

TOWN-WIDE SURVEY / Comprehensive Plan

A. Statement

Dear Citizens of Pownal,

The time has come to create a new Comprehensive Plan for our town. This official document is the primary public policy that will guide Pownal through the physical development and provisional needs of public utilities, facilities and services that make up our infrastructure, for the next 10 years.

As a citizen of Pownal, your vision, influence and participation in our community's comprehensive planning process is vital. As a taxpayer and/or voter, your choice and your money decide the way that our municipality will grow and develop.

Services provided by our Town are paid for by property taxes. Your investment in our community is the reason we are asking for your cooperation in the creation of our new comprehensive plan. It is made with you, for you, and because of you, so that we may remain "Independent unto Itself" and maintain sustainability that is rooted in our history.

Your involvement in this survey will communicate the goals, concepts, guidelines and proposals for consideration and help guide our committee to create a public policy plan that clearly outlines the vision of the Pownal Citizens.

Respectfully,

The Comprehensive Plan Committee

B. Filling out the Survey

2 Surveys will be mailed to every household.

The Town requests that each property owner or member of a household over 18 years of age in Pownal fill out one survey each.

If you need additional surveys, please contact the town office.

The survey can also be completed using Survey Monkey on our Town's website

www.pownalmaine.org

Please return your completed survey to the town office no later than _____.

C. Demographic Data

1. Please indicate which of the following best describes your residency in Pownal:

- Year-round resident (more than 6 months/year)
- Seasonal resident (less than 6 months/year)
- Non-resident property owner
- Non-resident business owner
- Student
- None of the above

2. Please indicate which one or more of the following apply to you:

- Owner of residential home/unit in Pownal
- Renter of a residential home/unit in Pownal
- Owner of vacant land in Pownal
- Owner of business in Pownal
- None of the above

3. If you are a resident, how many years have you lived in Gray?

- Less than 5 years
- 5 – 10 years
- 11 – 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- More than 20 years
- Does not apply

4. What is your age?

- 18–25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-70
- 70+

D. Government

There are two basic forms of local government in Maine. There is the "direct" form in which the town meeting serves as the legislative body, passing laws, approving the spending of monies. And there is the "representational" form in which an elected council serves as the legislative body. The five basic variations of these two forms are:

- Town Meeting / Selectmen Form of Government is the most common in Maine with 209 municipalities currently using this form of government. Town meeting is held once a year serving as the legislative arm of the government, to pass any needed laws/ordinances, approve a budget, and to levy taxes. It also elects various town officers.
- Town Meeting / Selectmen / Manager is the 2nd most common form of local government in Maine (135 currently). With a manager, the Selectmen will continue to serve as the town's executive body and can now attend to more issues of policy. As municipalities grown in size, as state regulations increase in number and complexity, towns find it helpful to hire a manger to administer the town government.
- Council / Town Meeting / Manager is a variation where the legislative functions of government are shared between the town meeting and elected council (20 in Maine).
- Council / Manager form of government has the council as the elected body which serves both the legislative and executive functions (37 in Maine). This type of government must be adopted through the local charter.
- Council/Mayor/Administrator form of government has only been adopted by four cities in Maine. The mayor is elected by the council and has broad powers of appointment, administration and legislation. A mayor is often the principal supervisor of all departments, can veto decisions of the council and has broad powers of appointment, administration and legislation.

Our current Town Government includes the Municipal Office, Department of Public Works, and Public Safety Department. Currently our municipal office includes an Administrative Assistant, Deputy Clerk, three Selectmen, and a Code Enforcement Officer, shared with North Yarmouth. It has been increasingly difficult to find people to run and serve as a Selectman.

1. Should we consider a new form of government?
 - a. Move from three to five Select Persons
 - b. Move to a Town Manager / Select BoardOr

- c. Stay the same and re-evaluate every _____ years
- 2. Town Meeting has traditionally been held on a Monday evening in June. Would you prefer to see Town Meeting to be held on a Saturday?
- 3. Currently our municipal offices are open Mondays (8:30 – 6:30) Tuesdays through Thursdays (8:30 – 4:30); closed on Fridays and Saturdays.
 - a. Are you satisfied with the office hours?
 - b. Would like to see municipal office hours increased?
 - c. Would like to see municipal office hours decreased?
 - d. Would like to see municipal office hours include some weekend hours?
- 4. Pownal has been divided into two districts giving us two State Representatives. Would you like to see Pownal go back to having only one representative?
- 5. In what way are you involved in Town Government?
 - a. I attend the annual Town Meeting
 - b. I attend Selectmen or other Committee or Board meetings
 - c. I am an active participant in Town Government either in committees, Board, or Town Government
 - d. I do not participate in any aspects of Town Government.

