

Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan



Prepared For
City of Newport, VT

Prepared By



October 2018

Acknowledgements

The City of Newport would like to recognize and thank the residents, staff, and members of the public who have all played a prominent role in preparing this Plan. Through the length of the study, they have contributed in many ways to help shape the vision, recommendations, and actions that are now presented to you.

Advisory Committee

Paul L. Monette, Mayor of Newport

Laura Dolgin, City Manager

Jessica Booth, Newport Parks and Recreation Director

James Nagle, Harbor Master

Karen Geraghty, NVDA, Economic Development Specialist

Tom Bernier, Public Works Director

Consultant Team

VHB

- Michael Willard, Project Manager
- Geoffrey Morrison-Logan, Principal
- Renee Guo, Planner
- Jeremy Pi, Co-op

Table of Contents

1	<u>Project Overview</u>	<i>1</i>
2	<u>Issues, Opportunities & Framework</u>	<i>6</i>
3	<u>Vision Plan</u>	<i>10</i>
4	<u>Implementation Strategies</u>	<i>10</i>

This page is intentionally left blank

1

Project Overview

Introduction

Downtown Newport has long been recognized by residents and visitors alike as a vibrant and integral part of the community. Historically rooted in a unique blend of waterfront and commercial activity, this area has experienced changes as cycles of investment and development have shaped both the physical and social landscape of Newport's downtown. At present, the downtown and waterfront areas remain vital resources for the community, yet possesses enormous potential for additional improvements that can better service the look, feel, and function of the area.

The *Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan* is the product of a collaborative process between members of Newport's community representing multiple perspectives and interests. In order to encourage development that highlights the great qualities of Newport, the City has gone through enormous lengths over the past decade to put together a collection of studies and initiatives that shed light on where the city can focus their efforts. These studies have resulted in numerous ideas and strategies for neighborhood revitalization, beautification, improved networks, and environmentally sustainable practices.

This report both augments and focuses the discussion already initiated by previous studies and ongoing conversations between the community and its leaders by both reaffirming the priorities of prior reports, and formulating tangible and quantifiable action plans for the City to implement in the immediate future. Highlighting those efforts that have the greatest potential for immediate and transformative impact, the *Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan* hopes to equip the City of Newport with a method for realizing an exceptional environment for future generations.

As part of a nation-wide trend in promoting downtowns as a primary community asset, this report concentrates on Newport's downtown and waterfront areas, broadly defined by the length of Main Street,

portions of Waterfront Plaza and Gardner Memorial Park, and most significantly the northern shoreline along Lake Memphremagog. As this area features vital institutional, recreational, and commercial resources, design interventions within this area have the capacity to reach significant portions of the City's population and visitors alike. (See **Figure 1** for study area)



Main Street at Field Ave



Lake Memphremagog waterfront



Figure 1
Study Area and City Map

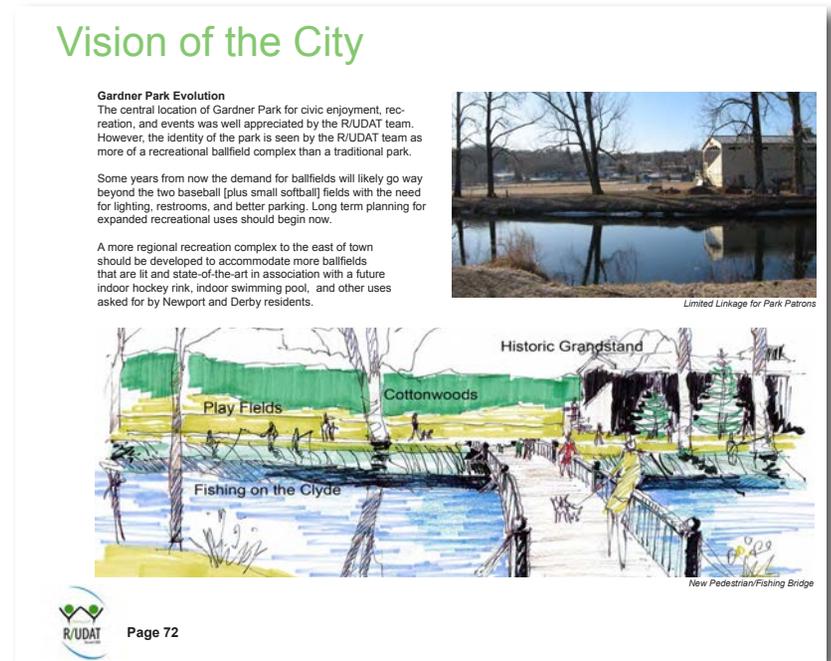
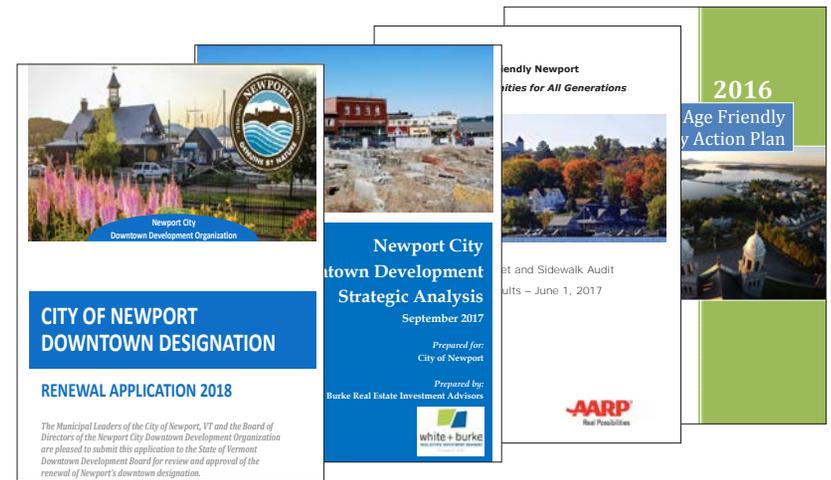
Past Studies & Efforts

The City of Newport has previously undertaken many studies that provide the foundation and vision of this report. As part of local and regional efforts to identify vulnerabilities, improve infrastructure and networks, and guide development, prior studies contain a wealth of information and constitute invaluable snapshots of different community aspects and perspectives. Although over the years much of the natural and physical landscape in Newport has shifted and its population diversified, these studies nonetheless serve as a framework and resource for contemporary efforts to augment the city's character.

Ranging from updates to civic documents to studies of vulnerable populations in Newport, the available data is diverse and thorough. Each study corresponds with a unique vision and tasks which look at Newport from a variety of scales. At times, surveys and analyses have been conducted at specific street intersections or individual, historic buildings. Conversely, documents such as the Newport City Municipal Plan (2015) take a comprehensive look at the entire city boundary, outlining long-term goals as well as immediate investment needs.

A number of actors, institutions, and organizations have participated in formulating and conducting surveys and analyses of Newport's unique characteristics and composition. National agencies such as AARP and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) have been active in community outreach and engagement, compiling holistic publications that emphasize local amenities, suggest improvements to local circulation patterns, and prominently feature natural resources. Private consultants have also weighed in, contributing unique advice on the topics of real estate, environmental considerations, and urban design standards.

Considering the enormous effort that accompanied the research and creation of such studies, the challenge for the City has always been how to capitalize on the findings. This report hopes to balance maximizing material that is already in place while also providing new direction.



Reports and prior proposals

Goals & Objectives

The City of Newport with the help of VHB have prepared this Master Plan to highlight prominent features throughout Newport's downtown and waterfront area, and most importantly provide a framework and guidelines for the City to approach future projects that will invigorate and strengthen community character. Working upon the existing foundation of resources, additional meetings and collaborative efforts have revealed numerous opportunities to consider immediate as well as long-term interventions for addressing contemporary concerns as well as encouraging future developments.

The *Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan* will serve as a document for the revitalization of several neighborhoods and areas of the city, allowing each site to proceed independently with urban design interventions and programming that will enrich the City as a whole. Furthermore, local organizations will be encouraged to partner with businesses, institutions, and city officials to help realize the goals and recommendations of this report and other efforts.

In order to best facilitate the processes and guidelines, a collection of objectives have been formulated. These directives serve as broader, high-level categories that encompass a variety of strategies. Collectively, the hope is to encourage investments and interventions at varying scales that are adaptive and responsive to the unique conditions and circumstances of the environment.

Downtown & Waterfront Objectives:

Walkability

Improve the pedestrian experience by upgrading infrastructure and expanding the network of sidewalks

Access

Encourage visitors to utilize local amenities and facilities by providing greater options for people, recreational vehicles and water craft, and safer roadways

Aesthetic Qualities

Create a charming environment through the careful employment of greenery, trees, and landscaping, and utilize street furniture and urban design techniques to cater to diverse uses

Greater Programming

Utilize existing public and recreational spaces for a variety of events that feature a combination of uses

Prioritization

Identify projects and plans that prioritize investments in the waterfront and downtown

Process

Over the course of a six-month period, the Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan was developed as a collaborative effort between the Project Advisory Committee and the Consultant team, composed of members from VHB. Development of the Plan was structured around a series of meetings, a walking tour and site visits, and public presentations that fostered input from a variety of community perspectives. The project was initiated with a Kick-off meeting with the Advisory Committee to discuss the overall objectives of the study, recognizing that a significant amount of work has already been done to study the issues and opportunities that impact the Downtown and waterfront.

Early in the process, the consulting team reviewed the existing conditions and reports that had previously been prepared to become familiar with the current conditions of the downtown and waterfront. After reviewing the existing conditions, VHB prepared for the first public meeting which was structured to review the baseline information and recommendations that came from a variety of prior studies. The goal of this meeting was to confirm the general direction of the Plan, and highlight potential projects the City could move forward with.

The second public meeting included a presentation of the proposed projects for the Downtown and Waterfront. These areas were then organized into five locations to address and identify projects that relate to each area. The public was asked to confirm the direction of the draft recommendations. Following the second public meeting, VHB worked closely with the Advisory Committee to prepare the Draft Plan and Implementation and Action Plan.

Timeline

- Project Kick-Off Meeting *January 2018*
- Existing Conditions Assessment *February 2018*
- Community Engagement
 - Public Workshop 1: Walking Tour & Information Meeting *March 2018*
 - Public Workshop 2: Creating the Updated Shared Vision *June 2018*
- Draft Executive Summary & Presentation of Master Plan *July 2018*
- Develop Implementation/ Action Plan *August 2018*



Site visit with steering committee and city officials

2 Issues, Opportunities & Focus Areas

Issues & Opportunities

Within the study area are numerous constraints and opportunities that will play a significant role in planning for future development. Especially as the water and existing transportation network defined boundaries, the effort to work within the natural and built landscapes represents a significant challenge that must be carefully considered.

Several trends and specific sites emerged as places of cultural, economic, or historical significance that added a dimension of complexity to the formulation of a working framework.

