

# **TOWN OF BOWDOINHAM**



## **WALKABLE VILLAGE PLAN**

**ADOPTED JUNE 9, 2010**

**PREPARED BY  
BOWDOINHAM WALKING, BIKING, AND PADDLING GROUP**

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# WALKABLE VILLAGE PLAN

## Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to serve as a long-range guide for establishing adequate, safe places for people to walk and bicycle in Bowdoinham village, using sidewalks, trails, paved shoulders, or a combination of all three, as appropriate. It is also a guide for the use of federal and/or state funds for the repair and expansion of sidewalks within the village.

## Historic Perspective

At one time, Bowdoinham village was served by a network of sidewalks, as suggested in the historical photo shown below. These early sidewalks appear to be made of wide planks that probably didn't last long. At some unknown point in time, they were replaced by concrete. Remnants of the old, concrete sidewalks exist today, but for the most part they have disappeared under lawns or were removed altogether. The decline and disappearance of these walkways didn't happen all at once, but were the likely byproducts of years of neglect and lack of funds for maintenance. The ascendancy of the automobile likely coincided with a perception that sidewalks were no longer very important as a means for getting about. In recent years, however, more and more people have realized the importance of physical exercise, the benefits of living in a community where you can walk safely and meet your neighbors, and the importance of conserving energy, reducing pollution and saving money by not having to rely on motor vehicles for all of your errands.



Wooden sidewalks once graced the village

## The Setting

The Town of Bowdoinham has a population of approximately 2,800 people, and is situated between Merrymeeting Bay and Interstate 295 in Sagadahoc County. The Town's classic New England village including many business, single-family homes and multi-family dwellings reflects the richness of its

historical heritage. Many of the Town's public services and offerings are located in the village including:

- Bowdoinham Community School
- Bowdoinham Athletic Fields
- Maily Waterfront Park
- Coombs Municipal Building (Town Office and Library)
- Town Hall
- Fire Station
- Marina

## **The Need**

Despite a growing awareness of the importance of being able to walk safely in the community, there are no sidewalks for children to walk to and from school, and there are no sidewalks connecting the various destinations within the village. This makes walking difficult and at times dangerous, particularly when children have to walk in the road.

Vehicles speeding above the designated speed limit have been a chronic problem for both Main Street (Route 125) and River Road. Crossing Route 24 either at the intersection of Main Street or at the intersection of Ridge Road is currently dangerous. Sidewalks, crosswalks and added signage would help reduce speed and allow pedestrians to safely cross.

## **The Importance of a Walkable Village**

When a village is pedestrian-oriented, it becomes the healthy heart of a Town, economically and socially. It acts as a magnet, drawing people in, increasing local business and supporting the local economy. A walkable village allows residents and visitors to travel around the Town center and discover local businesses, recreational possibilities, and one another. Impromptu meetings between neighbors and friends are important because they build a sense of community and encourage community development. A walkable village not only offers a quality of life and social connectedness, but also preserves our Town's character and history.

Sidewalks/pedestrian walkways would serve to connect the village area and allow people to walk safely between key community destinations. For example, children would be able to safely walk from the Bowdoinham Community School to the Bowdoinham Public Library, Maily Waterfront Park and numerous businesses. The Library is housed in the John. C. Coombs Municipal Building built in 1911 as the Town's first high school. This building also houses the Town's municipal offices.

Adjacent to the Coombs Municipal Building is the Town Hall, built in 1823 as the Union Church. It now serves as the Town's meeting hall for municipal events such as Town meetings and elections. The Town Hall is home to important community events such as the Annual Library Plant Sale (35 years running), the annual Community School rummage sale, monthly contra dances, and the annual Bowdoinham Artisans Guild show and sale. Sidewalks/pedestrian walkways would allow residents to walk safely to these events, which in turn would reduce vehicle congestion caused by people driving to the events and parking along Main Street when the municipal lot is full.

Sidewalks/pedestrian walkways would also connect the upper village area with the historic village center. The Town's largest density of residential development is located on Preble Road, where both Greenleaf Apartments and Bowdoinham Estates are located. A sidewalk/pedestrian way would allow residents living on Preble Road to walk safely into the historic village to community destinations.

In Bowdoinham village, a network of sidewalks would provide connections between Town destinations such as the school, library and Town office, as well as provide access to other transportation corridors including:

- **Route 24:** (an important highway corridor linking Topsham to the south and Richmond to the north). This road is used by many bicyclists, but is somewhat dangerous due to limited shoulders. There are numerous scenic views along the road that could be more accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists if there were sidewalks in the village as well as shoulders, where appropriate.
- **Recreation opportunities:** with its extensive waterfront, rivers and streams, Bowdoinham has high quality recreational assets that would be more accessible in a pedestrian-oriented village setting.
- **Merrymeeting Trail:** While only in the planning stages, there is a great deal of interest in and support for establishing a thirty mile regional rail with trail that would connect the following locations:
  - Androscoggin River Pedestrian Bike Path in Topsham that links Brunswick to Topsham;
  - the village area in Bowdoinham;
  - the village area in Richmond;
  - the village area in Gardiner; and
  - Kennebec River Rail Trail that links Gardiner, Farmingdale, Hallowell, and Augusta.

