

**PORTSMOUTH DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN**

**POLICY STATEMENTS SUMMARY**

**1 – NATURAL RESOURCES**

Policy NR - 1.1 - Ensure that new development and redevelopment in Portsmouth takes place in a manner which protects environmentally sensitive areas and resources.

(Related Policies: WS – 1.1, LU – 5.1, SF – 1.10, NH/CC – 1.2, LU – 1.1)

Policy NR - 1.2 - Preserve, protect and restore Portsmouth’s valuable coastal resources and shoreline features.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.10, SF – 1.11, NH/CC – 1.2, LU – 5.2)

Policy NR - 1.3 - Maintain the natural and functional characteristics of Portsmouth’s soils.

(Related Policies: AG – 1.1, LU – 6.2)

Policy NR - 1.4 - Protect the natural and rural open space character of Portsmouth and encourage the use and enjoyment of its abundant natural resources.

(Related Policies: HRC – 2.2, R – 1.2, ED – 2.1, LU – 1.1)

Policy NR - 1.5 - Support the conservation of Portsmouth’s forested areas, tree resources, native plants and wildlife species.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.2)

Policy NR - 1.6 - Promote efforts to maintain good air quality in Portsmouth and its surrounding communities.

(Related Policies: T – 3.1)

## **2 - RECREATION**

Policy R - 1.1 - Maintain an active Parks & Recreation Department to manage recreational activity in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.1)

Policy R - 1.2 - Continue to provide for high-quality maintenance of current public recreation areas and facilities.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.4, SF – 1.2)

Policy R - 1.3 - Explore opportunities to physically improve and increase access to existing recreational facilities as well as identify areas for potential expansion of our recreational system.

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### **3 – HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Policy HRC - 1.1 - Support the education of students, residents and visitors alike in the importance of preserving the historic and cultural heritage of Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.13)

Policy HRC - 1.2 - Promote and encourage all public, private and non-profit entities engaged in historic preservation activities in Portsmouth at all levels of effort.

Policy HRC - 1.3 - Foster civic participation and community engagement through enhanced access to Portsmouth’s rich historic and cultural resources.

(Related Policies: SF 1.13, NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy HRC - 2.1 - Protect and preserve historic and cultural resources through the use of design standards, zoning controls, easements, tax incentives and other tools at the Towns disposal.

(Related Policies: LU – 5.1, LU – 1.1)

Policy HRC - 2.2 - Preserve Portsmouth’s historic landscapes, including farms and agricultural lands as essential elements of our community character, economic vitality and quality of life.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.4, ED – 2.1, AG – 2.1, LU – 6.1, LU – 1.1, ED – 2.5)

Policy HRC - 2.3 - Maintain financial support for historic preservation activities, arts and cultural organizations and neighborhood associations.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.4)

#### **4 - HOUSING**

Policy H - 1.1 - Preserve existing affordable housing opportunities.

Policy H - 1.2 - Support and incentivize future residential development projects that result in additional affordable housing units.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.8)

Policy H - 1.3 - Encourage the development of more types of housing choices to accommodate changing household demographics.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.1, LU – 4.2, LU – 1.1)

Policy H - 1.4 - Recognize a particular obligation to meet the housing needs of our elderly population, first-time home buyers and those who are disabled or with special needs.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.14)

Policy H-2.1 - Promote opportunities to integrate affordable housing into existing neighborhoods.

(Related Policies: LU – 4.1)

Policy H-2.2 - Prioritize locations for affordable housing that are closely related to existing infrastructure, facilities and services.

(Related Policies: LU – 2.4, T – 2.2)

Policy H-2.3 - Encourage scattered site, mixed-use and infill residential development accompanied by effective housing rehabilitation programs as the surest way to achieve Portsmouth's housing goals.

(Related Policies: LU – 4.3, LU – 1.1)

Policy H - 3.1 - Advance programs that raise awareness of housing needs in the community and expand civic participation in affordable housing programs.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.4)

## **5 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Policy ED - 1.1 - Seek local business input to assess the workforce skills gap and support strategies to meet local employer’s talent needs.

Policy ED - 1.2 - Coordinate with local educational institutions and other entities that provide career growth counseling, technical education and training opportunities and management of apprenticeship / internship programs.

(Related Policies: SF – 3.1)

Policy ED-2.1 - Recognize and promote the belief that the very best business attractor we can create is to make Portsmouth an exceptional place to live, work and play.

