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Museum in the Streets: Lewiston and Auburn

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Museum in the Streets: Lewiston and Auburn

Final Report

Belle Hutchins, Beanie O’Shea, Kawai Marin, Camille Belletete

April 13th, 2018
Executive Summary

In collaboration with Museum L/A, Grow L+A, and Museum in the Streets, our community-based research project focuses on the creation of a “first class” visual walking history tour. The tour, which includes 15-30 signs with 150-word captions and 3-4 images per sign, focuses on the rich histories of Lewiston and Auburn, encompassing their long affiliation with the Androscoggin River, and strives to connect the people of Lewiston and Auburn to place through historical facts and anecdotes. In contributing to the creation of this visual walking history tour, our Bates team aims to tell the intricate story of the Androscoggin River through ecological, social, political, industrial, and cultural lenses in hopes of contribute historically inclusive signs to the community. While doing so we hope to encouraging participation and involvement of both local and regional communities. Included in this report is a detailed sign making process created by the Bates team to be used to create the 15-30 signs. The signs will include images, facts, and anecdotes which portray different views of Lewiston and Auburn through the eye of the past.

As the nature of our project is historically based, we spent much of our time carefully creating a sign making process with which we could portray information in an inclusive narrative. This included utilizing a variety of resources for research, including Ladd Library, Muskie Archives, the Androscoggin Historical Society, and internet sources, as well as referencing local members/professionals within the community regarding all information included in the signs. Our deliverables for the project included an iterative and repeatable flowchart for creating each sign, and 15 drafts of 150-word excerpts and selected photos for future sign content. In addition to sign content, we created an editable virtual map of possible sign locations along the Androscoggin River.
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Introduction

“Museum in the Streets” is a project that was created in 1996 with the aim of preserving and protecting cultural heritage and history. It is a project that has spanned across multiple cities celebrating histories, and with the collaborative work of our community partner’s, Museum L/A and Grow L+A, it is now becoming a reality in Lewiston and Auburn. Museum L/A, the local history museum which is located in the center of downtown Lewiston, has not only an obvious interest in the Lewiston and Auburn histories, but also plays a large role in the cultivation of community through various events and displays at the Museum. Similarly, Grow L+A works with the mission to “promote a vibrant urban landscape and its creative integration into a living and sustainable Lewiston + Auburn” (Facebook Page, Grow L+A). The commitment to the Lewiston and Auburn communities that both Museum L/A and Grow L+A are founded upon allows these groups to be the perfect leaders to a project that aims to tell the stories that have existed and continue to exist in this small but busy part of Maine. Through the medium of “Museum in the Streets,” our community partners have found a way to continue to cultivate and protect a place in which so many stories co-exist each day.

The success of this interactive museum in cities of similar structure to Lewiston and Auburn prompted our community partners to spearhead this initiative. L/A’s complex social, political, environmental and industrial history provides the perfect foundation for a successful and informative walking tour. As a product of L/A’s diverse population and environmental landscape, there are a multitude of histories and stories that may contribute to “placemaking,” and establishing a community feeling connected deeply to the landscape and infrastructure of Lewiston and Auburn. Philosopher Edward Casey defines place as “something 'carved out of space or superimposed on space,'” and argues “that it is place rather than space that is universal (but not pre-cultural)...space and time are contained in place rather than vice versa” (Pink 178). Placemaking has a long tradition of establishing identity, and thus has allowed ethnographers to consider the situation of individuals and communities as embodied beings (Pink 179). The Androscoggin River presents a unique example of the role of place in the making of a human history. In hopes of generating a common, respected and valued place, Grow L+A and Museum in the Street aim to establish a shared experience which tells stories of Lewiston and Auburn’s complicated past. Each story told during the walking tour aims to give a voice to the many different stories that have created this slice of Maine and produce a culture within Lewiston and Auburn that celebrates all. Museum in the streets strives to produce a public commemoration and appreciation for both told and untold histories.

Nonetheless, creating a project that tells a public history, as Museum in the Streets does, is not a simple task. Even as public history has the potential for so much good in preservation of stories, so too does it have a multitude of pitfalls. Such pitfalls have been made clear in the recent pushback against problematic public monuments that celebrate confederate officials, racist judges, and other problematic figures in United States History (Bidgood et al., 2017). These
monuments were put up at a time when the subjects were celebrated figures (in some contexts) despite their oppressing politics, and there presence through today has only continued oppressive narratives. Thus, there is indeed a great risk to telling stories of the past in such a public way, for in deciding which stories to tell is to participate in a process of validating certain histories over others, a process which has perpetuated oppression and silencing of minority voices since the beginning of (and prior to) the United States. It is with this recognition of what is at stake that we have approached the task of aiding our community partners in their work of creating a public history trail.

Our group had the opportunity to lend time and work to the important process of cultivating and protecting history that has been begun by Museum L/A and Grow L+A. Our role specifically within this project was to assist our community partners in developing a public walking tour that tells the intricate story of the Androscoggin River through ecological, social, political, industrial, and cultural lenses in hopes of encouraging participation and involvement of both local and regional communities. To best approach this large aim and most effectively assist our community partners, we broke our process down into the following distinct objectives: to incorporate community input into planning signs, to develop a methodological approach that is iterative, repeatable, participatory, and thorough, and to iteratively apply/test this methodology to produce engaging, accessible, and inclusive signs. By applying and engaging with our linked albeit varied objectives, we hope to have provided our community partners with important work that will be valuable as they continue on with the “Museum in the Streets” project.
Overall Approach

The overall approach is described in detail in the 4 sections below which include: Research on Walking Tours, Survey and Results, How to Make a Sign: The Process, and How to Make a Sign: Applied.