Additionally, the Merrymeeting Trail could serve as an alternate route on the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000 mile national trail linking Calais, Maine with Key West, Florida. A convenient system of walkways, wide shoulders and trails could draw travelers from the Merrymeeting Trail into our village to visit the Merrymeeting Arts Center, enjoy the town's historic and natural beauty, and patronize local businesses.

## **New Opportunities**

A walkable village would provide local businesses with an increased consumer base from foot traffic. Bowdoinham is fortunate to have a village area that has been the center of its economic activity. Businesses in the village area include a credit union, two insurance agencies, two churches, a country store/grocery store, restaurant, flower and gift shop, regional arts center and gallery, real estate agency, counseling office, and dog training center. In addition to these retail and service outlets, the downtown is home to many of the 150 businesses in Bowdoinham including four high-end cabinet makers, a wholesale wine distributor, and a software designer. An increase in accessibility and consumers would help attract new businesses to the local economy.

Another economic opportunity lies within Maily Waterfront Park and the public boat landing and docks, which are jointly operated by the Maine State Department of Conservation and the Town of Bowdoinham. Maily Waterfront Park is located at the end of Main Street and provides boating access

to the Cathance River and then Merrymeeting Bay, the Kennebec River, the Androscoggin River and the Atlantic Ocean. Merrymeeting Bay is a 20,000 acre tidal estuary, a world renowned recreation area with significant natural habitat. Merrymeeting Bay is located at the confluence of the Kennebec and Androscoggin rivers, and is a short boat ride from Popham Beach and the Atlantic Ocean. These waterways serve as a gateway for many boaters to access Bowdoinham. This significant transportation access is currently cut off to walking traffic due to the lack of sidewalks/pedestrian walkways. By a walkable village to the waterfront, boaters would have the opportunity to depart from their boats and safely walk to local businesses.

The addition of sidewalks would have an immediate economic benefit to the Town. During the summer months, the free Sunday Concert Series draws visitors from the surrounding communities to Maily Waterfront Park, the Town Park located adjacent to the public boat landing. Sidewalks would allow visitors to these well attended events to patronize area businesses and stroll along historic Main Street homes. Residents would be able to walk to the concerts.

The Merrymeeting Arts Center, a regional arts center, gallery and museum opened its doors in September, 2007. It is located next to Maily Waterfront Park, but with the lack of good sidewalks, it is cut off from the other local businesses. With walking enhancements, the Arts Center would see an increase in business and help to make Bowdoinham a destination for the arts.

The Bowdoinham Farmers Market is located in the Merrymeeting Grange which is located on Main Street across from the Downeast Credit Union. The grange, built in 1883, is located in the historic center of the Town on Main Street. The Farmers Market provides seasonally grown produce from area farmers. A walkable village would allow village residents to walk to the market each week to purchase their weekly produce and continue down Main Street to the local country store to complete their shopping experience.

With the recent discussion of the extension of Amtrak passenger rail to Brunswick, and current efforts to establish the Merrymeeting Trail alongside Bowdoinham's railway, there could be an increase in freight traffic, passenger service, and recreational use of the Merrymeeting Trail at some point in the future. The historic location of the train station and the ideal location for a new station would be in the center of Town and further help Bowdoinham become the bustling community it once was. Safe sidewalks would link the future station and access to the Merrymeeting Trail to the community's businesses and residents.

The Cathance River Trail is a ¾ mile trail that originates near Maily Waterfront Park and goes south alongside the Cathance River to a point looking back at Bowdoinham's harbor. This scenic trail is just another example of Bowdoinham's unconnected assets. With new and improved sidewalks, along with more trails and trail connections for walkers, bikers, horseback riders, cross country skiers and snow mobiles, all of the Town's assets its ready access to nature, arts and crafts amenities, beautiful waterfront park, unique businesses and historic homes would surely become a tourist destination, drawing visitors from away.

## **Criteria for Investment Priorities**

In addition to the Town vote on November 3, 2009, to invest in sidewalk improvements, the Town has made a long-range commitment to repair many of the roads within the village area. As roads are improved, there is an opportunity to further enhance walking opportunities by creating sidewalks and

other improvements in appropriate areas. The Walkable Village Plan should be considered and incorporated into the Town's Road Improvement Plan. Additional walking opportunities may be created when new trails are established in the community, especially if some of these trails connect to or serve the village area.

Finally, there are several long-range opportunities for supporting walking and biking including Maine Department of Transportation improvements to numbered state highways (none scheduled for the immediate future), and federal/state investments in a rail/trail corridor along the state-owned railroad right-of-way.

