



**SUMMARY: REGIONAL PLAN APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR RRPC**

This summary and the pages that follow document how the **Rutland Regional Planning Commission’s** plan dated **September 2, 2025** meets the requirements for approval by the Land Use Review Board. Per 24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(4), the Land Use Review Board (LURB) will approve the regional plan upon finding that the regional plan meets the following requirements:

- (A) Consistency with the **State planning goals** as described in Section 4302 of Chapter 117 with consistency determined in the manner described under subdivision 4302(f)(1) of this chapter.
- (B) Consistency with the **purposes of the regional plan** established in section 4347 of chapter.
- (C) Consistency with the **regional plan elements** as described in section 4348a of this chapter, except that the requirements of section 4352 of this chapter related to enhanced energy planning shall be the under the sole authority of the Department of Public Service.
- (D) Compatibility with **adjacent regional planning areas** in the manner described under subdivision 4302(f)(2) of this chapter.

In addition, the LURB conducts **regional plan map review** following the requirements of 10 V.S.A. § 6033. This approval may happen separately from regional plan approval.

**Plan Consistency & Compatibility**

As used in Chapter 117, *“consistent with the goals” requires substantial progress toward attainment of the goals established in this section, unless the planning body determines that a particular goal is not relevant or attainable. If such a determination is made, the planning body shall identify the goal in the plan and describe the situation, explain why the goal is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures should be taken to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward that goal. The determination of relevance or attainability shall be subject to review as part of a consistency determination under this chapter.* 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1).

*“...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 meets certain criteria listed in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(2).

**The following checklists summarize how the Rutland Regional Planning Commission’s plan meets the requirements above. Further details regarding how the plan and map meet the various requirements are on the following pages.**

<b>A. Consistency - State Planning Goals: § 4302</b>		Met	Not Met
1	Development Pattern	<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 Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9/17/2025

7	Energy	<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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Public Facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resilience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Environmental Benefits and Burdens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B. Consistency – Regional Plan Purposes § 4347** Met Not Met

Is the plan consistent with the purposes of the Regional Plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**C. Consistency - Required Elements § 4348a** Met Not Met

1	Statement of Policies to Guide Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Natural Resources and Working Lands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Utility and Facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Implementation Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Development Trends	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Economic Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Flood Resilience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Future Land Use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**D. Compatibility – Adjacent Regional Planning Areas § 4302(f)(2)** Met Not Met

Is the plan consistent with the plans of adjacent regional planning areas?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Mapping – Future Land Use Areas** Met Not Met

Does the plan’s Future Land Use Map delineate areas following the required mapping process and standards?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**PLAN AND PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW**

Date 9/17/2025

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

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 Primary contact: Devon Neary, Executive Director  
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**OUTREACH AND NOTIFICATION**

The following summarizes outreach and notice as required by 24 V.S.A. § 4348, Adoption of a Regional Plan.

<b>Outreach and Notification Timelines</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Actual or Anticipated Date(s)</b>
Throughout the planning process, the RPC has solicited the input of member municipalities, local residents, and organizations (24 V.S.A. § 4348(a))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Phase 1: January-April 2024 Phase 2: Sept-November 2024 Phase 3: April-June 2025 Phase 4: 1/22/2026, 1/27/2026, 1/29/2026, 2/3/2026
60 days before first RPC hearing: Send draft regional plan to LURB (24 V.S.A. § 4348(b))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9/17/2025
At least 30 days before first RPC hearing, plan and accompanying documentation sent to state and regional partners ((24 V.S.A. § 4348(d)(1))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12/19/2025
At least 30 days before first RPC hearing, RPC provides member municipalities with description of map changes, Tier 1B info, designation info (24 V.S.A. § 4348(d)(2))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12/19/2025
RPC holds at least two public hearings (24 V.S.A. § 4348(c))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1/20/2026, 4/21/2026
Regional Plan adoption by regional planning commission (24 V.S.A. § 4348(g))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4/21/2026
Within 15 days following adoption, RPC submits regionally adopted plan to LURB for determination compliance (24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(1))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4/27/2026

See 24 V.S.A. § 4348(f) for information on amendments to the plan during this process.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

24 V.S.A. § 4348 calls on Regional Planning Commissions to “allow for meaningful participation” in the adoption and amendment of a regional plan. Meaningful participation is defined in 3 V.S.A. § 6002. This section reports on the community outreach efforts undertaken for this plan’s development that advance meaningful participation, including information about engagement of Environmental Justice Focus populations, also defined in 3 V.S.A. § 6002. Document outreach efforts in this section. Please include information about the outreach strategy, how the RPC sought to reach Environmental Justice Focus populations, and the results of these efforts. This section may include a list or table summarizing outreach activities undertaken in the development of this plan.

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A summary of community engagement efforts during the plan development is provided here. For details, see the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan (the Plan) [Engagement Report](#). The development of the Plan was guided by a vision of the kind of place Rutland Region residents want it to become in the coming decades. Community engagement—the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people linked by location, shared interests, or similar situations to address issues affecting their well-being—was a core part of this update. The RRPC committed to an equitable and transparent process based on the Engagement Strategy prepared by *b Creative* in October 2023. The Engagement Strategy outlined three phases, each aligned with key milestones in the planning process. Each phase used a combination of active and passive methods to engage with the Region. A dedicated effort was made to ‘meet people where they are’ to ensure full public access to the planning process.

**Phase 1 – Learn & Assess** was completed between January and April 2024, coinciding with the start of the Plan update, to help the RRPC understand the Region’s concerns and needs. Methods included a robust advertising campaign across a range of media; the creation of a dedicated landing page ([www.rutlandrpc.org/plan2026](http://www.rutlandrpc.org/plan2026)) and email address; an online survey; in-person presentations in each municipality; pop-ups; community open house events; and targeted stakeholder engagement. The input was essential for describing current conditions in the Region, future aspirations, and how to reach the community economic development goals. The outcome of the Learn & Assess Phase was a shared understanding of baseline conditions along with the strengths, assets, and challenges present in the Region.

