

Overview of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Planning, Permitting, and Codes



What is a comp plan?

Definition: A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range policy document guiding a community's future growth and development.

Purpose: Balances community goals with state and regional priorities. Acts as a blueprint for zoning, ordinances, and public investments.

State Statute Reference:

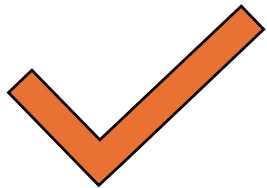
Required by **Maine's Growth Management Act (30-A MRSA Chapter 187)**.

Helps municipalities meet **statewide goals**, such as resource conservation and efficient land use.

Key Role: Foundation for land use ordinances; essential for applying for state and federal grants.

Time Frame: Typically updated every 10-12 years to remain relevant.

The Maine Growth Management Act (30-A MRSA Chapter 187).

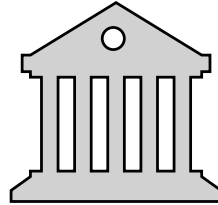


What is the Maine Growth Management Act?

Enacted in **1988** to address sprawl and unmanaged development.

Ensures **comprehensive planning** forms the basis for zoning and growth management.

Focuses on sustainable development while preserving Maine's rural character.



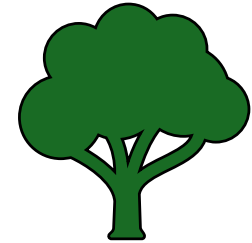
Key Components:

Requires **comprehensive plans** for municipalities:

- Inventories of current conditions (natural resources, housing, etc.).
- Policies addressing identified issues.
- Implementation strategies like zoning ordinances and capital investment plans.

Designates **Growth Areas** and **Rural Areas**:

- Growth areas encourage compact development.
- Rural areas preserve open space and natural habitats.



Significance:

The Act provides a framework to protect Maine's unique environment while guiding economic and residential growth responsibly.

Encourages **regional cooperation** and sustainable land use practices.

Statewide Goals:



Encourage orderly growth and development.



Protect natural resources (air, water, forests, etc.).



Promote affordable housing and economic opportunities.



Safeguard agricultural and forestry lands.



Protect critical natural resources, such as wetlands and wildlife habitats.



Maintain water quality and manage stormwater.



Prevent and mitigate coastal hazards.



Preserve historic and cultural resources.



What Sections Make Up the Plan?

Vision Statement: The community's overarching goals and aspirations.

Inventory and Analysis:

- Topography, Soils, Geology, and Water Resources
- Habitat and Other Significant Natural Resources
- Historic and Archaeological Resources
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Marine Resources
- Local and Regional Economy
- Population and Demographics
- Land Use Patterns
- Housing
- Transportation
- Recreation and Open Space
- Public Facilities and Services
- Promoting Food Access and Production and Growing the Agriculture Economy

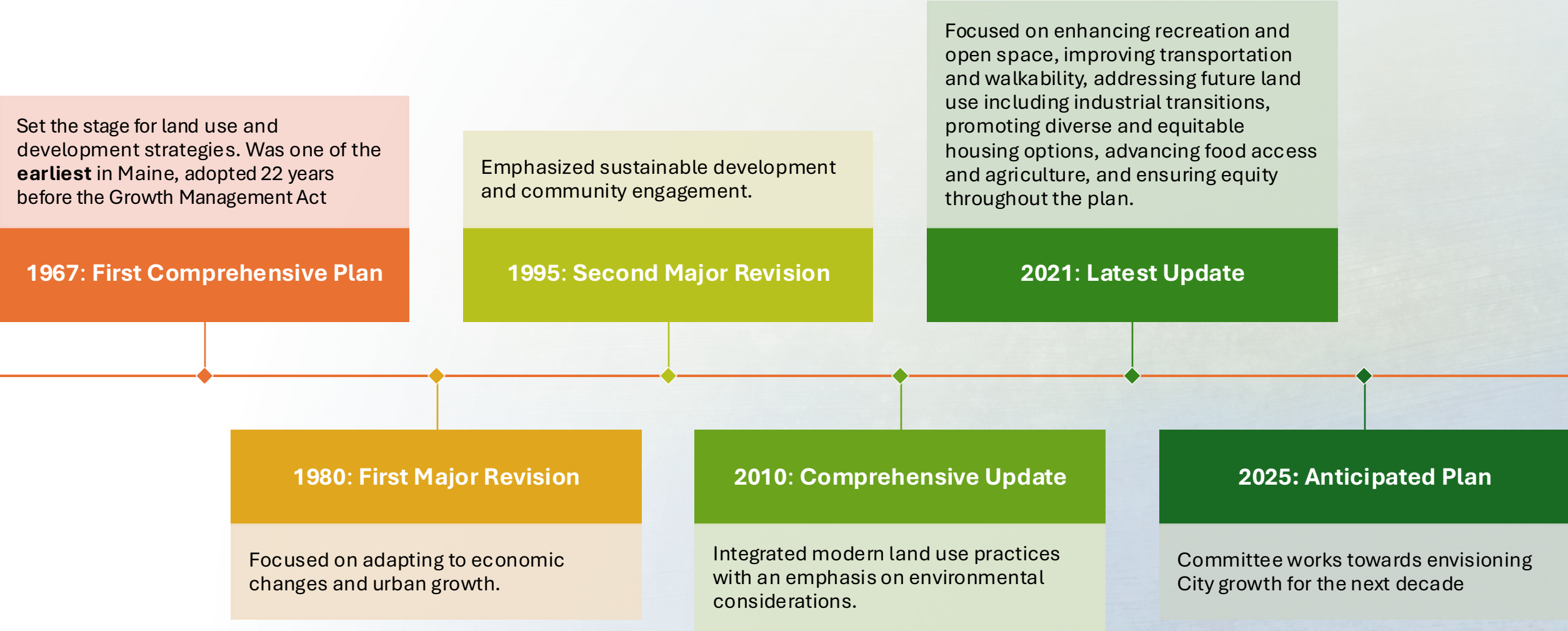
Policy Goals and Strategies: Steps to achieve the vision, aligned with state goals.

