Contents

• The comprehensive plan
• Planning process
• Setting the context
• What we’ve learned
• Community engagement
• Vision and principles
• Draft policies
• Next steps
The Comprehensive Plan
Why do we need a comprehensive plan?

1. An opportunity to plan together to shape our community’s future—as our community, economy, and natural setting continue to evolve

2. Legal protection for local ordinances (zoning, impact fees)

3. Qualify for certain state grants and loans

State’s “finding of consistency” expires after 12 years
State Growth Management Act (30-A MRSA, Chapter 187)
What is a comprehensive plan?

• Provides a shared community vision and policy framework that guides public and private decision-making

• Takes a long-range look at various topics that impact the City’s character, preservation and growth, and fiscal condition
What is included in a comprehensive plan?

**Required Elements:**
- Vision Statement
- Public Participation
- Regional Coordination
- Plan Implementation
- Evaluation Measures
What is included in a comprehensive plan?

Required Plan Topics:
• Historic and Archaeological Resources
• Water Resources
• Natural Resources
• Agricultural and Forest Resources
• Marine Resources

• Population and Demographics
• Housing
• Recreation
• Transportation
• Public Facilities and Services
• Fiscal Capacity and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
• Future Land Use Plan
What is included in a comprehensive plan?

Added Topics:
• Sea Level Rise
• Arts and Culture
• Sustainability and Resilience
How will the plan be structured?

- **Goals**
  - Big picture, long-term

- **Policies**
  - General, citywide

- **Strategies**
  - Specific, place-based
The Planning Process
What is the planning process?

**IMAGINE**
- What’s our shared vision for the future of Saco?

**PLAN**
- Goals to make the vision real
- Policies to achieve the goals

**ACT**
- Strategies to implement the policies
How will we get there?

- **Existing Conditions**: Fall/Winter 2020-21
- **Community Visioning**: Winter/Spring 2021
- **Topic Exploration**: Spring 2021
- **Draft Plan**: Summer/Fall 2021
- **Final Plan**: Winter/Spring 2021-22
- **Implement**: Ongoing 2022+
Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC)

- An advisory committee to City Council charged to oversee the City’s long-term vision

- 15 members
  - 2 City Councilors
  - 2 Planning Board members
  - 2 Economic Development Commission members
  - 2 Saco Schools staff
  - Saco Main Street representative
  - Age Friendly Saco representative
  - 5 Saco residents

- 6 City staff
  - City Planner
  - Director of Planning and Economic Development
  - Economic Development Specialist
  - Planning and Economic Development Associate
  - City Engineer
  - Director of Code Enforcement
What is the LRPC’s charge?

**Initial Charge** (w/ consultants and staff)
- Review 2011 Comprehensive Plan and 2018 Update
- Develop the 2021 Comprehensive Plan

**Ongoing Charge** (w/ staff)
- Study/make recommendations on managing City’s future growth and development
- Assessing zoning and land use initiatives
- Assessing growth management initiatives, environmental efforts
- Updates to the Comprehensive Plan
- Oversee accountability for its implementation
Setting the Context

Trends Influencing Saco
Lessons from the pandemic

What has changed? Greater interest in:

• Access to nature and public spaces
• Adapting streets for outdoor dining
• Remote work

• Accelerated challenges facing many retailers and small businesses
Lessons from the pandemic

What has not changed?

• Fundamental demographic, economic, mobility, and environmental trends that favor walkable, amenitized, community-rich places

• The value of planning for our community’s future
Economic imperative

Today **two-thirds** of all jobs require higher education...
Economic imperative

…creating a **growing knowledge worker shortage**

- Advanced economies may have **too few** college-educated workers and **too many** workers with secondary degrees
Demographic opportunity

- Traditional market for single-family houses is shrinking — two parents with kids
Demographic opportunity

• Less than 40% of US housing stock today matches the housing most new households will be searching for
Mobility disruption

• Electric vehicles
• Micromobility (bikes, scooters, skateboards)
• Rideshare (Uber/Lyft) and car share (ZipCar)
• Driver assistance technology (self-parking, etc.)
• Autonomous shuttles and vehicles
Changing climate

- Rising seas
- Increased storm frequency and intensity
- Global imperatives for mitigation and adaptation
What We’ve Learned

... and what it means for the future
Saco at a Glance

View two-pager online at Saco at a Glance 2021-01-12.pdf (sacomaine.org)
Some key takeaways:

- A growing population, and aging
- Shifting housing preferences and rising costs
- Need to attract more diverse and higher-paying jobs
- Regional transportation pressures, and desire for more pedestrian and bicycle connections
- Diverse natural resources to preserve and enhance
- Adaptation to a changing environment
## Saco Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>ACS 5-Yr</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>ESRI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16,822</td>
<td>18,482</td>
<td>19,497</td>
<td>20,381</td>
<td>20,932</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Households</strong></td>
<td>6,801</td>
<td>7,623</td>
<td>7,953</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>8,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Units</strong></td>
<td>7,424</td>
<td>8,508</td>
<td>8,693</td>
<td>9,407</td>
<td>9,784</td>
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Managing demographic changes
Saco’s population is increasing

+ **2,603** estimated net migration, 2010-2019
- **1,871** natural change, 2010-2019

- **94% white / 6% non-white**
- **2% Hispanic**

Source: Maine State Economist
Growth is driven by young professionals and ages 60+

*5-year change in population by age*: Increasing overall population, decreasing school-age children population

The 65+ population will also be increasing, which may influence the types of services Saco prioritizes.

Source: ESRI
Smaller share of kids, growing share of 65+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saco</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>ESRI est.</td>
<td>ESRI est.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 5-24</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 65+</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adapting to changing housing preferences
Housing characteristics

9,400 housing units | 8,470 households

Housing Units by Structure Type

- **59%** single-family detached
- **38%** attached or multifamily
- **3.5%** mobile homes

Housing Tenure

- **61%** Owner Occupied
- **29%** Renter Occupied
- **10%** Vacant

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018
Single family construction outpaces multifamily

- Single family fairly steady year-to-year
- Multifamily fluctuates widely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Multifamily</th>
<th>Single Family</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>AVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Saco Code Enforcement
Construction costs are rising

Change in cost 2015-2020: +24%

Single Family Construction Cost (excluding land)

Source: City of Saco Code Enforcement
Housing costs and incomes are diverging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homeowner</th>
<th>Median income</th>
<th>Median home price</th>
<th>Affordable home price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$67,582</td>
<td>$319,000</td>
<td>$221,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renter</th>
<th>Median income</th>
<th>Median 2BR rent</th>
<th>Affordable 2BR rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$48,395</td>
<td>$1,729</td>
<td>$1,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Saco’s 2019 Homeownership Affordability Index: 0.69**
- **Saco’s 2020 Rental Affordability Index: 0.70**

Source: MaineHousing
Attracting more diverse and higher-paying jobs
Recent job growth and local strengths...

+5% job growth 2014-19

• Lower than York + Cumberland Counties but higher than State

Local Industry Strengths:

• Health Care and Social Assistance
• Light Industrial, Manufacturing, and Logistics
• Professional and Technical Services

Source: Economic Development Market Analysis, Nov. 2020 (Camoin Associates)
...but population is growing faster than job opportunities

**Percent Change, 2010-2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population Growth</th>
<th>Employment Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saco</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddeford</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westbrook</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorham</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Portland</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falmouth</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Economic Development Market Analysis Workshop, 10/15/2020 (Camoin Associates)
Primarily small businesses

- **34%** of Saco businesses have 1 to 4 employees
- **50%** of Saco businesses have 5 to 19 employees

### Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Collar</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Economic Development Market Analysis, Nov. 2020 (Camoin Associates)

Where Saco Workers Live, 2017

- Saco-Biddeford: 33%
- Other locations: 16%
Average earnings per job lower than region

- Saco generally imports service occupations and exports professional occupations

Source: Economic Development Market Analysis, Nov. 2020 (Camoin Associates)

Median Household Income: $65,609
Per Capita Income: $35,979

Source: ESRI, 2020 estimates

Where Saco Residents Work, 2017

- Saco-Biddeford: 25%
- Other locations

Source: ESRI, 2020 estimates
Education comparable to region

Educational Attainment, 2019

City of Saco
- High School Diploma or Equivalent: 45.6%
- Bachelor’s Degree: 25.7%
- Associate’s Degree: 9.1%
- Bachelor’s Degree or higher: 39%

York and Cumberland Counties
- High School Diploma or Equivalent: 42.0%
- Bachelor’s Degree: 25.9%
- Associate’s Degree: 10.2%
- Bachelor’s Degree or higher: 48.9%