**Phase 2 – Report Back** was completed between September and November 2024. The RRPC closed the feedback loop by reporting back the key takeaways from Phase 1 and asked the Region to respond to the draft policies. Building on the most successful methods from Phase 1, the methods included an advertising campaign; online survey; in-person presentations in each municipality; pop-ups; feedback sessions; and more targeted stakeholder engagement. The outcome of the Report Back Phase was validation from the Region that the Plan’s policies were on target.

**Phase 3 – Alignment** was completed between April and June 2025, culminating with the release of a draft Plan. In this final phase, the RRPC sought alignment on the draft Plan, including the 2026 Regional Future Land Use Map. The draft Plan was several hundred pages. Recognizing that the sheer volume of material could be a barrier to engagement, the RRPC thoughtfully prepared a Plan Visualized graphic depicting regional priorities and one-page chapter summaries to make the material more accessible. Methods included an advertising campaign; online

survey; Act 181 trainings; in-person presentations in each municipality; pop-ups; and more targeted stakeholder engagement. The outcome of the Alignment Phase was a draft Plan and regional future land use map that reflected a shared vision for community economic development, guided by areas designated for growth and conservation based on environmental, infrastructure, and community factors.

**Phase 4 – Supplemental Public Meetings** will take place between the two required public hearings during the adoption phase of the Plan update. The RRPC will host four supplemental public meetings around the Region on January 22, 2026; January 27, 2026; January 29, 2026; and February 3, 2026. These are intended as informal, conversational forums where participants can ask questions and share ideas. Their purpose is to reach those unable to attend a public hearing and provide a more inclusive environment for participation.

### **NEW TIER 1B REQUESTS**

With this application, **RRPC** is requesting Tier 1B area approvals for eligible portions of the following ten (10) municipalities: Brandon, Castleton, Fair Haven, Killington, Pawlet, Pittsford, Poultney, Proctor, Wallingford, and West Rutland. These Tier 1B area requests are documented in the Draft Tier 1B Memorandum.

## PART A – CONSISTENCY WITH STATE PLANNING GOALS

Per 24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(4), for the Land Use Review Board to issue a determination of plan compliance, it must find that the plan is consistent with the State planning goals as established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302. Describe plan compliance below.

In this section, please provide detailed information about how the plan meets the general and specific goals outlined in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(b) and § 4302(c).

### 4302(b) – GENERAL 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.

Page numbers: 37-363 (Chapters 2-11) & 386-401 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The text, goals, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapters 2-11 (pages 37–363) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 386–401) demonstrate how the Plan meets the General Goals established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

The Plan establishes a clear policy framework and implementation strategy to guide municipal, regional, and State decision-making. Each chapter identifies goals, policies, actions, and indicators of progress that align with State priorities while reflecting regional conditions. The Implementation Matrix clearly organizes action timelines, effort, costs, and potential partners for each chapter, making implementation more efficient and effective.

Each chapter includes policies that encourage meaningful participation opportunities during planning and decision-making. Plan actions incorporate meaningful participation opportunities, ensuring that decisions are made at the most local level commensurate with their impact.

Each chapter evaluates the environmental, fiscal, and social consequences of development as it pertains to that chapter. Policies guide intensive development to designated growth areas, protecting natural resources and managing municipal costs. Progress indicators allow for ongoing monitoring of regional growth impacts.

The Plan’s policies support collaboration among municipalities through shared services and coordinated updates to planning tools. Plan actions provide resources, guidance, and data that facilitate joint problem-solving and consistent application of policies across municipal boundaries.

### 4302(c) – 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 avoided. 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.
- (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.

Page numbers: 74-76 (Chapter 2) & 386-387 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 2: Land Use (pages 74–76) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 386–387) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 1.

The Chapter 2 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Plan development to maintain historic settlement patterns of compact downtown and village centers separated by rural countryside.*

Policies establish a way to plan development to maintain historic settlement patterns. They emphasize smart growth principles and meaningful participation in land use planning and decision-making. The Plan encourages intensive residential development and community-serving facilities in growth areas, ensures pedestrian connections and public amenities for larger developments, and guides development to appropriate locations to minimize impacts.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to identify areas for new development or redevelopment in Growth FLUAs by municipality, assist with municipal planning and bylaw updates, implement a Fiscal Smart Growth Land Use Planning Guide, host annual public forums and feedback sessions, develop village and downtown master plans, and provide municipal training on smart growth strategies. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**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.**

Page numbers: 98-99 (Chapter 3) & 387-388 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 3: Economic Development (pages 98-99) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 387-388) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 2.

The Chapter 3 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Create a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding jobs while maintaining high environmental standards and expanding economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.*

Policies establish a way to support a strong and diverse regional economy. They emphasize smart growth, workforce sustainability, and meaningful participation in economic development planning and decision-making. This includes focusing future development in downtown and village centers while prioritizing densification in already developed areas to limit rural sprawl and reduce the demand for new public services. A key policy is to attract new workers and retain younger residents by strengthening the local workforce pipeline. This includes developing a coordinated, trade-focused workforce development system.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to assist municipalities in researching, developing, and implementing steps that support a robust, sustainable regional economy, retain local talent, and create growth opportunities for employers. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

Page numbers: 234-236 (Chapter 7) & 393-395 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 7: Community Facilities and Public Utilities (pages 234-236) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 393-395) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 3. There is some overlap with Goal 2 (see above) and the Economic Development chapter (Chapter 3), which covers programming quality related to workforce development.

The Chapter 7 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of diverse public facilities and services, including fire and police protection, healthcare services, **educational and vocational opportunities** [emphasis added], public drinking water supply and wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, childcare, and non-commercial recreational opportunities.*

Policies establish a way to broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities. They support school facility construction, consolidation, and renovation that increase efficiency, reduce tax burdens, and improve equitable education for all residents, as well as meaningful participation in community facility and public utility planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to assist in assessing educational facility needs, identifying opportunities for consolidation, and evaluating the potential for adaptive reuse during the municipal planning process. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

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

Page numbers: 174-177 (Chapter 5) & 390-392 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 5: Transportation (pages 174-177) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 390-392) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 4.