(Related Policies: R – 1.1, HRC – 2.2, H – 1.3, AG – 2.1, ED – 5.3, NR – 1.4, LU – 1.1, WS – 1.2, NH/CC – 1.3)

Policy ED-2.2 - Prioritize programs and policies that focus on retaining and strengthening existing local businesses. Keep local businesses in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: AG – 2.1, NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy ED-2.3 - Support the growth of home occupations as an important component of business activity in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: LU – 2.3)

Policy ED-2.4 - Continue to focus on attracting maritime, technology and defense-related businesses as desirable economic activity in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: LU – 3.1)

Policy ED-2.5 - Promote tourism and the local tourist economy at every opportunity.

(Related Policies: LU – 3.2, HRC – 2.2)

Policy ED - 3.1 - See that built infrastructure and municipal services are maximized to support local business activity in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: T – 1.1, NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy ED - 3.2 - Encourage local business-to-business programs and policies that encourage local relationships and local business coordination. Keep Portsmouth dollars in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy ED - 3.3 - Address the increasing impacts of climate change and seek ways to protect both public and private business and infrastructure assets within Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: E – 1.4, NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy ED - 4.1 - Through zoning, endeavor there is a sufficient amount of land to support growth in the commercial/industrial tax base to maintain a balance with Portsmouth’s residential tax base at appropriate levels.

(Related Policies: LU – 1.1)

Policy ED - 4.2 - Manage commercial/industrial growth patterns which may include the concept of nodes and clusters rather than large concentrated retail centers, extended commercial strip development or growth centers. Promote transportation alternatives accordingly.

(Related Policies: LU – 2.1)

Policy ED - 4.3 - Continue to require landscape buffers and other regulatory safeguards that protect residential properties from the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development.

Policy ED - 4.4 - Consider direct public investment in unique development, re-development and in-fill opportunities as a way to ensure quality business development that does not compromise community character.

(Related Policies: LU – 2.4))

Policy ED - 5.1 - Minimize regulatory constraints on new and existing business owners by seeking ways to improve local licensing, permit approvals and development regulations as well as working through Portsmouth’s state delegation to influence and streamline state-mandated licensing and permitting regulations.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.7)

Policy ED - 5.2 - Promote policies and programs that reduce the cost of doing business in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.8)

Policy ED - 5.3 - Ensure there is robust municipal support of local businesses including active promotion of Portsmouth as a good place to do business.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.1, NH/CC – 1.4, AG – 2.1)

**6 - AGRICULTURE**

Policy AG - 1.1 - Continue to work with land trusts, non-profits and other appropriate partners to target prime agricultural lands for preservation.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.3, LU – 6.2)

Policy AG - 2.1 - Advance regulations, programs and initiatives that increase the economic viability of agriculture in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: HRC – 2.2, ED – 2.1, ED – 2.2, WS – 1.2, LU – 1.1, ED – 5.3, E – 1.4)

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## **7 – SERVICES & FACILITIES**

Policy SF-1.1 - Improve procedures to maintain a physical inventory of all Town facilities and assets in order to inform both short and long-term Capital Improvement Programs.

Policy SF-1.2 - Manage long-range maintenance and improvement programs for all existing public facilities and town-owned land in order to protect prior public investment.

(Related Policies: R – 1.2)

Policy SF-1.3 - Maintain sound fiscal management of Portsmouth’s financial resources by developing sustainable annual budgets that promote long-term financial stability.

Policy SF-1.4 - Continuously seek grant opportunities and ways to increase revenue to the Town in order to offset the costs of providing services.

Policy SF-1.5 - Coordinate with neighboring communities and non-governmental organizations to determine if shared facilities and/or services may increase effectiveness.

(Related Policies: LU – 1.4)

Policy SF-1.6 - Improve municipal services and facilities to Prudence and Hog Islands commensurate with the inherent limitations of access being by ferry or private vessel only.

(Related Policies: T – 3.2)

Policy SF-1.7 - Ensure a high level of administrative functions from all town departments and enhance effective communication between town staff and citizens.

(Related Policies: LU – 1.1, ED – 5.1)

Policy SF-1.8 - Ensure that the Town maintains compliance with all state and federal regulations and with the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island.

(Related Policies: ED – 5.2, H – 1.2)

Policy SF-1.9 - Preserve the current high level of public works activities by continuously prioritizing service demands, supporting appropriate staffing levels and managing effective facilities and equipment maintenance / replacement programs.