Challenges

Newport's proximity to Lake Memphremagog has long been a defining characteristic, yet significant portions of the waterfront are presently inaccessible. Due largely to the presence of active train tracks for the Central Maine and Quebec Railway and Vermont Rail system, waterfront establishments and resources are difficult to access for pedestrian and vehicles alike. Although the waterfront features an active marina, other buildings and infrastructure have succumbed to natural deterioration associated with weathering and lack of regular maintenance.

Themes of access, circulation, and walkability issues extend into the Downtown area. Main Street caters to a variety of uses, but observations and studies have found the sidewalks and limited public spaces to be lacking in activity or content that encourages a variety of uses. Roadways and intersections also prove problematic, as Main Street not only constitutes a local road but also serves as an extension of Route 5. The area presently lacks cohesiveness that can help distinguish it as a thriving downtown, rather than a transportation corridor.

Vacancy has also taken a toll on the building stock. Storefronts are interrupted by periodic lulls where parking lots or abandoned parcels detract from the overall pedestrian quality, discouraging visitors or prolonged stays in areas that should otherwise be conducive to a variety of uses and activities. (See **Figure 2**)

- 1 Limited waterfront access to Lake Memphremagog due to active railroad
- 2 Industrial properties further limit waterfront access
- 3 Gateways into Downtown dominated by large lots, buildings, and pavement
- 4 Main Street pedestrian realm lacks amenities and activities
- 5 Poor pedestrian connections via local streets to waterfront



Sidewalks in need of improvement



Current pedestrian roadways to waterfront



Active railroad tracks



Waterfront access point



Major intersection



Working industrial properties



Vacant parcels



Figure 2
Challenges

Opportunities

Newport possesses a unique combination of natural features that creates an environment conducive to a variety of uses. The proximity to Lake Memphremagog provides spectacular views from the shoreline, and also caters to a host of water-related activities. Other community amenities such as Pomerleau Park have developed in tandem with the waterfront, and existing boardwalk, offer enormous potential to build upon and expand the existing pedestrian network.

Unlike other, denser communities, the City currently features a number of parcels that could welcome a host of new uses. Several parking lots could be rehabilitated and beautified with the introduction of landscaping, trees, and green spaces, while still providing a vital service for the community. The former Spates Block also constitutes an opportunity for gradual reinvestment, with the potential to become the focal point for the entire downtown as well as a vital conduit for the waterfront.

Improved wayfinding will help visitors navigate the downtown area, and also improve access to the City Dock and other waterfront amenities. Signage along key intersections, particularly the intersections of Route 5 and Railroad Square to the east, and Main Street and School/3rd Street will become a welcoming 'gateway' and draw attention to Newport's central hub of activity.

Roadway and intersection improvements also have the potential to address safety and aesthetic concerns. The downtown area serves as a major transportation corridor, the ability to address traffic concerns and pedestrian safety through urban design interventions can create more attractive environments that encourage people to stay and wander about the city rather than simply pass through. (See **Figure 3**)

- 1 Strengthen pedestrian connections to waterfront and recreational amenities
- 2 Enhance pedestrian safety at key intersections and crosswalks
- 3 Reinforce connections between commercial establishments along Main Street
- 4 Introduce landscaping and urban design interventions in parking lots and vacant spaces
- 5 Enhance gateway and arrival experience into Downtown



Pedestrian and bike trail



Gateway to downtown



Intersections primed for improvements



Newport City Dock



Recreational and open space areas



Vacant parcels and parking lots



Figure 3
Opportunities

Primary Land Use

The study area contains a number of different public, private, and civic uses that combine for a multi-faceted landscape. The center of Newport is a mixture of residential, commercial, and recreational establishments that caters to a diverse population, but also makes planning for development and interventions a unique challenge that requires a holistic vision.

While most of the city’s residential neighborhoods surround the downtown area, a number of medium density residential streets radiate from Main Street. A mixture of single-family homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings allow for a much higher concentration of residents than compared to the peripheries of the city, although parcel sizes are comparably smaller. Nestled within these neighborhoods are a collection of institutional spaces including churches and schools.

Commercial activity has always defined Newport’s downtown. Main Street, Waterfront Plaza, and light industrial areas define the city’s primary retail and employment hubs. In addition to numerous eateries, entertainment options, and local shops, the downtown includes a range of commercial uses that include offices and numerous service establishments including auto garages and a gas station.

Civic institutions are scattered throughout the study area, although most are concentrated around Main Street. Two court houses, the State office Building, Goodrich Memorial Library, and the Newport City Dock are only a few public resources that cater to Newport residents as well as the regional population of Orleans County.

Recreational spaces represent some of Newport’s most attractive and significant resources, as they offer residents and visitors an outlet in which to capitalize on the city’s natural areas and public spaces. Although much of the downtown core has been developed and dominated by buildings and roadways, public parks and plazas such as Pomerleau

Park and the Emory Hebard State Office Building plaza offer a respite. Gardner Memorial Park and its surrounding facilities also welcome a host of community amenities in a vast open green space. Finally, the Newport City Dock and its associated boat slips offer several water-related facilities for both short and long-term use. (See **Figure 4**)

-  Downtown commercial and civic core
-  Waterfront Plaza commercial area
-  Pomerleau Park Waterfront Recreation Area
-  Newport City Dock and boat slips
-  Gardner Memorial Park
-  Medium density residential
-  Industrial facilities
-  Predominantly low density homes in surrounding area
-  Railroad tracks



Figure 4
Land Use

Focus Areas

This study has identified five areas that the City should focus their efforts in advancing projects and plans for the downtown and waterfront. These areas are a result of reviewing prior documents, the site tour, and input gained from the public process. While there are numerous projects and initiatives that the City could move forward with, these areas were targeted as having the greatest potential to reposition the downtown and waterfront for the short, mid, and long-term.

Area 1 includes Newport’s waterfront which has great potential to transform into a regional hub of activity that will support a range of active and passive activities.

Area 2 includes the heart of downtown along Main Street. This area will benefit from improvements to streetscape elements and intersections and targeted infill development. These projects will add to the existing qualities that will reinforce the activities that happen along Main Street.

Area 3 is a small portion of Gardner Park that was identified as having near-term potential to make high-impact improvements to the park. These improvements were seen as an opportunity to set the stage for longer-term investments.

Area 4 includes the eastern waterfront where prior studies and recent regulations have imagined the transformation of this areas. There is the need to advance short-term projects in this area that may inform the long-term vision

Area 5 includes the local business that are south and east of Main street and include a range of uses. This area was targeted for small-scale investments and strategies that will help reinforce this areas a being an important part of the downtown’s “fabric” of streets and buildings.

(See **Figure 5**)

Area 1: Waterfront

Make the waterfront a regional destination

Area 2: Main Street

Position Main Street to become Newport’s ‘Hub’ of activity

Area 3: Gardner Memorial Park

Key investments to Gardner Park that set the stage for enhanced recreation and programming

Area 4: Eastern Waterfront

Plan for long-term reinvestments along Causeway and the Eastern Waterfront

Area 5: Downtown Commercial

Target investments and growth that reinforce Downtown’s “City Fabric”



Figure 5
Focus Areas

This page is intentionally left blank

3

Vision Plan

Revitalize the Waterfront

Today Newport's waterfront has potential to be transformed into a first-class regional destination. With resources such as the marina, trail, and harbor walk, this area has many attributes that could be leveraged. Seasonal demand for recreational boating and waterfront activities along the water's edge make the waterfront a critical local resource. Improvements to this area could include things that would expand the waterside activities, as well as broaden the range of marina and water-side operations.

Portions of the waterfront have been developed into small storage and boat recreation facilities for private users. These remain today on the western edge of the waterfront. Targeting improvements in these areas will lead to improved storage, parking, and accessibility which collectively will help with the day-to-day operations.

Access to the waterfront is very limited. The vision for the future anticipates drawing more people and activities to the waterfront, and improving access between the waterfront and Main Street. Through wayfinding and multi-modal improvements, there are numerous opportunities to improve the connectivity between the downtown and waterfront. (See **Figure 6**)

