Brewer Connects: Improving Local and Regional Mobility Project
Maine Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program
Funding Opportunity Number: DTOS59-26-RA-BUILD

MERIT CRITERIA NARRATIVE

MERIT CRITERIA

The *Brewer Connects: Improving Local and Regional Mobility Project* (Project) consists of making numerous transportation infrastructure improvements within the rural City of Brewer, Maine, in Penobscot County. Project components consist of safety and connectivity upgrades throughout the Project area, as well as safety improvements to three High Crash Locations. All enhancements align with BUILD program merit criteria. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System (BACTS) ensures that all Project components reflect their mission, outlined in the *Unified Planning Work Program 2026 – 2027*, to "provide for the safe, economical, efficient, effective, and convenient movement of people and goods over a multimodal transportation system compatible with the socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of the region."[7]

Safety

Improving *Safety* is a critical primary purpose of the Project. The improvements will result in a reduction of fatalities and/or serious injuries in the Project area to bring them below the state-wide average and incorporate specific safety improvements that are part of a documented safety risk mitigation strategy. The Project will help prevent fatalities and serious injuries by facilitating the separation of nonmotorized travelers from motorized travelers along nearly a mile-and-a-half of City streets. It also includes significant safety improvements to areas where vehicles and pedestrians intersect.

Current Safety Challenges

In 2022, Maine suffered its highest traffic fatality rate in 15 years, at 171.[8] The following year, the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety reported 134 fatalities, the lowest amount since 2014. The fatality rate for the previous two years has been in between these high and low points: 166 in 2024 and 157 in 2025. The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT, Department) is working to eliminate fatalities by *redesigning and modernizing roads to make them safer*, in addition to combatting unsafe driving and increasing public messaging about fatalities. The Department created the Maine Public Crash Query Tool to compile crash data and make it available to the public for download and analysis.[9] It identifies High Crash Locations (HCLs), areas with eight or more traffic crashes in a three-year period, as well as locations with a Critical Rate Factor (CRF) greater than 1.00 in a three-year period. A location with a CRF greater than 1.00 has a

The Study Team counts traffic and assesses safety and mobility infrastructure.

[7] BACTS *Unified Planning Work Program 2026 – 2027*, https://bactsmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/BACTS-UPWP-2026-2027-12022025.pdf

[8] Maine Public, https://www.mainepublic.org/maine/2022-12-28/maine-highway-fatalities-reach-15-year-high

[9] Maine Public Crash Query Tool, https://mdotapps.maine.gov/mainecrashpublic/

frequency of crashes greater than the statewide average for similar locations. From 2020 through 2023, the following areas in the Project area were identified as HCLs:

1. North Main Street *corridor* between State Street and Holyoke Street (**Focus Area 1**)
2. *Intersection* of North Main Street at State Street (**Focus Area 1**)
3. *Intersection* of North Main Street/South Main Street at Wilson Street (**Focus Area 3**)

To thoroughly align needed safety improvements with the mission of the Project, stakeholders conducted a Road Safety Audit (RSA) in May 2024. The RSA team observed and evaluated safety deficiencies and motorist habits in Brewer, then analyzed the observations and identified meaningful improvements, divided into three focus areas:

Focus Area 1: North Main Street Corridor from State Street to Chamberlain Street

Motorist Safety Challenges

The Maine Public Crash Query Tool map shows the high number of crashes in **Focus Area 1** (2020-2025), consisting of two High Crash Locations: the North Main Street *corridor* between State Street and Holyoke Street (16 total; 4 injury); the *intersection* of North Main Street at State Street (67 total; 17 injury). Based on crash data, most crashes occur in dry conditions during the day, with a peak occurrence between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. during summer. Seventy-seven percent of all crashes in this focus area are rear end/side swipe collisions. By analyzing the crash data, along with Roadway Safety Audit observations, Project planners incorporated meaningful safety solutions (listed below) for focus area intersections and the corridor as a whole that will calm traffic and make the area safer for pedestrians crossing streets.

Focus Area 2 includes a High Crash intersection (North Main Street at State Street) as well as a High Crash corridor (North Main Street between State Street and Holyoke Street).

Active Transportation Safety Challenges

The number one concern City officials hear from residents in this focus area is the dangerous pedestrian crossing on North Main Street at Holyoke Street near the convenience store (seen as 'Irving Oil' on the accompanying query tool map. Numerous public comments during the Village Partnership Initiative process detailed why the crossing is unsafe: vehicles speed up the hill (eastbound) to get around other vehicles. Witnesses report numerous pedestrian near misses, including those involving children. Roadway Safety Audit stakeholders documented that pedestrian crosswalk signs and 'STOP' signs must be updated to meet Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines. The RSA team also noted safety concerns at streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks in the

intersection because the vehicle access driveway to the convenience store is too long and not broken into intermittent sections.

Focus Area 1 Safety Solution	Crash Modification Factor ID	Crash Modification Factor	Crash Reduction Factor
Apply curved striping in the intersection of North Main Street and State Street that will help safely guide drivers through the two left turn lanes	10312	0.652	34.8%
Realign the right turn channelization lane from North Main Street westbound to State Street northbound as well as the island to current safety standards	8428	0.558	44.2%
Construct a landscaped median island along North Main Street with a dedicated left turn lane onto Prospect Street before the crosswalk	10984	0.72	28%
Create a zipper merge with overhead signage on North Main Street eastbound (No CMF; individual state studies indicate a 30% to 50% reduction in crashes)	N/A	N/A	30%-50%
Construct a two-stage raised crosswalk at Holyoke Street with Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) signage, pedestrian scale lighting, and upgraded crosswalk ramps	11158 11168 11169	0.27-0.31	69%-73%
Construct stamped shoulders northeast of the crosswalk at Holyoke Street to reinforce the single lanes of traffic (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Install overhead lane use signage and ground mounted pedestrian signage (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Incorporate updated signal timing and time-of-day signal planning (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Update intersection lighting utilizing current USDOT and MaineDOT standards	7778	0.64	36%

These solutions, part of a documented safety risk mitigation strategy under the *Maine Highway Safety Plan*, will help prevent fatalities and serious injuries for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers specifically by:[10]

- Improving safety for drivers and pedestrians at the right turn from North Main Street westbound onto State Street northbound towards Bangor by channeling turning traffic and creating a more defined crosswalk
- Creating a safer pedestrian crosswalk across North Main Street at Holyoke Street
- Helping guide drivers turning left at intersections by installing curved lines to follow in the intersection
- Eliminating lane entrapment on North Main Street for drivers turning right onto Chamberlain Street

[10] *Maine Highway Safety Plan, Fiscal Years 2024-2026*, https://www.maine.gov/dps/sites/maine.gov.dps/files/inline-files/ME_FY24-26_THSP.pdf

Focus Area 2: Center Street Corridor from North Main Street to the end of Center Street

Motorist Safety Challenges
While the Maine Public Crash Query Tool map does not reveal many crashes between 2020 and 2025 in **Focus Area 2**, Center Street is an important and frequently traveled corridor. It runs through the historic downtown and provides the most convenient connection between the renowned Brewer Riverwalk and neighborhoods, the Brewer Auditorium, city parks, and playing fields to the southeast. As a result, pedestrians and bicyclists commonly share the street with motorists. The City has implemented a few easy-to-install safety measures by prohibiting some turns on side streets. However, funding is required to make meaningful and long-lasting safety improvements.


Center Street corridor.

By analyzing Roadway Safety Audit observations, Project planners incorporated meaningful safety solutions (listed below) for focus area intersections and the corridor as a whole that will calm traffic and make the area safer for pedestrians.

Active Transportation Safety Challenges
The RSA team witnessed pedestrians commonly jaywalking across North Main Street at Center Street because the intersection lacks a pedestrian crosswalk. In this process, residents in neighborhoods east of North Main Street are attempting to access the historic downtown without safely walking south to Parker Street or north to State Street to access a signalized pedestrian crossing. The area also suffers from limited driver sight distance for motorists due to the downslope of the overpass that spans the railroad tracks — another safety concern for pedestrians. Pedestrian-level streetlights are located along Center Street downtown but taller streetlights are utilized along North Main Street. The taller lights create low-light conditions for pedestrians at sidewalk level.

Focus Area 2 Safety Solution	Crash Modification Factor ID	Crash Modification Factor	Crash Reduction Factor
Construct a raised midblock pedestrian crossing across North Main Street immediately northeast of Center Street with a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) that is electronically connected to the State Street intersection traffic signal	2922	0.309	69%
Construct a 10-foot-wide raised shared-use pathway along the eastern edge of Center Street from the North Main Street intersection to the parking lot at Village Centre	9250	0.75	25%

The new pedestrian crosswalk will create a safe and dedicated connection between the Brewer Riverwalk, the historic downtown, and residential neighborhoods to the east. Existing utility poles and light poles will be relocated to widen sidewalk passage and improve their compliance with ADA measures.

These solutions, part of a documented safety risk mitigation strategy under the *Maine Highway Safety Plan*, will help prevent fatalities and serious injuries for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers by specifically:[11]

- Providing a safe and formal pathway for pedestrians to cross North Main Street
- Improving vehicular safety at the intersection of Center Street and North Main Street
- Creating a safe bicycle/pedestrian pathway connection along Center Street between the historic downtown and neighborhoods, the Brewer Auditorium, city parks, and playing fields to the southeast.

