

Families, Neighborhood & Economy

*Draft Proposed Policies and Actions
Orono Comprehensive Plan Update*

Nov. 12, 2013

The First Wave of Policies & Actions

- Address Population, Housing & Neighborhoods, Economy, In-Town Land Use
- Will focus on 5 key areas tonight
 - Building a “Start-up” Business Economy
 - Attracting Family-Aged Households
 - Student Housing and Neighborhood Preservation
 - Downtown Improvement
 - Expanding Resource-Based Economy, incl Food

More...and More Coming

- Other proposed policies and actions addressing Population, Housing, Economy and In-Town Land Use on line at www.orono.org/planning
- Comp Plan Committee will be addressing other areas – Transportation, Capital Improvements, Recreation, Natural Resources, Municipal Finance - in coming months

I. Building a Start-Up Economy

Issue/Opportunity – *Commercializing innovative products and services coming out of UMaine and elsewhere*

Policy - *The Town will create an environment that supports commercialization of innovative ideas, products and processes.*



Building a Start-Up Economy: Actions

- Be part of a Greater Bangor innovation hub
- Implement High Speed Fiber and Gig. U
- Streamline Home Occupation Regulation
- Invest in Incubator, Co-Work, and Maker (Lt Mfg) Space
- Direct Assistance to Micro-Businesses

Be Part of a Regional Innovation Hub

- OEDC cooperating with UMaine, Old Town, Bangor Target Area Development Corp., Angel Network, Blackstone
- Grow the “BigGig” entrepreneur networking and pitch events



BigGig’s first 3 pitchers –
Oct. 22, 2013 at Verve

Implement “Last Mile” Gig Speed Fiber

- 21st Century municipal infrastructure
- Within 7 years extend fiber optics at least throughout the designated growth area of Orono (Stillwater Ave east, Kelley Rd north)
- Under “Gig.U,” work with ISPs and Micro & Start-up Businesses to hook up

100 Mbps Subscribers

2009	7,200
2010	69,700
2011	170,300
2012	516,500

50 Mbps Subscribers

2009	39,800
2010	162,500
2011	347,650
2012	803,461

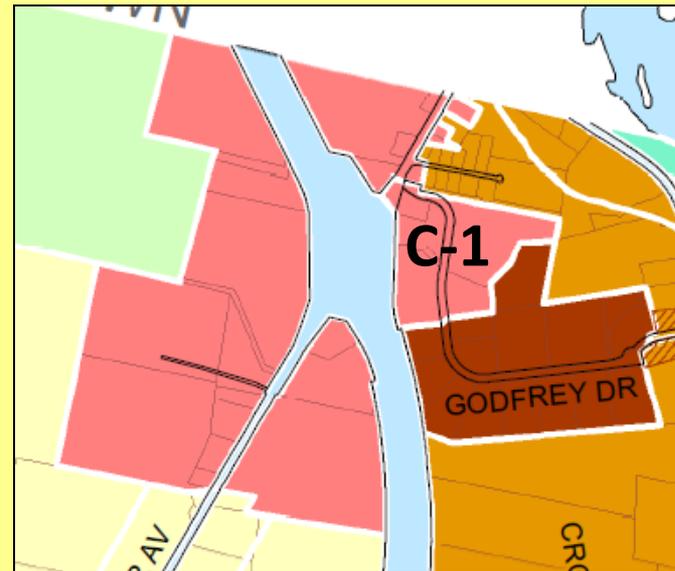
**National growth in
higher speed subscribers**

Streamline Home Occupation Regs

- Allow office-based and similar home occupations that do not generate significant customer traffic as a matter of right throughout the Town, without Planning Board review
- Other home occupations still allowed with Planning Board review

Invest in Incubators, Co-Work, Maker Spaces

- Help sustain Target Technology Center
- OEDC business plan for late stage incubator, co-work, and light industry/artisan “maker” spaces.
- Allow light industry in C-1 District east of I-95 (along Stillwater Ave, in Tech Park).



Assist Micro-Businesses

- Establish development fund to assist at least 10 start-ups in next three years with mini-grants of \$5K - \$10K for needed equipment and connection to high speed Internet service
- Assist graduating students wanting to start a business get a foothold in Orono



YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – START-UP ECONOMY

And don't forget the index card:

The Comp Plan Committee is on the right track

___ yes

___ almost there with some change (see below)

___ needs lots of work (see below)

Your comments on index card.