(Related Policies: E – 1.2, T – 1.1)

Policy SF-1.10 - Advance efficient and environmentally sensitive programs and practices to manage storm water runoff and on-site wastewater treatment to mitigate adverse impacts on receiving waters.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.2, WS – 1.1, NR – 1.1)

Policy SF-1.11 - Advance efficient and environmentally sensitive programs and practices to manage on-site wastewater treatment to mitigate adverse impacts on receiving waters.



Policy SF-1.12 - Promote adequate solid waste disposal and recycling programs that will serve the community with a minimum impact on the environment and assure compliance with the State's minimum goals for recycling and solid waste diversion rates.

Policy SF-1.13 - Recognize the Portsmouth Free Public Library as a cultural center and a critical public service by assisting the library's efforts to not only maintain but expand and diversify library facilities and programs.

(Related Policies: HRC – 1.1, HRC – 1.3)

Policy SF-1.14 - Improve on the current array of programs, services, and facilities for the benefit of senior citizens and disadvantaged individuals/families in the community.

(Related Policies: H – 1.4)

Policy SF-2.1 - Continuously assess the adequacy of public safety facilities, resources, and equipment to ensure the highest state of readiness.

(Related Policies: T – 1.3)

Policy SF-2.2 - Maintain and continuously seek to improve the current high level of public safety services within the constraints of budgetary realities and best-practice standards.

Policy SF-2.3 - Plan for future population changes and potential new development to ensure capacity to deliver appropriate public safety services at appropriate levels.

Policy SF-2.4 - Ensure that all public safety staff is adequately trained with proper levels of certification for their public safety duties.

Policy SF-3.1 - Engage all students in rigorous learning opportunities supported by a high quality and challenging curriculum and superior teaching to prepare them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

(Related Policies: ED – 1.2)

Policy SF-3.3 - Ensure that school facilities have the capacity to meet enrollment needs, are well maintained and are continuously evaluated for their utility as a setting for academic excellence.

Policy SF-3.2 - Under the provisions of the Town Charter, maintain open and cooperative relations between the School Department, and the Town Administration.

## **8 - ENERGY**

Policy E - 1.1 - Advance the efficient use of energy in all capital projects, municipal purchases and cooperative agreements.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.3)

Policy E - 1.2 - Seek to improve the overall energy efficiency of all municipal fleet vehicles.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.9)

Policy E - 1.3 - Support the development and maintenance of sustainable renewable energy resources in both the public and private sector.

(Related Policies: AG – 2.1)

Policy E - 1.4 - Encourage residents and local businesses to adopt energy-efficient measures and pursue renewable energy systems through public information campaigns and business incentives.

(Related Policies: ED – 3.3, NH/CC – 1.4)

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**9 – WATER SUPPLY**

Policy WS - 1.1 - Protect Portsmouth’s drinking water supply by minimizing the introduction of non-point source pollutants into our surface water reservoirs and groundwater resources. (Related Policies: NR – 1.1, SF – 1.11, NH/cc – 1.1, LU – 1.1)

Policy WS - 1.2 - Maintain close coordination between Town land use planning and the various water suppliers’ planning for future demand. (Related Policies: AG – 2.1, LU – 6.1, LU – 2.2, ED – 2.1)

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## **10 - TRANSPORTATION**

Policy T - 1.1 - Ensure the community has a safe and well-maintained street and roadway network with high standards for roadway design and a program of continuous improvement in roadway safety and capacity.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.9, ED – 3.1)

Policy T - 1.2 - Advance land use regulations that improve vehicular traffic circulation, promote transportation safety and encourage alternative transportation options.

(Related Policies: LU – 1.1)

Policy T- 1.3 - Declare public safety to be the top priority in all matters having to do with transportation and circulation in Portsmouth.

(Related Policies: SF – 2.1)

Policy T-2.1 - Maintain a policy of coordination with RIDOT during all phases of planning, design, construction and maintenance on state transportation projects within the community.

Policy T-2.2 - Support the expansion of all aspects of state and local public transportation systems.

(Related Policies: H – 2.2)

Policy T - 3.1 - Encourage the use of alternate modes of travel.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.6, LU – 1.1)

Policy T-3.2 - Ensure that reliable ferry service exists to and from Prudence Island on a year-round basis and seek ways to reestablish ferry service to Hog Island on a limited basis.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.6)

## **11 – NATURAL HAZARDS & CLIMATE CHANGE**

Policy NH/CC - 1.1 - Manage land use and the built environment within the floodplain and other vulnerable areas to not only mitigate but increase community resilience to, the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.2, WS – 1.1, LU – 5.2)

Policy NH/CC - 1.2 – Preserve and enhance the capacity of the natural environment to improve Portsmouth’s resilience to the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.5, NR – 1.1, NR – 1.2)

Policy NH/CC - 1.3 - Require all municipal departments, boards and commissions to incorporate resilience to natural hazards and climate change in all long-range planning and public infrastructure projects.

