

# Municipal Plan Review Tool

## Town of Montgomery – Final Review

This form addresses the statutory requirements of the State of Vermont for town plans, as cited in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A Chapter 117 (the Act). It includes the 12 required elements found in § 4382 of the Act; the four planning process goals found in § 4302(b), the 14 specific goals found in § 4302(c); and the standard of review found in § 4302(f), which covers consistency with goals and compatibility standards.

During the Regional approval and confirmation process, specified in § 4350 of the Act, the regional planning commission is required to assess town plans and the process whereby they are developed according to the criteria of the Act. Sections of relevant statute are quoted at each question.

<b>Required Elements § 4382</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Statement of Objectives, Policies, Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Land Use Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Transportation Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Utility and Facility Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rare Natural Resources/Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Educational Facilities Plan and Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Implementation Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Compatibility Statement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Energy Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Economic Development Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Flood Resiliency Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>State Planning Goals § 4302</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Compact village centers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural and Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Efficient use of Energy and Renewable Energy Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Agriculture and Forest Industries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Use of Resources and Earth Extraction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Safe and Affordable Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Public Facilities and Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## TOWN PLAN REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Title 24 Chapter 117: Municipal and Regional Planning and Development

### 24 V.S.A. § 4382. The plan for a municipality

(a) A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan and shall include the following:

**(1) A statement of objectives, policies and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.**

**Met**  
Pages: 5-17

Comments: *Chapter 2: Goals, Policies, and Implementation hosts a list of policies and goals for each remaining chapter. Pages 12-17 have an implementation table that outlines the action, timing, and party responsible for each action.*

**(2) A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses, that:**

**Met**  
Pages: 45-57

**(A) Indicates those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture (using the agricultural lands identification process established in 6 V.S.A. § 8), residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public uses and open spaces, areas reserved for flood plain, and areas identified by the State, the regional planning commission, or the municipality that require special consideration for aquifer protection; for wetland protection, for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors; or for other conservation purposes.**

MAPS  
Present Land Use Plan    ✓  
Prospective Land Use Plan    ☒

**(B) Sets forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity and character of such land uses and the appropriate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and service.**

**(C) Identifies those areas, if any, proposed for designation under chapter 76A of this title, together with, for each area proposed for designation, an explanation of how the designation would further the plan's goals and the goals of § 4302 of this title, and how the area meets the requirements for the type of designation to be sought.**

**(D) Indicates those areas that are important as forest blocks and habitat connectors and plans for land development in those areas to minimize forest fragmentation and promote the health, viability, and ecological function of forests.**

Comments: *Maps include every feature as listed above. Land Use/Land Cover Map: page 55. Proposed Land Use Map: page 58. The Future Land Use section on page 49 discusses location, amount and intensity of growth. Proposed land use sets forth present and prospective uses. Specific importance of working lands to farm and forestry economy and overall ecology of the town. Timing and sequence of land development in relation to provision of community facilities and services is considered in Chapter 9. Natural Resources Chapter addresses forest integrity and minimizing fragmentation with good attention to its significance in Montgomery and includes strong policy on development design. Is there enough consideration of the potential for commercial sprawl related to Jay Peak on Route 118? Land use maps could be improved by showing Village Center Designations.*

**(3) A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities showing existing and proposed highways and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, with indications of priority of need;**

**Met**  
Pages: 53-57

MAP  
Transportation    ☒

Comments: *Chapter 8: Transportation details each topic as listed above. Transportation Map: page 66. Considers the impact of road salt on water quality. Discusses in detail ongoing streetscape planning effort.*

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(4) A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing;

Met

Pages: 58-67

MAP

Utility and Facility

Comments: *Chapter 9: Community Facilities and Services covers each of the topics as listed above. Facilities & Services Map: page 77. Discusses wastewater project for the villages. Note use of word appropriate might be reconsidered in second paragraph of wastewater section on page 64. More detail could be provided on this project including service area, amount of capacity, cost estimates and funding sources. Recreation section is unique to the outdoor opportunities offered in Montgomery.*

(5) A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources;

Met

Pages: 15, 20-33

Comments: *Chapter 3: Archeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources begins with a list of policies for the protection of historical and scenic resources. Policies on natural areas are in Chapter 4, Natural Resources, and although the plan comprehensively identifies the various natural resources in the community, the language in the policies such as "sensitive areas" and "natural communities" doesn't directly relate to the plan text and could use clarification.*

(6) An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system;

Met

Pages: 65

Comments: *There is a short section of Chapter 9: Community Facilities and Services that provides information on Montgomery Elementary School but does not necessarily include projected uses. The Facilities & Services Map includes the school.*

MAP

Educational Facility

(7) A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan;

Pages: 11-14

Comments: *The implementation actions are detailed and specific to the goals and policies of the plan.*

(8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans of adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title;

Met

Pages: 78-79

Comments: *Chapter 11: Compatibility with Neighboring Municipalities includes a brief summary of Montgomery's compatibility with each of the neighboring towns.*

(9) An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems within the municipality, a statement of policy on the conservation of energy, including programs, such as thermal integrity standards for buildings, to implement that policy, a statement of policy on the development of renewable energy resources, a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy;

Met

Pages: 68-77

Comments: *Policies are located in Chapter 10: Energy on page 78. The Enhanced Energy Plan begins on page 79 and covers each topic as listed above.*

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(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision 4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing.

