The State Planning Office can help answer questions you may have about the Growth Management Act and the comprehensive planning process in Maine. Please contact us at 207-624-7660 or see our web site at www.maine.gov/spo/landuse.
**Planning is a lot of work and involves tough choices.**

Communities decide to undertake the planning process for a variety of reasons. Here are three reasons why it may make sense for your community.

1. **Legal protection for your ordinances.** According to the Maine Growth Management Act, your town must have a consistent* comprehensive plan in order to:
   - Legally impose a zoning ordinance beyond the state minimum for shoreland zoning;
   - Legally create an impact fee ordinance; or
   - Legally create a rate of growth or building cap ordinance

2. **A consistent comprehensive plan helps a town qualify for certain state grant and loan programs.** Over $80 million annually is awarded through 25 state grant and loan programs with some level of consideration of local comprehensive plans. Examples of these programs include:
   - Community Development Block Grants
   - Land for Maine’s Future
   - Municipal Investment Trust Fund
   - DEP 319(h) Non-Point Source Protection Grants
   - DEP State Revolving Loan Fund
   - SPO Plan Implementation Grants
   - Land and Water Conservation Fund

3. **Good planning makes good communities.**
   - Sustain rural living and vibrant village centers
   - Preserve a healthy landscape and walkable communities
   - Balance economic prosperity with quality of life
   - Protect working waterlines and community farms
   - Develop a discussion among neighbors
   - Develop a basis for sound decisions in town management

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*The term “consistent” means that the State Planning Office has reviewed a local comprehensive plan and issued a letter finding it consistent with the Growth Management Act.

Maine is growing, and, as pointed out in the 2006 Brookings Institution report *Charting Maine’s Future: An Action Plan for Promoting Sustainable Prosperity and Quality Places*, this growth is not limited to southern Maine or the coast. Other research by the State Planning Office—shown in the maps below;—also indicates that future growth is likely state-wide.