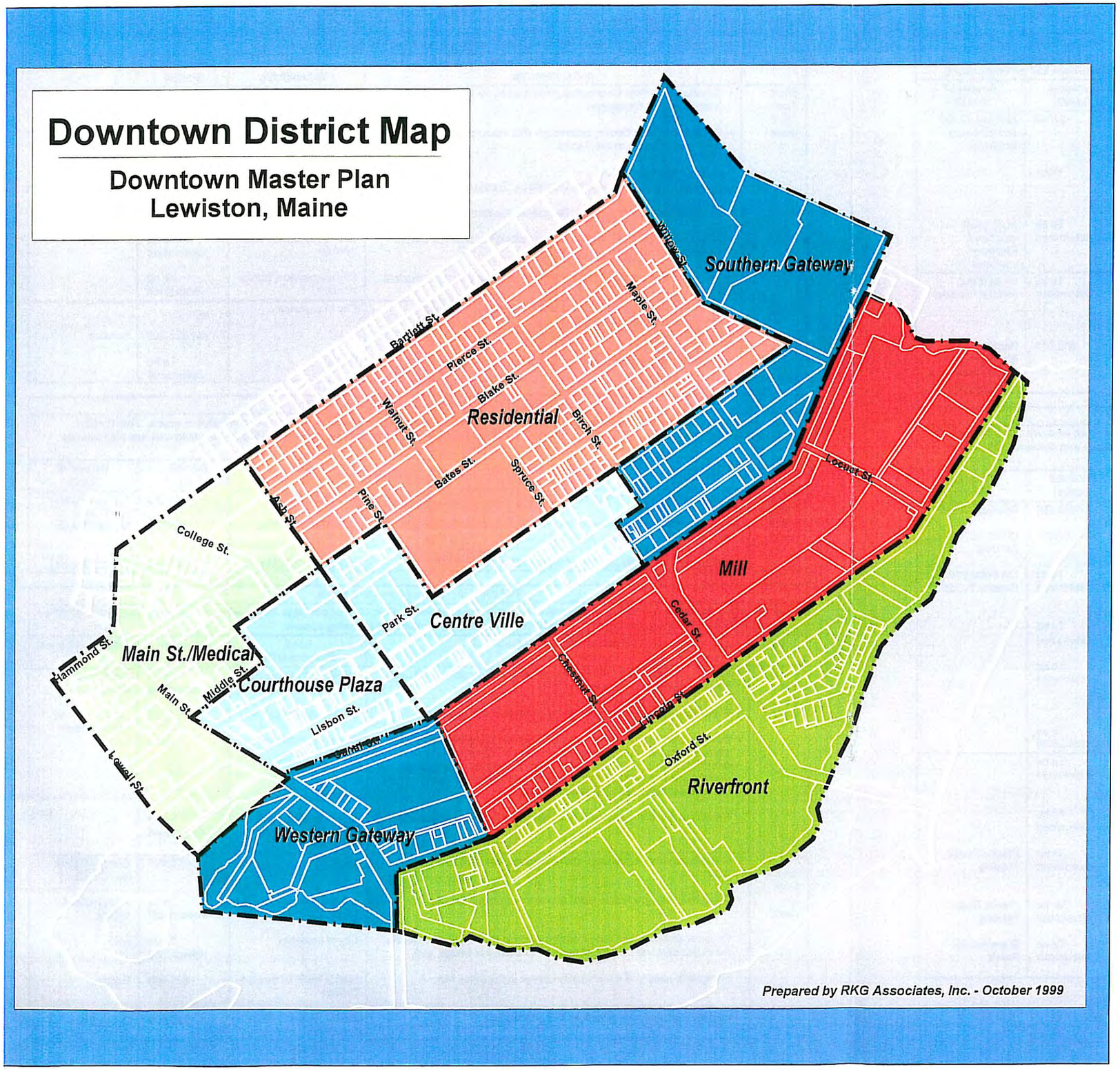

Vision To foster diverse employment, residential, cultural and educational opportunities, including open space and recreational amenities within the downtown. This in turn enhances the vitality of the downtown, for the benefit of all residents, while maintaining the City's industrial heritage, and will help restore the presence of specialty retailers along Lisbon Street.