Waterfront



Sheds and gravel parking lot

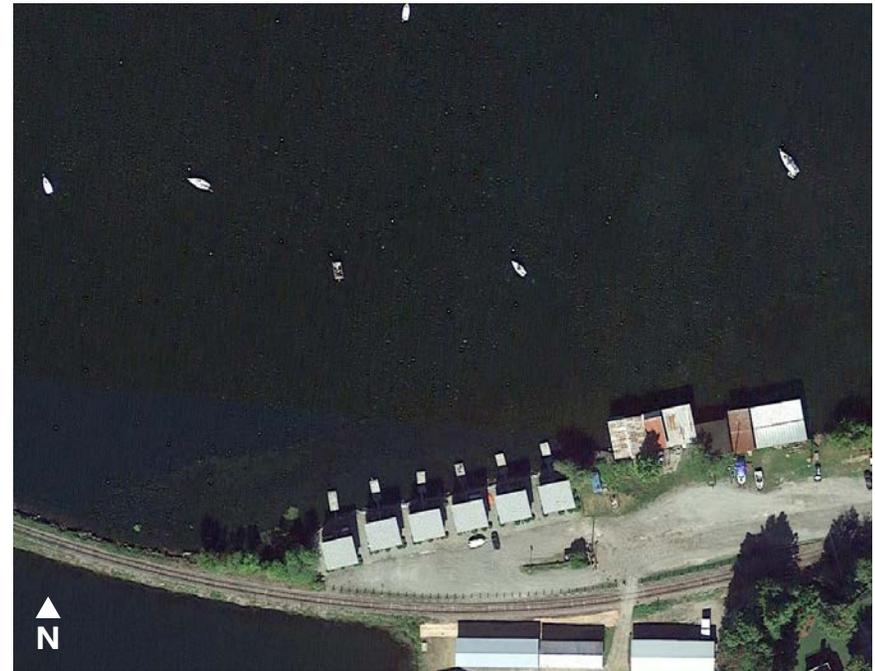


Figure 6 Lake Memphremagog Waterfront



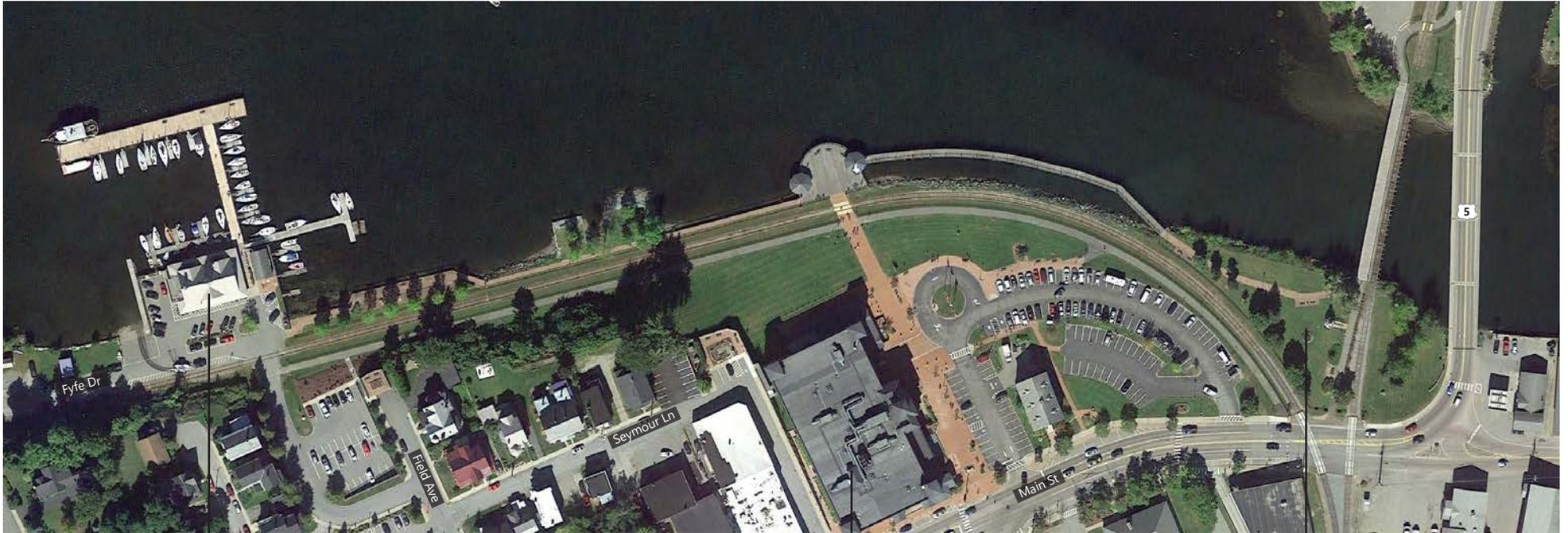
Storage Sheds



Fyfe Drive looking south from the waterfront



Newport City Dock



Newport City Dock

Emory Hebard State Office Building

Pomerleau Park

1.1 Expand marina and operations

The existing marina facility offers a range of recreational boating activities. Expanding the marina and its operations will enable this resource to grow and serve a bigger population of users that will activate the waterfront. Key to this expansion is reinforcing the core of the marina where the day-to-day operations take place. (See **Figure 7**)

A Expanded large vessel berths

Building out the existing pier to accommodate additional large vessels would provide infrastructure for different watercraft, and could draw in larger groups of visitors especially from Canada

B Seasonal slips

Implementing a flexible system of piers that can be assembled or disassembled depending on seasonal demand can ensure that the marina facilities are responsive to periodic fluctuations

C Customs dock

The creation of a specially designated customs dock separate from recreational piers could facilitate a more efficient processing and regulatory oversight

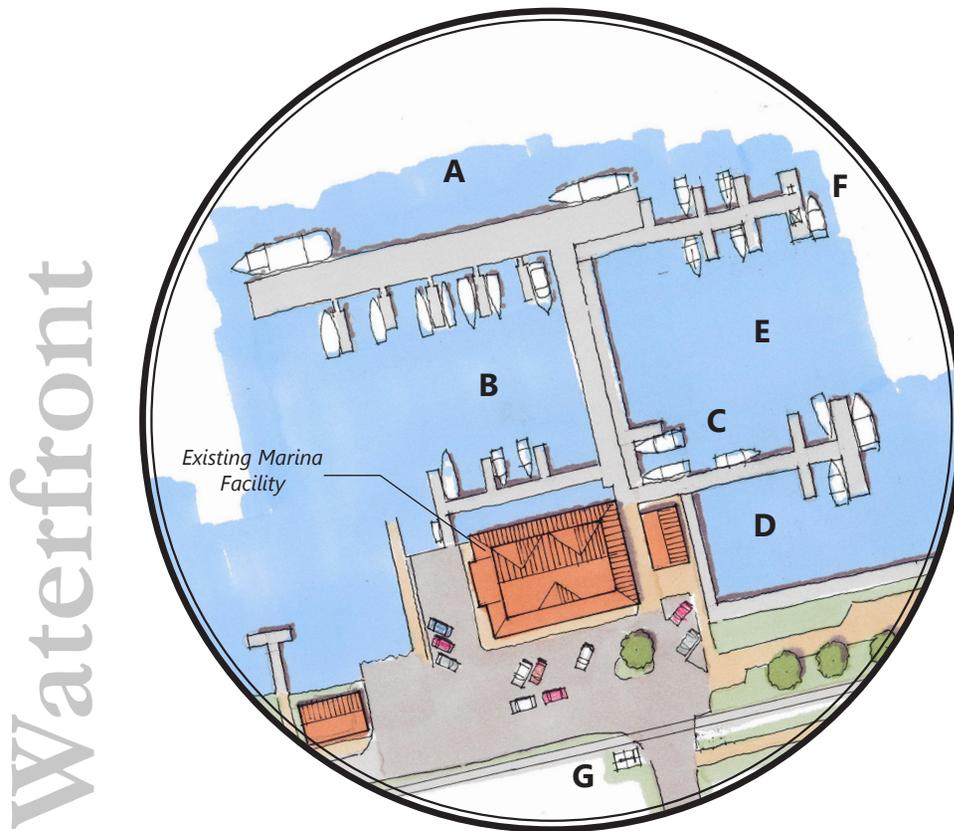


Figure 7 City Dock proposal



Waterfront

D Service pier

Vital emergency services such as fire fighting craft must be allocated designated space and suitable facilities that enable immediate response and reaction

E Transient slip

To encourage visitors on small crafts to make a short-term visit to Downtown, a separation of vessels from permanently docked boats can be achieved by specially designated transient piers

F Utilities service pier

Pumping services for fuel and waste disposal should be conveniently and strategically located to service vessels without blocking other craft

G Newport kiosk and info center

To complement wayfinding efforts throughout the rest of the city, a new kiosk could serve as a landmark for visitors and also provide relevant information and directions into downtown



1.2 Reorganize private sheds

Many of the seasonal sheds that used to occupy the waterfront have gone since the redevelopment of the eastern waterfront. A few sheds remain on the western waterfront next to the existing parking lot. A focused study of these sheds and the operations that surround them may open the opportunity to reorganize the sheds in ways that add more capacity, open views to the waters and allow for targeted improvement to the waters edge. (See **Figure 8**)

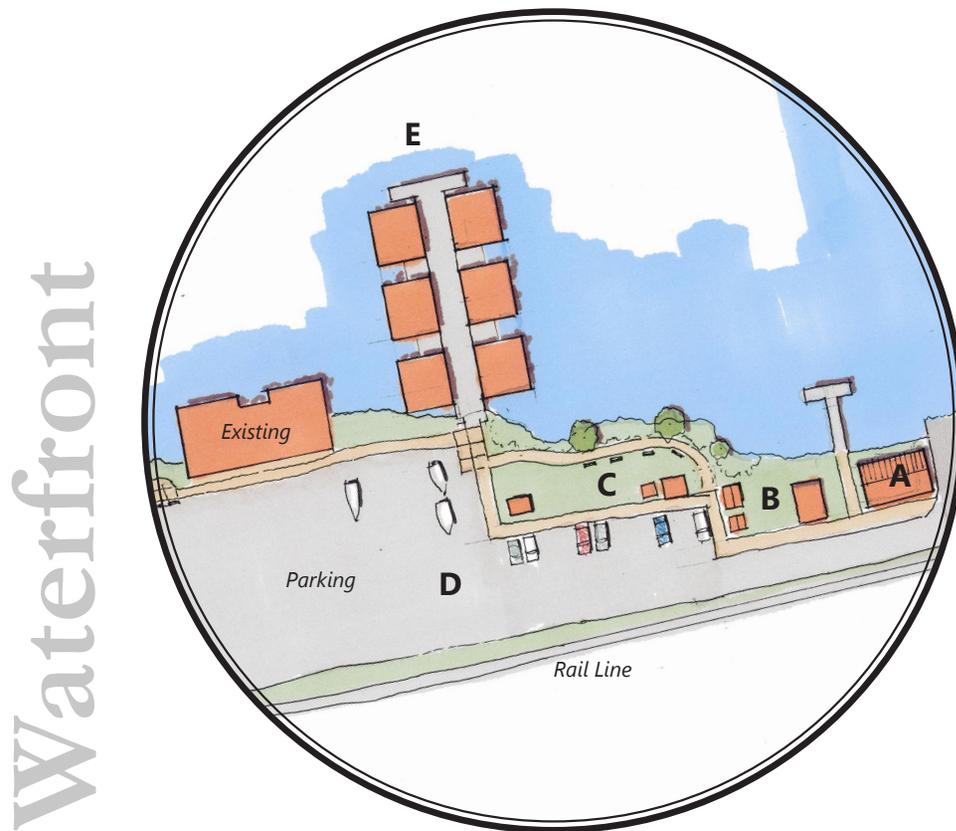


Figure 8 Boat shed and storage

A Small craft rental with restroom

A small structure should be constructed that offers public facilities as well as rental services. Depending the size of the structure, staff offices or vendor space could also be incorporated.

B Improved storage

At present, this space serves as an informal outdoor storage area for vehicles and equipment. Small, enclosed storage spaces could be put to good use, offering weather-proof facilities for sensitive equipment or seasonal inventory.



C Small park and landside overlook

Improving the green space and adding street furniture would help extend the active waterfront and offer options for visitors arriving at the city dock, or those coming from Downtown.

D Maintain gravel parking and boatyard

This area provides vital parking spaces for cars and boat trailers. In lieu of paving this area, the lot should remain a gravel lot but would benefit from minor landscaping and formal signage.

E Explore potential to rebuild and reposition sheds and pier

The existing sheds and launching docks have largely been poorly maintained, despite the fact that they still see active use. Rebuilding the sheds and adding to their number would encourage greater use, and also provide permanent facilities for residents in lieu of other transient docks along the waterfront.