The Chapter 5 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Establish a regional transportation system that incorporates public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists, ensuring the system is safe, convenient, energy-efficient, and respectful of the natural environment.*

Policies establish a way to develop this type of regional transportation system. They support safe, efficient, and energy-conscious regional transportation by promoting context-sensitive Complete Streets, roadway safety improvements, strategic bridge and culvert upgrades, and resilient infrastructure planning. They prioritize electric vehicle infrastructure along high-traffic corridors, improve public transit connectivity, enhance passenger and freight rail service, provide better access to airports and transit hubs, and ensure meaningful participation in transportation planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to advance key state highway and safety projects, optimize public transit routes and active transportation networks, improve public transit coordination and marketing, and support communities with technical assistance, capital planning, and data-informed investment in sustainable mobility systems. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**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.**

Page numbers: 124-126 (Chapter 4); 330-331 (Chapter 10); 389-390 & 398-399 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 4: Cultural Resources (pages 124-126) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 389-390) demonstrate how the Plan meets the historic and scenic aspects of State Planning Goal 5. The goal, policies,

actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 10: Natural Resources (pages 330-331) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 398-399) demonstrate how the Plan meets the natural resource aspects of State Planning Goal 5.

The Chapter 4 and Chapter 10 goals outline the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – Chapter 4: *Identify, protect, and preserve significant historic, archaeological, scenic, and cultural resources*. Chapter 10: **Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources [emphasis added] while promoting the wise and efficient use of these natural resources and appropriate extraction of earth and mineral resources. This approach helps ensure the area is properly restored and its aesthetic quality preserved.**

Policies establish a way to identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features. They promote the protection of significant natural areas, wetlands, surface and groundwater quality, and they support the preservation and vitality of the Region’s historic, archeological, scenic, and cultural resources by encouraging adaptive reuse, equitable access, resilient preservation planning, and inclusive cultural programming. They promote scenic resource mapping, the celebration of diverse histories, investment in community gathering spaces, the integration of arts and heritage into local planning, and inclusion of meaningful participation in cultural and natural resources planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to help municipalities maintain the quality of natural resources, preserve historic sites, and protect scenic views, while strengthening partnerships with cultural organizations, promoting access to state and federal funding, supporting the capacity of volunteers and nonprofits, and leveraging tools like GIS and digital archives to document and share the Region’s cultural resources. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**Goal 6: To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other 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.**

Page numbers: 330-331 (Chapter 10) & 398-399 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 10: Natural Resources (pages 330-331) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 398-399) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 6.

The Chapter 10 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – **Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources while promoting the wise and efficient use of these natural resources [emphasis added] and appropriate extraction of earth and mineral resources. This approach helps ensure the area is properly restored and its aesthetic quality preserved.**

Policies establish a way to maintain and improve the quality of natural resources. They promote the protection of air, wetlands, surface and groundwater quality, as well as the restoration of impaired surface waters. Other priorities include protecting forest blocks and wildlife corridors, as well as ensuring meaningful participation in natural resource planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to help municipalities maintain the quality of surface water and groundwater, as well as reduce parcelization of forests. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan's effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**Goal 7: To make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.**

- 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.**

*Page numbers:* 266-268 (Chapter 8) & 395-397 (Chapter 13)

*Narrative:* The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 8: Enhanced Energy (pages 266-268) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 395-397) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 7.

The Chapter 8 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Use energy efficiently, develop renewable energy resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

Policies establish a way to use energy efficiently, develop renewable energy sources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They promote fuel switching, energy conservation, investments in infrastructure to reduce energy consumption, and the siting of renewable energy sources that align with orderly development in the Region, complemented by enhanced energy planning at the local level. They encourage weatherization, high-efficiency technologies, renewable energy projects utilizing solar, hydro, and geothermal energy sources, as well as meaningful participation in energy planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to help municipalities develop Enhanced Energy Plans, educate residents and businesses about energy efficiency and conservation opportunities, reduce financial barriers to fuel switching, and ensure Section 248 applications align with the Plan's land use provisions. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan's effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

- A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.**
- B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.**

Page numbers: 234-236 (Chapter 7) & 393-395 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 7: Community Facilities and Public Utilities (pages 234-236) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 393-395) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 8.

The Chapter 7 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of diverse public facilities and services, including fire and police protection, healthcare services, educational and vocational opportunities, public drinking water supply and wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, childcare, and **non-commercial recreational opportunities** [emphasis added].*

Policies establish a way to maintain and enhance recreational opportunities. They support the construction, maintenance, and marketing of recreational resources for all user types, while balancing economic growth with environmental protection, and promote meaningful participation in community facility and public utility planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to guide the equitable expansion and improvement of municipal and state recreation facilities, develop accessible, multi-use trails, create a branding and marketing strategy for mountain biking and other outdoor recreation sports, and strengthen inter-municipal partnerships to connect recreation facilities with villages and downtowns. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

- A) Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forestlands 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.**

Page numbers: 294-295 (Chapter 9) & 397-398 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 9: Working Landscape (pages 294-295) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 397-398) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 9.

The Chapter 9 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Encourage and strengthen agricultural and forestry industries.*

Policies establish a way to encourage and strengthen agricultural and forestry industries. They support the viability of agricultural and forest operations and encourage measures to protect both industries from development. Other priorities include promoting local food production, establishing local food hubs, processing, and local food marketing, as well as meaningful participation in working landscape planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to help municipalities in stemming parcelization of agricultural and forest lands and support the Vermont Farmers' Food Market and Smokey House Center. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan's effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**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.**

*Page numbers:* 330-331 (Chapter 10) & 398-399 (Chapter 13)

*Narrative:* The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 10: Natural Resources (pages 330-331) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 398-399) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 10.

The Chapter 10 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources while **promoting the wise and efficient use of these natural resources and appropriate extraction of earth and mineral resources. This approach helps ensure the area is properly restored and its aesthetic quality preserved.*** [emphasis added]

Policies establish a way to promote the wise and efficient use of natural resources and the appropriate extraction of earth and mineral resources, including proper restoration. They encourage safe and clean earth and mineral extraction in Rural and Enterprise Future Land Use Areas, provided that negative impacts are minimized, such as excessive dust and noise, water quality impacts, soil erosion, and deterioration of highway infrastructure. They also promote meaningful participation in natural resource planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to update the database of active mines in the Region and assist with rehabilitating extraction sites that predate local and state regulations. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan's effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

**(A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income, 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 multi-family 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, elders, or persons who have a disability should be allowed.**

Page numbers: 196-197 (Chapter 6) & 392-393 (Chapter 13)

Narrative The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 6: Housing (pages 196–197) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 392–393) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 11.

