



**Town of Athol  
Downtown Design Guidelines**

**Community Workshop  
March 12, 2024**



# Public Workshop: content

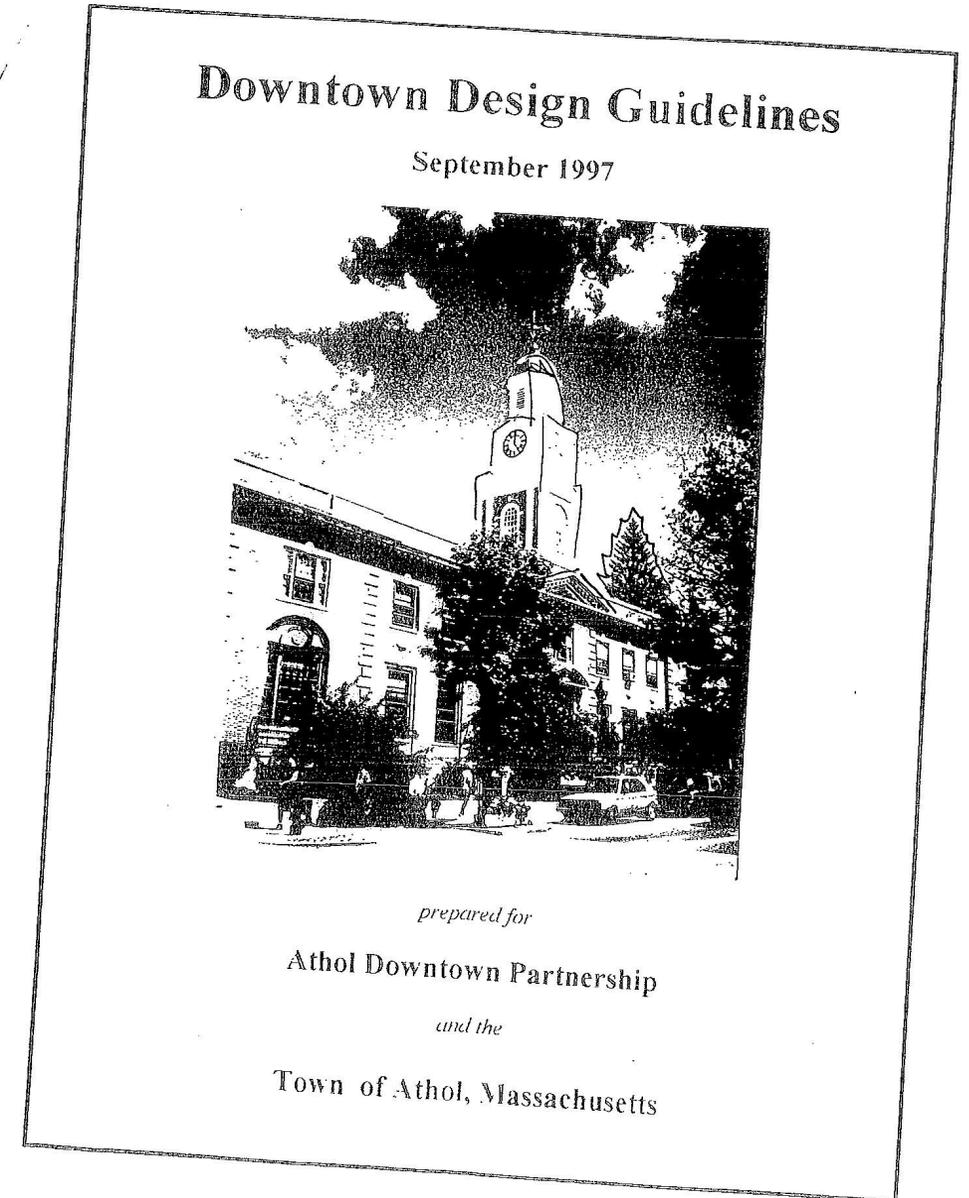
- ▶ Introduction to the **Team and the project.**
- ▶ Presentation of **Existing conditions.** **10 min**
- ▶ Presentation of **The City at Eye Level.** **10 min**
- ▶ **Activity 1!** Look and discuss the Main St. Elevations. **10 min**
- ▶ **Activity 2!** Rate the Main St. and a building. **25 min**
- ▶ **Activity 3!** Design your storefront. **25 min**
- ▶ **Close up.** **10 min**

