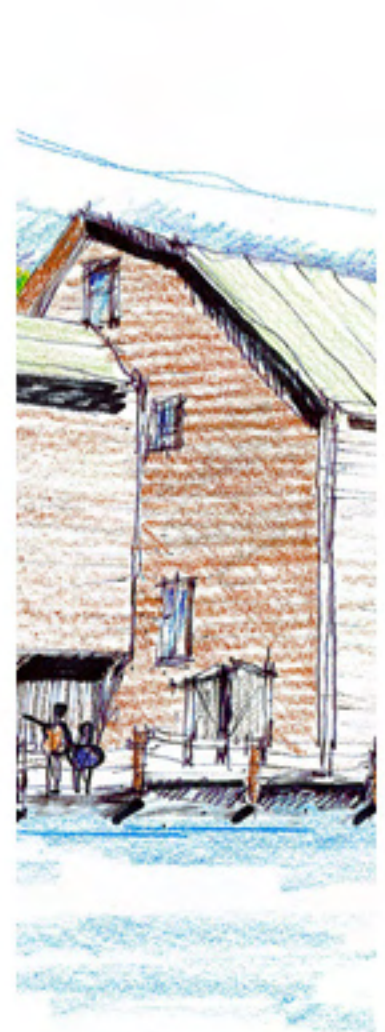
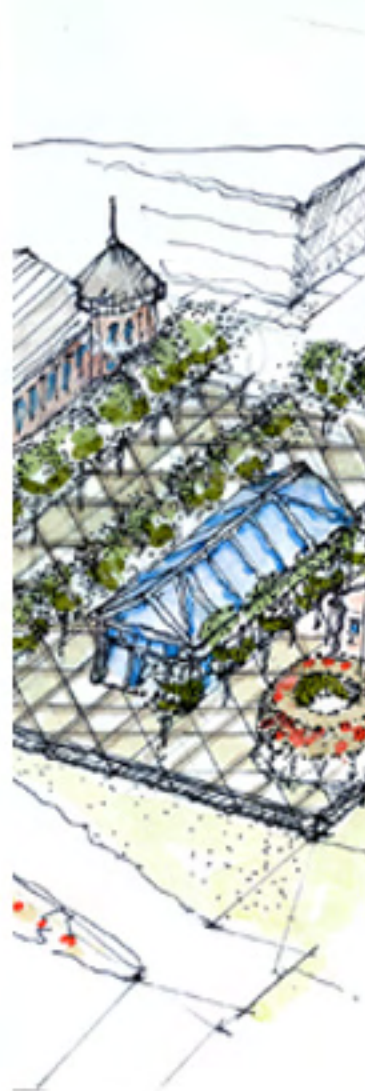
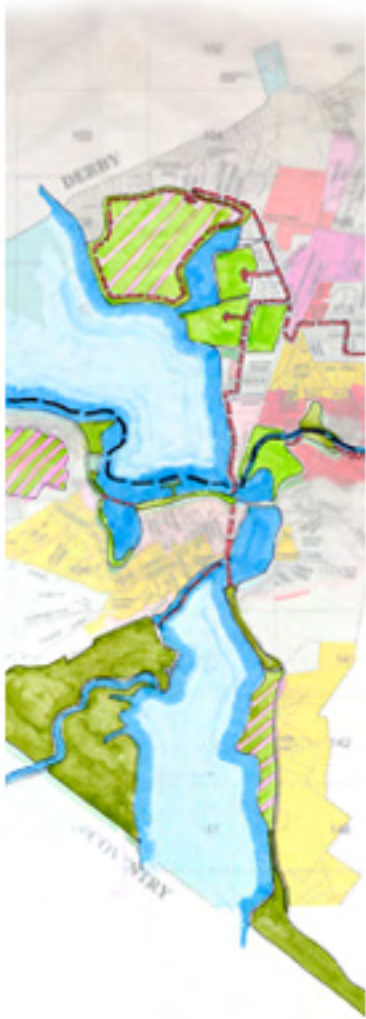


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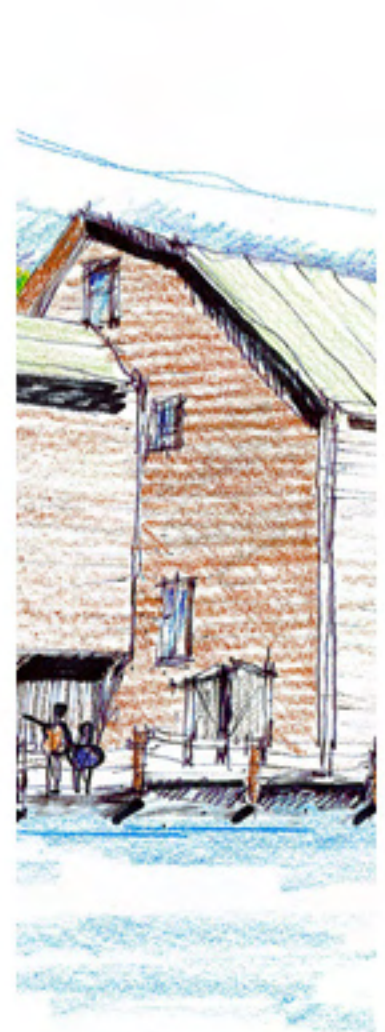
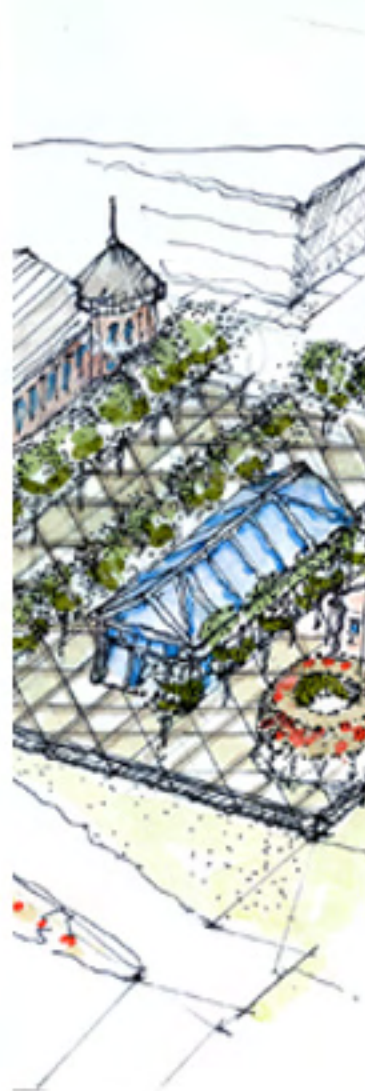
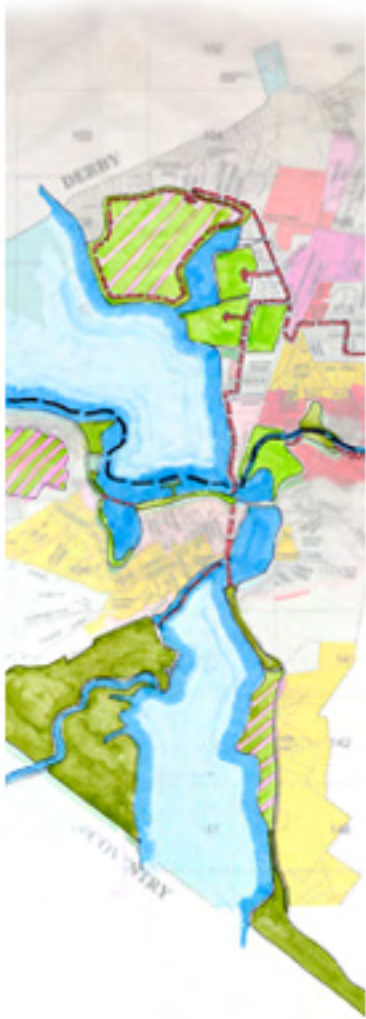
American Institute of Architects

Regional/ Urban Design Assistance Team



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Vermont Heritage Spring Water
The Dancing Sail
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Montgomery Café
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Introduction

March 23, 2009

To the Good Citizens of Newport:

To create a durable vision plan for Newport, this specially assembled AIA R/UDAT panel of specialists listened to citizens of many varied interests over two full days of input in several different forums. In inviting a national American Institute of Architects Regional / Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to your community, you have embarked on an historic event that will resonate in your community for years to come. We have blended citizen concerns with national quality expertise in town planning, landscape architecture, and architecture to present short-term and futuristic recommendations.

Crafting a durable vision for your community is demanding and difficult work. Our ambitious plan is just the beginning of the hard work yet to be done. Consensus and harmony for all interests at all times for all situations is impossible. However, you are blessed with community and cultural underpinnings that are well rooted in a collective spirit of altruism.

Preserving and enhancing an historic downtown, finding opportunities to link downtown with the Lake Memphremagog waterfront, burnishing and polishing the assets in Gardner Park, creating a new regional recreation facility, and committing to a "Century Bridge" in 2018 to improve linkages, identity, and access to South Bay are all challenges that this community and its strong, enterprising spirit can accomplish.

With patience and determination, your community will find the collective will and perseverance to provide your children and grandchildren with the small town atmosphere and quality of life you currently enjoy, but also a community richer in choices for housing, career, recreation, and entertainment for all stages of life. Your challenge is accepting change while demanding the highest

development standards of yourselves and new projects proposed in your community.

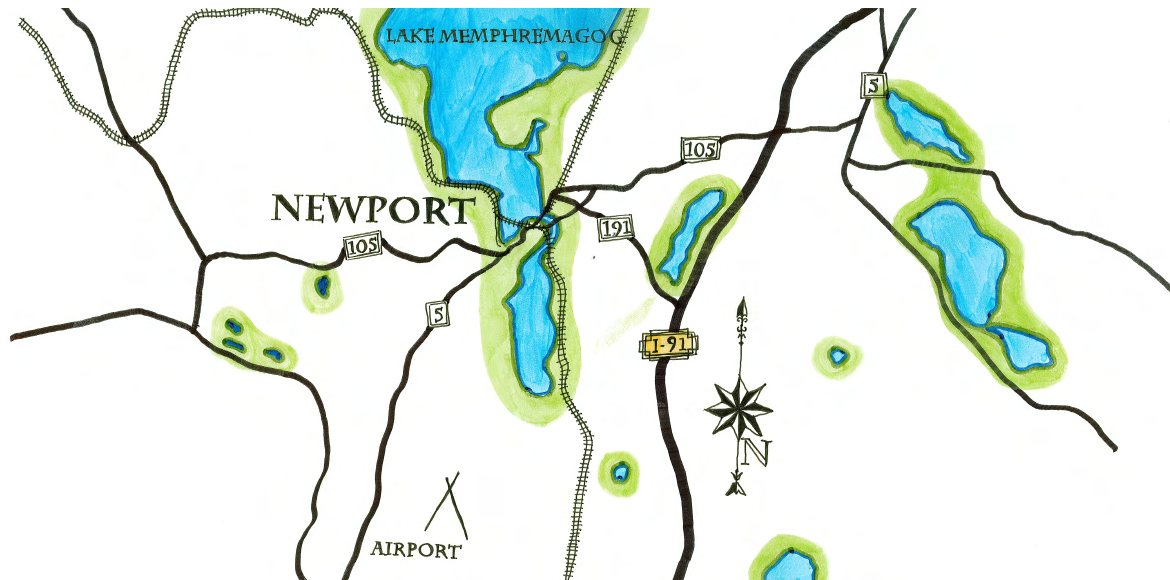
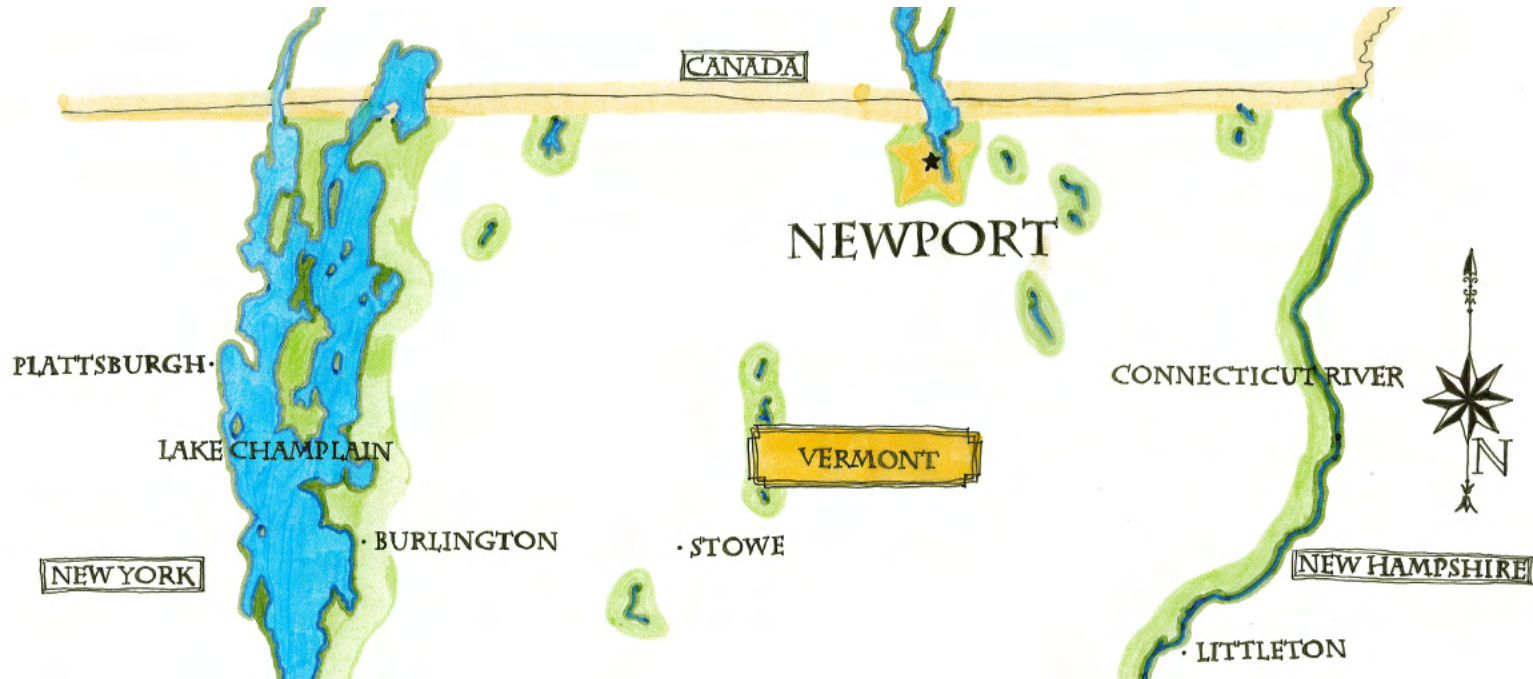
It is important to emphasize that this vision plan is only as durable as the collective community memory, and it is our team's hope that elected officials, planning commission members, R/UDAT steering committee members, and involved citizens will invoke the spirit and memory of this community planning effort when individual development proposals are reviewed, discussed, and adopted.

It has been a thrill to be so welcomed and loved by so many residents of Newport, and I look forward to visiting you again in the future as your vision of an even more livable community is realized. There can be no more noble undertaking that to leave our children a town that builds solid economic development, fosters community spirit, and celebrates urban quality. My best wishes to you !

James Abell, FAIA, LA
Newport, VT R/UDAT Team Leader



Community Context



History



Railroad in Downtown Newport

Newport, Vermont is located in northeastern Vermont. Newport is the only bona fide “city” in the Northeast Kingdom, though it is worth mentioning that the folks in St. Johnsbury Town don’t care much for that fact. Because of its proximity to the Canadian border, the City of Newport and the area it occupies has probably always been a regional hub of cultural activity and growth.

When the glory days of the railroad were over, the area changed considerably. This fact, combined with the decline area’s manufacturing base over the years left only a few major manufacturing employers such as Ethan Allen Manufacturing in Orleans, Tivoly (formerly Butterfields) in Derby Line and Columbia Plywood in Newport. Currently the largest employers in the region are North Country Supervisory Union (11 elementary schools, a junior high school and a high school) and North Country Health Systems (hospital and out-patient services).



Main Street 1950s

Tourism has always been a primary focus in the Newport area, often a destination for fishing and boating. A desire to rebuild its tradition as a travel destination has increased as Newport has been forced to focus less on industry. The beauty and serenity of Lake Memphremagog still remains the major attraction. After Lake Champlain, Lake Memphremagog is often referred to as Vermont’s other “great lake”.

Lake Memphremagog (Lac Memphrémagog in Quebec) is a fresh water glacial lake located between Newport, Vermont, United States and Magog, Quebec, Canada. The lake is 27 miles (43 km) long with 73 percent of the lake’s surface area in Quebec, where it drains into the Magog River. The city of Sherbrooke, Québec is on the river north of Newport, Vermont. Where the river runs through Sherbrooke it has a unique and locally famous



Aerial photograph of Newport

“plastic bridge” - innovative in its application of carbon-fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) instead of steel. Three-quarters of Lake Memphremagog’s watershed, 489 square miles (1,270 km²), is in Vermont. The total is 687 square miles (1,780 km²), with 198 square miles (510 km²) located in Quebec. The lake elevation is 682 feet (208 m).[4] The lake has 20 islands. Province Island, the largest, is divided by the international border. The name Memphremagog is derived from Algonkian (Algonquin), in which it means “where there is a big expanse of water”.

Newport City is the seat of Orleans County at the south end of Lake Memphremagog, near the Canadian border. The first house in the settlement (originally called Duncansboro) was built in 1793 by Deacon Martin Adams. The name Newport was adopted in 1816. Newport town (township; chartered 1802), including the village of Newport Center, is adjacent to the west. The city is an international port of entry and a railroad junction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It developed as a trade centre and a resort (skiing and water sports) and lies in an extensive dairy region; at one time the handling and processing of milk were important until the closing of the H.P. Hood and Sons plant. Other light manufactures include clothing, wood products, and plastics. Inc.

As of the census of 2000, there were 5,005 people, 2,086 households, and 1,192 families residing in Newport City. The population density was 828.9 people per square mile. There were 2,342 housing units at an average density of 390.3/ per square mile. The racial makeup of the city was 96.14% White, .76% Black or African American, .62% Asian, .62% Native American, .22% of Other Race, and 1.64% of two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.28% of the population. As of the census, there were 2,086, out of which 26.6% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 41% were married couples living together, 12.6% had



History

a female householder with no husband present, and 42.9% were non-families. 35.5% of all households were made up of individuals, and 16% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.20, and the average family size was 2.84.

In the city the population was spread out with 24.8% under the age of 20, 5.7% from 20 to 24, 27.1% from 25 to 44, 23.1% from 45 to 64, and 19.3% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 39.9 years. For every 100 females there were 97 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 94 males.

The US Census Bureau estimates that the town's population will increase 2.5% from 2000-2005. Most recently (1999) the median income for a household in Newport City was determined to be \$25,544 and the median income for a family was \$34,922. Males had a median income of \$26,421 versus \$13,527 for females. The per capita income for Newport City was \$20,054. About 13% of families and 16.6% of the population were living below the poverty line, including 25.4% of those under age 18 and 5.4% of those ages 65 or over.

NOTABLE

Josiah Groul, Jr. (May 28, 1841 - July 19, 1925), was the 46th Governor of Vermont, represented Newport in the legislature 1872-1876. He was an army officer, lawyer, and politician of the U.S. state of Vermont. A native of Quebec, he served in the American Civil War as a Union officer before entering the legal profession after the war. A Republican, he entered politics and served in both chambers of the Vermont General Assembly, including time as Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives. He then was elected as the 46th Governor, serving from 1896 to 1898.

Winston Lewis Prouty (September 1, 1906 - September 10, 1971) was a United States Representative and Senator from Vermont. The Prouty family owned and operated Prouty & Miller in Newport, a lumber and building materials company, with forests east of the Mississippi and in Canada. His uncle, George H. Prouty, served as governor of Vermont from 1908 until 1910. Prouty was the mayor of Newport from 1938 to 1941. He was a member of the Vermont House of Representatives in 1941, 1945, 1947; he served as speaker in 1947. Prouty was elected as a Republican to the Eighty-second Congress; re-elected to the three succeeding Congresses (January 3, 1951-January 3, 1959); was not a candidate for renomination in 1958; elected to the United States Senate in 1958; reelected in 1964 and 1970 and served from January 3, 1959, until his death; died in Boston, Mass., on September 10, 1971; interment in Pine Grove Cemetery, Newport, Vermont. Prouty died of cancer at 65 while in office in 1971 and was eulogized by President Richard Nixon.

George Herbert Prouty (March 4, 1862 – August 19, 1918) George H Prouty was born in Newport and was a Republican member of the Vermont House of Representatives, 1896-97; member of Vermont Senate, 1904; Lieutenant Governor of Vermont, 1906-08; Governor of Vermont, 1908-10; delegate to Republican National Convention from Vermont, 1916. Prouty was also the uncle of Senator Winston L. Prouty.

Charles Francis Adams, Founder of the Boston Bruins - one of the original six teams of the National Hockey League. Adams founded the Bruins in 1924. The NHL's Adams Division is named after him.



Lady of the Lake and Newport Railroad Station



Salmon Fishing from Bridge in Newport



Main Street Shopping

Housing



Home is where the Heart is

In Newport City, it is very significant how many people have introduced themselves at the community sessions that our team has had with the public by saying they were born or grew up in Newport and then they left for 10, 15, even 20 or 30 years, and then they came back. Some have used the expression, “And then I came back home.” They came back to Newport City and they came back clearly with the sense of coming home. This is an unusual feeling – in the United States where moving from one part of the country to another has become the pattern which is accepted, it strikes us that Newport City has clearly had a very special meaning to many of the people who were born here, or who grew up here and spent a good part of their childhood here. Newport City is the people, the sense of community, the pristine quality of the Vermont landscape, the absence of the extreme commercialism that has overtaken some other parts of the state, and intertwined with all these notable characteristics, is the LAKE!

The sight of Lake Memphremagog is ever-present in this city...the views of it change depending where one stands in the city, what time of day one sees it, and whether the sun or deep clouds are overhead. And just when one momentarily forgets its presence,

it catches the eye, and overwhelms once again....one runs out of adjectives of admiration and wonder. Although “old timers” seldom refer to the lake in their musings about why they returned to this city, we cannot help but think their memories hold that image no matter where they are, and urge them to return.

Our culture is full of references to home – Home Sweet Home – Home on the Range – Home is Where I Want to Be. Repeatedly we bring up home as the very special place where we will feel safe and secure and where people will accept us and take us in. This of course is

based on the idea that home has a specific meaning of a specific place in which to live – a house, an apartment, even a single room that is one’s own. The underlying assumption behind the joy of coming home, is knowing that it is a place that is safe, comfortable, accepted, and in an element that is your own. This is true whether the home is big or small – whether it is rented or owned – whether it has a beautiful view – or looks right out at the building across the street. It is the responsibility of everyone in the community, especially a close knit community like Newport City, to feel part of the responsibility of the community to provide homes for all the different kinds of people and different sizes of families who want to live here, make their living here, and have their friends here. We think the first thing, therefore, before we start talking about proposals for new homes or new ways to repair old homes we should look at the elements that give us a brief history of the housing in Newport City.

It is significant that about 65% of the buildings that are residential buildings in Newport City were built before WWII – before 1940. Although this very often means the homes have the charm and the character of the town and in many cases have kept that intact over the years, it also means there probably are many homes which are heated by furnaces that date from the 1920’s and 1930’s and have electrical systems which have not kept up with the demands of life in the 21st century. It also means, in many cases, homes that were never insulated at the standards we now call “green” and that have windows that are not energy efficient. The flip side of that coin is that those old homes which may look charming and in good condition on the outside, may be costing their owners much more for heating than necessary and be forcing their owners unwittingly to be taking risks with electrical wiring and appliances.