Focus Area 3: Wilson Street Corridor from North Main Street/South Main Street Intersection to the end of State Street

Motorist Safety Challenges

The Maine Public Crash Query Tool maps show crashes throughout **Focus Area 3** (2020-2025), with the intersection of North Main Street/South Main Street at Wilson Street qualifying as a High Crash Location (67 total; 12 injury). Based on the data, most crashes occur in dry conditions during the day, with a peak between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Ninety-six percent of all crashes are either rear end/side swipe or intersection movement crashes. By analyzing this crash data, along with Roadway Safety Audit observations, Project planners incorporated meaningful safety solutions (listed below) for focus area intersections and the entire corridor that will calm traffic and make the corridor safer for pedestrians needing to cross streets.

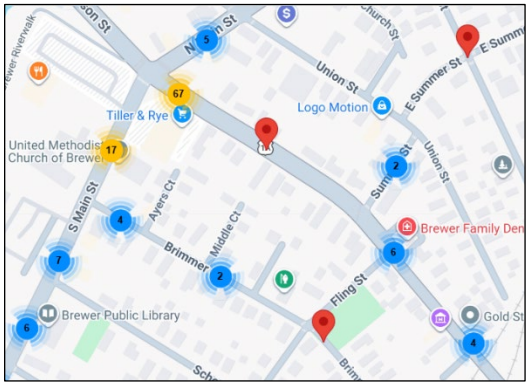
The intersection of North Main Street/South Main Street and Wilson Street, including the driveway that exits into the intersection in the upper left quadrant of the intersection.

The intersection of North Main Street/South Main Street at Wilson Street is complex and can often be confusing. Westbound approaches from North Main Street, as well as Wilson Street, both consist of a left turn lane, a through lane, and a right turn lane. Eastbound approaches to the intersection from South Main Street as well as Wilson Street consist of one left turn lane and one shared through/right lane. Complicating matters, a driveway serving businesses opens to the intersection on the northeast corner of it but has no intersection control signage provided and causes confusion throughout the intersection. The *BACTS Long Range Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan* recommends the intersection be the number one priority for safety

[11] *Maine Highway Safety Plan, Fiscal Years 2024-2026*, https://www.maine.gov/dps/sites/maine.gov.dps/files/inline-files/ME_FY24-26_THSP.pdf

improvements in Brewer because of the numerous safety concerns. These include high traffic volume, speeding vehicles, lengthy crosswalks, poor lighting, and traffic signals that conflict with pedestrian crossing signals.

Active Transportation Safety Challenges
Sidewalks are present along both sides of the Wilson Street corridor, however they are old, narrow, and are impeded by utility poles and signposts throughout. While the street has curbs on both sides, they are insufficient to safely accommodate bicyclists. Crosswalks throughout the corridor lack modern safety features. Lighting is poor for pedestrians crossing Wilson Street at night. Curb ramps create drainage issues.



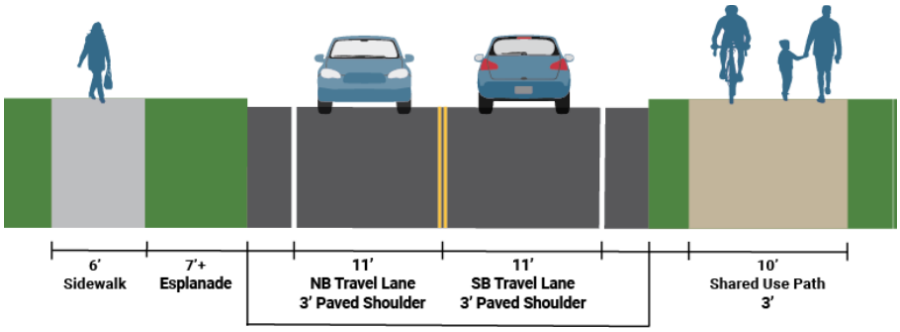
Screenshot from the Maine Public Crash Query Tool showing the Wilson Street at North Main Street/South Main Street Intersection and a portion of the corridor - from 2020-2025.

Focus Area 3 Safety Solution	Crash Modification Factor ID	Crash Modification Factor	Crash Reduction Factor
Reconstruct the corridor to include a separated 10-foot-wide shared use pathway south of Wilson Street running throughout the focus area	9250	0.75	25%
Construct crosswalks and curb ramps further back from streets than those currently existing (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Close the driveway that exits into the North Main Street/South Main Street at Wilson Street intersection and redirect those vehicles to Union Street for access (No CMF available)	9735	.67	33%
Improve access to the Tiller & Rye supermarket property (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eliminate a right turn on red for all North Main Street/South Main Street at Wilson Street intersection approaches by installing static signs and blank-out signs during active bicycle/pedestrian crossings (Minnesota Department of Transportation research indicates that active (dynamic) blank-out signs can achieve about 87% driver compliance, while static signs achieve over 90% compliance.)[12]	N/A	N/A	87%-90%
Create a right turn in/right turn out at the driveway between Tiller & Rye supermarket and the First United Methodist Church of Brewer (No CMF available)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Incorporate updated signal timing and time-of-day signal planning	10822	0.64	35.8%
Update intersection lighting utilizing current USDOT and MaineDOT standards	7778	0.64	36%