Research on walking tours:

Research and engage with relevant literature concerning place and walking theory and walking tour methodology to situate the walking tour project in an ongoing dialogue regarding such initiatives. In this initial step of the process the goal was to familiarize ourselves with the nature of the project, in this case, historical walking tours. In terms of research it was important to look at other examples and case studies of walking tours that had already been implemented within other municipalities. Looking at examples of previous walking tours such as Boston’s “Freedom Trail” and the Historical walking tour in Portland allowed us to compare and contrast the pros and cons of each one and thus tailor the logistics of “Walking in the Streets” to match the specific community for which it was being designed i.e. Lewiston-Auburn.

Survey and Results:

Send out community engaged survey including possible topics for future signs and additional considerations that the community may want to include in the narrative. Our survey was released in hopes of gaining insight into what the greater Lewiston/Auburn communities would like to take away from the walking tour. Gaining community insight on topics, structure and format will aid in the production of a tour that is inclusive, interesting, informative and successful. The survey was sent out in a press release in the Sun Journal, but was also highly advertised through both Museum LA and Grow LA through various emails and social media posts. Although the construction of the survey was not a task of ours, a successful survey includes these elements:

1. Accessible language
2. Considerate of the length of the survey
3. Unbiased questions
4. Inclusive content
On February 2nd, 2018 all survey result were downloaded and condensed into an excel sheet through which we modified and analyzed. The survey included five questions which addressed specifics and structure of the walking tour. Gaining community insight will hopefully produce a tour which is inclusive, accessible, captivating and successful.

**How We Began to Analyze the Data:**

This survey is structured in a way in which aims to gain community preferences on potential sign topics and general tour structure. Responses are recorded by the numbers one through six which are utilized to gauge community interest and preferences

- 6= I am Not Familiar With This Topic
- 5= Do Not Include This Topic
- 4= Low Priority
- 3= Medium Priority
- 2= High Priority
- 1= Very High Priority

The number of usable responses varies per question. We defined useable responses under specific criteria. We discounted all responses which correspond to the number six or respondents who didn’t have enough knowledge to accurately respond to the question. These were regarded as inconclusive responses who would ultimately have no impact in our final results of community preferences. Additionally, some survey respondents left parts of questions blank in which we also discounted their responses in our final data analysis. This was our attempt to condense the data into the most useful and informative format as possible. Our data was then sorted by question and level of priority which is shown in the chart below. The charts are broken down per question. Each question has various subquestion which include different topic preferences for signs to appear along the walking tour.

The average unit was found by adding up the total number of 1’s, 2’s, 3’s, 4’s and 5’ and then diving that sum by the total number of responses we had for that particular question. The chart below also includes a count of each specific response. This number was accurately recorded by counting up the total number of votes each response received. Depending on results, we averaged the responses per subquestion and then sorted them from lowest average (highest priority) to highest average (lowest priority).
Question 2 Analysis:

The survey begins with question two which asks participants to rank priority of different potential sign topics. This question is structured with sub questions of 27 different social, industrial, environmental historical topics in which may potentially comprise the tour. Beneath each subquestion, respondents are tasked to prioritize each general sign topic with the numbers one through six to signify a different level of priority. Each response aims to gauge community interest and their desire for the corresponding topic. Figure 1 displays the manipulated data of the 20 highest priority topics of question two. Priority is displayed from left to right, with the lowest average representing the highest priority. Beneath the averages in Figure 1 is the number total of “1”, “2”, “3,” “4,” “5” responses recorded per sub question. The last row of Figure 1 records the count, meaning the total number of usable responses per question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile Mills</th>
<th>Grand Trunk</th>
<th>Little Canada</th>
<th>Logging Drives/ Sawmills</th>
<th>Veterans Park/War Histories</th>
<th>Laurel Hill</th>
<th>Native American History</th>
<th>History of River s</th>
<th>Irish Par che s</th>
<th>LLB ean</th>
<th>Early Lumb er/text ile mills</th>
<th>Geo logy of Gre at Falls</th>
<th>Knight House/Downing Shoe Shop</th>
<th>Veterans Park/War Histories</th>
<th>Hydro Power</th>
<th>Music Hall/ Court House</th>
<th>Kennedy Park</th>
<th>Marsden Huntley</th>
<th>Haymarket square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: 75</td>
<td>1: 52</td>
<td>1: 52</td>
<td>1: 47</td>
<td>1: 34</td>
<td>1: 38</td>
<td>1: 38</td>
<td>1: 27</td>
<td>1: 29</td>
<td>1: 24</td>
<td>1: 31</td>
<td>1: 19</td>
<td>1: 10</td>
<td>1: 9</td>
<td>1: 21</td>
<td>1: 17</td>
<td>1: 10</td>
<td>1: 10</td>
<td>1: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 0</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 5</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 1</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
<td>5: 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Question 2: The L/A History Trail is considering several topics for inclusion in the historical walking tour. How much of a priority should each topic be given?

Given the synthesis and break down the of data found within Figure 1 a graph was made to visualize community topic preferences. To create this graph we subtracted 5 from the averages
shown in Figure 1. The highest priority sign now has the highest average, so in this case “1” corresponds to low priority and 5 corresponded to high priority.

Textile Mills: 3.6
Grand Trunk Depot: 3.28
Little Canada: 3.27
Logging Drives/Sawmills: 3.2
Veteran Park/War Histories: 3.17
Lorell Hills/Falls: 3.07
Native American History: 2.9
History of River: 2.89
Irish Patches: 2.88
LL Bean: 2.86
Early Lumber: 2.75

Figure 2. The graph above represents the top 11 community topic preferences. Through which we then utilized to narrow our search and inform our group topic distribution.

