

Executive Summary

The Winslow Comprehensive Planning Committee began meeting in the spring of 2007 to discuss an update to the Comprehensive Plan. Many residents in town felt that the conditions during the early 1990s were significantly different than the conditions of the early 2000s, warranting a review of the Comprehensive Plan. For example, in 1995 the Scott Paper Company factory was still operational, with over 700 employees. In 1998, the plant closed, forcing the town to reassess future employment expectations. Winslow residents now have a new vision of their town, one based on both historic nostalgia and recent reality: *That Winslow will be a suburban town with minor commercial and industrial development; that residents will maintain the ecological and recreational attributes of the Kennebec River, Sebasticook River, and Pattee's Pond; and that Winslow shall collaborate with its neighbors to enhance the central Maine region.*

This Comprehensive Planning Committee was composed of a broad representation of residents, from the urban northwest to rural east, and even camp owners on Pattee's Pond. Additionally, the Committee included members of the Planning Board and Town Council, as well as the Town Manager and local State Representative. Not only were all these people members of the committee, but they fully participated in the numerous and lengthy meetings covering the last 20 months.

Beyond the broad perspectives offered by committee members, various outreach efforts were made to involve members of the general public. Initial monthly committee meetings introduced committee members to the existing conditions in town by hearing questions, concerns and presentations from a regional economic development organization, local business owners, municipal department heads (including school superintendent), and local recreation and conservation organizations. School children also became involved in the process. Students from a local school class performed research on Winslow's history, prepared Microsoft PowerPoint presentations on their work, and even presented to the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Committee members hosted a booth at the July 4th celebration at Fort Halifax in summer 2007. Two public opinion surveys were conducted: the first a general planning opinion survey conducted in summer 2007, and the second a scenic resources survey and inventory conducted in fall 2007 through winter 2008. We believe this Comprehensive Plan is a fair representation of the general opinion of most Winslow residents.

Three conclusions were formed in the creation of this Plan:

- 1. Winslow has abundant natural and historic resources***
- 2. Historic patterns of development helped preserve these resources***
- 3. Recent patterns of development threaten these resources***

The Future Land Use Plan calls for town officials to encourage development in western Winslow, while preserving the bulk of the natural resources in eastern Winslow. Thanks to historic patterns of development, there is significant development infrastructure in western Winslow. Future development must utilize this infrastructure. Similarly, Pattee's Pond and the beautiful fields and forests of eastern Winslow must be preserved. Making these efforts will take time and money. Specifically, this Comprehensive Plan calls for the Planning Board, Town Manager, and Town Council to spend a significant amount of time in the next three years meeting with experts in resource protection, affordable housing, and economic development. The goal is to form concrete collaborative projects to bring future development back to western Winslow. Additionally, town officials are asked to invest \$60,000 annually in the Capital Improvements Plan, with the money going towards 3 specific projects that will provide a powerful incentive for protecting resources.