



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Special Meeting

Thursday, August 21, 2025 - 6:30 pm

Physical Location - 29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier VT

Hybrid Meeting with Remote Participation via Zoom¹

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81136818419?pwd=dDFDbDhrTm56TUNQUlp3WEorYzRZZz09>

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,81136818419#,,,,*722490# US (New York)

Dial in via phone: 1-929-436-2866 • Meeting ID: 811 3681 8419 • Passcode: 722490

Or find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81136818419?pwd=dDFDbDhrTm56TUNQUlp3WEorYzRZZz09>

Download the app at least 5 minutes before the meeting starts: <https://zoom.us/download>

AGENDA

6:30² Introductions

Adjustments to the Agenda

Public Comments (on items that are not on the agenda) 3 minutes per person

6:45 Montpelier City Plan – Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process (action - enclosed)³

• Staff Introduction

• Public Comment (5 minutes per person)

• Discussion

• Further Comment on Role of Regional Planning Commission (2 minutes per person)

• Vote

7:15 Adjourn

Next Regular Meeting: September 9, 2025

¹ Persons with disabilities who require assistance or alternate arrangements to participate in are encouraged us at 802-229-1015 or cvrpc@cvregion.com at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

² Times are approximate unless otherwise advertised.

³ Anticipated action item.

Une assistance linguistique gratuite est disponible pour accéder à tous les programmes



MEMO

Date: August 5, 2025

To: CVRPC Board of Commissioners

From: Niki Sabado on behalf of Municipal Plan Review Committee

Re: Approval of the *Montpelier City Plan 2025* and Confirmation of Planning Process

⊗ ACTIONS REQUESTED: Consider taking the following actions.

- 1) Approval of the Montpelier City Plan 2025.**
- 2) Confirm the planning process of the City of Montpelier.**
- 3) Adopt the resolution documenting the Montpelier City Plan approval and planning process confirmation by CVRPC.**

The Montpelier City Council adopted the Montpelier City Plan 2025 on July 9, 2025. The City preemptively requested regional approval of their plan and planning process to provide assurances that the plan, as currently drafted, contains all state planning elements and that the City is engaging in a planning process that will further state planning goals.

The Municipal Plan Review Committee met on July 8, 2025, and recommended regional approval of the plan and found the Draft *Montpelier City Plan 2025* is:

- ☒ consistent with the State goals established in section 24 VSA §4302;
- ☒ compatible with the Central Vermont Regional Plan;
- ☒ compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region; and
- ☒ contains all the elements included in section 24 VSA § 4382.

Background

2017	Montpelier Master Plan local adoption.
2018	CVRPC Board regionally approves the 2017 Montpelier Master Plan and confirms City planning process.
April 24, 2025	Montpelier requests approval for Montpelier City Plan 2025 by CVRPC after City Council voted in favor to request regional approval for plan draft.

May 21	Montpelier City Council held first public hearing on the Montpelier City Plan at the regular City Council meeting.
May 28	Montpelier City Council held a second public hearing at the regular City Council meeting.
June 9	Regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting
June 11	Montpelier City Council held a meeting to discuss public input and to vote changes to the draft Montpelier City Plan 2025.
June 20	All changes to the plan are incorporated by staff and the new City Council hearing is warned for July 9 th , 2025. The CVRPC Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) Hearing Notice is posted at the Municipal Clerk's office, Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier Senior Center and appeared in the Times Argus paper on June 21, 2025, and the CVRPC usual posting locations and CVRPC website.
June 23	Regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting to review the proposed changes by City Council to confirm compliance with the goals of 24 V.S.A. § 4302.
July 8	CVRPC Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) had a public hearing and recommended the plan to the Board for regional approval. The CVRPC Board of Commissioners had a meeting to consider a conditional approval of the plan. The vote was put on hold until City Council adopted the plan, and the Board had more time to review staff input on public comment and compatibility with adjacent towns and the regional plan.
July 9	Montpelier City Council had their final public hearing and voted to adopt the Montpelier City Plan 2025.
August 1	Staff completed responses to public comment and a thorough review of compatibility with adjacent towns and the regional plan.
August 21	CVRPC Board of Commissioners will hold a special meeting to consider regional approval of the Montpelier City Plan 2025.

Montpelier City Plan 2025

The plan is available for review as a web-based plan: <https://montpelier-city-plan-segroup.hub.arcgis.com/>

Or as a single document: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/11957/City-Plan-2025--Complete-Archival?bidId=>

If you would prefer hard copies of the Plan, please contact Nancy Chartrand chartrand@cvregion.com

The *Montpelier City Plan 2025* is a complete update of the previous 2017 Montpelier Master Plan. This update focused on a web-based format with interactive maps and implementation charts for each supporting chapter. The implementation charts for each chapter outline specific actions and programs to achieve the City's goals.

Staff Review

Staff planner Niki Sabado reviewed the draft City Plan for statutory requirements and completed the approval checklists.

CVRPC staff reviewed the Municipal Plan for the following items:

a) confirmation of the planning process under 24 VSA §4350(a);

- ☒ 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
- ☒ is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

Staff findings: Staff finds the City of Montpelier to be engaged in a continuing planning process and is maintaining its efforts to provide funds for planning purposes.

b) approval of the municipal plan per 24 V.S.A. § 4350(b);

- ☒ consistency with the State goals established in section §4302

Staff findings: Staff finds the plan to be consistent with the State goals

- ☒ **compatibly with its regional plan**

Staff findings: staff finds the plan to be compatible with the regional plan.

- ☒ **compatibly with approved plans of other municipalities in the region**

Staff findings: staff finds the plan to be compatible with approved plans of other municipalities.

- ☒ **containing all the elements included in section 24 V.S.A. § 4382**

Staff findings and recommendation: staff finds the plan to contain all required elements.

References:

To review the Municipal Plan Review Tool, refer to: [CVRPC Municipal Plan Review Tool Checklist 6-23-2025.pdf](#)

To view the Central Vermont Regional Plan visit: <https://centralvtplanning.org/wp->

[content/uploads/2024/07/2016-CVRPC-Regional-Plan-readopted-2024_Effective-July-9-2024.pdf](#)

To view Title 24 Chapter 117: Municipal and Regional Planning and Development statutory requirements in their entirety please visit: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/title/24>

Municipality: Montpelier	Plan date: 2025	Staff: Niki Sabado	Date: 6/23/2025
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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.

FYI:

Act 171 Requirements (Forest Integrity): required for plans adopted after Jan 1, 2018

Act 174 Requirements (Energy)

Act 181 Requirements (Housing & Land Use)

Act 121 Requirements (Flood Safety Act)

Act 47 (Home Act – Housing regulations)

Don't forget Standards of Review section: new **check boxes** added

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, and 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"/>

MUNICIPAL 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 **shall** 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.

Pages: II-III, III-IV, IV-V

Comments:

The Need for a City Plan (II-III) identifies top priorities for the City and requirements by statute. Three objectives are clearly defined under Plan Development (III-IV):

1. Increase public use of the City Plan
2. A more actionable plan with clear and actionable strategies
3. A well-organized document

There are aspirations, goals and strategies identified in each chapter.

Regional Impacts (IV-V) states compatibility with other neighboring town plans and the regional plan. This section also highlights opportunities that may strengthen neighboring towns, and the region outlined in the City Plan's overall goals.

- (2) A land use plan, which shall consist of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses, that:

(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.

(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, and for status under 10 V.S.A. §§ 6033 (Regional plan future land use map review) and 6034 (Tier 1A area status), together with, for each area proposed for designation, an explanation of how the designation would further the plan's goals and

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-17 – 1-18, 1-21, 10-21.

MAP 1-8 – 1-12, 1-14 – 1-16

Land Use Plan ✓

the goals of section 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. A plan may include specific policies to encourage the active management of those areas for wildlife habitat, water quality, timber production, recreation, or other values or functions identified by the municipality.

Comments:

- (A) Maps - Greenprint Plan (1-8) shows potential trails and greenways, highest priority areas for public recreation conservation, and city open space. Significant natural resources are identified on the following maps - Forest Blocks (1-9), Riparian Connectors (1-10), Habitat Connectors (1-11), and Wetlands (1-12) includes wetland identification and 50ft setback. Map – Future Land Use (1-14) identifies land use classifications for future land use maps per Act 181 requirements.
- (B) Map – Zoning (1-15) shows present and prospective uses and intensity of land use.
- (C) Map – Existing and Potential Designations (1-16) shows the existing designation downtown boundary and existing growth center. Potential areas for designation are highlighted at the country club road area and other smart growth areas eligible for growth center expansion. The explanation for the Country Club Road (CCR) Site is found on 1-17. To facilitate the utilities construction on this site, the city will apply to expand the existing Growth Center Designation to include the CCR site. The designation will allow the city to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to cover the cost of these improvements in this specific site area found on 1-18. TIF will help cover the costs of the new infrastructure without raising taxes in other parts of the town.
- (D) Maps defined in section (A) above. A specific policy is found in the Natural Resources chapter, (10-21) that states, “to implement a policy to ban the use of neonicotinoids” for any city operations.

(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;

Choose an item.

Pages: 9-1, 9-12 – 9-13, 9-15

MAP 9-3 – 9-11, 9-14

Transportation ☒

Comments: Statement and two primary goals for transportation strategy found on 9-1, “To cultivate a transportation system that treats all modes of transportation equally and prioritizes safety for all travelers” and “To support a societal shift to a non-fossil fuel future for transportation”. Significant transport areas, routes and facilities are identified on the following maps – Road Network (9-3), Bus Routes (9-4), Sidewalks (9-5), Bicycle Lanes (9-6), Trails (9-7), City Park Lots and Metered Streets (9-8), Rail Lines (9-9), Liquid Biofuel Station (9-10), Level 1 or 2 EV Charger and EV Fast Charger (9-11), Street Typology (Complete Streets) (9-14).

The city has completed 2 signature projects in recent years:

1. Montpelier Transit Center (9-12)
2. Siboinebi "River Water" Shared Use Path (9-13)

The plan identifies on 9-15 priorities for improvement such as the sidewalk and stormwater infrastructure via the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

(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;

Choose an item.

Pages: 3-6

MAP 3-3, 3-5, 3-7 – 3-10, 3-12 – 3-13

Utility and Facility ☒

Comments: Significant utilities and facilities are identified on the following maps – Municipal Water Service (3-3) includes water pump station locations and water lines, Wastewater Management (3-5) includes location of Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF), sewer pump station locations and sewer pump lines, Stormwater Lines (3-7), District Heat (3-8), (Electric) Transmission Line (3-9), Distribution Line (3-10), Municipal Facilities (3-12), Education Facilities (3-13).

Priorities include Stormwater Management through creation of stormwater utility which "will allow the creation of a funding stream and revenues to maintain the current stormwater collection and treatment system" (3-6). A long-term priority of the utility is to separate stormwater and sewer lines (3-6).

A separate section on educational facilities (3-13) is included stating that since 2018 the Montpelier-Roxbury School District has operated as a separate municipality and their facilities are managed independently from the City. The City communicates with the School District to ensure residential development does not exceed their ability to provide educational services for the children.

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

Choose an item.

Pages: 6-1, 10-1 – 10-2

Comments: The Natural Resources chapter (10-1 – 10-2) identifies key objectives:

- Accommodating growth within the city to reduce development on forestland and farmlands in our neighboring communities;
- Preserving sensitive ecosystems within our boundaries by incorporating them into our park system; and
- Careful regulation of development to minimize impacts to our natural resources."

The city currently maintains a natural resources inventory as part of an ongoing effort to protect natural resources (10-2).

The Historic Resources chapter (6-1) identifies the following three goals:

- To improve the documentation of historic resources,

- To increase the public's understanding and appreciation of the historic resources, and
- To continue to improve our protection of these resources through financial programs and fair regulations.

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

Comments: Education Facilities (3-13) locates on a map public and private facilities and includes a statement that "since 2018 the Montpelier-Roxbury School District has operated as a separate municipality and their facilities are managed independently from the City. The City communicates with the School District to ensure residential development does not exceed their ability to provide educational services for the children."

Choose an item.

Pages: 3-13

MAP 3-13

Educational Facility ☒

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

Comments: There are 30 implementation plan boards detailing the strategies for accomplishing the objectives of the plan. They are located under Land Use (1-23), Housing (2-13 – 2-14), Utilities and Facilities (3-20 – 3-21), Economic Development (4-11 – 4-12), Resilience (5-11 – 5-13), Historic Resources (6-13), Energy (7-19 – 7-20), Arts and Culture (8-22 – 8-23), Transportation (9-21 – 9-22), Natural Resources (10-21 – 10-22), Public Safety and Community Justice (11-11 – 11-15), Community Services (12-20 – 12-25)

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-23, 2-13 - 2-14, 3-20 – 3-21, 4-11 – 4-12, 5-11 – 5-13, 6-13, 7-19 – 7-20, 8-22 – 8-23, 9-21 – 9-22, 10-21 – 10-22, 11-11 – 11-15, 12-20 – 12-25

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

Comments: The Regional Impacts (IV-V) section of the City Plan 2025 provides a discussion of regional impacts. And states, "Finally, this plan will affect neighboring communities, the Central Vermont Region, and the State. Citizens beyond Montpelier's borders will benefit from the efforts outlined in this City Plan. For example, the construction of housing, extension of utilities, and expansion of the arts and outdoor recreation opportunities in Montpelier strengthen our neighbors. This City Plan seeks to further goals that align with the region and serves as touchpoint in developing cooperation with our neighbors to achieve a common vision of a safe, affordable, and enriching place to live and work. The Montpelier Planning Commission considered the Berlin, Middlesex, and East Montpelier Town Plans as well as Central Vermont Regional Plan during V the development of this plan. No inconsistencies among these plans and Montpelier plan appear to exist."

Choose an item.

Pages: IV-V

(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;

Choose an item.

Pages: 7-1, 7-3, 7-5, 7-7, 7-9 – 7-11, 7-13 – 7-14

Comments: The Energy chapter (7-1) states that the City has adopted policies to adapt to extreme weather events and reduce impact on the energy environment. Significant energy components are identified on the following maps: Roof-mounted Photovoltaic (PV) (7-3), Ground-mounted PV (7-5), Solar Hot Water Sites (7-7), Community-scale Advanced Wood Heat (7-9), Alternative Transportation Fuel (7-10), Group Net Metered Solar (7-13), Water Resource Recovery Facility (7-14)

The City partnered with the State of Vermont to expand the **Capitol Complex District Heat Plant** (7-11). This project created a utility to provide heat from the sustainable biomass plant to private and municipal buildings.

The 2021 Municipal energy report covers the analysis of resources, needs. Policies are contained in the Implementation plan.

If a municipality is seeking a *Determination of Energy Compliance* under Act 174, see standards contained within RPC PUC Municipal Determination Standards checklist. - The City is not seeking such a determination.

(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' **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.**

Choose an item.

Pages: 2-13 – 2-14

Comments: Recommended programs in the Housing Implementation Plan (2-13 – 2-14) cover these requirements. These include: Country Club Road, UDR, new emergency shelter, accessory dwelling unit support, the Housing Trust Fund, development agreement policy, and participation in the Designated Downtown and Growth Center Programs.

The requirement to account for permitted residential developments in section 4412 refers to the zoning regulations which are imbedded in the Unified Development Regulations (UDR). The City Plan discusses UDR in the strategies and the City's regulations already meet requirements of 4412.

(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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 4-4 – 4-6

Comments: In planning context- economic development (4-4), “The emphasis on supporting economic development through state designations continued in 2009, when the City applied for and became a **Designated Growth Center**. This designation will be active through 2029 (boundary shown on map) but the State is shifting to a new set of designations after 2026. The City will continue to review and apply for designations that benefit expanded economic opportunities.”

Synergies with other chapters (4-5 – 4-6) – “must consider the **transportation** needs of Montpelier residents who commute to other communities for work.” And “**Housing** has the greatest single connection to economic development. Business owners have consistently identified the need for **affordable** housing options across all income levels as a primary barrier to hiring and retaining employees.” And “Natural resources can also be a strength for economic development. As noted in the **Community Services** Chapter, the Park’s Department has been working closely with local and regional partners to make outdoor recreation one of the City’s economic pillars”.

(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.

These strategies shall include adoption and implementation of the State Flood Hazard Area Standards.

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

Choose an item.

Pages: 5-5, 5-11

Comments: FEMA flood map designations for City floodplains, river corridor, and streams are shown on the map (5-5) under planning context-resilience.