**Question 3: Optional opportunity to fill in additional desired sign topics**

In addition to the preselected survey questions and predetermined sign topics, question three allowed participants the opportunity to submit sign topics which were not found in question two on the survey. This was added to the survey to provide the community with a greater voice in the creation of this project. A correlated list of topics that were repeated more than once can found below. This further informed our sign creation topic list and guided our research.

- General History of Lisbon Street
- Shoe Industry/Shoe Strike of 1937
- Various Churches (St. Peter Basilica, etc.)
- Thorncrag
- Canals
- Franco-American History
- Hospitals
- Auburn Fire 1933
- Agricultural History
- Bates
Question 4 and 5: Walking Tour Length and Sign Distance

A similar process occurred when analyzing survey question four and five which addressed the walking tours optimal length and distance. Question 3 addressed the desired walking distance between each sign. The question was structured in a similar format with the use of the numbers 1-6 however instead of level of priority the numbers correspond to time length. The number 6 corresponded to an inability to respond to the question due to a lack of prior knowledge. We therefore eliminated all sixes before analyzing the data and calculating the averages. The community input and question results are found in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 Minute</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Minutes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Minutes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 Minutes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Mins</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. The number of responses for each length between signs.

Figure 4. Community Preferences on Maximum Distance Between Each Sign.
Survey results showed that 44 percent of participants were in favor of signs that are more than 4 minutes walking distance apart.

**Question 5: Community Preference on Total Walking Tour Length**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walking Distance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1= Less Than 20 Minutes</td>
<td>1:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= 20-30 Minutes</td>
<td>2=42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3= 30-40 Minutes</td>
<td>3=0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4= More Than 40 Minutes</td>
<td>4=67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4. Desired Total Length of Tour**

At large, the Lewiston/Auburn community preferred a longer tour with signs at a greater distance from each other. The information collected through this survey effectively informs the production and contents of our walking tour.
How to Make a Sign: The Process

The following characteristics addressed serve as a set of parameters for the construction of the signs. The first five were proposed as a result of our initial meeting with our community partners and act as an iterative guide in the sign making process (Figure 7.). The sixth however, was proposed as a result of the “sign making process itself”. Inclusivity was proposed as a result of the fact that as we started making signs we came to realize that behind every individual sign there were a multitude of different narratives and stories that composed each topic. With this in mind we decided that a truly authentic sign would be one where all perspectives were at least considered, and where all voices were heard. At the very least we decided that each sign should acknowledge the fact that the 150 word narrative we represent is but one way of telling a story and that although the perspective we represent may be singular in nature, that is not to say that it is the only valid perspective out there. All six characteristics are uncompromisable and transcend all signs regardless of topic or place. They can be thought of as the “skeleton” or underlying structure of each sign. Throughout the sign making process we often returned to these as a base checklist in sign making.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a finished sign:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 150 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Accessible language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Memorable and engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Visually captivating/aesthetically pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Historically Accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Inclusive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Parameters of Sign.

In this section we will discuss the ‘big picture’ process of the project as a whole. Using Figure 8. as a visual representation from which to ground our discussion of the process, we will move through every stage in our approach. From initial stages fundamental to the development of the project to the final deliverable themselves i.e. the signs.
Figure 8. Depiction of overall process.

Our overall process can be broken down in four major parts. Each part is represented by a set of light blue numbers as shown in Figure 8. It is important to note that each number or “part” of the process is a dialogue between a variety of smaller subsections that remain consistent with a specific idea and or particular step in the process. The subsections of each part are represented as the smaller multi-colored (Dark blue, and Orange) bubbles which themselves cohere to specific steps among the process. These individual “parts” of the process are connected by the overarching ideas they represent. Collectively they make up each of the four parts of the process. Each part will be elaborated on further but for now it is crucial to know that the first part of the process is responsible for establishing the foundations of the project as a whole. Part 2 is where the initial research is done and the first sign draft is created. Part 3 is where the sign is sent out for community feedback and the editing process for the construction of the second draft begins. Part four can be seen as the finalizing of the second draft and the final round of editing, where the official sign deliverable is produced.

**Part 1 Establishing the Foundations**

In phase one the intention was to gauge the overall nature of the project. In this phase we laid the foundational groundwork from which the rest of the project will be further developed (Figure 9.). The initial communication was with community partners. The point here was to discuss the parameters of the project; in our case we received some initial input on specific sign topics that
Grow L/A and Museum L/A thought were fit for representing the L/A community as a whole. Furthermore, we discussed other logistics and expectations for the “Museum in the Streets” project; we set certain criteria that had to be met consistently within each sign regardless of topic. Overall the initial meeting with our community partner allowed us to contextualize ourselves within the larger scope of the project and begin from there. If the first part of phase one included a consideration of the internal aspirations for the project, then the second part served as a way to counter balance that by aiming to collect input from external participants, i.e. the greater L/A community. In order to do this we sent out a community wide online survey consisting of a broad sample of questions ranging from general topics to be considered for sign making, to more specific instances and stories that should be told, refer to Figure 2 for further clarification. Along with the considerations from our community partners as well as the community we were working in, we looked to scholarly examples of other walking tours throughout the country, specifically Boston’s Freedom Trail, and Portland’s walking tour. This consultation of the written history present on walking tours further contextualized our project within a larger conversation of the different representations of Public History. Simply put, part 1 of the process:

A) Collected input from our community partners (meeting)
B) Collected input from the community (survey results)
C) Contextualized the project within a larger historical framework (written history).

The information from A,B, and C were all cross referenced and ultimately filtered down to a specific set of topics according to a gradient of importance.

Figure 9. Shows the dialogue among the different aspects of “part 1” of the process.