II. Family-Aged Households

Issue/Opportunity – *The steep decline in family households with school-aged children (-17%, 2000-10)*

Policy - *The Town will create opportunities for the development of affordable home ownership close to services, jobs and Downtown Orono.*



Family-Aged Households: Actions

- Financial assistance for affordable subdivisions tied to home ownership
- Zoning:
 - Revise MDR standards to match median lot size and reduce frontage requirement
 - Incentive-based Village Residential District, including Traditional Neighborhood Design standards

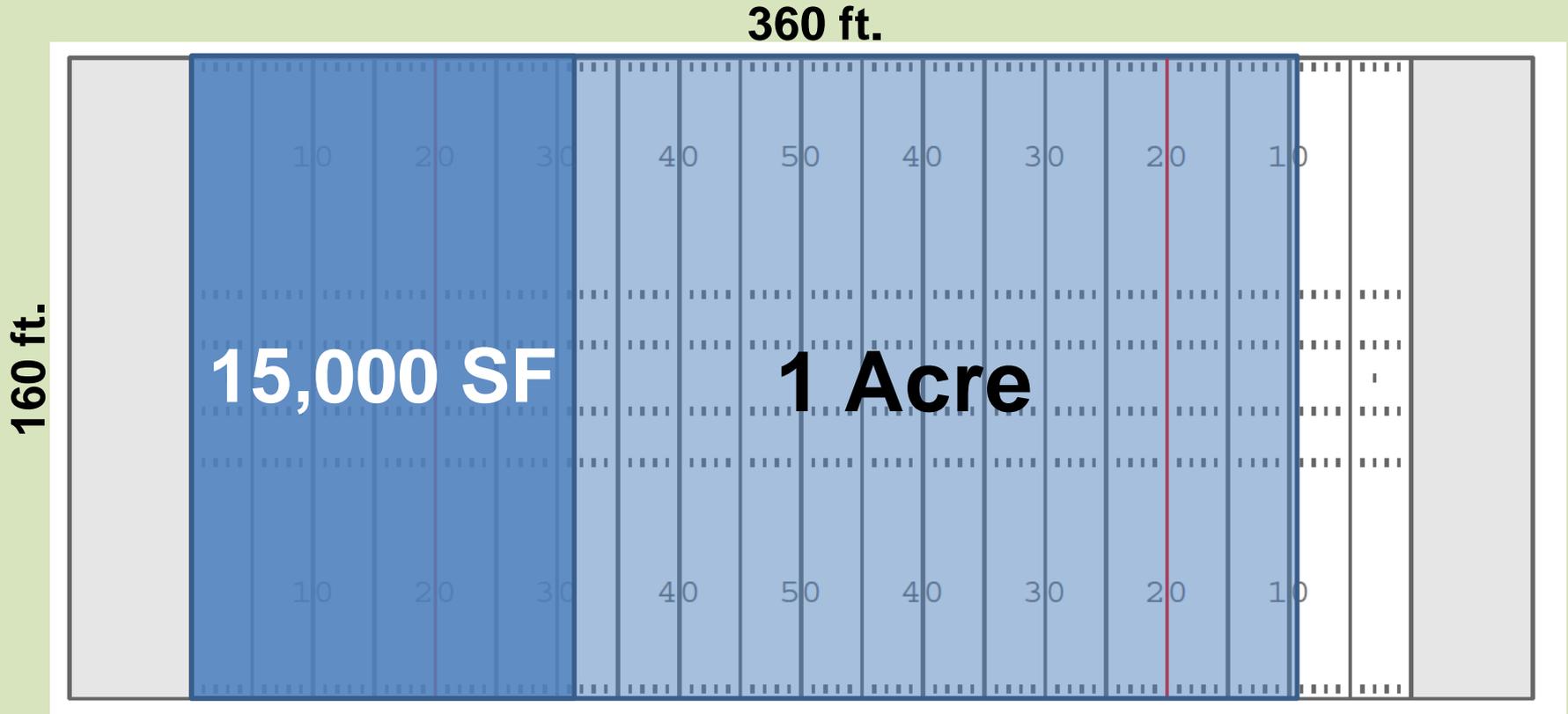
Affordable In-Town Subdivisions

- Affordable Housing Tax Increment Financing
 - Promotes housing, including owner housing, affordable to households with working incomes
 - Assistant professors, technicians, teachers, small business owners, etc., typically would qualify (max of 120% of region's median household income)
- “Patient” loans for infrastructure

Zoning: Reduce MDR Minimums

- Use MDR District median lot size as benchmark:
 - 20,000 SF minimum lot size to 15,000 SF – still fairly large lot (1/3 of a football field)
 - 100 feet minimum frontage to 80 feet
- Similar to Noyes Dr – Sunrise Terrace – Edgewood neighborhood (median 15,300 SF)
- Compare to Sailor Development (median 9,600 SF)

Compared to a Football Field...



