

SUMMARY: This chapter establishes the criteria the State Planning Office uses to review community comprehensive plans for consistency with the goals and guidelines of the Growth Management Act (30-A MRSA §4312 et seq.). The Office uses this Chapter to review and comment on proposed comprehensive plans under §4347-A(1) of the Act, and to review the plan component of local growth management programs for which certification has been requested under §4347-A(2).

Economy

A. State Goals

- (1) Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.
- (2) Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

B. Analyses and Key Issues

To generate minimum analyses to address state goals, use Conditions and Trends data in Section 4.2(C) to answer the following questions.

- (1) Where does the local population work and how does the community fit into the economic region (labor market area)?
- (2) Who are the major employers in the region and what is their outlook for the future?
- (3) Is the economy experiencing significant change, and how does this, or might this, affect the local population, employment, and municipal tax base?
- (4) What are the community's priorities for economic development? Are these priorities reflected in regional economic development plans?
- (5) If there is a traditional downtown in the community, is it deteriorating or thriving? How is this affecting the community?
- (6) Are natural resource-based industries (including fishing, farming, or forestry) important in the community and, if so, are they growing or declining? What steps has the community taken to support these industries?
- (7) Is tourism an important part of the local economy? If so, does the community want to foster this industry and what steps can it take to strengthen tourism?
- (8) What role do/should home occupations play in the community, if any?
- (9) Are there appropriate areas within the community for industrial or commercial development? If so, are performance standards necessary to assure that industrial

and commercial development is compatible with the surrounding land uses and landscape?

- (10) What types of public facilities, including sewer, water, broadband access or three-phase power, are needed to support the projected location, type, and amount of economic activity, and what are the issues involved in providing them?

C. Conditions and Trends

Minimum data required to address state goals:

- (1) The community's Comprehensive Planning Economic Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Office or its designee.
- (2) A brief historical perspective on how and why the current economy of the community and region developed.
- (3) A list of local and regional economic development plans developed over the past five years, which include the community.
- (4) A description of the major employers in the community and labor market area.
- (5) A description of retail stores by type and how the composition has changed over past five or ten years.
- (6) A description of any economic development incentive districts, such as tax increment financing districts or Pine Tree Zones, in the community.

D. Policies

Minimum policies required to address state goals:

- (1) To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region.
- (2) To make a financial commitment, if necessary, to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements.
- (3) To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.

E. Strategies

Minimum strategies required to address state goals:

- (1) If appropriate, assign responsibility and provide financial support for economic development activities to the proper entity (e.g., a local economic development committee, a local representative to a regional economic development organization, the community's economic development director, a regional economic development initiative, or other).
- (2) Enact or amend local ordinances, if appropriate, to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity, and location of future economic development.
- (3) Develop and adopt incentives suitable for the types and locations of economic development desired in the community.

- (4) If public investments are foreseen as required, identify the mechanisms to be considered to finance them (local tax dollars, creating a tax increment financing district, a Community Development Block Grant or other grants, bonding, impact fees, etc.)
- (5) Initiate participation in or continue to participate in any regional economic development efforts.