

# STRATEGIC PLAN

For the City of  
Auburn, Maine



SEPTEMBER 2019

## CITY COUNCIL

2018-2019

Mayor | Jason J. Levesque  
Ward 1 | Holly C. Lasagna  
Ward 2 | Robert P. Hayes  
Ward 3 | Andrew D. Titus  
Ward 4 | Alfreda M. Fournier  
Ward 5 | Leroy G. Walker, Sr.  
At-Large | Belinda A. Gerry  
At-Large | David C. Young

City Manager  
Peter Crichton

Assistant City Manager  
Phillip L. Crowell, Jr.



## COUNCIL RESOLVE

#12-09172018

“Whereas, the City of Auburn has a Comprehensive Plan that is well underway; Whereas, the City of Auburn remains committed to the progress and completion of the Comprehensive Plan; Whereas, the City of Auburn is committed to safe, sustainable, and livable neighborhoods; Whereas, we are a unique small city that offers a quality education and bold economic, recreation, and housing opportunities; Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan states that it is the primary responsibility of the City Manager to implement the Plan; Whereas, the Strategic Plan is a management tool for the implementation of the Plan and other challenges facing the City; Whereas, the Council will vote on each committee and its membership, the charge for each committee, and receive a report back from each committee; Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City Council supports the creation of a Strategic Plan; Be it further resolved that the strategic planning process shall utilize three committees with Growth, Quality of Life, and Investment; And be it further resolved that under the direction and approval of the City Council, the City Manager shall move forward with the strategic planning process.”

PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE: 7-0  
AUBURN, MAINE | SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

**ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2019, THE AUBURN  
CITY COUNCIL PASSED ORDER 105-09092019  
ACCEPTING THIS STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT.**

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*“This Strategic Plan will help position Auburn to become one of the best small cities in America.”*

Peter Crichton, Auburn City Manager

# A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Clifton Greim, P.E. President & CEO, Harriman



Dear Mayor, Councilors, community and contributors;

Successful achievement of goals in any organization, municipality or region begins with an inclusive and clear planning process. The City of Auburn's efforts to attract and retain residents, businesses, and community investment have helped me realize the value of developing a Strategic Plan. A Plan to provide clarity in our community's vision, and priorities and strategies for evolving and reaching our goals and objectives. Most importantly, a Plan that can be shared, measured, marketed, and communicated clearly and consistently.

A well-developed strategic plan speaks to a community that has aspirations and is invested in measured results; a community that has focus, is organized and is a great place to live and work. This is essential in today's competitive market.

With this Strategic Plan in place, the City of Auburn's administration will have a roadmap to follow and the Plan will offer the ability to mark and report on progress. As citizens, we will also be able to see the advancement of the envisioned results. This Strategic Plan will inform the Comprehensive planning process, and land use, zoning and facilities will benefit from the clarity and priorities established through this Plan.

I want to acknowledge the support, trust and participation from Auburn's Mayor and the City Council. Their leadership has brought this planning to reality. I also want to thank the many community citizens for their commitment and hours of valuable insight, wisdom and aspirations. We are lucky to live in a community that has such citizen response.

Special thanks to the three chairs of our sub-committees: Rick Malinowski, Chair of the Growth Sub-Committee; Dave Gonyea, Chair of the Quality Sub-Committee; and Bob Stone, Chair of the Invest Sub-Committee. Great leadership.

My personal thanks to Auburn's incredible City administration. Our City is fortunate to have such a high-performing and skilled staff! City Manager Peter Crichton and Assistant City Manager Phil Crowell provided direction and leadership throughout this process. Communications and Compliance Manager Liz Allen has been nothing short of amazing in her day-to-day engagement. Thanks, as well to Jody Durisko, Executive Assistant, for her creative scheduling and participation.

Lastly, my thanks to Harriman's Director of Planning, Emily Keys Innes. Her engagement and perspective provided alignment and great benchmarking measures.

I have been proud and honored to be part of this process and to participate with such a fantastic group of contributors. My level of confidence and excitement for this community's future has never been higher.

Congratulations, thank you...and onward and upward!

Clif Greim  
President, Harriman



# A NOTE FROM THE MANAGER

Peter Crichton, Auburn City Manager

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and Community;

As you can probably imagine, running a city can be a challenging and exciting adventure! We truly have a great team who are making things happen every day. But, of course, there are always more priorities than there are personnel and fiscal resources available to address the many demands and needs that a community our size faces. The City's loss of \$18.3 million in municipal revenue sharing to the state of Maine since 2010 has made it particularly challenging and difficult to accomplish everything that elected officials, citizens, and groups would like to see done.

So, what can be done? How can we best move the city forward with so many competing demands and needs? The answer is a dynamic and transformative Strategic Plan! This is a plan that will help guide the City's leaders on the multitude of investments that we could be making, and which of these investments should be a high priority as we strive to be one of the *best small cities in America*. This report is the result of many, many hours of conversations that, through a consensus decision making process, recommends what we hope you will agree should be considered the highest priorities for the City in the next 3-5 years.

This is not an updated Comprehensive Plan for the City. That update is coming in the not too-distant-future. Instead, this is a blueprint for strategic decisions – that with the support and approval of the City Council – will enable the City to be more highly successful and position us for even greater economic success. The Plan addresses issues concerning growth, quality, and investment and as you will read, sets a clear path for the City to follow.

I have tremendous admiration and appreciation for the volunteers and city staff who participated in this process. We were very fortunate to have Clif Greim, CEO of Harriman, as the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, together with an outstanding group of individuals who served on the committee. Our three Sub-committee Chairs were: Rick Malinowski for Growth, Dave Gonyea for Quality, and Bob Stone for Investments. Thank you to everyone who stepped up to play a role on the Strategic Planning Committee and Sub-committees (see Appendix 1).

My personal thanks to Assistant City Manager Phil Crowell for quarterbacking this process in outstanding fashion on a day-to-day basis and to our Compliance & Communications Manager Liz Allen, and Jody Durisko, Executive Assistant for the City Manager's Office for their exceptional assistance. Thanks also to Emily Keys Innes from Harriman, who helped assist us with this process.

Special thanks to the City Council and Mayor for their support and trust in this process. This is an important initiative by the City of Auburn. I look forward to seeing this report's strategies and recommendations placed before the City Council. Challenges and opportunities are all around us and with these decisions come financial commitments that will have to be made. The implementation of the report is an important step forward. Only by working together can we improve the future of the City.

Respectfully,  
Peter J. Crichton, City Manager

# STRATEGIC PLANNING: BY THE NUMBERS

Through visioning, brainstorming, and prioritization, participants in Auburn’s Strategic Planning process captured what they felt were the most pressing issues, developed transformative strategies to address them, and made recommendations that lay the foundation for the work of the City moving forward. The image below represents the process “by the numbers.”



**03**  
**FOCUS AREAS**  
The Strategic Planning Committee & Sub-Committees began with three focus areas: QUALITY, GROWTH & INVEST.



**09**  
**GOAL STATEMENTS**  
The Sub-Committees developed nine strategic goals, then expanded on them, forming solutions, action steps & tasks for each



**24**  
**STRATEGIES**  
Twenty-four strategies were presented to the Invest Sub-Committee.



**11**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**  
The Strategic Planning Committee blended 24 strategies to form 11 final recommendations.

# THE PLAN: FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The final recommendations below are the distillation of months of work by the Sub-Committees and Strategic Planning Committee. The SP Committee carefully crafted their recommendations by analyzing the **24 strategies** presented by the Sub-Committees and merging them with associated/complimentary strategies. These recommendations are not listed in order of priority, but according to the sub-group from which they emerged. Behind each recommendation are measured, supporting action steps that will assist with implementation. Refer to Appendix 3 to learn more.

**Work to protect and fully enjoy Auburn's natural resources**

FROM GROWTH 1

**Prioritize transportation by using transit to connect people with communities, employment & services**

FROM QUALITY 1 & GROWTH 4

**Protect Lake Auburn and all other bodies of water**

FROM GROWTH 1

**Improve image of schools and increase commitment to and value of education**

FROM QUALITY 2 & GROWTH 3

**Develop a downtown management district focusing on Great Falls Plaza, downtown & the Androscoggin River**

FROM GROWTH 2

**Study and plan to increase pedestrian environment, to include connectivity**

FROM QUALITY 3 & GROWTH 4

**Define and promote industry clusters**

FROM GROWTH 2

**Establish a city-wide communications plan**

FROM QUALITY 4

**Address identified public service and infrastructure needs**

FROM GROWTH 4

**Invest in arts, history, culture, recreation, and entertainment**

FROM QUALITY 5

**Define neighborhoods; support rehabilitation and beautification**

FROM GROWTH 5

# One Vision. One Plan. One Voice.

The City of Auburn embarked upon this strategic planning process with the desire for **one vision, one plan, one voice.**

## ONE VISION

The City’s vision - as established by the Comprehensive Plan and City Council priorities - remains clear:

“Auburn will be a community that balances urban & rural living, with safe, sustainable, livable neighborhoods that are well-connected; a community to be proud of, with a vibrant workforce and resources that are preserved and protected; a unique small city that offers quality education and bold economic, recreation, and housing opportunities.”