Goal 1 *To stimulate vital and new business investment in the downtown in order to maintain and improve real estate values, occupancy levels, employment opportunities and consumer activity.*

Goal 2 *To enhance the open/green space in downtown by creating gateways, pedestrian corridors/pocket parks, improved linkages and density reductions via aggressive inventory demolitions.*

Goal 3 *To encourage the adaptive, mixed reuse of downtown properties including commercial opportunities for the mill buildings and residential opportunities for owner occupied housing.*

Goal 4 *To promote and realize a downtown which is cleaner, friendlier and safer.*

Goal 5 *To undertake a design process for downtown which develops public space.*

Goal 6 *To enhance the aesthetic quality of Lewiston through: the expansion of arts/cultural amenities; use of the canal system, the Androscoggin River/riverfront; and, the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and where appropriate relocation of historic buildings.*

Goal 7 *To improve the vehicular access to and through downtown via traffic management, rerouting (where practical and feasible) and improved parking capacities at a scale which also serves the pedestrian and enhances the urban landscape.*

Goal 8 *To integrate Bates College, L/A College, Central Maine Technical College, Mid-State College, Husson College, St. Mary's Hospital, CMMC and other area businesses and employers more fully into the downtown community.*

Goal 9 *To establish an organizational and procedural process which ensures that this Master Plan is enacted and is systematically and routinely monitored to measure progress, review accountability and promote success.*

Goal 10 *To keep civic, office, government functions, as well as state and federal activities, in downtown Lewiston.*

Goal 11 *To conduct the development of downtown Lewiston, especially along the riverfront area, in a manner which is consistent with the initiatives in Auburn.*

Residential - District Specific Actions

Goal: Transition to more owner occupied housing with less density into a mixed income, mixed use neighborhood. Foster a sense of community and place through neighborhood meeting/gathering places, cultural places and services. The District contains 337 properties; 63.6 acres and 1,801,100 SF of buildings. It is 31% vacant, generates $869,000 in taxes and contains 838 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Establish a demolition schedule for an estimated 225,000 SF of building (approximately 150 units)	City of Lewiston, Empower Lewiston and LHA	$1.1M	Bonding, CDBG and Empower Lewiston
	• Create flexible zoning requirements to reduce density where desired and to direct development where appropriate.	City of Lewiston, Planning Board and City Council	None	
	• Work with Lewiston Housing Authority (LHA) to establish funding sources and partnership(s).	LHA, Empower Lewiston and City of Lewiston	To be determined	HUD, local charities & Empower Lewiston
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Consider developing a pilot project to acquire properties, assemble lots, in order to develop parking, green space, owner occupied housing opportunities.	Private sector with incentives and City of Lewiston, LHA and Empower Lewiston	To be determined	Local/State/ Federal Funding
	• Explore reuse potential of former St. Dom's/ St. Peter's campus for establishing artist colony or workshop/gallery space, children's museum, assisted living, neighborhood center or educational facility.	L/A Arts, L/A Excels and Portland (ME) Catholic Diocese	$50,000	Bonding, State/Federal /Local Grants and Private Funds

