfaces of the sidewalks are uneven and cracked.

Handicapped accessibility is compromised in a number of places: a few utility poles in the middle of the sidewalk do not allow even 3 feet of width for a wheelchair to pass; in other places abandoned tree planter spaces lie unprotected, and numerous grade changes occur without making provision for reasonable ramp slopes or smooth transition between surfaces.

Frequently, because of the buildup of street paving overlays, the curbs are 1 to 3 inches high and offer little protection to pedestrians. Clearly, lack of investment in the downtown sidewalks helps generate a rundown feeling and when repairs have been made, inexpensive solutions prevail, i.e., bituminous curbs and sidewalks.

Another problem is that in a number of places pedestrian safety has been compromised; excessively wide driveways and curb cuts, 70 to 90 feet wide in places, present a problem because they effectively eliminate the sidewalk itself. Narrower curb cuts are needed.

This inventory did not look at intersecting and linking sidewalks, on the residential streets, that tie into Main Street. In the future, after the Main Street improvements are made, the sidestreet sidewalks need to be addressed.

The table that follows addresses the condition of sidewalks and curbs within the study area, by segment. The accompanying map of the village study area shows the location of each sidewalk segment.

The inventory shows that of the 6,140 linear feet of sidewalk surveyed 3,875 feet (63%) were considered poor and in need of resurfacing. Another 1000 feet (16%) were in the poor to fair category, and 21 percent received a "fair" rating (1265 linear feet). All sidewalk surfaces are tar. Most are 4 to 5 feet wide; the wider sidewalks are, appropriately, in the center of the village where there is more pedestrian activity.

The curbs are in worse shape than the sidewalks. Most are the extruded bituminous type yet some, but very few, segments are granite.

SIDEWALK CONDITIONS ON MAIN STREET, WINTHROP

Sidewalk Segment (see map)	Sidewalk Condition				Curb Condition		
	Width (in feet)	Quality	Type	Approx. Length	Height (in inches)	Quality	Type
1	5	Poor	Tar	80	5 - 4	Poor	Bit ¹
2	5	Poor	Tar	20	5	Poor	Bit
3	7 - 5	Fair	Tar	90	1½	Poor	Bit
4	9 - 10	Poor	Tar	100	3	Poor	Gr ²
5	7	Poor	Tar	70	3	Poor	Gr
6	11	Poor	Tar	130	3	Poor	Gr
7	11 - 7 - 5	Poor	Tar	75	2 - 12	Poor	Gr/Bit
8	6	Fair/Poor	Tar	110	2 - 24	Poor	Bit/Conc
9	4	Fair/Poor	Tar	200	4	Poor	Bit
10	4	Poor	Tar	40	Broken up	Poor	Bit
11	4	Fair	Tar	90	Sloped 4"	Fair	Bit
12	4	Fair	Tar	320	3	Poor	Bit
13	6	Fair	Tar	30	2	Poor	Bit
14	5	Poor	Tar	50	1½	Poor	Bit
15	5	Poor	Tar	200	1½	Poor	Bit
16	4	Fair	Tar	175	2	Poor/Fair	Bit
17	4	Fair/Poor	Tar	130	2	Poor/Fair	Bit
18	5	Poor	Tar	35	2	Poor	Bit
19	15	Fair/Poor	Tar	60	2	Fair/Poor	Bit
20	5	Fair/Poor	Tar	350	3	Poor	Bit
21	8	Poor	Tar	35	2	Poor	Bit
22	10	Fair/Poor	Tar	150	1½	Poor	Bit
23	12 - 15	Fair	Tar	210	2	Fair	Bit
24	4	Fair	Tar	50	3	Poor	Gr
25	6	Poor	Tar	230	2 - 8	Poor	Bit
26	5	Fair	Tar	150	3	Fair/Poor	Bit
27	5	Poor	Tar	220	3	Poor	Bit
28	5	Poor	Tar	420	3	Poor	Bit
29	4	Poor	Tar over conc	250	No curb		
30	5	Poor	Tar over conc	150	Slope	Poor	Bit
31	5	Poor	Tar	120	6	Poor	Bit
32	3	Poor	Tar	165	2	Poor	Bit
33	3	Poor	Tar	90	1" sloped	Poor	Bit
34	5 - 6	Poor	Tar	60	No curb		

Total length of sidewalk 6140 linear feet.

¹ Bituminous Extruded Curb

² Granite

Crosswalks

Maine towns and villages are increasingly opting for better, safer, and more well defined crosswalks. More and more towns are placing barrels and/or special signs on their crosswalks, in the center of the street. Winthrop has four such barrel/signs on some of its crosswalks. The net effect has been increased public/pedestrian safety and some traffic “calming” or slowing of traffic on main streets throughout the State. “Give way to pedestrians – it’s the law” signage has been effective.

Some towns have gone further by:

- Using “neck-downs” to slow traffic; neck-downs emphasize the point of crossing and reduce the “exposed,” crossing distance;
- Using thermo-plastic material to emphasize the white crossing lines (it costs more, but lasts longer);
- Painting “yield” signs and pedestrian crossing signs on the pavement, ahead of the crosswalk;
- Adding vertical, bright yellow, pedestrian crossing signs;
- Paving (or painting) the crosswalk area with a colored paver or “streetprint.”

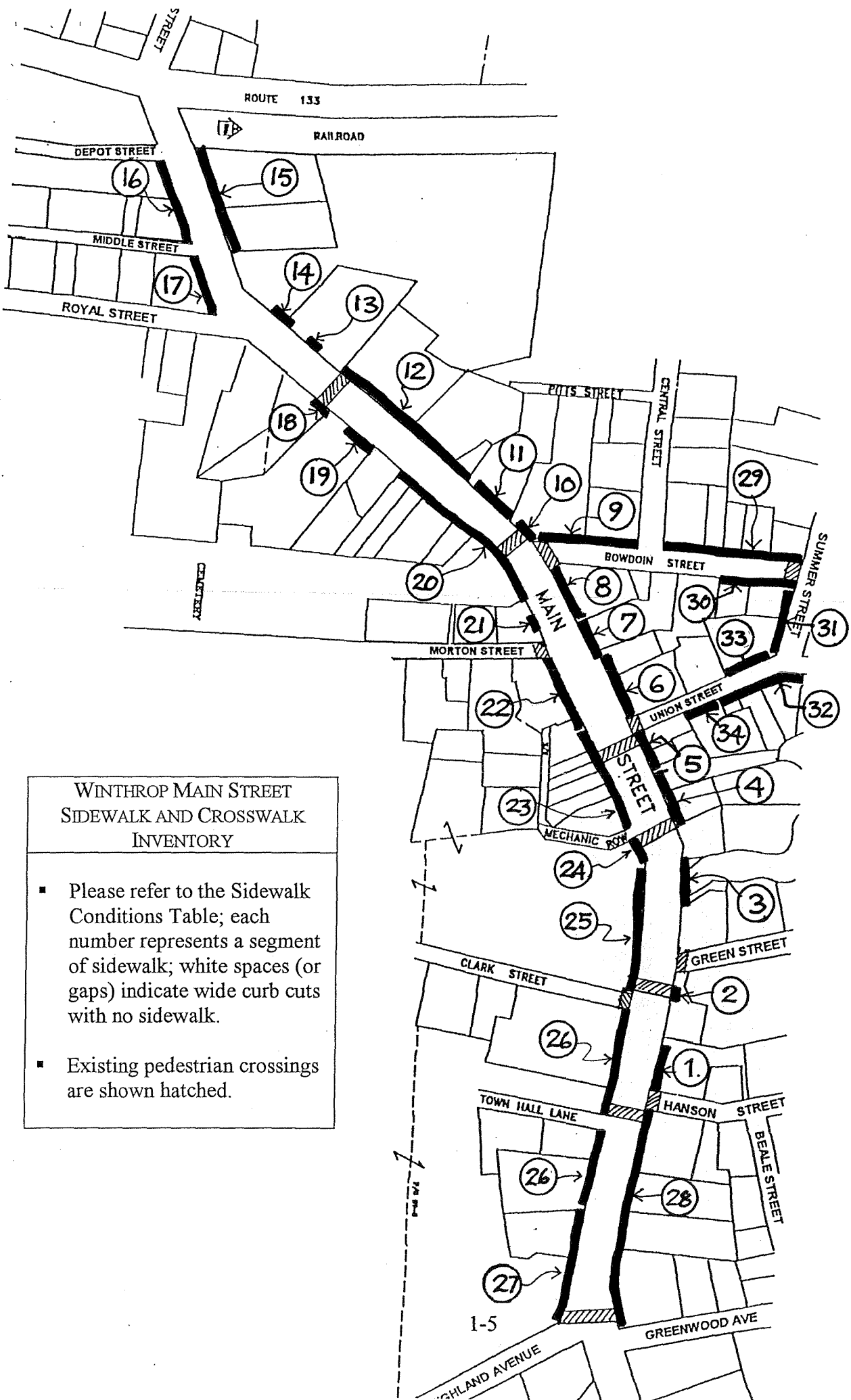
Inventory. Main Street in Winthrop, between Highland Avenue and the railroad, has seven marked crossings (*see map*); they are spaced from about 105 feet to 350 feet apart and are painted white with broad “cross hatch” lines. These crosswalks are quite wide, especially in the center of the village where the right-of-way is about 66 feet; pedestrians are quite “exposed” to traffic, especially the elderly and others who move slowly.

Additional, painted crosswalks are on some sidestreets that connect to Main Street. These are essentially extensions of the sidewalk. They’re located on: Hanson, Green, Union, Bowdoin, Morton, and Clark.

Handicapped Accessibility. Most, but not all, crosswalk/sidewalk connections have ramped surfaces to comply with the law; however, a number of the ramps do not meet the letter of the law. For example, some ramps have plus ½ inch bumps or rises in them; others are too narrow and/or steep to meet the ADA (federal standards); and in some locations there is no ramp, just a curb. Furthermore, in a few cases the sidewalk curb is dangerously broken, excessively high and/or awkwardly stepped.

As Winthrop plans for sidewalk, crosswalk, and other streetscape improvements, handicapped access must be provided. This applies to the entrances to businesses up and down Main Street. A smooth, continuous, flat surface is needed between the sidewalk and the entrances to public and private buildings.

Of course, elevator service to the second (and third) floors of downtown structures is needed if they are to be easily accessible and attractive to tenants.



WINTHROP MAIN STREET
SIDEWALK AND CROSSWALK
INVENTORY

- Please refer to the Sidewalk Conditions Table; each number represents a segment of sidewalk; white spaces (or gaps) indicate wide curb cuts with no sidewalk.
- Existing pedestrian crossings are shown hatched.

Street Trees and Street Furniture

There are nine surviving street trees on the public sidewalks in the center of the village. All have been damaged by careless snow plowing, and some are in poor to very poor condition. Two or three additional planting areas, where trees once stood, are evident. An arborist should be retained to evaluate these remaining trees, and a replanting program instigated.

Between Highland Avenue and Green Street, on Main Street, but on private property, there are healthy, attractive maples on both sides of the street. These should be retained; they provide a welcoming avenue to travelers headed westward. They form an attractive “gateway” to the village.

The west end of Main Street, on the other hand, has fewer trees (on public or private land), and there is no attractive avenue or gateway effect. In fact, the approach to the village from Route 133 and the railroad is unattractive, especially at the intersection.

There is little public “furniture” on Main Street. On the south side are three half-barrel flower planters and a single bench. Modest landscaping is provided along the sidewalk at the public parking lot, and there is a solitary mailbox east of Royal Street, on Main Street.

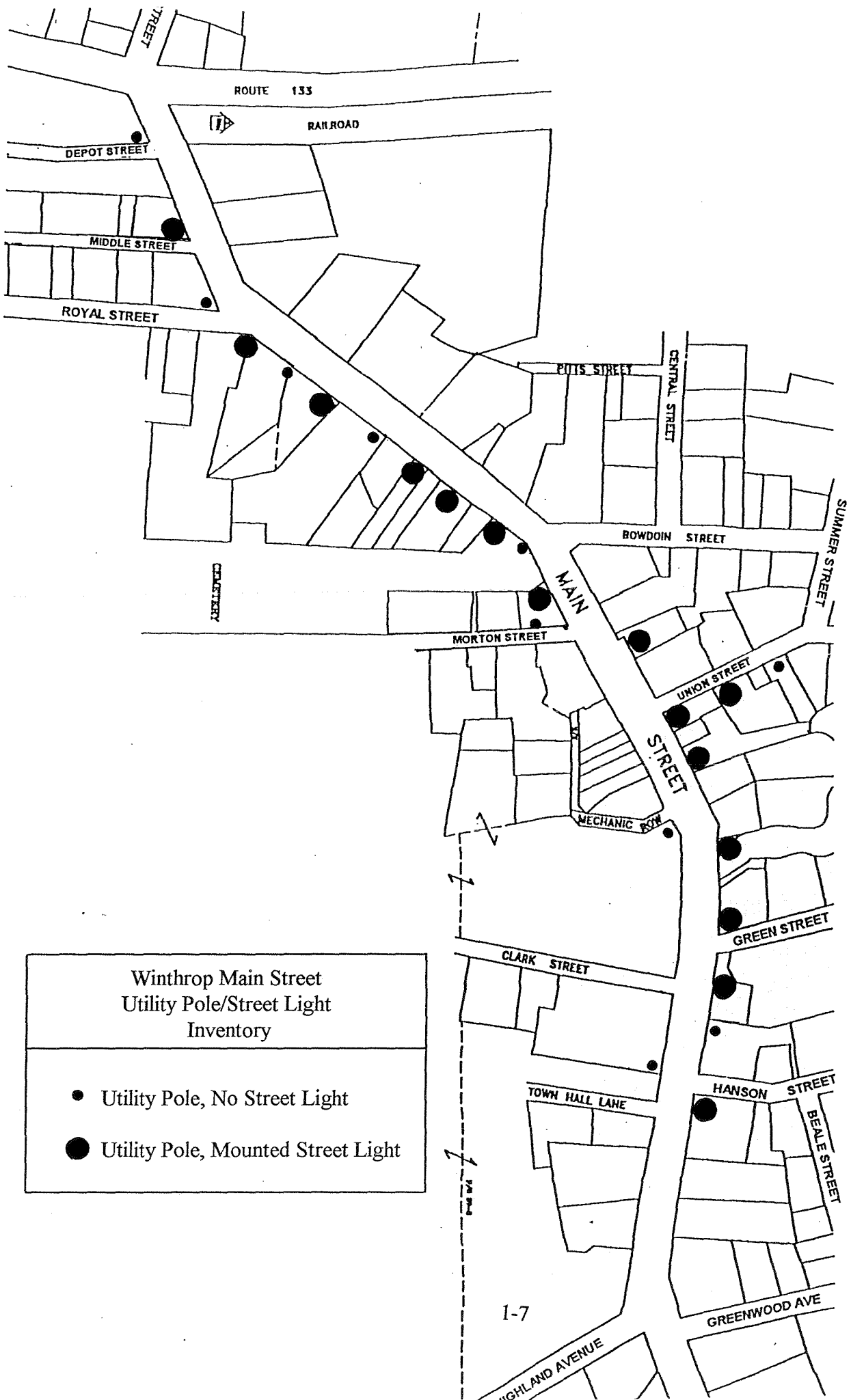
Electrical Utilities

The utility poles and overhead electrical wires serving the downtown project an unsightly, outmoded appearance. There are 22 Main Street utility poles between Hanson Street and Route 133. Several of the poles, including one at the corner of Main Street and Mechanic Row and another at Main and Union, are no longer vertical. The poles between Hanson Street and Morton Street are generally on the north side of Main Street, while those between Morton Street and Route 133 are on the south side.

