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Introduction

The Town's current comprehensive plan was adopted in 1989 following a period of somewhat rapid development and change in the community. The Town has used the 1989 plan as the basis for its zoning for almost 25 years. The passage of time and changes in the Town and the Boothbay region have made much of the plan out-of-date and a less than useful guide in managing the future of Boothbay. Therefore the Town has prepared this update of the Comprehensive Plan to serve as a guide for the decisions the Town must make about growth, development, redevelopment, and change over the coming decade. The 2014 Plan is a complete review of the policy issues facing our community and addresses emerging issues as well as providing a fresh look at ongoing issues.

The 2014 Plan is divided into three parts. Section A presents background information. Chapter One summarizes the key elements of the 1989 Plan and outlines some recent planning activities that impact the Town of Boothbay. Chapter Two contains a detailed profile of the past twelve years of residential and commercial development activity in Boothbay. Chapter Three offers summaries of the Plan's inventory sections. Full versions of the inventories are contained in Appendices A through L.

Section B of the Plan sets out the Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals, and policy recommendations. Chapter Four sets out the community's Vision for its future – what we want our town to be in ten or so years. Chapter Five presents goals and policies for addressing issues facing the community related to all plan elements aside from land use. Chapter Six contains goals and policies for land use, including a Future Land Use Plan and a vision and detailed summaries of preferred use and development patterns for each land use designation identified in the Future Land Use Plan.

Section C lays out the actions needed to achieve the goals and policies proposed in Part 2. Chapter Seven addressed how Boothbay should coordinate its planning activities with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations. Chapter Eight sets out a detailed program for carrying out the various strategies, and assigns responsibility for the implementation of each strategy to a particular department, board, or agency. Chapter Nine identifies the capital investments needed to both support future growth and development and to enhance the community's quality of life.

The appendices to the Plan include the full inventories for the various Plan elements, the Town's capital spending plan, and a summary of public participation in the

development of the Plan. It also includes a glossary of terms used in the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to conform to the requirements of the State's Growth Management Law for comprehensive plans. The state has established guidelines for comprehensive plans to guide communities in the development of local plans. The guidelines call for the plan to be developed through the active participation of the community. They layout the recommended contents of a plan including inventories of a wide range of factors about the community, goal and policies to address these various topics, a Future Land Use Plan to manage the anticipated growth and development in the community, and an implementation strategy setting out how the proposals will be carried out along with consideration of regional concerns and the capital spending necessary to implement the plan. The Table of Contents for this Plan reflects these requirements.

While state approval of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is not required, there is a process for the voluntary review of the plan by the state. If the Town's plan is found to be consistent with the state guidelines, there are some benefits for the Town including preferential treatment for some state grant programs. In addition, as provided by state law, the Comprehensive Plan, when adopted by Town Meeting, serves as the basis for the Town's zoning and land use regulations.

Chapter One Past Planning Activity

The Town's major planning document is the Comprehensive Plan that was prepared in the late 1980s. Since the preparation of the 1989 Plan, the Town has had limited involvement in town-wide planning activities. In 2002, a consultant prepared a study of the Route 27 corridor through Edgecomb, Boothbay, and Boothbay Harbor. Recently there have been some transportation studies done by the Lincoln County planning office that include recommendations relative to the Town. The Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission and the Maine Geological Survey completed the Lincoln County Sea Level Rise – Coastal Hazard Study. The following sections provide brief overviews of these plans and studies. In addition, the Boothbay Region Water District, an independent public utility that serves the Town, has developed a master plan for its facilities.

A. 1989 Comprehensive Plan

The Town's 1989 Comprehensive Plan was developed by a volunteer Comprehensive Plan Committee. The plan is a mix of long-range planning considerations and very specific ordinance type proposals. As part of the planning process, the Committee conducted a survey of both year-round and seasonal residents with a very high rate of participation (a total of 651 surveys were completed with about 60% from year-round residents and 40% from seasonal residents). The results from the survey are included in the plan. The plan includes the following conclusions from the community survey:

"There is a remarkable degree of unanimity (lack of controversy) in the public opinion expressed in the survey. Both residents and non-residents felt strongly that the town should protect the groundwater from contamination (the most strongly held opinion)."

"Residents felt strongly (ranked third) that at least some portion of the shore land should be preserved for marine-related activities, whereas non-residents also agreed"

"Non-residents were much more strongly in favor of protecting residential areas from non-residential development"

"The controversial issue was whether or not the town should promote new tourist facilities. Opinion among residents was mixed, but the average opinion was negative, whereas among non-residents, the average opinion was positive."

