CAPE COD COMMISSION

**Cape Cod Commission Staff Memorandum for Certification**

# Yarmouth Local Comprehensive Plan

## Introduction

The Cape Cod Commission (Commission) received the 2025 Yarmouth Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP) from the Town of Yarmouth along with a request for certification on January 28, 2026. The purpose of this memo is to provide Commission members with staff review and analysis of the LCP and whether it addresses the regulations and the requirements for certification.

## Background

The Commission adopted new LCP regulations on July 25, 2019. These regulations advance a more streamlined approach for LCP development, with a clearer and simpler path for Commission certification to encourage more communities to adopt LCPs. Several towns have undertaken LCP updates and received Commission certification since adoption of the new regulations.

With the initiation of a Vision Plan in 2020, the Town of Yarmouth began development of a new LCP, which would be its first Commission certified LCP. The planning team prepared and implemented a comprehensive publicity plan in support of the LCP including outreach via local news media, social media, Channel 8 bulletins, direct email notifications to civic and neighborhood organizations and residents as well as flyers, postcards and radio spots and promoting the LCP at community events. The planning team fostered direct community engagement through interviews with key stakeholders, undertook community surveys, and held community open houses and workshops. Finally, the Town's consultant, the BSC Group, created an online platform to support community engagement called the Comprehensive Plan Project Hub.

The Town held a public hearing on the completed draft LCP on October 1, 2025 and the Town of Yarmouth voted to adopt the LCP on November 17, 2025 at a Special Town Meeting.

### LCP CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

Under Section II.A of the Cape Cod Commission Local Comprehensive Plan regulations, an LCP must include the following contents to meet the minimum criteria for certification:

1. *Vision Statement – An LCP shall include a vision statement that expresses the shared values of the community for future growth and development and resource protection. The LCP shall also describe how the town's vision aligns with and supports the regional vision articulated in the "Growth Policy" of the RPP, with consideration given to the Cape Cod Placetypes concept identified in the RPP. The RPP identifies eight Placetypes across the region, which recognize major land use categories across Cape Cod and serve as a conceptual framework for appropriate context-sensitive planning and regulation. The LCP may also address additional strategic planning areas or land use categories not identified in the RPP as regional Placetypes.*

2. *Existing conditions – The LCP shall include a narrative that provides a basic inventory and overview of existing assets/conditions in the town. This existing conditions inventory and overview should guide the LCP's discussion about future growth and development and resource protection in the town.*

3. *Goals – The LCP shall identify planning and land use Goals that are consistent with those contained in the RPP. (The RPP's Goals are based on those goals, values and purposes expressed in Section 1 of the Act). LCP Goals may be tailored to suit local needs as necessary and desirable, among other purposes, to address key challenges identified by the town. Towns may adopt additional, more specific or different LCP Goals than those included or as articulated in the RPP, so long as such LCP Goals are consistent with and not contrary to RPP Goals.*

4. *Capital Facilities Plan – The LCP shall include a capital facilities plan that outlines key capital facilities and infrastructure needed to accommodate anticipated future growth and development and to protect resources in the town, and as coordinated with other towns, which plan should include:*

    a. *Description of the town's existing infrastructure systems and any challenges or constraints those infrastructure systems face*

    b. *Identification of capital facilities and infrastructure projects needed to support growth or redevelopment in areas identified by the community through the LCP process as appropriate and desirable for such purposes*

    c. *Description of funding sources and strategies to support planned capital facilities*

    d. *Description of how the identified and planned capital facilities projects will support the community's LCP vision and growth within the region*

    e. *Description of how the local capital facilities plan aligns with and supports the regional capital plan, as applicable*

5. *Housing Plan – An LCP shall include a housing plan that outlines how the town proposes to provide for the development of fair, low- and moderate- income affordable housing consistent*

*with local needs, including an analysis of housing needs and proposed local housing supply targets. This plan should include:*

a. *A housing production plan (HPP); or,*

b. *for communities that do not have an HPP, a housing needs assessment that includes an assessment of demand based on current data, population, development trends, and regional growth factors; an analysis of constraints and limitations; and housing goals and actions. A town is also encouraged to identify priority areas for compact and multi-family housing, including infill and redevelopment.*

