

**TOWN OF BENTON**  
**2018 Comprehensive Plan**  
**Executive Summary**  
**VERSION 01/01/2018**

DRAFT

Adopted by Town Select Board, \_\_\_\_\_

**Town of Benton Comprehensive Plan  
Executive Summary**

Table of Contents

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 3**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION I ..... 4**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION II ..... 4**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION III ..... 4**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION IV ..... 4**

# Town of Benton Comprehensive Plan

## Executive Summary

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan for Benton seeks to enhance and grow the community. The plan's recommended actions are intended to help guide the Town's leaders in making decisions over the next decade that strive to accomplish that goal.

Specific actions are proposed to help accomplish the vision of Benton as a smart town, with great neighborhoods. For ease of reference, these actions have been organized by four (4) themes:

1. Increase overall communications and coordination to ensure accountability and transparency of municipal operations.
2. Encourage business development and overall economic well-being consistent with Benton's rural, small town character.
3. Conservation and protection of our natural, historical and archeological resources.
4. Broadening of residential opportunities and commitment to open space and recreational activity.

Five major motivations focused the plan's direction:

1. Benton's long passion and commitment to our rural, small town character.
2. Benton's tradition of fiscal and management prudence.
3. Benton's desire to move the local economy forward, encouraging business development and expansion to the benefit of all residents.
4. Benton's commitment to open space and recreational activity, including Town-owned parcels.
5. Recognition that demographics are changing and there is need for broadening of residential opportunities.

To develop this plan, the Strategic Planning Committee met over several months. The committee:

1. Introduced planning topic at 2017 March Annual Town Meeting and provided handouts including topics:
  - o Why is a Comprehensive Plan Important?
  - o Invitations join bi-monthly meetings to participate in plan development.
2. Examined the accomplishments of the 1991 and 2008 Comprehensive Plans.
3. Created open forum using Facebook page; Benton Voice, used to:
  - o Asked residents what they thought of Benton as a place to live or do business (and what could be improved).
  - o Conduct a statistically-valid surveys of Benton residents and businesses.
4. Researched many local and regional plans.
5. Investigated thirteen topics outlined in State of Maine's Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule, Section 3 Required Topics, which provides "the criteria used to review community comprehensive plans for consistency with goals and guidelines of the *Growth Management Act* (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312 - 4350)" thirteen (13).
6. Sought feedback on the plan and its contents, including:
  - o Consulted on a regular basis with Select Board.
  - o Powerpoint presentations of the plan contents to Select Board, Planning Board, and Budget Committee.
  - o Conducted two (2) public hearing(s) on the draft plan, January 9 & 10, 2018.
7. Published plan materials on Town's website, requested and incorporated feedback.
8. Socialized comprehensive planning and the plan using Town's website, Facebook page and the Benton Voice Facebook page.
9. Presented plan at the Annual Town Meeting. <<Add outcome of the meeting here port meeting>>



# **Town of Benton Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION I**

Section I, is the actual plan which discusses four (4) key topics; future land use, regional coordination, open space and recreational activity, and capital investment. For each topic, Section I provides recommended goals and policies, and specific actions for implementation.

The plan recommends:

1. Increasing the share of growth in the designated growth area to two thirds of all new residential growth.
2. States a preference for the Town making more of its growth area accessible for public sewer and water services.
3. Expand and manage open space and recreational opportunities, including Town-owned parcels.
4. Allocation of any new municipal infrastructure capital investments into the designated growth areas.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION II**

Section II, provides the action plan to accomplish the plan. It includes recommendations in the form of policies and strategies for each of the thirteen topics outlined in State of Maine's Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule, Section 3 Required Topics, which provides "the criteria used to review community comprehensive plans for consistency with goals and guidelines of the *Growth Management Act* (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312 - 4350)". These recommendations are intended to address the issues raised in the analysis and review of the elements completed in Section III.

The matrix reflected in Section I will be used for monitoring progress and accomplishments.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION III**

Section III, provides background information that is the basis for the plan. It includes an in-depth discussion of thirteen topics outlined in State of Maine's Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule, which provides "the criteria used to review community comprehensive plans for consistency with goals and guidelines of the *Growth Management Act* (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312 - 4350)". This Section III includes the analysis of town, county and state statistical information which was used in Section II to develop the recommendations for policies and strategies.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SECTION IV**

Section IV, is the source for maps that provide a visual picture of the Town and its infrastructure and sources for images used.

In closing, none of these accomplishments could have been possible without a competent and professional staff, a committed group of elected and appointed officials and an engaged public. We are committed to the notions of transparency and good government and will do everything in our power to engage the public. As there are many ways for residents to be involved in community affairs, we encourage all residents to get involved to make Benton a better place to live, work and play. It has been an honor to serve this wonderful community, we look forward to the challenges and opportunities of the future.