

Way DownEast Downtown Revitalization Ideas

Downtown Revitalization and Beautification

This category has **both an individual community responsibility**, yet also **can have a collaborative aspect** in some situations. These responsibilities are generally the purview of the local municipality, citizens and businesses, such as painting public buildings, planting flowers, shrubs, and other beautification measures. However, if all **four partnering communities** decided they wanted to plant only purple flowers in their downtown areas so that they would look unified, that would be a **collaborative** decision! (This is an extreme example just to illustrate the difference in responsibility.) **It is a matter of decision-making among the partners whether most of the items are individual or collaborative.**

A Suggestion for initial collaborative project (based on group discussions):

- A common mural painted in a visible location in each of the four downtown as a background for photo opportunities and to show unity of the area.
 - Can use high school students to create the mural: can be words, a simple picture
 - Can use a local artist to create the mural
 - Theme and/or wording must be planned and discussed and agreed upon
 - Execution would be responsibility of individual communities

Residents, Organizations, Businesses

- Physical Community bulletin board
 - Place in a visible downtown location
 - High traffic area where people can see/read comfortably
- Beautify Empty Store fronts
 - Recruit school art classes to paint murals on the windows to enhance attractiveness
 - Recruit local artists to beautify the windows; include their contact information as a marketing effort for each small business
- Clean up roadside litter
 - Businesses, individuals, organizations can adopt specific streets, miles of a road, etc.
- Anti-littering campaign
- Attractive downtown banners
- Improved Wayfinding signage (can be an expensive, lengthy process working with DOT)
- Improved interpretive signs (Can be expensive depending upon vendor used)

Municipal/State

- Create façade improvement revolving loan fund
- Create grants for fixing roofs
- Create grant incentives for beautifying properties
- CDBG Grants for Downtown facades – Can towns request businesses accessing funds include an art component?
- Historic preservation and protection of Maine Street buildings preferred over new structures
- Repurposing of civic architecture

Way DownEast Map Ideas

❖ A Branded Map Series

Goal: A series of branded maps for the greater 4-community region that show people where/how to enjoy a group of activities that naturally complement each other and build awareness of unique regional assets.

- Explore current maps of region to insure no duplication;
 - Explore wider distribution or ways to share them collectively (DART Website?);
 - Create a common base map that can be used for the entire series (Center for GIS);
 - Add elements to each map that naturally complement each other and minimize confusion from too many elements on one map;
 - Include parks, playgrounds, schools and ball fields on maps as appropriate – “community pride”
 - Highlight shoulder season activities
 - Highlight Dining locations/options – especially Monday nights and off-season
 - QR code development for maps can be used in various locations to promote use of promotional content throughout the region.
 - Make maps digital accessible via a QR code
 - Place QR codes at major attractions to guide to other attractions
- **“Meet your Maker” map might highlight the following:**
- Visitor friendly Farms (with health & safety measures taken into consideration)
 - Farm to table dining/gathering experiences
 - Farm stands and products
 - Farmers markets and vendor products including bread, wine, crafts, etc.
 - Breweries – use local grains for production
 - Food Festival information
 - Fiber arts studios and events
 - Made in Maine arts and crafts studios and galleries (open to visitors/sales)
 - Add unique fun elements including:
 - Cemetery Tour at International Festival
 - Ghost Story Tours (Full Moon Club)
 - Haunted building tour
- **Historic and Cultural Attractions (culture include unique local foods)**
- Passamaquoddy connection, culture, museum, etc.
 - Historic Homes (open to public)
 - Historic Buildings (open to public)
 - Historic tours
 - Margareta Days, Pirate Festival and other similar events
 - Rhubarb Festival; Blueberry festival
 - Re-enactments
 - Historic BnB’s & Lodging facilities
 - Music & Art, Art Walks
 - Plus +++

➤ **Outdoor Recreation Series**

- Walking, Hiking and Biking
- Canoeing/kayaking/paddle boarding
 - Boat access points
- Snowmobile map
 - Rentals & Repair shops
- ATV Trail maps
 - Access routes for Downeast Trail Riders
 - Rental & Repair Shops
- Blue Trails (include lakes, rivers, ocean)
 - Water to Table food options
 - Boating facilities & access points
 - Marine shops, rentals and repair

➤ **Shop Way Downeast**

Way DownEast Marketing Ideas

The WDE Tourism Committee has the potential to market unique events and experiences that speak to the uniqueness, culture and values of your specific region over the other sub-regions of Downeast Acadia. The focus should be on what is different about WDE! Gather insights and best practices in marketing efforts to share with the partner communities to enhance the collective marketing effort.

- ❖ Shared Branding Concept (can be complicated to gain consensus/permissions, etc.)
 - Agreed upon by partners
 - Commitment to use by partners

- ❖ Shared Calendars
 - Potential for shared calendar of events and experiences on DART website?
 - Special event highlights
 - Unique Experiences by time of year

- ❖ Build social media page for WDE region.
 - Each community responsible for a post on a particular day of the week.
 - OR perhaps have a social media takeover of Downeast Acadia (DART) page shared with other sub-regions at various times.
 - Create Weekly Facebook posts on upcoming events in the area

- ❖ Build Video Assets
 - YouTube – Aerials especially
 - Vimeo – professionally done

- ❖ Internal Marketing within the communities for well-informed residents
 - Educate general public/adults on sustainable tourism, **benefits** and ways individuals get involved
 - Educate all locals about tourism and Recreational opportunities in the region – Internal Marketing

- ❖ Storytelling to Inspire
 - Inspire Visitors to live more ecologically – a “new story”
 - Inspire residents to engage with visitors to share their practical knowledge -how to eat a lobster like a Mainer; the health value of blueberries, etc.
 - Gather insights and best practices for existing efforts to share with partnering communities

- ❖ Market Reenactor Events to Educate and Inspire Locals and Visitors
 - Teach local history through re-enactors – to school children, residents and visitor
 - Re-enactor events expanded to include experiential components
 - Margaretta Days
 - Interactive Burnham Tavern + more
 - Calais Cemetery Tour – International Festival
 - Eastport’s Pirate Festival
 - Create more similar events