



Appendix C - PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

A comprehensive plan is a statement of policies directed to the long range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the county. It is a process of collecting information about the conditions of the county including environmental and socioeconomic data, and identifying goals and policies that will best meet the needs of present and future residents. The plan will seek to do this in a manner that provides for a high quality of life for all residents, with the least amount of long term adverse impacts.

The content, preparation, adoption and amendment of the county's Comprehensive Plan are guided by a combination of General Municipal Law (GML) and the Suffolk County Code (Code).

General Municipal Law (GML) defines a county comprehensive plan as *"the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the county..."*

GML further states that the content of a comprehensive plan may include but shall not be limited to the following topics at the level of detail adapted to the special requirements of the county:

General statements of goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards upon which proposals for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the county are based;

1. Content.

- (a) General statements of goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards upon which proposals for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the county are based;
- (b) Consideration of regional needs and the official plans of other governmental units and agencies within the county;
- (c) The existing and proposed location and intensity of land uses;
- (d) Consideration of agricultural uses, historic and cultural resources, coastal and natural and scenic resources and sensitive environmental areas;
- (e) Consideration of population, demographic and socio-economic trends and future projections;
- (f) The location and types of transportation facilities, including the reuse of abandoned transportation facilities;
- (g) Existing and proposed general location of public and private utilities and infrastructure;
- (h) Existing housing resources and future housing needs, including affordable housing;
- (i) The present and future general location of educational and cultural facilities, historic sites, health facilities, and facilities for emergency services;

- (j) Existing and proposed recreation facilities and parkland;
- (k) The present and potential future general location of commercial and industrial facilities;
- (l) Specific policies and strategies for improving the county economy in coordination with other plan topics;
- (m) Proposed measures, programs, devices, and instruments to implement the goals and objectives of the various topics within the county comprehensive plan;
- (n) All or part of the plan of another public agency;
- (o) Any and all other items which are consistent with the protection, enhancement, orderly growth and development of the county; and
- (p) Consideration of cumulative impacts of development, and other issues which promote compliance with the state environmental quality review act under article eight of the environmental conservation law and its implementing regulations.

GML also states that the county legislative body or, by resolution, the county Planning Board or special board may prepare a county comprehensive plan and amendments thereto. The Planning Board is also known as the Planning Commission and the special board consists of one or more members of the county Planning Board (Commission) and such other members as are appointed by the county legislative body to prepare a proposed county comprehensive plan or an amendment thereto.

The County Charter § C14-8 (A) empowers the Department of Planning to prepare a comprehensive plan and the Administrative Code states that the "Planning Commission shall propose a Comprehensive Plan for Suffolk County, which shall include a survey of the natural, scenic, aesthetic and historical resources and ecological systems of Suffolk County and their state of preservation." After the Planning Commission has adopted the Plan by resolution of two-thirds (2/3) of its total membership pursuant to A14-10 of the Administrative Code, the Plan is referred to the office of the County Executive, the office of the Clerk of the County Legislature, the town and village clerks, the County Clerk and the clerks of the school districts within the county.

§A14-10 (B) states that the "County Legislature shall review the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Planning Commission and...shall adopt that plan, with or without amendments..." The Code goes on to state that the "plan shall be used as a guide, when appropriate, but shall not be binding upon the County or its agencies."

Finally, § A14-11 of the County Code states that the "Planning Commission shall annually review the Comprehensive Plan and may, after public hearings, recommend by resolution that the County Legislature amend the Comprehensive Plan in ways specified in the resolution." The Commission resolution "may only be passed by affirmative vote of 2/3 of the total membership of the Commission."

GML:

2. **Preparation.** The county legislative body, or by resolution of such body the planning board or a special board, may prepare a proposed county comprehensive plan and amendments thereto. In the event the planning board or special board is directed to prepare a proposed comprehensive plan or amendment thereto, such board

shall, by resolution, recommend such proposed plan or amendment to the county legislative body.

3. **Environmental review.** A county comprehensive plan and any amendments thereto shall be subject to the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act under article eight of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations. A county comprehensive plan may be designed to also serve as, or be accompanied by, a generic environmental impact statement pursuant to the state environmental quality review act statute and regulations. No further compliance with such law is required for subsequent site specific county actions that are in conformance with the thresholds established for such county actions in the generic environmental impact statements and its findings.

4. **Agricultural review and coordination.** A county comprehensive plan and any amendments thereto for a county containing all or part of an agricultural district or lands receiving agricultural assessments within its jurisdiction shall continue to be subject to the provisions of article twenty-five-AA of the agriculture and markets law relating to the enactment and administration of local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations. A newly adopted or amended county comprehensive plan shall take into consideration applicable county agricultural and farmland protection plans as created under article twenty-five-AAA of the agriculture and markets law.

5. **Referrals.** The county legislative body shall, prior to adoption, refer the proposed county comprehensive plan or any amendment thereto to the county and regional planning boards as well as to the legislative bodies and to the planning boards of each municipality within the county for review and recommendation.

6. Public hearings; notice.

(a) Prior to adopting or amending a county comprehensive plan, the county legislative body shall hold one or more hearings on such proposed plan or amendments thereto.

(b) Where a special board prepares the proposed county comprehensive plan the county legislative body shall, within ninety days of receiving the special board's recommendations on such proposed plan or amendment, and prior to the adoption of the plan or amendment, hold a public hearing on such proposed plan or amendment.



(c) Notice of a public hearing shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least ten calendar days in advance of the hearing. Notice shall also be mailed to the chief executive officer and the chairperson of the planning board of each municipality at least ten days before such hearing. Representatives of

the regional or county planning board, the commissioner of transportation or his or her representative, county departments, municipalities, citizens and other interested parties shall be given the opportunity to be heard.

7. **Adoption.** The county legislative body may adopt by resolution a county comprehensive plan or any amendment thereto.

8. **Filing of adopted county comprehensive plan.** The adopted county comprehensive plan and any amendments thereto shall be filed in the office of the county clerk or register and a copy thereof filed in the office of the county planning board, with the secretary of state, as well as with the clerk of each municipality within the county.

9. **Effect of adoption.**

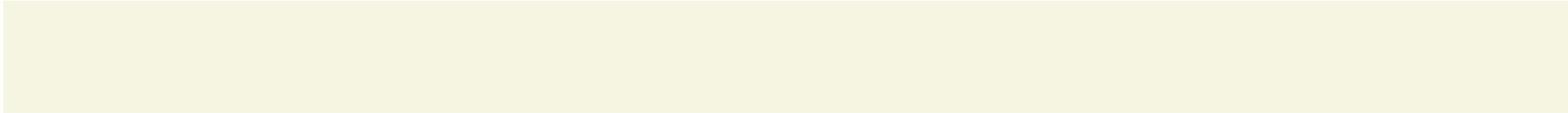
(a) All county land acquisitions and public improvements, including those identified in the county official map adopted or amended pursuant to this article, shall be in accordance with a county comprehensive plan, if one exists.

(b) All plans for capital projects of a municipality or state governmental agency on land included in the county comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section shall take such plan into consideration.

10. **Periodic review.** The county legislative body shall provide, as a component of such proposed county comprehensive plan, the maximum intervals at which the adopted plan shall be reviewed.

§ A14-7 of the County Administrative Code states that the "Planning Commission shall propose a Comprehensive Plan for Suffolk County, which shall include a survey of the natural, scenic, aesthetic and

historical resources and ecological systems of Suffolk County and their state of preservation." While the Planning Commission is responsible for the development of the Comprehensive Plan, § C14-8 (A) (1) of the Suffolk County Charter states that the Department of Planning shall prepare the comprehensive plan for Suffolk County. The Administrative Code further states that the Commission shall annually review the Comprehensive Plan and may, after public hearings, recommend by resolution that the County Legislature amend the Comprehensive Plan. A resolution of the Commission recommending amendment of the Plan may only be passed by affirmative vote of 2/3 of the total membership of the Commission. § C14-8 (A) (1) of the Suffolk County Charter states that the Department of Planning shall prepare the comprehensive plan for Suffolk County.



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