

**TO: Regional Commissioners  
Other Interested Persons**

**FROM: Jerry Fredrickson, Chairperson  
Peter G. Gregory, Executive Director**

**DATE: February 17, 2022**

**RE: Next Commission Meeting – February 23, 2022**

---

TRORC will hold its next meeting on **Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85966382911?pwd=aGptem1ZSlIzaHdLTmxhS2V3TVIzQT09>

Meeting ID: 859 6638 2911

Passcode: 109570

One tap mobile

+16465189805,,85966382911#,,,,\*109570# US (New York)

+16465588656,,85966382911#,,,,\*109570# US (New York)

### **Proposed Agenda**

- 1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda/Introductions/Public Comment on items not on the Agenda – 6:30 p.m.**
- 2. Public Hearing. Proposed Tunbridge Town Plan review and Tunbridge Confirmation**
- 3. Public Hearing. Tunbridge Determination of Energy Compliance**
- 4. Tunbridge Town Plan Approval, Tunbridge Confirmation of Planning Effort, Determination of Energy Compliance – Action. (Draft Decisions attached)**
- 5. Acceptance of the December and January Financial Reports (attached)**
- 6. Approval of TRORC Board Minutes from December 15, 2021 (attached)**

**7. Staff Presentation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP). Links to these two state plans:**

<https://climatechange.vermont.gov/sites/climatecouncilsandbox/files/2021-12/Initial%20Climate%20Action%20Plan%20-%20Final%20-%2012-1-21.pdf>

[https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/2022VermontComprehensiveEnergyPlan\\_0.pdf](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/2022VermontComprehensiveEnergyPlan_0.pdf)

**8. Staff presentation on draft TRORC Communications and Outreach Plan**

**9. Staff/Commissioner Updates**

- a. Commissioner Items
- b. Legislative Updates
- c. Other

**10. Adjournment – 8:00 p.m.**

NOTE: If you are unable to attend, please notify your town's other representative so he or she can attend. Thank you!

*The next TRORC Board Meeting is scheduled for **March 23, 2022**. A full packet and agenda will be sent out to Commissioners in mid-March.*

**RE: TOWN OF TUNBRIDGE, VERMONT  
PLAN REVIEW  
CASE # FY 22-1**

**BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A., Section 4350, the Town of Tunbridge, Vermont requested TRORC to review and approve the Tunbridge Town Plan adopted on December 14, 2021. The Plan encompasses all land in the Town of Tunbridge and is referred to hereinafter as the Plan.

24 V.S.A. § 4350 provides that prior to approving a Plan, the Regional Commission find that the Plan meets four tests. These tests are that the Plan is:

- A. Consistent with the planning goals in Section 4302 of Chapter 117;
- B. Compatible with the Regional Plan;
- C. Compatible with the approved plans of other municipalities within the Region; and
- D. Inclusive of all elements required of a plan as set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 4382.

Staff reviewed this Plan and offers the following information to the Board. TRORC scheduled and held a Public Hearing on this review on Wednesday, February 23, 2022. This matter is now ready for decision.

**This review is based upon the Town Plan as adopted.**

**FINDINGS**

**A. Is the Plan consistent with the planning goals?**

*NOTE: "Consistent with the goals" requires substantial progress toward attainment of the goals, 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.*

**General Goals**

- 1. Are municipal decisions guided by a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework?**  
Yes. The 2021 Tunbridge Town Plan is a comprehensive planning document that guides municipal decision making.
- 2. Is citizen participation encouraged at all levels of the planning process?**  
Yes. citizens provided input to the Planning Commission to inform revisions to the Plan.

**3. Is consideration being given to the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development?**

Yes. The Plan recognizes that Tunbridge is “a prime candidate for growth” and encourages “controlled and orderly growth” that does not compromise Tunbridge’s rural character (p. 7, 10).

**4. Is the municipality working creatively together with other municipalities to develop and implement plans?**

Yes. Tunbridge shares numerous activities and services with the surrounding towns including schools, emergency services and recreational opportunities. Tunbridge recommends encouraging “continued communication and cooperation between Tunbridge and its neighboring towns” (p. 99). Tunbridge plans to do this by exchanging “planning information and development data with neighboring communities” (p. 100).

### Specific Goals

A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302, which are:

**1. Planning for development needs to be conducted to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.**

**a. Is intensive residential development being encouraged primarily in areas that are identified as community centers, and is strip development along highways being discouraged?**

Yes. The Plan encourages the density of development to reflect existing settlement patterns (p. 63). Further, strip development “shall not be located outside Tunbridge’s Village Center Areas” (p. 63).

**b. Is economic growth being encouraged in locally designated growth areas or being employed to revitalize existing urban or village centers, or both?**

Yes. Tunbridge encourages home, cottage, and agriculture related businesses and “use of existing buildings in an appropriate manner” (p. 26). Tunbridge supports “economic projects that trigger Act 250 provided they are in accordance with the provisions in this Town Plan.” However, “chain retail enterprises shall not be located in Tunbridge” regardless of placement (p. 63).

**c. Are public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, being made so as to reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area?**

Yes. Tunbridge supports multi-unit affordable housing as long as it does not burden existing infrastructure (p. 34). Additionally, “major public investments, such as improvements to Route 110,” are encouraged and endorsed as long as it does not “endanger character of the Village Centers” (p. 63).

**d. Is development being undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles?**

Yes, development policies throughout the Plan are in accordance with smart growth principles. The Town's policy is to keep housing affordable by encouraging "accessory apartments, multi-dwelling units, and clustered developments" (p. 33). Development will shall also "respect traditional scales, portions, and shapes of the surrounding village" (p. 63).

**2. Does the Plan provide for a strong and diverse economy; provide satisfying and rewarding job opportunities that maintain high environmental standards; and expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes?**

Yes, partly. The Plan notes most residents of Tunbridge work out of town although there is support for adding small business to the villages and cottage industries to homes (p. 9). Tunbridge encourages the implementation of services like widespread internet access to encourage home businesses, but because agriculture is the "backbone of the town" economic policies that prioritize agriculture are adopted leaving less room for diverse economy (p. 26). The Town desires growth but is not willing to stray from the agricultural character, so it needs to take further actionable steps to change this reality.

**3. Does the Plan broaden access to education and vocational training opportunities for residents identified in the Plan?**

Yes, partly. Although there are not many opportunities for adult or vocational education in town, there are five higher education options in neighboring towns. Tunbridge's goal is to ensure these opportunities are available for all residents by encouraging residents to take advantage of adult education programs (p. 39). The Plan seeks to take advantage of Village Designation benefits to improve educational facilities and encompass vocational and place-based learning initiatives and outdoor recreation (p. 39). Tunbridge could speak more on expanding partnerships with neighboring higher educational opportunities.

**4. Planning needs 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. Does the Plan provide that highways, air, rail, and other means of transportation be mutually supportive, balanced, and integrated?**

Yes, in part. The Plan addresses the lack of public transportation, rail lines, and airports. The Town supports increased facilities for transit services and "efforts to provide public and private transportation systems that meet the needs of all population segments" (p. 54). Providing safe travel via sidewalks, crosswalks and bike paths is supported but could be strengthened in future plans with policies and actions.

**5. Planning needs to identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the community's landscape.**

**a. Have special areas been identified, including significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and**

**wetlands; significant scenic roads, waterways, and views; and important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas?**

Yes. The Plan identifies fragile conservation areas wetlands, forest blocks and floodplains. The Natural Resources chapter identifies and discusses different goals and recommendations to protect natural areas.

**6. Planning needs to maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife and land resources.**

**a. Is air, water, wildlife, mineral and land resources being planned for development and use under the principles set forth in Act 250?**

Yes, mostly. The Plan identifies these resources and discusses ways to prevent adverse impacts from land use and development. Tunbridge supports the extraction and processing of mineral resources on existing and proposed processing facilities while minimizing adverse effects on the other resources such as water quality and fish and wildlife habitats (p. 83).

**b. Is water quality being maintained and improved on according to the policies and actions set forth in the basin plans?**

Yes. The Land Use section addresses careful review of potential land use projects that may threaten groundwater quality and quantity (p. 66). The Natural Resources section addresses other areas of water quality regarding wetlands and floodplains.

**c. Are forestlands managed so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors?**

Yes. The Town's goal is to "protect scenic areas, open space, forest blocks and wildlife corridors" by evaluating subdivision layouts (p. 64).

**7. Planning needs to make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.**

**a. Are general strategies included for achieving these goals to include increasing 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?**

Yes. The Plan outlines these goals, policies, and recommendations in the Energy chapter. The Plan encourages responsible development of local renewable energy sources and reduced dependence on outside energy sources (p. 96). The Town encourages reduced commuting distances, the commercial and residential conservation of energy, and energy efficient home occupations (p. 97).

**b. Are specific strategies and recommendations for achieving these goals identified in the State energy plan included in the Plan?**

Yes. The Town's goal is to have 650 electric vehicles in town within 15 years and 90%

renewable energy by 2050 (p. 88, 90).

**8. Planning needs to maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.**

**a. Is growth being planned so as not to significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities?**

Yes. The Plan discusses partnerships to enhance recreational opportunities, providing accessible opportunities for outdoor recreation and connection to the natural world (p. 45). The Town also considers preserving Class 4 roads for recreational use (p. 55).

