



Town of Hampden
Comprehensive Planning Committee

**Comprehensive Plan
Frequently Asked Questions**

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The State of Maine encourages comprehensive plans to be developed periodically in accordance with its Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A., Chapter 187) in order to be eligible for funding, grants, and enact zoning ordinances. A comprehensive plan includes information on population, history, governance, housing, land use, environment, transportation, public health, economic development, natural resources, and infrastructure. Comprehensive plans are also intended to incorporate regional issues into local planning and decision making so as to ensure consideration of regional needs and regional impact of development.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the long-term vision for the Town of Hampden. It is a summary and guidebook of best practices for the future. It also facilitates legal protection for town ordinances that create rational caps on growth and development or require state agencies to comply with local zoning standards.

Will the Comprehensive Plan impact my taxes or change other ordinances?

No. The Comprehensive Plan has no impact on taxes or existing ordinances. It will not change tax rates, public spending, or existing ordinances. The Comprehensive Plan provides a blueprint for the future, putting in place balanced policy objectives to achieve what the community desires, while providing a basis for sound decision-making from elected officials and Town management.

Who will decide what is in the Comprehensive Plan?

The residents of the Town of Hampden will decide what is included in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a community-driven effort built through an extensive public engagement process. The objective is to foster a collaborative environment where a broad representation of residents, business owners, and stakeholders are engaged, knowledgeable, and participatory in the planning process.

Ultimately, the Town Council will vote on the acceptance of the Comprehensive Plan at a public meeting. Before then, the community will be given multiple opportunities to read, review, and comment on the proposed plan.

Who is compiling information and drafting the Comprehensive Plan?

The Town Council directed Town staff to put together a Comprehensive Planning Committee to oversee the drafting of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee brings together a spectrum of professional, financial, and civic capabilities and also draws on the expertise of Hampden's town officials and staff. The Committee meets once a month at a public meeting to discuss and plan the drafting and writing of the Comprehensive Plan.

Information on meetings are publicly posted and provided on the Town website. Please reach out to Clifton J. Iler, Town Planner (planner@hampdenmaine.gov) or Amy Ryder, Economic Development Director (aryder@hampdenmaine.gov) for more information.

How will the Comprehensive Plan be organized?

The State of Maine has provided specific guidance on how to draft and organize the sections of the Comprehensive Plan. That guidance has been included as an attachment to this FAQ. The Committee, along with Town staff, will draft the individual sections of the Comprehensive Plan. The data gathering, development, and review of each section will be conducted by the Committee. Subject matter experts will be interviewed as needed to help refine individual sections of the Plan.

Once the Comprehensive Plan has been drafted in full, it will be disseminated to the general public and Town Council for review and comment. Comments will be collected and integrated into a final version of the Comprehensive Plan. If the final plan is adopted at a Town meeting, the details will be negotiated with State officials in order to secure approval as a conforming Plan.

When will you talk to the taxpayers and residents?

Throughout the entire process: talk to us, and we will find ways to talk to you.

Over the course of the next couple months, there will be multiple opportunities for public engagement in the planning process. We will schedule public forums, focus groups, and workshops for specific subjects. Additionally, we will distribute a public opinion survey questionnaire to help guide the development of the Plan. Your feedback is very important.

How do I know what is happening?

Information on the Comprehensive Plan is regularly shared at all public meetings. Please attend regular Town Council, Planning Board, or Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings to learn what is happening with the planning process. The Comprehensive Plan can only work, and gain approval by the State as a conforming plan, if it has the benefit of citizen input. Please participate!

What's Next?

Currently, we are in the data gathering process. Public forums, focus groups, workshops, and surveys are how we gather data on the community to help draft and guide the Comprehensive Plan. Your advice on what you want to see, and expect, in the Town of Hampden is crucial for our community.

Upcoming dates your participation will be shared on the Town website and posted around the community. Please check the Town website and Town Facebook page for more information. Additionally, reach out to Clifton J. Iler, Town Planner (planner@hampdenmaine.gov) or Amy Ryder, Economic Development Director (aryder@hampdenmaine.gov) with any questions.

What's included in this FAQ?

The following items are included as attachments to this FAQ:

- State of Maine Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A., Chapter 187)
- Reasons to Create a Comprehensive Plan
- Legislative Incentives for Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan
- Town of Hampden Comprehensive Plan Scope of Work
- Comprehensive Plan Submittal Form (*For Municipal Use Only*)
- Comprehensive Plan Self-Assessment Checklist
- Comprehensive Planning: A Manual for Maine Communities (*Separate Attachment*)