

CITY OF NEW ENGLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The city of New England, as never before, is confronted with growth and development issues. The increased scrutiny of the cost of public services, changing economic trends, growing concern about the effects of land consumption, and energy development has resulted in a decision to adopt a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

Typically, everything that is addressed in a comprehensive plan is meant to guide policy-makers in their decisions-making process with respect to the physical nature of the land in their jurisdiction, and the manner in which those decisions affect public services. Times change. The issues and values that once drove certain land use decisions may no longer be valid and new issues and community values become more prominent. When city leaders make a decision to adopt a comprehensive plan, they are acknowledging these changes and are laying the groundwork to take advantage of new opportunities to guide the future of their city. The reasons for adopting the New England Comprehensive Plan have been identified as follows:

- Effectively plan for and manage growth
- Efficient use of public lands
- Promote economic vitality and growth
- Identify, preserve, and promote the wise use of natural resources
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Promote recreational opportunities throughout the city
- Ensure consistency with other planning processes
- Ensure adequate provision of public facilities and services
- Preserve historic, cultural, and archaeological resources
- Promote fiscal responsibility

City of New England Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan serves as a basis for making decisions on long-range development. It indicates in a general way the thoughts the people and local decision-makers have about their city and the way they want to develop over the next years. It is not a binding document, but rather an ongoing process designed to be flexible and dynamic – subject to periodic updating and changes as needs dictate.

The plan consist of two parts: Part I contains background information on the human, economic, and natural resources and land characteristics of the city; Part II presents the plan itself through a series of Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies as recommended by the New England Planning and Zoning Commission based on input received from the public and the conclusions of the various characteristics and problems as determined through an analysis of the background information and as subsequently adopted by the New England City Council

Definitions

Goal: Broad general concept that an individual, a community, or a society wishes to attain in the future.

Objective: A more specific, measurable step to be taken toward achieving a goal.

Implementation Strategies: (Policies) A particular and coordinated action which is designed to achieve the goal and objectives.

Vision

The City of New England is located on North Dakota State Hwy 22 in the western portion of Hettinger County, North Dakota. It is the second largest city in the county. The city was settled by ranchers, farmers, and tradesmen in the 1890's and early 1900's. Agriculture traditionally has been the backbone of the local economy.

The goal is to maintain the quality of place currently enjoyed by the residents; maintaining the agrarian ideal; and protecting the integrity of the rural community, all while reaping the benefits of anticipated development. The challenge is how to manage the growth within the limited confines of the city jurisdictional limits and to determine when and if expansion is necessary to achieve perceived goals.

The city is focused on building new opportunities for the future. This vision will be realized by initiatives in several areas including:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Health, schools, traffic, the environment, public service, and economic growth are all affected by development decisions. Growth presents a tremendous opportunity for progress in New England. At the same time growth creates a challenge to maintain farmland or natural landscapes, small town traditions, and rural character while still benefitting from development. Economic development focuses on:

- 1) Governmental policies and programs directed at elements of the economy expanding the economic base;
- 2) Policies and programs designed to provide high quality transportation systems, public safety, housing, health, and work-force training; and
- 3) Policies and programs directed at job creation and retention, higher wage levels, and real estate development.

Goal: Enhance and diversify New England's economy.

Objectives:

- 1) Strive for a well-rounded, stable economic foundation for the city.
- 2) Maintain a viable workforce for economic growth.
- 3) Preserve the importance of the agriculture sector in the city.
- 4) Ensure an adequate supply of industrial and commercial land in appropriate locations.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to economic development, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports and promotes the ideal of the family farm/ranch as an economically viable way of life.
- 2) New England supports efforts made toward sustainable economic development that results in good stewardship of natural resources.
- 3) New England supports economic development efforts that result in a majority of living wage jobs.
- 4) New England supports the land use and zoning designation of an adequate supply of commercial and industrial land as needed to attract quality business and industrial development within the city.
- 5) New England supports efforts to promote tourism and the city's recreational potential.
- 6) New England supports research, processing and utilization of local agricultural products and by-products.
- 7) New England encourages workforce development and training efforts.
- 8) New England supports economic development through the development of community amenities which make the city an attractive place to live, work, and play.