Options for upgrading the overhead wire network include moving poles, transmission lines and services to the rear of buildings, placing the network underground or consolidating wires. Based on estimates from Central Maine Power, underground placement can run as high as \$500/foot, and relocating the transmission lines from Main Street to an area behind the buildings could cost anywhere from \$100,000 to \$150,000. Consolidating wires would help but the downtown would continue to be served by unsightly poles. Relocating the system to the rear of buildings appears to be the best alternative. In the core area of the downtown between Green Street and Bowdoin Street, there are very few buildings with front entrance electrical service, so moving the system to the rear of the buildings would not cause extensive replacement of services.

Street Lights

There are 14 Cobra-style street lights along Main Street between Hanson Street and Route 133, all of which are mounted on utility poles. There are many more aesthetic light fixtures available for a reasonable cost. Many communities have replaced pole-mounted street lights with village-scale gas-light type street lamps. Street lamps would greatly improve Downtown Winthrop by giving it a more up-to-date appearance.



<p>Winthrop Main Street Utility Pole/Street Light Inventory</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utility Pole, No Street Light ● Utility Pole, Mounted Street Light

Underground Utilities

Water Main. The existing 10-inch water main serving the downtown, which was installed in 1924, serves as a major trunk line for the community. While a water main may last 100 years, this one is highly tuberculated to the point that it has significantly reduced fire flows and created pressure problems in remote parts of the community due to high downtown demands. Utility District personnel report that a new, 10-inch pipe should have a "C" factor (a measure of flow) of 120; their measurements indicate that the existing main has a C factor of only 30. Because of its deteriorated condition, the water main needs to be replaced prior to undertaking above-ground, downtown revitalization activities such as road, curb and sidewalk reconstruction. Replacement of the water main will minimize the future need to dig up newly reconstructed streets, sidewalks and curbs. Utility District personnel recommend replacing 1,800 feet of existing 10-inch diameter water main with 1,800 feet of 12-inch diameter cement-lined ductile iron pipe between Royal Street and Hanson Street. The Utility District is planning to replace in the year 2000 that portion of the water main which runs between Route 133 and Royal Street.

Sewer Mains. The sewer lines serving the downtown, which were installed in the 1950s, consist of concrete pipe with poured joints. The joints have lost all integrity, causing major inflow. Utility District personnel recommend replacing these lines with 3,450 feet of SDR35 PVC with gasket joints between Royal Street and Hanson Street. Reducing inflow and infiltration will reduce the cost of sending sanitary wastes to the Augusta Sanitary District (Winthrop does not have its own treatment plant). Currently, inflow/infiltration costs the District about \$1,100 per rain event.

Public Parking

Between Bowdoin Street and Green Street, there are 49 on-street public parking spaces including 18 spaces on the south side, and 31 spaces on the north side. In addition, there are 12 public parking spaces on the east side of Union Street, and 25 space in the public parking lot on the west side of Union Street at the intersection of Main and Union Streets, for a total of 86 public parking spaces. This count includes only clearly marked spaces which are available for general parking. It does not include employee parking spaces to the rear of downtown buildings, unmarked spaces, or parking spaces on church property or parking spaces on the sites of various businesses.

Based on an analysis of available, public parking spaces, and a calculation of overall parking demand, there is a shortage of 33 parking spaces along Main Street. This figure was calculated by adding the total, first-floor space of retail and service establishments as well as vacant buildings, exclusive of businesses which have their own on-site parking such as Key Bank, and multiplying the total (39,606 square feet) by the conservative parking standard of 3 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross leasable space found in many local ordinances. The overall parking demand, 39,606 square feet, includes 10,493 square feet of service space, 16,482 square feet of retail space, and 12,631 square feet of vacant space. The projected parking demand is based on the assumption that all vacant buildings eventually will be fully occupied. These numbers are subject to significant change if the Post Office constructs a new facility on the site of the former Village Green hardware and Downeast Pharmacy.



Winthrop Main Street
Public Parking
Inventory

The parking shortage is not evenly distributed along Main Street. The public parking lot in front of Sully's and on Union Street serves the central portion of the downtown fairly well. However, there are no on-site parking spaces in front of the businesses to the east of the central downtown area (the area in the vicinity of the Thomas Agency and adjacent businesses), and there is a parking shortage in the vicinity of 48 Main Street and the Post Office (there is only one parking spot immediately in front of the Post Office).

One option for providing additional parking is to pave a portion of the Town-owned lot immediately behind 48 Main Street. This unpaved area was used in the past for parking by tenants of 48 Main Street and could again serve tenants when the building is rehabilitated and rented out. In order to assure sufficient parking and provide for a green area along Mill Stream, the lot behind Smith's garage should be purchased and developed in conjunction with the Town-owned lot. The location of downtown parking spaces is shown on the map on the next page.

Open Space

There are a number of open space areas which either contribute to the village setting or have the potential to enhance the downtown.

The open space area in front of the former Village Green Hardware is an asset to the community and should either be retained or be redesigned and relocated if the property is redeveloped. If the property is redeveloped, the village green could be located adjacent to the public parking lot to better function with the parking lot as a village common.

There is a significant open space area behind 48 Main Street and the service station which could be developed into a public parking area and green space/park area. Public parking could be provided immediately behind 48 Main Street and the service station, and a green area could extend from the parking lot to Mill Stream. A trail could be developed from the green space along Mill Stream and out to Union Street. The development of the open space and trail area would require the purchase or lease of land behind the service station. Two trail easements would have to be obtained from property owners on Union Street.

Downtown Buildings

Downtown Winthrop serves as the focal point of the community. The quality, condition and appearance of the Town's downtown buildings are part of what the downtown represents to the Winthrop.

Some of the oldest buildings in Winthrop are located in the downtown village area, which historically has served as the economic center of the community. Several mills were once located in the downtown. Mill workers lived primarily in and around the downtown, often in apartments located on the upper floors of downtown commercial buildings.

Commercial Structures. There are a total of 32 commercial structures along Main Street exclusive of the Carleton Woolen Mill complex with a total combined first floor area of 66,008 square feet. This total includes 18 service business with a total combined first floor area of 25,985 square feet, and nine retail businesses with a total combined first floor area of 25,521 square feet. There are five vacant buildings with a total combined first floor area of 14,502 square feet.

Other Non-Residential Structures. Other non-residential structures along Main Street include the Post Office, Carleton Woolen Mills, two churches (Winthrop United Methodist Church and Winthrop Congregational Church), two banks (Key Bank and Kennebec Savings Bank), the Town Office, and the Fire Station.

48 Main Street. 48 Main Street, which is now owned by the Town of Winthrop, is the most prominent building on Main Street. This four-story, 100-year old brick building presents the most stately initial appearance to anyone entering the downtown. However, a closer examination reveals a deteriorated roof, windows that are falling apart, a wooden addition in the back which is collapsing, and deteriorated, shabby and missing display windows in the front. Other problems include dilapidated entrances and brick-work that is in need of repointing and/or is coming loose from the building. On the east side, one wall is bulging because ice got in between the main part of the structure and the exterior layer of bricks. The foundation on the back side is deteriorated. The building has been vacant about 7 years.

Code violations abound. The electrical system inside was cobbled together over the years and does not come close to meeting state requirements. The interior plumbing system does not meet the requirements of the State's plumbing code. There are asbestos tiles on the first floor. The heating system is ruined. When the electricity to the building was cut off about 7 years ago all of the interior radiators, pipes and water heaters froze and burst because water was left in them. The boiler is submerged in a pool of ice and is probably ruined. Utilities on the upper floors are inaccessible because they are encased in several layers of false ceilings. Over the years, this building has been the site of many failed business ventures. There have been no building renovations other than a recent Town investment to secure and clean the building. The Town filled four roll-off dumpsters with building debris, removed 250 pigeons and exterminated a rat population.

A privately funded engineering evaluation of the building prepared in 1996 concluded that it could cost anywhere between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000 to rehabilitate the exterior and all interior floors.

The table on the following pages includes an inventory of downtown buildings. It is keyed to the Town's tax maps and lot numbers and includes information obtained from Winthrop's tax records. For each of the listings, the inventory includes the name of the building, the tax map and lot number, the ground floor square footage of the building, an indication of whether the ground floor business is a retail or service establishment or whether the building is vacant, and general statements of building condition and type.

**SUMMARY OF MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
NORTH SIDE**

#	Occupant	Tax Map/Lot	Square Foot	Use	Condition	Description
1	Gardiner Savings	26/78	2116	Service	Good	1-Story Frame
2	Winthrop Mini-Mart	26/81	1488	Retail	Good	2-story concrete, brick
3	Alternative Options	31/221	1744	Service	Good	White Colonial Frame
4	Brian Berry Associates	31/222	850	Service	Average	2-story frame
5	Kennebec Savings bank	31/1	2346	Service	Average	One story brick/wood
6	Vacant (Village Green Hardware)	31/4a	4221	Vacant	Fair	One story frame
7	Vacant (Downeast Pharmacy, office)	31/50	4418	Vacant	Fair	2-story wood frame, gable roof
8	Sully's	31/53	9000	Retail	Good	2-story wood frame
9	Trans State Insurance	31/67	1187	Service	Fair	Single story brick and glass
10	Ned's Place	31/68	3967	Retail	Average	2 1/2 story frame
11	Vacant (48 Main)	31/69	2816	Vacant	Poor	4-story brick
12	Vacant (Smith's Mobile)	31/71	1871	Vacant	Average	Cinder block construction

13	Foshay Carlton, Dairy Delight	31/74	3071	Retail	Good	Extended 1-story commercial
14	One Green Street	31/97	1000	Service	Average	2 1/2-story wood frame
15	Arata's Service Station	31/98	720	Service	Poor	Deteriorated wood frame
16	Brennan Insurance	31/99	1000	Service	Good	2-story frame
17	Mia Linas	31/133A	3000	Retail	Good	2-story frame

**SUMMARY OF MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
SOUTH SIDE**

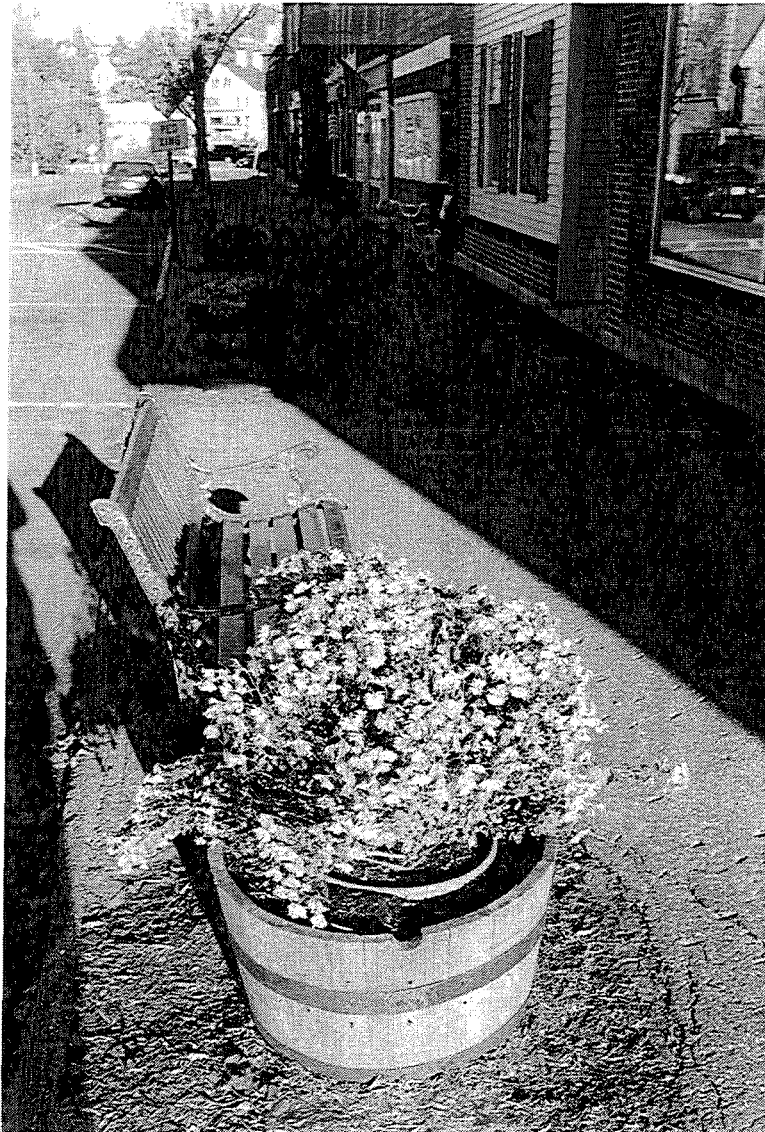
#	Occupant	Tax Map/Lot	Square Foot	Use	Condi- tion	Description
18	Action Video	27/40A	2100	Service	Good	1-story wood gable roof
19	Herb's Auto Shop	27/40	2076	Service	Fair	Cinder block construction
20	Winthrop House of Pizza, AFLAC, Diplock's	27/39	4480	Retail	Average	1-story brick, gable roof
21	Shauna Spillman	27/37	1200	Service	Average	2-story wood frame
22	Thomas Agency	27/34	950	Service	Good	1 1/2 story wood frame
23	Law Office	27/33	1066	Service	Good	1 1/2 story wood frame

