

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 – 35
- 36-65
- 66 +

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.
1. Currently our municipal office includes an Administrative Assistant, Deputy Clerk, 3 Selectmen, Code Enforcement Officer – should we re-evaluate our form of government every 10 years?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion
 2. It gets harder and harder to find people willing to run and server as a Selectman. Should we consider a TowCouncil/Town Meeting/Manager form of government?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion
 3. 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?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion
 4. Currently our municipal offices are open Monday (late) through Thursday. Are you satisfied with the office hours?
 Keep the same Close on Wednesdays Offer weekend hours No opinion
 Other _____
 5. Pownal has been divided in to two districts giving us two State Representatives. Would you like to see Pownal going back to having only one representative?
 Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

E. Town Services and Facilities

Anticipating population growth is an integral part of the comprehensive planning process. Depending on future population characteristics, a plan could be drafted from this information to address Pownal's needs (housing, zoning, growth areas, resource protection, etc.).

Population growth can provide additional tax revenue but also can increase the use of Town Services that might require additional expenditures. Do we feel our town facilities are staffed to handle the work load today and in the future effectively and efficiently?

- Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

1. Growth

In the past 10 years, 71 houses have been built in Pownal. What kind of growth rate would you favor for Pownal over the next 10 years?

- Slow Moderate Rapid

2. Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Currently, the Town uses the pay-per-bag system for residents to dispose of trash. In addition, residents can recycle plastics 1-7, glass, tin and cardboard to be picked up curbside. For a non-resident fee of \$40 annually, residents can take bulky wastes to Freeport Transfer Station. The Town offers metal recycling once a year in the Spring.

a. Are you satisfied with our current solid waste services?

- Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

b. Should we expand our current solid waste program?

- Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

c. Would you like the Town to offer "fall clean-up" curbside services?

- Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

d. Would you support a tax increase to expand our solid waste program?

- Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree Disagree No opinion

3. Public Works

Currently, our Public Works Department consists of a Road Commissioner who oversees 3 employees which includes an Equipment Operator, a Laborer, and an Equipment Operator/Mechanic. This department is responsible for all aspects of the maintenance, repair, upgrades and reconstruction of our roads. Their mission is to plan and to use resources wisely and to improve the quality of life through maintenance and protection of the Town's infrastructure and natural resources.

a. 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

b. Currently, the Public Works Department is housed in 2 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?

- Somewhat support Support Strongly Support Do not support No opinion

4. Public Safety

A. POWNAL FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Currently, the Pownal Fire and Rescue Department supports a Fire Chief who is appointed by the Selectmen for a three-year term. The chief oversees the working of the Department which includes trainings, managing the budget, hiring staff, purchasing equipment along with many other tasks that make for a well-run department.

In addition, Pownal has a first responder team and certified EMT's who attend regular trainings to give members the opportunity to practice their skills.

Pownal uses Freeport Rescue for transport services and all emergency calls are dispatched to the Brunswick Dispatch Center by dialing 911.

There are two fire stations in Pownal. One is located in North Pownal and is a garage that houses 2 engines. Center Station on Elmwood Road also houses 2 engines and has an office, a small kitchen, and meeting room on the 2nd floor.

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

Somewhat support Support Strongly Support Do not support No opinion

a. Would you support hiring a per diem Firefighter/EMT an average of 2 days a week to cover the Town while no one else is available during the work week?

b. Are there any additional services the FD could provide?

B. POLICE PROTECTION (see below*)

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C. Services for Older Adults

- a. Freeport Community Services (see 2016 Needs Assessment)
- b. Aging in Place Initiative
- c. Home health care
- d. Housing / Assisted Care Facility
- e. Transportation
- f. Tax Breaks – being able to stay in the home

D. Police Protection*

- a. The Town does not have a contract with the County. A contract would provide a dedicated deputy to the town of Pownal. While some are satisfied with coverage afforded by the Sheriff's Dept as a non-contract town, others have indicated that they wish there was more coverage.
- b. Better enforcement of speed limits

E. Animal Control

- a. Pownal is a rural community which supports livestock for small farms and a friendly environment for pets. Do you feel we have adequate animal control services in Pownal?
- b. Do you feel that the Town needs a dog barking ordinance?

F. Pownal Center Water Association (PCWA)

- a. What is the future plan for PCWA?