**b. Has public access to non-commercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, been identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate?**

Yes. The Plan lists increased use of hiking horseback trail riding, road bike riding, mountain bike trail riding, and backcountry skiing and snowshoeing (p. 44). The Town makes mention of working with surrounding towns to connect trail systems and supporting mix-use trail development (p. 46).

**9. Planning needs to encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.**

**a. Have strategies to protect long-term viability of agriculture and forestlands been encouraged, including maintaining low overall density?**

Yes. The Plan makes many mentions of protecting agriculture. The Town's goal is to "maintain the character of Tunbridge's rural countryside and support agriculture, forestry, and recreational uses in these areas, as well as low-density residential uses" (p. 64).

**b. Has the manufacture and marketing of value added agricultural and forest products been encouraged?**

Yes. The Plan discusses the importance of maintaining a working landscapes for agriculture uses. The Plan "supports the local exchange of agricultural products and the creation of value-added farm and forest products" (p. 26).

**c. Is the use of locally grown food products encouraged?**

Yes. The promotion of locally grown food is encouraged through the Tunbridge Farmer's Market (p. 60).

**d. Are sound forest and agricultural management practices encouraged?**

Yes. The Town "encourages sound forest and agriculture management practices" (p. 60).

**e. Are public investments planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land?**

Yes. Major public investments "should be encouraged and endorsed only on finding that they will not unreasonably or unnecessarily jeopardize or endanger the character of the Village Centers" (p. 63).

**10. Does the plan provide for the wise and efficient use of natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetics of the area?**

Yes. Existing and proposed mineral extraction shall be planned and managed to not to adversely impact uses around the site, not significantly interfere with the function and safety of roads, minimize adverse effects on water quality, fish and wildlife habitats, viewsheds and adjacent land uses, and reclaim and re-vegetate sites following extraction (p. 83).

**11. Planning needs to ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing.**

**a. Is housing encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income?**

Yes. The Plan discusses goals, policies, and recommendations for providing new housing and creation of affordable housing including multi and single dwelling units. Tunbridge supports the creation “of affordable housing that meets the definition of affordability in that it accounts for no more than 30% of an individual’s income” (p. 33).

**b. Does the plan provide for new and rehabilitated housing to be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities?**

Yes. The Plan calls the location of housing and related amenities to be “planned with due regard to the physical limitations of the site and its proximity to current or planned public and private services such as roads and commercial/service centers” (p. 33)

**c. Are sites for multi-family and manufactured housing readily available in similar locations to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings?**

Yes, several goals and policies speak to this in the Housing Chapter.

**d. Does the plan provide for accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences allowing close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons?**

Yes. The Town encourages the use of accessory apartments, and a policy is “to keep housing affordable by encouraging accessory apartments, multi-dwelling units, and clustered developments” (p. 33).

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

**a. Do public facilities and services address plans for such services as fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal?**

Yes. The Utilities, Facilities and Recreation section and the Health Emergency Services section discuss these needs.

**b. Does the rate of growth exceed the ability of the town and the area to provide facilities and services?**

No. The Town ensures “the timing and rate of new housing construction or rehabilitation does not exceed the community's ability to provide adequate public facilities” (p. 33).

**13. Does the plan ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare and integrate childcare issues into the planning process, including childcare financing, infrastructure, business assistance for childcare providers, and childcare work force development?**

Yes. The Plan states that there are only two licensed childcare providers in Tunbridge (p. 37). The Town encourages “the creation of affordable childcare facilities that meet the established needs of residents” (p. 39). Although the Plan states, most residents currently arrange care with relatives or take their children to neighboring town facilities, an expanded childcare plan could be of use and data should be updated (p. 38).

**14. Planning needs to encourage flood resilient communities.**

**Is new development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas avoided? If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.**

Yes, the Plan discourages structural development and placement of fill within the limits of the Special Flood Hazard Areas (p. 76).

**a. Is the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion encouraged?**

Yes. The Plan’s policy is to “maintain Tunbridge’s upland forests and watershed predominantly in forest use to ensure high quality valley streams and reduce flood flows” (p. 76).

**b. Are flood emergency preparedness and response planning encouraged?**

Yes. One of the Plan’s recommendations is to “continue working to update hazard mitigation plans and emergency preparedness and recovery procedures” (p. 77).

**B. Is the Municipal Plan Compatible with the Regional Plan?**

The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Plan was adopted on July 15, 2020 and became effective on August 19, 2020. It will remain in effect until August 19, 2028.

The Tunbridge Town Plan is found to be compatible with the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Plan. As used in this review, the term "compatible with" has been defined (in Section 4302) as meaning: that the Plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan (emphasis added). If a Plan, as implemented, will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other Plan (in this case, the Regional 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.

**C. Is the Plan Compatible with Approved Plans of other Municipalities in the Region?**

At the time of review of this Tunbridge Town Plan, the following municipalities have Plans approved by the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission that are in effect:

Barnard, Bethel, Bradford, Braintree, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Chelsea, Corinth, Fairlee, Granville, Hartford, Hartland, Newbury, Norwich, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Pomfret, Randolph, Rochester, Royalton, Stockbridge, Thetford, Vershire, West Fairlee, and Woodstock.

These approval decisions and Plans have been reviewed in the context of the above question. Based on this, we find the Tunbridge Town Plan to be compatible with these Plans.

**D. Municipal Plan Elements - Are They Included?**

A plan for a municipality shall include the following required elements. These elements or components are, in summary:

- (a) a statement of overall objectives and policies
- (b) a land use plan
- (c) a transportation plan
- (d) a utility and facility plan
- (e) a statement of policies for "special resources"
- (f) an education plan
- (g) an implementation program
- (h) a statement on relationship of plan to trends and plans for adjacent towns and the region
- (i) an energy plan
- (j) a housing plan
- (k) an economic development plan
- (l) a flood resiliency plan

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

Yes. Each section of the Plan includes goals, policies, and recommends implementation tasks throughout the Plan that guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.

- 2. A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement present and prospective land use, indicating those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture, (using 6 VSA Section 8), residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public uses and open spaces reserved for flood plain, wetland protection, or other conservation purposes; set forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity and character of such land uses and the appropriate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and services; and 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.**

Yes. In Chapter XI – Land Use, goal 2, policies 5, 6 and 11, and recommendation 1 (p. 62, 63). In Chapter XII – Natural Resources goals 1 and 3, policies 2 and 4, and recommendation 1 (p. 76). The Plan includes maps for current land use and future land use (p. 135, 137).

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

Yes. In Chapter IX – Transportation goals 1,3 and 6, policy 8, and recommendations 1, 9 and 10 (p. 54,55). A transportation map is included (p. 134).

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

Yes. In Chapter VII – Utilities, Facilities, and Recreation policies 1, 2 and 4 and recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5. (p. 46). The Plan includes a utilities, facilities and education map (p.136). The data should be updated in this section in the next iteration.

- 5. A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources.**

Yes. In Chapter XI – Land Use, the town’s goal is to “protect areas, open space, forest blocks and wildlife corridors” as well as preserving Tunbridge’s historic settlement pattern (p. 64).

- 6. An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and a statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system.**

Yes. In Chapter VI – Education goals 1 and 3, policy 2, and recommendations 3,4 and 5 (p. 38, 39). The Plan includes a utilities, facilities, and education map (p.136).

**7. A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan.**

Yes. In Chapter XV – Implementation includes adoption of the Tunbridge Town Plan by the Selectboard, involvement of the Planning Commission, community engagement, bylaws, subdivisions, and ordinances as ways to implement the development plan (p. 101. 102).

**8. A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under Title 24.**

Yes. The Plan includes development plans such as subdivision regulations, zoning bylaws, capital budget and programming, and other ordinances authorized by Title 24 in Chapter XI – Land Use (p. 61).

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

Yes. Chapter XIII – Energy addresses local energy consumption, demands, and desire for more energy efficient systems (p. 87).

**10. A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low- and moderate-income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to Section 4348a (a) (9) of Title 24.**

Yes. In Chapter V – Housing goal 5, policies 1 and 3, and recommendation 1(p. 33,34).

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

Yes. In Chapter IV – Economic Base goals 3, 5 and 7, policies 1 and 2 (p. 26).

**12. A flood resilience plan that identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas and designates those areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property; and recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.**

Yes. In Chapter XII – Natural Resources goals 1 and 4, policies 2, 4 and 8, and recommendation 1 (p. 76-77).

## CONCLUSION

Based upon the above findings, it is the conclusion of TRORC that the Tunbridge Town Plan be approved. This approval shall remain in effect until the date that the Plan expires, or until it is amended or readopted and reviewed pursuant to these provisions, whichever occurs first.

## DISCUSSION

TRORC appreciates the opportunity to formally evaluate the Tunbridge Town Plan. The Plan is all-inclusive, reflecting the community's planning capabilities and the import that they assign to issues around development.

Prior to issuing a Permit under Act 250, the District Environmental Commission or Environmental Court must find that the project is in conformance with the duly adopted Town Plan. This Plan includes clear, unambiguous language regarding current and proposed land use that can be reviewed by these bodies as part of an Act 250 project application. It is important that future Tunbridge Town Plans maintain their currency as Plans that have been found to be vague, unclear, or ambiguous do not carry much weight in Act 250 permit proceedings.