What 12,000 – 15,000 SF lots with 80 ft frontage look like: Noyes Dr – Sunrise Terr

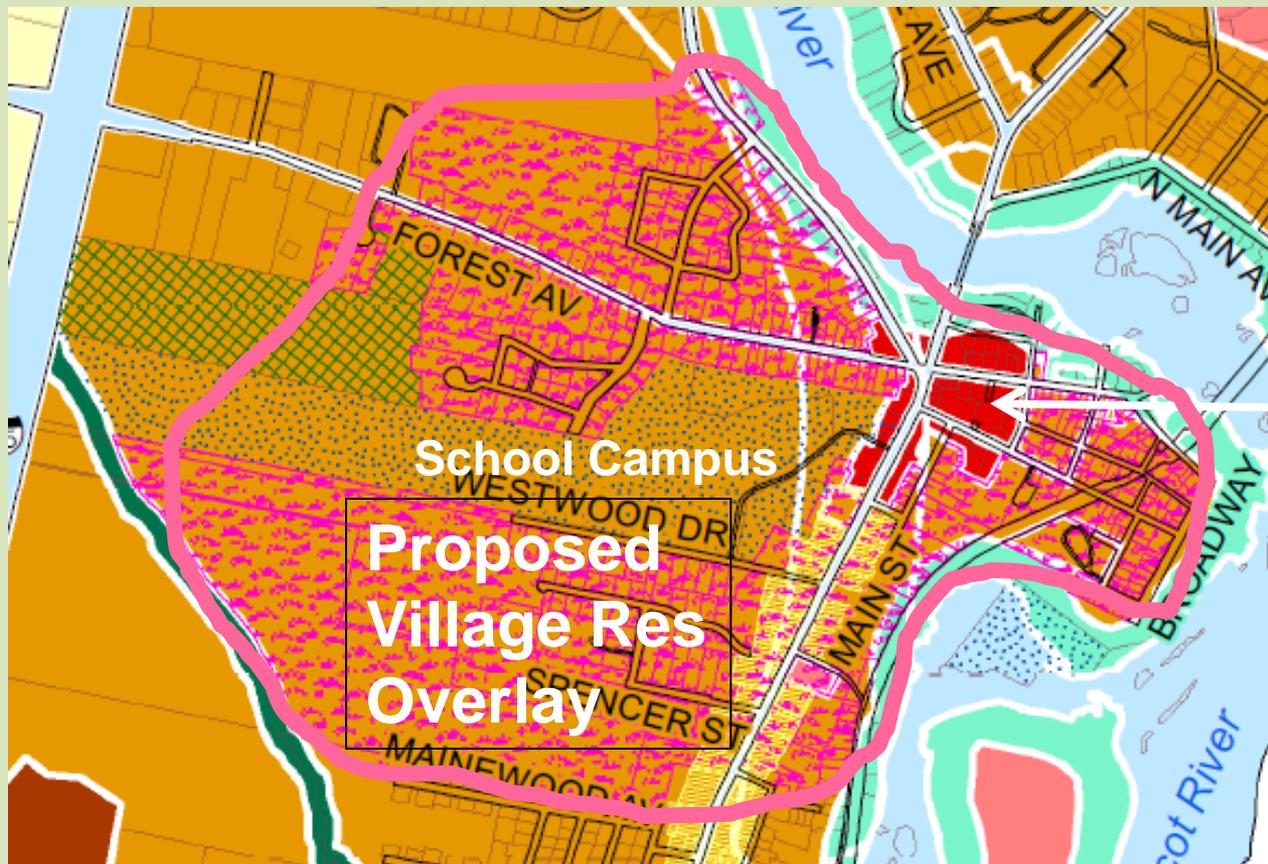


A football field



Zoning: Village Residential Overlay

- Within walking distance -- ~1750 ft (0.33-mi) – of Downtown or RSU school campus



Village
Comm.