The Chapter 6 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all residents.*

Policies establish a way to ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing. They emphasize increasing the housing supply through a mix of single-family homes, multi-family homes, manufactured homes, and Accessory Dwelling Units to meet the Region’s Housing Target. Policies direct most growth to Rutland City and other Growth FLUAs, prioritize affordability for low- and medium-income households, encourage adaptive reuse of vacant or historic buildings, and limit new development in FEMA-mapped flood hazard areas and state-mapped river corridors. Additional policies address workforce housing needs, regulatory barriers in growth areas, and inclusion of meaningful participation in housing planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to assist municipalities with planning and bylaw updates to allow a greater mix of housing types and densities, identifying suitable sites for new housing, supporting feasibility studies to guide strategic housing development, encouraging adaptive reuse of vacant residential and commercial buildings, tracking yearly progress toward the Region’s Housing Target through a virtual dashboard, and annually updating the Housing Resource Guide. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

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

Page numbers: 234-236 (Chapter 7) & 393-395 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 7: Community Facilities and Public Utilities (pages 234-236) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 393-395) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 12.

The Chapter 7 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of **diverse public facilities and services, including fire and police protection, healthcare services, educational and vocational opportunities, public drinking water supply and wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, [emphasis added] childcare, and non-commercial recreational opportunities.***

Policies establish a way to plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of diverse public facilities and services. They support efficient and sustainable growth by aligning public facilities and utilities with future development needs and the Region’s land use goals. They prioritize cost-effective upgrades, shared services, and expanded access to essential infrastructure, including public water and wastewater, energy, broadband, and solid waste management, while also expanding access to childcare, education, healthcare, and workforce capacity in critical sectors. They also promote meaningful participation in community facilities and public utilities planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to strengthen regional infrastructure, services, and workforce by supporting municipalities with data-driven tools, targeted planning, mapping, and technical assistance, and fostering collaboration among local, regional, and state partners. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**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.**

*Page numbers:* 234-236 (Chapter 7) & 393-395 (Chapter 13)

*Narrative:* The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 7: Community Facilities and Public Utilities (pages 234-236) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 393-395) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 13.

The Chapter 7 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of diverse public facilities and services, including fire and police protection, healthcare services, educational and vocational opportunities, public drinking water supply and wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, **childcare, [emphasis added] and non-commercial recreational opportunities.***

Policies establish a way to ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare. They support expanding childcare facilities and provider networks to meet the current and future workforce and family needs, especially in Growth Future Land Use Areas. They also promote meaningful participation in community facilities and public utilities planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions aim to assess needs and adaptive reuse potential to expand facilities in key employment areas. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

**\* Goal 14: (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.**
- (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.**

*\*This goal is effective until 1/1/28, after which it is replaced with updated language accounting for the forthcoming statewide minimum flood hazard area standards established by rule by the Agency of Natural Resources*

Page numbers: 360-363 (Chapter 11) & 399-401 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The goal, policies, actions, and indicators of progress presented in Chapter 11: Climate Resilience (pages 360-363) and the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 399-401) demonstrate how the Plan meets State Planning Goal 14.

The Chapter 11 goal outlines the future conditions the Plan aims to achieve – *Enhance the ability of communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related impacts, including flooding.*

Policies establish a way to encourage climate resilient communities. They support proactive mitigation investments aimed at reducing risk and increasing resilience. They promote working with the environment instead of against it by utilizing natural flood mitigation services, limiting growth in high-flood-risk areas, and encouraging flood-conscious development in existing growth areas. Other priorities include planning for hot weather, community collaboration, regional capacity building, and meaningful participation in resiliency planning and decision-making.

To effectively implement the policies and achieve the goal, the RRPC will take several realistic actions. Actions involve developing and implementing plans, studies, and agreements that empower towns to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. A rough timeframe for implementation, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners are included for each action in the Implementation Matrix.

Progress indicators are data-driven measures of how close the Region is to meeting its goals. The RRPC will monitor progress throughout the Plan’s effective life and will annually report on ten key indicators (denoted in bold font in the Implementation Matrix).

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

Page numbers: 29-34 (Chapter 1); 37-363 (Chapters 2-11); 386-401 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: As described in Chapter 1: Introduction, the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan is “a collaborative guide to shaping a healthy, equitable, and resilient Region.” This vision statement established the framework and direction for the Plan’s goals, policies, and actions to achieve coordinated and efficient community economic development in the Region, balancing economic growth with social, cultural, and environmental priorities. The Plan is designed in accordance with the core principles, which are rooted in the RRPC’s Declaration of Inclusion and Title VI Plan: flexible, locally led, equitable and sustainable, and outcome-driven. The Structure of the Plan on pages 30-34 explains that the Plan addresses all required elements and defines what it means to be a healthy,

equitable, and resilient community – dominant themes that the RRPC believes are important to achieving our community economic development goals.

Chapters 2-11 (pages 37-363) begin with a discussion of the dominant themes and what healthy, equitable, and resilient communities look like within that topic area. Current conditions and future trends further illustrate environmental benefits and burdens, providing context on their extent and how they may change over time.

Policies in the Plan guide the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. Across multiple chapters, these policies protect communities from disproportionate environmental burdens, enhance equitable access to environmental benefits, and promote healthy, equitable, and resilient communities at both local and regional scales. Many policies include “shall” statements that establish clear requirements for developers, and Act 250 regional plan conformance serves as one mechanism to ensure these policies result in substantial progress toward State Planning Goal 15.

To effectively implement these policies beyond Act 250, the RRPC will undertake practical actions to help municipalities mitigate environmental burdens and increase access to environmental benefits. Each action in the Implementation Matrix in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation (pages 386-401) includes a rough timeframe, estimated level of effort, approximate cost, and potential partners to support realistic implementation.