The 2004 Vermont State Legislature passed Act 115 that made significant amendments to the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. The most notable changes, in the context of this review, are that Town Plan and Zoning Bylaws are now held to a higher standard of consistency. From 24 V.S.A. §4303 Definitions:

“**Conformance with the Plan**’ means a proposed implementation tool, including a bylaw or bylaw amendment that is in accord with the municipal plan in effect at the time of adoption, when the bylaw or bylaw amendment includes all the following:

- (a) Makes progress toward attaining, or at least does not interfere with, the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan.
- (b) Provides for proposed future land uses, densities, and intensities of development contained in the municipal plan.
- (c) Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for community facilities, or other proposed actions contained in the municipal plan.”

The 2021 Tunbridge Town Plan is an improvement from the 2017 Town Plan. The Plan now includes recreation within the utilities and facilities chapter. More strides have been made toward broader access to fiber optic cable and future utility needs. The wildlife and forest resources sections were expanded in the new Town Plan. A timeline and responsibility for implementation was added to the implementation chapter.

Comments and suggested improvements for the next iteration of the Tunbridge Town Plan:

1. The Plan recognizes that there are only two licensed childcare providers in Tunbridge, which is a disincentive for young families to move to Tunbridge. Although relatives mostly take care of children and there are neighboring facilities, in the future Tunbridge should layout specific steps that minimize the impacts and cost due to the lack of childcare within the town.
2. The Plan lacks guidance as to how Tunbridge may encourage economic growth. Tunbridge recognizes most residents work out of town. While Tunbridge encourages small businesses and industries that enhance the rural character of the town, there are no concrete plans in place to spur economic activity.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at Woodstock, Vermont.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director

Memo

TO: TRORC Board  
FROM: Steven Bauer, Senior Planner  
DATE: February 23, 2022  
RE: Case #22-2: Tunbridge Determination of Energy Compliance

Re: Staff Review of the Tunbridge Town Plan adopted December 14, 2021, for Determination of Energy Compliance (Case #22-2)

On December 14, 2021, the Town of Tunbridge adopted a municipal plan. Town Plans must be regionally approved prior to receiving a determination of energy compliance. That regional approval review has been completed and a staff recommendation on regional approval is separate from this review.

This is a review to determine whether the plan complies with the state standards for energy compliance.

The TRORC Regional Plan that was adopted on July 15, 2020 and was approved for energy compliance by the Vermont Department of Public Service (PSD) on October 30, 2020. With this state approval, **municipal plans within the Region can receive a ‘determination of energy compliance’ from TRORC when requested by the town. A determination of energy compliance means local plans receive substantial deference during the state’s permitting of energy projects (Act 248 proceedings).**

To receive a regional determination of energy compliance, municipal plans must meet the standards of 24 V.S.A. § 4352(c). These are broken out as thirteen criteria in Part II of the PSD-made Energy Planning Standards Checklist. Staff have received the Plan, and the Energy Planning Standards Checklist as filled out by the town, and attached to this memo. Based on this review, we offer the following comments to the Board and the Town of Tunbridge, and a draft recommendation to the TRORC Board on a determination of energy compliance.

**Conclusion: Tunbridge’s Plan and maps adopted on December 14, 2021 meet the standards for energy compliance and should receive a ‘determination of energy compliance’ from TRORC.**

## Basis of Determination of Energy Compliance

### II.1. Adoption and Regional Approval

The Plan was adopted on December 14, 2021. The Plan was reviewed for approval and is scheduled for regional approval on February 23, 2022. The Plan meets this criterion.

Gerald Fredrickson, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
128 King Farm Rd. Woodstock, VT 05091 ~ 802-457-3188 ~ [trorc.org](http://trorc.org)

## II.2. Attachment

The Plan (text and maps) seeking determination of energy compliance was submitted along with the checklist.

## II.3. 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)

The Plan must contain components of 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3). Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement in the Energy Chapter.

**24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3) reads, “An energy element, which may include an analysis of resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the Region across all energy sections, including electric, thermal, and transportation; a statement of policy on the conservation and efficient use of energy and the development of 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.”**

This criterion is an overarching one and is based on later parts of the checklist. Based on these, we find the Plan meets this criterion.

## II.4. Resources, Needs, Scarcities, Costs and Problems

This criterion is essentially the first part of 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3). Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that pages 87 to 91, 96, and Appendix D meet this requirement.

We find that the Plan contains an *analysis of energy resources* on pages 86 to 87 and Appendix D.

We find that the Plan contains an *analysis of energy needs* on pages 85, 91 to 92, 96, and Appendix D.

We find that the Plan contains an *analysis of energy scarcities, costs, and problems* on pages 87 to 91, 96, and Appendix D.

## II.5 Energy Use and Targets

Towns may meet the five parts of this criterion by including the energy data sheets developed by TRORC, including the data in the Plan itself, or developing their own data. Tunbridge stated in the checklist that the regional supplied data is included as Appendix D. We find that it is. Therefore, we find the Plan meets the five parts of this criterion.

## II.6 Policy on Conservation and Efficiency

Towns must meet four parts of this criterion, a fifth is optional.

- Conservation by individuals/organizations: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 97, under Recommendation 1. We find that it does.
- Efficient buildings: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on pages 96 to 97, under Policy 1 and Recommendations 3 and 6. We find that it does.
- Decreased fossil fuels for heating: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on Page 96, under Goal 3. We find that it does.
- Efficiency in municipal buildings: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on pages 96 to 97, under Policy 1 and Recommendation 3. We find that it does.
- Other: N/A

## II.7 Transportation Policy

Towns must meet five parts of this criterion that focuses on reducing overall energy used in transportation and using lower emissions sources. A sixth is optional.

- Increased public transit: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 97, under Recommendation 8. We find that it does.
- Shift away from single occupancy vehicles: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 97, under Policy 4. We find that it does.
- Decreased fossil fuels for transportation: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 96, under Goal 3. We find that it does.
- Facilitate walking/biking: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 44, under Recreation. We find that it does.
- Efficiency of municipal transportation: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 93. We find that it does.
- Other: N/A

## II.8 Patterns and Density of Land Use

Density of land use is integrated with total energy used for transportation. Towns must meet two parts of this criterion. A third is optional.

- Reducing sprawl: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 63, under Land Use Policy 1. We find that it does.
- Compact settlement: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this **requirement on pages 104 to 105, under the Plan's implementation chapter. We find that it does.**
- Other: N/A

Gerald Fredrickson, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
128 King Farm Rd. Woodstock, VT 05091 ~ 802-457-3188 ~ [trorc.org](http://trorc.org)

## II.9 Policy on Siting and Development of Renewable Energy

State and regional energy policy is largely focused on fuel switching to electricity and in setting targets for energy use and production. To achieve this will require siting of facilities in towns. Towns can use siting maps supplied by TRORC, and can also designate preferred and unsuitable areas in maps or by text. Towns must meet seven parts of this criterion. An eighth is optional.

- Existing renewable generation: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement in Appendix D. We find that it does.
- Renewable generation potential areas: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement in Appendix D. We find that it does.
- Sufficient land for renewable generation: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement in Appendix D. We find that it does.
- Local constraints: Tunbridge stated that the Plan meets this requirement in Appendix D. We find that it does.
- Siting policy: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on pages 94 to 95. We find that it does. We recommend that in future versions of this Plan, Tunbridge include language and maps that identify statewide preferred locations, such as rooftops, parking lots, previously developed sites, brownfields, gravel pits, quarries, and Superfund sites.
- Maximize generation on preferred sites: Tunbridge has stated that the Plan meets this requirement on page 94. Tunbridge has identified two specific preferred sites (Larkin Hill and Welch's Hill) and has mapped areas of prime location. We recommend that **Tunbridge's Planning Commission continue to identify specific areas that are** appropriate for commercial, community, and residential scale energy production.
- Municipal leadership: Tunbridge has stated in the checklist that the Plan meets this requirement on page 97, under Recommendation 2. We find that it does.
- Other: N/A

## II.10-13 Maps

Towns may meet the parts of this criterion by including the energy maps developed by TRORC, or developing their own maps under criteria 11-13. Tunbridge has met this criterion by using regionally supplied maps.

