

**Mission of the Planning,  
Environment & Land  
Management Department**

## PLANNING PRIMER

### OVERVIEW

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A Comprehensive Plan is being prepared to guide the future of the Town of Brookhaven. The Plan will identify strategies to:

- Preserve important resources and coordinate conservation activities;
- Guide future land use decisions and regulations;
- Enhance community character,
- Program public projects and meet public needs; and
- Promote quality of life for residents.

### GOALS OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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- Protect open space
- Ensure environmental protection
- Build consensus with residents, community leaders, stakeholders and public agencies
- Redirect growth to areas served by infrastructure, revitalize downtowns, and establish pedestrian-oriented centers that have a sense of place
- Promote healthy communities
- Expand the range of transportation options
- Ensure a sustainable tax base through business and job development

### INTRODUCTION TO PLANNING

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A Comprehensive Plan is a tool for guiding the future of a community. Its purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then determine policies that will help attain that vision. While this Plan will primarily be a statement of recommendations addressing the conservation and development of the Town of Brookhaven (the physical layout) this Plan is also intended to address the social and economic development of the community. The goals and recommendations of this Plan are intended to reflect an overall consensus of what is considered desirable for Brookhaven, and its residents, in the future.

From a land use perspective, the major issue facing Brookhaven is how to address growth and change so that:

- the needs of the community and its residents - both present and future - are met in the most efficient and cost-effective manner,
- the positive elements of the Town's character is maintained, and
- the overall quality of life is enhanced.

*The Mission of Department of Planning, Environment and Land Management is to serve as guardians for the future of the Town of Brookhaven, and to enhance the quality of life of all its residents, through excellence in community planning, environmental stewardship, education, and citizen empowerment, based on the effective support and tools to assure the Town's ability to meet the challenges of growth and change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

#### On Planning

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll wind up somewhere else."

**Yogi Berra,  
Baseball Legend  
Renowned Punster**

## Statutory Reference

“...‘town comprehensive plan’ means 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 town...*”

While State Statutes require that the Town prepare a Comprehensive Plan to provide guidance to the local Zoning Regulations, the most important reason to prepare a plan is to establish a pro-active approach to guiding Brookhaven’s future.

## On Plans & Planning

“Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.”

**George Orwell**  
Author

## **PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE PLANNING**

### **Past Planning**

Brookhaven has a strong history of preparing and adopting Comprehensive Plans. The town adopted its first Plan of Development in 1958. The Plan was updated in 1969 and again in 1984. The most recent plan was prepared by Town Staff, and adopted in 1997.

These plans influenced the current land use regulations and development patterns in Brookhaven and helped guide the overall conservation and development of the community. Thus, it can be seen that Brookhaven has prepared, adopted, and amended Plans to address the appropriate conservation and development of the community for more than 40 years. It is in that spirit that this Plan will be prepared.

### **Planning Process for Brookhaven**

This planning process will be overseen and coordinated by members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC); the members of which have been appointed by Town Board. The CPSC will regularly seek input and advice from a Citizens’ Assembly, comprised of members of the Town’s numerous civic organizations, and other individuals determined by the Town Board to have expertise in specific, varied, and important areas of interest to the Town.

Formulating the Twenty Year Comprehensive Plan for Brookhaven will involve an intensive process. Between now and the end of 2008, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee will meet regularly with the consultants, Town officials, staff, and interested citizens to review, discuss, and refine the data and recommendations that will comprise the Plan.

Emphasis will be placed on local input and involvement. Efforts will be made to encourage and consider input from Brookhaven residents:

- Interviews will be held with different Town agencies, department heads, and individuals.
- Public meetings will be held to solicit input, generate discussion, and present recommendations.
- An interactive web site, at [www.brookhaven2030.org](http://www.brookhaven2030.org), will provide updates on the plan’s progress and collect comments from the public.

### **How Will The Plan Be Used in the Future?**

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the Plan rests with the Town Board, implementation will only occur with the diligent efforts of the residents, staff, and officials of the Town of Brookhaven. The Plan will only be effective if it is understood and supported by the people of Brookhaven, and implemented by the local boards and commissions.