

Colonial Theatre Restoration & Expansion Project Benefits and Estimated Economic Impacts to the City of Augusta

October 4, 2016

When it opened in 1913, the Colonial Theatre quickly became a cornerstone of downtown Augusta. For decades it provided a stimulus for growth and economic development and served as a symbol of Augusta's vitality and progress. With the changing times and gradual decline of downtown, the Theatre closed in 1969.

Today, we have the opportunity to not only restore an historic building but also to provide the Capital City a destination point, an arts district on the riverfront—successful in many cities across the nation.

Over the last decade, art has begun to transform a number of notable American cities. Visual arts, music, dance and theater, combined with architecturally unique public spaces, has helped to breathe new life into areas long thought dead, introducing both pleasing aesthetics and economic prosperity. Studies by economist Richard Florida¹ and others clearly demonstrate how quality of place and cultural offerings attract and retain individuals who are essential to economic development.

Cities with arts districts have proven that the arts foster economic development, revitalize urban areas, and improve the overall business climate by creating a more desirable community in which to live and work. Well-conceived and executed works of art enhance the value of development projects, create greater interest in space within the project, promote cultural tourism, and make a lasting, visible contribution to the community.

According to Florida, cities known for their strong cultural life and "creative cluster" also attract a higher-caliber workforce, as well as higher-paying companies that employ these individuals. Arts and culture contribute to an elevated quality of life through economic vitality, local cultural pride, and productive art jobs.

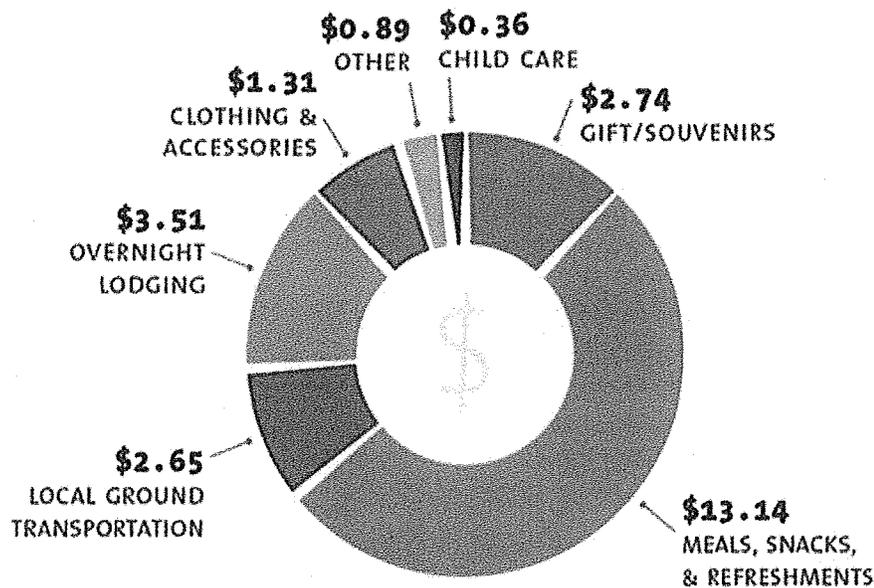
¹ Richard Florida is an American urban studies theorist at Carnegie Mellon University. Author *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 2002.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Colonial Theatre restoration project will catapult the revitalization of Downtown Augusta. In case after case, renovating historic theaters has decreased vacancy rates for retail and other business properties, increased property values, and improved the community's financial stability.²

The latest Americans for the Arts report, Arts & Economic Prosperity IV, shows that arts and culture organizations leverage additional event-related spending by their audiences that pumps revenue into the local economy. When patrons attend an arts event, they may pay for parking, eat dinner at a restaurant, shop in local retail stores, and have dessert on the way home. Based on the 151,802 audience surveys conducted for this study, the typical arts attendee spends \$24.60 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission.³

AVERAGE PER PERSON AUDIENCE EXPENDITURES: \$24.60



The study also showed that nationally, the non-profit arts and culture industry generates \$135.2 billion in economic activity annually—\$61.1 billion by the nation's nonprofits arts and culture organization in addition to \$74.1 billion in event-related expenditures by their audiences. This spending supports 4.1

² Forsher, J. (2003). *The Community of Cinema: How Cinema transformed the American downtown*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers. Retrieved January 2016.

³ American for the Arts Americans for the Arts • Arts & Economic Prosperity IV
<http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-iv>. Accessed 04-05-2016

million full-time jobs and also generates \$22.3 billion in revenue to local, state, and federal governments every year.

