



|                  |
|------------------|
| Reviewer: _____  |
| Date: _____      |
| Town/Plan: _____ |

Ascutney Professional Building, Route 5  
Post Office Box 320, Ascutney, VT 05030  
802 674-9201 / fax 802 674-5711  
www.swcrpc.org

## Municipal Planning Review Matrix

Updated January 2016

24 V.S.A. §4350

Vermont State Statutes involves two key review procedures for regional planning commissions: (1) confirmation of the local planning process and (2) approval of the municipal plan. The purpose of this document is to guide the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission's (SWCRPC) review procedures to be consistently applied in accordance with State law, as well as to provide clear expectations for town officials that will go through this review process.

### Confirmation of the Local Planning Process

Standards for the SWCRPC to confirm a local planning process in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4350 include the following criteria:

1. Is the community engaged in a continuing planning process that, within a reasonable time, will result in a plan which is consistent with the goals contained in section 4302 of this title?

- Yes      Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- No      \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is the community maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes?

- Yes      Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- No      \_\_\_\_\_

3. Does the community have an approved municipal plan?

- Yes      Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- No      \_\_\_\_\_

## Approval of a Municipal Plan

Standards for the SWCRPC to approve a municipal plan in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4350 include the following as included in Tables 1 through 3 and Section 4:

| <b>Table 1: Does the municipal plan contain all the required elements in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4382</b><br><i>Please evaluate each element and sub-element.</i>  |                 |                |                |
|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>ELEMENT</b>  | <b>INCLUDED</b> | <b>PAGE(S)</b> | <b>COMMENT</b> |
| <b>(1) Statement of objectives, policies, and programs</b> to guide future growth and development   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(2) Land use plan –</b><br>a. statement of present and prospective uses;<br>b. corresponding maps;<br>c. location, amount, intensity and character of such land uses;<br>d. timing and sequence of development in relation to providing community facilities and services<br>e. <b>identifying those areas, if any, proposed for designation under chapter 76A</b> |                 |                |                |
| <b>(3) Transportation plan –</b><br>a. statement of present and prospective facilities;<br>b. corresponding map;<br>c. all modes of travel, parking, scenic roads;<br>d. priority of need   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(4) Utility/facility plan –</b><br>a. statement of present and prospective facilities;<br>b. corresponding map;<br>c. recommendations for future needs;<br>d. priority of need, costs, financing   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(5) Statement of policies</b> on preservation of natural, scenic, historic resources   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(6) Education plan –</b><br>a. statement of present and projected uses and school system<br>b. corresponding map   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(7) Implementation</b> - recommended program   |                 |                |                |
| <b>(8) Statement of relationship</b> to trends and plans in adjacent municipalities and the region  |                 |                |                |
| <b>(9) Energy plan –</b><br>a. analysis of resources, needs, scarcities, costs, problems;<br>b. statement on conservation policy, including implementation programs;<br>c. policy statement on renewable resources<br>d. land use patterns likely to result in energy conservation  |                 |                |                |
| <b>(10) Housing element –</b><br>a. recommended program for addressing low and moderate income housing needs<br>b. account for accessory dwelling units   |                 |                |                |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>(11) Economic development –</b><br><b>a.</b> present conditions;<br><b>b.</b> location, type & scale of desired conditions;<br><b>c.</b> policies, projects & programs to foster economic growth              |  |  | New – for plans adopted after July 1, 2012 |
| <b>(12) Flood Resilience –</b><br><b>a.</b> identifies flood & erosion hazard areas<br><b>b.</b> designates those areas to be protected<br><b>c.</b> policies and strategies to protect areas and mitigate risks |  |  | New – for plans adopted after July 1, 2014 |

