

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. <i>Background</i> _____	3
2. <i>Goals</i> _____	4
3. <i>Issues</i> _____	5
4. <i>Design Ideas</i> _____	6
5. <i>Funding Sources</i> _____	17
6. <i>Survey Results</i> _____	22

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was undertaken by Brian Kent and Amanda Walker of Kent Associates for the Town's Revitalization Committee. The work was supervised by Clif Buuck, Code Enforcement Officer, and Stefan Pakulski, Town Manager.

Members of the Committee included:

- John Moran
- David Erb
- Gary Keilty
- John Knox
- Edward Dodge
- John T. Mitchell
- Jerry Bley

The historic photograph of the Corner, below, was provided by John Knox.



## 1. BACKGROUND

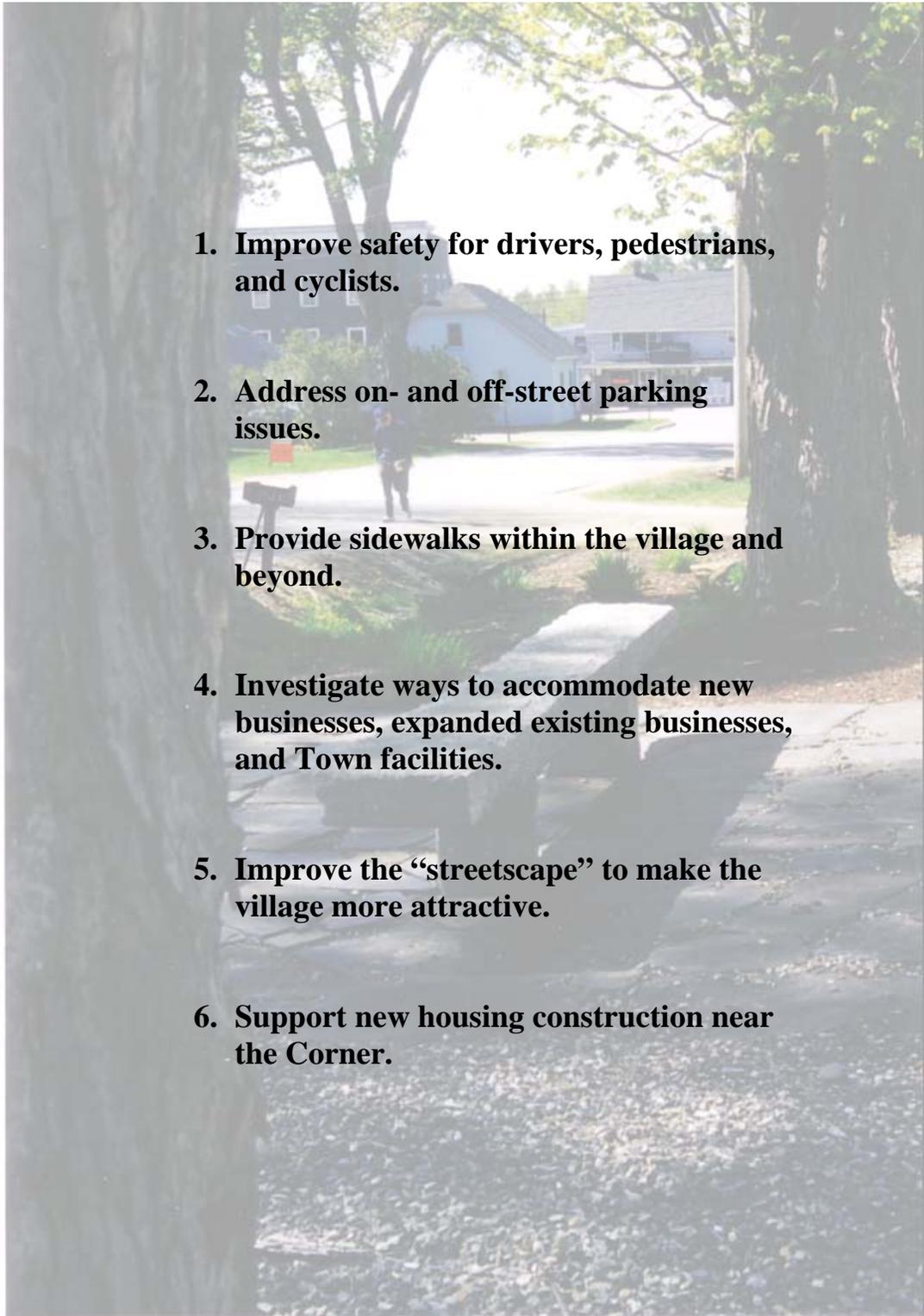
The Town of Readfield contracted with Kent Associates in early 2004 to:

1. Prepare a base map of the “Corner” and its surrounds, to scale, for the purpose of developing design ideas. The consultants also had color aerial (orthographic) photographs of this same area made, by Sewall Co., for reference and future use by the Town.
2. Prepare a series of design proposals, for the Town’s consideration, that address issues identified by the Committee, including: trail design and location, sidewalk options, parking and access solutions, traffic calming measures and site plans for areas adjacent to the Corner (*see Section 4, Design Ideas*).
3. Convene and facilitate a public meeting at which various design ideas were presented and the public’s comments solicited. Short surveys of public opinion were also distributed, collected, and analyzed (*see Section 6, Survey Results*).
4. Present a summary of the revitalization designs, in report form, along with information about possible funding sources.



**Aerial Photograph of Readfield Corner.** Route 17 runs east/west (right to left), while Route 41 runs to the south and the Church Road to the north. The Town Office is in the fork in the road, at the left of the picture.

