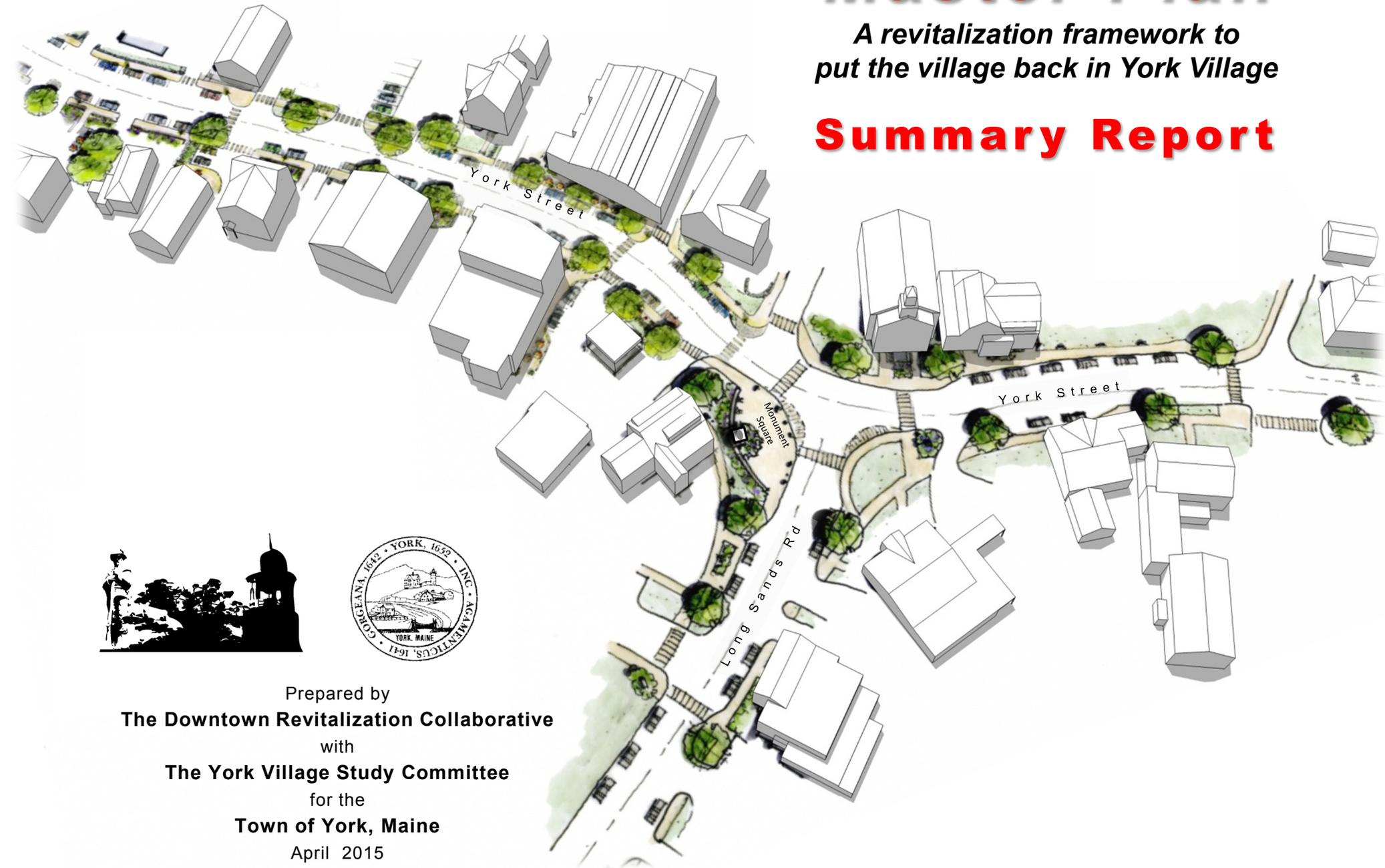


The York Village Master Plan

*A revitalization framework to
put the village back in York Village*

Summary Report



Prepared by
The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
with
The York Village Study Committee
for the
Town of York, Maine
April 2015



Preface

In a town as historic as York, it is easy to glimpse the past because it is all around you. Stand at Gaol Hill where you will see one of the oldest surviving buildings in the country. Walk around the First Parish's cemetery grounds and examine the dates carved on the gravestones. Read the inscriptions on buildings in the Village, some of which date to the Eighteenth Century. The past is very much present in York; present in the hearts and minds of residents and present to the many visitors who come to experience colonial New England.

It is easier still to see the present because it is so familiar to us: the monument at the Town's heart, the businesses along York Street, the churches and public buildings that grace the Village. At the same time, really seeing the present is not simple because of its familiarity. How many people pay attention to the monument in the center of the Village or know what it commemorates? How many know who owns the most prominent structures in the Village? How many know what lies beneath the surface of the roadways?

And if the present is hard to see with fresh eyes, how much more difficult is it to see the future? Seeing the future — or more accurately, envisioning alternative futures — is what the Village Study Committee (VSC) and its partner consultants from The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative of Portland were charged to do by the Board of Selectmen.

The visions of the VSC and The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative were not invented in isolation from the past or from the present. They are derived from studying what York looked like 100 years ago, how it worked 75 years ago, how it has changed over the last 50 years.

The visions are built on the memories and ideals of people who reached out to us. They are founded upon the thoughts of hundreds of citizens working in small groups during a series of public workshops. They are the product of meetings with diverse interest groups and innumerable one-on-one conversations that took place over a four year period.

The future.... That is what this Master Plan is intended to bring to life; a future that both respects the past and examines the present with a critical eye. It is a vision that puts "the village" back in York Village.

The volunteer members of the VSC and the professional staff of The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative would like to thank the countless people who spoke with us and who gave freely of their time to help bring to life a revitalized York Village.

This Master Plan belongs to, and is dedicated to, all of them.



Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success. (Henry Ford)

In 2011, the **York Board of Selectmen** initiated the Master Plan by appointing the Village Study Committee, and then subsequently advancing it by engaging The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative.

The **York Village Study Committee (YVSC)** laid a foundation that made the Master Plan possible, then provided leadership throughout the process.

The YVSC team:

- Steve Burns, Town Manager
- Ron McAllister, Retired Professor
- Stu Dawson, Landscape Architect
- Jodi Merrill, York Hospital
- Antonia DeSoto, Local Merchant
- Robert Palmer, BOS Rep
- Gloria Gustafson Gallery, Pres. YVA
- Dylan Smith, Town Planner
- Chris Hartwell, Web Developer
- Peter Smith, Planning Board
- Joel Lefever, Museums of Old York
- Scott Stevens, Preservationist
- Dean Lessard, York Public Works
- Lew Stowe, Planning Board

Former Members:

- Mary Andrews
- Steve Pelletier
- Dawn Fernald
- Jennifer Smith
- Christine Grimando
- Rob Yandow
- Ron Nowell

The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative led the Master Planning effort. Founded on the four cornerstones of Revitalization – Economics, Streets, Buildings and Community Participation, the Team purposefully integrates the allied disciplines of Planning, Design, Engineering, Funding and Implementation to provide comprehensive services.

The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative:

- Denis Lachman, Lachman Architects & Planners
- John Adams, Milone & MacBroom
- Regina Leonard, Landscape Architecture & Design
- Tom Fowler & Joel Lufkin, Landmark Corporation Surveyors & Engineers
- Rodney Lynch AICP – Community & Economic Development Planner

Many **Business Leaders, Property Owners and Merchants** shared their time and thoughts through one-on-one interviews to help guide this Master Plan.

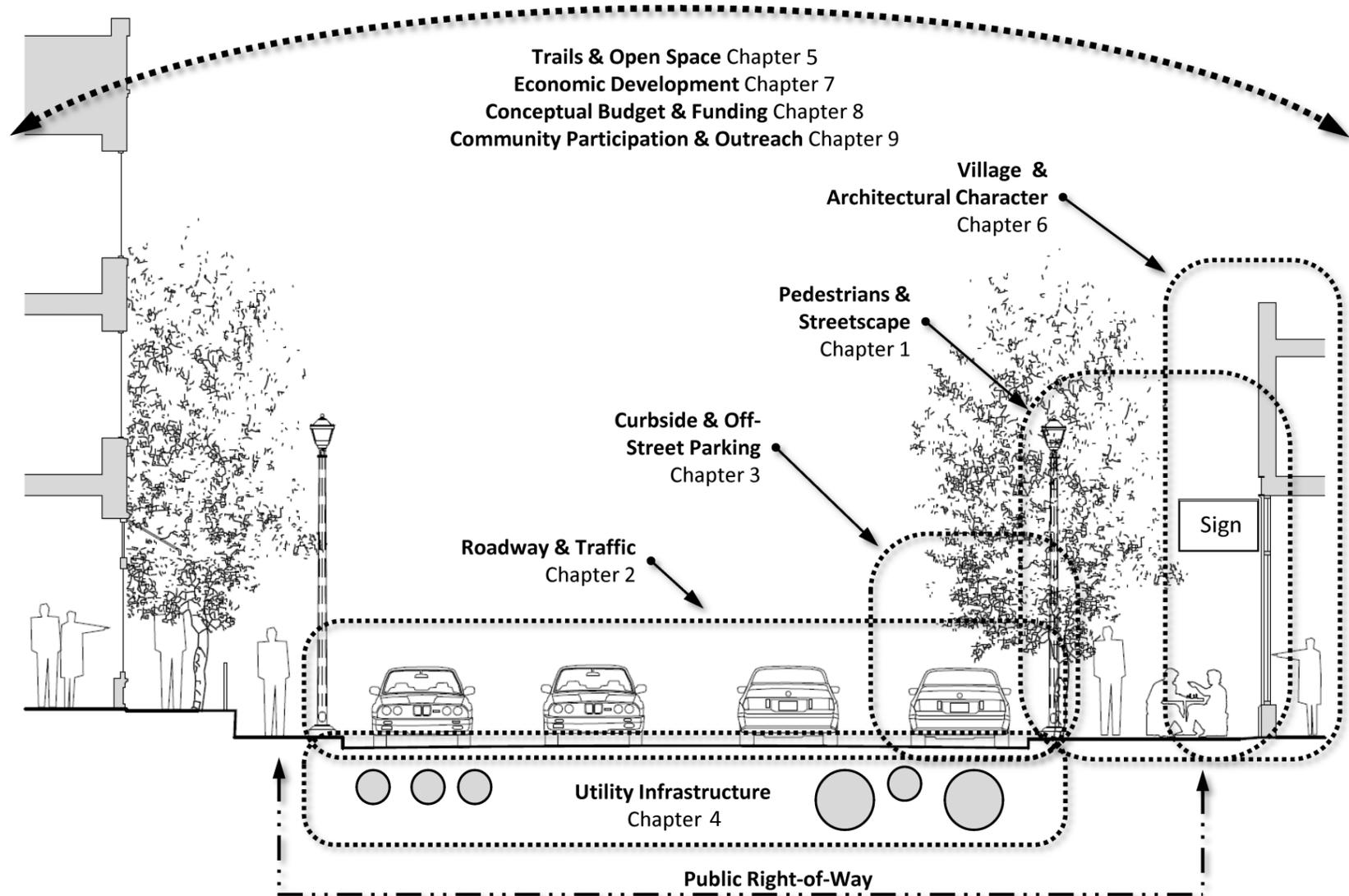
Over 240 **Community Members** committed their time and interest by participating in three Community Design Workshops. Their input enriched both the process and the results, ensuring this plan truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the community. Included were:

- Non Profit Community Leaders
- Emergency Services Fire, Police and Ambulance
- Veterans Organizations
- All Utilities – Water, Sewer, Power, Cable, Telephone



Visual Table of Contents

The York Village Master Plan Report is a complex weave of interrelated and overlapping topics. A few topics are exclusively in the **Public Realm** (such as Roadway & Traffic, Chapter 2 and Utility Infrastructure, Chapter 4). Others are primarily in the **Private Realm** (such as Village & Architectural Character, Chapter 6). Yet downtown revitalization is intrinsically interconnected, so most topics bridge **both Public and Private Realms**. The Visual Table of Contents below shows the physical locations of topics, correlated with the report's organization.





This Master Plan Report document is intended for multiple audiences, each with distinct interests seeking various levels of information and/or guidance - from citizens with a cursory interest to community leaders with broad policy interests and responsibilities to engineers concerned with technical implementation

To address this full range of audiences the Plan document is in a 3-part format. The first is the **Summary Report**, which can be printed as a standalone document. It contains visual representations of all key aspects of the plan and summaries of top considerations and recommendations in each topic area. For broader and more in-depth information, nine **Chapters** follow on the topics illustrated at left. Back up and technical information to some of the Chapters can be found in the **Appendix** referenced by its corresponding chapter number. All of the Master Plan Report can be found in pdf format online at www.YorkVillage.org.

Comprehensive Report	Summary Report	Visual Introduction to the Master Plan	5 - 20
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Visual Introduction to the Master Plan



PURPOSE

This Visual Introduction to the Master Plan includes conceptual design recommendations for the public right-of-way. The following sketches illustrate recommended treatments for the central Village, which is bounded to the west by Lindsay Road, to the east by Woodbridge Road, and extending southward to just beyond the Bagel Basket. The written portion of the Master Plan supplements and expands upon these conceptual ideas.

The Visual Introduction also includes section-elevations along the York Street and Long Sands Road central Village corridor. These cross-sections show both the existing and proposed treatments to illustrate how existing street rights-of-way can be modified to include pedestrian and bicycle enhancements.

LOCATION KEYS for SHEETS 1 – 6

To provide a visual representation of what the Village might look like upon implementation of this Master Plan, the Village is divided into numbered areas. For each of the six areas shown, an aerial view concept diagram has been created to show what that part of the Village would look like.

