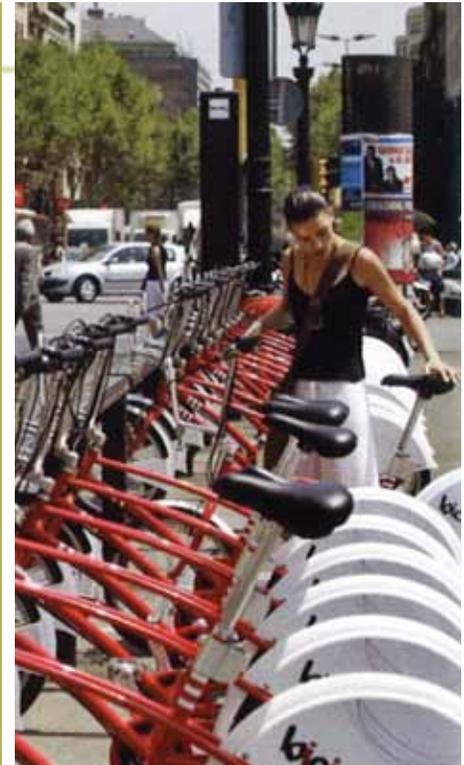


MAINE DOWNTOWN CENTER Green Downtowns!

Background

The Maine Downtown Center's Green Downtowns! program is designed to strengthen the link between the natural and built environment in Maine's historic downtowns to make them more environmentally responsive and ecologically conscious. Funded in 2009 by a \$100,000 grant through the Maine Community Foundation's Environmental Funder's Network, **Green Downtowns!** is designed to strengthen Maine's downtowns by building local leadership and community capacity to support sustainable green initiatives.

Green Downtowns! will accomplish multiple goals including providing challenge grants to select Main Street Maine communities, providing technical assistance in historic preservation activities to protect and preserve/reuse and recycle the historic built environment, supporting the development of a model multi-use trail system to link pedestrians directly to Main Street, and providing environmentally sensitive community design assistance to all seven of the Center's Maine Downtown Network communities. To accomplish this final goal, the Maine Downtown Center has contracted with Ekistics Planning and Design to work collaboratively in each community to identify and develop plans for "green enhancements" in each downtown. The results of their work will be featured during 2010 at both the Downtown Institute session on Green Design (April 9) and the Revitalizing Maine Communities conference (June 3-4.)



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"Green Downtowns! helps enhance the Main Street experience as a destination where people want to linger."
Roxanne Eflin, Program Director, Maine Downtown Network



Funding provided by the Maine Community Foundation.

Environmental Funders Network

Balancing livability, sustainability, green design, urbanism, active living and ecological development.



POTENTIAL GREEN DOWNTOWN CONSIDERATIONS:

Each community will have its own unique green downtown opportunities. The following is a list of potential considerations for your meeting with the consultant and Maine Downtown Center.

1. Enhancing community "walkability" (e.g. greenways, trails, multi-use trails, better sidewalks.) The goal is to make it easier for people in outlying neighborhoods to walk to downtown, or while in downtown, make it convenient and safe to walk instead of drive.
2. Increasing the green canopy downtown. This means an urban forest strategy with careful selection of hardy street trees. American Forests recommends an average 15% tree canopy

cover for commercial business districts.

3. Increase nature downtown. More and better parks and open spaces, preserving riparian buffers, "daylighting" of storm sewers, green parking lots, pedestrian friendly waterfronts and river fronts, green roofs, living walls, improved landscape standards, etc.
4. Healthy communities and active living such as outdoor exercise stations, diverse and vibrant economy, good schools and education, accessible playgrounds, adventure play, running trails, bike lanes, active transportation, active education, walking to school initiative, active living for seniors, local agriculture, and bike share programs.

5. Reduce, reuse, recycle preserving and fully utilizing historic buildings with thoughtful consideration to low energy building materials.
6. Green energy – LED lighting, Dark Sky compliance, distributed energy systems, seawater heat pumps, groundwater heat pumps, methane capture from landfill, solar, wind, microclimatic design.
7. Mixed-use and increased density with more people living and shopping in downtown.
8. Environmental advocacy – empowering the public for green choices, downtown recycling programs, sustainability planning, green tourism and ecotourism.

"This program underscores why Maine is an environmental leader..." *Jim Day, Castine. Senior Advisor, Maine Downtown Center; Advisor, National Trust for Historic Preservation*