# Timeline



# Existing Guidelines: Review

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Images
- ▶ Signs
- ▶ Entrances and Doorways
- ▶ Color
- ▶ Awnings & Canopies
- ▶ Maintenance & Structure
- ▶ Wood Restoration
- ▶ Building Equipment & Hardware
- ▶ ADA Standards
- ▶ Site Improvement
- ▶ Standards for Rehabilitation
- ▶ Example
- ▶ Glossary



# Existing Guidelines: Review

- ▶ *Identify the components that need to be brought up to current standards. This will include the current design review process.*
- ▶ Introduction (update)
- ▶ Images(update, add)
- ▶ Signs (update, add)
- ▶ Entrances and Doorways
- ▶ Awnings & Canopies
- ▶ Color (update)
- ▶ Maintenance & Structure (reorganize)
- ▶ Wood Restoration (reorganize)
- ▶ Building Equipment & Hardware (reorganize)
- ▶ ADA Standards (update)
- ▶ Site Improvement (reorganize based on topic, jurisdiction)
- ▶ Standards for Rehabilitation (update)
- ▶ Example (discuss!)
- ▶ Glossary (keep and add)

## Missing?

- ▶ Sustainability
- ▶ Infill Development
- ▶ Effective storefront design
- ▶ Effective storefront display
- ▶ Public Realm
- ▶ Town Infrastructure
- ▶ ??

