

Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c) which states:

*“When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. **The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in §4302 of this title.**”*

The plan has been written with the intent of receiving regional approval and has been written to meet the planning goals of 4302, including the new 15th planning goal of addressing environmental benefit and burden, although little guidance exists on this area. The energy plan, which was amended to address new requirements for substantial deference in the Section 248 process, now addresses energy burden and recommends measures to help lower income people with weatherization and fuel switching. This addition also addresses environmental benefit and burden. The social connections chapter addresses Craftsbury’s recent efforts to broaden participation in local government, and the community chapter addresses potential responses to housing shortages.

If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:

1. *The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.*

The current and prospective land use map largely follows the proposed future land maps and methodologies currently in development among the regional planning commissions in response to Act 181. The proposed map expands the current designated Village Centers slightly to conform to historic development patterns. These expansions are deemed to be within the purview of the regional planning commissions under Act 181. If and when the regional plan is approved by the Land Use Review board, the town may be able to expand tax credit eligibility to income producing properties as well as grant competitiveness in the villages – Craftsbury Village, East Craftsbury, and Craftsbury Common.

The proposed current and prospective land use map is consistent with previous maps in that it encourages compact development in traditional centers surrounded by open working lands. The plan cites an intent to maintain status quo on roads and does not promote a change in traffic patterns except to pursue traffic calming solutions in Craftsbury Village in accordance with the master plan that was completed in 2023.

2. *The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on:*

(A) the municipal tax base; and

The plan proposes hiring a part-time community development coordinator, who would direct more grant funds into the community while strengthening local businesses.

(B) *the need for public facilities;*

The plan identifies needs for traffic calming measures in Craftsbury village and advocates for identifying a long-term solution for the food shelf. The plan also explores and encourages long-term civic and public uses in Craftsbury Village, without advancing a specific concept.

3. *The amount of vacant land which is:*

(A) *already subject to the proposed new designation; and*

The designations reflect the built environment. The only amount of “vacant” land in the East Craftsbury designation is the site of the proposed expansion to Saplings.

(B) *actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose. See above – this land has been made available for this purpose by the church.*

4. *The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of:*

(A) *appropriate alternative locations;*

(B) *alternative uses for the area under consideration; and*

(C) *the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated*

The village center areas are based on the three legacy designations, and there are no suitable alternative locations.

5. *The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability and existing development in the area.”*

The size and boundaries of the village centers is deemed to be compatible with new regional planning methodologies developed in response to Act 181.

Please Note:

- ❖ The planning commission must hold at least one public hearing within the municipality after public notice on any proposed plan or amendment.
- ❖ At least **30** days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan or amendment and the written report must be delivered with proof of the receipt, or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:

1. the chairperson of the planning commission of each abutting municipality, or in the absence of any planning commission in an abutting municipality, to the clerk of that municipality;
 2. the executive director of the regional planning commission of the area in which the municipality is located;
 3. the Department of Economics, Housing and Community Development within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development; and
 4. business, conservation, low income advocacy and other community or interest groups or organizations that have requested notice in writing prior to the date the hearing is warned.
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- ❖ The planning commission may make revisions to the proposed plan or amendment and to any written report, and must thereafter submit the proposed plan or amendment and any written report to the legislative body of the municipality.

 - ❖ If the legislative body changes any part of the proposed plan, the planning commission must submit to the legislative body, at or prior to the public hearing, a report that analyzes the extent to which the changed proposal, when taken together with the rest of the plan, is consistent with the legislative goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302.

 - ❖ Simultaneously with the submission, the planning commission must file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed plan or amendment, and any written report, for public review.

