



Summary Report from the Start Up Team Visit to Farmington

November 2009

Presented to Michael Mansir, President
Farmington Downtown Association

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**Healthy, thriving downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts are
assets to communities endeavoring to sustain or grow their local
economy and create or retain jobs.**

INTRODUCTION

The Maine Downtown Center (MDC) is a program of the Maine Development Foundation (MDF). MDF believes that vibrant downtowns can be an economic engine of growth; can serve as an attractant to young people, creative economic ventures, retirees and diverse populations; and can mitigate costly sprawling land use development patterns. The MDC helps communities throughout the state revitalize their downtown economy, preserve and enhance appearance, and boost the image of their traditional business districts using a range of services and assistance.

We utilize the successful **Main Street Four-Point Approach**® developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center as its foundation for assistance. This approach emphasizes economic development within the context of historic preservation and is based on principles of self-determination and direct community participation. The Main Street Approach focuses on four key areas of revitalization which are worked simultaneously:

- **Organization.** Involving all constituencies having an interest in downtown revitalization and management of both human and financial resources. Organization helps everyone work towards the same goals and maximizes involvement of public and private leaders within the community;
- **Design.** Implementing projects that improve the appearance and functionality of downtown buildings and physical environment. Design enhances a district's appearance and pedestrian amenities while preserving its historic features;
- **Promotion.** Creating programs that market your downtown to potential and existing customers, producing special events and festivals, and promulgating a positive image of downtown. Promotion brings people back downtown by helping to attract visitors, shoppers, and investors; and
- **Economic Restructuring.** Studying your community's economy and market opportunities and using the information to develop programs that strengthen and expand existing businesses and aid in recruiting new businesses to downtown. Economic restructuring stimulates business development and helps strengthen the district's economic base.

The comprehensive approach has long been proven an effective methodology for revitalizing traditional, pedestrian-oriented commercial districts in your downtown. In essence, the Main Street Four-Point Approach® stresses grassroots involvement in the revitalization process where the community works beyond just the downtown stakeholders, to develop a compelling vision for your downtown.

Each Main Street program is locally driven, responds to locally identified priorities, and is locally funded. The Maine Downtown Center is committed to be a partner in this essential revitalization process for the long term.

OVERVIEW OF THE MAINE DOWNTOWN NETWORK

As part of a three-tier approach to downtown revitalization in Maine, the MDC has launched the **Maine Downtown Network**, an affiliate to our successful Main Street Maine program and Downtown Institute. The Maine Downtown Network (MDN) program provides a range of services and assistance to meet a variety of community commitment and readiness levels with technical support through its staff and other experienced consultants.

The MDN is for communities just starting a downtown revitalization effort and/or for those hoping to achieve Main Street Maine status. MDN services help communities build an appropriate organizational and funding base for a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program. Participation as a MDN community does not guarantee selection as a future designated Main Street Maine community, although it will help communities strengthen their revitalization efforts.

MDN communities are required to:

1. Understand, commit to and follow the Main Street Four-Point Approach® to downtown revitalization (Organization, Design, Promotion and Economic Restructuring) established by the National Trust Main Street Center and promoted by the Maine Downtown Center.
2. Maintain and report on quantitative measures of success, specifically volunteer hours and re-investment statistics and share these with the MDC Program Manager at least twice annually or as requested.
3. Develop and/or maintain a volunteer board, including representatives of downtown business entities, the greater community and local government, to oversee the continuing development of the local downtown revitalization program for the terms of this agreement.
4. Engage staff, committee and/or board members and volunteers in ongoing training offered by the Maine Downtown Center. Travel expenses for such training shall be paid by the Local Program, unless otherwise provided by the MDC. Discounted registration will be made available to MDN Local Program participants to attend Downtown Institute sessions and the annual Maine Downtown Conference.
5. Share lessons learned from their experience as a MDN Local Program and share documents and products with the MDC and other communities in instances where sharing will not compromise the work of the Local Program.
6. The Local Program will illustrate the acknowledgement of the receipt of the MDC's services by crediting its participation, and as a beneficiary of, the MDN program through the appropriate methods (i.e., website, printed acknowledgement in public notices, press releases, project signs, publications, verbal recognition at public meeting, etc.)
7. Pay an annual participation fee based on population.