## ONE PLAN

Auburn’s **Comprehensive Plan** serves as a guide for decisions the City must make about growth, development, redevelopment and changes. The Comp Plan established **207** ongoing, short- and long-term strategies for the City. While action has been taken on 89% of these strategies, a well-defined plan for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan - a multi-year *Strategic Plan* with annual updates - will be instrumental as the City works to implement the remaining strategies and prepares for the next Comprehensive Plan update.



# ONE VOICE

Based on the City’s vision, three focus areas were identified: GROWTH [develop & grow our city], QUALITY [enhance our quality of life], and INVEST [invest in our future]. These three focus areas aligned perfectly with the vision and evolved into the Strategic Planning Sub-committees, which included members of Auburn’s business, non-profit, residential, and education communities. In addition, each sub-committee had representatives from city departments.

Each group was tasked with setting goals, creating solutions, prioritizing, and coming up with action steps to implement them. The groups were led by a chairperson and a facilitator who helped direct large and small group work.



“ Auburn will be a community that balances urban & rural living, with safe, sustainable, livable neighborhoods that are well-connected; a community to be proud of, with a vibrant workforce and resources that are preserved and protected; a unique small city that offers quality education and bold economic, recreation, and housing opportunities. ”



# COLLABORATION

## Quality Sub-Committee

DAVID GONYEA, CHAIR | Central Maine Community College

**I was pleased to chair the Quality Sub-Committee as part of the City of Auburn’s strategic planning process.** The sub-committee benefited from the input of a cross section of our fellow Auburn neighbors who shared their own vision and goals for the city. The process was deliberate and thoughtful, and allowed the opportunity for committee members to provide input and opinions on how to best move Auburn forward.

On behalf of the members of my sub-committee, I am proud of our work and thankful that city officials value our input. We understand that this is only the beginning and will work diligently in the future to follow the blueprint set forth.

*David Gonyea, Central Maine Community College  
Quality Sub-Committee Chair*

The goal of the Quality Sub-committee was to develop and grow the city so Auburn will be... *a community to be proud of, with a vibrant workforce and resources that are preserved and well protected.*

Quality sub-committee members worked toward goals that would help the city achieve their vision.

## Growth Sub-Committee

RICK MALINOWSKI, CHAIR | Procter & Gamble Co.

The Growth Sub-Committee accepted the challenge of developing strategy recommendations to support the development and growth of Auburn, while maintaining the balance of urban and rural living. We put a great deal of emphasis on the character of different neighborhoods and the downtown. We talked about how to leverage the uniqueness of each area in a way that promotes growth but maintains the most desirable aspects of that area. The team was enabled to develop real, actionable recommendations through a combination of an outstanding process lead by the City leadership and a team comprised of people who live, work and believe in the City of Auburn.

The vision of the Growth Sub-committee was to develop and grow the city so Auburn will be... *a community that balances urban and rural living, with safe, sustainable, livable neighborhoods that are well connected.*

Sub-committee members developed several goals that would help the city achieve this vision.

**I believe the recommendations made by the Strategic Planning Committee put forth a road map that can deliver real measurable positive change.** The future of the City of Auburn is a bright one.

*Rick Malinowski, Tambrands Inc., A Procter & Gamble Co.  
Growth Sub-Committee Chair*

# GOAL STATEMENTS

During their first meeting, the Quality and Growth Sub-committees enhanced the focus areas identified at the Launch Event. The goal statements evolved into work-groups within the Sub-committees, and participants expanded on the goal statements, forming solutions, action steps and tasks for each.

\*Note: the Growth 3 and Quality 2 work groups were blended, resulting in 9 overall goal statements.

## **GROWTH 1 - RECREATION/NATURAL**

**RESOURCES:** Create, support and market an accessible, connected, and diverse network of recreation and natural resources that provides both destinations and pathways for residents and visitors.

## **GROWTH 2 - DOWNTOWN & BUSINESS PARK:**

Develop clear identities for Auburn's downtown and industrial park that considers scale, connectivity, use (including mixed) and integrity to maximize their appeal.

**GROWTH 3 - EDUCATION:** Develop education strategies for all stages of life that are dynamic, innovative, and collaborative to develop a foundation for economic and personal development.

## **GROWTH 4 - DIRECTED PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE:**

Invest in and maintain the infrastructure necessary to provide a sustainable, safe and livable environment.

## **GROWTH 5 - HOUSING:**

Efficiently utilize current housing stock and sustainable targeted residential development that supports and attracts growth, residents and workforce.

## **QUALITY 1 - EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:**

Attract quality businesses by creating an environment where business can succeed. Collaborate with existing partners to ensure and foster a sustainable and satisfying lifestyle.

**QUALITY 2 - EDUCATION:** Continue to improve access to training programs designed to address workforce gaps; provide diverse, well-rounded education by partnering with available resources and businesses. Protect funding and support for educators, facilities, and accessibility.

**QUALITY 3 - COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS:** Support all residents by fostering a sense of unity while honoring diversity & coordinating community resources and assets to provide wraparound support to all residents.

## **QUALITY 4 - PR, IMAGE & BRANDING:**

Dedicate resources to define our image and identity to build a sense of community.

## **QUALITY 5 - ENTERTAINMENT/CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES & HISTORIC PRESERVATION:**

Recognize the value of historic, cultural, and artistic assets and activities in enriching people's lives and promoting community life. Support the development of future opportunities in culture and the arts.



# “SMARTER” GOALS EXERCISE



**“Smarter” goals help clarify ideas and focus efforts.** The Strategic Planning Committee encouraged Quality and Growth Sub-committee members to apply this “filter” to help with motivation and clarity and lead to a well-constructed Strategic Plan for Auburn.

Each group’s **initial solutions and steps** were run through the filters of **S, M, A and R** (the Strategic Planning Committee worked on T, E, R). If an item was found to NOT be specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic, members worked to build consensus and improve upon the goal.

The SMARTER exercise produced effective, impactful goal statements and solutions, which led to the next step in the process: PRIORITIZATION.

*See Appendix 3 for the solutions and steps that evolved from the SMARTER exercise.*

# PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

**One of the most important components of Auburn’s Strategic Planning process: vision.**

Members of the Committee developed a prioritization matrix through which sub-committee goal statements would be “filtered.” Goals that would be likely to produce the highest impact and put the least demand on community resources were ranked as a 1. Those that would be likely to have a high impact, but put a high demand on resources were given a 2. If they would only make a low impact, even if they required few resources, they were given a 3. And, those that would make a low impact, but demand significant resources were given a 4.

*Ranking results can be found in Appendix 3 of this report.*



# COLLABORATION

## Invest Sub-Committee

ROBERT STONE, CHAIR

The Invest Sub-Committee was charged with discussing and developing a number of strategies generated by the Growth and Quality Sub-Committees. The community-wide planning exercise yielded a large number of ideas pertaining to the city's growth and quality of life. The exciting ideas were, because of the sheer numbers, run through a prioritization process to establish a workable scope of work for the Invest Sub-Committee.

Twenty-four strategies were presented to the Invest Sub-Committee. The committee was organized into sub-groups and the strategies randomly assigned to the sub-groups. The sub-groups convened for the purpose of further defining and detailing the strategies for inclusion in the final report to be presented to the Auburn City Council.

**The entire Strategic Planning exercise was a stimulating and positive experience which surely will be of value to the City Council and City Staff as we move forward into the 2020's in the great community of Auburn.**

*Robert Stone, Invest Sub-Committee Chair*

The goal of the **Invest Sub-committee** was to develop and grow the city so Auburn will be *a unique small city that offers quality education and bold economic, recreation, and housing opportunities.*

The Invest committee began their work after the Growth and Quality Sub-committees completed and reported out on their work. Their task was to take the work and look at the scale and scope of the resources that would be required.

The Invest Sub-committee explored what, if any, programs and services were already contributing to these goals while considering resources that may be available beyond city revenues. The analysis and work of this sub-committee evolved into the **final recommendations** presented by the Strategic Planning Committee.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING:

## Concept to Plan

### An Executive Summary

During the past 150 years, Auburn has developed a rich heritage, a strong economic base, and significant community pride. City staff seek to deliver high-quality services to the community in a way that upholds the vision and values that make Auburn the thriving community it is today.

This Strategic Plan is a blueprint to help guide the City's day-to-day operations and its capital improvement and revitalization programs. This Plan is formulated into three focus areas: Growth, Quality and Invest.