Riverfront - District Specific Actions

Goal: Develop as a recreation, employment and middle income housing area, using the Androscoggin River as an amenity. This District contains 151 properties; 35.7 acres; 758,700 SF of buildings. It is 48% vacant; generates $279,000 in taxes and contains 196 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Establish a demolition schedule for an estimated 50,000 SF of building.	City of Lewiston	$250,000	Bonding, CDBG
	• Complete "bike path" and link with district(s).	City of Lewiston, LA Excels and CABPAC	$200,000/yr.	ISTEA/TEA-21 & Bonding
	• Expand proposed Railroad Park to include more acreage and encourage both passive/active recreation use (theater/performance area, mufti-use athletic fields).	Parks & Recreation Dept., City of Lewiston and L/A Railroad	To be determined	L/A Railroad and General Funds
	• Consider relocation of a portion of the City Parks and Recreation Department to the Riverfront.	City of Lewiston, Parks & Recreation Dept.	To be determined	
	• Create new civic entity to mange programming and budgeting at Railroad Park.	MDRTF, LMRC, Parks & Recreation Dept., CABPAC and L/A Railroad	To be determined	
	• Add restrooms, police precinct and a performance stage with lighting to Railroad Park.	City of Lewiston and L/A Railroad	To be determined	
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Create more green space and open space, with linkage between them.	City of Lewiston, Parks & Recreation Dept., and CABPAC	To be determined	
	• Targeted new business growth such as restaurants and farmer's market, etc..	L/A Economic Growth Council and LMRC	To be determined	
	• Develop more upscale residential housing as opportunities present themselves.	Private sector with incentives and City of Lewiston	To be determined	Private Sector Funding
	• Consider conversion of Continental Mill, or other appropriate mills, to housing if they become available.	City of Lewiston	To be determined	Private Sector Funding
	• Explore the potential for canoeing, boating and related activities on the river.	MDRTF, LMRC, Parks & Recreation Dept. and L/A railroad	To be determined	State/Federal Funds

Courthouse Plaza - District Specific Actions

Goal: Develop as the professional, legal and financial center of downtown. This District contains 60 properties; 13.1 acres; and 680,600 SF of buildings. It is 24% vacant; generates $645,000 in taxes and contains 546 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Continue to monitor Courthouse project, lobby for it and promote its achievements/contributions.	City of Lewiston and MDRTF	None	
	• Develop new courthouse, open space and associated parking in a flexible manner within the District.	State of Maine	$5,000,000	State
	Build the new Courthouse **Year One -** Acquisition, Demolition, Construction	City of Lewiston	$930,920	Bonding
	Year Two - Acquisition, Demolition, Construction		$676,689	Bonding
	• Add landscaping to existing municipal parking lot, enhance exterior buffering, screening.	City of Lewiston, Public Works	To be determined	Bonding
	• Study possible closing of Lisbon Street from Main Street to Chestnut Street.	City of Lewiston, Public Works	To be determined	
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Continue to develop new Courthouse. Also add streetscape improvements and new street lighting. **Year Three -** Acquisition, Demolition, Construction	City of Lewiston	$1,823,599	Bonding
	• Monitor street maintenance and cleanliness.	DDMC	To be determined	

Main Street - Medical - District Specific Actions

Goal: Continue to develop as business and medical district while preserving the historical integrity of the building stock. This District contains 122 properties; 15.2 acres and 756,100 SF of buildings. It is 21% vacant; generates $566,000 in taxes and has 299 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Improve streetscape amenities.	City of Lewiston	$5,000	General Funds and CDBG
	• Conduct appropriate studies or support existing efforts/initiatives for the reuse of the former Knapp Shoe building.	MDRTF and DDMgr	$25,000	General Funds
	• Study feasibility of the location of a State office building.	MDRTF and DDMgr	$25,000	General Funds

Mill District - District Specific Actions

Goal: Continue to develop as major employment center in the downtown. This District contains 55 properties; 31.6 acres and 1,435,500 SF of buildings. It is 49% vacant; generates $291,000 in taxes and contains 684 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Continue development efforts at Bates Mill including parking (allowing for landscaping and buffering).	LMRC and Private Developers	To be determined	Bonding and Private Funds
	• Evaluate feasibility of an arts/cultural complex in the Bates Mill.	L/A Excels and L/A Arts	$25,000	L/A Excels and State/Federal Grants
	• Develop cost-benefit analysis and strategic parking plan which weighs alternatives of full buildout and parking needs against open space and urban landscape. Consider use of trolley system, multi-use parking destinations serving Canal and Lincoln Street, alternative parking (Mill #5), and additional Mill District demolitions.	City of Lewiston and LATC	None	
	• Create more green space and open space, with linkage between them.	City of Lewiston and Parks & Recreation Department	To be determined	
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Night illumination (small flood spots) of Bates Mill from Canal Street view.	LMRC	$5,000	General Funds and CDBG
	• Consider creating a "canal walk" atmosphere around the District.	L/A Excels and CABPAC	To be determined	State/Federal Grants
	• Consider limited expansion of canal system in this district to stimulate developer demand (views of river, quick access to bridge, etc).	City of Lewiston	To be determined	
	• Evaluate feasibility of a community college in the Bates Mill.	LMRC, MDRTF and L/A College	$25,000	Bonding
	• Evaluate feasibility of artists lofts in the Bates Mill.	LMRC, MDRTF, L/A Excels and L/A Arts	$25,000	Bonding and Private Funding