Arts & Economic Prosperity IV findings support what the tourism industry research has repeatedly demonstrated that arts tourists stay longer and spend more than the average traveler. In their study, 32 percent of attendees live outside the county in which the arts event took place, and their event-related spending is more than twice that of their local counterparts (nonlocal: \$39.96 vs. local: \$17.42).

Another study by the Pew Charitable Trust found that when companies plan to relocate to a new community, they cite the three most important cultural criteria in selecting a location: local community programs, movies, and theater.

The restoration of the Colonial Theatre in Keene, New Hampshire was the first step in the recovery of their downtown. Jack Dugan, executive director of the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), recalled the experience of Keene where the revitalization of the theater became the "the centerpiece of downtown" adding: "... it is one of the first places we bring people. It's a selling point."⁴

In a 2009 study by the Windham Regional Planning Commission of the Weston Theatre in Vermont, 83% of second homeowners responded that the most important reasons for choosing Weston, Vermont, as their second home were "cultural opportunities and the theatre."⁵

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT OF OTHER HISTORIC THEATRES/ARTS COMPLEXES

Many cities around the country have invested heavily in the restoration and operation of historic theatres and art complexes. Such investments have been based on the economic benefits, downtown revitalization projects, community quality of life improvement, and other benefits. Some do require city ownership, other projects have been public, private partnerships, and others have been completed by private non-profit organizations with assistance from local government sources.

A 2014 study of 177 non-profit professionally-run theatres of all sizes throughout the U.S., found that 1.7% of non-restricted income to theatres was contributed by city/county funds, 1.2% from state funding, and .04% from federal resources.⁶ Of these theatres, 51% were in capital campaigns in 2014 and 39 had completed a capital campaign in the past five years. Two of the 177 theatres profiled in the report were from Maine, Penobscot Theatre Company, and Portland Stage Company both with budgets of \$1 million to \$2,999,999.

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⁴The Laconia Daily Sun, June 22, 2015. <http://www.laconiadailysun.com/newsx/local-news/86898-collateral-impact-of-colonial-project>. Accessed on February 21, 2016.

⁵The Campaign for the Weston Playhouse Theatre Company Theatre. www.westonplayhouse.org. Accessed on January 13, 2016.

⁶Theatre Facts 2014: A Report on the Fiscal State of the U.S. Professional Not-for-profit Theatre Field. Theatre Communications Group. Fiscal Survey 2014.

The Woodward Opera House, Mount Vernon OH (Pop. 16, 990)

- The City donated \$500,00 to the capital campaign.

Wayne Theatre, Waynesboro, VA (Pop. 21,263)

- The city of Waynesboro donated the building to the nonprofit organization.
- The City's Economic Development Department donated \$200,000 upon opening.

Tampa Theatre, Tampa FL Population (Pop. 352,957)

- Owned by the City - operated by a nonprofit
- The City donates \$100,000 per year to the operating budget and pays utilities & basic maintenance

Newberry Opera House, Newberry, SC (Pop. 10,256)

- Owned by the City of Newberry; operated by the non-profit Newberry Opera House Foundation
- The City created a TIF district allowing for tax revenue sharing and construction debt reductions
- The City provides \$150,000 per year to the Opera House from the approximately \$600,000 per year received in accommodations taxes

The Lincoln Theatre, Marion VA (Pop. 6,000)

- Owned and operated by the non-profit Lincoln Theatre Foundation
- Town of Marion provides approximately \$65,000 per year for operations

Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady, NY (Pop. 66,135)

- Owned and operated by a non-profit
- County development agency donated \$9.5 million to the recent \$42 million renovation

Gaillard Center, Charleston, SC (Pop. 127,999)

- Owned by the City of Charleston; operated by the non-profit Gaillard Foundation
- The City is contributing \$71 million to the \$142 million cost of current renovation
- The City's share is being funded with accommodations and hospitality taxes and New Market Tax Credits; revenue from a TIF district (\$32 million); and general obligation bonds (\$19 million)
- The City provides \$1.1 million per year to the Gaillard Foundation to manage operations
- The City pays major facility costs; insurance; repair and maintenance of systems, etc.

CASE STUDIES

THE TARRYTOWN MUSIC HALL – TARRYTOWN, NY

In 1980, the Music Hall, a long-time movie theatre built in 1885, was closed due to the rise of multiplexes in the area and plans were in place for it to be torn down. The town mirrored its state of decay: the run-down Main Street was full of bars, motorcycle gangs and boarded-up stores. The theater was rescued by a group of local citizens who recognized that this building was unique and incredibly important to the economic and cultural welfare of the area.