24	Michael's Barber Shop	31/220	860	Service	Average	Small wood frame cape
25	Fairfields Insurance	31/219	1188	Service	Good	Wood frame cape, brick addition
26	Key Bank	31/214	2527	Service	Good	1-story with bell tower, front portico
27	CommTel	31/212, 211	4686	Service	Average	Cinder block construction, brick/glass front, wood frame
28	Apple Valley Books	31/210	860	Retail	Good	2-story frame, brick front
29	Vacant Rheames	31/209	1176	Vacant <i>Rheames</i>	Poor	2-story frame; burned out, being renovated
30	Second Time Around	31/208	884	Retail	Fair	2 1/2 story frame
31	Rheames	31/207	1771	Retail <i>Vacant</i>	Fair	2 story frame
32	53 Main Street	31/200	1685	Service	Fair	2 story frame

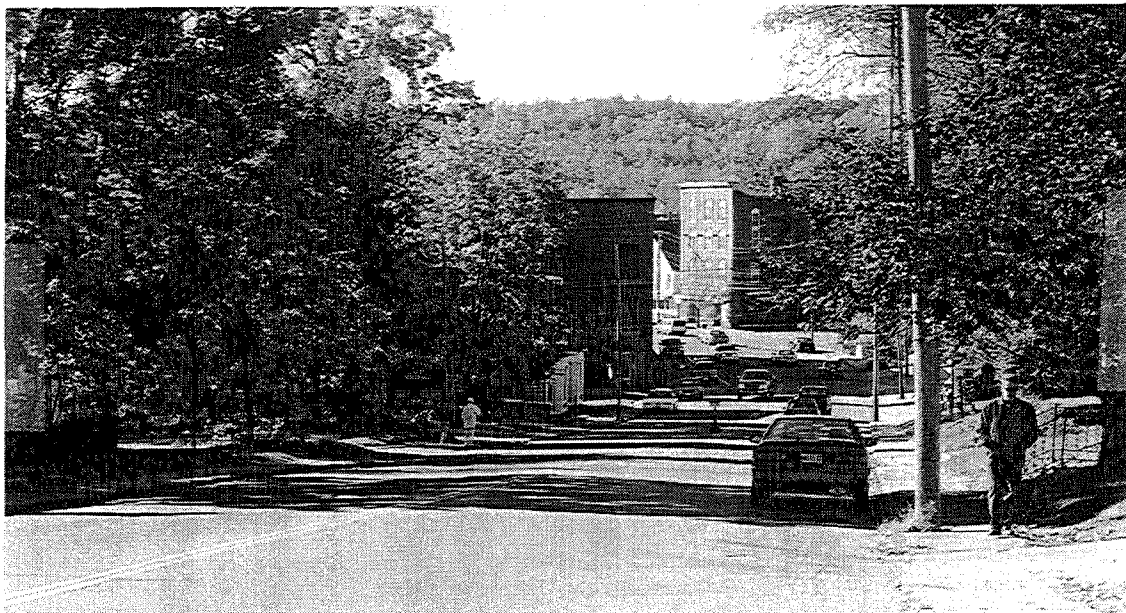
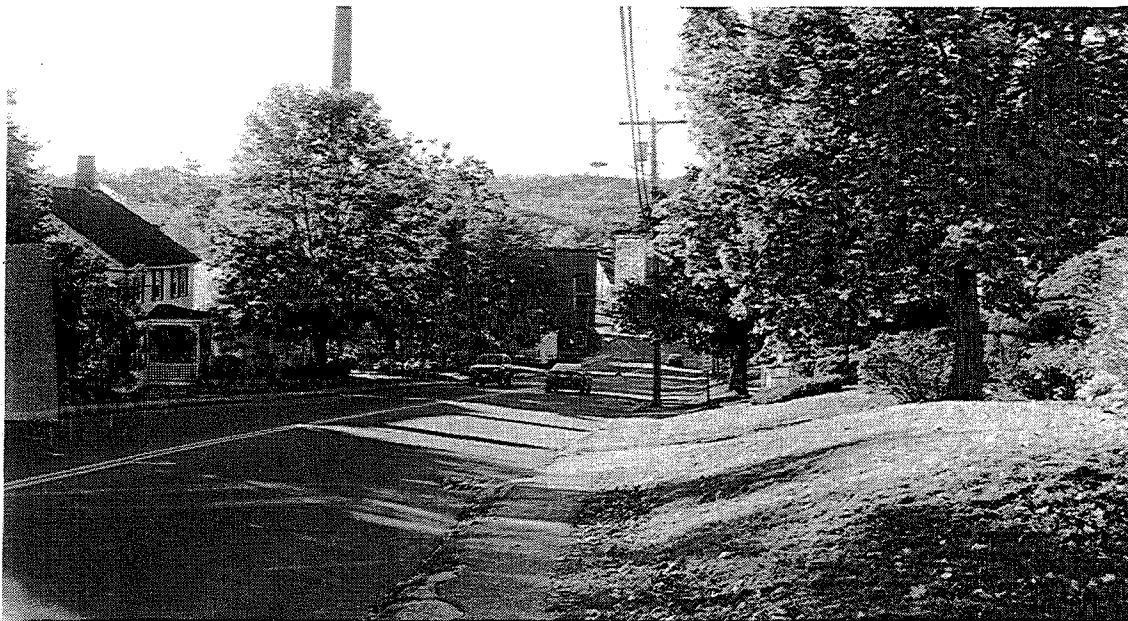
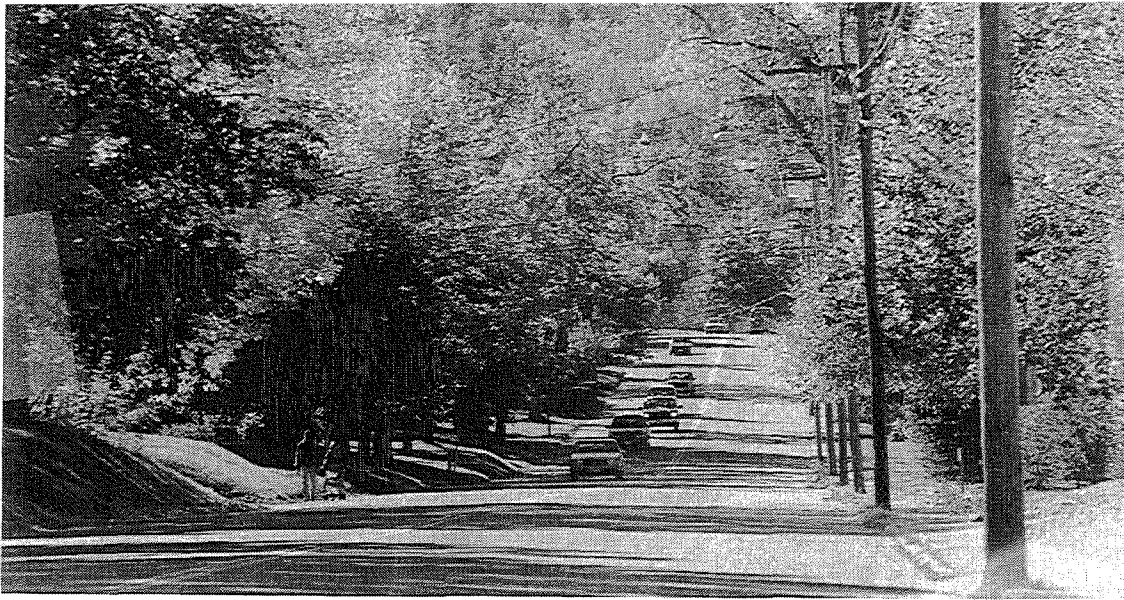
Photographs of Downtown Winthrop - Some Lessons Learned

The following photos and text show both positive and negative aspects of Main Street. Clearly, the Town can build upon its best features while finding ways to address the negative features.

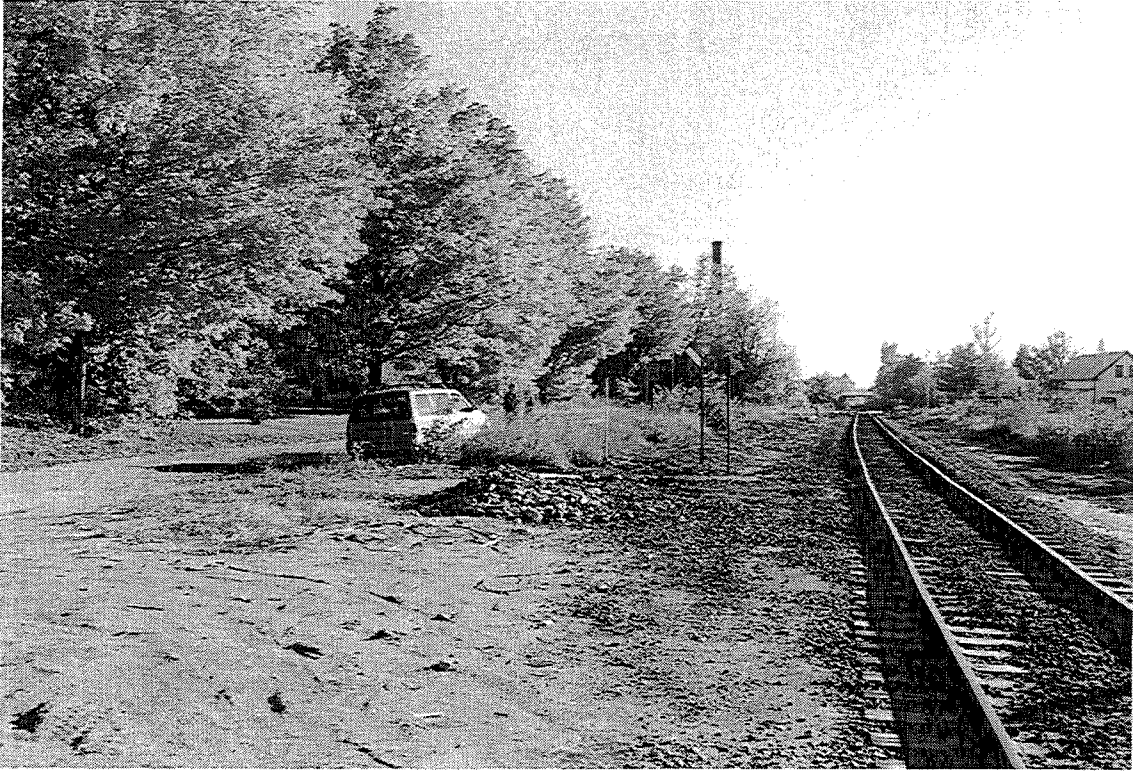
These photo and comments will, hopefully, spark further ideas and debate and lead to a revitalized downtown that retains the best of the past while introducing fresh new concepts.



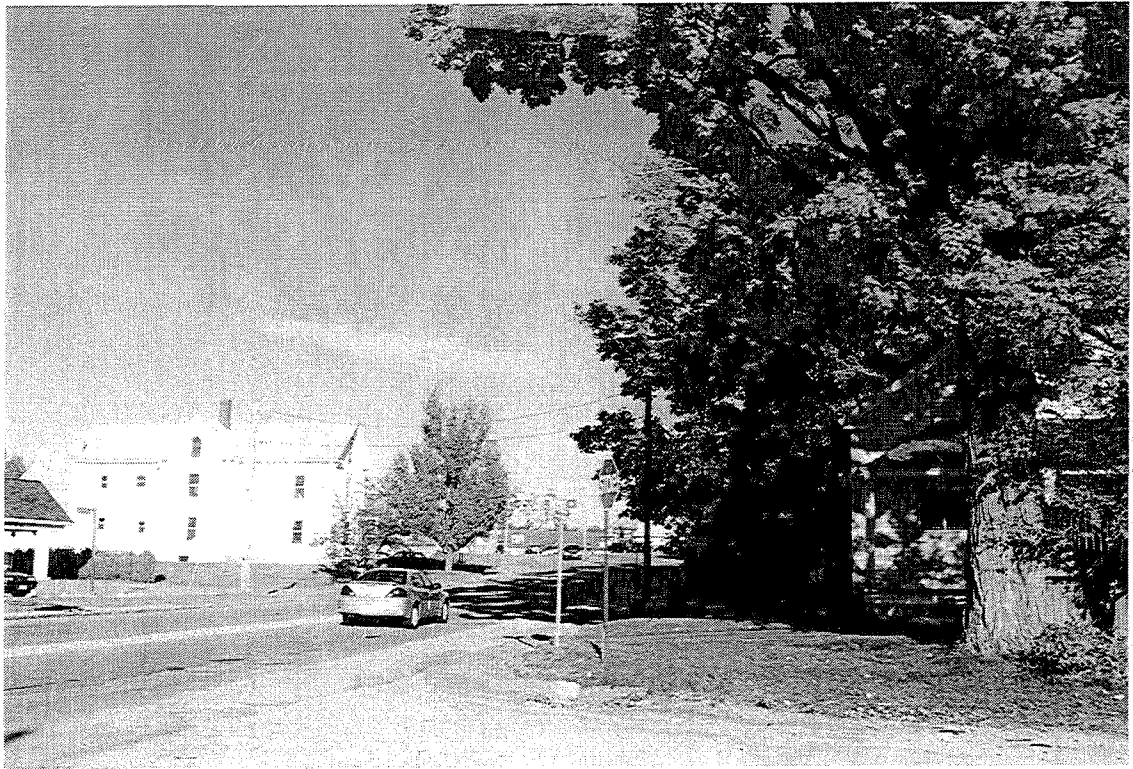
TLC: A formula that works! Small positive acts, tender loving care, can flower and build momentum.

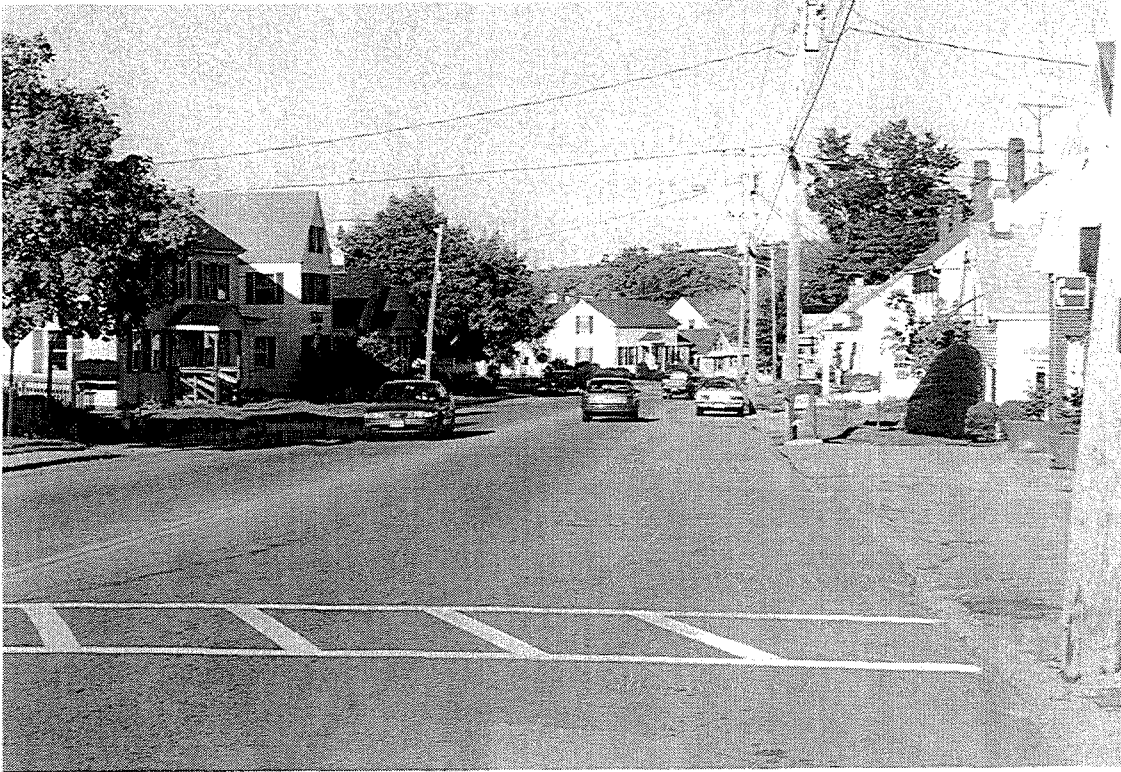


Main Street's "gateway" avenue approach from the east should be retained, if not improved. It is attractive, welcoming, and draws you in, towards the village center.



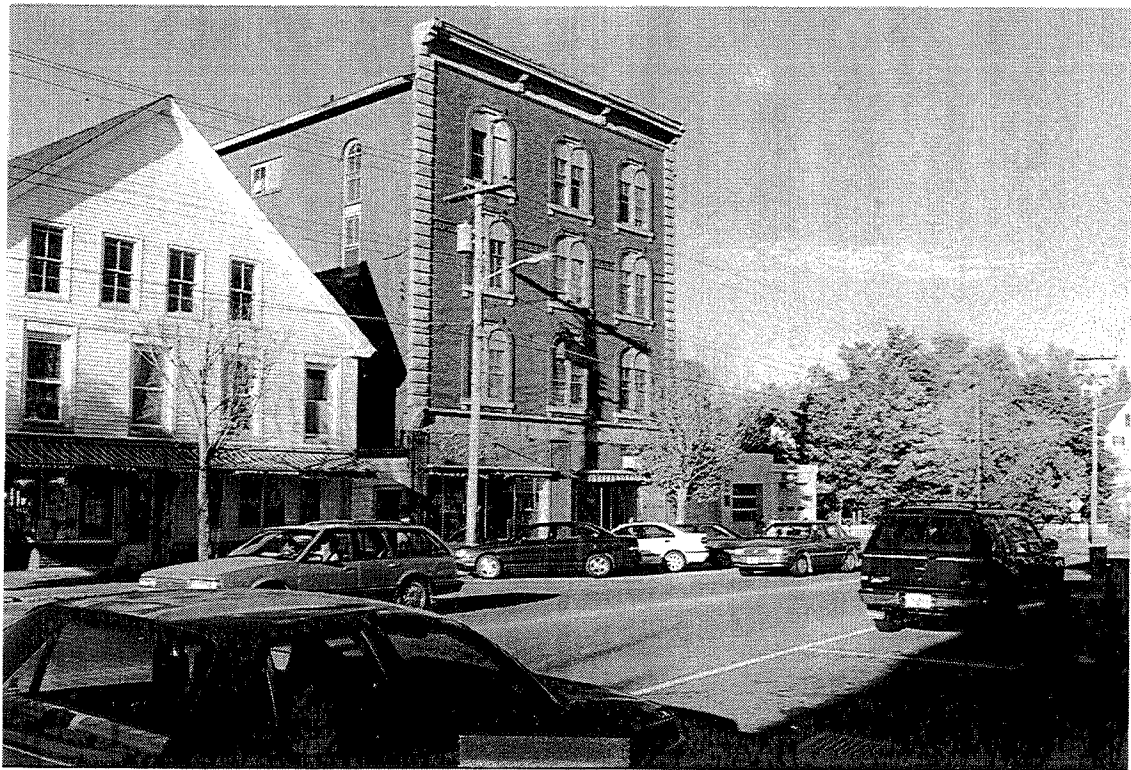
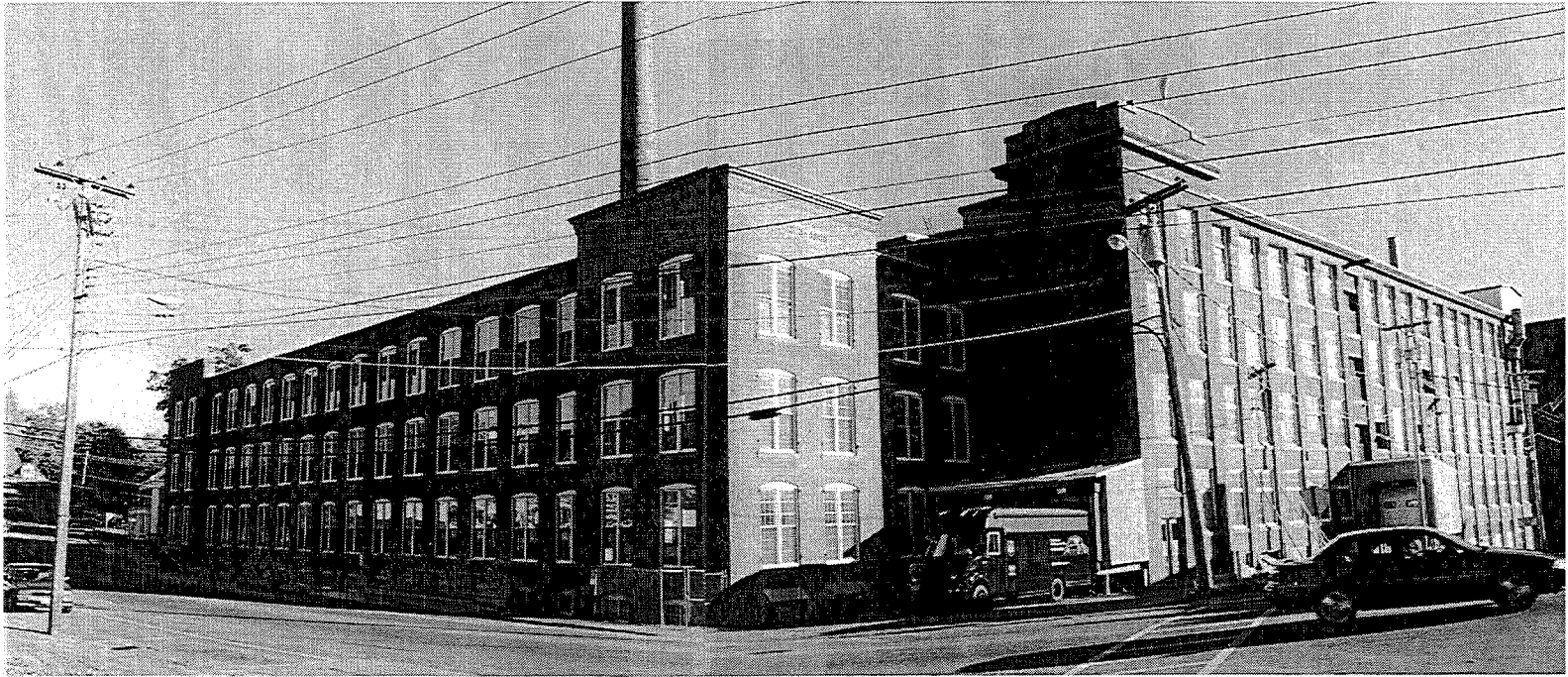
The railroad tracks (above) and the west end of Main Street (below) are not attractive and do not create a good gateway. The tracks present a barren landscape with no signage of landscaping.





An example of a well marked crosswalk (above) but wheelchair inaccessible curb. Also note the lack of sidewalk and wide unfriendly curb cuts (above and below).

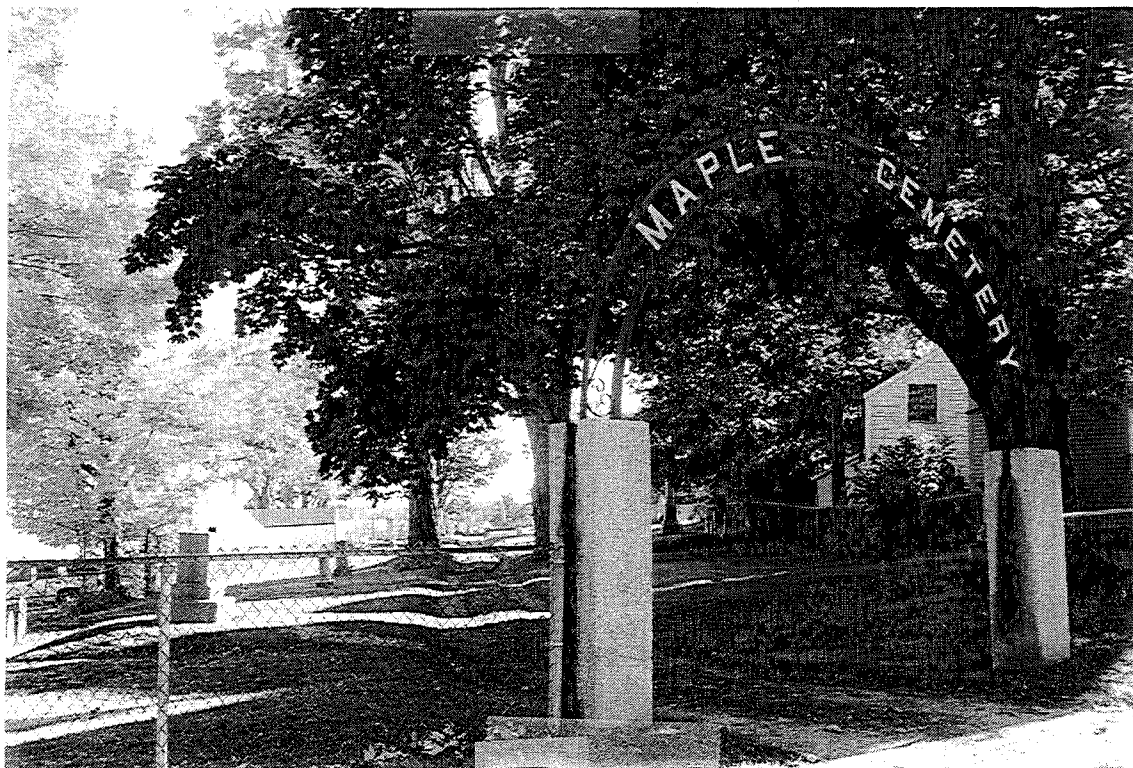


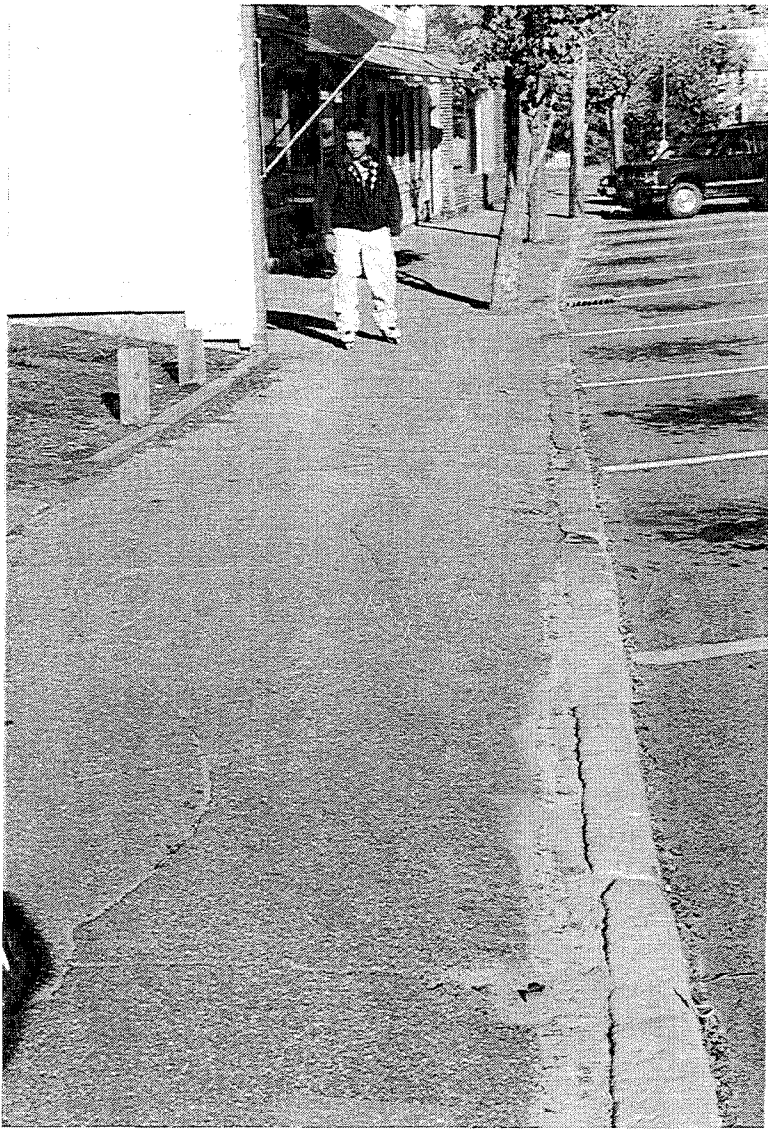


The village center and Main Street is celebrated and defined by 3 and 4 story, substantial, historic structures.



The delight of the natural world introduced into the village center; trees, water, grass provide welcome relief! (The fences and rail should, however, embellish and not detract from, the scene).

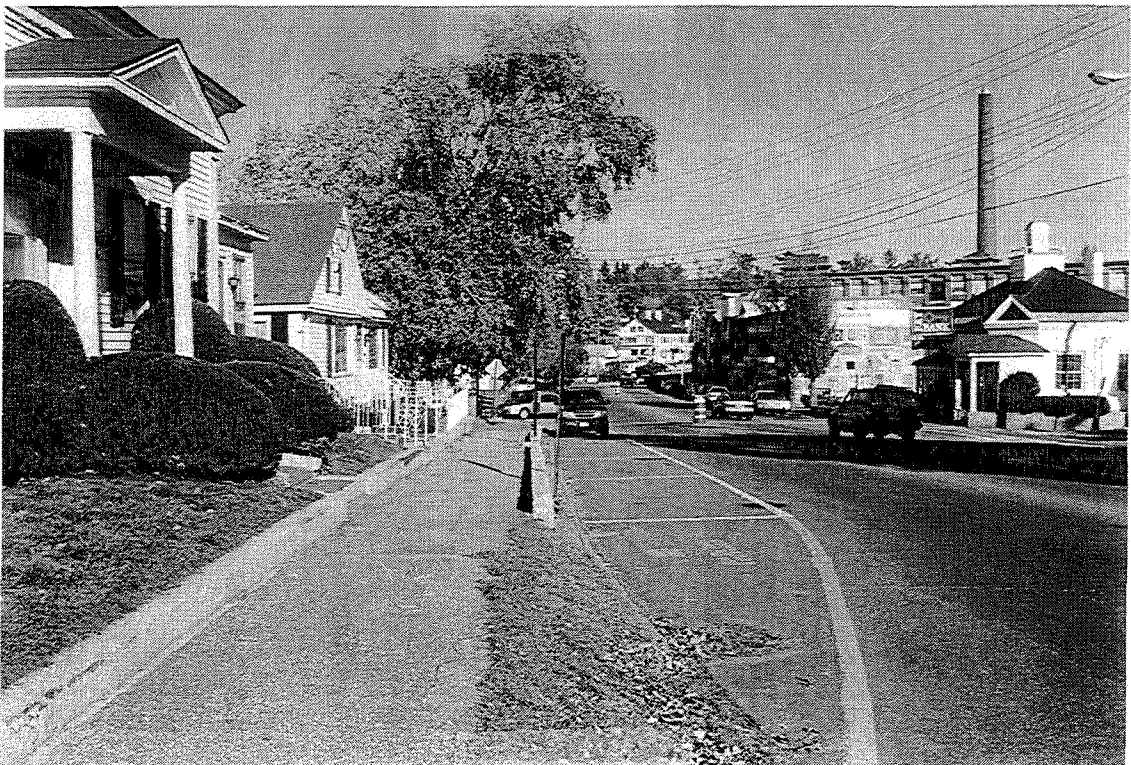


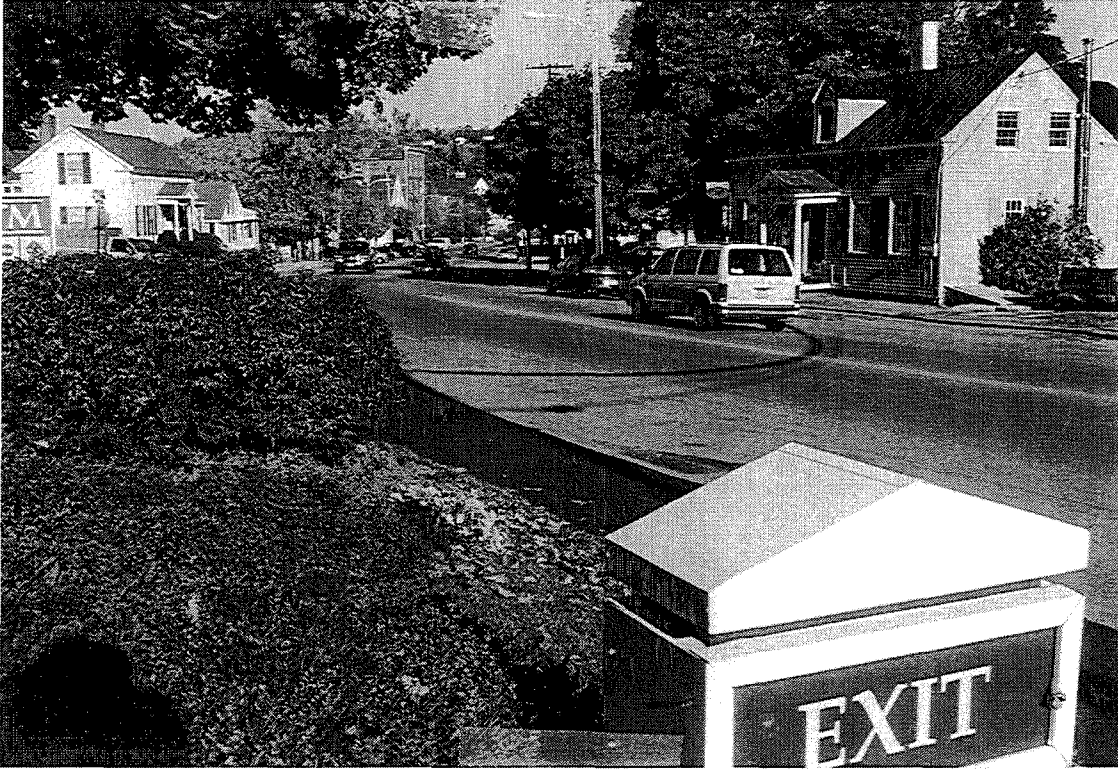


Broken curbs, cracked sidewalk, and crudely painted granite curb stones send the wrong message; they are ugly if not dangerous.



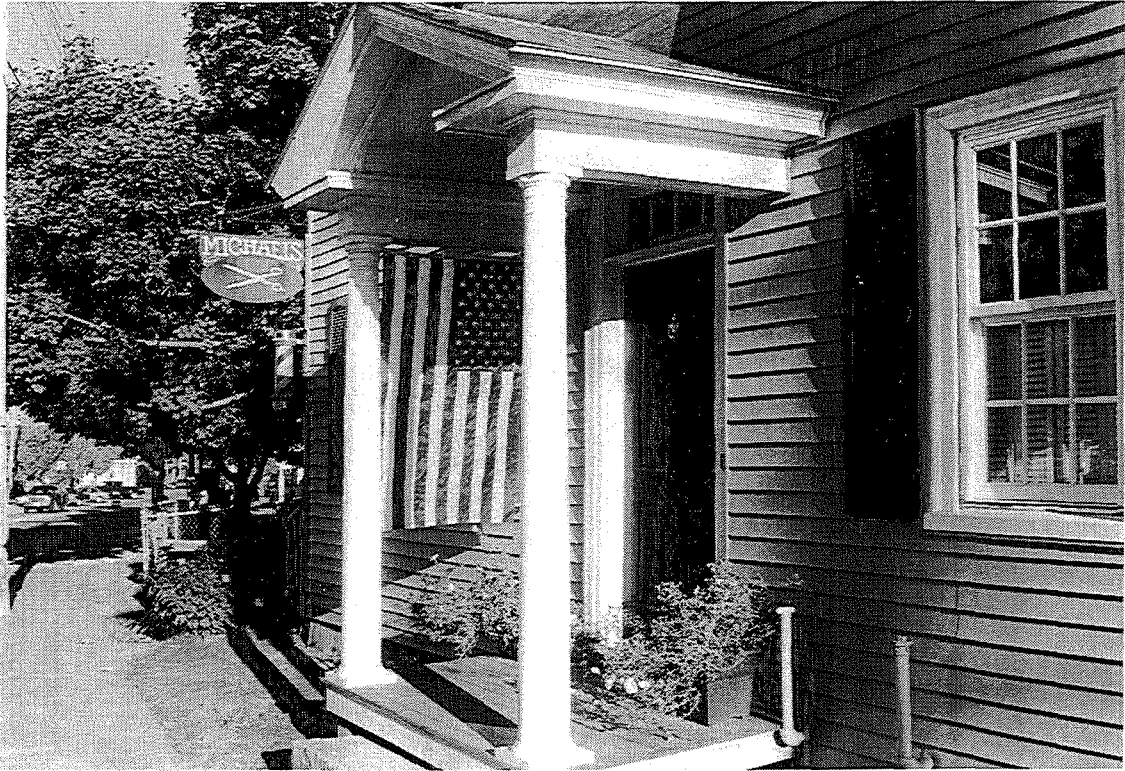
Crosswalks and “street furniture” in the center of town (above). Note the pleasant scale of street side buildings, the wide street, and crossing barrel, to slow traffic. The sidewalk (below) is in fair condition. It is raised above the street at this location by ± 18 inches. Note the decrease in the height of buildings west of the center of the village.



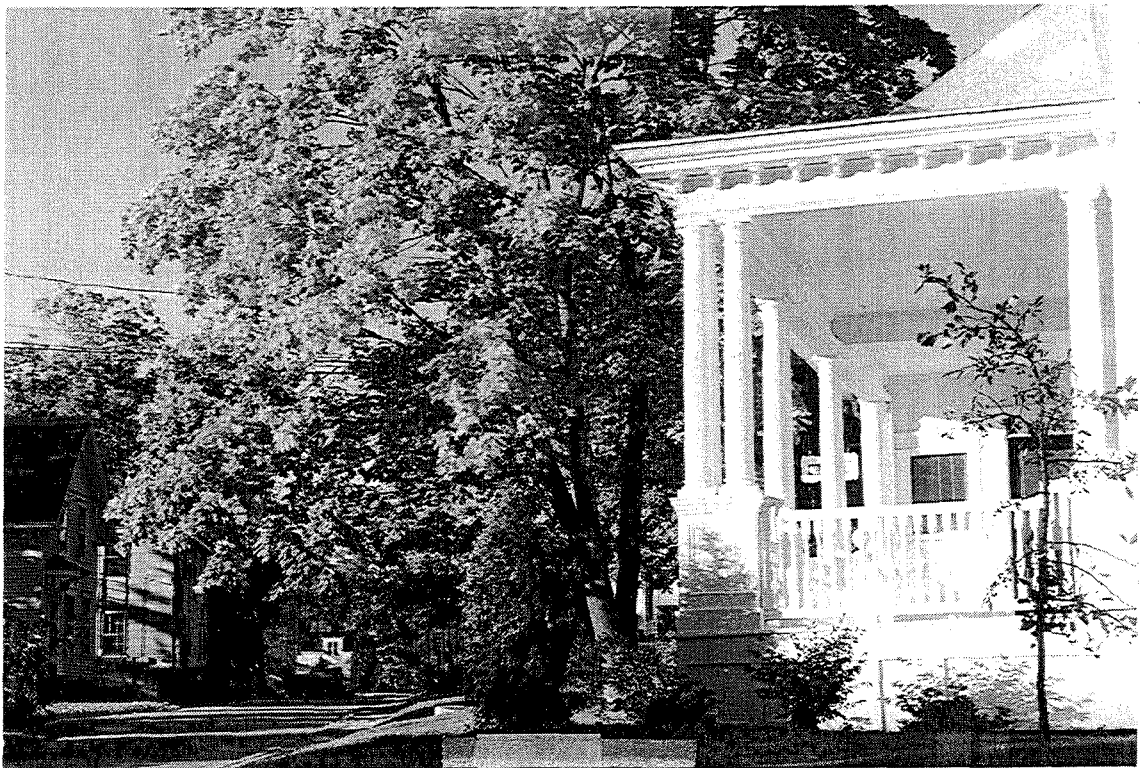


Historic architecture, good landscaping, and appropriately scaled signage – marred by poor sidewalk and overhead wires – west of Bowdoin Street, on Main Street.





More TLC, good modest signage and respect for historic architecture (above), in this case a residence used for commercial purposes on Main Street. And (below) a pleasant residential street with gracious historic homes and magnificent trees, seen from Main Street.

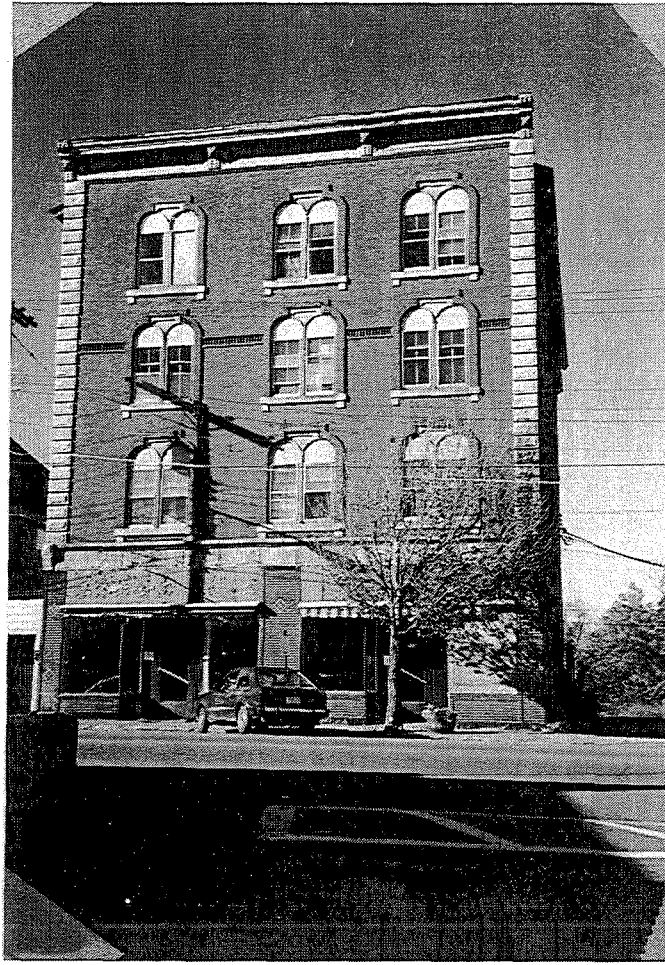




A number of street trees planted in the 1980s have either died or are misshapen and need to be replaced

