

An Act to Improve the Growth Management Program Laws
Sponsored by Representative Tiffany Roberts

An Act to Improve the Growth Management Program Laws was written with the expertise of professional planners with decades of experience statewide, in consultation with key agency stakeholders and legal review. Representative Roberts' bill provides municipalities cost and time savings, limits legal challenges, and provides process flexibility across the state with particular regard for rural Maine.

The Maine Association of Planners (MAP) supports comprehensive planning as the best means to battle the **three costs of unmanaged growth**:

- Sprawling development and increased state and local spending on infrastructure, emergency services, and education.
- Loss of natural habitats, working farmlands, working waterfront, and open spaces.
- Loss of community character, vibrant villages, downtowns, and social connections.

Comprehensive plans allow municipalities to balance housing, economic, social, and environmental goals by planning for and managing growth. Representative Roberts' bill will improve Maine's **growth management program** and encourage communities to develop and update comprehensive plans through **efficiency, flexibility, and cost effectiveness**:

- Enhances state goals related to housing and expressly states "to remove barriers to housing production".
- Retains the current legal findings section as requested by municipal legal review.
- Saves time and money for small towns by encouraging the creation of multimunicipal regions to conduct comprehensive plans.
- Streamlines the state review timelines.
- Continues the current growth area exemption, providing flexibility for small communities.
- Allows each municipality the ability to conduct planning board reviews.
- Simplifies the inventory process by only requiring already available information.
- Provides communities with consistency by linking the inventory with state goals.
- Promotes consistency with Maine's Climate Action Plan.

Rep. Roberts' bill allows communities to invest less volunteer capital on inventory, and more time on action; acknowledges the variations of Maine communities; and encourages first-time comprehensive plans by using existing state tools.

The Maine Association of Planners asks for your support on this important initiative.