

TOWN OF PALERMO  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1991

Prepared by

*the Palermo Comprehensive Plan Committee*

with the assistance of the

*North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission  
Winslow, Maine*

# TOWN OF PALERMO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
PLAN INDEX .....	i
<b>I INTRODUCTION</b>	
A. Introductory Letter .....	I-1
B. Credits .....	I-3
C. Plan Summary .....	I-5
<b>II COMMUNITY PROFILE</b>	
A. History Sketch .....	II-1
B. Population .....	II-3
C. Housing .....	II-19
D. Economy .....	II-31
E. Public Facilities and Services .....	II-39
F. Cultural Resources .....	II-67
G. Fiscal Capacity .....	II-77
H. Natural Resources .....	II-85
I. Existing Land Uses .....	II-113
<b>III FINDINGS AND ISSUE DELIBERATIONS</b>	
A. Planning Goals and Process .....	III-1
B. Population and Housing .....	III-2
C. Economy .....	III-3
D. Cultural and Natural Resources .....	III-4
E. Land Use .....	III-7
F. Public Facilities and Fiscal Capacity .....	III-11
G. Report of the Subcommittee on Education .....	III-14
H. Regional Coordination .....	III-18
<b>IV POLICY AND STRATEGY TIMETABLE</b>	
A. Roads .....	IV-1
B. Recreation .....	IV-3
C. Historic and Archaeological Resources .....	IV-4
D. Agriculture .....	IV-5
E. Forestry .....	IV-6
F. Economic Climate and Jobs .....	IV-7
G. Scenic Resources .....	IV-7
H. Fire Protection .....	IV-8
I. Solid Waste .....	IV-9
J. Natural Resources .....	IV-10
K. Housing .....	IV-12
L. School System .....	IV-12
M. Plan Implementation and Assessment .....	IV-14
<b>V APPENDICES</b>	
A. 1989 Public Opinion Survey Results	
B. 1991 Community Attitude Survey Summary of Findings	
C. Forest Committee Preliminary Report	

11-51

# INDEX FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TOWN OF PALERMO

The following index indicates of where the proposed plan addressed requirements of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act (30-A, M.R.S.A., Section 4326).

<u>REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
<b>1. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS SECTION</b>	
A. Population .....	II 3-18
B. Economy .....	II 31-37
C. Housing .....	II 19-30
D. Transportation .....	II 51-63 ✓
E. Public Facilities .....	II 39-66
F. Recreation .....	II 67-74
G. Marine Resources (if applicable) .....	N/A
H. Water Resources .....	II 85-94
I. Critical Natural Resources .....	II 75 & II 94-103
J. Historic and Archeological Resources .....	II 74
K. Land Use .....	II 104-118
L. Fiscal Capacity .....	II 77-83
<b>2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT SECTION</b>	
A. Orderly Growth and Development .....	III 2-3 & 7-9
B. Public Facilities .....	III 11-17
C. Economic Climate .....	III 3-4
D. Affordable Housing .....	III 3
E. Water Resources .....	III 6-9
F. Critical Natural Resources .....	III 4-9
G. Marine Resources .....	N/A
H. Agricultural and Forest Resources .....	III 4
I. Historic and Archeological Resources .....	III 6
J. Outdoor Recreation .....	III 5
K. Coastal Policies (if applicable) .....	N/A
<b>3. LAND USE PLAN/DESIGNATION OF GROWTH AND RURAL AREAS .....</b>	<b>III 7-9</b>
<b>4. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY SECTION</b>	
A. Affordable Housing .....	IV 11
B. Public Services .....	IV 1-3, 8-9 & 12-13
C. Historic and Archeological Resources .....	IV 4
D. Outdoor Recreation Opportunities .....	IV 3
E. Agricultural and Forestry Resources .....	IV 5-6
F. Marine Resources (if applicable) .....	N/A
G. Water Resources .....	IV 10-11
H. Critical Natural Resources .....	IV 7 & 10
I. Zoning Strategy .....	IV 1, 2, 5-7, 10, 11
i. Timely procedures for growth areas .....	IV 6 & 10
ii. Natural hazard protection .....	IV 1, 2, 5-8, 11
iii. Discouragement of development in rural areas .....	IV 7-11
iv. Coordination of shared facilities .....	IV 7-11
<b>5. REGIONAL COORDINATION PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>III 18-20</b>

## Credits

### Palermo Comprehensive Plan Committee:

Kathy Fuller, Chair  
Virginia Dowe  
Charles Peirce

Walter Banton  
Madeleine Haskell  
Joan Robertson

Clair Bradstreet  
James Mathieson  
Dorothy Templeton

### Palermo Selectmen:

Clair Bradstreet  
Darryl McKenney (til March 1990)

Howard Glidden  
David Parkman

### Palermo School Committee:

David Fuller  
Millard Howard

Patty Glidden  
Harold Siefken (til March 1990)

### North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission:

W. Elery Keene, Executive Director  
Patricia M. Graham, Secretary

Mary Ann Hayes, Staff Planner  
Melodie McCutcheon, Secretary

### Active Town Participants (subcommittee member or those who attended at least 50% of the meetings):

Donna Bradstreet  
Natalie Crowley  
Jamie Greager  
Jack Skillman

Heather Bradstreet  
Harry Friedman  
Millard Howard  
Sally Skillman

John Bradstreet  
Jeff Grady  
Millard Saban

### Other Participants (attending at least one meeting):

Irene Altieri  
Mardie Brown  
Vicki Dyer  
Howard Glidden  
Sidney Jones  
Betty Leeman  
Julie Leeman  
Darryl McKenney  
Bob Potter  
Mimi Roughgarden  
Mark Williams

Lillian Belden  
Joe Carey  
Valerie Files  
Ed Hatch  
Karen Keller  
Bradley Leeman  
Parker Leeman  
Christine Nichols  
Dean Potter  
Ralph Saban  
Dean Willoughby

Donald Brown  
Rob Coates  
Betty Glidden  
Chester Hunter  
Jan Leary  
Bruce Leeman  
Dale McKenney  
Ed Pollard  
Debbie Potter  
Martha Sullivan

Palermo Days Committee

Sheepscot Lake Fish & Game Association

Special thanks to Fritz Weidner for his computer assistance for the first public opinion survey (1988-89) and to Howard Glidden for this expert bus driving on both the Introductory and Scenic Town Tours. Thanks are also extended to Roy Warner, Palermo School Principal, and to Larry Littlefield, Union 51 Assistant Superintendent for their assistance with the Community Attitudes Survey and School Subcommittee Report.

SECTION I  
INTRODUCTION

November, 1991

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

On behalf of the members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, it is with great pleasure that I present to you the proposed Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Palermo. This document represents many hours of deliberation by the members of the Palermo Comprehensive Plan Committee. The members spent many sessions struggling with how far to go in proposing policies that would set the course for Palermo's future. In my opinion, the members of this Committee are to be congratulated for their success in balancing the goals of the State Growth Management Act, on the one hand, with the wishes and concerns of the residents and land owners of Palermo, on the other. It was by no means an easy task.

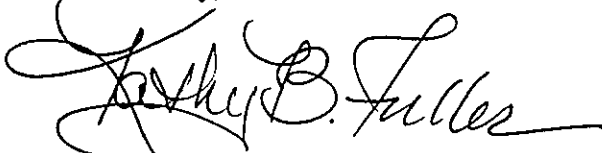
This Plan is a starting place. From here, it will be built upon, modified and reshaped to capture the changing visions of Palermo. From this point on, decisions will be guided by policies included. As with all such documents, there will likely come a time when a specific policy is either obsolete or inadequate to implement the vision recognized for the time. When that time comes, you will be asked to accept changes to the Plan.

For now, however, the Plan depends highly on the strong conservation and ecological ethic that exists in Palermo. The Committee believes that the goals of Plan can be achieved through voluntary and educational, rather than regulatory measures. We are depending on you!

I sincerely thank all those who were involved in the planning process from the beginning: the Town (for authorizing the necessary funds in 1989), the Selectman, the Committee and Subcommittee members, the North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission, the School Committee and Administrative staff, and all the citizens of Palermo who supported the effort.

We urge you to attend the March 1992 Town Meeting and vote to adopt this Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,



Kathy B. Fuller, Chair  
Comprehensive Plan Committee

# Credits

## Palermo Comprehensive Plan Committee:

Kathy Fuller, Chair  
Virginia Dowe  
Charles Peirce

Walter Banton  
Madeleine Haskell  
Joan Robertson

Clair Bradstreet  
James Mathieson  
Dorothy Templeton

## Palermo Selectmen:

Clair Bradstreet  
Darryl McKenney ('til March 1990)

Howard Glidden  
David Parkman

## Palermo School Committee:

David Fuller  
Millard Howard

Patty Glidden  
Harold Siefken ('til March 1990)

## North Kennebec Regional Planning Commission:

W. Elery Keene, Executive Director  
Patricia M. Graham, Secretary

Mary Ann Hayes, Staff Planner  
Melodie McCutcheon, Secretary

## Active Town Participants (subcommittee member or those who attended at least 50% of the meetings):

Donna Bradstreet  
Natalie Crowley  
Jamie Greager  
Sally Skillman

Heather Bradstreet  
Harry Friedman  
Millard Howard

John Bradstreet  
Jeff Grady  
Jack Skillman

## Other Participants (attending at least one meeting):

Irene Altieri  
Don Brown  
Vicki Dyer  
Howard Glidden  
Sidney Jones  
Betty Leeman  
Julie Leeman  
Darryl McKenney  
Bob Potter  
Mimi Roughgarden  
Mark Williams

Lillian Belden  
Joe Carey  
Valerie Files  
Ed Hatch  
Karen Keller  
Bradley Leeman  
Parker Leeman  
Christine Nichols  
Dean Potter  
Ralph Saban  
Dean Willoughby

Mardie Brown  
Rob Coates  
Betty Glidden  
Chester Hunter  
Jan Leary  
Bruce Leeman  
Dale McKenney  
Ed Pollard  
Debbie Potter  
Martha Sullivan

Palermo Days Committee

Sheepscot Lake Fish & Game Association

Special thanks to Fritz Weidner for his computer assistance for the first public opinion survey (1988-89) and to Howard Glidden for this expert bus driving on both the Introductory and Scenic Town Tours. Thanks are also extended to Roy Warner, Palermo School Principal, and to Larry Littlefield, Union 51 Assistant Superintendent for their assistance with the Community Attitudes Survey and School Subcommittee Report.

## PLAN SUMMARY

Palermo is a community founded on neighborliness. Although legally tied to Belfast through Waldo County government, Palermo is functionally much closer to Augusta, where the largest proportion of its workforce is employed. The Town has enjoyed the benefit of a strong spirit of volunteerism, especially among its longer-term residents.

Palermo residents tend to have a high degree of love and respect for land, water and wildlife. There is a strong conservation and ecological ethic, but many feel strongly that such goals should be achieved by voluntary and educational, rather than regulatory, measures. This plan is based on such strategies, with a review of their effectiveness scheduled annually, beginning in 1993.

Subdivision activity was heavy in the late 1980's, but the actual location of new structures on these lots has not kept up and the recession has slowed land development activity considerably. Palermo's townspeople, evidenced through a public opinion survey taken in early 1989, value natural resources highly. However, the pace of development is perceived as a particular threat neither to the integrity of the Town's natural resources nor to its character.

Palermo's planning process emphasized the study of issues that were expressed as important to townspeople in the 1989 public opinion survey results (see Appendix A for detailed results). As such, subcommittees were formed to perform detailed study in the areas of roads, education, and the feasibility of a Town beach. A second Community Attitude Survey was conducted over the winter of 1990-91 by the University of Maine with a focus on the school system. The policies and strategies recommended in the plan represent a combination of issues the State requires each community to address as well as local priorities.

After two years of hard work, Palermo's Comprehensive Plan Committee has developed a set of policies and strategies designed to achieve an appropriate balance among the following five local growth management goals:

- 1) Enhance community image and pride
- 2) Protect natural resources: lakes, ponds, rivers, wildlife habitat
- 3) Protect farmlands and fields
- 4) Protect private property rights
- 5) Protect the current form of town government

The proposed recommendations emphasize voluntary participation in maintaining the Town's rural character rather than strict land use regulations. A number of new committees are proposed to study cost-saving measures (e.g. roads, school) and advance community goals (e.g. agriculture, water quality). These will require volunteer input, building upon Palermo's tradition of citizen involvement. Reflecting a great deal of respect for private property rights, this plan offers guidance for continued wise land stewardship by private landowners.



Among the forty policies recommended for adoption by the Town (see Section IV) are the following major provisions:

- 1) Agricultural Promotion Committee: This group will encourage local marketing and purchase of agricultural products, gather and distribute technical assistance materials to farmers and gardeners, explore the establishment of a farmers' market, and develop a local farm registration program to protect existing agriculture from new development.
- 2) Palermo Conservation Commission: The Plan calls for reactivating the former Commission to seek voluntary protection of scenic and valuable natural resources through education and facilitation of land protection programs.
- 3) Road Committee: A three-member appointed committee will develop a road management plan, propose a set of road standards for the Town to consider adopting, and provide guidance to the Road Commissioner.
- 4) Minimal Land Use Regulations: No restrictions on land use are proposed excepting that major commercial and industrial activity will be confined to Route 3. A minimum lot size of one acre throughout town is recommended.
- 5) Natural Resource and Wildlife Protection: The unnecessary cutting of trees will be discouraged, although no additional regulations for timber harvesting beyond State minimums are proposed.
- 6) Water Quality Protection: Phosphorus runoff from new development will be limited to protect lake water quality. Residences will be checked for faulty septic systems when property changes hands. All perennial streams will be protected through shoreland zoning. Activities involving hazardous and/or toxic materials will be prohibited over the two major sand and gravel aquifers in town.
- 7) Recreation Committee: A five-member committee will be established to coordinate existing recreation activities of private groups and identify unmet recreational needs for the Town to address in the future.
- 8) Recycling Committee: A committee will be formed to assist the Selectmen in researching solid waste management and recycling options with neighboring communities and to promote recycling efforts in town.
- 9) School/Community Relations: The plan proposes a number of strategies for improving relations between the school and townspeople, including press releases, a newsletter, a lighted announcement board, and community-based programs.
- 10) School Facility Planning: A Land and Facilities Study Committee will be created to look at land, parking, pedestrian safety, lighting and playground facilities and propose an economical approach toward needed improvements.