The MDC will provide these additional services to MDN communities:

1. Designate a MDC Program Manager to act as liaison with the MDN Local Program and to facilitate communications between the Local Program, the Maine Downtown Center, other Maine communities and the National Trust Main Street Center where appropriate.
2. Organize and conduct an initial Start-Up Visit whereby the MDC Program Manager and members of the MDC Advisory Board, Senior Advisors and selected consultants will visit the MDN Local Program to conduct an informal needs assessment and offer initial observations to help organize the Downtown program.
3. Organize and conduct a Year One Organizational Visit to assist the MDN Local Program in developing a start-up checklist, work plan creation and fund raising strategies.
4. Organize and conduct a Year Two Organizational Visit identifying progress and provide suggestions for moving forward.
5. Conduct training for board members and/or committee members, MDN Local Program Managers (where appropriate), and community volunteers, providing intensive and comprehensive training on the content and methodology of the Main Street Program at the local level.
6. Provide resource and consultant information to the MDN Local Program in topic areas specifically related to organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring.
7. Assist in the selection of a Downtown Manager, if appropriate, and provide orientation and training at the MDC office.
8. Provide for the MDN Local Program's membership in the National Trust Main Street Center for two years during the term of the agreement.
9. In general, facilitate learning among Maine Downtown Network and Maine Street Maine communities and the general public.
10. Post success stories and testimonials from the MDN Local Program on the MDC website and share links to the National Trust Main Street Center and other state coordinating programs.

In summary, the Maine Downtown Network is what you make of it. Tap into the energy! Consider yourself part of a growing family of historically rich, civic minded, volunteer-driven cities and towns in Maine – with passionate people committed to protecting and enhancing their special sense of place and courageous enough to invest the energy necessary to convert their vision of a vibrant downtown to reality. Now let's get to work!

THE START UP VISIT

In July 2009, a group of enthusiastic downtown supporters representing both the public and private sectors met with the Maine Downtown Center's team. Our discussion focused on past efforts, current activities and future visions. We began with an orientation meeting which was followed by a walking tour which took the group into key businesses and buildings on Main Street. We returned for lunch to share immediate observations and discuss next steps as a Maine Downtown Network community. This report captures comments, ideas and suggestions from the team for consideration as you begin to work toward the Main Street model for downtown revitalization, incorporating the four points discussed previously.



*The Start Up visit team! This photo by team member Jayne Palmer, MDC Senior Advisor.
Report photos by Roxanne Eflin, Program Manager, Maine Downtown Center.*

ORGANIZATION OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FARMINGTON

Effective downtown revitalization efforts require the energy, leadership, vision and passion of an organized, engaged and diverse group of downtown supporters. Farmington is fortunate to have the core of such a group - the long-standing Farmington Downtown Association with approximately 125 members, led by President Michael Mansir of Franklin Savings Bank. We were impressed with the caliber of this group of volunteers, who are striving to reorganize into a 501c3 nonprofit organization with committees aligned into the Four Points of Main Street. This is the ideal time to create a Board of Directors of between 10-15 members and expand your committees to engage everyone! Downtown is the heart of your community, and it is essential to have broad based support.

Now it is important for other civic leaders who do not yet have a stake in downtown to be persuaded by influential leaders to get involved to help lead the effort. We encourage

delegation of tasks into highly-functioning committees in order to keep the movement pulsing forward and prevent individual burn-out. As with many of our participating communities, often the Chair or Board President does much of the heavy lifting because they do it so well! We encourage balance within the leadership to spread the work throughout the committees *and* the enthusiasm and groom others to pick up the pace when, and if, your top leaders (e.g., Board President and other officers) wish to step back from their respective roles. An inventory of other organizations active in Farmington is important to find leadership, new volunteers and supporters. The list should include the officers and board members, downtown projects and goals. Then develop a communications strategy to connect with them and *ask* for their participation. So often, people simply are not asked.