Auburn's City Council appointed community leaders, elected officials, and school and city staff to make up the team of engaged individuals to chart the plan to develop and **GROW** our city, enhance the **QUALITY OF LIFE** of our residents, and **INVEST** in our future. Members were assigned to the Strategic Planning Committee and three Sub-Committees.

The Growth and Quality Sub-Committees identified **Strategic Goals**, along with corresponding priorities for each. These were presented to the Invest Sub-committee, which identified action steps necessary for implementation.

Through visioning, brainstorming, and prioritization exercises, participants captured what they felt were the most pressing issues, developed transformative strategies to address them, and made recommendations to help the City of Auburn move forward. Auburn's Strategic Planning process blended citizen involvement with staff experience and as depicted in the timeline below, in an impressive effort that lasted just short of a year, this Strategic Plan was built with care, with enthusiasm and with devotion to a great city.



# FINAL THOUGHTS: A strategic plan to take Auburn into the next 150 years



Auburn, Maine is an outstanding small city whose geographic location and scale, natural resources, population diversity, long-standing economic initiative, and commitment to a high quality of life make it an appealing place to live and work, play and visit.

It is also a city determined to continue improving. That is why for the past six months, nearly 100 people have actively participated in conversations spanning 1,000 hours, all as a part of a community-wide strategic planning process designed to strengthen the city's quality and enhance its opportunities.

As this work unfolded, a number of core values emerged which became the guiding “north star” for the process. Together, these values speak not only to the mission that come to defining the planning process but also, more importantly, to the character of Auburn itself:

**Auburn is committed to the importance of a dynamic downtown and strong neighborhoods that, together with a well-protected environment, offer healthy and sustainable living and make ours a welcoming, inclusive community. We believe Auburn is most successful when people feel engaged, connected and empowered here and when they see themselves and this community as economically resilient.**

*~Auburn's Strategic Planning Committee*

“

“Every citizen of Auburn should read this Strategic Plan. Everyone in the *region* should read it. This is a living-breathing document. Thanks to a collaborative, positive process, the path forward is here.” Clif Greim, Strategic Planning Committee Chair

“This document will be referred back to, and often. It will become part of the lexicon of this organization - everything you do will tie back to it.” Dave Gonyea, Quality Sub-Committee Chair

“A strategic plan is a bedrock principle of any good organization. I have faith in this plan, and with the proper commitment, it will lead to success. Don't just put it on a shelf.”

Bob Stone, Invest Sub-Committee Chair

”

# APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Participants .....Page 18  
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Appendix 3 - Scope of Work with Prioritization Results.....Page 21  
Appendix 4 - “Dots” Exercise Results .....Page 31  
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# Appendix 1

## PARTICIPANTS

A plan built for the community, by the community.

Auburn’s strategic planning process was expertly and thoughtfully steered by the **Strategic Planning Committee** and the components were built by three sub-committees.

Members of Auburn’s business, non-profit, residential, and education communities participated at both the committee and sub-committee level, and every single member was critically important to the success of the project.

City staff supported, complimented and facilitated the process.

### Strategic Planning Committee

**Clifton Greim, Chair**

**Rick Malinowski, Growth Sub-Committee Chair**

**David Gonyea, Quality Sub-Committee Chair**

**Robert Stone, Invest Sub-Committee Chair**

Mayor Jason Levesque  
Councilor Holly Lasagna  
Councilor Leroy Walker  
Peter Crichton  
Phil Crowell  
Katy Grondin  
Michael Chamings

Fatuma Hussein  
Emily Keys Innes  
Adam Lee  
Stephen Milks  
Jan Phillips  
Jodi Redmun  
Mary Sylvester

### Auburn City Council

**Mayor | Jason J. Levesque**

Ward 1 | Holly C. Lasagna

Ward 2 | Robert P. Hayes

Ward 3 | Andrew D. Titus

Ward 4 | Alfreda M. Fournier

Ward 5 | Leroy G. Walker, Sr.

At-Large | Belinda A. Gerry

At-Large | David C. Young

## SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS\*

Maureen Aube	Misty Edgecomb	James Parakilas
Jeanette August	Lena Hann	Thomas Platz
Darcie Beaudin	Bonnie Hayes	John Plourde
Sharon Benoit	Sid Hazelton	Jodi Redmun
Scott Berry	Shelly Kruszewski	William Saucier
Katie Boss	Richard Lanman	Philip Savignano
Sam Boss	Rhyanna Larose	Suzanne Sullivan
Robert Boyer	Paul LeClair	Dana Staples
Brian Carrier	Betsy Libby	Rebecca Swanson Conrad
John Cleveland	Joan Macri	William Sylvester
Rachel Desgrosseilliers	Rick Martel	Ryan Walker
Olga Dolgicer	Kristen Muszynski	Steven Wallace
Jessica Donovan	Mamie Ney	

\*As approved by the Auburn City Council

## STAFF SUPPORT

Liz Allen	Timothy Cogle	Jeremy Gatcomb	Michelle McClellan
Sabrina Best	Eric Cousens	Marc Gosselin	Jason Moen
Derek Boulanger	Jody Durisko	Dan Goyette	Shelly Mogul
Michael Chamings	Jill Eastman	Adam Hanson	Christine Mumau
Robert Chase	Jennifer Edwards	Scott Holland	Holli Olivier
Susan Clements-Dallaire	Matthew Fifield	Jim Horn	Karen Scammon
Rachel Collamore	Paul Fraser	Audrey Knight	

Final report design by Liz Allen, City of Auburn Communications & Compliance Manager



# Appendix 3

## SCOPE OF WORK DOCUMENTS WITH PRIORITIZATION MATRIX RESULTS

### GROWTH Goal 1

**Goal Statement: Recreation/Natural Resources** – Create, support and market an accessible, connected, and diverse network of recreation and natural resources that provides both destinations and pathways for residents and visitors

#### Solutions:

1. Protect and provide access to Lake Auburn & Bodies of Water
  - a. Natural Resources
    - i. Drinking Water: Develop a plan to implement a filtration system for drinkable water out of Lake Auburn **2**
    - ii. Inventory list of all bodies of water access points and develop baseline testing **1**
  - b. Recreational Opportunities
    - i. Swimming and access to water activities: Conduct a “swimability” assessment with recommendations on how to create swimming locations and safe standards in Auburn. **1**
    - ii. Events and Programs: Establish a year-round events/program guide for opportunities to do: Boating, Kayaking, Canoeing, Fishing, Ice Fishing, Snowmobile access in wintertime, swimming, etc. **3**
2. Identity, Map, & List Recreational Properties
  - a. Natural Resources
    - i. Compile an Inventory List and breakdown of uses for all recreational properties city and non-city owned. (Trails, Open Spaces, River, Mt. Apatite); Establish a GIS Map with the different layers of uses for this inventory list; and perform a needs assessment to Identify missing venues and access for natural recreational areas (Open spaces, trails, connectivity) **1**
  - b. Recreational Opportunities
    - i. Compile an inventory list and breakdown of uses for all rentable sports and organized recreational programs. (Gyms, Fields, Indoor Turf, Ice Rink, Gathering Areas, Age Friendly Centers) **2**
3. Community Partnerships
  - a. Natural Resources
    - i. Promote thru educational pamphlets, maps, and websites; agreements with already established organizations and businesses that provide public access to natural resource locations; YMCA Trails, ALT, Lake Auburn Watershed Protection. **3**
  - b. Recreational Opportunities
    - i. Develop and implement a Joint Use Agreement with the School dept. on the new fields, gyms, and auditorium to ensure public access outside of school related functions. **2**
4. Future Development and Funding
  - a. Natural Resources
    - i. Explore Grant opportunities with local partners for new trails and parks. **3**
    - ii. Update and Implement the Subdivision Ordinance that requires new developers to invest in open spaces, trails, and parks. **1**
    - iii. Develop incentives and other funding sources such as tax breaks and TIF’s to encourage local business and landowners to allow for public access and recreational opportunities. **4**
    - iv. Develop a plan and timeline for connecting all trails within Auburn while focusing on walkability. **1**



## b. Recreation Opportunities

- i. Develop an Outdoor Recreational Complex that includes multiple fields that are multi-sport adaptable, trails, and open spaces. **2**
- ii. Develop and maintain an inventory list of unused open spaces and allow for neighborhood access.
- iii. Finish renovating the New Age Friendly Center and develop a comprehensive list of programs and events, working with community partners. **1**

## **GROWTH Goal 2**

**Goal Statement: Downtown and Business Park** – Develop clear identities for Auburn’s downtown and industrial park that considers scale, connectivity, use (incl. mixed) and integrity to maximize their appeal.

