

1 **Town of Northport Moratorium Ordinance – RV Campgrounds,**
2 **Glampgrounds, and Event Centers**

3 Legal Authority: 30-A M.R.S. §§ 3001, 4356

4 The TOWN OF NORTHPORT, MAINE, through its legislative body, adopts the following
5 Moratorium Ordinance:

6 WHEREAS, a Non-Residential Development that fits into the category of RV Campgrounds,
7 Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers has been proposed in Northport, the scale and scope of
8 which exceeds the type of Non-Residential Development historically seen in Northport except
9 along Route 1 (Atlantic Highway); and

10 WHEREAS, the Town of Northport did not anticipate RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or
11 Event Centers being proposed away from Route 1 (Atlantic Highway), and thus has not
12 implemented adequate regulations in its Site Plan Review Ordinance or any other ordinance or
13 regulation to preserve the Town’s rural and residential character away from Route 1 (Atlantic
14 Highway); and

15 WHEREAS, such RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers away from Route 1
16 (ATLANTIC HIGHWAY) could pose serious threats to the public health, safety, welfare and quality of
17 life of the residents of Northport through the overdevelopment of parts of the Town with such
18 projects without adequate provisions for preservation of agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and
19 natural areas; minimizing impacts from noise, nighttime lighting, traffic, odors, signage, and
20 environmental degradation; and increased demand on emergency services; and

21 WHEREAS, the Town has a valid interest in preserving its rural character, natural resources,
22 agricultural lands, scenic landscapes, and quality of life, and protecting its residents from
23 excessive noise, nighttime lighting, traffic, signage, and odors; and

24 WHEREAS, large-scale RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers have
25 historically occurred along Route 1 (Atlantic Highway), and there are currently no large-scale
26 RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers on any other road or way in Northport;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, roads in Northport other than Route 1 (Atlantic Highway) are narrow, winding,
29 hilly, have many blind spots, no striping and sparsely marked speed limits, which makes them
30 poorly suited to handle additional traffic and large vehicles generated by RV Campgrounds,
31 Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers; and

32 WHEREAS, there is a strong likelihood that the Town may continue to be subjected to Non-
33 Residential Development pressure in parts of Town other than along Route 1 (Atlantic Highway)
34 due to the amount of undeveloped land, the nonexistence of any regulations or restrictions
35 specific to new RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers; and

36 WHEREAS, campgrounds consisting of five (5) or more campsites are classified under Maine
37 law as commercial campgrounds subject to state regulation, illustrating the type of land use
38 intensity that may result from such uses and the need for appropriate regulation of even larger
39 such projects; and

40 WHEREAS, after public hearing, there is strong support for this Moratorium Ordinance; and

41 WHEREAS, the Town will need at least 180 days to develop provisions governing RV
42 Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers and other facilities of this scale and type so
43 as to address the concerns cited herein; and

44 WHEREAS, one of the options available to the Town includes passage of an ordinance with
45 retroactive effect, notwithstanding the provisions of 1 M.R.S. § 302, subject to the restrictions of
46 30-A M.R.S. § 3007(6); and

47 WHEREAS, amendments to the Site Plan Review Ordinance, if they are deemed appropriate,
48 require a public hearing and report by the Planning Board, and certification by the Select Board
49 and then must be presented for vote at a Town Meeting; and

50 WHEREAS, in the judgment of the Town, these facts create necessity within the meaning of 30-
51 A M.R.S. § 4356, and require passage of a Moratorium Ordinance as necessary for the
52 preservation of public health, safety, and welfare; and

53 NOW, THEREFORE, the Town of Northport hereby ordains this Town of Northport
54 Moratorium Ordinance - RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and Event Centers be enacted:

55 **I. Authority & Purpose:** This Moratorium Ordinance is enacted pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.
56 § 4356 and the Town of Northport’s home rule authority pursuant to the Maine Constitution and
57 30-A M.R.S. § 3001, for the purposes identified above.

58 **II. Definitions:** The following definitions shall be used in the interpretation and construction of
59 this Moratorium Ordinance:

60 A. “Event Center” means a place designed solely to provide recreation and entertainment
61 for non-residential purposes, is often rented for public or private functions, and is
62 generally not open to the public except when an event is scheduled.

63 B. “Glamping” and “Glampground” mean a form of camping involving accommodation
64 and facilities more luxurious, such as beds, electricity, and access to indoor plumbing,
65 than those associated with traditional camping.

66 C. “Non-Residential Development” means a change in land use for new non-residential
67 purposes involving alteration of the land, water, or vegetation on land without existing
68 structures; or the addition of buildings or structures on land without existing structures; or
69 other construction on land without existing structures. “Non-Residential Development”
70 does not include “Home Occupation” as defined in the Town of Northport’s Building
71 Permit Ordinance.

72 D. “RV Campground” means a commercial facility where tents, recreational vehicles,
73 camper trailers, yurts, domes, rental cabins, and cottages are permitted on five or more
74 sites for compensation or indirect compensation. “RV Campground” includes, but is not
75 limited to, sites intended for recreational purposes rather than permanent residency.

76 **III. Moratorium on RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers:** The Town
77 hereby declares and imposes a moratorium prohibiting the development of any new RV
78 Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers, located on any road other than Route 1
79 (Atlantic Highway) in the Town of Northport. No person or organization shall develop or operate
80 a new RV Campground, Glampground, and/or Event Center, located on any road other than
81 Route 1 (Atlantic Highway) in the Town of Northport.

82 **IV. Moratorium on Processing Applications:** No officer, employee, official, board or body of
83 the Town of Northport, including without limitation the Town of Northport Planning Board,
84 Zoning Board of Appeals, or Code Enforcement Officer, shall accept, issue, act upon or approve
85 applications, plans, permits, licenses, certificates and/or fees for any projects, commercial
86 developments, construction or uses for or directly related to the development, construction,
87 siting, or operation of an RV Campground, Glampground, and/or Event Center, located on any
88 road other than Route 1 (Atlantic Highway) in the Town of Northport.

89 **V. Severability:** Any provisions of the Town’s Site Plan Ordinance or any other ordinance or
90 regulation which are inconsistent or conflicting with the provisions of this Moratorium
91 Ordinance, including, without limitation, the requirements for special use permit review by the
92 Planning Board, and appeals by the Zoning Board of Appeals, are hereby suspended in their
93 effect to the extent that they are applicable for the duration of the Moratorium Ordinance hereby
94 ordained, but not otherwise. To the extent any provision of this Moratorium Ordinance is deemed
95 invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the balance of the Moratorium Ordinance shall
96 remain valid.

97

98 **VI. Effective Date, Term and Retroactivity:**

99 A. This moratorium shall take effect immediately upon passage by the Town Legislative Body.
100 This moratorium shall apply retroactively to March 23, 2026, which is the date of the first
101 discussion of these issues at a regularly scheduled Select Board meeting. This moratorium shall
102 remain in effect for the shorter of the following periods: (a) 180 days from date of passage; or (b)
103 immediately upon its repeal by a duly called Town Meeting.

104 B. This moratorium may be extended for successive 180-day periods by vote of the Select Board
105 as permitted by 30-A M.R.S. § 4356, after notice and hearing, if the Select Board finds that the
106 problem giving rise to the need for the moratorium still exists and that reasonable progress is
107 being made to alleviate it.

108 C. Upon its effective date, notwithstanding the provisions of 1 M.R.S. § 302, this Moratorium
109 Ordinance shall be retroactive to March 23, 2026, and applicable, to the maximum extent
110 permitted by law and subject to the severability clause above, to all filed, pending, or future
111 applications and petitions for an RV Campground, Glampground, and/or Event Center, including
112 any RV Campground, Glampground, and/or Event Center which has not received all necessary
113 final permits, licenses, certifications, approvals, and/or fees from the Town of Northport, that are
114 located on any road other than Route 1 (Atlantic Highway) in the Town of Northport; and all
115 proposed RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event Centers, that were not fully
116 operational and/or did not have all the required State permits; and, shall be applicable to any
117 Town of Northport permit that has received its lawful final approval issued less than 45 days
118 prior to the effective date of the Moratorium Ordinance, in accordance with 30-A M.R.S. §
119 3007(6).

120 **VII. Enforcement:** The Municipal Officers are hereby authorized to institute any and all actions,
121 either legal or equitable, that they deem necessary or appropriate to enforce the provisions of this
122 Moratorium Ordinance. Any violation of this Moratorium Ordinance is subject to an
123 enforcement action under 30-A M.R.S. § 4452, including, but not limited to, an award of
124 attorney fees to the Town and injunctive relief. Any violation of this Moratorium Ordinance
125 constitutes a nuisance. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense. All civil
126 penalties shall inure to the benefit of the Town of Northport.

127 **URGENCY CLAUSE:**

128 In view of the urgency cited herein, this Moratorium Ordinance shall take effect immediately
129 upon passage by the Town, shall apply, to the maximum extent permitted by the law but subject
130 to the severance clause above, to all proceedings, applications, permits, and petitions as set forth
131 in clause VI.C.

5/5/2026

132 By signing below the Select Board for the Town of Northport certify this is a true copy of the
133 approved moratorium ordinance to be considered by the Inhabitants of Northport at the Town
134 Meeting to be held on June 15, 2026:

135 SELECT BOARD

136 _____

137 Molly Schaffler, Chair

Jeanine Tucker, Vice Chair

138 ATTEST: A true copy of an ordinance entitled “Town of Northport Moratorium Ordinance -
139 Non-Residential Development, Including RV Campgrounds, Glampgrounds, and/or Event
140 Centers,” as certified to me by the municipal officers of Northport on the _____ day of May,
141 2026.

142

143 _____

144 Amy Eldridge, Clerk