Part 2 Research: First draft sign creation

With the parameters of the project in place, we would now move to the second phase of the project (Figure 10). It is in part 2 where the actual sign making process starts to take place. This
Part consists of two smaller subsections representative of steps as seen in Figure 3:

A) Data collection
B) Critical steps

The first step in the creation of the first draft is to choose one of the topics that were decided upon during Part 1 of the overall approach and begin to research the topic. Different topics will require different approaches to the research methods. One might consider contacting a professor or an expert in the field, if a topic pertains to something more academic in nature such as Ecology, or Geology. In another vein one might also consider reaching out to community members for personal stories, and primary accounts of historical instances. Regardless how you approach step A, the important thing to keep in mind is that this is simply the part of the process where one compiles all of the research on the predetermined sign topic. Once the research for the sign topic has been done it will be put through a set of critical steps which act as a filter to further condense the research in regards to what is relevant and what is not relevant in the sign creation process. These “critical steps” are displayed in Figure 13; however, the specifics of each critical step will be discussed further in “How to Make a Sign: Applied.” The critical steps guide you through the process of creating the first draft of a sign; after going through these steps one should have a concise first draft of the historical signs. Overall, Part 2 of the process moves into the more specific aspects of the approaches to signmaking.

![Figure 10. Shows the dialogue among the different aspects of “part 2” of the process.](image)

**Part 3** Editing: Second Draft Creation

This part of the process (Figure 11.) is where we further refine the first draft we produced in the earlier phases of the sign making process. In this part of the process we take our first draft and send it directly to our community partners along with a set of questions and considerations that may serve as a guide when giving feedback on the first drafts. Once we get the annotated copies of our draft back, we then sift through the information offered by our community partners and further consider the changes that need to be made in order to produce the second draft.
**Part 4** Finalizing: Creating a Deliverable

The final part of the sign making process is essentially an extension of the previous part. In this part of the process the sign is further edited and finalized by running it through the same set of “critical steps” that were mentioned in Part 2 (Figure 12.). It is important to note that Parts 3 and 4 of the process can be repeated several times and different copies of first and second draft may be sent not only to our community partners but also to other members of the communities which the sign’s story seek to represent. Once all voices, edits, and drafts are taken into consideration, a final copy of the sign draft will be produced and handed over to our community partners for distribution.

These four phases compose the overall approach we took in creating the signs for our project. In the coming sections we will specify some of the more concrete steps we took in the creation/editing of each sign.
How to Make a Sign: Applied

The methodological approach to making signs that our group established lent itself to providing our community partners with sign drafts that deliberately accounted for the risks to telling public history and the necessary inclusivity. As outlined in the methodology section above, this process involved a series of steps with iterative dialogues within each to best acknowledge the potential risks in public history. It is helpful here to address specifically the different elements within our process of making a sign in order to display the care and nuance that such a feat as this project requires. In order to explicate such, it is helpful to outline our work on the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign as it was filtered through our careful sign making approach.

The Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign was cited by our Community Partners as well as by the respondents to the L/A survey at our entry into this project as one sign that would be a helpful and important history to begin with. As such, our group worked together to research across a variety of sources, and compiled a significant amount of research with which we could begin to sift through in order to create the first draft of the sign. As identified in Figure 8, our general process of sign making is iterative and cyclical, with deeper introspection appearing in multiple steps as the consideration of “critical steps.” Figure 13, the critical steps section, is one that we identified as crucial for its nature as a deliberate acknowledgment of the necessity of inclusivity. In our process of making the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign, the filtering of the content we found through the critical steps component of our methodology was an extensive step (as it would be for all signs to follow).
1. Who Will This Matter To?

The first critical step that we identified as having primary significance is the question of “Who will [the content/topic of the sign] matter to?” We considered this question as a starting point to our critical points because it most directly acknowledges what is at risk and, to that point, how that risk translates to and affects individual lives. In regard to the Androscoggin River pollution, we identified a few initial groups to consider that may be affected by the content of the sign, identified in Figure 14.

As observed in Figure 14, we identified two relevant components to the question of “Who Will this Matter to?:” the first is the obvious consideration: those communities that are inherently implicated. However, there also exists the important consideration for those communities that may not come to mind as immediately, though are nonetheless just as important to consider, a category which we distinguished as: “Communities not as obviously affected but still implicated.” To the former, “Communities Inherently Implicated,” we initially identified three major groups that could be either positively or negatively affected by the content of the sign: Paper mills (due to their role in the pollution), Recreational Activists (due to their renewed ability to engage in recreational activities following the Clean Air Act), and generally Homeowners and Business along the river (for their direct and inevitable contact with the river). In regard to “Communities not as obviously affected but still implicated,” we initially identified just three, the Androscoggin Land Trust, L/A Community Members who interact with the river daily, and the Ecosystem of the River, with the caveat that there likely exist many more, and in further considerations and iterations of this sign these groups may become more clear. This initial consideration of those individuals and communities that are implicated in the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign then informed our work as we continued through to the next step in the process of critical steps.
2. Cross Reference Information and Sources

Utilizing our knowledge of who our topic matters to, we then begin to conduct accurate and extensive research. Acknowledging that our topic impacts various different people, ecosystems and environments is the first step of informing our research. We cater our research to each implicated group to ensure that an accurate and complete story is told. Through the scope of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign, a recognition of the homeowners and residents directly on the river most predominantly direct our research. We utilized multiple different platform and mediums to ensure that the entire story is told. The Bates College Library along with Muskie Archives were integral in providing us with first hand stories and facts on the effects of the river and its extensive pollution. We examined news articles from the Sun Journal, both past and present, for pictures and governmental/public information. Our involved Google searches after a breadth of information which was then utilized as background and base knowledge. This extensive and general knowledge was expanded upon with the help of the Androscoggin Historical Society which provided us with countless pictures, stories, quotes and facts which offered specific and detailed first hand accounts. Figure 15 highlights this involved process and the specific steps required to produce the most inclusive, accurate and iterative sign possible.
Figure 15. The First Critical Step Consideration applied to the Androscoggin River Pollution and Restoration Sign

3. Accounting for Politics

After assessing the first two parts to the critical steps process, who is implicated in the sign content as well as the cross referencing of information to be included in the sign, we then moved on to “Accounting for Politics” that may appear in the sign. It is important here to note the wording that we chose deliberately in approaching this aspect of sign making, for we aimed to present not a sign that was politically neutral (if such an aim is possible), but rather to acknowledge the layers and complexities of politics that may be involved in a sign’s content and topic. Figure 16, below, displays our identification of politics at play in a discussion of the pollution and restoration of the Androscoggin River.

As displayed in Figure 16, we identified two elements in the process of accounting for politics that proved useful in conceptualizing the impacts and workings of politics in various sign topics. The first was that of “On-Going Narratives,” or those often controversial and conflicting ideas that exist about a certain history. In regard to the Androscoggin River, and in particular the section of which that runs throughout Lewiston and Auburn, the narratives that have surrounded and continue to surround the river are many. There are ideations of the river as sustenance (with reference to fishing and hunting), the river as machine (with reference to industry), the river as a recreational hub, the association of the river and its polluted history with the “Dirty Lew,” and the romanticization of the river. Yet, these are just some of many possible narratives that exist or have existed about the Androscoggin River; as there likely exist many more narratives that we are not able to account for or even know about, we also recognized the importance of a box with
an ellipses to suggest all that we, in our positioning as Bates students and other relevant statuses, do not know. The second element in our process of accounting for politics in the topics and content of our signs was considering the “Direct Implications” of and to politics that the sign we produce may have. In this category, we identified the possibilities of community attitude changes, Environmental work and sustainability’s place in the community, legislative change, and the meaning of implicating Bates College in making major change in Lewiston/Auburn (with reference to Bates Alum Edmund Muskie’s role in the Clean Water Act). Considering the way these many elements engage with and overlap with each other is an incredibly important step in producing signs that are inclusive, especially in the face of the current polarized political climate.

Figure 16. The Third Critical Step Consideration applied to the Androscoggin River Pollution and Restoration Sign.

4. Contact Member of Community Who is Implicated or Contact an Expert in the Field

The third step of our “Critical Steps” process is that of contacting a member of the Community implicated and/or an expert in the field of the topic that we are considering, as depicted in Figure 17. In the case of the Androscoggin River, we identified two possible groups as “Experts in the Field;” the Androscoggin Land Trust and the Androscoggin Historical Society. These groups provided information as well as photos that were crucial to our making of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign. In regard to the subsection of “Member of the Community Implicated,” the Androscoggin River is one such topic that this category is quite
large. Generally, we identified that “Members of the L/A Community Who Experienced the Pollution” was a sufficient group with which to begin considering this stage of our Critical Steps, with the recognition that this category was both potentially overbroad as well as potentially underinclusive and thus this step will need further attention in later cycles of this step in the sign making process.

Figure 17. The Fourth Critical Step Consideration applied to the Androscoggin River Pollution and Restoration Sign.

5. Engage in Larger Group Conversations About Sign Topic Material and Content

The final step to our process of filtering each sign through the Critical Steps point in our larger more general sign approach, is engaging in larger group conversations about the research and material that we have gathered throughout the process. Similar to the previous points in our Critical steps component, this aspect of the process has again two core elements: a conversation within our Bates Group about the sign content material as well as a conversation with our community partners about the sign content material. These steps, although we distinguish them to make clear the internal and external processes of making a sign, do indeed inform one another as we filter each sign through them. Connected to and included in both conversations, we identified a categorical way to distinguish various features of different topics, that being those elements of signs that must appear, elements that should appear, and elements that could appear. Figure 18 below displays the ways in which these elements are all connected to each conversation about each sign:
Figure 18. The Fourth Critical Step Consideration that will impact every sign.

This particular steps process applied to the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign helps in portraying the particularities in the process of identifying elements that must, should, or could appear on a sign. Figure 19, below, displays various parts of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration story as they fall into each category:

**Must vs. Should vs. Could**

**MUST APPEAR**
- Edmund Muskie's Story
- Photos of Pollution
- The Clean Water Act
- The Magnitude and Effects of Pollution

**SHOULD APPEAR**
- Detailed/Personal Anecdotes
- Complexity/Scope of Issue
- Quotes

**COULD APPEAR**
- Chemicals Released into River
- New Industry (Born with Clean Water Act)
- Very Specific Details or Stories

Figure 19. The important elements within the Fourth Critical Step consideration applied to the Androscoggin River Pollution and Restoration Sign.

We approached these perhaps seemingly arbitrary distinctions in the following way: elements that *must* appear on a sign are those that, regardless of word count concerns, cannot be cut or deleted from the sign; elements that *should* appear on a sign are those that ideally will not be cut
in a situation where the sign is over 150 words, however if need be, may be cut over those elements that must appear; finally, elements that could appear are those elements that may indeed add aesthetic or interesting detail to the sign, however, are not necessary to the sign’s story and thus will be the first elements to be cut in the scenario that a sign draft is over the 150-word count. As displayed in Figure 19, we identified must appear elements of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign as Edmund Muskie’s story, photographs of the pollution, the Clean Water Act, and the general magnitude and effects of the pollution. Elements that were categorized in the should appear section were then identified as detailed/personal anecdotes, the complexity/specifies of an issue, and historical quotes about the Androscoggin River. Finally, elements that were identified as belonging in the could appear category, elements that unfortunately were indeed cut from the second draft of the sign, were the following: the specific chemicals released into the river, the idea of a new industry born with the clean water act, and other very specific details or stories about the story of the Androscoggin pollution and restoration. It is important to note here that the process of identifying the various elements of signs as belonging in any of these categories relies upon previous steps in the critical steps process, as our identification of importance of elements in specific histories must be informed by all of the previously considered elements of the specific history (the communities implicated, the accurate information, the politics involved, etc.).

6. Creating a Sign Draft

After taking each sign topic through the various steps identified in our critical steps process, we can then present a draft of a sign that has at least the foundation of inclusivity. As has been established, the critical steps are not only one part of the larger approach to making sign, but rather are a repeated process through which each sign and sign draft can and indeed should go through a multitude of times. In the case of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign, we were able to develop an initial draft after going through each of the critical steps outlined above. This initial draft then continued down the general process of making a sign outlined above to be assessed by our community partners, and then was subject to the critical steps once again in combination with recommendations from our community partners, all coalescing into the creation of a second draft. A visual comparison of the changes that occurred between the two drafts is displayed below in Figure 20:
It's hard to believe that the river in front of you was once so polluted that the stench alone would make people sick. This pollution affected everyone within Lewiston and Auburn, from those who had only a passing relationship with it to those who were forced to live on the riverbanks. The paper mills along the Androscoggin polluted the river with daily discharges, from sewage to sulfite, accounting for 92 percent of the total pollution. The waste was abundant, and destructive to both the aesthetic appearance of the river and the river's aquatic life. Years of citizen frustration and community engagement combined with a love for the river prompted Maine Senator Edmund Muskie to spearhead legislation, leading to the Clean Water Act of 1972. As a result, the river in front of you today has been partially restored to its original state and supports most natural wildlife and recreational activities.

Figure 10 clearly displays the components that changed in between the first and second drafts of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign. Due to the comments that we received from our community partners, as well as the additional cycle through our above outlined process of critical steps, there were elements that were both added to and taken away from the first draft of the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign to create the second draft. Generally, these components were the change in tone, anecdotal pieces, and more specific details. In regard to the change in tone, we received feedback from our community partners that asked for this, as well as were able to re-filter the sign through in particular the “Accounting For Politics” step within the critical steps, to consider how a change of tone should occur. Similarly, the anecdotal elements as well as the inclusion of more details were both requested by our community partners, along with informed by our critical steps (in particular those of “Who does this matter to?” and “Contacting Members of Community Implicated”).

The process of making sign that we have outlined and then applied to the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign is as multifaceted as it is iterative. In this vein, it is important to note that the way the critical steps applied to the Androscoggin River pollution and restoration sign is not the same way in which they will apply to other sign topics. That is, what we have attempted to establish with our approach to sign making is a process that can apply to the wide variety of sign topics that are available for the Lewiston/Auburn Walking Tour, and thus, the way in which each diverse sign filters through will vary dependent upon content and context. For example, a sign that is about a particular indigenous history will have a very different community

Draft 1

Draft 2

Like so many American Rivers that fueled the Industrial Revolution, the Androscoggin has a complex history. Once considered one of the “Top Ten” most polluted rivers in the country, the Lewiston/Auburn landscape has played a critical role in shaping 1970's environmental legislation that remains important today.

The paper mills along the Androscoggin accounted for the majority of the total pollution with discharges of anything from sewage to sulfite. The pollution of the river resulted in paint peeling off of houses, fish dying, household silverware tarnishing overnight, and a smell that traveled miles. The river was said to be “too thick to paddle, too thin to plow.”

One local resident, Edmund Muskie, raised in Rumford, alumnus of Bates, and Maine Senator, spearheaded legislation leading to the Clean Water Act of 1972.

As a result, the river in front of you today has been partially restored to its original state and supports most natural wildlife and recreational activities.
contact than a sign that is about the geology of the Androscoggin, and it is important to recognize these differences of application of our sign process. Nonetheless, our objective of making a process for making signs that is iterative, repeatable, participatory, and thorough, will hopefully contribute greatly to the content of all signs, regardless of topic, remaining inclusive.

**Recommendations for Next Steps**

**Sign Drafts**

1. Sign generation
   a. Number of signs created
   b. Topics of each sign
   c. Inclusivity of signs
   d. Accuracy of signs

In our work with our community partners Grow L+A and Museum L/A, we have produced 15 drafts of 150-word signs that each tell a unique history of Lewiston and Auburn. The signs that we have generated thus far include the following topics: the pollution and restoration of the Androscoggin River, L.L. Bean’s Auburn Store, Roak Block, Little Canada, Geology of the Falls, Veterans Memorial Park, Hydropower, Grand Trunk Depot, Ecology, Kennedy Park, Knight House, Marsden Hartley, City Hall, Peck’s Department Store, and Haymarket Square. The text for these signs can be found in Appendix 1, however, it is important to note that as our methodological approach to creating signs has a strong emphasis on the iterative nature of this process of sign making, the signs that have been created are not yet final versions, but rather are still able to be put through the outlined process in the “How to Make a Sign: The Process” section. This outlined process is itself a result, as it provides a map with which more signs can be created in an inclusive and deliberate way.

**Sign Placement**

Create a virtual walking tour on google maps to consider placement of each sign in order to inform the physical walking tour. This will depend upon the content and topic of each sign as the process moves forward. (Appendix 3.)

**Photos**
Further photos need to be selected for each sign. Photos which we have selected for the sign drafts we have made are included in the “Downtown LA River History Tour” Google document along with the location where they can be found (Appendix 2).
References Cited


Appendix

1. Sign Drafts (all referenced material cited in “Downtown LA River History Tour” Google doc)

   a. Androscoggin River Pollution and Restoration (Second Draft)

   Like so many American Rivers that fueled the Industrial Revolution, the Androscoggin has a complex history. Once considered one of the “Top Ten” most polluted rivers in the country, the Lewiston/Auburn landscape has played a critical role in shaping 1970’s environmental legislation that remains important today. The paper mills along the Androscoggin accounted for the majority of the total pollution with discharges of anything from sewage to sulfite. The pollution of the river resulted in paint peeling off of houses, fish dying, household silverware tarnishing overnight, and a smell that traveled miles. The river was said to be “too thick to paddle, too thin to plow.” One local resident, Edmund Muskie, raised in Rumford, alumnus of Bates, and Maine Senator, spearheaded legislation leading to the Clean Water Act of 1972. As a result, the river in front of you today has been partially restored to its original state and supports most natural wildlife and recreational activities. Word count: 156

   b. Roak Block (First Draft)

   A growing demand for shoes during the Civil War prompted Jacob Roak’s involvement in the shoe industry. Jacob Roak, Ara Cushman, Jeremiah Dingley and others strived to build a “a first-rate shoe manufacturing center” to support the already established shoe industry in Auburn. Roak Block, located on Main Street in Auburn, was built in 1871-72 to support the manufacturing and commercial production of shoes. Structurally the building consists of 3-½ floors with the ground floor serving as retail storefront while the upper floors were used for the manufacturing of shoes. Each of those involved in the design and construction of the building were shoe manufacturers who invested and owned a vertical section of structure. By the 19th century the manufacturing of shoes became the dominant industry and Auburn was considered “the shoe capital of the world”. It is recorded, “In 1917 one factory in auburn was producing 75 percent of the world’s supply of white canvas shoes”. Word count: 157

   c. L.L. Bean Store in Auburn (First Draft)
Leon Leonwood Bean, founder of the Maine company “L.L.Bean,” grew up in Southern Maine. He began his career in Freeport, ME, learning merchantry; however, in 1902, his work moved South to W. H. Moody’s shoe store at 74 Maine Street in Auburn, ME. Soon, with the Moody’s permission, Bean began to sell pants he had bought from his brother’s store over the counter, allowing him to eventually purchase a carriage with “The L.L. Bean Pant Store” painted on the side. By 1904, the store was called “Bean Brothers,” and it successfully operated for almost a decade. L.L. Bean is known now in its longtime Freeport location, but it remains locally rooted, as the famous “Maine Hunting Shoe” rubber-sole production happens right here in a Lewiston factory. A Brunswick factory produces the leather work and stitching, and together, the factories produce 1,500 pairs of boots daily. Word count: 145

d. Androscoggin River Geology (First Draft)

The geologic history of the Great Falls is a long and interesting one. These jagged rocky outcrops have long stood the testament of time, changing very little over millions of years. What we call the Great Falls today, is actually a combination of 3 distinct rock formations. The oldest rocks were laid down from 435 to 420 million years ago as continents collided! Over time, they slowly metamorphosed and formed what is known as the “Sangerville Formation.” Ranging from light green to a dark grey, they can be found along the Southern and Northern areas of the Falls. Along the Southern and Eastern patches, you will find granite. These dense, white rocks belong to the “Sebago Formation” and are the main reason behind the falls, acting as a natural damn. The most recent change to the falls happened with the opening of the Atlantic ocean over 180 million years ago when rising magma created a Basalt dyke near what is now the trestle bridge. Word count: 164
e. **Little Canada (First Draft)**

In the 1860’s Lewiston became a destination for people far and wide. French-Canadian immigrants were enticed by rumors of high wages. Although initially meant to be a temporary home, Lewiston quickly became a permanent home for many as wages were not as promised. French-Canadian immigrants resided in pockets of Lewiston named “Little Canada” which were predominantly stationed along the banks of the Androscoggin. Young Franco children attended same schools and churches, resided in the same neighborhoods and rarely wondered outside the confines of “Little Canada”. With the turn of the 20th century, the United States saw an increased push towards nationalism as various immigrant groups felt pressure to assimilate to American norms. In 1919, the Maine States Legislator proclaimed it illegal to speak French in public schools. Children were then socialized to speak English and to hide their French accent in hopes of leading a successful life. Word Count: 149

f. **Grand Trunk Depot (First Draft)**

The Grand Trunk Station is a longstanding monument of Lewiston/Auburn’s social and industrial history. Around the time of the Civil War Lewiston’s economy was booming as many Canadians immigrated to the area in search of a stable job with high wages. The Grand Trunk Station was constructed to connect Lewiston and Auburn to the Canadian National Railway as it quickly became the arrival point of thousands of Canadian Immigrants which lead to its name of “Ellis Island”. Between 1920 and 1939 more than 80 percent of Lewiston’s French-Canadian immigrants arrived through the Grand Trunk Station. After years of intensive use, the rail service eventually stopped as Lewiston’s economy began to slow. For decades the once bustling station was left abandoned and decaying. The remaining building is recognizable as a train station but is now used for educational, recreational and historical purposes. Word Count: 143

g. **Veterans Memorial Park (First Draft)**

Once Heritage park, and before that, a popular fishing spot for Indigenous Peoples, in front of you now stands a treasured part of the L/A community: Veterans Memorial Park. Dedicated in September of 2004, this park is the culmination of efforts from the L/A veterans council garnering donations and sponsorships from individuals, businesses, and organizations. The park began
with the donation of six flag poles, representing five military branches and POW/MIA. The jeep that stands here now has been used in many wars and conflicts, and the name stones each have 216 names. The marble Honor Roll memorializes Lewiston High School students who fought for the United States defense during World Wars; originally erected in 1919 by a Lewiston High School class, it was moved here in 2005. Veterans Memorial Park is an important remembrance of brave members of the Lewiston/Auburn communities, both past and present. Word Count: 150