# Existing Conditions



**1** 3-part storefront with sign band



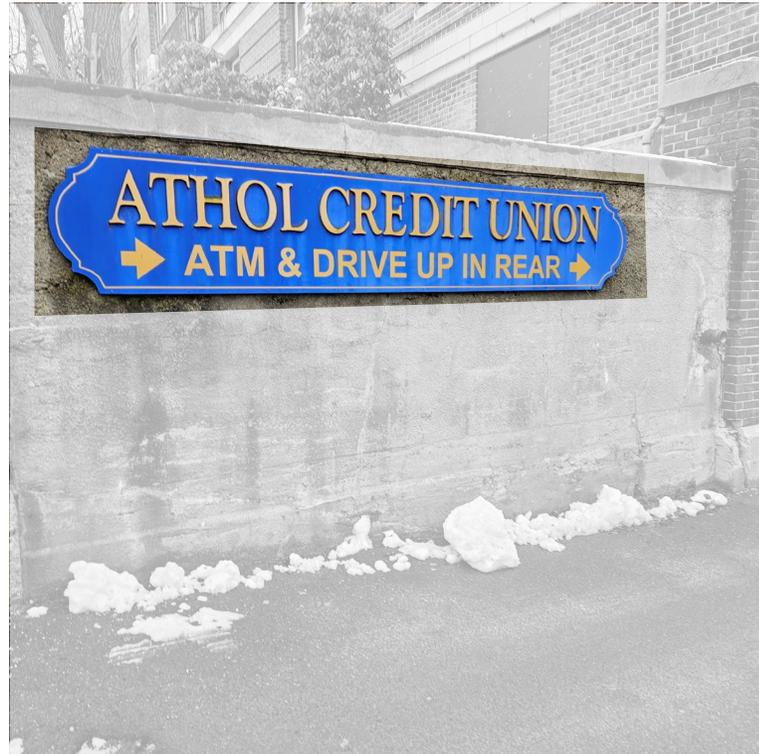
**2** Projecting signs



**3** Town lighting and crosswalk infrastructure

# Existing Conditions

## Signage for rear businesses

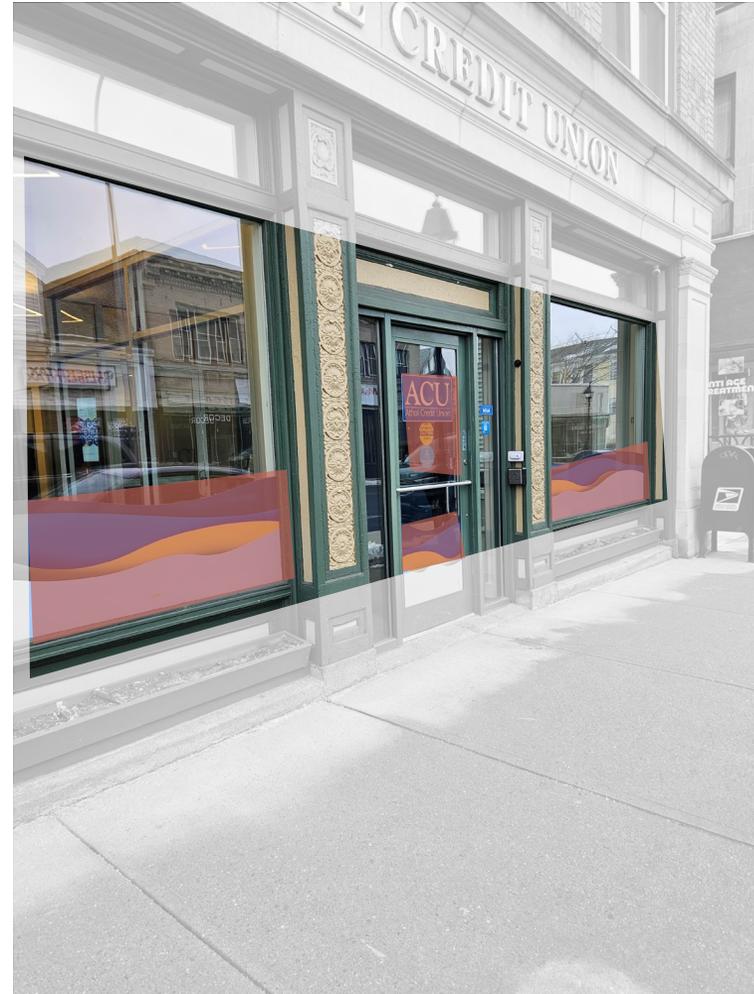


# Existing Conditions

## Percent of window coverage



Areas in red are obscured – what is the right percentage?



3/12/2024

# Existing Conditions

## Use of Sign Band



1 Temporary sign, placement not within the sign band



2 Proportion relative to sign band?



3 Proportion relative to sign band?



# Existing Conditions

## Storefronts



Recessed entry



Flat entry; flat window under overhang



Flat entry; protruding window; use of awnings

# Existing Conditions

## Window display



# Existing Conditions

## Town street furniture and materials



1 Concrete, brick, standard tree-grate



2 Bin, streetlight base, bench



# City at Eye Level



Illustration from *Soft City*. Author: David Sim

# City at Eye Level. Street

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and **healthy** street. What we want is **to improve** people's **life quality**.

**Health:** Physical, mental and social wellbeing.

**How to measure if a street is *healthy*.** We selected these 5 indicators.

- ▶ Comfort: wind, sun and sound.
- ▶ Level of maintenance.
- ▶ Activities, program: all day activity.
- ▶ Pleasure to walk.
- ▶ Places to stay: bench, garden, square or parks.

# City at Eye Level. Building

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street.  
What we want is **to improve** people's **life quality**.

## How can a storefront help to build a vibrant, active and healthy street?

We selected these 5 indicators.

- ▶ Culture Identity.
- ▶ Transparency: visual connection.
- ▶ Visual quality: is it attractive?.
- ▶ Hybrid zone: interaction between public and private.
- ▶ Is it ADA compliant? Is it inclusive?.

### Added Bonus!

- ▶ Improvement on local economy!
  - ▶ Social safety!
  - ▶ Creates community!

# City at Eye Level. Storefront

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street. What we want is **to improve people's life quality.**

► Culture identity.