Comment: What outreach might increase your participation? _____

E. Town Services and Facilities

1. Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Currently, the Town of Pownal uses the pay-per-bag system for residents to dispose of trash. In addition, residents may place recycled items curbside on designated trash pick-up days. The Town offers metal recycling once a year in the Spring. For a non-resident annual fee, residents of Pownal may use the Freeport Transfer Station.

- a. Are you satisfied with our current solid waste services?
- b. Should we expand our current solid waste program?
- c. Would you like the Town to offer "fall clean-up" curbside services?

2. Infrastructure/Public Works

Our current Public Works Department consists of four employees (One Road Commissioner with three department employees) who work out of buildings behind Mallett Hall.

Currently, the Public Works Department is housed in two buildings located behind Mallett Hall. Trucks and equipment sit outside all year round on a gravel parking lot which can impact long-term wear and tear on our vehicles.

~~Would you support the idea of the Public Works Department collaborating with the Fire Department to build the needed garages and facilities to maintain all our equipment?~~

The Needs Assessment Committee recommended the Public Works Buildings be redone. Do you agree or disagree that the Town of Pownal should pursue this recommendation?

Although gravel roads are part of the rural character of Pownal, they can be difficult to travel year round. Should we improve gravel roads by creating a maintenance schedule for improvements?

Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

3. Public Safety

The Pownal Fire and Rescue currently works out of two stations, one in Pownal Center and the other in North Pownal.

- a. The Needs Assessment Study recommended a new facility for Pownal's Fire and Rescue Department. Do agree or disagree that the Town of Pownal should pursue this recommendation?
- b. Would you support hiring a per diem Firefighter/EMT an average of two days a week to cover the Town while no one else is available during the work week?
- c. Are there any additional services the Fire Department could provide?
Police Protection. Police protection for Pownal is currently provided by the Cumberland County Sheriff's office and the Maine State Police.

- a. Are you satisfied with the level of service provided by the Cumberland County and State police department?
- b. Do you feel the Town of Pownal should investigate options for increased police coverage/protection in Pownal?
- c. Do you support increased enforcement of speed limits in Pownal?

4. Additional Services and Facilities

What other services would you support e.g. library?

F. Public Education (begin 26 march)

In 2018, xx percent supported RSU5 including Pownal Elementary School (PES).

Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following:

1. PES is a vital asset to our community.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. The Town should continue to offer prekindergarten through grade 5 at PES.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Consolidation with RSU 5 has been beneficial to our Town and students.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. If it is fiscally responsible, the Town should explore withdrawing from RSU 5.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The Town should have more control and a bigger voice in our students' education.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. Pownal students should have the option of going to the public high school of their choice.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. The Town’s adult education needs are met through Freeport Community Education programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

~~8. The Town needs an active Recreation Department. Moved to page 8~~

~~Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree~~

~~9. The Town should expand its youth recreation programs. Moved to page 8~~

~~Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree~~

G. Housing / Growth

Agree Disagree

Do you agree or disagree that the Town of Pownal should create a committee to research/investigate possibilities for:

- A. Family Housing
- B. Retirement Housing
- C. Multi-family unit housing
- D. Mobile home parks
- E. Single lots for mobile homes
- F. Smaller lots for single homes

Do you agree or disagree with the statement:

Encourage higher density development such as cluster housing with smaller house lots and the preservation of common open space

Should the Town allow Tiny Houses, Yurts, and other non-standard housing?

In 2018 we had _____ new home permits in Pownal, _____ in 2017 and _____ in 2016. Do you feel this growth rate should: (choose one)

Stay the same? _____ Increase _____ Decrease _____

Do you feel the town of Pownal should limit building permits?

We feel that #4 Public Water Supply belongs in the infrastructure section.

H. Land Use

1. What should the Town's policy be toward the following types of commercial development?

Allow anywhere, confine to specific areas, discourage, no opinion

- a. Retail sales & service (5000 sq ft or more)
- b. Retail sales & service (5000 sq ft or less)
- c. Convenience stores
- d. Fast food drive-ins
- e. Sit down restaurants/ diners
- f. Small shopping center
- g. Business Park
- h. Bed and Breakfast
- i. Campgrounds
- j. Recreation/Health Center
- k. Gravel Pits
- l. Child Care Centers
- m. Farming/Commercial Gardening/Nurseries
- n. Wholesale Businesses
- o. Light Manufacturing
- p. Home Occupations
- q. Professional Services
- r. Gas station
- s. Temporary residential rentals (i.e. AirBnb, VRBO)
- t. Event venues

End of 3/26

2. Should Pownall encourage:

Some what support, support, strongly support, do not support no opinion.