Village Residential Overlay

- Incentive-based
- Must adhere to Traditional Neighborhood design guidelines
- Must include deed covenants or other legally enforceable mechanism to require homes to be owner-occupied (if 2-family, one of units is owner-occupied)
 - Except UMaine – managed family housing
- Maximum of 2 unrelated persons

Village Residential Overlay

- In return, single-family and two-family dwellings allowed on smaller lots (e.g., 7,500 SF)
- Subdivisions designed as clustered development; single-family, two-family, and townhouses allowed with minimum open space requirement and flexible lot dimensions

Village Residential Overlay

**WHAT WE MEAN BY “TRADITIONAL
NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN”**

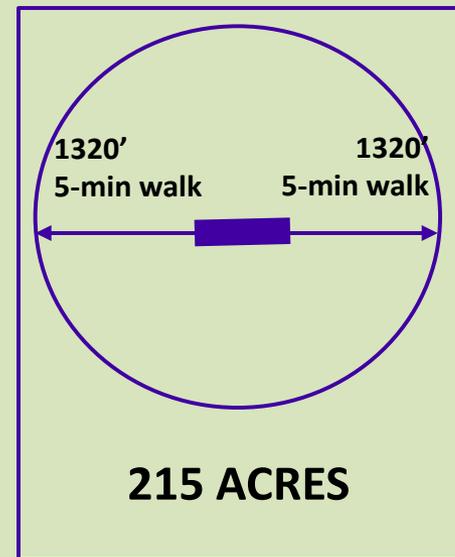
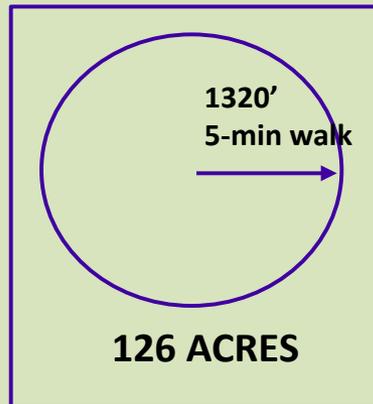
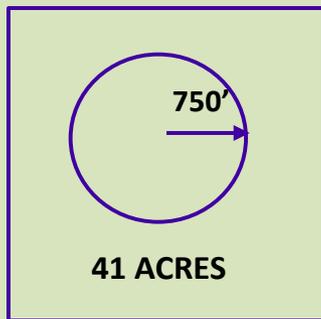
Easy to walk from end to end



Walkable Neighborhood Size

Q: How far can you walk in 5 min. at 3 mph?

A: 1,320 ft (or ¼-mile)



1/4 to 1/3 mile typically thought of as easily walkable

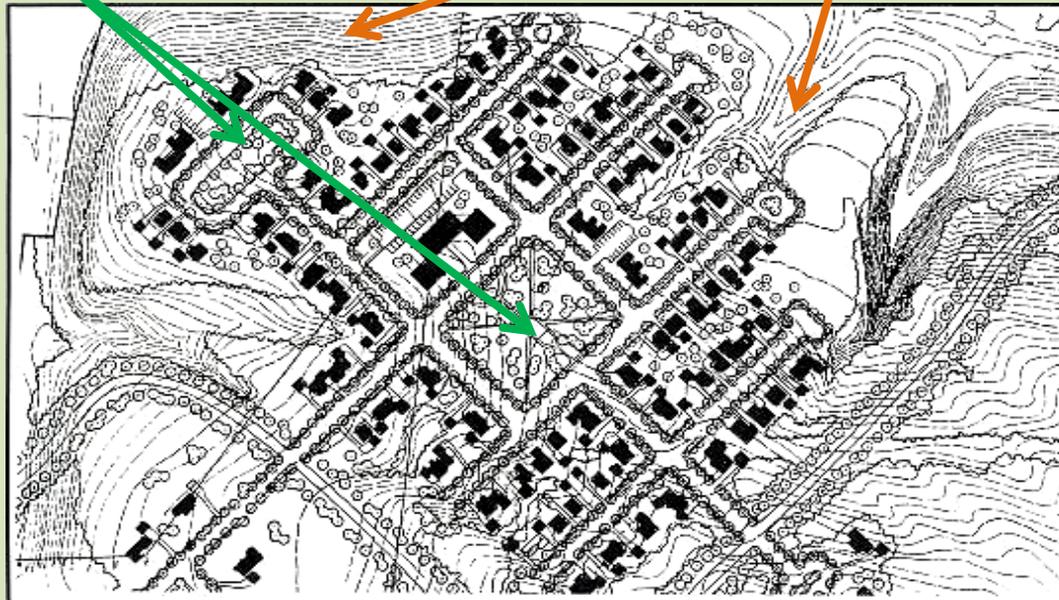
Two Types of Open Space

Formal: squares, greens, pocket parks

Identity, relaxation, play, helps to organize the streetscape (“outdoor rooms”)

