

# Cook's Corner Master Plan Executive Summary

## OVERVIEW

The Town of Brunswick is a fast-growing community on Maine's Midcoast about 30 minutes northeast of Portland. The 2011 closure of the Brunswick Naval Air Station led to a significant shift in the Town's economic profile. In the decade since the closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station, Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRRA) and the Town, along with state and other economic development partners have collaborated to reimagine the former military base as Brunswick Landing, a now thriving cluster of biotechnology, defense, cleantech, and manufacturing businesses. Although Brunswick Landing is located outside of the Cook's Corner Planning Area, it is impossible to extract the past, present, and future of Cook's Corner from the story of Brunswick Landings' transformation over the last decade.

Cook's Corner is a vehicle-centric retail center that serves local and regional visitors with national and regional chains. As brick-and-mortar retail has evolved due to the dawn of e-commerce and various economic shocks in the last decade, lingering vacancies prompted the Town to take a public-private approach to envision the future of Cook's Corner. These changes have coincided with a growth of retail and services in the Topsham area, which is located directly off I-295. Looking at real estate market realities, public sector investments, and the values of the community helped direct the recommendations within the Cook's Corner Revitalization Plan (also the "Revitalization Plan").

Although there have been previous visioning projects for Cook's Corner in the past, this process differentiated itself as a multi-disciplinary approach that drew support from a myriad of perspectives and was intentionally aligned with the Town's budgeting process.

This vision for Cook's Corner must be widely supported across Town departments and throughout the public sector. Committing to enacting the strategies to create a cohesive commercial corridor will create economic opportunities for the Town, allowing other economic development goals to thrive as well. Although the focus of the Revitalization Plan is the Cook's Corner Planning Area, supporting

opportunities for economic prosperity within this commercial node have valuable spillover effects to Brunswick Landing, downtown Brunswick, and the entire community.

*Additional supporting material contained in the Cook's Corner Revitalization Plan includes:*

**Goals and Strategies** | This section outlines the three primary goals of the Revitalization Plan, along with the strategies under each goal. This section also includes relevant figures and narrative text to explain the rationale behind each strategy.

Following Goals and Strategies, the remainder of the Cook's Corner Revitalization Plan is organized into the following chapters:

**Economic Profile** | This includes a demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Town that elaborates on industry strengths, growth, and concentration. This creates a baseline of information that informs subsequent portions of the report.

**Current Trends and Future Land Use Potential** | This section determines "what are the factors that influence where private businesses and developers invest?" and "what are the barriers that prevent those stakeholders from investing." This report explores the current and future state of retail, entertainment, office, and residential markets. It also includes a snapshot of the financial feasibility of developing each of those use types in Cook's Corner.

**Traffic Analysis** | The purpose of this section is to evaluate the traffic aspects of the study area and to offer potential alternatives that could improve overall traffic operations.

**Financial Feasibility Analysis** | This includes an analysis of three sites within Cook's Corner based on development scenarios that fit within the market analysis findings.

**Appendices** | This section includes additional figures, maps, community engagement responses, and other results that support the work of the Goals and Strategies.