[12] Minnesota Department of Transportation, Evaluation of static and dynamic no right turn on red signs at traffic signals, page 20, https://mdl.mndot.gov/index.php/_flysystem/fedora/2024-06/202417.pdf

The City has installed wayfinding signs at the intersection as well. These solutions, part of a documented safety risk mitigation strategy under the *Maine Highway Safety Plan*, will help prevent fatalities and serious injuries for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers by specifically:[13]

- Constructing a separated 10-foot-wide shared use pathway throughout the focus area corridor
- Reconstructing sidewalks
- Creating shorter pedestrian crosswalks to improve safety
- Maintaining existing curb lines
- Creating lane guidelines and restriping areas to improve safety
- Improving access management to properties near intersections



New Bypass Effect on Traffic Volume

A catalyst for the Project is the nearby I-395/Route 9 Bypass Project, completed in 2025, that allows through traffic, including heavy freight traffic, to conveniently navigate *around* downtown instead of through it. It operates from Interstate 95 on the south side of Bangor, through the southern portion of Brewer eastward, and connects to and through Route 1A (Wilson Street) four miles east of the historic downtown. The bypass results in safer and less congested traffic conditions in downtown Brewer.

Safety by the Numbers

The Project will result in new and safer infrastructure along lengthy corridors of the City:

Mobility Component	Focus Area 1	Focus Area 2	Focus Area 3	Total
Sidewalks (in feet)	4,800	2,000	5,280	12,080
Crosswalks	18 (one new mid-block)	8 (one new mid-block)	15	41
10' Shared-Use Pathways (in feet)	0	2,000	5,280	7,280

These improvements will result in extensive safety benefits. Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) calculations estimate discounted safety benefits of **$13,549,945**, representing the largest component of total Project benefits over the analysis period. Developing a street design that conforms to the standards of the state's *Complete Streets Policy* will significantly improve safety for residents, tourists, and visitors.[14] Active transportation infrastructure improvements will make walking and biking to and through downtown a safer and more viable option, even in the snowy winter months.

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[13] *Maine Highway Safety Plan, Fiscal Years 2024-2026*, https://www.maine.gov/dps/sites/maine.gov.dps/files/inline-files/ME_FY24-26_THSP.pdf

[14] *MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy*, https://www.maine.gov/dot/programs-services/safety-and-mobility/safer-roads/complete-streets

Environmental Sustainability
Improving *Environmental Sustainability* is a primary Project purpose. The Project has been thoughtfully designed to improve the resiliency of Brewer's aging infrastructure. Planners have taken into account the effects of extreme weather events, the possibility of natural disasters, and the state's large annual snowfall amount. The Project will benefit the ecology of the area because improvements will mitigate stormwater impacts and increase biodiversity. Project design includes 12,560 feet of 4-foot-wide to 7-foot-wide grass esplanades.

Project planners performed an environmental and historic resources screening to identify historic properties, aquifers, wildlife habitats, FEMA flood zones, conservation zones, and wetlands using Maine Department of Environmental Protection data maps, Maine Fish and Wildlife maps, the National Register of Historic Places, and the City of Brewer's Axis GIS Map. The Project area does not reside in a FEMA Flood Zone. There are no structures currently listed on the National Historic Registry, however, several properties in and around the Project area are eligible for placement on the registry.

Project Solutions
- **Focus Area 2**: Construct a narrow, landscaped median along North Main Street in the intersection with Center Street and extending north and south of the intersection; build a 2,000-foot-long, four-foot wide grass esplanade on the east side of Center Street south of North Main Street
- **Focus Area 3**: Construct a 10,560-foot-long, seven-foot wide grass esplanade on the south side of Wilson Street throughout the focus area; improve drainage capacity along Wilson Street

The Project includes resiliency improvements by reducing impervious surfaces and utilizing more greenspace. Because the I-395/Route 9 Bypass is open and now reducing traffic volume on US Route 1A, Project engineers have incorporated a design that reduces the number of travel lanes on some sections of US Route 1A, including through the Project area. Design includes repurposing the space currently occupied by the outer travel lanes into a vegetated esplanade and greenway. Not only will this provide separation between vehicles and multi-use pathway users, but it will also encourage more people to walk and bike and will greatly improve the aesthetics and ecology of the area. Infrastructure will be integrated into the greenway to mitigate stormwater impacts and increase biodiversity. These measures will increase the resiliency of the area during heavy rain and snow and provide better conditions for healthy trees and plants. The additional greenspace and native vegetation will contribute to cleaner air and serve as a natural stormwater filter in an area burdened by frequent flooding.

