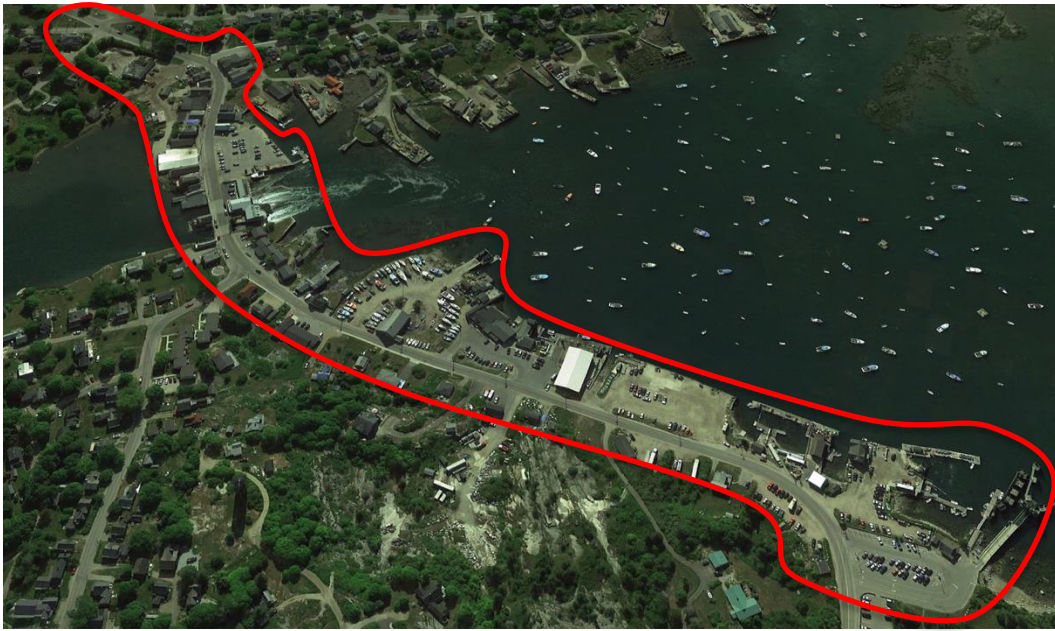


Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan



Town of Vinalhaven
Downtown Committee

October 2019

Acknowledgements

This project was possible only through the hard work and participation from over two hundred local citizens, business and property owners, members of the fishing community, Town staff, Maine state agencies, local utilities, non-profit organizations, and dedicated volunteers.

The overall planning effort was requested by the Vinalhaven Select Board, and was steered by members of the Downtown Committee (DTC) listed below, who met diligently for the past three years to identify issues, discuss approaches, help coordinate stakeholder outreach, and develop and prioritize practical solutions on a wide range of topics. We thank these volunteers for contributing so much time, energy and careful thought to this Downtown Master Plan:

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Elin Elisofon	Kathy Warren	Alison Thibault
Betsy Hopkins	John Wasielewski	
Margaret Qualey	David Wylie	Advisor: Hooper Brooks

The Downtown Master Plan has built upon and incorporated information and stakeholder input from many prior studies and planning efforts on Vinalhaven, such as the 2013 Vinalhaven Comprehensive Plan and public survey; the 2007 Vinalhaven Sidewalk Committee Report; the 2014 Vinalhaven Economic Development Strategy report; the 2017 Design and Resiliency Team (DART) Report; 2017 and 2018 Floodplain and Storm Surge analysis reports by Ransom Engineers; and additional strategic development plans and capital improvement plans from utilities, state agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Specific reports and plans that were used in developing this Downtown Master Plan are described in Sections 1.5 and 5, and copies of key reports are included in the Appendix.

The following businesses and organizations provided critical input through detailed stakeholder interviews with their owners, managers, and staff:

30 Downstreet, LLC	Historic Downstreet	The Sand Bar
Aerofit	Homeport	The Work Dock
American Legion Post #18	Hopkins Boatyard	Tidewater Motel
Bean Maine Lobster Inc.	Island Spirits	US Postal Service
Camden National Bank	Island's Closet	VinalEnergy
Carvers Harbor Market	Jaret & Cohn Real Estate	Vinalhaven Candy Co
Creelman Farm Store	Knight Insurance	Vinalhaven Chamber of Commerce
Davidson Realty	Maine State Ferry Service	Vinalhaven Fisherman's Coop
dot&millies	Maine Water	Vinalhaven Harbor Wharf
Engine House Press	Marston House	Vinalhaven Kelp Inc.
Fishermen's Friend	New Era Gallery	Vinalhaven Library
Fox Islands Electric Coop	Phineas Fogg, LLC	Vinalhaven Yoga, Pilates &Barre
Go Fish	Sea's Bakery	Windhorse Arts
Good Things	Sherry's Kitchen	
Greet's Eats	Star of Hope Foundation	
Harborside Apartments	The Nightingale	
Harrison Realty	The Plant Place	

In addition to those local organizations that participated in the Town's 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the following provided assistance and information to the Downtown Committee team:

Community Planning Studio	Maine Office of Historic Preservation
Danth, Inc.	Maine Department of Transportation
Design and Resiliency Team (DART)	Maine State Ferry Service
Gulf of Maine Research Institute	Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission
Island Institute	Spectrum/Time Warner
Islands Community Medical Services Inc.	Vinalhaven Eldercare Services
Knox County EMA	Vinalhaven Historical Society
Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Vinalhaven Land Trust
Maine Coastal Program	
Maine Preservation Inc.	

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Broadband Committee	Sidewalk Committee
Economic Development	Town Manager
Housing Committee	Water District Trustees
Planning Commission	Sewer District Trustees
Sea Level Rise Committee	

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This group's thoughtful and detailed input, combined with opinions gathered from the entire community through the 2013 Comprehensive Plan's surveys and public meetings, have formed the basis for the priorities, capital projects, and ordinance modifications recommended in this Downtown Master Plan.