Housing

Over 50% of the homes in Newport City are in single family detached buildings which is a fairly common housing type in small towns throughout the United States. However, in Newport City almost 30% of the housing units are in buildings that have 2, 3 or 4 apartments, and 12% of all the housing units in Newport City are in multi-family buildings, from 5 units to more than 20 units. The importance of this is that there are many people living in Newport City who do not own their home; the typical balance between ownership and rental is almost even in Newport City, as opposed to the more common standard of ownership in small towns where owner occupancy is dominant. Although this balance of ownership and rental housing can be very helpful to lower income people who cannot afford to buy a house it also means that some assistance with maintaining the multi-family housing could be very important for the owner. There has been some rehabilitation of housing in Newport City, but it would seem that there perhaps is a need for a city-wide awareness program that would address the availability of assistance to the owner in undertaking these major or minor improvements.

The three northern counties of the Northeast Kingdom, Orleans, Essex and Caledonia, are fortunate to be the target area of the Gilman Housing Trust, which is a participant of the NeighborWorks program. This organization not only builds and rehabs houses and apartments for affordable housing, but also provides services for first time homebuyers and for current home owners who are experiencing threat of foreclosure. For existing homeowners, they provide loans and grants for home improvements; currently there are 43 active loans in this program in Newport City. For first time homebuyers in Newport City there is a special program which provides assistance with down payment and

closing costs, administered for the city by the Gilman Housing Trust.

There is also a statewide nonprofit in Vermont that administers the federal Weatherization program, which will provide direct service to eligible homeowners who need new heating systems, insulation, storm windows, and other repairs which will reduce their energy expenses. This organization, Northeast Employment and Training Organization (NETO), will help homeowners determine their energy saving needs, and provide the funds and work oversight, up to the federal limits on their funds. NETO is not restricted to providing services to owner occupied buildings only. Landlords of multi-family buildings can also qualify for these funds if their tenants qualify.

These two organizations can help address many of the more serious problems that lower income homeowners and renters face. These different areas of assistance can help preserve the older homes, many of which give Newport City its distinctive character.

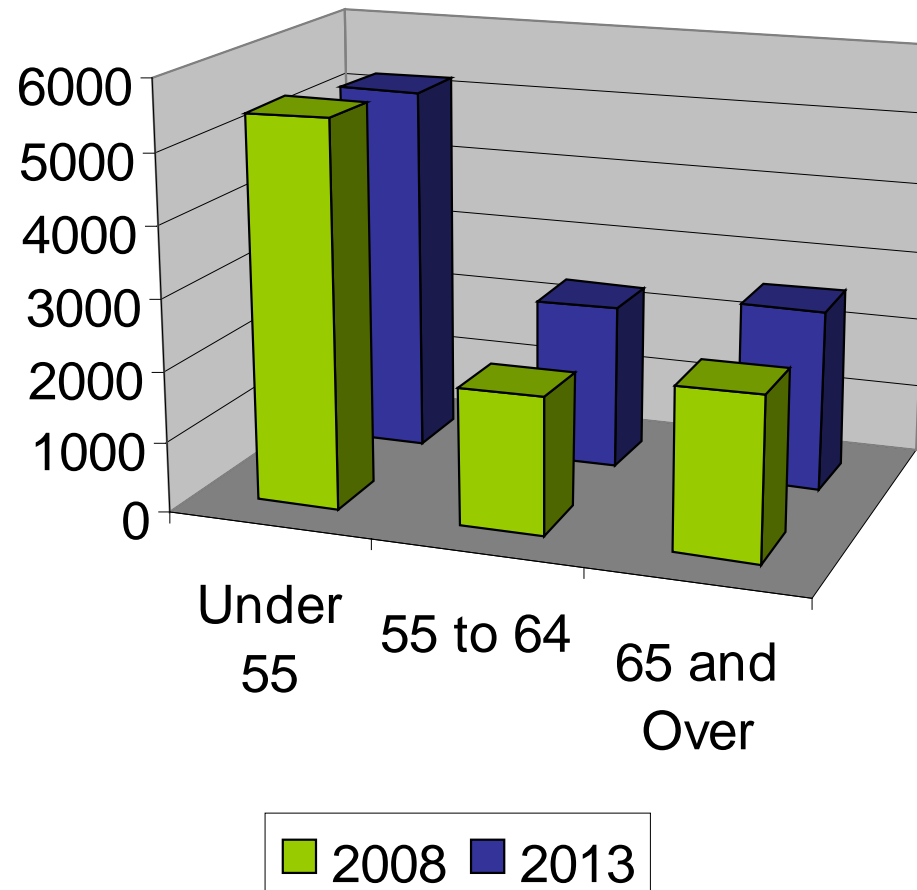
Who are the residents of Newport City....

The people who live in Newport City represent the best of the hardy folk who settled the difficult lands of New England....they worked hard for many years being successful farmers, while adding to the eastern economy by their hard work on the railroads which had a significant impact on the community. After the termination of passenger service on the railroad, and the reduction of railroad freight they have moved into other occupations. Many landowners still do farming with these new occupations. The major occupations now, besides the part-time farming, are government, education and health services, manufacturing, retail



Housing

Household Growth by Age



Housing

Another short term need in Newport City is for rehabilitation of existing buildings, for retail and for upper level residential. The Gilman Housing Trust has a loan program in cooperation with the city for housing rehabilitation. This program, in combination with commercial loans, could jump start a movement of property improvements in the Downtown that see real growth in the many good aspects of that neighborhood.

The need for affordable housing for the elderly is a nationwide need which seems to be without end. Newport City is no exception to this need. Fortunately, on Main Street, a 13 unit apartment buildings designed for the elderly is under construction on a very important corner, and will include new retail space on the ground floor. Creative marketing of this retail space by the owner, the Gilman Housing Trust, will be necessary to bring in a vital retail user. Both residents and businesses in Downtown have many ideas of the retail needs for Main Street, and hopefully there will be a collaboration of ideas and marketing skills.

The older houses discussed earlier are eligible for loans and grants from the Gilman Housing Trust for needed home improvements, and although their program is not widely known throughout the city, they have worked with hundreds of homeowners to make needed improvements. It would be very valuable for many homeowners to be made aware of this program, so that the charm of the existing older homes could be brought in line with the health and safety considerations of the 21st century.

Issues in Housing: Short and Long Term Role of Second Homes

Vermont has seen increasing numbers of second homes built throughout the state.

These homes are counted in the Vacant Homes category by the U.S Census. In 2000, there were 185 vacant homes counted in Newport City that were not listed for rent or sale. These homes do not add significantly to the expenditures of the city but they do support the municipal revenues through the payment of property taxes.

If the city determines that encouraging the development of second homes is a policy that will serve the city well, we would recommend that an advisory committee be established and a policy be proposed. If the policy welcomes these homes, then a marketing plan should be developed which would guide city officials and staff in providing relevant information. Brochures and Northeast Kingdom materials should be distributed and coordinated with Newport City materials and advertisements.

Special celebration visitors' weekends could be arranged for potential buyers to visit, and be guided by local citizens, to see the various facilities and sights. A local boat ride could be arranged to see the city from different vantage points, golf introductions, and restaurant vouchers might be given as gifts. These potential buyers could see first hand the friendliness and love of the community that has so impressed the R/UDAT members.

Expansion of Housing Choice

Addressing this issue seems very far in the future --- some might say too far away to start thinking about, but it is not too soon to start the policy discussions a long range plan for use of vacant land would require, and to think in terms of developing new neighborhoods.



Housing



The first step in planning for greater choice in housing can be the redevelopment and infill development of the already built-up neighborhoods. The first of these neighborhoods is recommended to be the Downtown neighborhood, from Coventry Street on the east, to a line extended from Governor Drive to the north and south to the water on each side, including the entire Downtown peninsula. These streets contain some of the oldest housing in the city, some of which has historical value, and should be preserved, and included in the proposed guided walking tour of Downtown. Some housing is old but not notable in character, and should be evaluated for substantial renovation, or considered for inclusion in a staged redevelopment plan.

Plans are already underway to redevelop a block of buildings on Main Street, which could provide an example of the process for evaluating the stability and/or historic value of buildings in that neighborhood. The fact that the entire Downtown neighborhood is a designated Historic District makes this an important aspect of the process of decision-making. An expansion of an existing building between Coventry and Central Streets will be completed by the end of the summer, 2009, which will provide new retail space on the ground floor, and thirteen apartments for the elderly on the second and third floors. This will not only provide needed homes for thirteen elderly people that they can afford, but will bring thirteen more shoppers to Main Street.

This development, which is being done by Gilman Housing Trust, will be followed in the Spring, 2010, by start of construction on thirty new apartments, in four three-story buildings and eight town houses. These apartments will contain a mixture of subsidized and market rate rentals, of one, two, and three bedrooms. The existing buildings

which are not considered of sufficient value to rehabilitate, will be demolished.

These two developments will provide a strong near-term result which will stimulate confidence in the future of Main Street.

Farther out in the future, but not long term, will be the development of elderly housing at the Sacred Heart property, between Clermont Terrace and Terrace Street, adjacent to St. Mary's Catholic Church. This project will contain up to 30 units of housing for the elderly. Most of the units will be subsidized for households with low incomes, but it is expected that some units will be designated for households which can afford market rate rentals. This site is walking distance from Main Street and market studies to date have shown that elderly households would find it a very desirable location....and the View!

The next steps in residential development in the Downtown neighborhood will take a little longer. Each block should be evaluated for the most effective type of treatment. Rehabilitation versus redevelopment is a key issue here, and full study should be given to the potential for infill housing.

The streets that run south and north off Main Street, and the three or four east-west streets behind Main Street, are filled with houses and occasionally a commercial building that lend themselves to rehabilitation or redevelopment. There are a number of undersized lots between bigger buildings that would suggest evaluation for infill housing would be worthwhile.

Housing

Infill housing, as the name suggests, refers usually to a single housing unit that can be slipped in between two existing buildings. It frequently is a substandard lot, which is a neighborhood nuisance, and requires variances for side yards, at least.

Infill housing was a novelty twenty years ago, but it is used now in so many cities that an entire design and build industry has grown up around it. Some of the pictures on this page and on the next page show examples of infill designs, which could help the Design and Review Board make a decision on the policy issues involved.

Rather than be requested to give a variance or waiver on each case, it would be possible to create a special use, permitted in Urban Residential zones, that could have criteria specifically suited for infill housing. We would recommend that this be studied for the entire peninsula that surrounds Main Street.

Another special area in the Downtown neighborhood is Seymour Lane, which turns from Main Street going north to west bound parallel to Main Street. This street has some fine historic houses, which should be protected, but it also has a number of houses that are not of historic significance and are not in good condition. They should be replaced, with row houses that are compatible with the other existing houses. This is a good street to establish as a “home industry” corridor, where small scale entrepreneurs could have retail and artisan shops in the house where they live. This will provide a unique supplemental activity for Main Street, that might include artisanal demonstrations in collaboration with the Farmer’s Market.

The work on Downtown has already started with the

expansion on Main Street of the elderly housing, and will continue apace. The infill housing, modification of the zoning bylaws, and redevelopment of Seymour Lane will be spaced out over the next five years, at least.

If any more redevelopment on Main Street involving removing existing buildings is planned to take place in that time, it would be important to design buildings which could combine lower level rear parking, as well as retail, office and living space for professionals. The population of those who have grown up in Newport City, left for school, perhaps entered a professional field, and now would like to come back to Newport City because it is “home”, would jump at the chance for an apartment in the center of things, designed for the young professional age group, and modern in its conveniences of being the workplace and the play place. This demographic belongs in Downtown!

It is anticipated that the changes that will be the long term goals for Newport City will ultimately require increases in housing units, and a broad range of housing types. The new employment that is the goal of the development in the hospitality industry, will eventually bring new families to live in Newport City. These families will be working people, and many of them will require housing in a category we call “work force housing”. This housing has no official source of subsidy, although a recent fund from HUD which addresses the foreclosure problem, does allow assistance to families up to 120% of the median income, as opposed to the standard income limit of 80% of median.

It is important that there is recognition that the market rate housing is still often above the affordable level of people with full time jobs. Without an official source of



Housing



subsidy, the controls on size of home and cost of land become important policy issues for Newport City to address.

There are large tracts of essentially vacant land on the southern side of Newport City, which could be developed. It is recommended that the sewer and water availability be the rule for staging housing development, once the demand for land increases. Much of the eastern portion of the south side, west of the lake, is served now by sewer and water which would provide a significant potential for development.



The areas surrounding Bogner Drive will be sought after as the Bogner site is developed with an institutional or light industrial use. There will be a need for a variety of housing types and prices, which will encourage the new workers to settle in Newport City. This factor also is important to potential employers seeking sites where they will have support and cooperation from the local government.

The process for staging development is a sensitive one, where property owners feel they should have the right to develop their property as they wish, within the current zoning by-laws. It is recommended that Newport City review its Zoning By-Law in the context of staging large developments within the laws for this in Vermont.

In Vermont there is a long-held belief that government should not interfere with private rights. Most Americans agree with this philosophy, but more and more, as technology expands the possibilities of actions, communications, and lifestyles, many are recognizing that some commonly held beliefs must adapt to the safety and convenience

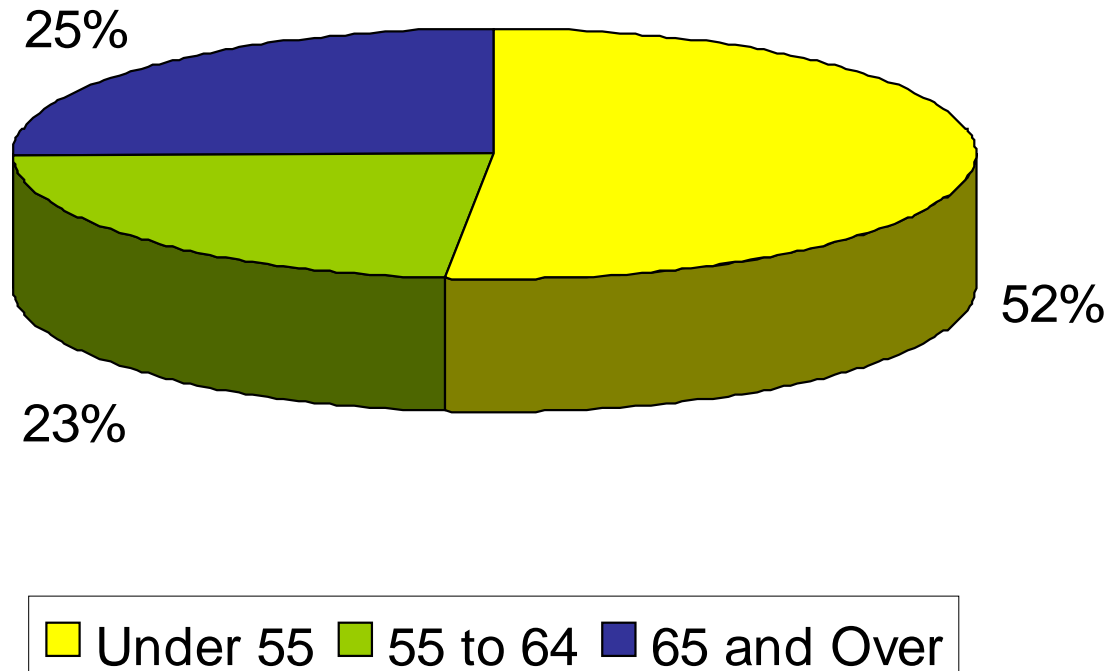
needed by all. Newport City has the potential for growth and expansion, but those who love this area, and believe it is the best place to live, will also agree that the pristine quality that is so loved may not be able to survive the needs of profit-oriented developers without carefully drawn guidelines and controls.

Housing



Housing

Newport Area Household Age Distribution 2013



Housing

trade, and leisure and hospitality services. Newport City has experienced the impact of the current recession as has all of Vermont...after years of relatively low unemployment, the unemployment rate in 2007 reached 9%, and is projected to be over 10% for 2008. As we look forward to change in Newport City, creating more jobs is of paramount importance.

Income levels in the Northeast Kingdom are significantly lower than the State of Vermont as a whole, and jobs that can provide a decent living wage will be at the top of the list of goals for Newport City. Ideally these jobs will be in Newport City, or Orleans County. The pattern now is that 90% of Newport City residents work within the County, and that pattern need not change. What might change is the age distribution of the Newport City population....in 2008 about 47% of the Newport City population was over 55 years of age. It was projected then that over half of the people in Newport City will be over 65 by 2013. Because many of those people will not be working, or only working part-time, the level of household income would remain low. With new jobs, and an influx of new people to fill those jobs, the average income and buying power in Newport City will increase proportionately. In 2000, over 70% of the households in Newport City consisted of one or two people. Between 2000 and 2008, there was a 10.7% increase in number of households in the market area of Newport City, but the average household size decreased to 2.35 persons. It is also interesting to note that in the eleven years between 1997 and 2007, the ratio of single family to multifamily building permits issued in Newport City was four to six. In contrast the same ratio in Orleans County was three to one, single family to multi family. Although housing for the elderly is critically important, maintaining

a healthy and robust distribution of ages and family sizes is very important to the overall vitality of the city.

Newport City has significant areas of beautifully situated, developable land outside the downtown area that would be very desirable for families with children, especially if it provided a broad choice of housing and lot sizes with an appropriate range of affordability.

The Short Term Needs for Newport City's Housing.....

The Downtown neighborhood of Newport City is attractive, with spectacular views of the lake from many vantage points, but there are buildings which, with employment of the concept of adaptive reuse, could bring a sense of vibrancy and energy to the area. There are many single people and younger couples who enjoy the concept of living in the heart of the city, and there are buildings which would lend themselves to conversion to housing appropriate for this population. Many young professionals would like having space for a home office, or for a retail business in the first floor of their home. Living space, or work space, could be located on a second or third floor.

This concept, now being widely tested in smaller cities, not only provides spaces that work for a broader range of interests, but also brings people into Downtown, day and night, which would increase their access to shops and restaurants. The older concept of zoning tended to separate different uses, but increasingly blending appropriate uses has been found to bring greater vitality to neighborhood, without damaging the integrity of the various uses. This type of adaptive reuse of Downtown buildings could be owner- occupied condominiums, or market-rate rentals.



Economic Development

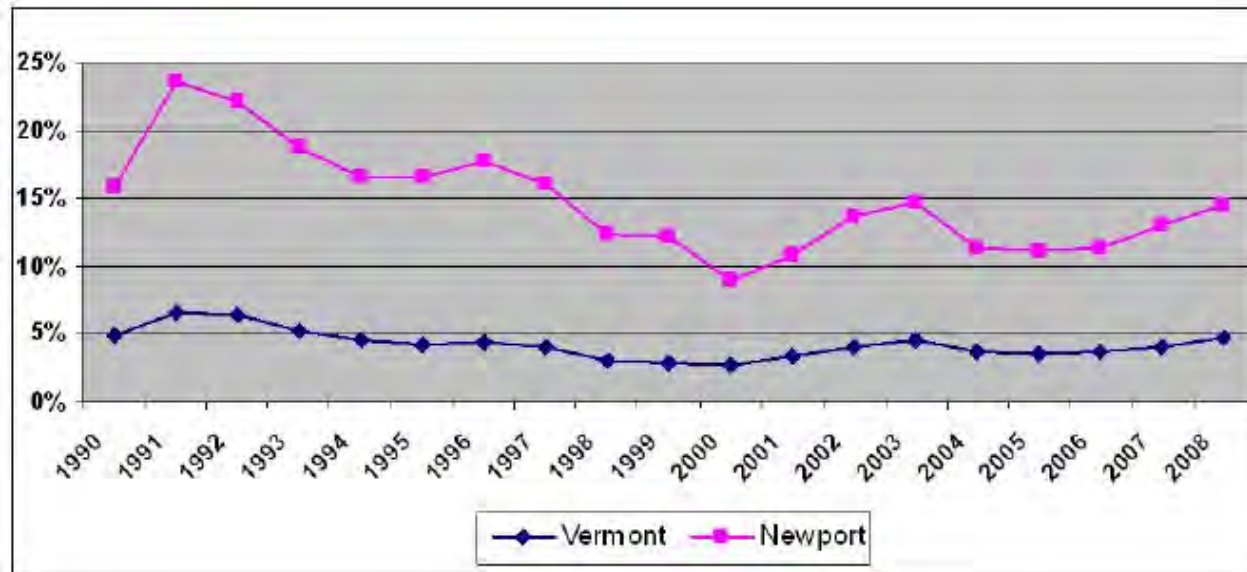


Chart 1 - Unemployment Rates

Building a Pathway to Prosperity

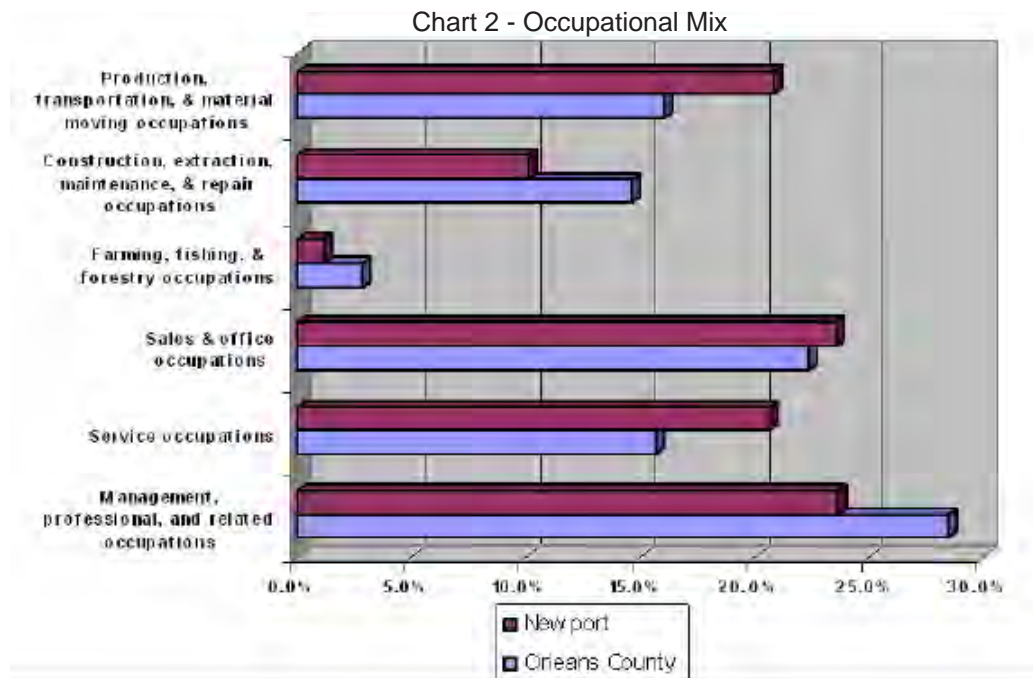
Economic development entails all aspects of fostering the economy including job development and improving the foundations that support economic development. Pursuing economic development is important for competitive reasons, to ensure your community continues to capture its fair share of economic opportunities, and to maintain the region's existing economic base and ensure that the standard of living does not decline. The world is changing, and while this represents a challenge where everyone must reevaluate their core competencies it also represents an opportunity for a level of economic development success not seen to date in Newport. Some perspective of Newport today is instructive in identifying the key issues that face the city and prevent, impede, or reduce economic development successes. As shown on Chart 1, Newport has been plagued by a relatively high unemployment rate; often three times that of the state.