Local Economy / Quality of Life

1. Expand Tax Base
 - a. Create structure to reward large land owners
 - b. Broaden tax base revising business districts, industry and zoning
2. Diversity in business opportunities
 - a. Home Occupations
 - b. Businesses that offer good paying jobs
 - c. The current town center (Mallett Hall, Store, Church) is sufficient for our needs?
 - d. The town center should be expanded to include additional small businesses?
 - e. Ordinances match land use and geographical needs
3. Community
 - a. Does the Town website along with postings and the town newsletter provide sufficient information to residents?
 - b. How can we create more connectivity, such as a Facebook page or town email list?
 - c. How do we promote and create town-wide activities?
 - d. How do we create community gathering places, art centers, retail gathering spaces, etc.
 - e. How do we increase communications between town and school?
 - f. What kind of information does the town offer to new residents? Do we have a "Welcome Wagon"?
 - g. Would you like to see a Pownal Community Market?

Transportation

1. Refurbish West Pownal railroad track/station
2. Public transportation to Freeport and Pineland
3. Safe bike lanes and trails
 - a. Would you like to see safe bike trails connecting to Freeport schools?

Public Education

1. RSU 5
 - a. More control/voice in education
 - b. Secure mandated funds for education
 - c. Increase volunteerism
 - d. How do we keep/afford our school?
 - e. Has consolidation with RSU 5 been beneficial to our Town?
 - f. Should Pownal investigate withdrawing from RSU 5?
2. Adult Education / Freeport
3. Recreation Department
4. Expanded youth programs

Housing / Growth (71 new houses have been built in Pownal from 2006 until March 2018)

1. Residential Growth Plan – planning for the future
 - a. Develop "Pownal Housing Trust" or collaborate with Freeport Housing Trust
 - b. Explore cost-friendly housing (i.e. affordable apartments, Habitat for Humanity)
 - c. Explore Elder/Retirement Housing / Assisted Living
 - d. Encourage residential development throughout rural areas

- e. Encourage higher density development in a limited area – can cluster housing be promoted as a way to conserve undeveloped land?
 - f. Encourage multi-family housing units
 - g. Air B&B – need ordinance?
 - h. Apartment Buildings, Condos, Duplexes
 - i. Multi-family housing units
 - j. Manufactured Home Parks / Manufactured Homes on single lot
 - k. Should dead-end roads be extended to allow more back development?
2. Limit new home building permits in rural areas for dwelling units
 3. Land Use Codes, do they reflect growth needs
 - a. Review/revise/rescind Impact Fee Ordinance
 - b. Tiny Houses – definition/ordinance?
 - c. Can we loosen accessory dwelling requirements to help retired people stay in their homes?
 - d. Are our current dimensional land use standards still appropriate for the town or would they need some adjustment to create more organized development – minimum lot size is 2.07 acres (90,000 square feet) with 300 feet of road frontage?
 4. Public water supply – growth of the village district would likely necessitate public water supply – how would the town handle that expense?

Land Use

The Towns' land use ordinances are important for town planning. At present, the zoning ordinance divides the Town into 3 districts: Rural Residential A for traditional residences; Rural Residential B for traditional residences and single wide mobile homes; and Village District for traditional residences and business/professional establishments.

1. Conservation Easements
 - a. Royal River Conservation Trust (formerly Pownal Land Trust)
 - b. Trails
 - c. Tax Incentives
 - d. Pownal Conservation Trust
2. Commercial Development
 - a. How can the town promote activities or businesses that compliment or capitalize on the rural character and recreations activities in and around Pownal? Or should it?
 - b. What is the policy around commercial/industrial development? Should we allow anywhere, confine to specific areas or discourage?
 - c. Looking at the cider orchard and berry farm, does the public like the agri-business direction and potentially larger scale agri-business or would it prefer small brick and mortar establishments in Pownal?
 - d. How can we make sure that the businesses we might attract won't be environmentally damaging?
3. Timber Harvesting / Town-Owned Forests
 - a. Pownal Conservation Trust
4. Farms are important to our town.
 - a. What can the town do to encourage agriculture

Rural Character / Recreation

1. Public Access to open space
2. Historic Sites / Natural Resources
3. Town-owned properties
 - a. Do you enjoy our town-owned land?
 - b. Do you think a town park would be an asset to the Town and therefore like to see a town-owned parcel be developed as a park?
4. Bradbury Mountain State Park
5. Wildlife habitat – town regulations for protection? Collaborate with abutting towns?
6. Create Municipal Recreation Department?
7. Trail systems – currently we have trails at Bradbury Mountain State Park and the Pineland Corridor. In addition, a walking trail has been created in the Elmwood Cemetery.
 - a. Bike Trails

Open Space

1. Tax reductions for placing conservation easements on open space?
2. Town purchase of conservation easements on open space if that results in tax savings for residents?

Water / Wetlands / Soil

1. Groundwater Protection
2. Chandler Brook / other surface water
3. Protect our underground water resources
4. Erosion control around rivers – how is new road construction and ditching affecting erosion?