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission  
 FY22 - July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022  
 Income and Expense Summary Report (Cash Basis)

As of January 31, 2022

**INCOME SUMMARY**

| Category                        | Prior Months          | Jan 2022            | Total to Date         | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>SUMMARY TOTALS:</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| TOTAL INFLOWS                   | \$1,696,441.02        | \$179,728.09        | \$1,876,169.11        | \$2,401,314.00        | 78%               |
| TOTAL OUTFLOWS                  | \$1,301,902.79        | \$136,605.73        | \$1,438,508.52        | \$2,401,314.00        | 60%               |
| <b>NET:</b>                     | <b>\$394,538.23</b>   | <b>\$43,122.36</b>  | <b>\$437,660.59</b>   | <b>\$0.00</b>         |                   |
| <b>REGIONAL PLANNING INCOME</b> |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Agency of Transportation        | \$107,549.12          | \$16,166.58         | \$123,715.70          | \$213,924.00          | 58%               |
| Agency of Commerce              | \$267,740.76          | \$0.00              | \$267,740.76          | \$305,458.00          | 88%               |
| EPA Brownfields                 | \$101,166.45          | \$0.00              | \$101,166.45          | \$139,000.00          | 73%               |
| HUD Sole Proprietor Grants      | \$510,614.00          | \$47,448.00         | \$558,062.00          | \$617,000.00          | 90%               |
| VHCB Buyouts                    | \$2,986.98            | \$2,068.23          | \$5,055.21            | \$154,921.00          | 3%                |
| EDA Supplemental                | \$35,107.68           | \$0.00              | \$35,107.68           | \$84,000.00           | 42%               |
| EDA Creative Economy            | \$18,162.13           | \$4,924.22          | \$23,086.35           | \$80,000.00           | 29%               |
| EDD Planning Grant              | \$12,945.00           | \$775.00            | \$13,720.00           | \$25,890.00           | 53%               |
| Municipal Dues                  | \$85,724.00           | \$0.00              | \$85,724.00           | \$85,724.00           | 100%              |
| Total Planning Income           | \$1,141,996.12        | \$71,382.03         | \$1,213,378.15        | \$1,705,917.00        | 71%               |
| <b>CONTRACT INCOME</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| State Contracts                 | \$78,313.55           | \$0.00              | \$78,313.55           | \$87,840.00           | 89%               |
| Municipal Contracts             | \$167,097.31          | \$77,454.86         | \$244,552.17          | \$279,899.00          | 87%               |
| Other Contract Services         | \$308,747.31          | \$30,874.24         | \$339,621.55          | \$319,647.00          | 106%              |
| Total Contract Income           | \$554,158.17          | \$108,329.10        | \$662,487.27          | \$687,386.00          | 96%               |
| <b>FEE INCOME</b>               |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Municipal Fees                  | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| Other Fees                      | \$165.90              | \$0.00              | \$165.90              | \$3,011.00            | 6%                |
| Total Fee Income                | \$165.90              | \$0.00              | \$165.90              | \$3,011.00            | 6%                |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS INCOME</b>     |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Interest                        | \$115.83              | \$16.96             | \$132.79              | \$5,000.00            | 3%                |
| Sales/Miscellaneous             | \$5.00                | \$0.00              | \$5.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| Total Misc. Income              | \$120.83              | \$16.96             | \$137.79              | \$5,000.00            | 3%                |
| <b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>            | <b>\$1,696,441.02</b> | <b>\$179,728.09</b> | <b>\$1,876,169.11</b> | <b>\$2,401,314.00</b> | <b>78%</b>        |

**EXPENSE SUMMARY**

| Category                           | Prior Months        | Jan 2022           | Total to Date       | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>PERSONNEL SERVICES</b>          |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Salaries/Wages                     | \$395,648.52        | \$60,318.81        | \$455,967.33        | \$738,543.00          | 62%               |
| Payroll Taxes                      | \$28,493.80         | \$4,322.98         | \$32,816.78         | \$56,499.00           | 58%               |
| EAP - Employee Assistance          | \$300.00            | \$150.00           | \$450.00            | \$600.00              | 75%               |
| Workers' Compensation              | \$2,615.00          | \$0.00             | \$2,615.00          | \$3,780.00            | 69%               |
| Unemployment Insurance             | \$261.59            | \$476.37           | \$737.96            | \$1,500.00            | 49%               |
| Health & Dental Insurance          | \$76,478.24         | \$13,422.62        | \$89,900.86         | \$152,577.00          | 59%               |
| Life Insurance                     | \$2,127.53          | \$1,400.68         | \$3,528.21          | \$6,000.00            | 59%               |
| Retirement Fund                    | \$61,342.21         | \$10,705.33        | \$72,047.54         | \$124,237.00          | 58%               |
| Disability Insurance               | \$3,504.13          | \$575.60           | \$4,079.73          | \$9,000.00            | 45%               |
| Tuition Reimb./Loan Forgiveness    | \$6,000.00          | \$1,000.00         | \$7,000.00          | \$14,700.00           | 48%               |
| <b>Total Personnel Services</b>    | <b>\$576,771.02</b> | <b>\$92,372.39</b> | <b>\$669,143.41</b> | <b>\$1,107,436.00</b> | <b>60%</b>        |
| <b>INSURANCES/OCCUPANCY</b>        |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Rent & Utilities                   | \$18,629.74         | \$6,735.03         | \$25,364.77         | \$46,000.00           | 55%               |
| Occupancy Expenses - King Farm     | \$673.15            | \$460.60           | \$1,133.75          | \$1,500.00            | 76%               |
| Fidelity Bond Policy               | \$2,953.00          | \$0.00             | \$2,953.00          | \$3,750.00            | 79%               |
| Professional Liability             | \$6,424.67          | \$0.00             | \$6,424.67          | \$6,000.00            | 107%              |
| Property Insurance                 | \$4,326.00          | \$0.00             | \$4,326.00          | \$6,000.00            | 72%               |
| <b>Total Insurances/Occupancy</b>  | <b>\$33,006.56</b>  | <b>\$7,195.63</b>  | <b>\$40,202.19</b>  | <b>\$63,250.00</b>    | <b>64%</b>        |
| <b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</b>       |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Legal Services                     | \$0.00              | \$0.00             | \$0.00              | \$2,000.00            | 0%                |
| Accounting Services                | \$0.00              | \$0.00             | \$0.00              | \$1,000.00            | 0%                |
| Program Audit                      | \$6,800.00          | \$0.00             | \$6,800.00          | \$10,000.00           | 68%               |
| <b>Total Professional Services</b> | <b>\$6,800.00</b>   | <b>\$0.00</b>      | <b>\$6,800.00</b>   | <b>\$13,000.00</b>    | <b>52%</b>        |
| <b>CONSULTANTS</b>                 |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Planning                           | \$132,351.01        | \$5,172.50         | \$137,523.51        | \$275,820.00          | 50%               |
| HUD Sole Propr. Pass-Thru funds    | \$401,800.00        | \$20,000.00        | \$421,800.00        | \$500,000.00          | 84%               |
| VHCB Buyout Pass-Thru funds        | \$825.00            | \$0.00             | \$825.00            | \$144,000.00          | 1%                |
| EPA Brownfields Consultants        | \$72,788.52         | \$327.75           | \$73,116.27         | \$96,280.00           | 76%               |
| <b>Total Consultants</b>           | <b>\$607,764.53</b> | <b>\$25,500.25</b> | <b>\$633,264.78</b> | <b>\$1,016,100.00</b> | <b>62%</b>        |

**EXPENSE SUMMARY**

| Category                       | Prior Months          | Jan 2022            | Total to Date         | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>TRAVEL</b>                  |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Travel Reimbursement           | \$12,943.82           | \$0.00              | \$12,943.82           | \$30,000.00           | 43%               |
| Commissioner travel reimb.     | \$337.61              | \$0.00              | \$337.61              | \$1,250.00            | 27%               |
| Mtgs, Conf & Training          | \$7,074.33            | \$94.94             | \$7,169.27            | \$29,500.00           | 24%               |
| <b>Total Travel</b>            | <b>\$20,355.76</b>    | <b>\$94.94</b>      | <b>\$20,450.70</b>    | <b>\$60,750.00</b>    | <b>34%</b>        |
| <b>OFFICE EXPENSES</b>         |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| General Supplies               | \$5,323.00            | \$276.57            | \$5,599.57            | \$8,500.00            | 66%               |
| Outside Printing               | \$967.82              | \$74.23             | \$1,042.05            | \$2,500.00            | 42%               |
| Advertising                    | \$4,230.08            | \$197.92            | \$4,428.00            | \$6,500.00            | 68%               |
| Dues/Publications/Data         | \$18,539.40           | \$1,643.00          | \$20,182.40           | \$32,500.00           | 62%               |
| Postage                        | \$973.00              | \$229.97            | \$1,202.97            | \$3,500.00            | 34%               |
| Telephone/Internet/Web         | \$10,116.04           | \$1,169.62          | \$11,285.66           | \$17,000.00           | 66%               |
| Repairs                        | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$500.00              | 0%                |
| Bank/Payroll Fees              | \$380.17              | \$35.57             | \$415.74              | \$850.00              | 49%               |
| Equip/Software Contracts       | \$8,888.65            | \$579.90            | \$9,468.55            | \$24,500.00           | 39%               |
| <b>Total Office Expenses</b>   | <b>\$49,418.16</b>    | <b>\$4,206.78</b>   | <b>\$53,624.94</b>    | <b>\$96,350.00</b>    | <b>56%</b>        |
| <b>OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>        |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Computer Hardware              | \$3,864.99            | \$0.00              | \$3,864.99            | \$4,500.00            | 86%               |
| Office Equipment/Furniture     | \$2,535.01            | \$0.00              | \$2,535.01            | \$2,400.00            | 106%              |
| Computer Software              | \$1,248.67            | \$235.74            | \$1,484.41            | \$20,028.00           | 7%                |
| <b>Total Office Equipment</b>  | <b>\$7,648.67</b>     | <b>\$235.74</b>     | <b>\$7,884.41</b>     | <b>\$26,928.00</b>    | <b>29%</b>        |
| <b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Transportation Equip./Supplies | \$138.09              | \$0.00              | \$138.09              | \$6,500.00            | 2%                |
| Scholarship Program            | \$0.00                | \$7,000.00          | \$7,000.00            | \$11,000.00           | 64%               |
| Miscellaneous/Bad Debt         | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| <b>Total Other</b>             | <b>\$138.09</b>       | <b>\$7,000.00</b>   | <b>\$7,138.09</b>     | <b>\$17,500.00</b>    | <b>41%</b>        |
| <b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>          | <b>\$1,301,902.79</b> | <b>\$136,605.73</b> | <b>\$1,438,508.52</b> | <b>\$2,401,314.00</b> | <b>60%</b>        |

**Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission**

**Balance Sheet**

As of January 31, 2022

02/15/22

|  | Jan 31, 22          |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                          |                     |
| <b>Current Assets</b>                  |                     |
| <b>Checking/Savings</b>                |                     |
| 1001 · Cash                            | 453,822.08          |
| 1002 · Investments                     | 794,705.20          |
| <b>Total Checking/Savings</b>          | 1,248,527.28        |
| <b>Accounts Receivable</b>             |                     |
| 1003 · Accounts Receivable             | 208,727.80          |
| <b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>       | 208,727.80          |
| <b>Other Current Assets</b>            |                     |
| 1140 Prepaid expenses                  | 228.33              |
| <b>Total Other Current Assets</b>      | 228.33              |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>            | 1,457,483.41        |
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>                    |                     |
| 1510 · General Fixed Assets            | 163,878.71          |
| 1515 · Accumulated Depreciation        | -163,878.71         |
| <b>Total Fixed Assets</b>              | 0.00                |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                    | <b>1,457,483.41</b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>        |                     |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                     |                     |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b>             |                     |
| <b>Other Current Liabilities</b>       |                     |
| 2002 · Accrued Expenses                | 2,948.70            |
| 2100 · Accrued Uncompensated Absences  | 61,699.08           |
| 2810 · Deferred Revenue                | 4,917.33            |
| <b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b> | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>       | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |                     |
| 3001 · Fund Balances                   | 61,214.09           |
| 3900 · Retained Earnings               | 1,050,864.33        |
| Net Income                             | 275,839.88          |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    | 1,387,918.30        |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>  | <b>1,457,483.41</b> |

**Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission**  
**A/R Aging Detail**  
**As of January 31, 2022**

| Type           | Date       | Num    | Name                                     | Class         | Open Balance      |
|----------------|------------|--------|--|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Current</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 01/31/2022 | 22-125 | Town of Woodstock                        | 4 - Emerg...  | 3,731.12          |
| Total Current  |            |        |  |               | 3,731.12          |
| <b>1 - 30</b>  |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 01/03/2022 | 22-102 | East Central Vermont EDD                 | 3 - Econo...  | 6,472.50          |
| Invoice        | 01/05/2022 | 22-105 | Town of Bradford:Bradford Plan MPG FY... | 8 - Techni... | 2,122.58          |
| Invoice        | 01/06/2022 | 22-104 | Rutland Regional Planning Commission     | 8 - Techni... | 15,167.96         |
| Invoice        | 01/06/2022 | 22-108 | Mount Ascutney Regional Commission:M...  | 6 - Enviro... | 6,380.62          |
| Invoice        | 01/07/2022 | 22-103 | East Central Vermont EDD:ECV EDD Su...   | 3 - Econo...  | 19,687.11         |
| Invoice        | 01/10/2022 | 22-110 | Chittenden County RPC - c                | 6 - Enviro... | 3,687.18          |
| Invoice        | 01/10/2022 | 22-109 | VT Agency of Transportation              | 7 - Trans...  | 14,276.23         |
| Invoice        | 01/13/2022 | 22-113 | VT Division of Emergency Management      | 4 - Emerg...  | 22,931.61         |
| Invoice        | 01/13/2022 | 22-114 | Agency of Commerce and Community D...    | 2 - Regio...  | 89,356.76         |
| Invoice        | 01/26/2022 | 22-122 | VT Dept of Fish & Wildlife               | 6 - Enviro... | 2,800.00          |
| Invoice        | 01/28/2022 | 22-124 | Agency of Commerce and Community D...    | 3 - Econo...  | 6,400.00          |
| Total 1 - 30   |            |        |  |               | 189,282.55        |
| <b>31 - 60</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Total 31 - 60  |            |        |  |               |                   |
| <b>61 - 90</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 11/19/2021 | 22-72  | Northwest RPC - c                        | 7 - Trans...  | 15,714.13         |
| Total 61 - 90  |            |        |  |               | 15,714.13         |
| <b>&gt; 90</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Total > 90     |            |        |  |               |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |            |        |  |               | <b>208,727.80</b> |

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission  
 FY22 - July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022  
 Income and Expense Summary Report (Cash Basis)

As of January 31, 2022

**INCOME SUMMARY**

| Category                        | Prior Months          | Jan 2022            | Total to Date         | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>SUMMARY TOTALS:</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| TOTAL INFLOWS                   | \$1,696,441.02        | \$179,728.09        | \$1,876,169.11        | \$2,401,314.00        | 78%               |
| TOTAL OUTFLOWS                  | \$1,301,902.79        | \$136,605.73        | \$1,438,508.52        | \$2,401,314.00        | 60%               |
| NET:                            | \$394,538.23          | \$43,122.36         | \$437,660.59          | \$0.00                |                   |
| <b>REGIONAL PLANNING INCOME</b> |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Agency of Transportation        | \$107,549.12          | \$16,166.58         | \$123,715.70          | \$213,924.00          | 58%               |
| Agency of Commerce              | \$267,740.76          | \$0.00              | \$267,740.76          | \$305,458.00          | 88%               |
| EPA Brownfields                 | \$101,166.45          | \$0.00              | \$101,166.45          | \$139,000.00          | 73%               |
| HUD Sole Proprietor Grants      | \$510,614.00          | \$47,448.00         | \$558,062.00          | \$617,000.00          | 90%               |
| VHCB Buyouts                    | \$2,986.98            | \$2,068.23          | \$5,055.21            | \$154,921.00          | 3%                |
| EDA Supplemental                | \$35,107.68           | \$0.00              | \$35,107.68           | \$84,000.00           | 42%               |
| EDA Creative Economy            | \$18,162.13           | \$4,924.22          | \$23,086.35           | \$80,000.00           | 29%               |
| EDD Planning Grant              | \$12,945.00           | \$775.00            | \$13,720.00           | \$25,890.00           | 53%               |
| Municipal Dues                  | \$85,724.00           | \$0.00              | \$85,724.00           | \$85,724.00           | 100%              |
| Total Planning Income           | \$1,141,996.12        | \$71,382.03         | \$1,213,378.15        | \$1,705,917.00        | 71%               |
| <b>CONTRACT INCOME</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| State Contracts                 | \$78,313.55           | \$0.00              | \$78,313.55           | \$87,840.00           | 89%               |
| Municipal Contracts             | \$167,097.31          | \$77,454.86         | \$244,552.17          | \$279,899.00          | 87%               |
| Other Contract Services         | \$308,747.31          | \$30,874.24         | \$339,621.55          | \$319,647.00          | 106%              |
| Total Contract Income           | \$554,158.17          | \$108,329.10        | \$662,487.27          | \$687,386.00          | 96%               |
| <b>FEE INCOME</b>               |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Municipal Fees                  | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| Other Fees                      | \$165.90              | \$0.00              | \$165.90              | \$3,011.00            | 6%                |
| Total Fee Income                | \$165.90              | \$0.00              | \$165.90              | \$3,011.00            | 6%                |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS INCOME</b>     |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Interest                        | \$115.83              | \$16.96             | \$132.79              | \$5,000.00            | 3%                |
| Sales/Miscellaneous             | \$5.00                | \$0.00              | \$5.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| Total Misc. Income              | \$120.83              | \$16.96             | \$137.79              | \$5,000.00            | 3%                |
| <b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>            | <b>\$1,696,441.02</b> | <b>\$179,728.09</b> | <b>\$1,876,169.11</b> | <b>\$2,401,314.00</b> | <b>78%</b>        |

**EXPENSE SUMMARY**

| Category                           | Prior Months        | Jan 2022           | Total to Date       | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>PERSONNEL SERVICES</b>          |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Salaries/Wages                     | \$395,648.52        | \$60,318.81        | \$455,967.33        | \$738,543.00          | 62%               |
| Payroll Taxes                      | \$28,493.80         | \$4,322.98         | \$32,816.78         | \$56,499.00           | 58%               |
| EAP - Employee Assistance          | \$300.00            | \$150.00           | \$450.00            | \$600.00              | 75%               |
| Workers' Compensation              | \$2,615.00          | \$0.00             | \$2,615.00          | \$3,780.00            | 69%               |
| Unemployment Insurance             | \$261.59            | \$476.37           | \$737.96            | \$1,500.00            | 49%               |
| Health & Dental Insurance          | \$76,478.24         | \$13,422.62        | \$89,900.86         | \$152,577.00          | 59%               |
| Life Insurance                     | \$2,127.53          | \$1,400.68         | \$3,528.21          | \$6,000.00            | 59%               |
| Retirement Fund                    | \$61,342.21         | \$10,705.33        | \$72,047.54         | \$124,237.00          | 58%               |
| Disability Insurance               | \$3,504.13          | \$575.60           | \$4,079.73          | \$9,000.00            | 45%               |
| Tuition Reimb./Loan Forgiveness    | \$6,000.00          | \$1,000.00         | \$7,000.00          | \$14,700.00           | 48%               |
| <b>Total Personnel Services</b>    | <b>\$576,771.02</b> | <b>\$92,372.39</b> | <b>\$669,143.41</b> | <b>\$1,107,436.00</b> | <b>60%</b>        |
| <b>INSURANCES/OCCUPANCY</b>        |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Rent & Utilities                   | \$18,629.74         | \$6,735.03         | \$25,364.77         | \$46,000.00           | 55%               |
| Occupancy Expenses - King Farm     | \$673.15            | \$460.60           | \$1,133.75          | \$1,500.00            | 76%               |
| Fidelity Bond Policy               | \$2,953.00          | \$0.00             | \$2,953.00          | \$3,750.00            | 79%               |
| Professional Liability             | \$6,424.67          | \$0.00             | \$6,424.67          | \$6,000.00            | 107%              |
| Property Insurance                 | \$4,326.00          | \$0.00             | \$4,326.00          | \$6,000.00            | 72%               |
| <b>Total Insurances/Occupancy</b>  | <b>\$33,006.56</b>  | <b>\$7,195.63</b>  | <b>\$40,202.19</b>  | <b>\$63,250.00</b>    | <b>64%</b>        |
| <b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</b>       |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Legal Services                     | \$0.00              | \$0.00             | \$0.00              | \$2,000.00            | 0%                |
| Accounting Services                | \$0.00              | \$0.00             | \$0.00              | \$1,000.00            | 0%                |
| Program Audit                      | \$6,800.00          | \$0.00             | \$6,800.00          | \$10,000.00           | 68%               |
| <b>Total Professional Services</b> | <b>\$6,800.00</b>   | <b>\$0.00</b>      | <b>\$6,800.00</b>   | <b>\$13,000.00</b>    | <b>52%</b>        |
| <b>CONSULTANTS</b>                 |                     |                    |                     |                       |                   |
| Planning                           | \$132,351.01        | \$5,172.50         | \$137,523.51        | \$275,820.00          | 50%               |
| HUD Sole Propr. Pass-Thru funds    | \$401,800.00        | \$20,000.00        | \$421,800.00        | \$500,000.00          | 84%               |
| VHCB Buyout Pass-Thru funds        | \$825.00            | \$0.00             | \$825.00            | \$144,000.00          | 1%                |
| EPA Brownfields Consultants        | \$72,788.52         | \$327.75           | \$73,116.27         | \$96,280.00           | 76%               |
| <b>Total Consultants</b>           | <b>\$607,764.53</b> | <b>\$25,500.25</b> | <b>\$633,264.78</b> | <b>\$1,016,100.00</b> | <b>62%</b>        |

**EXPENSE SUMMARY**

| Category                       | Prior Months          | Jan 2022            | Total to Date         | FY22 Budget           | Percent of Budget |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>TRAVEL</b>                  |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Travel Reimbursement           | \$12,943.82           | \$0.00              | \$12,943.82           | \$30,000.00           | 43%               |
| Commissioner travel reimb.     | \$337.61              | \$0.00              | \$337.61              | \$1,250.00            | 27%               |
| Mtgs, Conf & Training          | \$7,074.33            | \$94.94             | \$7,169.27            | \$29,500.00           | 24%               |
| <b>Total Travel</b>            | <b>\$20,355.76</b>    | <b>\$94.94</b>      | <b>\$20,450.70</b>    | <b>\$60,750.00</b>    | <b>34%</b>        |
| <b>OFFICE EXPENSES</b>         |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| General Supplies               | \$5,323.00            | \$276.57            | \$5,599.57            | \$8,500.00            | 66%               |
| Outside Printing               | \$967.82              | \$74.23             | \$1,042.05            | \$2,500.00            | 42%               |
| Advertising                    | \$4,230.08            | \$197.92            | \$4,428.00            | \$6,500.00            | 68%               |
| Dues/Publications/Data         | \$18,539.40           | \$1,643.00          | \$20,182.40           | \$32,500.00           | 62%               |
| Postage                        | \$973.00              | \$229.97            | \$1,202.97            | \$3,500.00            | 34%               |
| Telephone/Internet/Web         | \$10,116.04           | \$1,169.62          | \$11,285.66           | \$17,000.00           | 66%               |
| Repairs                        | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$500.00              | 0%                |
| Bank/Payroll Fees              | \$380.17              | \$35.57             | \$415.74              | \$850.00              | 49%               |
| Equip/Software Contracts       | \$8,888.65            | \$579.90            | \$9,468.55            | \$24,500.00           | 39%               |
| <b>Total Office Expenses</b>   | <b>\$49,418.16</b>    | <b>\$4,206.78</b>   | <b>\$53,624.94</b>    | <b>\$96,350.00</b>    | <b>56%</b>        |
| <b>OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>        |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Computer Hardware              | \$3,864.99            | \$0.00              | \$3,864.99            | \$4,500.00            | 86%               |
| Office Equipment/Furniture     | \$2,535.01            | \$0.00              | \$2,535.01            | \$2,400.00            | 106%              |
| Computer Software              | \$1,248.67            | \$235.74            | \$1,484.41            | \$20,028.00           | 7%                |
| <b>Total Office Equipment</b>  | <b>\$7,648.67</b>     | <b>\$235.74</b>     | <b>\$7,884.41</b>     | <b>\$26,928.00</b>    | <b>29%</b>        |
| <b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>          |                       |                     |                       |                       |                   |
| Transportation Equip./Supplies | \$138.09              | \$0.00              | \$138.09              | \$6,500.00            | 2%                |
| Scholarship Program            | \$0.00                | \$7,000.00          | \$7,000.00            | \$11,000.00           | 64%               |
| Miscellaneous/Bad Debt         | \$0.00                | \$0.00              | \$0.00                | \$0.00                | 0%                |
| <b>Total Other</b>             | <b>\$138.09</b>       | <b>\$7,000.00</b>   | <b>\$7,138.09</b>     | <b>\$17,500.00</b>    | <b>41%</b>        |
| <b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>          | <b>\$1,301,902.79</b> | <b>\$136,605.73</b> | <b>\$1,438,508.52</b> | <b>\$2,401,314.00</b> | <b>60%</b>        |

**Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission**

**Balance Sheet**

As of January 31, 2022

02/15/22

|  | Jan 31, 22          |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                          |                     |
| <b>Current Assets</b>                  |                     |
| <b>Checking/Savings</b>                |                     |
| 1001 · Cash                            | 453,822.08          |
| 1002 · Investments                     | 794,705.20          |
| <b>Total Checking/Savings</b>          | 1,248,527.28        |
| <b>Accounts Receivable</b>             |                     |
| 1003 · Accounts Receivable             | 208,727.80          |
| <b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>       | 208,727.80          |
| <b>Other Current Assets</b>            |                     |
| 1140 Prepaid expenses                  | 228.33              |
| <b>Total Other Current Assets</b>      | 228.33              |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>            | 1,457,483.41        |
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>                    |                     |
| 1510 · General Fixed Assets            | 163,878.71          |
| 1515 · Accumulated Depreciation        | -163,878.71         |
| <b>Total Fixed Assets</b>              | 0.00                |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                    | <b>1,457,483.41</b> |
| <b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>        |                     |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                     |                     |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b>             |                     |
| <b>Other Current Liabilities</b>       |                     |
| 2002 · Accrued Expenses                | 2,948.70            |
| 2100 · Accrued Uncompensated Absences  | 61,699.08           |
| 2810 · Deferred Revenue                | 4,917.33            |
| <b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b> | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>       | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               | 69,565.11           |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |                     |
| 3001 · Fund Balances                   | 61,214.09           |
| 3900 · Retained Earnings               | 1,050,864.33        |
| Net Income                             | 275,839.88          |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    | 1,387,918.30        |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>  | <b>1,457,483.41</b> |

**Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission**  
**A/R Aging Detail**  
**As of January 31, 2022**

| Type           | Date       | Num    | Name                                     | Class         | Open Balance      |
|----------------|------------|--------|--|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Current</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 01/31/2022 | 22-125 | Town of Woodstock                        | 4 - Emerg...  | 3,731.12          |
| Total Current  |            |        |  |               | 3,731.12          |
| <b>1 - 30</b>  |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 01/03/2022 | 22-102 | East Central Vermont EDD                 | 3 - Econo...  | 6,472.50          |
| Invoice        | 01/05/2022 | 22-105 | Town of Bradford:Bradford Plan MPG FY... | 8 - Techni... | 2,122.58          |
| Invoice        | 01/06/2022 | 22-104 | Rutland Regional Planning Commission     | 8 - Techni... | 15,167.96         |
| Invoice        | 01/06/2022 | 22-108 | Mount Ascutney Regional Commission:M...  | 6 - Enviro... | 6,380.62          |
| Invoice        | 01/07/2022 | 22-103 | East Central Vermont EDD:ECV EDD Su...   | 3 - Econo...  | 19,687.11         |
| Invoice        | 01/10/2022 | 22-110 | Chittenden County RPC - c                | 6 - Enviro... | 3,687.18          |
| Invoice        | 01/10/2022 | 22-109 | VT Agency of Transportation              | 7 - Trans...  | 14,276.23         |
| Invoice        | 01/13/2022 | 22-113 | VT Division of Emergency Management      | 4 - Emerg...  | 22,931.61         |
| Invoice        | 01/13/2022 | 22-114 | Agency of Commerce and Community D...    | 2 - Regio...  | 89,356.76         |
| Invoice        | 01/26/2022 | 22-122 | VT Dept of Fish & Wildlife               | 6 - Enviro... | 2,800.00          |
| Invoice        | 01/28/2022 | 22-124 | Agency of Commerce and Community D...    | 3 - Econo...  | 6,400.00          |
| Total 1 - 30   |            |        |  |               | 189,282.55        |
| <b>31 - 60</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Total 31 - 60  |            |        |  |               |                   |
| <b>61 - 90</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Invoice        | 11/19/2021 | 22-72  | Northwest RPC - c                        | 7 - Trans...  | 15,714.13         |
| Total 61 - 90  |            |        |  |               | 15,714.13         |
| <b>&gt; 90</b> |            |        |  |               |                   |
| Total > 90     |            |        |  |               |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |            |        |  |               | <b>208,727.80</b> |