### **Solutions:**

Goals, purposes and solutions for the downtown and industrial areas need to be defined separately, because they serve distinctly different city functions:

- A. The Downtown should be the focal point for culture, arts, events and entertainment necessary to attract and retain millennials & professionals – without a great downtown all other economic development and millennial retention and attraction activities will be challenged.
- B. Promote our large Industrial areas as the space for creating large scale sustainable industry clusters (i.e. solar & wind energy, Agri-biz, hydroponics, hemp, marijuana - processing & distribution)

### **Downtown Solutions – Four Transformational Actions**

1. A viable downtown is Walkable – Study & plan to increase “walkability.” While there are technically sidewalks in the downtown, it is not considered “walkable” due to the limited space provided, poor maintenance in winter, lack of lighting & ped space in Great Falls area, heavy volume and width of Court Street, and weak visual and spatial attention to cross walks. **2**
  - a. Expand sidewalk and crosswalk widths and remove sidewalk posts & signs that prohibit good winter maintenance
  - b. Narrow Court Street to two lanes with parking and sidewalks to slow traffic and reconnect the “center”
  - c. More outdoor seating and dining opportunities, with wider sidewalks (Main Street sidewalks are a great start) are needed throughout
2. Redevelop the Great Falls Area to achieve the critical mass needed for multiple destination, mixed-use activities. The adopted Form-based code allows up-to 8 stories in the Great Falls area, and up-to 6 in the city center areas, with 90 & 80% lot coverage, which calls for big redevelopment projects to create a shift in how the downtown functions **2**
  - a. Multi-use buildings that have higher-end housing, parking garages (instead of surface lots), ground floor food, retail, personal services & entertainment (2 screen theater) would provide new anchors, clean-up surface parking dead space, create higher income 24/7 residents & create destinations for city residents and visitors.
  - b. Needs a more diverse mixture of uses, “anchors” and more than one reason to be “downtown”
  - c. A mix of residential types, price-points and formats need to be part of the downtown composition
  - d. The current anchors, Gritty’s, the Hilton, the Court House, City Hall, Library, Hannaford & the YMCA, are single-purpose destinations and shopping & entertainment destinations are needed to keep people downtown
3. Establish a downtown management district and “coordinator” as a convener and manager to deconflict Great Falls, Library & Hotel event parking issues, program events, market space, mix of uses, and facilitate incentives. **1**
  - a. Manage mix of uses (like a Mall)- Shopping, ground floor retail, unique hh goods & furnishings need to be located in downtown (captive markets - professionals and hotel guests have nowhere to go for goods, browsing or entertainment)
  - b. Actively support (financial incentives to make pro-forma work) retail and housing entrepreneurs trying to bring uses downtown (don’t just support the big guys along Center, Minot and Hotel)
  - c. Create some meter parking to alert and constrain long-term parkers in turn-over locations like on-street near hotels, and library- funds to be dedicated to Downtown improvements and events programming
  - d. Install consistent lighting system in and around downtown that is easily maintained
4. Promote and create an identity for Downtown & New Auburn as the focal point for Arts and Entertainment **1**
  - a. Year-round event programming for the downtown (build on New Year’s Eve success) - Downtown should be **the** focal point for community events and a “place to go & spend a day or evening
  - b. Link with Quality Goal 5

## **Industrial Area(s)/Park Solutions – Four Transformational Actions**

1. Promote and define industry clusters - Push Agricultural processing and distribution opportunities of Auburns' large ag & industrial land areas and policies – the growth of hemp, mushroom and other ag production and processing could create another “industry cluster” **1**
  - a. Take advantage of Governor Mills Clean Energy initiative and create an industry cluster for Wind & Solar manufacture and distribution using highway, rail and air and central state location as selling points.
  - b. Map and define existing industry types, patterns and possible existing industry clusters to identify agglomeration economies, vertical expansions and complimentary chain partners
  - c. Court the State House on the sustainable energy cluster idea & “revision energy” on our central location, rail, air & highway hub
  - d. Program and invest in infrastructure and services that support identified and targeted industry clusters
2. Re-examine (possibly rezone) zoning patterns to support cohesive, unified long-term investment for both industry and high-end housing - More clearly define and separate residential and industrially zoned land & define complimentary uses (ie. Ag and industry?) – conflicting land uses have been emerging with more housing (Millions of \$ in housing development are occurring near 95 and industrial zoned land) and more industry developing side-by-side, ala Merrow Road. **2**
3. Develop linkages and connectivity between industrial activity and other areas of the city to promote functionality and development. Encourage complimentary or co-locations between workers, supply chains, service needs and other goods and services. Cut down on VMT & increase sales, production and distribution. **3**
  - a. Create a Business Board at the interchange and/or at central airport & “park” locations to list/advertise our businesses to keep visitors/investors/businesses engaged and knowledgeable about our economic activity
  - b. Advertise/create “tours” of manufacturing operations such as Thomas Moser, Side-by-Each brewery, Good Shepherd, Tambrands, World Harbor, etc.
  - c. Incorporate/support ABDC work and studies into solution based “cluster” marketing & speculative building development for turn-key occupation
  - d. Utilize and/or program transit, shuttles or van pools to high employee destinations
4. Define the desired look, feel, function of corridors & gateways. Re-examine land use and zoning of major corridors/gateways zoned or in industrial use **2**
  - a. Identify industry clusters and long-term vision for each economic corridor (Washington Street, Minot, Center)

## **GROWTH Goal 3/QUALITY Goal 2**

**Goal Statement: Education** – Develop education strategies for all stages of life that are dynamic, innovative, and collaborative to develop a foundation for economic and personal development.

**Goal Statement: Education Opportunities** – Continue to improve access to training programs designed to address workforce gaps and provide diverse and well-rounded education by partnering with available resources and businesses. Protect funding and support for educators, facilities, and accessibility.

### **Solutions:**

1. Increase learning opportunities for all students.
2. Increase the community’s awareness and understanding of educational opportunities and programming.
3. Increase the community’s commitment to and value of education.
4. Improve the image of the school department.
5. Document the return on investment of school department programming.

### **Steps:**

1. Solution: Increase Learning Opportunities for all students **2**
  - \* Increase the number of elective offerings provided by community (at elementary, middle, or high school)
  - \* Increase percent of children accessing early education (pre-K)
  - \* Increase early (pre-high school) college and career experiences
2. Solution: Increase the community’s awareness and understanding of educational opportunities and programming. **1**
  - \* Create a shared PR position (city/school) for the purpose of promoting city and school events and news via a wide variety of media outlets to target community members of a range of ages.
  - \* Increase the frequency of positive stories that showcase success of students
3. Solution: Increase the community’s commitment to and value of education. **2**

- \* Identify the barriers that families face in building aspirations
  - \* Develop and implement a model with strategies to address identified barriers
  - \* Connect youth with residents needing support/services
  - \* Increase the number of volunteers in schools
4. Solution: Improve the image of our schools in our community and beyond. **1**
- \* Monitor external “ratings” of school department and fight for corrected data when warranted.
  - \* Create marketing materials (including print) to be distributed for use in promoting the School Department
  - \* Create a plan for engaging with prospective residents, giving guided community tours (highlighting schools)
5. Document the return on investment of school department programming. **3**

## **GROWTH Goal 4**

**Goal Statement: Directed Public Infrastructure** – Invest in and maintain the infrastructure necessary to provide a sustainable, safe and livable environment.

### **Solutions:**

- Workshop which would include public input and council endorsement on existing long-range plans **1**
- New Public Safety Building **2**
- Sub Fire Station, South of Mellow Road for industrial growth needs, turnpike exit and airport **4**
- Define the desired pedestrian/trail network and future needs **3**
- Future space planning for City infrastructure, airport, housing **2**
- An efficient transit system that meets the needs of the public determined through ridership information and a survey of needs **4**
- Expand sewer/water service to accommodate future land use planning & space needs **4**
- Great Falls Masterplan Implementation **2**

### **Steps:**

- Plans – should be marketed; public information sessions; social media, directed online polls, mailings
- Space needs analysis – engineering study, cost, publicize information
- Pedestrian/Trail networks – a prioritization of existing trail wants and needs
- Future space planning – Council/staff identify existing plans /future needs, publicize, Comp Plan needs to incorporate newly-identified items
- Transit - Increase funding so that more frequent predictable service hits the hot spots
- Water/Sewer - determine location based on the Comp. Plan and where future growth areas (ag zone changes) are anticipated

## **GROWTH Goal 5**

**Goal Statement: Housing** – Efficiently utilize current housing stock and sustainable targeted residential development that supports and attracts [growth] residents and workforce.

