

**COVENTRY PLANNING COMMISSION DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION TO COVENTRY TOWN COUNCIL ON  
PROPOSED 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

DATE OF MEETING: **April 29, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Recommendation to Town Council – 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update**

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This matter came before the Coventry Planning Commission as a Public Hearing on April 29, 2026 for a recommendation to the Town Council on the DRAFT 2026 Comprehensive Community Plan Update.

The DRAFT 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update will replace the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, which expired in 2004, and provides a much-needed update to the Town’s policy structure moving forward. The 2026 Plan includes elements focused on the following policy areas: land use, natural resources, open space and outdoor recreation, cultural and historical resources, housing, economic development, community services and facilities, energy and renewable energy, and natural hazards and climate change.

The local adoption process for municipal comprehensive plans is outlined in RIGL § 45-22.2-8, which tasks the Planning Commission with preparing the draft comprehensive plan, including the implementation program. The Commission is also tasked with gathering oral or written feedback from citizens, conducting a minimum of one public hearing, and submit recommendations to the Coventry Town Council regarding the adoption of the plan.

The Planning Commission held a public workshop discussion to gather initial feedback on the DRAFT Comprehensive Plan on April 9, 2026 prior to the official Public Hearing noted above. The Plan was revised following the meeting to reflect the Planning Commission’s desired changes and to incorporate comments and suggested edits from Town staff, local stakeholders, and members of the public.

Following the Planning Commission’s review and recommendation, the Coventry Town Council will hold a separate public hearing and vote on the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission and Town Council should both consider if the DRAFT 2026 Comprehensive Community Plan Update aligns with the goals of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, RIGL 45-22.2-3(c).

The recommendation below is based upon the “Town of Coventry Community Comprehensive Plan: 2026 Update” initially prepared by BETA Group, and last revised by Planning staff on April 16, 2026 in response to the comments and suggested edits accepted by the Planning Commission at the public workshop discussion. This recommendation is also based upon two Staff Reports, dated March 20, 2026 and April 21, 2026, which itemizes all accepted revisions, as well as outstanding public comments on the matter.

***It is hereby DECREED:***

Upon a motion made by Secretary Burke, and seconded by Member DaSilva, the Coventry Planning Commission unanimously forwards a **positive recommendation** to the Coventry Town Council on the DRAFT 2026 Comprehensive Community Plan Update, based upon the following Findings of Fact:

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The Planning Commission conducted an orderly, thorough, and expeditious review of this DRAFT 2026 Comprehensive Community Plan Update for alignment with the goals of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, RIGL 45-22.2-3(c) and finds as follows:

***RIGL § 45-22.2-3(c) Goals.*** *The general assembly hereby establishes a series of goals to provide overall direction and consistency for state and municipal agencies in the comprehensive planning process established by this chapter. The goals have equal priority and are numbered for reference only.*

*(1) To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use, the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities, and is consistent with available resources and the need to protect public health, including drinking water supply, drinking water safety, and environmental quality.*

1. The DRAFT Land Use Element, which consists of relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 1 and its Future Land Use Map (FLUM), addresses the promotion of orderly growth and development in Coventry.
2. The DRAFT Land Use Element recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities and ensures consistency with available resources and the need to protect public health. The land use goals encourage the preservation of open space, forests, and agricultural areas and encourages growth in areas that are serviced by existing or planned community services.
3. The DRAFT Community Services and Facilities Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 7, also addresses the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services.

*(2) To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well being of each municipality and the state.*

4. The DRAFT Economic Development Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 6, promotes an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall well being of Coventry for the next decade.

*(3) To promote the production and rehabilitation of year-round housing and to preserve government subsidized housing for persons and families of low- and moderate-income in a manner that: considers local, regional, and statewide needs; housing that achieves a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups; recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the state; takes into account growth management and the need to phase and pace development in areas of rapid growth; and facilitates economic growth in the state.*

5. The DRAFT Housing Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 5, promotes the production of year-round housing and the preservation of government subsidized housing for persons and families of low- and moderate-income.
6. This DRAFT Housing Element also considers local, regional, and statewide needs and recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of Coventry through a variety of goals and action items.
7. The DRAFT Housing Element considers local, regional, and statewide needs through a variety of goals, policies, and action items. These needs are expressed in Chapter 5 – Housing, and will be expanded upon in the concurrent Housing Chapter update.
8. The DRAFT Housing Element will help achieve a balance of housing choices through Goal 3, which calls upon the Town to enable housing types beyond single-family detached homes to accommodate diverse housing needs, and also Goal 4, which recommends that the Town expand homeownership options for low- and moderate-income households. These goals are supported by specific policies and action items.
9. The DRAFT Housing Element takes into account growth management and the need to phase and pace development in areas of rapid growth through specific calls for infrastructure planning in the Centre of New England region and identification of priority growth areas. Goal 2 and the specific policies and action items within directly address housing growth.
10. The DRAFT Housing Element addresses economic growth in Goal 4, which includes specific action items aimed at conducting housing-employment analysis and exploring employer interest in workforce housing partnerships.

