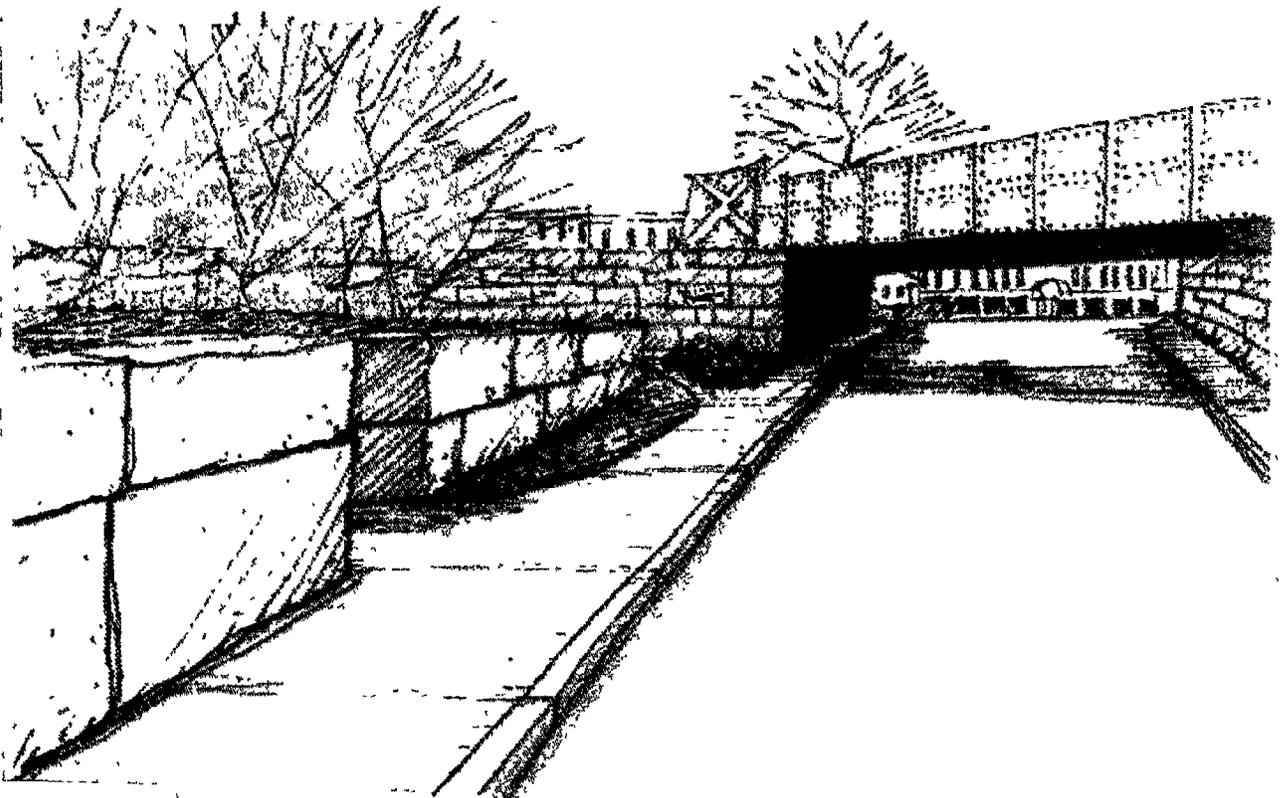


# Riverfront Park and Boat Ramp,

City of Saco, Maine  
December 1987

Maine Coastal Zone Management Program  
QH 91.75.M2.R58 1987



QH  
91.75  
M2  
R58  
1987

COASTAL ZONE  
INFORMATION CENTER

Skinner & Lambe, Inc.

SKINNER & LAMBE, INC.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

306 CONGRESS  
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P.O. BOX 15188  
PORTLAND, MAINE  
04101

207-871-0661

December 29, 1987

Mr. Peter Morelli  
City Planner  
City of Saco Town Hall  
300 Main Street  
Saco, Maine 04072

Dear Peter,

Thank you for giving us the pleasure of working on the Riverfront Park and Boat Ramp Feasibility Study. We have enjoyed the creative opportunity presented by the site dynamics. Your support and responsiveness is much appreciated.

We believe the study herein is a sound description of existing conditions with design recommendations based on research and careful thought. We hope it will prove a useful tool in planning and negotiations.

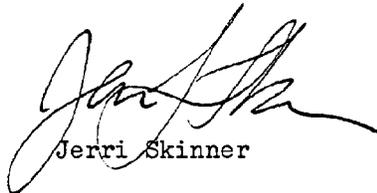
Please give serious consideration to the concept of artist involvement in the park. The Maine Commission of Arts and the Humanities may be interested in helping the cause. It is possible to incorporate the historic significance of the site and its surrounds into the artwork. The artwork would work best as interpretive pieces rather than representational.

We hope the next steps of implementing the recommendations of this study will be simple ones.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Lambe



Jerri Skinner

SML/maf

Prepared by: Skinner & Lambe Inc.  
P.O. Box 15188  
Portland, Maine 04101

In Conjunction with the City of Saco  
Planning Board  
City Planner, Peter Morelli

Book Design: Celeste Labrie

"Financial assistance for preparation of this document was provided by a grant from Maine's Coastal Program, through funding provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended."

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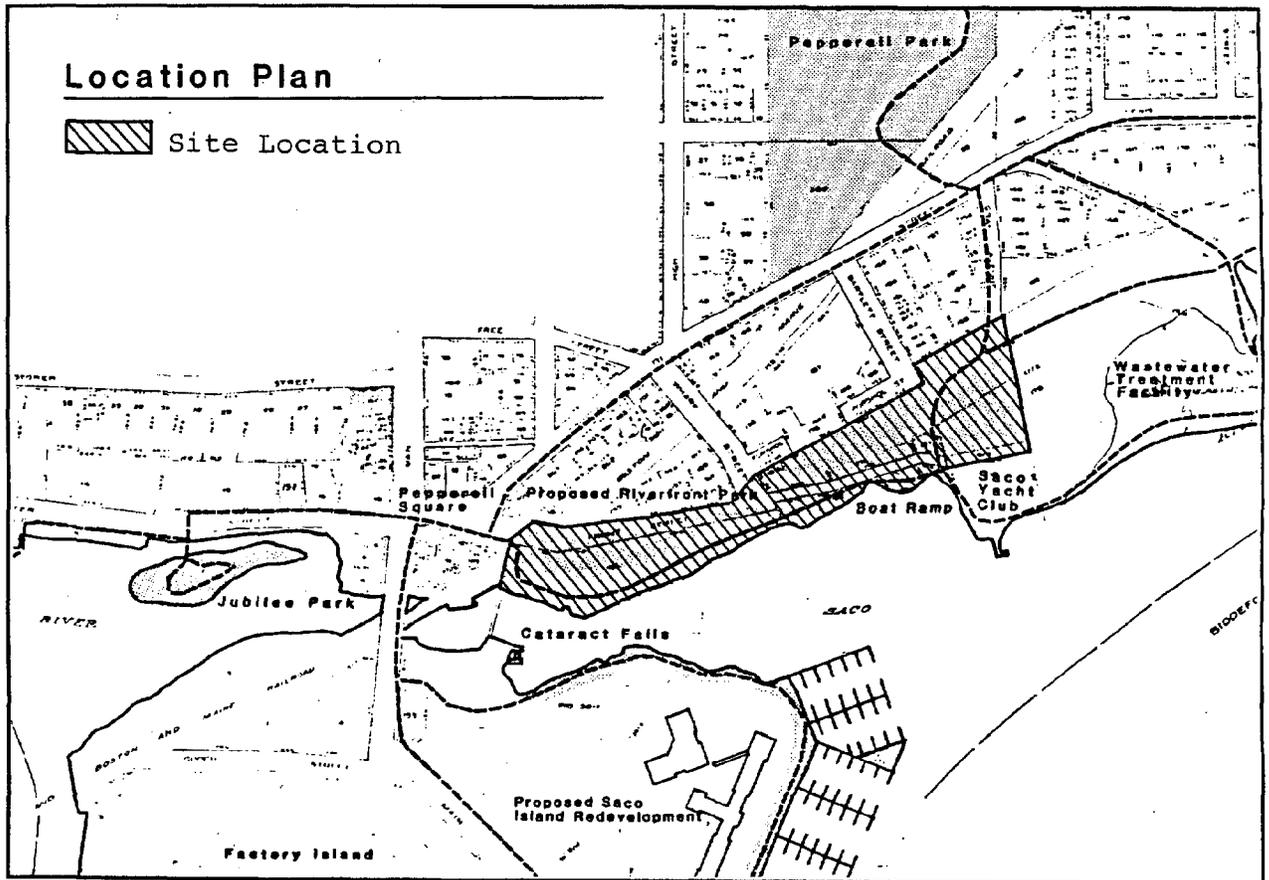
**Introduction**

The study area is located on the Saco River between Cataract Falls and the Saco Yacht Club. It is adjacent to the busiest section of downtown Saco, less than 50 yards from Pepperell Square. It has two unique features which presently attract people to the site. It overlooks Saco River and Cataract Falls, a hydroelectric project built in 1937-38 which is owned and maintained by Central Maine Power. Slightly downstream the site has an active public boat ramp. Another potentially valuable site resource is the former Public Works Garage (approximately 6,600 square feet).