1.3 Invest in waterside activities

The current waterfront has several areas that could be re-purposed to allow for the expansion of waterside and landside activities. This could include small craft rentals with modest improvements to the landside features. This area could be explored for small food/events and would benefit from having benches and shade structures to support the waterside activities. (See **Figure 9**)

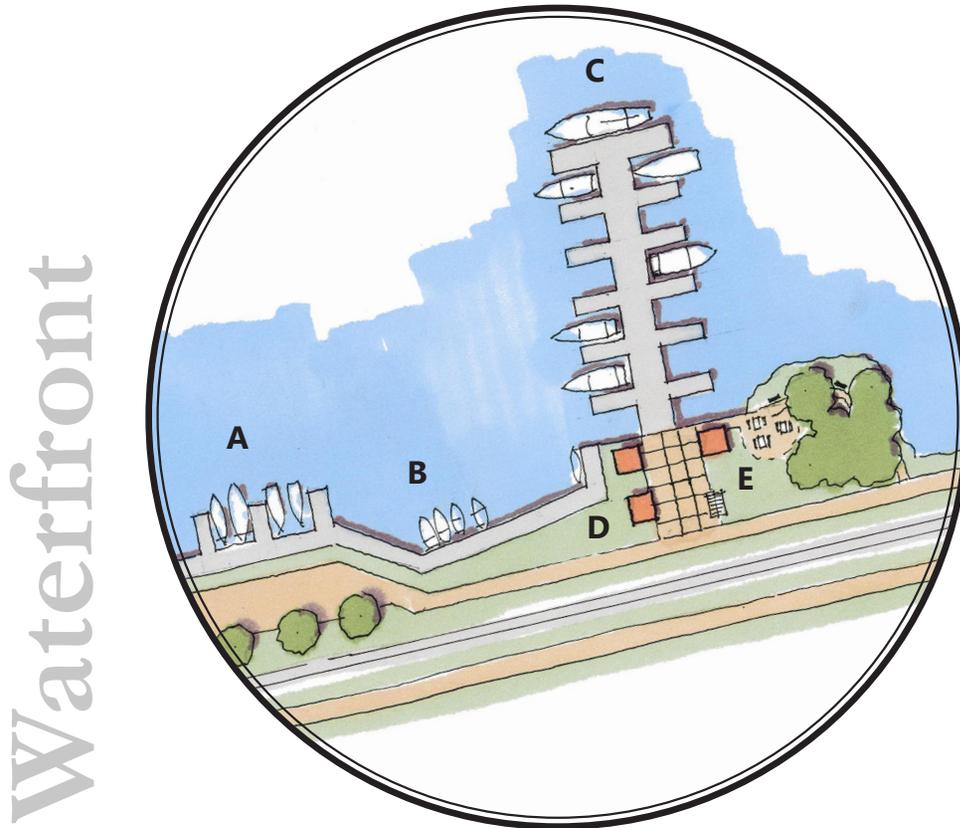


Figure 9 Pier, dock and landside proposal

A Small craft rental slips

Kayaks, small sail boats, or canoes could be made available for hourly or daily rentals. Locating the rental slips away from the primary City dock would prevent any overlap in uses, and would also activate a different portion of the waterfront.

B Small craft rental dock

Landscaping and grade changes could create a dock that allows people to walk directly down to the water into vessels, or easily access the park and boardwalk.

C Slips

In order to address overflow capacity from the primary City docks, additional slips could be constructed elsewhere along the boardwalk that could cater to both small and large vessels



D Small food truck and pavilion vendor

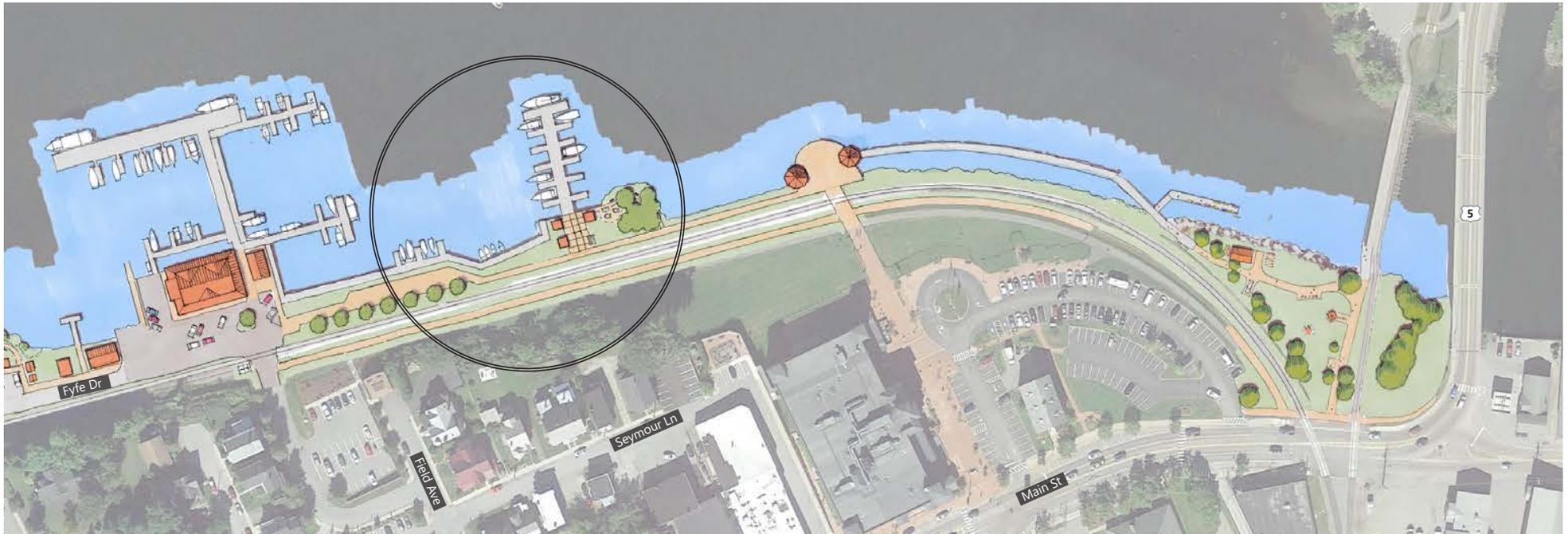
There are currently minimal dining options readily accessible along the waterfront. Creating facilities to accommodate food trucks would allow for flexible spaces that would not necessitate the need for a permanent structure. Alternatively, a small pavilion could be built that features a local vendor.

E Landside overlook & picnic area or venue space

Especially if dining options are introduced to this area of the waterfront, a seating area could serve as a picnic space and offer spectacular views of the adjacent docks and the lake. This area could also be designed as a multi-purpose space that allows for other types of activities and events.



Waterfront benches and seating would encourage prolonged stay



1.4 Connect Pomerleau Park to the water

Pomerleau Park is an underutilized resource that would benefit from active programming. This programming would offer the potential to connect the park to the west and north and would offer reasons for patrons to stop and enjoy the park. Suggestions in this area include the potential to move the existing light house structure and implement improvements that could bring seasonal kayak and canoe rentals. Improved access and storage would be needed to support these seasonal uses. (See **Figure 10**)

A Small craft rental and transient dock

Extending a portion of the boardwalk into the water could create a transient dock large enough to accommodate kayaks and other small craft. Depending on investments along other portions of the waterfront, this dock could become a primary or secondary transient dock.

B Structural repairs to the existing boardwalk

On account of weathering and aging, portions of the existing boardwalk are in need of significant repairs. This could represent an immediate and short-term project that shores up an existing waterfront amenity. Plans to further expand the boardwalk in the future could also be considered.

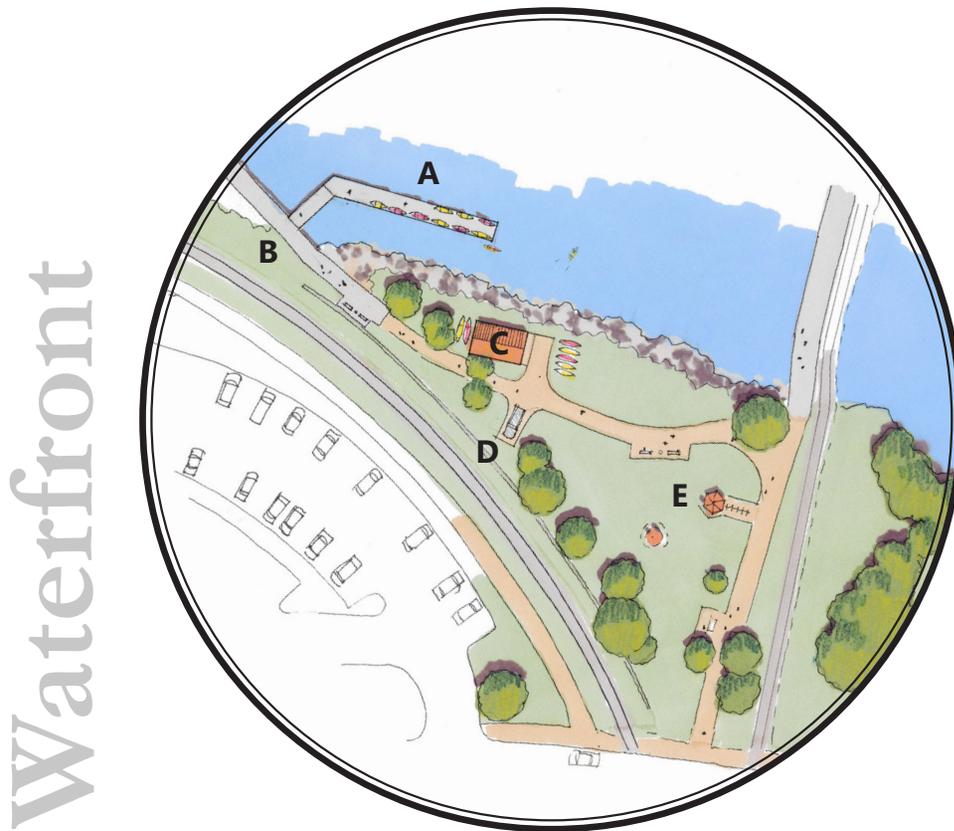


Figure 10 Pomerleau Park proposal



Waterfront

C Kayak and canoe storage

Contingent upon plans along the remainder of the waterfront, a structure could also be built on a portion of the park near the waterfront for the purpose of small craft storage. A storage space could also alleviate vessels from accumulating at the nearby docks.

D Loading and truck parking

In anticipation of greater water-related activities, a designated space for large vehicles to park and unload will be necessary. Such a space will need to be carefully designed to keep the nearby rail road tracks intact and unaltered.

E Lighthouse as a seasonal visitors center or snack pavilion

Built as an homage to Newport's historic lighthouses, the existing lighthouse pavilion in the park could be renovated and repositioned as a seasonal visitors center, or outfitted to serve concessions or for kayak rentals.



Make Main Street a Hub

Main Street in Newport has historically been the centerpiece of activity for residents, businesses and visitors. With changes in demographics and the economy, the downtown has seen decreased activity and investment in the last few decades. The goal for this section of Newport is to reinvigorate Main Street to make it to the “hub of activity” for all. This will require several strategic initiative’s that will lead toward improvements that contribute to the vitality of the street and will make it a place.

