HOUSING POLICY FRAMEWORK

TOWN OF BAR HARBOR

HOUSING VISION

Support Bar Harbor's year-round community by having adequate and affordable workforce housing for residents who work in town, for families hoping to raise their children here, for seniors hoping to stay in the community as they age, and for businesses looking for a stable workforce and housing base needed to expand the town's year-round economy.

HOUSING GOAL

Provide a framework for the Town of Bar Harbor to ensure that we are fast-tracking the increase in housing availability and affordability for year-round residents by addressing the unique and pressing housing challenges as identified in, but not limited to, the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the 2012 Economic Development Strategy, the 2017 and 2018 Council Vision, and the 2018 Island Housing Trust Housing Needs Analysis and Assessment.

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Affordable Workforce Housing:	Quality housing in reasonable proximity to the workplace that has a sale price or rental amount that is within the means of the household that earns from about two-thirds to double the median household income.
CEO:	Code Enforcement Officer
COA:	College of the Atlantic
DRB	Design Review Board
Immediate:	Completion within 1 year
JAX:	The Jackson Laboratory
LMI:	Low- and moderate – means includes earning less than 50% to 120% of the area (i.e. Hancock County) median income.
Long-term:	Completion within 5 years
LUO:	Land Use Ordinance
MDI:	Mount Desert Island
NFPA:	National Fire Protection Association
NFP:	Not-for-profit
NPS:	National Park Service
PB:	Planning Board
PUD:	Planned Unit Development
Short-term:	Completion within 3 years
STR:	Short-term rental

HOUSING STRATEGIES

Strategy 1	Develop Short-Term Rental (STR) Restrictions		
Purpose	• Curtail the conversion of year-round housing to STRs. • Retain neighborhood integrity by ensuring that residential neighborhoods do not become lodging zones. • Support increased enforcement.		
Actions	1. Quantify the problem (inventory and analysis).		2. Hear from people that do not have a financial stake in STRs.
	3. Establish goals and purposes and draft regulations.		4. Develop land use and licensing regulations.
Who	Planning Department in coordination with ad hoc Zoning Advisory Group and Planning Board		
Funding	Possibly	**Time Frame**	Immediate
Success	Adoption of Short-Term Rental land use and licensing regulations.		
Notes			

Strategy 2	Develop Zoning for Employee Housing		
Purpose	Provide affordable seasonal employee housing, preferably in the village area and on land that is served by water and sewer, and in close proximity to places of employment.		
Actions	1. Hear from people in the districts where the dormitory uses are proposed.	2. Revise the proposed land use regulations	3. Develop licensing regulations to ensure that the housing does not become a nuisance.
Who	Planning Department in coordination with ad hoc Zoning Advisory Group and Planning Board		
Funding	No	**Time Frame**	Ongoing
Success	• LUO amendments. • Adoption of licensing regulations.		
Notes			

Strategy 3	Develop Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan	
Purpose	Identify a range of housing types, sizes, and densities to ensure they meet the needs of the community.	
Actions	1. Analyze current housing conditions and needs for low- and moderate-income (LMI), workforce, 55 and older, and seasonal housing.	2. Develop a 10-year action plan.
Who	Planning Department with Consultant	
Funding	Yes	**Time Frame** Short-term
Success	• Completed in time to inform the Comprehensive Plan. • Implementation of regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.	
Notes		

Strategy 4	Identify Zoning Barriers to Housing	
Purpose	Identify if the LUO creates barriers to the development of affordable workforce housing.	
Actions	1. Quantify current zoning density and possible zoning density per housing use. 2. Analyze the LUO dimensional requirements – (lot size, area/family, lot coverage, setback, height, occupancy, Floor Area Ratio, etc.) 3. Identify opportunities to add densities and different housing types.	4. Organize a listening session with people/developers/NFPs familiar with the housing market and land use regulations to hear their comments/ideas about the zoning barriers to housing development.
Who	Planning Department with Consultant	
Funding	Yes	**Time Frame** Short-term
Success	• Informs the outcome of the Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan. • LUO amendments. • Results in an increase in the number of LMI and affordable workforce housing.	
Notes		

Strategy 5	Encourage LMI Housing through Zoning		
Purpose	Provide incentives for LMI housing development that encourages developers and others to engage in LMI housing development		
Actions	1. Review Planned Unit Development LUO language.	2. Meet with developers/NFPs that have done LMI and/or PUD housing - hear lessons learned.	3. Draft land use ordinance language to encourage LMI housing.
Who	Planning Department with Consultant		
Funding	Yes	**Time Frame**	Short-term
Success	• Informs the outcome of the Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan. • LUO amendments. • Results in an increase in the number of LMI housing units.		
Notes			

Strategy 6	Create Partnerships with Community Organizations	
Purpose	Develop, maintain, support partnerships with community organizations, as well as regional and state partners to collaboratively address local housing needs.	
Actions	1. Identify vacant, underutilized, and town-owned parcels with the potential to support housing development.	2. Meet with MDI Housing Authority, Island Housing Trust, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust to discuss goals, priorities, and needs, and identify ways to work together to develop housing that meets the needs of the community.
Who	Town Manager	
Funding	No	**Time Frame** Long-term
Success	Creation of LMI and affordable workforce housing units.	
Notes		

Strategy 7	Create partnerships with Large Employers		
Purpose	Plan for appropriately dense housing, in proximity to places of employment, which fits with the character of the community and contributes to the tax base.		
Actions	Meet with JAX, MDI Hospital, COA, etc. to discuss goals, priorities, and needs, and identify ways to work together to create housing.		
Who	Town Manager		
Funding	No	**Time Frame**	Long-term
Success	Creation of affordable workforce housing units.		
Notes			

Strategy 8	Secure NPS Town Hill Land		
Purpose	Secure the 40-acre Town Hill parcel, originally earmarked in the 1986 Park Boundary Legislation for an island-wide transfer station, for the purpose of year-round affordable workforce housing.		
Actions	Work with the NPS and congress.		
Who	Town Manager		
Funding	No	**Time Frame**	Long-term
Success	Secure land		
Notes			

Strategy 9	Ensure Quality Rental Housing		
Purpose	Maintain and improve the quality of the existing rental housing stock.		
Actions	1. Develop a rental property maintenance licensing and inspection ordinance.	2. Work with community partners to promote housing rehabilitation program and incentives.	
Who	Planning Department, CEO, and Fire Chief		
Funding	No	**Time Frame**	Short-term
Success	• Adequate living conditions for renters. • Maintained properties.		
Notes			

Strategy 10	Reduce Red Tape		
Purpose	Streamline approval process to save time and reduce cost		
Actions	1. Work with DRB to ensure consistent review process for new multi-unit housing.	2. Adopt same version of NFPA as the one used by the Fire Marshal's Office.	3. Streamline PB review process while providing for more meaningful resident input.
Who	Planning Department and Fire Department		
Funding	No	**Time Frame**	Short-term
Success	Efficient and consistent approval process		
Notes			