GOVERNMENTAL

While philosophies over time differ as to the role of government or the size of governmental administrative agencies, government on the local level, at a minimum, is charged with the task of providing for the health, safety, and welfare of the general public. As city government attempts reasonable management of beneficial growth, it must find a balance between the interest of industry, commerce, and the general public, while at the same time maintaining and protecting the rural character of the area.

The City of New England should establish governmental policies, practices, and priorities that protect the public health and welfare and balance the needs of both the public and growth interests.

Goal: Ensure efficient administration of city government for the betterment of New England and its residents.

Objectives:

- 1) Strive for improved levels of communication and coordination among the city, sister cities within Hettinger County, and organized political entities and subdivisions as appropriate.
- 2) Promote public involvement in the decision-making process.
- 3) Provide for a cost-effective and efficient method of governmental administration and services.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to governmental administration, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports coordination with city, state, federal and regional agencies, companies, and associations involved in ensuring appropriate planning.
- 2) New England supports working for the development of consistent and complementary zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, annexation procedures, and extraterritorial jurisdictions between the city and Hettinger County.
- 3) New England supports the cooperation, interaction, and communication on a regular basis with the neighboring city commissions and councils.
- 4) New England supports the periodic review of city codes and ordinances to ensure their current relevancy.
- 5) New England supports the solicitation, consideration, and utilization of citizen input and suggestions when making public decisions.
- 6) New England supports the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and data analysis in the decision-making process where appropriate.

NATURAL RESOURCES

New England has a delicate watershed system and soils subject to erosion. The stewardship of natural resources often results in polarized opinions. All acknowledge the need to protect our natural resources. Technologies need to be developed that meet human population and economic needs in such a manner that allows the environment to sustain and regenerate its resources.

Goal: Encourage the wise and proper use or development of the city's natural resources.

Objectives:

- 1) Recognize the potentials and capabilities of the land and its uses, particularly in regard to natural resource development.
- 2) Maintain and/or restore New England's clean and favorable environment.
- 3) Promote the appropriate use of productive agricultural land.
- 4) Preserve adequate quantities and quality of ground and surface water supplies.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to natural resource development and conservation, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports the establishment and maintenance of city natural, recreational or historical preservation areas.
- 2) New England supports proper planning for impacts resulting from coal, oil, natural gas, wind, or other natural resource development.
- 3) New England supports the prohibition of mining activities within the jurisdictional boundaries of the city.
- 4) New England supports the identification of and protection of available and potential sources of surface and groundwater.

LAND USE

Communities strive to find the best and most efficient use of land. This goal is tempered by competing use values. Agriculture has historically played a primary role in the local economy. Multiple generations of families have owned and operated the land. Any land use plan must take into account this rural heritage and the rural values it has fostered over the years. Cultural and historical resources as well as competing industrial and commercial demands must be considered in the development of any land use plan.

Goal: Assure that the use of land is properly planned and compatible with adjacent land uses.

Objectives:

- 1) Encourage the wise use of land.
- 2) Strive to protect the agricultural integrity of rural areas.
- 3) Ensure orderly and desirable energy development.
- 4) Foster proper growth management practices.
- 5) Avoid conflicts between land uses.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to land uses, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports limiting structural development in floodplain areas.
- 2) New England supports uniform land use regulations.
- 3) New England supports the utilization of defined growth management sectors and procedures within the city for planning and decision-making purposes.
- 4) New England supports the limiting of residential or commercial subdivisions on problem soils areas.
- 5) New England supports the use of existing utility corridors and discouraging developments that are not readily accessible to utility services.
- 6) New England supports subdivision designs that are compatible with the environmental characteristics of the site, as well as complement the location.
- 7) New England supports evaluating the need for providing separate areas for mixed housing types.
- 8) New England supports ensuring that adequate water and waste disposal is available prior to subdivision approval.
- 9) New England supports avoiding strip development or activities that encourage strip developments.
- 10) New England supports the limitation of uses that depreciate land values of adjacent properties.
- 11) New England supports the development of standards for the construction of and maintenance of roads in subdivision developments.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

City government is charged with the task of providing services and facilities for public use. These benefits are designed to protect the general health and welfare of the citizenry and to improve the general quality of life. New England may not be able to meet the new demands associated with development. The cost of services often exceed the revenue generated from taxes and fees in these areas. Public services and facilities as a minimum involve law enforcement, ambulance services, fire protection services and road maintenance.