Projects anticipated along Main Street range from simple improvements, such as adding street furniture, to more complex projects that will unlock the potential for the redevelopment of critical sites that have frontage on street. Collectively these improvements and development projects will contribute towards adding to the street life and will make Main Street

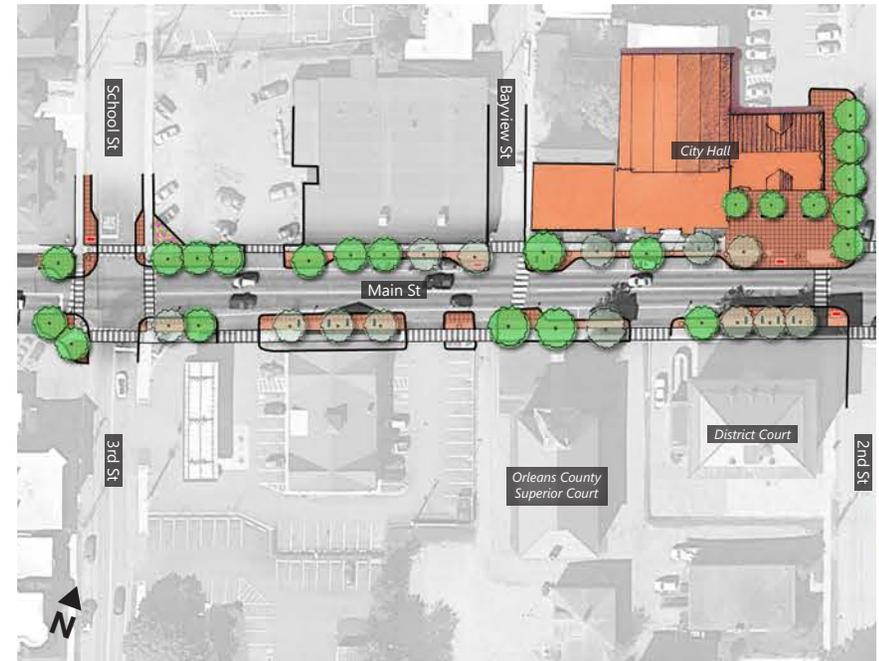
a great civic place. Simple things like street trees and street furniture, coupled with sidewalk bump-outs, an intersection improvements will dramatically impact the aesthetics of downtown. Planning for future additions to City Hall could also lead to opportunities for more civic space.

The City could work closely with the State to plan for potential reinvestments to the existing State Building and Courts. These sites offer the City and State the potential to create a shared-vision for how these resources could be re-purposed in ways that will positively impact the downtown by making room for new users that could activate the street and open the opportunity for additional economic development. (See **Figure 11**)

Main Street



Figure 11 Main Street



2.1 Streetscape Improvements

A Add street trees

-  Existing
-  Proposed

The City has struggled to maintain Downtown’s street trees in recent years due to a variety of factors. Inadequate soil and drainage have resulted in a number of trees along Main Street being removed. The replanting and rehabilitation of street trees requires a comprehensive approach that concentrates efforts around major intersections and prominent downtown buildings. Preliminary work may require a close analysis of failed trees to not only identify previous issues, but also formulate an informed strategy for future implementation. The City could also benefit from a phasing strategy, where a handful of new trees are planted on an annual basis thereby maximizing their impact.



Planting new trees to supplement existing ones can create a shaded and attractive walkway



B Create bump-outs

Bump-outs and sidewalk extensions are both an effective way of managing local traffic as well as providing spaces of respite for pedestrians. Coupling these bump-outs with decorative paving, new trees, and street furniture can further augment these public spaces and create an aesthetically pleasing environment that advances the character of Downtown. Studies by STANTEC and AARP have identified intersections along Main Street as crosswalks for pedestrians and vehicles alike: these studies could be furthered extended to other key intersections between Railroad Square and 3rd Street in order to facilitate a coordinated initiative for sidewalk renovations in downtown.

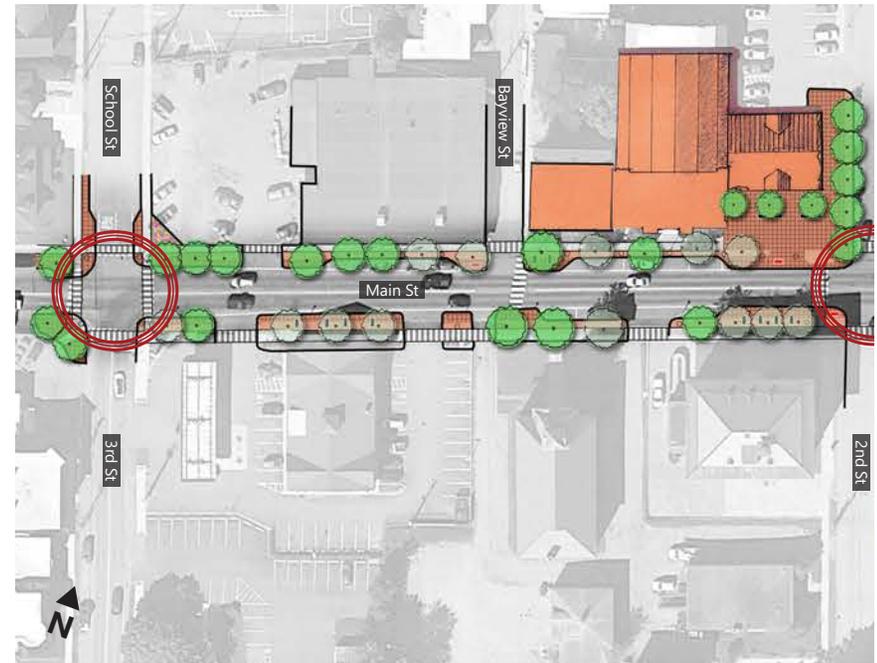
C Move forward with intersection improvements

Previous audits and reports have highlighted the need to upgrade or rehabilitate intersections and roadways along Main Street. With regards to ADA accessibility and visibility, current conditions at some of the more weathered intersections are in need of attention, whether it's repainting of crosswalks or fixing cracks and curb cuts. The findings of these reports should be consolidated and evident in the City's capital improvement plan, where prior efforts should be oriented around those intersections that offer access to community amenities or popular establishments. Candidates include Main Street at Central Street, Second Street, Third Street, Railroad Square, and Bayview Street, and potentially others.

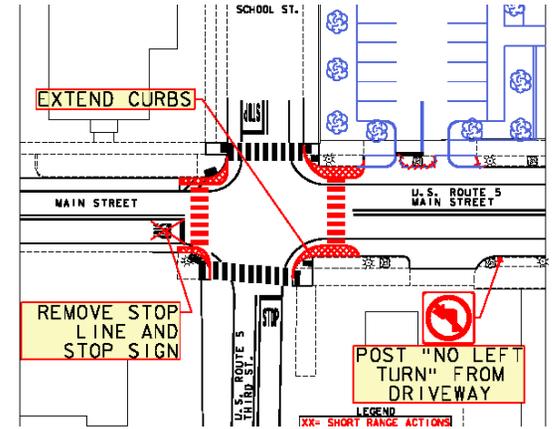
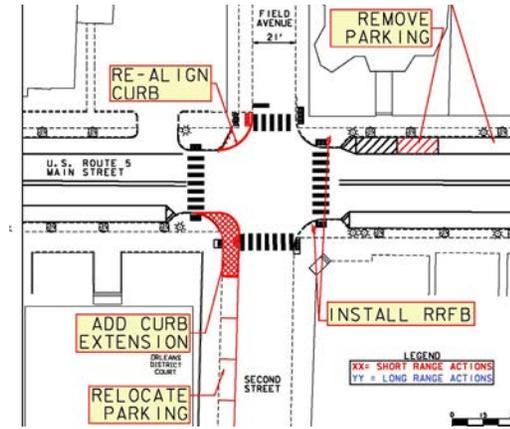
Main Street



Bump-outs at intersections featuring furniture, signage, and decorative paving materials



The City could advance the design of these intersections, and in doing so, should take into consideration the ideas that are presented in this section of the report that seeks to expand the size of the bump-outs, provide for street furniture, increase the use of street trees and incorporate the potential to create a plaza in front of City Hall. While there are targeted intersection improvements identified in the Newport Intersection Study, the City should explore additional bump-outs and streetscape improvements at other key intersections in the downtown.



Excerpts from 'Newport Intersection Study'



D Add street furniture

The City’s form based code implemented in 2010 includes requirements for new street furniture associated with all new development in Downtown. While it acknowledges the installation of benches, bike racks, and waste bins, the lack of consistent development in recent years has resulted in an overall lack of desirable street furniture throughout Main Street. Resulting from inadequate funding, existing planters, trees, lights, and seating are in need of upgrades.

The development and creation of a comprehensive streetscape standard for the Downtown Area would be a viable first step in improving the inventory of street furniture across Main Street and Downtown as a whole. The City should invest in implementing this plan throughout Main Street and its adjoining roadways, potentially partnering with local businesses and community organizations to fund, construct, and maintain these shared community amenities. Municipal investments however should also be coupled with close partnerships with future developers whom should be encouraged to contribute generously to the street furniture inventory beyond the minimum requirements.

In anticipation of future development projects, immediate improvements should be focused on key areas such as Municipal Building and the intersection of 2nd and Main where the placement of additional seating and visually aesthetic components such as new planters and trees could cater to the largest number of pedestrians and cyclists.



Attractive furniture could include flower beds, benches, and decorated waste receptacles





E Install signage, wayfinding, and kiosks at major cross streets

Main Street currently features a number of helpful signs that help direct visitors to local attractions, and also facilitate the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Banners also hang from a number of decorative street lights, acting as visual cues and contributing to a collective Downtown aesthetic.

Plans to increase the number of signs and improve wayfinding throughout Main Street should be enacted to capitalize on major intersections and draw further attention to areas such as the Waterfront. The overall visitor experience would also be enhanced by signs that correspond with local parking patterns, and kiosks that could also serve as welcome points.



Small kiosks and maps could provide directions and information for visitors



2.2 Growth on Main Street

Growth on Main Street will result from efforts to advance development projects forward and could build partnerships with local and State institutions that will set a clear direction for the potential reuse and expansion of these civic buildings. The City Hall building, library and court facilities offer a unique opportunity to develop a master plan for the long-term use of these facilities. (See **Figures 12 and 13**)

A Infill development

The vacant lot can accommodate several buildings that could range in use. Buildings in this area will be informed by the City’s Form Based Code requirements for building form, setback and use. The goal for this site is to achieve a high-quality development that reinforces the street by having active ground floor uses and parking at the rear of (or under) the lot.

B Expanded streetscape

The streetscape in front of the vacant lot offers the opportunity to expand the sidewalks and allow for outdoor dining and public space. The design of the streetscape should complement the qualities of Main Street and include ample street furniture and lighting.

C Parking for downtown - Main Street Vacant Site

Parking at the rear of the lot will provide for spaces necessary to redevelop of the site. The City should explore opportunities to expand parking in this lot for general public use. This expansion of parking could enable the redevelopment of the parking lot where the addition to the Municipal Building and the public plaza are anticipated.

D Event space

The redevelopment of a portion of the existing parking lot at Municipal Building will offer the opportunity for a new event space and public plaza. This space offers great potential to increase the activities that could occur on Main Street.

E Signage and wayfinding

Additional signage and wayfinding (via an informational kiosk and street signs) will enhance the user experience in downtown. This signage could be used to advertise directions to the waterfront and could be used to inform the public about events and resources that are located throughout the downtown.