**h. The History of Hydroelectric Power in L/A (First Draft)**

The Androscoggin River’s great natural power has played a tremendous role in the development of the Lewiston Auburn communities. Historically, the river was always used as a source of sustenance, providing people with food, water among many other things. However, it didn’t take long for people to recognize the river’s tremendous potential for economic growth. The key factor at play were the falls you see before you. Lewiston Auburn’s Great Falls dropped from 1,245 feet being one of the steepest gradients of any river in Maine. Seeing the opportunity, Bostonian investors such as Benjamin E. Bates began funding canal building projects along the river’s banks so that the river’s hydroelectric power could be harnessed. Though funded by Bostonian entrepreneurs it was the Irish, and French Canadian communities that ultimately constructed the canals we see today. As a result Lewiston Auburn grew substantially in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Word Count: 150

**i. Ecology (First Draft)**

The banks of the Androscoggin River is home to a variety of plants and animals. If you take the time to walk slowly along its shores you will catch a glimpse of a once vast forest community known as “The Northern Hardwood Forests”. These forests are made up of a variety of different trees, the most common being White Pine, Hemlock, Red Maple, Paper Birch, and Sugar Maple. In the summer months, they provide shade and shelter for a variety of different creatures. From migrating birds such as blue throated warblers, to year long residents such as the Red-tailed Hawk. Along some of the more isolated parts of the river, one might even catch a glimpse of our most elusive animal-resident, the bald eagle! Although seemingly quiet, our rivershore is part of a vibrant ecological community! Word count: 150

**j. Kennedy Park (First Draft)**
Kennedy Park, originally “City Park,” was founded in the 1860s by The Franklin Water Power Company for the recreation of employees of the Textile Mills. In 1868, the park was deeded to Lewiston and the first bandstand/Gazebo, was constructed on the land. While the original bandstand was replaced in 1925, for more than 150 years a bandstand has stood in the park, serving as a focal point for numerous political rallies, musical events, and festivals. One such political rally was on the night of November 6, 1960, when Senator John F. Kennedy visited just before his presidential election. 14,000 people waited in freezing temperatures to hear him speak, and when he was delayed 3-hours, still more than 8,000 people waited for him. The park was named for Kennedy on December 3, 1963, shortly after his assassination. Today, Kennedy park and its famous bandstand continues to be a hotspot for music, festivals, and rallies. Word Count: 156

k. Marsden Hartley (First Draft)

Marsden Hartley, “The painter from Maine”, was born in 1877 in Lewiston, Maine. Marsden was born to immigrant parents from England seeking work in the Mills. Left to work in the Auburn shoe mill at 14, Marsden moved one year later to be with his family in Cleveland, Ohio where he began his art education at the Cleveland School of Art and continued at the New York School of Art. Originally named Edmund, Hartley changed his name to Marsden as a tribute to his step mother Martha Marsden. Inspired by artists of his time, like Picasso, Kandinsky and Cézanne along spending time in the Paris salon scene with Gertrude Stein, Marsden’s work portrayed both abstraction and realism. Moving back to Lewiston Maine in 1912, Marsden was discovered by Alfred Stieglitz who offered him his first solo exhibition in gallery 291 in NYC. Marsden died in 1943 in Maine. According to his wishes his ashes were spread over the Androscoggin River. Word Count: 160

l. City Hall (First Draft)

Prior to the City Hall building you see today, there were two previous buildings where City Hall bustle took place. City Hall offices were originally located in “Central Block” at the corner of Lisbon and Main Street. The burning of “Central Block” in 1870 prompted the construction of the second City Hall, at the corner of Park and Pine in 1870-72. This brick and granite gothic style building, designed by Mr. Meacham from Boston, MA, contained the police department, post office, and library on the first floor, prison in the basement, and a meeting hall which
could hold more than 2,000 people. Hosting a poultry show on January 7, 1890 a fire broke out burning the entire building in just 12 hours. In 1890-92 the construction of the slightly smaller present City Hall took place costing $180,298.40 to build. Though the interior has undergone multiple renovations, it still stands as City Hall today. Word Count: 156

**m. Knight House (First Draft)**

Named for Nathaniel Knight, “Knight House” stands as the oldest frame house in downtown Auburn, and is a typical example of houses built in the late 1700’s. Originally located on Cross Street near North River Road, about a mile from this current location, Knight House has been moved six times and had twelve different owners. The house was built by Caleb Lincoln, a revolutionary war veteran, in 1796, when Maine was still a part of the commonwealth of Massachusetts. It was sold to it’s twelfth owner Nathaniel Knight in 1864. The shoe shop, which is adjunct to the house was constructed in the 1790s, contains original tools and equipment that display the particulars of early shoemaking. Knight House, open for exploring during certain Lewiston and Auburn events such as the balloon festival, is also available for tours which can be booked through the Androscoggin Historical Society. Word Count: 146

**2. Google Doc Organization**

- Instructions on how to find suggested sign photos and where to find them in the community.
- In the google doc click on the folder titled “photos”
- Sign topics are labeled (e.g. Little Canada, Hydropower ect.) (a.)
- Then select the folder for which it is from in the Androscoggin Historical Society (e.g. “Lewiston Falls folder”) (b.)
- Then you will find the relevant photos we found in that location. (c.)

![Google Doc Organization](image)
3. **Map: Sign Locations**
   - Using google maps we created a virtual map of the walking tour.
   - [https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1nAkox8xqcgVFpl5_3hxIal1H81ZTjdue&ll=44.095817683816975%2C-70.22153550000002&z=15](https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1nAkox8xqcgVFpl5_3hxIal1H81ZTjdue&ll=44.095817683816975%2C-70.22153550000002&z=15)