The Bowdoinham Walking, Biking and Paddling Group prepared the following recommended criteria for prioritizing walkable village investments. Potential investments that meet the most criteria should be given the highest priority.

### Criteria

1. Safety considerations
2. Re-establishment of historical sidewalks
3. Sidewalks along numbered State routes
4. Connectivity within and to village center
5. Connectivity within and to pedestrian attractors such as library, school, Bowdoinham athletic fields, Maily Waterfront Park and businesses.
6. Sidewalks mostly on one side only to stretch dollars to widest possible area

### Operating Principles

- Avoid use of shoulders; shoulders are generally not safe for walking and they encourage speeding. Shoulders are best used for bicycling, horseback riding and parking.
- Avoid investments where other, less expensive alternatives exist or could be established such as off-road foot, bicycle and horse paths.
- Consider environmental impact.
- Consider other users of the roadway (cyclist, horses) when determining sidewalk/shoulder/both
- Consider right-of-way impacts

## **Walkable Village Priorities**

There are currently three levels of recommended investments in the plan as presented:

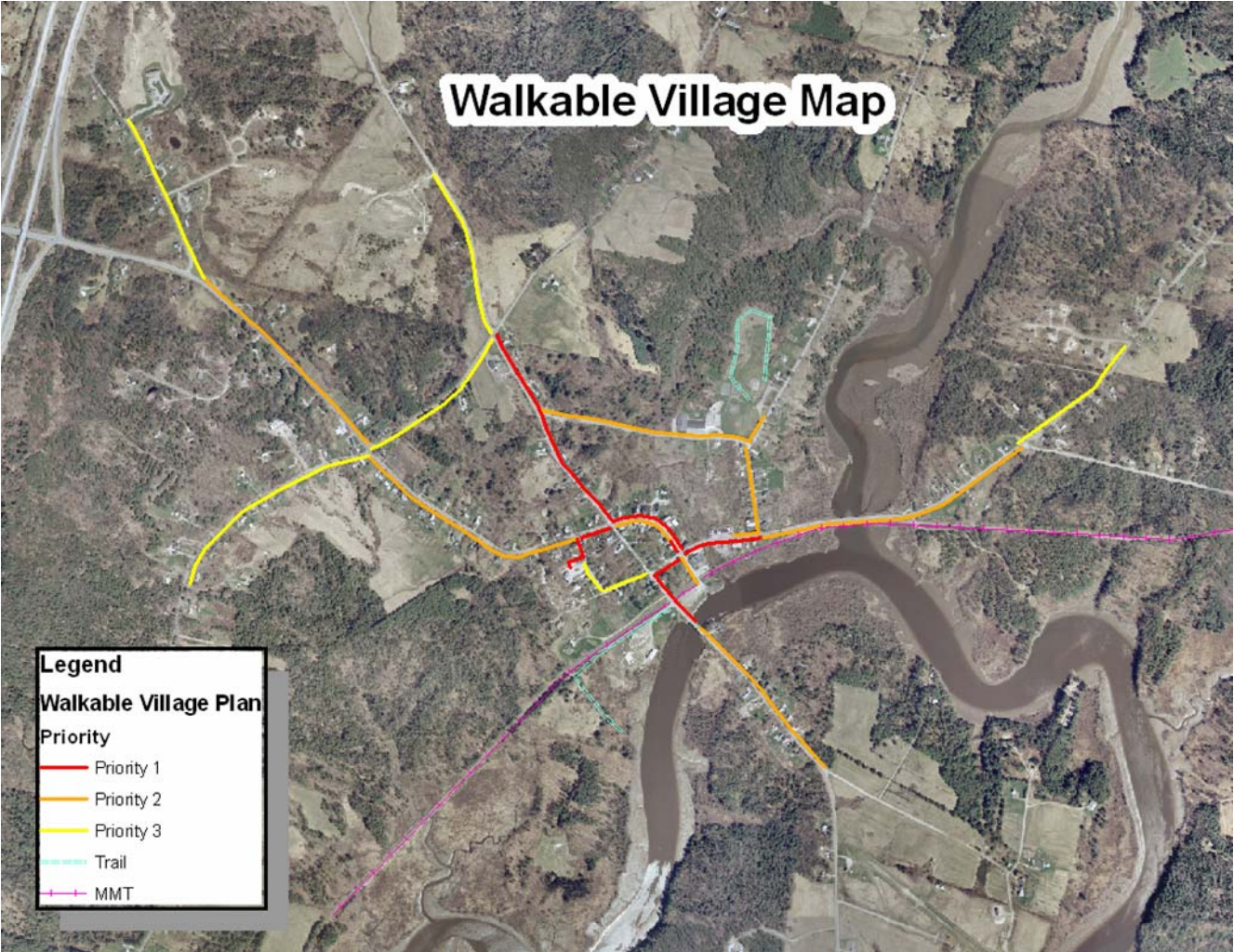
**Priority 1 Sidewalks:** Sidewalks along these road segments should receive highest priority for sidewalk investments. They represent sidewalks in the heart of the community that serve the major village attractions and the largest number of people.