Approximately 3.5 acres in size, the site is owned in part by the City of Saco (1.6 acres) and in part by Central

Maine power (1.8 acres) with a small parcel (.1 acres) owned by a private citizen. CMP and the private citizen have each expressed interest in the project and are awaiting further details of the City's intended use of the land.

Considering the site's ideal location - on the riverfront, next to the downtown, within walking distance to Pepperell Park, Jubilee Park, Laurel Hill Cemetery and Factory Island - the goal of public access is appropriate and highly desirable. Its existing features, the boat ramp and the river/falls, are popular destination points, ensuring the park's success as a public space.



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## Goals & Objectives

On December 8, 1987, the Planning Board affirmed the following statements as the goals and objectives for the Riverfront Park and Boat Ramp project.

1. Create an attraction or destination by providing a safe place to view the falls.
2. Improve the boat ramp to meet existing and anticipated recreational boating needs.
3. Create parking spaces for Pepperell Square businesses, boaters, and park visitors.
4. Enhance and extend Pepperell Square as an attractive hub of Saco's Main Street.
5. Improve the aesthetics at the railroad overpass and the entrance to the park.
6. Use the development of this park as the first mission for "The Friends of the Riverfront". Identify and encourage community support for parks system development
7. Accommodate the recreational needs of the increased population anticipated at Factory Island, (considering both residents and daytime users of the site).
8. Take full advantage of the former Public Works Garage for potential marine and recreational reuse.
9. Use this park as the first piece of a continuous river walk, and path system, which connects parks and key areas of the city.
10. Enhance use of site for safe park fishing.

## Recreation Need

The City of Saco has for over two decades recognized the need for improved recreation facilities, particularly in the downtown. The city's 1967 Comprehensive Plan first identified the need for increased recreation facilities. "Public open space is almost non-existent in the downtown area, either for active or passive recreation," that report said. Comprehensive plans developed in 1978 and 1987 also called for increased open space.

The riverfront was identified as the logical place for such open space in the 1967 report, which stated "(People) should have not only visual but also physical access to the River nearby downtown. It is therefore suggested that the riverfront once again be made available to the citizens of Saco..." The city implemented this recommendation, in part, with the upstream development of Diamond Riverside Park and Jubilee Park on Poore's Island.

The public open space proposed in conjunction with the Saco Island mill redevelopment project and the Front Street facilities proposed in this study would nearly complete the implementation of the concept developed in the 1960s.

Boat registrations and boating club information also provide a strong indication of the need for improved facilities. City records indicate that 697 boats are now registered here, an all time high. The Saco Yacht Club, adjacent to the site, serves 200 local residents and has a waiting list for new members.

The old city boat ramp on the site is used frequently despite its poor condition. On a nice summer day it is not unusual to see 5 cars with boat trailers parked nearby. Yacht club members frequently take advantage of the extra depth at the city ramp for large craft which cannot use the yacht club's ramp. "It's being used all of the time," says Saco Yacht Club President Mike Gray.

On a more general note, the city's population is increasing at a rate of three percent annually in recent years. Much of that growth has been within walking distance of the site--at an old mill and a seniors housing project on Water Street. Over 200 additional housing units are planned at Saco Island, a stone's throw from the site.

## History

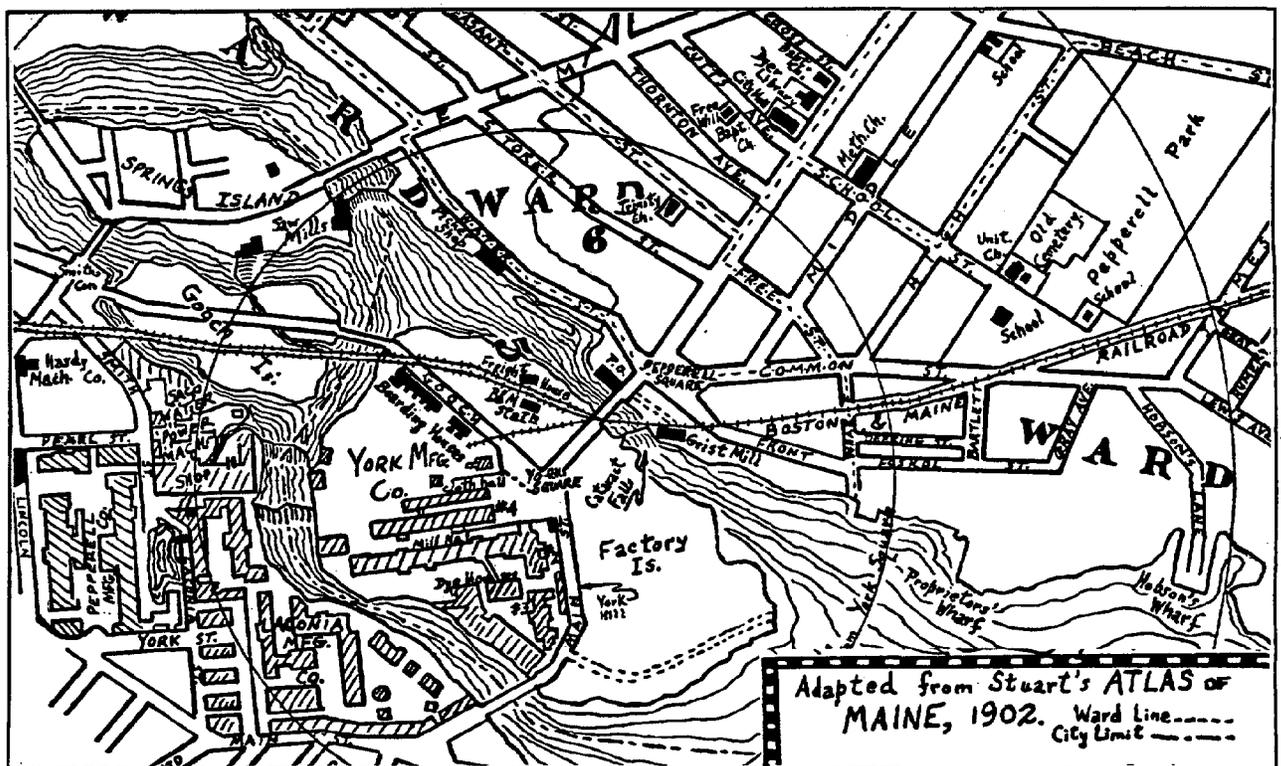
While the Front Street site is largely abandoned today, the area played an important role in the city's history. Lumbering, coastal trade, ice cutting and shipping, excursion and recreational boating, smelting and boatyards have all played important roles on the site and adjacent land, according to old maps and to Sands, Spindles and Steeples by Roy Fairfield, a city history.

The Proprietors' Wharf, on the current site of the Saco Yacht Club, was an early center of commerce connecting Saco with other coastal cities. Pictures from the 1890s show three masted schooners and workboats docked at this important port. In the early 1900 wood and coal were unloaded on their way to Factory Island. Nearer

the dam stood saw and planing mills and a grist mill. Ice cutting was a major business for a short time. In 1926 an oil company built tanks on Proprietors Wharf, but a 1936 flood put an end to that business forever.

Humbler activities also took place along Front Street. The area was attractive to smelters who developed a small shanty town along both sides of Front Street. Later the smelt gave out and the shanty town disappeared.

Recreation, too, was important on the site. In the early part of the century thousands of travelers left rail cars and embarked on the boats Nimrod and Goldenrod to complete their excursions to Biddeford Pool. Old Orchard Beach also became a destination.