Today, the Music Hall is thriving as a venue for live performances and films. It is the center for community groups where students have the experience of performing, and it is a haven for professional artists such as Judy Collins, Dizzy Gillespie, Savion Glover, Wynton Marsalis, The Preservation Hall Jazz Band, and many others. At the same time that the theatre was brought back to life, Tarrytown began to change, and it is presently flourishing. The streets are generously lined with shops and restaurants; not ONE boarded up store exists. Tourism is popular and people are scrambling to move and live here. Twenty-four years after the Music Hall was to be demolished, people are treasuring it and cannot get enough of what they so nearly lost.

White Plains, the closest large city to Tarrytown, on the other hand, made the mistake of destroying their historic theatre. After the demolition, the city was completely dead at night; there was no nightlife AT ALL. It took thirty years for the city to figure out why and in November 2003, millions of dollars were spent building a new theatre to revitalize the downtown. Unfortunately, the theatre they have built cannot even begin to compare to what was originally there. It is just an ordinary black box. There is no charm; it is nothing special. What they lost is tremendous and can never be replaced.

FLYNN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS – BURLINGTON, VT

The restoration and re-use of the historic Flynn Theatre in Burlington, Vermont has had a huge impact on the region. Situated in downtown Burlington, the theatre was purchased as a seedy movie house in 1980, and through four phases of restoration has become a Center for the Performing Arts with large and small performance venues, a gallery, studio/classrooms and year-round programming. The Winter/Spring Season of classes expects to serve over 300 children and adults through these classes - many of them meeting weekly over 12 weeks. The theatre generates traffic, visibility, and taxes for downtown.

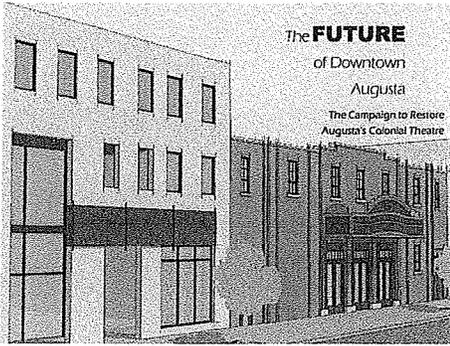
About 60% of the programming in the facility are their presentations. The remaining are rentals. They conservatively estimate the economic impact to be \$20 Million a year (2004 dollars). They have helped sustain an incredible variety of restaurants in downtown, creating a lively year-round and after-hours ambience. Scores of people have moved back downtown. The City supports the theatre through relief from property tax, working on street improvements, occasional grants, and with sponsorship of their summer jazz festival which brings 30,000 people into downtown.

Bardavon Opera House – Poughkeepsie, NY

Within a few short years of its escape from the wrecking ball, the theater was reopened as a performance hall, incorporated as a non-profit presenting organization, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. By 1980, a formal capital campaign was launched to initiate measures to address the mile-long list of the building's problems and needs. This was the first stage of numerous fundraising efforts that over the years have brought in some \$6-7 million to restore and preserve this gem of a hall, the oldest continuously operating theater in the State and among the oldest in the nation.

Today, the Bardavon is generously supported by City, County and State Legislature grants, and is among the three top recipients statewide of NYS Council on the Arts (NYSCA) program funding and ranks first in capital funding. In 2002, Governor George E. Pataki officiated at the inaugural lighting of the theater's restored marquee and capital campaign kick-off.

SOURCE: THE LEAGUE OF HISTORIC AMERICAN THEATRES, 334 N. CHARLES STREET, BALTIMORE, MD 21201-4042



Estimates of Job Creation

“Since 2008, the Historic Tax Credit has leveraged approximately \$350 million in private investment in Maine alone. Our bipartisan legislation will make the Historic Tax Credit easier to use and expand its economic impact - spurring growth, development, and the creation of good-paying jobs for hardworking Americans.”

-Senator Susan Collins, Co-Sponsor of the HISTORIC TAX CREDIT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2016”

In hundreds of cities across the nation, the development of historic theatres has produced enormous economic benefits for downtown districts—bringing people back downtown, expanding downtown activity after 5 pm and stimulating the growth of restaurants and other businesses supporting the activities of the theatre. Restoring the Colonial Theatre has been identified by Augusta’s City Council as a central component of revitalizing Augusta’s historic downtown.