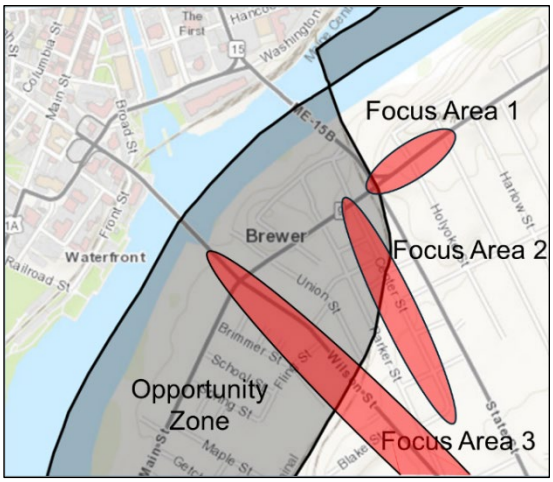
Quality of Life
Improving *Quality of Life* is a primary Project purpose. A portion of the Project is located in a Qualifying Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 23019004100 (41)).[15] The Project cost within this tract is $5,840,384.

Infrastructure Challenges
As described in the *BACTS Long Range Transportation Plan*, "*The present-day network has*

[15] IRS Internal Revenue Bulletin: 2018-28, July 9, 2018, https://www.irs.gov/irb/2018-28_IRB#NOT-2018-48

been shaped by several historical factors, including:

- *The formation of compact urban centers around major waterways in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the development of primitive roadways for pedestrians and horse-borne travelers and traders;*
- *The mass production of motor vehicles and subsequent construction of the Maine state highway system from 1925 to 1960, including the construction of Interstate I-95 during the 1950s and subsequent development in areas close to the exit ramps; and*
- *The opening of the I-395 spur including the third Penobscot River Bridge in the mid-1980s.*"



Portions of Focus Area 2 and Focus Area 3 are located in a Qualifying Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 41). The Project includes an investment of $5,840,384 in the Opportunity Zone.

While occasional band-aid repairs have been made to the streets and sidewalks within the City, transportation infrastructure within the Project area has not been vastly improved or modernized since the 1990s. The storm drain infrastructure was installed in the early 1900s. Existing infrastructure is reaching the end of its useful life after decades of heavy use, prolonged exposure to extremely cold weather, and deferred maintenance. Current conditions do not align with visions and plans for an accessible, revitalized downtown that can serve tourists and provide an adequate quality of life.

Many residents struggle to achieve a valuable quality of life due, in part, to the deteriorating and visually unappealing infrastructure. Aging concrete and asphalt streets lined with old, narrow, and cracked sidewalks reside throughout the Project area. There are no tree-lined streets, a few small and unwelcoming city parks, cracked sidewalks with utility poles and signage impeding the walkway, and outdated streetlights that don't spread an adequate amount of light over walking surfaces. There are few wayfinding signs and, for drivers, the inability to be able to turn in a certain direction at some intersections leads to the need to 'circle the block' while some impatient drivers make turns illegally. Living in a city filled with these infrastructure burdens quickly detracts from the community pride Brewer residents long for. The City and tourists both lose out because tourists want to dine and shop in locations that aesthetically blend modern amenities with historic charm — a quality that many other Maine cities exhibit.

Project Solutions

Project design will beautify the transportation infrastructure with context appropriate design to enhance the user experience. Improvements in connectivity to the small parks in the Project area will aid in a pleasant travel experience for families.

- **Focus Area 1**: Access to the park on the northwest corner of State Street and North Main Street (Chamberlain Freedom Park) will be improved
- **Focus Area 2**: A narrow, landscaped grass median will be constructed along North Main Street; a shared-use path and sidewalk with a grass esplanade will be constructed along Center Street south of North Main Street

Improvements will be made to wayfinding and the user experience:

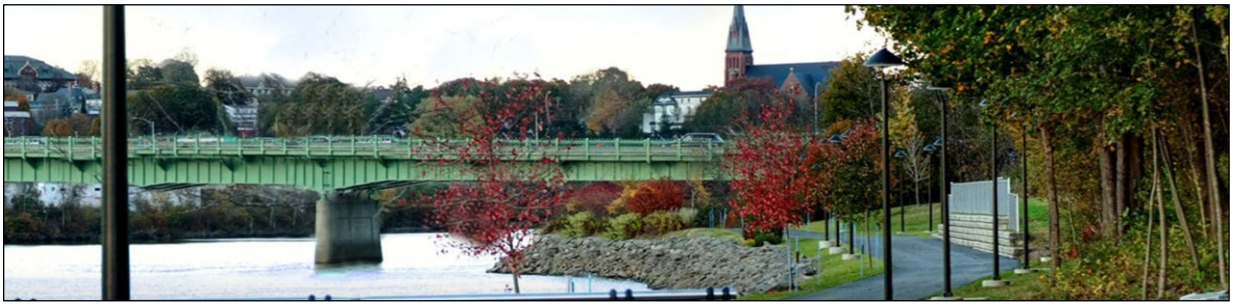
- **Focus Area 1**: Striping will be applied to the intersection for the double left turn lanes from State Street to North Main Street; a zipper merge will be created on North Main Street with overhead and ground mounted signage; a two-stage raised crosswalk will be constructed at Holyoke Street with a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), pedestrian scale lighting, and upgraded crosswalk ramps; overhead lane use signage and ground mounted pedestrian signage will be utilized
- **Focus Area 2**: A midblock pedestrian crossing will be installed across North Main Street at Center Street with a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) which will be coordinated with the State Street/North Main Street intersection traffic signal
- **Focus Area 3**: A well-marked shared-use path will be constructed along Wilson Street; intersection lighting will be improved utilizing current MaineDOT lighting standards