Maps contain all required elements. The Unified Development (protecting wetlands), River Hazard Area regulations, and LHMP are all discussed in the Resilience Implementation Plan (5-11).

(b) The maps called for by this section may be incorporated on one or more maps and may be referred to in each separate statement called for by this section.

Refer to each chapter for accompanying maps.

(c) Where appropriate, and to further the purposes of subsection 4302(b) of this title, a municipal plan shall be based upon inventories, studies, and analyses of current trends and shall consider the probable social and economic consequences of the proposed plan. Such studies may consider or contain, but not be limited to:

- (1) population characteristics and distribution, including income and employment;**

- (2) the existing and projected housing needs by amount, type, and location for all economic groups within the municipality and the region;
- (3) existing and estimated patterns and rates of growth in the various land use classifications, and desired patterns and rates of growth in terms of the community's ability to finance and provide public facilities and services.

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.
- (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 downtown centers, village centers, planned growth areas, and village areas as described in section 4348a of this title, and strip development along highways should be discouraged. These areas should be planned so as to accommodate a substantial majority of housing needed to reach the housing targets developed for each region pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title.

(B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally and regionally designated growth areas, employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both.

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-2, 1-14 - 1-16, 2-2, 4-11 - 4-12, 9-14

(C) Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the 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.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The Montpelier City Plan 2025 maintains the historic settlement patterns of a compact urban area with rural countryside. The historic downtown core is identified as Historic District map (1-2), and densities and uses are prescribed by the Unified Development Regulations (UDR). The city's participation in the Designated Downtown and Growth Center Designation help in its implementation. Utilities are provided to support urban densities and are not extended into the rural countryside.

(A) The Future Land Use plan (1-14), the provision of utilities, densities in the UDR, and growth center encourage intensive residential growth in downtown centers and planned growth areas located on map in Existing and Potential Designations (1-16). Strip development along highways is discouraged. Areas along Elm Street north of the North Branch Nature Center are zoned rural and no utility services are provided to prevent sprawl. The Housing chapter – Planning Context (2-2) contains housing targets that exceed those required under section 4348(a)(9) and the City proposes expansion of the growth center to accommodate what are anticipated to be increasing housing targets over time. The Country Club Road project is a city owned project and is a strategy to kickstart a major new housing development to achieve those targets.

(B) The Land Use Plan, specifically identified on the zoning map (1-15) directs economic growth to certain areas of town including the Urban Center and mixed-use districts. The City has a Designated Growth Center and over the 15 years of its existence it has accommodated more than 50% of the economic growth. The Economic Development chapter, located on the Implementation Plan (4-11 – 4-12), also outlines strategies to support economic development in these areas.

(C) The Utilities and Facilities, Transportation, and Economic Development Plans support (C). The utilities are designed to accommodate future growth and have the capacity to accommodate the future growth anticipated in the three major planned growth areas on the future land use map (1-14). Intensive residential development is targeted at areas surrounding the city's center and economic growth is encouraged in the City's Growth Center and Designated Downtown where infrastructure is already available. The Transportation Plan is found on a Complete Streets Plan, Street Typology map (9-14) that accommodates all modes of transportation. New roadways are required to meet these Complete Streets requirements including those in the new Country Club Road site and any roads connecting to Sabins Pasture and through to College Street (if appropriate).

(D) The plan establishes the basis for implementation tools that will require development to be undertaken with Smart Growth principles.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 4-11 – 4-12

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The Economic Development, Implementation Plan (4-11 – 4-12) establishes goals and strategies for both the business side of the economy as well as for the labor force. The UDR establishes rules to protect the environment without negatively impacting economic growth.

The plan describes three barriers to participation in the labor force in Montpelier- affordable housing, transportation, and childcare. Implementation of those goals is achieved through the housing, transportation and community services chapters respectively. Montpelier is neither an area with high unemployment nor one with low per capita incomes.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 4-11 – 4-12

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The Economic Development chapter and Implementation Plan (4-11 – 4-12) discusses support for a service hub to direct people to educational services. The City itself does not provide any educational and vocational training since the School District is no longer a part of City government. Within the Economic Development Implementation Plan is a strategy called “Develop and Implement a Workforce Development Program”. This strategy includes, among other things, to have staff work with the state to provide satellite offices in Montpelier for services like adult basic education, CCV, and vocational rehab.

It should be noted that the city does not identify a lack of access to education and vocational training as a barrier to Vermonters to access the labor market. The City did identify three other barriers for workers entering or remaining in the work force including- affordable housing, transportation, and childcare. The City established specific policies and programs to address these three areas in the Economic Development Plan and implemented them in the housing, transportation, and community services chapters.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 9-1 – 9-2, 9-14

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

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The aspiration, goals, and strategies address the provision of all these state goals. The foundation of the transportation plan is the implementation of the Complete Streets Plan, Street Typology map (9-14) which establishes typologies for each street in the City. Each typology is a complete street so once all streets are brought up to standard, the City will have a complete network.

The Transportation Plan (9-1 – 9-2) discusses integrated shared mobility system allowing walkers, bikers, commuters and public transit to work together. The rail currently is strictly freight with limited use. Montpelier does not have aviation within its boundaries therefore those modes are not integrated into this plan.

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**

Choose an item.

Pages: 6-13, 10-21 – 10-22

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

There is both a Natural Resources Implementation Plan (10-21 – 10-22) and a Historic Resources Implementation Plan (6-13) with goals and policies to protect natural areas, outstanding water resources, wetlands, plans to protect scenic resources, and important historic and archeological resources.

Both chapters have strategies to identify these resources whether through the completion of a Natural Resources Inventory or continued identification of Historic Resources. There is a plan to study and identify views of the statehouse dome for protection in a future zoning (UDR) update.

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 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.

(C) Vermont's forestlands should be managed so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-4, 1-9 – 1-12

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The resources are identified in the Natural Resources chapter. Significant natural resources are identified on the following maps - Forest Blocks (1-9), Riparian Connectors (1-10), Habitat Connectors (1-11), and Wetlands (1-12) includes wetland identification and 50ft setback. The UDR provisions are in place to protect natural resources, manage earth extraction operations, and manage development to limit and mitigate impacts.

Forest blocks and habitat connectors have been identified in the natural resources plan and integrated into the future land use map. These areas are appropriately zoned for low density or have already been purchased for conservation.

The Crestview area, off Terrace Street, is a Growth Center, identified on the Existing Growth Center map (1-4) and is also identified as an Interior Forest Block (1-9). The Crestview area is close to downtown, with access to sewer and water, and has areas suitable for residential development. It is at the edge of the forest block so any development will not subdivide a block but would at worst, shrink the block at the edge.

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.

(A) General strategies for achieving these goals include increasing the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings; identifying areas suitable for renewable energy generation; encouraging the use and development of renewable or lower emission energy sources for electricity, heat, and transportation; and reducing transportation energy demand and single occupancy vehicle use.

(B) Specific strategies and recommendations for achieving these goals are identified in the State energy plans prepared under 30 V.S.A. §§ 202 and 202b

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-23, 7-3, 7-5, 7-7, 7-9
– 7-11, 7-13 – 7-14, 7-19, 9-22

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

(A) The Energy, Transportation, and Land Use plans work together to cover all these elements. Energy efficiency and electricity generation are covered in the Energy Plan. The City has Net Zero goals for 2030 for municipal operations and 2050 for the broader community. There are separate goals and strategies for 2030 and 2050. The energy plans are detailed regarding energy generation and conversion to non-fossil fuel alternatives for heating. Significant energy components are identified on the following maps: Roof-mounted Photovoltaic (PV) (7-3), Ground-mounted PV (7-5), Solar Hot Water Sites (7-7), Community-scale Advanced Wood Heat (7-9), Alternative Transportation Fuel (7-10), Group Net Metered Solar (7-13), Water Resource Recovery Facility (7-14)

The City partnered with the State of Vermont to expand the **Capitol Complex District Heat Plant** (7-11). This project created a utility to provide heat from the sustainable biomass plant to private and municipal buildings.

The 2021 Municipal energy report covers the analysis of resources, needs.

(B) Policies are contained in the Energy - Implementation plan (7-19). Strategies for public transportation, safe infrastructure for bike and pedestrians are found in the Transportation – Implementation Plan (9-22). These will be accomplished with the completion of the Complete Streets Plan. Strategies to encourage walking and biking is in the Land Use – Implementation Plan (1-23) which includes mixed residential neighborhoods close to work, shopping, and play, thus minimizing automobile use.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-8, 1-23, 4-2 – 4-3

(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 :

The City Plan identifies outdoor recreation as a new pillar in the Economic Development Plan – Planning Context (4-2 – 4-3). The plan states, “Developing the outdoor tourism sector also has the potential to improve and expand recreational infrastructure.”

The Greenprint Plan (1-8) identifies outdoor recreational opportunities that the Parks Commission should pursue for protection.

The Land Use Implementation Plan (1-23) has a goal to “Maintain a pattern of land use that creates neighborhoods that are in close proximity to open space and recreational resources; that are walk-able and bike-able to downtown; and that incorporate a mix of uses within (or having complementary neighborhoods close-by) to allow for living, working, learning, shopping, and playing all in a short walk”.

The Land Use Implementation Plan (1-23) includes a strategy to “Update the Greenprint Plan and Continue its Implementation”. Important revisions include:

- “Integrate the conservation map into the Greenprint in order to highlight parcels and rights that best achieve the long term protection of natural resources;
- Improve connections between our vibrant downtown and high-quality trail systems;
- Develop a funding mechanism to support the Greenprint; and
- Work with City Council on a policy to strategically acquire parcels and rights.”

Outdoor recreation is also discussed in community services and utilities and facilities for parks.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-14, 4-9, 4-11, 10-21

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

- A. Strategies Natural Resources (10-21) NR.3 “Develop Plan to Map and Protect Forest Blocks and Wildlife Corridors”, “NR.8 “Develop Comprehensive Natural Resource Inventories with Maps”, NR.16 “Continue to Participate in the Community Rating System Program and Work to Improve

Score”, NR.7 “Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)”, NR.15 “Continue to Administer the River Hazard Area Regulations”.

- B. Goal 4, Economic Development (4-11) “Increase the number of local businesses through retention and expansion programs as well as support for startups and entrepreneurship with a goal of increasing the number of full-time jobs by 100 per year.”
- C. Goal 3, Economic Development (4-11) “Continue to improve our business and economic climate to encourage and support businesses.”
- D. Natural Resources Implementation Plan (10-21): Goal 1, “Maintain a documented, mapped, and up-to-date inventory of our natural resources and heritage to support informed decision making.”; Goal 6, “Maintain protection of the City’s soil resources from contamination or erosion.”; Goal 8, “Enhance protection of the City’s urban ecology.”
- E. Refer to A and D

There are only a small number of agricultural properties in the City and they are identified on the Future Land Use map (1-14) for protection. Many of these parcels are already conserved.

Implementation summary (4-9) states, “The City has supported some private projects, such as the Caledonia Spirits distillery and Timberhomes Vermont, by providing city infrastructure and/or zoning amendment assistance.”

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 10-2 – 10-15

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

Montpelier is predominantly an urban area and has limited earth extraction opportunities. The City Plan discusses the need for the completion of a natural resource inventory (10-2 – 10-15) to identify resources, but it is not anticipated to find any significant earth resources. Regardless, the City does have regulations in the Unified Development Regulations to address any earth extraction operations if one is ever developed.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 1-23, 2-1 – 2-2, 2-13 – 2-14, 3-20

(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, and consistent with housing targets provided for in subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title.

(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 multifamily and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family dwellings.

(D) Accessory dwelling units within or attached to single family residences that 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 :

(A) Housing plan (2-1 – 2-2) discusses the need for a variety of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of people across ages and incomes. There are a number of strategies, found in the Housing – Implementation Plan (2-13 – 2-14) to address the need for housing for low- and moderate-income families. The City does not having housing targets from CVRPC to date. The plan (2-2) states, “Montpelier has a goal of creating 600 housing units over the next eight years.” The City currently has a 0% vacancy (Planning Context, 2-2). The implementation plan discusses the Country Club Road project where 300 units or more are possible.

(B) There are goals for safe housing, found in Housing – Implementation Plan (2-13) that is conveniently located. This is also highlighted in the Land Use plan (1-23). These are coordinated with the utilities and facilities discussed in the Utilities and Facilities plan (3-20).

(C) As identified in the Land Use plan (1-23) and reflected in the UDR, multifamily and manufactured homes are allowed where single family homes are allowed.

(D) ADUs are discussed in the implementation plan (2-13) with specific programs to encourage their use. The UDR are also more generous than the state law making them easier to develop.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 3-1 – 3-2, 12-1 – 12-2

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

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

(A) The City Plan has both a Utilities and Facilities chapter (3-1 – 3-2) and a Public Safety & Community Justice Chapter (12-1 – 12-2). These two chapters discuss the physical facilities and services and what limitations may exist for each.

(B) City has goals and policies not to exceed the City's ability to provide services to the community, found in Utilities and Facilities – Introduction (3-1). Goals are "To ensure that City facilities are sufficient to meet current and future demands, conducting maintenance and improvements as necessary" and "Non-municipal facilities, such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and waste management facilities will be sufficient to meet current and future demands".

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 4-1, 12-1, 12-20

Childcare is highlighted in two chapters- Economic Development (4-1) and Community Services (12-1). There are special incentives that are called for to target childcare businesses including a suggestion for using the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund and tax stabilization.

The City also provides child care services during the summer by providing care for 100 children during summer camps. The Community Services - Implementation Plan (12-20) describes the Country Club Road property as an area where the city could expand childcare services including the potential for infant care when the project advances.

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 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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 5-1, 5-5, 5-11 – 5-12

(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 :

(A) The Resiliency Plan has discussions (5-1) and maps (5-5) as well as a full Implementation Plan (5-11 – 5-12). Maps show flood hazard and river corridors.

(B) Implementation Plan (5-11) describe regulations in these areas including RS.10 “Continue the Dam Removal Program with our Partners”. Various programs and projects that protect and restore floodplains are tasks in the implementation plan.

(C) Emergency preparedness and response are the primary theme in the Resiliency chapter and Implementation Plan. Implementation Plan (5-12) includes strategies RS.19 “Continue to Monitor Ice and River Gauges Prior and During Events” and RS.18 “Continue to Annually Adopt a Local Emergency Management Plan (MAPLE)”.

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.

Choose an item.

Pages: 2-13, 12-22, 12-24

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal :

The Community Services – Implementation Plan (12-22) has specific strategies to equitably distribute environmental benefits and burdens, specifically around MSAC Staff Training Program to “expand staff training to include additional guidance regarding accessible inclusion, diversity, equity, leadership, and conflict management tools.” Implementation Plan (12-24) has a strategy to create a Public Education Program which is a systematic public information campaign “to increase the knowledge of Montpelier residents about housing instability and the issues faced by individuals unhoused in our community.”

The Housing – Implementation Plan (2-13) has a goal to “Maintain the city’s commitment to affirmatively furthering fair and accessible housing by focusing on the areas where needs are not currently met” and a specific strategy to create a new affordable housing project that “would help disadvantaged groups such as refugees, asylum seekers, group homes, Single Room Occupancies (SRO)s, persons reintegrating from incarceration, and the homeless.” In addition, there is a high priority strategy to adopt a fair housing policy, HO.10 “Adopt a Fair Housing Policy”.

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.

(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.
-

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 an alternate procedure for review of town plan amendments. For review of amendments, it is up to the discretion of the Regional Planning Commission as to which procedure will be used.

Town Plan Review & Approval Process

The following may be used for town plan re-adoption reviews as well as town plan amendment reviews

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 committee or board given responsibility by the RPC's bylaws for town plan approval.
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

This is an alternative procedure for town plan amendment reviews

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 committee or board given responsibility by the RPC's bylaws for town plan approval.

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.

DRAFT



MEMO

Date: July 31, 2025

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Christian Meyer, Executive Director

Re: Review of RPC criteria for Municipal Plan Review

Atch: Municipal Plan Review Tool; Compatibility assessments for the regional plan and abutting municipalities.

This memo covers the four primary criteria the RPC must consider in approving a municipal development plan and where to identify staff findings for commissioner consideration. Finally, the memo will review other questions that have been raised by commissioners.

Background

To be approved, a plan must:

- 1) Be consistent with the State goals established in section 24 VSA §4302;
- 2) Contain all the elements included in section 24 VSA § 4382.
- 3) Be compatible with the Central Vermont Regional Plan; and
- 4) Be compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region.

Each of these criteria are address below.

Consistent with State goals under 24 VSA §4302

Staff finding that the Montpelier City Plan is consistent with State goals. Please see staff completed Municipal Plan Review Tool, pages 2-8.

Contains all elements under 24 VSA § 4382

Staff finding that the Montpelier City Plan includes all required elements. Please see staff completed Municipal Plan Review Tool, pages 8-18.

Compatible with the Central Vermont Regional Plan

Definition of ‘**compatible with**’ as excerpted from 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f):

*(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.

Staff reviewed the Montpelier Plan against each of the CVRPC goals included in the current regional plan. For each CVRPC goal, the Montpelier plan was scored as ‘supports,’ ‘compatible,’ ‘silent,’ or ‘incompatible.’ Please note, where the Montpelier plan is ‘silent,’ it is considered to *not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan*. Recognizing that a municipal development plan is not all inclusive of all local planning documents (UDRs, master planning projects, capital plans, etc...), where any elements might be incompatible, additional research was conducted into the broader local planning process to identify if and where the impacts of any possible ‘incompatible’ elements are being mitigated. Where mitigating factors were identified, staff noted such factors and considered the element ‘compatible.’ Please see attached reports for a summary of each regional goal and where the Montpelier plan is compatible or not.

Compatible with other municipalities

Please find definition of ‘Compatible’ above..

The Montpelier Plan was further reviewed against the goals of other municipalities in the region, with a more detailed review of the abutting municipalities of East Montpelier, Berlin, and Middlesex. The Montpelier plan was again scored as ‘supports,’ ‘compatible,’ ‘silent,’ or ‘incompatible’ with these municipal plans. Again, where the Montpelier plan is ‘silent,’ it is considered to *not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan*. Recognizing that a municipal development plan is not all inclusive of all local planning

documents (UDRs, master planning projects, capital plans, etc...), where any elements might be incompatible, additional research was conducted into the broader local planning process to identify if and where the impacts of any possible 'incompatible' elements are being mitigated. Please see attached reports for a detailed run down of each municipal plan and goals and where the Montpelier plan is compatible or not. Please see attached reports for a goal direct comparison of compatibility.

Additional questions

The following is a summary of how other elements of the state planning process interact with a municipal plan. These topics are direct responses to questions CVRPC commissioners raised with staff.

What are the benefits of approved plan to include:

- Eligibility to receive Municipal Planning Grant funding
- Eligibility to participate in the state designation programs (Downtown program, Growth Centers, etc.)
- Eligibility to participate in some state administered funding programs
- Facilitates a smoother Act 250 process.

What are the requirements and benefits of a Growth Center designation

Requirements for a Growth Center Amendment per 24 V.S.A. § 2793c:

- Municipal governing body action supporting application
- 20-year growth plan
- Regional and local growth projections
- Inventory map with adjoining designations
- Quantify the type and amount of development
- Locally adopted and regionally approved plan
- Bylaws
- RPC description of how the plan fits the region and how it interacts with neighboring communities.
- Confirmation from the RPC that the Growth Center conforms with the Regional Plan
- Concept plan depicting character of streets
- Maps delineating the boundaries of the growth center

Benefits:

- Eligibility and priority on many State funding programs
- Authority to adopt a Special Assessment District or Tax Increment Financing
- Housing permit appeals limitations
- Tax credits
- Municipal Authority to Lower Speed Limits <25 mph
- State Water/Wastewater Permit Fee Reduction

****Interim Act 250 exemptions for 75 Dwelling Units until January 1, 2027, if the municipality has zoning/bylaws; sewer or water or adequate Soils. All Growth Center designations expire December 31, 2026 or with the adoption of a regional Future Land Use Area map, whichever arrives first.*

Q&A

Does an approved plan enable a municipality to pursue Act 250 tier status?

No. Only an approved regional plan conveys eligibility for Tier 1 status.

Does an approved plan allow a municipality to receive a growth center.

An approved plan is a requirement. However, it is not the only requirement. An application or amendment also requires a letter of conformance from the RPC. It also requires a description by the RPC that outlines how the proposed district fits in with regional planning and the planning of neighboring municipalities.

Does a Growth Center provide exemptions from Act 250.

Through January 1, 2027, housing developments of 75 units or fewer are exempt from Act 250 permit review. After said date, no further exemptions are currently expected to apply.

2. LAND USE ELEMENT			
Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Town Center Policies:</u> Concentrate development and civic life in town centers by promoting dense mixed-use growth, adaptive reuse, affordable housing, and public amenities while enhancing regional connectivity and protecting flood resilience	Supports	Goal 1: Invigorate and strengthen our existing historic downtown and mixed-use neighborhoods while developing areas of the city outside of high-risk flood hazard zones that can support the downtown	
<u>Mixed Use Commercial Area Policies:</u> Promote mixed use, scrutinize large scale retail	Supports	Goal 3: Maintain a pattern of land use that creates neighborhoods in close proximity to open space and recreational resources; walk-able and bikeable to downtown; and that incorporates a mix of uses within (or having complementary neighborhoods close-by) to allow for living, working, learning, shopping and playing all in a short walk.	
<u>Industrial Area Policies:</u> Prioritize industrial uses in designated areas Allow small-scale industrial elsewhere per plans	Compatible	LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)	UDR - Section 3124. Extraction Operations, Section 3123. Rural Enterprises

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Resort Center Area Policies:</u> Coordinate resort area growth cooperatively, focus growth on existing resorts	Silent		N/A
<u>Rural Area Policies:</u> preserve farmland, forests, and rural character Promote conservation-oriented development, use compact and traditional settlement patterns, protect sensitive habitats, and support small-scale rural businesses and recreation	Supports	Goal 5: Acquire and maintain park land and easements with a view towards achieving the long- term protection of Montpelier's natural resources and heritage.	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p><u>Resource Area Policies:</u> Protect sensitive natural resources by restricting development in vulnerable areas, minimizing infrastructure impacts, mitigating unavoidable disturbances, and preserving forests, habitats, steep slopes, and flood-prone lands.</p> <p>Minimize farmland and forest fragmentation using regulatory tools, buffer development from sensitive areas, help landowners afford conservation, retain rural character with safe travel, compact design, and buried utilities, expand hamlets with traditional patterns, protect wildlife corridors, limit large non-residential uses, support customary home occupations, and encourage low-impact recreation facilities</p>	Compatible	<p>Goal 5: Acquire and maintain park land and easements with a view towards achieving the long- term protection of Montpelier's natural resources and heritage.</p> <p>LU.8: Continue to Administer the River Hazard Area Regulations</p> <p>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</p>	<p>UDR -</p> <p>Section 3005. Riparian Areas</p> <p>Section 3006. Wetlands and Vernal Pools</p> <p>Section 3007. Steep Slopes</p> <p>Section 3407. Conservation Subdivision</p>
General Land Use Goals, Policies, and Strategies			

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 1: Promote sound natural resource use</p> <p>Encourage conservation commissions, improve water resource mapping, support local wetland inventories, protect and restore water quality, store harmful materials safely, evaluate water impacts of projects, maintain vegetated buffers, secure conservation easements, remove unused dams, identify funding for buffer plantings, use community septic or public systems near surface waters, enhance watershed education, avoid or mitigate flood hazard development, raise awareness of flood risks, and protect forest blocks and habitat connectors</p>	Compatible	<p>Goal 5: Acquire and maintain park land and easements with a view towards achieving the long- term protection of Montpelier's natural resources and heritage.</p> <p>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</p> <p>LU.8: Continue to Administer the River Hazard Area Regulations</p>	<p>UDR -</p> <p>Section 3005. Riparian Areas</p> <p>Section 3006. Wetlands and Vernal Pools</p> <p>Section 3007. Steep Slopes</p> <p>Section 3407. Conservation Subdivision</p>

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 2: Support viable resource-based industries – <i>Protect agriculture, forestry, minerals</i></p> <p>Preserve working lands and soils by supporting agricultural, forest, and extraction productivity, discouraging infrastructure that promotes inappropriate development, prioritizing land protection through LESA/FLESA assessments, encouraging fair taxation with Use Value Appraisal, planning for long-term food security, requiring reclamation of extraction sites, and protecting resource operations from conflicting uses.</p>	Compatible	LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)	UDR - Section 3124. Extraction Operations, Section 3123. Rural Enterprises

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 3: Encourage historic settlement patterns – <i>Support compact growth, and economically viable development locations</i></div> <div>Promote village-scale development and affordable infill by supporting smart growth and Growth Center designations, encouraging clustered design and infill redevelopment, assisting towns with planning and funding (including brownfield cleanup and TIF), and endorsing strategies to expand existing settlements while preserving ruMonral countryside</div>	Supports	<div>Goal 1: Invigorate and strengthen our existing historic downtown and mixed-use neighborhoods while developing areas of the city outside of high-risk flood hazard zones that can support the downtown</div> <div>Goal 3: Maintain a pattern of land use that creates neighborhoods in close proximity to open space and recreational resources; walk-able and bikeable to downtown; and that incorporates a mix of uses within (or having complementary neighborhoods close-by) to allow for living, working, learning, shopping and playing all in a short walk.</div> <div>LU.4: Continue Participating in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as appropriate</div> <div>LU.5: Continue Participating in the Designated Downtown Program</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 4: Protect sensitive or unique areas – <i>Preserve fragile and natural habitats</i></p> <p>Protect natural and fragile areas by preserving high-value environmental sites, acquiring and mapping sensitive lands, mitigating development impacts near critical habitats, preventing groundwater contamination, preserving wetlands, identifying wildlife habitats and connectors, and managing invasive species through public education and regional response efforts.</p>	Compatible	<p>Goal 5: Acquire and maintain park land and easements with a view towards achieving the long- term protection of Montpelier's natural resources and heritage.</p> <p>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</p> <p>LU.8: Continue to Administer the River Hazard Area Regulations</p>	<p>UDR -</p> <p>Section 3005. Riparian Areas</p> <p>Section 3006. Wetlands and Vernal Pools</p> <p>Section 3007. Steep Slopes</p> <p>Section 3008. Erosion Control</p> <p>Section 3009. Stormwater Management</p> <p>Section 3407. Conservation Subdivision</p>

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 5: Preserve aesthetic quality – <i>Maintain scenic beauty and viewsheds</i></div> <div>Use native vegetation, screen development near scenic roads, retain scenic views, map significant scenic areas, protect ridgelines, prevent light pollution, enforce Act 250 visual standards, avoid siting utilities in view areas, restore visual character after construction, use context-sensitive design, maintain open landscapes, and identify and preserve scenic roads</div>	Compatible	<div>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</div> <div>LU.9: Update the Greenprint Plan and Continue its Implementation</div>	UDR - Section 3203. Landscaping and Screening
<div>Goal 6: Manage interstate interchange development</div> <div>Support smart growth and Berlin’s growth center plan, encourage context-sensitive and form-based design, restrict incompatible uses like strip malls, coordinate with local and regional plans, and protect agricultural land near highway exits</div>	Compatible	<div>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</div>	<div>UDR -</div> <div>Section 2106. Western Gateway (WG) District & Neighborhoods</div> <div>Section 2111. Residential 9000 (RES 9) District & Neighborhoods</div> <div>Section 2113. Rural (RL) District & Neighborhoods</div> <div>Section 3101. Fences and Walls</div>

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 7: Manage stormwater runoff – <i>Protect water quality from runoff</i></p> <p>Minimize runoff impacts by designing compact sites, preserving vegetation, phasing construction; manage stormwater using retain, infiltrate, control erosion; apply acceptable management practices in agriculture, forestry, extraction; reduce impervious surfaces with build structured or shared parking, use pervious materials, add landscaped bio-retention; encourage municipalities to adopt stormwater-friendly regulations, maintain infrastructure, protect water quality.</p>	Compatible	<p>Goal 4: Improve and expand utilities and infrastructure such as sewer and water systems, roads and sidewalks to provide for current and future neighborhoods.</p>	<p>UDR- Section 3009. Stormwater Management</p>

3. Energy Element

Nota Bene: Montpelier has a Net Zero Montpelier Goal and Independent Plan. Chapter 7 clearly includes targets from this plan including by 2030 100% of energy used for municipal government operations (thermal, electrical, and transportation) will be renewable or offset; by 2050 fossil fuel use will be eliminated entirely and 100% of energy needs (municipal, residential, and commercial will be met renewably). Goals and ENs found: "Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission - Documents\Township - Muni. Plans, Regs, etc.\Montpelier\2025 Municipal Plan\7 Energy Implementation Plan.pdf"

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal: Increase conservation of energy by individuals, organizations, and municipalities (pp.51–52)</p> <p>Connect municipalities, residents, and businesses with programs and incentives, coordinate residential weatherization campaigns, support and develop municipal energy committees, provide technical assistance and encourage energy-conserving bylaws, support state and utility energy programs, advocate for accessible models for underserved residents, promote energy equity commitments, and develop municipal energy use baselines and assessments to guide improvements.</p>	Supports	<p>Goal 1:Reduce base energy use in schools and municipal buildings through efficiency and weatherization</p> <p>Goal 4: Reduce base energy use in residential and commercial buildings through efficiency and weatherization</p> <p>EN.11: Expand District Heat System and Grow Customers</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal: Promote climate-ready, resilient, energy-efficient building design, construction, and retrofits (pp.52–53)</div> <div>Promote RBES/CBES standards and municipal stretch code adoption, host building science and standards training, encourage commercial benchmarking, develop local energy codes and net-zero-ready practices, review zoning for energy impacts, promote high-efficiency manufactured housing and energy-efficient landscaping, support municipal energy tracking and waste heat recovery near infill, and develop a regional GHG emissions inventory</div>	Supports	Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7: EN.1, EN.2, EN.4, EN.11, EN.12, EN.13, EN.19, EN.14, EN.16 , EN.21, EN.22, EN.23, EN.24, EN.25	Historic resource chapter challenge noted before implementation summary in chapter 7. Chapter 3 Utilities & Facilities: Each of the City’s Public Facilities (municipal buildings, senior center, parking lots, recreation fields, cemeteries, and parks) will be sufficient to meet current and future demands and be well maintained and efficient (Net Zero where appropriate).

