



Ellsworth
The FRIENDLY CITY

High Street Corridor Stakeholder Meeting

August 25, 2026



Rural
Community
Assistance
Partnership



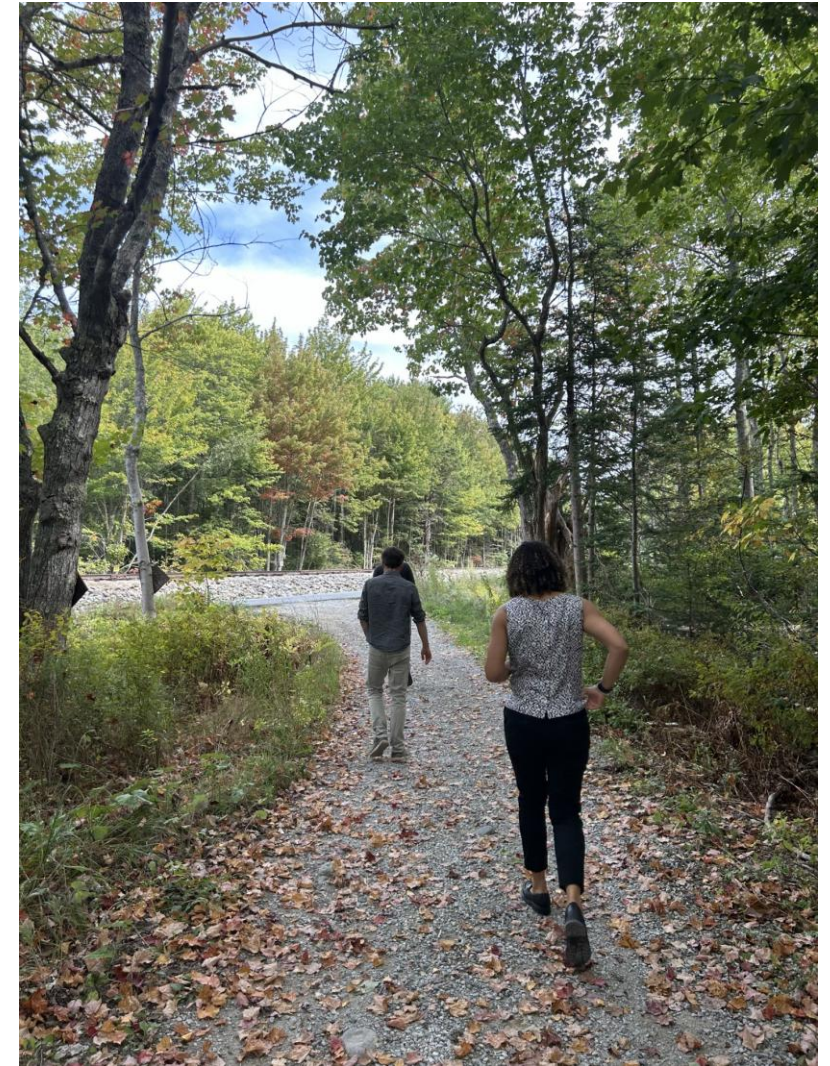
USDOT Thriving Communities: Ellsworth, Maine

Sarah Buck, RCAP Solutions

September, 2024



The City and RCAP Solutions (RSOL), the lead capacity builder in Maine, completed a comprehensive needs assessment and toured the community to develop a TCP community workplan for the 2 ½ year intensive Technical Assistance (TA) engagement. TA set to go through **12/26/26**.



Workplan Priorities

- **Corridor Study for High Street** (comprehensive plan recommendation)
- **Stormwater** with a focus on Card Brook/High St. (some stormwater tasks have spun off for additional RCAP Solutions EPA-funded TA work, including potential recommended state funding for Card Brook)
- **Childcare Assessment**
- New priority added in 2026 to **support existing public transit education, outreach, and marketing**—tie to HCPC NBRC \$

High Street Corridor Study Goals

1) Safety

2) Pedestrian/Bicycle Access (with a focus on Pedestrians)

3) Streetscaping/Beautification (with a focus on functional green infrastructure where possible)

August, 2026



- USDOT paid for the study via a subaward, TA team helped to manage consultant**
 - Stantec competitively selected—kicked off work in late 2025; scope and budget were increased to complete all 4 priority intersections and an entire corridor overview. Timeline and budget increased again to address Ellsworth community feedback/concerns. Study completed August 2026; MDOT engaged throughout**
 - TA team helping explore funding for design, further required planning studies, and implementation now that the study is completed**
 - USDOT SS4A application submitted Spring 2026; TA team can support a 100% grant USDOT Rural and Tribal Pilot program application later in 2026 if desired by the City**
-

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- **Childcare Assessment**
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Thank You

Sarah Buck, RCAP Solutions

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207-631-0010/978-894-4123

ELLSWORTH HIGH STREET CORRIDOR STUDY

Final Report Public Presentation
August 25, 2026



STUDY OVERVIEW



High Street is one of Ellsworth's most **important transportation corridors**. It serves **year-round residents, local businesses**, visitors traveling to **Acadia and Downeast Maine**, and people moving through the city by car, on foot, by bicycle, or by transit.