## **2. GOALS**



- 1. Improve safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.**
- 2. Address on- and off-street parking issues.**
- 3. Provide sidewalks within the village and beyond.**
- 4. Investigate ways to accommodate new businesses, expanded existing businesses, and Town facilities.**
- 5. Improve the “streetscape” to make the village more attractive.**
- 6. Support new housing construction near the Corner.**

### **3. ISSUES**

The Advisory Committee identified the following as important issues:

#### **1. *Safety***

- a) find ways to slow down traffic near the Route 17/41 intersection;
- b) improve sightlines for drivers entering onto Route 17;
- c) investigate appropriate “traffic-calming” measures;
- d) apply sensible access management standards to driveways near the Corner;
- e) check MDOT accident records at the intersection.

#### **2. *Parking***

- a) determine the practicality/safety of on-street parking;
- b) avoid diagonal parking on Route 17;
- c) review access/egress options to off-street parking;
- d) develop off-street parking lot designs that improve safety, ease-of-use, and attractiveness.

#### **3. *Sidewalks***

- a) provide for sidewalks and curbing within the heart of the village;
- b) establish crosswalk locations and designs;
- c) investigate the design, engineering, and cost implications of new sidewalks:
  - from the corner, south to new housing;
  - from the corner, north to the fairgrounds;
  - from the corner, east to the high school along Route 17;
- d) determine if trails (existing or proposed) can link to the sidewalk system.

#### **4. *Business Expansion and New Community Facilities***

- a) explore options to create space for small, new businesses;
- b) explore ways in which existing businesses can expand;
- c) explore new locations for the town library (and reuse of the existing library and site) and a community center.

#### **5. *Streetscape***

- a) find opportunities to create open space, green space, and/or gardens within the village;
- b) investigate street-tree planting options;
- c) develop ideas for street lights within the village;
- d) offer building owners design ideas for façade improvements.

#### **6. *Housing***

- a) support the construction of elderly housing south of the corner;
- b) seek opportunity for “in-fill” housing in the village.
- c) encourage adaptive reuse of large village houses for B&B’s and/or (elderly) apartments.

## **4. DESIGN IDEAS**

### **Sidewalk and Trail Options** (*see map that follows on page 7*)

The map displays eight sidewalk and trail ideas, four of each.

#### **Sidewalk Options**

Of the sidewalk options the clear preference of those attending the public meeting on June 17, 2004, was Option 3, a new sidewalk along Route 17 from the Corner to the High School entrance. Next in order of priority was Option 1, a new 5-foot wide sidewalk between the Corner and the Town Office. The other two options were supported but given lower priority.

Design sketches for Options 1, 2 and 3 are shown on the following pages.

Funding for these improvements could come from the Town and MDOT and MDOT is more likely to favor Readfield's application for funds if the Town itself commits to building Options 1 and 2. Thus it is recommended that:

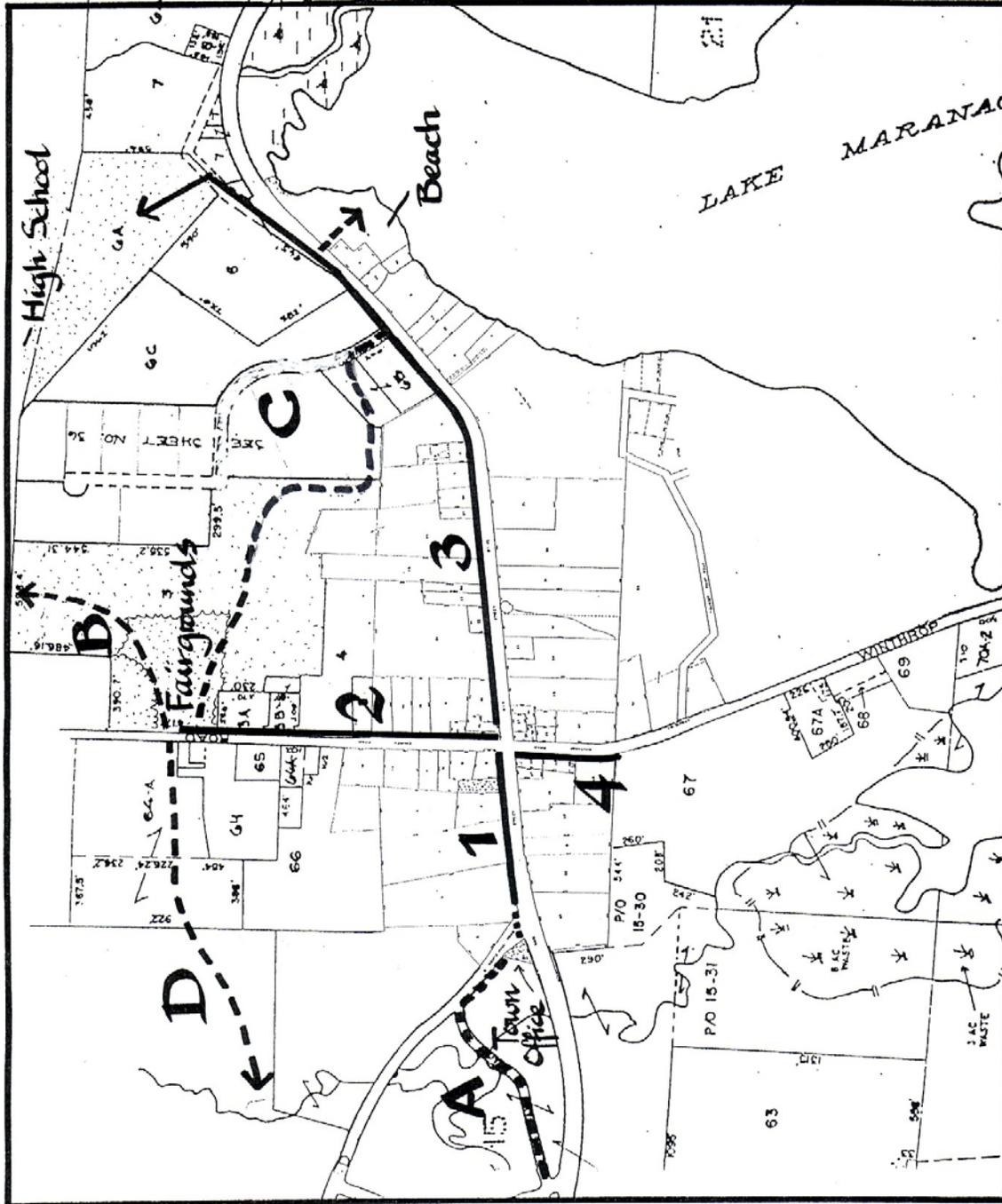
- a) The Town, working with MDOT approval, build Options 1 and 2 with local Capital Improvement funds. These sidewalks are relatively inexpensive to build (*see the sketches and the cross-sectional view of Church Street*).
- b) The Town provide a 20% match (or more) and apply for "Safe Routes to School" funds from MDOT; failing that, apply for "Transportation Enhancement" funds in 2005, from MDOT.
- c) The Town, along with adjacent landowners, fund and build Option 4 cooperatively.
- d) The Town have an engineering firm provide estimates (not designs) of the costs associated with these options.

