

# MODERNIZE MAINE'S GROWTH MANAGEMENT LAW TO CREATE A MORE FLEXIBLE AND EFFECTIVE FRAMEWORK

Better outcomes in land use from housing and social spaces to protected lands.

## Maine communities are dealing with complex challenges.

- Many municipalities are working to rebuild their local economies to recover from long-term industry shifts and support growth, while others are working to navigate significant population growth.
- Climate change requires new thinking about infrastructure, public services, and housing.
- Housing shortages are making it difficult for people to afford to live near their jobs and almost impossible for communities to attract new workers and families.
- Social isolation is a critical public health issue, impacting physical, mental, and emotional health.

## Maine's 34-year-old Growth Management Law and Comprehensive Planning requirements are not supporting communities to address these challenges.

- Comprehensive planning is the tool that Maine municipalities – big and small – use to plan, illustrate, and envision how they want their communities to look and function in the future.
- The current process does not provide communities the tools they need. It requires too much red tape, exhausting communities before they can reach their goals.
- Outdated requirements neither link state goals and data to desired community outcomes nor integrate designated areas for growth, conservation, and resilience within those goals.
- The current process too often leads to a lengthy document that looks good, but “sits on a shelf” and does not get implemented.



*Proposed new village, Windam Comprehensive Plan*

## Revising the Comprehensive Plan process and requirements will lead to better outcomes.

- Maine can revise comprehensive planning to focus on local priorities and implementation strategies for sustainable economic development, community revitalization, and strategic land protection.
- This bill updates definitions of critical natural resources, protects access to farmland, and promotes the viability of agriculture to safeguard Maine's rural character, working lands, and heritage industries.



*Proposed infill & street improvements, Newcastle Comprehensive Plan*

- It encourages municipalities to direct new development to growth areas, making efficient use of public services and existing infrastructure while preventing development sprawl and associated traffic.
- Updating our Growth Management Law will help Maine communities address the current housing crisis without undermining climate action or creating the next crisis in access to working farmland, forests, water, and outdoor recreation spaces.

## Support Maine communities. Update the Growth Management Law.

For more information, please contact  
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# Environmental Priorities Coalition

Maine's **Environmental Priorities Coalition** is an inclusive statewide alliance of 39 conservation, climate action, and public health organizations. Each year we collectively identify a slate of policy priorities to act on the climate crisis, further environmental justice, protect land, water, and wildlife, and cultivate healthy Maine communities.



Acadia  
Center



Conservation  
Law Foundation



Gateway Community Services Maine



Immigrant Welcome Center  
GREATER PORTLAND



MEEA  
Maine  
Environmental  
Education  
Association



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