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal: Identify ways to decrease fossil fuel use for heating (p.53)</div> <div>Promote fossil-fuel-free technologies like heat pumps and geothermal, support stove and boiler trade-out programs, identify and enable district heating and biogas projects, identify renewable fuel sources and biodigester opportunities, promote energy storage and microgrids, and provide community education on renewable energy for emergency management</div>	Supports	Goal 2 and 5 (also 1 and 4). Strategies: EN.1, EN.4-8, EN.11 , EN.12, EN.17, EN.18, EN.22, EN.23, EN.24, EN.25, EN.26	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Promote Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Ridesharing Programs (pp. 59-60)</p> <p>Support Go!Vermont and employer commute programs, develop criteria for ridesharing infrastructure, identify transit gaps and over-capacity park & rides, update park & ride inventories, map fiber optic gaps, follow the Vermont Transportation Equity Framework, support regional commute alternatives including rail, evaluate intermodal facilities, plan transit in growth areas, connect underserved communities to critical services, create incentives and policies integrating transit into development, establish a comprehensive transit plan, and provide technical assistance to transit providers</p>	<p>Supports/ Compatible</p>	<p>Transportation plan prioritizes ability to live and work in Montpelier without a car; support for public transit, ride sharing options in addition to EVSE</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal: Promote shift from gas/diesel to electric or alternative transportation (p.59)</div> <div>Ensure zoning does not prohibit EVSE or alternative fuel technologies, promote EV-ready building practices and bidirectional charging, coordinate funding and guidance for Drive Electric programs, disseminate fleet electrification resources, and support municipal participation in EVSE and fleet programs.</div>	Supports	Goals 3 and 6. EN.2, EN.10, EN.12, EN.13, EN.14, EN.15, EN.19, EN.20, EN.22, EN.24	Chapter 7 includes existing EV chargers;
<div>Goal: Facilitate walking, biking, and rolling infrastructure (pp.61–62)</div> <div>Provide technical and grant assistance, develop health equity-based project prioritization, update municipal road standards to Complete Streets with training and compliance reviews, develop model regulations and site plan requirements for walking, biking, and rolling, create a walk/bike/roll master plan with gap analyses and funding strategies, and center underserved communities in planning</div>	Supports/ Compatible	Transportation plan prioritizes ability to live and work in Montpelier without a car; Land Use Plan's goals re: fostering dense, mixed-use downtown with good sidewalks and bike-lanes	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Pathways: Renewable Energy Development and Siting</div> <div>Develop summaries of municipal projects, support project development, create siting guidelines and mapping tools, assist municipalities with updated regulations, identify co-benefits like waste heat and thermal networks, map thermal and preferred siting resources, align housing, conservation, and energy goals, coordinate modeling with DPS and utilities, support grid upgrades and utility data updates, encourage early municipal consultation, analyze resource areas, integrate onsite generation and storage into capital planning, advocate for fossil-fuel-free backup power, and provide education on bi-directional EV chargers and microgrids</div>	Supports	EN.21: Replace Backup Generators with Batteries tied to City's existing PV arrays (which supply 70% of electricity used by municipality)	WRRF, DPW, District Heat and other capital planning projects (existing, expansion, and novel)

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Policy: Evaluate generation from existing renewable energy facilities (p.87)</p> <p><i>Provide regular updates on facility inventories, update mapping of constraints, reflect municipal changes to preferred or unsuitable locations, map woody biomass locations consistent with conservation priorities.</i></p> <p>The municipal energy element requires: identification of potential areas for the development and siting of renewable energy resources and areas that are unsuitable for siting those resources or particular categories or sizes of those resources.</p>	Supports/Compatible	<p>EN11: Expand District Heat Systems and Grow Customers; EN5, 6 & 8 wood chip boiler projects; EN 9 purchase offsets to achieve net zero; existing solar array supplies majority of municipal electricity demand. Chapter 7 (storymap) includes discussion and maps with data accessible of existing solar including municipal array, solar hot water systems, biomass thermal systems including their community scale advanced wood heat (district heat plant), etc. Natural resources chapter includes discussion of where the impacts of hydropower on water quality and natural aquatic communities are considered.</p>	<p>Infrastructure and energy chapters provide description and upkeep of existing district heat, wood, and other relevant facilities. Provides info on interconnection and support of renewable energy generation in municipality. The plan is not an enhanced energy plan and does not seek a determination of energy compliance to receive substantial deference in the Section 248 process. While siting is not explicitly discussed, the city's existing generation, Net Zero Plan, and integration of energy infrastructure into capital planning demonstrate consistent collaboration with energy stakeholders including utilities, business owners, and residents around the siting of energy infrastructure.</p>
Patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy	Supports/Compatible	<p>Land Use Plan's goals re fostering dense, mixed-use downtown with good sidewalks and bike-lanes. Public infrastructure from transportation to heating. Natural Resources Chapter includes strategies to develop carbon sequestration management plans; urban ecology goals re street trees and greens spaces to address heat island effect of downtown and summer energy conservation (reduces AC demand).</p>	

4. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT			
Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 1: Integrate transportation and land use planning – <i>Comprehensive, multimodal planning focus</i></div> <div>Coordinate planning, support compact walkable growth in designated centers, engage communities, develop regional plans, coordinate with state and local agencies, integrate economic development, and ensure equitable access for all residents</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.4: Continue to Participate in the Designated Downtown Program</div> <div>TR.13: Implement the Streetscape Improvements Initiative</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 2: Preserve and maintain infrastructure – <i>Maintain existing transportation assets</i> Prioritize maintenance and repair, match capacity to growth, and monitor asset conditions</div>	Supports	TR.2: Continue the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) TR.8: Continue the Maintenance Programs Initiative TR.11: Create a Street Engineering and Design Initiative TR.12: Continue to Implement the Country Club Road Actionable Plan	Policy 3 under this goal calls for maintaining certain levels of service on regional roads. Montpelier aspires to permit 300-500 new housing units on the Country Club Road, which, without mitigating factors, may interfere with this regional policy. Mitigating factors taken into consideration: (1) The plan calls for the creation of a second road to access the property and directly connect East Montpelier Road to Barre Street and East State Street and possibly Towne Hill Road, (2) Montpelier unified development regulations require a traffic impact study for any proposed development that may create 75 or more trips per day, (3) the regional plan acknowledges a lower level of service in urban areas is expected, specifically citing Montpelier and Northeast Berlin, (4) the plan places a heavy emphasis on planning for transit and active transportation both mitigating factors to increased vehicle traffic.

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 3: Manage demand and promote alternatives – <i>Use modes beyond solo driving</i></div> <div>Reduce peak travel loads, promote walking, biking, and transit, support park-and-ride facilities, preserve transportation rights-of-way, provide travel information, support ride-matching and shuttles, encourage workplace commuting programs, expand transit services, and promote car sharing and EVs.</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.3: Renew the Program to Annually Fund Green Mountain Transit (GMT)</div> <div>TR.4: Continue to Participate in the Designated Downtown Program</div> <div>TR.5: Create a North-South Path Initiative</div> <div>TR.9: Amend the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Initiative</div> <div>TR.13: Implement the Streetscape Improvements Initiative</div>	
<div>Goal 4: Integrate travel modes – Coordinate across modes and populations</div> <div>Design intermodal connections, improve connectivity between systems, coordinate with human service providers, plan for emergency access routes, and support freight and goods movement.</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.3: Renew the Program to Annually Fund Green Mountain Transit (GMT)</div> <div>TR.9: Amend the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Initiative</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 5: Minimize environmental impact – <i>Reduce emissions and protect resources</i></div> <div>Promote energy-efficient modes, encourage transit-oriented development, support green infrastructure practices, avoid impacts to sensitive areas, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and coordinate transportation with energy goals</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.4: Continue to Participate in the Designated Downtown Program</div> <div>TR.13: Implement the Streetscape Improvements Initiative</div>	
<div>Goal 6: Improve system performance and safety – <i>Safe, efficient movement for all users</i></div> <div>Address high-crash locations, use access management techniques, improve pedestrian and bike safety, design streets for all users, upgrade aging bridges and culverts, promote safe speeds and enforcement, and collect and use crash data</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.8: Continue the Maintenance Programs Initiative</div> <div>TR.9: Amend the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Initiative</div> <div>TR.13: Implement the Streetscape Improvements Initiative</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 7: Design for aesthetics and livability – <i>Beautify and humanize infrastructure</i></div> <div>Preserve historic road elements, design context-sensitive roadways, incorporate landscaping and buffers, improve streetscapes in town centers, encourage pedestrian-scale design, and integrate art and design features</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.4: Continue to Participate in the Designated Downtown Program</div> <div>TR.9: Amend the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Initiative</div> <div>TR.13: Implement the Streetscape Improvements Initiative</div>	
<div>Goal 8: Link transport and development – <i>Serve growth areas with transport improvements</i></div> <div>Support access to designated centers, target investments to priority areas, and connect housing to employment centers</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.12: Continue to Implement the Country Club Road Actionable Plan</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<div>Goal 9: Support public transportation – <i>Expand and sustain transit services</i></div> <div>Ensure access for all populations, coordinate land use with transit, and reduce congestion and emissions</div>	Supports	<div>TR.3: Renew the Program to Annually Fund Green Mountain Transit (GMT)</div> <div>TR.15: Create an Initiative to Subsidize Public Transit and Shared Mobility for Low Income Residents</div>	
RELATED TRANSPORTATION CONTENT FROM ENERGY ELEMENT:			
Reducing Transportation Energy Demand and GHG Emissions			
<div>Goal: Promote Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Ridesharing Programs</div> <div>Promote commute options, expand transit access, update park & rides, integrate transit into growth planning, connect underserved communities, support alternative modes, and coordinate a regional transit plan</div>	Supports	<div>TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative</div> <div>TR.3: Renew the Program to Annually Fund Green Mountain Transit (GMT)</div> <div>TR.10: Adopt a Policy to Support Shared Mobility on Public Property</div> <div>TR.14: Create a Parking Initiative</div>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Goal: Promote shift from gas/diesel to electric or alternative transportation	Supports	Energy Goal Three: All vehicles used by schools and the municipality will be powered by renewable sources (electric or bio-fuels).	
Ensure zoning does not prohibit EVSE, promote EV-ready building and bidirectional charging, coordinate funding for Drive Electric programs, disseminate fleet electrification resources, and support municipal participation in EVSE and fleet programs	Supports	"The Transportation plan prioritizes the ability to live and work in Montpelier without a car, thereby supporting reduced fossil-fuel consumption. Supporting this is the Land Use Plan's goals of fostering a dense, mixed-use downtown with good sidewalks and bike-lanes. Further, the transportation plan's support for public transit, ride sharing options and electric vehicle charging stations also work to advance the goals of the energy plan."	

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Provide technical and grant assistance, update municipal road standards to Complete Streets, develop model regulations and site plan requirements for walking, biking, and rolling, create a regional walk/bike/roll master plan, and collaborate with advocacy groups to promote micromobility	Supports	TR.1: Amend and Continue to Implement the Complete Streets Initiative	

5. UTILITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Wastewater</u>			
<p>Wastewater Treatment Goal: Improve and expand wastewater facilities – Protect health, maximize investment, guide growth</p> <p>Support improving and upgrading systems, encourage inter-municipal and decentralized facilities, extend service in growth-appropriate areas, promote environmentally sound sludge disposal, improve outreach on system maintenance, and maintain accurate wastewater records.</p>	Supports	<p>A.4: Maintain the quality and quantity of wastewater treatment of the Water Resource Recovery Facility.</p> <p>A.5: Improve quality of collection lines to achieve a steady state for maintenance of sewer utilities.</p>	
<u>Water System</u>			
<p>Water System Goal: Improve and expand water systems – Protect health, maximize investment, guide growth.</p> <p>Use existing systems for dense development, prohibit water source degradation, strengthen small systems, encourage inter-municipal agreements, protect backup sources, expand service in growth areas, and require accurate system records.</p>	Supports	<p>A.1: Maintain the quality and quantity of water including water supply, treatment plant, and storage system.</p> <p>A.2: Improve quality of distribution lines to achieve a steady state for maintenance of water system.</p> <p>A.3: Maintain the responsible administration of the Water Fund and increase funding to the water fund to achieve steady state maintenance.</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Electric Power</u>			
<p>Electric Power Goal: Improve and expand electric power – Ensure service, conserve energy, protect resources and public health</p> <p>Support demand-side management, encourage renewable and diverse energy, design climate-resilient and low-impact infrastructure, minimize aesthetic and resource impacts, and place substations unobtrusively in suitable areas</p>	Supports	<p>C: Private utilities (electricity, communications, wireless telecommunications) are universally available and, where appropriate, meet Net Zero objectives</p> <p>C.1: Continue to monitor Green Mountain Power to ensure it meets its commitments to be Net Zero by 2030</p>	
<u>Outdoor Recreation</u>			
<p>Outdoor Recreation Goal: Promote access to diverse, high-quality recreation for all</p> <p>Support inclusive and nature-based recreation, protect recreation lands, improve and rehabilitate facilities, expand public access and trail networks, encourage private land access, and support ski areas responsibly</p>	Supports	<p>RC.2: Continue to Implement the Country Club Road Actionable Plan</p> <p>RC.3: Continue and Expand the Recreation Program</p> <p>RC.5: Continue the Recreation Communication Program</p> <p>RC.6: Develop a Barre Street Recreation Facility Plan</p> <p>RC.7: Conduct a Fee Schedule Study</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Cultural Resources			
<p>Cultural Resources Goal: Promote access to diverse, high-quality cultural experiences for all</p> <p>Encourage new cultural facilities near growth centers, protect existing cultural resources, collaborate with cultural organizations, promote adaptive reuse, and support arts in education</p>	Compatible/ Silent	AC.5: Create a Montpelier Cultural Plan	Focuses on public displays of art, silent on culture
Historical and Archeological			
<p>Historical & Archeological Resources Goal: Protect and promote use of historic and archeological resources</p> <p>Encourage historic preservation in planning, support revitalization and adaptive reuse, protect historic areas, minimize visual impacts, consult state agencies for significant sites, and promote funding and tax incentives</p>	Supports	<p>HR.1: Create a New Historic Surveys Program</p> <p>HR.2: Continue the Designated Downtown Program</p> <p>HR.3: Establish the Historic Preservation Outreach Initiative</p> <p>HR.4: Adopt a Policy on Maintenance of City-Owned Historic Buildings</p> <p>HR.6: Continue the Tax Stabilization Program</p> <p>HR.8: Conduct a Historic/Scenic Resources Study</p> <p>HR.10: Study the Preservation Program Options for Owner-Occupied Houses</p> <p>HR.11: Continue the Grant Writing Assistance Program</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Wireless Telecommunication</u>			
<p>Wireless Telecommunication Facilities Goal: Promote effective and efficient communication systems.</p> <p>Minimize scenic and environmental impacts, prioritize co-location, require bonds for tower removal, ensure FCC compliance, provide model bylaws and expedited permits, and site towers with existing access</p>	Supports	<p>C: Private utilities (electricity, communications, wireless telecommunications) are universally available and, where appropriate, meet Net Zero objectives</p> <p>C.1: Each private utility will continue to be universally available and improved over time as technology advances to increase availability and improve reliability</p>	
<u>Emergency/Health Services</u>			
<p>Emergency/Health Services Goal: Promote effective, efficient, and accessible emergency and health services.</p> <p>Plan and locate facilities based on population and transport patterns and encourage regional and cooperative service delivery</p>	Supports	<p>D.1: Maintain Montpelier's high quality emergency response for both EMS and Fire</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Emergency Management</u>			
Emergency Management Goal 1: Build disaster-resistant communities through sound planning	Supports	LU1 RS.1: Continue to Use the Capital Improvement Program to Schedule Improvements RS.2: Continue to Utilize the Volunteer Hub During and After Distasters RS.3: Complete the Building Elevation Projects from the 2023 Flood RS.4: Continue to Update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan RS.5: Conduct a Downtown Building Flood Resilience Assessment	
Emergency Management Goal 2: Ensure communities have resources to respond and recover Promote local emergency plans, update rapid response plans, assess risks, adopt resilient infrastructure and land use policies, discourage floodplain development, maintain buffers, update flood regulations, and provide mitigation funding information	Supports	C.1: For MPD Dispatch to continue to improve the quality of its communications service C.3: Improve reliability of the dispatching system and system redundancy with Barre City and the Vermont State Police D.1: Maintain Montpelier’s high quality emergency response for both EMS and Fire RS.1: Continue to Use the Capital Improvement Program to Schedule Improvements RS.2: Continue to Utilize the Volunteer Hub During and After Distasters RS.3: Complete the Building Elevation Projects from the 2023 Flood RS.4: Continue to Update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan RS.5: Conduct a Downtown Building Flood Resilience Assessment	
<u>Crime and Safety</u>			

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Crime and Safety Goal: Reduce crime, prevent conflicts, and protect communities			
<div>Goal 1. Prevent social and economic conditions leading to conflict</div> <div>Promote early intervention and prevention in schools and support education, housing, and employment policies to reduce conflict</div>	Supports	<div>CJ.4: Continue to Implement the Conflict Assistance Program</div> <div>CJ.5: Continue to Administer Community Education and Dialogue Program</div> <div>PD.1: Renew the School Resource Officer</div> <div>PD.5: Continue to Implement the Crisis Intervention Team Training Program</div>	
<div>Goal 2. Foster safe, supportive communities through education and prevention</div> <div>Encourage community-based crime prevention, support restorative justice centers, promote conflict resolution in schools and law enforcement, track crime and safety indicators, coordinate rehabilitation with the justice system, and advocate for state support of restorative justice programs</div>	Supports	<div>CJ 1: Continue to offer the Restorative Outreach Services Program</div> <div>CJ.3: Continue to Implement the Restorative Justice Program</div>	
<div>Goal 3. Protect communities from violence and serious crimes</div> <div>Support incarceration for violent offenders and evaluate need and impacts of new prison facilities</div>	Compatible	<div>CJ.2: Continue to Administer the Circles of Support & Accountability Program</div> <div>CJ.6: Continue to Administer the Restorative Reentry Program</div> <div>CJ. 7: Continue to Administer the Resource or Service Navigation Program</div>	Focuses on support for offender reentry (when incarceration ends)

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<u>Education</u>			
<p>Education Goal. Promote effective, efficient, accessible, and affordable education services</p> <p>Require development to mitigate school impacts, build schools in growth areas, coordinate regionally, plan capital improvements, and expand adult, senior, and vocational education</p>	Compatible	<p>SC.5: Continue the Health & Wellness Program</p> <p>D: Non-municipal facilities such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and waste management facilities will be sufficient to meet current and future demands</p> <p>D.1: Continue to maintain a balance between the amount of residential development and the capacity of our schools.</p>	<p>"Since 2018 the Montpelier-Roxbury Unified Union School District has operated as a separate municipality and their facilities are managed independently from the City. The City communicates with the School District to ensure residential development does not exceed their ability to provide educational services for the children. "</p>
<u>Childcare</u>			
<p>Child Care Goal. Ensure safe, affordable child care and integrate into planning</p> <p>Remind towns to plan for child care, reduce barriers, assess regional needs, and encourage facilities near growth centers, schools, jobs, and transit</p>	Supports	<p>CC.1: Create A Child Care Action Plan</p> <p>CC.2: Continue and Expand the City Child Care Initiative</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Compatible		
<u>Solid Waste</u>			
Solid Waste Goal. Ensure safe, cost-effective, and efficient solid waste management. Prioritize waste reduction, manage locally, educate on recycling and composting, support producer responsibility, expand collection centers, promote local composting, and limit biosolids to vetted programs.	Supports	D: Non-municipal facilities such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and waste management facilities will be sufficient to meet current and future demands: D.4: Continue to participate in CVSWMD to aid that organization in planning programs that extend the life of the current landfill through diversion and plan for any future landfill expansions or new locations when the need arises.	
<u>Broadband</u>			
Broadband Goal. Ensure universal broadband availability and affordability. Include broadband in local plans, promote public awareness, expand service in underserved areas, encourage public wi-fi zones, and support rural wireless expansion	Supports	C: Private utilities (electricity, communications, wireless telecommunications) are universally available and, where appropriate, meet Net Zero objectives. C.1: Each private utility will continue to be universally available and improved over time as technology advances to increase availability and improve reliability.	

