

INTRODUCTION

During the economic “boom” of the eighties, the State of Maine experienced substantial growth, not only in our urban areas, but also in the outlying rural communities. This growth, which was a mix of industrial, commercial and residential, occurred in many communities that were not prepared to deal with the increased demands on municipal budgets or the environmental effects. In response to this growth and in an effort to reduce the impact on taxes, community character and our environment, the State of Maine Legislature enacted various land use laws that were intended to provide municipalities with the tools to prepare for future growth and development. The “Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act” of 1988, which is frequently referred to as the “Growth Management Act” required municipalities throughout the State to adopt a Growth Management Program. The program, which consisted of a comprehensive plan and implemented land use ordinance, would provide the framework for municipalities to guide their future growth and development while still maintaining the character and identity of their community. Due to a period of decreasing state revenues, the program was repealed by the Legislature to eliminate the mandatory aspect of the law; but many communities had already recognized the necessity of this program and continue today to achieve Growth Management’s goals.

In January 2001, Public Law 776 *“An Act to Implement the Land Use Recommendations of the Task Force on State Office Building Location, Other State Growth-related Capital Investments and Patterns of Development”* went into effect to ensure that governmental investments are made in a manner that will not spur development sprawl and will concentrate public facilities and improvements in locally designated growth areas. “Growth-related capital investment” means investment by the State in only the following projects, whether using state, federal or other public funds and whether in the form of a purchase, lease, grant, loan, loan guarantee, credit, tax credit or other financial assistance:

- Construction or acquisition of newly constructed multifamily rental housing;
- Development of industrial or business parks;
- Construction or extension of sewer, water and other utility lines;
- Grants and loans for public service infrastructure, public facilities and community buildings; and
- Construction or expansion of state office buildings, state courts and other state civic buildings that serve public clients and customers.

"Growth-related capital investment" **does not** include investment in the following:

- Operation or maintenance of a governmental or quasi-governmental facility or program;
- Renovation of a governmental facility that does not significantly expand the facility's capacity;

- General purpose aid for education;
- School construction or renovation projects;
- Highway or bridge projects;
- Programs that provide direct financial assistance to individual businesses; community revenue sharing; or
- Public health programs.

A comprehensive plan is a document adopted by a local government and created by local people. This document is actually a map to the town's future that guides the decision making process regarding the community and the vision that the residents have for their future. The essential characteristic of the plan makes it comprehensive, general, and long-range. The plan is comprehensive since it encompasses all aspects of the community; general because the plan summarizes policies and implementation strategies but does not include detailed regulations, and long-range since the plan looks to the future to envision the problems and possibilities.

STATUTORY BASIS

Clifton's Comprehensive Plan was developed pursuant to the statutory requirements of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act of 1988 (MRS Title 30, Section 4861). The adoption of the plan can assist Clifton in receiving preferential consideration when applying for federally or state funded grants that affect community development (MRSA Title 30-A, Section 4349).

PURPOSE

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to provide the factual basis and policy framework for future planning, regulatory, and community development decision-making, in both the public and private sectors for the Town. The plan is a valuable working instrument for the future growth and development of Clifton.

CONSULTANT

Penobscot Valley Council of Governments is pleased to assist the Town of Clifton with their comprehensive planning efforts and continues to enjoy working with the community.

STATE'S GOALS

In order for the plan to be deemed consistent by the state, it must address the State's ten goals of growth management. The following is a listing of those goals.

- To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the state's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl.
- To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.
- To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well being.
- To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.
- To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the state's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas.
- To protect the state's critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas.
- To protect the state's marine resources industry, ports, and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.
- To safeguard the state's agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources.
- To preserve the state's historical and archaeological resources.
- To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

SCOPE

This comprehensive plan involves the following:

- Survey of existing and potential resources;
- Analysis of past, present, and future community trends;
- Development of policies to abate, resolve or prevent local problems;
- Adoption and implementation of these policies by Town officials and residents; and
- Continuous monitoring of the Plan's policies and implementation strategies.

A comprehensive plan follows an established format set forth by the State. Within the plan, however, are the collective thoughts and actions of Clifton's residents. The entire comprehensive plan must be applicable now and in the future. As a result, the Town must periodically review the plan and update it to reflect needed changes in local policies and to incorporate updated information.

This comprehensive plan looks at local, as well as regional, issues that concern or affect the Town of Clifton. This Plan will guide the Town over the next ten years, and provide a reasonable approach to land use regulation in preparing the Town for future development while retaining, or even enhancing, the local quality of life.

This comprehensive plan examines the above mentioned available information, including:

1. Inventory and Analysis (*Data Gathering*) – Explain where the Town has been and where the Town is going (statistically speaking). The inventory and analysis of each section is based on U.S. Census data, various state and federal government agency data, and information and material provided by the Town.
2. Local Policies (*Needs*) – What the Town would like to accomplish in the planning period. Policies are statements speaking to the desired end goals. Policies are local goals and objectives created in response to the findings of the inventory and analysis and related to the State’s goals.
3. Implementation Strategies (*Action Plan*) – How the Town plans to achieve goals (policies). Implementation Strategies explain how the desired end is going to be accomplished outlining responsible parties, time frames for completion and funding sources. The following timeframes are represented in the plan:

Time Frame for accomplishing each Planned Action:

On-going (OG) = make the action part of standard official operations.

Near term (NT) = initiate action by February 1, 2006, accomplish by February 1, 2007.

Short term (ST) = initiate action by February 1, 2007, accomplish by February 1, 2010.

Long term (LT) = initiate action by February 1, 2010, accomplish by February 1, 2015.

Relevant policies and strategies are found at the end of each inventory section and are also summarized in table form in Section M.

LIMITATIONS

This comprehensive plan has been assembled and compiled with the genuine intention that all of the data and information contained herein is reasonably accurate and correct. The information contained in this plan was gathered from the sources cited. Some of the sources were found to be more detailed and more recent than other sources. Where appropriate, future application of the information contained in this plan should be preceded by a check of the sources to see if additional or revised information is available. Most of the information contained in the plan is considered current enough and of sufficient detail to support the conclusions and recommendations offered. Note that while this information is suitable for general planning, it may not be appropriate for site specific decisions.

The information used to create the maps contained within this comprehensive plan has been derived from multiple sources. This product as provided is for reference and planning purposes only and is not to be construed as a legal document or survey instrument. PVCOG/EMDC provides this information with the understanding that it is not guaranteed to be accurate, correct or complete; that it is subject to revision; and conclusions drawn from such information are the responsibility of the user. *Due to ongoing road renaming and addressing, the road names shown on this map may not be current.* Any user of this map accepts same AS IS, WITH ALL FAULTS, and assumes all responsibility for the use thereof, and further agrees to hold PVCOG/EMDC harmless from and against any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of this map.