The Saco Yacht Club, which was located slightly north of its current site, has provided opportunities for recreational boating for over 100 years. The Saco Boat Club was also organized in the 1870s. Rowing contests with \$5 and \$10 prizes were a common holiday event at the turn of the century, Fairfield writes. Thousands of Biddeford and Saco residents viewed the races from the river banks.

Another favorite activity was to pile in a boat with some friends, some salt pork and some potatoes, and to head downstream to Camp Ellis for chowder and a clam bake, Fairfield writes. Some 100 power boats were registered in the city before the Depression. Recreational boating supported a small boatyard on the site until the late 1970s.



Cataract Falls. Note Grist Pepperell Mill on original mill site, east of falls.



Saco River steamer, the *S. E. Spring*, one of many ships used for recreation.

**Area Descriptions / Recommendations**

## Overview/Riverwalk Concept

### Overview

The site for the Riverfront Park is ideally located on the Saco River. That this open space exists just 250 feet from Main Street and abuts historic Pepperell Square is enough to recommend its consideration for recreational uses.

Add to this ideal location the dynamic sight and sound of water rushing over Cataract Falls, plummeting 50' to meet the Saco River below. Scenic vistas of the Saco River flowing to the ocean, a rocky shoreline perfect for bank fishing and a public boat ramp ensure that this park will be popular. The park site is used now for fishing, for its views and for nature walks and will be used for these purposes and others when these recommendations are implemented.

The site has a few design constraints. It is very narrow, averaging + 75' in width. It has a steep drop in grade abutting the falls, dropping at a grade of + 45%. It is located on a dead end street, Front Street, at the end of which is a wastewater treatment facility. Abutting the wastewater treatment plant is the former public works garage, a site currently in use as a recreational facility. A privately run gymnastics school is leasing space in the building. The slope behind the garage rises steeply to meet a path through the CMP right of way at the end of Gray Avenue.

### Riverwalk

The riverfront location of the park, as well as its proximity to other city parks, naturally led to considering a series of connections to unite the city's parks systems to a riverfront walk. The idea of linking the parks is not a new one. However, this riverfront park may be the first opportunity to realize this concept.

As illustrated on the Overall Site Plan, it is possible to link this Riverfront Park to Diamond Riverside Park, Jubilee Park, the Mutual Fire Insurance Park at Storer and Main and Pepperell Park. Other key connections include the Saco Recreation Community Center, the Open Door seniors center Laurel Hill Cemetery, and perhaps Camp Ellis.

The term Riverwalk has described this linkage concept thus far, although this is by no means the definitive name. A recommendation for this concept is that Saco Planning Board and Planning Staff consider the Riverwalk as a project for further study and keep it in mind when reviewing proposals for projects along the riverfront.

## Upper Area

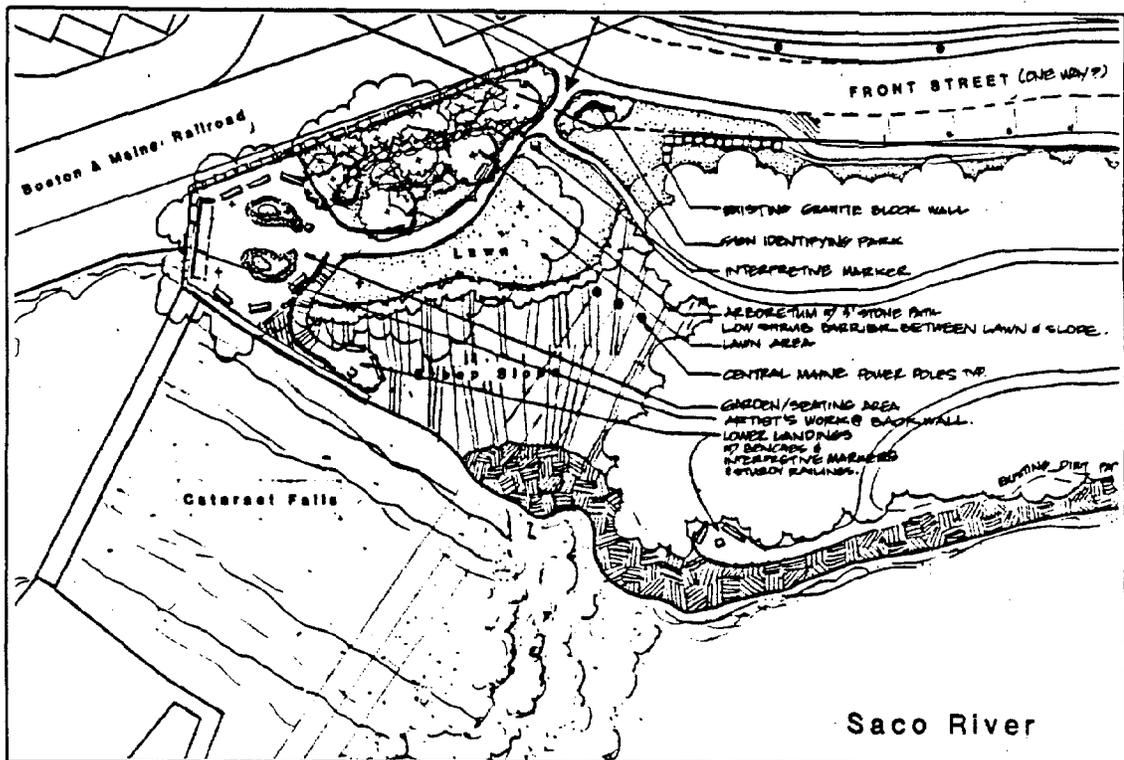
### Description

The level area adjacent to Front Street will serve as the entrance to the park and the connection to Pepperell Square. It is bounded on two sides by granite block walls which elevate the abutting Boston & Maine Railway tracks approximately 10' above grade. There are several existing trees, approximately 8" diameter at breast height, which create a ceiling for this outdoor room. The outdoor room is defined on a third side by Cataract Falls. The falls have a powerful effect on the space, creating a strong draw to the view as well as to the magnetic sound of the rushing water. Despite the difficult access, people are already in the habit of sitting on the concrete wall bounding the falls and looking out at the moving water. This concrete wall rises to meet the

railway's granite walls, both of which are spotted with spray-can graffiti.

The entire CMP property on the river side of Front Street is covered with young trees, save for the narrow area under the power lines recently cleared by CMP. The power poles are located in groups of three throughout the site. Paths crisscross under the lines and over the steep slopes where hikers have made their way to the water.

Many anglers enjoy fishing at the foot of the falls. Atlantic run salmon are present in the vicinity of the falls, thanks in part to the fish stocking program which has been in place since 1982. This stocking was done knowing that fish passage on the Saco is very difficult, though not impossible.

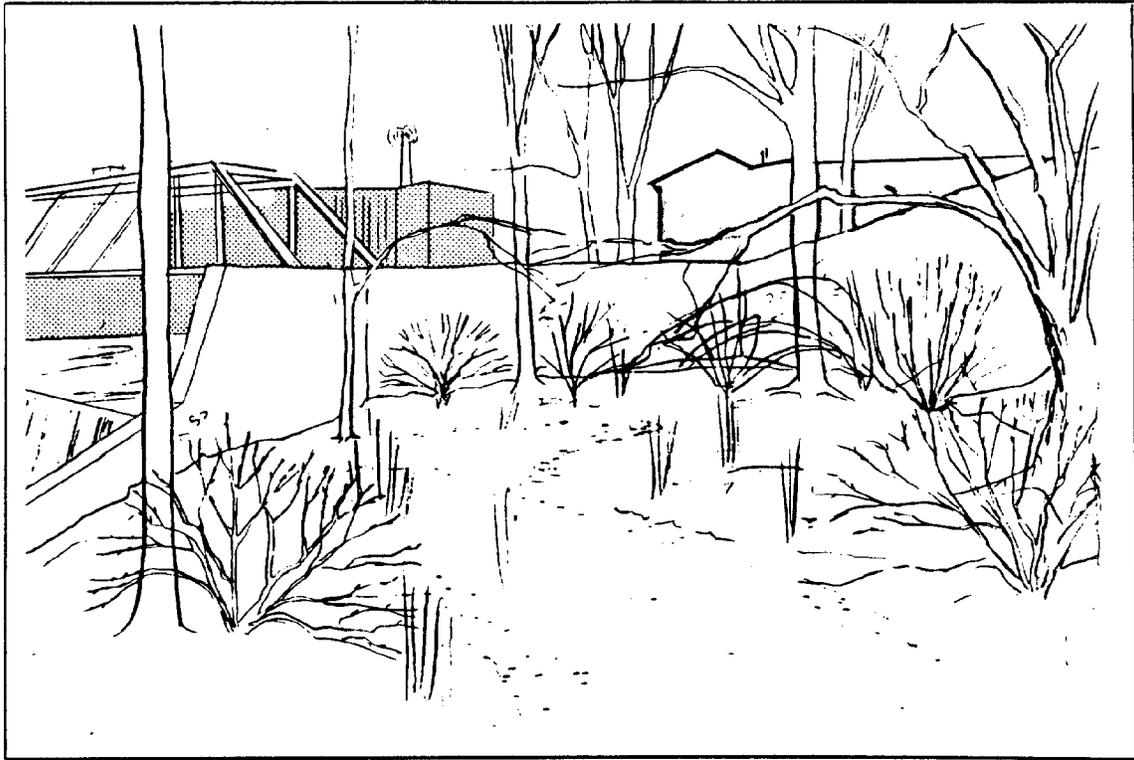


Upper Area (con't.)