Centre Ville - District Specific Actions

Goal: Develop as a mixed use commercial, cultural and residential downtown center. Preserve and restore historic buildings and initiate economic revitalization through increased occupancies of downtown properties. This District contains 85 properties; 11.3 acres and 703,800 SF of building. It is 34% vacant; provides $457,800 in taxes and contains 576 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Establish a demolition schedule for an estimated 45,000 SF of building.	City of Lewiston	$225,000	Bonding, General Funds and CDBG
	• Improve streetscape, parking amenities.	City of Lewiston		
	SITE 1 - Pocket Park - Acquisition Construction (2,500 SF)		$5,000 $25,000	Bonding, General Funds and CDBG
	SITE 2 - Pocket Park "A" - Acquisition Demolition Construction (10,000 SF)		$45,000 $50,000 $100,000	
	SITE 2 - Pocket Park "B" - Acquisition Construction (2 @ 2,500 SF each)		$25,000 $50,000	
	• Increase storefront occupancies, consider financial incentives including matching grant funds for facade and fit-out (exterior, interior work); empowerment funds; and, owner initiated low-rent moratorium.	LMRC, DDMgr, Property Owners and Empower Lewiston	To be determined	CDBG, Matching Grant Funds, Empower Lewiston
	• Increase first floor retail uses/tenants, possibly around a Franco-American theme, utilizing matching grants program.	L/A Excels, Forum Francophone des Affairs, LMRC and DDMC	To be determined	Local/State Matching Grant Funds
	• Explore re-establishing elevator funding program and use in conjunction with the matching grants program.	City of Lewiston, DDMC and State	To be determined	State/Local/ Federal Funding
	• Work with Lewiston Housing Authority to establish funding for upper story residential rental housing.	LHA and DDMC	To be determined	
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Create pedestrian connector(s) to the Mill and Riverfront districts.	City of Lewiston, Cities of the Androscoggin Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CABPAC)	$220,000	Local/State/ Federal Funding, including ISTEA/TEA-21
	• Keep parking plan updated. Pay particular attention to maintain available parking for retail customers.	City of Lewiston	To be determined	Local/State/ Federal Funding
Develop-ment Options	Consider various development alternatives for meeting future parking needs including: • Establishing trolley system. • Building parking garages on Canal Street.	Lewiston/Auburn Transit Committee (LATC)		State and Federal Grants
	SITE 1 - 2 Deck Parking - Acquisition Construction (150 spaces)	City of Lewiston and Empower Lewiston	$110,000 $1,500,000	Bonding and Empower Lewiston
	SITE 2 - 2 Deck Parking - Acquisition Demolition Construction (550 spaces)		$680,000 $95,000 $5,500,000	Bonding and Empower Lewiston
	• Developing multiple use parking facilities serving the Mill District, Centre Ville, and Courthouse Plaza, as well as daytime and evening downtown populations, employees, residents.	City of Lewiston, Empower Lewiston and L/A Excels		Bonding and Private Foundations