Village areas covered by these diagrams are:

Sheet 1 - Lindsay Road Concept

Sheet 2 - Intersection Concept

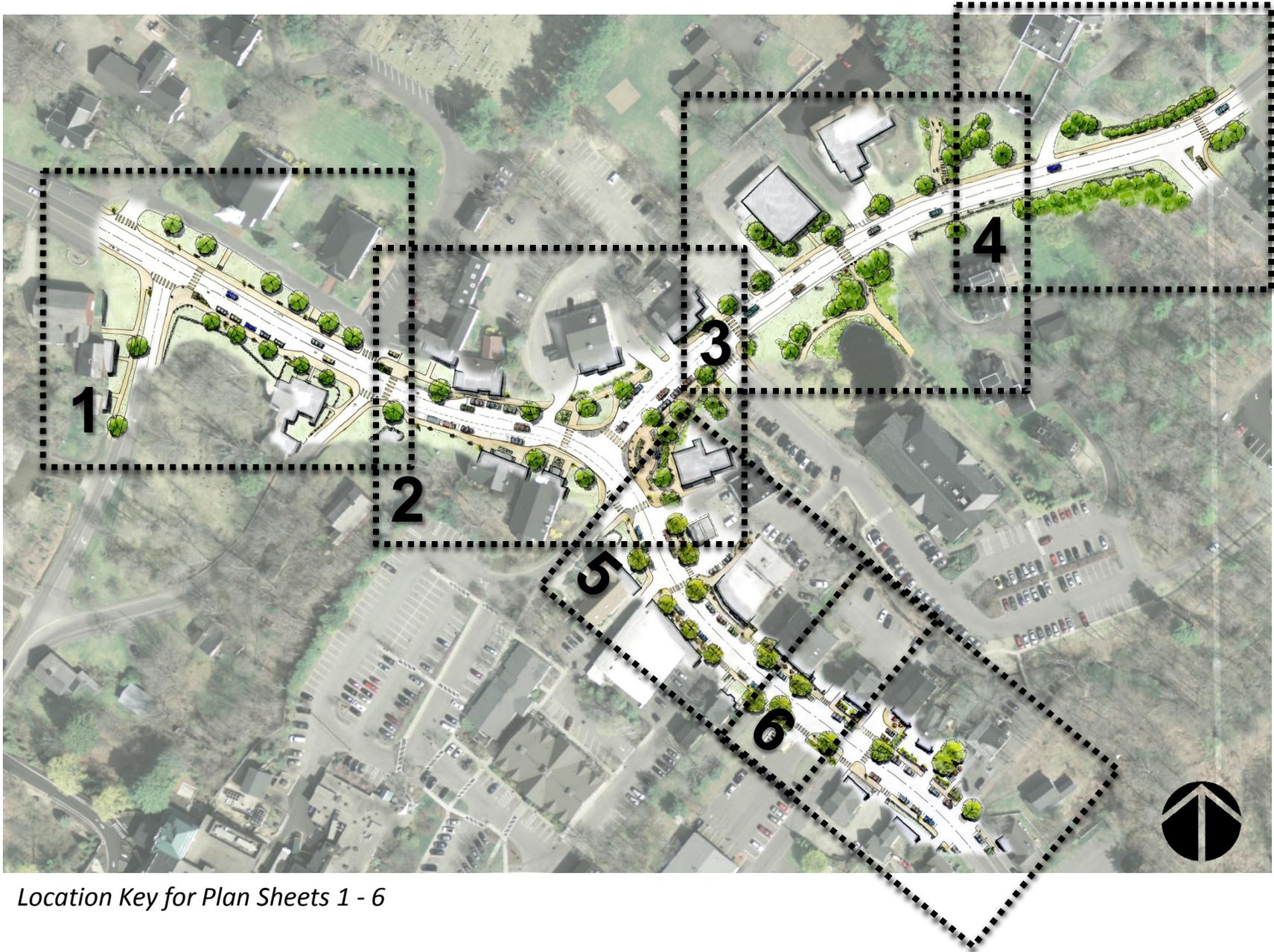
Sheet 3 - Long Sands Road Concept -1

Sheet 4 - Long Sands Road Concept -2

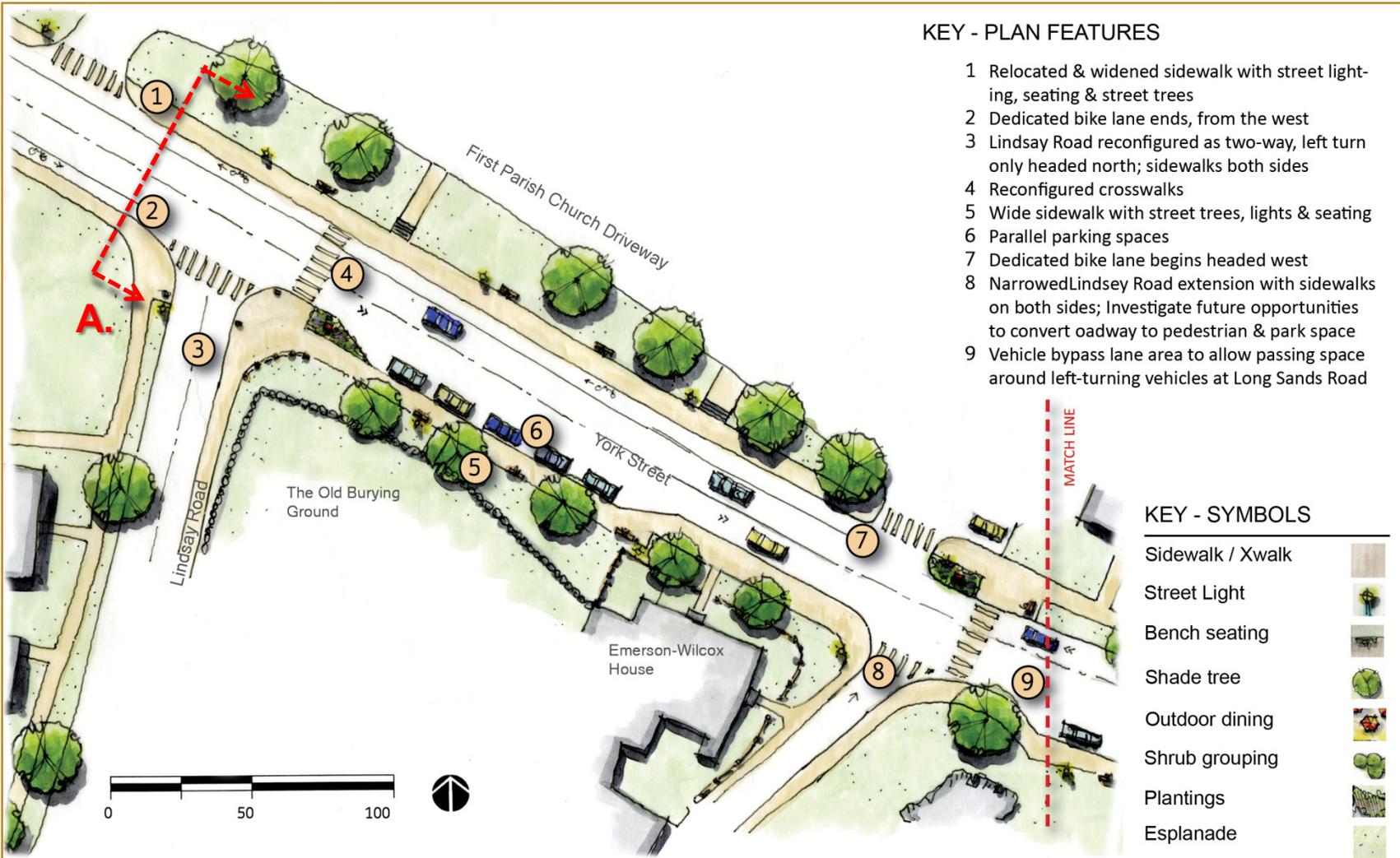
Sheet 5 - York Street Center Concept

Sheet 6 - York Street East Concept

In addition, concept drawings have been created to show one or more street segments (cross-cut views of the street) for each of the six areas. These cross-cut views show more details about the layout of the street segment. These segments are designated on each drawing with a letter that corresponds to the cross-cut segment drawings six areas. These cross-cut views show more details about the layout of the street segment.



Location Key for Plan Sheets 1 - 6



KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Relocated & widened sidewalk with street lighting, seating & street trees
- 2 Dedicated bike lane ends, from the west
- 3 Lindsay Road reconfigured as two-way, left turn only headed north; sidewalks both sides
- 4 Reconfigured crosswalks
- 5 Wide sidewalk with street trees, lights & seating
- 6 Parallel parking spaces
- 7 Dedicated bike lane begins headed west
- 8 Narrowed Lindsey Road extension with sidewalks on both sides; Investigate future opportunities to convert roadway to pedestrian & park space
- 9 Vehicle bypass lane area to allow passing space around left-turning vehicles at Long Sands Road

KEY - SYMBOLS

Sidewalk / Xwalk	
Street Light	
Bench seating	
Shade tree	
Outdoor dining	
Shrub grouping	
Plantings	
Esplanade	

DATE: March 27, 2015

YORK-LINDSEY CONCEPT

YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)

prepared for:
YORK VILLAGE STUDY COMMITTEE

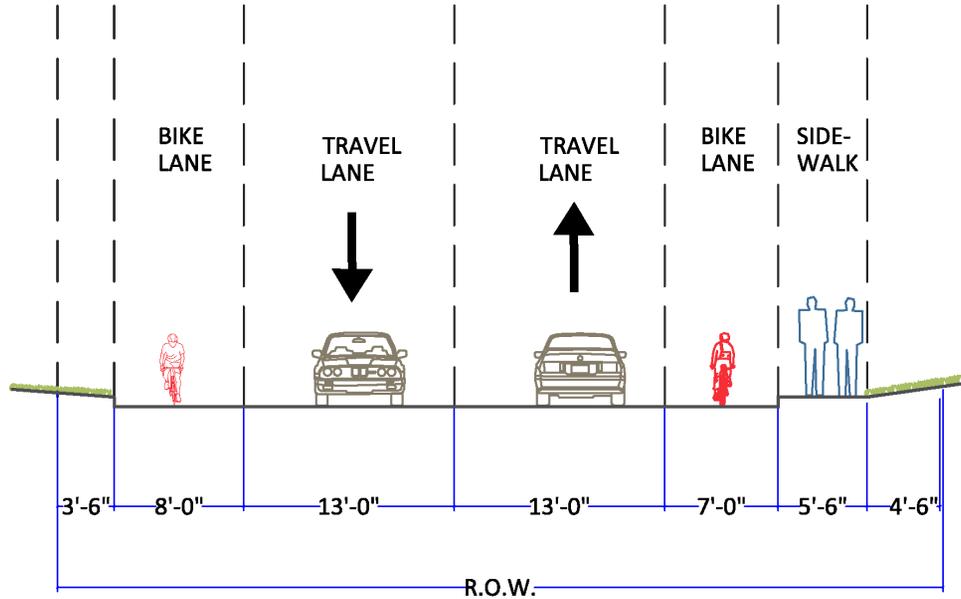
TOWN OF YORK
 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909

SHEET
1

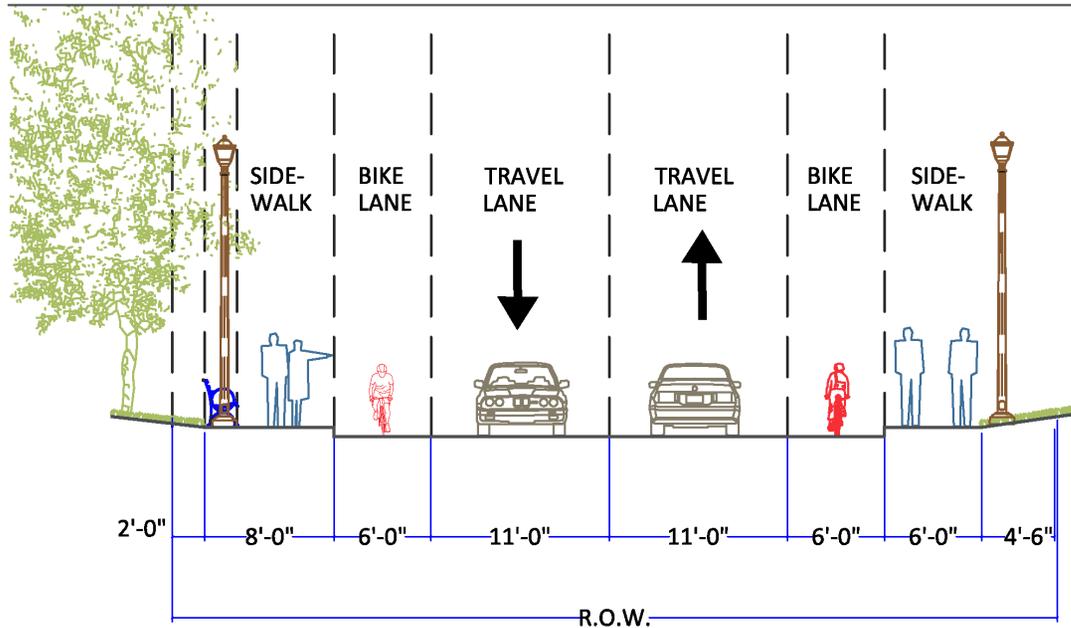


SECTION A

YORK STREET:
BETWEEN REMICK BARN &
FIRST PARISH, FACING EAST



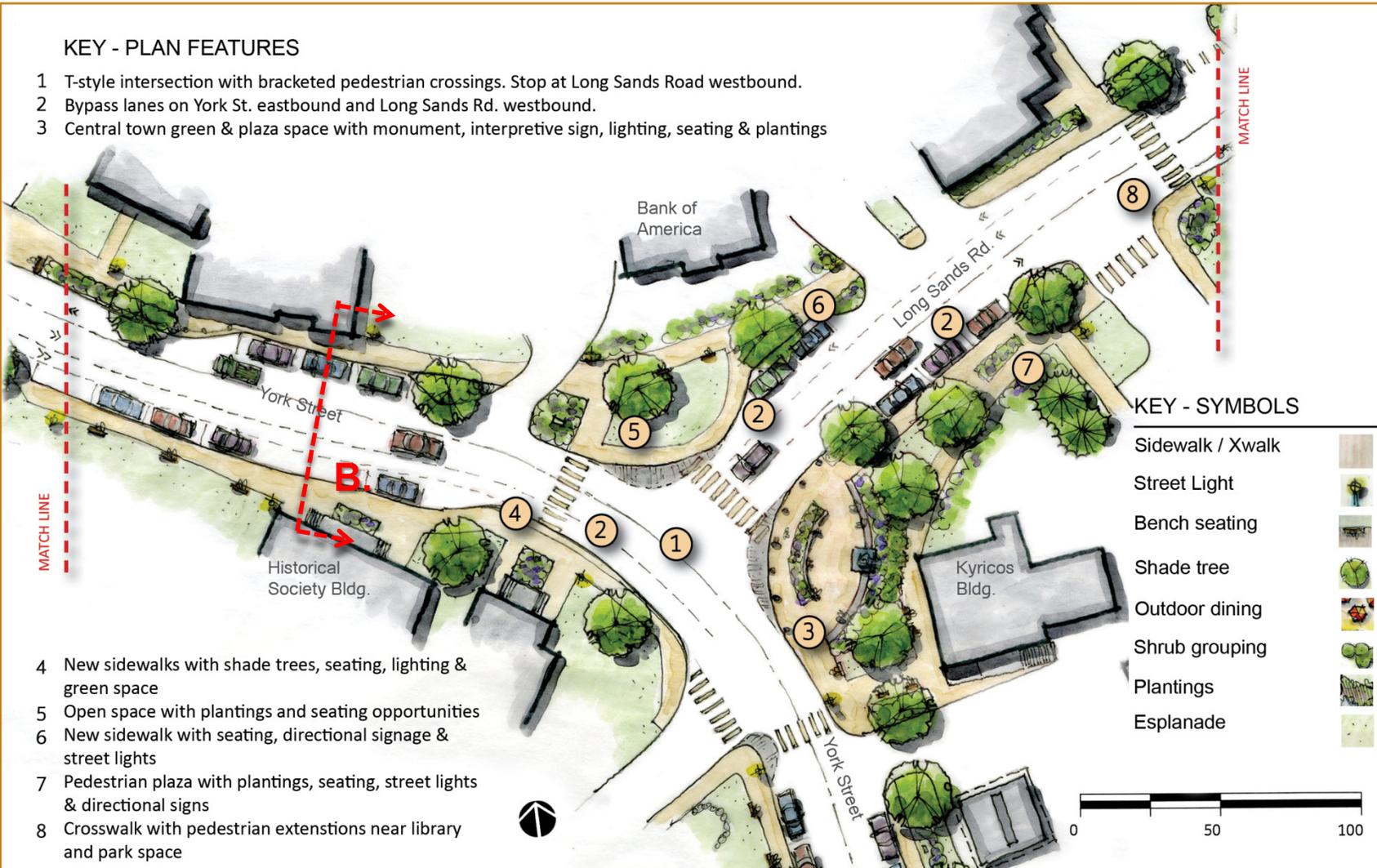
STREET SECTION
EXISTING



STREET SECTION
PROPOSED

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

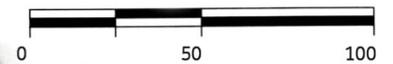
- 1 T-style intersection with bracketed pedestrian crossings. Stop at Long Sands Road westbound.
- 2 Bypass lanes on York St. eastbound and Long Sands Rd. westbound.
- 3 Central town green & plaza space with monument, interpretive sign, lighting, seating & plantings