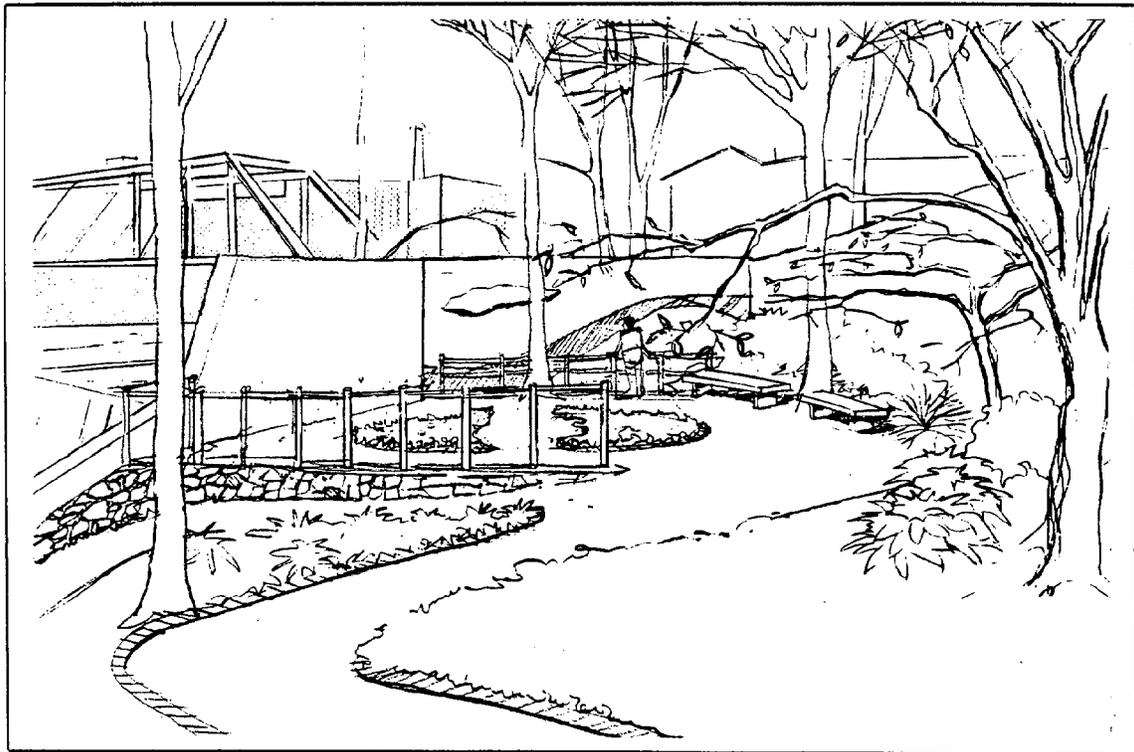
Recommendations

1. Request permission from CMP to use their property for the recreational uses specified in this study.
2. Develop the Upper Area so that it is easily used as an urban park, as an extension of the downtown. Hire a landscape architect for final design and construction drawings to build this area of the park. Final design should:
  - a. Define views/suggest selective tree clearing.
  - b. Create a 'sense of place' by making a formal entrance to the park.
  - c. Clear scrub growth throughout the Upper Area, particularly in front of the 3' granite block wall abutting Front Street.
  - d. Create a safe way to get to the edge of the falls. Ideally this would take the form of a ramp with railing which would be accessible to people with physical handicaps. At the edge of the falls, install a small seating area (the existing grade will accommodate this although construction could be tricky). Install lighting, benches, landscaping. Add an interpretive marker which would discuss the view to Factory Island and downstream, commenting on the rich history of the area. It could also explain the purpose of the dam and how it functions.
- e. Develop the outdoor room. Solid design and adequate maintenance/security will be essential to the success of this space. Design considerations include:
  1. Proximity of the site to Pepperell Square. This site will attract workers on their lunch hours for lunch or quite contemplation.
  2. The existing walls (10' high) creating the room. The walls could incorporate vines, interpretive signage or some type of memorial. Another possibility of merit is to incorporate artwork on the walls. Artist Howard Clifford offered consultation on this concept and his comments are included in this study (see page 25).
  3. The majority of the existing trees should remain to complete the space. The space would be too stark without them.
  4. Lighting, seating, trash cans, paths, landscaping, interpretive markers, signage.
3. Continue to accommodate fishing at the base of the falls. Should fishing continue to prove popular, install a rod rack.