### **Solutions:**

1. Rehabilitate and improve curb appeal of downtown neighborhoods
2. Create more pride in neighborhoods
3. Continue to support development of market value housing by a secondary Turnpike exit

### **Steps:**

1. Rehabilitate and improve curb appeal of residential neighborhoods **2**
  - a. Implement and enforce property maintenance codes to improve curb appeal of blighted areas by:
    - i. Creating policies that foster landlord associations and provide tax breaks for improvements that improve curb appeal
    - ii. Creating an assessment grace period to incentivize exterior property improvements (with a claw back policy in case a property owner does not follow through on approved changes) homeowners make to improve the aesthetic appearance & curb appeal of a property
    - iii. Amend refuse ordinance to remove debris from curb faster
    - iv. Hold landlords accountable who do not remove debris and/or do not comply with city ordinances.
    - iv. Budget for annual bulky waste removal for residents
      1. To offset cost, consider a curbside pickup program (such as Portland) where residents may request curbside pickup of up to 10 small bulky items at no charge, and large bulky items at a fee per item.

2. To offset cost and encourage recycling, consider a program requiring residents to purchase City of Auburn trash bags to dispose of waste. For households living in subsidized housing, provide bags free of charge and/or institute a waiver program.

3. To offset cost, consider creation of a drop off store/rummage sale location where donated, usable bulky/household items/furnishings can be resold at significant cost savings. For reference, Damariscotta has a program where they partner with a community organization and volunteers staff the rummage sale. This encourages reuse of usable quality items, keeping them out of landfills, provides low cost quality items to those in need, and creates a revenue stream that could be used to assist with neighborhood beautification, etc.

a. Goods not sold could be given to a community partner organization willing to provide these items for free to assist low income residents moving into housing without furniture or household goods.

b. Market available CDBG rehab programs by including specific program information/ relevant contact information for applying to eligible property owners when sending out tax bills. (What programs, who is eligible, how to apply)

2. Create more pride in neighborhoods **3**

a. Define the neighborhood geographically. City to facilitate by providing geographical boundaries (eg. Downtown, East Auburn, New Auburn, etc.)

b. Let residents name and brand their neighborhood. City to facilitate this process by coordinating neighborhood meetings and providing historical information, maps, and photos relevant to each neighborhood and/or properties within, for use in marketing and branding the neighborhood and highlighting the unique features.

c. Establish community/neighborhood watch groups for each neighborhood.

d. Hold neighborhood events. Include events targeted at increasing the number of young families participating. Use participation in community events, gatherings, and neighborhood watch groups as a measurement for pride in the neighborhood.

e. Establish groupings of adjoining neighborhoods to make up community associations that are either within a TIF district or can be established as a new TIF district if needed.

f. Use TIF funds to improve infrastructure in residential neighborhoods, such as sidewalks and lighting.

i. City employee to discuss with each community association that is eligible to receive TIF funds. City requests feedback from property owners within each association to best assess/prioritize the needs within the neighborhoods and prioritize TIF fund expenditure accordingly.

ii. Provide more incentives for residents to invest in their properties

3. Continue to support development of market value housing by a secondary Turnpike exit in Auburn **2**

a. As current zoning around the existing Turnpike exit is primarily industrial or agricultural, consider a secondary Turnpike exit in Auburn. Zoning around this new exit would be residential.

b. Increase stock of housing, especially in the \$200,000 - \$300,000 range, near the secondary turnpike exit, improving options for young professionals (and families) who may not have the time to revitalize older available housing stock and desire housing proximate to the turnpike.

c. Continue to work with developers to encourage new development of single-family homes in the \$200,000 - \$300,000 throughout Auburn

## QUALITY Goal 1

**Goal Statement: Employment Opportunities** – Attract quality businesses by creating an environment where business can succeed. Collaborate with existing partners to ensure and foster a sustainable, satisfying lifestyle.

### Solutions:

• Reduce the number of people who see transportation as an obstacle to working by 50% **4**

o People: Bus and passenger rail. Getting to and from work is an obstacle for some. If the public bus system is not meeting a large employers (ERs) needs, could they contribute for expanded service to avoid liabilities of transporting their own employees (EEs). Have the conversation.

• Create a metric to measure cost competitiveness to do business in Auburn over time, and in comparison with other Maine communities; provide concise information to the public and business community on strengths. **1**

o Freight connection strengths – Promote rail, air and highway connections in Auburn to increase their use. Utilities (Water, sewer, gas, electricity), high speed internet, taxes, FTZ, TIF, continue list and spread the word.

- o Predictable and Timely Permitting Environment – Delegated Reviews (Traffic, Stormwater, Site Law), Local site plan reviews and trades permits. Perception: Get the information out to people that may not currently know about the benefits of the local process and may not have considered a site in Auburn yet. Market strengths.
- Increase formal relationships with business and community partners. Collaboration and communication with stakeholders/shared interest groups is important. Raise awareness among City officials, staff and stakeholders so they can advocate to businesses about programs and resources available in the community. These programs support new business to include work by the chamber of commerce, workforce development programs, career center programs and transportation programs. **2**

**Steps:**

- Predictable Permitting Environment
  - o Compare Auburn to other communities including site plan review, delegated reviews, other permit wait times
  - o Establish process with single point advocate for permitting large projects – don’t send one project to various staff/ departments for individual specialized approvals. Continue one stop shopping approach and enhance by assigning lead person for larger projects that remain the contact from idea to completion.
- Transportation
  - o ERs are struggling to find and retain qualified EEs. Creative solutions and collaboration are needed. Ex: Bridges out of Poverty Program where ER hires person to contact EE with poor attendance and help them access services or assistance to overcome the cause and succeed. Could be transportation, childcare, temporary life event, auto breakdown, substance abuse, other. EE will not often approach ER with problem but will just stop going to work. ER assistance builds relationship, loyalty and retains EE if done carefully. Part of this belongs in another group.
  - o Identify large employers and explore improved bus availability and connectivity to large ERs. Consider customizing service to partner and meet specific needs identified.
  - o Turnpike Access -Collect existing data and reports; Designate responsible party/group to make the case for and request additional access to Maine Turnpike. Continued engagement until accomplished.
  - o Collect existing data and reports; Designate responsible party/group to make the case for and request commuter passenger rail connectivity to other employment centers. Continued engagement until accomplished.
- Use Metric to measure and improve cost competitiveness to do business in Auburn to attract investment and employers.
  - o Develop and measure baseline and track over time.
  - o Develop and distribute single guide & social media communication process promoting above metric and incentives to invest here.
  - o Extend water and sewer to future growth areas.
  - o Public Education on economic development programs, specifically TIF. There aren’t many other tools and they can be very advantageous to the community but suffer from a bad reputation as soon as you say the word. Use the tax shift value for infrastructure or needed incentives but don’t provide more incentive than needed. Develop simple to view metric with TIF specific costs and benefits displayed graphically that can be used to measure community benefits/costs of individual TIF proposals. Include tax shift, infrastructure, jobs, wages, need (to attract or lose investment), short- and long-term tax benefits or avoided costs (during and beyond TIF term), other TBD.
  - o Increase Legislative advocacy both in Augusta and at home by working more closely with elected representatives.

**QUALITY Goal 3**

**Goal Statement: Community Connections** – Support all residents by fostering a sense of unity while honoring diversity and coordinating community resources and assets to provide wraparound support to all residents.

**Solutions:**

- A. Neighborhoods
  - a. Identify and Define Neighborhoods
    - i. Define Neighborhoods by a combination between City Staff (GIS and Planning) and Neighborhood/ Community Members. Create a Map with the defined neighborhoods. (NextDoor App defined neighborhoods). **3**
    - ii. Signs (Hampshire Street Neighborhood Sign), using combination of CDBG, CIP, and grant funding. Focusing on the Major Corridor entry points. **2**