6. *Targeted Action Plan and Schedule– The LCP shall include action items and an implementation schedule with timeframes/priorities for completion of action items, and the responsible party that will take the lead in implementation. The Action Plan shall include the following:*

   a. *Proposed new, or amendments to existing, municipal development bylaws/ordinances intended to advance the goals and vision of the LCP;*

   b. *Town's implementation schedule and budgeting for proposed capital facilities projects that will support achieving the community's vision;*

   c. *Implementation schedule for proposed private or non-municipal infrastructure in or affecting the town, to the extent known by the town;*

   d. *Implementation schedule for proposed actions intended to advance fair, low- and moderate-income affordable housing consistent with local needs, including anticipated housing starts that meet identified supply targets;*

   e. *Anticipated meeting schedule to update Commission staff on LCP implementation actions; and*

   f. *Performance measures to assist in determining whether identified actions have been met or achieved their purpose.*

For the Commission to certify an LCP, it must also be consistent with the Regional Policy Plan and the Goals of the Cape Cod Commission Act.

## Yarmouth LCP Contents and Staff Analysis of Each Requirement of the Regulations

The Yarmouth LCP is a comprehensive long range planning document that contains the Commission's required certification contents and other planning goals for the town. This memo

provides a summary review of the contents of the Yarmouth LCP and staff analysis of the elements required for certification.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Yarmouth LCP provides both a vision statement and growth policy for the town.

### Yarmouth Vision Statement

The overarching Yarmouth LCP Vision Statement is:

*"The Citizens of Yarmouth want our community to be a great place to LIVE, WORK, PLAY, & LEARN. We envision our town as an attractive, affordable, inclusive community that values the importance of a clean, healthy, sustainable environment; a strong economic base with diverse business interests; abundant places for fun, leisure, and socializing; and educational excellence."*

This is followed by several specific goals within the categories of being a great place to live, to work, to play, and to learn.

### Growth Policy

The Yarmouth LCP articulates the following approach regarding where and how the Town will grow and redevelop:

*"Yarmouth shall pursue managed growth and development that adds value to our community and benefits our residents, business owners, and visitors while protecting the resources and community character that we cherish. Economic growth should be focused in areas with municipal sewer including aesthetically pleasing mixed-use or commercial redevelopment along our Route 28 corridor, and our hotel properties along South Shore Drive. Redevelopment along Route 28 should encourage the creation of walkable village areas, with an emphasis on the South Yarmouth Village area near the Bass River, Long Pond/ Route 28 intersection, Great Island Plaza at Winslow Gray/ South Sea Ave, Higgins Crowell Road/ Route 28 intersection, and the western end of Route 28 near the Cape Cod Hospital. This focus area is aligned with Yarmouth's desire to convert "Suburban Commercial Development" areas into village center nodes in line with the Cape Cod Commission's "Community Activity Centers" placetype.*

*Other areas of potential growth include enhancing our village centers along historic Route 6A, aligning with the CCC's "Historic Areas" placetype; and thoughtful reuse of the Town-owned former Mattacheese Middle School property to address a variety of community needs which could encompass a number of different placetypes depending upon the final uses chosen.*

*As our community grows and evolves, the Town needs to ensure the protection of historic and cultural resources, promote resiliency and sustainability, and steward our valuable water and environmental resources, aligning with the CCC's "Natural Areas" placetype."*

The vision and growth policy approach of the Yarmouth LCP meets the requirements for Commission certification and advancing the LCP vision will help advance the vision of the RPP.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The LCP provides an existing conditions section ("Existing Conditions Report") that includes data and information on current conditions for several issue areas. These issue areas are categorized by Natural, Built, and Community systems, similar to the RPP's structure, and generally are similar to the specific issue areas in the Regional Policy Plan (e.g., open space, transportation, housing, etc.).

For each issue area, the plan describes the existing conditions in the town relative to that topic. The Natural Systems section focuses on water resources, wastewater management, water supply, freshwater and saltwater resources, wetlands, habitat, open space, and coastal resiliency. Built Systems covers community design and land use, transportation and connectivity, climate mitigation and energy, and waste management. The Community Systems section provides data and discussion of Yarmouth's community character and cultural heritage, economy, town services, and recreation.

The existing conditions section, with its extensive data and accompanying narrative, presents Yarmouth's current conditions and provides a strong foundation to guide the plan and support its goals and actions. This section of the LCP meets the existing conditions requirement for certification.

## GOALS

The Community Goals chapter identifies a series of goals oriented to Natural Systems, Built Systems, and Community Systems, again similar to the RPP topic areas. The goals serve to advance the Town's vision and provide the organizing framework for Chapter 4: Targeted Action Plan.