TRORC Board Meeting – Zoom Meeting  
 December 15, 2021 – Board Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

| Name              | Town              | 2/24/21 | 4/28/21 | 5/26/21 | 6/23/21 | 9/22/21 | 12/15/21 |  |  |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--|--|
| Jerry Fredrickson | Barnard           | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Steve Cota        | Barnard (Alt)     |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Paul Vallee       | Bethel            | X       | X       |         | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Carl Russell      | Bethel (Alt)      |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Nancy Jones       | Bradford          | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Marcey Carver     | Bradford (Alt)    |         | X       |         | X       |         |          |  |  |
| Marlys Eddy       | Braintree         |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Lynne Bertram     | Bridgewater       |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Gwynn Zakov       | Brookfield        |         | X       | X       | X       | X       |          |  |  |
| Jon Binhammer     | Brookfield (Alt.) | X       |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Carl Pepperman    | Chelsea           | X       |         | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Tim O'Dell        | Corinth           | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Peter Berger      | Fairlee           | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Mark Belisle      | Granville         |         |         |         | X       |         | X        |  |  |
| Monica Collins    | Hancock           | X       |         | X       | X       | X       |          |  |  |
| Lori Hirshfield   | Hartford          |         | X       |         | X       | X       |          |  |  |
| Bruce Riddle      | Hartford (Alt)    | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Charles Jeffries  | Hartland          |         | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| David Ormiston    | Hartland          |         | X       | X       |         | X       | X        |  |  |
| Frank Tegethoff   | Newbury           | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Larry Scott       | Newbury (Alt.)    |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Rod Francis       | Norwich           | X       | X       |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Jeff Lubell       | Norwich           |         | X       | X       | X       | X       |          |  |  |
| Sarah Gallagher   | Pittsfield        | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Anne Brown        | Plymouth          |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Jim Allen         | Plymouth (Alt.)   |         |         |         |         |         |          |  |  |
| Bill Emmons       | Pomfret           | X       | X       | X       | X       |         | X        |  |  |
| Phil Dechert      | Pomfret (Alt)     |         | X       | X       | X       |         | X        |  |  |
| Ramsey Papp       | Randolph          | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       | X        |  |  |
| Gary Dir          | Randolph (Alt)    | X       | X       | X       | X       |         | X        |  |  |
| Anni Mackay       | Rochester         | X       | X       | X       |         |         | X        |  |  |
| Doon Hinderyckx   | Rochester (Alt)   | X       | X       | X       |         |         | X        |  |  |
| David Brandau     | Royalton          | X       | X       | X       | X       | X       |          |  |  |

|                 |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Bushrod Powers  | Royalton (Alt)  | X | X | X | X |   | X |  |  |
| Ira Clark       | Sharon          | X | X | X | X | X | X |  |  |
| Deborah Jones   | Sharon (Alt.)   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| Bill Edgerton   | Stockbridge     |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| John Echeverria | Strafford       |   | X | X | X |   | X |  |  |
| Jesse Anderson  | Thetford        | X | X | X | X | X | X |  |  |
| Jim Masland     | Thetford (Alt)  |   |   | X |   |   |   |  |  |
| Jim Clark       | Topsham         |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| Michael Sacca   | Tunbridge       |   | X | X |   |   |   |  |  |
| Kevin Rose      | Tunbridge (Alt) |   |   | X |   |   |   |  |  |
| Bill Baylis     | Vershire        |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| Nancy Malmquist | W. Fairlee      | X | X | X | X | X | X |  |  |
| Don Bourdon     | Woodstock       | X |   | X |   | X | X |  |  |
| Brad Prescott   | Woodstock (Alt) |   |   |   |   | X |   |  |  |
| Meghan Butts    | At-Large        | X | X | X | X | X | X |  |  |
| Jennifer Colby  | At-Large        |   |   |   |   |   | X |  |  |
| Ken Alton       | At-Large        |   | X | X |   | X | X |  |  |
| Dan Rudell      | At-Large        |   |   |   |   |   | X |  |  |
| Andrew Winter   | At-Large        | X | X | X |   | X |   |  |  |
| Meg Emmons      | At-Large        | X | X |   |   | X | X |  |  |

**Guests:** Erich Osterburg

**Staff:** Peter Gregory, Lori Kay, Kevin Geiger, Pete Fellows, Steven Bauer, Kim Gilbert, Tory Littlefield

**1. Call to Order, Approval of the Agenda, Roll Call, and Public Comments:**

The meeting opened at 6:32 p.m. A quorum after roll call was declared. No changes to the agenda were made. There were no comments from the public.

**2. Public Hearing – proposed Strafford Town Plan and Strafford Confirmation**

Director of Planning Kevin Geiger spoke on behalf of TRORC, sharing that the draft review was prepared by TRORC staff member Steven Bauer. Geiger stated that the draft review noted a few sections as being inconsistent with the Regional Plan – vocational training, childcare and economic development. Geiger went on to say that the Town Plan does meet the minimum requirements per the Statutes. Geiger will amend those sections of the Town Plan review as well as recommend that those sections be strengthened the next time the Plan is updated.

Commissioner Echeverria, representing Strafford, stated that the Town had participated in full and vigorous debate on a lot of issues. He noted that much progress was made in the Plan's sections on energy planning, forest fragmentation and housing.

Chairperson Frederickson closed the public hearing.

### **3. Public Hearing –Strafford Determination of Energy Compliance**

Geiger stated that the Town Plan met all points needed for the Determination of Energy Compliance. Chairperson Frederickson closed the public hearing.

### **4. Strafford Town Plan Approval, Strafford Confirmation of Planning Effort, Determination of Energy Compliance**

On a motion by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Bill Emmons, the Strafford Town Plan, the Town's planning process, and the Determination of Energy Compliance were all approved.

### **5. Acceptance of the Unaudited September, November, December 2021 TRORC Financial Reports**

On a motion made by Commissioner Jones, and seconded by Commissioner Bill Emmons, the unaudited September, October, and November 2021 Financial Reports were approved unanimously.

Frederickson stated the TRORC is in good financial status.

### **6. Guest Speaker – Erich Osterburg**

Executive Director Peter Gregory and Kevin Geiger introduced the guest speaker - Erich Osterburg, a professor at Dartmouth College and a Climate Scientist. Osterburg is studying climate change in New Hampshire and Vermont and shared a presentation on Global Warming and the Upper Valley. A question-and-answer period followed the presentation.

[The full presentation slides were distributed to all Commissioners following the meeting.]

### **7. Approval of TRORC Board Minutes from September 22, 2021**

On a motion made by Commissioner Alton, and seconded by Commissioner Powers, the September meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### **8. Acceptance of FY21 TRORC Audit**

On a motion made by Commissioner Belisle, and seconded by Commissioner Powers, the FY21 Audit was accepted unanimously.

Gregory commented on the Audit, stating that the auditors found no material weaknesses, no significant deficiencies or questioned costs, and no noncompliance. FY21 ended with a major increase in net position, primarily due to two items:

- 1) Sole Proprietor grant was unexpected business and was a major effort.
- 2) Over-recovery of indirect costs. This was due in part to the cyclical nature of TRORC's business and the impact of COVID on TRORC's operations. Typical indirect expense like office supplies and travel were much lower in FY21.

TRORC's current fund balance is equal to about five months of expenses. The auditors and TRORC's adopted Fund Balance policy recommend a fund balance equal to six months of expenses, so TRORC is close to that benchmark.

Gregory noted that TRORC is in its last year of a three-year contract with RHR Smith, and will be going out to bid for a new three-year contract this year.

A full copy of the audit has been uploaded to the TRORC website.

## 9. Staff/Commissioner Updates

Gregory announced the following staff changes:

Jake Palant has moved to a different job closer to friends and family in New York State.

Sage Doviak has been hired as a Planner and will start on January 3, 2022.

The Executive Committee has authorized the hiring of a limited term employee for a two-year period to help with expected workload.

Gregory is working with Geiger and Lori Kay to see if any of Lori's administrative duties can be re-assigned to a part-time hire. This would free Lori up for additional financial and contract management activities.

Legislature updates:

The Legislature is actively working on the Act 250 bill. Geiger is working committees on housing development. Gregory is working with the Legislature's Energy committee on putting together a program for fuel switching audits for municipal buildings and then implementing those changes.

Gregory stated that additional funds may become available to towns for MPG work – limited to those towns that were not funded in the initial round of grants.