- 4 New sidewalks with shade trees, seating, lighting & green space
- 5 Open space with plantings and seating opportunities
- 6 New sidewalk with seating, directional signage & street lights
- 7 Pedestrian plaza with plantings, seating, street lights & directional signs
- 8 Crosswalk with pedestrian extensions near library and park space

KEY - SYMBOLS

Sidewalk / Xwalk	
Street Light	
Bench seating	
Shade tree	
Outdoor dining	
Shrub grouping	
Plantings	
Esplanade	



DATE: March 27, 2015

INTERSECTION CONCEPT

YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)



prepared for:
YORK VILLAGE STUDY COMMITTEE



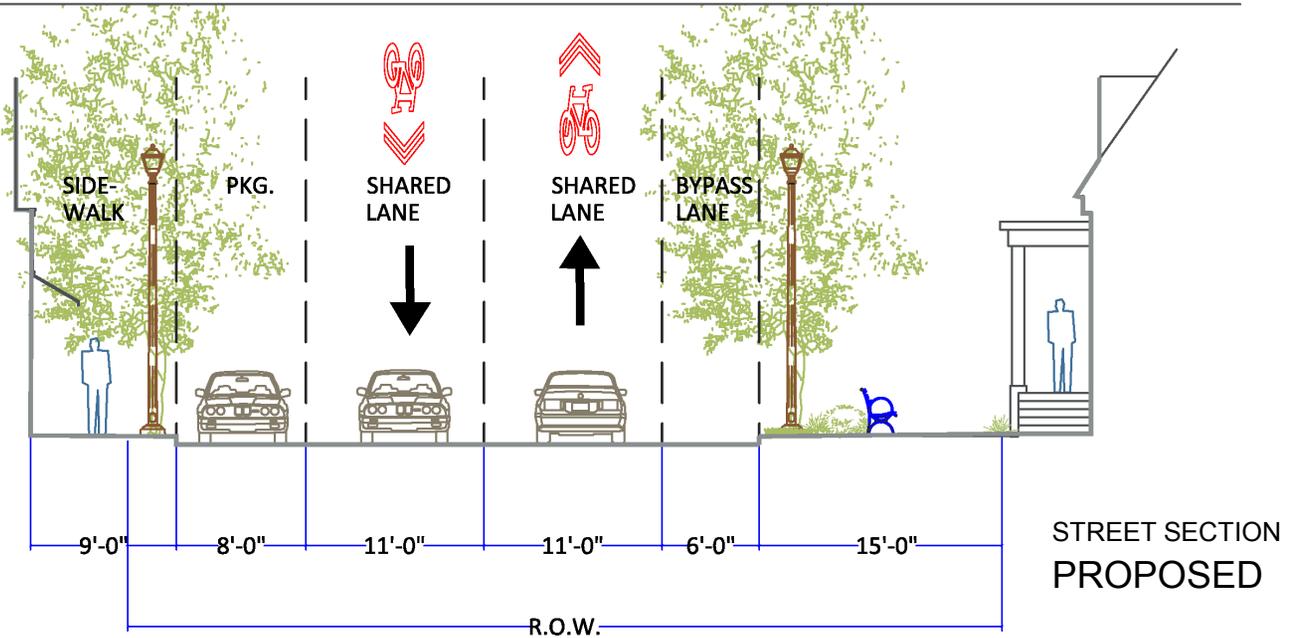
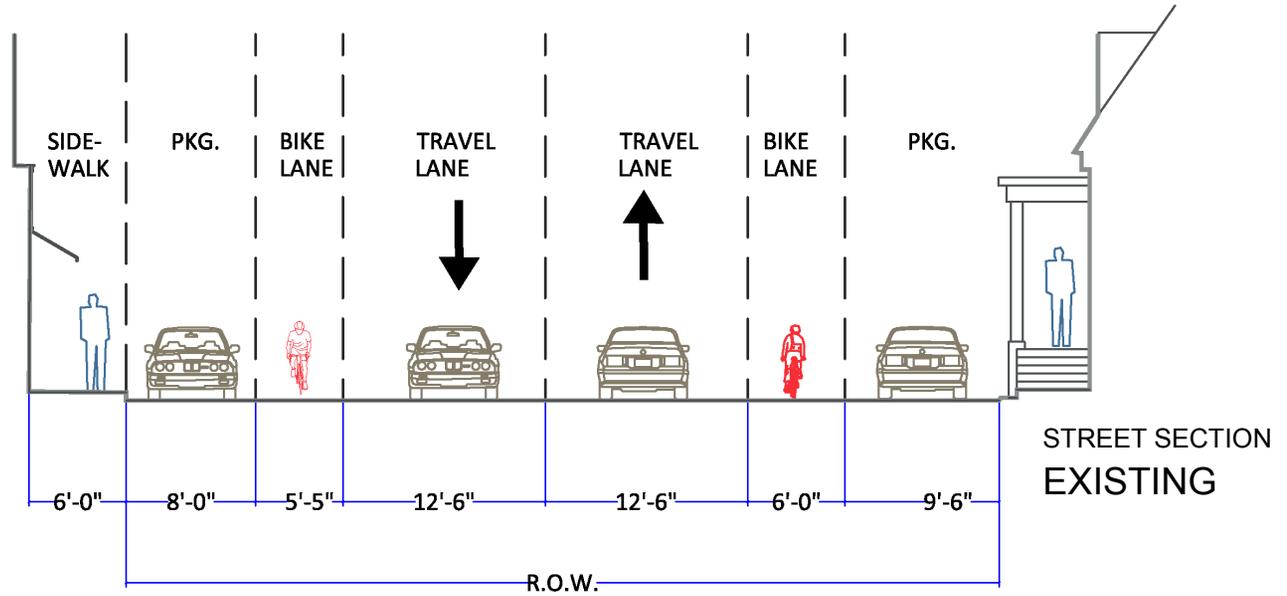
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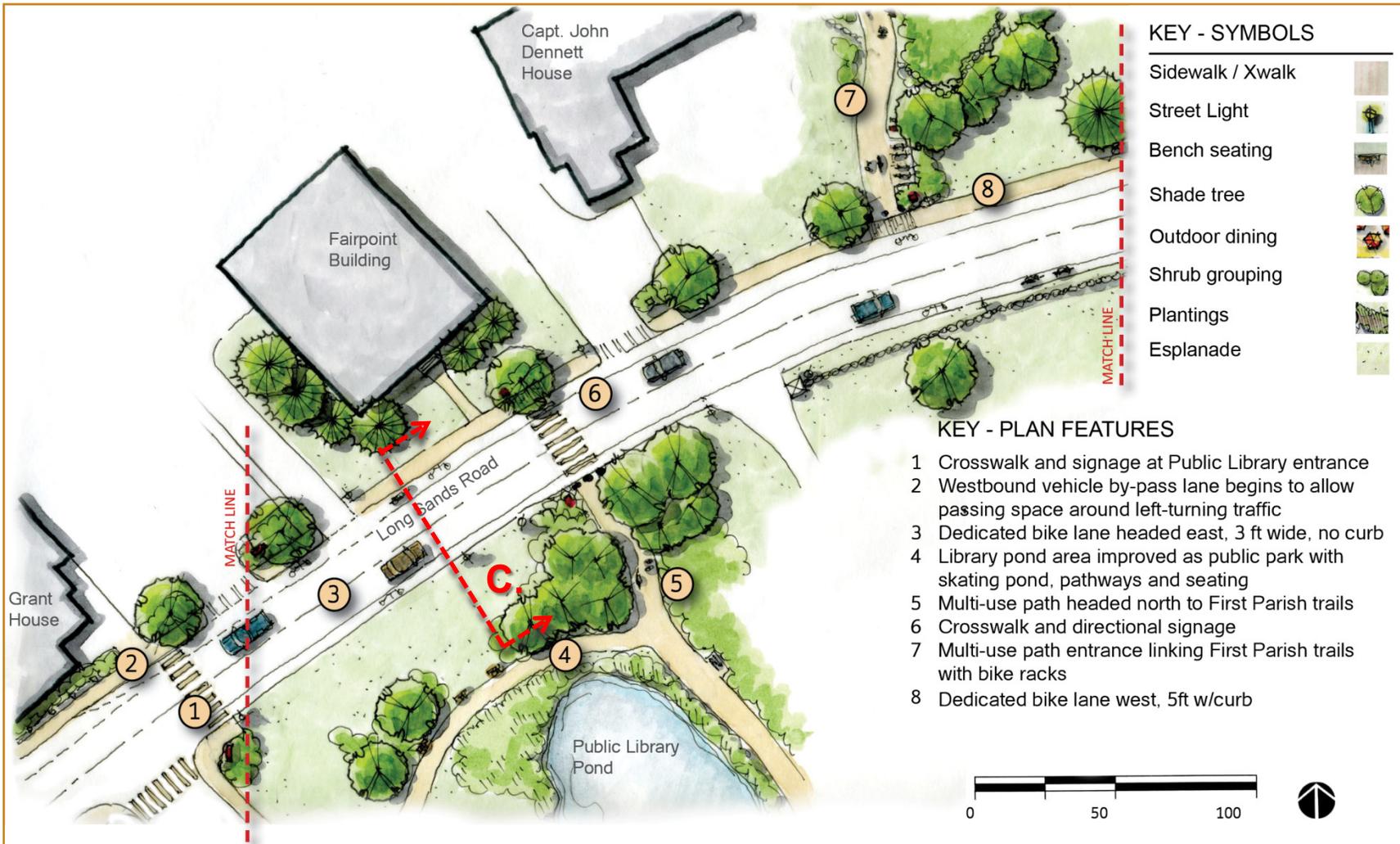
SHEET
2



SECTION B

YORK STREET:
BETWEEN ELLIS INSURANCE &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING,
FACING EAST



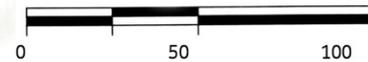


KEY - SYMBOLS

- Sidewalk / Xwalk
- Street Light
- Bench seating
- Shade tree
- Outdoor dining
- Shrub grouping
- Plantings
- Esplanade

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Crosswalk and signage at Public Library entrance
- 2 Westbound vehicle by-pass lane begins to allow passing space around left-turning traffic
- 3 Dedicated bike lane headed east, 3 ft wide, no curb
- 4 Library pond area improved as public park with skating pond, pathways and seating
- 5 Multi-use path headed north to First Parish trails
- 6 Crosswalk and directional signage
- 7 Multi-use path entrance linking First Parish trails with bike racks
- 8 Dedicated bike lane west, 5ft w/curb



DATE: March 27, 2015

LONG SANDS ROAD CONCEPT - 1

YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)