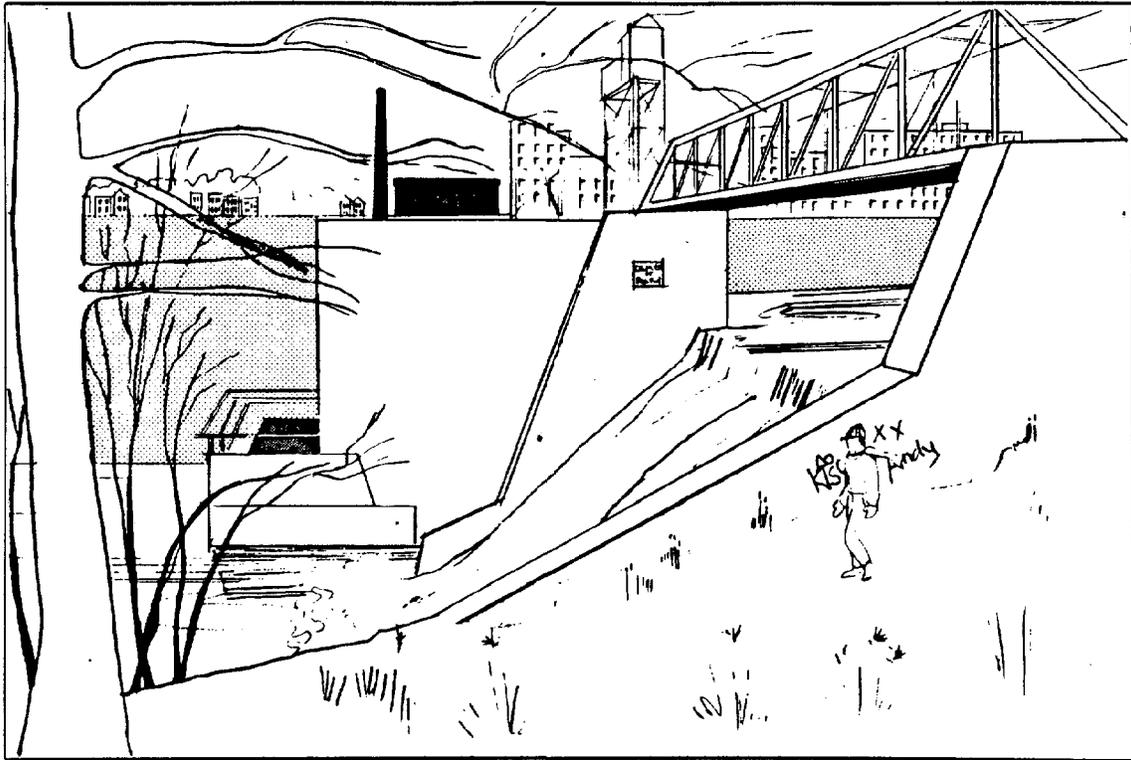
Existing Upper Falls Area



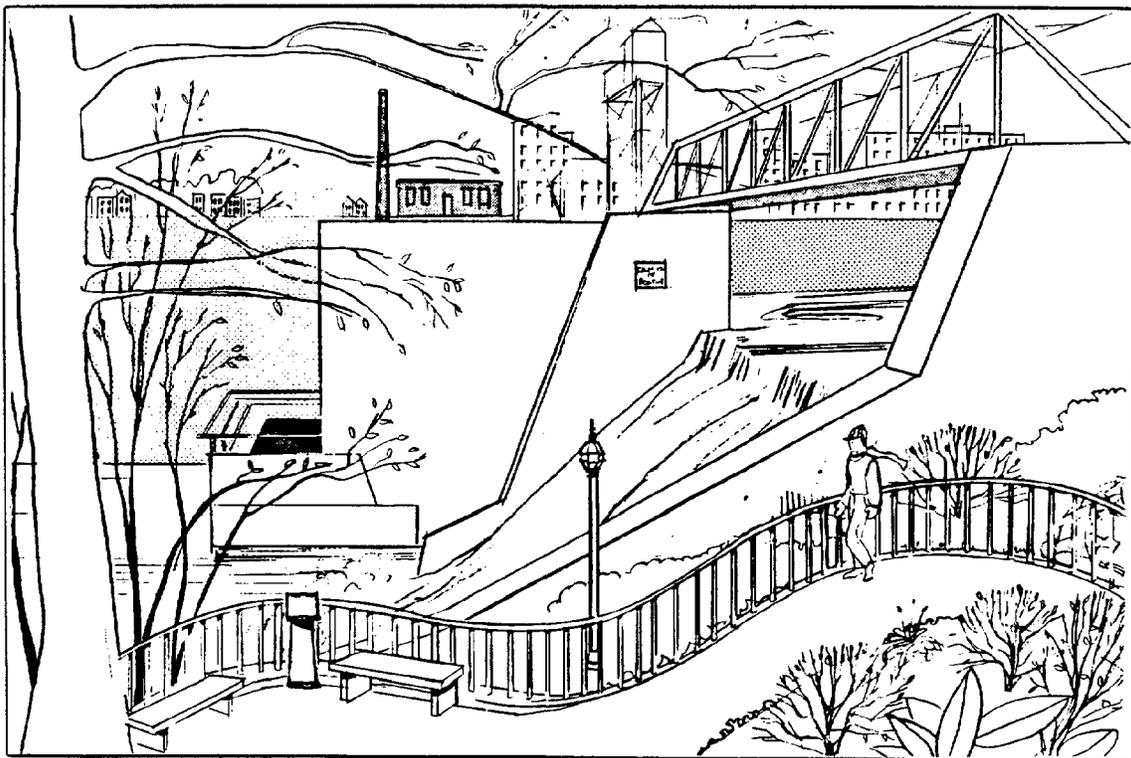
Proposed Garden Area Upper Falls



Overlook at Cataract Falls



Proposed Overlook at Cataract Falls



## Improvements to Front Street

### Description

Front Street extends from Pepperell Square to the Wastewater Treatment Plant along the Saco River. It is a substandard city street with minimal daily traffic. The railroad overpass which divides the park area from Pepperell Square acts as a gate to the park. Once past the overpass, the park unfolds on the right.

Front Street is not curbed and is approximately 18' to 20' wide. The paving is in disrepair with evident patching of potholes, particularly between Pepperell Square and Wharf Street. It will serve as the automobile connection to the park and will need to accommodate those wishing to park and enjoy the scenic overlook, cars with boat trailers using the boat ramp, traffic to the former Public Works Garage reuse and traffic to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

### Recommendations

1. We recommend that an engineering consultant be retained to plan the improvements to Front Street.
  - a. Research the feasibility of making Front Street one way from Pepperell Square to Wharf Street.
  - b. Widen the street to 24' and repave it. Consult with utilities to coordinate street widening.
  - c. Provide parallel parking on one side of the street if it will be two way and both sides of the street if it is to be a one way street. This parking will accommodate park users as well as people destined for Pepperell Square.
  - d. A retaining wall of approximately 3' height will probably be required along Front Street from the entrance to the park at the Upper Area to Wharf Street to accommodate the widening of the street.
2. Improve the connection between Pepperell Square and the park by doing cosmetic work to the overpass.
  - a. Consult with the railroad about painting the steel pipe attached to the trestle a dark grey color to blend into trestle.
  - b. Add site identification such as "To Riverwalk" to the granite wall under trestle.
  - c. Sandblast granite to remove dirt under trestle.
  - d. Add lighting.
3. Define Front Street at the lower end by creating entrances to the Saco Yacht Club and the former Public Works Garage. Use grassed islands, landscaping and/or curbing to define the edge of street.

## Path System

### Description

Currently there is no formal path that connects the downtown with existing recreational space. There are dirt paths that have been worn by use, through the C.M.P. property at the Upper Area down to the water and along the shore. There is also a 5' wide mown, grassy path through the C.M.P. right of way that stretches from the end of Gray Street behind the Public Works Garage and over to the water's edge past the Wastewater Treatment Facility. This path could connect Front Street Park and Pepperell Square to the Open Door senior citizen center, Pepperell Park and the Community Center if the railroad pedestrian underpass next to the Open Door seniors center were improved.

### Path System Design Recommendations

1. Obtain permission from C.M.P. to use their property for the recreational use specified in this study.
2. Develop an inviting, easily traversed path from Pepperell Square, through the C.M.P. property, to the Cataract Falls overlook. Pave a path down to the public boat ramp, a path down to a landing overlooking the falls, across the street to the old Public

Works Garage and up the hill, through to C.M.P. right of way to the end of Gray Street. Refer to the 1"=30' scale plans for conceptual location of the path system.

3. Install lighting in key areas. Minimum light levels on path to be .5 footcandles per square foot. Add security lighting to areas which require police supervision.
4. Install railings where needed.
5. Install benches every 200' to meet ANSI Standards and particularly at scenic overlooks.
6. Where possible, build the path so it is accessible for people with physical handicaps as required for federally funded projects. Refer to the American National Standards Institute Publication 117.1 for design standards. Assessment of accessibility will have to be made when there is more topographic information available. Accessibility may not be possible throughout due to constraints of step slopes.
7. Where necessary, add gates to the path to restrict passage when park is closed.
8. Post sign with rules for recreation in proximity to a hydropower project as recommended by Central Maine Power. (See Appendix)

## Boat Ramp Improvements

### Description

The public boat ramp located on Front Street is bounded on one side by a small lot (5,000 square feet) owned by a private citizen, Dr. Mackenzie, and the Saco Yacht Club on the other. Across Front Street, there was a small boat repair shop which is now defunct. The remains of the building still stands. The business had a dock on the waterfront, just up river from the public boat ramp.

Across the street from the boat ramp is the former Public Works Garage next to a narrow band of level ground which belongs to the city. There is no existing parking for boaters or boat trailers.

The boat ramp itself is in disrepair. The width of the ramp is somewhat limited by the existing rock outcrops which make up the shoreline. The ramp sits on a natural basin in the river which is 6' deep on the average. There exists an old buried gas tank near the boat ramp area.

### Design Recommendations

1. Improve and lengthen the ramp to be functional during the year's lowest tide.
2. Expand ramp width to 20'.
3. Consider repaving the ramp with precast concrete strips, as recently done at Saco Yacht Club and as exists at Diamond Riverside Park boat ramp. At a minimum, the ramp should be repaved with a hot course of bituminous asphalt.
4. Develop car parking and boat trailer parking convenient to the boat ramp. Request permission from C.M.P. to encroach on their property to accommodate the grading of earth necessary to construct the trailer parking area.
5. Post speed limit for boats on the Saco River in a visible area next to the boat ramp. Fast moving boats are adding to the erosion of marshland along the river. Consult with Saco River Corridor Commission on speed limit ranges.
6. Develop space to maneuver a car with boat trailer in order to easily back trailer into water to unload boat.
7. If possible, acquire the McKenzie property.
8. Build a pier overlooking the boat ramp area with a seasonal float for passenger boarding. Repair the existing wooden cribbing under proposed pier prior to pier construction. Cribbing must be repaired even if pier is not built.
9. Install lighting, benches and signage with rules and speed limits posted.
10. Clear brush next to boat ramp and install lawn area as shown on plan.
11. Project the effect of the population increase resulting from the Factory Island development and consider erecting a concession stand with gas pump to accommodate increased population.
12. Build a boat rack to allow windsurfers, canoeists and kayakers the option to store their crafts on site. Rent spaces to earn revenue for maintenance.