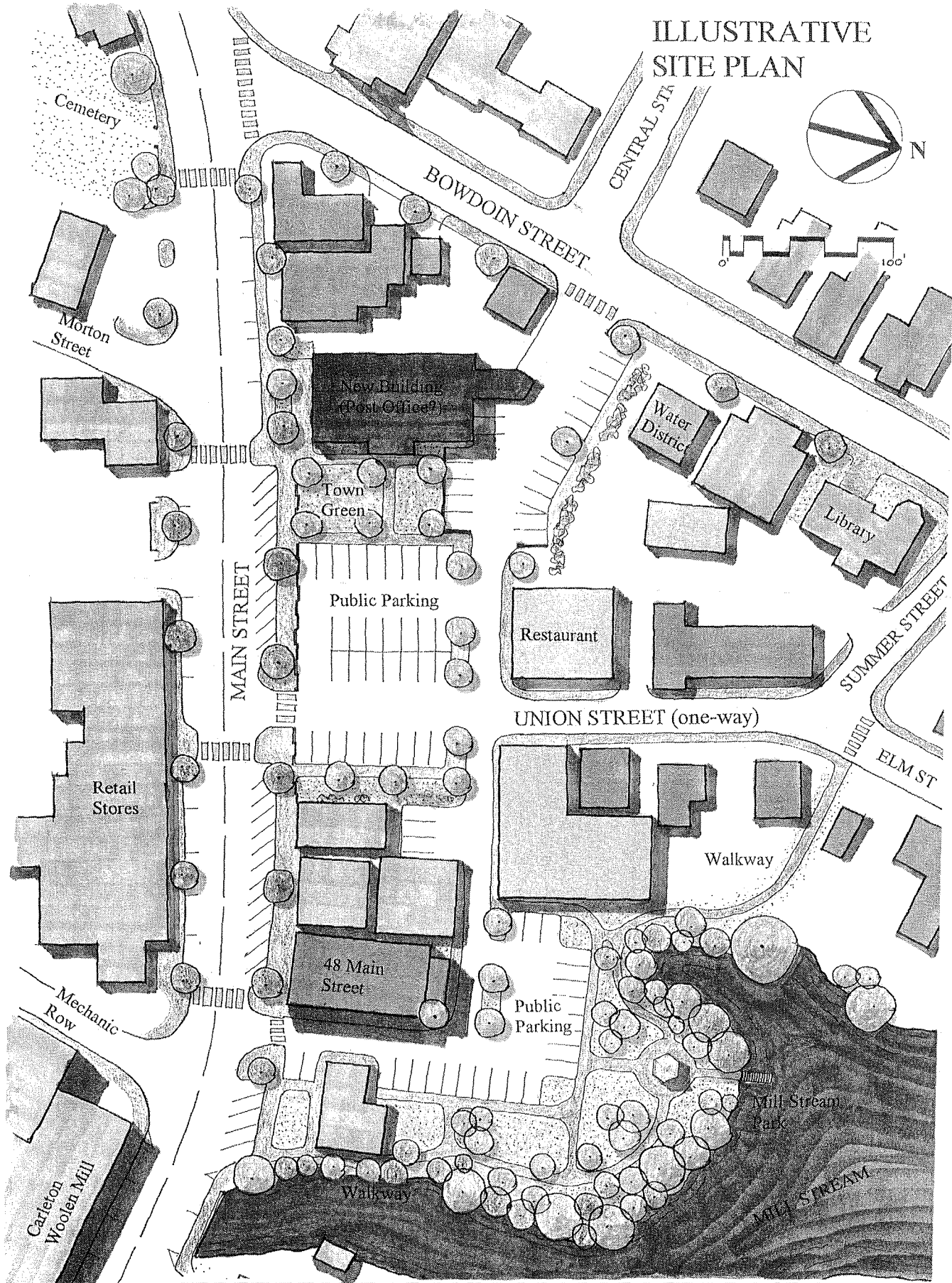


A number of delightful murals capture the spirit and reflect the energy of the community!



A number of vacant buildings are exerting a blighting influence on the downtown

ILLUSTRATIVE
SITE PLAN



**TOWN OF WINTHROP
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN**
Prepared by Kent Associates, Planning and Design Consultants, in association with
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January 2000

2. WINTHROP VISIONING SESSION

On November 4, 1999, over 50 Winthrop citizens gathered at the Middle School from 6 to 9 p.m. to discuss their hopes and desires with regard to Winthrop's downtown. The group was welcomed by Mike Danforth of the Winthrop Council, and facilitated by Frank O'Hara of Planning Decisions. Rich Rothe of Rothe Associates took notes on flip charts. The following is Frank O'Hara's translation of those notes into a statement of vision for Winthrop Main Street.

Vision for Winthrop's Main Street

Winthrop Maine street is a small, friendly, inviting New England Village. The stores and houses have historic white paint and shutters. Sidewalks are sheltered by shade trees and attractive new street lights. It's a walkable place. Most cars are invisible, parked behind the buildings on Main Street. Regular shuttle bus service to neighboring towns and connecting bike trails also reduce traffic. There are interesting shops, attractive apartments and senior housing, an active community center for young and old, and a welcoming new Town Hall. The library is expanded and offers more arts and cultural activities. The Carleton Woolen Mill remains a center of activity, either in its current role of producing cloth, or in a future role as a home for shops, small businesses, or apartments.

The stores attract a diverse mix of people. Shopping ranges from high-end arts, crafts, and ethnic restaurants for professionals and tourists, to day-to-day stores and family restaurants for seniors and young families. Young people are also downtown to listen to music and socialize.

Right in the middle of Town, in the parking lot in front of Sully's and the new post office, there is a fountain, a community bulletin board, and a farmer's market 2 days a week. There is a walking path along the Mill stream connecting Main Street to the two nearby lakes, Maranacook and Annabessacook. On the path is a new park around the old lagoons behind Carleton Mill.

Along Maranacook Lake there are new docks for boats, seaplanes, and the high school sailing and rowing teams; new affordable condominiums; and even a floating restaurant. In the winter there is lighted hockey and skating on the lake. Ducks are controlled. The rail station is rehabilitated and serves day-trippers and tourists, as well as residents seeking to hook up with a new passenger rail service in Augusta.

In short, Main Street Winthrop is a place where young and old can come to shop, eat, work, live, visit, walk, bicycle, skateboard, sail, skate, and celebrate.

Three Focuses for Short-Term Action

1. Clean up the appearance of Main Street

This has many possibilities. The group did not prioritize which might come first. Among the ideas were the following:

- a) new lights
- b) new and repaired sidewalks
- c) more mural paintings
- d) move wires underground
- e) add flower baskets
- f) add plantings
- g) clean buildings
- h) remove eyesore buildings
- i) add Christmas lights
- j) build a fountain
- k) re-use 48 Main Street
- l) do something with old Audette's building

2. Increase the number of fairs and festivals and activities in the downtown

There are already many successful activities on Main Street, from wall mural painting to the annual art show to fireworks. However, the group felt that this was just the beginning. There were ideas for adding activities at Norcross Point and on Maranacook Lake – such things as high school sailing and rowing meets, sailing races, and skating races. There also were ideas for additional craft shows and fairs on Main Street. The desire was to get activities downtown in all four seasons, meeting the needs of all age groups in and around Winthrop.

3. Create a community center or centers

The need for this was felt strongly by most participants in the meeting, although exactly what form such a center would take differed to different people. Some had an idea of a senior center, with meals and craft activities; others mentioned a teen center with music and games; others thought of an art gallery or cultural space; and some had some combination of all these ideas. Proposed locations included a library expansion, part of the new high school, in the old lace factory, or along Main or Union Streets.

In short, this is a strongly-felt need which needs further work by local committees in order to define its role and location.

Do the Post Office Right!

Participants were excited that the Post Office is staying on Main Street in a new building. They expressed the hope that the Post Office would put the front of its new building along the street itself; that the design would be compatible with the historic New England character of surrounding buildings; and that it be done in a way which ensures that the space in front of Sully's could continue to be used for farmer's markets and other community activities.

Considerations for the Location of Specific Activities

1. Restaurants

Why Main Street is a good place to locate restaurants

- a) Its walking distance from houses
- b) It's nearby to people
- c) People know each other
- d) It's close to lakes
- e) People want to support local the local economy

What kinds of additional restaurants might locate there

- a) Family, affordable restaurants
- b) A place with a good salad bar
- c) A place with ambience, atmosphere

What kinds of new customers might be attracted?

- a) People from Augusta (if it was a new specialty restaurant)
- b) A place with music for young adults
- c) People who use the lakes for vacation or day trip purposes
- d) People coming from a play or movie

2. Shopping

What kinds of new stores would you patronize on Main Street

- a) Books
- b) Clothing
- c) Groceries
- d) Hardware
- e) Greeting Cards
- f) Hobbies, music -- something for young people

- g) Specialty store like the Sign of the Sun in Waterville
- h) Dime store like Reny's in Gardiner
- i) Coffee shop (café)
- j) Music store (CD's)
- k) Craft stores or Maine-made craft store
- l) Sporting goods
- m) Art gallery
- n) Antique stores
- o) Shoe store

3. Offices

Why is Main Street a good place for professional offices?

- a) Near to lakes
- b) Near to Augusta airport
- c) Pretty
- d) Inexpensive rents
- e) Near other economic areas -- Lewiston, Augusta, Brunswick
- f) Has a Main Street market area where events are held

What are problems with Main Street as an office location?

- a) Visibility from Route 202
- b) Parking
- c) Distance to state government complex
- d) Appearance – run-down in places

What additional offices would you patronize downtown?

- a) Doctor
- b) Computer services

4. Apartments and Homes

Why is the Main Street area a good place to live?

- a) Close to everything
- b) Stable neighborhoods
- c) Proximity to lake
- d) Near to schools
- e) Good rental tenants
- f) Village atmosphere

What kinds of housing are missing downtown?

- a) Condominiums for young people hired at EnvisionNet
- b) Assisted living for the elderly

What is missing for residential living downtown?

- a) Need transportation for elderly

5. Arts and Culture

What new arts and culture activities would do well downtown?

- a) Library wing for arts and crafts, more books, and an Internet café
- b) Something for kids to do after school
- c) Street dances
- d) Senior center
- e) Community center for people of all ages

6. Fairs, Festivals, and Events

What's going on already?

- a) Farmers market
- b) Parades
- c) Sidewalk art show
- d) Fireworks
- e) Annual community mural program
- f) Christmas parade (Community advertiser helps)
- g) Spring concert
- h) May parade
- i) Snowmobile races

What would you add to the mix?

- a) Hockey rink on the lake
- b) Crew races on the lake
- c) Sailing
- d) Boat races
- e) Skating
- f) Winthrop Pride Day

3. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

There were a number of important milestones leading up to the development of this Downtown Revitalization Plan. These are summarized in the paragraphs below.

Comprehensive Plan

In 1996, the Town adopted a Comprehensive Plan which recommended that the Town maintain the village/downtown as the economic center of the community. This plan, which was prepared with widespread input from the Town's citizens, was found by the State Planning Office to be consistent with the State's growth management law.

Winthrop Shoppers' Survey

In 1997, Winthrop's Downtown Development Corporation distributed a Winthrop Shoppers' Survey to downtown shoppers as well as patrons of downtown activities including the art show. The results of the survey showed strong support for rehabilitating the downtown.

Downtown Merchants Survey

In January, 2000, Winthrop distributed, collected and tabulated a Downtown Merchants Survey which asked merchants to rate the actions contained in the downtown revitalization plan. There was strong support for all of the activities contained in this application. Specific results included: reconstruct sidewalks (23 in favor, 3 no opinion, 4 opposed); replace lighting (20 in favor, 5 no opinion, 4 oppose); implement facade grant program (24 in favor, 3 no opinion, 3 oppose); rehabilitate 48 Main Street (20 in favor, 5 no opinion, 4 oppose); construct parking lot in back of 48 Main (21 in favor, 7 no opinion, 2 oppose); create a small park along Mill Stream (23 in favor, 2 no opinion, 5 oppose).

Downtown Visioning

On November 4, 1999, the Town of Winthrop held a downtown visioning/brainstorming session for the community at large (See previous section). Information about the visioning session was handed at the polling booths on November 2, and was included in a front-page article of section C of the Kennebec Journal on November 4. The session was attended by over 60 people. The 3-hour session was lively and constructive. Major themes which emerged included:

- clean up the appearance of Main Street (new lights, new and repaired sidewalks, more mural paintings, move wires underground, add flower baskets, add plantings, clean buildings, remove eyesore buildings, add Christmas lights, build a fountain, re-use 48 Main Street, do something with old Audette's building).

- increase the number of fairs, festivals and activities in the downtown (build on current successes such as the annual art show and fireworks)
- create a community center or centers (such as a senior center or teen center or some combination)
- do the Post Office right!(design should be compatible with the historic New England character of surrounding buildings, and it should be done in such a way that the space in front of Sully's can continue to be used for farmers' markets and other community activities.
- bring a greater variety of businesses to downtown Winthrop (such as stores for books, clothing, groceries, hardware, greeting cards, hobbies and music.

Town Council Meetings

Beginning in the fall of 1998, the Town Council devoted a number of meetings to the downtown. In a December, 1998 brainstorming session, the Council and business leaders considered ideas for preparing a downtown action plan and for doing something about 48 Main Street. On Dec. 7, the Council voted to acquire ownership of the building and either renovate it or tear it down. At subsequent meetings, the Council voted to proceed with hiring one or more consultants to prepare a downtown plan and conduct a public visioning process as part of the preparation of that plan.

48 Main Street Committee

In the spring of 1999, the Council formed the 48 Main Street Committee to evaluate proposals from developers for the redevelopment of 48 Main Street and to make recommendations to the Council for follow-up actions. The Committee met through the summer of 1999. In its written report to the Council which the Council reviewed on August 2, the Committee reported that it had reviewed Dick Dyer's proposal for renovating the building. The high cost of rehabilitating the building would result in rents as high as \$15/foot for first floor office space which is way above market rates. The Committee recommended that the Council proceed with the preparation of a downtown revitalization grant that would include funds to support renovation of the building and the construction of a parking lot behind 48 Main.

Main Street Committee

Beginning in September of 1998, an informal group of citizens known as the Main Street Committee began to meet to work on a downtown visioning session and the preparation of a Main Street Plan for Downtown Winthrop. This Committee sponsored the visioning session that was held on November 4, and prepared this plan over the course of several months. The Committee was also instrumental in applying for two community development block grants including a Public Facilities Infrastructure Grant on December 3 and a Downtown Revitalization Grant on January 21, 2000. As part of its work, the Committee recommended to the Town Council that Winthrop continue to be proactive in applying for grants to implement the downtown plan.