The **City of Ellsworth**, in **partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Thriving Communities Program** technical assistance team, **initiated the High Street Corridor Study** to better understand existing transportation and safety conditions and identify potential improvements that could make the corridor safer, more comfortable, and more adaptable over time.

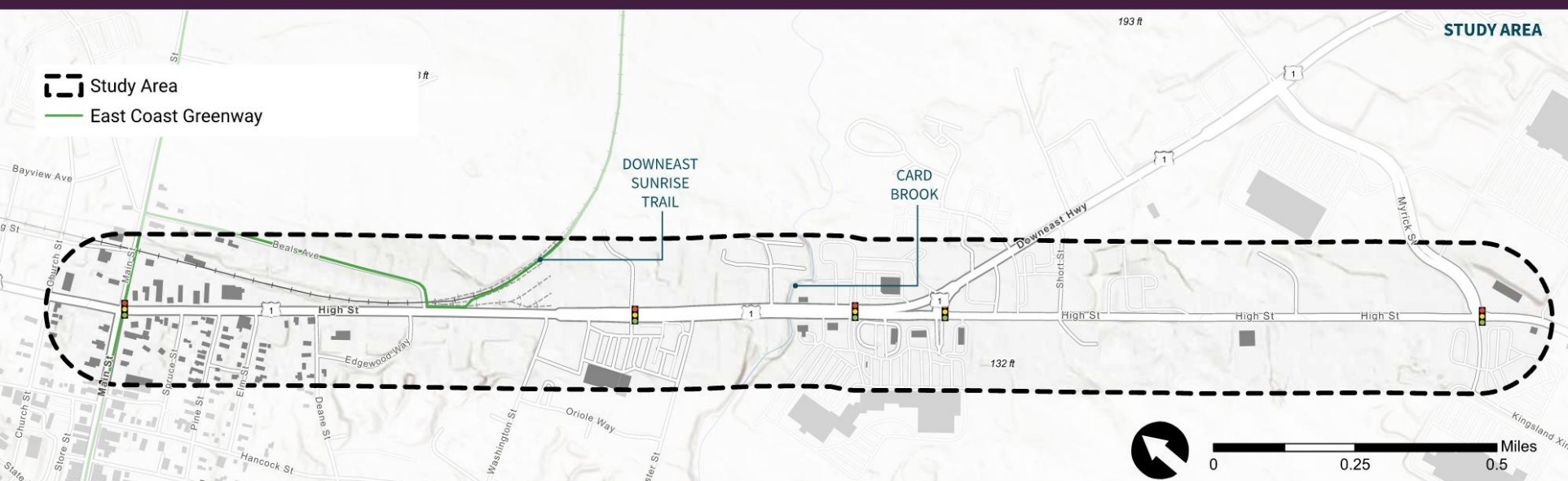
GOALS

Create a safe and sustainable High Street corridor by:

- Improving **multimodal safety** along High Street, while maintaining existing roadway capacity.
- Integrating safety enhancements with **stormwater-friendly streetscaping and green infrastructure**.
- Positioning the City for **future success** by providing clear, actionable deliverables—including conceptual renderings, planning-level cost estimates, and a phased implementation roadmap.

Additional Context

- Concepts are **planning-level ideas, not final designs** or approved projects
- Recommendations **illustrate potential options** and help the City consider priorities
- **Additional engineering, coordination, permitting, property owner discussions, and further public engagement would be required before implementing**



BEALS AVENUE INTERSECTION – PLANNING-LEVEL CONCEPT



PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATE AND PHASING:

- **Phase 1** – Trailhead improvements and extending Multi-Use Path to Beals Ave: \$150,000
- **Phase 2** – Multi-Use Path between Deane St. and Washington St., associated landscaping and Pedestrian HAWK crossing: \$500,000

Proposed Improvements

1. Multiuse path added on western side of road
2. Additional plantings, street trees and trail head with bench and interpretative signage
3. Potential crosswalk with HAWK signal

