

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT MEMO

DATE: March 18, 2026

TO: Windham Town Council

THROUGH: Robert Burns, Town Manager

FROM: Steve Puleo, Director of Planning

Cc: Amanda Lessard, Assistant Town Manager/Senior Planner

RE: Establishment of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) for the Update of the 2016 Town of Windham's Comprehensive Plan

Town Council Meeting – March 24, 2025

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### Purpose

This memo updates the Comprehensive Plan rewrite process by establishing a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) to oversee the initiative. The CPSC will ensure compliance with state mandates and foster public engagement. Below is an overview of the CPSC's purpose, responsibilities, composition, term length, governance structure, timeline, and suggested criteria for candidate review.

### Overview of Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC)

**Purpose:** The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee ("CPSC") shall assist in preparing an update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan consistent with the Maine Growth Management Act. The CPSC shall develop a community vision, goals, policies, and implementation strategies, and transmit a recommended Plan to the Town Council for consideration.

**Duties:** The CPSC shall: (i) review and advise on project scope, schedule, and public engagement plans; (ii) provide policy input; (iii) participate in and support public engagement activities; (iv) review and comment on draft chapters and the compiled draft Plan; (v) coordinate to ensure compliance with State-mandated requirements; and (vi) report progress and issues to the Town Council.

**Composition:** The CPSC shall consist of ten (10) to fifteen (15) members, including representatives from the Town Council, School Board, Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Economic Development Committee, and Ordinance Committee, together with community stakeholders such as landowners, business owners, environmental organizations, seniors, youth, and others as determined by the Council.

**Terms & Governance:** Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Town Council for an initial term of eighteen (18) months. The CPSC shall dissolve automatically upon the Town Council's acceptance and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Council expressly extends the Committee's service for a defined period to address post-adoption transition or early implementation tasks. Any such extension shall be set forth by Council order specifying scope and

duration. All meetings shall be noticed and conducted in accordance with the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S.A. § 401 et seq.

**Reporting:** The CPSC shall provide quarterly updates to the Town Council, supplemented by milestone briefings at key project stages.

**Appointments Committee Timeline.**

#	Description	Duration	Estimated Dates	Description
1.	Application period outreach	12 weeks	March – May 2026	Create application/advertise
2.	Review of applications	3 weeks	May – June 2026	Chose candidates
3.	Candidate interviews	2 weeks	June 2026	Appointments Committee may use some of the suggested review criteria. (See below)
4.	Finalize recommended slate and Appointment vote	4 weeks	June –July 2026	Recommend to the Council the candidate slate and Council vote
5.	CPSC Kickoff meeting	1 weeks	July 2026	Elect chair and vice chair, adopt meeting calendar, and project schedule.

**Possible Candidate Review Criteria:**

Consider candidates with demonstrated planning, land use, housing, or civic experience (e.g., boards or commissions or professional roles in planning, development, environmental, transportation, or public health). Excellent applicants who reflect community perspectives, growth-area, geography, renter and/or owner mix, age diversity, and business owners, employers, or RSU connect. Confirm availability of an 18-month commitment with monthly or bimonthly meetings including public workshops and/or hearings. Inquire about public-engagement skills (facilitation, outreach, communications). Familiarity with state mandates and local ordinances (LD 1829/PL 385, Growth Management Act (GMA)), Municipal Permit Application Process (MPAP) and/or a clear willingness to learn. The requirement for disclosure of potential conflicts and the ability to recuse as necessary and an optional local reference.

**Request**

Staff recommends that the Town Council approve the Order creating the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (“CPSC”) as outlined in the Order and supported by the attached briefing memorandum, appointment schedule, and suggested candidate review criteria for appointments.