6. HOUSING ELEMENT			
Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Goal 1. Develop housing for all, including affordable, elderly, and special needs	Supports	Goal 4: Increase the number of homes that are universally accessible on the first floor. Goal 5: Maintain the city’s commitment to affirmatively furthering fair and accessible housing by focusing on the areas where needs are not currently met. HO.6: Create a New Affordable Housing Project HO.10 The Housing Task Force would like to formally adopt a policy that the City is committed to affirmatively furthering fair housing in the implementation of all its planning, permitting, programs, projects, and policies.	
Goal 2. Encourage innovative, low-cost, energy-efficient, environmentally friendly housing	Supports/ Silent	Energy Chapter Goal 4:Reduce base energy use in residential and commercial buildings through efficiency and weatherization.	
Goal 3. Preserve existing housing; focus new housing in centers and Growth Centers	Supports	HO.7: Continue to Participate in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as appropriate.	

Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Goal 4. Support coordination among public, private, and non-profit housing agencies	Supports	HO.4: Continue the Montpelier Accessory Dwelling Unit Program (MAD UP) HO.6: Create a New Affordable Housing Project	
Goal 5. Encourage employer-assisted housing by large employers	Silent		
Collaborate among towns, non-profits, and state agencies, evaluate municipal capacity to meet housing targets, encourage maximum densities consistent with local plans, strive for 20% affordable housing, focus new housing in growth centers, preserve and reuse existing housing, and encourage affordable housing near jobs for below-median-income households	Compatible	Goal 6: Increase support for homeowners, developers, and non-profit partners in the creation of the housing that would not otherwise be provided by the private market.	Housing target for Montpelier from readopted regional plan was 126 total new units by 2030. Proposed Montpelier plan has 75 units/year, so their plan more than meets this goal

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Actions			
Assist towns with housing needs analyses and growth center designations, encourage regulations allowing concentrated housing, review town plans for housing solutions, connect towns with affordable housing partners, advocate for state policies and funding, provide GIS and zoning analysis tools, support local housing groups, promote density-building strategies, participate in Act 250 reviews, and encourage streamlined permitting, density bonuses, and reduced fees in growth and village centers	Supports	HO.3: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws) HO.6: Create a New Affordable Housing Project HO.7: Continue to Participate in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as Appropriate HO.17: Continue the Tax Stabilization Program HO.18: Amend and Grow the Housing Trust Fund HO.19: Review and Amend Development Fees	HO.3 Specific revisions to bylaws to facilitate infill are mentioned in the plan in HO.3 HO.6 "Through the Housing Trust Fund, the City sets aside money to support new affordable housing projects. The City should sponsor at least one new housing project during the lifetime of this plan." HO.7 "Montpelier has ... adopted a Growth Center District that covers most of the highest density zoning districts in the downtown area. The district will need to be expanded to include the Country Club Road site and remainder of Residential 9000 District." HO.17 "The Tax Stabilization Program...provide[s] some property tax relief for developers who propose projects that achieve specific goals. The City should continue to provide these incentives and should also review, and if appropriate, provide recommendations to increase incentives to develop commercial residential housing units." HO.18 "The purpose of the Fund is to preserve, construct and/or rehabilitate affordable housing units in Montpelier for ownership or rental, and occupancy by eligible households." HO.19 "The city should review ... fees to identify ways to cap, eliminate, or reduce them to facilitate housing development projects."

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Goal 1. Achieve full employment; create and preserve diverse, high-quality jobs	Supports	Goal: Increase the number of local businesses through retention and expansion programs as well as support for startups and entrepreneurship with a goal of increasing the number of full-time jobs by 100 per year.	
Goal 2. Support business retention, growth, and market-driven development Promote career exploration and training, provide lifelong learning for all workers, focus growth on regionally appropriate industries, encourage entrepreneurship and small business innovation, enhance quality of place to attract employers, ensure available commercial and industrial space, maintain infrastructure to support business expansion, and support sustainable natural resource industries	Supports/ Silent		Goals 2 and 6 both support the regional goals around economic development and a sense of place.

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 3. Ensure incomes meet basic needs with advancement opportunities.</p> <p>Support strategies to create livable wage jobs, expand workforce stability resources, provide career pathway and advancement information, and support statewide economic development strategy projects</p>	Supports/ Compatible/ Silent	<p>The City is planning to support livability with increased housing options and transportation options. The City intends to support the development of career pathways by supporting vocational training.</p>	<p>Mineral resources are covered under Montpelier's UDRs; The Montpelier plan does not cover the breadth of topics covered under the CVRPC plan; however it is either silent or compatible.</p>
<p>Goal 4. Foster dynamic, resilient downtowns, villages, and commercial districts</p> <p>Reuse vacant and under-utilized sites, focus infrastructure investments in centers with healthy design, strengthen economic resilience to extreme weather and flooding, and market and promote unique downtowns and villages</p>	Supports	<p>Goal 6: Maintain and improve our sense of place and the quality of our public built environment. Further supports maintaining TIF and Growth Centers; continue to maintain UDRs; continue to implement street scape improvements.</p>	

Regional Plan Policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Compatible <input type="checkbox"/> Silent <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
<p>Goal 5. Maintain sustainable and viable agricultural and forest lands</p> <p>Expand asset-based, year-round recreation and tourism and strengthen partnerships among regional food system stakeholders</p>	Supports/ Compatible	<p>ED.12: Expand the City and Tourism Marketing Program.</p> <p>ED.21: Create a New Economic Development Public Education and Outreach Program</p>	<p>Planning Context: " Although we are an urban center, water quality and thoughtful land conservation remain critical priorities for the community and we achieve those objectives by: • Accommodating growth within the city to reduce development on forestland and farmlands in our neighboring communities; • Preserving sensitive ecosystems within our boundaries by incorporating them into our park system; and • Careful regulation of development to minimize impacts to our natural resources."</p>

FLOOD RESILIENCE (SUPPLIMENTAL)			
Regional Plan Policies	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Supports</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Compatible</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Silent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible</div>	Montpelier Goals and Strategies	Notes
Promote sound natural resource use (from Land use Chapter) Encourage conservation commissions, improve water resource mapping, support local wetland inventories, protect and restore water quality, store harmful materials safely, evaluate water impacts of projects, maintain vegetated buffers, secure conservation easements, remove unused dams, identify funding for buffer plantings, use community septic or public systems near surface waters, enhance watershed education, avoid or mitigate flood hazard development, raise awareness of flood risks, and protect forest blocks and habitat connectors.	Supports	NR.1: Continue the Emerald Ash Borer Program NR.2: Develop a Natural Resources Climate Adaptation Plan NR.3: Develop Plan to Map and Protect Forest Blocks and Wildlife Corridors NR.4: Develop a Stormwater Assistance Program NR.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)	

Build disaster-resistant communities through sound planning (From Emergency Management Chapter)	Supports	RS.1: Continue to Use the Capital Improvement Program to Schedule Improvements RS.2: Continue to Utilize the Volunteer Hub During and After Distasters RS.3: Complete the Building Elevation Projects from the 2023 Flood RS.4: Continue to Update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan RS.5: Conduct a Downtown Building Flood Resilience Assessment	
Ensure communities have resources to respond and recover (From Emergency Management Chapter) Promote municipal emergency management plans, encourage annual rapid response updates, support all-hazards risk assessments, adopt minimum infrastructure standards, implement land use policies reducing disaster impacts, discourage floodplain development, maintain vegetated buffers, update flood hazard regulations, and provide FEMA/VEM hazard mitigation funding information	Supports	C.1: For MPD Dispatch to continue to improve the quality of its communications service C.3: Improve reliability of the dispatching system and system redundancy with Barre City and the Vermont State Police D.1: Maintain Montpelier’s high quality emergency response for both EMS and Fire RS.1: Continue to Use the Capital Improvement Program to Schedule Improvements RS.2: Continue to Utilize the Volunteer Hub During and After Distasters RS.3: Complete the Building Elevation Projects from the 2023 Flood RS.4: Continue to Update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan RS.5: Conduct a Downtown Building Flood Resilience Assessment	

Category	Issue	Berlin	Montpelier	Notes
Traffic and Transportation	Traffic calming, access management and bike/ped improvements along 302 with proposed Montpelier development	Many planning issues such as transportation improvements along the major highway corridors - traffic calming, access management, transit and bike/ ped improvements - will need to be addressed jointly by Montpelier, Berlin, and Barre Town and Barre City. p. 14	LU.4: Continue Participating in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as Appropriate LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws) UDR - Section 2105. Eastern Gateway (EG) District & Neighborhoods Section 3202. Bike and Pedestrian - Access and Circulation Section 3303. Traffic Section 3406. New Neighborhood Development, 3406.G Street Design Section 3504. Traffic Section 3506. Design and Layout of Necessary Improvements	3303.B Traffic Impact Study. A traffic impact study prepared by a qualified professional in accordance with VTrans’ traffic impact study policy shall be included in any application for proposed development that is expected to generate 75 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hour on Class 1 roads, and 50 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hours on Class 2 and 3 roads. The Development Review Board may require any applicant to submit a professionally prepared traffic impact study as deemed necessary to determine compliance with this section, particularly if traffic is anticipated to impact an intersection with a level of service of E or F. Section 3504. Traffic 3504.A Major Subdivisions shall be designed to meet the traffic revisions that apply to conditional use applications in Section 3303 except that the word “subdivision” shall be substituted for “development” where applicable. (5) 3506.A Streets (5)Access Points. A subdivision with more than 10 parcels shall have at least two access points from public streets for emergency access and improved traffic flow. The Development Review Board may waive or modify this requirement as recommended by the Technical Review Committee for sites with physical conditions that make provision of a second access impractical. The Development Review Board may allow the secondary access to be limited to emergency access. The Development Review Board may require a secondary or emergency access for smaller subdivisions or developments when deemed necessary to protect public safety and improve traffic flow.

Category	Issue	Berlin	Montpelier	Notes
Alternative Transportation	Link regional path near auto dealers to Montpelier	"Transform the auto-oriented character of the Route 302 corridor by completing the Central Vermont Regional Path linking this area to downtown Montpelier and Barre City."	LU.9: Update the Greenprint Plan and Continue its Implementation TR.16: Conduct a New Integrated Transportation Study	

Category	Issue	East Montpelier	Montpelier	Notes
Traffic and Transportation	Traffic at Gallison Hill Road and Town Hill Road intersection	<p>“Gallison Hill Road runs from Towne Hill Road to the Montpelier city line at U-32 Middle/High School. The road carries considerable traffic but serves primarily as access to the school. The intersection with Towne Hill Road is heavily used. Gallison Hill is identified in this Plan as a potential growth area. In 2017 the town hired a firm specializing in transportation planning to study the intersection of Towne Hill and Gallison Hill Roads. High traffic volumes, poor site distances, and the potential for accidents raised concerns among nearby residents. Many U-32 students pass through this intersection which is also used by pedestrians and by bicyclists.”</p>	<p>LU.4: Continue Participating in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as Appropriate</p> <p>LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)</p> <p>UDR -</p> <p>Section 2105. Eastern Gateway (EG) District & Neighborhoods</p> <p>Section 3202. Bike and Pedestrian - Access and Circulation</p> <p>Section 3303. Traffic</p> <p>Section 3406. New Neighborhood Development, 3406.G Street Design</p> <p>Section 3504. Traffic</p> <p>Section 3506. Design and Layout of Necessary Improvements</p>	<p>3303.B Traffic Impact Study. A traffic impact study prepared by a qualified professional in accordance with VTrans’ traffic impact study policy shall be included in any application for proposed development that is expected to generate 75 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hour on Class 1 roads, and 50 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hours on Class 2 and 3 roads. The Development Review Board may require any applicant to submit a professionally prepared traffic impact study as deemed necessary to determine compliance with this section, particularly if traffic is anticipated to impact an intersection with a level of service of E or F.</p> <p>Section 3504. Traffic 3504.A Major Subdivisions shall be designed to meet the traffic provisions that apply to conditional use applications in Section 3303 except that the word “subdivision” shall be substituted for “development” where applicable.</p> <p>(5) 3506.A Streets (5)Access Points. A subdivision with more than 10 parcels shall have at least two access points from public streets for emergency access and improved traffic flow. The Development Review Board may waive or modify this requirement as recommended by the Technical Review Committee for sites with physical conditions that make provision of a second access impractical. The Development Review Board may allow the secondary access to be limited to emergency access. The Development Review Board may require a secondary or emergency access for smaller subdivisions or developments when deemed necessary to protect public safety and improve traffic flow.</p>

Category	Issue	East Montpelier	Montpelier	Notes
Growth, economic development and utilities (water/sewer)	Potential for development on Gallison Hill Road	“Most adjoining areas of Montpelier are currently zoned Low Density Residential with the exception of the area near Gallison Hill Road and U-32, which are zoned Medium Density Residential. The adjoining areas in East Montpelier are zoned Rural Residential/Agricultural. East Montpelier has identified the Gallison Hill area as a possible growth area. Increased development in this area would be compatible with development in neighboring Montpelier. U-32 is served by Montpelier’s water and sewer systems. If East Montpelier were able to arrange for an extension of these services along Gallison Hill, then additional development density consistent with adjacent Montpelier would be possible.”	Goal: Ensure sufficient land is available for future economic opportunities and to grow housing by 1,500 units in the next 20 years. Goal: Improve and expand utilities and infrastructure such as sewer and water systems, roads and sidewalks to provide for current and future neighborhoods. LU.3: Apply to Have Certain High Density Districts be Considered Tier 1a and Tier 1b Under the New Act 250 Law	This area of Montpelier has municipal water and sewer, which is part of why East Montpelier identified it as a possible growth area.