#### **Trail Options**

Of the four trail options presented no one was a clear favorite with the public. There was least support of Option D, while Options B and C were favored over Option A.

- Option B is an existing trail through the fairgrounds to the High School; clearly it should be maintained, if not improved.
- Option C is a new trail for which easements have already been granted; it's a good candidate for grant funds from the Department of Conservation Trail Program.
- Option A might best be achieved as a neighborhood/community volunteer project.

*Please also refer to Section 5, Funding Sources.*



**READFIELD  
CORNER:  
SIDEWALK & TRAIL  
OPTIONS**

- 1** New 5-foot-wide sidewalk  
(Corner to Town Office)
- 2** New 4-foot-wide sidewalk  
(Corner to Fairgrounds)
- 3** New sidewalk/trail to  
High School
- 4** New 4-foot-wide sidewalk  
(Corner to new housing)
- A** Improved trail Town  
Office to Mill Stream
- B** Trail from Fairgrounds  
entrance to High School
- C** Trail from Fairgrounds  
entrance to Public Beach
- D** Trail from Kent's Hill  
Road to Fairgrounds



**Sidewalk Option 1 – the Corner to the Town Office**

This proposal calls for narrowing the Route 17 shoulder to slow down traffic and gain space for a 5-foot-wide bituminous sidewalk and curb. A second option would be to narrow the shoulder and create a 2-foot-wide grass verge or edge, behind a new curb, and then add a sidewalk.



**Proposed sidewalk west of Corner near Town Office.**



**Sidewalk Option 2 – the Corner to the Fairgrounds on Church St.**

Here a simple gravel or stone dust, 4-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed. No curb is needed and a grass verge is retained to enhance this attractive tree-lined street (*also see cross-section drawing of Church Street*).



**Proposed sidewalk on Church Street.**



**Sidewalk Option 3– the Corner to the High School on Route 17** (*sketch illustration #3a below*)

**Option 3a.** At the entrance to the high school, close to Route 17, there is an existing trail that can be enhanced with a better surface to create this first segment of this sidewalk option.



**Trail at high school entrance at Route 17.**



**Sidewalk Option 3– the Corner to the High School on Route 17** (*sketch illustration #3b below*)

**Option 3b.** Near the Beach this sidewalk should be kept away from the travel way, as illustrated here (*also see cross-section drawing of Route 17*); further north ditching, trees and topography complicate sidewalk placement and more study to find a solution is needed.