Literature Review

- One of the most immediate benefits of restoring and rehabilitating historic buildings is job creation. More labor intensive than new construction, rehabilitating historic buildings has the added economic benefit of usually involving a faster start to completion time than new construction. Job creation is realized not only through the immediate rehabilitation work, but when the underutilized or vacant building is once again placed in service in the community. With the creation of an estimated 2.4 million jobs in the construction, service, and retail sectors, the program (*Historic Tax Credits*) is a proven job stimulant in today’s recovering economy.¹
- For every \$1 million in historic property investment, 16 jobs are created and \$2.1 million in economic activity is catalyzed. ² The cost to renovate **and** expand the Colonial is \$8.5 million. Using this formula, at a minimum, we can estimate **136 local jobs will be created**.
- Every \$1 of historic tax credits leverages a minimum of \$4 of private investment. This is the epitome of cost-effective use of taxpayer dollars because \$200,000 in historic tax credits spurs \$800,000 in private dollars, creating \$1 million in investment.
- 75 percent of the economic benefits of these projects stay on the ground, in state and local economies. Developers buy materials close to the project site and hire local workers. Moreover, because historical building rehabilitations are more labor intensive than new construction, they often require additional workers at higher wages.³

¹ National Park Service Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program 35th Anniversary Report. <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/tax-incentives-35anniversary.pdf> accessed on May 18, 2016.

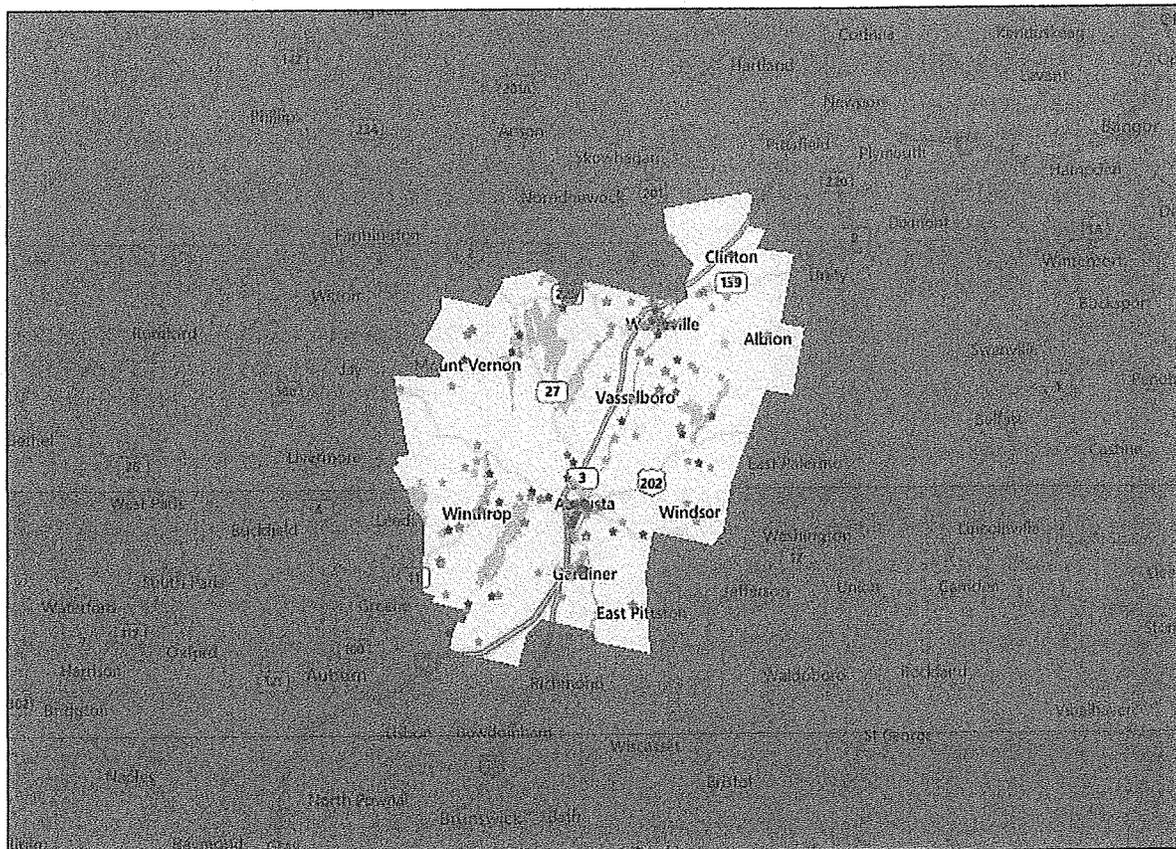
² The Federal Historical Tax Credit. Transforming Communities. Prepared for the National Trust for Historic Preservation by Place Economics June 2014.