### Natural Systems Goals

- **Wastewater Management:** Continue with the implementation of the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP).
- **Water Supply:** Attain a sustainable supply of high-quality drinking water to meet our community needs.
- **Freshwater & Saltwater:** Preserve, protect and restore the quality and functions of our fresh, marine and ocean water resources.
- **Wetland Resources:** Protect, preserve and restore the quality and natural values and functions of inland and coastal wetlands and their buffers.

- **Plant & Wildlife Habitat:** Protect, preserve, or restore wildlife and plant habitat to maintain species diversity, and protect rare and endangered species.
- **Open Space:** Manage, protect and expand open space and conservation lands for resource protection, passive recreation and quality of life.
- **Coastal Resiliency:** Prevent or minimize the impacts and risks from storms, flooding, erosion and sea level rise on the environment, property, infrastructure, economy, and people of Yarmouth.

### Built Systems

- **Community Design & Land Use:** Promote the creation of village areas, walkable neighborhoods, and growth in areas with adequate infrastructure.
- **Transportation & Connectivity:** Maintain a safe, accessible, and efficient network of sidewalks, bikeways, roadways, and public transit services.
- **Climate Mitigation & Energy:** Promote renewable energy initiatives, energy conservation and efficiencies to reduce energy consumption, and the production of greenhouse gases in support of the Commonwealth's state-wide net zero carbon goals.
- **Waste Management:** Promote a sustainable solid waste management system for Yarmouth and the region that protects public health, safety, and the environment, and supports the economy.

### Community Systems

- **Community Character & Cultural Heritage:** Protect and preserve our significant cultural, historic, and archaeological resources, and foster a strong sense of community.
- **Economy:** Promote a thriving year-round economy with a variety of quality employment opportunities and businesses while supporting our strong hospitality and tourism sectors. Promote a business-friendly approach to economic development that takes into consideration environmental and infrastructure impacts, and community goals and interests.
- **Housing:** Promote the preservation and production of an adequate supply of safe year-round ownership and rental housing that is attainable for people with different income levels and diverse needs.
- **Town Services:** Provide effective and efficient government and tax rates that balance services, facilities and infrastructure needs through prioritization while meeting the critical needs of the community.
- **Recreation:** Provide year-round active recreational opportunities for all ages and increase public awareness and access to town-owned land and facilities.

The Yarmouth LCP goals are generally consistent with and not contrary to those in the Regional Policy Plan and meet the requirements for goals for Commission certification. The Yarmouth LCP also contains goals for issue areas not included in the RPP, i.e., Town Services and Recreation, which is appropriate.

## CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN

The Yarmouth LCP includes a chapter for Capital Infrastructure and Facilities, which, along with existing conditions sections, provide descriptions of the existing conditions of capital facilities and infrastructure in the Town and related issues and opportunities. This chapter also provides goals and actions for infrastructure and facilities throughout the Town to advance the vision and goals of the LCP. The Existing Conditions and Key Issues chapter notes some of the challenges facing the infrastructure and facilities in the town (e.g., wastewater management, coastal resiliency, etc.).

Within the Targeted Action Plan in Chapter 4 and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 8, there are actions for infrastructure and facilities, with time frames, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. These are grouped under goals, and it notes where actions overlap with other goals. To ensure continuous progress, the Plan states "the status of the Implementation Matrix will be evaluated by the Planning Board on an annual basis with input on the status of the various actions being sought from the responsible partners. Annual status updates will be provided to the Select Board and Cape Cod Commission."

This section satisfies the Capital Facilities Plan requirements for Commission certification.

## HOUSING PLAN

Yarmouth has a current Housing Production Plan that was approved by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities effective August 15, 2024. The LCP itself also discusses existing conditions and needs for housing in the Town, including providing a demographic analysis, discussing demand based on recent data, analyzing constraints and challenges, identifying specific housing goals and actions to address challenges, and identifying time frames and responsible parties for each.

The content contained in the Yarmouth LCP and the Town's current Housing Production Plan meets the Housing Plan requirement for Commission certification for a plan to provide for the development of fair, low- and moderate-income housing consistent with local needs.

## TARGETED ACTION PLAN

The Targeted Action Plan provides a list of goals and actions for each issue area discussed in the Existing Conditions and Key Issues section (water resources, wastewater management, water supply,

freshwater and saltwater resources, wetlands, habitat, open space, coastal resiliency, community design and land use, transportation and connectivity, climate mitigation and energy, and waste management, community character and cultural heritage, economy, town services, and recreation).

The plan also provides a detailed Implementation Matrix. For each of the actions in the targeted action plan the matrix identifies time frames, responsible parties, potential funding sources, and how each action relates to the various chapter topics. The implementation matrix groups the actions by the natural, built, and community systems, and the goals contained within each. The plan describes how implementation will be overseen by the Town Planning Board who will be responsible for evaluating the status of implementation on an annual basis. The information in the implementation matrix will allow for understanding and tracking progress being made and the Planning Board will make annual reports on implementation to the Select Board. The Town also will report annually to the Cape Cod Commission on plan progress.

Taken together, these elements meet the Commission certification requirements for a targeted action plan.

## CONSISTENCY WITH THE REGIONAL POLICY PLAN AND GOALS OF THE COMMISSION ACT

Staff has reviewed the LCP for consistency with the Regional Policy Plan and Goals of the Cape Cod Commission Act. The vision statement, growth policy, and goals of the Yarmouth LCP are consistent with those of the Regional Policy Plan. Local action advancing the Yarmouth LCP vision and goals will also serve to advance the goals of the Regional Policy Plan.

The goals of the Cape Cod Commission Act are to further: the conservation and preservation of natural undeveloped areas, wildlife, flora and habitats for endangered species; the preservation of coastal resources including aquaculture; the protection of groundwater, surface water and ocean water quality, as well as the other natural resources of Cape Cod; balanced economic growth; the provision of adequate capital facilities, including transportation, water supply, and solid, sanitary and hazardous waste disposal facilities; the coordination of the provision of adequate capital facilities with the achievement of other goals; the development of an adequate supply of fair affordable housing; and the preservation of historical, cultural, archaeological, architectural, and recreational values.

The Yarmouth LCP goals and actions align with and are consistent with the goals of the Cape Cod Commission Act. For example, the Yarmouth LCP commits to “manage, protect and expand open space and conservation lands for resource protection, passive recreation, and quality of life” and also “to promote the preservation and production of an adequate supply of safe, year-round ownership and rental housing…” and numerous other actions to balance environmental objectives

with meeting critical community needs. There are also goals and actions related to transportation, infrastructure, coastal resiliency, and recreation.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Yarmouth LCP was developed with substantial public participation. These efforts were launched with the creation of the Vision Plan in 2020 that involved two community surveys, three virtual workshops, multiple presentations and a final presentation to the Select Board in 2022. The town issued an RFP for a consultant team to update the LCP and selected BSC group to commence work on the plan in April 2024. A comprehensive publicity plan was prepared and implemented in support of the LCP. It included outreach via local news media, social media, Channel 8 bulletins, direct email notifications to civic and neighborhood organizations and residents as well as flyers, postcards and radio spots. Town planning staff also promoted the LCP at community events throughout the year including at the Police Department's National Night Out and at the Seaside Festivals in October 2024 and 2025.

The planning team conducted interviews with key town staff and community stakeholders and undertook community surveys to solicit input on current issues and desired future outcomes. A community Open House was held on September 26, 2024 to gather feedback on identified goals and objectives. In January 2025, a second community meeting was held to provide an update on the project and focus feedback on four key topics: Economy, Land use, Housing, and Coastal Resiliency and Sustainability. The BSC Group created an online platform to support community engagement called the Comprehensive Plan Project Hub and created a Crowdsource Map that remained online and accessible from August 2024 to January 2025, collecting 88 placed-based comments.

The draft of the LCP was released for a 30-day public review period in August 2025 and a formal public hearing was conducted on October 1, 2025. The LCP was adopted by Town Meeting on November 17, 2025.

These events and efforts meet the requirement for public outreach in plan development for Commission certification.

## Staff Recommendation

The Yarmouth 2025 LCP is a thoughtful, thorough, and effective planning document that articulates the community's shared vision for the future and actions to advance its goals. The LCP sets forth a future vision for the town with goals and actions that are consistent with the initiatives of the Regional Policy Plan. The LCP is the product of significant work by Town staff and a wide range of local community representatives and will serve to guide Yarmouth over the next 10 or more years. The LCP meets the requirements for Commission certification and staff recommends that the

Commission vote to certify the 2025 Yarmouth LCP as consistent with the Regional Policy Plan, Goals of the Cape Cod Commission Act, and requirements of the Commission's Local Comprehensive Plan Regulations.