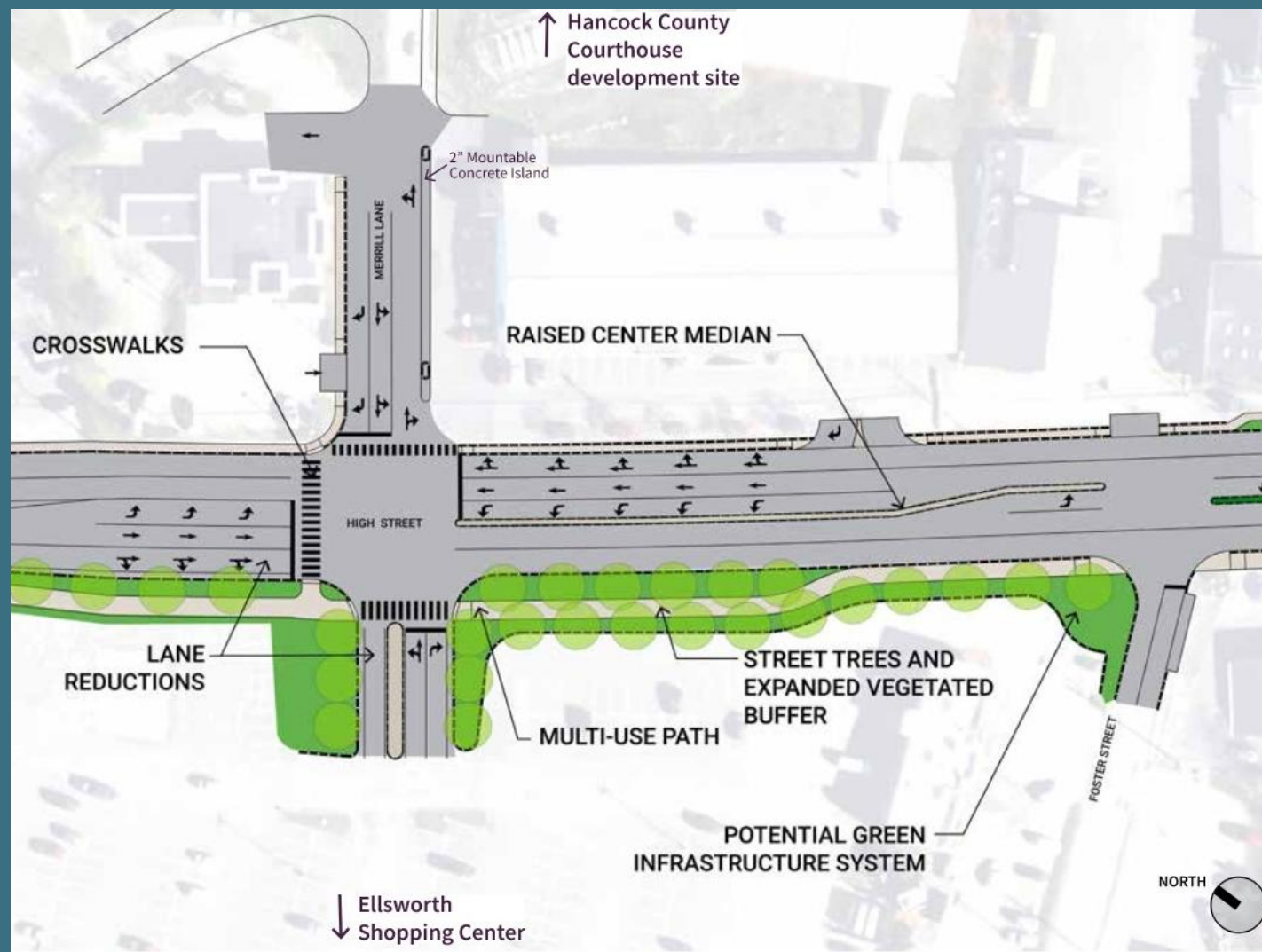
Changes from Previous Draft (based on public input)

1. No lane reductions – Maintains two lanes of traffic in each direction
2. Beals Avenue remains open to Through traffic and no trailhead parking has been added at the end of Beals Avenue.



Example pedestrian hybrid beacon (Congress Street, Portland, ME)

MERRILL LANE INTERSECTION – PLANNING-LEVEL CONCEPT



Proposed Improvements

1. Crosswalks added across 3 sides of the intersection
2. Lanes reduced entering/exiting Ellsworth Shopping Center
3. Multiuse Path on western side of the road
4. Expanded vegetated buffer with street trees and potential green infrastructure system in front of Ellsworth Shopping Center

Changes from Previous Draft *(based on public input)*

1. Street trees moved so they are between multi-use path and road
2. Merrill Lane aligns with current design associated with the Hancock County Courthouse development. This concept may need to be adjusted as that project advances.

PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATE AND PHASING:

- **Phase 1** – Merrill Lane intersection improvements and 600' sidewalk : \$250,000
- **Phase 2** –Multi-Use Path between Washington St. and Foster St., associated landscaping and signal upgrades: \$850,000

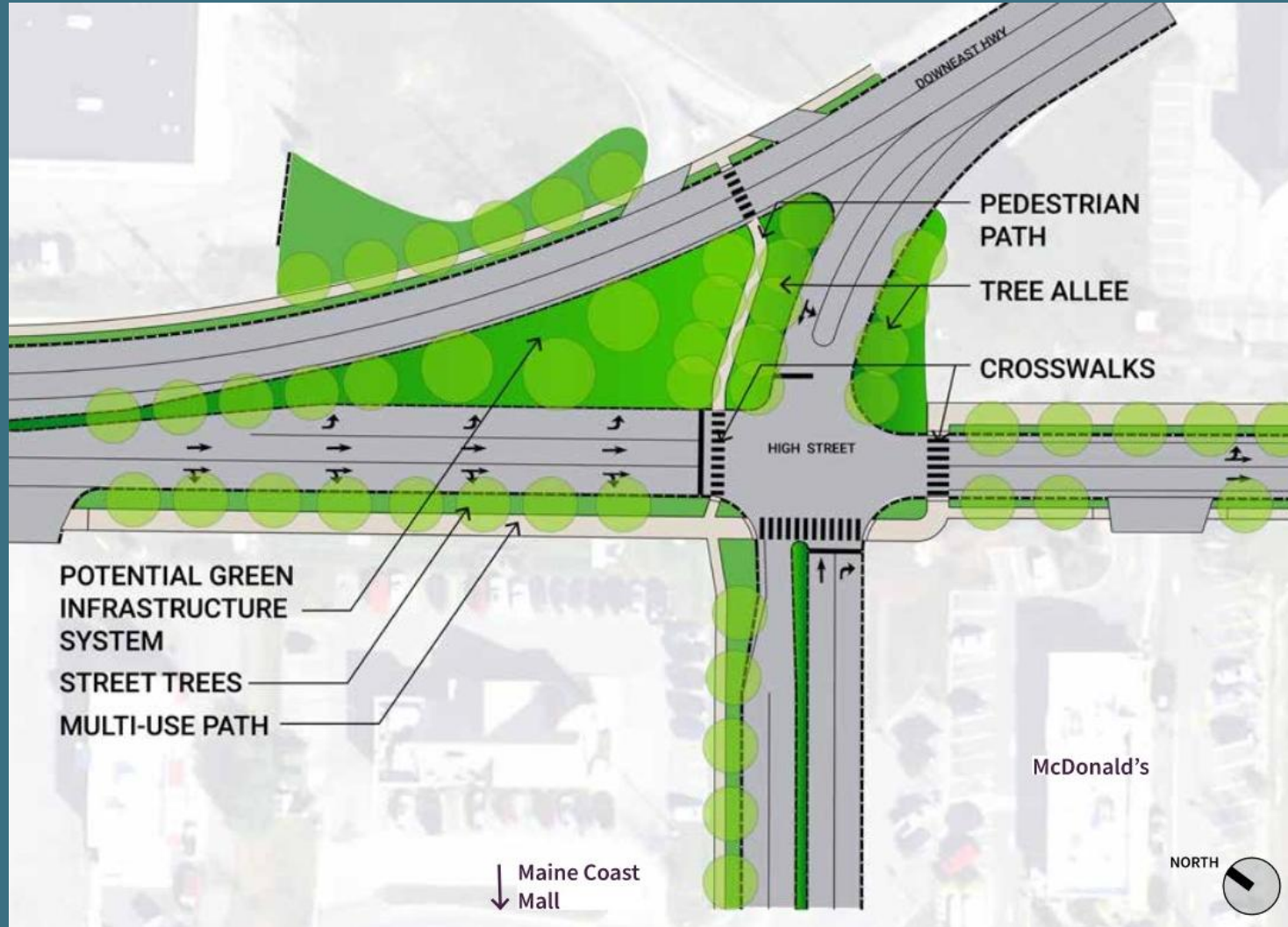
MERRILL LANE INTERSECTION – PHOTOMONTAGE (EXISTING)



MERRILL LANE INTERSECTION – PHOTOMONTAGE (PROPOSED)



DOWNEAST HIGHWAY (ROUTE 1) INTERSECTION – PLANNING-LEVEL CONCEPT



Proposed Improvements

1. Enhance the center triangle with a green infrastructure system, and a pedestrian path lined with trees
2. Crosswalks across 3 legs on intersection
3. Multiuse path on the western side of road crossing to the eastern side of road

Changes from Previous Draft (based on public input)

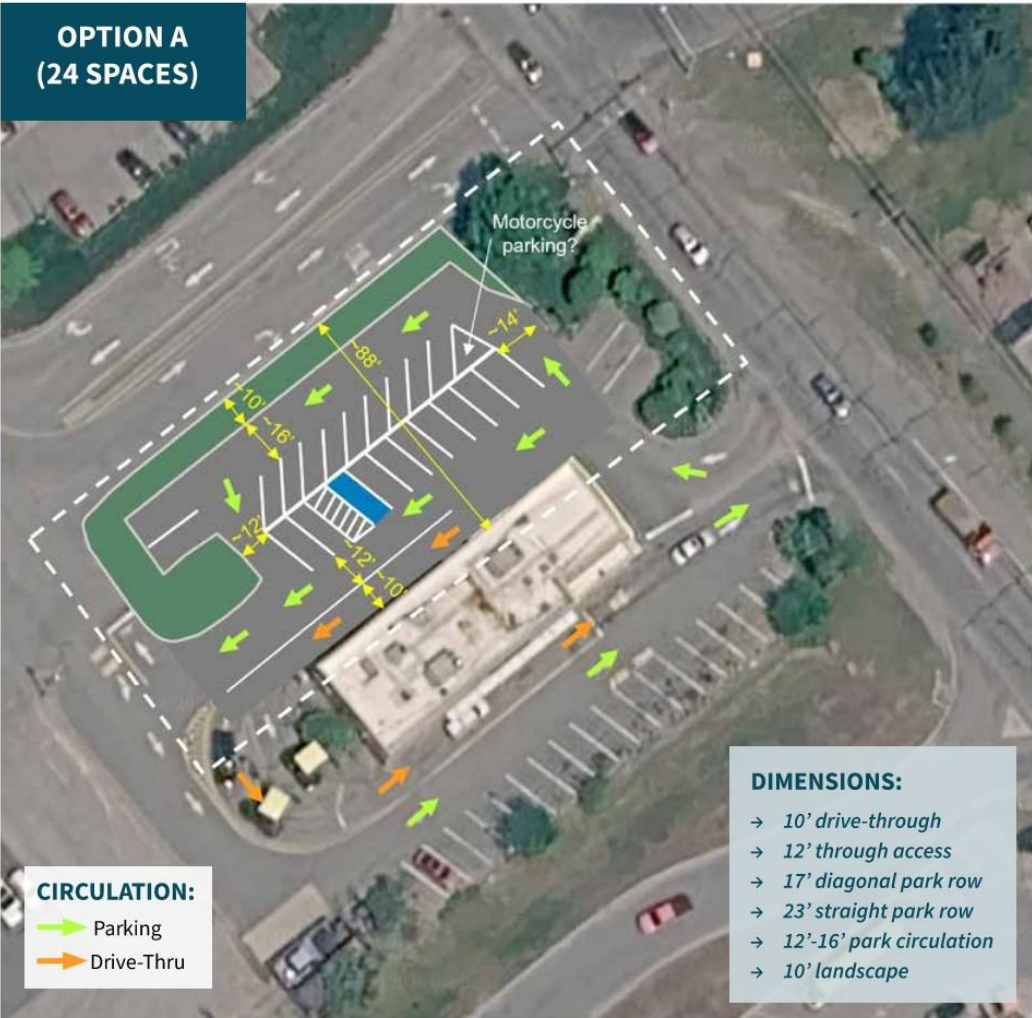
1. Two lanes of traffic maintained through the on-way portion of High Street
2. Curb cut in front of diagonal McDonald's parking pulling into the Maine Coast Mall exit road was maintained, but a concept was developed to demonstrate how this can be done without losing parking

PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATE AND PHASING:

- **Phase 1** – Intersection improvements and 600' Multi-Use Path, 400' Sidewalk, and associated landscaping: \$500,000
- **Phase 2** – Island green infrastructure and sidewalk and access management: \$650,000

DOWNEAST HIGHWAY (ROUTE 1) INTERSECTION – McDONALD'S PARKING LOT

To improve safety on the Maine Coast Mall exit driveway, the recommended alternative removes the diagonal parking spaces backing into the roadway. This safety improvement can be accomplished without losing any parking spaces associated with the McDonald's property. To demonstrate how this could be achieved, the study team developed two conceptual parking lot reconfiguration options. These options show potential ways the property could maintain a similar number of parking spaces while removing the diagonal parking along the driveway. The concepts are illustrative only and would require additional coordination with the property owner, detailed design, engineering review, permitting, and all applicable approvals before any changes could be implemented.