Farmington is fortunate to have a Town Manager, Richard Davis, who is an outspoken champion of downtown – a true advocate. His vision and leadership is vitally important to help solidify support from the elected officials and all town employees. They each have a role in the future of your commercial core and need to understand how the Main Street approach works. Town government should position itself as a partner (and sometimes facilitator and implementer), encouraging the leadership roles to be served by the private sector. A balanced three-way partnership between the merchants/property owners, municipality and the residents is critically important for sustainable success. As MDC Senior Advisor Bill King says “It’s all together for success!”



We strongly encourage the key individuals involved in the downtown effort to receive training in historic preservation in order to fully understand the *essential role* that historic preservation, and the accompanying incentives, plays in economic development.

We also urge you to undertake (or renew) a Downtown Master Plan, which, to be effective, should be kept fresh and impart an enthusiastic vision, clarify priorities, set deadlines and assign responsibilities. Determining the boundary of your downtown program area will help focus your efforts, time and energy. If you have not done so already, we encourage you to compress the geography of your downtown district to the traditional commercial core.

A few other Organization observations and suggestions:

- Web presence is crucial and your website (www.farmingtondowntown.com) is superb – colorful and easy to navigate with room for growth. Please link the MDC’s

website to yours and include the fact that you are an official Maine Downtown Network community!

- Fundraising is an ongoing challenge and opportunity. We encourage you to “think in threes” for income sources: 1/3 from the Town, 1/3 from downtown businesses and property owners and 1/3 from the residents and special events. A balanced fundraising plan is important to help spread the ownership and prevent a setback should any one source be cut or curtailed. You should work in tandem from bottom to top/top to bottom - establish your budget and a funding pyramid. If you have not yet done so, this is the time to inventory your assets and promote these as a selling tool. This is also the time to ask each of your downtown stakeholders to sign on with a gift then secure one or more lead gifts while you are obtaining grassroots support from every resident and business. A number of small gifts are as important as your top gifts when building your base of support. Remember to thank every donor in writing within 48 hours after their gift is received. While the Farmington Business Association reorganizes into a 501(c)3 nonprofit, you will need to utilize an existing 501(c)3 to serve as your charitable fiscal agent, which we understand you have already accomplished.



The current graphic features heritage and the environment

- Public relations about your revitalization efforts should be constant – in the press, on public access television, at the University and in educational presentations by your members. Develop a downtown brand logo and slogan statement. Create a PowerPoint presentation for your board members and committee volunteers to take into the schools to educate and inspire teachers and students (K-12) and, subsequently, their entire families.
- We urge your organization to develop (or maintain!) a positive presence at Town Council meetings and invite one of them to serve on your board. It is useful to rotate the spokesperson role at Council meetings in order to show the many faces of downtown and develop speaker leadership.
- Have some fun times together, preferably after hours, at several different businesses. The Bath Business Barometer is an excellent model, resulting in team building.

We encourage your organization to take advantage of the training and network opportunities made available by the Maine Downtown Center, including the Downtown Institute – six sessions held throughout the year in Augusta on a variety of topics specific to the Main Street Four Point Approach®. We strongly believe that an informed and well organized group, comprised of downtown retailers and business owners, local residents, nonprofit organizations and municipal government, has the singular ability to elevate downtown Farmington to the prominence it rightly deserves.

DESIGN OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FARMINGTON



Farmington is fortunate to have a number of architecturally and historically significant buildings comprising a large National Register district, which helps define your unique character.

The overarching slogan for the Main Street program is “economic development within the context of historic preservation.” Historic buildings provide the distinctive setting for downtown revitalization and, when combined with a beautiful natural setting, are a community’s greatest economic development assets. Your good historic building stock is relatively intact, with the exception of a few storefronts that have been significantly modified over time, and at least two drive-through facilities. These commercial drive-through windows have the double impact of breaking the strong rhythm of the commercial facades and perpetually underutilizing the building envelope/airspace – the result being a perpetual loss in potential public benefit that only occupied multi-story space in downtown commercial buildings provide.