The RRPC conducted an [equity analysis](#) as part of the planning process to embed equity in both the vision and implementation of the Plan. The findings from the analysis shaped the RRPC’s assessment of equity impacts while updating the Plan. During the implementation phase of the Plan, the RRPC will continue to analyze whether communities disproportionately bear burdens, such as environmental impacts or lack of access in rural areas.

## PART B – CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF A REGIONAL PLAN

Per 24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(4), for the Land Use Review Board to issue a determination of plan compliance, it must find that the plan is consistent with the purposes of a regional plan as established in 24 V.S.A. § 4347. “Consistency” is defined in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1), and above.

Please provide detailed information describing how the plan is consistent with the purposes of a regional plan.

### 24 V.S.A. § 4347 – PURPOSES OF A REGIONAL PLAN

A regional plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, efficient, equitable, and economic development of the region that will, in accordance with the present and future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and welfare of current and future inhabitants as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. This general purpose includes recommending a distribution of population and of the uses of the land for urbanization, trade, industry, habitation, recreation, agriculture, forestry, and other uses as will tend to:

- (1) create conditions favorable to transportation, health, safety, civic activities, and educational and cultural opportunities;
- (2) reduce the wastes of financial, energy, and human resources that result from either excessive congestion or excessive scattering of population;
- (3) promote an efficient and economic utilization of drainage, energy, sanitary, and other facilities and resources;
- (4) promote the conservation of the supply of food, water, energy, and minerals;
- (5) promote the production of food and fiber resources and the reasonable use of mineral, water, and renewable energy resources;
- (6) promote the development of housing suitable to the needs of the region and its communities; and
- (7) help communities equitably build resilience to address the effects of climate change through mitigation and adaptation consistent with the Vermont Climate Action Plan adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 592 and 3 V.S.A. chapter 72.

Page numbers: 15-34 (Chapter 1)

Narrative: The information presented in Chapter 1: Introduction demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the general purposes of a regional plan.

The chapter begins on page 16 with an explanation of what the Rutland Regional Planning Commission is and what it does, including the responsibility for developing a regional plan. A brainstorming session at an RRPC staff retreat in October 2023 produced the vision statement for the 2026 Rutland Regional Plan – “*The Rutland Regional Plan is a collaborative guide to shaping a healthy, equitable, and resilient Region.*” This vision established the framework and direction for the Plan’s goals, policies, and actions to achieve coordinated and efficient community economic development in the Region, balancing economic growth with social, cultural, and environmental priorities.

On pages 16-29, characteristics unique to the Region are described – 1) its geography and physiographic regions and how these influence historic, present, and future development patterns; 2) population trends to help answer questions about the types and numbers of people expected to reside in the Region, which is needed to assess future demand for resources and services; and 3) socioeconomic trends, which are relevant to understanding drivers of change, how to guide change, and when it is time to act.

Pages 29-30 explain the general purpose of the Plan to shape the pattern, design, and function of communities to meet future needs effectively. The Plan’s core design principles, rooted in the RRPC’s Declaration of Inclusion and Title VI Plan, are presented in the sidebar on page 31.

Pages 30-34 include an explanation of the Plan’s structure, how it addresses all the required regional plan elements, and why the themes of health, equity, and resilience are important to achieving our community economic development goals.

**PART C – REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF A REGIONAL PLAN**

Per 24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(4), for the Land Use Review Board to issue a determination of plan compliance, it must find that the plan is consistent with the regional plan elements as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a, except that the requirements of 24 V.S.A. § 4352 related to enhanced energy planning are under the sole authority of the Department of Public Service.

Please provide details about how the regional plan is consistent with the regional plan elements listed below.

**(1) A statement of basic policies of the region to guide the future growth and development of land and of public services and facilities, and to protect the environment**

*Page numbers:* 386-401 (Chapter 13)

*Narrative:* Taken together, the Plan’s policies demonstrate how the Plan is consistent with Required Element 1. The policies outline how to coordinate and promote efficient community economic development, striking a balance between growth and development and other social, cultural, and environmental priorities. The Plan’s policies are summarized in the Implementation Matrix presented in Chapter 13: Plan Implementation.

**(2) A natural resources and working lands element, which shall consist of a map or maps and policies, based on ecosystem function, consistent with Vermont Conservation Design, support compact centers surrounded by rural and working lands, and that:**

- (A) Indicates those areas of significant natural resources, including existing and proposed for forests, wetlands, vernal pools, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, floodplains, river corridors, recreation, agriculture using the agricultural lands identification process established in 6 V.S.A. § 8, residence, commerce, industry, public, and semipublic uses, open spaces, areas reserved for flood plain, forest blocks, habitat connectors, recreation areas and recreational trails, and areas identified by the State, regional planning commissions, or municipalities 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) Indicates those areas that have the potential to sustain agriculture and recommendations for maintaining them that may include transfer of development rights, acquisition of development rights, or farmer assistance programs.
- (C) 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 regional planning commission.
- (D) Encourages preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources.
- (E) Encourages protection and improvement of the quality of waters of the State to be used in the development and furtherance of the applicable basin plans established by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 V.S.A. § 1253.

*Page numbers:* 101-126 (Chapter 4); 271-295 (Chapter 9); 297-331 (Chapter 10)

*Narrative:* In the narrative, please describe how the plan’s policies, actions, and future land use areas support the intent of 10 VSA 2802 (i.e., 30x30 and 50x50 conservation goals).

The Natural Resources chapter (Chapter 10) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the natural resources element, except for scenic and historic resources. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a natural resources perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an analysis of the current state of the Region's natural resources—air, surface water, groundwater, wildlife and their habitats, and forests. The analysis covers the quality of these resources, the systems in place to manage them, and how their conservation connects to community economic development, along with the strengths, assets, and challenges present. After establishing a baseline, the chapter then describes the trends shaping the future of the Region's natural resources and strategies to maintain and improve their quality and promote their wise and efficient use. Potential areas to achieve the 30x30 and 50x50 conservation targets are discussed on page 326. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan's natural resources goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