³ A Catalyst for Change: Transforming America’s Past into Our Futures, The Federal Historic Tax Credit: Transforming Communities Prepared for the National Trust for Historic Preservation by Place Economics June 2014

The Creative Industries in Kennebec County, ME

This *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts* report provides a research-based approach to understanding the scope and economic importance of the arts in **Kennebec County, ME**. The creative industries are composed of arts businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies. Arts businesses and the creative people they employ stimulate innovation, strengthen America's competitiveness in the global marketplace, and play an important role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy.

178 Arts-Related Businesses Employ 412 People



- Arts-Related Business**
- ★ Museums/Collections
 - ★ Performing Arts
 - ★ Visual/Photography
 - ★ Film, Radio, TV
 - ★ Design/Publishing
 - ★ Art School/Services

Kennebec County, ME is home to 178 arts-related businesses that employ 412 people. The creative industries account for 2.5 percent of the total number of businesses located in Kennebec County, ME and 0.6 percent of the people they employ. The map above plots the creative industries, with each star representing a unique arts business establishment.

Nationally, 702,771 businesses are involved in the creation or distribution of the arts, and they employ 2.9 million people. This represents 3.9 percent of all U.S. businesses and 1.9 percent of all U.S. employees—demonstrating statistically that the arts are a formidable business presence and broadly distributed across our communities. The source for these data is Dun & Bradstreet, the most comprehensive and trusted source for business information in the United States. These data are current as of January 2015.

**The Creative Industries Represent
2.5 Percent of All Businesses and 0.6 Percent of All Employees in
Kennebec County, ME
(Data current as of January 2015)**

CATEGORY	BUSINESSES	EMPLOYEES
Arts Schools and Services	6	5
Agents	1	0
Arts Schools and Instruction	5	5
Design and Publishing	40	74
Advertising	4	7
Architecture	2	7
Design	33	54
Publishing	1	6
Film, Radio and TV	19	60
Motion Pictures	15	51
Radio	3	9
Television	1	0
Museums and Collections	12	56
Historical Society	2	4
Museums	8	38
Zoos and Botanical	2	14
Performing Arts	29	68
Music	13	34
Performers (nec)	4	4
Services & Facilities	10	24
Theater	2	6
Visual Arts/Photography	72	149
Crafts	9	15
Photography	40	67
Services	10	51
Visual Arts	13	16
GRAND TOTAL	178	412

Research Notes:

- These Creative Industries data are based solely on active U.S. businesses that are registered with Dun & Bradstreet. Because not all businesses register, our analyses indicate an under-representation of arts businesses (particularly those that are nonprofit arts organizations and individual artists). The data in this report, therefore, should be considered conservative.
- To define the Creative Industries, Americans for the Arts selected 644 8-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes that represent for-profit and nonprofit arts-centric businesses (out of more than 18,500 codes representing all industries).
- Reports for all 435 U.S. Congressional Districts, the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the 7,500 state legislative districts, and all 3,143 U.S. counties—as well as a full suite of user tools and a comprehensive list of the industries included in this analysis—are available for download at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CreativeIndustries.

City of Augusta, Maine
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

AUGUSTA STATE AIRPORT
CODE ENFORCEMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ENGINEERING
FACILITIES & SYSTEMS
PLANNING

MEMO

To: Bill Bridgeo, City Manager
From: Keith P. Luke, Deputy Director of Development Services
CC: Ralph St. Pierre, Matt Nazar
Date: 10/11/2016

Augusta Downtown Tipping Point Initiative

Over the past six months the City of Augusta's Economic Development Office has worked closely with the Augusta Downtown Alliance to establish an incentive package to promote development in the city's downtown district.

We are proposing a three part program with the goal of promoting both business and residential development in the downtown, with the understanding that success in both areas is critical to establish a sustainable, successful downtown district. Augusta's downtown has seen several successful residential projects over the past decade, but in spite of those successes, retail and commercial office revitalization has been slow to develop. This program includes incentives for well-targeted, desirable commercial and residential projects.

We propose funding the initiative with \$50,000 from the city's reserve account. The City Council appropriated \$100,000 for Job Retention in 2001. The Council allocated \$25,000 for E – Pro Engineering Services in 2001 and \$25,000 for Fieldstone Pump Station in 2006 leaving a balance of \$50,000 in the reserve account.