Making Transportation More Affordable

Project planners have carefully studied pedestrian movements, volume, and patterns to identify optimal locations to install the pathways, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings. This will ensure all residents and tourists have safe access to daily destinations. The Project addresses safety concerns and affordable alternative transportation limitations and creates better opportunities to access employment, workforce development, and critical points of interest to improve quality of life. BCA calculations estimate significantly discounted amenity benefits of **$1,572,646**, as well as health benefits of **$227,949** over the analysis period.

Mobility and Community Connectivity

Improving *Mobility and Community Connectivity* is a primary Project purpose.



The scenic Brewer Riverwalk downtown along the Penobscot River attracts tourists and local residents, as well as residents from throughout the region who don't have sidewalks or multi-use pathways in their own community. The Project will greatly improve the connection between the riverwalk and neighborhoods throughout Brewer.

Current Mobility Challenges

Brewer is a community where homes are in close proximity to the City's core downtown along Center Street. This close proximity makes walking ideal instead of driving, however, the state of the current pedestrian infrastructure is extremely uninviting. Different sidewalks and crosswalks have different features and lack uniformity. Mid-block crosswalks currently do not exist in areas where they would be extremely convenient. Busy roads combined with limited ADA-compliant sidewalks and crosswalks have been concerns for residents and tourists for decades. U.S. Route 1A (Wilson Street) and State Route 178 (North Main Street) have been physical barriers to safe and convenient multi-modal transportation in Brewer for decades due to the difficulty crossing them.

The Brewer Riverwalk is the landmark destination in the City. For years, the City has focused diligently to ensure it is conveniently connected to downtown. The *City of Brewer South Main Street Corridor Study, Final Plan, February 2025*, states "*To maximize its potential, it is crucial to enhance the connection between the community and the riverfront. The intersection at Main Street and Wilson Street is designed to encourage people to enter the Riverwalk by formalizing the trail head with accent paving, plantings and seating*."[16]

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
Based on the City's bicycle and pedestrian data, the annual average daily cycling trips in the Project area is 15: 10 bikers on Wilson Street and 5 bikers on Center Street. For pedestrians, the annual average daily pedestrian trips is 390: 270 on Wilson Street and 120 on Center Street. The Project area includes a pathway of national significance. The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a 3,000-mile bicycling and walking path beginning in Calais, Maine, at the Canadian border and extending all the way to Key West, Florida. In the BACTS region, the ECG route runs through Bangor and Brewer. In the Project area within Brewer, the trail operates along U.S. Route 1A (Wilson Street) from the Joshua Chamberlain Bridge along Wilson Street through the railroad tracks to Parkway South then towards the Acadia National Park region to the south.

BACTS' notes that while there has been a great deal of progress making communities more bicycle friendly, there are still serious deficiencies throughout the region. These include: many sidewalks that are not ADA compliant, sidewalks that are nonexistent on at least one side of many urban streets, crosswalks that are missing or difficult to see, and few intersections containing bike lane markings or bike lane signage.

Project Benefits

Mobility Component	Focus Area 1	Focus Area 2	Focus Area 3	Total
Sidewalks (in feet)	4,800	2,000	5,280	12,080
Crosswalks	18 (one new mid-block)	8 (one new mid-block)	15	41
10' Shared-Use Pathways (in feet)	0	2,000	5,280	7,280

The Project will significantly improve access to, and the time it takes to access, everyday destinations. It will create more convenient and affordable transportation options and encourage transportation that does not require an automobile. Mobility benefits include:

- Implementing design improvements based on community feedback and data
- Enhancing accessibility for families and Americans with disabilities by incorporating Universal Design features
- Removing physical barriers by reconnecting communities to direct, affordable transportation options: public transit, micro-mobility, sidewalks, crosswalks, and multi-use pathways.

Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity
Improving *Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity* is a primary Project purpose. A portion of the Project is located in a Qualifying Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 23019004100 (41)). The Project will improve access to employment, tourism activities, healthcare, education, and

[16] *City of Brewer South Main Street Corridor Study, Final Plan, February 2025*, https://bactsmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Brewer_South_Main_Corridor_Study_Final.pdf, page 10

critical services for users of all transportation modes. In 2023, Brewer's Economic Development Department conducted the *Brewer Retail Consumer Survey*. It informed City officials about the shopping patterns, expectations, and opinions of area retail consumers. Recommendations from the survey to increase commerce in the Project area can be grouped into three components:

1. Brewer's downtown, Main Street, and waterfront areas would benefit from improvements by both the City of Brewer and businesses in order to become a more attractive destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment
2. An increase in outdoor activities and outdoor space downtown, along Main Street, and in waterfront areas is desired
3. An increase in parking spaces, an increase in the variety of stores and restaurants, and the rehabilitation of old buildings is desired

Promoting Economic Growth
In many ways, it is more important for a small city to foster economic opportunity with greater intensity because there are often fewer opportunities presented for a city the size of Brewer to generate economic growth at scale. MaineDOT recognized this concern when developing the *City of Brewer Village Partnership Initiative Study*. The Purpose and Need statement for the Project included the desire to *"Support future growth and economic development by enhancing the look, feel, and character of the streetscape."* Establishing the VPI program was an important catalyst for improvements in Brewer because the program strives to create economic growth and opportunity in historic downtowns.

Brewer recognizes the importance of supporting freight movement through the area while simultaneously balancing traffic and pedestrian safety concerns. That's why in 2007, BACTS commissioned a truck route study that identified improvements needed at specific locations to accommodate trucks on the region's streets and roads. The study identified the Wilson Street and North Main Street intersection specifically: "*Provide for traffic efficiency improvements whenever possible rather than new construction or rerouting projects on South and North Main, Wilson, and State Streets, to reduce noise and congestion, improve visual quality, and strengthen economic potential*." More recently, the I-395/Route 9 Bypass has provided a new route for non-local destination freight traffic to bypass the City. The bypass fosters economic growth in the region while reducing freight traffic in the City center.

BACTS' understands that economic competitiveness in a global market requires safe, convenient, and reasonably priced transportation options to attract and retain employees. As the population ages, "*the region must devise strategies to lure skilled workers to fill the workforce gap. To compete for talented young professionals, economic development tactics must prioritize walkable neighborhoods with transit access and safe streets for all users*."[17]

Facilitating Tourism Opportunities
According to 2022 statistics from the Maine Office of Tourism, the vacation industry is one of Maine's largest, supporting some 151,000 jobs, with $5.6 billion in earnings for Maine households. The total economic impact is estimated to be $8.5 billion annually. BACTS research considers Maine residents traveling 50 or more miles as tourists, meaning 19 percent of tourists

[17] BACTS Vision 2043, page 26

are Maine residents. Other New England regional residents account for 32 percent of visitors, 20 percent from the Mid-Atlantic region, and four percent from Canada.[18] A significant number of the more than three million visitors who tour Acadia National Park annually pass through the area as well because Brewer is located between Interstate 95 and the Downeast region.
The Brewer Riverwalk is a local treasure and regional tourist attraction. It is a .6-mile-long multi-use pathway along the shoreline of the Penobscot River. The ten-foot wide paved path is lit, has security cameras, and features numerous benches and scenic river overlooks. There is an area for events such as weddings or performances.[19]

State of Good Repair
Addressing *State of Good Repair* needs is a primary Project purpose.

Existing Conditions Create Barriers
Transportation infrastructure in Brewer has been largely unmodified since the mid-1900s when it was designed to accommodate the rapidly growing use of the automobile. Before the interstate highway system in Maine was built and long before the bypass route around Brewer was constructed, heavy freight traffic traversed the Project area, wedged onto streets not designed to accommodate trucks. This resulted in pavement damage and the deterioration of many streets in Brewer.

Due to limitations on available infrastructure funding, according to BACTS municipalities in the region, including Brewer, submit only the most needed projects and those having a chance of rating high enough for funding selection. Locations that are unfunded either continue to deteriorate, resulting in even higher construction and maintenance costs. And as time goes on, the process of prioritizing projects becomes increasingly challenging. This trend is unlikely to improve. Given scarce funding, BACTS has been forced to shift its funding priorities to cover pavement preservation and rehabilitation instead of full reconstruction of aging infrastructure. This is one reason why the need for BUILD funding is so important.[20]

Project Benefits
The Project will result in replacing or repairing numerous state of good repair conditions, including:

- Replacing pedestrian crosswalks utilizing Complete Streets design features
- Constructing new, modern, and wider sidewalks to easily accommodate all modes of active transportation
- Building new multi-use pathways along Center Street and Wilson Street
- Reconstructing drainage areas to enlarge them to handle a higher volume of water during storms
- Reconstructing broken and misaligned curbs to create better street definition and augment rainwater collection by efficiently funneling water into new drainage areas
- Relocating outdated utility poles and fire hydrants away from sidewalk rights-of-way

[18] BACTS Vision 2043, page 29
[19] Maine Trail Finder, https://www.mainetrailfinder.com/trails/trail/brewer-riverwalk
[20] BACTS Vision 2043, page 63