Existing Boat Launch



Possible Future View From Boat Launch



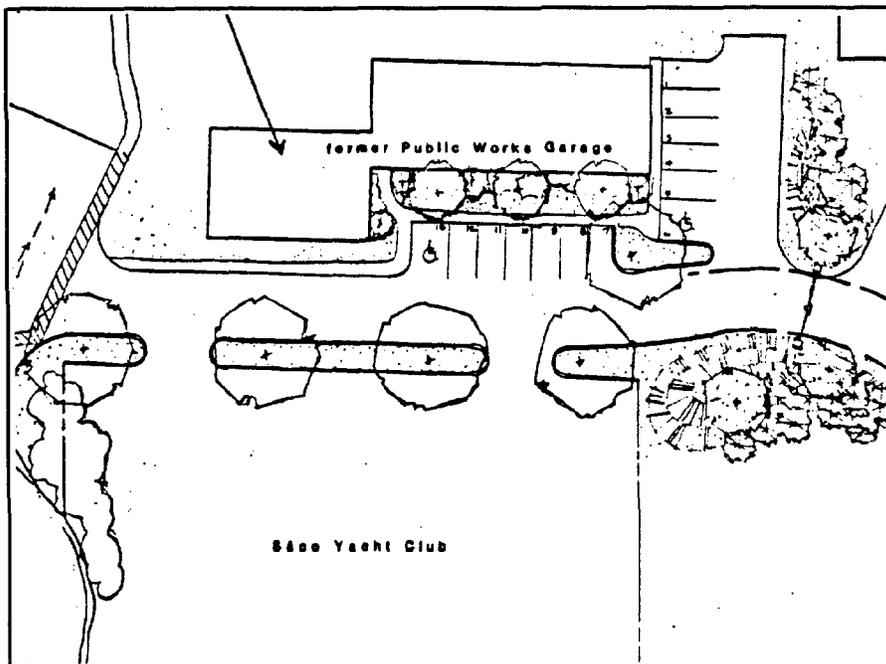
## Public Works Garage Reuse

### Description

Across Front Street from the boat ramp is the existing former Public Works Garage. It is a cinder block building of 6600 square feet built in 1960's. Its eight large wooden garage doors make up the facade of the building facing the water. Currently two-thirds of the space is rented for aerobics and gymnastic classes. A portion of the remainder is used for long term storage by three city departments. The front yard is entirely paved and is used for parking and access to the garage bays.

### Design Recommendations

1. Explore the possibility of inviting a cooperative effort between the city and private enterprise for the building's improvement. A request for proposal system could be used. Emphasis should be placed on inviting marine related uses, such as boat/outboard engine repair, office for the harbor master, boating license office, fishing supplies sales, etc.
2. Explore the possibility of using the space as a municipally managed facility for public use such as: a day care center, a sailing school, a vocational school (with a maritime emphasis), a health recreation center.
3. Continue renting the space to interested parties. There is presently a successful gymnastics school renting space in the building. Possibly work with the renter/lessor by offering matching funds for building improvements.
4. Improve the appearance of the building. Reduce number of bays. Repair roof and provide drainage at rear to end water infiltration.
5. Delineate parking areas. Install landscaping and lighting.



## Assessment of Environmental Impact

The design recommendations for the site include minimal changes to existing conditions. (Refer to Area Descriptions and Design Recommendations for further information.) These changes should not significantly alter the drainage patterns on site. Existing vegetation will be minimally cleared in the upper area and at the boat ramp to provide limited lawn area for recreation. Any phosphorus run off from the addition of this lawn area will be negligible.

Automobile traffic impact will change minimally with the addition of + 15 parallel parking spaces provided on street between the overpass and Wharf Street, as well as the undetermined number of parking spaces in the vicinity of a former Public Works Garage.

Foot traffic will be mainly limited to the constructed paths due to the

natural constraints of steep slopes and rocky shoreline.

Lighting levels will be increased on site. Lighting will be required at the Upper Area to facilitate police patrols and to add to the visual appeal of the site. Low levels of light have been recommended along the path system and at the public boat ramp. Lighting of the parking near the former Public Works Garage will also be necessary. There will be no light spilling onto residential areas.

The riverbank in this area is stable due to the naturally existing rock outcrop shoreline. There is a length (+ 20') of dilapidated cribbing stabilizing the bank where an old dock used to be. We have recommended the cribbing be repaired and a small (10'x15') pier be built over it to act as a passenger pick up area for people using the public boat ramp.

**Funding / Implementation**

## Funding/Implementation

There are variety of funding resources available for use in the implementation of the Master Plan, once complete. These are discussed below.

### Coastal Zone Management Funds

As sponsors of this study, Maine's Coastal Program administered by the State Office of Economic and Community Development has already provided major support for the design and development of the project. There are two potential sources of funding that might be used for additional work.

The Waterfront Action Grant Program is in its third year of operation and can be used for small construction projects, waterfront renewal projects, and land acquisition projects that improve public access to the waterfront. The definition of waterfront for this program includes waterfront property and river front property on tidal rivers up to the head of the tides.

Federal funding for the program is expected to be between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in FY '88. There is a state limit of \$50,000 per community per year. Communities that have received previous waterfront Action funding will be given a handicap in the scoring

process for the proposals. The state requires that the city match 50% of their request to the program with other sources of funding. The State Office of Economic and Community Development prefers to fund smaller projects with this program.

The program strongly favors land acquisition, but land that is leased or included through with easements are eligible for consideration. The program can not be used for title searches.

The Coastal Planning Grant Program sponsored this study, and might be used for additional projects in the city.

For further information, contact:  
Sherry Hanson, Senior Planner  
Community Assistance Division  
State Office of Economic and Community  
Development  
State House Station 130  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
Tel. 289-3154

### Maine Coast Heritage Trust

The Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) is a non-profit organization that serves as a broker of land conservation projects for landowners and other organizations and agencies. MCHT is primarily interested in participating in projects with statewide significance. Specific services available through Maine Coast Heritage Trust include:

Information on how to develop conservation easements with landowners;

Sample easements for use for preserving open space and significant coastal lands;

Educational materials and workshops for landowners, explaining the tax implications of donating or selling land to the City; and

Educational materials and workshops on "bargain sales", whereby landowners can sell their land to the city at less than market values and have the difference between the market value and the value of sale be tax-deductible.

The services of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust are provided free of charge. For further information, contact:

Jay Espy, Associate Director  
Maine Coast Heritage Trust  
P.O. Box 416  
Topsham, ME 04086  
Tel. 729-7366

### Land and Water Conservation Grants

Land and Water Conservation grants can be used to acquire lands and develop them, but can not be used for title searches and appraisals. The land must be owned by the City (or sponsoring agency) and can not be leased. It is possible for the City to apply the appraised value of land that is donated to the City as part of the match for a LAWCON grant, but it can take up to two years for the National Park Service to appraise and approve the donation.

Federal funding for the Land and Water Conservation Grants (LAWCON) program has dropped from a high of nearly \$3 million per year in the early 1980's to a low of \$300,000 in 1987. Because of this, there is limited funding available for major projects and a upper limit of \$75,000 per community was established in 1987.

LAWCON requires that their grant represent from 25-50% of the total cost of a project. LAWCON grants can be matched with private sources of support and Community Development Block Grants, but not with Coastal Zone Management or Federal Highway Funds.

### State Boating Facilities Fund

The Boating Facilities Division has resources available for public boat ramp improvements. While the major emphasis is on building and renovating regional scale boat ramps, local scale boat ramps also qualify for funding. The division has been in existence since 1965.

The yearly budget for the fund hovers around \$725,000, depending on the availability of federal funds. A site inspection is required before funding can be considered. There is potential for the fund to cover 50% of the cost of the ramp, requiring the city to make up the difference through other channels.

For further information, contact:  
Richard Skinner  
Supervisor of Boating  
Facilities Division  
Bureau of Parks & Recreation  
State House Station 22  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
Tel. 289-3824

### The National Endowment of the Arts (NEA)

The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act was enacted in 1965. The Congress found that "the encouragement and support of national progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts, while primarily a matter of private and local initiative, is also an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government..."

The Endowment assists individual artists; those who act on behalf of artists or audiences; organizations whose primary intention is artistic or educational; and state and local arts agencies. Demonstrated or potential excellence and capacity to conceive, develop, or present a work of art are primary criteria.

#### Goals of the NEA:

- ° Demonstrate national recognition of the importance of artistic excellence.
- ° Provide opportunities for artists to develop their talents.
- ° Assure preservation of our cultural heritage.
- ° Increase the performance, exhibition, and transmission of art to all people throughout the nation.
- ° Deepen understanding and appreciation of the arts among all people nationwide.
- ° Encourage serious and meaningful art programs as part of basic education.
- ° Stimulate increasing levels of nonfederal support of the arts.