Another key issue of importance in Newport today is the quality of the available jobs. While the city has generally seen some success in job creation efforts, the average wages have increased more slowly. Today the median household income in Newport is \$25,544 (U.S. Census, 2000). This exacerbates the problem whereby more than one full time job is needed to support the household, and the associated issues which include long commutes driven by multiple wage earners with jobs not in proximity to one another, air quality impacts, and a time shortage in the household that limits civic and community involvement.



Economic Development

“Newport is really a
Walmart
demographic.”
—Bill M.



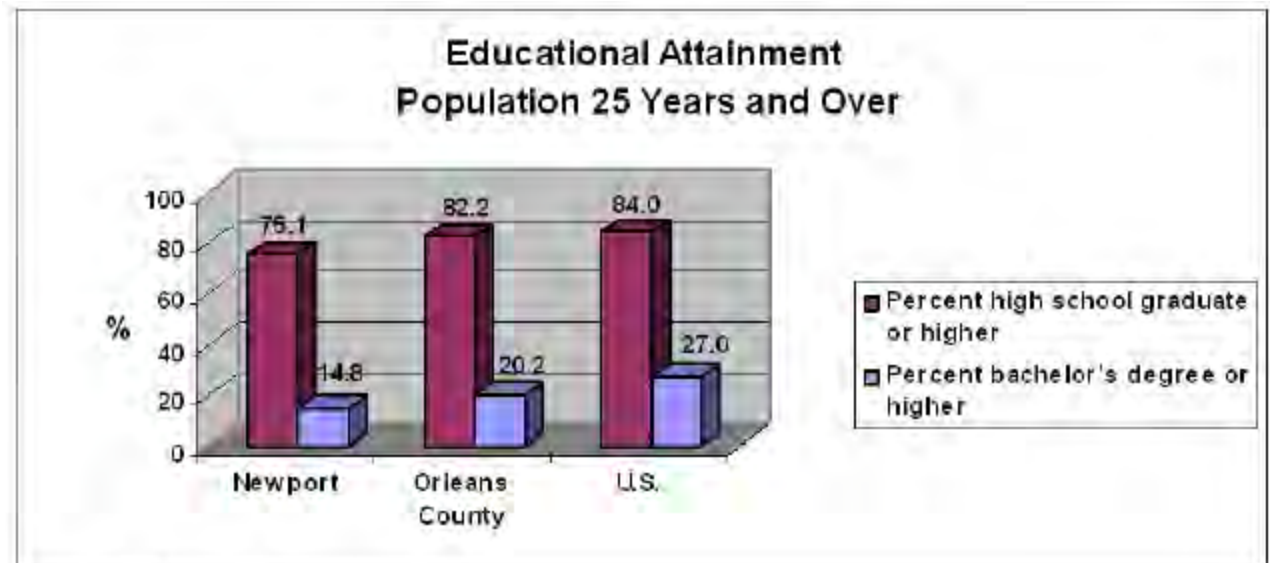
In looking at the occupational mix of the workforce, Newport has a higher percentage of its residents employed in production, sales and service occupations than Orleans County as a whole. Newport lags the County in management, professional and related occupations, which typically pay higher wages

Lifetime earnings are inextricable tied to the highest level of education attainment. It has been proven that those who have a college degree will earn twice the income in their lifetime than those with only a high school diploma. In looking at education attainment in Newport, only 14.8 percent of the residents have a Bachelor's Degree or higher, compared to the County at 20.2 percent and 27 percent for the U.S. From a business perspective, education attainment is one of several key measures of the skill set of the population. In order to attract companies in technology, resource management, and research and development, there needs to be a concerted effort to provide lifelong learning opportunities in Newport, through distant learning and the attraction of institutes of higher learning.

Economic Development

Did you Know?

- Women are starting businesses at a faster rate than men
 - 56% of start up businesses were started in the home
 - 50% of start up businesses were in non-technology related businesses
- National Commission on Entrepreneurship



Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Many young adults have chosen not to stay in Newport upon graduation. They either go off to college and don't return, or leave to start their careers elsewhere. Much of this is due to the fact that there are very few job opportunities in Newport. For these reasons, the primary focus of economic development planning in the Newport should be directed toward job creation, both to provide more and better opportunities for the existing unemployed workers (in conjunction with coordinated training to ensure that workers have the skills to fill the jobs) In order to make some progress in economic development and enhance the job base, there are several initiatives that the City should consider.

Economic Development

Fostering Entrepreneurship

A successful entrepreneurial community depends on a local business culture that embraces and nurtures entrepreneurs. The key institutions in such a culture are broad and informal networks: the lone-wolf business mogul is a thing of the past. Today's entrepreneurs are consummate networkers who thrive on sharing real-time information about where to find money, managers, employees, mentors, suppliers, customers, and even new technologies.

Newport will need to develop the framework that aids the process of local entrepreneurial development, which comes in many forms. These forms include: access to start-up and expansion capital, adequate counseling for businesses, space to incubate and foster emerging industries, and programs that provide the necessary training.

Newport has a wealth of talent in the artisan community, and there is an opportunity to capitalize on this talent by fostering the entrepreneurial spirit. Working with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Newport should encourage start up business by providing technical assistance in the areas of business plan development, marketing, merchandising, and financial management. Supporting entrepreneurs can be achieved by constantly improving the level of coordination within the entrepreneurial network to maximize the potential of these programs. Further, providing entrepreneurial support through improved services has proven to be a successful method for entrepreneurial development. A true entrepreneurial support system coordinates all relevant service providers, requests that providers operate according to common procedures, and they offer a

customized set of public and private services.

It was mentioned that there are some entrepreneurs that meet on a monthly basis to catch up on social and business affairs. The biggest difficulty that any small business owner has is making, not finding, the time to participate in networking events, business training sessions and seminars.

Expanding the Economy

Creating jobs that pay well and bring new dollars into the community is the root of any economic development effort of a community. Newport should capitalize on its natural assets and identify the type of business that is appropriate for the region and that pays higher wages. Potential targets that Newport could consider include agribusiness that supports the local farming industry, wood processing, furniture and related manufacturing, and fabricated metal; all of which have a presence in the State of Vermont.

Green Jobs A focus on fostering jobs that embrace the "green" economy is a natural fit for Newport. Most green-collar jobs are middle-skill jobs requiring more education than high school, but less than a four-year degree. These jobs are well within reach of lower skilled and low-income workers providing that they have access to training programs. These jobs are career jobs that have distinct career ladders and can be found in manufacturing, installation, fabrication and operations. Opportunities that exist in rural settings include green building, energy efficient auditing, power plant operations, facilities management, and farming. These jobs pay affordable living wages and provide workers with the opportunity for advancement.



Focus Group



Economic Development

“The lake is an outstanding resource that we need to do a lot with.”
—Dan Coutu



Potential Marina

Newport Waterfront An underutilized asset that offers a tremendous potential for job creation is the waterfront and the marina. Activities associated with the waterfront that are not present today include boat rentals (canoe, kayak, paddleboats, and motorized boats) boat maintenance and cleaning and boat tours on the lake. With access to the appropriate capital and training, this type of economic activity can easily be met by enterprising local entrepreneurs.

The presence of this business will not only create jobs for area residents, but will contribute to the economy through the attraction of tourism. Boating is a multi-million dollar business, which at the moment is an untapped resource in Newport. By attracting this activity, Newport will be in a position to offer the amenities and services that boaters expect, which will increase the visitor stay in the area and drive up the demand for hotel rooms, dining and shopping.

Bogner Industrial Site

There are several industrial sites in Newport that house various business operations. However, there is one industrial site situated off of Lake Road and Bogner Drive that has the potential to become the location for a technical institute. This location offers a stunning view of the lake and is surrounded by residential land with the potential for a diverse mix of market rate housing.

There are several universities and colleges within Vermont that currently offer a curriculum or degree in sustainable studies such as environmental management, conservation and sustainable design and construction. Career opportunities associated with these studies include traditional business and those using sustainable technologies or environmentally friendly business

practices. These positions pay higher wages than what is currently offered in Newport, and provide a greater opportunity for career advancement.

The potential for having a satellite campus offering scientific and technical education should be pursued by community leaders. Having an institute of higher learning will not only provide a direct pathway to technical education for area high school students, but will attract professors and administrative staff to the region, whose higher wages will increase the median household income in the region.

Valued Added Agriculture Newport has the opportunity to really capitalize on its agricultural roots through farmers markets, campaigns to buy local produce, and value added agriculture ventures. A winning example is the implementation of a commercial kitchen incubator, which provides entrepreneurs with the opportunity to rent the use of ovens, stoves, and food processing equipment that will enable them to prepare their food products. This approach leverages the areas strength in farming, by utilizing the locally grown produce and adding value through the preparation of a finished food product.

Commercial Kitchen Incubator Case Study

The Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACENet) developed a community kitchen incubator in the mid 1990's, which has now expanded to include warehouse space for bulk foods packaged on site. The community economic development organization provided a licensed facility where entrepreneurs could rent the use of ovens, stoves, and food processing equipment and compete in niche markets throughout the country.

Economic Development

ACENet also provides research support to its businesses, keeping abreast of food trends and microenterprise best practices as well as performing market analysis. The center has developed a regional brand “Foods We Love” that it markets to local retailers using products of tenants.

The Food Ventures Center has worked with more than 300 businesses and provided technical support to assist small businesses in complying with increasingly complex regulations.

While the center covers only about 30 percent of costs through rent revenue, it is viewed as a major success for the opportunities it provides for entrepreneurial development (a number of businesses have expanded out of the center) and especially subsidized support for the economically disadvantaged in entrepreneurial pursuits.

The type of valued added products include baked goods, jams and jellies, and maple syrup products, to mention a few. Through this venture, there is a tremendous opportunity for marketing finished products to Vermont retailers, as well as other niche markets throughout the country.

Northeast Kingdom Artesian Trail

There are several regions around the U.S. that have realized that economic revitalization isn't necessarily just about attracting industry. In Newport and the Northeast Kingdom there is a hidden heritage with craftspeople that are vitally important to economic development. A few years ago a dozen organizations from the Northern Forest of Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire and New York collaborated to prepare a guide to fine arts and crafts. This work culminated in the identification of

more than 300 businesses into a driving tour of the area showcasing studios, galleries, workshops, museums and markets. Regrettably, the regional collaboration that began in earnest never culminated into promoting the artisan trail. Newport, in conjunction with collaborative partners in the Northeast Kingdom should pick up where the Northern Forest left off and identify and define the “Northeast Kingdom Artisan Trail.” This approach to economic development serves as a unique opportunity to contribute to the economy, culture and heritage of the area.

Enhancing the Downtown Experience

The historic Main Street in downtown Newport has been designated a “downtown district” and is home to 99 business establishments and offices that either sell goods or provide professional services to customers. A high percentage of business establishments in the Historic Downtown District are represented by office users at 42 percent, which includes professional services, health services, banking, accounting and investment and real estate and property management. Restaurants and bars comprise 12 percent and clothing, jewelry and personal care represents 9 percent of the business establishments.



Canning



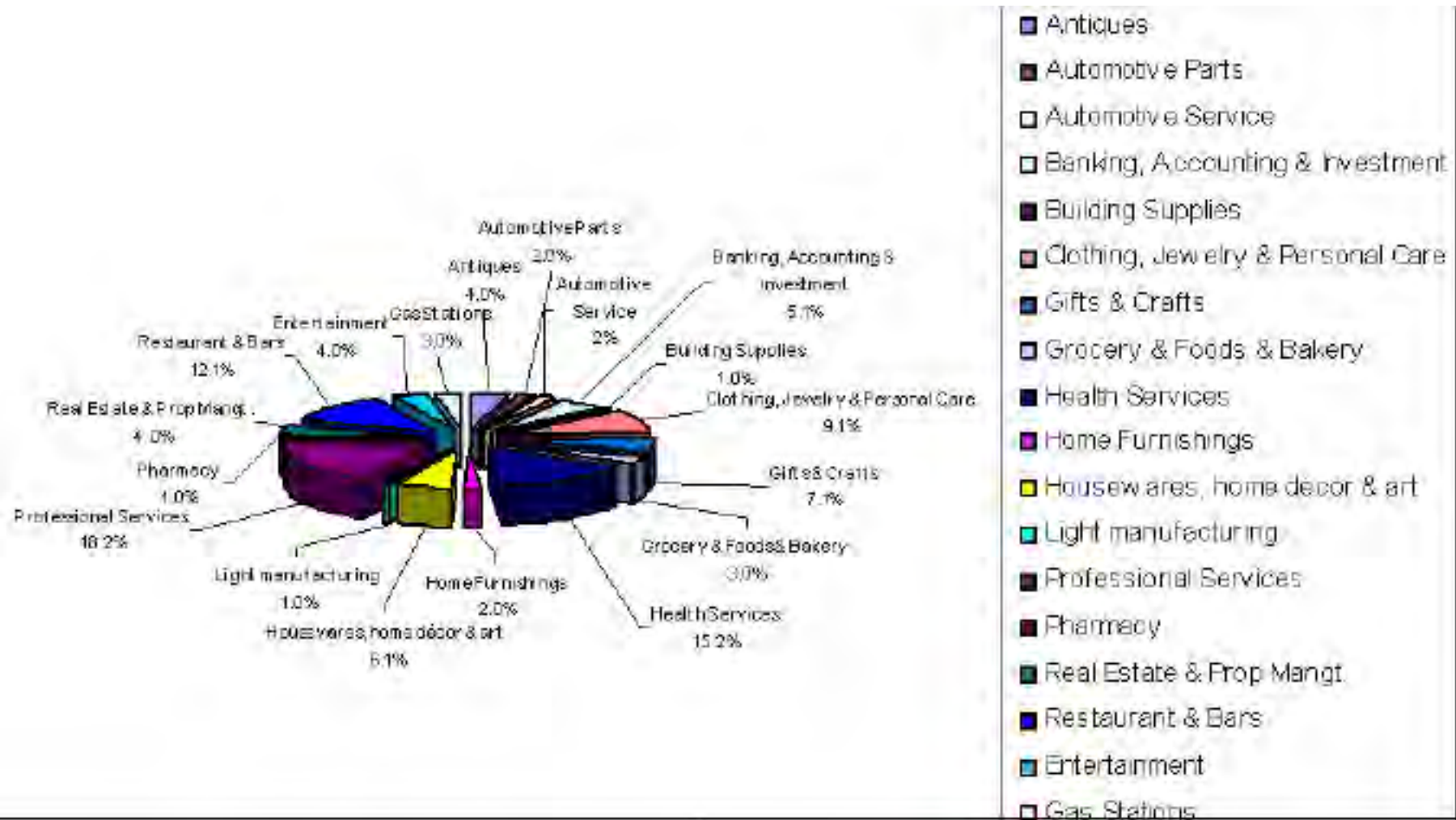
Community Kitchen



Local Crafts

Economic Development

Chart 4 – Historic District Business



Economic Development

Downtowns today are undergoing transformations and many of the management techniques of shopping malls are being applied to downtowns, such as the coordination of business activities such as marketing, leasing and physical improvements. Attention should be paid to the merchandising mix of the downtown and over time establish retail niches or themes that are clustered together such as:

- Clothing, jewelry and lifestyle specialty retail
- Home furnishings, furniture and accessories
- Entertainment, restaurants and bars
- Health and personal services
- Specialty neighborhood retail including grocery
- Office uses

The psychology of clustering retail stimulates more browsing and spending on the part of the shopper. Given the size of the market trade area for the Historic Downtown District, Newport can easily draw upon a customer base of nearly 29,000 people with an average household income of \$48,838. The following trade area is represented by a 20 minute drive time which extends beyond the boundaries of Newport, but does not reach St. Johnsbury.

In the Newport City Market Analysis prepared for the City, a consumer survey was conducted which showed that the retail activities people desired the most were family clothing, shoe store, bakery/coffee shop, general merchandise and restaurants. Given the existing mix of retail currently in the Historic Downtown, the City should focus its efforts in targeting shop owners within smaller markets and enticing them to expand their business to Newport, or assist local entrepreneurs to start up a business in the Historic Downtown. As previously mentioned, to foster entrepreneurship and help start up business establishments, Newport will need to create the

environment and financial incentives for entrepreneurs. To make downtown today more inviting, residents have voiced a need for benches, an anchor department store, a theater or performing arts venue, and good restaurants. Much discussion has taken place in the community regarding siting a big box retailer within the City. Those that are in favor of this are interested in having expanded retail offerings, while those that are against this are fearful that it will compete with the Historic Downtown District. Newport is not alone in this discussion, and there is no easy answer to this debate as each community is different. However, a community that has worked hard to create a vibrant downtown with a strong sense of place that provides residents and visitors alike with a premier shopping experience have learned to co-exist with large format retail.

Workforce Skills Enhancement

Labor is the single largest expense for most businesses. The skills of the existing labor pool, expected employee turnover, and work ethic have huge impacts on corporate location decisions. It is not always the place with the lowest cost of labor, but rather the place that provides the best match of skill sets, company needs, and productivity that lands new and expanding businesses and helps them compete in the modern global marketplace. The role of workforce development in economic prosperity today is embodied in assuring a minimum level of basic skills throughout the workforce, working closely with new and emerging industries to develop appropriate training programs, and encouraging participation by workers and companies.

There are a number of education and training programs that would support the focus of the R/DAT Team's recommendations. The following list is not intended to be



Economic Development

inclusive of all training and education that is needed to develop a job ready workforce.

Tourism and Hospitality With the prospect of increased tourism, the expansion of Jay Peak, and the future construction of waterfront hotels, Newport needs to be ready with a properly trained hospitality workforce. People in the hospitality industry are on the frontline in tourism and can make or break a visitor's experience. A training program in tourism and hospitality is highly recommended and could be offered at the Community College of Vermont in Newport. The curriculum, at a minimum, should include hotel and restaurant management and would be highly complementary to the culinary program currently offered at North Country Union High School.

Agricultural Sciences Advancing agricultural sciences in the Northeast Kingdom would complement agri-business and foster the expansion from crop harvesting and canning to the higher value added of the industry cluster, such as agricultural research and the potential for the location of corporate headquarters of these companies. A degree in agricultural sciences, with an emphasis on the environment and green farming practices, would serve to produce a trained workforce that will foster the growth in the agriculture sector and embrace the green economy.

Green Job Training A green economy is based on the efficient use of energy, reducing polluting emissions, and the use of renewable sources of power. A special focus in job training should be on fostering "green careers" that focus on building retrofitting, wind and solar power, and cellulosic biomass fuels. A large majority of jobs associated with the green economy are in the same areas of employment that people in Newport already work in today. For example, constructing wind farms creates jobs for sheet metal workers, machinists and truck drivers; and increasing the energy efficiency of buildings through

retrofitting relies on roofers, insulators and building inspectors.

Jobs associated with the green economy range from middle-skilled to those requiring a four-year college degree. What is important to note, however, is that these jobs provide decent employment opportunities, have defined career ladders, and pay a liveable wage, which is what people in Newport are asking for. In order to maximize the return on training investment dollars, Newport training providers should also provide green job placement, apprenticeship programs, and career ladders and education pathways.

R/UDAT Team Recommendations

- Promoting economic and community development within a marketplace should be done on a full-time basis. Newport should consider hiring an economic development coordinator who can facilitate economic development matters, work with local business and coordinate various projects on behalf of the city.

- Work collaboratively with the SBDC and others to develop the environment that aids the process of local entrepreneurial development including access to start-up and expansion capital, adequate counseling for businesses, space to incubate and foster emerging industries, and programs that provide the necessary training.

- Newport should gear its economic development efforts on creating job opportunities in the renewable energy and construction industries.

- As a long term goal, create the position of a downtown manager who can begin working with business and property owners to manage and promote the Historic Downtown.

Economic Development

- Considering applying for a grant from the USDA to develop a commercial incubator kitchen. Begin by identifying an suitable location and potential partners in this venture. A concerted effort should be made to create incentives for entrepreneurs who would like to start a business in the Historic Downtown. These incentives could consist of reduction of rent for a period of time, waiver of permitting fees for tenant improvements, to the abatement of property taxes for an owner occupied business establishment
- Collaborate with others in the Northeast Kingdom and engage the artisan community to identify and brand the Northeast Kingdom Artisans Trail. This should begin by reviewing the publication "Handmade in the Northern Forest" and update the list of artisans. Maps, brochures and contact information should be placed on the NEK-TTA's website.
- Prepare a package of information promoting Newport and the Bogner site and engage the University of Vermont, the Vermont Technical College and others in a dialog regarding establishing a physical presence in Newport and offering a curriculum in agribusiness, sustainable design and technologies or other applicable coursework.

Tourism

*"It really is just a matter of perception, I think."
~Katy K.*



Newport residents identify family roots as one of the strongest elements of their community identity. Residents are committed to raising their children in the community and passing down their Northern Vermont culture. Steve and Heidi Mayo, for example, are teaching their daughter Emily to sugar and boil.

A Matter of Perception: Newport's Identity

The R/UDAT Team began their work by investigating how Newport area citizens defined the community. A tendency to focus on the region's depressed economic situation and existing challenges to progress were the opening comments of many residents. Comments, such as those listed below, were delivered in matter-of-fact tones:

"Newport has lost its coolness."

~Public Meeting Participant

"Newport is really a WalMart demographic." ~Bill M.

"We're old, and we think our taxes are too high." ~Public Meeting Participant

"People, this place is in serious decline." ~Charlie (on the economic situation in Newport)

This pervasive sense that the Northeast Kingdom is defined by its difficult economic situation has contributed to a civic voice that fails to sing the praises of its hometown. However, when asked to articulate why they live in the area, residents expressed love for the community without hesitation and commonly cited one of three factors as their primary motivator for choosing this region as their hometown.

What Is It about Newport?

Family roots. Many of today's citizens grew up in this region and chose to stay throughout their lives. These citizens are rooted in Newport and committed to riding the waves of its fortune. Others have chosen to return after attending school or working elsewhere for a time. They discussed their deep family roots and memories of growing up in the area as a motivator for living here. Family members are often living nearby, and starting one's own family factored into a decision to return here. The R/UDAT Team was particularly impressed by the

that some Newporters had made to make a move back to the Northeast Kingdom possible, with some citing as much as a 50% pay cut or a total change in career.

"I've been in Newport 77 years. I've seen it come and I've seen it go." ~Public Meeting Participant

"I grew up here. When I thought about having kids, I couldn't imagine not doing it here. I have 12 nieces and nephews here, and I wanted to spend time sailing with them." ~Paul (on returning to Newport after years away)

Authenticity. The Vermont spirit, small town character, surrounding agricultural landscapes, and lack of homogenizing influences found in other communities appealed to many Newport area residents. The Northeast Kingdom largely remains a place quintessentially Vermont. Highly developed communities like Stowe were often cited as examples of a place that had less of the authentic small-town, rural feel that citizens in this area desire. "We like it up here because it's still Vermont." ~Public Meeting Participant

"The town of Newport is my communal living space... How can we convince people of the wonderfulness of small town life?" ~Diane

Natural & scenic beauty. Newport is spectacular Vermont in a contained region. Words like "pristine" were commonly mentioned when the area was described by locals. The R/UDAT Team concurs; the scenic views in this region are as good as any.

"It's pristine here: rare beauty." ~Rob

"In the fall, this place goes to glory." ~Jackie

Recommendation: See Yourself with New Eyes.

The R/UDAT Team observed two additional unique and defining features of the community that most residents did not cite as their reason for choosing Newport.



Tourism

However, these features are strongly present, overwhelmingly positive aspects of the community that could be celebrated as part of the community's identity: outdoor recreation and friendly attitudes.