The Cultural Resources chapter (Chapter 4) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the scenic and historic parts of the natural resources element. This chapter details a path forward to preserve and protect the Region's identity, which is deeply rooted in its historic, archaeological, scenic, and cultural resources. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a cultural resources perspective. This is followed by an analysis of the current state of the Region's cultural assets. The analysis looks at the role of cultural resources in defining identity, shaping local economies, and supporting communities. It also outlines persistent challenges, including underinvestment, lack of capacity, and barriers to equitable access. After establishing a baseline, the chapter then describes the trends shaping the future of the Region's cultural resources and strategies to preserve and strengthen them amid demographic shifts, climate change, housing pressures, and generational turnover. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan's cultural resources goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

The Working Landscape chapter (Chapter 9) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the working lands element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a working landscape perspective. This is followed by an analysis of the current agricultural (system for production of food resources) and forestry (system for production of fiber resources) industries in the Region, how these industries relate to community economic development, and the strengths, assets, and challenges present. After establishing a baseline, the chapter then outlines the trends shaping the future of the Region's working lands and strategies to preserve their long-term viability, promote the manufacture and marketing of value-added products, encourage the use of locally-grown food, implement sound management practices, and plan public investment to reduce development pressure on agricultural and forest land. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan's working landscape goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(3) An energy element, including an analysis of resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the region across all energy sectors, including electric, thermal, and transportation; a statement of policy on the conservation and efficient use of energy and the development and siting of renewable energy resources; a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy; and an 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.**

*Page numbers:* 239-268 (Chapter 8) & 425-428 (Appendix)

Narrative: The Enhanced Energy chapter (Chapter 8) and its appendix demonstrate how the Plan is consistent with the energy element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from an energy perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. In addition, this chapter includes an equity impacts analysis special section on pages 242-243 to meet the requirements of Act 174. This is followed by an analysis of regional energy consumption and generation to understand current use and gauge the trajectories and pace of change required. The analysis examines current energy use across the thermal, transportation, and energy sectors, evaluating resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the Region. After establishing a baseline, the chapter then describes the trends shaping the future of energy in the Region. It presents targets by sector to reduce total energy use, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and increase renewable electricity generation by 2050. The targets achieve these reductions through energy conservation and gradual fuel switching at natural replacement points, ensuring affordability, equity, and long-term sustainability. This chapter also includes a special section on pages 264-265 outlining the Public Utility Commission Section 248 process for the siting of electric generation and transmission facilities and the Section 248 Review Criteria to be used by the RRPC when reviewing a Certificate of Public Good application for energy projects. The criteria are divided into Universal (applicable to all energy projects) and technology-specific requirements. It concludes with a listing of the Plan's energy goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(4) A transportation element consisting of a statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities, and a map showing existing and proposed highways, including limited access highways, and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, anticipated points of congestion, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, and recommendations to meet future needs for such facilities, with indications of priorities of need, costs, and method of financing.**

Page numbers: 129-177 (Chapter 5) & 421-422 (Appendix)

Narrative: The Transportation chapter (Chapter 5) and its appendix demonstrate how the Plan is consistent with the transportation element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a transportation systems perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an overview of the Region's current multi-modal transportation network, how these facilities relate to community economic development, and the strengths, assets, and challenges present. The strengths of the current system include walkable centers and diverse infrastructure, while its challenges include safety risks, inconsistent maintenance, and vulnerabilities to climate impacts. After establishing a baseline, the chapter examines future trends and how broader demographic shifts, economic changes, and environmental pressures are anticipated to impact transportation needs and priorities. Understanding these trends is essential to ensuring the Region's transportation systems remain safe, resilient, and aligned with community values. It concludes with a listing of the Plan's transportation goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(5) A utility and facility element, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective local and regional community facilities and public utilities, whether publicly or privately owned, showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including public schools, State office buildings, hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, wireless telecommunications facilities and ancillary improvements, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse**

**disposal, storm drainage, and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for those facilities, with indications of priority of need.**

Page numbers: 199-236 (Chapter 7)

Narrative: The Community Facilities and Public Utilities chapter (Chapter 7) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the utility and facility element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a community facilities and public utilities perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an overview of existing local and regional community facilities, utilities, and services, how these relate to community economic development, and the strengths, assets, and challenges present. This chapter specifically examines municipal facilities (town offices, libraries, parks and recreation facilities, town garages, public safety facilities), public water and wastewater utilities, municipal services (elected, appointed, staff), education and vocational training facilities, healthcare, childcare, non-commercial recreation facilities, electric utilities, telecommunications, and solid waste and recycling. After establishing a baseline for this broad and diverse element, the chapter examines future trends shaping community facilities, utilities, and services, as well as strategies to realize a dynamic, inclusive, and interconnected system designed to meet evolving community needs. This chapter also includes a special section on page 232 presenting the siting criteria the RRPC will use to review Certificate of Public Good applications for telecommunications projects under the Public Utility Commission Section 248a approval process. It concludes with a listing of the Plan’s community facilities and public utilities goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(7) A program for the implementation of the regional plan’s objectives, including a recommended investment strategy for regional facilities and services based on a capacity study of the elements in this section.**

Page numbers: 37-76 (Chapter 2); 199-236 (Chapter 7); 297-331 (Chapter 10); 333-363 (Chapter 11); 373-401 (Chapter 13)

Narrative: The Plan Implementation chapter (Chapter 13) provides a coordinated program for the implementation of the Plan. The Land Use chapter (Chapter 2) and Community Facilities and Public Utilities chapter (Chapter 7) policies and actions outline a recommended investment strategy for regional facilities and services and are based on a capacity study. The Development Constraint section (pages 48–50) of the Land Use chapter (Chapter 2) provides a land capacity baseline, identifying where development can occur by analyzing infrastructure access, soils for onsite septic, flood risk, and environmental constraints. The Community Facilities and Public Utilities chapter (Chapter 7), Natural Resources chapter (Chapter 10), and Climate Resilience chapter (Chapter 11) provide greater depth on these geographic constraints, offering more detailed data collection on the limits that affect future development.

**(8) A statement indicating how the regional plan relates to development trends, needs, and plans and regional plans for adjacent municipalities and regions.**

Page numbers: 365-370 (Chapter 12)

Narrative: The Neighboring Plans chapter (Chapter 12) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with required element 8. This chapter begins with an overview of regional planning in neighboring communities in both Vermont and New York. This is followed by statements, by region, of the development trends and plan consistency.