Future Land Use Plan: Guidance on zoning and growth areas.

Implementation Program: Timeline, funding, and responsibilities for proposed actions.



Key Milestones in Auburn's Comprehensive Planning





2021 Comprehensive Plan Update: Auburn's Vision for the Future

The *Comprehensive Plan* is a **10-year vision** for Auburn, guiding growth, development, and quality of life enhancements.

Last fully updated in **2010**, the plan received targeted updates in **2021** as directed by the City Council.

Key Focus Areas of the 2021 Update:

- 1. Recreation & Open Space:** Enhancing parks, greenways, and outdoor opportunities.
- 2. Transportation:** Addressing safety, walkability, and planning for a new Turnpike interchange.
- 3. Future Land Use:** Industrial transitions, gateways, livability, and safety.
- 4. Housing:** Promoting diverse, equitable housing options.
- 5. Food Access & Agriculture:** A new chapter focusing on growing Auburn's agricultural economy and promoting equitable food access.
- 6. Equity:** Ensuring the entire plan reflects inclusivity and fairness.

Working Groups:

1. Recreation/Open Space/Agriculture
2. Transportation
3. Zoning

Formation of the Comprehensive Plan Committee



Committee Creation

Formed by **ORDER 106-08192024**, adopted by the City Council on **August 19, 2024**, and amended on **October 7, 2024**, and **November 4, 2024**.



Responsibilities

- * Develop a compliant comprehensive plan and implementation strategies.
- * Review zoning district regulations and prepare recommendations.
- * Analyze relevant municipal data and resources to support planning efforts.



Membership

Mayor
12 resident members
2 Planning Board members
2 City Councilors

Current Make-Up of Committee: Jeffrey Harmon (Mayor), Heidi Bertels, Kelly Butler, Virginia Keel, Dana Staples, Jane Costlow, Bruce Rioux, Denis Bergeron, Adam Lee, John Cleveland, Rex Rhoades, Rebecca Swanson Conrad, Mathieu Duvall, Riley Bergeron (Planning Board), Paul Jacques (Planning Board), Richard Whiting (City Council), Timothy Cowan (City Council)

Comprehensive Plan Consultant RFP

Release Date

- October 31, 2024

Objective

- Select a qualified planning consultant to assist the Committee with developing the plan.

Scope of Services

- Conduct baseline reviews, inventories, and future projections.
- Develop goals, policies, and implementation strategies.
- Ensure state consistency and public engagement.

Key Focus Areas

- Affordable housing and workforce development
- Sustainability and climate change adaptation
- Transportation, land use, and village revitalization
- Natural resource protection and recreation





City Received Five Bids for Proposal

Bidders:

1. **Haley Ward** – Portland, Maine
2. **Viewshed** – Yarmouth, Maine
3. **Northstar** – New Gloucester, Maine
4. **BerryDunn** – Portland, Maine
5. **Town Planning & Urban Design Collaborative** – Franklin, Tennessee

VIEWSHED



Public Engagement in the Planning Process

Approach

- Conduct public meetings, surveys, and workshops.
- Engage diverse stakeholders, including residents, associations, and businesses.
- Utilize a dedicated project website for updates and feedback.

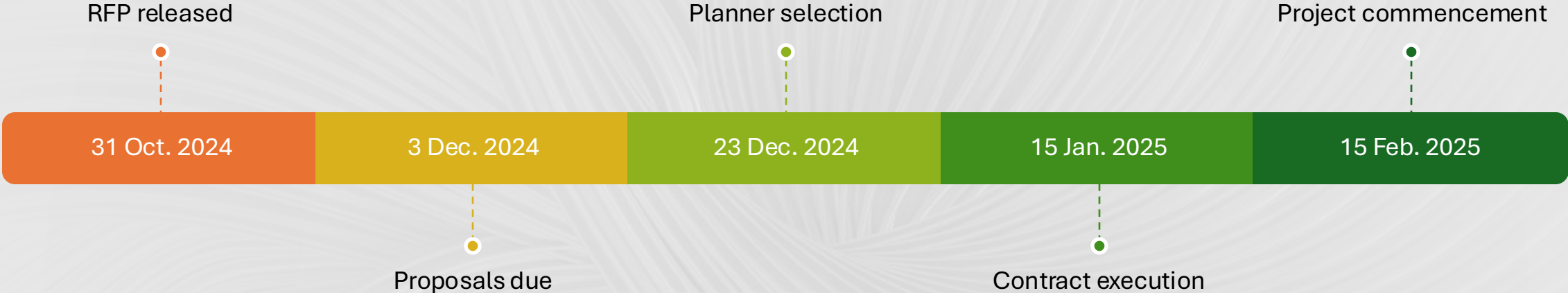
Significance

- Public input is essential to ensure the plan reflects community priorities and gains broad support.

Outcome

- A vision-driven, community-supported plan that addresses Auburn's future challenges and opportunities.
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Timeline



Expected Completion

18 months from the project start date.

Next Steps

Shortlist interviews: December 11–20, 2024

Committee recommendation to City Council: December 30, 2024