

**DESIGN CHARGE  
PRIDE'S CORNER WESTBROOK WORKSHOP  
SUSTAIN SOUTHERN MAINE  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2013**

**Objectives**

Change the look and feel of an emerging commercial corridor that also serves as a throughway between Portland and the Lakes Region while not negatively impacting traffic flow. Explore how mixed use village style development could create a commercial center for the neighborhood and improve both the appearance of the area and existing traffic flow. The "Corridor Mixed Use District" as identified in the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan envisions a mix of uses and establishing a consistent building line with a maximum of 4 stories.

Understand the design requirements of property owners, tenants, and investors and how growth of the Pride's Corner area can fit those requirements.

In addition to these objectives, we wish to get insights on the following:

- the potential for job and residential growth in this pilot center – can it be designed to accept growth?
- the kinds of activities, goods and services that people living and working within this center could access without having to leave the center and without need to travel in private vehicles on major roads.
- the relationship of this center to other centers in the region and the choices of transportation people would have to get from this center to other centers.
- whether this center can accommodate housing for residents of different incomes.

**Growth Targets**

*Jobs:* Accommodate about 10% of Westbrook's projected job growth (2010-35), or between 330 and 350 jobs. Depending on the mix of retail, food service, and office space, this may translate to 165000 and 175000 square feet of commercial space (@ 500 s.f. per job).

*Housing:* Accommodate 5-10% of Westbrook's projected household growth (2010-35), or between 90 and 180 households. The housing should accommodate a mix of incomes. The pilot area may be well positioned to serve young and senior markets with modestly sized units.

**Design Challenges**

*Intensity/Density of development:*

The vision for this area is to promote high quality cohesive commercial and mixed use development on consolidated lots while addressing traffic flow in this area. The scale and intensity of development should respect the surrounding residential neighborhoods while being substantial enough to establish an identifiable and attractive neighborhood mixed use commercial corridor. The "Corridor Mixed Use District" envisions establishing a consistent building line with a maximum of 4 stories. This workshop will explore a variety of space and bulk scenarios for use by the City Planning staff as it implements this new vision.

Residential densities need not be artificially limited. The number and design of units should be guided by companion elements of the plan, including the target of 90 to 180 households, parking needs, and the provision of green space to manage storm water and provide an amenity for residents. (For reference only, if housing for 90 to 180 households occupied, say, 5 acres in the pilot area, the residential density would be between 18 and 36 units per acre. Under Westbrook’s zoning ordinance, the Pride’s Corner area allows 4 units per net acre (10,000 s.f. and 15,000 s.f. per lot and per unit in sewered areas). The current RGA-II and City Center Districts permit up to 5.8 and 17 units per acre respectively.

Within and immediately adjacent to this pilot area are the 100+ acre Wormell property, the former Pride’s Corner School property (12 acres) and the Flea Market property (6.4 acres).

*Land use mix:* Strive for a mix that can share traffic, customers, and parking; and that will allow customers and residents to meet a reasonable number of needs within walking distance of homes and job locations. The mix can build on the existing array of convenience goods and services already in the Pride’s Corner area. In Table 1, note the synergies between activities as rated by Urban Land Institute:

**Table 1. On-Site Support and Synergy in Mixed-Use Projects**

Land Use	Degree of Support/Synergy			
	Residential	Hotel <sup>a</sup>	Retail/Entertainment <sup>b</sup>	Culture/Civic/Recreation
Office	●●	●●●●●	●●●●	●●●
Residential	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●●
Hotel	●●●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●
Retail/Entertainment	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●
Cultural/Civic/Recreation	●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●

Bullets: ●=very weak, ●●=weak, ●●●=moderate, ●●●●= strong, ●●●●●= very strong.

<sup>a</sup> Synergy is strongest between high end hotels and condominiums, less for mid-priced hotels and residences.

<sup>b</sup> Restaurants and food services are the main source of benefit for offices.

Source: *Mixed Use Development Handbook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC, 2003, p. 85.

*Urban design:* Set a course toward urban edges and streetscapes, with the placement of buildings along frontages. Consider appropriate landscaping as a way to enhance the image and brand of the area, both within public rights-of-way and within the development parcels. Sidewalks should be on both sides of Bridgton Road in the planning area or at least its center.

*Circulation:* Improve vehicular and pedestrian connections within the pilot area. Consider whether and how at least one additional east-west and/or one additional north-south connection can be made through the pilot area. For example, is there a way to extend Villa Road (or the long driveway north of it) so that it can become a 4-way intersection at Grandview Drive – or to connect the Pride’s Corner School property with Grandview Drive?