**(9) A housing element that identifies the regional and community-level need for housing that will result in an adequate supply of building code and energy code compliant homes where most households spend not more than 30 percent of their income on housing and not more than 15 percent on transportation. To**

**establish housing needs, the Department of Housing and Community Development shall publish statewide and regional housing targets or ranges as part of the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment. The regional planning commission shall consult the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment; current and expected demographic data; the current location, quality, types, and cost of housing; other local studies related to housing needs; and data gathered pursuant to subsection 4382(c) of this title. If no such data has been gathered, the regional planning commission shall gather it. The regional planning commission's assessment shall estimate the total needed housing investments in terms of price, quality, unit size or type, and zoning district as applicable and shall disaggregate regional housing targets or ranges by municipality. The housing element shall include a set of recommended actions to satisfy the established needs.**

*Page numbers:* 179-197 (Chapter 6) & [Appendix](#)

[This appendix will be included in the Final Draft Plan released for the first public hearing.]

*Narrative:* The Housing chapter (Chapter 6) and its appendix demonstrate how the Plan is consistent with the housing element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a housing perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an overview of the current total housing need, as well as housing need broken down by type, location, and price. Housing needs for resiliency, for unhoused people, for older adults, and to meet workforce needs are also discussed. After establishing a baseline, the chapter examines future trends and how broader demographic shifts, economic changes, and environmental pressures are anticipated to impact housing needs and priorities. The Appendix demonstrates that the Plan was developed in consultation with the 2025 Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, and disaggregates the statewide targets to provide a clearer understanding of each town's share. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan's housing goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(10) 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.**

*Page numbers:* 79-99 (Chapter 3)

*Narrative:* The Economic Development chapter (Chapter 3) demonstrates how the Plan is consistent with the economic development element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from an economic development perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an overview of the Region's current economic landscape, employers, income, workforce, downtown and village economy, rural economy, and alignment with the West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Having established a baseline, the chapter addresses future trends, the most promising areas of business and job growth in the Region, and where future expansion should be prioritized. It examines attracting new workers and expanding the workforce, as well as business development, job creation, workforce development, employee retention, and infrastructure resilience.

The Region's economic future depends on its ability to retain local talent, attract new residents, and support a diverse and resilient business ecosystem. As this chapter illustrates, the Region's economy is shaped by a mix of small businesses, essential industries, and educational institutions that together form the backbone for local opportunity. Yet, persistent challenges remain, including workforce shortages, income disparities, and aging infrastructure that will require coordinated, forward-looking strategies. By investing in workforce development, modern infrastructure, and entrepreneurial systems, the Region can build a more sustainable and opportunity-

rich economy. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan’s economic development goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(11)(A) A flood resilience element 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 this subdivision (A) and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and public investments.**

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

*Page numbers:* 333-363 (Chapter 11) & 429-430 (Appendix)

*Narrative:* The Climate Resilience chapter (Chapter 11) and its appendix demonstrate how the Plan is consistent with the flood resilience element. It starts by describing what a healthy, equitable, and resilient community looks like from a climate resilience perspective. The qualities of a healthy, equitable, and resilient community define what makes a place great, so they are highlighted early in the chapter. Likewise, past and current traits of an unhealthy, inequitable, and vulnerable community determine why a place may be undesirable, so they are identified early in the chapter. This is followed by an overview of the current conditions in the Region, including changes in climate trends since 1900 and risks posed by the most common disasters. It further evaluates the cascading effects of climate change on four domains (the built environment, natural environment, economy, and people and society) and the various determinants of community vulnerability and resilience. After establishing a baseline, the chapter examines future trends and strategies to achieve regional resilience in each of the four domains. The chapter concludes with a listing of the Plan’s climate resilience goal, policies to achieve the goal, actions to implement the policies, and indicators to track progress.

**(12) A future land use element, based upon the elements in this section, that sets forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity, and character of such land uses in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and services and that consists of a map delineating future land use area boundaries for the land uses in subdivisions (A)–(J) of this subdivision (12) as appropriate and any other special land use category the regional planning commission deems necessary; descriptions of intended future land uses; and policies intended to support the implementation of the future land use element using the land use categories as defined by 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(12)**

*Use the following mapping checklist to demonstrate conformance with this required element of the regional plan. In the General Narrative, please describe the process by which the RPC determined how the areas proposed for growth (Downtown and Village Centers, Planned Growth Areas, and Village Areas) can accommodate a substantial majority of the region’s housing targets.*

*Definitions for each land use category can be found in [24 V.S.A. § 4348a\(a\)\(12\)](#). In addition, [Mapping Process and Standards v 3.0](#) summarizes the methodology and planning considerations followed by RPCs in developing the future land use map.*

*Page numbers:* 37-76 (Chapter 2) & 418-420 (Appendix)

General Narrative: The RRPC reviewed and configured Future Land Use Category boundaries to ensure they can accommodate a substantial majority of the Region’s housing target of 5,021 units by 2040. While most of the approximately 14,500 acres in the designated growth areas are already developed, the RRPC assumed that roughly 10 percent of this land (1,450 acres) could support housing growth through redevelopment—such as converting vacant buildings or single-family homes to multi-family units—or through new development, including infill or greenfield projects. At a modest average density of 3.5 units per acre, these 1,450 acres could accommodate 5,075 units, slightly exceeding the regional target. Even at a lower density of 2 units per acre, the same acreage could provide 2,900 units, representing roughly 58% of the 5,021-unit target, a majority. Much of this land is zoned for higher densities, up to 5 units per acre or greater, and is served by municipal water and sewer, demonstrating that the area can accommodate a substantial majority or even the entirety of the Region’s housing target.

**Downtown Center**

(4) Municipalities with a Downtown Center:

- 1) Brandon\*
- 2) Fair Haven\*
- 3) Rutland City\*
- 4) Poultney\*

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

\*Denotes a legacy designation; note Fair Haven’s 2025 Downtown Center application is pending.