**Trail/sidewalk on Route 17 near Beach.**

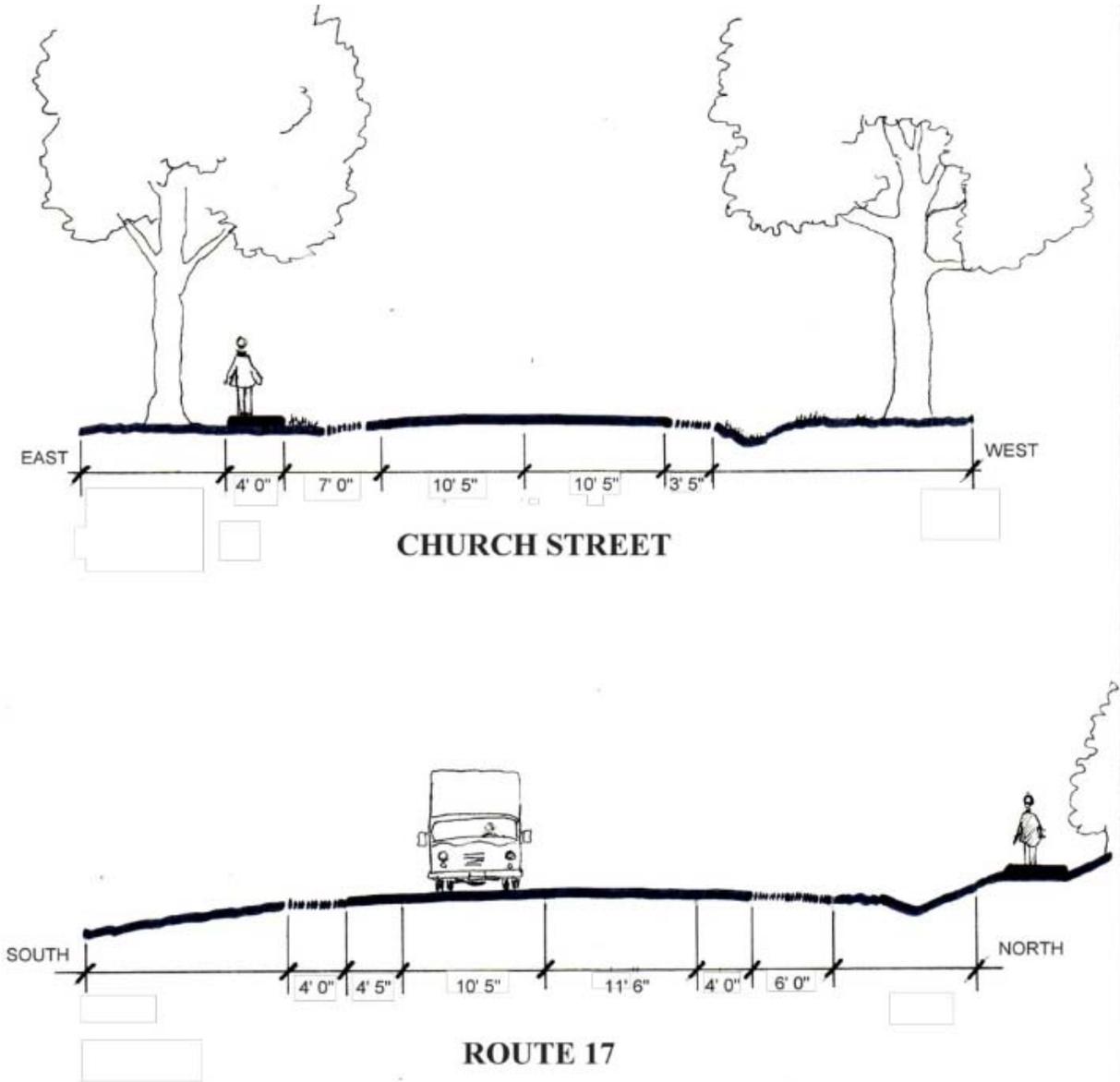


**Sidewalk Option 3– the Corner to the High School on Route 17** (*sketch illustration #3c below*)

**Option 3c.** Nearer to the Corner the sidewalk should be constructed alongside Route 17. Roadside ditching in this vicinity would need to be reconfigured to accommodate the sidewalk.



**Sidewalk along Route 17 east of the Corner.**



**CROSS-SECTIONS THROUGH CHURCH STREET AND ROUTE 17**

## Corner Design Options

The committee identified several concerns about the Corner. These fell into four categories:

**1. Safety:**

The principal concerns are speeding traffic, poor sightlines and unmanaged access (i.e. too many entrances and exits near the Corner).

**2. Parking:**

Both on-street and off-street parking for cars and trucks is poorly laid out; the diagonal parking on Route 17 is especially inappropriate, while the area behind the Post Office, in particular, is disorganized and unattractive.

**3. Business Expansion:**

The Town and local business owners would like to see new businesses move in and existing businesses expand.

**4. Streetscape:**

There is strong support for improvements that will enhance the character of the Corner and make it a more attractive place to visit. The public's strongest support focused on:

- offering building owners incentives to upgrade their buildings;
- encouraging new businesses to locate here; and
- making low-interest loans available to building owners.

## Design Solutions

The consultant's responses to these concerns are illustrated on the following pages. Some of the drawings address several of these issues, others show singular solutions and yet others show options to address parking and access problems.

### ***1. Overall Plan for the Corner***

This plan (illustrated on the next page) shows recommendations for:

- a) sidewalk improvements (*see #2 Proposed Route 17 Width Changes*);
- b) the locations for crosswalks and bump-outs (*see #3 Crosswalk Options and #4 The Bump-out Concept*);
- c) suggestions for new tree planting;
- d) suggested reconfigured/improved parking lots (*note: the parking options for behind the post office are shown in #5 Three Parking Options Behind the Post Office*);
- e) a connecting road from the fire station to Route 41.

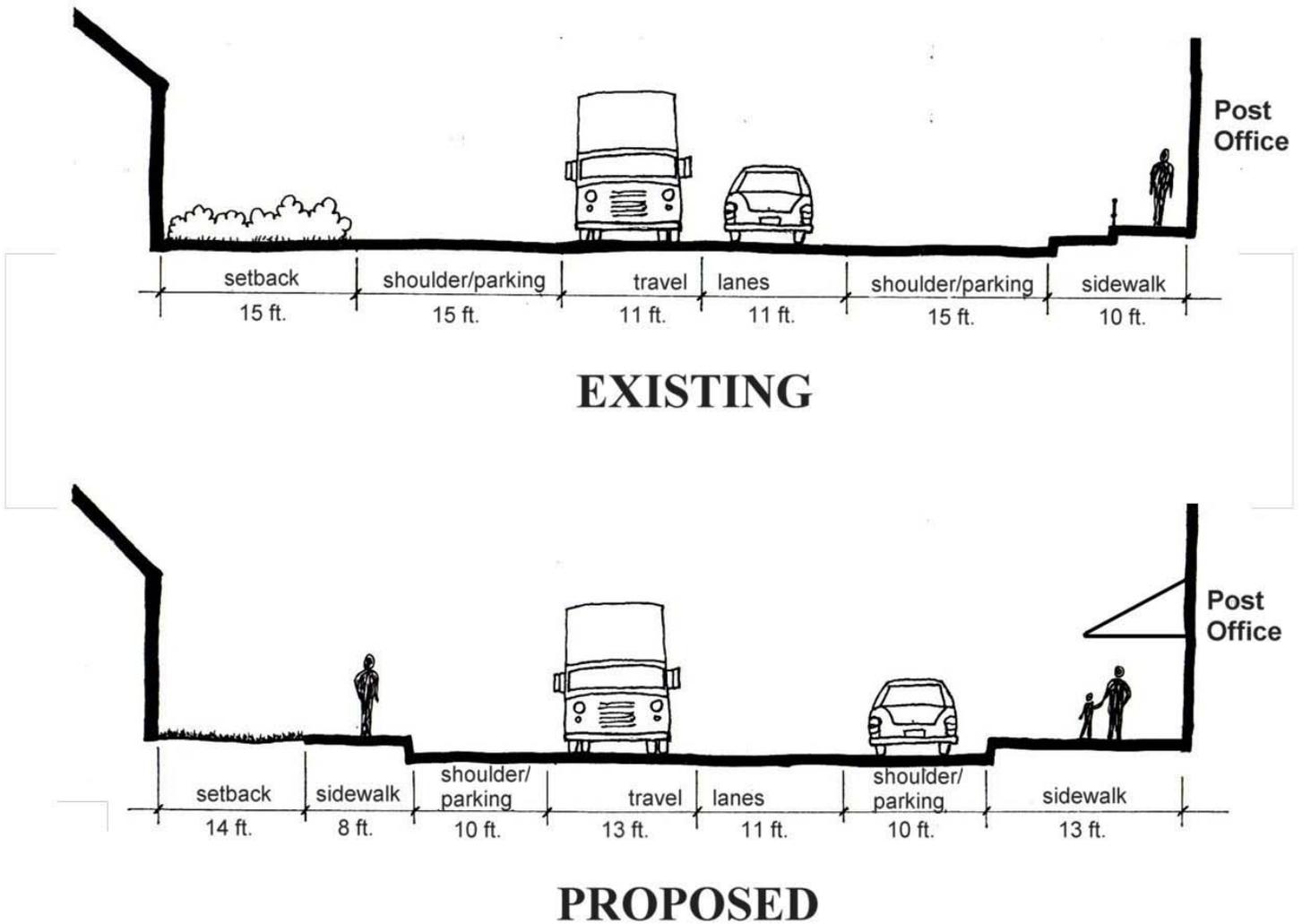
The plan endeavors to slow or “calm” traffic by narrowing the Route 17 shoulder on both sides of the intersection, by creating four crosswalks in close proximity to each other and by adding “bump-outs” that reduce the road width. Parallel parking, on both sides of Route 17 also signals drivers to slow down.