prepared for:
YORK VILLAGE
STUDY COMMITTEE



TOWN OF YORK
 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909

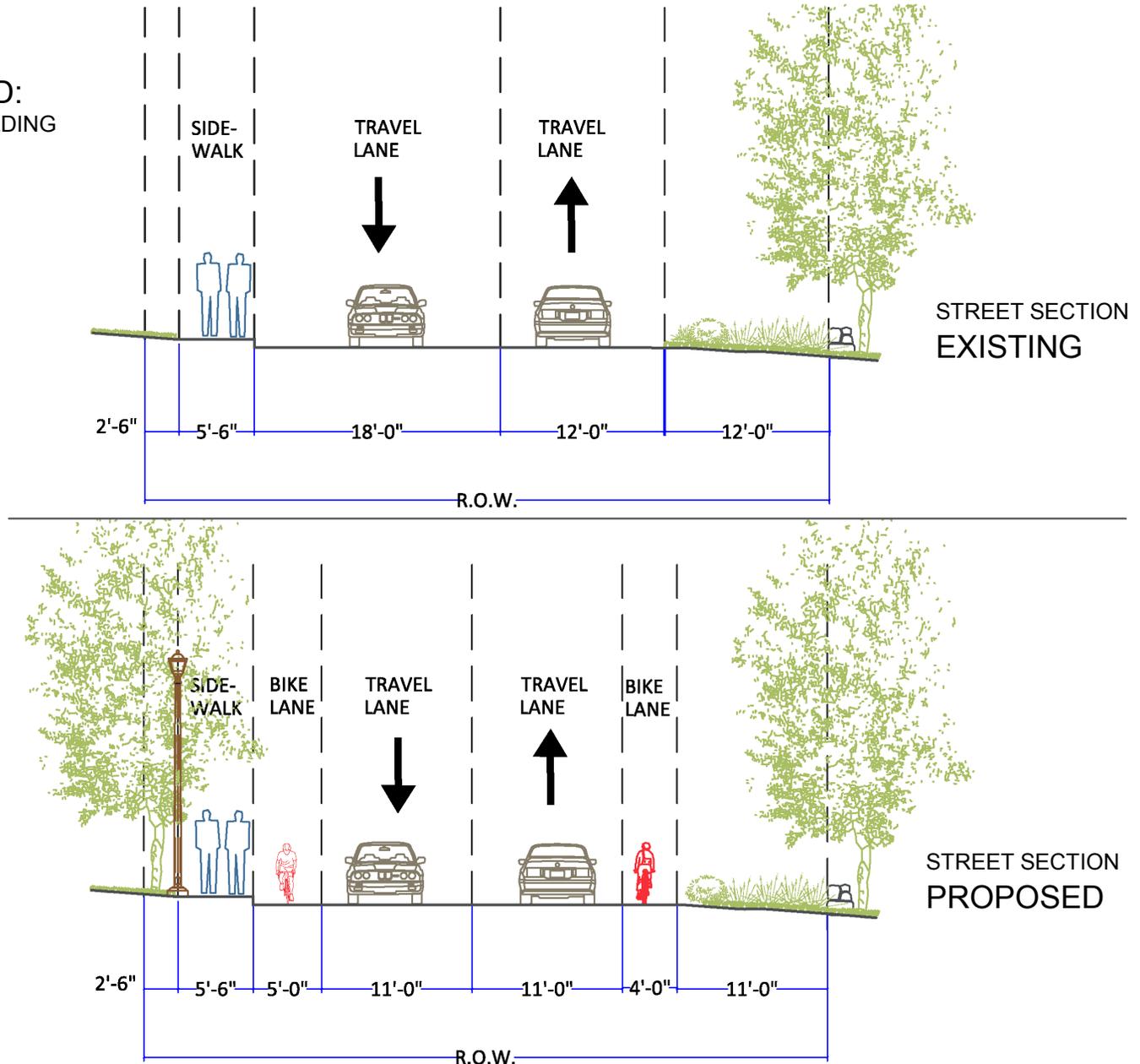
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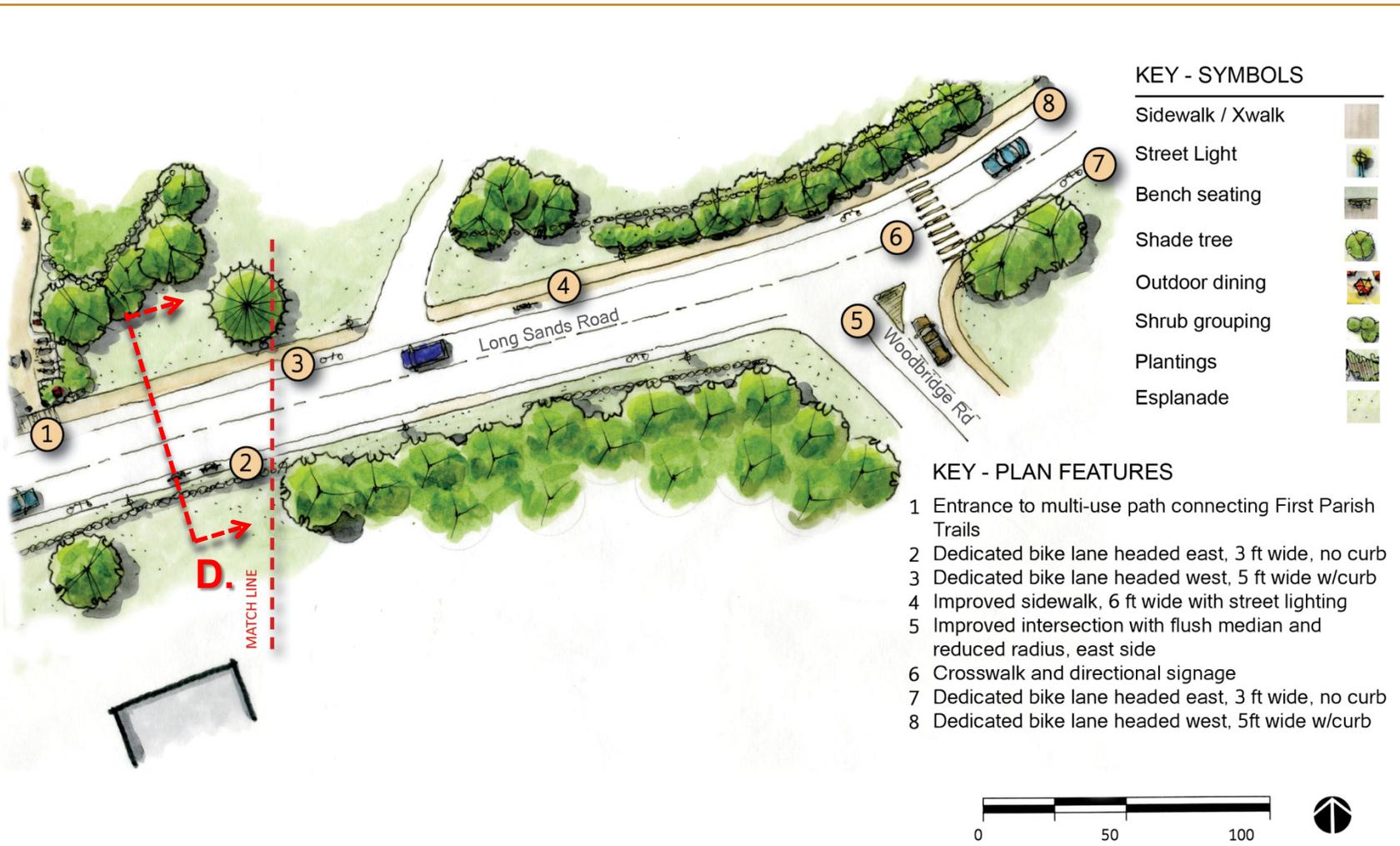
3



SECTION C

LONG SANDS ROAD:
BETWEEN FAIRPOINT BUILDING
& LIBRARY FRONT YARD,
FACING EAST





DATE: March 27, 2015

LONG SANDS ROAD CONCEPT - 2

YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)

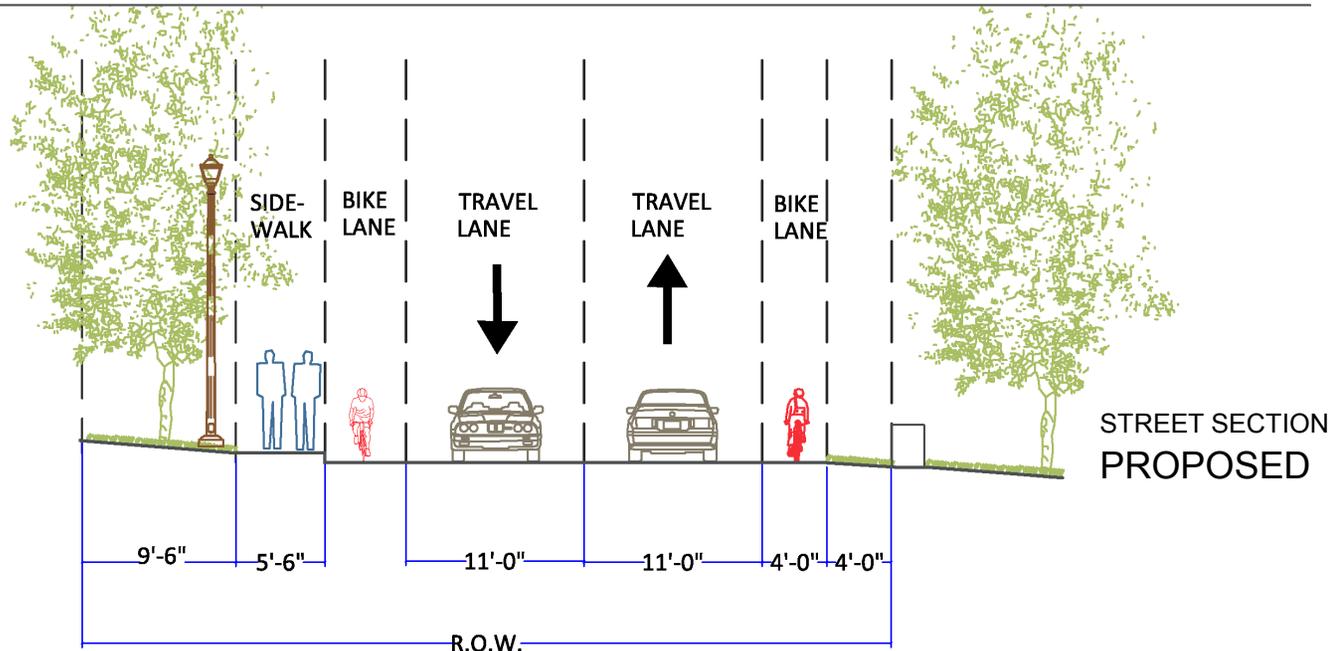
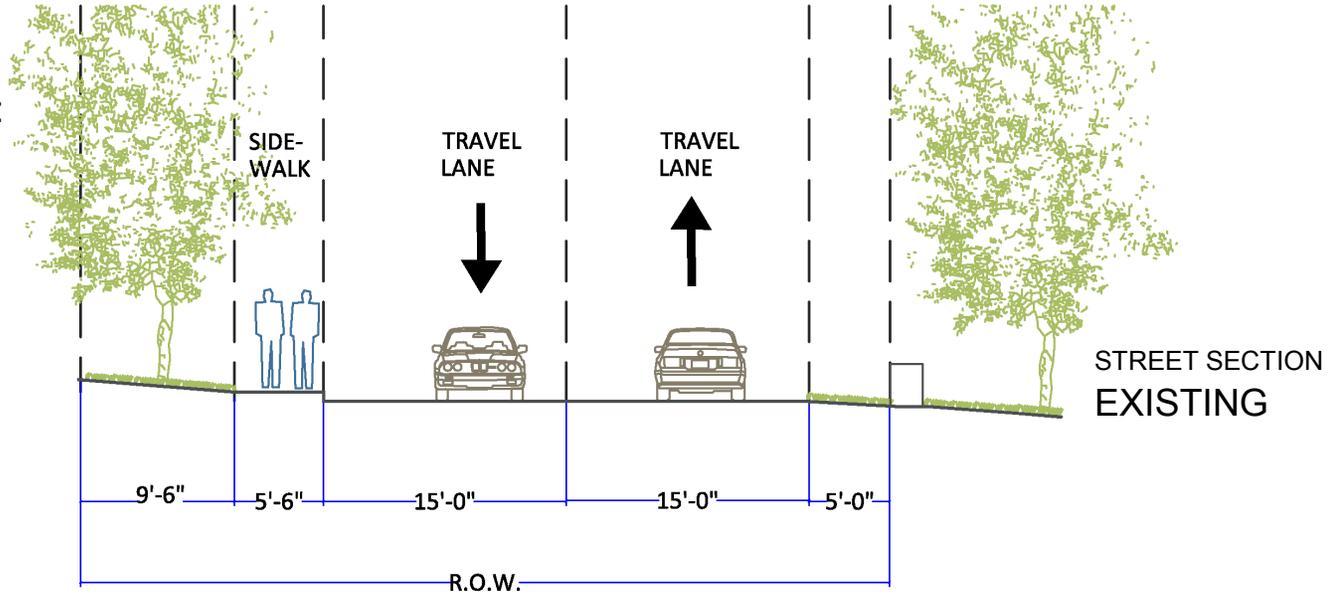
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YORK VILLAGE REVITALIZATION
STUDY COMMITTEE
TOWN OF YORK
 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909

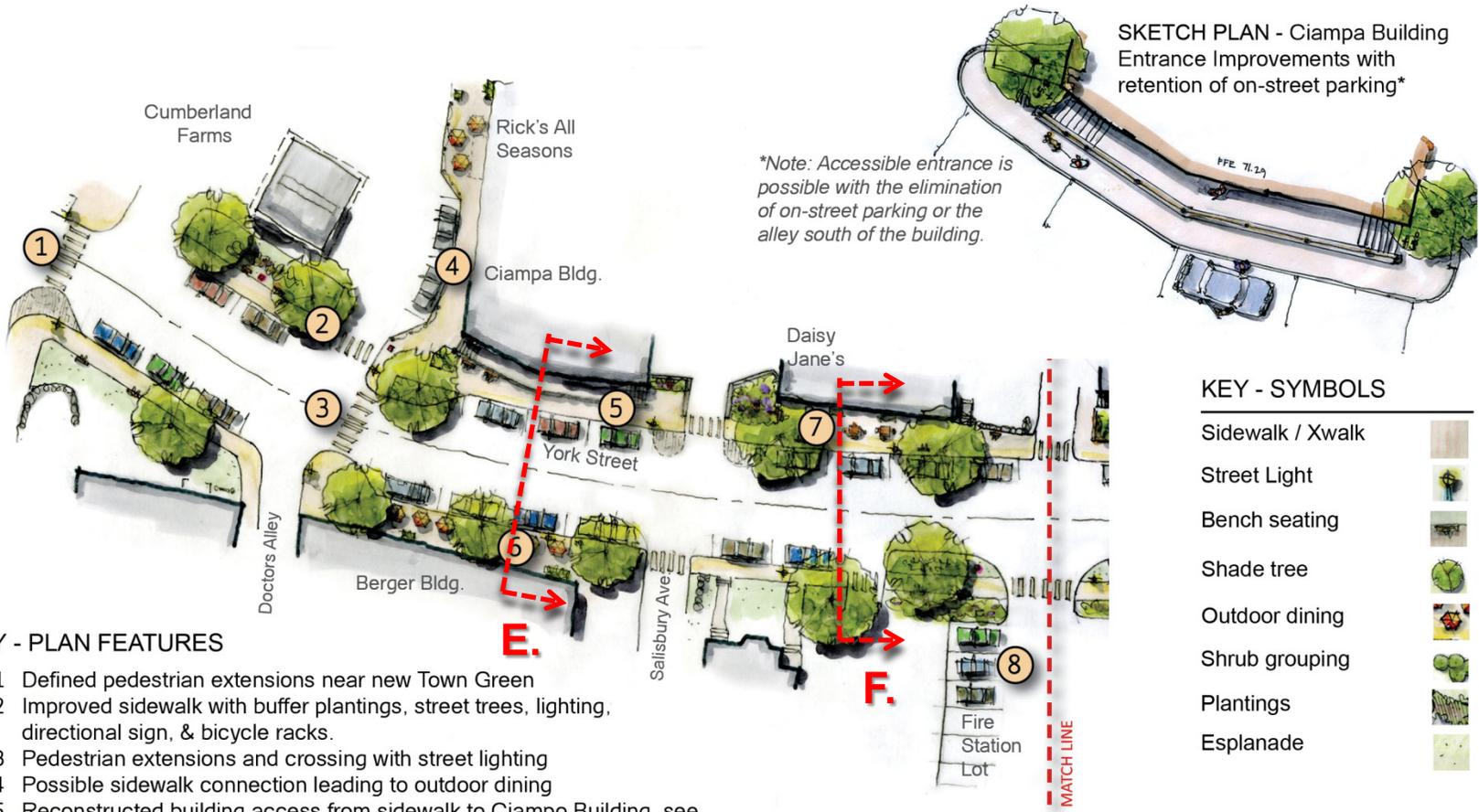
SHEET
4



SECTION D

**LONG SANDS ROAD:
NEAR COVENTRY HALL
PROPERTY, FACING EAST**





*Note: Accessible entrance is possible with the elimination of on-street parking or the alley south of the building.