The survey also included questions about water supply. Respondents who reported getting their water from drilled wells were asked a series of additional questions. Here are a few highlights from the results:

- Just under half (323 respondents) reported getting their water from a drilled well
- Of the people with a drilled well, just over 5% reported it had gone dry primarily in July and August
- Almost 7% reported that they had had a well turn salty but this was spread over a 30 year period

The 1989 Comprehensive Plan included a set of Community Land Use Goals. These goals were established “to guide the Town in the development of its Comprehensive Plan.” The following are the highlights of those goals (see Pages 89-90 in the Plan for the full language). For each goal, the Plan lays out approaches for achieving that goal.

A. **Small Town Character** – As the community grows, the Town should assure that the small town, rural character of Boothbay is maintained.

B. **Residential Uses** – The Town should manage residential development in the community to assure that it is a positive addition to the community and is in keeping with the rural character of the community.

C. **Marine Related Activities** – As change occurs in Boothbay, the Town should promote the retention of traditional marine related activities such as fishing, shell fishing, boat building, and marine supply and service.

D. **Commercial and Industrial** – The Town should allow the retention, expansion and creation of small scale commercial/industrial enterprises which would provide year round employment opportunities for local people.

E. **Groundwater Protection** – As growth occurs, the Town should assure that both the quality and quantity of groundwater are protected to assure adequate future water supplies.

F. **Environmental Protection** – The Town should preserve the quality of life and Boothbay’s environment.

The Plan includes a review of various land use management techniques and their applicability to Boothbay. It also includes recommendations for the following

- Ordinance administration including the appointment of a Code Enforcement Officer
- General standards dealing with zoning interpretations and non-conformance
- Allowed uses in various zoning districts

- Regulation of residential uses including density, open space preservation, quality of development, conversion of seasonal property, homes on under-sized lots, large-scale uses, mobile homes, and grandfathered lots
- Development standards for the various residential zones including the General Residential District and Special Residential District
- The establishment of commercial/industrial zones including a commercial-industrial corridor along Route 27 including detailed provisions for site plan review
- The management of shore lands including the creation of a Shoreland Protection District and a Resource Protection District
- The treatment of conditional uses
- Provisions for cluster development
- Standards for the approval of subdivisions

The current Comprehensive Plan Committee reviewed the 1989 Comprehensive Plan. As a result of that review, the Committee made the following general observations about the 1989 Plan:

1. In general, the goals and policies are dated and many things have changed over the past twenty-five years. Some of the areas have been addressed (Code Enforcement, Fire Department facility, police protection, island protection, etc.).
2. Some of the recommendations are too specific for a comprehensive plan and are essentially ordinance language.
3. Some of the recommendations are too “conditional” and do not really provide solid direction for what the Town should do.
4. Many of the recommendations are vague and don’t provide much direction – they were characterized as “white noise”.
5. The general sense from the review is that the recommendations of the 1989 Plan provide little direct policy guidance that should be carried over into discussions of the new plan.

At the same time, the review of the 1989 Comprehensive Plan identified a number of specific topics or issues that need to be considered in the new comprehensive plan. The following is a summary of those topics/issues:

1. The issue of residential lot sizes is a key area that needs to be addressed. The plan

needs to balance environmental considerations (groundwater protection, shoreland, etc.) with housing affordability.

2. Related to 1 is the question of whether any type of cluster or open space subdivision provisions makes sense to include in the new plan.

3. The whole area of water supply – public and groundwater – is an area on which the plan needs to focus. This includes supply for the public system, protection of the current sources, and protection of groundwater quality and quantity.

4. The shoreland zoning requirements with respect to standards such as setbacks vis-à-vis the state minimums needs attention.

5. Land preservation/open space is an important concern but looking at private vs. public involvement might be useful.

6. While there are limited historic properties in the town, looking at the overall question of how we keep the visual environment attractive is important. Maintaining a New England village character is an issue.

7. Education is a priority!

8. Management of the harbors is an issue but the Port Committee and Harbormaster are dealing with these issues.

9. As noted in 1 and 2, balancing residential development and the quality of life and environmental protection is a major topic that overlaps many of the other topics (groundwater protection, aging population, education, open space, etc.)

10. Related to this is increasing the diversity of housing available in the community.

11. Home occupations and what is or is not appropriate is an issue that the plan needs to address from a policy perspective.

12. Commercial growth that is appropriate for Boothbay is a key issue – this includes the treatment of and vision for the Route 27 corridor and the expansion of job opportunities in the community.

13. Licensed overboard discharges are a concern that needs to be addressed.

14. The management of seasonal conversions also needs to be addressed.

B. State Route 27 Corridor Study (2002)

In 2002, Milone & MacBroom prepared a study of the Route 27 corridor through Edgecomb, Boothbay, and Boothbay Harbor. The study analyzed the existing conditions in the corridor, explored alternative treatments for various areas of the corridor, and made recommendations for land use strategies, general corridor improvements, and specific transportation improvements. Within the Town of Boothbay, the study focused on two areas, the Railway Village area and the Common. The study also reviewed the Town's land use regulations and found two areas in which the ordinances are lacking, parking requirements and site development standards. The study also explored possibilities for improved bicycle facilities including off-road trails.

The study includes a series of land use recommendations including locating parking behind the front wall of the building, limiting curb cuts and encouraging shared access, revising parking requirements, upgrading stormwater management requirements, enhancing landscaping and streetscape requirements, providing pedestrian amenities, requiring better plans for development proposals, and improving the regulation of signs in the corridor.

In terms of transportation improvements, the study recommends traffic patterns in the vicinity of the Commons be revised. The recommendations include constructing a roundabout at Back River Road, realigning Back River Road and Corey Lane, converting Common Drive to a one-way street, installing sidewalks and pedestrian crossings, and realigning the Chapel Street intersection.

C. Midcoast Route 27 Corridor Management Plan (2012)

In 2012, the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission prepared a management plan for the Midcoast Route 27 Corridor. This plan has been endorsed by the Boothbay Board of Selectmen. The Plan makes a number of recommendations to improve mobility and safety in the Route 27 corridor within the Town of Boothbay. These recommendations include:

- Modifying Common Drive to make it one-way and adding sidewalks and angled parking
- Conducting a traffic study of Boothbay Center from the Clipper Mart to the

- southerly end of Common Drive
- Adding turning lanes at Industrial Road, Hardwick Road, and River Road
- Adding roadside landscaping
- Realigning, regarding and improving sight distance at the Hardwick Road intersection
- Improving sight distance at Industrial Road
- Reducing the width of the access at Dave's AG (now T&D Variety)
- Widening the pavement for bike and pedestrian use from Boothbay Common to Hardwick Road
- Realigning and improving the safety at both Adams Road intersections

These recommendations should be included in the new comprehensive plan where appropriate.

D. Boothbay-Boothbay Harbor Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan (2012)

In 2012, the Boothbay-Boothbay Harbor Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee prepared a bike/ped plan for the two communities with assistance from Robert Faunce, the Lincoln County Planner. This plan was endorsed by the Boothbay Board of Selectmen. The Plan makes a number of recommendations for improvements in the Town of Boothbay. These include:

- Extending the sidewalk along Route 27 from the YMCA to Boothbay Common
- Constructing paved shoulders on the portions of Route 96 between Route 27 and East Boothbay that do not currently have paved shoulders
- Constructing paved shoulders where possible and providing improved signage on Route 96 between East Boothbay and Ocean Point
- Developing an off-road multiuse path for pedestrians and bicyclists between the YMCA/school complex on Route 27 and the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens
- Installing pedestrian improvements at the Boothbay Common intersection based upon a MeDOT traffic study and improvement plan for the entire Commons area
- Expanding the paved shoulder on Route 27 to a minimum of four feet from Boothbay Center to the Edgecomb town line

These recommendations should be included in the new comprehensive plan where appropriate.

E. Lincoln County Sea Level Rise – Coastal Hazard Study (2013)

The Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission and the Maine Geological Survey conducted the Lincoln County Sea Level Rise – Coastal Hazard Study. The purpose of the study was to determine the potential impacts of increasing sea level on the county's 450 miles of tidal shoreland. The study modeled the impacts of 10 different sea level rise scenarios ranging from 1 foot over highest annual tide (HAT) now experienced to 6 feet over HAT and scenarios considering the additional impacts with the historical "storm of record", the February 1987 storm which resulted in the highest Stillwater levels along the Maine coast.

The study prepared a series of maps showing the areas of Boothbay (as well as other county coastal communities) that would be inundated under the various scenarios including the potential depths of inundation. The study identified two areas, portions of East Boothbay and the Samoset Trail area, as being most susceptible to possible inundation. The study also identifies the Town's public facilities, primarily roads, that would be impacted under the various scenarios of sea level rise.

The information from this study should be reviewed and used in the development of policies and actions to address the possibility of future sea level rise.