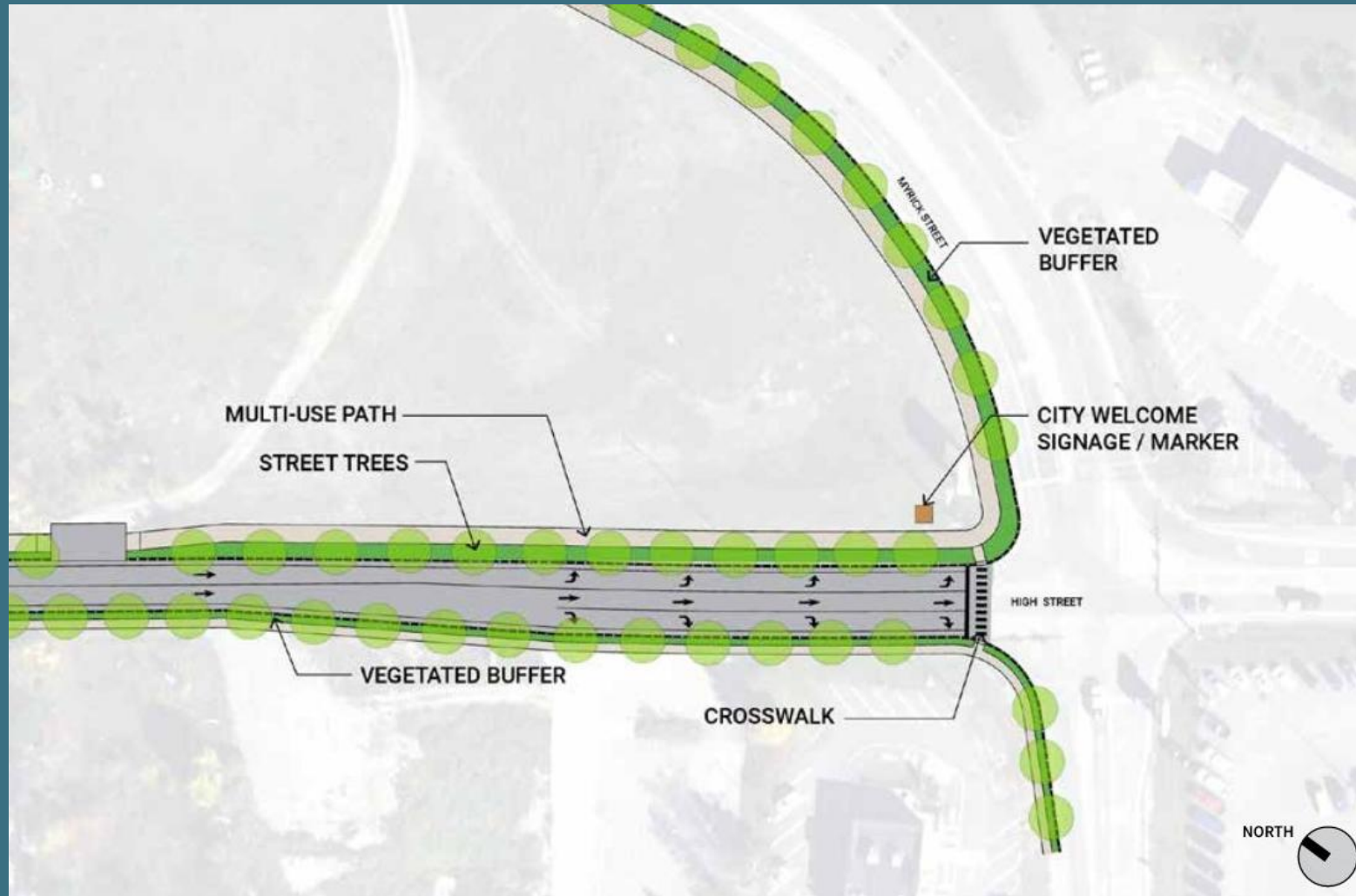
DOWNEAST HIGHWAY (ROUTE 1) INTERSECTION – PHOTOMONTAGE (EXISTING)



DOWNEAST HIGHWAY (ROUTE 1) INTERSECTION – PHOTOMONTAGE (PROPOSED)



MYRICK STREET INTERSECTION – PLANNING-LEVEL CONCEPT



Proposed Improvements

1. Multiuse Path and street trees on eastern side of High Street and Myrick Street, connecting to the Walmart
2. Sidewalk with buffer strip on western side of road
3. Crosswalk across one leg of intersection

Changes from Previous Draft (based on public input)

1. Two lanes of traffic maintained through the on-way portion of High Street
2. Street trees moved so they are between multi-use path and road

PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATE AND PHASING:

- **Phase 1** – 1300' Multi-Use Path and landscaping, including crossing on Myrick and access to shopping plaza: \$700,000
- **Phase 2** – 750' of sidewalk and landscaping and signal improvements: \$350,000

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY – PLANNING-LEVEL CONCEPT



NEXT STEPS



The **FRIENDLY CITY**
Ellsworth
Maine

It is up to you!