OVERALL PLAN FOR THE CORNER

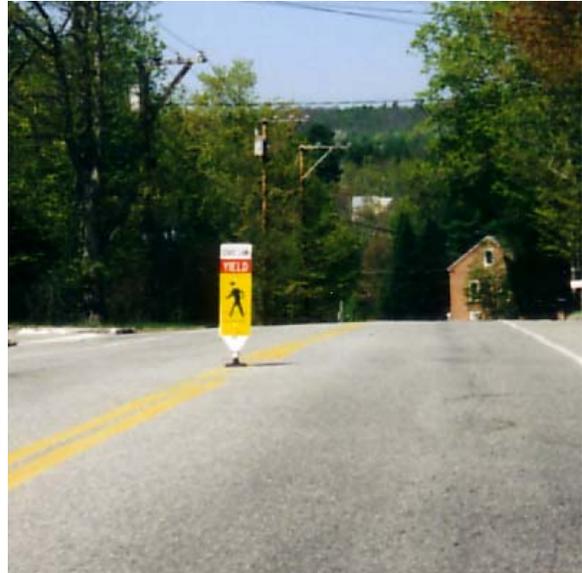
## 2. Proposed Route 17 Width Changes

This before and after illustration shows how the width of the street can be narrowed safely. By eliminating the diagonal parking but keeping parallel parking the cross-section is narrowed from 52 feet to 44 feet. At the bump-outs (now shown) the width is reduced more – to ease pedestrian crossing.

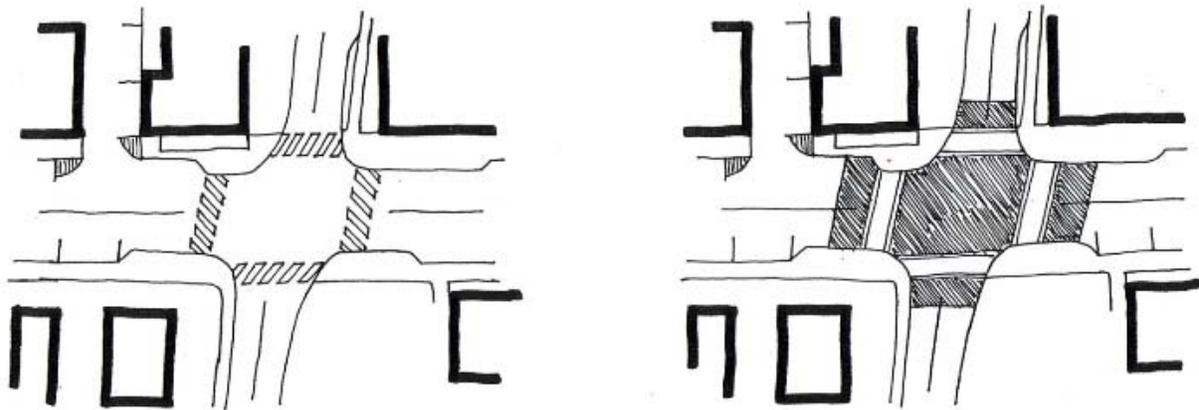


### 3. Crosswalk Options

The overall plan (#1) and these two plans of the Corner show how different road markings can act to draw attention to the crosswalks. Unusual, distinctive patterns cause drivers to slow up. In addition, signage and moveable signs placed in the center of the road can help get the “slow-down!” message across. Further, some towns have resorted to a flashing light or a four-way stop.