Outdoor recreation. The area offers resources for 4-season outdoor recreation that includes downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, fishing, boating, sailing, biking, and much more. Public meeting and focus group participants stated that there is "nothing to do here," yet there is an abundance of opportunities for getting outside and enjoying the natural environment. Focus group participants who work in related occupations estimated that approximately no more than 10% of Newport area residents regularly participates in outdoor recreation. At the same time, most citizens recognized recreation as an important asset, describing it as a key tourism offering.

The R/UDAT Team recommends the Newport community embrace outdoor recreation as a part of its self identity, seeking ways to encourage and motivate citizens to experience the offerings of the region's environment. When recreation is an embraced element of the region's identity, it will naturally provide a stronger lure for tourism—when residents value the activity, development of the resources will occur and will increase both quality of life and tourism attractiveness.

"There's nothing to do here. Everyone wants to move out because there's nothing to keep them here." ~Joseph, high school student

Friendly attitudes. Newporters have been universally warm, friendly, and welcoming to the R/UDAT Team of outsiders. The team was graciously hosted by small local businesses, embraced into a steamy family sugaring

operation, fed like family at Thanksgiving, and treated like family by the Newport City Renaissance Corporation Board and the R/UDAT Steering Team. In our hurried culture and fragmented living, this is a valuable and appealing trait that the community should consider acknowledging, embracing, and cultivating.

Recommendation: Embark on a Total Rewrite of the City Plan Based on Community Identity and Community Engagement.

The R/UDAT Team recommends starting the current city plan update from a "clean slate." The city should write an entirely new city plan built on the community character identified in the R/UDAT process and supported and enhanced by a strong public process. Revisions to the plan in the future should include a significant public engagement effort to ensure it remains aligned with community desires and identity.

Newport: A Great Place to Live and Visit

For a town with the natural, cultural, and historical resources of Newport, the R/UDAT Team recommends a "civic tourism" approach to tourism development. Civic tourism is based on the concept of shifting tourism's purpose from



*"We're a community that is awakening to its identity." ~Gloria Bruce
The R/UDAT Team recommends any tourism development in the region be in alignment with the community newly articulated identity.*

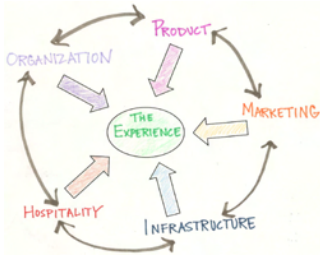
*"I boil because I grew up doing it. I don't know what I'd do if I wasn't boiling."
-Steve Mayo*

Tourism

Communities that pursue tourism development with a focus on what tourists want and need often look back over time to realize they have development patterns they did not desire and that they have degraded the unique, inherent community assets that made them a viable tourism destination in the first place. For example, many destinations in the United States that were once authentic and scenic ski towns or lake communities pursued tourism-oriented development only to awaken twenty or even ten years later to the realization that once-scenic views are blocked by housing, strip malls, and other sprawling developments. It is important for Newport to find ways to entice and accommodate visitors while respecting and protecting the best the community has to offer.

The Tourism System

Any plan for the pursuit of tourism must take into account all the elements of the tourism system and how the planning community—Newport—fits within that system. There are five key elements to the tourism system, and each of them plays a significant role in the success or failure of attempts to capture visitor interest and dollars. Each is defined below.



- Product describes what you offer for visitors and is at the heart of your effort. This can be as diverse as scenic natural landscapes, hiking trails, amusement parks, golf courses, ski resorts, Civil War battlefields, and modern or historic architecture, to name a few.
- Marketing is often the first and sometimes the only element of the system that communities fully pursue. It can include any messages meant to entice visitors to Newport, ranging from brochures and official websites to travel articles or segments.
- Infrastructure includes the systems that underlie visitors' ability to understand, navigate and traverse the

destination. This includes visitor information centers, transportation, wayfinding and signage, and maps.

- Hospitality is the range of visitor services, including hotels and restaurants.
- Organization refers to the various funding structures, local leadership, and regional/local collaborations and organizations that are involved in the tourism system. This includes obvious organizations, such as local destination marketing organizations, as well as often-overlooked organizations, such as local historical societies that own museums.

Newport's Strong Tourism Foundations & Opportunities

Newport has a strong foundation for tourism and numerous opportunities to further leverage its assets to drive increased visitor numbers and spending. The R/UDAT Team's assessment of current conditions within Newport's tourism system and recommendations for improvements, below, are meant to address those opportunities and help the community prepare for increased visitation. These recommendations are based in the principles of civic tourism, respecting the wishes expressed by residents for their hometown throughout the R/UDAT process. They are meant to ensure a state of "visitor readiness," a state in which your community puts its best foot forward; much like you prepare your home for guests, you should prepare your community for guests as well.

Product

Newport's key tourism products are rooted in the authentic identity of Vermont and, specifically, the Northeast Kingdom. This type of community-based product provides a strong foundation for civic and heritage/cultural tourism approaches.

Tourism

Strength: Scenic Landscapes. The region's scenery comprises mountains, water, rural farmlands, and small towns dotting the landscape. The lack of suburban-style development translates to crisp edges between town and country. Water and mountain views from within Newport itself are wonderful and, as many residents described it, "pristine."

Strength: Lake Memphremagog. This glacial lake is a source of identity, recreation, and scenic views. Its orientation to the mountains and city create a beautiful vista while its size provides ample opportunity for diverse water sports.

Strength: Local Products. Vermont is famous for its local products like agriculture, food, furniture, and textiles, among others. The region surrounding Newport includes sugar houses, farms, cheese producers, wineries, dairies, textile manufacturing, and more. The availability of these products is part of the tourism product, and there are the beginnings of a strong culinary experience here with locally based food production (including maple sugaring by hand), a natural foods store and café, a student culinary program, and some excellent local eateries. The visitor experience can also include interactions with the process of generating local products; for example, maple syrup is a product that can be sold or served to visitors, but another meaningful experience is to make the sugaring process and culture available to visitors so they can understand the family values that are incorporated into Vermont's artisan and small scale sugar operations. The R/UDAT Team had a chance to experience this and felt it was a highlight of their time in Newport.

Marketing

The Northeast Kingdom enjoys an international market for tourism. The region enjoys many drive-in visitors, as evidenced by its key travel markets (in order of volume): Quebec, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ontario, New Jersey, to name a few. With the large population centers of Montreal, Burlington, Quebec, and Sherbrooke within less than three hours' drive, Newport has potential to capture a more day trip and drive-in visitors.

Strength: Regional Collaboration. The Northeast Kingdom Travel & Tourism Association represents a three-county area that includes Newport. This valuable partner for the Newport community can provide marketing support that drives visitors to the region and that highlights the offerings of Newport, among others. The city's other primary regional marketing partner, Jay Peak, has an impressive professional marketing program with a well developed and articulately and attractively expressed message that aligns with the identity of Newport itself.

Strength: Strong Allure for Public Relations. Public relations represents free media coverage of Newport and is often more effective than paid advertising. Travelers are more likely to trust sources like The New York Times Travel Section than they are glossy brochures and visitor guides. Fortunately for Newport, Vermont garners public relations attention from major markets as a result of its charming towns, recreation offerings, scenic landscapes, and local products, including food. Newport itself is especially attractive for this type of coverage, as it represents a mostly "undiscovered" gem.



"I boil because I grew up doing it. I don't know what I'd do if I wasn't boiling."
~Steve Mayo

Tourism

"There's not a lot of waterfront access, and I like that."
-Waterfront Resident



The R/UDAT Team recommends partnering fully with Jay Peak's marketing staff to create a graphics and content cohesive family of marketing products for the region.

Strength: Jay Peak. The resort primarily offers skiing, snowboarding, and golfing and has extensive expansion plans for its accommodations and experience (including plans for an indoor water park). Jay Peak's quality of experience, marketing expertise, commitment to Newport, and natural resource-based ethic make it an ideal partner for the city and an attractive product for visitors who desire authentic experiences.

Strength: General Outdoor Recreation. Beyond the official offerings of the ski resort, the region is abundant with hiking, snowshoeing, biking, and other outdoor activities. Outdoor recreation is a growing segment of the tourism market, and Newport is poised to take advantage of this. **Strength: Historic Downtown Newport.** Downtown Newport provides a charming historic environment for travelers to home base or to access services, such as retail, dining, groceries, and fuel. It also home to some regional destination offerings, such as Lago's Trattoria and the Pick & Shovel.

Issue: Incomplete Products. Though there are trails located along portions of Lake Mehphremagog, there is not a fully connected, complete trail around the lake. Downtown Newport has a number of excellent boutique shops and restaurants, yet the entirety of downtown lacks a recognized brand and identity. Despite abundant recreation resources surrounding Newport, the region is sparse in recreation outfitters and guides. Jay Peak represents a strong partner and driver for the tourism economy, but links with Newport could be stronger. Thus, the product base here requires investment in both hard (capital/construction) and soft (programmatic/information) connections.

Issue: Disconnect Between Local Identity and Desired Tourism Identity. Local participants in the R/UDAT process cited the products listed above as important to growth of the region's tourism economy. At the same time, many also failed to describe or recognize those same products as part of their own identity, viewing them instead as visitor amenities to be leveraged for economic benefit.

This way of thinking generates an "ours" and "theirs" view of the region's resources and therefore results in investments being viewed as a win for visitors or for locals but not for both. For example, if locals do not view a fully connected waterfront trail as an amenity for themselves, investment in such a trail, even if it attracts visitors and connects them to the town's businesses, will be viewed as infringing on private interests and spending the region's dollars for the benefit of tourists. Additionally, most businesses that capture tourism dollars, such as restaurants, generally report that the bulk of their revenue is generated by resident spending with visitor spending providing the margin needed for profitability. Because the tourism product in this region is steeped in the authentic identity of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, product developments should benefit both local quality of life and visitor experience.

R/UDAT Team Product Recommendations

- Emphasize, incubate, and grow businesses around "made in Vermont" products—both retail products like maple syrup and tourism products like sugar house tours, sugaring workshops, and maple syrup festivals. The range of high quality and clearly "Vermont" branded products is enviable to other states—furniture, textiles, ice cream, cheese, syrup, etc. The immense 2006 investment made in the "Handmade in the Northern

Tourism

Forest” initiative, including the now-out-of-print full-color booklet and maps, and now-defunct website, should be resurrected and promoted. The Vermont-relevant information in the booklet and Vermont maps should be available online through NEKTTA's and Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing's websites at a minimum. Reenergizing this effort would make a key authentic product more easily accessible for visitors and for residents. Future work on the initiative could be linked to small business incubator ideas discussed for Newport.

- Complete and connect products. Connections will be both programmatic and physical. Examples are given below:
 - o Multi-use trails, including hike/bike, water, and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing trails should be fully connected. Thus, segments of walk/bike trail on the waterfront in Newport should not only expand to connect the waterfront but also connect to regional walk/bike trails around the region. This provides a complete recreation product to residents and to visitors who bike, run, rollerblade, etc.
 - o In addition to physical trail connections, programmatic/information connections should be made in a cohesive way. There are now multiple maps identifying trail locations in the region with varying degrees of quality and sometimes different information. A single family of information with a shared graphic identity, fully vetted through various organizations that are familiar with the recreation systems in the region, would be an excellent way to complete and make available this strong product. In addition, expanding the recreation product to include complimentary activities, such as bird watching, would further complete the region's offerings.
 - o Likewise, small business incubation efforts should take into account the lack of recreation outfitters

and guides in the region. The addition of small watercraft rentals and guides, motorboat rentals, and bicycle rentals and guides would provide an entry point for visitors who do not travel with their own gear and would make the natural environment and recreation systems more accessible to travelers who are not familiar with the area but wish to experience different levels and types of natural environments. It would also make the natural environment here more accessible to residents who cannot afford to own their own equipment.

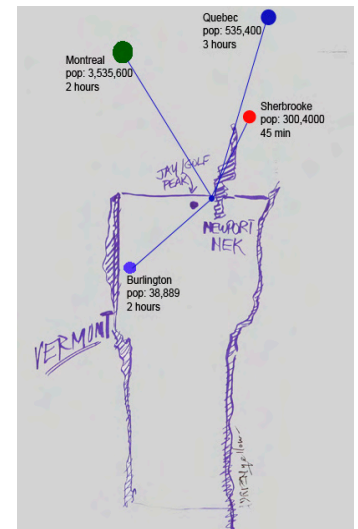
- o Downtown Newport would strengthen its appeal for visitors by clarifying its identity and seeking additional businesses to complement that brand. With the Newport City Renaissance Corporation formed to focus on downtown issues, timing is good to craft a plan and implementation approach to this section of the city.

- o Better linking Jay Peak and Newport would strengthen the experience for Jay Peak's patrons and provide a client base for the town's commercial offerings at the same time. The Newport City Renaissance Corporation has made a good start in this regard by organizing and promoting Thursday nights on Main Street. Additional ideas could include trolley or bus transportation between Newport and Jay Peak, partnership marketing efforts, and collaborative special event weekends, such as a “Vermont Powder Festival” that links the identity of the mountain and the town. Some of the activities that were once the basis for popular events here might be appropriate for inclusion, including snow/ice sculptures or dog sledding.

Marketing

“Promote, market, put on a pedestal the best your town has to offer.” ~Linda F.

The Northeast Kingdom enjoys an international market for tourism. The region enjoys many drive-in visitors, as



Tourism



A new, cohesive graphic family of identity and wayfinding signage is an early implementation recommendation of the R/UDAT Team. Unique signage linked to Newport's identity, including a set of attractive welcome signs, will not only help visitors to find services and attractions but will also increase civic pride.



evidenced by its key travel markets (in order of volume): Quebec, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ontario, New Jersey, to name a few. With the large population centers of Montreal, Burlington, Quebec, and Sherbrooke within less than three hours' drive, Newport has potential to capture a more day trip and drive-in visitors.

Strength: Regional Collaboration. The Northeast Kingdom Travel & Tourism Association represents a three-county area that includes Newport. This valuable partner for the Newport community can provide marketing support that drives visitors to the region and that highlights the offerings of Newport, among others. The city's other primary regional marketing partner, Jay Peak, has an impressive professional marketing program with a well developed and articulately and attractively expressed message that aligns with the identity of Newport itself.

Strength: Strong Allure for Public Relations. Public relations represents free media coverage of Newport and is often more effective than paid advertising. Travelers are more likely to trust sources like The New York Times Travel Section than they are glossy brochures and visitor guides. Fortunately for Newport, Vermont garners public relations attention from major markets as a result of its charming towns, recreation offerings, scenic landscapes, and local products, including food. Newport itself is especially attractive for this type of coverage, as it represents a mostly "undiscovered" gem.

Issue: Difficulty in purchasing media. The high unemployment rate and comparatively low income levels of this region equate to relatively impoverished nonprofit and governmental organizations, which in turn equates to limited funding available for marketing and promotion. Tourism promotion organizations like NEKTTA as well as local organizations that represent attractions, such as

downtown merchants, find it difficult to sustain regular paid media.

Issue: Lack of Consistency in Marketing Materials. Materials that promote Newport and its surrounding region, including "official" tourism promotion materials, vary widely in quality, graphic look, content organization, and message. This results in a lack of cohesive identity or brand for the region or the city.

Issue: Border Crossing Challenges Threaten Key Markets in Canada. United States' standards for Homeland Security have a direct impact on Newport's tourism success, for the more difficult crossing becomes, the less motivated Canadian visitors will be to come south.

R/UDAT Team Marketing Recommendations

- Partner with Jay Peak's excellent marketing staff to develop and produce a family of graphically linked, aesthetically strong, high-quality marketing and information materials ranging from brochures to seasonal visitor guides to a town walking tour to a set of four-season recreation/green space maps. Though much of this information exists in various pieces now, the lack of a cohesive look and collaborative approach gives a disjointed and sometimes low-quality appearance to the community's message.
- Continue to seek public relations-based coverage through major media markets within driving distance, such as Montreal, Quebec, Burlington, and Sherbrooke. One approach to garnering this type of coverage is to organize a familiarization tour for travel media professionals with a regional perspective, highlighting Newport and Jay Peak as jewels of the Northeast Kingdom.
- Manage expectations in materials for visitors. Honesty in advance marketing has an impact on visitor experience, for when expectations are not met,

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visitors leave disappointed and tell their friends and family. When expectations are met or exceeded, visitors leave satisfied and eager to recommend Newport as a destination to their friends and family. Jay Peak's marketing materials are an excellent example of appropriate messaging for the product, emphasizing the unique strengths of the mountain—abundant natural snowfall and tree glade skiing—rather than claiming to be everything to everyone or inflating claims regarding other aspects of the resort.

- Work to provide as easy a border crossing as possible for Canadian visitors. This will include continued efforts with local INS officials to streamline how United States' border processing standards are met in Newport. Moreover, it also includes providing information and assistance to potential visitors from Canada wherever possible. Fact sheets on what is currently required for border crossing and how the process works should be provided through the internet as well as all tourism information outlets and hospitality providers, such as the hotel and ski resort. Hospitality training should include this information and stress the importance of pushing it out to Canadian visitors.

Infrastructure

Strength: Two Airports Served by Major Airlines within Two Hours' Drive. The Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport and the Burlington International Airport have daily flights are available to major markets, such as Washington (DC), New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Atlanta, to name a few. The Burlington International Airport has recently completed a \$15 million renovation. In addition, BTV identifies itself as "New England's most convenient and welcoming airport," an identity that fits with the friendly nature of Newport. *Strength: City Commitment to Sidewalks and Safe*

Walking. Touring Newport, the R/UDAT Team noted a relatively complete network of sidewalks through residential and commercial districts. Mayor Paul Monette described the city as committed to have safe sidewalks for walking through town. The size of Newport also makes it easily traversable on foot.

Strength: New Visitor Center. The Newport Chamber of Commerce recently completed a new visitor center that will serve between 10,000 and 14,000 visitors per year. The community is proud of this new resource located next to Gardner Park. It presents a welcoming and attractive face to visitors.

Strength & Issue: Rural Roadways. The roads surrounding Newport tend to be rural or state roadways with mostly rural character. This translates into a curvy, hilly, and somewhat inefficient means of getting from point A to point B. It also forms the basis for a scenic and charming experience of travel within the region. The region is crossed by a network of scenic byway-quality roads that showcase the character of the Northeast Kingdom while moving residents and visitors.

Issue: Lack of Identity and Informational Signage. The town is lacking a graphic system to cohesively welcome people and identify public areas, parking, wayfinding, community identity, and the like. Main Street is perceived as lacking parking, which is influenced by confusion about where public parking is available and how it relates to the Main Street.

Issue: No Transit. There are very few transit options in the Newport area. Transit for both residents and tourists is currently missing.

Issue: Weak Physical Connectivity among Key Assets. Though Newport is a compact city with sidewalks, it also exhibits the different between walking safely and walking comfortably. Sidewalks are often directly adjacent to the busy roadways, and pedestrian water crossings, such as

the causeway and railroad bridge, have an unprotected feeling. When snowfall occurs, it becomes difficult to utilize crossings. The visitor center location is separated from the key activity center (downtown) by these water crossings.

R/UDAT Team Infrastructure Recommendations

- Design and install an identity and wayfinding signage system in Newport. These graphic systems serve a threefold purpose: 1) Helping nonresidents find their way and locate parking and other services; 2) Changing perceptions about the viability of parking and walking downtown by creating a welcoming, connected environment; and 3) Elevating the civic pride of the community by identifying assets and providing an attractive graphic element of identity. One way to accomplish this while generating attention for Newport's efforts is to conduct a design competition for a unique signage system design. It is recommended that the city seek a unique signage design that expresses Newport's identity in some way.
- Give the visitor center a downtown presence. In the short term, this will mean providing better links between Main Street and the visitor center through wayfinding signage, better physical connections for pedestrians and bikes, a transit link (in-season trolley), and an information outlet at the NEKTTA office in the Customs House. In the long term, the R/UDAT Team recommends moving the visitor center function to the downtown. The Customs House, with its prominent location at the entrance to Main Street, waterfront location, abundant public parking, and historic significance and character, would be an ideal candidate for the future site of the visitor center. This would also encourage visitors to park once and walk downtown and the waterfront.
- Provide a transit connection between Newport and Jay Peak during peak season(s). In addition to

opening the shops during times convenient for resort patrons, provide a means by which resort patrons can come to Newport and Newport residents can get up Jay Peak without driving. Following on the success of such a link, investigate the viability of adding connections to Canadian markets like Magog, to Burke Mountain, and others as deemed desirable.

- A single town trolley or attractively designed bus could provide the local transit links described above via a complete regional loop.

Hospitality

Strength: Friendly, Welcoming Populace. The Newport community provides a warm, open reception to those coming from outside. Though non-Vermonters might always be "flatlanders," they are treated like family. This is a wonderful and attractive part of the region's culture.

Issue: Limited Accommodations. Even with the expansion and renovation of the Newport Motel, the city is underserved by visitor accommodations. Despite a gorgeous lake, there is no waterfront upscale resort, family-focused resort, or cottage rentals. There are no beds in Newport appropriate for winter sports enthusiasts who would choose to stay in the historic town rather than on the mountain. Other missing pieces in ski accommodations will be addressed by Jay Peak's planned expansion, and local entrepreneurs have begun planning waterfront resort-style development in town.

Strength: Opportunities to Define Local Hospitality Industry. The lack of accommodations also means the landscape and town character have not been degraded by inappropriate development or the local business culture overrun by a "heads on beds" mentality that fails to take into account what is best for the community overall. One participant (Dena) expressed it best when she said, "Many people come here because they like us the way



The R/UDAT Team recommends increasing the mix of accommodations in the region and providing hospitality training in order to professionalize the local hospitality industry.

Tourism

"These are tough economic times, but I love Newport, so let's make it work."
-Sherry

we are. They don't want to see a 6-story Sheraton on the waterfront." Newport finds itself at an ideal time to determine what type of accommodations it should offer and where.

Issue: Little Professionalism of Hospitality Industry Staff in Region. The R/UDAT Team and their out-of-town volunteers had a number of experiences that indicated a lack of professionalism amongst "front line" hospitality staff in Newport. Focus group comments confirmed this trend exists in the region. Given the town's desire to attract more visitors and to support more upscale accommodations—and therefore an upscale clientele with corresponding expectations—this lack of a professionalized hospitality industry is a significant barrier. Poor hospitality experiences can sour visitors from returning. In addition, word-of-mouth/traveler review (often located online on sites like Tripadvisor.com) is one of the most powerful marketing tools a community can harness; on the other hand, poor reviews can stop visitors from coming to experience Newport.

R/UDAT Team Hospitality Recommendations

- Implement a hospitality training program. This would improve the visitor experience, provide economic development, and prepare the local workforce to serve in the proposed new waterfront resort and expanded Jay Peak offerings at a level expected by the audience for those facilities.
- Provide familiarization tours for hospitality workers and front line staff who work at visitor intercept sites, such as gas stations and the library. These workers are often the first or only Newporters visitors encounter, and their answer to the perennial question—"What is there to do around here?"—has a significant impact on the image of Newport.

- Implement an ambassador program in downtown Newport, training volunteers and providing them with a "uniform" to walk Main Street and the waterfront during peak visitor and shopping times. This provides a source of information for those who need it, a sense of welcome, and increased safety.

Organization

Strength: Increasing Regional Collaboration. Many of the public, nonprofit, and private organizations the R/UDAT Team encountered were in various stages of realizing the value of collaboration. Organizations like Newport City Renaissance Corporation, NEKTTA, the Chamber of Commerce, the City of Newport, and the regional arts collaborative have demonstrated a desire to continue leveraging their work by working together.

Strength: Commitment of Jay Peak. Jay Peak represents a strong, high-capacity private partner for Newport. The resort's leadership lives in Newport and has a real commitment to the community.