**Priority 2 Sidewalks:** Sidewalks along these road segments lie just outside the immediate village but are nevertheless important from the standpoint of bringing people into the village center.

**Priority 3 Sidewalks:** These sidewalks serve more remote areas of the village and/or are not as critical as Priority 1 and Priority 2 sidewalks.



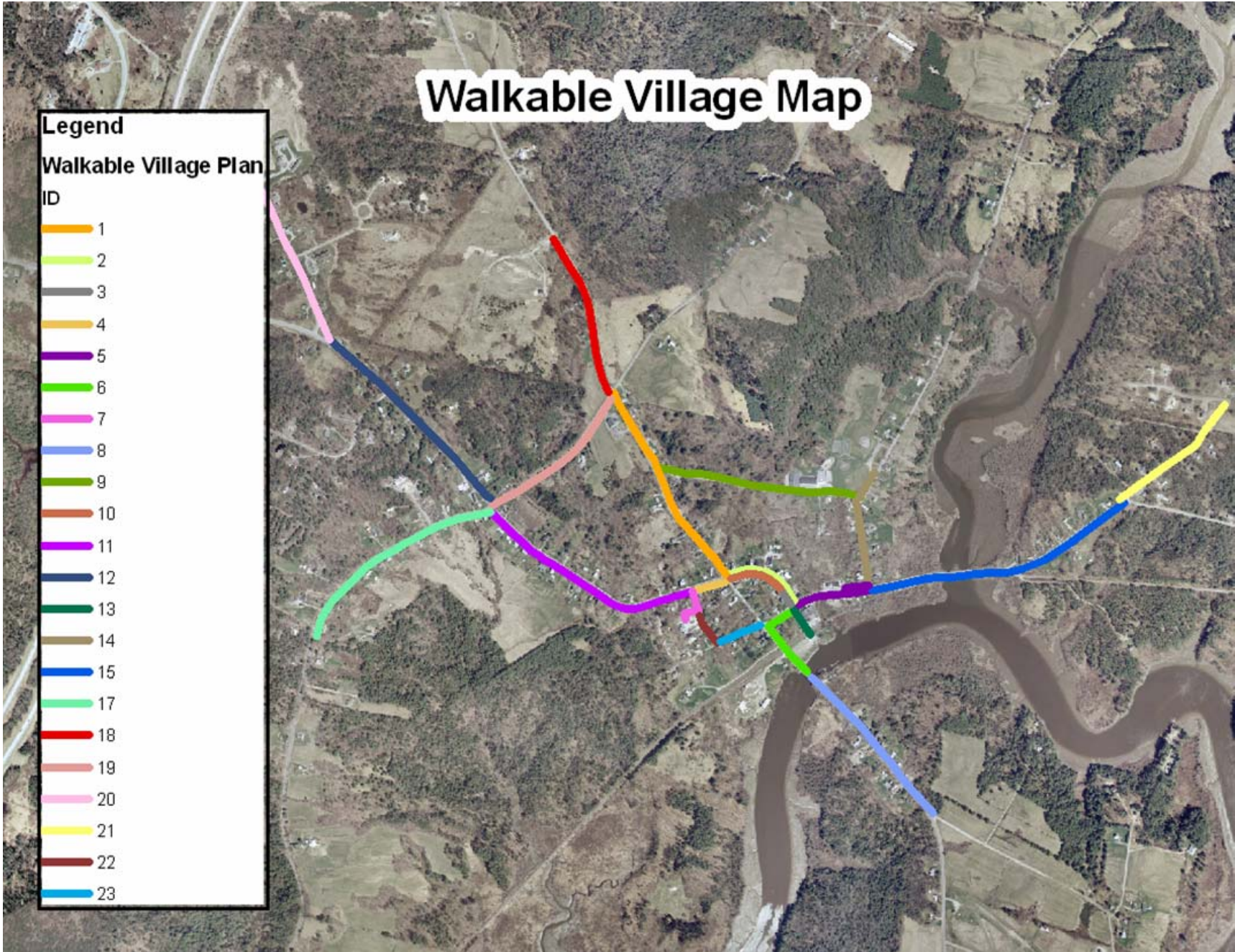
Walkable Village Maps





# Walkable Village Map

| Legend                   |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Walkable Village Plan ID |               |
| 1                        | Orange        |
| 2                        | Light Green   |
| 3                        | Grey          |
| 4                        | Yellow-Orange |
| 5                        | Purple        |
| 6                        | Bright Green  |
| 7                        | Pink          |
| 8                        | Light Blue    |
| 9                        | Olive Green   |
| 10                       | Brown         |
| 11                       | Magenta       |
| 12                       | Dark Blue     |
| 13                       | Dark Green    |
| 14                       | Olive         |
| 15                       | Blue          |
| 17                       | Light Cyan    |
| 18                       | Red           |
| 19                       | Light Pink    |
| 20                       | Pink          |
| 21                       | Yellow        |
| 22                       | Brown         |
| 23                       | Light Blue    |