*(4) To promote the protection of the natural, historic and cultural resources of each municipality and the state.*

11. The DRAFT Natural Resources Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 2, promotes the protection of natural resources in Coventry.
12. The DRAFT Historical and Cultural Resources Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 4, promotes the protection of cultural and historical resources in Coventry.

*(5) To promote the preservation of the open space and recreational resources of each municipality and the state.*

13. The DRAFT Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Element, which consists of the relevant goals, policies, and action items delineated in Volume I and the Implementation Plan, as well as the existing conditions and needs study in Volume II – Chapter 3, promote the preservation of open space and recreational resources in Coventry.

*(6) To provide for the use of performance-based standards for development and to encourage the use of innovative development regulations and techniques that promote the development of land suitable for development while protecting our natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources, and achieving a balanced pattern of land uses.*

14. The current DRAFT Housing Element (Volume II – Chapter 5) provides performance-based standards for development through the specific LMI housing production projections tied to each specific affordable housing strategy.
15. The DRAFT Plan encourages the use of innovative development regulations and techniques such as conservation development ordinances (action item NR-10), archaeological survey requirements for indigenous sites (HC-6), zoning ordinances to allow two-family and multi-family housing (H-14), incentives for renewable energy and energy efficiency (ER-5), and sidewalk regulations for private developments (T-15). These tools would promote the development of land suitable for development while protecting the Town's natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources.

*(7) To promote consistency of state actions and programs with municipal comprehensive plans, and provide for review procedures to ensure that state goals and policies are reflected in municipal comprehensive plans and state guide plans.*

16. This DRAFT Comprehensive Plan will be consistent with state actions and programs and reflects state goals and policies. Each chapter is based upon the appropriate state guide plans (for example, the Land Use Element and FLUM draws from *Land Use 2025*) and the state goals and policies contained therein.

*(8) To ensure that adequate and uniform data are available to municipal and state government as the basis for comprehensive planning and land use regulation.*

17. This DRAFT Comprehensive Plan ensures that adequate and uniform data are available to Coventry and the State through the provision of maps, tables, graphs, and charts.
18. Chapter 6 – Economic Development was updated with data from 2024 or newer in response to comments from the Division of Statewide Planning, to ensure State approvability.
19. Chapter 5 – Housing contains obsolete data that will be updated in the concurrent Housing Chapter update.

*(9) To ensure that municipal land use regulations and decisions are consistent with the comprehensive plan of the municipality, and to ensure state land use regulations and decisions are consistent with state guide plans.*

20. All elements of the DRAFT Plan point to specific updates to the Coventry Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations where appropriate. The following land use action items, LU-1 and LU-2, address the above goal directly:
  - a. LU-1 states: “Revise the Town Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the State Zoning Enabling Legislation and the new Comprehensive Community Plan. This will include revising, updating, and officially adopting town zoning maps to provide accurate and up-to-date information on Zoning District boundaries.”
  - b. LU-2 states: “Revise Town Subdivision and Land Development Regulations in accordance with the Comprehensive Community Plan.”
21. As stated in the finding above, all elements of the DRAFT Plan are consistent with the requisite state guide plans.

*(10) To encourage the involvement of all citizens in the formulation, review, and adoption, or amendment of the comprehensive plan.*

22. The previous Planning staff held three public meetings on the DRAFT Comprehensive Plan on May 25, 2022 (to introduce the planning process), October 12, 2022 (to review goals and develop policies and actions), and March 20, 2023 (to present the implementation plan).
23. The previous Planning staff also conducted multiple meetings with an ad-hoc Comprehensive Plan advisory task force throughout the Comprehensive Planning process in 2022-2023. The current Planning staff held a final, follow-up meeting with the task force in March 2026 to gather comments.

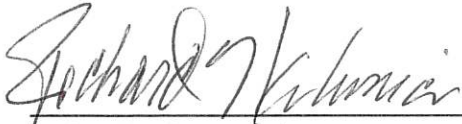
24. The current Planning staff sought feedback on the DRAFT Housing Chapter from local stakeholders and housing policy experts to ensure adequate local “buy in” on affordable housing strategies in Chapter 5, and goals, policies, and action items.

The following votes were cast on this matter:

Chairman Richard Kalunian	Aye
Vice Chairman John Studley, IV	Aye
Secretary Michael Burke	Aye
Member James Kenney, II	Aye
Member Ken DaSilva	Aye
Member Patrick Dulude	Aye
Member Gavaskar Lewis	Aye

Members Excused – Kevin Reyes and John Preiss

SIGNED:



Richard Kalunian, Chairman  
Coventry Planning Commission

5-11-2026

Dated

TOWN OF COVENTRY, R.I.  
May 12, 2026 09:25A  
JOANNE P. AMITRAND, TOWN CLERK