SKETCH PLAN - Ciampa Building Entrance Improvements with retention of on-street parking*

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Defined pedestrian extensions near new Town Green
- 2 Improved sidewalk with buffer plantings, street trees, lighting, directional sign, & bicycle racks.
- 3 Pedestrian extensions and crossing with street lighting
- 4 Possible sidewalk connection leading to outdoor dining
- 5 Reconstructed building access from sidewalk to Ciampo Building, see sketch
- 6 Reconfigured access to Ciampa Building with sidewalk, lights, seating
- 7 Expanded plaza with outdoor seating, planters, street trees
- 8 Possible public parking (5-10 sp.) at fire station, street tree, plantings, sign

KEY - SYMBOLS

Sidewalk / Xwalk	
Street Light	
Bench seating	
Shade tree	
Outdoor dining	
Shrub grouping	
Plantings	
Esplanade	

DATE: March 27, 2015

YORK STREET CONCEPT
YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
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 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
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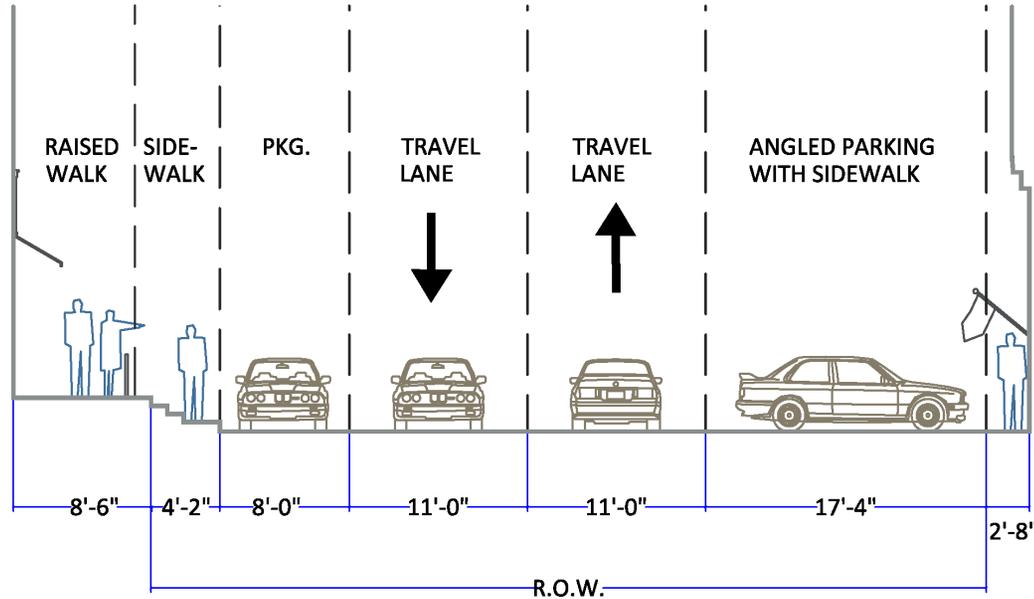
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YORK VILLAGE STUDY COMMITTEE
 TOWN OF YORK
 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909

SHEET
5

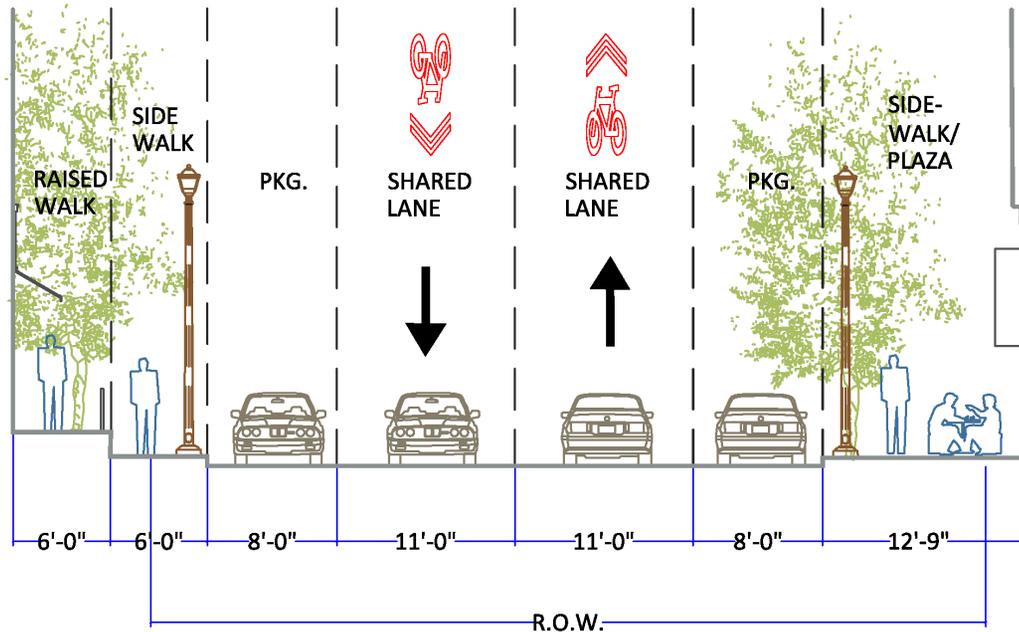


SECTION E

YORK STREET:
BETWEEN BERGER & CIAMPA
BUILDINGS, FACING SOUTH



STREET SECTION
EXISTING

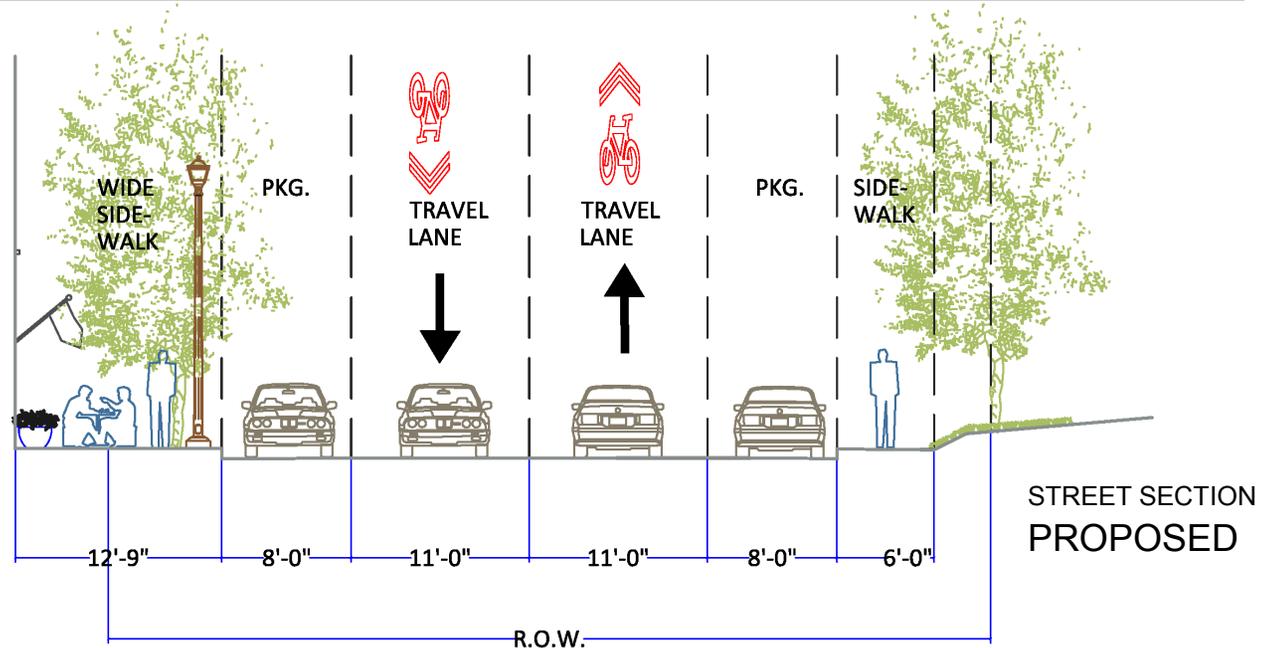
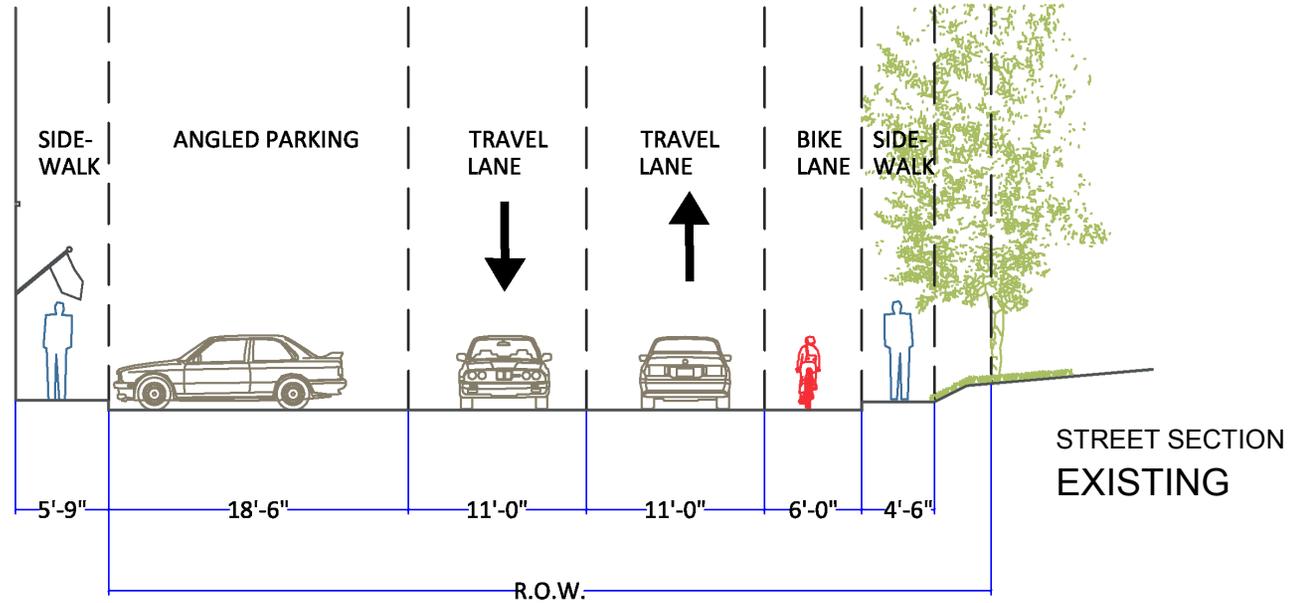


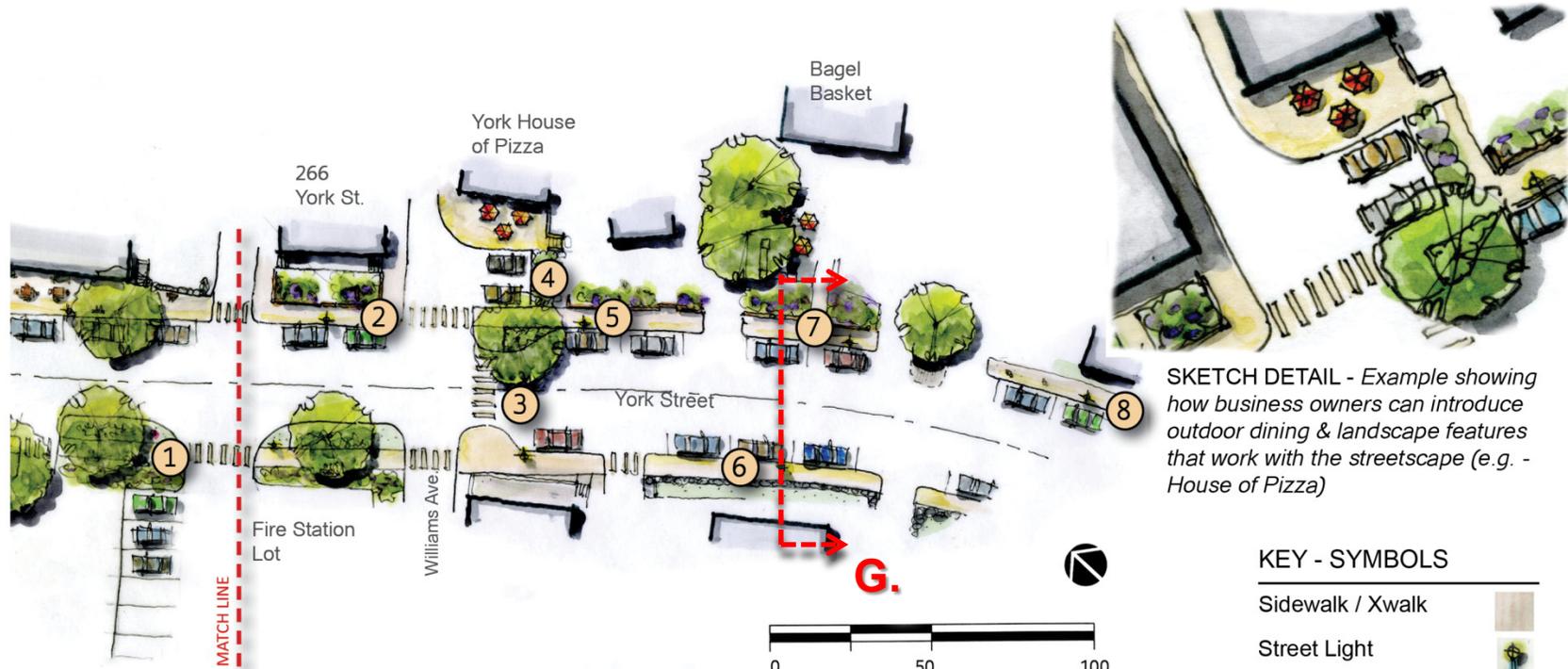
STREET SECTION
PROPOSED



SECTION F

YORK STREET:
BETWEEN DAISY JANES AND
LIGHTHOUSE COUNSELING,
FACING SOUTH





SKETCH DETAIL - Example showing how business owners can introduce outdoor dining & landscape features that work with the streetscape (e.g. - House of Pizza)

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Reduced curb cut with green space, shrubs, street trees, lighting
- 2 Sidewalk with street lighting
- 3 Pedestrian extensions and crossing with street lighting, tree, plantings
- 4 Possible sidewalk connection leading to outdoor dining & off-street parking
- 5 Sidewalk with street lighting
- 6 Sidewalk with street lighting
- 7 Sidewalk with street lighting, entrance to Bagel Basket
- 8 Future sidewalk along north side of York Street

KEY - SYMBOLS

- Sidewalk / Xwalk
- Street Light
- Bench seating
- Shade tree
- Outdoor dining
- Shrub grouping
- Plantings
- Esplanade