Strength: Passion and Support of Local Entrepreneurs and Investors. R/UDAT Team members were impressed by the passion evidenced by business owners and leaders from the community in the café sessions and focus groups. Their love for Newport was apparent, and many of them are working to elevate the community through their own efforts.

Issue: Region-wide Capacity and Funding Challenges. One focus group revealed that 70% of the public school students in Newport are on free lunch programs. The economy of the Northeast Kingdom is a challenge for the region's organizations, which struggle to raise private funds and have few options for fee or tax structures that would not burden the general population.

R/UDAT Team Organization Recommendations

- Strengthen the downtown merchants' association. This group has a passion for Newport and a direct economic stake in the success of downtown. The support and motivation that such groups provide for Main Street stakeholders can be the difference between their progression and their burn-out. A first step would be to set regularly scheduled meetings that include discussion of topics of interest and tours or introductions to each other's business challenges and strengths.
- Involve a representative(s) from the downtown merchants' association in regional merchants' collaboratives like the one involving the business owners from Hardwick and Morristown who attended Friday's focus group. These regional groups allow merchants to step outside their own town's challenges and learn what solutions and approaches are working elsewhere. The representative(s) then bring that information back to the Newport group.
- Co-locate or merge various organizations that are struggling to fulfill topically and/or geographically similar missions now. For example, the Jay Peak and Vermont North Country Chambers of Commerce are both all-volunteer operations with limited ability to successfully carry out diverse initiatives. If they were to merge to cover a broader area of Newport and Jay Peak, not only would it reinforce the connections between the two communities, but it would also allow the two small organizations to accomplish more as one larger group. At the most simple level, sharing an office space with one physical space to maintain, one copier, etc. would reduce costs. At a higher level, a more comprehensive shared website, board, and staff is recommended. NEK-TTA could also be considered for collocation or merging with these two organizations for the same reasons stated above.

What Next: Spectacular Vermont

The Northeast Kingdom and particularly the Newport and Jay Peak vicinity is well positioned for success in the realm of place-based tourism development. The unique, authentic character and assets in this region set it apart from other places in the United States and form a strong product from which to build. With investments in enhancing the community's identity, connecting assets and organizations, and making the resources here more accessible, the R/UDAT Team sees potential for this area to become the quintessential "spectacular Vermont" getaway.

Downtown & Historic Preservation

Following the Main Street Model

Newport has turned a significant corner in its revitalization. It has become a member of the National Main Street community. Main Street® is the most successful downtown revitalization program in the country. It is a component of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and since its inception in 1980 has generated nearly \$45 billion dollars in downtown reinvestment, 83,000 new businesses, and more than 370,000 new jobs. The Newport City Renaissance Corporation is a new member of this network through the Vermont Downtown Program and has already begun reaping the benefits of this partnership. One of the best aspects of being a Main Street community is the access to ideas and solutions that have been tried in more than 1200 communities around the country. There's certainly no need to re-invent the wheel and Newport can gain significant knowledge from participating in this program.



Board Meeting

One of the primary reasons Main Street is so successful is that it follows a comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization utilizing four key points and eight principles. Those four points are represented in the four primary committees within each Main Street organization. (Insert photo Board Meeting)

- Economic Restructuring helps to strengthen Newport's existing economic assets and expand its economic base.
- Organization provides a structural support system for the organization, dividing responsibilities while building consensus.
- Promotion sells a positive image of the downtown to both residents and visitors.
- Design deals with the physical aspects of the downtown including buildings, streetscapes, signage, storefronts and parking.

Additionally, for Main Street to be successful, there are eight principles that are key for a community to understand and accept:

- Comprehensive – not a single focus, but a broad look at all aspects of the downtown
- Incremental – the first steps are small ones, building on successes before getting to the harder problems
- Self-help – nobody but the active and positive members of the community are going to make this turnaround
- Partnerships – building relationships with various groups makes the load lighter and accomplishes more
- Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets – using those things you already have, especially those that are unique to your community
- Quality – make every project have as much quality as possible – half hearted approaches just reinforce the negative image that others may already have
- Change – it will happen regardless, so it's better to guide it in the direction that is most beneficial for the community
- Implementation – completed projects build confidence in the local organization and generate more interest and support.

The Newport City Renaissance Corporation is the local organization that has been charged with revitalizing downtown. The board and committee members of the organization need to follow through with the Four Points and Eight Principles. While the Economic Restructuring Committee has moved significantly forward with numerous activities, especially the R/UDAT, they need to be sure to develop all four committees and a fully comprehensive approach to the program. the Vermont Downtown Program and the National Main Street Center.

"Unique architecture-made building(s) different than the norm. (People would) come here just to see the buildings. Make a statement."
-student



Downtown & Historic Preservation

This includes sending board members and staff to training and networking opportunities offered by both programs. Additional information on the Vermont Downtown Program is available at www.historicvermont.org and on the National Main Street Center at www.mainstreet.org.

Revitalization Through Historic Preservation

Newport is a distinctive and important historic community not only for Orleans County but for the entire state. While the first Euro-Americans settled here in the late 18th century, the golden years of Newport were the 1870s to the 1930s. There are many significant historic buildings throughout the community, both commercial and residential. Many of these are important enough to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Downtown Historic District. In order for Newport to retain this unique identity though, there are some basic principles that many who are involved in the development of new or the rehabilitation of existing buildings should follow. The first criteria are specific to existing historic buildings.

- Don't remove historic fabric. If there are historic windows or doors, wood siding, brick walls, or decorative elements on a building, they should not be removed. Once these historic features are lost we will not be able to recover or reproduce them accurately. If some of these features are damaged, they should be repaired. If they are deteriorated beyond repair, then they should be replaced utilizing the same material and dimensions as the original.
- Don't create a false history. Many people find historic elements added to new buildings make them charming, but this really distorts the visual history of the community. It's better to build something new that serves an intended purpose and looks like a new building than to re-create historic buildings just because we

want to build an overall theme for a community. Newport is a community that has changed over time; we shouldn't confine our building style to a specific period.

- Windows are often the biggest area of contention when dealing with historic buildings. There is no standard answer for all historic building window issues. Each building's openings should be evaluated on their own merits. If a window is a simple 1/1 double hung wood window that has deteriorated, then replacing it with a new insulated wood, wood-clad, or fiberglass window is a good option. If a window has unusual divisions or an unusual shape not commonly found, then it is important to try and preserve that window. For these special windows, every effort should be made to repair and preserve them. In today's energy conscious environment, the best solution for increasing the energy efficiency of an historic window is simply to add a storm window. These may not provide the most aesthetic solution, but they preserve these important building components.

- Original siding is another building material that should be preserved rather than removed or covered over. Most wood siding is a durable exterior weather barrier if it is properly maintained. This does mean a regular schedule of painting and repairing damaged areas. Covering existing wood siding with vinyl or aluminum usually just compounds any problems that already existed with the building. And using these two materials encourages moisture retention, mold, and poor air quality in historic buildings.

Having access to technical resources is also important when making decisions about historic preservation. The City of Newport could develop its own set of simple guidelines or pamphlets to help explain the "dos and don'ts" of historic preservation, or they could borrow a reasonable set from another community. The National Park Service provides a set of Preservation Briefs and



Historic Fabric in Library



Traditional German Festival



Historic Barn



Siding

Downtown & Historic Preservation



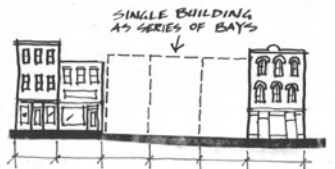
Main Street



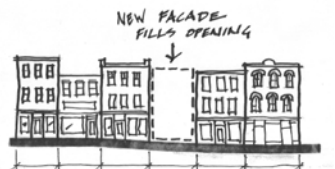
Montgomery Ward



Incompatible Design



Large Infill Project



Single Infill Project

Tech Notes that describe appropriate preservation practices and methods in detail. These are available at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/publications.htm>. The Preservation Trust of Vermont (www.ptvermont.org) is also a good source of information for rehabilitating, selling, and exploring historic Vermont buildings. Finally, an occasional training opportunity for local contractors, realtors, and homeowners is a good way to spread the word to those most involved in historic buildings in Newport. Several preservation organizations should be able to conduct these trainings.

Taking advantage of financial resources is a critical piece for anyone interested in rehabilitating historic buildings. Newport has received an official designation as a Vermont Downtown, a program that allows owners to take advantage of various tax credit programs. The first of these is a 10% historic rehabilitation credit that can be used for interior and exterior projects. The second is a 25% façade improvement credit specifically for building exteriors. The third is a 50% code improvement credit used to bring the building up to current accessibility, fire, life safety, structural or general building codes. Weatherization programs are also available through the Vermont Efficiency Program, but care should be taken when weatherizing an historic structure as adding wall insulation can sometimes create more problems than it solves. Replacing windows are generally considered an effective way to reduce energy costs, but weatherstripping existing windows and installing storms are often a more cost effective way of reducing energy usage.

We've shown a few local examples of simple ways to rehabilitate existing historic commercial structures. The Montgomery Ward Building is a simple example where the storefront has been rehabilitated, a simple cornice was added, and new signage more fitting to

the façade has been added. The Memphremagog Arts Collaborative building has also been rehabilitated with an increased amount of glass available for window shopping, restoration of the historic cornice, a lighter color trim paint so that it appears less oppressive in the winter, a re-opened second floor window in a space that was originally used as a photography studio, and a new creative and colorful sign that helps to fill the blank brick façade. Many residential structures can also be rehabilitated by removing small insensitive additions, better positioning exterior stairways that serve large residences converted to apartments, and removing the large scale siding that covered original smaller wood siding.

Developing Appropriate Infill

For those buildable areas in the downtown district where there are no historic buildings, it's important to develop infill structures that are compatible with the existing character of the district. Constructing infill buildings provides an important design component to the downtown by filling empty holes in the streetscape. An infill building should look like a new building, since most architectural, preservation and heritage tourism professionals feel it is important not to create a false sense of history. But these new buildings must be compatible in order to complete the overall development of the district. There are several key components that are used to guide this infill. They are described as follows:

Form and massing

- width similar to adjacent buildings
- height similar to adjacent buildings
- shape similar to adjacent buildings
- similar volume with the majority of the buildings adjacent.

If all the buildings in the block are three stories tall, then

Downtown & Historic Preservation

new infill should be three stories. If a neighboring building is two stories and one is three, then the new infill building could be similar to either, or somewhere in between.

Site placement

- no front yard setback in the downtown commercial area
- front yard setback similar to adjacent buildings in residential areas
- residential garages or accessory buildings set behind the front line of the house
- primary entry on the busiest street side

Most of the downtown core will have buildings constructed out to the lot line. There are a few exceptions for major civic buildings that have special prominence.

Materials should be durable and compatible with historic structures

- Standard sized solid color brick
- Hand or machine cut stone
- Poured concrete or concrete block
- Narrow wood siding or shingles
- Sustainable materials such as fiber cement board in a narrow width and smooth surface or ipe wood for decking

Window rhythms

- First floor storefront wide blocks
- Upper floor vertical oriented openings

New windows should also be inset a few inches into the wall to provide a sense of depth and reinforce the rhythm.

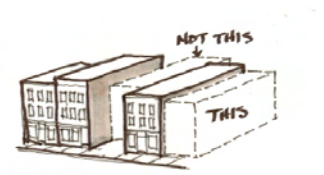
Streetscape elements

- Awnings should only fill the opening they cover, not extend to cover the entire building
- Balconies shouldn't extend more than 24"
- Signage should be creative, but compatible with the form of the storefront or building. No backlit or plastic box signs should be permitted.
- Lighting should be simple, strategically placed and focused downward to minimize light pollution
- Landscaping should be simple, hardy, consistently placed, and regularly maintained.
- Benches should be durable, of a consistent design, and placed in every main block. Middle arm rests can be added to reduce the potential for sleeping.
- Trash cans should be durable, placed away from benches and storefronts, and regularly emptied.
- Sidewalk cafes should be encouraged where the sidewalk is wide enough or where a building has an inset that provides adequate space for a couple of tables and chairs.
- Paving should be durable, consistent, easy to maintain, and resistant to winter weather. A different paving pattern and material could be used in the primary downtown blocks to emphasize that this is a special zone.

Moving to a Form Based Zoning Code

In order to provide additional housing, and more commercial space, the Newport R/UDAT would like to consider increasing the density in and around the downtown. The City of Newport's existing zoning bylaws in the downtown are similar to other communities and reflect a 1950s or 60s philosophy of controlling uses. These laws reflect the following problems that discourage optimal utilization of downtown and adjacent lots:

- Restrictive use categories that limit the potential



Setback Diagram



Compatible Addition

*"I don't want to see modern glass and metal."
~Melissa*



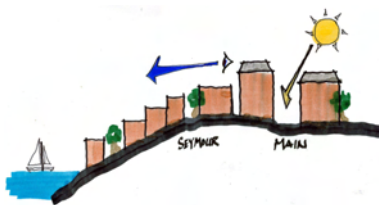
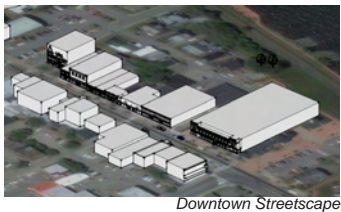
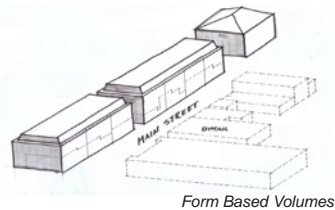
Montgomery Ward



Corner Cafe possibility

Downtown & Historic Preservation

"We have not sat down to decide where we want to go and what we want to save." ~Jennifer



for a more dynamic mix of uses

- Restrictive setbacks that effectively limit the density potential
- Restrictive heights that don't reflect the community's history and also limit density
- Longer review process for conditional uses and variances that are often required

One way to provide a more effective method of creating the desired built environment is to implement a form based zoning code. These codes not only provide an opportunity for a variety of uses but they develop the heart of the community in a fashion that is consistent and compatible with the existing historic district, all the while enhancing future development. This type of code is established by community participation to determine what form downtown Newport should take rather than what types of activities take place there. Building form, height, and window to wall ratios are regulated, and any use could be implemented. Offensive uses like major industrial activities could be restricted. The more interesting aspects of a form based code for Newport include:

- Top floor setbacks or mansards. Historically, many buildings in downtown Newport had mansard roofs that reflected the Second Empire building style common in the 1870s. Re-creating that element on new structures would lend a unique character to Newport.
- Slightly taller buildings. Also historically, Newport had significantly taller buildings downtown than the mostly one and two story buildings that exist now. Most buildings were three stories and several extended four stories, often with a taller tower. Permitting taller buildings would increase the available commercial and office space, allow for upper floor housing, and basement level parking.

- Better views of the waterfront. The height of the buildings would step down as they get closer to the waterfront to maximize views from a variety of viewpoints.

Utilizing Cultural and Architectural Heritage Icons

Newport has a wonderful collection of important heritage buildings. These buildings are important not only to the history of the community, but to its revitalization and future growth. These buildings range in importance from the Orleans County Courthouse to individual single family residences scattered in various neighborhoods around town. This collection of Newport's architectural heritage can serve as a springboard for increased interest in the community, but only if Newporters are willing to learn more about these assets and appreciate their importance. Numerous buildings are recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, but many more are just as important, and have yet to be officially recognized. These significant resources fall into several categories:

Civic Buildings – these buildings represent important public activities in Newport, and most are major architectural masterpieces

- Customs House
- Orleans County Courthouse Complex
- Goodrich Library
- Gardner Park Grandstand

Residential Neighborhoods – these buildings represent how everyone in Newport lives. This type of historic resource varies the most and even the smallest and simplest of houses is an important reminder of our collective history. One important and architecturally interesting strip of houses is that along Second Street from Main to the waterfront. This collection represents several

Downtown & Historic Preservation

important building styles and could serve as a starting point for anyone interested in exploring Newport's history.

Churches – these buildings represent our social history and are often the most visually important structures in a community. Most often church towers or steeples are the tallest built element in town and churches have historically been built to last centuries. They are made of sturdy building materials, and designed to reflect each congregation's religious beliefs.

- St. Mary Star of the Sea
- St. Marks
- United
- Christian Science

Bridges – these elements represent the significant industrial and engineering aspects of the community. Some are very utilitarian like several railroad bridges and underpasses. Others were designed to reflect the design influences at the time of their construction such as the Art Deco influenced bridge at the entrance to Gardner Park.

Agricultural – these elements of our architectural past are often the largest buildings in the community. They not only represent an important economic aspect of Newport, but also represent an important social aspect, as many citizens of Orleans County were historically involved in some aspect of farming. People often see these structures with different lenses. Some see the economic stability that agriculture can provide to a community. Some see large, often dilapidated structures that are in every community. But all of these resources represent an important source of ingenuity, craftsmanship, and a unique building type that is being lost at a fast

rate. In Newport there are two significant examples of historic agricultural resources remaining.

- Poulin Grain Elevators and Sheds
- Coventry Street Barn

The condition and location of the Coventry Street Barn is an issue that warrants additional investigation and action. The barn is currently being used by the City of Newport for storage, but it is located immediately adjacent to the roadbed of Coventry Street, and snow from the barn's large roof collects on the street. This location also limits access into the building, and the small site is partially surrounded by a tall fence. Much of the building's foundation has been compromised and the siding has deteriorated. The barn is constructed using significant timbers that are prized for high-end architectural projects throughout the region. As a result of this value, historic barns throughout Vermont are being dismantled and sold as timber. Because of these issues, and because the building is not being utilized to its fullest potential, the barn should be considered for relocation to a more prominent and more accessible location. Prior to that relocation, options for reuse of the barn should be thoroughly examined. In other parts of Vermont and in the entire country, barns are being converted for adaptive reuse purposes. The large volume space of the hay loft common in many barns is conducive to a number of different uses including dance halls, conference/community centers, wedding facilities, educational facilities, residences, farmers markets, and other unique agricultural practices such as drying of herbs and flowers, compost worm farming, soap production, and community garden centers.

The Newport R/UDAT has determined that the Coventry Street Barn could best be used as a four season



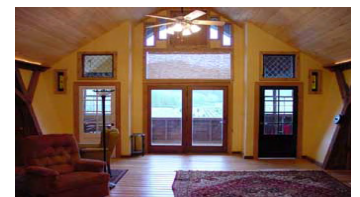
St. Mary's Church



Bridge to Gardner's Park

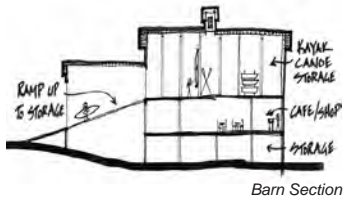


Historic Barn



Interior of Historic Barn

Downtown & Historic Preservation



recreational facility relocated in Gardner Park. The barn can be dismantled and moved in pieces to the park and reassembled on a new foundation near the water's edge in the park. There are four key spaces in the building. The largest space is the third floor hayloft that contains most of the visible timber and a high arched ceiling. This space would initially be used for storage and rental of a variety of recreational craft, including kayaks, canoes and small sailboats for use in the warmer months of the year. In winter months, the space could be used to store and rent snowmobiles, cross country skis, snowshoes, and other winter recreational equipment for use in Gardner Park or on the frozen surface of Lake Memphremagog and South Bay. Because of the unique construction techniques in this space, very little should be done to rehabilitate the loft. All structural wood members should be exposed and many of the timbers could be used to hang equipment or small boats. Little mechanical conditioning of the space is required, thereby reducing the cost of rehabilitating the barn. The entry ramp is the second key space in the building and was originally used to allow access for hay carts and wagons into the upper floor hayloft. This space is an ideal way to allow for the disbursement of all of the recreational equipment, whether hauling a snowmobile up with a winch, or walking a small skiff down to the water's edge.

The third key space is the second floor, originally serving as a milking parlor and storage for milking equipment. This space has lower ceilings, and is divided into several spaces. This floor has easy access from ground level and could become a coffee shop or café, a chandlery shop, and offices for recreational organizations. Because of the construction methods used on this floor, it is more conducive to rehabilitation for these kinds of uses, including the installation of durable surfaces for a

kitchen, and better climate control. The final space, the first floor/basement, is built into the grade, and has a very low ceiling, so it is less suitable for habitable space. This space could be subdivided into storage units for paddleboats, snowmobiles, or other recreational equipment that is too large or heavy to store upstairs. An additional amenity has been added to the building to increase the usage, especially during the warmer months. A deck has been added at the second floor level that feeds off the café/coffee shop space and it provides a great view of South Bay and downtown Newport. A stairway on the water side has also been added to provide direct access to the waterfront. Over time, additional uses may develop for the Gardner Park barn, including some of those described above.

Recommendations and Implementation Strategies for Downtown and Historic Preservation

Follow the Main Street® Model

- Utilize and update the existing Newport City Renaissance Corporation workplan. Within the next 6 months and continuing regularly.
- Build capacity in the four committees of NCRC, even if it's just meeting regularly. In the next 6 to 18 months and ongoing.
- Network with other Vermont Downtown communities and with the National Main Street Program, especially by sending staff and board members to training opportunities at the state and national level. In the next 6 to 18 months and ongoing.

Develop an historic preservation ethic

- Provide technical information on best practices in preservation rehabilitation to contractors, owners, and realtors. Within 6 months.

Downtown & Historic Preservation

This information is readily available through existing websites and preservation organizations.

- Distribute information to the community about the Downtown Historic District properties. This could include a condensed version of the history of these resources taken from the National Register nomination. This would be a great history or architecture student project. In the next 6 to 18 months.
- Develop technical resources specific to Newport for historic property owners, contractors, and realtors to encourage best preservation practices. This could include training courses for contractors and realtors, or old house workshops. In the next 18 – 24 months.

Develop Infill Guidelines for new construction

- Convene a community education workshop to explain the reason for using such guidelines and to assist in the development. In 12-24 months.
- Utilize professional assistance to complete the process including amending the zoning bylaws and developing graphic information that explains them. In 12-36 months.
- Explore moving to a form based code or other similar zoning process for the downtown district. In 12-36 months.
- Identify those specific and unique characteristics of a form based district in Newport with special emphasis on top floor setbacks or mansards, taller buildings, and conforming to the overall elevation of the slope from the lake southward to protect some views. Newport may want to consider using the courthouse complex as a guide for building heights downtown. In 24-48 months.
- Amend the zoning bylaws to reflect a form based code. In 24-48 months.

Celebrate Newport's Cultural and Architectural Heritage

- Hold occasional open houses of various buildings already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These open houses could correspond with community festivals or events, and could be targeted to specific travel groups that are coming to the region. In 6-18 months.
- Develop a more effective walking tour of downtown, including the addition of audio capability through the use of MP3 or cell phone technology. In 12-24 months. See <http://www.destinationheritage.org/> for an example.
- Nominate additional buildings or districts to the National Register. This is not only an important issue to build pride in the community, but it offers occasional financial incentives for owners. In 12-24 months identify potential historic properties. In 36-60 months add at least one new district to the Register.
- Move the Coventry Street Barn and redevelop it as a multi-use facility in Gardner Park. In 24-36 months, relocate the barn. In 36-60 months complete the rehabilitation.

Natural Environment & Community Open Space



Overview

Newport, VT is defined by the ultimate open space, a picturesque panorama of hills, water and quaint settlement patterns. A state with a strong environmental ethic, a population which has harnessed the abundant natural resources for their livelihood. They share an international lake defined by the enclosing mountains with their neighbor to the north

The drainage ways, streams and rivers find their way to Lake Memphremagog ("Beautiful Waters"). One of the largest natural amenities in the Northeast Kingdom is Lake Memphremagog which flows to the north to Canada.