Southern Gateway - District Specific Actions

Goal: Define District as attractive gateway entrance with boulevard treatment and sites for future development. This District contains 44 properties, 23.4 acres and 549,300 SF of buildings. It is 40% vacant; generates $127,7000 in taxes and contains 100 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Establish a demolition schedule for an estimated 90,000 SF of building.	City of Lewiston	$450,000	Bonding
	• Streetscape - continue landscaping and lighting consistent with upper Lisbon Street.	City of Lewiston	$50,000 to $100,000	Bonding
	• Evaluate feasibility of creating an urban renewal district in this area.	MDRTF, LMRC, City of Lewiston and DDMC	$50,000	Bonding
	• Paint side of Public Theatre as mural.	L/A Arts, Public Theatre	$2,500	Non-Profit Org.
Medium to Long Term 3+ years	• Gateway - create esplanade treatment along Lisbon Street similar to Main Street.	City of Lewiston	To be determined	General Funds
	• Consider developing parking and a truck terminal site, with bakery, on the block bounded by Birch, Maple, Lisbon and Park Street(s).	Private sector and City	To be determined	EDA, DOT, Private Sector
	• Discuss reorienting historic brick structures to face Maple Street and for possible use by Public Theatre.	Historic Preservation Review Board	To be determined	
	• Consider the acquisition of food bank property to assemble with other properties in order to improve gateway entrance and encourage new development.	City of Lewiston	To be determined	
	• Further study the costs and feasibility of reorienting traffic flows along Lisbon, Canal and Park Street(s).	City of Lewiston and DOT	To be determined	

Western Gateway - District Specific Actions

Goal: Develop as attractive, viable entryway into the City. This District contains 50 properties, 30.6 acres; 534,000 SF of buildings. It is 20% vacant; generates $209,400 in taxes and contains 92 parking spaces.

Term	Recommended Actions and Comments	Lead Responsibility	Potential Cost(s)	Source of Funds
Short Term 1 to 2 years	• Establish a demolition schedule for an estimated 50,000 SF of building.	City of Lewiston	$250,000	General Funds and CDBG
	• Work in conjunction with Auburn to bring about a hotel/conference center complex in the downtown area.	City of Lewiston, City of Auburn, L/A Excels and L/A Together	To be determined	Bonding, L/A Excels and Private Sector Funding
Demo-lition	• Consider properties adjacent to Mill #5 and Main Street as a redevelopment site or for a boulevard treatment and greenway entrance.	City of Lewiston	$500,000	Bonding
	• Consider acquisition of Libbey Mill, Cowan Mill and relocation of Central Maine Power Company for future development site. This site could be used for hotel, offices, restaurant or housing.	City of Lewiston, L/A Excels, Private Sector	To be determined	
	• Evaluate usage of Mill #5 as a possible parking structure.	LMRC, City of Lewiston	To be determined	State and Private Sector Funding
	• Evaluate feasibility of reusing the Empire Theater when new State legislation has been passed.	City of Lewiston, State and Private Sector	To be determined	

The Mayor's Downtown Renaissance Task Force Members

Kaileigh Tara, Mayor

Joyce Bilodeau, Co-Chair
Rita Dube, Co-Chair
Paul Badeau
Paul Bonneau
Jim Carignan
Claudette Caron
Leighton Cooney
Chuck Gill
Michael Grimmer
Lionel Guay
Barbara E. Labbe
Ray Lagueux
Charles Manning
Susan Mulready
Norm Rousseau
Paul Samson
Donna Steckino
Dick Tardif
Richard Willing
Fredda Wolf