DATE: March 27, 2015

YORK STREET CONCEPT - EAST
 YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
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 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)

prepared for:
YORK VILLAGE REVITALIZATION
 YORK VILLAGE STUDY COMMITTEE

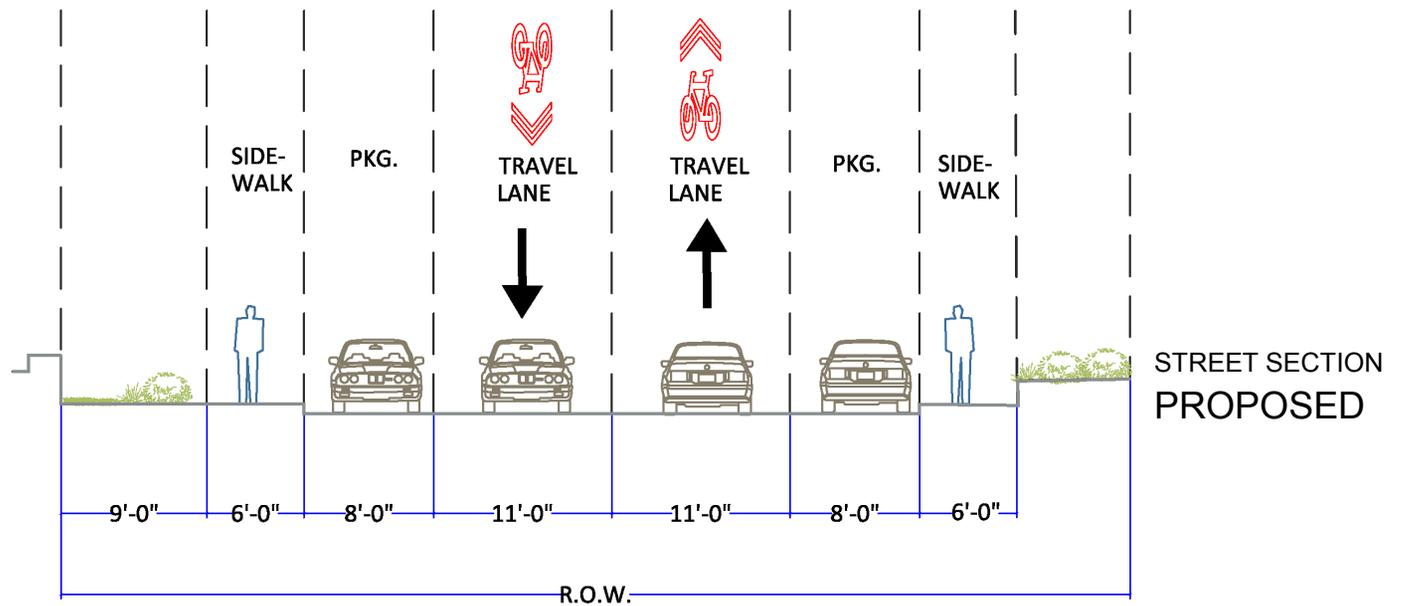
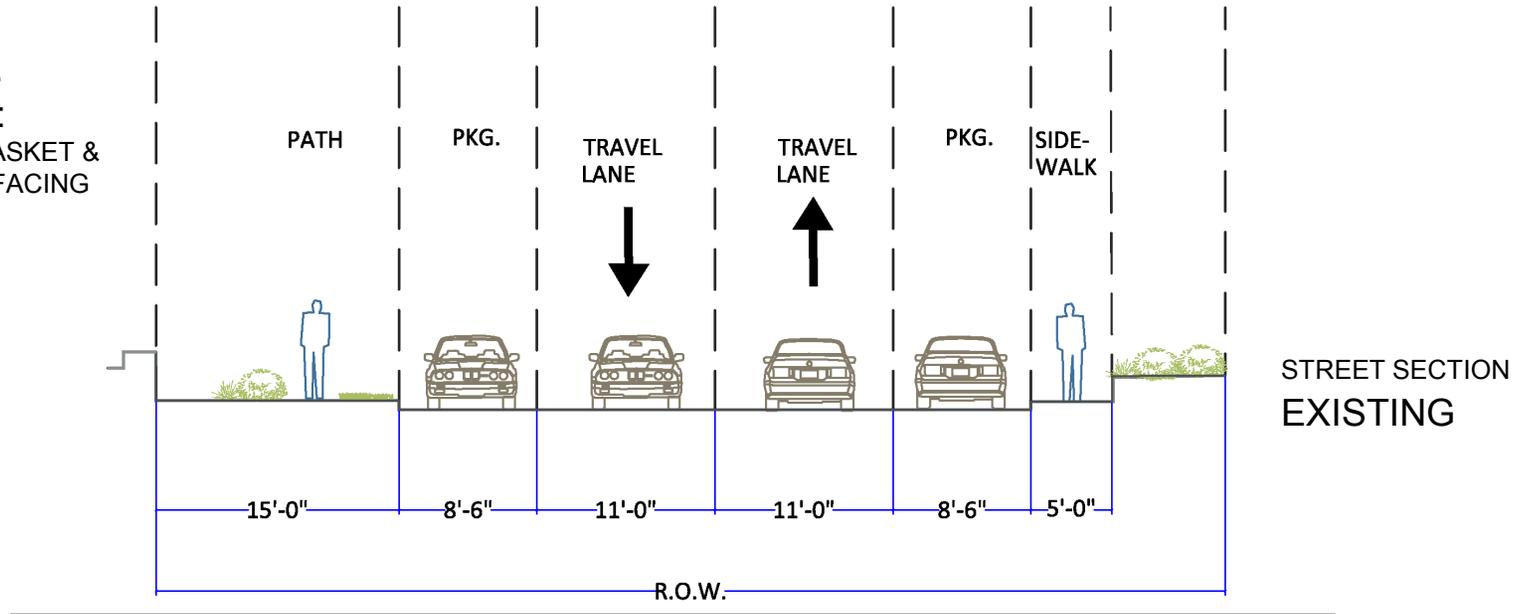
 TOWN OF YORK
 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909

SHEET
6



SECTION G

YORK STREET:
BETWEEN BAGEL BASKET &
279 YORK STREET, FACING
SOUTH







Master Plan Top Points

Purpose of the Master Plan

- *Illustrate and articulate a community-wide vision for future York Village after improvements*
- *Provide a framework and reference document to guide its implementation*

York's Quality of Place

York Village, with its quaint New England character and abundance of historical destinations, holds a special charm that is closely tied to both its Maine coastal heritage and its community. The Village center is rich with landmark architecture, a mix of local businesses, clustered civic destinations, all centered upon the revered Civil War monument located in the heart. The community agrees that this quality of place is what makes the Village special.

Something Missing

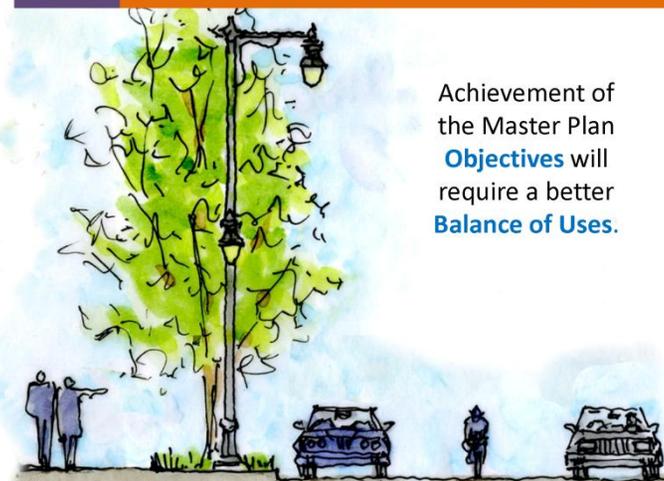
Yet despite these wonderful assets, something is missing. Community members expressed desire for more destinations, slower traffic, a cohesive network of sidewalks, green spaces, trails and those “little things that count”, like well-tended flower boxes.

The assessment that something is missing is not new. For at least a century it has been acknowledged that York Village needs improvement. In fact there have been periodic attempts to improve the village. (See Appendix A0 From Then to Now). Decades of vehicle-centric decision-making has profoundly compromised those very qualities that make the heart of York Village special. Buildings, pedestrian space and streetscape elements like trees, streetlights, and benches have all been displaced by a melee of moving and parked vehicles.

“York Village feels more like an intersection than a village.” This comment during the first community workshop perhaps best summarizes what is lacking in York Village: the village. The graphic below illustrates the imbalance that currently exists between automobiles and pedestrians, and how changes to rebalance can bring the village back in York Village.



Auto-Centric



Achievement of the Master Plan Objectives will require a better Balance of Uses.

Pedestrian-friendly

Vehicle space needs to be Streamlined to make way for Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Streetscape.



Revitalizing York Village

Like many other small town centers in Maine, York Village has struggled to retain its former vibrancy as a center of economic, social and civic activities. Putting the village back in York Village requires reinventing its vitality through revitalization:

- *create 21st century function along with cherished historic qualities,*
- *balance competing pedestrian and vehicular needs,*
- *foster economic prosperity.*

From Intent to Implementation

One purpose of this Master Plan is to illustrate and articulate a community-wide vision for the future of York Village – after improvements. Envisioning York’s future (bringing it to life in the present) is a huge accomplishment, yet implementing the vision (making it a reality in the future) is a huge challenge. Another purpose of this Master Plan is to provide a framework and reference document to guide implementation. There is no short cut to downtown revitalization, only sustained effort guided by a master plan which “sets the stage” for economic, political and social variables to align.

Top Factors for Successful Revitalization

Success of revitalization requires attention to multiple contributing factors, and their coordination to work in consort. Among many, four factors typically stand above others in their importance – all cornerstones of this Master Plan.

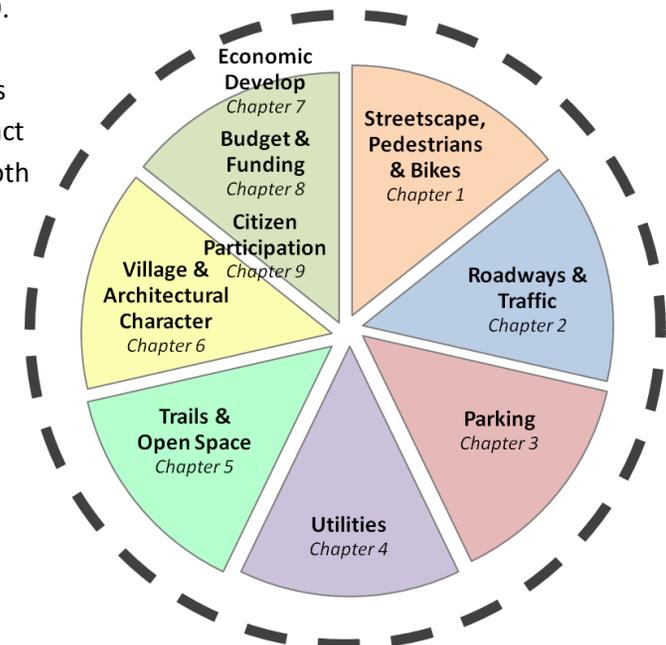
1. A Common Visual Vision

This is the very heart of the Master Plan. Graphic visual information helps gets everyone “on the same page” by fostering common understanding. For many, seeing is a step towards understanding, which in turn is a step towards shared support. There is great power to be tapped when a community aligns behind a unified visual concept, proceeds on a shared path, and focuses its precious financial (and human) resources towards a common purpose. (See *Visual Introduction to the Master Plan*).

2. A Comprehensive Approach

There is no question York Village needs visual, functional and safety improvements, yet this Master Plan is not a beautification scheme. Revitalization is a comprehensive approach purposefully integrating multiple considerations, as illustrated below and addressed in Chapters 1 – 9.

Each of these considerations mutually impact each other, both positively and negatively, so successful revitalization requires advancing all concurrently.





Master Plan Top Points

3. Community Participation

Over the course of nine months, hundreds of York's citizens participated in creating the Master Plan, which demonstrates an unusually high level of interest and dedication by citizens to their community. For moving projects forward in later stages, continued support is critical because the community will be called upon for sustained involvement of many types at many levels and over multiple years. Community participation proactively builds incremental understanding among citizens along the way, and is essential to avoid 11th hour critics. *(See Community Participation, Chapter 9)*

4. Funding

The power of a great vision, a comprehensive approach or citizen participation is not enough to proceed from intent to implementation. Without funding, great ideas remain stuck as abstract visions. Since many voters are reluctant to fully pay for plan implementation from the Town's General Fund Tax Revenues, funding implementation depends on a combination of multiple sources. Combining and leveraging these varied sources requires a Coordinated Funding Strategy.

Revitalization rarely happens by itself, and municipalities should assume leadership roles. Public investments in complete streets, such as improved sidewalks, reduced traffic speeds and pedestrian and bike safety, are very good for business because they attract residents who seek out quality of place, which in turn increases property values. Yet the bulk of the public investment is required early in the revitalization process. Public improvement projects, such as those recommended in the York Village Master Plan, are therefore necessary first steps to attract future business and leverage investments in the Village Center. *(See Concept Budget & Funding, Chapter 8)*

York's Ownership of the Master Plan

York Village is poised to capitalize on its "quality of place" by investing in physical improvements that both accentuate those qualities that make the Village special and invite increased use. This Master Plan provides many tools and guidance to proceed. While the Master Plan sets the stage, success ultimately belongs to York's citizens, businesses and their elected leaders who must assume ownership by engaging the plan's contents and prioritizing its many opportunities, then generate the momentum required for sustained implementation. Other neighboring communities have accomplished revitalization, and so too can York Village.

The tools and guidance provided within the Master Plan are summarized by topic on the following pages.



Pedestrians & Streetscape Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 1)

Adjust The Balance Of Land Use To Create A Place For People

A growing public desire for walkable communities combined with York Village’s inherent “Place-Making Dividend” provides an unprecedented opportunity for economic and social revitalization of the Village center. It is time to adjust the balance of land use to create a place for people - a vibrant center of community and economic activity that reinforces the Village’s historic character. The recommended revitalization changes will require a significant Public improvements projects, such as this plan recommends, yet are necessary first steps in leveraging future business and investments in the Village center.

Recommendations & Actions

- Create a Pedestrian-Oriented Village
- Integrate Bicycle Improvements
- Create Village Arrival Zones
- Initiate Wayfinding Improvements
- Investigate Opportunities for Public-Private Partnerships

Roadway & Traffic

Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 2)

An Intersection for All Transportation Modes

For years York Village has been dealing with increased traffic volumes, congestion and delay as motorists pass through the village center. This is especially true in the summer months when the influx of summer residents and tourists substantially increases volumes for all modes of traffic (vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists). The existing intersection of York Street and Long Sands Road functions as a vehicle-centric, atypical triangular intersection which is confusing, lacks clarity of right-of-way for vehicular movements and lacks safe and defined areas for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross streets and travel through. Not surprisingly the intersection is classified by Maine DOT as a high crash location. A fresh look at this intersection and York Village is required for this area so all modes of transportation can function and coexist safely.

Recommendations & Actions

- Create a new intersection that fits the village context and addresses existing safety and capacity issues.
- Promote traffic calming elements into the design.
- Provide clear and defined areas and design elements that provide a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclist to operate alongside the heavy vehicular traffic volumes.
- Design a simpler intersection that reduces confusion and provides clarity for movements and vehicle right-of-way.
- Create a single point “Tee” type intersection with appropriate formal bypass lanes so that through vehicles can pass vehicles stopped waiting to turn left from York St and Long Sands Rd.



Top Points & Recommendations by Topic

Curbside & Off-street Parking

Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 3)

No Lack of Parking, But Lack of Managing Demand

Despite the fact that the majority of available space in the Village has been dedicated to the automobile, there remains a strong perception that parking is still insufficient. The parking study reveals that the issue is not parking supply, but a lack of managing demand. This Plan recommends enhancements to public parking in the Village center through adjustments in zoning, active management techniques, and public-private cooperation. It is important to note that these changes will require time and coordination. Change will happen incrementally and strategies may need to be adjusted over time, but one thing is clear: setting the stage for and adapting to the needs of a growing Village economy will require a significant investment to parking resources and management.