Natural Environment & Community Open Space

The region and Newport's natural amenities host a variety of recreational experiences. These activities range from hiking and bike trails, abundant fishing, winter sports, boating, municipal/state forests, the National Northern Forest Canoe Trail, all crowned by the surrounding mountains.

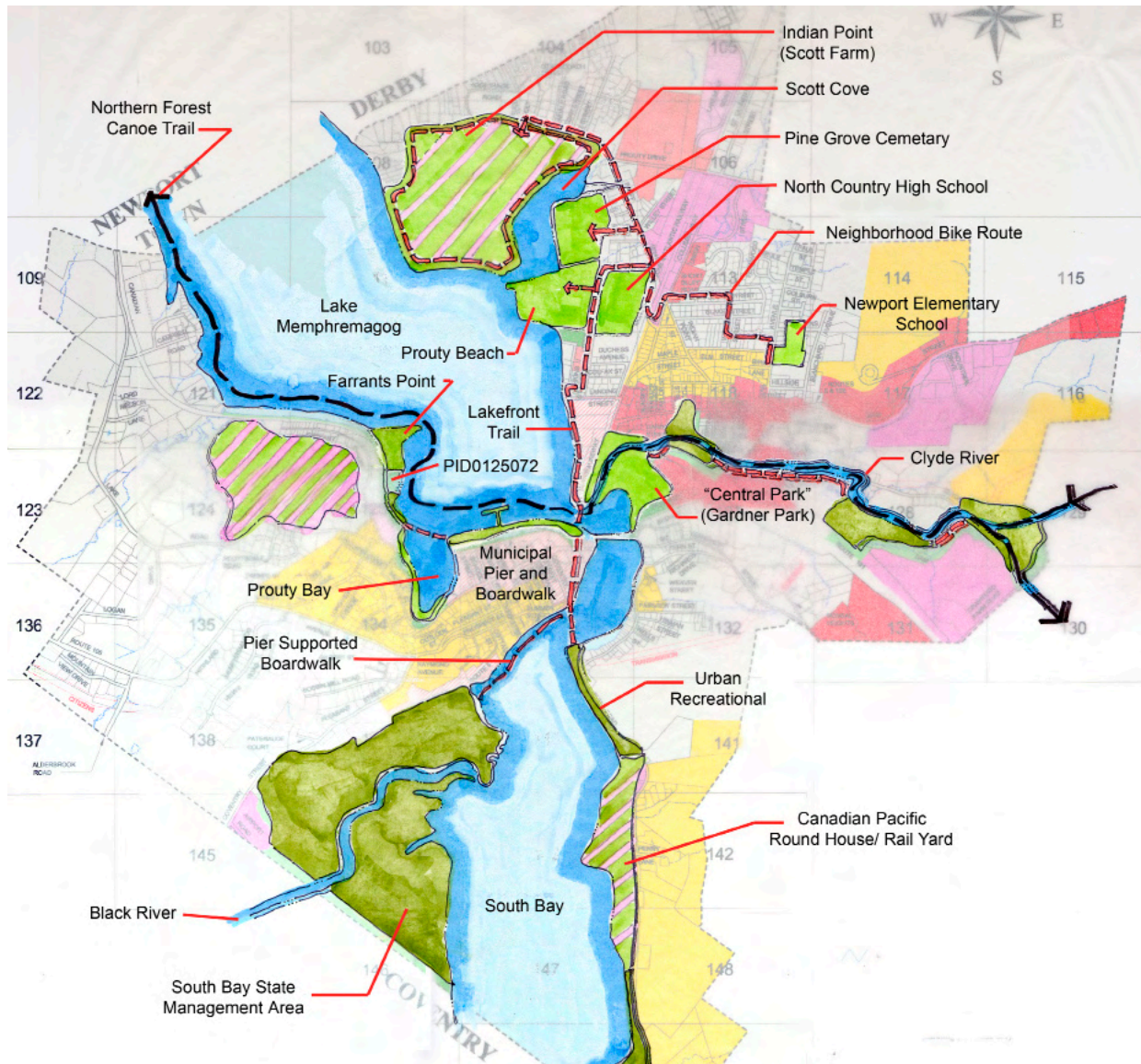
On a local level the City of Newport shares the benefits of small parks, marinas, recreational athletic fields, neighborhood walkways, public beach, campground, picturesque cemeteries and a collection of natural areas displaying the local flora, fauna and aquatic life forms.

One of the most recently added jewels is the Gateway Center and the newly constructed lakefront promenade. This not only provides better public access along the lake but increases the public's awareness of the lake and the water based recreation it offers.

The open space system also plays a strong role in defining the character and public realm of the downtown. It is the continued improvement of the Main Street corridor's streetscape and the opportunity for better connectivity to both the Lake and Gardner Park that define the quality of life for Newport's residents. One of the key attributes of successful waterfront communities is their ability to provide access and strong linkages to the water-based resources.



Natural Environment & Community Open Space



Newport needs to start thinking of its parks, public gathering spaces and trails as its green infrastructure. The streams, rivers and Lake Memphremagog need to be looked at as the community's blue infrastructure. This perspective needs to take into account everything from the water quality, the access to natural bodies of water and how to increase the public benefit of these special resources.

Both blue and green infrastructure are key to the economic sustainability of the city's long term well being. The benefits of both systems are critical catalysts in attracting economic investment and creating resources that help promote and maintain the environmental sustainability of Newport as well as the surrounding environs.

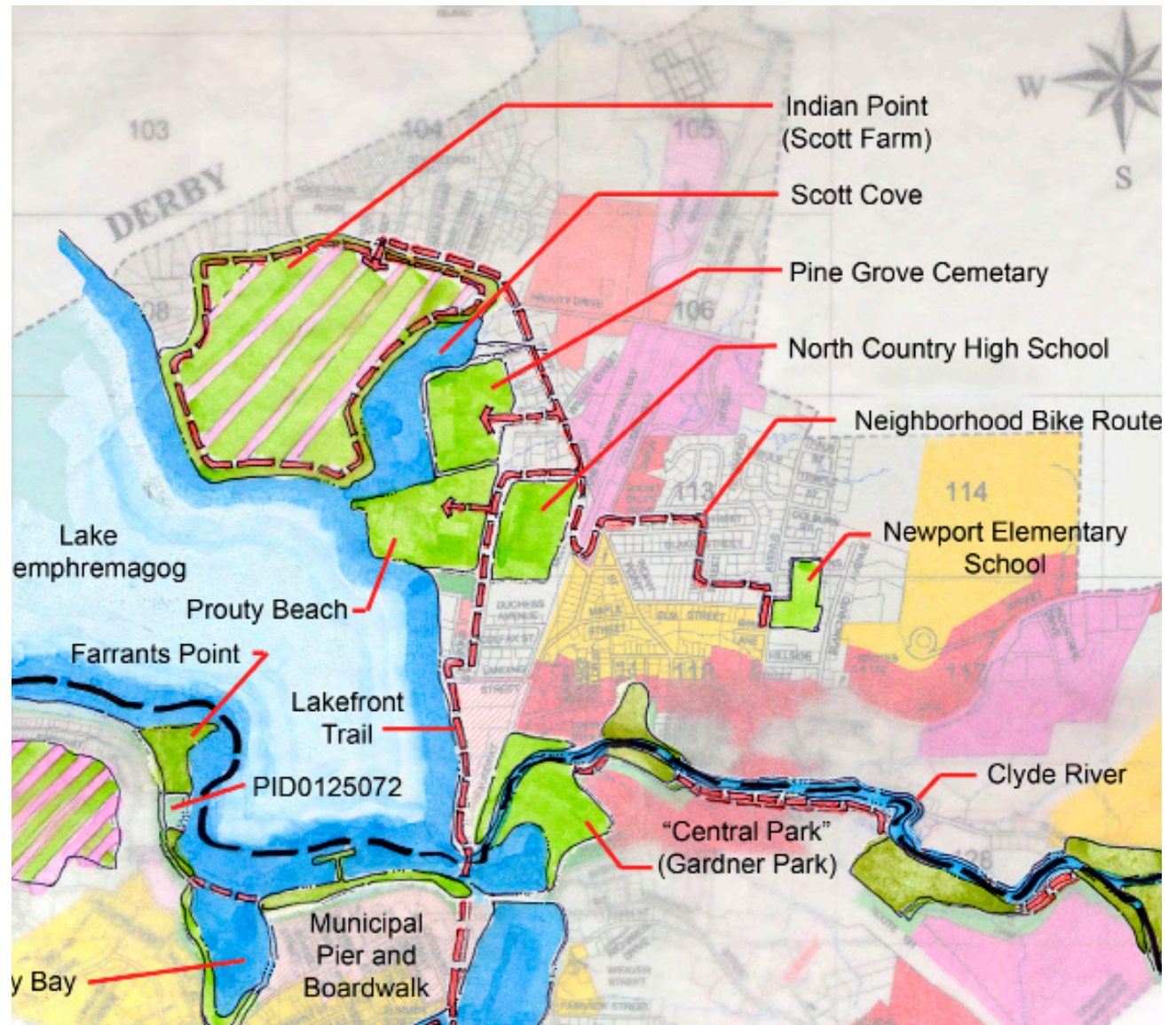
The challenge and more importantly the opportunity is to understand how to more effectively tie these resources together and strengthen linkages to the urban fabric.

Creating a System

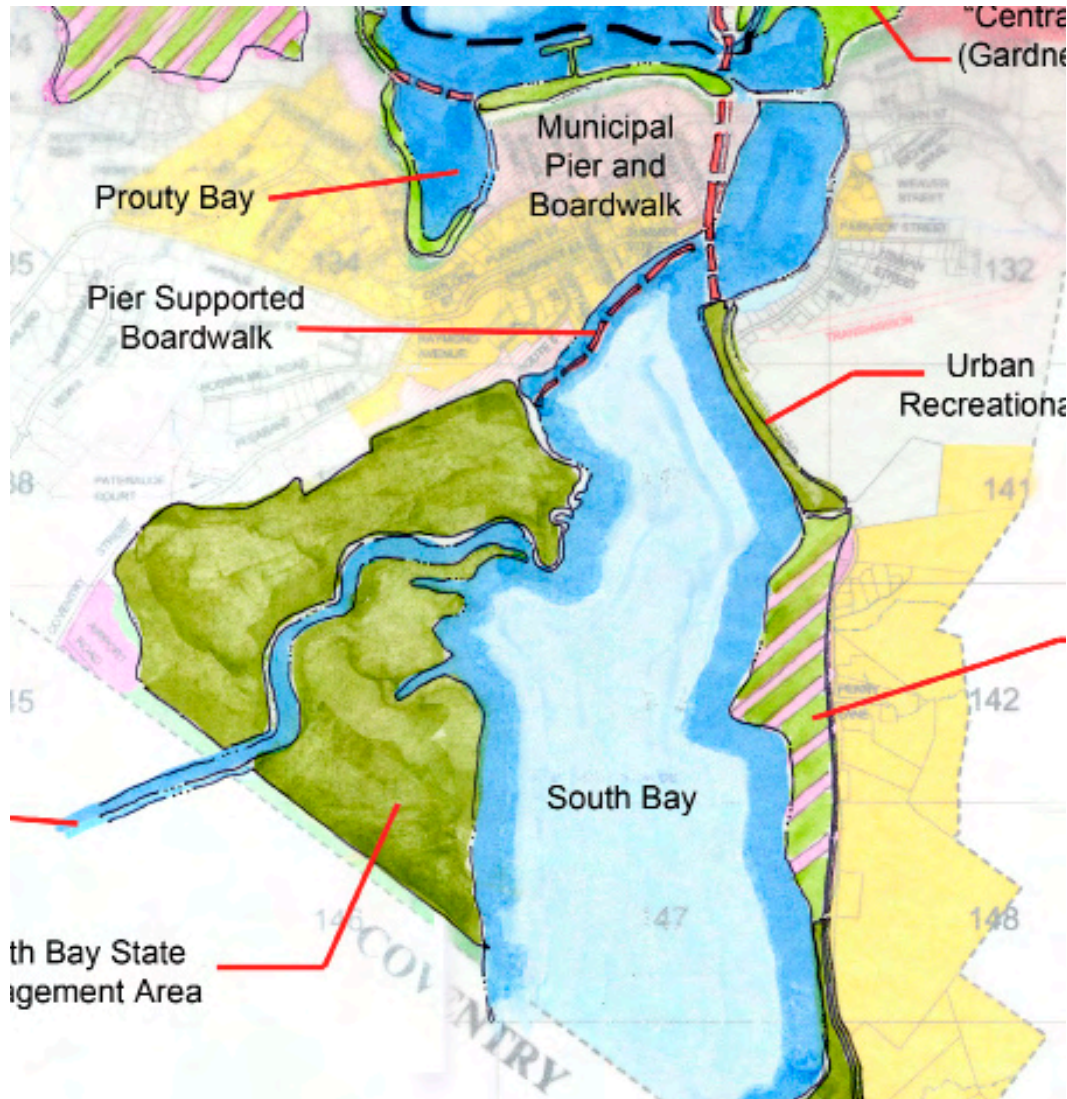
The first priority should be to understand what is missing and where continuity is lacking.

Natural Environment & Community Open Space

Starting with the lake and river, the utilization and connection to a variety of recreational and conservation areas could be greatly enhanced. The primary focus needs to address potential property acquisition, easements, filling in missing segments of trail, way finding and public education. Some of the properties to be considered for voluntary acquisition or the creation of special easements are the Canadian Pacific Round House/Rail Yard, the edge of "Poulin Grain" along Route 5 and the available parcel (PID 0125072) as well as Farrant's Point. Special consideration should be given during the planning for the redevelopment of the "Scott Farm" property to allow for the incorporation of a multipurpose recreational trail loop.



Natural Environment & Community Open Space



In addition to the creation of accessible land, the routing of trails needs to encourage the creation of trail segments which fill in the missing links and provide ability to establish loops whenever possible.

An important benefit of a continuous system is the ability to extend the visitor's stay and exploration. A major goal for the residents of Newport is to provide the residents an alternative form of mobility regardless of age or economic standing. A successful trail and open space system increases the walk-ability of a community promoting better personal health.

Another opportunity to connect segments is the actual construction of additional trails along the Clyde River, the completion of the new bike path in the neighborhood around the high school and along the railroad trestle west of Gateway Center historically known as Prouty Bay.

Additional consideration should be given to the routing of the trail through neighborhoods on local streets providing access to the following:

- Newport Elementary School (via Blake/Elm Streets)
- North Country Union High School
- Prouty Beach
- Pine Grove Cemetery & Scott's Cove
- Indian Point

A longer term consideration is the ability to connect parks or conservation lands through pile supported boardwalks.

The ability to access the South Bay State Wildlife Management Area and the Northern Forest Canoe Trail would add tremendous value to Newport's tourism and complement the local focus on environmental education.

Natural Environment & Community Open Space

Developing Newport's Central Park

The rethinking of Gardner Park as Newport's Central Park or Newport Commons would dramatically alter the quality of life for downtown residents and tourists alike. Throughout the history of the community, a variety of civic elements and events have been placed in Gardner Park. This clearly identifies the park as a strong civic gathering space. To continue the evolution of a meaningful "civic jewel" in Newport we recommend rethinking the following:

- The future programming of park events
- Prioritizing elements in park
- Better placement of elements in park
- Rethinking park access
- Better use of South Bay
- Staging seasonal events
- A youth paddling venue
- Development of environmental education programs
- Retain historically significant elements such as monuments, the "WPA" bridge and historic grandstand
- Strategically site the relocated Coventry Street Barn
- Incorporate "community gardens"
- Start the process of relocation of regional facilities
- Develop a new landscape aesthetic for the park with the intent of showcasing "Newport's Central Park"

Downtown Linkages to the Waterfront

To maximize the investments to date and leverage the natural resources of the lake, serious consideration needs to be given to strengthen all linkage opportunities between Main Street and the lakefront. The opportunities vary drastically from programmatic to physical access enhancements through the introduction of new featured elements. The more Newport's downtown strengthens this relationship and access to the lakefront the more Main Street benefits. These benefits are also shared by the immediate residential neighborhoods, the retail/food & beverage establishments, the downtown office worker and of course the out of town visitor.



Natural Environment & Community Open Space



PRIORITIZE PUBLIC WATERFRONT ACCESS AND PROGRAMS

In addition to the parklands, Newport's lakefront is one of its primary assets.

Many of recent public improvements have dramatically altered perceptions and public waterfront access. A new trail has been developed parallel to the water and incorporated major recreational facilities and taken advantage of utilization of the railroad structures. The following actions can strengthen and increase public waterfront access/use:

- Develop policies and a review process that incorporates a waterfront path, trail or boardwalk as part of any new or redeveloped project
- Develop an entity to establish an endowment or trust to maintain waterfront access facilities
- Develop four season programs for waterfront trails
- Consider a new approach to marketing the Gateway Center which looks at the possibility of renaming the facility which literally acknowledges its maritime use and location
- Plan for marina expansion at the municipal pier
- Develop a youth sailing program at the municipal pier
- Develop a strategy to purchase the waterfront elements currently owned by the State of Vermont
- Locate the municipal dock (Newport Belle) on axis with Seymour Lane

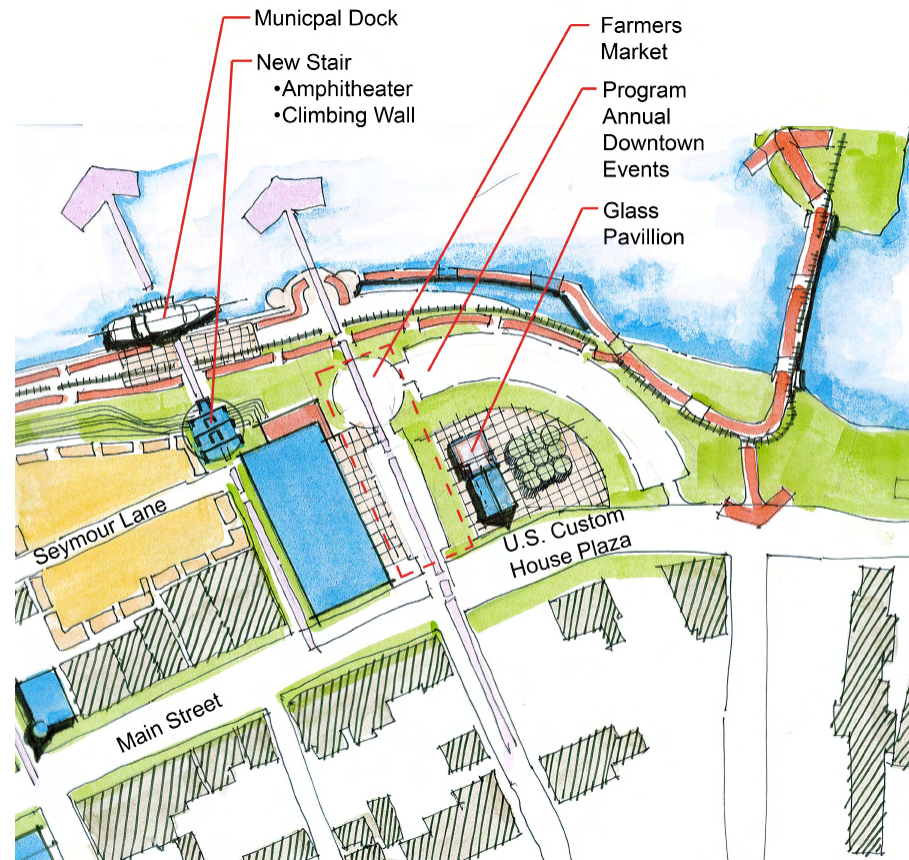
Natural Environment & Community Open Space

DOWNTOWN LINKAGES TO THE WATERFRONT

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With a stronger relationship to Newport's lakefront, destination appeal will strengthen and branding is dramatically improved. Positive identity and image perceptions help the recruitment of businesses as well as individuals or families looking for unique places to live.

The raised standard elevates the community's self esteem and increases its ability to compete for more desirable businesses, which retains local talent and increased tax base. The appeal and success of your retail community is elevated translating into a more stable downtown business environment resulting in positive momentum attracting other successful establishments.



Natural Environment & Community Open Space

Some of the improvements suggested are:

- Enhance visual access to primary features
 - Municipal dock – from Seymour Lane
 - Newport Pier (Gateway Center) – from Field Avenue & Bayview Street
 - Marina and Bay – from School Street
- Create physical access from
 - Seymour Lane
 - Field Avenue
- Develop a staircase design to double as amphitheater seating
- Incorporate a climbing wall on the retaining wall at Seymour Lane
- Increase programming at the new Emery Hebard State Office Building
 - Farmers Market
 - Art Fair (annual)
 - Other annual events
- Develop glass structure at U.S. Customs House
 - Year round market structure
 - Winter vendor/indoor garden structure
 - Develop a public plaza at the U.S. Customs House
- Civic plaza becomes a new feature as a downtown entry
- A new small social gathering place
- Consider placing Immigration/U.S. Customs staff in the U.S. Customs House (foreign boats could arrive at municipal dock, check in with the appropriate procedures, relocate their vessel at the transient dock location)
- Develop additional small social gathering places
 - Develop a green roof over parking structure at municipal pier
 - Develop small vest pocket plaza between the Armory and Memorial Library

Natural Environment & Community Open Space

- Serves outdoor library functions
- Provides outdoor small civic space at public buildings/court houses/Main Street
 - Develop a park where the proposed bridge landing located at the interface of lake and South Bay
- New Point Park
- Create distinctive streetscape treatment on waterfront linkage streets
 - Seymour Lane
 - Field Ave
 - Bay Street
 - School Street
- Develop strategy to assess and maintain Main Street streetscape at primary downtown retail blocks. (From Centennial Bridge to Second Street)
- Incorporate market rate housing at mid-block Seymour Lane to increase downtown housing.
 - Increase tax base
 - Increase retail service demand in the downtown
 - Enhance relationship of built fabric and lakefront
 - Increase density and 24 hour presence along lakefront increasing safety

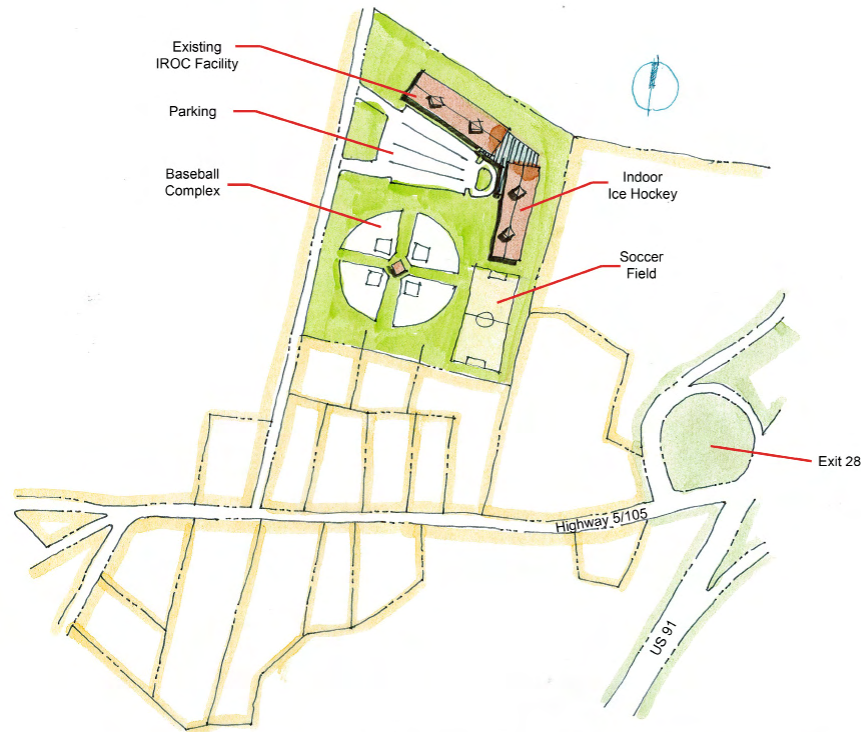
RELOCATION OF REGIONAL ATHLETIC FACILITIES

As a result of reassessing the downtown park and recreational elements, there are large programmatic demands with the need for special land base.