Recommended Overall Actions to Implement the Downtown Master Plan

Action	Responsibility	Estimated Cost	Source of Funds
1. Continue to utilize the Mayor's Downtown Renaissance Task Force (MDRTF) in an advisory/oversight capacity for policy development in the downtown.	City Council	None	None
2. Consider expanding the role of the Lewiston Mill Redevelopment Corporation (LMRC) to include all of downtown. The Development Manager would work for this or a similar entity. Possibly rename the LMRC the Lewiston Downtown Development Corporation. Also, consider designating the entire downtown a TIF district.	City Council and LMRC	To be determined	State/Federal Grants and General Funds
3. Hire an experienced senior level Downtown Development Manager (DDMgr) to function as staff to MDRTF.	City Council and MDRTF	$80,000	General Funds
4. Work with local banks to establish a low interest loan pool for acquisition and redevelopment of property.	DDMgr	None	Local Banks
5. Establish a matching City grant program for building improvements.	City Council	$1M	CDBG and Bonding
6. Retain an experienced real estate broker to market downtown properties.	LMRC and DDMgr	$100,000	General Funds and Commissions
7. Continue the program of acquiring and demolishing blighted, vacant properties in a strategic manner, focusing particularly on opportunities to create new development or to enhance the value of existing properties.	City Council, LMRC and Planning Board	$1M to $2M	Bonding, General Funds and CDBG
8. Market vacant, non-strategic City-owned land to developers.	City Council, LMRC, Planning Board and Land Committee	None	-
9. Involve the Lewiston Housing Authority in the implementation of this plan.	City Council and MDRTF	None	-
10. Seek the involvement of private foundations, institutions, local charities and civic organizations in the implementation of various aspects of this plan.	MDRTF, LMRC, L/A Excels and Empower Lewiston	To be determined	Various
11. Develop flexible land use regulations, including parking requirements, space and bulk standards and an expedited review and approval process for the development and adaptive reuse of downtown sites.	Planning Board and City Council	None	-
12. Reduce the level of heavy truck traffic through the downtown. Evaluate the usage of EDA and DOT funds for the possible creation of a truck route adjacent to the downtown.	City Council and Public Works	$50,000	EDA, DOT and General Funds
13. Evaluate the feasibility of a trolley system versus new parking garages.	MDRTF and LATC	$25,000	Federal/State Grants and Private Sector
14. Improve the Pedestrian Connection from Courthouse Plaza and Centre Ville to the Riverfront.	City Council, LMRC and CABPAC	To be determined	State Grants, Federal ISTEA/TEA-21 and Bonding
15. Have City Council adopt the downtown plan as a component of the City-wide Comprehensive Plan.	Planning Board, City Council and MDRTF	None	-
16. Undertake the necessary studies as recommended in the District specific actions.	MDRTF, City Council and Planning Board	To be determined	General Funds and Grants
17. Seek Special State Legislation to finance cultural projects.	DDMgr and State Representatives	$25,000	General Funds
18. Seek a Riverfront District Grant similar to what Augusta, Maine, received ($600,000).	City Council and State Representatives	-	-
19. Develop and implement an overall marketing program for the downtown.	MDRTF, City Council and DDMgr	$50,000	General Funds
20. Develop additional cultural programs and activities in the downtown.	L/A Excels, L/A Arts and Recreation Department	$50,000 to $100,000	Charitable Foundations, Private Sector, General Funds and Bonding
21. Evaluate the potential usage of SuperPark Legislation/Bonding with Auburn and adjacent communities. This could be used to help fund a hotel/conference center or other similar project of regional significance.	City Development Department, Department of Economic/Community Development and L/A Together	None	-
22. Long term, consider the use of tax increment financing to help fund municipal parking structures.	LMRC, Public Works and City Council	To be determined	EDA and DOT
23. Establish design guidelines for the downtown.	Planning Board, City Council, Historic Preservation Review Board and Public Works	$100,000	Grants
24. Implement other district specific actions as recommended in the downtown plan.	Varies, refer to District Specific Action Plans	Varies, refer to District Specific Action Plans	Varies, refer to District Specific Action Plans

Downtown Master Plan
for the
City of Lewiston, Maine

October 1999

Prepared by
The Mayor's Downtown Renaissance Task Force
and the City of Lewiston

in association with

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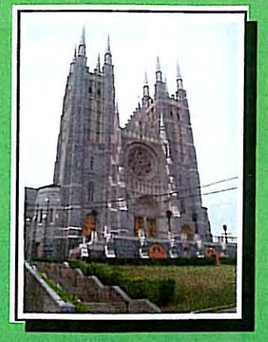
and

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