| <b>Table 2: Is the municipal plan “compatible with” the regional plan?</b>  |            |           |                 |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <b>Standard of Review</b>   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Comments</b> |
| (1) Will the implementation of the municipal plan <i>not</i> significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the regional plan?  |            |           |                 |
| If no, the plan may be considered compatible if it includes the following:  |            |           |                 |
| (2) Does it include a statement that identifies the ways that it will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan?  |            |           |                 |
| (3) Does it include an explanation of why any incompatible portion of the plan in question is essential to the desired effect of the plan as a whole?   |            |           |                 |
| (4) Does it include an explanation of why, with respect to any incompatible portion of the plan in question, there is no reasonable alternative way to achieve the desired effect of the plan? <i>and</i> |            |           |                 |
| (5) Does it include an explanation of how any incompatible portion of the plan in question has been structured to mitigate its detrimental effects on the implementation of the other plan?               |            |           |                 |

| <b>Table 3: Is the municipal plan “compatible with” approved plans from other municipalities in the Region?</b>  |            |           |                 |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <b>Standard of Review</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Comments</b> |
| (1) Will the implementation of the municipal plan <i>not</i> significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other municipal plans? |            |           |                 |
| If no, the plan may be considered compatible if it includes the following:   |            |           |                 |
| (2) Does it include a statement that identifies the ways that it will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan?                         |            |           |                 |
| (3) Does it include an explanation of why any incompatible portion of the plan in question is essential to the desired effect of the plan as a whole?    |            |           |                 |
| (4) Does it include an explanation of why, with respect to any incompatible portion of the plan in   |            |           |                 |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| question, there is no reasonable alternative way to achieve the desired effect of the plan? <i>and</i>  |  |  |  |
| (5) Does it include an explanation of how any incompatible portion of the plan in question has been structured to mitigate its detrimental effects on the implementation of the other plan? |  |  |  |

**Section 4: Is the municipal plan consistent with the State Planning Goals [24 V.S.A. §4302(c)]?**

Evaluate each State Planning Goal, including sub-goals, to determine consistency using the following standard of review in making such a determination.

**Standard of Review**

*As used in this chapter, "consistent with the goals" requires substantial progress toward attainment of the goals established in this section, unless the planning body determines that a particular goal is not relevant or attainable. If such a determination is made, the planning body shall identify the goal in the plan and describe the situation, explain why the goal is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures should be taken to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward that goal. The determination of relevance or attainability shall be subject to review as part of a consistency determination under this chapter. [24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1)]*

**Goal 1** – *To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.*

- (A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.*
- (B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, or employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both, **and should be encouraged in growth centers designated under chapter 76A of this title.***
- (C) Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.*
- (D) Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles as defined in subdivision 2791(13) of this title.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 2** – *To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 3** – *To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
-

**Goal 4** – *To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.*

*(A) Highways, air, rail and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced and integrated.*

Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Not Consistent

Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Goal 5** – *To identify, protect and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape, including:*

*(A) significant natural and fragile areas;*

*(B) outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and wetlands;*

*(C) significant scenic roads, waterways and views;*

*(D) important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas.*

Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Not Consistent

Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Goal 6** – *To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife and land resources.*

*(A) Vermont's air, water, wildlife, mineral and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a).*

*(B) Vermont's water quality should be maintained and improved according to the policies and actions developed in the basin plans established by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 V.S.A. § 1253.*

Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Not Consistent

Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Goal 7** – *To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.*

Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Not Consistent

Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Goal 8** – *To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.*

*(A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.*

*(B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 9** – *To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.*

- (A) Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forest lands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall density.*
- (B) The manufacture and marketing of value-added agricultural and forest products should be encouraged.*
- (C) The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.*
- (D) Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged.*
- (E) Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 10** – *To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 11** – *To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.*

- (A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income.*
- (B) New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.*
- (C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.*
- (D) Accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be allowed.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
-

**Goal 12** – *To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.*

- (A) *Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal.*
- (B) *The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 13** – *To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Goal 14** – *To encourage flood resilient communities.*

- (A) *New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.*
- (B) *The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.*
- (C) *Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.*

- Consistent (i.e. substantial progress toward attaining this goal and subgoals); Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not Consistent
  - Not Relevant or Attainable; Explain why: \_\_\_\_\_
-