- iii. Community Watch Groups; continue with the APD program and look to develop the areas not being met. Look to support this program and initiatives thru staffing, funding projects or initiatives, and resources. Use this program to allow individual neighborhoods to have a voice on specific needs/projects in their neighborhood. **2**
- iv. How do you communicate (House Bound); Use resources such as Sun Journal, Facebook, Auburn Highlights, NextDoor App, and mailers (specific to hit the house bound individuals), Community Bulletin/message boards. Also utilize the City and Regional, Schools, Civic Groups, Meals on Wheels. **2**
- v. Neighborhood Events (BBQ, Block Party Trailer idea, what events do they want?) **1**
  - 1. What assets are in the neighborhood, landmarks, what are the recreational wants; infrastructure.
  - 2. CDBG Funding
  - 3. Include Businesses
- B. Communication
  - a. Auburn Community Survey on wants and needs in various methods (email, mail, in person, door to door) **1**
  - b. Event Calendar; we have so many different calendars can we create one central location for event calendar. Who would be responsible for the calendar, maintain, update, how would it be publicized? **4**
  - c. Events (City Wide)
- C. Diverse Offerings; Add a Cultural diversification type event that is offered annually, Food around the world Festival, Arts Workshop that teaches variety types of Art, Local Brewery event, Ultra Marathon event, Triathlon (Canoe instead of swim). Work off already established events such as the Triple Crown Races, Local Agriculture Fair. **2**
  - a. Volunteer Opportunities, work with not only individuals but with organizations and civic groups. **4**
- D. Organizations/Civic Groups
  - a. Creating a 'Match Making' Organization; Age Friendly connects seniors to the different programs and organizations within the community. Can the School Dept. cross promote local interest such as the City, YMCA, CLT? Or the Chamber or ABA. AKA cross promote? **2**
  - b. Identify umbrellas – Look to group similar organizations and civic groups under a generic 'umbrella' for collaboration, communication, cross marketing, events; all Arts are under one umbrella board, Arts and Culture LA. Ex. Chamber Non-Profit Concept
  - c. Host an Auburn Open House to allow for all groups to share their offerings and programs. An annual meeting with one rep from each group to talk about upcoming year programs, events, goals etc. **4**
- E. Public Spaces
  - a. Identify within each neighborhood and map the meeting/gathering spaces within neighborhoods or City (coffee shop, park, trail). See above about How to Identity wants for new infrastructure within the neighborhood ie. Dog Park (wish list) **1**
- F. Transportation
  - a. All major event and recreational locations should be a public transportation stop; Schools, Rec, Festival Plaza, Municipal Beach, Mt. Apatite, CLT, CMCC, Mall, All residential areas. AND they need to be operating at the time of the event and after the event so people can get home. **2/4**
  - b. Needs assessment and inventory of all-season walkability within neighborhoods and city. Ex. walking your dog in the summer is very different than walking your dog in the winter. **4**

## **QUALITY Goal 4**

**Goal Statement: Better Public Relations, Image, and Branding** – Dedicate resources to define our image and identity to build a sense of community.

### **Solutions:**

Three (3) parts to defining better public relations, image and branding:

- 1. Dedicating resources
  - a. Money
  - b. Website
  - c. Social Media Channels and voice
  - d. Local partnerships and businesses
  - e. Staff
  - f. Volunteers
  - g. Local Organizations and non-profits (Ex. Neighborhood groups)
  - h. Natural resources
  - i. Historic buildings

2. Defining our image
  - a. Auburn is a bedroom community
  - b. Our city is passionate about are citizens, businesses and educational opportunities
  - c. Recreation and Outdoor activities
  - d. Auburn is a perfect mix of urban and rural
  - e. Provides a quality of life that is healthy and safe
  - f. Vitality and access
  - g. Professional
3. Identify to build a sense of community
  - a. In order to build a sense of community the City of Auburn must be able to reach and engage the following populations: Families (traditional & non-traditional), Businesses, Youth and young professionals, Aging population

**Steps:**

- Improve communication through technology and different media channels, while keeping in mind the audience shared in building a sense of community
- LIVE HERE! (Find ways to “bait” and educate individuals and businesses about the city of Auburn)
- Prioritize are key/target demographics
- Build image around the “psychographics” of our demographic (what people want /are passionate about)
- Auburn Passport (hard copy and digital); Include interactive maps of the city
- Conduct studies and surveys; Segmentation surveys & Focus Groups
- Information packets that are targeted to specific demographics
  - o Families; Ex. Affordable housing, employment, living communities
  - o Businesses; Ex. Revitalization efforts, building incentives, unique business categories, incubator spaces
  - o Youth and Young Professionals; EX Information on open spaces, parks, activities, education, employment
  - o Aging and Age Friendly Population

**Changes/Notes:**

1. Establish a communication plan that integrates the city website, signage and social media voice keeping in mind designated demographics while building a sense of community. **2**
2. Create “Live Here” informational and event packets to educate visiting individuals/businesses about the City. **1**
3. Prioritize attracting key/target demographics by creating a digital and printed passport. Interactive mapping out 12 months of releases through e-blasts/newsletters with a “Local Passport” (addressing local residents) and a “Visitor Passport” (addressing visitors to the city of Auburn). **3**
4. Conduct segmentation surveys to understand population/census gaps to understand where people live and determine targeted groups. **2**
5. Create two (2) focus groups. One specific targeted population and a random sample population providing what are the five (5) best assets in the city **3**
6. Relocation packets that are specific to families, businesses, young professionals and age-friendly populations. **2**
7. Institute a city “ambassadors” program to provide personal touch points and tours for individuals/businesses looking to relocate to Auburn. **1**

**QUALITY Goal 5**

**Goal Statement: Entertainment/Cultural Opportunities & Historic Preservation** – Recognize the value of historic, cultural, and artistic assets and activities in enriching people’s lives and promoting community life. Support the development of future opportunities in culture and the arts.

**Solutions:**

The following solutions, steps, and tasks are extremely important and should be prioritized because it will build community, increase pride for citizens and enhance the image of Auburn to visitors. This in turn, will greatly contribute to economic development and tourism in the area.

- Recognize and support existing and new entertainment, cultural and historic preservation opportunities by making them a funding priority. **1**
- Make beautification and maintenance of public parks, downtown, Riverwalk, trails, downtown and any other areas where entertainment of historic, cultural, or artistic events and activities will take place. **2**
- Focus on the river as an asset by increasing activities and events along the Riverwalk and in the downtown area. **1**
- Enhance current activities by making them experiences and developing a marketing plan to attract tourism. **2**

## **Entertainment -**

### **Arts & Culture**

- o Build partnerships with local organizations who contribute to arts and culture in the Auburn/Lewiston Region. **1**
- o Diversify current events, activities and festivals by including art, cultural, and historical elements and making them “experiences”. **2**
- o Enhance and increase the number of events in festival plaza and on the Riverwalk. **2**
- o Increase the inclusion of arts/culture in new developments, projects, and activities especially in the downtown. **3**
- o Support funding the new school auditorium. Improve or move Community Little Theatre. **2**
- o Make sure events and venues are age- friendly and handicap accessible. **1**

### **Natural Resources**

- Promote connectivity to the community and draw people to parks, Riverwalk, trails, and green spaces. Update and enhance Riverwalk, Mt. Apatite, trails, and city-owned parks. **2**
- Promote and advocate the use of our natural resources by using them for entertainment with art, cultural and historic activities. **1**

### **Historic Preservation**

- Make City record preservation and storage a funding priority. **4**
- Make Auburns historic presence more prominent throughout the community. **1**
- Maintain and protect the cities historical buildings, monuments, and historical landmarks. **2**

### **Steps:**

#### **Entertainment -**

##### **Arts & Culture**

- o Invite local partners Museum LA, Androscoggin Historical Society, Community Little Theatre, Women’s Literary Union, Auburn Public Library, Androscoggin Land Trust, Train Club, etc. to participate in the planning of events, activities and marketing strategies.
- o Diversify existing and new events, activities, and festivals by including areas for local artisans, crafters, historical exhibits, musicians, etc.
- o Hold more concerts, bring back Concerts in the Park in festival plaza including lunch hour and evening events and activities downtown. The concerts and events should contain cultural themes, drumming bands/acts, cultural dancing and local dance team performances, acapella groups, and local instrumentalists and singers and food trucks, local artisans, crafters, and any other event appropriate vendors.
- o Continue work on Museum in the Streets by extending the historical markers in the street up Main Street and add audio recordings to sites (some or all as part of tour- try to create a “Freedom Trail” type experience Auburn style.
- o Update art wall, it is recommended to use local artists for this project and to utilize the entire wall by painting the entire wall which will reduce graffiti on the wall. Art should encompass cultural diversity and Auburns rich history. Auburn should use this wall to help tell its story and enhance the “experiences” created through things like the Museum in the streets, Art walk, or the guided tours mentioned above.
- o Enhance Art Walk by expanding, soliciting additional local artisans including paintings, photos, pottery, sculptures, historical exhibits, etc. Include additional areas for crafters, local musicians, entertainers, art lessons, and food.
- o Where and when possible combine events into a larger more diverse event done well. In other words, doing one event well is better than having 10 separate smaller events that reach a smaller audience.
- o Incorporate accessibility into planning events and venues by making sure they are age-friendly, handicap accessible, and walkability and connectivity.
- o Support school auditorium and move Community Little Theatre there.
- o Promote and expand events at Community Little Theatre.

##### **Natural Resources**

- Add Wi-Fi downtown and other green spaces/parks.
- Complete Riverwalk loop by acquiring necessary properties, drawing up design plan, and looking for grant opportunities for the project.
- Light the Falls to enhance river and Riverwalk to add to the experience of the Riverwalk.
- Create a play area and splash park in Anniversary Park.
- Trim along the river to optimize views from the Riverwalk.
- Increase maintenance of the Riverwalk to return it to its original state by fixing worn or damaged surface area, fix any fencing, curbs, retaining walls, benches, gardens, mulching, etc.

