

City of Saco Comprehensive Plan Update Meeting November 3, 2016

Your role as a Comprehensive Plan Committee

Congratulations on being appointed to the Comprehensive Plan Committee!

We'll be talking with you on November 3rd about comprehensive plans and the process of drafting a comprehensive plan but wanted to give you information about Comprehensive Plan Committees and their role in the process of comprehensive planning beforehand.

As you know, the City of Saco is engaging in a Comprehensive Plan update. The City currently has a Comprehensive Plan that was done in 2005 and last updated in 2011 – the task ahead is to update certain sections of this Comprehensive Plan. State statute (M.R.S.A. Title 30-A Chapter 187) regulates the comprehensive planning process and stipulates that when a community chooses to prepare a comprehensive plan that the municipal officers designate and establish a planning committee which includes one or more municipal officials.

The City of Saco has appointed an eleven-member Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) with the City Planner and the Economic Development Director to assist. Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) has been hired by the City to facilitate the meetings, perform data gathering and draft the updated Comprehensive Plan sections.

This planning committee, or comprehensive plan committee as most are known, is responsible for developing the comprehensive plan, and for holding public hearings and doing outreach to strongly encourage citizen input. You, the City of Saco Comprehensive Plan Committee, will be discussing a wide range of topics related to the following: transportation, housing, demographics and population, arts and culture, land use and the downtown area, sea level rise and economic development. Sometimes your meetings may include other town staff, community leaders, organizations or stakeholders who come to speak with you. All your meetings will be public meetings, meaning that they will be posted in City Hall and members of the public may attend. Your committee will establish a chair and vice-chair, decide on a schedule, and may want to consider adopting a meeting policy (more on that at the November 3rd meeting).

The City of Saco Comprehensive Plan Committee will be given information by SMPDC that describes your community currently, such as types of housing and land uses. As mentioned before, you will be listening to others' ideas who come to speak to you. All this information will provide the basis on which to plan for what Saco might be 10 or 15 years from now and ideas on how to get there. Those ideas, in the form of goals, policies and strategies, together with the information that is gathered, become the draft Comprehensive Plan to guide the City. The other important task for the Committee is to both listen to and communicate the Plan to the residents of Saco – this is done through your meetings when others attend and through public hearings where the public is invited to ask questions and speak.

See you on November 3rd!