Table of Contents

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN SUMMARY – PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST	1
OVERVIEW	1
MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATION.....	1
PROCESS.....	2
ANALYSIS AND GOALS.....	4
VISION STATEMENT – PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST.....	6
PROJECT COORDINATION AND SEQUENCING.....	9
FUNDING MECHANISMS	9
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.....	12
CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS TIMETABLE.....	13
ORDINANCES, BUILDING CODES AND DESIGN STANDARDS	22
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	24
1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE.....	24
1.2 DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA.....	32
1.3 PLANNING APPROACH AND PROCESS.....	34
1.4 REGIONAL CONTEXT AND DEMOGRAPHICS.....	40
1.5 PREVIOUS STUDIES.....	42
CHAPTER 2 DOWNTOWN ANALYSIS.....	48
2.1 HISTORIC CONTEXT OF MAIN STREET	48
2.2 MAIN STREET’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ISLAND ECONOMY.....	60
2.3 CURRENT LAND USE AND BUILDING CONDITIONS	64
2.4 VEHICLES, ROADWAYS AND TRAFFIC.....	81
2.5 PEDESTRIANS AND SIDEWALKS	87
2.6 PARKING.....	94
2.7 BICYCLE SAFETY	99
2.8 HOUSING	102
2.9 STREETSAPES, PARKS, AND WAYFINDING	106
2.10 ZONING, ORDINANCES, AND BUILDING CODES	110
CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC TRENDS	124
3.1 FISHING	124
3.2 AQUACULTURE.....	124
3.3 BROADBAND AND TELEWORKING	125
3.4 THE ARTS.....	126
3.5 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE	127
3.6 RETAIL.....	128
3.7 SHORT-DURATION TOURISM	128
3.8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING	129
CHAPTER 4 LIMITS TO GROWTH.....	131
4.1 FERRY TRANSPORTATION	131
4.2 INFRASTRUCTURE.....	134
4.3 HOUSING LIMITATIONS.....	137
4.4 LABOR FORCE AND WAGES.....	138
4.5 FLOODING, STORMWATER, AND SEA LEVEL RISE	140
4.6 UTILITIES	146

4.7	FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS	150
CHAPTER 5 EXISTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS.....		153
5.1	TOWN OF VINALHAVEN CIP STATUS.....	153
5.2	TOWN OF VINALHAVEN CAPITAL PROJECTS	153
5.3	MAINE DOT CAPITAL PROJECTS	154
5.4	VINALHAVEN WATER DISTRICT/MAINE WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS.....	155
5.5	VINALHAVEN SEWER DISTRICT CAPITAL PROJECTS	156
5.6	FOX ISLANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CAPITAL PROJECTS	156
5.7	OTHER UTILITIES AND SERVICES PROJECTS	156
CHAPTER 6 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, ACTIONS, AND SCHEDULE.....		159
6.1	OVERVIEW	159
6.2	FUNDING MECHANISMS.....	159
6.3	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	162
6.4	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS TIMETABLE	163
6.5	ORDINANCES, BUILDING CODES, AND DESIGN STANDARDS.....	172
6.6	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND SIDEWALKS.....	173
6.7	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - ROADWAY, TRAFFIC CALMING, AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ..	175
6.8	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - PARKING.....	177
6.9	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - FLOODING AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT	181
6.10	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION	183
6.11	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - WATERFRONT ACCESS AND DEVELOPMENT.....	185
6.12	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - HOUSING.....	186
6.13	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - STREETSAPES, PUBLIC SPACES, AND WAYFINDING.....	188
6.14	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - HISTORIC PRESERVATION	190
6.15	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - BROADBAND	192
6.16	CAPITAL PROJECTS AND ACTIONS - THE COMMUNITY CENTER CONCEPT	192
ACRONYMS GLOSSARY		194
PHOTO CREDITS.....		195
APPENDIX		
1.	STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE.....	
2.	MAIN STREET BUILDING INVENTORY	
3.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 2016-2019	
4.	TOWN OF VINALHAVEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2013)	
5.	TOWN OF VINALHAVEN SIDEWALK COMMITTEE REPORT (2006).....	
6.	DOWNTOWN DRAINAGE STUDY (2007).....	
7.	TOWN OF VINALHAVEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2014)	
8.	BROADBAND STUDY FOR THE MAINE OFFSHORE ISLANDS (2015).....	
9.	DART REPORT (2017)	
10.	RANSOM COASTAL FLOODING REPORT (2018)	
11.	VINALHAVEN WATER DISTRICT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2018).....	
12.	VINALHAVEN WASTEWATER SYSTEM CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN (2019).....	

Downtown Master Plan Summary – Putting People First

Overview

Vinalhaven’s Downtown Main Street corridor represents what some residents have called “the historic and economic heart of the community”, and together with its adjoining harbor and waterfront is the center for most of the commerce, transportation, tourism, entertainment, and employment for the island. The dozens of businesses along Main Street provide 110 year-round full-time jobs and 102 seasonal jobs with a \$3.3 million annual payroll, representing at least 12% of the overall island economy. Between the Ferry Terminal and the Library there are 40 apartments and 14 single-family homes, which provide housing for nearly 100 people. And this same Downtown area contains all of the community’s restaurants, retail shops, some professional services, public wharves, and many of the most historic buildings on the island.

Vinalhaven’s Downtown has seen dramatic changes over the past 150 years, and we should expect more to come. Changes will inevitably happen in the economy, technology, transportation, and climate, which will affect us in some ways that we can imagine, and many we cannot. Such change is uncomfortable and a bit scary to a lot of people. It also has the potential to affect this community in ways that we may not be able to predict.

There are different opinions on Vinalhaven regarding what is best for the town as a whole, but many of those viewpoints often represent self-interest and fear of change, rather than a comprehensive vision for the future. When the topic is about people, however, like an aging relative trying to remain on the island, an island family struggling with loss of income, your child who has moved away, or a young couple struggling to find an affordable apartment, the Vinalhaven community often speaks with a common voice.

And that is what happened during this planning effort. Through conversations with stakeholders, we heard personal stories, and heard the needs of the community as they relate to individuals rather than simply bricks and mortar.

In compiling goals and actions for this Downtown Master Plan, what has emerged from extensive research and input from across the island community is an amazingly common set of needs and objectives that cut across island demographics and livelihoods. These needs and objectives are not focused on fancy extras for the town, but on how we can anticipate future changes and retain our community values, while providing support for our aging relatives, families, and young people that represent the future of the island. We all have a responsibility and role in accomplishing that, including the Select Board, volunteer groups, businesses, and local organizations, by partnering and working collaboratively.

This Plan then, is actually about people. On the surface it discusses infrastructure, policies, and recommended capital projects. But in the end, its vision is not simply about concrete, or buildings, or wharves, or ferries. It is about trying to provide what our residents and visitors need to stay safe, make a living, and make a life.