Informal: natural areas, recreational areas, buffers

Resource protection, edge, active and passive recreation



Formal Open Space and Streetscape work together to create a memorable place

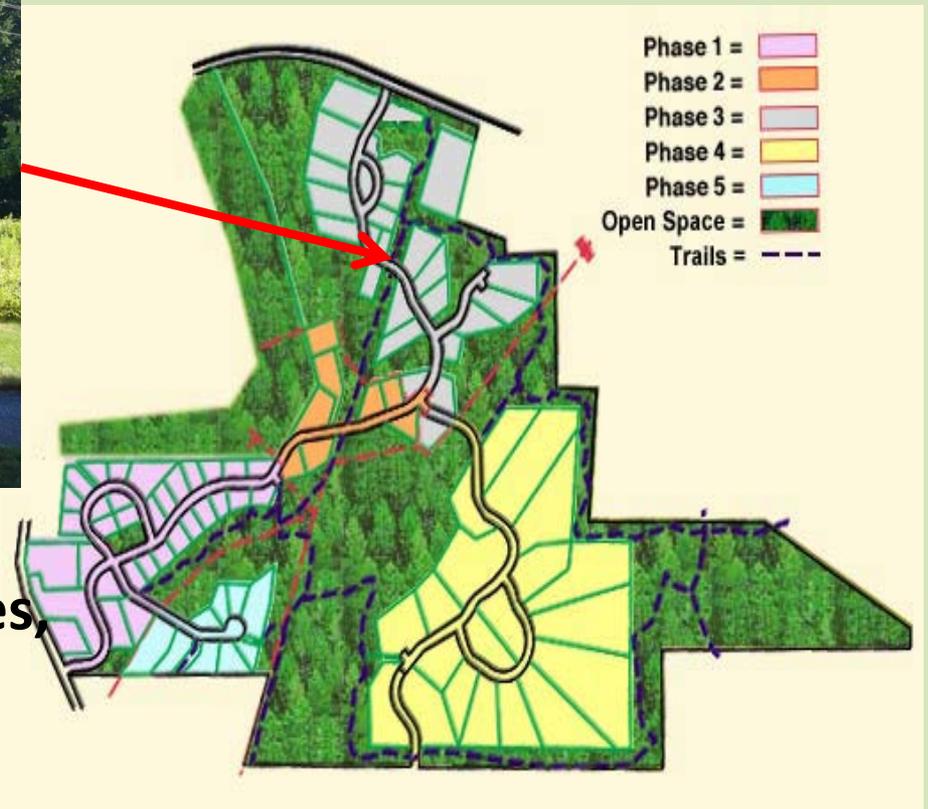


Noyes St., Portland, ME

Informal Open Space...