Recommendations & Actions

- Rethink Off-Street Parking Requirements for Zoning
- Initiate In-Lieu and Parking Credit Options & Unbundle parking
- Encourage Shared Parking and Convert Single-Use Parking to Public Parking Where Possible
- Define Existing Public Parking @ Western Perimeter of Library
- Acquire the Hodgin Lot for Public or Shared Parking
- Initiate a Demand-Responsive Pricing System for Street Parking
- Update Fire Station Lot To Include Designated Public Parking
- Establish a Parking Benefit-Business Improvement District
- Delineate Loading Zones and Develop Loading Zone Policies
- Develop a Parking Way-Finding System & enhance connections

Utility Infrastructure

Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 4)

Relocating Aerial Electrical Utility Lines Underground is

recommended as part of the Master Plan to improve the visual appeal of the Village and to remove restrictions to implementing Master Plan concepts. Relocating overhead lines is possible and realistic, but the burden of cost to the Town is significant. Coordination with all of the utilities will be vital, while design and coordination for relocating electrical service underground may take the most effort.

Understanding the Solutions for Underground Utilities is Essential

The placement of utilities underground is a crucial part of the Master Plan which carries both high cost and high benefit. It would be prudent, even if funding of this utility work does not seem viable initially, to account for underground utility infrastructure during Schematic Design. During Schematic Design, constraints become evident and solutions are determined. Understanding the solutions for underground utilities is a great first step in coordinating with roadway, sidewalk, and landscape elements.

Recommendations & Actions

- During the Schematic Design phase, account for underground utility infrastructure because stormwater and utility infrastructure will be vying for the remaining underground space not already occupied by established water and sewer infrastructure.



Trail & Open Space Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 5)

Trails and Open Spaces Help Define Community and Enhance Quality Of Life

If developed, trails and open spaces would play a critical role in the revitalization of York Village. They would connect and define community and enhance quality of life. Particularly within the Village center, park spaces would serve the public good as centers of community pride and activity – like the public greens around which villages were once built. Green spaces also serve critical environmental functions by providing habitat and offering opportunities for humans to engage with nature. These goal-oriented recommendations are aimed at enhancing the functionality and beauty of these important assets.

Recommendations & Actions

- Capitalize on York’s Destination Resources
- Enhance the Connectivity between Residential Areas, Schools, and the Village
- Create Public Open Space in the Village Center
- Identify and Secure Critical Connections through Undeveloped Land Tracts
- Form Strategic Partnership
- Foster Sense of Place

Village & Architectural Character Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 6)

Maintain Village & Architectural Character

York Village is extremely fortunate to have as one of its greatest assets its village and architectural character. Maintaining and supporting this unique sense of place and heritage is a top priority for the Master Plan. Accomplish this by pursuing the classic tri-part revitalization approach: (1) existing historic buildings are a priority to maintain, keep economically viable and meet 21st century expectations; (2) new infill buildings and major remodels should complement the best existing village and architectural character; (3) ensure a complementary interface between buildings (private realm) and pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and roadways. These patterns mutually reinforce each other, and doing so create a web of character which is York Village’s distinct sense of place.

Recommendations & Actions

- Promote Private Investment Incentives to Maintain & Improving Existing Historic Buildings.
- Formalize Desired Village Character as Part of the Comprehensive Plan Update With a York Village Zone
- Develop and Utilize Building Design Standards to Maintain & Foster Village & Architectural Character
- Follow Recommended Steps to Develop Design Standards.



Top Points & Recommendations by Topic

Economic Development

Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 7)

An Economic Development Strategic Plan is an Essential Companion to the Master Plan

Economic Development is an integral cornerstone of revitalization, and therefore must be addressed concurrently with physical improvements recommended in the Master Plan. Like its companion, the purpose of the York Economic Development Strategic Plan should be to provide a framework and reference document. There is no shortcut or silver bullet to economic development, only sustained effort guided by a shared vision which provides a foundation for economic, political and social variables to align. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to “set the stage.”

Recommendations & Actions

- Identify a leader to develop, implement and manage the economic development strategy
- Start from the purpose statement of the Master Plan
- Pursue an incremental approach, rather than a “big bang”
- Follow recommended steps to develop an ED Strategic Plan
- Continually engage the business community
- Pursue a Village TIF District
- Pursue digital technology as a key component to economic development, and opportunities to fund it.
- Join the Maine Downtown Network

Community Participation & Outreach

Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 9)

Crafting the Master Plan with Community Participation was a high priority from the beginning for the following reasons:

- a) Ultimately, York’s citizens, businesses and elected leaders must “own” the Master Plan. Participation fosters ownership.
- b) Community support is essential for moving the project forward in later stages. The community will be called upon for sustained involvement of many types at many levels and over many years.
- c) Communication is as important as design, because a lingering sour taste by stakeholders who feel “not included” or “not heard” can spoil the potential to implement a good plan.
- d) There is great power to be tapped when a community participates, aligns behind a unified concept, and focuses its precious financial and human resources for a common purpose.
- e) Graphic visual information is essential, because it allows everyone to get on the same page leading to common understanding.

Recommendations & Actions

- Maintain momentum so the Master Plan remains as an important Town priority
- Sponsor engaging community-wide events to maintain momentum
- Continue outreach to maintain a high profile
- Use related activities to keep public focus on the Master Plan
- Maintain connections with special groups



Conceptual Budget & Funding Top Points & Recommendations

(For additional information see Chapter 8)

The Cost of Implementation

- **Master Plan Without Relocating Overhead Utilities Underground** Hard Costs (construction with overhead utilities remaining) + Soft Costs (design) + Contingency = approximately **\$3.6 million.**
- **Relocating Overhead Utilities Underground** and removing numerous poles within the master plan area, with Soft Costs and Contingency will cost approximately **\$7.9 million.**
- **Total Master Plan Including Relocating Overhead Utilities Underground** will cost approximately **\$11.5 million.**

What the Budget is Based On

Because this is a concept-stage budget, costs estimates are based on ideas presented on the Concept Plans and informed assumptions rather than a detailed scope of work from design drawings. Soft Costs include the design and consultants necessary to prepare construction drawings, bid documents, and contracts. The Contingency is purposefully left high at this point because of numerous assumptions and unknowns regarding scope and content. At a subsequent stage, design will be advanced, scope and content will be determined, and cost estimates will be refined, which then become the basis for final budgets and potential funding sources.

Phased Implementation is Not Practical

The Concept Plan is based on long, sweeping roadway alignment changes that in turn create space and opportunity for sidewalks, parking, and landscaping. This fact, combined with significant intersection changes, make it difficult to create transition points and therefore impractical to “phase” the improvements.

Funding the Plan’s Implementation Requires Multiple Sources

Because the project cost is substantial and it is impractical to phase, the most vexing issue is how to pay for its implementation. Since many voters are reluctant to fully pay for implementation from the Town’s General Fund Tax Revenues, funding will depend on a combination of the following sources to succeed: (1) State & Federal Non Municipal Opportunities (Priority), (2) Tax Increment Financing (TIF), (3) Town General Fund Tax Revenues & Bonds, (4) Private Investment in Buildings & Sites.

Combining Sources Requires a Coordinated Funding Strategy

Each of these categories has a different set of sequences, deadlines, amounts, competitiveness, eligibility, approval etc. Therefore combining and leveraging these varied sources requires a carefully Coordinated Funding Strategy.

Early Public Investment in the Village is Good for Business

Public investments in complete streets – those that improve sidewalks, introduce landscaping, reduce traffic speeds and provide accommodations for bikes – are very good for business because they attract residents who seek out quality of place, which in turn increases property values.

Recommendations & Actions

- Identify a leader to develop, implement and manage the Coordinated Funding Strategy.
- Pursue public investment up front to “set the stage” and attract private investment
- Fund technology as a key economic development consideration
- Continually engage the business community
- Prioritize non-municipal funding opportunities
- Pursue a Downtown TIF District
- Promote private investment incentives for historic buildings



20th Century Planning to Improve York Village

Throughout the 20th century, there have been periodic efforts to improve York Village.

During the 19th century, York Street was without shade trees, the old cemetery was overgrown and the “village green”—the area surrounding Town Hall and the First Parish Church—was a sometimes muddy, always unkempt knoll. In the early 20th century, York's business district, along with the "monument square" at the intersection of York Street and Long Sands Road began to “modernize” and achieved much of its character we recognize today. Power lines and paved asphalt roads for automobiles impacted the historical nature of York Village.



Early 19th century

In mid-century, even further changes to “autoize” caused some older residences to be demolished (the site of the Bank of America). Initiatives were created to address problems, but most were not implemented.

In 1946 the Comey Improvement Plan described York Village as “once convenient, charming if not beautiful, and safe. Today it is inconvenient, ugly and to a degree dangerous... (For additional information about the evolution of York Village, see Introduction – From Then to Now).



Mid 20th century

1 1900-on Historic Properties

The Old York Historical & Improvement Society's first project—opened on the 4th of July, 1900—was the Old Gaol Museum. The jail established York Village as a tourist destination, and with the other museum properties it continues to do so.

2 1946 Improvement Plan for York Village

Arthur C. Comey—a nationally prominent city and town planner—created a plan for improvements to the village sponsored by the Old York Garden Club. The Comey plan involved traffic and parking improvements and what was thought to be the harmonious redesign of existing buildings to give them a “colonial” appearance.

3 1964-67 Village Square Project

Improvement Society directors began to discuss a variety of possible improvements that could be promoted in the village. Following the Comey report, their new thrust concentrated on “colonial” signage and façade renovations and burying utility lines throughout the village. The Society engaged James Garvin, architect and architectural historian then working at Strawberry Banke, to sketch plans for harmonious signs and buildings.

1
1900

2
1946

3
1965

4
1975

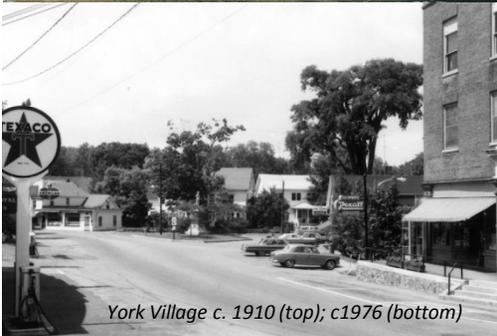
1902-1974 Landscaping

In 1902 the Improvement Society took all in hand. A landscape plan for the village green was created, so too for the Civil War monument in the square, trees and flowering shrubs were planted around Town Hall and the church, as well as along York Street and in the cemetery.

4 1974-77 York Village Townscape Project

Improvement Society directors joined the Chamber of Commerce in a village townscape project envisioned as a broad-based community Bicentennial effort. At about the same time, the Society was in discussion with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program office concerning a possible storefront improvement initiative in York Village. By 1975, the planning firm Vision, Inc. had 100 York participants working on the townscape project.

Early 21st Century Revitalization



York Village c. 1910 (top); c1976 (bottom)

Conditions evolved with the times into the 21st century, yet underlying problems, and the concerns they caused, persisted. Now, almost 70 years after the 1946 Improvement Plan, its fundamental assessment of the Village "...once convenient, charming if not beautiful, and safe. Today it is inconvenient, ugly and to a degree dangerous..." remains as appropriate now as it was then.

The recognition of persistent underlying problems prompted a renewed interest the village center. Unlike earlier 20th century initiatives focused primarily on physical improvements, 21st century revitalization is a comprehensive approach, including Pedestrians & Streetscapes, Roadways & Traffic, Parking, Utilities, Trails & Open Space, Village & Architectural Character, Budget & Funding, Economic Development and Community Participation.

- 8 April 2015 Select Board Master Plan presented and formally adopted.
- 9 2015 – 2016 Design Concepts Advanced
- 10 2015 – 2016 Non-municipal Funding Explored and applications submitted

5 2011 Maine Downtown Center

The Museums of Old York hosted the first in a series of community meetings on the topic "Revitalizing York Village." with presentations by the Maine Downtown Center.



6 2011 – current The York Village Study Committee

The York Board of Selectmen appointed the York Village Study Committee (YVSC) to look into ways in which York Village might be revitalized. The mission of the committee is to establish a framework that will promote the vitality and beauty of York Village and create a dynamic, safe, and sustainable town center which reflects the history of a community and is both welcoming to visitors and supportive of local businesses.

7c February 2015 Community Design Workshop #3

7b November 2014 Community Design Workshop #2

7a October 2014 Community Design Workshop #1

7d Many Additional Opportunities

- Village Study Committee (20 working meetings open to the public)
- Business Leaders, Property Owners & Merchants
- Non Profit Community Leaders (York Hospital, York Library, Museums of Old York, First Parish)
- Emergency Services (Fire, Police and Ambulance)
- Veterans Organizations (VFW and Legion)
- Utilities (Water District, Sewer District, Public Works Department)

7 2014 The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative

Advancing and executing the YVSC's visioning work required a multi disciplinary consultant team to collaborate with in order to build on the progress made over the last three years and see this town project through to completion. The York Select Board in August 2014 unanimously approved allocation of funds for the Master Plan to be created through the services of The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative.



11 November 2015 General Referendum Election (Town Mtg)

Citizens vote to update the Comprehensive Plan, which includes the Master Plan.