Master Plan Organization

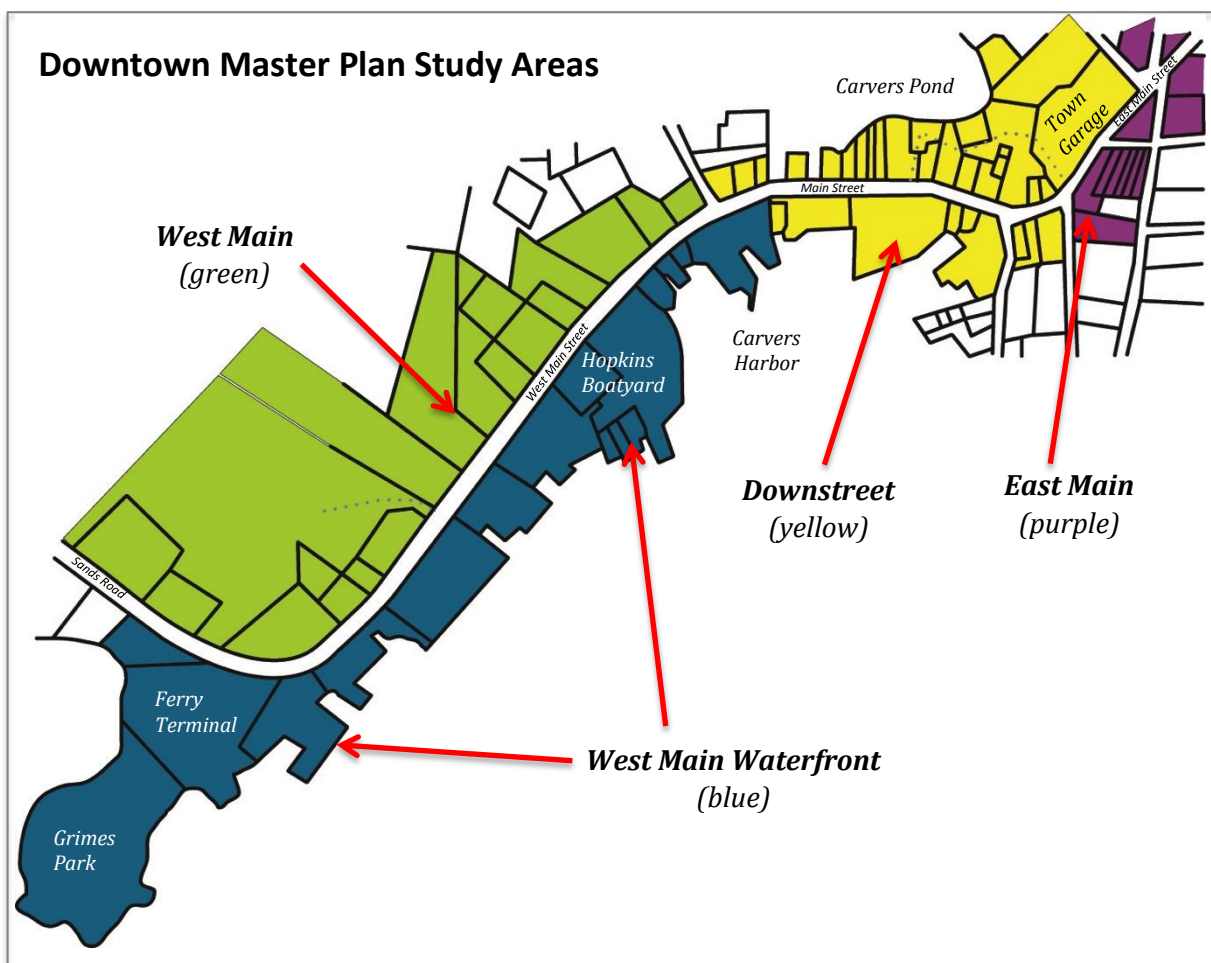
This Downtown Master Plan is organized to provide the reader with an overview as well as detailed analyses and explanations of recommended actions. This initial section offers a summary of the overall process, analysis, and results. Chapter 1 provides an introduction and detail about the process and the data used for our analysis and conclusions, including a

discussion of Vinalhaven’s primary economies, our population, and Main Street’s value to the community. Chapter 2 offers a thorough and detailed analysis of Main Street features as they exist today, with subsections that discuss land use, buildings, roads, infrastructure, housing, and current town ordinances. Chapters 3 and 4 look at some economic trends that may affect Downtown, and limits to growth for our community. Chapter 5 describes specific capital projects that are already underway or are planned by the Town, State of Maine, and utilities on the island. Chapter 6 provides detailed descriptions and justifications of specific actions recommended by this Master Plan. This document also includes a number of Appendices that provide even more detail on a wide range of topics.

Process

The Vinalhaven Select Board established a Downtown Committee (DTC) in 2016, and charged the group with researching and developing a Master Plan for revitalization of the downtown area. The Downtown Master Plan includes recommendations for policies, ordinances, and prioritized capital projects designed to meet community values and infrastructure needs, support economic development, and address impacts from climate change and sea level rise, covering the next 20 to 30 years.

For this effort, the DTC focused on a 1.4-mile section of Main Street from the Town Library to the Maine State Ferry Service terminal. The DTC further divided the study area into four segments, shown on the map below as *West Main Waterfront*, *West Main*, *Downstreet*, and *East Main*.



The entire island is affected by what happens on Main Street, and there are many other portions of the island that contribute to the vitality of the community. The *2013 Vinalhaven Comprehensive Plan* encompassed the entire island, and this Downtown Master Plan is intended to build upon the Comprehensive Plan, but with a focus on the Downtown Main Street corridor.

The Downtown Committee focused on a multi-step process to complete this planning project:

- Adopting a standardized approach to downtown planning
- Reviewing and compiling prior studies and technical reports from the past decade
- Conducting outreach and individual interviews with property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders in the Main Street corridor to identify needs and projects
- Consulting with outside organizations, federal and state agencies, and engineers
- Identifying common issues and concerns to develop groupings of priorities and solutions
- Coordinating findings and proposed actions with engineering consultants and the Town

To streamline planning discussions, the DTC held ten theme-based committee meetings (illustrated below) to identify and discuss policies, capital improvements, and ordinances related to specific topics such as transportation, housing, safety, parking, etc.











The resulting Downtown Master Plan represents the best thinking across the community of what we need today, and a vision of what the next 20-30 years may bring by *Putting People First*.



The Downtown Committee team then looked at the specific needs in each of the three economies, to see which ones were overlapping and which ones might conflict. There were surprisingly few conflicts, and a lot of shared needs:

- Our critically-important **Commercial fishing and maritime economy** needs a healthy marine environment; unobstructed access to the harbor; waterfront support infrastructure such as wharves and docks; convenient spaces for managing gear and parking vehicles; facilities for the processing and shipping of seafood products; affordable housing for workers; dockside services and support systems; and a safe and productive community to live in.
- The **Seasonal/tourism economy** provides employment for a significant number of Vinalhaven’s residents, and has been a significant part of the island economy for nearly 150 years. To continue prospering, it requires convenient transportation to and around the island; safe ways to travel from the ferry to Downstreet and other destinations; a vibrant and active downtown with retail shops and restaurants; a wide range of lodging options; and access to a seasonal workforce.
- The **Year-round economy** needs a resilient infrastructure; reliable and cost-effective transportation to the mainland; a walkable and safe village; affordable housing for workers, families, and the elderly; year-round businesses and jobs; and a safe downtown that serves as a crossroads and provides space for community gatherings.