Meeting Summary

There have been many meetings leading to the preparation of the downtown revitalization plan and the development a CDBG application. Recent meetings included:

- 9/16/98 Town Council meets to discuss 48 Main Street
- 9/29/98 Town Council meets to review Post Office Plans, discuss 48 Main St.
- 11/2/98 Town Council discusses visioning session for Post Office, 48 Main St.
- 12/7/98 Town Council hires appraiser for 48 Main St. lot
- 2/1/99 Town Council discusses visioning for Post Office, 48 Main St.
- 3/1/99 Town Council reviews update on downtown visioning
- 4/5/99 Town Council hears update on Post Office, receives 48 Main St. lot appraisal of \$14,000
- 5/26/99 Meeting of Town Manager, Peter Lyford, Dick Dyer to review CDBG rules for 48 Main St. renovation and business assistance possibilities
- 6/7/99 Town Council appoints 48 Main St. review committee
- 6/23/99 48 Main St. Committee meets to review proposals for development of 48 Main
- 8/2/99 Town Council approves 48 Main St. Committees recommendations and action plan
- 8/20/99 Council Subcommittee meets to discuss bid list for consultants to do public visioning session
- 8/23/99 Council Subcommittee conducts final review of RFP
- 9/10/99 Council Subcommittee reviews consultant proposals for downtown plan and visioning session
- 9/22/99 Council Subcommittee meets with Rich Rothe, Frank O'Hara on plan and visioning session
- 9/27/99 Town Council conducts goals session; goal #1 is to continue to work on downtown master plan and development
- 9/29/99 Main Street Committee holds first meeting to discuss the plan, visioning and grant process
- 10/18/99 Main Street Committee meets to discuss the upcoming visioning session and downtown strengths and weaknesses
- 10/27/99 Main Street Subcommittee meets with Frank O'Hara to review site of visioning session and process to be used
- 11/4/99 Main Street Committee conducts public visioning session
- 11/17/99 Main Street Committee reviews results of visioning session; reviews draft plan strategies
- 11/22/99 Meeting of Main Street Subcommittee to review options for CDBG PFIG application
- 11/24/99 Meeting of Main Street Subcommittee to discuss CDBG PFIG application
- 11/29/99 Main Street Committee meets to review PFIG application and strategies for downtown plan
- 11/29/99 Town Council holds public hearing for CDBG PFIG grant application
- 12/14/99 Business Guild meeting; Dick Dyer is the guest speaker regarding 48 Main Street and downtown development
- 12/27/99 Main Street Committee meets to review and refine downtown strategies
- 12/30/99 Main Street Subcommittee meets to review commitments, strategies, and costs for development in the downtown
- 1/3/00 Main Street Subcommittee meets to review total costs for downtown revitalization project and 48 Main St. commitment

- 1/11/00 Main Street Committee reviews final cost summary for CDBG application
- 1/11/00 Town Council reviews 48 Main St. inclusion in the application and downtown strategies
- 1/12/00 Main Street Subcommittee meets to work on the business commitment letters
- 1/19/00 Town Council holds public hearing for CDBG DR application

Refinement of Downtown Target Area

During the summer of 2000, several Town officials met in Winthrop with the manager of the Community Development Block Grant Program to review downtown conditions, the requirements of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, and how Winthrop could enhance its competitiveness in applying for CDBG grants. Several major points emerged from that review:

1. Downtown Winthrop should not include all of Main Street, but should be limited to the portion of Main Street which lies between Bowdoin Street and Green Street.
2. A successful Downtown Revitalization application must show how all of the "slum and blight" conditions of the downtown, including 48 Main Street will be addressed. The application must not rely on future grants for completing the work.
3. The CDBG Business Assistance Program or the Economic Development Infrastructure Program could be utilized to help fix up 48 Main Street. A successful application would require that a private investor play a major role in rehabilitating the building and creating a significant number of jobs, at least 51% of which would be filled by low-to-moderate income people as defined in the CDBG program.

4. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN

Introduction

The Downtown Revitalization Plan for the Town of Winthrop includes:

- 1) The Vision Statement contained in Section 2 of this Plan;
- 2) Plan Illustrations (pages 4-2 through 4-4) which reflect many of the goals and strategies developed by Winthrop's Main Street Committee beginning in September of 1999; and
- 3) Detailed goals and strategies (pages 4-5 through 4-16) relating to Downtown Revitalization Strategies including Main Street Infrastructure Improvements, Side Street Improvements, Building Improvements, Economic Development/Vitality, Marketing and Promotion, Image and Amenities, and Housing. Strategies beginning on page 4-14 relate to village improvements outside of the downtown. The Main Street Committee developed the goals and strategies as a refinement and extension of the Vision Statement.

For the purposes of this Plan, the Downtown includes Main Street between Bowdoin Street and Green Street, as well as the area bounded by Main Street on the South, Bowdoin Street on the West, Summer Street extending to Mill Stream on the north, and Green Street on the east. This area is generally shown on pages 4-3 and 4-4. The remaining areas of Main Street as well as other side streets are considered part of Winthrop Village.

The strategies set forth on the following pages, coupled with the Plan Illustrations, envision a long-term commitment to improving Downtown Winthrop. The underlying principle is that the Town of Winthrop, the Winthrop Water District, private interests and the citizens of Winthrop can work together over a number of years to implement the Plan. The development of a workable, realistic plan provides a sound basis for securing federal and state financial support, stimulating private investment and guiding future municipal investments.

The strategies set forth in this section include both high and medium priority actions which the Main Street Committee feels are essential to the restoration of the downtown so that it can once again be a source of community pride. Some strategies reflect ongoing actions which are crucial to the ultimate success of the Plan. Strategies range from those which can readily be implemented (e.g. make Union Street a one-way street) to those which are more complex and may involve a series of inter-related decisions (e.g. renovate 48 Main Street for the ultimate purpose of creating productive commercial space). Priorities reflect the decisions made by the Main Street Committee based in part on put received at the visioning session and at various public meetings and hearings. The responsibility/funding source column identifies the entity and/or funding source responsible for implementation.

PLAN DESCRIPTION

Apply new overlay on Main Street following installation of underground utilities. Stripe all parking spaces and paint bold crosswalks at new "neck-downs."

Plant new street trees in locations show.

Redevelop this site for new Post Offices (as shown) or Town Office or private development. Require construction of small "town green" or common.

Provide new pedestrian amenities: benches, flower beds, trash receptacles, bicycle parking, etc., and a Town notice board.

Reconstruct sidewalks along Main Street; install granite curbing and build "neck-downs" to lessen pedestrian crossing distance and to slow down traffic; sidewalks should be patterned, colored, concrete.

Replace the existing Cobra-style overhead street lights with lower, attractive village lights (with underground wiring) on both sides of Main St.

Shift the north side overhead wires from Main Street to the driveway behind 48 Main Street, through to Bowdoin Street.

Urge property owners to reduce (or eliminate) the width of commercial driveways, to increase pedestrian safety, here and elsewhere.

Plant new street trees along Bowdoin Street and reconstruct the sidewalks on both sides.

Acquire a strip of land from the Water District to construct new parking here; note this lot could be gated on the east end.

Improve the municipal parking lot with islands, tree planting, and new signage (entry to lot off Main Street can be two-way).

Make Union Street one-way, north from the parking lot to Summer and Elm Streets.

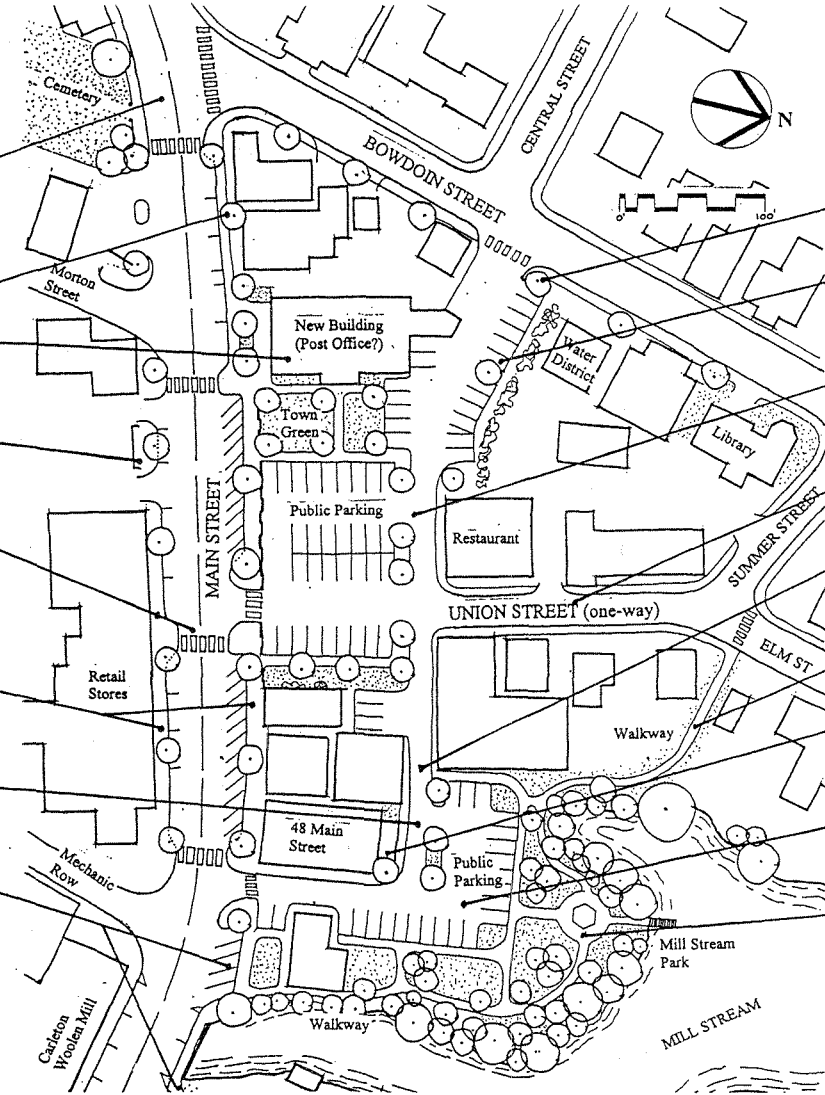
Provide, through landowner agreements, a one-way through driveway, from Main Street to Union Street.

Acquire easements to build a Mill Stream walkway, as shown.

Provide a new elevator and service core to 48 Main Street so all floor levels are easily accessible and available for rehabilitation and new businesses.

Construct, with landowner cooperation and purchase of the parcel on Mill Stream, a new public parking lot behind 48 Main Street.

Create a new village park and picnic area along Mill Street, with walkway, canoe dock, gazebo, benches, etc.; link the park to Main Street and Summer Street with walkways.

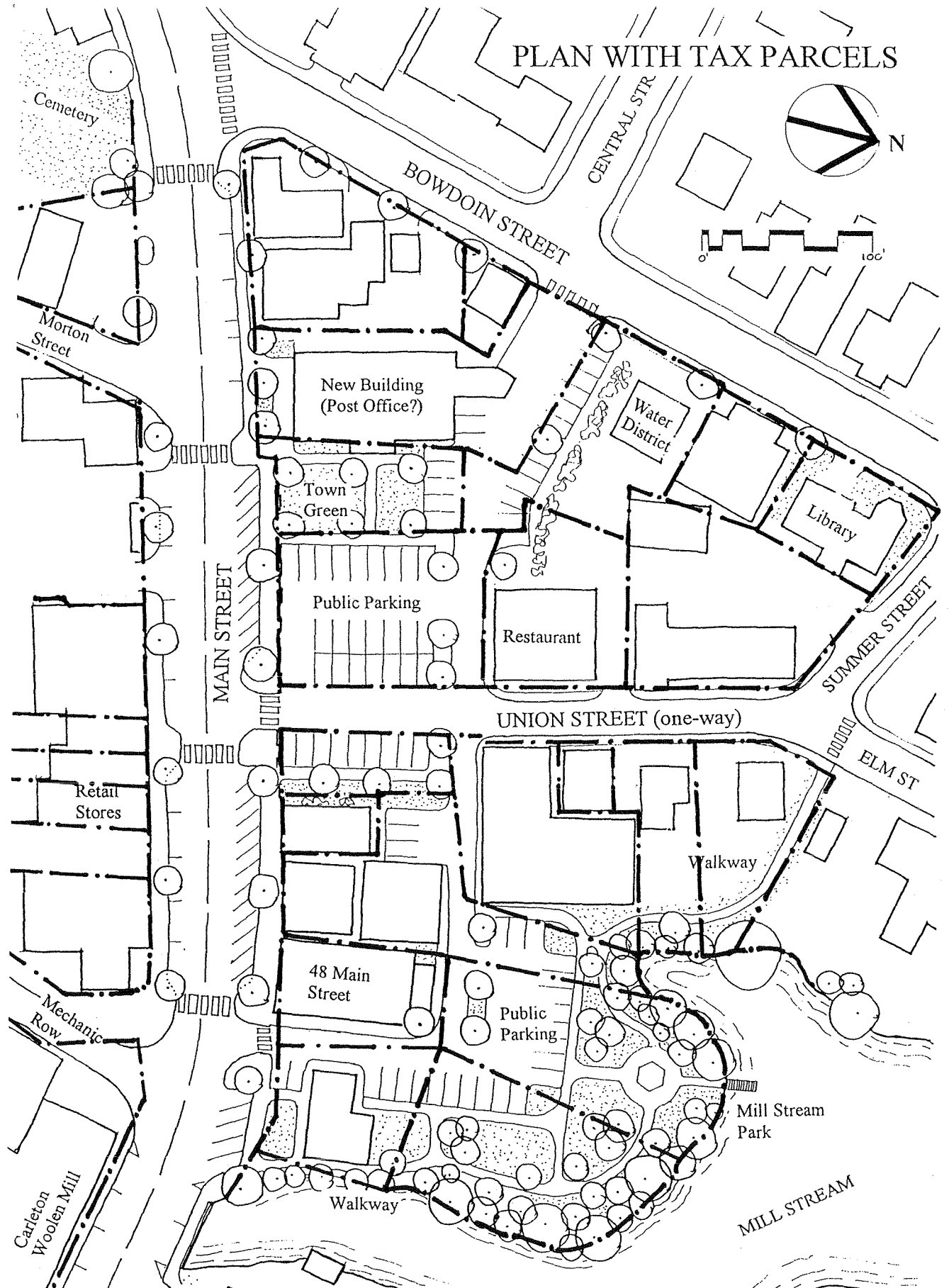
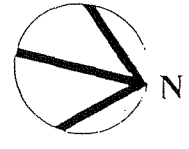


**TOWN OF WINTHROP
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN**

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January 2000

PLAN WITH TAX PARCELS



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January 2000

TOWN OF WINTHROP

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

GOALS

1. Improve the physical appearance of Downtown Winthrop
2. Strengthen economic conditions in the downtown
3. Enhance the role of Downtown Winthrop as the center of the community

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
MAIN STREET INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS			
Years 1-2 Focus on Main Street between Bowdoin Street and Green Street Years 3-5 Extend improvements to other sections of Main Street			
M-1. Engineering. Prepare engineering designs for needed public improvements.	Engineering plans will be needed for new sidewalks, curbs, and street lights, as well as underground utilities including a new water main and related services, new sanitary mains and related services, and electrical services for new stand-alone light posts.	Town	High
M-2. Capital Improvements Program. Include downtown improvements in a long-range capital improvements program that would provide for on-going public investment in the downtown.	Adoption of an ongoing downtown capital improvements program will help ensure that improvements are made in the downtown on a continuing and on-going basis.	Town	High