Category	Issue	Middlesex	Montpelier	Notes
Stormwater	Stormwater runoff from proposed future development	"More severe storms from climate change and impervious-surface stormwater and wastewater discharges from developed lands, including Montpelier just up-river, impact the water quality of the Winooski River."	LU.7: Amend and Continue to Administer the Unified Development Regulations (Zoning Bylaws)	UDR -Section 3005. Riparian Areas Section 3009. Stormwater Management UDR -Section 3407. Conservation Subdivision NR.8: Develop Comprehensive Natural Resource Inventories with Maps
Economic Development	Economic development impact on housing demand	"Montpelier's stated economic development plan, if successful, could have a major impact on the demand for housing in Middlesex." (p.86)	LU.4: Continue Participating in the Growth Center Program and Expand the District as appropriate	

	Supports	Compatible	Silent	Incompatible
Land Use	38%	62%	8%	0%
Energy	56%	44%	0%	0%
Transportation	100%	0%	0%	0%
Utilities-Facilities-Services	82%	12%	0%	0%
Housing	57%	14%	14%	0%
Economic Development	40%		0%	0%
Flood Resilience	100%	0%	0%	0%

RESOLUTION 2025-03

Whereas Title 24, VSA, Section §4350 requires that regional planning commissions, after public notice, shall review the planning process of member municipalities 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 that is consistent with the goals contained in 24 V.S.A. § 4302;
2. is engaged in a process to implement its municipal plan, consistent with the program for implementation required under 24 V.S.A. § 4382; and
3. is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes;

Whereas as part of the consultation process, a regional planning commission shall consider whether a municipality has adopted a plan;

Whereas a regional planning commission shall review and approve plans of its member municipalities, when approval is requested and warranted, and a commission shall approve a plan if it finds that the plan:

1. is consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302;
2. is compatible with its regional plan;
3. is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region; and
4. contains all the elements included in 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(1)-(12);

Whereas the City of Montpelier prepared a municipal plan in accordance with 24 V.S.A Chapter 117;

Whereas the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission concluded that the *Montpelier City Plan 2025* meets the requirements for approval; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission:

1. approves the *Montpelier City Plan 2025*, adopted July 9, 2025; and
2. consulted with and confirms the planning process of the City of Montpelier.

Under 24 V.S.A. § 4350, when an adopted municipal plan expires, its approval and confirmation of the municipality's planning process also expire. Recommendations made by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission are attached and should be considered when developing the next municipal plan.

A municipality that has adopted a plan may define and regulate land development in any manner that the municipality establishes in its bylaws, provided those bylaws are in conformance with the plan and are adopted for the purposes set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

ADOPTED by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission on August 21, 2025

Peter Carbee, Chair

Comments and Suggestion to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission Regarding the Proposed Montpelier City Plan 2025

From Peter Kelman <phkelman@gmail.com>

Date Sat 7/5/2025 7:49 AM

To Niki Sabado <sabado@cvregion.com>; Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

Cc Peter Kelman <phkelman@gmail.com>; L-Council <L-Council@montpelier-vt.org>; Kelly Murphy <kmurphy@montpelier-vt.org>

■ 5 attachments (780 KB)

Kelman 31025 comments on City Plan.pdf; COMMENTS on The Resilience Chapter of the City Plan Submitted by Peter Kelman to the Planning Commission 3_24_25.pdf; RECOMMENDED REVIEW of CITY PLANCHAPTERS by RELEVANT CITY ENTITIES Submitted to the Planning Commission 3_24_25 (1).pdf; Kelman 5_26_25 Recommendations to City Council Regarding City Plan 2025.pdf; Envisioning the Future of Montpelier (3_27_25) (1).pdf;

**Comments and Suggestion to the Central Vermont Regional Planning
Commission Regarding the Proposed Montpelier City Plan 2025
From Peter Kelman (7/6/25)**

My name is Peter Kelman and I have been a resident of and a homeowner in Montpelier since 2016. I have also probably spent more time over the past 3+ years agonizing over the Montpelier City Plan 2025 (hereafter referred to simply as the City Plan) than anyone on the current Montpelier Planning Commission. In fact I believe that since May 2018 when I was a member of the Montpelier Housing Task Force, I have spent more time on this plan overall than anyone in the City other than former Planning Commission chair Kirby Keeton and Planning Director Mike Miller, the primary author of this Plan.

Although I have not read every word of this latest iteration of the City Plan, I have carefully read various iterations of a number of chapters over the past 3+ years, most particularly the Housing chapter about which I have shared extensive and detailed comments and suggestions with former Montpelier Planning Commission Chair Kirby Keeton and Planning Director Mike Miller, as well as with the entire Montpelier Planning Commission at its meetings and public Input sessions, and at public hearings before the Montpelier City Council.

I have also closely followed the on-again, off again development process of the City Plan since 2018 and have observed the sharply varying degrees to which input from residents and city committees has been incorporated into different chapters.

It is my considered opinion that significant problems remain with both the process and the product, although I will grant that over the last six months or so, the Plan has improved considerably in response to suggestions from several committees and a small number of engaged individuals like me.

Recommendations

There are two overlapping reasons/deadlines why the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) may decide to approve the Montpelier City Plan 2025 at this time :

- (1) a requirement that a new (or amended) City Plan be submitted by December 2025 to replace the current Montpelier Master Plan, originally approved in 2010 and renewed (with minor amendments) in 2018.
- (2) a more accelerated approval of such a plan in time to apply for Growth Center and TIF designations that would include Country Club Road (CCR).

In order to address these two separate, but potentially complementary goals, I recommend that CVRPC consider *conditional* approval of the City Plan, provided that the following improvements are made:

I. PRE-PUBLICATION QUALITY CONTROL

- Prior to the final unconditional approval, the document must be professionally copyedited for clarity, accuracy and style consistency, and thoroughly proof-read for typographical and other errors. For example, although the *content* of the Welcome Section has been significantly improved in response to my prior detailed criticisms of it, it now reads like a hastily done cut-and-paste “fix” that needs to be rewritten for clarity and style by someone other than the original author.
- All maps in both the printed document and web-based version of the plan must clearly show source and date so that readers will know the age of the underlying map data and be able to check with the sources of the maps to see if/when more recent maps may be available.
- Prior to copy-editing and proof-reading, inconsistencies between Story-maps and Implementation Plans must be resolved by the Planning Director and Planning Commission, particularly between the Introductions in some of the Story-maps and the Aspirations and Goals in their respective Implementation Plans. If necessary, some of the Story-maps may require significant rewriting.
- Implementation Strategies need to be radically reorganized and, in some cases, completely rewritten, because (1) throughout the plan, it is still not visually obvious which strategies have the highest or higher priority; (2) too many strategies are merely or mainly continuations of what is now already being done or has been done in the past; and (3) the vast majority of the strategies don’t clearly state their objective(s) or how success would be measured.

One possible solution to these serious defects might be to include only the higher priority strategies for each chapter in the main body of its Implementation Strategies and put the rest in an addendum or exhibit, especially those that only state "Continue." Doing this might provide more space for the higher priority strategies to be more specific about objectives and metrics.

CVRPC staff response: *Staff was able to navigate the document for the purposes of their statutory review. Staff is also aware similar comments regarding procurement of copy-editing services have been considered by the Montpelier City Council.*

Including source data with maps and table is standard procedure, though its absence is not disqualifying.

Addressing any inconsistencies should be a priority of the municipality. However, this issue did not impact staff's statutory review.

The organization of implementation strategies did not impact staff's statutory review.

Staff finding: *No default identified*

Staff recommendation: *Staff proposes an advisory recommendations to included data sources with all maps and tables.*

II. FORMAT and PUBLICATION

Unfortunately, I believe the Montpelier Planning Commission and the Director of Planning should be prepared to abandon the online version sometime before the next City Plan is written if and when it becomes clear that the web version has become hopelessly out-of-date, technically glitchy, and rarely used. This is because most people have much different (and higher) expectations for web-based sites than they do for printed materials. For example, at a Public Input Session in May, Thomas Weiss not unreasonably requested that the PDF have a Table of Contents in which sections are hyperlinked. Similarly, most web users also expect "interactive" features to be kept in working order and for all information on a website to be up-to-date. However, keeping the narrative language of the web-version of the Plan reasonably up-to-date and technically maintained would have been a costly, time-consuming endeavor even before the City's recent budget and staff reductions, which are slated to seriously impact the jobs of the Communications and Technology coordinators. Now, maintenance of the web version is highly unlikely to be possible. Moreover, as discussed above, the maps are not and are likely never going to be based on up-to-date data.

In order to address the above weaknesses of the web-based version of the plan, I suggest the following precautions be required by CVRPC:

- The official City Plan as submitted for approval should be a good old-fashioned printed document just like the master plans of every other town and city in Vermont,

and not a costly, time-consuming, high maintenance web version with misplaced aspirations to be “award winning.”

- Once approved by governing bodies, this printed City Plan should have a limited 4color print run for official uses, but should also be available on the City website as a downloadable PDF document that members of the public can print out legibly in black and white on traditional 8.5” x 11” letter-sized paper and as a searchable online document with a hyper-linked table of contents that will enable users to quickly and easily find chapters and sections they wish to read.

If the Planning Director wishes to *test* his hypothesis regarding the efficacy and costeffectiveness of a web-based “public engagement” version of the City Plan, he should provide the City Council with a written proposal for a *project* that includes realistic staffing requirements needed to maintain it, a projected annual budget for doing so, and an evaluation design that would independently and accurately measure the extent and degree of its use by the public (compared with their use of the PDF version), as well as *actual* audited maintenance costs such as the salaries of qualified staff with time to do so. For example, Mike Miller claims that a strength of the web version is its ability to include videos, but the only video currently in the plan is an embarrassing amateur production, whereas quality videos are expensive and are unlikely to be done under Montpelier’s current austere budget.

CVRPC staff response: *The City Plan format is not part of the regional approval process or under the scope of review by the CVRPC. It is CVRPC's policy to look closely at the progress a municipality makes from one plan submission to the next. It is not the been Commission's intention to have every community in the Region follow a standard template. There is no single style for writing an acceptable plan.*

For a town plan to be approved by the RPC, it must meet four basic criteria:

- 1. The plan must be consistent with the goals established in §4382 of Title 24.*
- 2. The plan must be compatible with its Regional Plan*
- 3. The plan must be compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the Region; and*
- 4. The plan must contain each of the required elements listed under §4382.*

Staff finding: *No default identified*

Staff recommendation: *Staff recommends close monitoring of plan engagement from the community with the intention of providing data on how well the digital format is received by users. The City is trying something new and residents and neighboring municipalities will benefits form understanding what is working and what is not.*

III. SUBSTANTIAL CONTENT AMENDMENTS

Even if the above suggestions are followed at a reasonably high level, the content of the current Montpelier City Plan 2025 will still fall well short of being a truly useful tool for the City Council and city staff, as they seek to address the formidable challenges that Montpelier is facing today let alone those it will face in the next decade.

In order to have a significantly more accessible and more usable City Plan in place for at least the next several years the City Council would direct the Planning Director and Planning Commission to immediately begin to make significant changes in the content of the current draft, as follows:

- The Planning Director should undertake an affirmative and effective process to have the Story Maps and Implementation Plans (Aspirations, Goals, and Strategies) of every current chapter thoroughly reviewed by all relevant committees and organizations, including those whose mission cuts across chapters in the plan, including: Montpelier-Roxbury School Board, SEJAC, ADA, MSAC, Youth Committee, and Montpelier Alive! among many others, as well as civic organizations, arts organizations, relevant local experts, property and business owners, interested members of the public, and all those people who have made suggestions at various public input sessions and/or hearings.

[See attached *Recommended Review of City Plan Chapters by Relevant City Entities*.]

- All of these committees, organizations, and individuals should be strongly and effectively encouraged to submit written comments and suggestions for amendments to the current City Plan, including:
 - Concerns about the wording of Aspirations and Goals and possibly even adding or eliminating certain Aspirations or Goals
 - Identification of priority Implementation Strategies that may be missing entirely or that are under-prioritized, as well as ones that should have lower priority or that should be moved to a section for strategies that are merely being continued as is, or possibly even eliminated
 - Rewording of all retained implementation strategies so as to make objectives of the strategy clear and, wherever possible, to include metrics of success; e.g. listing priority objectives for modifying the huge Unified Zoning & Subdivision Regulations.

All of these comments should be given serious consideration for incorporation, as appropriate, into a new, much improved draft of the City Plan.

CVRPC staff response: CVRPC staff recommends the inclusion of public participation and input to begin early in the process of updating and/or amending the City Plan for future updates.

From this testimony and responses provided to Commissioners by Mike Miller, engagement has taken place, beginning in approximately 2018 with City committees. During the development of the Actionable Plan for the Country Club Road parcel, a series of consultant led public input meetings were held with Montpelier residents. Further, during the plan development stage and prior to beginning public hearings, the City held 11 public input sessions prior to the first public hearing on this plan. The City Council subsequently held three hearings and provided additional opportunities for the public to provide comments during other meetings.

Staff finding: No default identified

Staff recommendation: Advisory recommendation to consider alternative forms of public engagement to ensure the broadest swath of the community feels heard.

IV. A Completely New and Visionary City Plan 2030

In order to have a truly visionary, future-focused, inclusive, and innovative City Plan for the next eight years, the City Council would work with the new City Manager (once hired) to launch a professionally-facilitated public engagement process that will generate a community-wide, shared vision for Montpelier 2030-40, one that can serve as the basis for a new City Plan to be completed and adopted no later than 2030.

[See brief description of the enVision process that was used to develop the 2010 Master Plan and was mentioned by Jim Sheridan at the last City Council Meeting. <https://earthcharter.org/envision-montpelier-sustainability-city-planning-with-the-earth-charter/>]

CVRPC staff response: CVRPC supports the continued review and improvement of all municipal plans.

Staff finding: n/a

Staff recommendation: n/a

Addendum:

Attachments of relatively recent previous comments and suggestions regarding the “final” draft of the City Plan that I have sent to the Planning Commission and/or the City Council, as follows:

- *Comments on the Current Draft of the Montpelier City Plan Offered to the Planning Commission by Peter Kelman at their March 10, 2025 Meeting*
- *General Comment on City Plan 3/24/25 Public Hearing*
- *Recommended Review of City Plan Chapters by Relevant City Entities Submitted to the Planning Commission 3/24/25*
- *Comments on The Resilience Chapter of the City Plan Submitted by Peter Kelman to the Planning Commission 3/24/25*
- *Looking Back at Montpelier from the Year 2038, an Envisioning Exercise Submitted to the Planning Commission by Peter Kelman 3/27/25*

Also, if you'd be interested, let me know and I can forward to you the following emails regarding housing that I have relatively recently sent to (or copied) all members of the City Council (L-Council) as follows:

- 4/28/25: Re: Quick Wins?
- 4/28/25 RE: Yet another example of how other VT towns are meeting housing needs (Seven Days)
- 4/18/25 Comments and recommendations regarding Housing Committee resignations, the City Plan and the CCR "plan"
- 3/25/25 NEXT STEPS

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- 1/31/25 Vermont is desperate for new homes. Is it time to build them in factories? - VTDigger
- 1/18/25 Todd Howland: Interpreting Gov. Scott's call to "legalize housing" - VTDigger
- 9/2/24 *The Labyrinthine Rules That Created a Housing Crisis* - The Atlantic

Thank you for your attention to these suggestions, an abbreviated version of which I will present at the CVRPC hearings on Monday July 7, 2025,

Peter

Peter Helmut Kelman
6 Mountain View St.
Montpelier, VT 05602

Cell: (718) 986-7289
phkelman@gmail.com

Please note that I have added to my email signature my middle name, Helmut, which I was given at birth in memory of my mother's brother, [Helmut Hirsch](#), who was executed in 1937 for his part in a bombing plot intended to destabilize the German nazi regime.

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

Martin Niemoller (1892-1984) was a prominent Protestant pastor who emerged as an outspoken public foe of Adolph Hitler and spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps.

Thomas Weiss, P. E.
P. O. Box 512
Montpelier, Vermont 05601
July 8, 2025

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
Municipal Plan Review Committee
29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Subject: Comments on Montpelier's, City Council Draft of the City Plan, June 20, 2025

Dear Committee:

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Thomas Weiss, a resident of Montpelier who has been participating in Montpelier's zoning and planning amendments as a member of the public. I am also participating at the Land Use Review Board as it works to define and implement its duties, including regional plan review and the tier system. I am a civil engineer with experience in planning and reviewing plans and contracts for compliance with the appropriate regulations and statutes. I bring that experience to my review of Montpelier's draft city plan.

I find that the draft plan fails to comply with section 4382. My findings are based on my review of the draft city plan, of section 43 82, and of the Municipal Plan Review Tool dated 6/23/2025.

Subdivision (B) of the land use plan (4382(a)(2)) requires that the plan set forth the present and prospective amount and intensities of the land uses. I do not find this information. Nor do I find that the review tool has shown where the draft plan provides this information. Without this information, we cannot determine whether the draft plan adequately balances the different land uses. We cannot determine whether the amount of land adequately provides for the future growth planned by the City. We cannot determine this in part because the draft plan has no 20-year plan for agriculture or commercial or industrial and in part because the draft plan has no indication of how much land is provided for each of these uses.

CVRPC staff response: In Chapter 1-Land Use, Map 3/6 Future Land Use (or pg 1-14) uses the statutorily defined classifications to identify prospective future land uses and intensities. Each of the classifications are defined under 24 VSA § 4348a(a)(12). These definitions include intensity and character of the proposed land use.