Blending these needs with specific input from the community, including information from prior studies, resulted in a list of goals, shown below, with actions identified to help meet those goals. This template provided the guiding strategy behind the actions recommended in this Master Plan. The icons representing the priority goals are used throughout the remainder of the Master Plan to show how recommended actions are tied to specific goals.

Priority Goals for the Downtown Master Plan – Putting People First	
	Improve pedestrian safety and amenities <i>Accessible sidewalks, crosswalks, safer intersections, traffic calming, wayfinding, benches</i>
	Improve accessibility to sidewalks and buildings <i>Add wheelchair-accessible space, access ramps, elevate sidewalks nearer to building thresholds</i>
	Improve parking for residents, fishermen, and visitors <i>New parking areas, redesign curbside parking, ordinance improvements</i>
	Preserve and expand waterfront access <i>Strengthen ordinances, support marine businesses, consider acquisitions to regain access</i>
	Encourage more year-round business and activities <i>Strengthen ordinances, improve infrastructure, encourage new development</i>
	Expand year-round affordable housing <i>Revise ordinances, preserve existing housing, encourage new housing initiatives</i>
	Improve stormwater and flood resiliency <i>Fix stormwater systems, elevate road and sidewalks, revise flood maps, inform owners</i>
	Create more public gathering spaces <i>Downtown benches, multi-purpose public lot for events, pocket parks, roadside landscaping</i>
	Manage summer congestion to maximize benefits and minimize impacts <i>Sidewalks, wayfinding, parking, bicycle safety, traffic calming, lodging-related ordinances</i>
	Preserve and enhance the character of the Village and its heritage <i>Strengthen ordinances, address demolition and blight, signage, landscaping; parks</i>

Vision Statement – Putting People First

Complete Streets and Public Places

The Downtown Master Plan encourages a *Complete Streets* approach, which integrates people and places in the planning, design, construction, and operation of transportation networks. This helps to ensure that streets 1) are safe for people of all ages and abilities, 2) balance the needs of different modes of transport, and 3) support local land uses, economies, cultures, and natural environments.

At the center of the Complete Streets strategy on Vinalhaven is the goal of making Main Street accessible to all users, while accommodating all forms of transportation, and doing so in a way that makes the street both more attractive and resilient to flooding. By using space more efficiently, existing parking and service access can be maintained and improved while opening up new areas for waterfront access, public parks, and other pedestrian amenities.

A broad vision for the Downtown corridor was presented in the 2017 DART study, which included a series of Complete Streets concepts that focused on four locations along Main Street: the Ferry Terminal area; West Main Street redevelopment; Downstreet; and the Town Garage site and Carvers Pond waterfront (“Pondside”). Their guiding principles for design included many of the same goals as this Downtown Master Plan, such as maintaining the working waterfront, adapting for sea level rise, improving safety for pedestrians and drivers, removing deficiencies that inhibit business growth, protecting historic buildings, and providing sustainable development for housing and a more diverse economic base.



The 2017 DART study focused on design concepts in four sections of the Main Street corridor that would address similar objectives of this Downtown Master Plan.

Some of the DART team’s design concepts were received by the community with interest, others with skepticism, but their overall Complete Streets approach and a few of the concepts are retained in this Plan as recommended actions.

The Main Street Web

Just as the three Vinalhaven economies are intertwined, so too are the multiple priorities and goals of this Master Plan. The Main Street corridor consists of a complex web of businesses, infrastructure, policies, and people, and each has needs and wishes. Many of those needs are in common, and are easy to identify and address without conflict. They are among the top priorities of this Plan, and will be relatively straightforward to implement. Other needs may be unique to one business or location, and may be more difficult to address without negatively impacting someone else. Those are of lower priority in this Plan, or are not addressed at this time.

As a result of this web-like feature of Main Street, many of the actions in this Plan must occur in a proper sequence to be successful.

The interrelationships and recommended sequencing is described in the action plan outlined below, and referenced in the Implementation recommendations in Section 6.

The Main Street Vision

From the Ferry to the Library, Vinalhaven will provide safe passage for vehicles, pedestrians, delivery trucks, bicycles, forklifts, and the occasional boat being towed on a trailer. Main Street will be redesigned to address sea level rise and provide well-defined and adequate roadway widths; safe pathways for pedestrians, bicycles, and slow moving vehicles to use; traffic calming through better roadway design, signage, and appropriate speed enforcement; crosswalks; improved access to sidewalks, parking spaces, and building thresholds for the elderly and people with disabilities; and pedestrian amenities such as benches, wayfinding signage, and roadside landscaping in appropriate locations.

The working waterfront areas along Main Street will continue to prosper, and access to the harbor will be protected and expanded by strengthening ordinances and by encouraging the acquisition and redevelopment of waterfront properties to preserve traditional access and use of wharves for commercial fishing, while allowing mixed uses of waterfront buildings only when that will not interfere with harbor access. Increased access to the waterfront by the public will also be encouraged, primarily to provide viewpoints and short-term vessel loading and unloading facilities.

The central core of downtown will be supported as a key element of the community, through improved sidewalks and accessibility, roadway definition and traffic calming, better stormwater and flood management, creation of public gathering spaces, more off-street parking, and policies and ordinances that encourage investment, redevelopment and conversion of structures to provide more housing and jobs to the year-round community. As part of this effort, there will be improvement and more mixed-use of the existing Downstreet lot for public events and markets, as well as continued use for parking and waterfront access.

Town infrastructure Downstreet, including roads, sidewalks, and sewer, water and stormwater systems, will be redesigned, elevated, and improved to provide more resiliency to flooding and sea level rise. Property owners with buildings at risk of flooding will be encouraged to implement flood-proofing measures and to consider raising their buildings as needed in the future. The Town will also join with property owners to pursue a revision of the FEMA flood zone map to reduce flood insurance costs in the Downtown area and encourage more investment and economic development.

The demolition and loss of historic structures downtown will be monitored and influenced through a more rigorous design review and permitting process, and there will be ordinances in place to address neglected buildings that pose public health or safety risks. To reinforce the historic character of Downtown, these processes and ordinances will encourage appropriate architectural design and the use of traditional materials like granite where possible in Downtown buildings, streetscapes, and landscaping. The formal creation of a historic district is not proposed, but a process should be set up to inform property owners about their site's heritage and provide them with support in researching and posting historic signage for their buildings.

The "Pondside" (backside) of Downstreet may not be extensively developed in the near term due to requirements for delivery truck passage, ordinance constraints, and uncertainties regarding rights of way. However, providing more parking at the former Town Garage site, combined with safe pedestrian pathways connected to Main Street, will improve Downtown parking and provide an opportunity to work with private property owners to create a small waterfront park on Carvers Pond. The Town will also establish a committee to determine the best long-term use of the former Town Garage site.

The Town will encourage the expansion of year-round affordable housing and office space along the Main Street corridor through ordinance and policy changes, and capital projects. These will include supporting the conversion of second floor spaces to include year-round residential apartments and offices; easing parking requirements for properties that have limited space; creating additional offsite public parking; encouraging the creation of a community investment organization to assist in financing for economic development, capital projects, and building improvements; and encouraging the creation of a housing organization that can purchase, develop, and manage affordable housing for year-round residents. The Town will also strengthen its planning resources by creating a Town Planner position to support community improvements and development that is compliant with ordinances and community character.

All of these measures will help preserve and enhance the character of the Village and its heritage, and provide a safe and vibrant Downtown for people who work, live, and visit here.

The Role of the Town

A municipal government and its leadership often view their primary responsibilities as maintaining the town's infrastructure, collecting taxes and fees, and soundly managing the town budget. Those are critically important, but for a town to thrive, that same leadership must also work collaboratively with other groups and organizations to create policies and take actions that encourage investment and vitality.

On Vinalhaven, that has always been the case, and it will continue to be just as important in the future. Economic development for a community is not just the purview of a chamber of commerce, nor does it fall solely to individuals and their businesses working only on their own behalf. It is also not the sole responsibility of a Select Board or Town Manager, or an Economic Development committee. It takes collaboration and cooperation between multiple entities, including the Town, individual business owners, utilities, chambers, and volunteer groups, and that approach is especially important when implementing actions in a master plan. By working together, Vinalhaven can create the infrastructure, atmosphere, ordinances, and support for a sustainable and resilient community.

Project Coordination and Sequencing

One of the planning guidelines for the Downtown Committee (DTC) effort has been to recommend improvements that build upon one another, and, most importantly, will not preclude expansions or modifications in the future. That is an especially critical approach for a community that may have grand wishes but cannot afford to do everything at once, or even within a 5-year period.

For the Downtown area, there are a series of steps that must be done together, such as a capital improvement linked with an ordinance change. And there are a series of improvements that need to be done in an ordered and coordinated sequence that reflects available funding timetables and construction schedules.

For example, providing businesses with more nearby parking for their customers requires a change in policies regarding long-term parking on Main Street. But that could impact apartment residents and employees who have no other place to park and would need an alternative location. One alternative could be adding some parking areas at the Town Garage site as an interim initial use, while other future uses of that site are considered by a Town committee. But such a use could not occur until the Water District office is relocated, a new stormwater system is designed and built, and the Water Street intersection is redesigned and improved. Constructing the new stormwater system and replacing the aging water main on Main Street need to be coordinated with roadway and sidewalk improvements to save money and minimize disruptions to businesses and traffic.

For those actions that are interdependent, one should not be attempted until and unless the other(s) is also ready to be implemented.

The Downtown Master Plan's *Implementation Sequence* and *Capital Projects and Actions Timetable* address these interconnected and interdependent projects and actions, and suggest a path for making these improvements in a coordinated way. The specific recommended Actions in Section 6 provide detailed descriptions of interrelated aspects, design considerations, and constraints related to timetables and project sequencing.

Coordinating the design and construction of these interrelated projects, and meshing their implementation schedules with grant application and funding timetables, cannot be accomplished just by the Select Board or another volunteer committee. To provide this coordination, this Downtown Master Plan includes a recommendation to establish a Town Planner position working at least three days per week. This position will be charged with obtaining grant funding, and working with the Town Manager and Code Enforcement Officer, to coordinate and implement Master Plan projects and actions, and to coordinate the work of the Planning Commission and Planning Board.

Funding Mechanisms

How to pay for community improvements is a critical topic for both Select Boards and taxpayers. This Downtown Master Plan provides suggestions for funding mechanisms for individual actions, and also considers grant funding cycles in the recommended sequencing and timetables for projects. An overview of funding mechanisms is provided below.

Public and Private Grants

A number of state and federal agencies have funds that support local capital improvement and community development. Some specific examples are provided in Section 6.2.

Most grant programs have specific application and award timetables that will influence implementation schedules, or may preclude certain grant opportunities from being considered. In addition, state and federal grant programs are constantly modifying their project requirements, funding levels, and application processes. Thus, the potential grant funding mechanisms listed in each of the Section 6 recommended actions are suggestions that will need to be further reviewed for pursuit when this Plan is adopted by the Select Board.

Community Development and Investment Corporation

A community development and investment corporation is an organization, often made up of local citizens, established to improve the economy of the area by creating economic development programs, drawing new business and industry, and providing financial support for entrepreneurs, capital projects, housing projects, and business owners adapting their properties to sea level rise. These entities can seek and administer investor and grant funds, provide low-interest loans, and can purchase properties and arrange for their redevelopment. Many Maine communities have established such organizations to help revitalize their downtowns, provide support for affordable housing, and encourage additional investment in the community.

One of the actions recommended by this Plan is supporting the creation of such an organization on Vinalhaven, with an initial step being the creation of an Economic Development Committee charged with 1) identifying and fostering economic development initiatives for the island, and 2) supporting the establishment of a community development and investment entity on Vinalhaven.

Capital Improvement Planning

The capital facilities of local governments are essential to meeting the service needs of the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Vinalhaven does not currently have a capital budgeting system for municipal facilities and equipment called a *Capital Improvement Program (CIP)*.

A CIP is a document that includes an assessment of existing and anticipated public facilities and services required to meet the Town's planned growth and economic development, including but not limited to sewer, water, emergency services, schools, parks and open spaces, and transportation infrastructure. It is generally a five- or ten-year plan covering the maintenance, replacement and expansion of existing public facilities and equipment, or the design and construction or acquisition of new facilities and equipment. A CIP includes projections of when and where such facilities and equipment will be required, how much they are anticipated to cost, how the costs will be funded, and a schedule of when the improvements will be needed.

