

Bar Harbor Town Council

Vision

The Bar Harbor Town Council is resolute in its commitment to promoting a sustainable and resilient community. Efficient use of public funds, good governance in accordance with the Town Charter and citizen involvement will ensure ample access to goods, services, housing and education and afford our diverse residents and visitors an outstanding quality of life.

2017 Five Year Goals and Strategies

~ FY17 through FY22 ~

A. Keep the rate of Property Tax Increases low and Enhance User-based Revenues

1. Work with the manager to draft a Municipal Budget that will keep property tax increases to a minimum, while still considering services that are necessary and appropriate.
2. Work to identify opportunities to match potential revenues to incurred expenses to minimize impact on property tax and rate-payers. Continue to encourage payments in lieu of property taxes while recognizing the varied public benefits provided by non-profit organizations.
3. Work with the Finance Director and Assessor to understand possible variances/inequities in property assessment to determine the need for and timing of a revaluation of all properties.

B. Protect the local environment on which much of our economy is based

1. Explore opportunities to significantly reduce reliance on fossil fuels by the town, local businesses and residents.

C. Create effective plans for a Sustainable Future

1. Work with the town's planner to lay out a process to update the town comprehensive plan by (year) and develop a more workable, enforceable Land Use Ordinance to support that plan.
2. Work with the Jackson Lab, The League of Towns and other partners and stakeholders to determine what steps the town can take to encourage additional Workforce Housing.
3. Gather objective data that will allow the Town Council to determine the potential benefits and impacts of exceeding the cruise ship cap set by the Council.

4. Assess Municipal Street Lighting for possible improvements in efficiency, reduction in annual cost and compliance with the town's night sky ordinance, and determine priorities for replacement of existing street lights with LED or other lighting.
5. Integrate recommendations for improved streetscape and sidewalk design coming from various task forces and town committees (Parking Solutions Task Force, Aging in Place Task Force, Cottage Street Streetscape Project) that will improve safety and access for pedestrians, cyclists and those with handicaps and create an overall street/sidewalk plan that lays out priorities and timing for municipal investment through the Capital Improvement Program.

D. Improve the Effectiveness and Delivery of Municipal Services

1. Promote and support effectiveness and efficiency of public safety services and other municipal services, including current and new collaborations with other towns.

E. Improve Local Infrastructure

1. Continue to actively engage MDOT and our State and Federal delegations to ensure Route 3 reconstruction is completed
2. Work with partners and stakeholders to insure that land at the former ferry terminal remains zoned for marine uses, assuring that Bar Harbor retains its status as a Class A port of entry.
3. Sustain and grow cruise ship visitation, within limits set by the Town Council on a yearly basis, to ensure that the income stream from cruise visitation continues to make public acquisition of the ferry terminal viable
4. Seek solutions to on-going parking problems in the summer season, coordinating where mutually beneficial with Acadia National Park as it completes its transportation plan.
5. Adopt a master plan for the transfer station.
6. Rebuild Grant Park according to plans adopted by the town.
7. Evaluate opportunities for improved broadband service within downtown and areas of the town not currently served.
8. Study future space needs and options for public safety functions within Bar Harbor, as exploration of collaboration with other towns proceeds
9. Study and create a priority list of in-town roads, noting both short-term needs for resurfacing and long-term needs for reconstruction, with appropriate planning, engineering and funding mechanisms.
10. Explore potential for and promote construction of additional bike lanes and other amenities for cyclists in the downtown area, and along roadways/routes leading into town, especially when roads are reconstructed, and when collaboration is possible with Acadia National Park and Maine Department of Transportation.

F. Improve the Effectiveness and Efficiency of our Town Governance and encourage citizen involvement

1. Improve communications with tax-payers and residents, so that council members better understand the needs and hopes of residents, and residents better understand the roles and responsibilities of the council.
2. Determine ways in which Council meetings can be structured to improve civility and increase satisfaction among both Council members and citizens in our ability to work together on opportunities and solve problems. Consider techniques employed by other towns, including:
 - hosting a community-wide workshop designed to elicit suggestions for improving civility and increasing citizen participation in and satisfaction with town government
 - eliminating the single public comment period and replacing it with reasonable opportunity for citizens to comment or ask questions during discussion of specific agenda items
 - offering a simple explanation at the beginning of each council meeting, reinforced on the town’s website, about the best ways for citizens to participate in town government and to bring matters to the attention and possible action by the council
 - determining and publishing “best practice” suggestions for the conduct of meetings of town boards, committees and task forces
 - determining when and where the use of a neutral facilitator would aid in the work of boards, committees and task forces.

HISTORY

10-27-16 Results of Goal Setting Workshop
11-15-16 Adoption of Goals