Chapter Two: Recent Development Profile

This chapter provides an overview of residential development activity in the Town of Boothbay between 2005 and April 1 of 2014. This almost nine+ year period covers the timeframe in which the Town has accurate records of development activity from the assessor's database. Prior to 2005, the information on development is not reliable. The 2005 to 2014 period includes three phases of the economic cycle:

- 2005-2007 was the 3-year pre-recession period during which residential construction was very active in Boothbay and throughout the MidCoast
- 2008-2010 was 3-year period of the economic recession during which residential construction throughout Maine declined dramatically
- 2011-2014 was the 3+ period during which residential construction in some areas started to rebound

A. Amount of Residential Development 2005-2014

Over this period of 2005 to 2014, a total of 238 dwelling units were built in Boothbay. Most of these units were single-family homes but there were a few duplexes and one 4-unit condo project built during this period. Table 2-1 provides a year-by-year breakdown of the number of units built as well as the total assessed value and the average size of the units. In 2005 and 2006, 77 and 41 units were constructed respectively. These units added almost \$33 million to the Town's tax base. Construction dropped to a low of 4 new units in 2011. Interestingly, the average size of new dwelling units increased significantly through 2008 when the recession hit the housing market and has dropped since then.

Table 2-2 looks at the level of residential development based on the three 3-year periods discussed above. During the pre-recession period, Boothbay was seeing an average of almost 44 new units added per year. During the recession years of 2008-2010, the average dropped to about 21 new units per year although 2008 saw significantly more construction than the following two years possibly reflecting units that were in the pipeline as the housing market collapsed. Interestingly, Boothbay has seen very limited construction of new housing since 2011, except for 2012. The average for the 2011 to 2014 period has been only 13.5 units per year

Table 2-1 Yearly Residential Construction

Year	Units Built	Total Value of Improvements (not land)	Total Square Feet Built (Living Area)	Avg. Sq. Ft per unit
2005	77	\$21,404,700	152,223	1,977
2006	41	\$11,271,500	80,817	1,971
2007	13	\$4,309,500	25,617	1,971
2008	27	\$8,534,500	60,232	2,231
2009	19	\$4,259,900	36,719	1,933
2010	16	\$3,791,300	26,757	1,672
2011	4	\$469,700	4,260	1,065
2012	27	\$5,680,200	44,795	1,659
2013	9	\$2,534,500	15,775	1,753
2014 (part)	5	\$636,400	6,724	1,345

Table 2-2 Residential Construction by Periods

Year	Units Built	Total Value of Improvements (not land)	Total Square Feet Built (Living Area)	Avg. Sq. Ft per unit
2005-2007	131	\$36,985,700	258,657	1,974
2008-2010	62	\$16,585,700	123,708	1,995
2011-2014	45	\$9,320,800	71,554	1,590

B. Pattern of Residential Development 2005-2014

Figure 2-1 shows the location of the 238 new dwelling units constructed in Boothbay between 2005 and April 1, 2014 by the three 3-year time periods. Two things stand out when looking at this figure:

- Residential development was dispersed throughout the entire town with no significant concentrations of units in any one area.
- Most residential development appears to be occurring on a lot-by-lot basis or in small subdivisions with little, if any, development is in larger subdivisions or other residential developments.

**Patterns of Residential Construction
in Boothbay, 2005 to 2014**

Source: Town of Boothbay, 2014

Date: 1/29/2015

Year of Construction (Residential)

Pre-Recession (2005-2007) ●

Recession (2008-2010) ○

Post-Recession (2011-2014) ●

Boothbay Parcels

NOTES:

- 2014 residential data represents construction to April 01, 2014

- Each unit in a multi-unit construction projects are shown on the lot

- Major renovations of existing properties are not included

- Map-Lot R05-1010 (Hilde Place) includes a 4-unit condo development. Shown as 4 separate projects



Chapter Three Overview of the Updated Inventories

Understanding the current situation in Boothbay with respect to both the natural and built environments is essential in planning for the future of the community. Similarly, understanding how the community has been changing over the past 10-20 years provides a context within which to consider the future of Boothbay. The appendices contain thirteen inventories that look at various aspects of Boothbay ranging from the Town's demographic characteristics to its natural and marine resources to the Town's fiscal situation. The inventories are intended to provide a factual, objective look at the community to allow thoughtful decisions to be made about the future of Boothbay. This chapter provides a brief overview of each of those inventories and identifies issues and implications that need to be addressed in the goals and policies of this plan.

A.