The City can use this report to prioritize improvements, coordinate with MaineDOT and other partners, and pursue funding opportunities.

Potential funding sources may include:

- Federal safety and transportation grants such as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A), BUILD, INFRA, and PROTECT;
- State programs such as the MaineDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Community Based Initiatives, and Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands programs;
- Local or private sources such as the Capital Improvement Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and community placemaking grants.

The concepts and cost estimates are planning-level and are not final designs.

Before any recommendation moves toward implementation, additional engineering review, property owner coordination where needed, permitting, and continued public engagement would be required.



Community
Engineering Corps



Ellsworth Stormwater on High Street within Card Brook Watershed

August 25, 2026

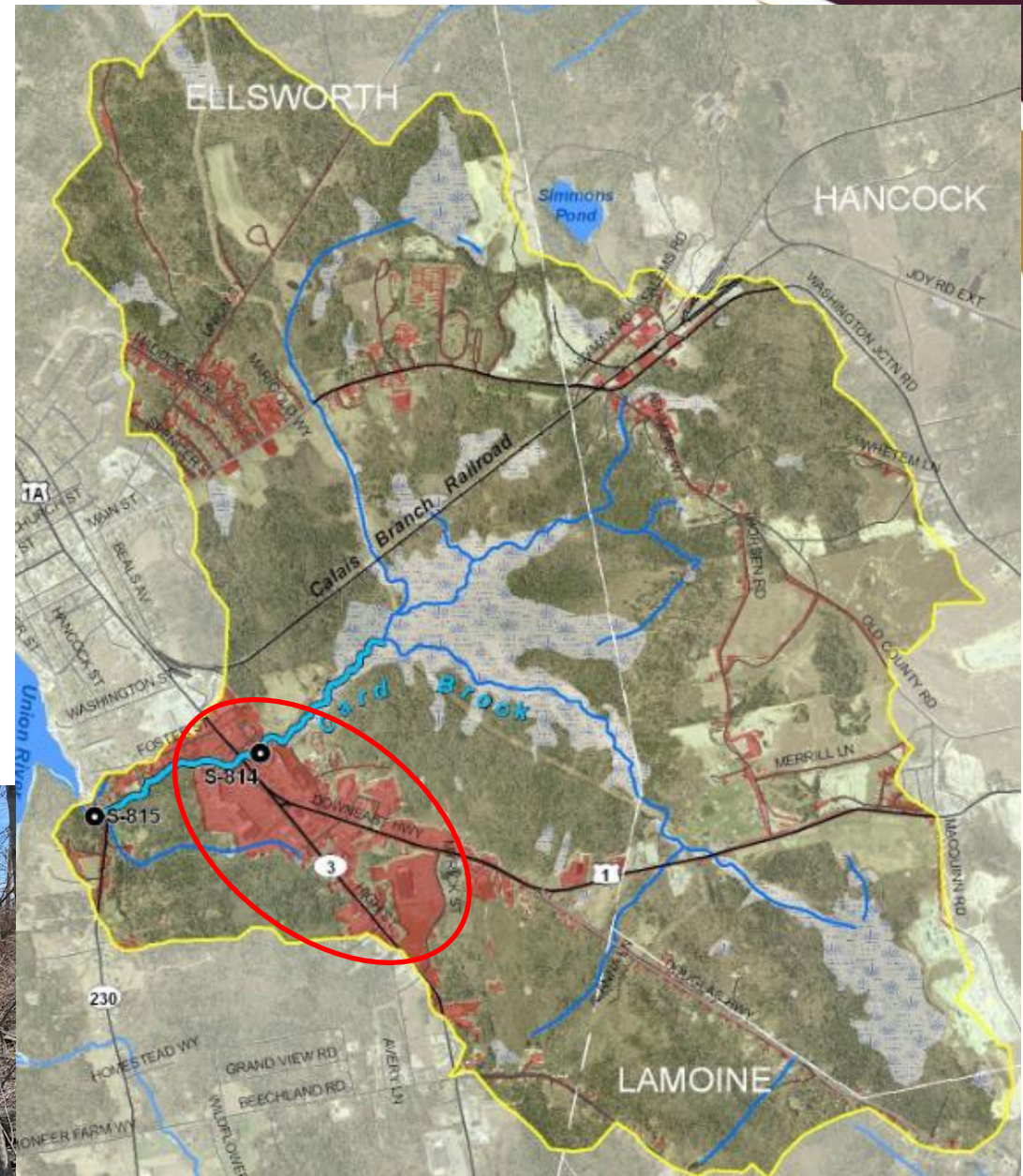
Introduction

- About Community Engineering Corps (CEC)/Engineers Without Borders-USA (EWB-USA)
- Team
 - CEC/EWB-USA Staff: Scott Underhill, PE and Natalie Celmo, PE
 - Woodard & Curran Volunteers: Eric Petersson, PE; Devin Sandberg and Reilley Hicks
- Subconsultant to RCAP under the DOT Thriving Community Program
- Our Objective
 - Summarize Existing Stormwater Infrastructure within High Street/Card Brook Area
 - Identify Stormwater Best Management Practices
 - Identify Stormwater Funding Opportunities
 - Provide Recommendations for Improving Stormwater Management within High Street/Card Brook Area