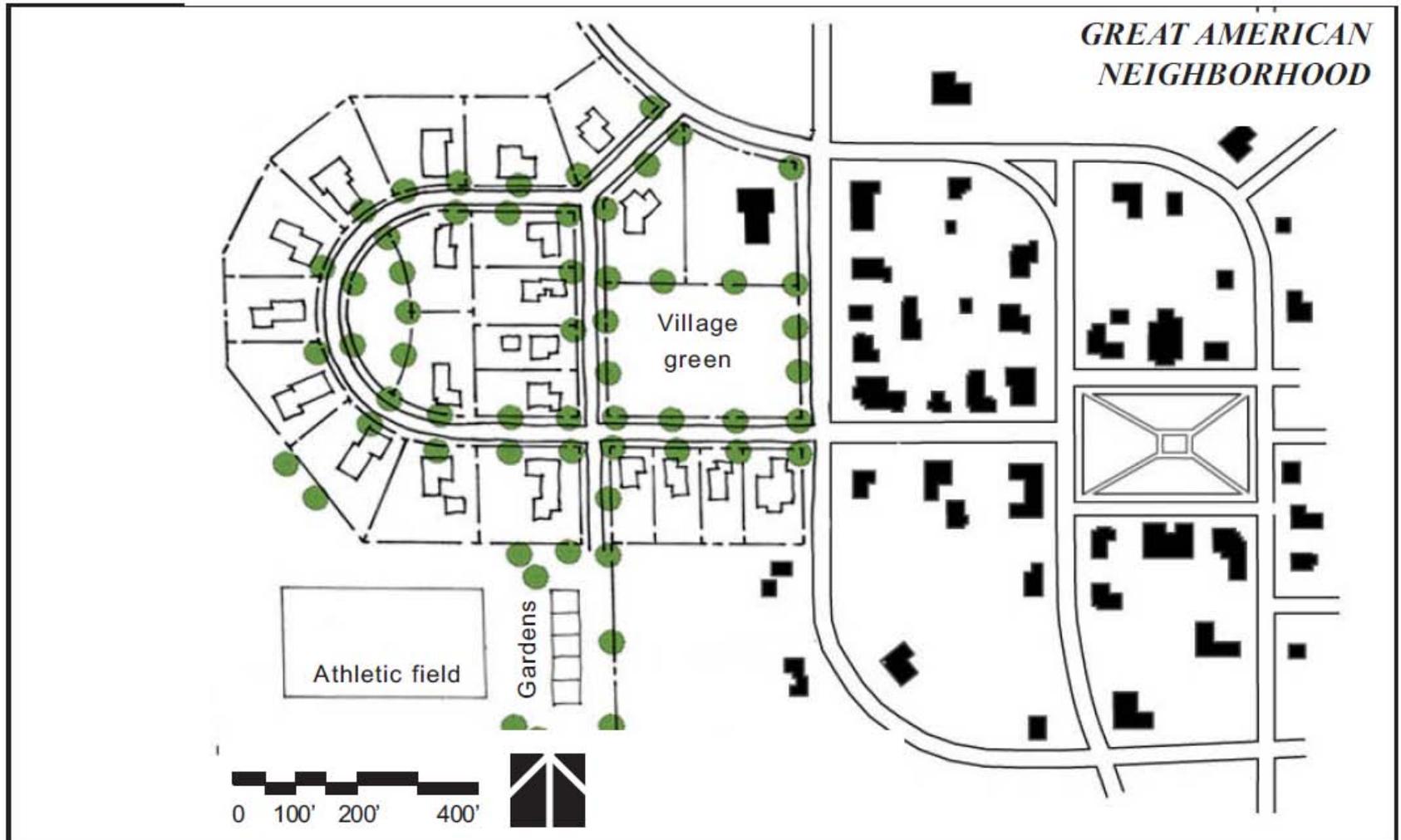


Cross Hill, Cape Elizabeth

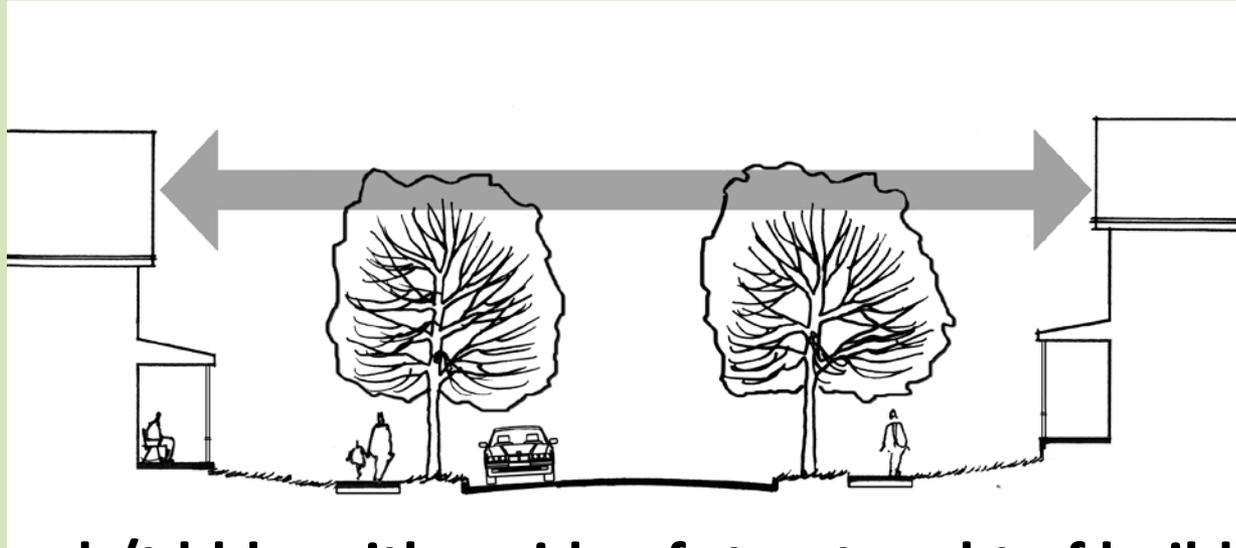


**Defines edges, protects resources,
provides recreation**

Connection to Street System



The Street as an Outdoor Room



Distance b/t bldgs either side of street vs. ht of buildings: 3.5:1