Grants for organizations may be used to pay no more than half the total cost of any project.

Grants are generally awarded for a 12-month period.

NEA (con't.)

1988 Theme: Design of Cities

Periodically, the Design Arts Program establishes a national theme in response to emerging and significant issues in the field. The purpose is to encourage designers to apply their skills and knowledge in areas where their contributions may be particularly timely or important.

In 1988, the Program will continue its focus on cities. The National Theme: Design of Cities is an incentive for applicants to consider projects, activities, and investigations that address this concern.

Designing cities or, more broadly, the public realm, is a challenge for all the design arts. For our experience of a public place does not come from its architecture alone; it derives from space as well as buildings, movement as well as signs, sound as well as vision, trees as well as streets. It is the totality of a place that influences our experience.

The Endowment, in selecting the design of cities as its national theme, is seeking to encourage designers to find ways to improve the quality of urban design and the public realm. Although cities are shaped by an accumulation of design decisions, intended and unintended, made by many people, professional designers have a special role to play. They can identify the natural, cultural, and aesthetic elements that lend character and

distinction to a place and propose design strategies to strengthen the quality of a specific environment. By helping others to assess, visualize, and debate alternatives to change, designers can make a critical difference.

The Endowment invites organizations and individuals to submit proposals for design projects that will lend identify, vitality, quality, and meaning to public places. For example, a project might identify and map an area's physical resources--such as a riverfront, historic neighborhood, park system, industrial artifacts, or harbor--and develop innovative zoning or design proposals to protect, enhance, and enliven them. Projects addressing specific features of public places--signs, seating areas, or paving patterns, for example--are also welcome. Project proposals might include a media project, exhibition, working design, conference, workshop series, demonstration project, or research. An applicant could also propose a project that combines any of these activities into one overall project.

Public Information Office  
National Endowment for the Arts  
Nancy Hanks Center  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20506  
202-682-5400  
202/682-5496 Voice/TTY

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### Private Funding Sources

There are a wide variety of opportunities for obtaining funding for the park from private foundations, corporations, community service groups, or private individuals. Fundraising efforts could be implemented incrementally over a number of years should phasing for the park improvements be deemed desirable. It is premature to identify appropriate fundraising sources until specific budgets are developed for various components of the Master Plan.

Once the materials and costs for the projects are identified, the City might consider hiring a fundraising professional to develop a detailed fundraising strategy. A key aspect of the strategy should be to dovetail with and compliment previously existing fundraising activities in the community. A wish list produced in association with the City might be one mechanism used to raise money. Another innovative funding source might be the National Endowment for the Arts "Design of Cities" Program, as described on the previous page

## Phasing

The project breaks down into five separate elements, each a separate construction project. These are:

1. Upper Area
2. Improvements to Front Street
3. Path System
4. Boat Ramp Improvements
5. Public Works Garage Reuse

Refer to Area Descriptions/Design Recommendations for specifics on each area.

Determination of which element(s) of the project to construct first must be based on city budget constraints, grant availability, assessment of Saco's recreational needs, Pepperell Square parking congestion, etc. Final design and construction drawings are required prior to construction.

## Task Force

A task force should be appointed to the City Council to guide the Riverfront Park & Boat Ramp project to completion. The task force could be responsible for assigning the final design and construction drawings, reviewing them, making recommendations to council on construction phasing, and supervising construction.

Issues to be considered by the Task Force include:

- Maintenance
- Security
- Budget
- Recreational needs of Saco's residents, now and projected
- Public health, safety and welfare

Suggested appointees to the Task Force include:

- Parks and Public Works representative
- Planning Staff representative
- Police Department representative
- Pepperell Square business representative
- Saco Yacht Club Representative
- Neighborhood representative
- Citizen-at-large
- City Council representative
- Planning Board representative

## Artist's Involvement

Artist Howard Clifford was invited to review the Riverfront Park site and give his opinion on the potential for artist's involvement in the park. He has recorded his comments in a letter which follows. The narrative is an excerpt from an announcement from his recent show at the Baxter Gallery in Portland, Maine. It is included to familiarize the Planning Board with his qualification to evaluate the site.

An interesting sidelight is Mr. Clifford's skill in salmon fishing. He holds the United States record for catching the largest Atlantic Salmon. He recommended installing a rod rack along the base of Cataract Falls, if the park continues to attract anglers. Using the rod rack is a method of queuing up so everyone has equal opportunity to fish a popular spot.



"The stone wall on the right at the park entrance has two places---there are stones that would function well either attaching an artwork to it or---carving a relief into it."

Howard Clifford

---

Howard Clifford: Paintings

Text by Steven S. High

The landscapes of Howard Clifford evoke a utopian environment void of all human activity. They are idyllic and serene settings which, through their minimalist abstraction and purposeful cultural naivete, illuminate for us the sad knowledge that pure landscape, untouched by civilization, no longer exists. In the contemporary world, the representation of such simplicity, idealism, and serenity creates a condition of irony caused by an absurd relation to the political and environmental reality of the world.

Nowhere, in fact, is this irony more clearly delineated than in landscape painting today. As seen in the work of Howard Clifford, and painters David Deutsch, April Gornik, Neil Jenney and Susan Shatter, contemporary landscape painting retains a romantic link to the past—to a time when the land was primitive and overpowering. This cold, analytical approach to landscape unites these artists' work with forms that are clearly defined, separated, and above all, barren. Their paintings evoke the sublime, yet a sublime that is appropriated from history in order to convey a

decidedly critical message about the present.

Howard Clifford has been systematically investigating his own relationship with nature over the last ten years. His earlier work maintained a seemingly balanced apolitical view—nature seen as a vast plain of rolling green hills and white cumulus clouds, idyllic, peaceful, yet unreal. Recently the artist's vision has intensified, the palette acquiring a wider range of acidic colors, the once pacific white clouds now taking on an ominous orange hue. These works shift from the nostalgia of the past to a warning of the future. The artist has found a perfect metaphor for our civilization. In his most recent works, *Surface Series x (H-Bomb—Dory—Sunset)* 1987 and *Cloud Series xxxxx (Bomb Blast)* 1987, the symbols of this destruction become most manifest. In these works Clifford extends the cycle by clearly implicating the cause of his imagery. He has traveled from the pastoral to the apocalyptic. Through observing this cycle the viewer gains the strangest insight into the artist's unfolding vision.

HOWARD CLIFFORD, JR.

December 26, 1987

To the Saco Planning Board,

The proposed park area in Saco that I visited with Sue Lambe on December 18 holds a number of places that art work would work well, fitting into the existing environment.

The stone wall on the right at the part entrance has two places, one just at the entrance and the second approximately halfway to the dam wall.

In each case there are stones that would function well, either attaching an art work to it (such as a bronze) or by using the stone itself and carving a relief into it.

The other feasible area, the concrete dam wall, also makes a very handsome place for a work. With a pit sunk in front of it and a railing to thwart vandalism, it would show off an art work to its maximum advantage.

In discussing the types of work with Sue, it seemed wise to have something for everyone. Therefore, at the entrance the first work might be representational, perhaps depicting a scene or artifact from local history. The pieces would then become increasingly abstract, with the piece at the dam wall projecting an artist's interpretation of the dynamic feeling the space gives.

Sincerely Yours,  
Howard Clifford

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REFERENCES

Amended Application for New License for the Cataract Project by  
Central Maine Power Volume 2, Exhibit E, Draft Copy. No date.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan, City of Saco, September 1987.  
Consultant: John Rahenkamp Consultants, Inc.

Cataract Hydroelectric Redevelopment Project, Biddeford-Saco, Me.  
Central Maine Power. No date.

Greenbelt Master Plan, City of South Portland, October, 1987.  
Consultant: Skinner & Lambe, Inc.

Management Plan: Eastern Promenade & Fort Gorges, City of Portland,  
May 1986. Consultants: Applied Economic Research, Land Use Plan  
Associates, Childs Engineering, People, Places & Design.

Bikeway Plan, Portland Area Comprehensive Traffic Study.

Condition Survey of River Bottom, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Saco  
River, Drawing No. 2174 D-2-1, Sht 5 of 5, June 1982.

Contour Information, 12968 FIA Work Map, Community: Saco, York Co.,  
Me. Panel No: 8 of 11.

Poore's Island Project, Saco, Maine. Saco Jaycees, 1981.