**Village Center**

(25) Municipalities with a Village Center(s):

- 1) Benson (1): Benson Village Center\*
- 2) Brandon (1): **Forestdale Village Center**
- 3) Castleton (3): Castleton Village Center\*, Castleton Corners Village Center\*, Hydeville Village Center\*
- 4) Chittenden (2): Chittenden Village Center\*, North Chittenden Village Center\*
- 5) Clarendon (3): Clarendon Springs Village Center\*, **North Clarendon Village Center, Clarendon Village Center**
- 6) Danby (1): Danby Village Center\*
- 7) Fair Haven (1): **South Fair Haven Village Center**
- 8) Ira (1): Ira Village Center\*
- 9) Killington (1): **Killington Village Center**
- 10) Mendon (1): Mendon Village Center\*
- 11) Middletown Springs (1): Middletown Springs Village Center\*
- 12) Mount Holly (2): Belmont Village Center\*, **Mount Holly Village Center**
- 13) Mount Tabor (1): **Mount Tabor Village Center**
- 14) Pawlet (2): Pawlet Village Center\*, West Pawlet Village Center\*
- 15) Pittsford (1): Pittsford Village Center\*
- 16) Poultney (1): East Poultney Village Center\*
- 17) Proctor (1): Proctor Village Center\*
- 18) Rutland Town (1): **Center Rutland Village Center**
- 19) Shrewsbury (2): **North Shrewsbury Village Center, Cuttingsville Village Center**
- 20) Sudbury (1): Sudbury Village Center\*

- 21) Tinmouth (1): Tinmouth Village Center\*
- 22) Wallingford (3): Wallingford Village Center\*, South Wallingford Village Center\*, East Wallingford Village Center\*
- 23) Wells (1): Wells Village Center\*
- 24) West Haven (1): **West Haven Village Center**
- 25) West Rutland (1): West Rutland Village Center\*

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

\*Denotes a legacy designation (24); note the Fair Haven Village Center is omitted here as it will be superseded by a Downtown Center (see above). **Bold** denotes a new designation (11).

**Planned Growth Area**

(10) Municipalities with a Planned Growth Area: Brandon, Castleton, Fair Haven, Pawlet, Pittsford, Poultney, Proctor, Rutland City, Wallingford, West Rutland

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

RRPC did not “review boundary against parcel lines and snap to parcel lines where reasonable” and instead relied on boundaries determined by the datasets as specified in state law, including water and sewer service areas, planning and zoning boundaries, and flood hazard/river corridors. Boundaries were further modified based on local input that RRPC felt was consistent with state law. This approach ensures the Plan is more closely aligned with municipal intent and maintains regional consistency.

Extensions of water or wastewater mapping were not considered because local planning priorities focus on growth within existing service areas. Areas that could potentially accommodate future extensions were instead categorized as Village Area, as they meet statutory requirements for Village Area but not for Planned Growth Area.

While some towns have pending subdivision regulations, adoption is expected before final Plan approval.

**Village Area**

(10) Municipalities with a Village Area: Benson, Brandon, Castleton, Fair Haven, Mendon, Pawlet, Pittsford, Poultney, Shrewsbury, Wallingford

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

RRPC did not “review boundary against parcel lines and snap to parcel lines where reasonable” and instead relied on boundaries determined by the datasets specified in state law (water and sewer service areas, planning and zoning boundaries, and flood hazard/river corridors). Boundaries were further modified based on local input that RRPC felt was consistent with state law. This approach ensures the Plan is more closely aligned with municipal intent and maintains regional consistency.

While some towns have pending subdivision regulations, adoption is expected before final Plan approval.

**Enterprise Areas**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

**Transition Areas**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

**Resource-based Recreation Areas**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

**Hamlets**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

**Rural Areas: General**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

All rural E911 buildings and a 300-foot surrounding buffer have been reclassified as Rural General to ensure consistent treatment of rural buildings, better reflect conditions on the ground, and support rural redevelopment by encouraging new development to cluster near existing structures rather than further fragmenting open land. This reclassification also incorporates public comments received during the planning process as previously rural buildings were inconsistently classified across rural designations, and buffers were applied inconsistently around buildings due to reliance on boundaries defined by Vermont Conservation Design data layers. To further ensure consistency, rural road right-of-way parcels and railway right-of-way parcels are also classified as Rural General. Aligning the Rural General classification with existing settlement patterns and municipal priorities ensures a more coherent and locally relevant rural land use framework.

**Rural Areas: Agriculture and Forestry**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

Boundaries are based on parcels enrolled in the Current Use (UVA) program as of 2023, except where parcels qualify for another growth-related designation (e.g., Village Area) or are affected by the classification of all rural E911 buildings and their 300-foot buffers as “Rural (General).” Current Use designations reflect ongoing agricultural and forestry management activities. At the local request, RRPC excluded certain forest block parcels

in Mount Holly and modified boundaries to better align with the Mount Holly Municipal Plan's Future Land Use Map.

**Rural Areas: Conservation**

- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards.
- RPC mapped this area consistent with the mapping process and standards with the following modifications to address local and regional context:

Boundaries are influenced by the reclassification of all rural E911 buildings and their 300-foot surrounding buffers as Rural General, along with rural road and railway right-of-way parcels, ensuring conservation areas remain distinct from developed areas.

## PART D – COMPATIBILITY WITH ADJACENT REGIONAL PLANNING AREAS

Per 24 V.S.A. § 4348(h)(4), for the Land Use Review Board to issue a determination of plan compliance, it must find that the plan is compatible with adjacent regional planning areas. 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(2) defines “compatibility” as follows:

(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.

Page numbers: 365-370 (Chapter 12)

Narrative: The Neighboring Plans chapter (Chapter 12) demonstrates how the Plan is compatible with adjacent regional planning areas. This chapter provides consistency statements explaining how the Plan is compatible with the regional plans of the five adjacent Vermont Regional Planning Commissions.

### Version log

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- Version 1 – original draft
- Version 2 – incorporating LURB feedback to ask more specifically about how the process promoted “meaningful engagement.”
- Version 3 – Corrected typos. Changed “comments – optional” to “narrative.” Added text prompting explanation of how each section’s requirements were met. Finalized text about describing how meaningful engagement was undertaken.
- Version 3.1 – Corrected typos, edited all statutory references to ensure consistent format, corrected one inaccurate statutory reference on page 15; made very minor wording changes to “New Tier 1B Requests” and “Part B” headings. Added instructions to address Act 59 goals and how areas planned for growth can accommodate housing targets.