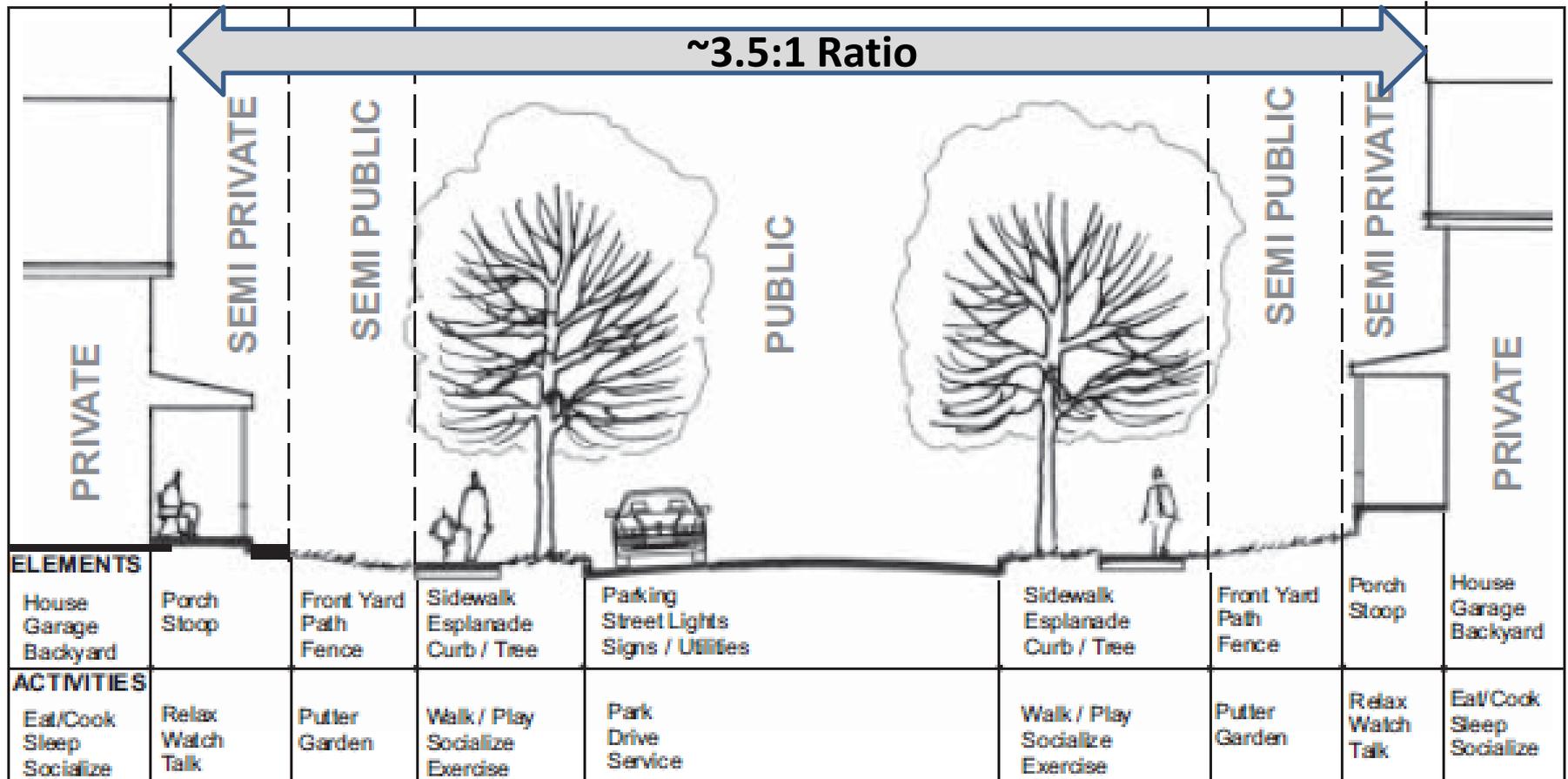


Two Examples



The Public-Private Continuum

Now let's break down the Outdoor Room into its parts:



~20 ft	~13 ft	~24 ft	~13 ft	~20 ft
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Feels Good from the Front Yard...