F Expansion of the Municipal Building

The expansion of Municipal Building could be achieved by creating an addition to the east of the current building that would take a portion of the existing parking lot. In addition to expanding the city vault, the addition could accommodate space needs for departments, services and potential to include a community room that overlooks the lake. (See **Figure 15**)

G Improvements to the court house buildings

The City could work collaboratively with the State to identify the long-term needs of their court facilities. It is common that these types of facilities become outdated for their current users and are often repurposed to accommodate other redevelopment opportunities. By developing a shared-vision, the City and State could identify actions to advance the future of these great resources. (See **Figure 14**)



Figure 12 Today



Figure 13 Potential future growth

Repositioning Main Street

- 1 Main Street
- 2 City Hall
- 3 New Plaza
- 4 Addition to City Hall
- 5 Improved Sidewalks
- 6 Goodrich Memorial Library
- 7 Future Development
- 8 Intersection Improvements
- 9 Bump-out
- 10 New street trees



Figure 14
Vision for Main Street

Creating a new plaza at City Hall



Vendors along plazas or sidewalk bump-outs



Commissioned public art pieces along buildings



Outdoor public seating along pedestrian spaces



Figure 15
New City Hall Plaza

2.3 Re-Position State Facilities and Pomerleau Park

The existing State Complex and Pomerleau Park have been a great addition to downtown in the waterfront. It has been observed through numerous studies that these facilities offer potential for additional enhancements that will improve the way people get to, and access the waterfront.

Ideas on how improvements can enhance the experience at the waterfront and getting to the waterfront include additional streetscape improvements, opportunities to configure the event space along the waterfront, and opportunities to incorporate additional development through the expansion development program in and around the existing parking lot.

Several scenarios were developed for the waterfront park that show ways that events can be located in the park, as well as show how the removal of the existing circular drop off could make way for a bigger waterfront event area. (See [Figure 16](#))



Figure 16 Pomerleau Park today

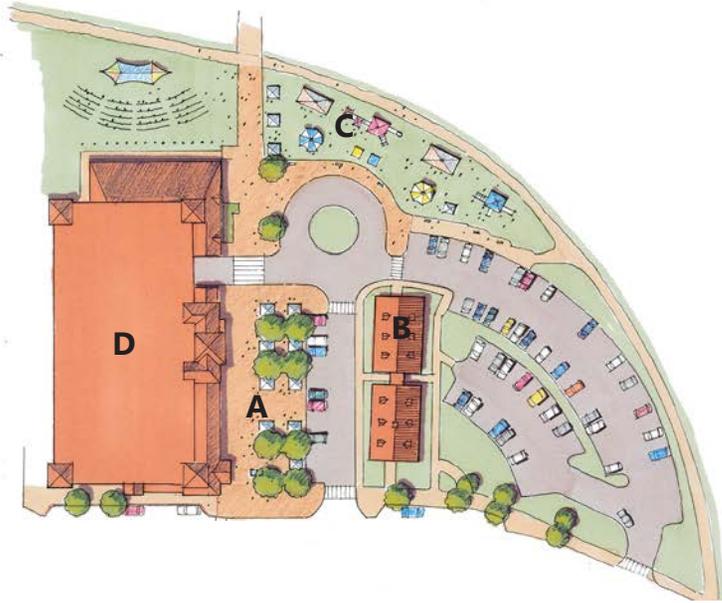
A Reconfigure promenade for events

The plaza adjacent to the State Building is an excellent gathering space with the potential to host a variety of events. Small investments such as the planting of additional trees, installation of new street furniture, and potentially the construction of trellises could create a welcoming environment that could host farmers or flea markets, performances, or food trucks.

B Expanded development

Building a second structure behind the existing NEKCA office building could provide flexible spaces that accommodate office, retail, or perhaps hotel uses. The City should work with the state to identify the process to enable the expansion

Scenario 1



C Plan for large waterfront venues

The intermediary lawn space between the parking lot and the recreation path could be better utilized to feature public amenities such as play structures, outdoor seating, and potentially a formal space for performances. The proximity to the waterfront would allow visitors in boats to also enjoy the events. The City should develop a plan with the state for the potential reconfiguration of the open space that identifies a preferred design and costs.

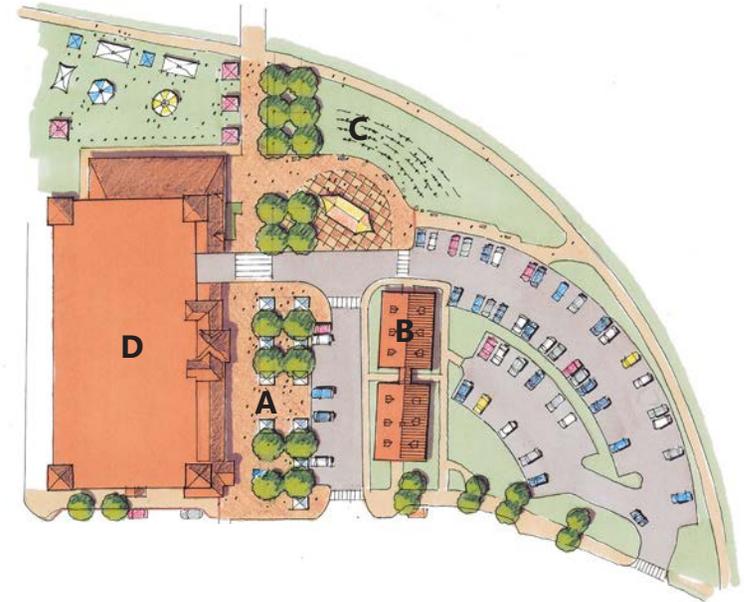
Scenario 1 Maintain drop-off

The existing roundabout could be preserved to accommodate circulation needs.

Scenario 2 Remove drop-off and create event space

The roundabout could be paved over to create a multi-purpose facility capable of hosting different events.

Scenario 2



D Develop a Plan for the State Building

Work with the City and State to explore the repositioning of the state complex. Opportunities include a hotel, retail, and office space. The city should undertake a feasibility study to determine the highest and best use for the potential tenants of this building.

Invest in Gardner Park

Gardner Park is one of Newport’s largest public parks, and is widely embraced by the entire community. Drawn to its numerous facilities, organized events, and seasonal festivities, the 20-acre park features a range of programs that cater to young and old, and constitutes a recreational meeting point for events year-round.

The park hosts a number of permanent fixtures as well as seasonal activities that invite local residents as well as visitors to interact and make use of the space. Several athletic fields provide facilities for multiple sports and active recreation, while programming augments other spaces of the park for farmers markets, band concerts, and occasional weddings. The park also plays a prominent role in civic life and Newport’s historical heritage.

Given the Park’s prominent role in providing the City an important multi-purpose recreational space, the park has been the subject of an important planning process that was conducted recently. A collective effort between city officials and the Gardner Park Restoration Committee have spurred efforts to propose numerous interventions and projects, some calling for extensive and drastic renovations that would reorganize the features of the park.

Rather than undertaking comprehensive steps to alter the park in its entirety, the emphasis should be promoting short-term interventions that do not preclude the opportunity for future projects. By focusing efforts upon those handful of projects that would have the highest immediate impact, a gradual face lift of the park can occur that allows the community to continue its use without the burdens of extensive construction or costly renovations. (See **Figure 17**)

Potential Short Term Projects:

A Rebuild playground

The park’s aging play equipment will benefit from new structures and systems that encourage an even greater number of activities for the City’s youngest residents.

B Renovate bathrooms and skate rental facility

Expansion and small scale alterations to the existing facility will provide better facilities for visitors and park staff alike.

C Make improvements to the boat ramp and waterfront access

Improvements to the facilities and new street furniture will welcome greater use and create a better connection to the water. Physical infrastructure can also be complemented by additional programming and educational opportunities for children. The new dock will improve the accessibility to the shoreline and waterfront access to downtown. Landscaping improvements in this area will enhance the character of this waterfront resource.



Figure 17
Gardner Memorial Park

3 Vision Plan

Gardner Memorial Park

A Rebuild playground

At present, the playground equipment at Gardner Memorial Park has aged and is showing the natural wear and tear associated with extensive use. The rebuilding and expansion of the playground would not only provide children and parents with an attractive facility, but could also be constructed in several phases thereby eliminating any down time in between the work that would otherwise make the equipment inaccessible. It is anticipated that there would be some reductions, in terms of the quantity of play equipment, however there would be an expansion of areas for general leisure, picnicking, and a splash pad.

The process of updating the equipment would require an intentional study of current uses as well as potential additions in order to attract the largest number of visitors. The materials and structures could encourage a variety of activities catering to both toddlers as well as older children, and even feature wheelchair accessible facilities.



Gardner Memorial Park playground today



Example of new playground equipment that is design for ADA and a range of age levels

B Renovate bathrooms and skate rental facility

The building directly across from the playground not only houses the park's restrooms, and a concession stand. An update to these facilities would not only create a better environment for visitors, but would also allow for new additions and features that improve the building's capacity (such as multiple exits) to operate year round.

Seating and tables could be installed on the building's periphery, providing a space for visitors to eat and converse. The snack bar could be expanded through a separate addition where a covered deck could accommodate such equipment as an outdoor grill or counter. A new coat of paint and small alterations to existing fixtures would also provide an aesthetic upgrade, all while the existing interior could remain largely intact.



Existing recreation facilities building



Gardner Memorial Park staff offices and bathroom facilities

C Make improvements to the Dock and waterfront access

In keeping with the broader theme of encouraging and improving access to the waterfront, Gardner Memorial Park would benefit greatly from a renovated dock that could bring people and recreational vehicles to the water. The current facilities are in need of updating, and would benefit from aesthetic and functional improvements that could encourage greater use.

Improvements should be focused on the accessway to the water, as well as the dock. A new pathway leading from the parking lot could be flanked by benches, trash cans, and bicycle racks, thereby drawing people to the area. The existing dock should be rebuilt and expanded further into the water, allowing a larger number of people to utilize the platform. Programming this space for additional recreational use and including seasonal boat rentals could be explored.



Existing dock and ramp



View from Gardner Park Road

This page is intentionally left blank

Anticipate long-term reinvestment

Offering an alternative to the smaller retail options that characterize Main Street, the area surrounding Watertown Plaza along the eastern waterfront is a unique collection of commercial and recreational spaces. Uniquely positioned along a major transit corridor in Route 5 and the Lake, this area has already seen new additions in recent years such as a seasonal walking path and bike path. The opportunity exists now to anticipate even further long-term investment through these interventions. (See **Figure 18**)

A Zone for future uses and define building form goals

The City’s form based code currently features a number of design standards that represent challenges for future development. In order to better facilitate growth, an effort should be made to revisit the Code to seek out potential revisions that could provide more flexibility. Clear objectives should be determined that facilitate both short and long-term projects, including beautifying building edges along the waterfront and Route 5 or receiving new tenants and businesses.

B Advance intersection improvements

While Waterfront Plaza and the adjacent Gardner Park offer an excellent combination of community amenities, pedestrians and drivers alike are challenged by the current design that includes a single access point at Gardner Park Road and Route 5. Previous reports such as AARP’s Street and Sidewalk Audit and STANTEC’s Intersection Study have proposed redesigns that would improve circulation and better define the entryway. These recommendations should move forward aided by the necessary funding.