Potential Uses of Front Street Property, Memorandum for Kathleen  
Leyden to Ronald Stewart, 1/13/86.

ANSI 117.1-1980 American National Standards Institute, Inc.  
(Specifications on site usability for people who are physically  
handicapped.)

Sands, Spindles & Steeples, Roy P. Fairfield, Progressive  
Printing-Manifold Co., Portland, Maine. 1956.

Opinion of Cost

<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>	<u>Total</u>
Perennials	250	\$6/ea	\$ 1,500.00
Shrub	46	60/ea	2,760.00
Small Tree	11	225/ea	2,475.00
Large Tree	8	350/ea	2,800.00
Evergreen	27	200/ea	5,400.00
7'x3' Wood Sign w/2 posts	1	150/ea	150.00
Benches	12	750/ea	9,000.00
Interpretive Markers	3	550/ea	1,650.00
Brick Edging	410 S.F.	8/S.F.	3,280.00
Stonedust Path	250 S.Y.	1.11/S.Y.	277.50
Flagstone Path	240 S.F.	9.59/S.F.	2,302.00
Asphalt Walk	1,432 S.Y.	9.54/S.Y.	13,661.00
Timbersteps	30	2/220	3,330.00
Railing	150 L.F.	6.75/L.F.	1,015.00
Clearing & Grubbing	.6 AC	3,000/AC	1,800.00
Lawn Area	4.7 M.S.F.	640/M.S.F.	3,008.00
Extra Paving at Front Street	781 S.Y.	14.5/S.Y.	11,325.00
Top Coat at Front Street	1,955 S.Y.	2.23/S.Y.	4,360.00
Parking Areas	2,382.S.Y.	14.5/S.Y.	34,539.00
Crosswalk	2	35/ea	70.00
Blast Ledge	740 C.Y.	16/C.Y.	11,840.00
Stone Retaining Wall	210 L.F.	61/L.F.	12,810.00
Overpass	Price not available		
Demolition Building	12,000 C.F.	17/C.F.	2,040.00
Wood Floating Dock	360 S.F.	17/S.F.	6,120.00
Boat Ramp (20'x45')	900 S.F.	4.50 S.F.	4,050.00
Pier	150 S.F.	22/S.F.	3,300.00
Floating Dock	120 S.F.	17/S.F.	2,040.00
Plant Islands @ Yacht Club			
Granite Curbing	270 L.F.	13.95/L.F.	3,770.00
Curve Granite Curbing	100 L.F.	26/L.F.	2,600.00
Lawn	2 M.S.F.	640/M.S.F.	1,280.00
			154,522.50
		+30% Contingency	46,365.75
			<u>\$200,918.25</u>



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Appendix

## Liability

A key issue for the City's implementation of the park is resolving the question of liability for private property owners. Participation in the park by private property owners will be strictly voluntary, and before these property owners are approached for easements, the City should be able to clearly describe to them whether through their participation they are incurring potential liabilities.

The liabilities are of two types:

- (1) Possible actions taken by a user of the park if the user is injured while crossing the private property--either within the easement or while straying off the easement elsewhere on the private property; and
- (2) Possible damage to private property caused by users of the park.

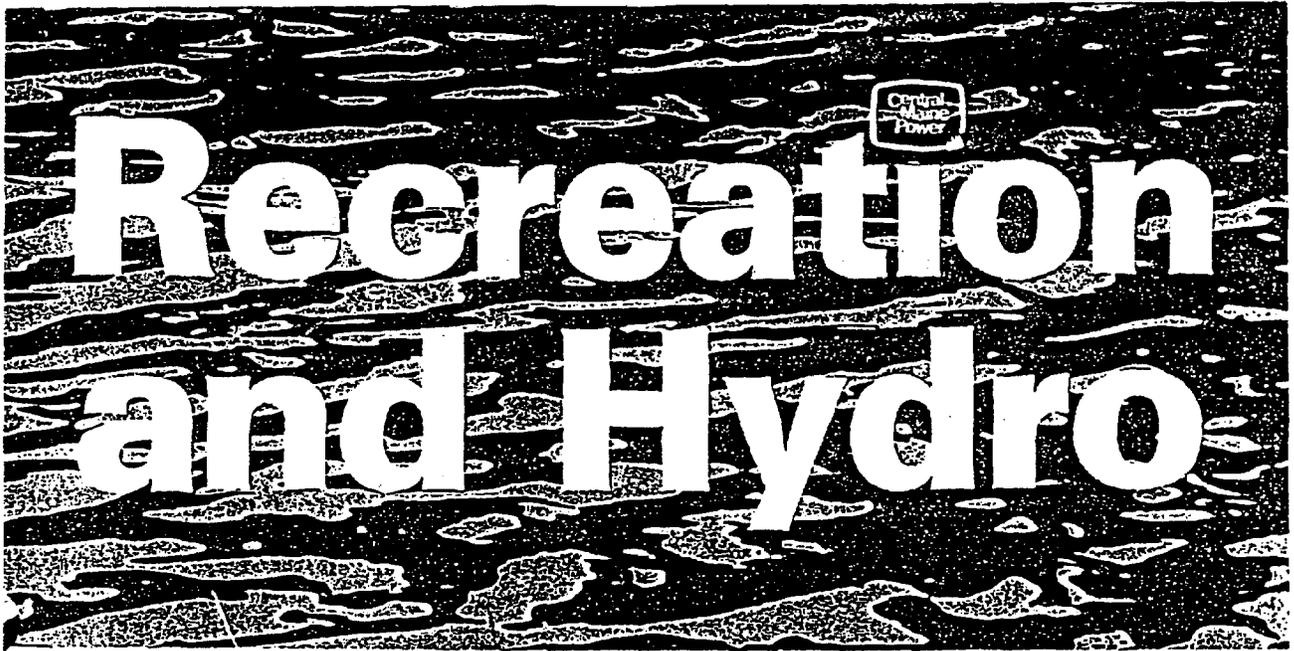
The city of Saco should request that the City's Corporation Counsel review these possibilities and to advise whether or not present state law and/or potential easement language would give the private property assurances of protection against these liabilities.

The issue of the first type of liability (injury to users) may be adequately addressed by state law, specifically two statutes, Title 14 M.R.S.A., Section 159-A and Title 14 M.R.S.A., Section 8103.

The second type of liability (damage to private property) probably must be handled through easement language. Certainly, anybody whose property has been damaged by others has the right to seek a remedy from the person(s) doing the damage. However, that prospect is unlikely to give sufficient comfort to property owners who are deciding whether or not to provide the City with an easement for the park and linkages to other city parks.

Pending the legal advice of Corporation Counsel, the City should consider incorporating into the easement language that would indemnify property owners against damage that clearly results from public use of the park or park system linkages as it crosses private property. This type of language has been built into easements already given cities in Maine, notably the City of South Portland, by developers for recreational paths.

And finally, the City should examine its insurance policies to determine whether insurance coverage is appropriate and possible for this type of situation.



# Recreation and Hydro

## 10 Commandments of Water Safety

1. Avoid alcoholic drinks while fishing.
2. Regard every boat as possible to capsize and do not stand up.
3. Always WEAR a life preserver. It is nearly impossible to put one on in the water.
4. Carry the legally required safety equipment and more.
5. Dress warmly for any fishing trip. Cold water kills.
6. Pay attention to weather reports.
7. Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
8. When rescuing try to throw something to the party rather than going into the water yourself.
9. Never anchor by the stern.
10. Stay with your boat. Wait for help.

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## CMP Safety Rules

# About CMP . . . .



Central Maine Power Company operates 23 hydroelectric sites along Maine's rivers. These stations produce a combined capacity of over 300,000 kilowatts, or about 21 percent of CMP's total electric energy.

Hydroelectric power is produced from the energy of falling water. As changes in hydro power production occur, water levels above and below the dams can change quickly.

## Rules for Safety . . . .

Because of the dangers associated with the water level changes near hydro stations, CMP and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife urge you to obey the following safety rules:

1. Swimming in the vicinity of hydro stations is PROHIBITED.
2. Fishing is allowed only from the river banks in designated areas.
3. No wading or boating near water discharge (tailrace) areas.
4. When boating upstream from a hydro station, DO NOT go near the water intake areas.
5. Obey all signs and rules set by CMP personnel and game wardens.



## For your sake . . . .

These few rules are for your safety. Water level changes occurring without warning can pose significant risks. Adherence to these simple rules of safety can help us all avoid unnecessary accidents.

If an accident should occur, report it immediately to CMP personnel or local authorities.