- a. Preservation of farms/orchards, vineyards
- b. Development of Cultural, educational, and historical resources
- c. Town Park for recreation
- d. Outdoor recreation areas/trails
- e. Tourism
- f. Residential – single family homes
- g. Residential – multi unit family
- h. Affordable housing
- i. Senior/assisted living
- j. Agriculture
- k. Retail development
- l. Public outdoor recreation
- m. Protection of natural areas/open space

- n. Light industrial manufacturing uses
 - o. Motels/hotels
 - p. Convenience stores
 - q. Retail stores
 - r. Professional offices
3. Recognizing that additional town services typically mean increasing taxes, to what degree (if any) do you support town investment in each of the following:
Somewhat support, support, strongly support, do not support no opinion.
- a. Purchasing land rights to develop an interconnected trail system
 - b. Purchasing rights for open space land for recreational purposes
 - c. Economic/infrastructure investment in village area
 - d. Open space/undeveloped areas
 - e. Farmland
 - f. Scenic views/roadways
 - g. Wildlife habitat
 - h. Groundwater protection
 - i. Outdoor recreation areas/trails
 - j. Public access to open space
 - k. Historic sites
 - l. Chandler Brook and other surface water resources

4. Indicate your level of agreement on the role Pownal should play in managing land use?
Somewhat support, support, strongly support, do not support no opinion.

Tightening zoning codes and regulations

Limit urban sprawl

Regulate through existing codes

Purchase land development rights

Provide incentives to landowners to permit development on rural land

Property tax reductions for placing conservation easements on open space

Town purchase of conservation easements on open space if that results in tax savings for Pownal residents

Strengthening Town regulations for wetlands on private lands

Strengthening Town regulations for wildlife habitat protection on private lands

Continued management of town-Owned forests as a renewable resource and harvesting of wood on a sustained yield basis.

Co-ordinating with abutting towns to protect habitat and scenic resources on a regional scale.

I. **Rural Character / Recreation/Open Space**

Pownal's rural character is in large part due to our abundance of undeveloped land, open farmland, scenic vistas, country roads, woodlands, and natural streams. Much of our open space is protected by the State (Bradbury), the Town, and private/public easements (Royal River Conservation Trust). Please indicate your support for the following:

- 1) Do you feel we should continue to support and encourage preservation of open space, farmlands, and recreational spaces?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

- 2) Do you support the use of tax dollars or tax reductions to preserve open space through town-owned easements?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

- 3) Should we improve access and increase recreational opportunities (hiking, bike trails, snowmobile trails, fishing, etc.) to these and other town-owned properties including continued collaboration with Bradbury Mountain State Park and Royal River Conservation Trust?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

- 4) Do you support creation of a municipal recreation department to enhance recreational opportunities (adult education, summer day camp, after school activities, creation/management of parks/hiking/biking trails)?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

- 5) Should the Town be more pro-active in preserving our valuable scenic resources?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

J. **Historic Sites**

- 1) Pownal has a number of historic resources (Mallett Hall, one-room school houses, hearse house, and some mill sites). Should these resources be protected by Town ordinances?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

K. **Natural Resources: Water/Wetlands/Forests**

Pownal has several large aquifers that supply our wells, as well as natural resources such as brook trout streams, wildlife habitat and soils suitable for farming. Please indicate your support of the following:

1) Our aquifers are currently protected by regulations such as shoreland zoning. However increased development could adversely impact the quality and quantity of our water. Would you favor additional review to protect the future of our aquifers?

Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

2) Do you feel our natural resources (wildlife habitat, wetlands, streams) are sufficiently protected by federal/state regulations and local ordinances?

Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

3) Chandler Brook, East Branch, Thoits, and other streams have been adversely affected by practices such road sanding, salting and ditching. Do you feel we should restore our stream water quality and habitat by improving our practices such as sand removal and better erosion control?

Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

List any other activities that might be adversely affecting our streams and brooks.

4) Pownal owns xx parcels. The Town has an integrated forest management plan for some of these parcels. The lack of a land survey is preventing implementation of this plan. Do you support the use of Town funds to get Town lands surveyed.

Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion