

Municipal Plan Review Tool Town of Sheldon – 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.

Required Elements § 4382		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"/>
 State Planning Goals § 4302		 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"/>
15	Environmental Justice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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: 3, 6-10

Comments: Chapter 1 on page 3 is a vision statement for the town of Sheldon. Chapter 3 on pages 6-10 is a summary of all goals and policies listed in the subsequent chapters.

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

Met

Pages: 38-56, 62-63

(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: Points A, B, C and D are addressed in Chapter 12: Land Use Plan on pages 38-44. The proposed land use map and corresponding district vision statements give a framework for each land use planning area. Additional information relating to points A and D is available in Chapter 4 on pages 45-56. Maps are shown that identify floodplains, water resources, critical areas, habitat blocks and

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wildlife connectors in Sheldon. Chapter 15: Flood Resiliency contains additional information and policies to discourage development in identified flood hazard areas and protect and restore floodplains, river corridors, and upland forest areas. Together, the corresponding goals and policies in Chapters 12, 13 and 15 address all requirements of this section.

(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: 57-61
MAP Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments: Chapter 14: Transportation covers every mode of transportation as listed above and indicates priority areas of improvement, mainly bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Transportation System Map is located on page 58.

(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: 19-27
MAP Utility and Facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments: Chapters 6-8 on Facilities, Services, and Utilities cover every topic as listed above. The Facilities and Services Map is located on page 25.

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

Met Pages: 16-18, 45-50

Comments: Chapter 5: Archaeological, Historic, & Scenic Resources and Chapter 13: Natural Features specifically address the preservation of natural resources, scenic areas, and historic features.

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

Met Pages: 25, 30-31
MAP Educational Facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Comments: Information on educational facilities is located in Chapter 10: Education. The section discusses the Sheldon School Enrollment and

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childcare in the town. There is no specific map of the educational facilities but they are marked on the Facilities and Services Map on page 25.

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

Met

Pages: 66-69

Comments: Chapter 17: Implementation lists implementation tasks based on goals and policies found throughout the plan, and who is responsible for each specific action. It is organized by which chapter the action is from.

(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: 64-65

Comments: Chapter 16: Compatibility with Neighboring Towns discusses the plan's compatibility with Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, Franklin, Highgate, Swanton, Fairfield, and the NRPC Regional Plan.

(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: 70-92

Comments: Appendix A: Enhanced Energy Plan thoroughly covers every topic as listed above. Goals and Policies are listed on pages 79-80.

(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program public and private actions to address housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should use data on year-round and seasonal dwellings and include specific actions to address the housing needs of persons with low income and persons with moderate income and account for permitted residential development as described in section 4412 of this title.

Met

Pages: 32-37

Comments: Chapter 11: Housing addresses each topic as listed above. Affordable housing needs and opportunities are listed on pages 34-36. The chapter is consistent with the 2023 Northwest Regional Plan housing element.

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(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: 28-29

Comments: Chapter 9: Economy covers all topics as listed above. Goals and policies are listed on page 28.

(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

Met

Pages: 50, 62-63

(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.

Comments: Chapter 15: Flood Resiliency meets all the requirements as listed above. Goals and policies are listed on page 62. Floodplains and River Corridors are shown on the Water Resources 2 Map located on page 50 in the Natural Features chapter.

GOALS AND STANDARDS OF REVIEW

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.

Consistent

Pages: 38-44

(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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 14: Land Use Plan addresses Goal 1 (A) (B) and (C) by designating land use areas specific to the type of development (or lack thereof) desired in each area. Under each land use area there is a statement regarding the intended purpose for the area.

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: 28-29

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 9: Economy details goals and policies to capitalize on the town's existing industries of manufacturing and agriculture and support local businesses.

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: 30-31

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 10: Education contains a policy to broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities for all ages. The section also contains details on improving access for school-age children, including sidewalk access to the elementary school and increased high-quality childcare capacity.

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

Consistent

Pages: 57-61

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

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 14: Transportation contains details on improving bicycle and pedestrian safety in Sheldon, including sidewalk and intersection improvements that would make biking and walking a more accessible means of transportation for residents and visitors.

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:

Consistent

Pages: 16-18, 45-56

(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

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Goal 5 is addressed in Chapter 5: Archaeological, Historic, & Scenic Resources and Chapter 13: Natural Features. Each resource relevant to the town is identified and discussed in Chapter 13.

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: 40-43, 45-56

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Air quality, water quality, wildlife and forest preservation are discussed in Chapter 13: Natural Features. Pages 40-43 of Chapter 12: Land Use also discuss limiting development to preserve resources and sensitive natural areas.

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

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

Consistent

Pages: 70-93

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Appendix A: Enhanced Energy Plan addresses this goal in detail. Pages 71-74 discuss the current energy sources and uses. Pages 74-79 discuss equity and affordability, target usage numbers, and renewable energy generation potential. Goals, policies, and implementation actions related to energy efficiency and renewability are listed on pages 79-80.

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.

Consistent

Pages: 22-23, 45-56

(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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Page 23 of Chapter 7: Community Services discusses the current recreational facilities and future recreation planning. Protecting natural features for recreational use is also discussed throughout Chapter 13: Natural Features.

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

Goal 9: To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

Consistent

Pages: 28-29, 40-43, 48

(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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 9: Economy discusses the importance of agriculture to Sheldon's economy, including the importance of farm diversification and value added production. The section also includes a policy to protect and encourage the continuation of agriculture by protecting the rights of farmers who responsibly use Required Agricultural Practices. References to the importance of protecting Sheldon's agricultural character are also made throughout the plan, including in the Land Use chapter. Page 48 addresses primary agricultural soils.