Zoning Map, included in Chapter 1-Land Use, Map 4/6 Zoning (or pg 1-15) further establishes and implements the present location, amount, intensity, and character of each land use.

Staff finding: Required element included

Staff recommendation: None

Subdivision (B) of the land use plan also requires the plan to set forth a timing or sequencing of activities. I do not find this information. Nor do I find that the review tool has shown where the draft plan provides this information. The priorities of the strategies (high, medium, or low) do not seem to relate to either timing or sequence, so I do not see them as fulfilling this requirement.

CVRPC staff response: As noted, the Plan qualifies goals a high, medium or low priority. While these are not defined terms, staff turned to their understanding that priorities implicitly include temporality. This was further confirmed by the Collins dictionary which states a priority "must be done or dealt with before everything else."

Further, the city of Montpelier has a Capital Improvement Plan that supports the timing and sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and service.

Staff finding: Requirement met.

Staff recommendation: Advisory comment to better define timing and sequencing of goals.

Subdivision (C) of the land use plan requires "an explanation of how the designation would further the plan's goals and the goals of section 4302". The draft plan lumps its explanation ("Designations Analysis") in with 24 documents in a section of the draft plan titled "Additional Resources". The draft plan does not refer to the designations analysis. Therefore the designations analysis cannot be considered part of the plan.

CVRPC response (direct from Municipal Plan Review Tool Checklist): Chapter 1-Land Use, Map 5/6 Potential Designations (or pg 1-16) shows the existing designation downtown boundary and existing growth center. Potential areas for designation are highlighted at the Country Club Road (CCR) area and other smart growth areas eligible for growth center expansion. The explanation for the CCR Site is found on Chapter 1-Land Use, Map 6/6 Country Club Road Site (or pg 1-17). To facilitate the utilities construction on this site, the City will apply to expand the existing Growth Center Designation to include the CCR site. The designation will allow the City to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to cover the cost of these improvements in this specific site area found on Chapter 1-Land Use, Map 6/6 The

preferred Concept Plan for the CCR site (or pg 1-18). TIF will help cover the costs of the new infrastructure without raising taxes in other parts of the town.

Subdivision (C) of the land use plan states “Identifies those areas, if any, proposed for designation under chapter 76A of this title, and for status under 10 V.S.A. § 6033 (Regional plan future land use map review) and 6034 (Tier 1A area status), together with, for each area proposed for designation, an explanation of how the designation would further the plan's goals and the goals of section 4302 of this title, and how the area meets the requirements for the type of designation to be sought.” CVRPC believes statute requirements are met for the areas that are identified as proposed designations along with an explanation for each area proposed for future designation.

The “Designations Analysis” under the Addition Resources section of the City Plan explains 1) how the designation furthers the plans goals; 2) furthers the goals of 24 V.S.A. §4302; and 3) how the area meets the requirements for the type of designation.

Both the official web-based City Plan and the Archival PDF include the “Additional Resources” section, leading staff to recognize it as part of the plan and each of the links as referenced materials. However, please note that it is not the Commission’s intention to have every community in the region follow a standard template. There is no single style for writing an acceptable plan. The City of Montpelier has chosen a website version with links to additional resources that include the designation analysis.

Staff finding: Requirement met.

Staff recommendation: Advisory comment to recommend increased wayfinding for referenced materials.

The transportation plan 4382 (a) (3) is required to show the character of improvement of existing highways and streets. I do not find this information. Nor do I find that the review tool has shown where the draft plan provides this information. Strategy TR.11 states that the City has chosen to manage streets toward a specific pavement conditions index. A map showing the index of each street would satisfy this requirement, I believe, and would provide valuable information to readers of the plan.

CVRPC response: Looking broader at the statutory text, it states: “...a map and statement...showing existing and proposed highways and streets by types and character of improvement.” From a transportation planning perspective, this could be interpreted as intended use or planned improvements to meet intended uses. Improvements include, technological improvements, pedestrian improvements, safety improvements, sidewalks, and highways surface conditions to name a few. The Montpelier Street Typology map (9.

Transportation 4/6 Street Typology; or pg 9-14) and the referenced Complete Streets Design Report specifically includes design improvements and guidelines by street context or character.

(direct from Municipal Plan Review Tool Checklist (3) transportation plan required element): At the beginning of Chapter 9-Transportation, there is a statement and two primary goals for transportation found on (or pg 9-1), “To cultivate a transportation system that treats all modes of transportation equally and prioritizes safety for all traveler” and “To support a societal shift to a non-fossil fuel future for transportation”. Significant transport areas, routes and facilities are identified on the following maps - 9. Transportation 1/6 Road Network (or pg 9-3), 9. Transportation 1/6 Bus Routes (or pg 9-4), 9. Transportation 1/6 Sidewalks (or pg 9-5), 9. Transportation 1/6 Bicycle Lanes (or pg 9-6), 9. Transportation 1/6 Trails (or pg 9-7), 9. Transportation 1/6 City Park Lots and Metered Streets (or pg 9-8), 9. Transportation 1/6 Rail Lines (or pg 9-9), 9. Transportation 1/6 Liquid Biofuel Station (or pg 9-10), 9. Transportation 1/6 Level 1 or 2 EV Charger and EV Fast Charger (or pg 9-11), 9. Transportation 1/6 Street Typology (or pg 9-14).

The plan identifies how the City uses a Capital Improvement Plan to schedule improvements such as paving, sidewalk and stormwater infrastructure. The CIP is not included by reference in the chapter.

CVRPC believes statute requirements are met but would recommend that the City of Montpelier include a highway conditions map if such data has been collected and budget and staff capacity allow.

Staff finding: Requirement met.

Staff recommendation: Advisory comment to recommend consideration of a public facing portal to include any municipal inventories of highway conditions if available. (Recognizing most municipalities in the Central Vermont planning area will not have this data available.)

The utility and facility plan (4382 (a) (4); and the recommended program for implementation are required to indicate costs and method of financing to meet future needs. I do not find this information. Nor do I find that the review tool has shown where the draft plan provides this information. Each strategy has a cost level of high, medium, or low. However, the draft plan has no information on what each cost level means. Readers of the draft plan have no idea of the potential cost of this draft plan or the method of financing (e.g., taxes, bonds, grants). There was an intent in 2020 to include timelines, costs, and staffing. That information is not in this year's draft plans.

CVRPC response: Statute reads, "...and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing;". The implementation boards indicate priority of need and level of cost and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services. Further strategy UF.2 directs the municipality to "Continue the CIP." Maintaining a capital plan is an essential part of financing future needs.

Staff finding: Requirement met.

Staff recommendation: Advisory comment recognizing the importance of capital planning to implementation of a municipal plan and recommend clearly linking the Montpelier Capital Improvement Plan to the City Plan. Advisory comment to better define cost levels, sequencing, and needed staffing of strategies.

Summary of oral testimony relating to the approval of the Montpelier City Plan received during the CVRPC public hearing held July 8, 2025 with CVRPC staff responses. Where written testimony was provided in addition to oral testimony, staff has provided responses therein. See additional attached.

Summary of comments made by Stephen Whitaker of Montpelier

Comment: There should be a more detailed review.

CVRPC staff response: Staff and the Municipal Plan Review Committee review plans explicitly against statute.

Staff finding: n/a

Staff recommendation: n/a

Comment: Statute requires that public participation and engagement is sufficient and resulted in this plan. This has not happened in Montpelier.

CVRPC staff response: *While the following is not part of a regional review, 24 V.S.A. § 4384 provides the following guidance to municipalities: At the outset of the planning process and throughout the process, planning commissions shall solicit the participation of local citizens and organizations by holding informal working sessions that suit the needs of local people.*

From other testimony and responses provided to Commissioners by Mike Miller, Montpelier Director of Planning, engagement began in approximately 2018 with City committees. During the development of the Actionable Plan for the Country Club Road parcel, a series of consultant led public input meetings were held with Montpelier residents. Further, during the plan development stage and prior to beginning public hearings, the City held 11 public input sessions prior to the first public hearing on this plan. The City Council subsequently held three hearings and provided additional opportunities for the public to provide comments during other meetings

Staff and the Municipal Plan Review Committee review plans explicitly against statute.

Staff finding: n/a

Staff recommendation: n/a

Comment: Whitaker noted resignations of members from several municipal committees in protest to the plan. Whitaker then anonymously read several correspondences from housing committee members to the City documenting their discontentment with the process.

CVRPC staff response: *Inter-committee communication is outside the regional review of municipal plans.*

Staff finding: *n/a*

Staff recommendation: *n/a*

Whitaker continued that the City Planning Commission did not write the plan, but only rubber stamped the plan. As such it should not be approved and should be sent back to the City.

CVRPC staff response: *The Montpelier Planning Commission most recently endorsed the current version of the plan during a public meeting, June 23, 2025.*

Staff finding: *n/a*

Staff recommendation: *n/a*

Comment: Whitaker further requested that the Board of Commissioners be asked to amend its agenda to open a hearing.

CVRPC staff response: *Whitaker provided a similar comment during public comment for the Board of Commission meeting.*

Staff finding: *n/a*

Staff recommendation: *n/a*

As part of additional testimony (staff response highlighted):

Whitaker stated the plan lacks...

a section on housing the homeless population,

The plan includes an implementation plan dedicated to addressing homelessness

a section on public bathrooms,

Beyond the scope of a municipal plan review.

a section on wifi and back-up power for wifi,

Beyond the scope of a municipal plan review.

a section on Sidewalk maintenance,

Transportation Action 8: "Continue the Maintenance Programs Initiative." This Action includes sidewalk maintenance.

storm drain maintenance,

Utilities and Facilities Action 13: Continue the Stormwater System Maintenance Programs

a goal of regional dispatch consolidation,

The plan includes an entire implementation plan on Public Safety Dispatch. That these goals do not align with everyone's perspective is not a default.

development of a staging area during flooding,

Beyond the scope of a municipal plan review.

Country Club Road (CCR) Actional Plan has not been adopted

The Actionable Plan was approved by Montpelier City Council May 28, 2025.

Summary of comments made by James Moore of Montpelier

Comment:

Moore experienced extensive opportunity to comment and further noted comments being filed with the Planning Commission and City Council. Through this process changes were made to the plan.

Moore felt that while a different public process may have also worked, the process has been good.

Moore noted that the plan has some real ambitious goals and that through engagement in public meetings, public works has stated that the City has the capacity to meet those goals.

Moore further stated that in his experience, the planning department had been responsive and that timelines were made public.

Moore noted that the plan allows Montpelier to begin the growth center designation process needed to meet housing and growth goals.

Finally, while committee input was given, not all input was integrated. The PC decided not to integrate all of it.

CVRPC Staff response: Moore's comments on public engagement align with what staff was able to corroborate in meeting minutes and local journalism.

Additional comments were submitted in writing by the following Montpelier residents Neville Berle, Virginia Catone, Dan Jones, Christine Lilyquist, Stephen McArther, Carolyn Ridpath, Jennifer Roberts, and Stephen Whitaker. All were received after the July 8 hearing.

These comments can be summarized as requesting additional time for public input in the CVRPC plan approval review process. Each is attached.

Montpelier City Plan 2025 review by CVRPC

From Stephen Whitaker <whitaker.stephen@gmail.com>

Date Fri 7/11/2025 2:51 PM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

via email

July 11, 2025

Staff responses following
the document in yellow

Mr. Christian Meyer Executive
Director - CVRPC and
Commissioners of CVRPC

RE: Montpelier City Plan 2025 review by CVRPC

I'm writing to request that the Commission, at its planned Special Meeting now proposed for early August, schedule a full hour for concise testimony and Q&A discussion from those public participants who have devoted their time and expertise to identify the significant errors, omissions and statutory non-compliance of the Montpelier City Plan 2025.

As Regional Planning Commissioners, it is imperative that you approach the City of Montpelier's City Plan with an elevated level of scrutiny, particularly concerning the Country Club Road (CCR) development and its intended exemption from Act 250 review. Your statutory obligations under 24 V.S.A. §4350 require you to confirm that municipal plans are consistent with state goals, compatible with the regional plan, and crucially, developed through an adequate planning process. Given the Montpelier Planning Director's explicit statements and the concerns raised by various stakeholders, a traditionally perfunctory review by CVRPC would be a disservice to your mandate and the public interest.

Montpelier has sought rushed approval of their draft municipal plan, (since adopted by the City Council at their July 9, 2025 meeting), to facilitate their state-designated Growth Center expansion and the subsequent establishment of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. This is a commendable goal, aligning with the Regional Housing Distribution Plan's desire to locate residents in close proximity to jobs and in areas with adequate infrastructure capacity, thereby maintaining Vermont's historic settlement pattern of compact centers. However, the approach to the CCR project within this framework demands your utmost attention.

The Act 250 Exemption and its Implications

Planning Director Mike Miller has clearly articulated that a primary reason for pursuing the Growth Center designation and its associated TIF district is to achieve an Act 250 exemption for the Country Club Road development. Act 250 typically serves as a critical state-level review for major developments, ensuring they meet environmental, social, traffic and economic criteria. While a Growth Center designation *can* raise the threshold for Act 250 projects to 50 units, or even completely exempt

properties within the Growth Center from Act 250 review, this exemption does not absolve the project or the City Plan from regional review of the same critical issues. In fact, it places a greater burden on your Commission to ensure that the municipal plan adequately addresses the very impacts Act 250 would otherwise scrutinize. Miller notes that bypassing Act 250 would alleviate the financial burden of a potentially risky and expensive application process, especially given the known primary agricultural soils on the lower part of the golf course which usually require an exception. This financial rationale, while understandable, cannot be allowed to compromise sound planning principles.

Increased Scrutiny on Key Constraints and Impacts

The intent to bypass a comprehensive state review means your Commission's review of the City Plan must delve deeply into the project's specifics, treating the plan as the primary safeguard for regional interests.

1. **Traffic Impacts: Turtle Island, municipal recreation and 300-500 Housing Units** The Country Club Road proposal is stated to be inconsistent with the Central Vermont Regional Plan's policies due to its lack of a full Transportation Impact Study (TIS) and the additional pressure it would impose on the intersection of Country Club Road with U.S. Route 2 and the US-2/302 roundabout, without mitigation. This is a significant red flag. The City Plan should **not** be approved without a completed TIS and identified mitigation strategies for these regional traffic impacts.

You have heard direct concerns that the existing US-2/302 roundabout cannot adequately handle even the projected traffic from the Turtle Island project, which is anticipated to serve up to 100 students plus staff, let alone heavy construction traffic and eventually, the proposed 300-500 units of housing planned for CCR. The proposed development, if it proceeds as envisioned, would generate substantial new vehicle trips. While initial impacts might be concentrated on the intersection with Country Club Road and the East Montpelier Road (Route 2), a major thoroughfare, the downstream effects on the US-2/302 roundabout are explicitly identified as a conflict with the regional plan. The absence of a TIS means you lack the validated infrastructure feasibility required to properly assess the plan's impact. A full traffic analysis, including public input, is essential before any new road connections are made or substantial development proceeds.

2. **Railroad Siding Constraints** Discussions are proposed about changes to setbacks along railway property lines. Currently, a 20-foot setback from a rail line is required. While staff suggested flexibility to allow for future options, any development near active or abandoned rail lines carries inherent safety and operational considerations. The plan must demonstrate how development in this area will address these unique constraints without relying solely on future "tweaking" or administrative waivers that lack public and deliberative review. If current VTRANS rules limit potential use, as suggested, then the plan must clearly outline how this constraint is managed or how changes will be pursued transparently.
3. **Limited Landing Approach to US Route 2 and Potential Roundabout Space** The proposal to replace the Country Club Road intersection at Route 2, if necessary, with a roundabout has not been examined for feasibility, especially considering the railroad siding proximity and grade of approach requirements. The US-2/302 roundabout located a short distance to the West is a critical piece of regional transportation infrastructure. The CCR development's projected traffic volume, particularly with 300-500 housing units and a significant institutional presence like Turtle Island, directly threatens its operational capacity. The plan must clearly articulate not just that a TIS will be

done, but that concrete, feasible solutions for intersection improvements and capacity enhancements are identified and integrated into the overall capital improvement program. Generic statements about accommodating increased traffic on Route 2 are insufficient given the chokepoint at the roundabout. Any CVRPC conditional approval must insist on resolving geometric and operational feasibility concerns at this critical intersection.