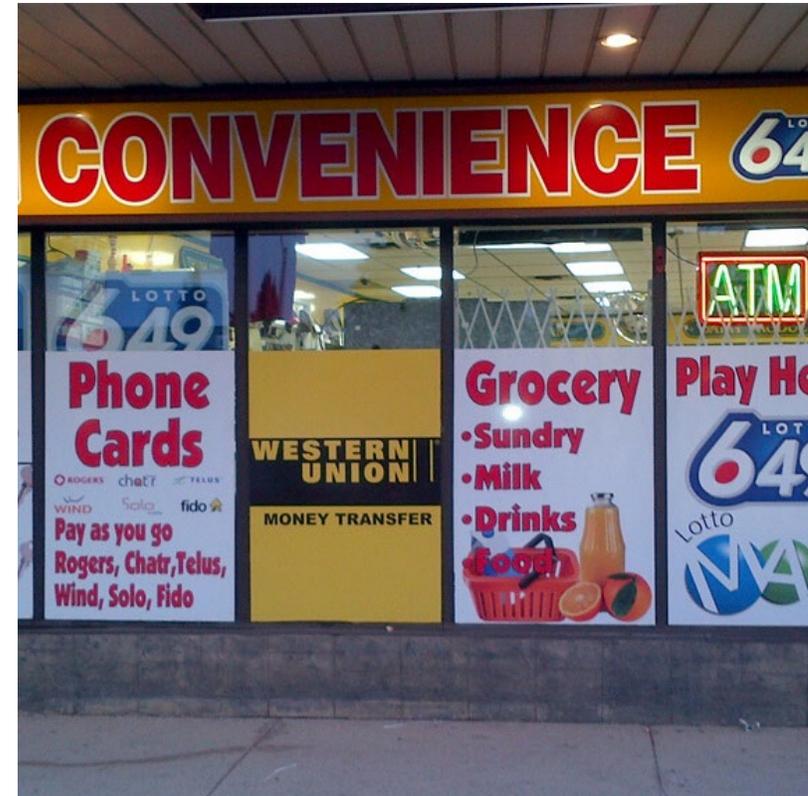
Source: Google images

# City at Eye Level. Storefront

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street. What we want is **to improve** people's life quality.

► **Transparency.**

- Natural light
- Safety
- Active and attractive



Source: Google image

# City at Eye Level. Storefront

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street. What we want is **to improve** people's **life quality**.

▶ Visual quality.

- Clean and clear.
- Materials and colors.
- Air conditioner.



# City at Eye Level. Storefront

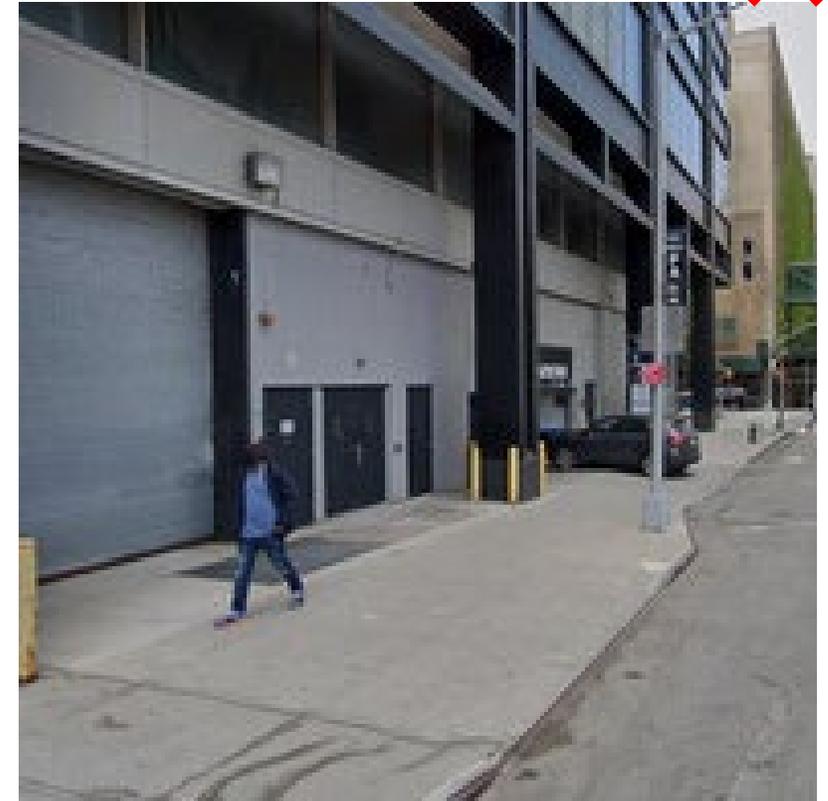
The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street. What we want is **to improve** people's life quality.