As these programs are studied and future downtown growth is anticipated, the local and regional programs should be separated and prioritized.

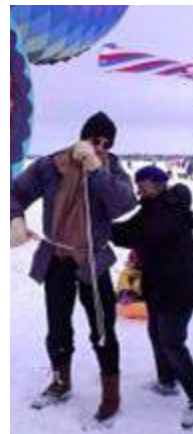
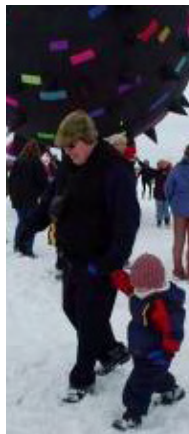
[Photo-regional recreation plan]

Regional recreational field needs such as land, traffic and parking conflicts result due to the amount of available space, the need for large flat surface areas and associated infrastructure.



Regional Recreation Opportunities

Natural Environment & Community Open Space



The general operational needs of running regional tournaments challenge the scale and operation of an urban center. It is recommended that the regional recreational programs be clustered with the current regional facilities. This would free up space to accommodate the programs more desirable in a more civic/central park as Gardner Park transforms itself.

The following recommendations include:

- Develop strategy to work with IROC administration to develop comprehensive recreation campus
- Strategy to address land acquisition
- IROC's location on Vermont 105/5 at US 91 interchange provides regional access for a number of sports
 - o Swimming
 - o Baseball/Softball
 - o Hockey arena
 - o Soccer
- There is a development pattern in this area and traffic flows that work well in this area.

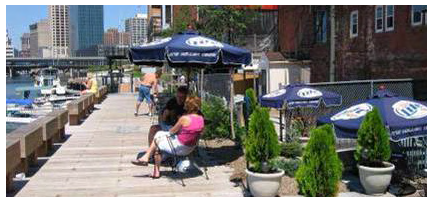
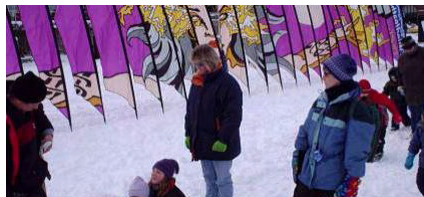
SUCCESSFUL WATERFRONTS

Successful waterfronts are a direct result of understanding the context of a community and regions natural and physical context.

CONNECTIONS – It is not only important to understand the context but to maximize the connections to those resources. It is all about creating a regional system with strong linkages to the community's most valuable resources. Any system of trails, waterways, ecological units or open space must provide connectivity. It is important to assess every system and eliminate obstacles or missing links.

The major objective is to balance public and private needs with the goal of maximizing public access to as many resources defining a particular place.

The balanced approach effectively accesses the environmental treasures, while at the same time providing adequate management of those resources. This is done through quality development/investment, good design in the public realm, using quality materials, proactive marketing, creative programming and a commitment to daily maintenance and long term operations.



Civic Health



Focus Group

The concepts of place and community are defining characteristics in any healthy society, and every municipality in America faces its own unique challenges to building a healthy community. Contemporary challenges include the following:

- lack of a common civic identity;
- the pervasive presence of controversy and public conflict;
- difficulty managing diverse interests and creating inclusive public processes;
- turnover and 'civic churning' of citizens and civic leaders;
- weak institutions outside of government;
- and limited public resources to invest in community building efforts.

*"I've seen Newport
come, and I've seen
it go."
-Lifelong Newport
resident*



Historic Main Street

Challenges

Newport City has several key constraints and challenges to civic health. Newport's location in the Northeast kingdom provides a physical isolation from other communities, and its adjacency to the border creates unique challenges regarding regional mobility and access to the community. The community's small size and population present challenges in that there are few anchor businesses or philanthropic institutions to partner with on community-building work. Like other communities, public monies are limited in Newport City. Therefore, it faces a 'partnership premium' and must pool collective talent and resources across the community to address critical issues. In a similar fashion to other cities, Newport must pursue public-private partnerships and innovation in problem-solving and community investment.

Newport City faces challenges regarding the absence of a robust local job market to keep the city's youth in the community. It doesn't have some of the same amenities,

such as movie theaters, hotels, and concentrated retail opportunities downtown that existed 60 years ago. Furthermore, the city has significant percentages of vulnerable populations with economic, housing, and healthcare needs that present additional challenges. While many of the city's core residents are lifelong citizens, Newport City has also developed seasonal citizens with second homes in the city. These citizens are only present and involved in the life of Newport for part of the year, creating gaps and surges depending on the calendar. The civic dialogue in Newport is generally good, but there are some gaps regarding the community's ability to take on controversial issues and resolve them effectively, reflecting a need to have mechanisms for productive dialogue and collective problem-solving.

The Civic Pride Paradox

During the public input process, the R/UDAT Team discovered that civic pride is an issue for Newport City residents. While citizens' sense of attachment to the community is strong, civic pride is not well articulated. In fact, there is a prevailing narrative of decline among many residents, particularly older residents that have lived in Newport City for a long time. It may be the city's most fundamental challenge. The team heard a repeated chorus which described the city's glory days in the past tense, and expressed nostalgia for days when the Newport City was more vibrant and dynamic. As one participant who has lived in Newport for 77 years remarked, "I've seen Newport come, and I've seen it go." During the R/UDAT's public workshops and town hall meetings, citizens expressed anxiety about the future of the city. It is time for Newport's citizens to begin believing in the community's future again, to rewrite the narrative of decline, and to renew the sense of community pride and civic spirit that defined Newport a generation ago.



Civic Health

Assets

Newport has some unusual assets to apply to civic health, particularly compared to other cities. One of the R/UDAT Team's most striking observations of Newport is its citizens' deep sense of attachment to community. Newport City's greatest strength is expressed in the shared commitment residents have to this common bond. It will serve as a fundamental asset to future success. The team was unanimously impressed by the number of personal narratives about individuals who are lifelong residents of Newport or who left the city only to return later in life and raise families. The community's citizens do not locate in Newport for jobs. In fact, many residents have sacrificed economic opportunity to return to the city. Their return represents a fundamental affirmation of the attachment to community and quality of life that Newport exemplifies. It is a rare civic asset. Many Americans would be envious of the relationship and connection Newport's residents have to the greater community.

Newport faces some significant challenges regarding its aging demographic and low-income populations, but some of its demographic realities can be strategically leveraged as assets. For instance, implementation of the R/UDAT recommendations will require broad-based partnership and sustained community-wide effort to be successful. Newport has a largely homogeneous population, which lends itself to higher degrees of social capital that can be leveraged for effective community-wide partnership in the short-term. It will be a critical advantage to maintain momentum for implementation in the initial years of the R/UDAT process.

Newport has a large senior population relative to other communities. While aging demographics are not

advantageous to economic development efforts, they do provide an underutilized asset regarding the need for community volunteerism. Nationally, seniors have provided an army of volunteers to accomplish great civic works. The Senior Corps program was created in the 1990s to leverage the country's aging population for volunteerism, and it remains a tremendous asset that could provide the needed volunteer boost to current and future efforts.

Newport boasts a significant 'real estate' advantage regarding community and civic maintenance as well. The city's physical setting is conducive to the creation of strong community connections and civic spirit. If Newport represents 'home' to its residents, Main Street serves as an important civic 'living room' where people can gather and build the fundamental relationships that strengthen social capital. The street features a number of institutions which are critical to the maintenance of community relationships, including a health food store, pubs, restaurants, a bookstore, and the community's unique Pick and Shovel anchor store. The city's existing parks and waterfront, while underutilized, already provide opportunities for civic gathering and social interaction. Enhancing these properties, and continuing to invest in a dynamic Main Street, will lay the foundation for healthy civic life. In addition, the city features a number of public facilities that can serve important roles as gathering spaces and create opportunities for civic life. The historic library, the Gateway Center, and the State building are all centrally located in the downtown and along the waterfront, providing several venues where citizens can interact and participate in the collective life of the community.



Pick and Shovel



Waterfront Gazebo

Civic Health



Focus Group

R/UDAT Recommendations

The R/UDAT Team is recommending a series of intentional strategies to produce civic pride while addressing core community issues. In considering our recommendations, we have focused on a limited number of critical actions we believe meet the following criteria:

- They require limited public resources;
- They utilize existing assets in the community, most importantly human capital;
- They are feasible but necessary to improve civic pride and capacity;
- They require the collective will, partnership and collaboration of many people in the community to be successful.

Convene Stakeholders to Address Loitering Concerns in the Downtown

Newport City needs to establish effective mechanisms for collaborative problem-solving around key community issues. This need is exemplified by the current issues regarding the loitering controversy downtown. The R/UDAT Team heard a lot of testimony about perceived loitering issues and related safety issues impacting the image of Main Street. Loitering represents the kind of issue that should be addressed proactively in a collaborative manner, by convening a conversation between local retailers, neighborhood representatives, residents, non-profit organizations, and local government to analyze the issue and propose potential alternatives. The controversy surrounding the loitering issue represents an opportunity for civic leaders to take on a salient issue that has high resident awareness and demonstrate successful resolution through collaborative problem-solving. The loitering issue could model a process for addressing issues collaboratively and inclusively, increasing trust among city stakeholders and laying the foundations for future



Focus Group

collaborative work. This conversation should begin immediately. The loitering issue has produced controversy and tension that are inherently antithetical to Newport's community aesthetic and should not be allowed to fester unaddressed.

Engage the Community in the Design, Creation, and Maintenance of a Community Garden

One important method of increasing civic pride and building stronger relationships across the community is to provide opportunities that engage citizens in collaborative public work. The R/UDAT Team recommends that Newport City work towards the establishment of a community garden. During the public input process, the team heard many residents express interest in the community garden concept as an opportunity for the city. Community gardens represent an effective tool to engage residents in partnership and collaboration toward a shared purpose. Once established, the gardens provide an amenity and local source of food, as well as an important public space for social interaction. They typically have beneficial impacts on community health and livability regardless of context. There are many success stories associated with community gardens in other communities which could be modeled by Newport. Community gardens are also low-cost facilities, and the city should use this opportunity to conduct outreach with potential partners who may contribute modest resources to the project. Newport can use the community garden project as a low-cost, low-risk demonstration project that provides a source of community partnership and civic pride, and builds momentum for greater public investment and collaboration on larger issues present in the community.

Civic Health

Explore Community School Models

Newport City has significant percentages of at-risk populations relative to other small cities, which presents both a challenge and an opportunity for increased civic health. As a result, the city needs to leverage new opportunities to provide strategic interventions that support vulnerable populations. The R/UDAT team heard testimony that approximately 70 percent of students in the North Country school system qualify for subsidized lunches. The team believes that Newport can increase its existing use of public facilities to help address community needs and promote civic pride. The city's elementary school is currently under enrolled. The facility can accommodate 400 students, but current enrollment is 300. Therefore, the school has excess facility space that could be repurposed under a Community School programming model to co-locate important community services for students and adults within the facility. Co-location of human and social service programming will enhance the accessibility of services for populations with special needs. Schools can serve an important civic role by providing a primary intervention point to help address existing community needs and build community.

There are approximately 3,000 schools in the United States that employ a community schools model. Community Schools represent a fundamental shift in programming that recognizes the reciprocal relationships between a community and its education system. Such institutions can provide the important difference for children and families that need health, social and other supportive services to succeed. Young people, particularly at-risk children, need supportive learning environments after school as well. Schools require public support and engaged families to succeed. Community school models

allow the education system to serve as a bridging institution that leverages this reciprocal relationship for mutual benefit. Community-based organizations, including child and family service agencies, youth development organizations and others, are often successful partners in the community school model. The programming models vary, but commonly include services such as adult education, family involvement, after school activities, family support, community development, community engagement, preventive health services, mental health, physical health, early childhood, and youth development services. The R/UDAT Team believes that a community school model would be a feasible possibility for Newport City in part because the community is already modeling innovative co-location strategies through the Technical Education Center and High School facility. More information on Community School models can be found through the Coalition for Community Schools (<http://www.community-schools.org/>).

Engage Residents in the Production of a Collective Narrative

Promulgating a collective community narrative is an important foundation for developing common civic identities and instilling pride in the community. Newport City has an interesting story to tell, and it has lifelong citizens with rich personal narratives about the life and times of the city. It also has youth with strong ideas about its contemporary place and its future. The R/UDAT Team believes Newport City should harness these stories as a resource for community pride through an intergenerational storytelling project. Storytelling projects are effective vehicles for collecting oral histories of place, building relationships across the community through the process, and instilling a common narrative of the city that citizens

"children do well when their families do well, and families do better when they live in supportive communities." Annie E. Casey Foundation



Historic Main Street

Civic Health



Local Youth Presenting Urban Design Project

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” –Jane Jacobs

Celebrate Newport

During the public input process, the R/UDAT Team heard citizens describe some of the exciting civic events in the city’s past, including dog sled races, skating races on the lake, professional biking criterion races, sailing competitions, and other festive events. Community-wide events serve important civic purposes by bringing residents together to participate in exciting experiences. They also mark important moments in the life of the community and contribute to the creation of collective narratives about Newport’s history, culture and people. The team recommends that Newport City build upon its existing signature events by organizing additional civic experiences that reinforce the local community attachment and create a sense of excitement among residents. During the week of R/UDAT meetings, the team observed several great local examples of events that Newport City’s residents associate with the community, such as the “sugar on snow” served at the team’s opening reception.

Create a Youth Commission or Youth Advisory Council

During the public input workshops, the R/UDAT Team heard residents express concern that Newport is struggling to keep its youth in the city. Newport’s soft employment market, as well as the lack of amenities that appeal to the city’s younger residents, present challenges to keeping young professionals in the city. It is a complex problem that will require a variety of strategies to address and correct the current trends and drain of talent from Newport. Therefore, the R/UDAT Team recommends that the city establish a Youth Commission or Youth Advisory Council to effectively provide opportunities for younger residents to participate in the civic dialogue and decision making about Newport’s future. Many effective models of Youth Commissions exist, and

other cities suffering from declining populations and a vacating younger demographic have used these mechanisms to develop effective strategies. The team recommends the city study successful models in communities such as Hampton, Virginia (<http://www.hamptonyouth.com/>) as a basis for its own implementation.

Create Collaboration Newport

Healthy communities require effective mediating institutions that can nourish civic life by serving a variety of roles in the maintenance of community dialogue and as fertile ground for the development of citizen leaders. Civic Capacity refers to a community’s collective commitment to progress, including resources and human talent that can be leveraged to address key issues. The R/UDAT Team recommends that the city establish ‘Collaboration Newport’ to address long-term civic capacity in the community. This entity could be created as a collaborative partnership among key organizations and institutions in the city that are involved in civic life, including the Newport City Renaissance, Gilman Housing, local educational institutions and others. The purpose of Collaboration Newport will be to serve as a “civic lab” dedicated to the promulgation of community-wide partnership and collaboration. It can also serve as a hub for community volunteerism by coordinating volunteer recruitment for civic efforts around town such as the design and building of community gardens, the organization and staffing for major community events, and partnerships for everything from after-school programs to story-telling projects. Collaboration Newport can serve an important convening role for community dialogue and public work by modeling collaborative leadership and community problem-solving on critical issues facing the city. Finally, in coordination with educational partners, Collaboration Newport could serve as the home for civic leadership training by

Civic Health

establishing a citizen academy or neighborhood college program that engages city residents in skill-building work on negotiation and conflict resolution, collaborative problem-solving, and cross-sector partnership. Through a suite of programming designed for city residents, Collaboration Newport can provide an initial entry into public engagement and prepare citizens for expanded participation roles. Newport could find inspiration in other communities' efforts to create similar entities, including the Institute for Civic Leadership in Portland, Maine (<http://www.civicleadership.org/>), Focus St. Louis (<http://www.focus-stl.org/>) or Collaboration DC (<http://collaborationdc.net/>).

Become an All-America City

This week, Newport City has become the first community in Vermont to ever host a R/UDAT process. At a time when the nation is planning for economic stimulus and infrastructure development, Newport City stands apart as a leading community that is planning proactively for its future. The team believes Newport should continue to aspire to leadership by pursuing recognition for its collaborative efforts and its outstanding community achievements as it implements the R/UDAT plan. Since 1949, the National Civic League has recognized collaborative communities who are developing innovative solutions to their most pressing public issues through its All-America City Awards program. Often referred to as "the Olympics of Community," jurisdictions from around the country typically apply to compete as finalists over a 3-day period by presenting their community delegations before a panel of renowned leaders in local government and civic affairs. Each year, 30 finalist communities are selected through application to compete for designation, with 10 communities receiving the award. It has been 53 years since a Vermont community (Brattleboro) won All-America City status.

Newport should compete for and obtain an All-America City Award in the next five years. There are several benefits inherent in such an endeavor. The All-America City Award requires communities to implement a Civic Index process as a component of its self-evaluation, and asks them to demonstrate innovative approaches to collaborative problem-solving on key challenges in the community. Receiving All-America City designation carries with it economic development benefits. Previous designated communities have realized additional new investment and revenue as a result of obtaining the status. Competing for the award produces enormous community pride and civic momentum to take on new challenges and aspire to greater collective achievements. Having the designation is a great branding approach for external community marketing, as it serves as an official stamp of approval that Newport is an exceptional community worth living in and visiting. Most importantly, participation in the All-America City Awards produces civic pride as a by product. "This celebration of community spirit and success is a life-changing experience for all participants," according to Robert Rawson Jr., NCL's Chairman of the Board of Directors. "We invite the public to attend. We think people from all walks of life will be energized by these communities that illustrate what is great about America." For more information about the All-America City Program, consult the National Civic League website at <http://www.ncl.org/aac/AACindex.htm>.

Success is Possible

Civic pride and collaboration will be the central ingredients in Newport's successful R/UDAT implementation. Community-wide collaboration is a mandatory concept for Newport. While government is an important partner in implementation, the community cannot rely on government alone. Implementation will require a collective



All American City Event

Civic Health



Community Gardens

contribution. It will require collaborative leadership from the R/UDAT Steering Committee and the community's civic organizations, businesses, and citizens. However, it is important to emphasize that success is not only possible, but inevitable with the right commitment. Newport City can accomplish great things through the collective energies of its citizens. It can recapture its 'glory days' again. Newport's citizens can take inspiration from numerous examples of other communities that have undergone a dramatic renaissance as the result of collective effort. The city can learn from these communities' strategies as it plans its own renaissance.

Fort Dodge, Iowa

In the 1980s, Fort Dodge was facing a severe crisis following the economic decline of the agricultural sector and the loss of local jobs. Residents, particularly the community's youth, began to leave the community in search of improved prospects elsewhere. The community's low point was reached when famous radio personality Paul Harvey pronounced the city doomed. As Harvey reported, "The agricultural crisis has reached epidemic proportions in the rural Midwest. And the community of Fort Dodge, Iowa has seen thousands of jobs evaporate, and a mass exodus of its population. It saddens me to say, will the last person out of Fort Dodge please turn out the lights."

In response to the crisis, the Community Action Network formed as a community-wide coalition focused on the revitalization of Fort Dodge. Over a 5 year period, the Network raised over \$10 million from the community to fund a variety of projects, including school renovations, parks, recreation facilities, childcare, a new library, and 20 additional civic projects. The Network was a catalyst

for a comprehensive planning process that re-envisioned the city waterfront, including a collaborative visioning process with the community. The Community Action Network also established formal mechanisms to involve everyone, including the community's youth, in establishing a collective vision and desires for the future. In 2001, Fort Dodge received an All-America City Award designation from the National Civic League in a national competition. The city's theme was "the Lights are on!" As a four-year-old member of the city's delegation stated, "our future is so bright we need shades now."

Citizens in Clinton, North Carolina also demonstrated that collective resources can achieve dramatic results. As a community of 8,000 residents, Clinton faced a crisis regarding dilapidated public facilities and infrastructure that was driving residents away from the community. In response, the "March to a Million" campaign was born. The community campaign set a goal of raising \$1.4 million from the community – in four months. They exceeded their goal. It's not just about financial resources. The most important resource available to any community is its human talent and volunteer capacity.

Capitalize on the R/UDAT Process and Build Upon It

The Newport City R/UDAT presents a unique opportunity to the city and its residents. It is a rare event in the life of a community, and during the past week hundreds of city residents have been able to engage in the same conversation about their collective future at the same time. The community has participated in the R/UDAT process and demonstrated their commitment to the future of the city. The team believes strongly that the R/UDAT represents a beginning for Newport City. As the R/UDAT process progresses with implementation, the city should seek



R/UDAT Team

Civic Health

additional opportunities to leverage citizen input and produce civic pride at each stage. Each citizen has a responsibility to make personal contributions and work towards a greater whole, to capitalize upon the energy and creativity expressed during this process, and to sustain your commitment so that future generations of city residents may know the same love of community that you all have demonstrated in your time, efforts and ideas about the future during the R/UDAT.



Historic Main Street

Vision of the City



Looking to the future of Newport
Andrew Halpern, Kristi Lafleur, and Julian Rumery



Pedestrian Marketplace
Lealoni Coathup, Alex Fournier, and Justin Whipple

Challenge to Newport Youth

In visiting Newport in November of 2008, the R/UDAT team leader, James Abell, FAIA, challenged the students in Ron Paula's Computer Aided Design [CAD] class at North Country Career Center to become involved in the R.UDAT process and craft their own futuristic Vision of Newport. These design studies were reviewed and judged by the entire R/UDAT team with three top prizes awarded.

Portions of those student schemes are illustrated here, and is an great illustration of the enthusiasm, talent, and hard work of Newport youth to participate in the planning and future of their hometown.



A New Look
Joseph Poulima



c. 1912 Postcard of Lake Memphremagog illustrates the fanciful dreaming that these waters induce!



Vision of the City

Family Attractions

Many citizens expressed an interest in having more choices in downtown that allow for fun, family activities, and environments that entice visitors and citizens to stay downtown, stroll, relax, and recreate.

Vestpocket Park Downtown

Many Newport residents have asked for a place in downtown to linger, to watch a sunset, to have a comfortable lunch, and to enjoy urban life. The municipal parking lot between the Newport Library and Municipal Building could be reconfigured as a “village square” with enhanced paving that includes a small grove of trees to provide shade in summer and fall color in downtown. This new parking lot / village square paving could be designed to include Field Avenue so as to enlarge this village square while allowing local traffic access through the plaza paving.

Reinforced concrete paving with perforations for lawn to grow with percolation of storm water by summer, yet accommodates snow removal in winter, would allow this parking lot to appear green in the summer and allow for civic events a few times the year. Potentially, with selective redevelopment over time in downtown that is more dense, structured parking can occur within new building complexes that would allow parking from this area to move to new locations, leaving a ‘vestpocket park’ between the Library and Municipal building that fronts on downtown. Ultimately, a “winter garden” structure could be erected in a portion of this park allowing for a 4th



Winter Garden



Vision of the City



Could an historic train be brought back to encourage families and tourism in Downtown?

Rail Corridor at the Waterfront

The rail right of way on the waterfront continues to serve commerce, though lightly used only once a day. Could this right of way be utilized for a fun, recreational train that could be run seasonally to attract families and tourists to downtown Newport? This train could be a tourist attraction as well that will serve the resort hotel and condominiums planned for the Waterfront Plaza area and would tie in well with the R/UDAT team's recommendation for connectivity to Gardner Park.