4. **Uncertainty of Cost and Right-of-Way for a New Road Through Sabin's Pasture** The concept plan for CCR anticipates a new roadway connecting through to Sabin's Pasture, Barre Street, and potentially College and East State. This linkage may be crucial for emergency response, supporting the downtown and ensuring adequate access. However, the proposal for a new road through Sabin's Pasture raises significant concerns. Historically, the original Growth Center application for Sabin's Pasture explicitly argued *against* putting a road through the upper, untouched lands of the pasture due to preservation goals. Now, discussions imply building a road through "protected view" areas. This represents a potential conflict with prior planning when Sabin's was added to the Growth Center, and conservation efforts for a parcel debated publicly many times.

Furthermore, the plan is criticized for lacking specifics on the costs and mechanisms for such infrastructure. A full traffic analysis and public input are statutory requirements *before* any new connection is made. The current City Plan is cited as deficient in detailing infrastructure requirements and a capital budget for CCR, with critics arguing the Montpelier planning commission has not fulfilled its obligation to prepare a five-year capital program. Miller himself acknowledges that extending roads, sewer, and water requires financial feasibility, needing about 50 units for the project to be viable. Without any clear, adopted, and budgeted plan for these significant infrastructure investments, the proposed development remains speculative and inconsistent with sound planning.

Concerns Regarding Public Participation and Plan Adequacy

Beyond these specific infrastructure and project-related issues, numerous public comments, which your Commission is obligated to consider, highlight serious deficiencies in the planning process itself. There are accusations of a "charade of a public process" and a "dysfunctional" approach that "disenfranchises" public participation. Various city committees, including Housing, Conservation, Complete Streets, Transportation, Homelessness, and the former Chair of the now dissolved regional Public Safety Authority, feel their input has been disregarded and not genuinely incorporated into the plan.

Concerns also persist about the web-based format of the plan, which is seen as inaccessible to many, especially older residents, the sight impaired, and the lack of comprehensive options for printed documents. The plan is criticized for vague references to CCR without any detailed master plan, capital plan, and budget, which are seen as prerequisites for a Growth Center application. Fundamental elements like strategies for the unhoused population, restrooms, Wi-Fi with backup power during emergencies, and infrastructure maintenance are noted as missing or inadequately addressed. Such deficiencies, if not remedied, could legitimately jeopardize the Growth Center designation.

Christian Meyer's Suggestion for Conditional Approval

In light of these pressing concerns, a perfunctory review is simply unacceptable. The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission must leverage its authority to disapprove the plan, sending back

for revisions by the Montpelier Planning Commission, or, though less desirable, provide **conditional approval** of the Montpelier City Plan 2025. Conditions should include, at a minimum:

- **Completion of a comprehensive Transportation Impact Study (TIS)** for the entire CCR project, including the housing units and Turtle Island, explicitly identifying and mitigating regional traffic impacts, particularly at the US-2/302 roundabout. This TIS must be publicly vetted.
- **Demonstrated Feasibility and Commitment for Key Infrastructure:** Clear plans and a formalized capital budget and easement agreement must be presented for all necessary infrastructure, including the proposed road through Sabin's Pasture, ensuring right-of-way, cost, and design are thoroughly analyzed and publicly reviewed. This cannot be a vague "pointer" to future studies.
- **Resolution of Conflicts with Prior Planning and Conservation:** Any new road through Sabin's Pasture must reconcile with previous Growth Center application arguments against such intrusion into protected view areas.
- **Substantial Revisions to Address Public Input:** The City Plan must demonstrate a more robust and inclusive public engagement process, incorporating feedback from all relevant committees and addressing previously "disregarded" concerns related to housing, community services, and other critical elements. This includes ensuring the plan is accessible in various formats.

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's role is to ensure consistency with the Regional Plan, thoroughly scrutinize transportation infrastructure and traffic impacts, especially for any projects anticipated to be exempt from Act 250 review, ensure responsible, sustainable development that benefits the region as a whole; not to rubber-stamp a process that appears to cut corners and disenfranchise the public. The City of Montpelier has an opportunity to create a truly exemplary plan, but it must be required by CVRPC to first address these fundamental issues before it can fully secure regional support and achieve its ambitious growth goals.

I hereby request to be notified in advance of all Special Meetings warned by the CVRPC Commission and its subcommittees any time this calendar year in accordance with Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

Kind regards,

Stephen Whitaker

Staff notes:

Act 250:

Approval of a municipal plan carries no exemptions from Act 250.

A growth center will carry interim Act 250 exemptions, currently set to expire January 1 2027. This would exempt only residential developments of 75 units or fewer from requiring an Act 250 permit. Growth Centers themselves will be superseded by the regional Future Land Use Area map (to be adopted before 12/31/26).

The intent of the legislature under Act 181 was never to place project permitting requirements on regional planning commissions. This responsibility is placed on municipalities if and only if they have the requisite processes and regulations in place. The regional plan is where regional input on development

intensities and locations is integrated into the process. For additional information on the CVRPC statutory review please see below.

Statutory requirements:

For a complete review of staff statutory requirements See staff memos, compatibility review, and municipal plan review tool

Project specific reviews and capital planning

Many of the comments make requests for specific documents (TIS, CIP, etc...). Many of these will be required as part of the Growth Center designation amendment process.

The email calls for a traffic impact study (TIS) and additional traffic planning. A planning level TIS was completed as part of the Country Club Road actionable plan, the City Unified Development Regulations require an application-specific TIS for new development (+75 average daily trips), the City Plan also proposes alternative routes via Barre Street, East State Street or Towne Hill Road for future planning consideration to ease impacts on East Montpelier Road.

Many of the comments for project-level review are beyond scope of a regional municipal plan review. Specifics around the type of traffic improvements would normally be based on a study conducted with the VAOT and included in a capital improvement plan. A capital improvement plan is a required element of a Growth Center designation amendment.

Citizen engagement

Montpelier has a significant number of committees dedicated to specific planning goals that regularly meet publicly with representation from the City staff and City Council.

Further, as part of this municipal planning process, staff understand from citizen testimony and responses provided to Commissioners by Mike Miller, Montpelier Director of Planning, engagement began in approximately 2018 with City committees. During the development of the Actionable Plan for the Country Club Road parcel, a series of consultant led public input meetings were held with Montpelier residents. Further, during the plan development stage and prior to beginning public hearings, the City held 11 public input sessions prior to the first public hearing on this plan. The City Council subsequently held three hearings and provided additional opportunities for the public to provide comments during other meetings

Conditioned approval

Staff is not longer proposing a conditioned approval as the City of Montpelier has now adopted the plan.

MEMORANDUM

To: Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC)
Executive Director Christian Meyer
Chairman Peter Carbee

From: Stephen Whitaker

Date: July 15, 2025

Subject: Legal Concerns Regarding 'Conditional Approval' of Municipal Plans

This memo addresses a critical issue concerning the legal authority of regional planning commissions—specifically, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC)—to issue a 'conditional approval' of a municipal plan that is substantively deficient under Vermont law.

1. No Statutory Basis for Conditional Approval

Vermont's planning statutes, particularly 24 V.S.A. § 4350(b), govern regional review of municipal plans. That statute states:

"A regional planning commission shall approve a plan if it finds that the plan is consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and is compatible with the regional plan and approved plans of adjoining municipalities."

It further provides that:

"If the regional planning commission disapproves a plan, it shall state its reasons in writing and shall, if appropriate, suggest acceptable modifications."

At no point does Vermont statute authorize a 'conditional approval.' The phrase 'conditionally approve' does not appear in § 4350 or anywhere in Title 24, Chapter 117.

2. Risk of Procedural and Legal Invalidity

Issuing a 'conditional approval' rather than a formal disapproval of a deficient municipal plan may constitute an overreach of statutory authority. It

bypasses the clear directive that a plan must either be approved or disapproved based on substantive findings of compliance.

A conditional approval that allows adoption of a flawed plan—particularly one lacking statutorily required components, such as a capital budget and program, or one that fails ADA accessibility standards—may invalidate the regional review process and undermine public trust.

3. Consequences of Unauthorized Conditional Approval

- Undermines statutory integrity by failing to enforce minimum standards.
- Creates legal exposure for the RPC if the plan is later challenged in court.
- Jeopardizes municipal eligibility for programs that require valid regional approval (e.g., Growth Center Designation, Downtown Designation).
- Dilutes public accountability and may limit stakeholder rights to comment on corrected plan materials.

4. Recommendation

The CVRPC should refrain from issuing any form of 'conditional approval' not authorized by statute. If a plan is deficient, the proper procedure is to issue a written disapproval with a clear explanation and recommended modifications, followed by re-submission and re-review. This ensures compliance with Vermont law and protects the validity of the planning process.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Whitaker

STAFF Response: No conditions are being proposed at this time. Previous conditions did not constitute a partial approval, but rather required the City to adopt a plan with no major changes before regional approval would be conveyed.



Montpelier City Plan, 2025

From Neville Berle <nmbe1022@gmail.com>

Date Sun 7/13/2025 9:44 AM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

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Dear Mr. Meyer,

Several informed stakeholders have formulated guidance for the CVRPC board toward the drafting of the Montpelier City Plan. Those stakeholders have requested a special meeting with the full board, lasting at least one hour, in which to make their case, and must be allowed to do so.

A truly inclusive process requires that all concerned citizens be allowed to contribute, especially when the future of their hometown is at stake.

Please do all you can to ensure these citizens have a voice.

Sincerely,
Neville Berle
Montpelier, VT



Outlook

CVRPC special meeting request

From Ginny Catone <vcatone@comcast.net>

Date Sat 7/12/2025 11:29 AM

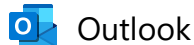
To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

[You don't often get email from vcatone@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

As a retired Legislative Fiscal Office employee of many decades working and now living within a mile of downtown Montpelier, I have become increasingly confounded and irritated by reports on the planning and decision-making processes in City Hall and by other relevant entities - by top level employees as well as the City Council and a multitude of other entities involved in planning. Until a few years ago I was inclined to support seemingly well thought out planning initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for all of our residents and visitors. That has changed. To me, the process of decision making has become increasingly murky and at times seemingly too casual. To help revive my faith in the process, I join other folks in requesting that when the full Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (not just a subcommittee) holds its special meeting in August, a full hour be set aside to hear from well informed, capable folks wishing to share their expertise about municipal planning.

Virginia Catone
Montpelier resident

Sent from my iPhone



Montpelier City Plan 2025

From Stephen McArthur <fsmcarthur@gmail.com>

Date Sun 7/13/2025 1:41 PM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>; Eli Toohey <toohey@cvregion.com>; Brian Voigt <voigt@cvregion.com>

Cc Steven Pappas <steven.pappas@timesargus.com>; Michael Miller <MMiller@montpelier-vt.org>; Pelin Kohn <pkohn@montpelier-vt.org>; Cassandra Hemenway <editor@montpelierbridge.com>; agil@montpelier-vt.org <agil@montpelier-vt.org>; Cary Brown <Cbrown9904@gmail.com>; Sal Alfano <sal.alfano@gmail.com>; jsheridan@montpelier-vt.org <jsheridan@montpelier-vt.org>; Ben Doyle <ben@ptvermont.org>; Peter Kelman <phkelman@gmail.com>; Jack McCullough <jmccullough@montpelier-vt.org>; Albert Sabatini <asabatini56@gmail.com>; Dan Jones <dan@siteprod.com>; Andrea Stander <andrea.stander@gmail.com>; Phil Dodd <philipkdodd@gmail.com>; Daniel Hecht <danhecht@myfairpoint.net>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from fsmcarthur@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Christian Meyer -- At a time when so many voices of opposition, voices contributing to our civic discourse, alternative points of view, as well as those of dissent are being shut down, silenced, and criminalized in America, it would be a significant act of anti-democratic defiance for the CVRPC to ban citizen voices of Montpelier to have *sufficient time* at any public hearing to address the Commission regarding their concerns and ideas with respect to the Montpelier City Plan 2025.

I, therefore, urge the CVRPC to include in its agenda time for any upcoming hearings about this Plan for Montpelier citizens to be able to contribute at least one hour for their voices to be heard by the Commission in this respect and to also allow them to submit any supporting documents they may have at the upcoming hearing(s).

Respectfully yours,

Stephen McArthur
Former Member, Montpelier City Council
1 N Franklin Street, Unit 3
Montpelier VT 05602
802-839-0371



Please do a deeper review of Montpelier city plan.

From Dan Jones <dan@siteprod.com>

Date Tue 7/15/2025 9:21 AM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

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Dear Mr Meyer —

Many of us in Montpelier feel that the proposee City Plan is inadequate to both the needs and available resources of our city,, it would be a significant act of anti-democratic defiance for the CVRPC to ban citizen voices of Montpelier to have *sufficient time* at any public hearing to address the Commission regarding their concerns and ideas with respect to the Montpelier City Plan 2025.

I would like to request the CVRPC to include in its agenda time for any upcoming hearings about this Plan for Montpelier citizens to be able to contribute at least one hour for their voices to be heard by the Commission in this respect and to also allow them to submit any supporting documents they may have at the upcoming hearing(s).

Respectfully yours,

Dan Jones

Northfield St

Montpelier



(No subject)

From Christine Lilyquist <lilyquist@earthlink.net>

Date Sun 7/13/2025 8:33 AM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

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Dear Commissioner Meyer,

Resident and voter Peter Kelman of Montpelier has made a reasonable request to me, to ask you to allow the complete CVRPC Board to hear the concerns that he, and at least one other voter I know, have regarding approval of the City Plan 2025 draft.

I first inquired about a City Plan from Planning Director Mike Miller in 2018; followed its progress towards an update; spoke at two public hearings and to City Council members. Questions that were asked, and objections that were raised did not get informed or thoughtful replies, it seemed to me, nor did they slow Mr. Miller's push toward ideas he had formed of how our money should be spent: how soon we could get housing, what we could do with facilities or land we already have, how much any of it would cost us long-term, what about other collaborative proposals, are we hiring appropriate expertise to evaluate them. With two new Council members this spring, and the freedom for them to hire a new City manager, I am encouraged to think that our City government will have more critical review of planning. We are not rich, much real estate is controlled by a now largely-absent landowner (the State), and have physical confines that limit not only housing and building our Grand List, but contribute to Climate crises. In my opinion, we have procedures to update and must be very careful in prioritizing what we put money and staff energies toward.

I *do* implore you, as the CVRPC, to critically review our Planning Department's draft. My husband and I were part-time in Chelsea for 20 years before moving to Montpelier; we very much respected Two Rivers-Ottawquechee's director Peter Gregory and valued the help from staff toward our village. We appreciate that Montpelier is a member of a Regional Planning Commission that can review the work of those hired locally.

Christine Lilyquist
15 First Ave., Montpelier



Central Vermont Regional Policy Commission (CVRPC)

From Carolyn Ridpath <carolyn_ridpath@yahoo.com>

Date Sat 7/12/2025 8:07 PM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

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Dear Christian Meyer, Director:

It has come to my attention that there will be a special meeting of the full CVRPC Board regarding the approval of the current draft of the Montpelier City Plan 2025. I became concerned about the plan when four members of the Montpelier Housing Committee resigned. That has prompted me to ask that at least one hour be made available for the full Commission to hear from our community members who have devoted a lot of time to the development of the plan. I feel that they can provide valuable guidance to the Board in their decision making.

Sincerely,
Carolyn J. Ridpath



Montpelier City Plan Approval

From Jen Roberts <jen.roberts11@gmail.com>

Date Wed 7/16/2025 11:39 AM

To Christian Meyer <meyer@cvregion.com>

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Good Morning, Christian,

My name is Jennifer Roberts and I'm a concerned Montpelier resident. I'm writing regarding a potential upcoming special meeting of the CVRPC Board regarding approval of the current draft of the Montpelier City Plan 2025.

I'm asking that the board allow at least an hour to hear from interested and engaged local residents. These residents have invested a great deal of time to help the city establish the best possible City Plan. I believe that the Commission would benefit greatly from hearing their very specific feedback. I believe the goal will be to move forward with a conditional acceptance of the plan, with agreed upon improvements to be made after that. Their concerns have been almost entirely disregarded by the city.

I recognize that a significant amount of time has been invested in the overall development of this plan and appreciate its importance. I think that everyone agrees that it needs to move forward. Taking this important feedback into consideration before it does, is not only the right thing to do, the plan will ultimately be better for it.

Thanks very much for your consideration.
Jennifer Roberts