Maine
- High School Diploma or Equivalent: 48.9%
- Bachelor’s Degree: 20.3%
- Associate’s Degree: 10.6%
- Bachelor’s Degree or higher: 33%

Source: Esri
Expanding walking, biking, transit options; mitigating regional transportation pressures
Highest volumes on regional corridors

• Highest volumes on Industrial Park Rd, Route 1
• Maine Turnpike Exit 35/36 project

Source: Maine DOT
Most Saco residents drive elsewhere for work

**Commute Modes**

- **10,979**
  - 82.3% Drive Alone to Work
- **0.2%**
  - Walk Public Transportation
- **1.4%**
  - Walk to Work
- **0.6%**
  - Bike to Work

**All Jobs Inflow/Outflow, 2018**

- Work in Saco, Live Elsewhere: 6,022
- Live and Work in Saco: 9,352
- Live in Saco, Work Elsewhere: 1,508

Sources:
- American Community Survey
- OnTheMap, U.S. Census Bureau
Housing + transportation costs are more affordable near downtown

• Lowest downtown, highest near coast and North Saco

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing + Transportation Costs As % Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36-45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: H+T Affordability Index, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Increasing transit/bicycling use

**BSOOB**: ridership increased 21% from 2017-19
- 46% shuttlebus, 36% seasonal trolleys, 11% Portland IC, 6% Zoom

**Downeaster**: 547,293 riders in FY2019 (+8% from ‘18)
- Connects to buses/shuttles at Saco Transportation Center

**Eastern Trail**: ~3.25 miles of off-street multiuse path through Saco
- Significant increase in use during pandemic
Preserving and enhancing our diverse natural resources
Variety of parks and recreation opportunities

- 14 parks/630 acres
  - 1 park per ~1,500 residents
- 70 Parks + Recreation programs prior to Covid-19
- ~15 miles of trails in Saco
Diverse natural resources

• 2+ miles of coastline
• Saco River corridor recreational opportunities

• 90+ licensed vessels
  o 15 commercial fishing, 17 lobster/crab, 37 non-commercial lobster/crab
• Several working farms in North Saco
• Average 350 acres timber harvest per year 2011-18
Historic built environment

- 11 landmarks and 2 districts on National Register of Historic Places
- 225 properties in Downtown Historic District
Responding to a changing environment
Sustainability

Climate Change Mitigation (GHG Reduction)

Resilience

Climate Change Adaptation (Coastal Flooding, SLR)
Integrating sustainability and resiliency

- Resilience
- Sustainability

- Green Buildings
- Mobility
- Density and Walkability
- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Pandemic
- Health & Wellness

- Urban Design
- Climate Change
- Stormwater Mgmt
- Solid Waste Mgmt
- Resilient Economy
- Affordable Housing
- Open Space
MAINE GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS BY SECTOR

1. TRANSPORTATION: 54%
2. RESIDENTIAL: 19%
3. ELECTRIC POWER: 7%
4. COMMERCIAL: 11%
5. INDUSTRIAL: 9%

Source: Maine Climate Council
Adapting to a changing environment

**Climate**: +3.2°F since 1895
- +2-4°F increase projected by 2050, up to 10°F increase by 2100
- Most pronounced change in winter season

**Precipitation**: +6” annual precipitation since 1895
- Increase in average heavy precipitation events (intensity)
- Increased flood volume
- No observed increase in drought occurrences

Source: “Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine”
Adapting to coastal changes

Sea Level Rise (SLR) projections: +1 ft/century recently
- **Commit** to manage 1.5 ft relative SLR by 2050 and 3.9 ft by 2100
- **Prepare** to manage 3.0 ft relative SLR by 2050 and 8.8 ft by 2100

Ocean temperature, acidification:
- Warming trend in past 15 years, continuing through 2050
- pH has decreased from 8.2 to 8.1, a 30% increase in the average acidity

Source: “Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine”
High tide +3.9’ SLR projection (by 2100)

Intermediate scenario by 2100
Managing our fiscal health
Highest values in/near downtown and coast
Water/sewer mostly south of I-95
Community Engagement
Building from Bridge 2025

“What people love” themes:
• Warm, friendly sense of community
• Historic, small city and beautiful natural setting
• Downtown Saco
• Saco’s location and access

“What people want to improve” themes:
• Downtown revitalization
• Traffic concerns, including pedestrian circulation
• Business development
• Property taxes

From Bridge 2025 Report to Council (public engagement process in 2014-2015)
Building from Bridge 2025

Vision themes:

• Friendly, welcoming community
• Thriving downtown
• Quality jobs from steady, sustainable commercial growth
• Outstanding educational system
• Flourishing natural areas and recreational opportunities
• Affordable for a diverse group of residents
• Active, engaged citizens, elected leaders, and City staff
LRPC survey

Challenges

• Managing growth
• Traffic challenges – “making it all fit”
• Taxes and housing costs/affordability
• Sea level rise and beach erosion
• Aging schools

LRPC online survey January 2021
Future Considerations

• “Understanding the aspects of what makes a community a livable community”
• Promote commercial growth/diversify tax base
• Attract innovative downtown development, walkable mixed-use
• Encourage affordable housing and housing availability
• Involve residents and gather input from wide range of people

LRPC online survey January 2021
Community Engagement So Far

• 25 interviews with 40+ people – Dec 2020/Jan 2021

• Public kickoff meeting – January 2021
  - 445 community survey responses
  - 109 interactive map comments

• Four topic meetings – April/May
  - Downtown, Housing, Mobility, Sustainability + Resilience
  - 11 panelists shared local/regional perspectives
  - 20+ ideas submitted to online Ideas Forum

• Posters at two community events – June
Community Survey + Interactive Map
Online engagement during visioning

Social Pinpoint website:
• 2,000 total visits, 653 unique users
• 109 map comments from 45 users

Survey:
• 445 survey responses: 387 complete + 59 partially complete
Engagement Summary

View summary online at:
Vision-Input-Summary_210308.pdf (sacomaine.org)

Interactive Map: visitors could place marker and leave comments
Q4: How would you describe the amount of development in Saco today?

Diversity of opinions regarding housing

**Residential – single family**

- Not enough: 17.00%
- About right: 56.00%
- Too much: 26.00%

**Residential – multi-family**

- Not enough: 23.00%
- About right: 47.00%
- Too much: 29.00%
Q4: How would you describe the amount of development in Saco today?

~90% ‘about right’ or ‘not enough’ commercial and industrial

**Commercial – office, lab**

- Not enough: 30.00%
- About right: 60.00%
- Too much: 10.00%

**Industrial/Manufacturing**

- Not enough: 29.00%
- About right: 62.00%
- Too much: 9.00%
Q4: How would you describe the amount of development in Saco today?

Majority thinks not enough retail and dining options

Retail – shops, services

- Not enough: 64.00%
- About right: 35.00%
- Too much: 1.00%

Restaurants/Food and Beverage

- Not enough: 67.00%
- About right: 30.00%
- Too much: 3.00%
Q6: I think Saco needs more...

What I Think Saco Needs More...

Themes from written responses
- Restaurant & Retail
- School Improvements
- Business/Jobs/Industrial
- Green Space/Preservation
- Activities & Events
- Downtown Attractions
- Traffic Mitigation/Parking
- Affordable Housing
- Bike & Pedestrian Infrastructure
Q7: I think Saco needs less...

Themes from written responses:
- Housing Developments: 15%
- Traffic: 15%
- Chain Stores/Lack of Retail Variety: 14%
- Multi-Family Housing: 13%
- Development: 13%
- Taxes: 13%
- Single-Family Housing: 12%
- Industrial Parks: 6%
- Sprawl: 6%
- Other: 3%
Q8: Rank top 3 comp plan issues most important to you

1. Land use
2. Fiscal capacity
3. Transportation
4. Economic Development
5. Sustainability/Resiliency
6. Natural resources/open spaces
7. Public infrastructure/facilities
8. Parks and recreation
9. Arts and culture
10. Historic preservation
Q8: Rank top 3 comp plan issues most important to you

Notes:

• “Sustainability/Resiliency” ranked #2 by respondents younger than 35 (#5 overall).