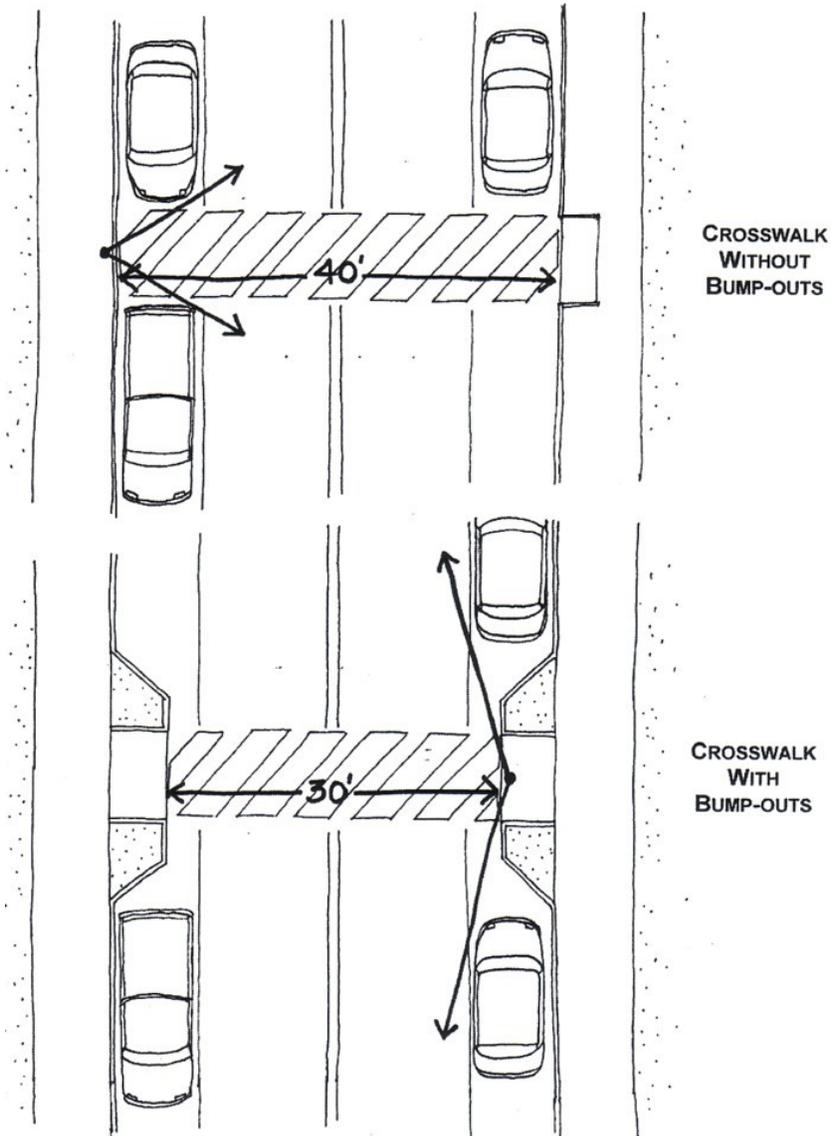
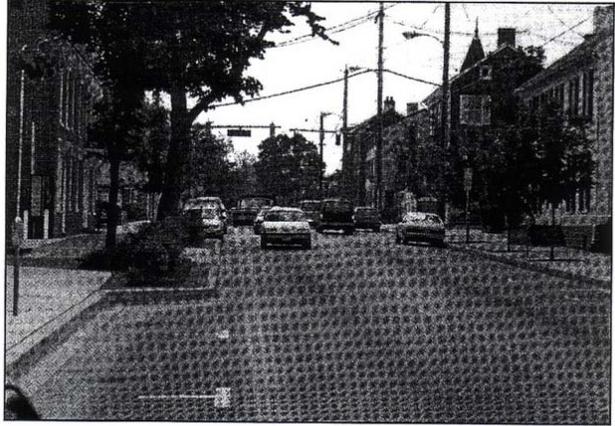
*Readfield's existing pedestrian crossing.*



*Two Approaches to crosswalk design*

#### 4. The Bump-Out Concept

The drawing (below) explains why bump-outs are effective and help create a safer crossing. Moveable, center-of-street signs could be placed at and/or ahead of, the crosswalk itself. Make sure the bump-outs are handicapped-accessible (i.e., they include ramps for wheelchairs).



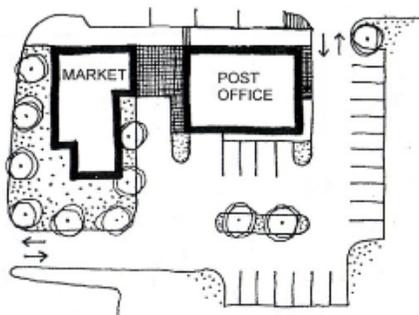
### 5. Three Parking Options Behind the Post Office

These three plans show three approaches, some of which could be combined to create additional parking solutions. They all, however, share common goals, i.e.,:

- avoid two-way traffic in the narrow alley;
- organize and layout the parking;
- keep access for post office trucks;
- pave the lots; and
- add generous landscaping.

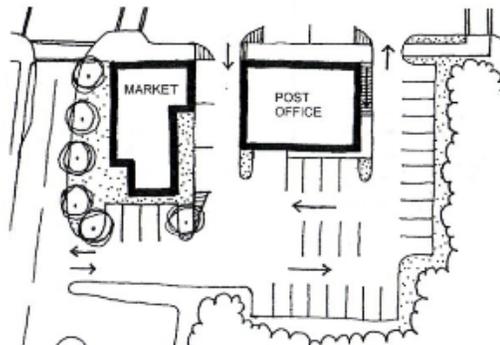
Further, it is essential that the owners of the adjacent lots find a solution that works well for each of them.

The public (survey) response to these was mixed. The scheme (A) selected as the highest priority solution also garnered the most negative responses. In the end the town should work with the owners and find financial support to help achieve win-win answers.



