

## **Your 2020 Comprehensive Plan is Ready to Review**

By: Jay Chace, Planning Director & Karen Martin, SEDCO Director

The Town of Scarborough's Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) released a new draft of the proposed 2020 Comprehensive Plan for the public to review. The Comprehensive Plan articulates a vision of the community and provides a series of steps to support the vision. The Plan is aimed at being an expression of Scarborough's residents' hopes and thoughts on important issues that impact the day-to-day experience of what it means to live and work in Scarborough. In addition, this is an important process because of the requirements of the State's Growth Management Act and considerations granted by the State for having a Comprehensive Plan that is consistent with State goals.

In today's article, we want to highlight the five components of the vision that evolved as the LRPC wove together public input from a variety of sources over the last two years. We also want to highlight the public process that led up to this draft as well as the public process leading toward final adoption by the Town Council.

At its very core, a Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that guides development based on a community vision. Though the Plan does not lay out all of the specific changes in ordinances or policies that will be required to articulate the vision; however, the Plan does provide guideposts for evaluating changes. And, central to most comprehensive plans, a future land use map generally defines a pattern of development that shows where growth can be accommodated in light of the vision.

The five core Vision statements from the Plan are:

- The Scarborough Marsh is central to the Town's identity, and therefore future land use will follow a pattern of development that is sensitive to protecting the Marsh as well as the town's natural resources.
- Future land use patterns will create opportunities for the efficient delivery of municipal services and infrastructure, resulting in fiscal sustainability.
- Our ordinances will support the diversity and character of existing and emerging neighborhoods, centers and open spaces.
- Scarborough's economy will support a broad assortment of companies that provide stability for the tax base, that blend with the natural resource base, and that support opportunities for residents.
- Scarborough's transportation network will support current and future land uses that create efficiencies which reduce the impact of traffic on residents and businesses.

These vision statements are the culmination of different types of public input, from vision-style meetings where folks were asked to "Imagine the Future", to hands on meetings where participants mapped out ideas, to one-on-one meetings with staff and consultants. A survey published in the *Scarborough Leader* invited input in written comments either online or on paper. We also tried out a separate website where people could track progress and provide input.

For those staff and committee members participating in all of the public processes, we learned that our residents and businesses are passionate about their community. They came from different styles of development, different areas of Town and different stages of life. But all identified their piece of Scarborough as home.

The intent of this plan is to respect that there are many sides to Scarborough, all of which can be woven together in a single community looking toward the future. The LRPC is working with town leadership on identifying the schedule and process for public dialogue, but the first step is spreading the word that the 2020 Comprehensive Plan is ready for review.

The Latest Draft can be found on the Planning & Codes Department page of the town's website: [scarboroughmaine.org](http://scarboroughmaine.org). Please stay tuned for additional articles and information related to the 2020 Comprehensive Plan review process.