Card Brook Watershed

- Watershed = 4,217 acres
- Classification Class B freshwater stream
- Does not meet water quality standards and prone to flooding
- Classified as “Impaired” by the state
- Impairment due to 7% impervious (pavement) cover (IC); goal < 5% IC



High Street/Card Brook Area Stormwater Concerns

- Study by Woodard & Curran (2024)
- Identified the following impaired stormwater infrastructure (purple)
 - 18 Catch basins
 - 9 Manholes
 - 1,322 feet of drainage pipe
- Identified capacity limitations leading to modeled flooding during storm events (green)



Recommended Practical Solutions

- Maintain Existing Stormwater Infrastructure
 - Regular Cleaning, Inspection, Spot Repairs
- Update City's Stormwater Ordinance
 - Include Card Brook Specifically
 - Address Infrastructure and Maintenance that Reduces Effective Impervious Cover
- Use High Street Projects as Opportunities
 - Stormwater Upgrades with Each Future Project
- Community Partnerships
 - Watershed organization, regional planning agencies, nonprofits, property owners, businesses, and residents



Example of Filterra Stormwater Bioretention System (Image Credit: [Contech Engineered Solutions](#))



Example Photo of an Infiltration Trench (Image Credit: [USEPA Stormwater Best Management Practices, EPA-832-F-21-031C, December 2021](#))

Potential to Pursue Funding Opportunities

- Clean Water Act Section 319 – Nonpoint Source Grants (Maine DEP)
 - Plan Development – Develop Watershed Assessments and Plans
 - Project Implementation Grants – Projects guided by Watershed Plan
 - Branch Lake is a local grant in awarded in 2023
- Maine's Grant Programs Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
 - Funding for Pre-disaster Mitigation
 - Culvert upgrades



Closing

- What's not working:
 - Card Brook is "Impaired" due to impervious cover (pavement)
 - High Street has impaired Stormwater Infrastructure
 - Flooding on High Street; poor water quality in Card Brook
- What's working:
 - City has purchased equipment to clean stormwater infrastructure
 - City's stormwater ordinance is applying BMPs to New Projects
 - Home2Suites Hotel
 - Merrill Lane Extension
 - 211 High Street Pump Station Upgrade
 - City is updating stormwater ordinance
 - City is working with RCAP Solutions to develop City-wide stormwater management plans (asset management, capital improvement, and operations and maintenance—may also assist with funding request)
- What's still needed:
 - Card Brook Watershed Management Plan (required for grant funding)
 - Stormwater educational material and training
 - Stormwater maintenance plans for existing commercial properties





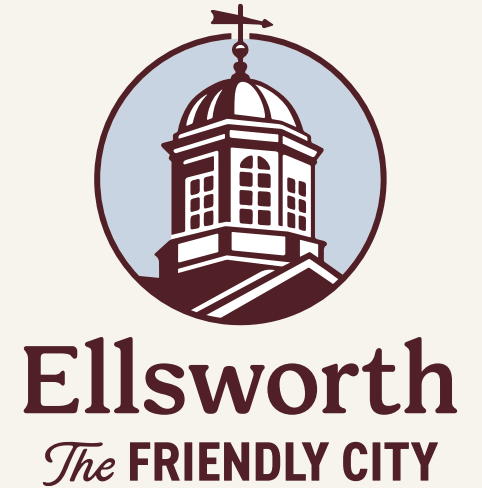
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MaineDOT Work Plan Update

Kathryn Grond, Statewide Planner

Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC): Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) Grant Projects

- Expand awareness of Downeast Transportation's year-round bus service
- Engagement with other county and regional transit partners
- Further study of rural transportation to identify models and best practices
- Hire a consultant to design bus stop infrastructure





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Stakeholder Q&A

Sara Devlin, Deputy City Manager



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Next Steps

Charlie Pearce, City Manager



Thank you for attending!

- *Please leave any comment cards with City Staff or on the table in the lobby.*
- *Additional questions and concerns can be directed to Twila Fisher, tfisher@ellsworthmaine.gov.*
- *PowerPoint presentations from the meeting will be posted in a timely manner on the City's website.*
- *Sign up for the High Street Corridor newsletter with Brittany Merrill at the sign-in table.*