## Summary of Walkable Village Investments

| <b>Priority 1 Investments</b>  |             |                                      |   |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|
| <b>Road</b>                    | <b>ID #</b> | <b>Location</b>                      | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Feet</b> |
| <b>Center Street</b>           | <b>1</b>    | Main Street to Post Road             | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, 20 foot travel way  | 2,075       |
| <b>Main Street, north side</b> | <b>2</b>    | River Road to Center Street          | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, 4-foot wide shoulder, five parallel parking spaces along the Town-owned property across from the bank.  | 800         |
| <b>Main Street south side</b>  | <b>3</b>    | River Road to Credit Union           | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, 4-foot wide shoulder  | 300         |
|                                | <b>4</b>    | Back Hill Street to School Street    | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk , 4-foot wide shoulder   | 315         |
| <b>River Road (Route 24)</b>   | <b>5</b>    | Main Street to Ridge Rd              | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, paved shoulder  | 760         |
|                                | <b>6</b>    | Main Street to Cathance River bridge | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, paved shoulder  | 880         |
| <b>School Street</b>           | <b>7</b>    | Main Street to Town Hall             | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk from Main Street to Hall, then along side of Town Hall and around rear of building to Municipal Building | 300         |

## Priority 2 Investments

| <b>Road</b>               | <b>ID #</b> | <b>Location</b>                                      | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Feet</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------|--|--|-------------|
| <b>Bay Road</b>           | <b>8</b>    | Wallentine Road to Cathance Bridge                   | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk, 2-foot wide shoulder           | 1,720       |
| <b>Cemetery Road</b>      | <b>9</b>    | Ridge Road past school to Center Street              | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk and/or paved shoulder           | 1,900       |
| <b>Main Street</b>        | <b>10</b>   | Credit Union to Back Hill Street                     | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk and shoulder                    | 460         |
|                           | <b>11</b>   | School Street to Post Road                           | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk and/or 3-foot wide shoulder     | 2,300       |
|                           | <b>12</b>   | Post Road to Preble Road                             | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk and/or 3-foot wide shoulder     | 2,500       |
|                           | <b>13</b>   | River Road to Maily Waterfront Park                  | Sidewalk or a delineated walking area                        | 300         |
| <b>Ridge Road</b>         | <b>14</b>   | River Road to sidewalk at beginning of Cemetery Road | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk and/or paved shoulder           | 950         |
| <b>River Road</b>         | <b>15</b>   | Ridge Road to Brown's Point Road                     | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk with shoulder or paved shoulder | 2700        |
| <b>Merrymeeting Trail</b> | <b>16</b>   |  |  |             |

### Priority 3 Investments

| Road          | ID # | Location                                     | Description  | Feet  |
|---------------|------|--|--|-------|
| Fisher Road   | 17   | From Main Street south about 1,000 feet      | Minimum 4-foot sidewalk and/or paved shoulder                | 1,000 |
| Millay Road   | 18   | Post Road to Tegans Way                      | Minimum 4-foot sidewalks and/or paved shoulder               | 1,700 |
| Post Road     | 19   | Center Street to Main Street                 | Minimum 4-foot sidewalks and/or paved shoulder               | 1,600 |
| Preble Road   | 20   | Main Street to Greenleaf Apartments          | Minimum 4-foot sidewalks and/or paved shoulder               | 1,700 |
| River Road    | 21   | Browns Point Road to Elloit Lane             | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk with shoulder or paved shoulder | 1,400 |
| School Street | 22   | Main Street to Spring Street                 | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk                                 | 300   |
| Spring Street | 23   | School Street to River Road/Back Hill Street | Minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk                                 | 500   |

### Walkable Village Implementation Plan

Priority 1 To be completed with the use of MaineDOT Quality Community Grant, to the extent possible.

Priority 2 To be completed within the next five years by:

- Integrating work into the Town’s Road Improvement Plan for Town Roads
- Integrating work into State plans for State roads
- Seeking out other sources of funding

Priority 3 To be completed within the next fifteen years by:

- Integrating work into the Town’s Road Improvement Plan for Town Roads
- Integrating work into State plans for State roads
- Seeking out other sources of funding

(Priorities for non-sidewalk connectors are presently being discussed by the Bowdoinham Walking, Biking and Paddling Group and other interested residents for later incorporation into this plan.)