**Met**

Pages: 35-39

Comments: *Is goal 1 intended to be in housing chapter? Pages 45 and 46 of Chapter 5: Housing include a recommended program for addressing low- and moderate-income persons' housing needs. Note changes re: HOME Act. Good policies on efficient development patterns and impact on affordability. Plan language indicates the Town is trying to understand the impact of short-term rentals on the community and whether to require a registry. Great discussion on increasing housing variety and affordability related to bylaw modernization project.*

(11) An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth.

**Met**

Pages: 40-44

Comments: *Chapter 6: Economy identifies most economic sectors and challenges to economic development, and describes what can be done to develop the town's workforce. Good consideration of the impact of outdoor recreation tourism and ecotourism.*

(12)(A) A flood resilience plan that:

(i) identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas, based on river corridor maps provided by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1428(a) or maps recommended by the Secretary, and designates those areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property; and

(ii) recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated under subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this subsection and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

(B) A flood resilience plan may reference an existing local hazard mitigation plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6.

**Met**

Pages: 26-29

Comments: *Page 24 lists policies regarding flooding. Pages 30 to 32 identify floodplains and river corridors, as well as flood resiliency.*

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## GOALS AND STANDARDS OF REVIEW

### GOALS

#### 24 VSA § 4302

(a) General purposes . . .

(b) It is also the intent of the legislature that municipalities, regional planning commissions and state agencies shall engage in a continuing planning process that will further the following goals:

(1) To establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework to guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and state agencies.

(2) To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process, and to assure that decisions shall be made at the most local level possible commensurate with their impact.

(3) To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development for the region and the state, as well as the community in which it takes place.

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(4) To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.

(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:

### **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.

(C) Public investments, including construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.

**Consistent**

Pages: 45-52 and throughout the plan

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *On page 56, the plan identifies "Village Center Designations" to encourage compact development. On page 59, the plan outlines the proposed Village Districts which are intended to preserve Montgomery's traditional village character. The land use and housing chapter have policies directing developing to be compact and efficient where infrastructure and growth is planned. Goal 4 in the energy chapter addresses focusing growth in the villages.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 40-44

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *The list of policies on page 47 of Chapter 6: Economy encourage the development of businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force. There does not seem to be much mention of how the town will maintain high environmental standards. Good consideration of working lands and outdoor recreation and tourism as important elements of economic development.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 58, 65-66

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Policy #15 on page 68 says to broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities. Page 75 details where and what educational and vocational opportunities are offered in the area.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

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### **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**

Pages: 53--57

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Policy #2 on page 53 says to promote safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems. Each means of transportation as listed above is discussed. Pages 64-65 are dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and public transit.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 15-34

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Both Chapter 3: Archeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources and Chapter 4: Natural Resources address the protection and preservation of natural and historic features. There are multiple policies on page 18 that address this goal, including policy #4 which is to preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, roads, and waterways. The proposed land use map identifies a conservation 1 and conservation 2 districts intended to limit the impacts of development on these resources.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

### **Goal 6:**

To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests and other land resources.

**Consistent**

Pages: 20-34

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Each of Montgomery's resources is addressed, including air quality, throughout Chapter 4: Natural Resources. There are multiple policies located on pages 23-24 that aim to encourage the maintenance of natural resources and wildlife habitats.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

### **Goal 7:**

To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

**Consistent**

Pages: 68-77

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Pages 80-86 of the Enhanced Energy Plan have tables showing the current energy usage and targets for 2025, 2035, and 2050. One of the policies listed on page 78 says that Montgomery supports the development and siting of renewable energy resources according to the specifications in the plan.*

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If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 32 and

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Chapter 4: Natural Resources includes a list of goals to encourage the development of recreation areas and lists recreational opportunities in the town. This section of the plan could be improved by including a map of current hiking trails.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 40-41

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Pages 40-41 of Chapter 6: Economy encourage efforts to support Montgomery's agricultural base.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 20-34

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Chapter 4: Natural Resources has a short section with preservation strategies for each local natural resource.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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.