While many people do, it is important for the entire community to recognize the quality of these irreplaceable buildings, their character-defining value, and their potential to leverage the benefits of incentives such as the historic tax credits to restore and preserve them well into the future. As we and many others regularly state: historic preservation is a proven economic development tool and will significantly raise the level of revitalization here to the status it deserves.

Maine Downtown Center Senior Advisor, Chris Glass, offers these comments:

“In general, Farmington has done a good job of caring for its downtown, building on the façade improvement project of 20 years ago. There are a few exceptions, notably the corner building with the (vinyl, I assume) siding on the upper floors, but overall the downtown looks well cared for and is in good shape. New signage is excellent, and the sidewalks and streets are well maintained. The new walking tour signs are handsome and indicate pride in the town.

“The attractiveness to pedestrians of the downtown is hampered by the lack of retail on the west side of Main Street south of Broadway and on both sides of Broadway,

but especially the north side, west of Main Street. Banks and offices don't provide as much visual interest and pedestrian activity as retail shops. Combined with the alternative offered by the new shopping district on the flats to the west of downtown, this could prove to be a drag on the continued vitality of the center of town. This is both a Design and Economic Restructuring issue."

Maine Downtown Center Senior Advisor, Jayne Palmer, echoes Chris's comments:

"The streetscape is pleasing with many original buildings well preserved; however, it does not look particularly "alive." I know they have made improvements since a few years ago with trees and benches, yet they need more."

The Downtown Team members concur: high quality, well designed streetscape improvements should be a priority. Farmington is fortunate to have a very walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown. To encourage more of this, a complete streetscape rendering is suggested in order for building owners, merchants, residents and – importantly – your elected officials – to visualize the possibilities. The results would be instantly noticeable, and would have the important affect of softening facades and providing pedestrian amenities currently only available in the park across from the Court House.



Benches, flowers boxes or barrels, window displays, attractive and effective signs (of which you have great examples), color and street trees will all enhance the downtown experience.

As Franklin County's seat of government, Farmington's success with the preservation methodology could positively influence other communities in the county struggling with similar issues in their commercial cores. Demolition should always be the absolute last resort as it results in gutting the heart of your community of its heritage and distinct character thereby jeopardizing your strong position in the regional marketplace as a community with heart and heritage. Historic buildings need proper rehabilitation to correct deferred maintenance and/or unsympathetic changes that have occurred over time.

Embrace those historic buildings! Analyze each for its current condition and future potential. Begin by gathering all the historic photos you can of your downtown buildings, engaging the partnership of the Farmington Historical Society, UMF, the Maine Historical Society's *Maine Memory Network* and many others. This treasure trove of historic data (in

addition to the National Register district nomination) should be utilized to assist property owners, your Design committee and the Town in making façade design decisions.



Historic images provide valuable clues for façade enhancements

The next step for you to investigate is some form of local preservation legislation to help protect your historic built environment – your key downtown asset – and to incentivize private investment downtown. Thousands of towns and cities nationwide have adopted historic preservation ordinances, including many in Maine. Some of these ordinances are more advisory in nature, which Farmington may wish to consider at this stage. To learn more, contact either/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (287-2132), Maine Preservation (775-3652) or the Maine Downtown Center (622-6345.)

Most often, changes over time detract from the original design integrity – we see many examples of this erosion in downtowns across Maine, including Farmington. Small changes and improvements can make a significant difference and will begin to build energy and similar interest by building owners up and down the street. *The Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings* offers practical, common sense advice to building owners and contractors. Base your design decisions upon those historic photos you gathered or find clues in the building. You will begin to accomplish two things: 1) restore the authentic appearance of these character-defining buildings and/or 2) rehabilitate buildings with design sensitivity to original design principles and the neighboring context.



We also encourage you to develop simple design guidelines for downtown buildings. Check out Gardiner Main Street's efforts here – their publication is posted on their website. A fresh coat of paint and some simple maintenance are easy opportunities for volunteers to pitch in to make an immediate difference.



