



STATE OF MAINE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE PLANNING OFFICE
38 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
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January 3, 2008

Roger Katz, Mayor
Lester F. Wilkinson, Jr., Chair, Planning Committee
Matthew Nazar, Deputy Director of Development Services
City of Augusta
16 Cony Street
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for submitting the City of Augusta 2007 Comprehensive Plan (Plan) for review for consistency with the Growth Management Act (the Act). You, the comprehensive planning committee, and the various sub-committees who were involved in this effort are to be congratulated for all of the hard work that went into producing the Plan.

Upon review of the Plan, and supplemental Plan amendments submitted to the State Planning Office (SPO) via electronic mail from Matt Nazar on December 10, 2007 and December 26, 2007, the State Planning Office finds the **Plan as amended** to be *consistent* with the Act and the Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule. In addition to the findings developed by this Office, attached are review comments submitted to this Office by other state agencies.

The findings consist of three sections:

1. The first provides the SPO's general Conclusions about the Plan.
2. The second section provides Suggestions for how the City might modify the Plan or issues it might explore to improve or strengthen the Plan to better meet State and local goals. It is not necessary for the City to respond to suggestions in order to be found consistent with the Act. Suggestions are simply offered as advice on how the City could improve its Plan.
3. The third section identifies Other Agency Comments that have been received from State agencies, regional councils, or other interested parties (attached and printed on blue paper). As with the Suggestions from our office, these are areas where the City might improve the plan or strengthen sections to address agency interests and goals.

SECTION I – CONCLUSIONS

The Comprehensive Planning Committee clearly gathered and considered a great deal of information in developing the Plan. The Plan's analyses also indicate an understanding of the

issues facing Augusta as the City looks to achieve the goals laid out in the Plan. The following elements are especially commendable:

- The stated “Guiding General Principle” of less than 20% of new residential units outside of growth areas.
- The Plan’s sense of responsibility to work regionally with neighboring communities on public health, affordable housing, the arts, and other issues.
- Recognition of the potential to be a leader in promoting energy-efficient development.

SECTION II – SUGGESTIONS

Although not necessary to make the Plan consistent with the Act, some constructive comments that could help strengthen the Plan are outlined below. Please let me know if you have any questions.

1. It would be helpful to address as many of the comments from the attached letters as possible.
2. While the Capital Investment Plan (CInP) included in the Plan via amendment meets the minimum requirements of the Act and Rule, it will likely be useful to the City to further develop the CInP as the critically important task of implementing the Plan gets underway. How and where the City allocates scarce funds, and works with other partners to coordinate efforts, will be an important part of achieving the goals of the Plan, including but not limited to those specifically related to capital investments.
3. The recognition of the potential for the Kennebec River waterfront is a key component of the Plan. As that part of the Plan is implemented, it will be important to enhance the lateral connection to the neighborhoods to the east and west of the river, thus allowing Augusta residents and visitors alike to benefit.
4. The Plan calls for most economic development growth to occur on the west side of the river in the “Economic Growth Areas.” With a significant amount of residential growth likely on the east side of the river, transportation patterns on arterials and collectors should be monitored closely and appropriate measures taken to address any transportation issues that may arise.

SECTION III– COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES

The following agencies reviewed and provided comments on the Plan. SPO notes that certain amendments to the Plan were developed in response to comments from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission:

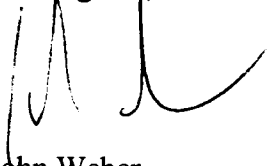
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- [Maine Historic Preservation Commission](#)
- Maine Forest Service

- Maine Department of Transportation

These comments are attached (blue sheets). These comments provide additional detail and other suggestions that you might find useful as you complete your final draft.

In closing, thank you again for submitting this plan for review and for the City's work on the Plan.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Weber', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

John Weber
Senior Planner

Cc: Chris Huck, KVCOG

Attachments:

Section III – Comments from other state agencies.

SECTION III
COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES