

Jamestown 2015 Comprehensive Community Plan: Issues & Opportunities by Topic

TOPIC	2015 Issues	2015 Opportunities
HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The lack of affordable housing is a significant issue, with limited options for low-to-moderate-income households. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a significant disparity between housing prices & median household income. <input type="checkbox"/> Many Jamestown households are cost burdened. <input type="checkbox"/> High land & development costs, along with infrastructure limitations, make it difficult to build new affordable housing. <input type="checkbox"/> Jamestown's workforce, including municipal, marine & service workers, are priced out. <input type="checkbox"/> The volunteer firefighter force is threatened because of unaffordability. <input type="checkbox"/> Some oppose affordable housing, citing concern about crime, property values, & neighborhood character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Revising zoning ordinances can create more inclusive housing options for residents. <input type="checkbox"/> Repurposing underutilized land for affordable housing can help meet state-mandated goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships with non-profit housing developers & securing funding can support new affordable housing projects. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure long-term affordability by using land trusts & monitoring deed-restricted rental units to preserve affordable housing over time. <input type="checkbox"/> Raise awareness of Jamestown's affordability needs through public education. <input type="checkbox"/> Establish funding mechanisms such as an Affordable Housing Trust Fund & employer-assisted housing programs.
LAND USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning regulations & infrastructure limitations, such as limited sewer & water services, restrict development, complicating efforts to meet housing & economic needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Many areas in Jamestown are unsuitable for development due to constraints such as poor soil quality, wetlands, & steep slopes. <input type="checkbox"/> Conversion of multi-family homes to single-family homes has reduced housing diversity. <input type="checkbox"/> Jamestown Shores: Homes on substandard lots has led to groundwater contamination risks, exacerbated by poor soils & limited water resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Areas: Groundwater yields are low, & soils are poorly suited for OWTS, which threatens groundwater quality in areas like Beavertail. <input type="checkbox"/> The zoning ordinance does not fully align with the current & future land use maps. <input type="checkbox"/> Future Land Use: Less than 15% of the land remains undeveloped, limiting future growth opportunities and making conservation critical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning updates can encourage sustainable development (e.g. mixed-use, village-style) which supports growth & preserves town's character & natural resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Jamestown Shores: Implement & enforce the High Groundwater Overlay District to protect water quality & regulate impervious surfaces / manage stormwater runoff. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Areas: Strengthen land-use regulations to ensure the protection of groundwater, (via zoning updates & conservation efforts). <input type="checkbox"/> Water & Sewer Capacity: Continue studies on water needs & ensure that development aligns with infrastructure capacity. <input type="checkbox"/> Future Land Use: Encourage sustainable land use practices that prioritize open space & water resource protection, aligning with Jamestown's rural character. <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Management: Utilize growth management strategies like conservation development to maintain the town's infrastructure & protect natural resources.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Jamestown's economy relies heavily on seasonal tourism, which creates income variability & workforce challenges. ❑ Commercial development is limited & needs to be carefully balanced with conservation efforts. ❑ Infrastructure constraints in the village & waterfront areas limit opportunities for business growth. ❑ Limited overnight accommodations for lodging are available on the island, restricting the potential for additional tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Developing the village area using smart growth principles can enhance commercial opportunities & attract year-round businesses. ❑ Expanding tourism offerings, particularly eco-tourism & heritage tourism, can increase economic resilience. ❑ Waterfront development can be carefully managed to support recreational boating, fishing, & tourism while protecting the environment. ❑ Expansion of aquaculture opportunities & growth of the blue economy can promote economic development within Jamestown & exports to surrounding communities.
HISTORIC & CULTURAL PRESERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Historic & cultural sites in Jamestown are vulnerable to both natural hazards, such as flooding & hurricanes, & human activities, such as development & neglect. ❑ Many cultural & historical resources lack sufficient protections, & some sites may face deterioration due to inadequate maintenance. ❑ Development pressures may lead to the loss of scenic & historical landscapes, which are key to the town's identity & tourism economy. ❑ There is severe lack of public awareness of the importance of historic preservation. Many people are unaware they live in a historic building or near a historic site, & do not know how to properly care for these properties. ❑ Many residents are opposed to creating historic districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Preserving & restoring historic landmarks & landscapes can enhance community character & support heritage tourism, providing economic & cultural benefits. ❑ Expanding historic preservation programs & partnerships with local organizations can protect & promote Jamestown's cultural resources. ❑ Incorporating cultural & scenic resources into land use planning can ensure that future development respects & enhances the town's heritage. ❑ Maintaining inventories of historic properties can enhance education & protection efforts. ❑ Young families are purchasing older homes & restoring them to their original appearance. ❑ Strengthening partnership with the Jamestown Historical Society to support preservation efforts & pursue historic designation of new districts & resources.

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NATURAL RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Jamestown’s surface & groundwater supplies available for drinking water are limited, & water resources in some areas show signs of overuse & pollution from development, agriculture, & stormwater runoff. ❑ Wetlands & coastal ecosystems are under pressure from land development & boating infrastructure, which threatens their ability to function as critical habitats & buffers against flooding. ❑ Habitat fragmentation & loss of open space pose risks to local wildlife, & sensitive ecological areas are at risk from climate change & human activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ A range of mechanisms for conservation efforts, including land acquisition & protection & local ordinances, can be used to safeguard water resources, wetlands, & critical habitats for wildlife. ❑ Strengthening water quality protection measures through local regulations on waste disposal systems & implementation of pond management plans can help maintain the health of drinking water sources. ❑ Water conservation programs & ordinances can extend limited water supplies. ❑ Management of natural habitats in recreation areas to reduce human impacts, can enhance biodiversity & mitigate soil erosion. ❑ Public coastal access could be improved & expanded at existing rights of way to encourage recreation & manage impacts.
SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Jamestown’s coastal location makes it highly vulnerable to flooding, sea-level rise, & storm surge, which threatens homes & infrastructure. ❑ Critical infrastructure, such as bridges & key roads, is at risk from severe weather & climate change, which may lead to isolation during emergencies. ❑ Climate change is expected to increase the frequency & severity of natural hazards, such as hurricanes, nor’easters, & severe winter storms, amplifying risks to the community. ❑ Few climate adaptation planning efforts have been studied or conducted in Jamestown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Implementing & regularly updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan can reduce risks from natural hazards & improve preparedness for disasters. ❑ Prioritizing infrastructure projects that mitigate flood risks, especially in vulnerable areas, can strengthen the town's resilience. ❑ Performing an energy audit & continuing to monitor energy usage could provide a baseline understanding. With this data, the Town could create energy consumption goals & benchmarks. ❑ Public education & outreach programs can increase community awareness & preparedness for natural hazards & climate change impacts.
PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Many public facilities, including the recreation & senior centers, schools & emergency services, are aging & require upgrades to meet future needs. ❑ School enrollment has declined in recent years, but the total education budget remains to be a significant part of the municipal budget. ❑ Limited municipal resources hinder the Town’s ability to expand/maintain critical services & facilities. ❑ Jamestown's water supply is reliant on its two reservoirs, which creates a concern for future demand, especially in the case of drought. ❑ Groundwater infiltration into sewer lines reduces the system's capacity & has become an increasingly common problem in recent years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Upgrading & expanding public facilities can enhance community services & support population growth. ❑ Improving water management & conservation strategies can help ensure a sustainable water supply for the future. ❑ Securing state & federal funding for facility upgrades can reduce the financial burden. ❑ Allocate or negotiate school funds from North Kingstown to increase funding for other municipal programs.

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PARKS, OPEN SPACE, & RECREATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Development pressures threaten valuable open space & prime farmland. ❑ Older recreational facilities are in need of repairs & upgrades, & recreational needs are changing. ❑ Protecting wetlands & sensitive ecological areas is essential & urgent given development pressures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Funding is available within the Town for preservation efforts to help protect open space & the watershed & for enhancements to recreational facilities. ❑ Designs & funding are available for a greenway bike path that could support bicycle use on the island by visitors & residents. ❑ Agricultural land preservation & supportive local policies can enhance local farming & support food security & protect rural character.
TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Traffic congestion and parking shortages in village and waterfront areas affect access to businesses and quality of life, especially during the tourist season. ❑ Road maintenance is underfunded, with many local roads in poor condition, and traffic from Route 138 upgrades requires better speed control & enforcement. ❑ Public transportation options are limited, with low ridership & insufficient bus services, while alternative transportation modes like biking and walking infrastructure remain underdeveloped. ❑ The need for long-term parking for village employees and the underutilization of marine transportation are challenging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Expanding public transportation, biking, & walking infrastructure can reduce traffic congestion & improve overall circulation. ❑ Investing in road maintenance & infrastructure improvements will support long-term growth & enhance connectivity. ❑ Developing new parking solutions & implementing traffic management strategies can better accommodate visitors & support local businesses. ❑ Expanding ferry services & improving public transportation options will alleviate vehicular traffic & reduce parking demand, especially during peak seasons.