• “Natural resources/open spaces” ranked #2 by respondents 55 or older (#6 overall).
Q9: Rank top 3 strategies that would most improve quality of life over 10-15 years

1. Improve physical condition of schools
2. Enhance Downtown Saco as a destination
3. Attract more businesses to the city
4. Acquire/protect more open spaces and natural resources
5. Expand use of Saco River as recreational amenity
6. Expand housing options for all income and age levels

51% of first choices
Q9: Rank top 3 strategies that would most improve quality of life over 10-15 years

7. Provide more parks, trails, and recreation facilities
8. Improve roads for driving around the city
9. Expand environmental sustainability efforts
10. Improve non-vehicular ways to travel around the city (walking, biking, buses)
11. Improve existing parks, trails, and recreation facilities
12. Provide new or expanded arts and cultural offerings
Q9: Rank top 3 strategies that would most improve quality of life over 10-15 years

Notes:

• “Expand housing options for all income and age levels” ranked #3 among those younger than 35 (#6 overall)

• “Expand environmental sustainability efforts” ranked #6 (tied) among respondents younger than 35 and #5 among respondents 55 or older (#9 overall).
Map themes

- Bike/ped
- Coast/river
- Traffic/parking
- Parks/trails

Interactive Map: visitors could place marker and leave comments
Word cloud

access, river, parking, spaces, preserve, zoning, north, build, residents, purchase, increase, pedestrians, buxton, family, green, ellis, school, property, development, need, sidewalks, small, water, place, trail, allow, great, public, areas, access, along, beach, street, traffic, parking, north, build, residents, purchase, increase, pedestrians, buxton, family, green, ellis, school, property, development, need, sidewalks, small, water, place, trail, allow, great, public, areas, access, better, community, space, rural, growth, places, walking, launch, people, pedestrian, downtown, route, turn, individuals, industrial
Most ‘up’ votes

• “Riverwalk trail from Downtown to the beach.” – 19
• “Build a safe bike path from Main Street to Camp Ellis. Riding on narrow sidewalks shared with pedestrians isn't safe. This would be a great amenity for Saco residents and attract Eastern Trail users.” – 19
• “Develop this land [Saco Island] into a public park and include boat launch and connect to river walk.” – 17
• “Increase amount of parking reserved for Saco residents [Seaside Ave near Bayview].” - 17
Ideas Forum

Downtown:
• “One way to reduce traffic speed in downtown is to add more bulb outs to the sidewalks”
• “We do not go downtown often, though we live in walking distance. There are not many places we want to frequent there […] Outside of personal preference, my input is to keep the traffic slow and concentrate housing.”

Housing:
• “If sustainability matters, we should focus growth downtown where some public transportation already exists.”
• How do we promote infill development and transform single use areas? Answer: Begin with transforming the traffic.”
Ideas Forum

Mobility:

• “We live near CK Burns school and often walk in the surrounding neighborhood and to get from A to B, avoiding Main st as much as possible […] We occasionally bike to the beaches with fewer issues.”

• “Walking & biking must be a top priority for the present and future. The city needs to create a unique, aesthetic, safe and natural appeal.”

• “Fully funding the bus system to provide an alternative to driving is a necessity for those without cars and those wanting to leave them parked. The last mile needs to be our focus.”

Sample comments from interactive website:
Social Pinpoint | Saco Comprehensive Plan (mysocialpinpoint.com)
Sustainability and Resiliency:

• “Our state's largest share of carbon emissions come from transportation. I would start by evaluating how we can incentivize cleaner transportation and public transportation.”

• “Invest in green technology is a first move […] Push green tech into codes as minimum stds for new construction.”

Other Topics:

• “Offer tax incentives to bring in new businesses. Biddeford and Westbrook have become good models for how to reinvigorate and downtown and bring in exciting new businesses.”

• “How do you expect to pay for schools and infrastructure without growing the tax base? You have to have smart growth vs no growth”.

Sample comments from interactive website:
Social Pinpoint | Saco Comprehensive Plan (mysocialpinpoint.com)
Vision and Principles

Developed from community input with LRPC feedback
Our Vision Statement

Saco—a community for a lifetime.