Small Business Loan Program

The City of Augusta and Kennebec Savings Bank will be partnering to make a loan pool of \$250,000 available to merchants in the Water Street Historic District (map attached). Kennebec Savings will be providing the loan capital at an interest rate of 2.5% over seven years. The city will provide a reimbursement of interest costs to the borrower, making the program effectively interest free.

The mayor will appoint a three member committee to review and score loan applications.

Program terms include:

- Loan not to exceed 1/3 of total project cost or \$50,000.
- Borrower equity must be equal to at least 50% of the total project cost.
- Borrower must agree to a "soft-second" security interest in business assets.
- If terms and conditions are not met, the default repayment rate is 12% interest.

Loan proceeds may be used for allowable expenses under MRSA Title 30-A, §5225 Project Costs, including:

- The demolition, alteration, remodeling, repair or reconstruction of existing buildings, structures and fixtures;
- Site preparation and finishing work;
- All fees and expenses that are eligible to be included in the capital cost of such improvements, including, but not limited to, licensing and permitting expenses and planning, engineering, architectural, testing, legal and accounting expenses.

Loan applications will be pre-screened by Development Services staff to verify location of the subject property, then ranked and scored on a first come, first serve basis by the loan review committee. Applications will then passed on to Kennebec Savings Bank which will approve the loans using conventional underwriting criteria.

Downtown Residential Development Grant

The pilot-phase of the Tipping Point Initiative includes enough funding for seventeen incentive-grants to encourage the development of new, upper floor residential apartment units.

In order to qualify, a developer must be creating new, code-compliant dwelling units in the city's Water Street Historic District (map attached), and invest a minimum of \$25,000 in construction of each unit.

The development grants are intended to cover expenses related to life-safety and code-related investments and will require the presentation of paid invoices for eligible expenses under MRSA Title 30-A, §5225 Project Costs, to the city for reimbursement, up to \$2,000 for each unit receiving an occupancy permit.

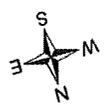
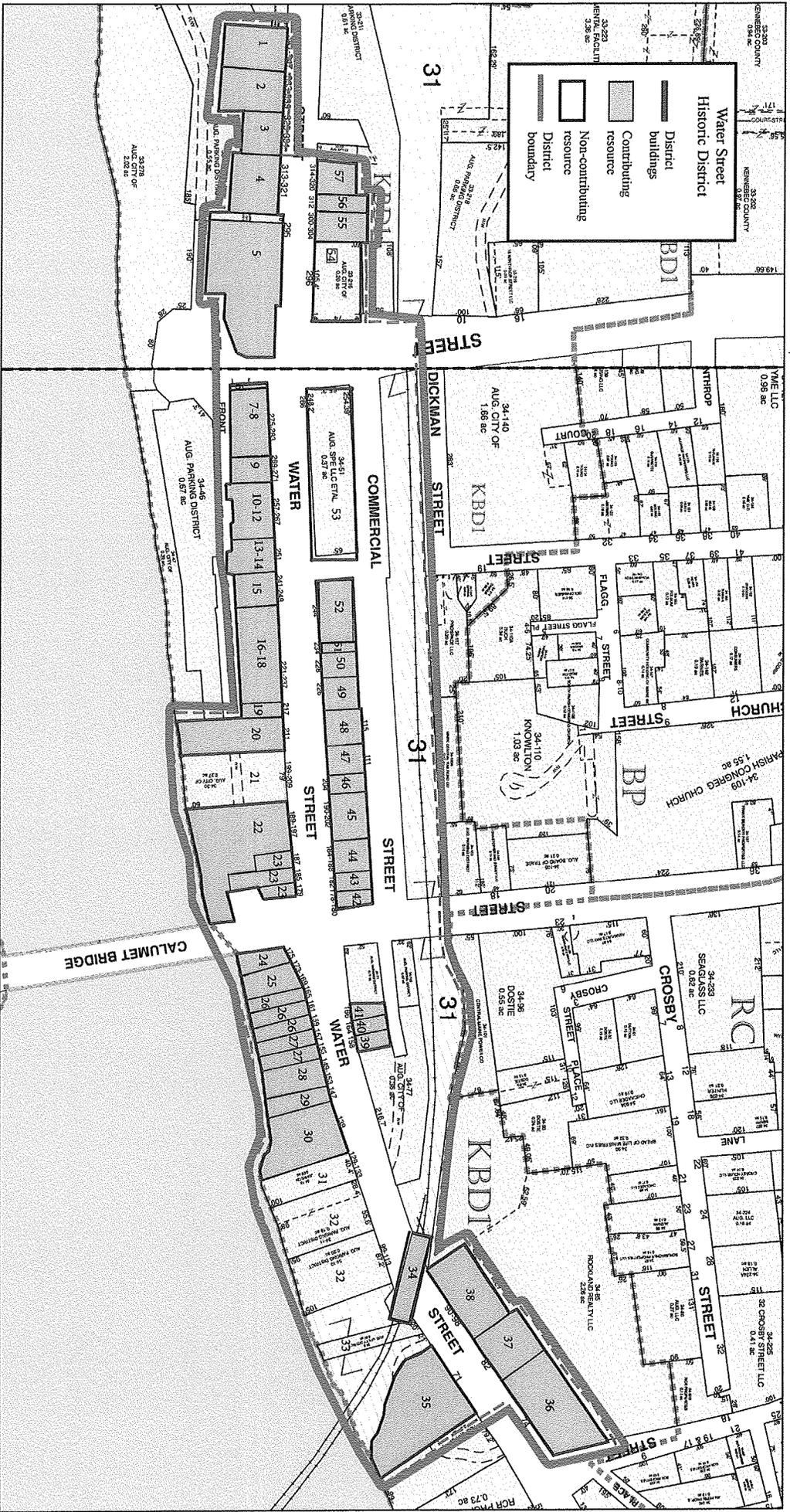
Projects covered by a credit enhancement agreement with the city under the terms of a tax increment financing agreement will not be eligible for the grant program.