## Appendix A - Roadway Information

|                          | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4   |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|---|
|                          | <u>Center Street</u><br><i>Main Street to Post Road</i>   | <u>Main Street</u><br><i>River Road to Center Street</i> | <u>Main Street</u><br><i>River Road to Credit Union</i> | <u>Main Street</u><br><i>Backhill Street to School Street</i>   |
| Village Core             | X   | X  | X   | X   |
| Connectivity             |   |  |   |   |
| •Town Office & Library   |   |  |   | X   |
| •Waterfront Park         |   |  |   |   |
| •Recreation Complex      |   |  |   |   |
| •Fire Department         | X   |  |   |   |
| •School                  | X   |  |   |   |
| Within 2 miles of School | X   | X  | X   | X   |
| Needed for Safety        | X   |  |   |   |
| Parking Needed           |   | Yes  | Yes   | Yes   |
| Shoulders Needed         |   | Yes  | Yes   | Yes   |
| Road Ownership           | Town  | State  | State   | State   |
| Road Plan                | 2010  |  |   |   |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Connects Main Street, Cemetery Road, the Elementary School, Post Road and the Fire Station where many community functions are held at the Fire Station. | This is the center of the village.                       | This is the center of the village.                      | Serves to connect residents and students to the both the Town Hall and John C. Coombs Municipal Building, which contains both the Town Office and Public Library. The Town Hall is the location of many community events. |

|                          | 5   | 6  | 7   |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|
|                          | River Road<br>Main Street to<br>Ridge Road  | River Road<br>Cathance River<br>to Main Street | School St Main<br>Street to Town<br>Office/Library  |
| Village Core             | X   | X  | X   |
| Connectivity             |   |  |   |
| •Town Office & Library   |   |  | X   |
| •Waterfront Park         |   | X  |   |
| •Recreation Complex      | X   |  |   |
| •Fire Department         |   |  |   |
| •School                  | X   |  |   |
| Within 2 miles of School | X   | X  | X   |
| Needed for Safety        | X   | X  | X   |
| Parking Needed           |   |  |   |
| Shoulders Needed         | Yes   | Yes  |   |
| Road Ownership           | State   | State  | Town  |
| Road Plan                |   |  | 2010  |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Connects Main Street and the Ridge Road, which serves to connect Bowdoinham Community School, Municipal Recreation Complex the Country Store and Town Landing Restaurant. | Connects residents to Main Street.             | Connects Main Street to the both the Town Hall and John C. Coombs Municipal Building, which contains both the Town Office and Public Library. The Town Hall is the location of many community events. |

|                          | 8  | 9   | 10  | 11   |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|--|
|                          | Bay Road<br><i>Wallentine Road<br/>to Cathance<br/>River</i> | Cemetery Street<br><i>Ridge Road to<br/>Center Street</i>   | Main Street<br><i>Credit Union to<br/>Backhill Street</i> | Main Street<br><i>School Street<br/>to Post Road</i> |
| Village Core             |  | X   | X   |  |
| Connectivity             |  |   |   |  |
| •Town Office & Library   |  |   |   | X  |
| •Waterfront Park         | X  |   |   |  |
| •Recreation Complex      |  | X   |   |  |
| •Fire Department         |  |   |   | X  |
| •School                  |  | X   |   |  |
| Within 2 miles of School | X  | X   | X   | X  |
| Needed for Safety        | X  |   |   | X  |
| Parking Needed           |  |   | Yes   |  |
| Shoulders Needed         | Yes  |   | Yes   | Yes  |
| Road Ownership           | State  | Town  | State   | State  |
| Road Plan                |  | 2010  |   |  |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Connects residents to the Village.                           | Connects Center Street to Ridge Road and the recreation complex. The Elementary School is located on Cemetery Street. | This area is the urban core of the village.               | Serves to connect residents to the Village.          |



|                          | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|                          | Main Street<br>Post Road to<br>Preble Street  | Main Street<br>Maily<br>Waterfront Park<br>to River Road  | Ridge Road<br>River Road to<br>Cemetery Street  | River Road<br>Ridge Road to<br>Browns Point<br>Road |
| Village Core             |   |   | X   |   |
| Connectivity             |   |   |   |   |
| •Town Office & Library   |   |   |   |   |
| •Waterfront Park         |   | X   |   |   |
| •Recreation Complex      |   |   | X   | X   |
| •Fire Department         | X   |   |   |   |
| •School                  |   |   | X   | X   |
| Within 2 miles of School | X   |   | X   | X   |
| Needed for Safety        | X   |   | X   | X   |
| Parking Needed           |   |   |   |   |
| Shoulders Needed         | Yes   |   |   | Yes   |
| Road Ownership           | State   |   | Town  | State   |
| Road Plan                |   |   | 2011  |   |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Serves to connect the residents of Preble Road (Bowdoinham's highest population density) to the Village (school, stores, Town Office, Public Library, etc). | Connects Maily Waterfront Park, the Boat Launch, and several businesses to the River Road where both the Country Store and Town Landing Restaurant are located. | Connects the Bowdoinham Community School & Municipal Recreation Complex to the River Road where both the Country Store and Town Landing Restaurant are located. | Connects residents to the Village.                  |