The plan is usually prepared by the Town Manager with assistance from a Town Planner, other Town Departments, and sometimes the Planning Board. It is typically tied to the community's comprehensive plan and any related planning efforts. It is usually reviewed by the Town Select Board, amended following a public hearing, and then sent to the Annual Town Meeting for a community vote.

Without a long-term CIP as part of the Town’s annual budgeting and administrative process, the temptation is to defer needed spending on capital projects when budgets are tight, and approve whatever is proposed when funds are available. This approach usually results in scarce capital dollars being spent on small projects that do not reflect the greatest needs of the community. Even more importantly, such haphazard project-by-project budgeting can result in under-designed or poorly functioning systems, as well as unexpected future costs for major projects that are essential or are mandated by state or federal requirements.

A CIP is designed to assist the Town in planning its needed capital expenditures on a rational and systematic basis. The CIP is designed to identify a community’s needed capital expenditures, to evaluate the priority of the various needs, and to structure a spending program for meeting the more important of these needs on an affordable basis. This provides the Town, and its taxpayers, with a “no surprises” approach to capital projects, and usually results in a coordinated, well-designed infrastructure where all the parts function properly together.

Implementation Strategy

To achieve this vision and create the mechanisms needed to move forward, the following strategy is recommended. This includes the establishment of a Town position responsible for securing funding, and assisting and coordinating implementation of Master Plan actions.

Recommended Steps		Timing
1	Have the Select Board officially adopt this Downtown Master Plan, described here, and incorporate the Plan as part of the Town's Comprehensive Plan	2019
2	Have the Town establish a formal Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that addresses project priorities, identifies funding sources, and establishes project schedules for the next 10-15 years.	2019-2020
3	Have the Town Planning Commission conduct reviews and draft language for ordinance changes and additions recommended in this Plan to support future needs of the community.	2019-2021
4	Establish a Town Planner position to work at least three days per week charged with obtaining grant funding for and working with the Town Manager to coordinate and implement Master Plan projects and actions, and coordinate the work of the Planning Commission, Planning Board, and associated Committees.	2019-2020
5	Establish a <i>Net Factory Site Re-Use Committee</i> charged with researching and developing a long-term plan for redeveloping the former Town Garage site.	2020-2022
6	Have the Town apply for grant funds for the purpose of: funding the engineering redesign of the Main Street Corridor; constructing roadways, sidewalks, crosswalks, and parking lot improvements; improving the performance and flood resiliency of Main Street infrastructure including drinking water, stormwater, and sewer systems; preserving waterfront access; and providing support for economic development.	2020-2022
6	Implement construction of capital projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater, water, and sewer infrastructure • Roadway, sidewalks, intersection improvements • New parking lot, other parking improvements • Dock and wharf improvements • Public parks and streetscape improvements 	2022-2023 <i>(specific timing and sequencing is listed in the following Capital Projects summary)</i>
7	Establish an <i>Economic Development Committee</i> to be charged with: 1) fostering economic development island-wide, and 2) helping to create a community investment entity (as described in Section 6.2) that can provide financing for sustainable economic development, business investment, affordable housing, and sea level rise adaptation.	2020-2023











Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

A set of Actions and Capital Projects have been recommended in Section 6 of this Downtown Master Plan to improve infrastructure and meet the goals and objectives identified by the community. The Capital Projects are intended to be part of a 15-year Capital Improvement Plan for the Town.







The following *Capital Projects and Actions Timetable* provides a summary of each recommended action, along with the suggested responsible parties and team members, the sequencing and timing of the action, possible funding sources, and an estimated range of costs. More detailed descriptions of each recommended action, along with suggested design considerations, justification, constraints, potential funding sources, and implementation aspects are provided in Section 6. Each Capital Project includes a reference to specific sections providing more detail.

A parallel set of ordinance amendments are also recommended to further address these goals and objectives, and to support the implementation of capital projects. These ordinance modifications are summarized in Section 6.5, complete with references to section narratives that provide more background information and justifications.





The icons representing the Master Plan’s priority goals, shown below, are used throughout the *Capital Projects and Actions Timetable* to show how individual recommended actions are tied to specific goals.

Priority Goals for the Downtown Master Plan – Putting People First	
	Improve pedestrian safety and amenities <i>Accessible sidewalks, crosswalks, safer intersections, traffic calming, wayfinding, benches</i>
	Improve accessibility to sidewalks and buildings <i>Add wheelchair-accessible space, access ramps, elevate sidewalks nearer to building thresholds</i>
	Improve parking for residents, fishermen, and visitors <i>New parking areas, redesign curbside parking, ordinance improvements</i>
	Preserve and expand waterfront access <i>Strengthen ordinances, support marine businesses, consider acquisitions to regain access</i>
	Encourage more year-round business and activities <i>Strengthen ordinances, improve infrastructure, encourage new development</i>
	Expand year-round affordable housing <i>Revise ordinances, preserve existing housing, encourage new housing initiatives</i>
	Improve stormwater and flood resiliency <i>Fix stormwater systems, elevate road and sidewalks, revise flood maps, inform owners</i>
	Create more public gathering spaces <i>Downtown benches, multi-purpose public lot for events, pocket parks, roadside landscaping</i>
	Manage summer congestion to maximize benefits and minimize impacts <i>Sidewalks, wayfinding, parking, bicycle safety, traffic calming, lodging-related ordinances</i>
	Preserve and enhance the character of the Village and its heritage <i>Strengthen ordinances, address demolition and blight, signage, landscaping; parks</i>





Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	1) Initiate a modeling effort and submit a request to modify the FEMA Flood map covering Carvers Harbor, Main Street, and Carvers Pond, in partnership with other affected private property owners.	Town Manager Sea Level Rise Committee Planning Board Property owners	2019-2020	Town of VH + Private funding	\$25,000-\$40,000	4.5, 6.9, 6.10
	2) Request that the Maine State Ferry Service clear obstructions from and improve their sidewalk from the Ferry Terminal to West Main Street.	Town Manager Ferry Advisory Board MSFS	2019	Town of VH	No cost	2.5, 4.1, 6.6
	3) Enforce the 25-mph posted speed zone on Sands Road. Install additional speed limit signage and pedestrian warning signage approaching Downstreet.	Town Manager Planning Board Select Board	2019	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.4, 2.5, 6.7
	4) Coordinate with the Vinalhaven Water District to relocate the existing Water District office from the Town Garage site to another location.	Town Manager Water District Board Select Board Planning Board Site Re-use Committee Maine Water Inc.	2020-2021	Town of VH	\$100,000-\$150,000	6.8, 6.16
	5) Apply for state and federal grants to cover the costs of: coordinated design and construction of recommended pedestrian, roadway, and parking improvements on Main Street; stormwater and wastewater system upgrades and resiliency; and water system capital improvements. Combined total project costs are estimated to be in the range of \$3,500,000-\$4,000,000.	Town Planner Town Manager Select Board Downtown Committee Sewer District Board Water District Board Sea Level Rise Committee	2019-2021	Town of VH	\$10,000-\$12,000 to develop grant proposals	All
	6) Provide information to Main Street property owners regarding engineering and construction options that could help mitigate potential flood damage to their properties, and provide information on potential funding options for private property owners.	Town Manager Sea Level Rise Committee	2020-2021	Town of VH	Minimal cost, for handouts or website info	4.5, 6.9, 6.10






Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	7) Update Downtown stormwater system study, using new engineering and SLR info, including catch basins, collection pipes, culverts, and outfall pipes, including one-way valves to prevent tidal backflow. Coordinate with design for reconstruction of Main Street roadway, intersections, and sidewalks, and design of new parking lot at former Town Garage site.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT Sea Level Rise Committee	2020	Town of VH	\$20,000- \$40,000	4.2, 4.5, 6.9, 6.10
	8) Design and re-engineer the 1.4-mile Main Street corridor from the Ferry Terminal to Water Street to address traffic calming, pedestrian safety, parking, ADA access, crosswalks, roadway limits, lighting, and extended and wider sidewalks. Coordinate with stormwater system and sewer system upgrades, water main replacement, and abutting property owners to ensure minimum impacts to their properties. Includes survey, geotech, engineering.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT Sea Level Rise Committee	2020	Community Dev. Block Grant MaineDOT Pedestrian Program Northern Borders Regional Comm. USEPA	\$400,000- \$600,000	2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 6.6, 6.7
	9) Design and re-engineer the intersections at Clamshell Alley and Water Street to provide improved pedestrian safety, while accommodating current and anticipated future traffic patterns on Windy Way.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT	2020	Community Dev Block Grant MaineDOT Pedestrian Program Northern Borders Regional Comm.	\$30,000- \$40,000	2.4, 6.7
	10) Encourage a mixed-use re-development of the Harborview Apartments property to retain year-round housing and increase access and use of the existing wharf and harbor access at the site.	Town Planner Planning board Select Board VH Housing Committee	2021	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.8, 6.11








Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	11) Construct a 1,000-foot pedestrian sidewalk or safe multi-use pathway along the north side of Main Street from the Public Safety building to the Ferry Terminal. Improve curb cuts along West Main Street properties and parking lots.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT	2021	Northern Borders Regional Comm. Community Dev Block Grant MaineDOT Pedestrian Program	\$300,000- \$400,000	2.5, 6.6
	12) Construct a new crosswalk at the Ferry Terminal.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board	2021	Town of VH	\$15,000- \$20,000	2.5, 6.6
	13) Construct, elevate, widen, and level the sidewalks between High Street and Water Street to eliminate multiple elevations, eliminate slopes, make buildings more accessible to those with mobility limitations, and accommodate sea level rise.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Property Owners Sea Level Rise Committee	2022	FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program	\$300,000- \$400,000	2.5, 4.2, 6.6, 6.7
	14) Construct and install upgraded stormwater management components between Atlantic Avenue and High Street. Coordinate with reconstruction of Main Street roadway, intersections, sidewalks, sewer system improvements, water main replacement on Main Street, and abutting property owners to ensure minimum impacts to their properties.	Town Planner Town Manager Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT Property Owners Sea Level Rise Committee	2022	FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program	\$400,000- \$500,000	4.5, 6.9






Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	15) Construct and install wastewater system improvements between Water Street and High Street to address CAP recommendations, including bypass infrastructure for the force main on the Millrace Bridge, and Main Street pumping station modifications to address flooding resiliency.	Sewer District Board Town Planner Town Manager Select Board Woodard & Curran Sea Level Rise Committee	2022	Federal CWSRF USDA Rural Development Program	\$120,000- \$160,000	5.5
	16) Replace 1907 water main and install millrace bridge bypass components to address Water District needs.	Water District Board Town Manager Town Planner Maine Water Inc. Sea Level Rise Committee	2022	Maine DWSRF Program USDA Rural Development Program	\$750,000	5.4
	17) Reconstruct and elevate the Main Street roadway from High Street to Water Street to accommodate elevated sidewalks and a 1-foot sea level rise. Coordinate with stormwater system and sewer system upgrades, water main replacement on Main Street, and abutting property owners to ensure minimum impacts to their properties.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT Property Owners Sea Level Rise Committee	2022	FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program	\$750,000- \$950,000	4.5, 6.7, 6.9, 6.10
	18) Reconstruct the intersections at Clamshell Alley and Water Street	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT	2022	TBD	\$150,000- \$180,000	2.4, 6.7
	19) Construct more visible and safer crosswalks at the Downstreet parking lot and the Water Street intersection.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Maine DOT	2022	Town of VH	\$30,000- \$40,000	2.4, 2.5, 6.6






Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	20) Design and construct a street-level multi-purpose walking lane, on the south side of Main Street from the Downstreet parking lot to Water Street. Coordinate with potential development of a new pocket park at Clamshell Alley corner.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Maine DOT	2022	Town of VH	\$22,000- \$25,000	2.5, 2.9, 6.6, 6.13
	21) Install Pedestrian warning signs near all crosswalks	Town Planner	2022	Town of VH	\$ 2,000	2.5, 6.6
	22) In coordination with efforts of the <i>Net Factory Site Re-Use Committee</i> , design and develop additional parking areas at the former site of the Town Garage, as an interim, initial use of the site.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Site Re-Use Committee	2023	TBD	\$250,000- \$300,000	2.1, 2.6, 6.8
	23) Designate one or two additional wheelchair-accessible parking spaces between High Street and Water Street.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.6, 6.8
	24) Designate two existing curbside parking spaces to fit wide delivery trucks better and avoid their obstruction of the roadway during deliveries. Consider designating and posting those spaces as <i>Loading Zones</i> with time limits.	Town Manager Town Planner Planning Board Select Board	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.6, 6.8
	25) Designate curbside parking between Clamshell Alley and Water Street in conjunction with reconstruction of the Clamshell Alley intersection and creation of a south side pedestrian sidewalk/walkway.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.6, 6.8
	26) Determine, establish, and enforce an appropriate daytime time limit for all curbside parking spaces between High Street and Water Street.	Town Planner Planning Commission Planning Board Select Board	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.6, 6.8







Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	27) Designate a separate narrow multi-purpose lane on the south side of Main Street from the Ferry Terminal to High Street, suitable for use by slow-moving vehicles and bicycles.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.4, 2.7, 4.2, 6.7
	28) Modify the Downstreet parking lot to accommodate a pedestrian walkway and benches along the waterfront, and to host community events, but only after additional parking areas are established near Downtown.	Town Planner Planning Board Select Board	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.9, 6.8
	29) Evaluate the need for modifications at the Downstreet parking lot and wharf to accommodate passenger vessels and water taxis.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Planning Board Harbor Ordinance Committee	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.9, 3.4, 4.1, 6.11
	30) Elevate the Downstreet parking lot as needed to match a raised Main Street and reduce periodic nuisance flooding.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board Sea Level Rise Committee	2025	USEPA Resiliency Grants FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program	\$200,000-\$280,000	4.5, 6.10
	31) Encourage a collaborative effort between the <i>Historic Downstreet</i> group and the <i>Vinalhaven Historical Society</i> to develop and fund an outreach and support program that provides interested property owners with assistance in identifying their building's heritage and posting appropriate signs to that effect	Town Planner Planning Commission Historic Downstreet VH Historical Society	2023	Town of VH VH Historical Soc. Private Donations	Minimal cost	2.1, 6.14

Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable










Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	32) Develop notification process warning of flooding and storm events	Town Planner Sea Level Rise Committee Select Board	2023	SLR grants	\$10,000	4.5, 6.10
	33) Monitor availability of waterfront properties and consider acquisitions to increase access to wharves, float space, and parking for fishermen.	Town Planner Select Board	2023	ME Land and Water Conservation Fund	TBD	4.2, 6.11
	34) Install pedestrian benches on sidewalks along Main Street	Town Planner Select Board VH Chamber of Com.	2023	Town of VH Star of Hope Fdn Private donations	\$4,000-\$8,000	2.9, 6.13
	35) Create a small park at the Clamshell Alley intersection with Main Street	Town Planner Select Board VH Parks Committee	2023	Town of VH ME Land and Water Conservation Fund ME Project Canopy Star of Hope Fdn Private donations	\$20,000-\$30,000	2.9, 6.13
	36) Create a small park on the Carvers Pond waterfront	Town Planner Select Board VH Parks Committee Main Street Landowners	2023	Town of VH ME Land and Water Conservation Fund Star of Hope Fdn Private donations	\$20,000-\$40,000	2.9, 6.13

Vinalhaven Downtown Master Plan - Capital Projects and Actions Timetable

Goals Addressed	Capital Projects and Actions	Partners and Collaborators	Timing	Funding Sources	Est. Cost	Ref. Section
	37) Increase the use of Grimes Park through signage and sidewalks	Town Planner Select Board Legion Post VH Parks Committee	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.9, 6.13
	38) Encourage landscaping and plantings along Main Street without impeding movement or reducing safety	Town Planner Select Board VH Chamber of Com. Main Street Landowners	2023	Town of VH VH Chamber ME Project Canopy Property Owners	Minimal cost	2.9, 6.13
	39) Establish a graphic standard for signage in the Main Street corridor.	Town Planner Planning Commission VH Chamber of Com. VH Historical Society	2023	Town of VH	Minimal cost	2.9, 6.13
	40) Secure access to another boat ramp outside the Main Street corridor.	Town Manager Town Planner Select Board	2025	Town of VH	TBD	4.2, 6.11
	41) Consider a long term plan to raise wharf elevations	Town Planner Select Board Sea Level Rise Committee	2030?	Town of VH	TBD	4.2, 4.5, 6.10
	42) Modify millrace structure with a gate to inhibit flow to Carvers Pond	Town Planner Select Board Woodard & Curran Sea Level Rise Committee	2030?	TBD	TBD	4.5, 6.10

Ordinances, Building Codes and Design Standards

Several ordinance amendments are recommended as part of this Master Plan. The following timetable is suggested for ordinance modifications. Detailed descriptions and justifications are provided in Sections 2.10 and 6, and specific reference sections are listed under each action.

Topic Area	Ordinance Modification Description	Timing	Ref. Section
Pedestrian Safety 	1. Review current ordinances regarding compliance with regulations for curb cuts and road access points	2019-2020	2.5, 2.10
	2. Review ordinances to determine if changes are needed regarding sidewalk maintenance responsibilities	2019-2020	2.5, 2.10
Parking  	1. In the <i>Parking Ordinance</i> , establish a section addressing curbside parking time limits and loading zones	2020-2021	2.6, 2.8, 2.10, 4.2
	2. In the <i>Land Use Ordinance</i> , modify onsite parking space requirements for Downstreet apartment conversions	2020-2021	2.10, 4.3
	3. In the <i>Parking Ordinance</i> , institute a rule and process for allowing long-term permit parking in a Town lot	2020-2021	2.6, 2.10, 2.8, 2.10
Housing  	1. Revisit the topic of allowing second floor residences in the <i>Commercial Fisheries/Maritime Activities District</i> , and consider a revision of the <i>Land Use Ordinance</i> to allow such conversions while protecting access and use of the harbor	2020-2022	2.8, 2.10, 4.3
	2. Consider <i>Land Use Ordinance</i> modifications regarding conversion of apartments to condominiums unless year-round occupancy and usage controls can be met	2019-2020	2.3, 2.10, 4.3
	3. Review and consider <i>Land Use Ordinance</i> modifications to control and limit non-owner-occupied short-term rentals in the Downtown area	2019-2020	2.3, 2.10, 3.6
Waterfront Access  	1. Review existing <i>Land Use Ordinance</i> language allowing “Other commercial activities” in the <i>Commercial Fisheries/Maritime Activities District</i> with regard to businesses that are not directly related to the commercial fishing industry	2020-2021	2.10
	2. Determine if any ordinance language needs to be modified to set guidelines and limits for private passenger ferry services to operate in the harbor and utilize Town docking facilities	2021-2022	2.10, 3.4, 4.1
Historic Buildings 	1. Consider establishing a blight ordinance that addresses actions related to deteriorated buildings posing public health or safety risks	2019-2020	2.1, 2.3, 2.10
	2. Review and consider the viability of instituting a simple design review ordinance and process, including a demolition clause that would cover a designated portion of the historic Main Street corridor	2021-2022	2.1, 2.3, 2.10
Building Codes 	1. Review existing <i>Floodplain Ordinance</i> regarding requirements for new construction and renovation	2019-2020	2.10, 4.5
	2. Modify the <i>Floodplain Ordinance</i> to allow definition of a “locally significant property” that could qualify for a variance without a formal federal or state listing being required.	2020-2021	2.10, 4.5
	3. Review and consider the viability of instituting a simple Design Review ordinance and process	2020-2021	2.3, 2.10