Building Permit Waiver Program

We are also proposing to waive building permit and inspection fees for improvements to multi-family housing units city-wide, for one calendar year, beginning on January 1, 2017. Building permits and inspections are still required – those failing to do so will not be eligible for the fee waiver. In calendar year 2015 total building permit fees for work and improvements to multi-unit residential buildings totaled \$10, 790.

Water Street Historic District

- District buildings
- Contributing resource
- Non-contributing resource
- District boundary



PROPERTY MAP
 CITY OF AUGUSTA
 KENNESAW COUNTY MAINE
 2017 Annual Assessment Computer
 1 inch equals 100 feet

Memorandum

To: William R. Bridgeo, City Manager

From: Chief Robert C. Gregoire

Date: 9-29-16

Re: Council Order

I respectfully request that the following Council Order appear at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting for the approval to apply to the Bureau of Highway Safety's 2017 Evidence Based Impaired Driving High Visibility Enforcement program that runs from October 1st 2016 to September 30th of 2017 for the amount of \$33,440.00.

The project will consist of dedicated details to increase effective enforcement of traffic related laws and impaired driving incidences as well as impaired driving-related injuries, crashes, and fatalities.

BE IT ORDERED. That the City Manager is authorized to accept grant funding in the amount not to exceed \$33,440.00 from the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety for the Evidence Based Impaired Driving High Visibility Enforcement Grant. There is no monetary match.

TO: William R. Bridgeo, City Manager

FROM: Chief Robert C. Gregoire

DATE: September 27, 2016

RE: Acceptance of Grant Funding.

I respectfully request that the following order be placed on the next regular City Council Business meeting.

Healthy Communities of the Capital Area (HCCA) is a Comprehensive Community Health Coalition with a focus on prevention of chronic disease including substance use disorders and substance misuse. HCCA hosts the Southern Kennebec Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) and serves the 18 communities in southern Kennebec County.

HCCA has been awarded federal funds, STOP Act Grant # SPO22007, to support efforts to decrease underage drinking including support for an Underage Drinking Task Force and a Law Enforcement Task Force (LETf). LETf conducts enforcement details and compliance checks across southern Kennebec County. The agreement requires collaboration among six law enforcement agencies who participate in the LETf. STOP Act Grant # SPO22007 also provides for training opportunities for the Augusta Police Department that can be extended to all law enforcement agencies that are part of the LETf, as well as social service and health/mental health providers that the law enforcement agencies partner with in their communities.

This is a reimbursement grant and the Augusta Police Department will be reimbursed for the personnel costs related to grant activities. Funding is available October 01, 2016 to September 29, 2017.

ORDERED, That the Augusta Police Department is authorized to accept grant funding from the Healthy Communities of the Capital Area in the amount not to exceed of \$14,640.00 for the Augusta Police Department. Grant funding will be used to provide underage drinking education, enforcement and training. There is no match requirement.

City of Augusta, Maine
COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Vision

Promoting pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation travel reduces negative environmental impacts, promotes healthy living, advances the well-being of travelers, supports the goal of compact development, and meets the needs of the diverse populations that comprise our community. The vision of the City of Augusta is of a community in which all residents and visitors, regardless of their age, ability, or financial resources, can safely and efficiently use the public right-of-way to meet their transportation needs regardless of their preferred mode of travel.