|                          | 17  | 18  | 19   | 20  |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|---|
|                          | Fisher Road<br><i>About 1,000-ft<br/>from Main<br/>Street</i> | Millay Road<br><i>Post Road to<br/>Tegans Way</i> | Post Road <i>Main<br/>Street to Center<br/>Street</i>  | Preble Road<br><i>Main St to<br/>Greenleaf<br/>Apartments</i>   |
| Village Core             |   |   |  |   |
| Connectivity             |   |   |  |   |
| •Town Office & Library   |   |   |  |   |
| •Waterfront Park         |   |   |  |   |
| •Recreation Complex      |   |   |  |   |
| •Fire Department         |   |   | X  |   |
| •School                  |   |   |  |   |
| Within 2 miles of School | X   |   | X  | X   |
| Needed for Safety        |   |   | X  |   |
| Parking Needed           |   |   |  |   |
| Shoulders Needed         |   |   | Yes  |   |
| Road Ownership           | Town  | Town  | State  | Town  |
| Road Plan                | 2018  | 2018  |  | 2013  |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Connects<br>residents to<br>Main Street.                      | Connects<br>residents to<br>Post Road.            | Connects Main<br>Street to Center<br>Street and the<br>Fire Station<br>where many<br>community<br>functions are<br>held. | Connects the<br>residents at<br>both Greenleaf<br>Apartments<br>and the<br>retirement<br>complex to<br>Main Street. |

|                          | 21  | 22   | 23  |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|
|                          | River Road<br>Browns Point<br>Road to Elloit<br>Lane  | School St Town<br>Office to Spring<br>Street   | Spring St School<br>Street to River<br>Road |
| Village Core             | X   | X  | X   |
| Connectivity             |   |  |   |
| •Town Office & Library   |   | X  | X   |
| •Waterfront Park         | X   |  |   |
| •Recreation Complex      |   |  |   |
| •Fire Department         |   |  |   |
| •School                  |   |  |   |
| Within 2 miles of School | X   | X  | X   |
| Needed for Safety        |   | X  |   |
| Parking Needed           | Yes   |  |   |
| Shoulders Needed         |   |  |   |
| Road Ownership           | Town  | Town   | Town  |
| Road Plan                | 2018  | 2010   | 2010  |
| Benefit/Why Needed       | Connects the<br>River Road, the<br>Town Landing<br>and the Country<br>Store to the<br>Maily<br>Waterfront Park. | Connects to the<br>Town Hall and<br>John C. Coombs<br>Municipal<br>Building, which<br>contains both<br>the Town Office<br>and Public<br>Library. | Connects River<br>Road to Spring<br>Street. |

## **Appendix B - Plan Preparation Process**

This Plan was prepared by the Bowdoinham, Walking, Biking, Paddling Group (BWBPG) over a period of many months. The Group discussed the need for the Plan at many public meetings and workshops, and sought public input through public workshops, the Town's web site, and during Bowdoinham Days during the summer of 2009. Public meetings and workshops were held on the following days:

- July 27: The BWBPG met in a public session to review options for the walkable village plan.
- August 24: The BWBPG met in a public session to review options for the walkable village plan.
- September 28, 2009: The BWBPG met in a public session to review options for the walkable village plan.
- October 14, 2009: The BWBPG held a question and answer session for the public on the Plan and the November 3, 2009 ballot question.
- October 20, 2009: The Selectboard held a public hearing to make sure everyone had a chance to comment on the November 3 vote.
- November 10, 2009: The BWBPG held a public meeting to review walkable village investment options following the positive vote by citizens on November 3 to raise the local match for a federal sidewalk grant.
- November 23, 2009: The BWBPG met in a public session to finalize the walkable village priorities.
- December 14, 2009: The BWBPG met in a public session to review and revised the text of the draft walkable village plan.
- February 22, 2010: The BWBPG met in a public session to review and revised the text of the draft walkable village plan.
- March 18, 2010: The BWBPG held a public hearing to review the Walkable Village Plan.
- March 22, 2010: The BWBPG met in a public session to review and revised the text of the draft walkable village plan.

## Appendix C - Public Policy Basis for Walkable Village

The citizens of Bowdoinham are actively involved in establishing a pedestrian friendly village. Public support for a walkable village and biking is reflected in the following:

- **Bowdoinham Walking, Biking and Paddling Group:** The Bowdoinham, Walking, Biking, Paddling Group (BWBPG), a town committee, has published several brochures that it distributes to residents, highlighting suggested bike routes and describing its work to establish hiking trails in the community.
- **Public opinion survey:** In a public opinion survey conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process in 1992, 82% of the respondents express their support for sidewalks. This survey was personally delivered to every household in the community. Forty-five percent of the surveys were returned – an exceptionally high return rate.
- **Comprehensive Plan:** The 2000 Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of the village. It states, in part:

“The Village ... defines the community and its protection is a key goal of this plan. It is the locus of community life and the focus of protection and revitalization efforts.”