- Create an Adopt-a-Spot garden program for beautification. Soliciting sponsors for garden spots can significantly reduce the amount of funds needed to enhance the Riverwalk and other public parks and or green spaces throughout the City but specifically along the Riverwalk and in the downtown area.
- Add lighting to tunnel and path that leads to Moulton Park, trim trees to allow for more natural light, fix and improve skate park to make the park a desirable location. The skate park will add enrichment and diversity to the city's existing parks and utilize it as an asset to promote community life.
- Maintain and beautify existing parks and trails throughout the city.
- Make sure the cities natural resources are age-friendly and handicap accessible.
- Create inventory list of natural resources and activities to enrich people's lives such as: Mt. Apatite, trail by Sherwood Heights, YMCA Outdoor Education Park, Riverwalk, bike trails, other trails, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, golf, Lost Valley, Norway Savings Bank Arena, and other outdoor activities. Create and design a brochure to use in the City's marketing plan.

### **Historic Preservation**

- Increase municipal funding for record preservation by increasing funding to \$25,000 per year for the next 4-5 years.
- Add history tab or link on city website – feature a highlight and update it regularly with new highlights.
- Take inventory of city-wide historical/cultural assets: historic buildings, monuments, landmarks, and organizations.
- Clearly identify historic buildings, monuments, and historic landmarks with plaques, signs etc.
- Plan historical plays, guided tours, and activities.
- Identify preservation projects in cemeteries for potential Eagle Scout projects, etc.
- Look for grant opportunities for preservation projects.
- Develop brochure to outline historical entertainment, cultural, and historic activities.
- Make sure historic events and/or activities are age-friendly and handicap accessible.

### **Tasks:**

- Create a committee to develop inventory lists of historical sites, buildings, and monuments, organizations and local talent ( Include representation from Auburn Public Library, Androscoggin Historical Society, Museum L/A, Community Little Theatre, Women's Literary Union, ELHS History teacher, Androscoggin Land Trust, L/A Arts, etc.).
  - o Develop list; Create brochure & Identify historical activities, events, etc. and send to committee developing inventory of events
- Create a committee to develop inventory of city-wide events, activities, festivals (Include representation from Recreation, Auburn Public Library, Androscoggin Historical Society, Museum L/A, Community Little Theatre, Women's Literary Union, Androscoggin Land Trust, L/A Arts, etc.).
  - o Develop list; Identify partnerships for events and activity planning to enhance and diversify; and Develop marketing plan, community calendar, other ways to publicize to our community and beyond
- Create a committee to develop inventory list of natural resources and activities to enrich people's lives such as: Mt. Apatite, trail by Sherwood Heights, YMCA Outdoor Education Park, Riverwalk, bike trails, other trails, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, golf, Lost Valley, Norway Savings Bank Arena, and other outdoor activities. Create brochure/ map & marketing plan

# Appendix 4

## “DOTS” PRIORITIZATION EXERCISE RESULTS



Strategic Planning Committee and Sub-Committee members participated in exercises that asked members to prioritize goals established by the Sub-Committees. During the first round, members used “dots” - round stickers - to signify what they would prioritize “if money were no object,” then again based upon which goals would be easiest to achieve. A second round of prioritization allowed each member to rank their preferred goals by high, medium, or low importance. Once tallied and ranked, this provided the Strategic Planning Committee with a narrower group of high priority goals.

STRATEGY	TOTAL	BLUE	GREEN
Establish a city-wide communications plan.	50	14	36
Define the desired pedestrian/trail network and future needs/funding.	31	22	9
Enhance formal relationships with business and community partners.	31	5	26
Inspire neighborhood pride; rehabilitate and improve curb appeal.	29	13	16
Identity, Map, & List Recreational Properties.	28	8	20
Study & plan to increase “walkability.”	21	10	11
Arts & Culture.	16	9	7
Implement Great Falls Master Plan.	13	12	1
Strengthen community connections.	11	2	9
Improve the image of our schools in our community and beyond and increase the community’s awareness and understanding of educational opportunities and programming.	10	2	8
Protect and provide access to Lake Auburn & Bodies of Water.	10	9	1
Create secondary Turnpike exit in Auburn.	9	7	2
Document the return on investment of school department programming.	6	1	5
Focus on the river as an asset.	6	3	3
Increase the community’s commitment to and value of education.	6	0	6
Define the desired look, feel and function of corridors and gateways.	5	2	3
Future space planning for City infrastructure, airport, housing.	5	5	0
New Public Safety Building.	4	4	0
Promote and define industry clusters.	4	4	0
Establish a downtown management district.	3	2	1
Increase Learning Opportunities for all students.	3	3	0
Make historic and record preservation a funding priority.	3	2	1
Prioritize transportation as community connector that can also enhance employment opportunities.	1	1	0
Develop links and connectivity between industrial activity and other areas of the city to promote functionality and development.	0	0	0

Top 5 Highest Total Score - Most Dots Overall

Top 5 Highest Score - Blue Dots

Top 5 Highest Score - Green Dots



# Appendix 5

## STRATEGIES PRESENTED TO INVEST SUB-COMMITTEE

This table contains the 24 strategies identified by the Quality and Growth Sub-Committees which were presented to the Invest Committee. The work groups that created each item are referenced here, as well as the corresponding section of Auburn’s Comprehensive Plan that connects with each strategy.

STRATEGY	Group	Comp Plan
<p><b>Establish a city-wide communications plan.</b> Integrate city website, signage and social media voice to build a sense of community. Create and distribute “Live Here” informational packets to educate visitors and businesses. Create a digital and printed passport program: a “local passport” and a “visitor passport” to highlight events, attractions, programs, etc. Fund and conduct segmentation surveys to understand population/census gaps and determine targeted groups. Create focus groups - one specific targeted population and one random sample population - to identify the five best assets in Auburn. Produce relocation packets specific to families, businesses, young professionals and age-friendly populations. Institute a “city ambassador” program to provide personal outreach/tours for individuals/businesses looking to relocate to Auburn. Measure cost competitiveness of doing business in Auburn and provide concise information to the public and business community on our strengths. Promote rail, air and highway connections, as well as utilities, high speed internet, taxes, FTZ, TIF. Encourage predictable and timely permitting environment and promote/share the benefits of the local process and market strengths. Conduct community survey on wants and needs. Consider one city-wide events calendar; delegate responsibility for maintenance, updates and publicity. Enhance current entertainment, cultural, and historical preservation activities by making them a funding priority to attract tourism. Gather public input and council endorsement on existing long-range infrastructure plans through public information sessions; social media, directed online polls, mailings.</p>	Q4/Q1/Q3/ Q5/G4	Ch. 1 - F
<p><b>Define the desired pedestrian/trail network and future needs/funding.</b> Explore grant opportunities for new trails and parks. Update and implement the subdivision ordinance that requires new developers to invest in open spaces, trails, and parks. Develop incentives and other funding sources to encourage local business and land owners to allow for public access and recreational opportunities. Develop a plan and timeline for connecting all trails within Auburn while focusing on walkability. Develop an outdoor recreational complex that includes multiple fields that are multi-sport adaptable, trails, and open spaces. Develop and maintain an inventory list of unused open spaces and allow for neighborhood access. Work with community partners to develop a comprehensive list of age-friendly programs and events at the newly-renovated Senior Community Center. Make beautification and maintenance of trails, public parks, downtown, Riverwalk and other areas where entertainment or historic, cultural, or artistic events and activities will take place.</p>	G1 G4	Ch. 1 - E
<p><b>Enhance formal relationships with business and community partners.</b> Strong community partnerships are imperative to recreation/natural resources; employment; arts and culture; and overall success of the City and its residents. Solidify agreements with organizations and businesses that provide public access to natural resource locations. Develop and implement a Joint Use Agreement with the School Department for the new high school to ensure public access outside of school related functions. Advocate to businesses about programs and resources available in the community which support new business, including chamber of commerce, workforce development programs, career center programs and transportation programs. Host "partnership summit" to strengthen relationships and showcase partner resources, programming, and offerings. Facilitate 'match-making' to connect people with organizations.</p>	G1/Q1/Q3	Ch. 1 - I Ch. 3 - D