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
<p>M-3. Water Line Replacement. Replace existing water main with new 12-inch main and provide new services to adjacent buildings.</p>	<p>Based on the Water District's analysis, the existing Main Street water main is highly tuberculated. The poor condition of the water main affects fire flows. A new main would tie into main replacement work which the Water District is planning between Route 133 and Royal Street in 2000.</p>	<p>Water District CDBG</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>M-4. Sewer Main and Service Line Replacement. Replace sewer line segments that flow from Main Street down Morton Street, from Main Street down Mechanic Street, and from Main Street down Clark Street, and replace service lines.</p>	<p>These sewer lines are old. Leaky joints contribute to stormwater inflow and groundwater infiltration. The Water District estimates that inflow and infiltration costs the Town a minimum of \$1,100 every storm.</p>	<p>Water District CDBG</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>M-5. Storm Drains. Install new storm drains on Morton Street and other streets as needed.</p>	<p>The existing storm drainage system was installed in the late 1960s and may no longer be adequate to handle storm flows. Additional storm drainage capacity may be needed when inflow/infiltration is removed from the sanitary sewer lines. An analysis is needed to determine whether improvements are needed.</p>	<p>MDOT Town</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>M-6. Road Surface. Overlay Main Street following installation of underground utilities and re-establish well-marked crosswalks.</p>	<p>Following installation of all underground utilities, an overlay will be needed to give Main Street a finished look.</p>	<p>MDOT</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>M-7. Sidewalks. Reconstruct sidewalks along Main Street. Preference should be given to granite curbing and concrete-paved sidewalks, preferably with a patterned, colored surface.</p>	<p>In general, breaks in the sidewalk (to cross driveways) should be no more than 30 feet in width. Ramped curbs should be provided at all crosswalks for bikes, wheelchairs and carriages, and to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p>	<p>Town CDBG</p>	<p>High</p>

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
M-8. Lighting. Replace Cobra-style overhead lighting with fixtures that are unique to downtown Winthrop.	Cobra style fixtures are functional, but do nothing to enhance the downtown or distinguish it from other roadways. Free-standing light fixtures would enhance the appearance of the downtown.	Town CDBG CMP	High
M-9. Overhead Wires. Replace overhead wires rear-service entrances.	Many of the buildings between Bowdoin and Green Streets are served by rear-entrance services. Removal of the overhead wire network would require changing some front entrance services and serving new street lights with underground conduit.	Town CDBG CMP	Medium
M-10. Trees. Plant new street trees to replace those that are dead, dying, or too large for their location along the street.	Many of the trees that were planted in the downtown have either died, are dying, or are too large for their intended purpose.	Town Business Guild	High
M-11. Pedestrian amenities. Update pedestrian amenities where necessary including new benches and trash receptacles.	Pedestrian amenities are important to creating and maintaining a pedestrian-friendly downtown.	Town CDBG Business Guild	Medium
M-12. Parking Lot at Elementary School. Convert the former elementary school playground to a Main Street parking lot.	This will provide much needed parking at the eastern end of the downtown. Moving the playground to a location between school buildings will reduce safety risks for young children.	Town	High
M-13. Mill Stream Park. Purchase land in back Smith's Garage and create a small park along Mill Stream.	The Town owns approximately 1/3 acre in back of 48 Main St. Purchasing the adjacent 1/3 acre would provide enough land area to develop an attractive park.	Town CDBG	Medium
M-14. Mill Steam Walkway. Develop a footpath along Mill Stream leading from the Mill Street Park.	A walkway to Union Street could be developed by purchasing land or easements of a small number of non-residential properties.	Town CDBG	Medium

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
M-15. Union Street One-Way. Establish one-way traffic on Union Street from Main Street to Summer Street.	The current traffic configuration is confusing and potentially dangerous. The one-way designation would enhance safety and provide for smoother traffic flow in the downtown.	Town	Medium
M-16. Public Parking lot at 48 Main. Develop a public parking lot on Town-owned land in back of 48 Main Street and connect to Main Street by a sidewalk.	Additional parking is critical to the redevelopment of 48 Main Street. A public parking lot in this location would also serve other downtown businesses.	Town CDBG	Medium
SIDE STREETS			
S-1. Side Street Sidewalks and Lights. Replace side street sidewalks and upgrade street lights	Extend sidewalk improvements to side streets throughout the downtown where applicable.	Town CDBG	Medium
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS			
B-1. Facade Program. Implement a facade management program to encourage the improvement of blighted buildings and provide incentives for building maintenance that is consistent with a quality image for downtown Winthrop.	Such a program could include facade grants on a matching basis, and guidelines that could be used to persuade property owners to maintain, construct or renovate their properties in a manner consistent with a quality downtown image.	CDBG	Medium

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
B-2. 48 Main Street. Utilize grant funds to the maximum extent possible to renovate 48 Main Street for the ultimate purpose of creating productive commercial space.	The cost of rehabilitating this structure exceeds the projected rate of market return. Grant assistance is needed if this building is to become viable space operated by the private sector. The Town does not anticipate any public uses for this building.	CDBG Developer	High
B-3. Post Office. Work with the Post Office to encourage a downtown location for their new facility in a building that is compatible with the scale and style of commercial buildings in the downtown.	Postal authorities should be encouraged to include green space which (if near the public parking lot on the corner of Main and Bowdoin) should provide logical pedestrian connections between the green space and the Town's parking lot.	United State Post Office	High
B-4. Town Office. Create a public space task force to study the Town's needs and evaluate options for relocating the Town Office in a downtown building.	Based on a determination of need, options could include a new structure or re-use of an existing structure. In the event that the Post Office does not locate at the site of the former pharmacy and hardware store, consider this site for a new Town Office. Expansion of the existing Town Office is also an option.	Town	Medium
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/VITALITY			
E-1. Downtown Development Corporation. Re-activate the Winthrop Downtown Development Corporation and charge it with the responsibility to plan for and manage the future development of the downtown.	The Winthrop Downtown Development Corporation was formed in 1986 and played an active role in efforts to rehabilitate the downtown. It is the logical entity to ensure that downtown revitalization efforts are successful and ongoing, and that Winthrop takes advantage of grant programs on a continuing basis.	Downtown Development Corporation (DDC)	High

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
<p>E-2. Business Attraction Program. Develop a business attraction program for the purpose of bringing new businesses to the downtown and filling vacant buildings.</p>	<p>Priority should be given to filling gaps in the existing array of stores and services. One such gap is the need for a discount store. The Business Attraction Program would not attempt to compete with nearby malls or retail offerings in Augusta or Lewiston/Auburn, but it would focus on making downtown Winthrop a niche retail and service center for the region.</p>	<p>Town Winthrop Regional Development Council (WRDC)</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>E-3. Low-Interest Loan Program. Re-capitalize the low-interest loan program for business start-ups and expansions.</p>	<p>The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used to re-capitalize the Town's current fund. KVCOG (the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments) may be able to provide additional assistance.</p>	<p>CDBG KVCOG</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>E-5. Regulatory Barriers. Review local ordinances to identify unnecessary regulatory barriers to downtown redevelopment and make ordinance changes accordingly.</p>	<p>A special district is needed to make construction and business development easier. Consideration should be given to removing setbacks, parking requirements, and restrictions related to impervious areas.</p>	<p>Town</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>E-6. Economic Development Director. Hire an economic development director who would be responsible for town-wide economic development efforts including efforts to improve the economic vitality of the downtown.</p>	<p>An economic development director would provide the staff support needed to enhance the Town's economic development efforts and to ensure that downtown revitalization efforts include a focus on bringing new businesses to the downtown.</p>	<p>Town</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>E-7. TIF District. Consider creating a Tax Increment Financing District so that a local funding mechanism can be created to assist in downtown revitalization efforts.</p>	<p>A TIF District could be created around 48 Main Street so that increased tax revenues generated by the property (after it returns to private ownership) can be dedicated to further investments in 48 Main Street or in other areas of the downtown.</p>	<p>Town</p>	<p>Medium</p>

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
E-8. Funding Sources. Seek a wide variety of funding sources to help with the overall downtown revitalization effort.	The CDBG Program is an excellent source of assistance for the Town's downtown revitalization efforts but it is not the only avenue of assistance. An economic development director could help in the effort to maximize the Town's participation in these programs.	Town Economic Development Director DDC	High
MARKETING AND PROMOTION			
P-1. Marketing Plan. Develop an overall marketing plan to provide guidance and direction to downtown marketing efforts.	A marketing plan would help identify priorities and help ensure that limited resources are wisely spent.	Town KVCOG	High
P-2. Guild Efforts. Encourage the Winthrop Business and Professional Guild to continue its efforts to market and promote the Town's business community, including the downtown.	Marketing and promotion should be a public/private partnership. Both the community at large and business interests benefit from a successful marketing and promotional effort.	Business Guild DDC Economic Director	High
P-3. Existing Activities. Continue, encourage and support the wide range of activities, festivals, markets and special events taking place in the downtown.	Events, festivals and special activities are the lifeblood of the community in general and the downtown in particular. They bring people into Town, provide a reason to go downtown and anchor the downtown as the center of the community.	Town DDC Service Clubs	High
P-4. Additional Activities. Encourage additional events and activities, especially during the fall season. Build on the proximity of the lake, Norcross Park, and the potential for lake-based recreation activities.	See comment immediately above.	Town DDC Service Clubs	High

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
<p>P-5. Brochure. Develop a brochure that would help promote the downtown as a whole as well as the individual businesses.</p>	<p>A brochure can summarize the key features of the downtown and would be useful in promotional and marketing efforts. A web page can serve a similar purpose.</p>	<p>Town WRDC Economic Development Director</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>P-6. Posters or Bulletin Board. Establish a poster or bulletin board at 48 Main Street to keep people informed of downtown revitalization efforts.</p>	<p>A bulletin board or poster is an excellent way to communicate with the public and keep citizens informed about revitalization efforts.</p>	<p>Town DDC</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>IMAGE AND AMENITIES</p>			
<p>I-1. Christmas Decorations. Take steps to bring back Christmas decorations. Work with Central Maine Power to establish an ongoing program even if CMP is unable to participate directly.</p>	<p>Christmas decorations were a long and popular tradition in the downtown and served as a reminder that the downtown was the center of the community.</p>	<p>Town Service Clubs</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>I-2. Banners. Utilize banners to project a positive image of the downtown and surrounding village area.</p>	<p>Banners are an effective, relatively inexpensive method for projecting a positive, festive air and for making people feel good about the downtown. The use of seasonal banners adds color and variety.</p>	<p>Town DDC Service Clubs</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>I-3. Sign Guidelines. Establish sign guidelines for public and private signs to encourage attractive, informative signs.</p>	<p>Attractive signs will enhance the image of the downtown and make it easier for motorists and pedestrians to find downtown offerings.</p>	<p>Town</p>	<p>Medium</p>

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
<p>I-4. Murals. Encourage volunteers to continue adding murals to the downtown and surrounding village area.</p>	<p>The mural project adds vitality and excitement to the downtown, strengthens community spirit and participation and sends a message that the downtown is a special place.</p>	<p>Town Winthrop Mural Project</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>HOUSING</p>			
<p>H-1. Housing Committee. Establish a housing rehabilitation committee and charge it with the responsibility of applying for a Housing Assessment Planning Grant (CDBG Program) for the purpose of assessing housing conditions in the downtown and surrounding village area. If warranted, apply for a CDBG housing assistance grant.</p>	<p>Apartments and homes in the downtown and surrounding village area provide a customer base for some downtown businesses. While the Town has administered housing rehabilitation programs in the past, there is a need to determine whether or not additional rehabilitation efforts are needed.</p>	<p>Town CDBG</p>	<p>Medium</p>

TOWN OF WINTHROP

VILLAGE REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

(Exclusive of the Downtown)

GOALS

1. Improve the physical appearance of the village areas immediately adjacent to the Downtown
2. Strengthen economic conditions in the village

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
MAIN STREET INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS			
Engineering. Prepare engineering designs for needed public improvements.	Engineering plans will be needed for new sidewalks, curbs, and street lights, as well as underground utilities including a new water main and related services, new sanitary mains and related services, and electrical services for new stand-alone light posts.	Town	High
Capital Improvements Program. Include village improvements in a long-range capital improvements program that would provide for on-going public investment.	Adoption of an ongoing capital improvements program will help ensure that improvements are made on a continuing and on-going basis.	Town	High
Water Line Replacement. Replace existing water main west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street where necessary with new 12-inch main and provide new services to adjacent buildings.	Based on the Water District's analysis, the existing Main Street water main is highly tuberculated. The poor condition of the water main affects fire flows.	Water District	High

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
Storm Drains. Install new storm drains as needed west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street.	The existing storm drainage system was installed in the late 1960s and may no longer be adequate to handle storm flows. Additional storm drainage capacity may be needed when inflow/infiltration is removed from the sanitary sewer lines. An analysis is needed to determine whether improvements are needed.	MDOT Town	Medium
Road Surface. Overlay Main Street west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street following installation of underground utilities and re-establish well-marked crosswalks.	Following installation of all underground utilities, an overlay will be needed to give Main Street a finished look.	MDOT	High
Sidewalks. Reconstruct sidewalks along Main Street west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street. Preference should be given to granite curbing and concrete-paved sidewalks, preferably with a patterned, colored surface.	In general, breaks in the sidewalk (to cross driveways) should be no more than 30 feet in width. Ramped curbs should be provided at all crosswalks for bikes, wheelchairs and carriages, and to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.	Town	High
Lighting. Replace Cobra-style overhead lighting along Main Street west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street with fixtures that are consistent with new downtown fixtures.	Cobra style fixtures are functional, but do nothing to enhance the village or distinguish it from other roadways. Free-standing light fixtures would enhance the appearance of the village portion of Main Street.	Town CMP	Medium
Trees. Plant new street trees west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street to replace those that are dead, dying, or too large for their location along the street.	Many of the trees that were planted along Main Street have either died, are dying, or are too large for their intended purpose.	Town Business Guild	High
Pedestrian amenities. Update pedestrian amenities west of Bowdoin Street and east of Green Street where necessary including new benches and trash receptacles.	Pedestrian amenities are important to creating and maintaining a pedestrian-friendly environment.	Town Business Guild	Medium

Strategies	Explanation/Justification	Responsibility/ Funding Source	Priority
MARKETING AND PROMOTION			
<p>Gateways. Establish gateways at either end of Main Street to better define the location of the village as well as the downtown and to welcome travelers, shoppers and clients.</p>	<p>A gateway serves to let the traveler know that he or she is entering a special place, and that there is a strong sense of community pride and betterment. A gateway does not have to be located at the site of the first commercial building, but it does have to have good visibility.</p>	<p>MDOT - gateway funding Town</p>	<p>Medium</p>
RAILROAD			
<p>Passenger Service. Encourage the development of passenger rail transportation and passenger transportation facilities, particularly as they complement the growth and revitalization of the village.</p>	<p>The railroad could become a focal point for additional events and activities in the village including recreation-based passenger rail transportation. In the future, Winthrop should consider taking advantage of federal and state funds which may become available for such facilities.</p>	<p>Town, MDOT, Railroad</p>	<p>Medium</p>