C Implement wayfinding

The inclusion of wayfinding at the entrance to this area will provide the opportunity for patrons to understand the resources that are nearby, that include the trail, visitors center, farmers market, and future connections to Bluffside Farm and future transient dock.

D Identify connection to Bluffside Farm

The City could work with Bluffside Farm to advance plans for connecting the existing trail to Bluffside Farm. This trail connection will provide the ability to connect the downtown to the north, where there are a range of waterfront activities that are available.

E Advance ideas for transient dock

With the Lake being a regional resource, the City could work closely with the adjacent businesses to develop a vision for a waterside dock that could accommodate transient vessels that might seek a short stay to participate in activities at Gardner Park, and the mixed use development along the eastern waterfront..



A decorative gateway sign could denote the entrance to downtown



Pedestrian and bike trail today



Signage could better direct visitors along the path

Figure 18
Eastern Waterfront



Reinforce Downtown’s fabric

While much of the commercial and cultural activities in Newport are oriented around Main Street and the waterfront, the interior neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown core also constitute a significant population in need of improvement to infrastructure and aesthetics. The area features a unique blend of residential, industrial, and commercial uses, and given the wide variety of establishments a holistic and adaptable strategy is necessary. (See **Figure 19**)

A Review zoning and encourage gradual investment opportunities

Located within the specially designated Downtown zone, current design standards constitute aspirational if not entirely practical guidelines for development. As this area is a blend of medium-density housing and diverse retail establishments, regulations must be adjustable in order to invite reinvestment on existing parcels and simultaneously attract new developments. The City Planning Commission could work with the current land owners to understand potential short-term improvements that may lead to the interim development. The City should also review the current zoning and Form Based Code to see if there is the need to make adjustments to the larger district requirements and its associated street typologies.

B Formulate a plan for collaborative parking requirements

Traffic patterns throughout this part of Newport are varied, contingent largely upon land use. On-site and off-street parking requirements can sometimes constitute a significant burden for businesses, especially due to the lack of developable space. In an effort to separate residential streets from commercial overflow, the City could encourage a system of shared access parking arrangements amongst business owners, and formulate a strategy that builds upon existing standards. A shared parking system could also be designed to improve circulation and safety.

C Introduce small-scale urban design interventions

Although it features nearly as many businesses as Main Street, Coventry Street does not benefit from the same generous sidewalk allocations nor is it characterized by similar decorative lighting, brick paving, or greenery. Local roadways that radiate from Main Street would benefit considerably from improvements to the public realm that could be applied through small-scale interventions. Sidewalks could be remediated and repaired, and where space allows landscaped buffers and flowerbeds could augment these pedestrian corridors. Garden walls or decorative fencing, such as those found in front of Pick & Shovel, could serve as intermediary boundaries. Long-term, bump-outs or a continuation of the brick pavement could also create a more cohesive downtown aesthetic.



Encourage infill development through zoning



Install landscape buffers along major roadways



Greenery can buffer interior parking lots



Figure 19
Downtown Industrial

This page is intentionally left blank

4

Implementation Strategies

Implementation Strategies

It is anticipated that the ideas and recommendations included in this Master Plan will occur over time. As such, it is important that the recommendations retain a degree of flexibility that will enable the City, and those assisting with implementation, the ability to strategically move forward in ways that are beneficial towards seeking funding and leveraging investments. The following implementation matrix outlines each of the initiatives that are included in the Vision Plan. As illustrated, each initiative has a title, project description, champion, timeframe, key actions, estimated costs and comments.

As the City moves forward with implementing aspects of the Master Plan, it will be important to revisit the Master Plan to track its progress. The implementation matrix could be updated on a regular basis to track progress made and to acknowledge that some actions may need to be modified as subsequent steps have been taken. The identification of funding sources and the opportunity to develop partnerships will also inform this Master Plan. With these things in mind, it is envisioned that this implementation plan become a living document that will position the City to be responsive to the funding opportunities and be proactive about helping set a strategic direction on how the waterfront and downtown will achieve its short-and long-term vision.

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs	Comments
1.1	<i>Expand marina and operations</i>						
1.1.a	Expanded large vessels berths	Building out the existing pier to accommodate additional large vessels would provide infrastructure for different watercraft, and could draw in larger groups of visitors especially from Canada	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$5,000 - \$10,000	For improved vessel mooring and fendering arrangements on north wall of main pier
1.1.b	Seasonal Slips	Implementing a flexible system of piers that can be assembled or disassembled depending on seasonal demand can ensure that the marina facilities are responsive to periodic fluctuations	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$150,000 - \$200,000	For floating dock construction and installation
1.1.c	Customs dock	The creation of a specially designated customs dock separate from recreational piers could facilitate a more efficient processing and regulatory oversight	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	5-10 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$15,000 - \$25,000	For floating dock and gangway construction and installation
1.1.d	Service pier	Vital emergency services such as fire fighting craft must be allocated designated space and suitable facilities that enable immediate response and reaction	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	5-10 years	Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$125,000 - \$200,000	For boathouse and boat lift installation adjacent to east wall of main pier
1.1.e	Transient slips	To encourage visitors on small crafts to make a short-term visit to Downtown, a separation of vessels from permanently docked boats can be achieved by specially designated transient piers	City Parks & Recreation + Harbor Commission + Committee	5-10 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$100,000 - \$150,000	For additional finger piers and installation of marine power and water services
1.1.f	Utilities service pier	Pumping services for fuel and waste disposal should be conveniently and strategically located to service vessels without blocking other craft	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	5-10 years	Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$65,000 - \$80,000	For floating service pier, marine fuel delivery system upgrade and placement on main pier.
1.1.g	Newport kiosk & info center	To complement wayfinding efforts throughout the rest of the city, a new kiosk could serve as a landmark for visitors and also provide relevant information and directions into downtown	City Parks & Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Study to incorporate kiosk with City wide wayfinding plan / Design / Construction	\$10,000 - \$20,000	

4 Implementation Strategies

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs	Comments
1.2	Reorganize private sheds						
1.2.a	Small craft rental with restrooms	A small structure should be constructed that offers public facilities as well as rental services. Depending the size of the structure, staff offices or vendor space could also be incorporated.	City + Biz Development Committee	1-5 years	Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$125,000	For design and construction of a Boat Rental Center, VT Access Greeter Station and Public Restrooms west of the Gateway
1.2.b	Improved storage	At present, this space serves as an informal outdoor storage area for vehicles and equipment. Small, enclosed storage spaces could be put to good use, offering weather-proof facilities for sensitive equipment or seasonal inventory.	City /Parks & Recreation	5-10 years			
1.2.c	Small park and landside overlook	Improving the green space and adding street furniture would help extend the active waterfront and offer options for visitors arriving at the city dock, or those coming from Downtown.	City / Parks and Recreation + Committee		Develop programming for the park space / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$200,000 - \$500,000	
1.2.d	Maintain gravel parking and boatyard	This area provides vital parking spaces for cars and boat trailers. In lieu of financing the paving of this area, the lot should remain a gravel lot but would benefit from minor landscaping and formal signage.	City / Public Works/Parks & Recreation	5-10 years			
1.2.e	Rebuild and reposition sheds & pier	The existing sheds and launching docks have largely been poorly maintained, despite the fact that they still see active use. Rebuilding the sheds and adding to their number would encourage greater use, and also provide permanent facilities for residents in lieu of other transient docks along the waterfront.	City / Parks & Recreation / Public Works	10 - 20 years	Work with property owners / Fund a study / Develop design plans for improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$300,000 - \$500,000	

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs	Comments
1.3	<i>Invest in waterside activities</i>						
1.3.a	Small craft rental slips	Kayaks, small sail boats, or canoes could be made available for hourly or daily rentals. Locating the rental slips away from the primary City dock would prevent any overlap in uses, and would also activate a different portion of the waterfront.	City /Parks & Recreation/ Biz Development Committee	1-5 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$50,000 - \$100,000	For rental fleet purchase, construction/installation of dry storage racks for small craft, and floating launch dock designed for small craft launching.
1.3.b	Small craft rental dock	Landscaping and grade changes could create a dock that allows people to walk directly into vessels, or easily access the park and boardwalk.	City /Parks & Recreation/ Biz Development Committee	5-10 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$250,000 - \$400,000	For engineering structural survey of sheet pile sea wall. Improve deck surface with a concrete cap fitted with decorative bollards, cleats and security fencing, lighting.
1.3.c	Small food truck & pavilion vendor	There are currently no dining options readily accessible along the waterfront. Creating facilities to accommodate food trucks would allow for flexible spaces that would not necessitate the need for a permanent structure. Alternatively, a small pavilion could be built that features a local vendor.	City / Parks and Recreation/ Biz Development Committee	5-10 years	Develop programming for the park space / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$50,000	For engineering study to design waterfront vending facility drive floating docks to provide day use docking to access food vendors and downtown business.
1.3.d	Slips	In order to address overflow capacity from the primary City docks, additional slips could be constructed elsewhere along the boardwalk that could cater to both small and large vessels	City /Parks & Recreation/ Biz Development Committee	5-10years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$200,000	For additional floating docks and power and water services
1.3.e	Landside overlook and picnic area or small venue space	Especially if dining options are introduced to this area of the waterfront, a seating area could serve as a picnic space and offer spectacular views of the adjacent docks and the lake. This area could also be designed as a multi-purpose space that allows for other types of activities and events.	City / Parks and Recreation / Committee	5-10 years	Develop programming for the park space / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$200,000 - \$500,000	

4 Implementation Strategies

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs	Comments
1.4	Connect Pomerleau Park to the water						
1.4.a	Small craft & transient dock	Extending a portion of the boardwalk into the water could create a transient dock large enough to accommodate kayaks and other small craft. Depending on investments along other portions of the waterfront, this dock could become a primary or secondary transient dock.	City / Parks & Recreation	1-5 years	Study for size and types of vessels / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction		
1.4.b	Structural repairs to the existing boardwalk	On account of weathering and aging, portions of the existing boardwalk are in need of significant repairs. This could represent an immediate and short-term project that shores up an existing waterfront amenity. Plans to further expand the boardwalk in the future could also be considered.	City / Parks & Recreation / Public Works / State of Vermont	5-10 years	Work with the State of Vermont, determine appropriate time line and locate appropriate funding.		
1.4.c	Kayak and canoe storage	Contingent upon plans along the remainder of the waterfront, a structure could also be built on a portion of the park near the waterfront for the purpose of small craft storage. A storage space could also alleviate vessels from accumulating at the nearby docks.	City / Parks and Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Develop Design plans for proposed improvements		
1.4.d	Loading & truck parking	In anticipation of greater water-related activities, a designated space for large vehicles to park and unload will be necessary. Such a space will need to be carefully designed to keep the nearby rail road tracks intact and unaltered.	City / Public Works	1-5 years	Meld into Intersection Study		
1.4.e	Lighthouse as a seasonal visitors center, informational kiosk, and/or souvenir snack pavilion	Built as an homage to Newport's historic lighthouses, the small pavilion in the park could be renovated and repositioned as a seasonal visitors center, or outfitted to serve concessions.	City / Parks and Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Study to re-hab existing light house or build a new one / Develop design / Permitting / Construction	\$50,000 - \$100,000	

