

Mexico Walkable Audit Report July 2009

Introduction

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), in cooperation with Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) conducted a Walkable Community Audit Workshop at the Mexico Town Office at 140 Main Street in Mexico on June 5, 2009.

Purpose

This report helps summarize the physical conditions, needs and opportunities for pedestrian facilities within and surrounding downtown Mexico. The town has been, and continues to be, active in creating a safe and visible sidewalk and crosswalk network for pedestrians, especially the school age population which walks to school. The town has purchased bikes for the physical education curriculum which gets the students out within the community encouraging a higher level of physical fitness.

Mexico is also interested in the potentials for trail connections between the towns of Rumford and Mexico which can be utilized for recreation as well as connections to Rumford and Mexico schools. Future discussions will need to take place between the two communities towards trail connections and/or expansion.

The information contained in this report will provide the Town of Mexico and its residents with priority projects towards becoming a more pedestrian friendly community.

Methodology

Several hours of pre-audit work was conducted prior to holding the community walking audit. Work began with correspondence between AVCOG staff and town officials to determine the most appropriate area of the community to conduct an audit. Once the audit area was selected staff visited the town to meet the town official(s) and walk the focus area to gain familiarity. The pre-audit walk involved taking pictures within the community which offered good and bad examples of a pedestrian friendly environment. The pictures were then downloaded to be used in a PowerPoint presentation given at the community walkable audit. A PowerPoint presentation was created to educate workshop attendees on pedestrian design, safety, education, and enforcement while using pre-audit pictures in the presentation for examples.

The Mexico Town Manager posted fliers throughout the community announcing an upcoming Walkable Community Workshop asking for participation towards making Mexico more pedestrian friendly. The workshop was sponsored by MaineDOT and administered by AVCOG staff; there were 3 participants consisting of the Road Commissioner, Town Manager, and one area business owner also representing a civic organization in town.

The workshop was four hours and included the PowerPoint presentation discussing pedestrian design, safety, education, enforcement, and encouragement. The workshop concepts were explained through town specific examples relating to trail, path, and sidewalk conditions and pedestrian-scale safety and development standards. After the PowerPoint presentation the group felt they knew their community very well and based on the health constraints of one participant they decided to forgo walking and immediately identify areas of concern. The participants wrote comments of what is needed within the town (community buy-in); comments were written on maps of the focus area and the entire town. Comments are outlined in the list below. AVCOG staff had previously attended the Active Communities Conference in Freeport and offered the participants informational materials from the Conference that encouraged the community to do their own walkability checklist. This report includes a summary of comments for the focus area and town wide; list of workshop attendees; and promotional flier for the workshop. The report has been submitted to the community for comments or changes prior to the report being finalized.

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Summary of Comments:

Mexico Crosswalks and Sidewalks			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	Trim vegetation along sidewalks that interrupt pedestrian movement.	On-going	Public Works
2	Develop crosswalks with tip downs and truncated domes	1-3 years	Public Works and MaineDOT
3	Improve the condition of the existing sidewalk network through curbing sidewalks, etc.	1-3 years	Public Works and MaineDOT
4	Relocate utility poles out of sidewalks for uninterrupted pedestrian movement.	3-5 years	Public Works and Utility Companies
5	Paint crosswalks in spring to maintain visibility or use durable material (e.g., thermal plastic)	On-going	Public Works
6	Relocate the crosswalk from Cross Street to Howard Street so the catch basin is not in the crosswalk.	1 year	Public Works
7	Extend sidewalk along the river side of Main Street to Veteran’s Bridge.	3-5 years	Public Works
8	From Webb River Bridge along Route 2 at the Dixfield town line expand sidewalks along the river to the Peru Bridge connecting sidewalk to both bridges.	1 year	Public Works and MaineDOT

9	Review painting techniques for crosswalks (i.e., glass beads used for longevity of paint, temperature is appropriate, and surface preparation has been conducted).	On-going	Road Commissioner
Mexico Bicycling Facilities			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	Construct a bike lane on Whitman Street through road widening easements.	3-5 years	Public Works
Mexico Development			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	<p>From Riverside Avenue to Porter Bridge Road formalize a mixed use trail along the Androscoggin River and Swift River.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance - Acquire rights through public easement or acquisition for trail use and maintenance (refer to comment #2 below) - Explore all surfaces pertaining to universal accessibility - Determine proper access points for water recreation - Explore options with Rumford for reinstating the narrow gauge railroad bridge across the Swift River connecting the communities' trails to enhance recreational opportunities and school access. 	1-5 years	Town/Property Owners/MaineDEP (Bill Laflamme 287-7726)
2	Communicate with private owners and trail clubs (e.g., Snowmobile and ATV) concerning access rights for a formalized trail along the Androscoggin River and Swift River	1-5 years	Town Manager
3	Re-establish a bridge off the existing Narrow Gauge Railroad abutments at Porter Bridge Road through discussions between Rumford and Mexico with Mexico's support.	1-5 years	Tim Gallant Rumford Parks Commissioner, Brookfield Power 357-8769

4	At Harlow Hill and Roxbury Road intersection at the Mexico One Stop delineate the parking lot to prevent traffic from cutting through.	Done	Public Works and MaineDOT
Mexico Education			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	Consistent use of bus stop signs and bus stop ahead warning on the pavement	On-going	Public Works
2	Consideration of possible bus stop shelters	1-5 years	Town Manger and Public Works
3	Communicate with the school concerning bike usage and bike lane incorporation along Whitman Street.	On-going	Town Manger
Mexico Off-Road Facilities			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	Pave trail behind town office to Swift River Bridge starting at the proposed boat launch.	1-5 years	Public Works
Mexico On-Road Facilities			
	Issue/Community	Priority/Timeframe	Implementation
1	Update and/or replace signage that is no longer visible	On-going	Public Works
2	Increase the visibility on the blind curve on Whitman Street (i.e., cut vegetation, etc.).	On-going	Public Works
3	Replace fencing (guardrail) at the intersection of Whitman Street and Recreation Drive.	1-3 years	Public Works and MaineDOT
4	Incorporate pedestrian-scale lighting near One Stop Store along Roxbury Road	1-3 years	Public Works
5	Food Trend traffic signal is green at the same time as Roxbury Road which causes problems with turning; remove signal phase for the grocery store.	On-going	MaineDOT/ Mexico Road Commissioner

Attendance Sheet:

MEXICO WALKING AUDIT
June 4, 2009

Name	Organization	Address	Phone
David Errington	Town of Mexico	134 Main St.	364-7971
John Madison	Town of Mexico	"	"
Todd Wardwell	Tulawaen Care	9 Boxbury Rd	364/4206

Walking Audit Flier:

MEXICO WALKING WORKSHOP



Mexico Town Office



**JUNE 4, 2009
9:00 am — 1:00 pm**

Who Should Attend?

Business owners, citizens, municipal officials, public safety officials,
and others interested in learning how to make Mexico an “active
community environment”

(Bring your walking shoes—rain or shine)