<p><b>Inspire neighborhood pride; rehabilitate and improve curb appeal.</b> Implement and enforce property maintenance codes to improve curb appeal of blighted areas. Foster landlord associations and provide tax breaks for improvements. Create an assessment grace period to incentivize exterior property improvements. Amend ordinance to remove debris from curb faster and hold landlords accountable who do not comply. Budget for annual bulky waste removal for residents. Market available CDBG rehab programs. Define neighborhoods geographically. Let residents name and brand their neighborhood. Coordinate neighborhood meetings and provide historical information, maps, and photos relevant to each neighborhood. Establish community watch groups and hold neighborhood events. Use participation as a measurement for neighborhood pride. Establish groupings of adjoining neighborhoods to make up community associations and use TIF funds to improve infrastructure in residential neighborhoods, such as sidewalks and lighting.</p>	G5	Ch. 1 - H
<p><b>Identity, Map, &amp; List Recreational Properties.</b> Compile an inventory list for all recreational properties city and non-city owned. Establish a GIS Map with the different layers of uses. Perform a needs assessment to identify gaps and access for natural recreational areas. Promote connectivity to the community and draw people to parks, Riverwalk, trails, and green spaces. Update and enhance Riverwalk, Mt. Apatite, trails, and city-owned parks. Promote and advocate the use of our natural resources by using them for entertainment with art, cultural and historic activities.</p>	G1/Q5	Ch. 1 - E
<p><b>Study &amp; plan to increase “walkability.”</b> A viable downtown is Walkable. While there are technically sidewalks in the downtown, it is not considered “walkable” due to the limited space provided, poor maintenance in winter, lack of lighting &amp; ped space in Great Falls area, heavy volume and width of Court Street, and weak visual and spatial attention to cross walks. Expand sidewalk and cross-walk widths and remove sidewalk posts &amp; signs that prohibit good winter maintenance. Narrow Court Street to two lanes with parking and sidewalks to slow traffic and reconnect the “center.” More outdoor seating and dining opportunities, with wider sidewalks are needed throughout. Conduct city-wide needs assessment and inventory of all-season walkability.</p>	G2/Q3	Ch. 1 - G
<p><b>Arts &amp; Culture.</b> Build partnerships with local organizations who contribute to arts and culture in the region. Enhance current events, activities and festivals by including culturally diverse art, cultural, and historical elements and making them “experiences.” Enhance and increase the number of events at Festival Plaza/Riverwalk. Increase the inclusion of arts and culture in new developments, projects, and activities especially downtown. Partner with individuals as well as organizations and civic groups. Support funding the new school auditorium. Improve or move Community Little Theatre. Make sure events and venues are age-friendly and handicap accessible. Promote and create an identity for Downtown &amp; New Auburn as the focal point for Arts and Entertainment. Year-round event programming for the downtown to make it the focal point for community events and a “place to go &amp; spend a day/evening.” Look to group similar organizations and civic groups under an ‘umbrella’ for collaboration, communication, cross marketing, events.</p>	Q5/G2/Q3	Ch. 1 - E Ch. 3 - B
<p><b>Implement Great Falls Master Plan</b> to allow for multiple destination, mixed-use activities. Form-based code allows for big redevelopment projects to create a shift in how the downtown functions. Multi-use buildings that have higher-end housing, parking garages, ground floor food, retail, personal services &amp; entertainment would provide new anchors, clean-up surface parking dead space, create higher income 24/7 residents &amp; create destinations for city residents and visitors. A more diverse mixture of uses, mixed residential types, price-points and formats, shopping &amp; entertainment destinations are needed to keep people downtown.</p>	G2	Ch. 1 - I
<p><b>Strengthen community connections.</b> Identify and define neighborhoods through a partnership between City staff (GIS/Planning) and community members. Create a map with the defined neighborhoods. Use a combination of funding to install neighborhood-specific signage. Focusing on the major corridor entry points. Support and enhance the Auburn PD’s Neighborhood Watch program and look for gaps. Support program and initiatives through staffing, funding and other resources and allow neighborhoods to voice specific needs and projects. Use Sun Journal, social media, small local newspapers, NextDoor App, direct mail, community bulletin boards or message boards and more to communicate with residents. Encourage Neighborhood Events (BBQ, Block Party Trailer idea, what events do they want). Identify and map public gathering spaces within each neighborhood.</p>	Q3	

<p><b>Improve the image of our schools in our community and beyond and increase the community’s awareness and understanding of educational opportunities and programming.</b> Monitor external “ratings” of school department and fight for corrected data when warranted. Create marketing materials to promote the School Department. Create a plan for engaging with prospective new residents &amp; giving them guided community tours. Create a shared PR position (city/school) to promote city/school events and news via a wide variety of media outlets to target community members of a range of ages. Increase the frequency of positive stories that showcase student success.</p>	G3/Q2	Ch. 1 - C, F
<p><b>Protect and provide access to Lake Auburn &amp; Bodies of Water.</b> Develop a plan on how to implement a filtration system for drinkable water out of Lake Auburn. Create inventory list of all bodies of water access points and develop baseline testing. Conduct a “Swimability” Assessment with recommendations on how to create swimming locations and safe standards in Auburn. Establish a year-round events/program guide for: boating, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, snowmobile access, etc.</p>	G1	Ch. 1 - A, E
<p><b>Create secondary Turnpike exit in Auburn.</b> As current zoning around the existing Turnpike exit is primarily industrial or agricultural, zoning around this new exit would be residential. Increase housing stock near the secondary turnpike exit, improving options for young professionals (and families). Work with developers to encourage new development of single-family homes throughout Auburn. Re-examine (rezone?) zoning patterns to support cohesive, unified long-term investment for industry and high-end housing. Add Fire Sub-station south of Mellow Road to support anticipated growth.</p>	G2/G4/G5	Ch. 1 - G Ch. 3 - C
<p><b>Document the return on investment of school department programming.</b></p>	G3/Q2	
<p><b>Focus on the river as an asset.</b> Increase activities &amp; events along the Riverwalk &amp; downtown.</p>	Q5	Ch. 1 - E Ch. 3 - B
<p><b>Increase the community’s commitment to and value of education.</b> Identify the barriers that families face in building aspirations. Develop and implement a model with strategies to address identified barriers. Connect youth with residents needing support/services. Increase the number of volunteers in schools.</p>	G3/Q2	
<p><b>Define the desired look, feel and function of corridors and gateways.</b> Re-examine land use and zoning of major corridors and gateways zoned or in industrial use. Identify industry clusters and long-term vision for each economic corridor.</p>	G2	
<p><b>Future space planning for City infrastructure, airport, housing.</b> Space needs analysis – engineering study, cost, publicize information. Identify existing plans/future needs, publicize, and incorporate newly identified items in Comp. Plan. Expand sewer/water service to accommodate future land use planning &amp; space needs. Determine location based on the Comp. Plan.</p>	G4	Ch. 1 - C Ch. 2 - FLUP
<p><b>New Public Safety Building</b></p>	G4	Ch. 1 - C & 3 - A
<p><b>Promote and define industry clusters.</b> Push Agricultural processing and distribution opportunities of Auburn’s large ag &amp; industrial land areas and policies. Take advantage of Clean Energy initiative and create an industry cluster for Wind &amp; Solar manufacture and distribution highlighting highway, rail, air and central state location. Map and define existing industry types, patterns and possible existing industry clusters to identify agglomeration economies, vertical expansions and complimentary chain partners. Program and invest in infrastructure and services that support identified and targeted industry clusters.</p>	G2	
<p><b>Establish a downtown management district</b> and coordinator as a convener and manager to deconflict parking issues, program events, market space and mix of uses, and facilitate incentives. Manage mix of uses - shopping, ground floor retail, unique goods and furnishings need to be downtown. Actively support retail &amp; housing entrepreneurs trying to bring uses downtown. Create metered parking. Install consistent lighting system in and around downtown that is easily maintained.</p>	G2	Ch. 1 - I
<p><b>Increase Learning Opportunities for all students.</b> Increase the number of elective offerings provided by community members (at elementary, middle, or high school). Increase percent of children accessing early education (pre-K). Increase early (pre-high school) college and career experiences.</p>	G3/Q2	Ch. 1 - C

<p><b>Make historic and record preservation a funding priority.</b> Make Auburns historic presence more prominent throughout the community. Maintain and protect the cities historical buildings, monuments, and historical landmarks.</p>	Q5	Ch. 1 - D
<p><b>Prioritize transportation as community connector that can also enhance employment opportunities.</b> Using bus and passenger rail, reduce obstacles for getting to and from work. Add all major event and recreational locations as public transportation stops. Expand operating hours to better align with events schedule. Support an efficient transit system that meets the needs of the public. Increase funding so that more frequent predictable service hits the hot spots.</p>	Q1/Q3/Q5	Ch. 1 - G
<p><b>Develop links and connectivity between industrial activity and other areas of the city to promote functionality and development.</b> Encourage complimentary or co-locations between workers, supply chains, service needs and other goods and services. Create a Business Board at the interchange and/or at central airport &amp; “park “locations to list and advertise our businesses to keep visitors, investors and other businesses engaged and knowledgeable about our economic activity. Advertise and/or create “Tours” of manufacturing operations. Incorporate and support ABDC work and studies into solution based “cluster” marketing and speculative building development for turn-key occupation. Utilize and/or program transit, shuttles or van pools to high employee destinations.</p>	G2	Ch. 1 - G



*“A vision without a strategy remains an illusion.”*

*Lee Bolman*

## City of Auburn, Maine

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