Partnership and Collaboration

Creating strong *Partnerships and Collaboration* is a primary Project purpose. Living through the City's safety and connectivity difficulties every day, Brewer residents were happy to share their suggestions for improvement at public meetings:

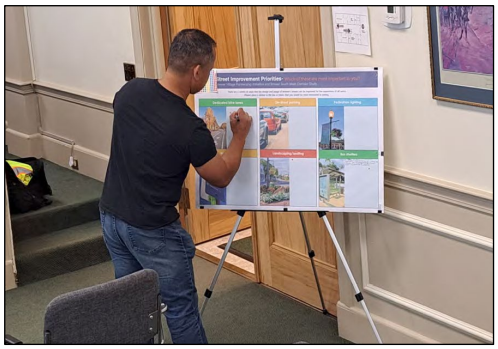
> *"I really like the ideas presented to connect Center Street to the Riverwalk. Main Street is a dangerous barrier for pedestrians and bikers trying to get to the riverwalk."*
>
> *"Please add storm drains during the replacement process. Center Street between Washington Street and North Main Street."*
>
> *"This entire intersection [Wilson Street and North Main Street/South Main Street] is unsafe for pedestrians. Specifically, cars turning right from North Main Street onto the bridge…are used to rolling through the intersection and often roll through the crosswalk as pedestrians are trying to cross."*

MaineDOT and the City recognize the value of engaging the community to ensure those living and working in the Project area are meaningfully involved in its development. The Project greatly affects a diverse share of the region: motorists, active transportation users, tourists, business owners, and civic organizations. All have and will continue to be given the opportunity to engage in decision making because the Project creates such important transportation connections throughout the community. Project design is the result of several plans, studies, and visions — each in coordination with BACTS and the community:[21]

Community Collaboration

Project planners solicited feedback from stakeholders by organizing two public meetings, a public survey, and roundtable discussions for the public to share their comments and concerns. A map-based community survey was released in May 2024. Representatives from BACTS also attended the Riverwalk Festival in June 2025 to solicit feedback.

The first public meeting was held in September 2024. Project planners presented details, fielded questions, and solicited feedback from the public regarding desired street improvements, intersection concerns and ideas, and the preferred cross-sections of key corridors. The Team also hosted five virtual roundtables focused on specific user groups. Key takeaways were:



A Brewer resident writes down an improvement suggestion at a Project meeting in 2024.

- Bicycle lanes were the most requested improvements
- Current pedestrian crossings are challenging throughout the Project area
- There is a strong desire for a formal pedestrian crossing on Center Street
- Existing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) are extremely popular

The second public meeting was held in November 2024. Planners shared alternatives with the public for feedback. The presentation and alternatives were posted on the city website.

[21] BACTS Current Programs, https://bactsmpo.org/current-programs/

MaineDOT's previous and future community outreach is consistent the its *Public Involvement Plan* (PIP) documentation, which outlines the Department's efforts to ensure all populations are afforded meaningful opportunities for public involvement.

Performance Measures Collaboration
MaineDOT welcomes working with USDOT to identify and measure metrics that will assess Project benefits. MaineDOT is very experienced and has systems in place to gather baseline data and establish ongoing measurements to ensure Project goals are realized. Given MaineDOT's experience administering numerous Federal grants alongside a variety of partners, the Department will efficiently collaborate with the City to measure Project success.

Additional Collaboration
In addition to the MaineDOT and City of Brewer partnership that is the foundation of the Project, other interested parties are providing broad Project support. The application includes numerous letters of support from businesses, city service providers, lawmakers, civic organizations, and others who recognize the transformational value the Project will generate.

Innovation
Innovative Technologies
Fostering *Innovation* is a primary Project purpose. Innovative traffic signals, signage, and pavement are critical components of the Project so individuals can reach their destination safely. Innovative features include traffic signals that detect vehicles using video infrastructure, coordination of traffic signals for optimal efficiency, traffic signals with cellular/modem interconnectivity, sensors to monitor and detect crosswalk utilization, and blank out LED signs. Project components and their installation will adhere to the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, 11th Edition* to ensure all improvements reflect the most recent safety measures for all types of transportation.[22]

Innovative Project Delivery
MaineDOT will utilize the NEPA Assignment Program (Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program) to innovatively accelerate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and permitting measures. This program formally assigns the Federal Highway Administration's NEPA responsibilities to a state department of transportation. Through the program, MaineDOT has assumed responsibility from FHWA for all classes of NEPA (Categorical Exclusions, Environmental Assessments, and Environmental Impact Statements) and also assumes responsibility for environmental laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and interagency consultation in Maine. The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for the Project will be carried out by MaineDOT pursuant to either:

- 23 U.S.C. 326 and Memorandum of Understanding executed by FHWA and MaineDOT dated October 9, 2024
- 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding executed by FHWA and MaineDOT dated January 30, 2026

Maine is the 9th state in the nation to receive NEPA Assignment Program approval.

[22] *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, 11th Edition*, https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/