Goal: Plan, develop, provide and maintain adequate and efficient public facilities and services.

Objectives:

- 1) Keep abreast of needs as they change throughout the city.
- 2) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of city operations and services.
- 3) Ensure safe and healthy living conditions for the residents of the city.
- 4) Provide a means by which the city can direct future growth and development.
- 5) Ensure that land is available to provide for economical and efficient construction, operation, and maintenance of the public facilities and services in both existing and future developments.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to the city's needs for public facilities and service, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports examining the feasibility of combining city and county governmental services and facilities through intergovernmental cooperation and joint-exercise-of-powers agreements for cooperative ventures, thus avoiding duplication of services and facilities and minimizing tax expenditures.
- 2) New England supports ensuring that the costs of additional services and facilities are equitably distributed among actual users, developers, and beneficiaries without undue stress upon general taxpayers.
- 3) New England supports the continual update of departmental manpower and equipment needs assessments, priorities, fiscal impact analysis and capital improvement programs.
- 4) New England supports providing adequate law enforcement services and equipment for the city.
- 5) New England supports providing for the needs of the city's senior citizen population.
- 6) New England supports providing adequate emergency services and training for emergency medical and para-medical personnel.
- 7) New England supports the sustainability of adequate medical facilities within the county.
- 8) New England supports the use of a county-wide Geographic Information System (GIS) incorporating all jurisdictions.
- 9) New England supports maintaining its website (establishing) for the use and benefit of the citizens of the city and to take advantage of technological advances for information dissemination.
- 10) New England supports the development of a public facilities and services plan to determine land needs and location requirements for public facilities.

TRANSPORTATION

An adequate transportation system is essential to the continued economic growth and development in New England. This is the case both for agricultural and commercial interests. Economic development impacts tend to stress the city's transportation systems and networks.

Goal: Provide and maintain an adequate transportation system within New England.

Objectives:

- 1) Provide reliable routes for the transfer of goods and products to markets.
- 2) Integrate city road improvements with land use needs and public service areas.

Implementation Strategies:

- 1) New England supports safe access by city residents to necessary facilities, services, and public transportation systems.
- 2) New England supports road improvement and bridge replacement programs.
- 3) New England supports the establishment of a preferred heavy traffic road network.
- 4) New England supports a regular assessment of the roads system to determine maintenance scheduling and road access needs.
- 5) New England supports establishing and implementing right of way needs for future roadway network improvements.
- 6) New England supports the limitation of residential subdivision development from being placed in a location that does not have a paved road or highway as its primary route of access to the development's local street system.
- 7) New England supports updating the city's subdivision regulations to establish requirements for developer financing of paving access roads between the paved highway system and the local streets within the development.

RECREATION

New England promotes a wide array of recreational opportunities throughout the county. Hunting, fishing, golf, hiking, and rodeos represent but just a few of the assets and activities available to the user. These activities also support a growing tourism trade within the area

Goal: Optimize the city's recreational assets.

Objectives:

- 1) Recognize, develop, promote and maintain the quality of recreational assets of the city and county.
- 2) Encourage tourism development through promotion of the city's recreational assets.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to recreation, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England supports the development and maintenance of parks and recreational sites and activities for all city residents and visitors.
- 2) New England supports the expansion of facilities and services when warranted by population densities and opportunities.
- 3) New England seeks to coordinate with county programs and facilities to meet the needs of the city's residents.
- 4) New England supports efforts to promote tourism and the city's recreational potential.

HOUSING

Adequate housing is a concern in New England. A growing population increases the pressure on existing housing developments and demands new solutions to the problem.

Goal: Promote an adequate housing supply for the existing and future residents of New England.

Objectives:

- 1) Promote a wide range of housing options and desirable housing for all socio-economic and age groups within New England.
- 2) Encourage the improvement of the quality of the housing supply.

Implementation Strategies:

With respect to housing, New England adopts the following policies:

- 1) New England encourages housing development in areas with adequate infrastructure.
- 2) New England supports the development of a land use plan and zoning districts that provide for a variety of housing styles.
- 3) New England supports the creation and maintenance of aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods.
- 4) New England supports the requirements for buffer areas and “transitional land uses” between residential districts and industrial and commercial developments to ensure land use compatibility in and around neighborhoods.
- 5) New England supports the development of housing facilities which minimize negative impacts on the city.