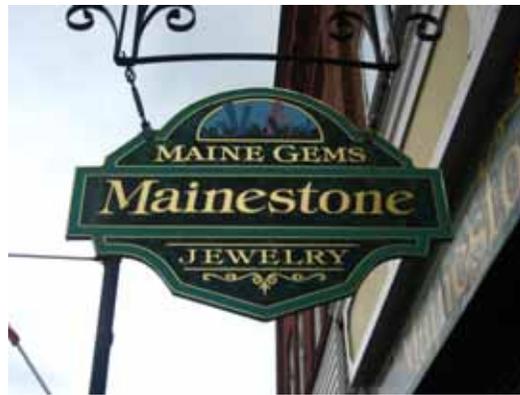
Design guidelines serve to inform, educate and encourage good alteration design sympathetic to the downtown context and compatible to the historic character of the National Register district. They also inform good building stewardship practices and should discuss ways to incorporate savvy energy efficiency methods while retaining historic building fabric.

Building density is a good thing in downtowns. Connected facades invite pedestrian traffic and helps create a symbiotic energy that is distinctive from the detached commercial buildings that generally flank downtown or appear randomly at the gateways.



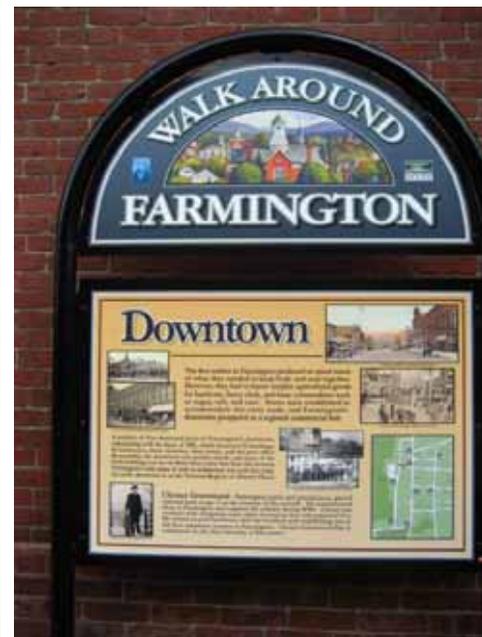
Mid-block drive-through facilities, while convenient to drivers, can be hazardous to pedestrians and underutilize the allowable building envelope and create a break in the façade plane.

Vacant storefronts (of which we saw very few) make downtowns feel “hollow” and unappealing. If you find yourself in this situation, an option to reducing dark cavernous voids is to install a temporary wall or curtain a few feet behind the storefront and provide lighting (on a timer). Next, introduce rotating displays which could be historic photos of the building and/or town, work by local artists and/or youth, local business display ads, your library or a “what is happening on Main Street” display. Be creative!



Gold stars to Farmington for *excellent* downtown signage – among the best in Maine and a signature of your downtown. This is a big issue with big results, as you have experienced. Signs constructed of quality materials, nicely designed and scaled to the building are not only aesthetically appealing but they present a harmonious setting for shopping and doing business. We encourage you to keep the good work!

Window displays offer opportunities to involve a variety of people from the community - particularly clever and creative UMF students. What about a window display contest? Invite a display professional to give an evening workshop with hot tips on how to make storefront displays sing! Encourage members of the Design and Promotions committee to take pictures during their travels of any and all storefront window displays (and signs) that catch their eye and make them pause. Those are the windows that work. Study the elements and help your downtown merchants improve their greeting-card-behind-glass.



Consider creating a podcast walking tour utilizing your new interpretive signs.

Overall, downtown Farmington is an excellent example of what can be achieved by paying attention to the impression that the town makes. Well done!

Promotions Observations and Suggestions for Farmington

Branding images are most effective when used widely – by merchants, partner organizations, the Town, etc. Use your brand image everywhere - on banners, shopping bags, marketing materials and public signs including way-finding, directional, entry gateways, facility identification and town entry monuments. These signs, combined with other design amenities, will help create an appealing environment for residents and visitors and need to be produced in sustainable materials for durability and easy maintenance. (For a PowerPoint on Promotions, Marketing and Branding, presented through the Downtown Institute, visit the MDC website at www.mdf.org/SessionVResourceList.php.)