While sidewalks were not specifically mentioned, the plan identifies the village as a major asset or opportunity to the future of Bowdoinham. “While a faint echo of the commerce of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the village is still an identifiable focal point for economic and social activity. It is a crossroads for local traffic, making it particularly apt for serving local commercial retail and service needs. ...Many of these establishments meet the needs of residents as well as tourists using the waterfront, airport, and recreation areas.”

The following is included in the plan’s analysis of the local economy: “Economic development also affects ‘quality of life’ objectives. A motivation expressed by some people in Bowdoinham is to enhance the sense of community. This can be achieved by revitalizing what is already in town and making existing businesses more viable...Consumer convenience is enhanced when retail and services are provided locally. Retail stores in Bowdoinham reduce the need to drive to more distant locations, which saves time and energy and helps to keep money in town.”

- **Proposed Site Plan Review Ordinance:** The Town’s proposed Site Plan Review Ordinance requires pedestrian walkways for new commercial developments. It reads, in part:

“Pedestrian Circulation –

- A) The site plan must provide for a system of pedestrian ways within the development appropriate to the type and scale of development.

- B) This system must connect the major building entrances/exits with parking areas and with existing sidewalks, if they exist or are planned in the vicinity of the project.
- C) Where an existing or planned public sidewalk is interrupted by a proposed project driveway, the sidewalk material must continue to be maintained across the driveway, or the driveway must be painted to distinguish it as a sidewalk.
- D) The pedestrian network may be located either in the street right-of-way or outside of the right-of-way in open space or recreation areas.
- E) The system must be designed to link the project with residential, recreational, and commercial facilities, schools, bus stops, and existing sidewalks in the neighborhood or, when appropriate, to connect with amenities such as parks or open space on or adjacent to the site.
- F) The system shall be safely separated from vehicular traffic through landscape buffers and curbing.”

- **Transportation Vision Statement:** In 2008, Bowdoinham adopted a Transportation Village Statement that supported a walkable village. The Transportation Vision Statement read, in part:

“Community Vision: The Town will seek to protect and enhance its classic, small-town village center and its rural surroundings, commercial areas and the waterfront, while at the same time manage development to preserve the rural character of the community. Bowdoinham will also seek to enhance the strong sense of community that makes the Town a special place in which to live.”

“Walkable Village. Work to achieve a pedestrian friendly village.

- A. Planning. Plan for adequate, safe places for people to walk using sidewalks, trails, paved shoulders or a combination of all three, as appropriate. Plan for adequate drainage and mitigation of environmental impacts.
- B. Historic Main Street sidewalks. Re-establish Bowdoinham’s historic sidewalks, where appropriate.
- C. Safety and connectivity between community destinations. Establish places for people to walk between major community destinations such as the school, recreational fields, library, town office, Maily Waterfront Park, and stores.”

- **Municipal appropriation to match federal grant:** In April of 2009, the Town was approved for a Maine Department of Transportation Quality Community Program grant of \$535,000 in federal funds for the repair and expansion of sidewalks within the village. On November 3, 2009, the Town voted to transfer up to \$133,750 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the FY 2010 budget revenues and appropriate the same to be used for the required local match for this grant.

## Appendix D - Design Considerations

The following is a brief summary of some of the sidewalk design standards used by MaineDOT:

- A preferred sidewalk width of 60 inches is recommended to allow wheelchairs to pass one another. It also allows pedestrians to walk side by side.
- A narrow sidewalk of 36 inches in width may be used if:
  - A wider width is impossible
  - The narrow width continues for as short a distance as possible
  - Passing spaces are provided at intervals of no more than 200 feet
  - Passing space is defined as a section of path wide enough to allow two wheelchair users to pass one another or travel abreast
  - A passing space or maneuvering area requires a minimum area of 60 inches by 60 inches
- Sidewalk grades should be limited to no more than 5% over short distances (less than 200 feet)
- Cross slope is limited to a maximum of 20%
- Vertical differences in level between abutting surfaces to be no more than ¼ inch; if beveled at 1:2 then a ½ inch difference in elevation is permitted
- An algebraic difference in elevation greater than 11% is not permitted
- Curb ramps
  - One at each crossing, where feasible
  - Preferred ramp width of 48 inches, minimum of 36 inches exclusive of flares
  - 1:12 (8.3%) maximum running slope (new construction)
  - 1:48 (2%) maximum cross slope
  - No exposure to moving traffic lane
  - 1:20 (5%) maximum counter slope at gutter
  - Flush (no lip) connection at street (tolerance is ¼")

Attest a true certified copy of the Walkable Village Plan.

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Pamela C. Ross, Town Clerk