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
2.1	Main St Streetscape Improvements					
2.1.a	Add street trees/ City as Botanic Garden Concept	The City has struggled with inadequate soil, lack of sunlight, and poor drainage which have contributed to the demise of Main Street's trees. The replanting and rehabilitation of street trees requires a comprehensive approach that concentrates efforts around major intersections and prominent downtown buildings. Preliminary work may require an assessment of previous issues to inform a strategy for future implementation. The City could also benefit from a phasing strategy, where a handful of new trees are planted on an annual basis thereby maximizing their impact. The City could also use temporary ornamental trees placed on the street as the incubator of the City as Botanical Garden idea. These trees can then be planted around the City if and when a more permanent concept is adopted.	City / Public Works + Art & Garden Committee	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$100,000 - \$200,000
2.1.b	Create bump-outs	Bumpouts and sidewalk extensions are both an effective way of managing local traffic as well as providing spaces of respite for pedestrians. Coupling these bumpouts with decorative paving, new trees, and street furniture can further augment these public spaces and create an aesthetically pleasing environment that advances the character of Downtown. Studies by STANTEC and AARP have already identified several intersections along Main Street as the busiest crosswalks for pedestrians and vehicles alike: these studies should be furthered extended to every intersection between Railroad Square and 3rd Street in order to facilitate the re-design and most effective rollout of sidewalk renovations.	City / Public Works + Art & Garden Committee	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$100,000 - \$300,000 each
2.1.c	Move forward with intersection improvements	Previous audits and reports have already highlighted the need to upgrade or rehabilitate intersections and roadways along Main Street. With regards to ADA accessibility and visibility, current conditions at some of the intersections are in need of attention, whether it's the repainting of crosswalks or fixing of cracks and curb cuts. The findings of these reports should be consolidated and evident in the City's capital improvement plan, where initial efforts should be oriented around those intersections that offer access to community amenities or popular establishments. Candidates include Main Street at Central Street, Coventry Street, and Second Street/Field Avenue.	City / Public Works	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$500,000 - \$750,000

4 Implementation Strategies

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
2.1	Main St Streetscape Improvements					
2.1.d	Add street furniture	<p>The City's form based code implemented in 2010 includes requirements for new street furniture associated with all new development in Downtown. Although it mandates the installation of benches, bike racks, and trash and recycling receptacles, the lack of consistent development in recent years has resulted in an overall lack of desirable street furniture throughout Main Street. Resulting from a lack of adequate funding or maintenance, existing planters, trees, lights, and seating have declined in quality and upkeep.</p> <p>The development and creation of a comprehensive streetscape standard for the Downtown Area would be a viable first step in improving the inventory of street furniture across Main Street and Downtown as a whole. The City could consider investing in implementing this plan throughout Main Street and its adjoining roadways, potentially partnering with local businesses and community organizations to fund, construct, and maintain these shared community amenities. Municipal investment could also be coupled with partnerships with future developers whom should be encouraged to contribute generously to the street furniture inventory.</p> <p>In anticipation of future development projects, improvements could be focused on key areas such as the Municipal Building Parking Lot and the intersection of Second and Main where the placement of additional seating and visually aesthetic components such as new planters and trees could cater to the largest number of pedestrians and cyclists.</p>	City / Public Works + Committee	5-10 years	Develop City standards for street furniture, benches, trash and recycling receptacles / Installation	\$50,000-\$100,000
2.1.e	Install signage, wayfinding, and kiosks at major cross streets	<p>Main Street currently features a number of helpful signs that help direct visitors to local attractions, and also facilitate the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Banners also hang from a number of decorative street lights, acting as visual cues and contributing to a collective Downtown aesthetic.</p> <p>Plans to increase the number of signs and improve wayfinding throughout Main Street should be enacted to capitalize on major intersections and draw further attention to areas such as the Waterfront. The overall visitor experience would also be enhanced by signs that correspond with local parking patterns, and kiosks that could also serve as welcome points.</p>	City / Public Works + Committee	1-5 years	<p>Study to incorporate kiosk with City wide wayfinding plan / Design / Install kiosks and signs</p> <p>(Anticipate up to 3 kiosks, and supplemental wayfinding signs in the downtown)</p>	\$80,000 - \$150,000

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
2.2	Growth on Main Street					
2.2a	Infill development	<p><i>All of these projects are contingent upon funding and finding developers and would take place after development plans are in place.</i></p>			Future public / private development, TBD	
2.2.b	Expanded streetscape				Refer to section 2.0 intersections	
2.2.c	Parking for downtown				Explore potential to build expanded public parking	
2.2.d	Event space				Public space	
2.2.e	Signage/ wayfinding				Coordinate w/ 2.1e	
2.2.f	Expansion of City Hall				Public meeting room, City office, City Hall Vault	\$3,000,000 - \$5,000,000
2.2.g	Improvements to the court houses				Work w/ state to study reuse of Court House	\$30,000

4 Implementation Strategies

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
2.3	Reconfigure Pomerleau Park					
2.3.a	Reconfigure promenade for events/add streetscape elements	The plaza adjacent to the State Building is an excellent gathering space with the potential to host a variety of events. Small investments such as the planting of additional trees, installation of new street furniture, and potentially the construction of trellises could create a welcoming environment that could host farmers or flea markets, performances, or food trucks.	state owned property	5-10 years	Study for programming needs / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$200,000 - \$300,000
2.3.b	Expanded development	Building a second structure to expand on the existing NEKCA office building could provide flexible spaces that accommodate office, retail, or perhaps hotel uses.	state owned property: City / economic development initiatives	10-20 years	Study for real estate market / Work with state to understand highest and best use	\$30,000
2.3.c	Plan for large waterfront venues	The intermediary lawn space between the parking lot and the Newport Recreation Path could be better utilized to feature public amenities such as play structures, outdoor seating, and potentially a formal space for performances. The proximity to the waterfront would allow visitors in boats to also enjoy the events.	City / Parks and Recreation	5 - 10 years	Work with event planners	\$100,000 - \$200,000
*2.3.d	Maintain drop-off	The existing roundabout could be preserved to accommodate circulation needs.				
*2.3.d	Remove drop-off and create event space	The roundabout could be paved over to create a multi-purpose facility capable of hosting different events.	City / Public Works	10 -20 years	Work with event planners and architects/engineers / Study design option to eliminate the drop-off for pedestrian space / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting / Construction	\$300,000 - \$500,000

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
3.a	Rebuilding Playground	The park's aging play equipment will benefit considerably from new structures and systems that encourage an even greater number of activities for the City's youngest residents	City / Parks and Recreation/ + Recreation Committee + Committee	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$50,000- \$75,000
3.b	Renovate bathrooms and skate rental facility	Expansion and small scale alterations to the existing building will provide better facilities for visitors and park staff alike	City / Parks and Recreation + Committee	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$100,000- \$200,000
3.c	Make improvements to the dock and waterfront access	Improvements to the facilities and new park furniture will welcome greater use and create a better connection to the water	City / Parks and Recreation + Committee	1-5 years	Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$75,000 - \$150,000

4 Implementation Strategies

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
4.a	Zone for future uses and define building form goals	The City's form based code currently features a number of design standards that represent challenges for future development. In order to better facilitate growth, an effort should be made to collaborate with existing tenants and nearby stakeholders in formulating revisions to the existing code that provide flexible requirements. Clear objectives should be determined that facilitate both short and long-term projects, including beautifying building edges along the waterfront and Route 5 or receiving new tenants and businesses.	City / Planning Commission / City Manager	10-20 years	Downtown Committee / Establish Goals and Objectives / Amend City Zoning Regulations as necessary	\$0
4.b	Advance intersection improvements	Gardner Park Road and Route 5 could benefit from a redesign that would improve circulation and better define the entry way to both the Waterfront Plaza and Gardner Park community amenities. AARP's Street and Sidewalk Audit and STANTEC's Intersection Study have proposed some redesigns that would improve this area. These recommendations could move forward aided by the necessary funding.	City / Public Works + Private Business + Committee	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$200,000 - \$500,000
4.c	Implement wayfinding	In addition to the pedestrian and bike trail, a number of community amenities offer a variety of uses and activities: the farmers market, the water front, and Gardner Memorial Park are some example. Signage posted throughout the area and well maintained signage and information kiosks at the Chamber of Commerce' Visitor Center could direct visitors to these destinations and offer improved access.	City / Committees	1-5 years	Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements	\$25,000 - \$50,000
4.d	Identify connection to Bluffside Farms	Create pedestrian connection to Bluffside Farm through recreation trails, boardwalks, and walking paths. Develop a wayfinding and signage plan.	City / Committees/ Vermont Land Trust		Develop recreation trail plan to establish connections with Bluffside Farm and Bebee Spur Trail / Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000
4.e	VISTA Seasonal Walking Path Docks	Installed summer of 2018 (Estimated Costs for floating dock and gangway construction and installation)	Private Business owner	done	Study to determine type and size of vessels / Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$15,000 - \$25,000

Initiative #	Title	Project Description	Champion	Timeframe	Key Actions	Estimated Costs
5.a	Amend zoning and encourage gradual investment opportunities	Located within the specially designated Downtown zone, current design standards constitute aspirational if not entirely practical guidelines for development. As this area is a blend of medium-density housing and diverse retail establishments, regulations must be adjustable in order to invite reinvestment on existing parcels and simultaneously attract new developments.	City / Developers/ Committees /Planning Commission	1-5 years	Amend City Zoning Regulations /Attract developers through Public and Private partnerships	\$0
5.b.	Formulate a plan for collaborative parking requirements	Traffic patterns throughout in this part of Newport are varied, contingent largely upon land use. Especially for businesses, on-site and off-street parking requirements can sometimes constitute a significant burden, especially due to the lack of developable space. In an effort to separate residential streets from commercial overflow, the City should encourage a system of shared access parking arrangements amongst business owners, and formulate a strategy that builds upon existing standards. A shared parking system could also be designed to improve circulation and safety.	City / NVDA / Developers / Committees /Planning Commission	1-5 years	Amend City Zoning Regulations / Work with property and business owners, and stakeholders / Install wayfinding and signage directing visitors to parking inventory	\$50,000
5.c	Introduce small-scale urban design ideas	Note: Coventry St is a heavily travelled truck route; large trucks cannot travel on Main St. Coventry St. is known more as an industrial area than a typical Main St. The first third of Coventry St from Main St could benefit from sidewalk improvements and landscape buffers and flowerbeds to draw consumer traffic to the few retail businesses. The City could consider eventually installing pavers from Main St. to the Pick & Shovel Parking lot.	City / Public Works/ Businesses /Planning Commission	5-10 years	Apply for grants / Hire design consultants / Develop design plans for proposed improvements / Permitting	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000

This page is intentionally left blank