Policy

The City will plan for, design, construct, operate, and maintain an appropriate and integrated transportation system that will meet the needs of motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair users, transit vehicles and riders, freight haulers, emergency responders, and residents of all ages and abilities.

Transportation facilities that support the concept of complete streets include, but are not limited to pavement markings and signs; street and sidewalk lighting; sidewalk and pedestrian safety improvements; Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI compliance; transit accommodations; bicycle accommodations, including appropriate signage and markings; and streetscapes that appeal to and promote pedestrian use.

The system's design will be consistent with and supportive of local neighborhoods, the historic downtown, our many major highways entering the city, and the rural area of Augusta, recognizing that transportation needs vary and must be balanced in a flexible, safe, and cost effective manner.

Projects

Those involved in the planning and design of projects within the public right-of-way will give consideration to all users and modes of travel from the start of planning and design work.

Transportation improvements shall be viewed as opportunities to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. This shall apply to new construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation. The City of Augusta's Traffic Calming Committee shall be briefed on potential future projects of this nature during or immediately following the annual development of the city's capital improvement program. This will allow the Committee to provide its views regarding complete streets policy early in the planning and design process.

Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be made under the circumstances listed below:

1. Street projects may exclude those elements of this policy that would require the accommodation of street uses prohibited by law;
2. Ordinary maintenance activities such as mowing, snowplowing, sweeping, spot repair, joint or crack sealing, or pothole filling do not require that elements of this policy be applied beyond the scope of that maintenance activity;
3. Ordinary maintenance paving projects may only exclude the elements of this policy that would require increasing pavement width. However, when such projects do occur, the condition of existing facilities supporting alternate transportation modes should be evaluated as well as the appropriateness of modifying existing pavement markings and signage that supports such alternate modes. This exception does not apply to street reconstruction projects;
4. Street reconstruction projects and maintenance paving projects which involve widening pavement may exclude elements of this policy when the accommodation of a specific use is expected to:
 - a. require more space than is physically available, or
 - b. be located where both current and future demand is proven absent, or
 - c. drastically increase project costs and equivalent alternatives exist within proximity, or
 - d. have adverse impacts on environmental resources such as streams, wetlands, floodplains, or on historic structures or sites above and beyond the impacts of currently existing infrastructure.

In order for an exception to be granted under the conditions stated above and prior to finalizing the design and budget for the intended project, the Director of Public Works and/or City Engineer must first consult with the Director of Development Services and City Manager. The City Manager shall determine if an exception is warranted and inform the City Council of the exception.

Publicly managed street projects may exclude the development of sidewalks in areas falling outside those identified as appropriate for sidewalks on the basis of an adopted sidewalk policy or other plans.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The City will cooperate together and with other transportation agencies including the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to ensure the principles and practices of complete streets are embedded within their planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities.

Design Criteria

The City, through its Public Works and Development Services Departments, shall develop and adopt design criteria, standards, and guidelines based upon recognized best practices in

street design, construction, and operation. To the greatest extent possible, the City shall adopt the best practices standards with particular emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle markings and wayfinding signage.

Resources to be referenced in developing these standards shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the latest editions of:

1. American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, Guide for Planning, Designing, and Operating Pedestrian Facilities, and Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities;
2. Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach;
3. National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide;
4. U.S. Access Board Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines;
5. Highway Capacity Manual and Highway Safety Manual; and
6. the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

The City will be permitted to consider innovative or non-traditional design options that provide a comparable level of safety and utility for users as those listed above.

Performance

The Director of Public Works and City Engineer shall report to the City Council on an annual basis on the transportation projects undertaken within the prior year and planned within the coming year and the extent to which each of these projects has met the objectives of this policy.

Community Context & Network

Implementation of this Policy shall take into account the goal of enhancing the context and character of the surrounding built and natural environments. Transportation facilities, including roads, should be adapted to fit and enhance the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Special attention should be given to projects which enhance the overall transportation system and its connectivity. Specifically, high priority should be given to:

1. Corridors providing primary access to one or more significant destinations such as a parks or recreation areas, schools, shopping/commercial areas, public transportation, or employment centers;
2. Corridors serving a relatively high number of users of non-motorized transportation modes;
3. Corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian or bicycle networks;
4. Projects identified in regional or local thoroughfare, bicycle, and pedestrian plans.