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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: 18, 49

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Identification and appropriate extraction of Sheldon's earth resources is discussed on page 49. Preservation of scenic qualities is discussed on page 18.

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.

Consistent

Pages: 32-36

(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 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: All aspects of this goal are addressed in Chapter 11: 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.

Consistent

Pages: 22-27, 30-31

(B) The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.

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How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Chapter 7: Community Services includes sections on law enforcement, fire and ambulance services, libraries, and solid waste disposal. Water and wastewater are discussed in Chapter 8: Community Utilities. Schools are discussed in Chapter 10: Education.

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: 30-31

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: The need for safe and affordable childcare is addressed in Chapter 10: Education.

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.

Consistent
Pages: 62-63

(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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: All aspects of Goal 14 are addressed in Chapter 15: Flood Resiliency.

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

Goal 15: To equitably distribute environmental benefits and burdens as described in 3 V.S.A. chapter 72.

Consistent
Pages: 71

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal: Environmental benefits and burdens are discussed in the Enhanced Energy Plan under the Equity and Affordability subheading. The section states that “reaching Sheldon’s energy goals will bring both environmental and economic costs and benefits” and “the equity issues related to who will bear those costs is of continuing concern to the Town.” The plan recognizes that environmental benefits such as electric vehicles, heat pumps and residential solar provide increased savings but are less attainable for low-income residents due to high upfront costs. The plan also recognizes that low-income workers tend to work in industries such as tourism and agriculture that are most susceptible to the environmental burdens of climate change. The Enhanced Energy Plan states that equity for all residents will be considered in every decision.

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

Regional Plan and Adjacent Community Plan Compatibility

Regional Plan

Is the municipal plan compatible with its regional plan?

Yes

Comments: The Regional Plan identifies land use areas that are similar to those identified in the Sheldon Town Plan. The Regional Plan also notes the importance of agricultural lands in Sheldon and the significance of having these land remain a part of the working landscape, which is addressed throughout the Town Plan.

Adjacent Municipalities

Is the municipal plan compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region?

Yes

Comments: The Sheldon Town Plan does not propose any major changes to its land use districts, and because of this, no substantial conflicts with adjoining town plans should arise. Chapter 16: Compatibility with Neighboring Towns discusses in detail how the Sheldon town plan is compatible with the town plans of each adjoining municipality.

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

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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.

(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

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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.

Review and Approval Process

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

Town Plan Review & Approval Process – Adoptions and Re-adoptions

1. The regional planning commission (RPC) receives a request for municipal plan approval. Staff will encourage municipalities to submit requests for approval at the time of noticing the Planning Commission public hearing.
2. **Preliminary Review.** Staff will complete a Preliminary Staff Review of the draft plan when requests for regional approval are received for a municipal plan that is still under review by the local Planning Commission. Staff may convene a Municipal Plan Review Committee meeting to review the draft plan, and the Preliminary Staff Review, and to make any recommendations to the Planning Commission. Staff will provide comments from the preliminary staff review to the local Planning Commission, including notification of any content or lack thereof that could preclude RPC approval.
3. **Final Review.** Staff will complete a Final Staff Review for municipal plans that have recently been adopted or where the final Selectboard hearing has been or will soon be warned. If the staff review reveals a flaw that would preclude RPC approval, the municipality will be notified. It is the municipality's option as to whether they want a final decision on the plan or if the plan should be withdrawn from the approval process.
4. The Final Staff Review, including draft findings and recommendations, will be provided to the Municipal Plan Review Committee. The Municipal Plan Review Committee shall meet at least once to review the Town Plan, Final Staff Review and prepare findings and recommendations to the Board of Regional Commissioners.
5. The RPC will hold a duly warned public hearing before the RPC makes its final decision on regional approval of the plan and confirmation of the municipalities planning process.
6. The Municipal Plan Review Committee will provide findings and recommendations to the Board of Regional Commissioners on regional approval of the municipal plan and confirmation of the planning process.
7. 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 municipal plan.

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2. Staff will complete a Final Staff Review, including draft findings, and a recommendation on whether or not the amendment may be approved within the context of the current regional approval of the municipal plan, or if the amendment constitutes a material change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval. At the discretion of staff, the staff review and findings will be provided to the Municipal Plan Review committee for review and approval.
3. The Final Staff Review, including findings and recommendations, shall be provided to the municipality. If the amendment constitutes a material change to the plan that is beyond the scope of the current regional approval, the municipality will have the option of submitting the amended plan for regional approval.

Final Staff Review shall consist of the following items:

1. Staff review checklist contained in Municipal Plan Review Tool.
2. Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans – Determination Checklist (if requested/relevant)
3. Municipal Plan Implementation Assessment (for confirmation of planning program)

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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 is responsible for reviewing all plans submitted for approval during that year. 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. If requested, the Committee may provide preliminary comments on a draft plan prior to the final review and findings.

NRPC staff shall organize and warn the required public hearing and any Municipal Plan Review Committee meetings. 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 encourage municipalities to submit requests for regional approval at the time of noticing the planning commission public hearing. When requests are received at this time or at a minimum prior to noticing the first legislative body hearing, staff will conduct a preliminary review of the plan prior to the final review. Staff will review plans using the checklist provided in the Municipal Plan Review Tool. Under direction of the Committee, staff will complete all required public notifications, prepare written findings and otherwise assist the Committee.