- ▶ Hybrid zone: Interaction between public and private



Source: <https://urbanspringtime.blogspot.com/>



Source: Google image

3/12/2024

# City at Eye Level. Storefront

The main goal is to achieve an **active, vibrant** and *healthy* street. What we want is **to improve** people's life quality.

▶ ADA compliant



Source: Google image

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# Activity 1: Look at Main st. Elevations.

Look for “The City at Eye Level” concepts:

- ▶ Cultural Identity
- ▶ Transparency
- ▶ Variety in building typologies
- ▶ Street first floor
- ▶ Materials and colors

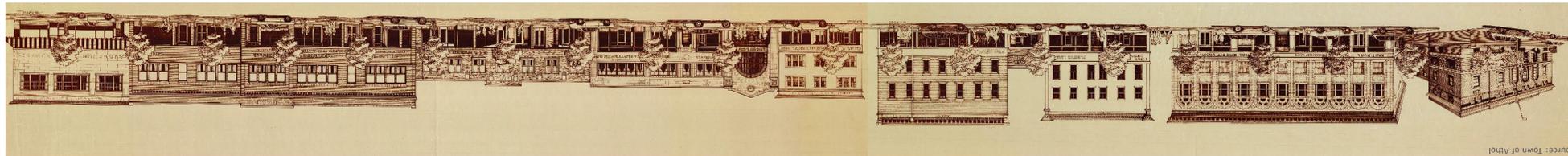


Main St.

Main St.

Main St.

Main St.



School St.

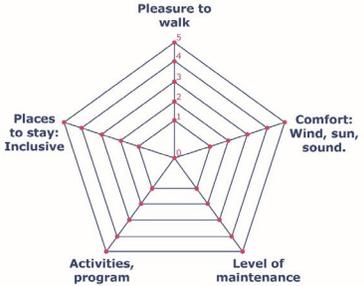


# Activity 2: Rate Main St. and Rate one storefront.



### Rate the street: Main st.

- Give a grade from 1 to 5 (5 being the maximum grade) to each the following topics.
- Connect the dots to form the diagram.



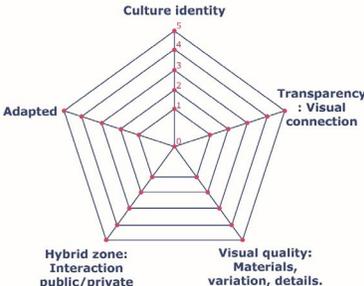
**NOTES**

- Pleasure to walk:
- Comfort:
- Maintenance:
- Activities, program:
- Places to stay:

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### Rate the building

- Each team will get a different example to rate.
- Give a grade from 1 to 5 (5 being the maximum grade) to each the following topics.
- Connect the dots to form the diagram.

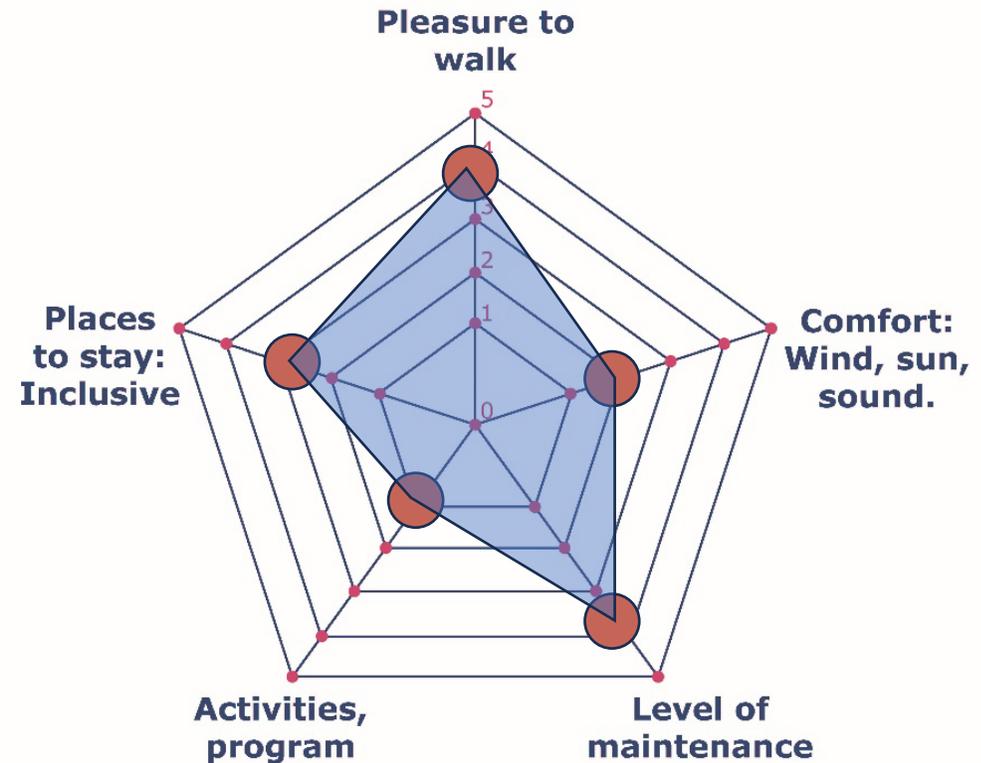


**NOTES**

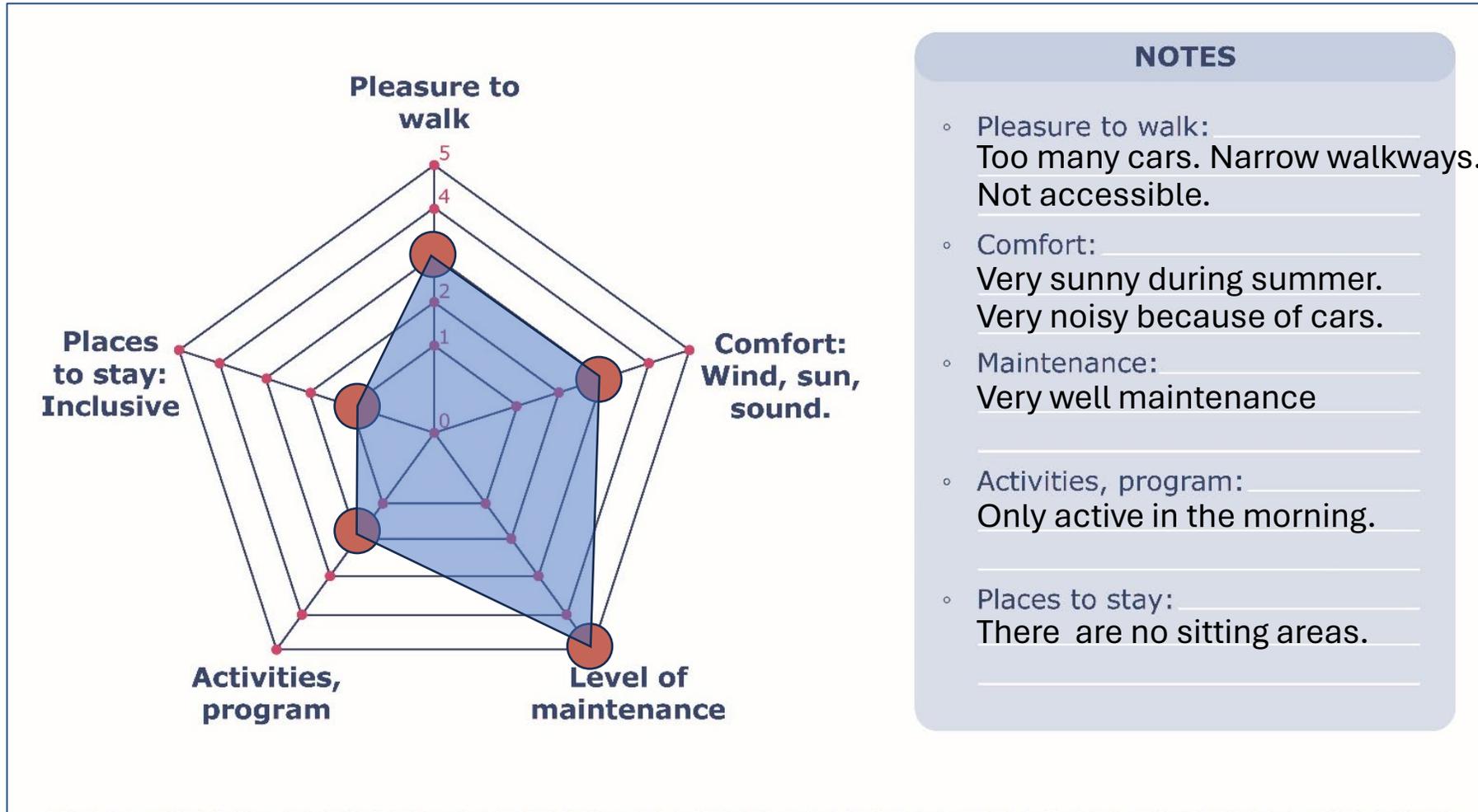
- Identity:
- Transparency:
- Visual quality:
- Hybrid zone:
- Adapted:

In behalf of your town, we Thank you!

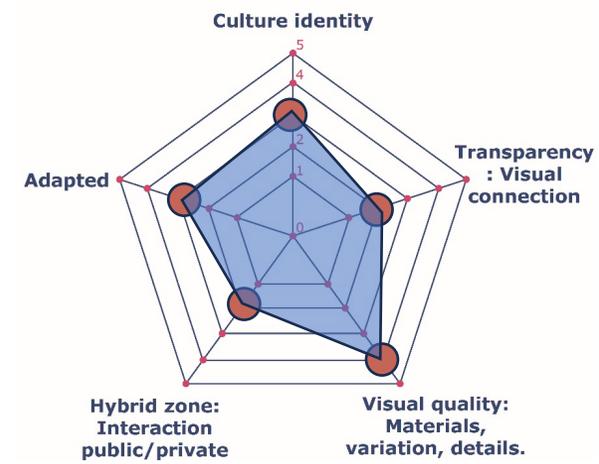
- ▶ Part 1: Rate Main Street.
- ▶ Part 2: Rate the storefront provided by the team.
- ▶ Please share your thoughts on the Notes paragraph.



# Activity 2: Example Rate a street.



# Activity 2: Rate one storefront.



## ▶ Storefront 1



Source: Google maps.

## ▶ Storefront 2



Source: Google maps.

# Activity 3: Design your own storefront.

Choose your favorite building and have fun!



- ▶ Choose your favorite building.
- ▶ Choose 2-3 colors for your storefront.
- ▶ Select the location for your signage. Max. 3.
- ▶ Design your own signs!
- ▶ Have fun!

# Close up.

Please fill the questionnaire. We would love your feedback!

1 questionnaire per table.

- ▶ Each street is different. How would you describe its unique character?
- ▶ What do you like best about the street?
- ▶ How do you use the street? During the day, night, other seasons?
- ▶ What would you change to improve your street?
- ▶ Could you identify one element that gives identity to this street?
- ▶ How do you get to the Downtown? By car, by bike, on foot?
- ▶ What did you learn on this workshop?
- ▶ Is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to know?
- ▶ Is there anything that you wanted to discuss, and we did not cover?