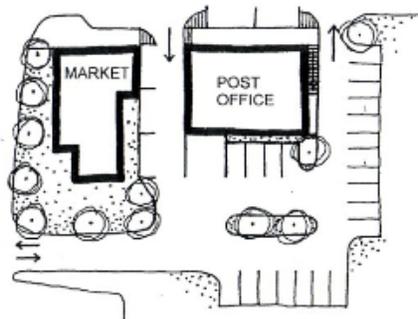
**OPTION A – Closed Alleyway & Landscaping**

- Two-way circulation off Main Street
- Pedestrian-only alley plaza
- Landscaping in parking lot & behind Market
- 22 Off-street parking spaces
- Post Office loading area
- Market truck delivery area



**OPTION B – One-way Circulation**

- One-way circulation off Main Street
- 33 Off-street parking spaces – center isle parking & spaces behind Market
- Post Office loading area
- Market truck delivery in alleyway



**OPTION C – "Green" Landscaping & One-way Circulation**

- One-way circulation off Main Street
- 25 Off-street parking spaces
- Landscaping in parking lot & behind Market
- Post Office loading area
- Market truck delivery in alleyway

## 5. FUNDING SOURCES

### Sidewalks

- MDOT will usually only fund replacement sidewalks on state roads, but they have been known to include new sidewalks and fund them.
- Most towns with sidewalks have sidewalk accounts (CIP) for construction and maintenance; this is a good option for Readfield. A 5- to 10-year sidewalk program should be initiated.
- Raymond voters approved a bond for sidewalk, lighting, and landscaping Route 302; this is an option for Route 17.
- MDOT's "Safe Routes to School" program could provide some funds. This program should be available in Fall 2005.
- Cooperating landowners can also work with the Town to fund and build sidewalks that benefit them and the Town.

### Trails

- Bike paths, trails, walkways, and sidewalks can be funded through MDOT's "Enhancement" funds (*see explanation on the following page*) – contact John Balicki at MDOT (624-3252).
- The Department of Conservation also has two trail funding programs: funding of up to \$30,000 per trail is available; applications are due in December 2004 ([see http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html](http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html)). The Department also administers a Recreational Trails program through the Bureau of Parks and Lands.
- The Conservation Corps can provide help with trail building, but they now charge a fee for this service.
- Volunteer groups (high school, garden club, conservation club members) can also help with trail building.

### Post Office/Corner Market

- A cooperative effort between the grange and store owners and the town is needed to improve circulation, parking, and safety for everyone. This will require cost-sharing and agreements to work together. Low-interest loans could be used to pay for the improvements – once they've been planned and approved by the respective owners.
- With the recent announcement that Gardiner Savings plans to have a branch bank in the old superintendent's office, the Town should work with them to: (a) allow access via the tire station; (b) build a sidewalk on route 41; and (c) make the area more attractive and visible.

### Traffic Calming

- To explore a 4-way stop, painted crosswalks, warning signs, as well as movable signs (as now) in the center of Route 17, contact MDOT's new Regional Office in Fairfield (contact: David Allen).
- Curb changes for bump-outs, reduced shoulders, and/or a sidewalk within the shoulder would require approval from the Regional Office if not MDOT (Augusta); funding may be a problem unless the project is included in a future BTIP funding cycle.

### Streetscaping

- Façade grants could be made under the Office of Community Development's "Community Enterprise program, provided the buildings needing upgrading qualify as "blighted" under OCD's rules. Up to \$100,000 could be available, but the Town should apply for a more modest amount, appropriate to the need. ([see www.meocd.org](http://www.meocd.org) or call 624-7489 for more information).
- OCD is considering a new "Village Program" for small Maine towns like Readfield. If established (hopefully next year), the program might be ideal for Readfield as lighting, streetscape, sidewalk, and parking issues are being considered as appropriate for funding. The Town should begin to show its interest in this program and invite OCD staff to visit to explain the programs available.

## Street Tree Planting

- Funds could be available through “Project Canopy,” a Maine Forest Service program (1-800-367-0223); also ask about the Tree City USA program.
- Unity College students do, on occasion, undertake street tree evaluations, through their classes; it may be worth contacting their instructor at the College and requesting that they use Readfield Corner as a case study or class exercise.

## Transportation Enhancement Program

The **Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program** is a federal/municipal match program (typically 80/20) offering a funding opportunity to help communities expand their transportation and livability choices. Project proposals must show a relationship to non-maintenance surface transportation (exclusive of aviation) while protecting the environment. Projects will be prioritized and selected for funding by MDOT. It is important to note that funding for this program is highly competitive. For example, in Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003, Maine had approximately \$7 million in federal funds and MDOT received over \$15 million in requests. Funding for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 will be even more constrained as the over \$8 million in unfulfilled requests from previous years will likely become candidates for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005.

**Maine’s program principally supports enhancements in connection with MDOT’s *Explore Maine*, pedestrian & bicycle, environmental mitigation, and downtown revitalization initiatives that create a more enhanced transportation system focused on the community.**