(Related Policies: E – 1.1, LU – 1.1, ED – 2.1)

Policy NH/CC - 1.4 - Work to reduce the economic impacts of and increase the societal resilience to the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

(Related Policies: ED – 3.3, HRC – 2.3, H – 3.1, ED – 3.2, ED – 5.3, E – 1.4, LU – 2.1, HRC – 1.3, ED – 2.2, LU – 1.2)

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## **12 – LAND USE**

Policy LU - 1.1 - Advance smart growth principles in all land use decisions made by the Town of Portsmouth. (Related Policies: ED – 4.1, NR – 1.1, NR – 1.4, HRC – 2.1, HRC – 2.2, H – 1.3, H – 2.3, T – 1.2, ED – 2.1, AG – 2.1, WS – 1.1, T – 3.1, NH/CC – 1.3, SF – 1.7)

Policy LU - 1.2 - Improve the existing municipal land use regulatory scheme to allow for more planning initiative, less regulatory reaction, higher quality development and conformance with the provisions and intent of this Comprehensive Plan.

(Related Policies: NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy LU - 1.3 - Encourage the use of flexible zoning techniques such as the Planned Unit Development (PUD) for all commercial and industrial districts.

Policy LU - 1.4 - Continue to affirm the importance of regional cooperation by participating in mutually beneficial planning initiatives with adjacent communities, state agencies and other stakeholders.

(Related Policies: SF – 1.5)

Policy LU - 2.1 - Manage commercial/industrial growth patterns around the concept of nodes and clusters rather than large concentrated retail centers, extended commercial strip development or growth centers.

(Related Policies: ED – 4.2)

Policy LU - 2.2 - Consider growth management strategies that relate residential, commercial and industrial growth to the rate of population growth in order to discourage overdevelopment of these land uses which may alter the character of the Town.

(Related Policies: WS – 1.2, NH/CC – 1.4)

Policy LU - 2.3 - Encourage mixed-use development/re-development in commercial and light industrial districts and home occupation uses in residential districts with appropriate limitations.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.3)

Policy LU - 2.4 - Encourage in-fill development and re-development of vacant and underutilized parcels especially those with adequate infrastructure and ready access to public services.

(Related Policies: H – 2.2, ED – 3.1, ED – 4.4)

Policy LU - 3.1 - Support the reuse and redevelopment of former military land along the West Side including existing military housing, infrastructure, and the Tank Farms.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.4)

Policy LU - 3.2 - Encourage continued marine-industrial development, marina expansion, resort/tourism accommodations and public waterfront access as beneficial land uses along the West Side.

(Related Policies: ED – 2.5)

Policy LU - 3.3 - Along the West Side, support limited commercial and residential development as part of mixed-use development projects only.

Policy LU - 4.1 - Ensure the continued strength and stability of our residential neighborhoods by respecting valued development patterns and character.

(Related Policies: H – 2.1)

Policy LU - 4.2 - Support a range of residential land uses to ensure a diversity of housing choices for all residents.

(Related Policies: H – 1.3)

Policy LU - 4.3 - Encourage scattered site, mixed-use and infill residential development accompanied by effective housing rehabilitation programs as the surest way to achieve Portsmouth’s housing goals.

(Related Policies: H – 2.3)

Policy LU - 5.1 - Ensure future development is compatible with adjoining land uses, the natural environment, and existing historic and cultural features.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.1, HRC – 2.1)

Policy LU - 5.2 - Manage land use and development within the floodplain and other vulnerable areas to not only mitigate the impacts of, but increase community resilience to, the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.2, NH/CC – 1.1)

Policy LU - 6.1 - Preserve Portsmouth’s farms and agricultural lands as essential elements of our community character, economic vitality and quality of life.

(Related Policies: HRC – 2.2, AG – 1.1, WS – 1.2)

Policy LU - 6.2 - Continue to work with land trusts, non-profits and other appropriate partners to target prime agricultural lands for preservation.

(Related Policies: NR – 1.3, AG – 1.1)