Through your association with the Maine Downtown Center, you have truly vast resources available to you through the National Main Street Center's members-only section online. You will find a substantial amount of practical advice, innovative ideas and guidance to help you develop a solid promotion strategy for downtown Farmington. We encourage you to take advantage of our low-cost Downtown Institute sessions offered six times a year.



Farmington's internationally famous trio provides multiple promotional opportunities!

The Chester Greenwood Day is a well known, successful signature event. We urge you to continue working with all your partners, including the Nordica museum and perhaps Olympian Seth Wescott, to bring people downtown in every season. The Farmington Fair is a superb regional event loaded with cross marketing opportunities. Events are excellent opportunities to engage volunteers of all ages and interests in downtown, and help build the base of support Farmington needs to move forward in its downtown revitalization efforts.

Remember the importance of retail events which serve triple duty: 1) they bring shoppers to downtown, 2) they get shoppers inside stores spending money, and 3) they can galvanize merchants to your downtown mission, vision and efforts. Many of our participating Main Street Maine and Maine Downtown Network communities have created annual signature retail events that have become extremely successful. You might try an “Early Bird” sale as a retail promotion for the first day of hunting season; details are available through the Maine Downtown Center. These events are easy, fun and are great media photo opportunities! Please share your success stories with the MDC for posting on our website.

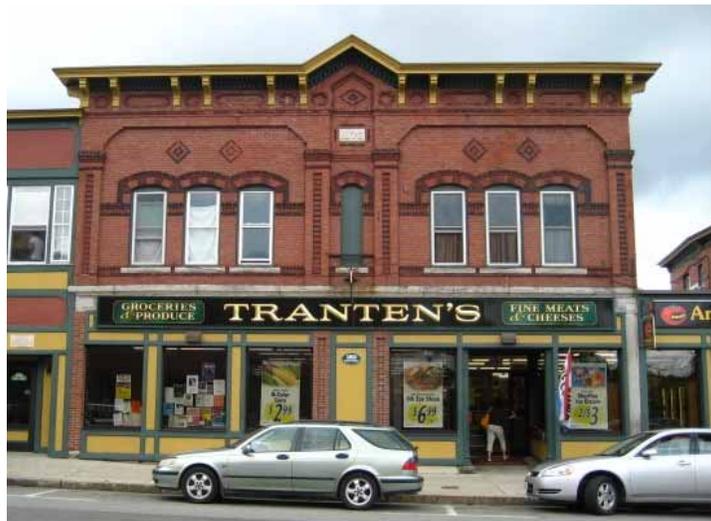
Promoting “heritage retailing” is becoming increasingly effective for downtown retail districts and celebrates Maine’s creative community. According to the National Main Street Center, heritage retailing is “the term for buying local and providing those purchasing opportunities to visitors and community residents alike. Buying local can be implemented on a variety of scales from large to small, and one of its many positive aspects is that any community or individual can participate. Buying goods made locally keeps revenue in your community and, if these products reflect the history or character of your community, they will play an important role in your development of a heritage retailing strategy.” Use your collective media buying power to promote your unique position in the regional marketplace.

Sister Cities are another good way to connect merchants and residents to communities with some connection to Farmington. You don’t have to have just one. Not only does this encourage tourism and school connections, but it provides good publicity and good will between communities.

Take the lead to build pride in your built environment. Find opportunities to work with MSAD9 and UMaine Farmington, your library and private teaching facilities (all ages) to create lesson plans centered on the history and architecture of Farmington. The Design and Promotions Committee could work together on projects such as:

- creating an architectural scavenger hunt downtown
- developing a monthly downtown building trivia contest
- printing a coloring book based on historic downtown and residential architecture

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FARMINGTON



Tranten's Market fills an important need downtown, and features a wine cave!

Farmington’s downtown is loaded with amenities other communities *wish* they had! The Downtown Team was impressed with the use of upper floor space that have either retained their original office and/or residential use or where new housing units have been created. Upper floor use is often a very difficult goal to achieve, though it appears that much of downtown Farmington has figured out how to accomplish this. Establishing a diverse mix

of residents – living right in downtown and within immediate proximity - is essential to keep downtowns thriving.