Green Mountain Train

<http://www.rwin.com/vacation/images/greenmountain.JPG>

Vision of the City

Visual Repair with Recreation Potential

The massive retaining walls adjacent to the Hebard building are not attractive from Lake Memphremagog boaters and boardwalk strollers. A visual solution that has some 'bonus' components could be accomplished by veneering the concrete retaining walls with local stone that could be utilized also as a climbing tower attraction for the waterfront boardwalk.

This climbing wall could potential be used for demonstrations by merchants selling outdoor gear, be an activity for Newport teens, and could even include an outdoor fireplace at it's highest level for a "Sunset Promitory" conversatyion and seating area.

In some communities this rock climbing tower can be used for teen competitions, or perhaps be used as modest funds generator to pay for itself over time. If done with sensitivity, this tower could also tell the story of local geology as already on display inside the Hebard State Building.



The retaining wall is enhanced by a natural stone face that reflects the local geology, while adding a recreational aspect.



Example of Real Climbing Tower with People Waiting



The lakeside retaining walls have a significant negative impact and can be better integrated with the local landscape with stonefacings.

Vision of the City



Participatory Sculpture of Natural Themes



Environmental Art

Public Art is an element of many successful, walkable downtowns, and if handled correctly can engage, educate, and entertain the shopping public.

Continuing the theme begun at the Hebard Building of environmental art that teaches our community about the flora and fauna of the region is an excellent way to create a regional flavor and could allow for sitting, climbing, picture taking, and relaxing.

Diner Possibility

With the "rail theme" already in place, the potential exists to bring the beloved "Miss Newport" diner back, most likely located along the waterfront trail / rail line adjacent to downtown.

Serving healthy snacks, drinks, or even Pick 'n Shovel Ice Cream from a diner car on the waterfront could encourage strolling, lingering, and enjoyment of the downtown.



An attraction with rail history on the rail corridor.

Vision of the City

Gardner Park Evolution

The central location of Gardner Park for civic enjoyment, recreation, and events was well appreciated by the R/UDAT team. However, the identity of the park is seen by the R/UDAT team as more of a recreational ballfield complex than a traditional park.

Some years from now the demand for ballfields will likely go way beyond the two baseball [plus small softball] fields with the need for lighting, restrooms, and better parking on long term planning for expanded recreational uses should begin now.

A more regional recreation complex to the east of town should be developed to accommodate more ballfields that are lit and state-of-the-art in association with a future indoor hockey rink, indoor swimming pool, and other uses asked for by Newport and Derby residents.



Limited Linkage for Park Patrons

New Pedestrian/Fishing Bridge.

Vision of the City

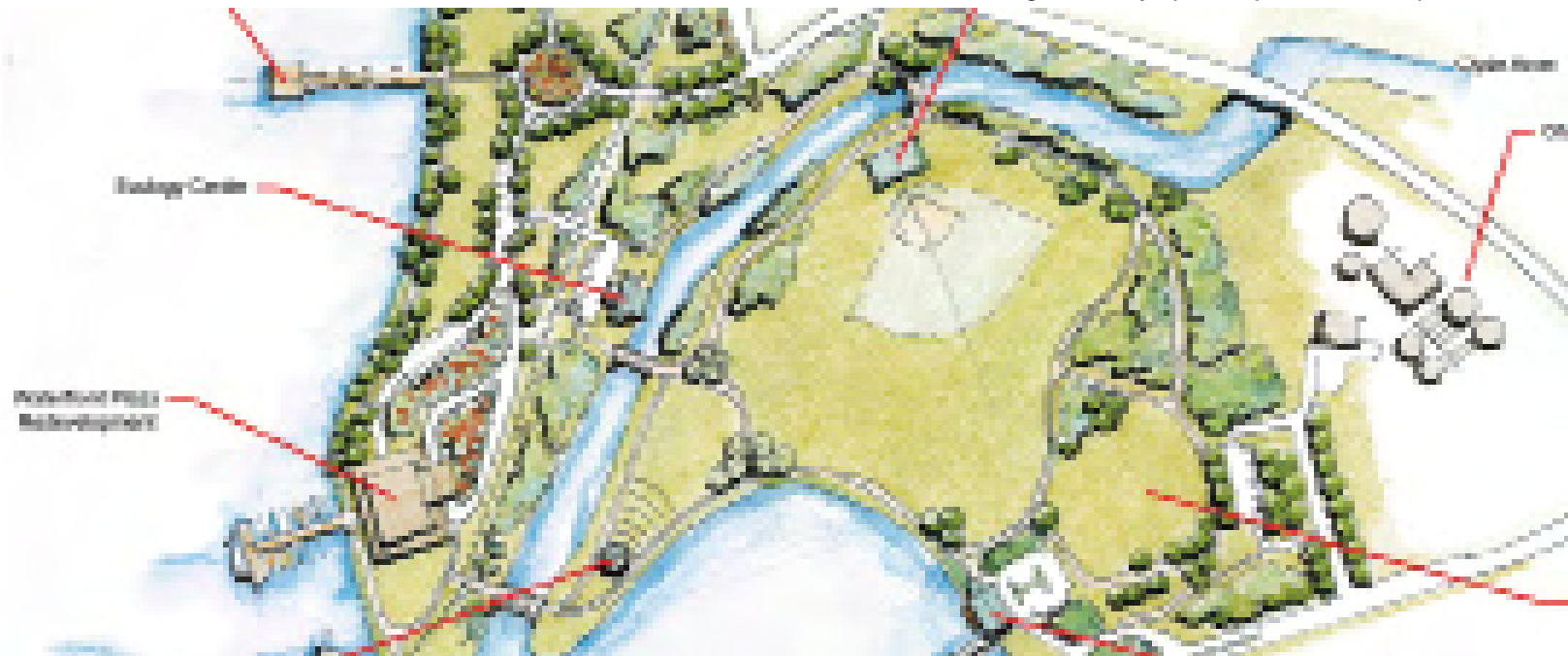


Illuminated Ice Castle

This transition of ballfields, parking, and active uses will allow for Gardner Park to enjoy more uses:

- Picnic Grounds
- Legacy Ballfield and Grandstand
- Community Garden
- Winter Ice Castle
- Toddler Splash Pad and Play Area.

The most significant element, however, that can be added to this park may well be the planting of heritage trees that are seen elsewhere in the community but have been lost to some extent in this park over time. We recommend that the park be considered The Northeast Kingdom Arboretum where the trees of the region can take a prominent role with an interpretive signage describing the many species planted in the park.



Gardner Park

Vision of the City

Recreational Fishing and Nature Trail at Clyde River

Currently there is little opportunity for fisherman and creekbed adventurers to enjoy the Clyde River as it arcs through Gardner Park.

A simple foot bridge will add more connectivity from the park to the current band gazebo and will allow for walkers, joggers and fishermen more enjoyment of this natural resource.

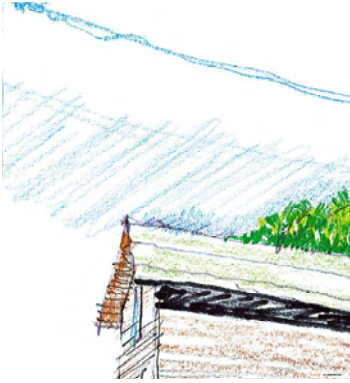


Existing Cottonwoods at Clyde River.



New Nature Pathway with interpretive signage for arboretum.

Vision of the City



Paddleboat Dock at Relocated Barn

The South Bay Cove adjacent to Gardner Park is underutilized. Perhaps as the long bridge, the main street bridge and even the current rail bridge are renewed and replaced, these can better allow watercraft access into South Bay.

Having small craft to rent in the park and having one of many uses of the relocated Coventry Road Barn accommodating this need will attract more park use and enjoyment of the waterfront opportunities.

An iconic Vermont structure can be used for other purposes

Vision of the City

New Nature/Ecology Center in Gardner Park

In keeping with the economic and tourism specialist's recommendation that the Tourism Center should be relocated long term to the Downtown Custom House, the Welcome center can become a Park Building that can be used as a Nature Center with a new creekside deck.



Vision of the City



Existing



Poulin Mills

The historic significance on farming towns across the USA are defined by mills such as we have in Newport. Perhaps longterm, the legacy underpinning the mill is story that can be told on the outside of the building and silos. History, transportation, farming, processing, and the full cycle of agricultural products can be told through historic photos and interpretive signage located near or adjacent to the mill. To treat the functional aspects of the mill as Urban Sculpture, one approach might be to consider “functional expressionism” by painting different components in bright colors, or perhaps a themed family of colors that creates delight, curiosity, and urban interest in the historic mill.



Center Pompidu

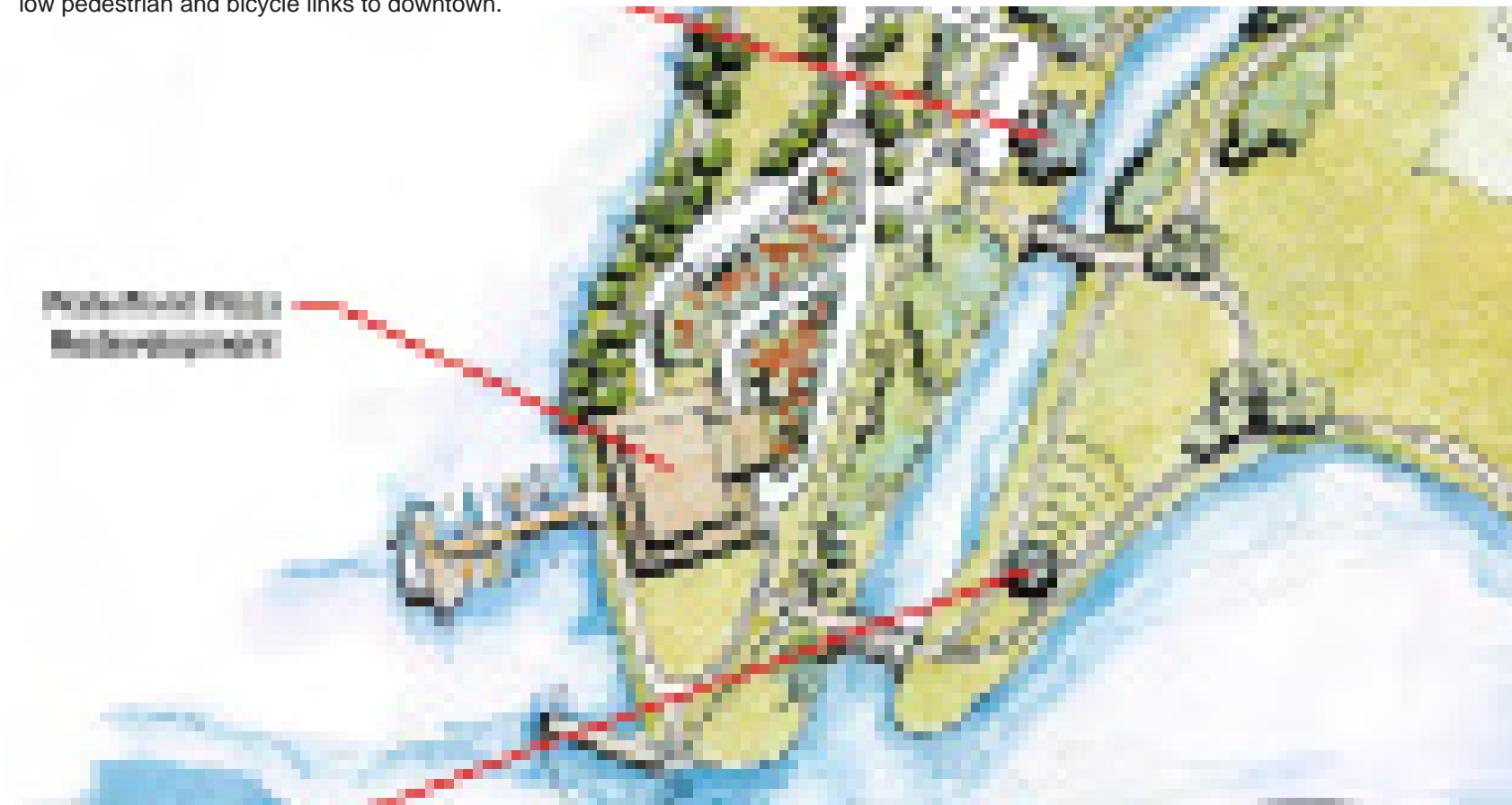
At the terminus of historic downtown, a new colorful image for Poulin Mills Could Encourage Interest & Visitation.

Vision of the City

Resort Promontory

The development opportunities for resort condominiums already approved at the Eastside Restaurant area, and the planned resort hotel on the waterfront plaza offer exceptional opportunities to combine waterfront amenities while connecting pedestrian activity to Gardner Park and expanding the 'green zone' of the park.

As long as the railbridge connection is in place with it's pedestrian component in place, this promontory will allow pedestrian and bicycle links to downtown.



Vision of the City



Functional Public Works projects should be thought of as "urban monuments" while enhancing identity & interest.

Century Bridge 2018

The two bridges in Newport create a confusing and dangerous traffic intersection near Poulin Mills that is further complicated by the deteriorating condition of the Long Bridge. The Causeway Bridge also has some age considerations and is not friendly or safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair bound individuals.

Perhaps a longterm bridge strategy could be effected over the next 9 years to the Century mark of Newport's incorporation of 1918.

A bridge that combines two needs into one, a bridge that provides world class pedestrian accommodation to enjoy the views north across Lake Memphremagog. And a span design that serves as a Gateway to the USA from Canada is worthy of consideration. It would be significant in allowing portions of Main Street along what is now Waterfront Shopping Plaza to be eliminated in favor of park land.

It also makes for shared access to Gardner Park, re-routing of truck traffic and automotive noise away from the fledgling condominium and resort development for this peninsula that is being discussed and planned.

Certainly, an undertaking this large will need a long-term commitment, but the rewards, if built, include enhanced civic identity, a gateway arch into the USA of world class quality, and a piece of civic sculpture that can be illuminated at night for special occasions. Interestingly, this monumental bridge would much more unite Downtown with South Bay Cove, with Gardner Park, and with East Main Street and the civic commerce north and east of Downtown.

Vision of the City

Implementation Schedule

2009-2011: Form Citizen Committees to undertake specific improvements in downtown. Committee for Environmental Sculpture, Committee for Rail Oriented Attractions, Committee for Planning a New Regional Recreation Facility, Committee for Nature Center are just a few examples. Create a dialog with VDOT regarding Long Bridge and Causeway Bridge. Initiate discussions with Canadian Atlantic Railroad on recreational use of their right of way. Plans for building the Century Bridge 2018 should begin. Climbing Wall and Tower on waterfront, Vestpocket Park in downtown, Welcome Center Moved to Custom House or Downtown. Move Coventry Barn carcass. Work with Waterfront Plaza owners and developers to create connectivity between their property and Gardner Park.

2012-2015: Inhabit Coventry Barn with Paddleboat rentals, Ice Skating Platform on South Bay Cove. Design of Century Bridge begun. Installations of Environmental art in Downtown and at Gardner Park Nature Center. Build Clyde River pedestrian bridge. The Newport Diner comes home and sells "Pick n' Shovel" Ice Cream down on the rail / waterfront / boardwalk. Tourist Train service begins. Joining of new resort development at Waterfront Plaza with Gardner Park is complete.

2016-2018: Final Engineering for Century Bridge, Regional Recreation Center for Ballfields, Indoor Swimming, and Indoor Hockey begin design, Vestpocket Park in Downtown with "wintergarden" structure events is complete. Ice Castle event in Downtown Vestpocket Park brings visitors from regional area. Poulin Mills as Civic Art object is complete.



Functional Public Works projects should be thought of as "urban monuments" while enhancing identity & interest.

R/UDAT
Vermont 2009

Acknowledgements



James Logan Abell, FAIA, LA

RUDAT Team Leader

Tempe, Arizona

James has owned and operated Abell & Associates Architects, Ltd. continuously in Tempe, Arizona since 1979. He has 36 years of experience in architecture, landscape architecture, and community planning throughout the western United States and the United Kingdom. His projects have won numerous design awards and have been published in regional and national architecture press including Progressive Architecture, AIA Memo, Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly, and Arizona Architecture. Often a visiting Professor of Architecture at Arizona State University and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, he has also lectured frequently at regional and national AIA symposia. James is a registered Architect in Arizona (1978) and California (1986), and a registered Landscape Architect in Arizona (1981). He has participated in RUDATs and community design workshops in California, Ohio, North Carolina, Utah, Texas, and throughout Arizona. For 3 decades, Abell & Associates Architects have specialized in the integration of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.



Eduard J. Freer

Landscape Architect and Urban Designer

Over the course of his 30-year professional career, Ed Freer has built a significant and award-winning portfolio in urban design, waterfront and downtown redevelopment, and community-based planning. Currently a Senior Urban Designer for JJR, he has also worked for HNTB, Seracuse Lawler + Partners, and The Architect Collaborative (TAC). Ed is highly accomplished at facilitating a consensus vision and broad community support for urban design and redevelopment initiatives. He has worked throughout the United States, with project work including:

Echo Bay Redevelopment, New Rochelle, NY

Central Wharf Redevelopment, Boston, MA

Weehawken – Hudson River Pedestrian Master Plan, Weehawken, NJ

Riverfront Redevelopment Plan, Paducah, KY

Marine District Redevelopment Plan, Seabrook, TX

Waterfront District Plan, Cleveland, OH

Ed has served as a resource member to many civic task forces and professional panels and as a member of national design juries. He has been an urban design resource for the Mayors Institute on City Design and an Urban Waterfront Planner for the ULI – Advisory Panel for San Pedro, CA. He currently serves as an Advisory Board Member for the Waterfront Center.

Acknowledgements

Carla L. Lerman AICP/PP

Housing & Community Planning

Carla has been involved in participatory urban planning for over thirty years, starting with a consulting firm in New Jersey, undertaking Master Plans, redevelopment planning, and neighborhood planning in towns in New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. For four years she served as Expert Witness and Special Master to a Superior Court in New Jersey setting up the ground rules for a NJ Supreme Court decision that all towns were responsible for zoning that permitted all levels of affordability in housing. She has worked at a County and State level, developing programs in neighborhood planning, housing rehabilitation, and nonprofit training and support. Carla was the first Executive Director of a regional nonprofit covering seven counties, helping nonprofits and towns in strategic planning, neighborhood planning and housing development, a position she held for fourteen years. She is currently a housing and community planning consultant. Carla, who received a Masters degree in City Planning from the University of Chicago, is a recipient of the Governor's Alice Paul Humanitarian Award and an Award of Honor from the N.J. Society of Architects.



Joel Mills Director

AIA Communities by Design

Washington, D.C.

Joel provides process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, he works with AIA components, members and partner organizations to provide technical assistance to communities across the country on sustainability and urban design. His experience includes community-based technical assistance, process design, facilitation and training across a number of fields including juvenile justice reform, local government, education, family strengthening, civic media and emergency management. During the 1990s, Mr. Mills spent several years supporting international democratization initiatives by providing technical assistance to parliaments, political parties, local governments, civic and international organizations. His scope of work included constitutional design and governing systems, voter and civic education, election monitoring and administration, political party training and campaign strategy, collaborative governance, human rights and civil society capacity building. He maintains active memberships in the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), and the Mid-Atlantic Facilitators Network. He also serves on several public and private boards.



Acknowledgements



Judie A. Scalise, CECd

Economic Development & Pre-Development Planning

Judie is Founder and Principal of ESI Corporation in Phoenix, AZ. She specializes in economic development and pre-development planning services to a clientele consisting of government agencies, corporations, private developers, school districts and utility companies. Prior to forming ESI Corp in 1991, she held the management positions of Executive Director of the Phoenix Economic Growth Corporation, Vice President and Manager of the Industrial and Economic Development Department of Security Pacific Bank and Director of Business and International Trade for the Arizona Department of Commerce.

Ms. Scalise has nearly 30 years of professional experience in the areas of land economics, strategic planning, and economic development. As a Principal of ESI Corp, Ms. Scalise has directed numerous consulting assignments consisting of market and trade area identification, market and financial feasibility analysis, economic/fiscal impact studies, strategic planning, labor market analysis, and industry cluster analysis.

Her professional affiliations include International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and Urban Land Institute (ULI).



J. Todd Scott

Historic Preservation & Downtown Revitalization

Todd is a licensed architect who specializes in historic preservation and downtown revitalization. His preservation experience includes stints with Oklahoma City, as historic preservation officer, and with King County, Washington, where he currently provides assistance for historic properties in that county and sixteen suburban and rural communities. He recently completed the intensive level survey of 175 historic barns on the Enumclaw Plateau and 200 historic residential and commercial properties in Kent, both in King County.

He has been involved in the rehabilitation of hundreds of structures in dozens of small downtowns as the state architect for Oklahoma Main Street and for DesignWorks, an arts-based design charrette program. Todd also served as community development director and assistant city manager for the city of Astoria, Oregon. He has presented at numerous state, regional, and national conferences on topics ranging from sustainability in design to mounting grass roots campaigns for endangered structures.

Todd has served on the boards of various non-profit agencies including heritage organizations, community development corporations, urban renewal authorities, and architectural foundations.

Acknowledgements

Jackie Barton

Tourism Specialist

Jackie Barton is the Coordinator of Ohio's Civil War 150th effort with the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus, OH. Her duties include promoting and organizing the state's effort to commemorate the Civil War sesquicentennial, assisting organizations and communities with their own commemoration plans, and connecting Ohio's efforts to those of other states around the nation. She also represents the Society on various heritage and cultural tourism initiatives, including a committee seeking to energize a heritage areas program for the state of Ohio and a tour of ancient mound sites, among others.

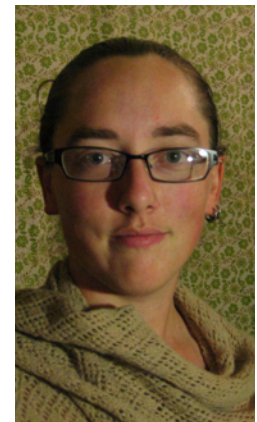
Before coming to the Society, Jackie worked as a consultant with Mary Means + Associates in Alexandria, VA. As a Senior Associate, she managed and executed community-based planning processes around heritage and cultural tourism, historic preservation, neighborhood and downtown revitalization, heritage areas, and related initiatives.



K.P.C. Hudson

Bookmaster

Katelyn is a resident of Jericho, Vermont. While in High School she was very involved in music, playing in the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association, and the Girl Scouting community, earning her Gold and Silver Awards and serving two terms on the Girl Scout Board of Directors for the Girl Scout Council of Vermont. Katelyn, then, attended Vermont Technical College, graduating from the Architectural Building Technology program in 2007 with her associate's degree. She had leadership roles in multiple campus organizations including the yearbook committee, student council, student activity team, and VTC's AIAS chapter. Since then, Katelyn has been working to complete her Bachelor's degree at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. Through the school, she has been able to work on many architectural projects including being the project manager for the Uganda Community School Project Inc. and had the opportunity to travel to Uganda. Katelyn also has been awarded the President Student Service Award, President Volunteer Service Award, and is a member of Tau Alpha Pi.



Acknowledgements



Steering Committee:

Frank Knoll
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Paul Monette
Doug Spates
Chris Johansen
Joe Torter
Mark Stewart
Kenneth L Wells
C Mike Marsh
Gillian Staniforth
Chris Hamblett
John Ward
Katy Kavanagh
Paul Dreher
David Snedeker
Alison Meaders