Saco is known as a welcoming small city committed to managing its growth to build a better community for all and for a lifetime. As we grow, we continue to preserve our rich historic and natural legacy while celebrating our defining assets—a vibrant downtown, cherished beaches, the Saco River, and natural open spaces.
9 Guiding Principles Support Our Vision

1. Enhance our downtown as the lively core of our community
2. Expand economic opportunity for all
3. Provide a variety of housing options
4. Design a connected mobility system
5. Grow our environmental stewardship
6. Promote health and well-being
7. Build resiliency
8. Invest in our schools and infrastructure
9. Strengthen our City’s fiscal position

View two-pager online: Saco Vision-Principles_210408.pdf (sacomaine.org)
Draft Policies

Initial draft under review by City staff
Downtown + Saco Island

1. Enhance our **Downtown as the lively core** of our community
   1. Create an outdoor community gathering space
   2. Recruit and retain local businesses, especially active ground floor uses
   3. Encourage new development within a 10-minute walk of Downtown
   4. Facilitate historic preservation
   5. Improve access and parking Downtown
   6. Develop public arts and culture program
   7. Enhance public access and programming along Saco River

DRAFT for review
Economic Development

2. Expand **economic opportunity** for all
   1. Attract businesses with local and regional strength
   2. Retain and expand existing businesses
   3. Communicate the value and availability of economic incentives
   4. Clarify and promote Saco’s impact fee system
   5. Pursue cooperative regional economic development
   6. Encourage new development that provides quality of life to attract workers and residents

Recommendations build from 2020 Economic Development Action Plan

DRAFT for review
Housing

3. Provide a variety of **housing options**
   1. Encourage housing types that address the changing preferences, needs, and budgets of current and potential Saco residents
   2. Encourage new development in areas with existing infrastructure
   3. Promote mixed-income, transit-accessible housing
   4. Improve maintenance and energy-efficiency of current housing
Mobility

4. Design a **connected mobility** system
   1. Support safe vehicle travel
   2. Improve transit amenities to grow ridership
   3. Prioritize transportation options for those with limited mobility
   4. Improve walkability around key areas and locations
   5. Create bicycle networks linking key locations and provide bicycle parking
   6. Create new multimodal connections between Downtown Saco and Biddeford
   7. Maximize the efficient use of vehicle parking
   8. Develop and implement an electric mobility plan
   9. Adopt mobility policies that support community goals

Photo: City of Saco Communications/Andrew Dickinson

DRAFT for review
Sustainability

5. Grow our **environmental stewardship**

1. Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation
2. Adopt a “One Water” approach to managing the urban watershed
3. Promote sustainable construction techniques
4. Increase participation in recycling and composting programs
5. Create community resource database to encourage innovative sustainability projects
6. Work with SMPDC’s Sustainability and Resilience program
7. Protect critical natural resources (watersheds, farmland, open space)
8. Preserve and protect historic and archeological resources

Photo: City of Saco Communications/Andrew Dickinson

**DRAFT** for review
Health and Well-Being

6. Promote health and well-being
   1. Promote and maintain existing trails, parks and open spaces
   2. Expand public access to Saco River
   3. Expand Recreation Complex to meet changing needs of residents
   4. Encourage development patterns that support walking and biking for short trips
   5. Continue implementing “Age Friendly Community Action Plan”
   6. Provide information on the benefits of public recreational access to private lands

DRAFT for review
Resiliency

7. Build resiliency
   1. Develop capacity to adapt and respond to climate change impacts
   2. Increase awareness of local climate change impacts
   3. Increase economic resiliency through diversification of job base
   4. Build social capital and collaboration among residents
   5. Work with SMPDC’s Sustainability and Resilience program

Photo: City of Saco Communications/Andrew Dickinson
Infrastructure

8. Invest in our schools and infrastructure
   1. Align infrastructure investment with desired growth
   2. Implement green building standards in public projects
   3. Modernize school facilities
   4. Invest in long-term viability of WRRF
   5. Invest in public safety facilities to keep pace with growth
Fiscal Capacity

9. Strengthen our City’s fiscal position
   1. Link Capital Improvement Plan process to Comprehensive Plan
   2. Conduct a citywide property tax revaluation
   3. Assess the City’s impact fee structure
   4. Conduct fiscal cost/benefit analyses for proposed developments
   5. Explore cost saving opportunities with neighboring communities
Next Steps
Coming Soon

• Develop draft plan document, including Future Land Use Plan
• Continue review with City departments
• Host public open house to review major themes (Nov 2021)
  o Offer online engagement to complement open house
• Revise draft plan based on input
• Conduct public hearings (Feb-Apr 2022)
  o Planning Board
  o City Council for adoption
• Submit to State:
  o Completeness Review
  o Finding of Consistency
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Participate online and stay up to date:

sacomaine.org/comp_plan