

# The Plan for a Municipality: Required Elements

*From Title 24 : Municipal And County Government, Chapter 117 : Municipal And Regional Planning And Development, Subchapter 005 : Municipal Development Plan, § 4382. The plan for a municipality*

A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan. A municipal plan must include all 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;
2. A land use plan consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses that:
  - indicates those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture (using the agricultural land identification process described 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 protections, for wetland protection, for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors, or form other conservation purposes.
  - 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.
  - identifies those areas, if any, proposed for state designation under chapter 76A of this title, together with, for each area proposed for state designation, an explanation of how the state 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.
  - 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.
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;
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;
5. A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources;
6. An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system;
7. A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan;

8. A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title;
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;
10. A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision 4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing;
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;
12. A flood resilience plan that:
  - 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
  - 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.

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

The maps called for by this section may be combined into one or more maps, and may be referred to in each separate statement called for by this section.

Where appropriate, and to further the purposes of subsection 4302(b) of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes, 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.

Where appropriate, a municipal plan may provide for the use of "transit passes" or other evidence of reduced demand for parking spaces in lieu of parking spaces.