...to the Private Backyard



YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – FAMILY-AGED HOUSEHOLDS

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III. Students and Neighborhood Preservation

Issue/Opportunity – *The integration of off-campus student housing into Town*

Policy - *The Town will continue to seek a balance between small-scale student housing integrated into neighborhoods and larger-scale developments close to campus, with particular attention to limiting impacts on established single-family neighborhoods.*

Reference: Population-Housing Issue/Opportunity #3 and #4

Students and Neighborhood Preservation: Actions

- Student engagement
- Limit student rentals in single-family neighborhoods
- Improve communications with landlords, especially those who live outside of town
- Strengthen code enforcement tools
- Rental rehab and rental reconversion funds

Student Engagement

- Work with UMaine's new Associate Dean for Community Engagement to expand opportunities for students to contribute to and be part of town life
- Create a University presence Downtown (drop-in center, bookstore/clothing store, non-alcohol venue for socializing, etc.)

Limit Student Rentals in Single-Family Neighborhoods

- Adopt “student home” as a regulated land use in the MDR District and limit their number
 - Draw from examples in Newark, DE, St. Paul, MN, and Lower Marion Township, PA

Improve Communications with Landlords

- Re-establish Landlord-Town Committee for communication, education, outreach
 - Peer pressure approach aimed at relatively few landlords vs. expanded regulation that impacts all landlords
- Protocol for communications among Code Enforcement Office, Landlord, and Public

Strengthen Enforcement Capacity

- Improve code enforcement's ability to enforce the limit of 3 unrelated persons in single-family zoning districts
 - Rental registration list on web site
 - Public tracking of CEO and Police-documented complaints via web map
 - Release of leases to CEO if required
- Amend Disorderly Property Ordinance for better application to large student housing projects

Rental Rehab and Reconversion

- Through CDBG or similar mechanism, provide rental rehab loan funds to improve health & safety of rental properties
- Establish a mechanism to fund a reconversion incentive program – from multi-family rental back to single-family homes

YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

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Downtown Improvement

Issue/Opportunity – Downtown’s transition from neighborhood commercial to a specialty district of restaurants, specialty goods and financial services

Policy - The Town will continue to invest in the infrastructure, business development, and marketing of Downtown as a center of economic activity and a destination for goods services and entertainment.



Downtown Improvement: Actions

- Locally financed façade improvement program
- Public infrastructure
- Housing near Downtown
- Off-site business signage
- Credit enhancement agreements

Locally Financed Façade Improvement Program

- Use a portion of future Downtown TIF funds to create a façade improvement program targeted at historic character, aesthetics, & energy efficiency
- Follow design guidelines from 2011 Downtown Plan; work with OVA
- At least dollar-for-dollar private match

Public Infrastructure

- Sidewalks, streets, sewers, drainage per CIP and Downtown TIF Development Program
- Upgrade Pine Street parking lot
- Reclaim Pine Street gully; expand public parking in anticipation of other Downtown expansion

Housing Near Downtown

- Housing within walking distance of Downtown is a driver of successful stores
- See actions under Family-Aged Households (Village Residential Overlay District)

Off-Site Business Signage

- Work with OVA (and Stillwater Ave. businesses) to design an Off-Site Business Signage program
- Amend Land Use Ordinance to allow a off-site business signage customized to Orono



Credit Enhancement Agreements

- Consider a standard Credit Enhancement Agreement, as allowed within Downtown TIF District, to return a portion of new property taxes resulting from substantial redevelopment and increases in valuation of Downtown properties

YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT

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Food System as Part of Economic Base

Issue/Opportunity – *Expanding Orono's resource-based economy, including agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation and related value-added production.*

Policy - *Orono will draw on its natural resources and University expertise to expand resource-based economic activity.*

Note: Actions address both outdoor recreation and food-related economic activity. Tonight, talking about food-related activity.

Value-Added Food Incubator

- Engage Cooperative Extension, School of Food and Agriculture, Target Technology Center, and Maine Farmland Trust to determine feasibility of & financing for
 - incubator specializing in value-added food production and/or
 - Shared commercial kitchen/food processing facility



Farmers' Market

- Develop a roofed facility for Orono Farmers' Market in or close to Downtown



Covered Farmers' Market, Portland, OR

Photo by J. Jemison

YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – FOOD SYSTEM AS ECONOMIC BASE

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