12 May 2016 Referendum Warrant (Town Mtg)

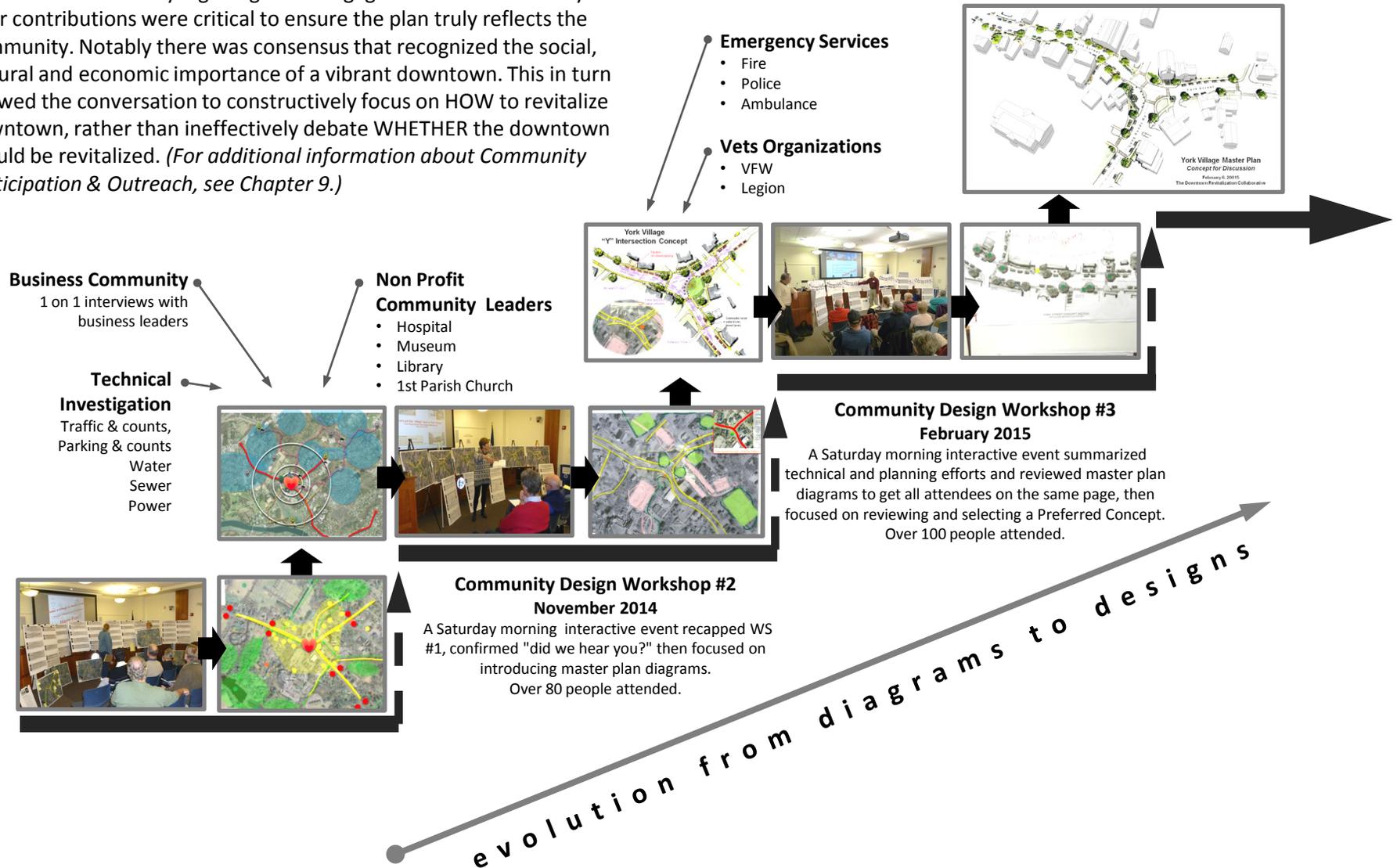
Citizens vote whether to fund improvements



York Village 2014

2015 – 2016 Master Plan Diagrams to Designs with Community Participation

One of the cornerstones of early 21st century revitalization is community participation. From the start of this Master Plan, community participation was a priority. The plan was guided by significant input from multiple sources, who shared their thoughts and interest. Overall there was an unusually high degree of engagement and collectively their contributions were critical to ensure the plan truly reflects the community. Notably there was consensus that recognized the social, cultural and economic importance of a vibrant downtown. This in turn allowed the conversation to constructively focus on HOW to revitalize downtown, rather than ineffectively debate WHETHER the downtown should be revitalized. (For additional information about Community Participation & Outreach, see Chapter 9.)





The documents that make up the Village Master Plan constitute what the VSC and TDRC saw as we peered into the future. What you have seen above is a relatively short-term vision of how York Village will look in the next few years if the Master Plan is allowed to go forward. It is a vision that serves the needs of the people who live here, the tourists who visit here, the business that operate here. But there is more to think about when we contemplate the future of York.

What about the distant future? We asked ourselves not just about the village as it might be in our lifetime but also how York might look and function in the lifetimes of the next generation and the one after that.

What will York Village look like forty or fifty years from now? We all can see how demographics, culture and technology have changed the quaint village that existed here 100 years ago into what we see today. How will these same forces (and other unknown forces) impact the village of our hopes and dreams?

The Town has a Comprehensive Plan to guide its progress but like the current Master Plan, it can only be expected to provide short-term results. There is a future version of York after the Master Plan is implemented. We can't see it clearly but we can imagine some aspects of that distant picture. The following map is a key to the three renderings that follow it. Together these three drawings suggest how things could change further over the next 30 - 50 years. We hope these images and this focus on the distant future will stimulate people to think about the big picture — York at the middle or even at the end of the 21st Century.



Location Key for Plan Sheets 7 - 9

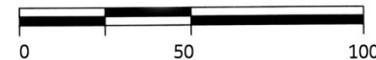


KEY - SYMBOLS

- Sidewalk / Xwalk
- Street Light
- Bench seating
- Shade tree
- Outdoor dining
- Shrub grouping
- Plantings
- Esplanade

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Public green space mirroring Town Green, with wide sidewalks, seating & street trees
- 2 Town Green and central public space featuring Civil War monument, plantings and plaza space
- 3 Entrance facing Village center civic space and arrival zone
- 4 Entrance drive with wide sidewalk
- 5 Accessible and short term visitor parking near rear accessible entrance
- 6 Access to Hodgin lot (visitor and shared parking) with vehicle and pedestrian connection to First Parish lot and additional parking (employees)
- 7 Pedestrian plaza with curbside parking
- 8 Existing abutting properties to be buffered by plantings and/or privacy fence
- 9 Enhanced pedestrian crossing at Library Drive



DATE: March 27, 2015

LONG RANGE CONCEPT PLAN - 1
YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)



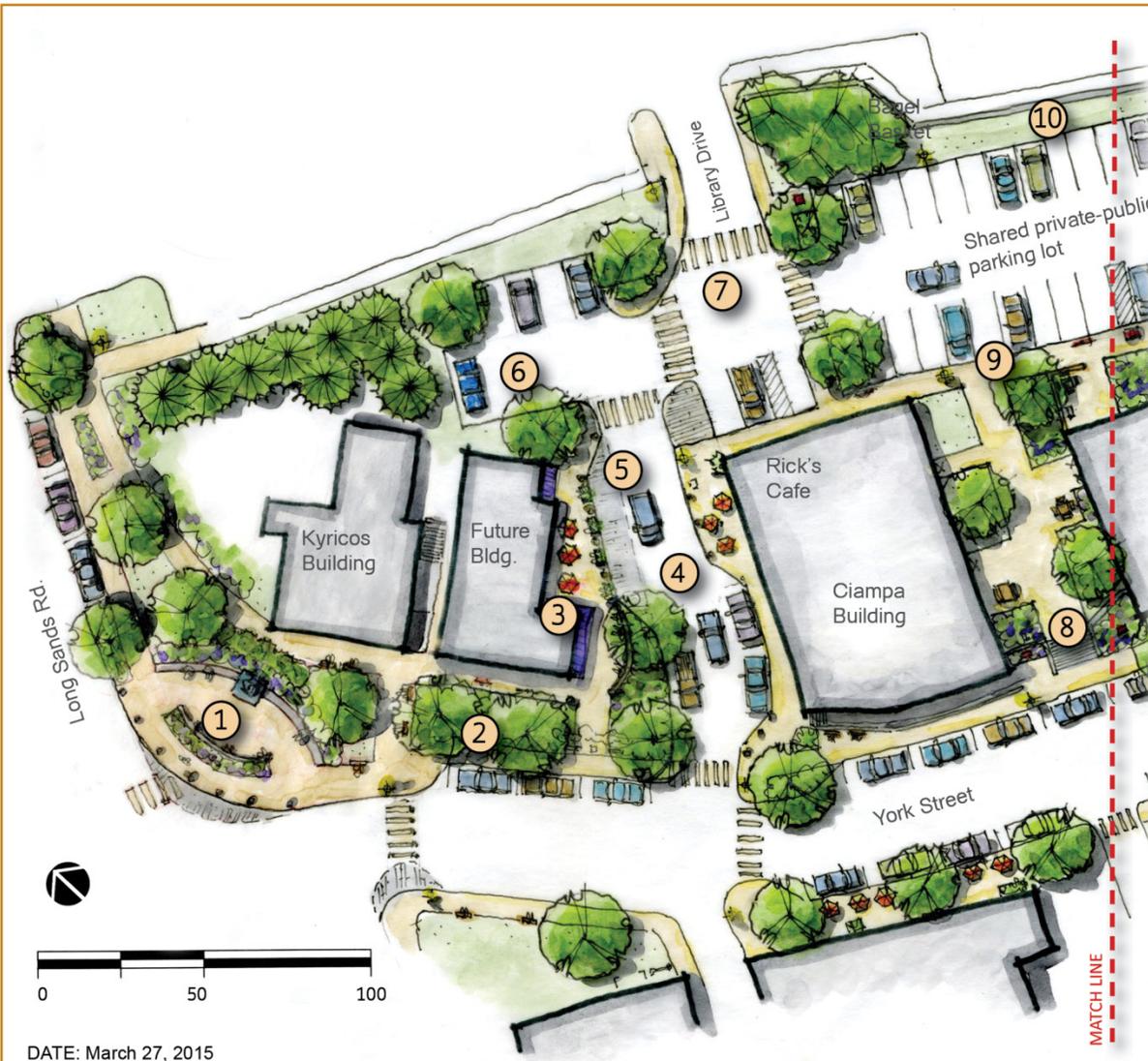
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 YORK, MAINE 03909

SHEET

7



KEY - SYMBOLS

Sidewalk / Xwalk	
Street Light	
Bench seating	
Shade tree	
Outdoor dining	
Shrub grouping	
Plantings	
Esplanade	

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Central Green & pedestrian plaza
- 2 Eliminated curb cut and enhanced streetscape with curbside parking
- 3 Example of Village-oriented infill development with vibrant streetscape
- 4 Defined side street to allow 2-way access to shared parking & library lots
- 5 Defined service vehicle lane
- 6 Utility service access and short-term commercial parking area
- 7 Improved pedestrian circulation & crosswalks, including directional signage
- 8 Transformation of alleys from vehicle to pedestrian-oriented space
- 9 Sidewalk connecting parking, alleys & York St. w/lighting, bike racks, street trees
- 10 Piped segment of ravine to allow for parking & streetscape improvements

DATE: March 27, 2015

LONG RANGE CONCEPT PLAN - 2

YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)



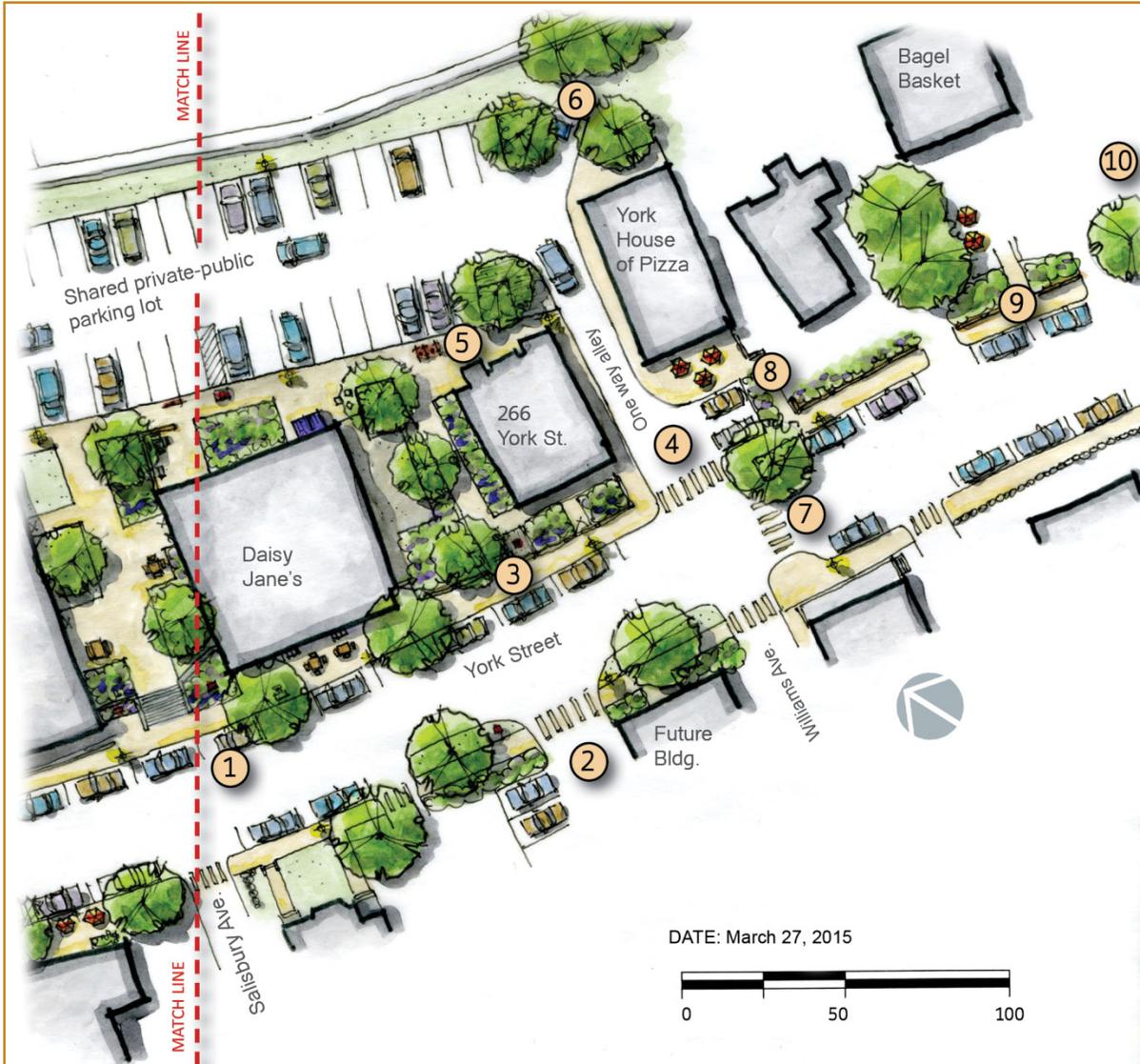
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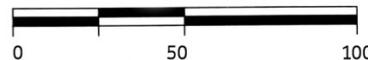
KEY - SYMBOLS

Sidewalk / Xwalk	
Street Light	
Bench seating	
Shade tree	
Outdoor dining	
Shrub grouping	
Plantings	
Esplanade	

KEY - PLAN FEATURES

- 1 Reduced curb cuts to allow more curbside parking
- 2 Infill development with shared public-private parking
- 3 Transformation of alley from auto to pedestrian-oriented space
- 4 Retain existing alley for one way access to shared parking
- 5 Sidewalk connecting parking, alleys & York St. w/lighting, bike racks, street trees & seating/dining opportunities
- 6 Defined service utility area
- 7 Enhanced pedestrian crossing aligning Williams Avenue with shared parking & rear York Street business block
- 8 Sidewalk connection to House of Pizza
- 9 Sidewalk connection to Bagel Basket
- 10 Pedestrian connection to Public Library and future multi-use path

DATE: March 27, 2015



LONG RANGE CONCEPT PLAN - 3
YORK VILLAGE MASTER PLAN PROJECT 2015

Project Team:
Downtown Revitalization Collaborative
 Lachman Architects & Planners (Project Leader)
 Regina Leonard, RLA (Landscape Architecture)
 Milone & MacBroom (Traffic)
 Landmark Corporation (Civil)



prepared for:
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 186 YORK STREET
 YORK, MAINE 03909**

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