**Consistent**

Pages: 35-39

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(C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should 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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *The plan could provide additional thought to how to specifically encourage the development and availability of safe and affordable housing as well as accessory dwelling units.*

*Pages 35-39 include a section entitled "Options to Increase Housing Variety and Affordability" that discusses ways in which the town can accommodate a diversity of housing types, like reviewing its zoning regulations. Policy #7 addresses point (B) by encouraging high quality design and proximity to employment for affordable housing.*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 52, 58-67

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Policy #13 on page 52 addresses point (B), encouraging the promotion of anti-sprawl initiatives. Each public facility and service as listed above is addressed in Chapter 9: Community Facilities and Services (A). The first policy of the list of policies on page 67 is to promote the efficient and functional use of existing municipal buildings and facilities.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 67, 75-76

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *The town does not currently have a childcare facility but encourages the development of one (page 76).*

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address 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**

Pages: 23, 31

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: *Policy #11 on page 23 says to avoid development within mapped river corridors (A). Policy #18 on page 24 encourages the protection and restoration of floodplains.*



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If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

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### **STANDARD OF REVIEW**

#### **24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)**

(1) 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.

(2) As used in this chapter, for one plan to be "compatible with" another, the plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan. If a plan, as implemented, will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan, the plan may be considered compatible if it includes the following:

(A) a statement that identifies the ways that it will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan;

(B) an explanation of why any incompatible portion of the plan in question is essential to the desired effect of the plan as a whole;

(C) 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, and

(D) 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.

#### **24 V.S.A. § 4350. Review and consultation regarding municipal planning effort**

(a) A regional planning commission shall consult with its municipalities with respect to the municipalities' planning efforts, ascertaining the municipalities' needs as individual municipalities and as neighbors in a region, and identifying the assistance that ought to be provided by the regional planning commission. As a part of this consultation, the regional planning commission, after public notice, shall review the planning process of its member municipalities at least twice during an eight-year period, or more frequently on request of the municipality, and shall so confirm when a municipality:

(1) is 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; and

(2) is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

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(b)(1) As part of the consultation process, the commission shall consider whether a municipality has adopted a plan. In order to obtain or retain confirmation of the planning process after January 1, 1996, a municipality must have an approved plan. A regional planning commission shall review and approve plans of its member municipalities, when approval is requested and warranted. Each review shall include a public hearing which is noticed at least 15 days in advance by posting in the office of the municipal clerk and at least one public place within the municipality and by publication in a newspaper or newspapers of general publication in the region affected. The commission shall approve a plan if it finds that the plan:

- (A) is consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title;
- (B) is compatible with its regional plan;
- (C) is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region; and
- (D) contains all the elements included in subdivisions 4382(a)(1)-(10) of this title.

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The following are procedures for Regional Planning Commission review of town plans. The first procedure pertains to review of town plan re-adoptions and town plan amendments. The second is a procedure for review of town plan amendments.

### **Town Plan Review & Approval Process**

1. The regional planning commission (RPC) receives a request for town plan approval.
2. If the staff review reveals a flaw that would preclude RPC approval, the town will be notified. It is the town's option as to whether they want a final decision on the plan or if the plan should be withdrawn from the approval process.
3. Staff comments, including draft findings and recommendations, will be provided to the Municipal Plan Review Committee.
4. The RPC's public hearing will be held before the RPC makes its final decision on the plan.
5. In all cases the RPC will take final action on the plan approval request within 60 days of its receipt.

### **Town Plan Amendment Review Process**

1. The regional planning commission (RPC) receives a request to review an amendment to the town plan.
2. Staff comments, including draft findings and recommendations, will be provided to the Municipal Plan Review Committee.
3. The town will be notified whether or not the amendment may be approved within the context of the current regional approval of the town plan, or if the amendment constitutes a material change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval.
4. If the amendment constitutes a change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval, the town will be given the option of submitting the amended plan for regional approval.

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### **Municipal Plan Review Committee**

The Chair of NRPC will appoint a five member Municipal Plan Review Committee following the annual meeting each year. The Municipal Plan Review Committee will be responsible for reviewing all plans submitted for approval during that year. Upon receipt of a plan or amendment submitted by a municipal legislative body for approval, the Executive Director or his/her designee will notify the Committee members. Board members representing the municipality whose plan or amendment is under review must temporarily recuse themselves as a member of the Committee. They may, however, act on behalf of the municipality during the review process, and provide testimony at the public hearing.

The Committee, at its first meeting in each fiscal year, will elect a Chair to run meetings, the public hearing(s), and to present the Panel's recommendations to the Board and a Vice-Chair to assume the duties of the Chair as needed.

It is the responsibility of the Committee to consider staff recommendations and any comments from the municipality, neighboring municipalities, and other interested parties; and to make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners in the form of written findings and conclusions.

NRPC staff shall organize and warn the required public hearing. Committee members shall attend the public hearing or review the record of the hearing. The Committee will prepare written findings and recommendations. The Committee's findings and recommendations will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for action.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

After submission of a request for regional approval by the local legislative body, one or more staff members, appointed by the Executive Director, will conduct a review of a proposed plan or plan amendment. Staff will review the plan using the attached checklists. Under direction of the Committee, staff will complete all required public notifications, prepare written findings and otherwise assist the Committee.