Focusing on ground floor retail with upper levels reserved for offices and residential uses will help insure a proper economic mix of retail/office and keep pedestrian traffic high. Some communities have institute vertical zoning to accomplish this multiple-use goal.

Surveys are critically important tools to provide a basic understanding of your downtown in the regional marketplace. We understand you are currently raising funds to obtain professional services to conduct surveys of business owners, customers (through intercept surveys) and parking. This is energy well spent, within reason and budget; however, it is important for a variety of reasons to not simply turn this over to paid consultants and students to accomplish. Your committee, perhaps bolstered with students and other volunteers, needs to roll up their sleeves and dive in – after receiving training on how to best approach people for information. This is where professional guidance can channel, champion and help you analyze your efforts. An example worth investigating is the ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) group in Bath, who enjoy conducting these surveys.

Once your basic surveys are conducted and analyzed, you should consider conducting a residential survey. As you well know, many residents rarely or never come downtown. It will be very beneficial to discover what would change their lack of interest in downtown.

You may also consider hosting a Business Barometer along the successful Bath model – this would be a great new beginning for the ER committee and would get the retailers and restaurateurs involved. The story of bringing Tranten’s Market to downtown is a wonderful story. It can be done again. Appliance and furniture stores and independent drug stores also make good downtown anchor businesses.

Business retention and recruitment requires the work of downtown ambassadors. Package your amenities and assets and go after the businesses you lack to further strengthen downtown Farmington regional marketplace. Downtown Team member, Abbe Levin, from the Maine Office of Tourism states “you have an abundance of amenities, both natural and

built, and unique features - all great assets.” She lists a few that stand out and provides a few recommendations, as follows:

Main Street

Highly walkable downtown with pleasant side streets

Historic downtown signage is excellent

A few great downtown businesses: Renys, DDG Booksellers, Tranten’s Market

Newly installed street level planters

Overall streetscape is pleasant – well designed streetlights

Meeting House Park is an anchor

Recommendations:

- install quality benches (none exist now)
- work with banks to improve drive-through passages (hardscape)
- extend sidewalks and “feel” through campus section of Main Street

Unique Features

Lively university town with campus located close-in to the heart of downtown

Recently installed interpretive signage

Recommendation:

- Make the signage sites come alive (e.g., map, podcast, volunteer docents)

Built Environment

Recommendation:

- Provide free Wi-Fi downtown: work with UMF to make Main Street wireless

Recommendations regarding Fall Foliage tours:

- Work with tour operators to build a better local experience
- Intercept coaches with the Farmington story, maps, coupons, lunch suggestions and local apples before passengers disembark for 90 minutes downtown
- Educate merchants on ways to gear up for and welcome coach passengers, who are in downtown briefly - and ready to shop!

Amenities, local and regional

Friendly college town with coffee shops and good bookstores

Movie theater

Farmers Market (Have promotional and directional signs on Main Street on market days)

Farmington Public Library

Farmington Fairgrounds

Sandy River

Access to outdoor recreation:

Titcomb Mountain and Spruce Mountain Ski Areas

Gateway to Sugarloaf

Maine Huts and Trails

Golf



The Alumni Theater (rehabilitation plans are underway) and the State are two cultural landmarks

Additional Local Cultural Attributes to promote

- UMaine events
- Connection between cultural/natural resources
- Nordica house museum
- Hippach Field and the Farmington Fair (1840)
- Gateway to two Scenic Byways
- Maine Ski Museum
- Meeting House Park concerts



Marketing the historic tax credits is another strategy to stimulate downtown development - by contacting real estate-oriented new owners, encouraging residential development, getting a few smaller projects started at the same time and marketing downtown as a whole during the process. For more information on this, contact Mike Johnson at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (287-2132) or Greg Paxton at Maine Preservation (775-3652.)

Utilize your new connections to the Maine Downtown Center's resources (staff, Advisory Council, Senior Advisors, website, annual conference, Downtown Institute and the 16 other participating Main Street Maine and Maine Downtown Center communities.) Also, take advantage of your membership with the National Trust Main Street Center and tap into their vast online resources and listserv.

We applaud Farmington for becoming a Maine Downtown Network community and look forward to working with you in the future.