Eligible Categories:	Examples & Notes:
<b>Bicycle/Pedestrian</b>	
<b>Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities; Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Education Activities; Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails</b>	<b>Examples:</b> Planning, designing and constructing multi-use trails; paved shoulders or sidewalks on minor collectors or local roads; new sidewalks on major collectors or arterials where closed drainage exists; walkways or curb ramps; bike lane striping, bike parking and bus racks. Programs designed to encourage walking and bicycling. Acquiring railroad rights-of-way for the purpose of developing rail-with-trail projects. <b>Note: Projects proposed for this category are selected through MDOT’s Office of Passenger Transportation; contact (207) 624-3250. For Bicycle/Pedestrian information ask for John Balicki. For recreation-only trails, contact the Bureau of Parks &amp; Lands, Maine Department of Conservation, (207) 287-2163.</b>
<b>Scenic/Landscape/Historic</b>	
<b>Acquisition of Scenic or Historic Easements and Sites; Landscaping and Scenic Beautification; Scenic or Historic Highway Programs; Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities; Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Examples:</b> Acquisition of scenic land easements, vistas and landscapes; purchase of buildings in historic districts or historic properties; preservation of farmland. Improvements such as street furniture, lighting, public art and landscaping along streets, historic highways, trails and interstates, waterfronts, and gateways. Construction of turnouts and overlooks; designation signs and markers. Restoration of railroad depots, bus stations and lighthouses; rehabilitation of rail trestles, tunnels and bridges. Preservation of buildings in historic districts; restoration and reuse of historic buildings for transportation-related purposes. <b>Note: Projects proposed for this category are selected through MDOT’s Environmental Office; contact (207) 624-3100 for more information. For Scenic Byways Program information ask for Bret Poi or for Community Gateways Competition information ask for Kent Cooper.</b>
<b>Environmental</b>	
<b>Mitigation of Highway Runoff Pollution and Provision of Wildlife Connectivity</b>	<b>Examples:</b> Soil erosion controls; detention and sediment basins, river clean-ups; wildlife passage; wildlife mortality and safety. <b>Note: Projects proposed for this category are selected through MDOT’s Environmental Office; contact (207) 624-3100 for more information.</b>
<b>Other (low priority for funding)</b>	
Establishment of Transportation Museums	Examples: Construction of new museums or additions may include the conversion of railroad stations or historic properties to museums with transportation themes.
Archaeological Planning and Research	Examples: Research, preservation planning and interpretation.
Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising	Examples: Billboard inventories or removal of illegal and nonconforming billboards. <b>Note: 23 MRSA 1901-1925 limits the amount and types of outdoor advertising, therefore, this category is not funded through MDOT’s TE Program.</b>

For further TE Program information please contact:

Duane Scott  
TE Coordinator  
(207)624-3300 or (800)380-7822; FAX (207)624-3301; TTY (207)287-3392  
[duane.scott@maine.gov](mailto:duane.scott@maine.gov)

## 6. SURVEY RESULTS

Presented here is the summary of the findings from the Readfield Corner Workshop held in mid-June. The participants were asked to fill out five sections and rate the priority of the concepts illustrated.

### Summary

In Section I, **Sidewalks**, construction of sidewalks on (a) Main Street, (b) Church Road, (c) Main Street (Corner to High School) and (d) Winthrop Road all had high support, with the first priority being the Main Street (Corner to High School) construction.

In Section II, **Trails**, ideas for (a) maintenance of the trail along the Mill Stream Road, (b) maintenance of the existing trail from Fairgrounds to the High School, (c) construction of a trail from the Fairgrounds to the Public Beach, and (d) permission to improve trails through the area all had high support, with the highest priority being (b) and (c).

In Section III, **Post Office/Market Parking Lot**, high support was shown for (b) One-way circulation and (c) “Green” landscaping, with median support shown for (a) closed (pedestrian only) alley-way. The highest priority was for (a) closed (pedestrian only) alley way.

In Section IV, **Traffic Calming**, the three ways presented to slow down traffic, (a) create a 4-way stop at the Corner, (b) add well-marked crosswalks around the intersection, and (c) narrow Route 17 near the corner were all highly supported, with priority given to (b) and (c).

In Section V, **Streetscape**, concerning Readfield Corner improvements, the participants highly supported (b) incentives to building owners, (c) plant more street trees, (d) work with businesses to improve their signage, (e) encourage more retail businesses and/or offices to locate at Readfield Corner, (f) offer low-interest loans to business owners, and (g) restore and expand the library where it now stands. Median support was shown for (a) pedestrian-scale, attractive street lights. Participants did not support (h) move the library to a new location near the corner.

Additional comments on the surveys included having all mail home delivered, paving the Post Office parking lot, needing less light not more, putting in a regular stoplight instead of stop signs, getting rid of “security” lights, and preserving the rural quality that people moved there for.

Suggestions to calm traffic included some form of speed bumps, light blinking periodically as you approach the intersection, and markers in the road.

## Results

### I. Sidewalks

	Support	Don't Support	Priority <sup>1</sup>
a) Main Street, Corner to Town Office (#1 on map)	14	1	2
b) Church Road, Corner to Fairgrounds (#2 on map)	13	2	
c) Main Street, Corner to High School (along Route 17) (#3 on map)	15	2	13
d) Winthrop Road, Corner to proposed senior housing site (#4 on map)	12	3	

### II. Trails

	Support	Don't Support	Priority <sup>1</sup>
a) Maintain and extend the existing trail along Mill Stream Road (see A on map)	14	1	2
b) Maintain the existing trail from Fairgrounds to the High School (see B on map)	16	1	5
c) Build a trail from Fairgrounds to the Public Beach (see C on map)	12	3	5
d) Get permission to improve trails through this area (see D on map)	10	4	1

### III. Post Office/Market Parking Lot

	Support	Don't Support	Priority <sup>1</sup>
a) Closed (pedestrian only) alley-way	12	8	9
b) One-way circulation	14	1	5
c) "Green" landscaping	12	3	

### IV. Traffic Calming

	Support	Don't Support	Priority <sup>1</sup>
a) Create a 4-way stop at the Corner (and eliminate flashing light)	7	1	3
b) Add well-marked crosswalks, with pedestrian crossing signs, around the intersection and near to the intersection area	17		7
c) Narrow Route 17 near the Corner by bringing the curb in, to make narrower shoulders	12	2	5

### V. Streetscape

	Support	Don't Support	No Opinion
a) Pedestrian-scale, attractive street lights	11	7	2
b) Offer incentives to building owners to upgrade their buildings and grounds	18	2	
c) Plant more street trees	12	2	
d) Work with businesses to improve their signage design and placement	11	1	1
e) Encourage more retail businesses and/or offices to locate at Readfield Corner	17	1	1
f) Offer low-interest loans to business owners to upgrade their buildings to quality design (historic) standards	17	1	2
g) Restore and expand the library where it now stands	12	6	2
h) Move the library to a new location near the Corner	2	10	2

<sup>1</sup> Total number of respondents stating that this action had top priority for them.