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, January 26, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Lori Kay, Finance Manager, December 22, 2021

# 2022 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan

## Executive Summary

Vermont is at a moment of great opportunity to take control of its energy future. Technology changes over the last decade have set the foundation for a just and equitable transition to a more affordable, cleaner, more efficient, and more reliable energy future for Vermont's residents and businesses. Even though significant challenges remain and the transition will take time to implement, the recent advances in technology, strategy, and application have positioned Vermont to make significant strides in the next decade and beyond — strides that will enable us to maintain and reestablish the principles of state energy policy, as set forth in 30 V.S.A. § 202a:

*To ensure to the greatest extent practicable that Vermont can meet its energy service needs in a manner that is adequate, reliable, secure, and sustainable; that ensures affordability and encourages the State's economic vitality, the efficient use of energy resources, and cost-effective demand-side management; and that is environmentally sound.*

*To identify and evaluate, on an ongoing basis, resources that will meet Vermont's energy service needs in accordance with the principles of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and least-cost integrated planning, including efficiency, conservation, and load management alternatives; wise use of renewable resources; and environmentally sound energy supply.*

*To meet Vermont's energy service needs in a manner that will achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reductions requirements pursuant to 10 V.S.A § 578 and is consistent with the Vermont Climate Action Plan adopted and updated pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 592.*

This Comprehensive Energy Plan balances the principles articulated in 30 V.S.A. § 202a of energy adequacy, reliability, security, and affordability, which are all essential for a vibrant, resilient, and robust economy and for the health and well-being of all Vermonters. It also recognizes that the current energy system is marked by systemic inequities that have a disproportionate impact on many of Vermont's communities, in terms of issues such as energy burden and access to renewable energy opportunities. When approached through the lens of equity and justice, the transition required to meet Vermont's renewable energy goals and GHG reduction requirements presents us with opportunities to root out and redress those existing inequities.

This CEP advances these guiding principles through pathways, strategies, and recommendations found throughout the plan, building on and re-establishing the high-level goals set in the 2011 and 2016 CEPs: **Meet 25% of energy needs from renewable sources by 2025, 45% by 2035, and 90% by 2050.**

This Comprehensive Energy Plan is structured to meet the greenhouse gas requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act, and to be consistent with the Climate Action Plan required by 10 V.S.A. §592. In addition, and in support of the greenhouse gas reduction requirements and the top-level goal above, this CEP establishes — or reestablishes — the following set of goals:

- In the **transportation sector**, meet 10% of energy needs from renewable energy by 2025, and 45% by 2040.
- In the **thermal sector**, meet 30% of energy needs from renewable energy by 2025, and 70% by 2042.
- In the **electric sector**, meet 100% of energy needs from carbon-free resources by 2032, with at least 75% from renewable energy.

The Global Warming Solutions Act requires the following reductions in greenhouse gases:

- 26% reduction from 2005 levels by 2025
- 40% reduction from 1990 levels by 2030
- 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050.

These targets will not be easy to reach, particularly in the transportation and thermal sectors. They provide a vision, and this CEP articulates the pathways, strategies, and specific recommendations for actions aimed at meeting them. At a high level, the 2022 CEP continues building on themes from previous plans, with additional insight and knowledge from more recent experience:

- The burdens and benefits of energy policy in Vermont have not been equitably distributed across the state or its citizens. Strategies in this plan will consider both the historical distribution of impacts and those impacts that will occur with energy policy action.
- Transformational changes to the way Vermont generates, delivers, and uses electricity are upon us. The electric grid must be optimized to ensure resilience and responsiveness, and to benefit all electric consumers. This plan will provide a structure to guide the course of a highly dynamic, distributed, resilient future electric grid.
- Vermont’s energy policy is interconnected with the health and economic well-being of Vermonters. Energy policy needs to consider non-energy-related objectives that can be advanced with action in the energy sphere.
- Efficiency continues to be the most cost-effective first resource, and can and should be structured to equitably distribute the benefits to the Vermonters most in need.
- Innovation in technology and policy will continue to be necessary to achieve the needed energy transition affordably, reliably, and equitably.

To keep moving toward our targets, Vermont must acknowledge that the goals articulated by the Legislature’s energy policy can at times be in conflict. Those conflicts cannot be a cause for inaction; instead they must help us improve policy and prioritize the actions that should be supported. Even though all decisions will not please all people all the time, the decisions made under ever-changing circumstances cannot happen under cover. To meet the required need, some actions will have negative impacts on some stakeholders — and transparency in the decision-making process is critical to ensuring that those negative impacts are mitigated.

This plan advocates for a decision-making process that can set benchmarks for understanding when a policy is no longer cost-effective and other options can more affordably achieve the desired outcome. In other words, this plan recognizes uncertainty in Vermonters' lives and future.

Policy must be nimble in the face of change. Transparently articulating how these principles have been applied when taking action will help ensure that necessary conversation and debate on policy priorities takes place, and that estimated implications of a given action or set of actions are made on the basis of consistent data and facts.

This CEP also provides detail about current programs, and articulates the benefits and costs of programs from different perspectives — including a broad societal perspective and that of Vermonters, both those who participate in transitional programs early on and those who do not. By clearly articulating our assumptions and pursuing policies that seek to balance tradeoffs instead of ignoring them, we can move beyond partisan debate and take action that is best for Vermont residents and businesses.

## **Just and Equitable Energy Transition**

Acknowledging that “every one of us benefits when we make society fairer and more just,” as noted by Vermont’s Director of Racial Equity in her 2021 report to the Legislature, the principles of building Vermont’s renewable energy future through a lens of equity and just transition run throughout this 2022 CEP. As Vermont moves towards a cleaner energy future and develops the policies and programs to support those changes, it will be critical to do so through a lens of equity and justice to ensure that no Vermonter is left behind. That has historically not been the case.

The average statewide total energy burden, or energy spending as a percent of income, is about 10%, but the energy burden for some Vermonters can be much higher. There is a broad range of costs, given Vermont’s rural character, old buildings, and variable weather; the average energy burden for towns across Vermont ranges from 6% to 20%, and for many individuals it can be even greater. Clean energy technologies, which can reduce costs and energy burden, see limited adoption in areas with the highest energy burden.<sup>1</sup>

The energy system, at its roots, was built to serve people through enabling the provision of critical services, such as warm and healthy homes on cold winter evenings and the fuel to support local business operations. Approaching the clean energy transition through an equity and justice lens will help ensure that we meet the needs of Vermont’s citizens, communities, and businesses/institutions — in particular those that have historically been marginalized or underserved and will be most impacted by this transition. The energy transition opens the door, not just to meet renewable energy and climate objectives, but to do so in a way that better serves all Vermonters, uplifts those who have not had access or ability to participate previously, addresses and repairs the root causes of existing inequities, and in the process builds a more inclusive energy system for Vermont.

---

<sup>1</sup> Efficiency Vermont, *Vermont Energy Burden Report*, October 2019, Sears & Lucci.

Leveraging the foundational work of the Just Transitions subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council, Chapter 3 grounds this CEP in clear understanding of what is meant by *energy equity* and a *just transition* for the system. It considers what this means for Vermont moving forward and provides recommendations for steps to broadly advance a just and equitable energy transition while implementing the programmatic and policy actions outlined in the plan.

## **Adequate, Secure, and Reliable Energy Services**

As described in this CEP, many pathways for our energy future involve significant electrification of non-fossil resources. A modern electric grid allows for the integration of distributed energy resources (DERs) — e.g., electric vehicles, heat pumps, smart appliances, storage, and generation — while maintaining and improving safety and reliability. The grid needs to continue to perform — to reliably deliver the required energy to customers, every hour of the year, to and from resources that are exponentially more distributed, diverse, and variable, under increasing pressure from severe weather events and cyberattacks, while weaning off fossil resources and staying affordable. Where we don't electrify, ensuring that biofuels (solid, gas or liquid) remain available and affordable is critical.

This CEP sets the goal of a secure and affordable electric grid that can efficiently integrate, use, and optimize high penetrations of distributed energy resources to enhance the state's resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also recognizes the role that broadband services play in delivering transformative technologies to all Vermonters, together with the capability of managing those technologies to reduce costs. This CEP does not create a stepwise plan for a modern grid, because such a plan would be outdated upon publication. Instead, Chapter 4 illustrates the tradeoffs associated with achieving a modern grid that must be explored.

*Adequacy, security, and reliability* do not just pertain to our electric grid; they are principles that apply to all of Vermont's energy end uses. Energy demand management through efficiency — providing the same service while using less energy — remains paramount to our future. Whether it is tightening our buildings through comprehensive weatherization retrofits or reducing our vehicle miles traveled, energy efficiency can improve the health, well-being, and pocketbook of Vermonters and Vermont businesses while ensuring reliable energy service by lowering overall demand.

For sectors where electrification options are limited, biofuels remain a viable alternative. Even where electrification eventually needs to occur, biofuels can be made available to provide a great many Vermonters with a transition fuel, often with low upfront costs.

## **Since the Last CEP**

The 2011 CEP established a goal of meeting 90% of the state's energy needs through renewable sources by 2050, proposing steps to minimize our dependence on fossil fuels. The 2016 CEP maintained that trajectory, and proposed additional actions to get us on the path toward achieving both the 90-by-2050 target and the GHG requirements. The CEP prompted many positive steps toward these targets and requirements; and many successes have been achieved, including these:

- Implementation of the Renewable Energy Standard, including “Tier III,” which requires electric utilities to reduce fossil fuel consumption from its customers;
- Authorization of innovative electric utility pilots that allow utilities to take steps toward climate action through modernizing systems and programs with long-term benefits to ratepayers;
- Authorization of a doubling of investment in natural gas efficiency programs, and in research on and development of renewable natural gas to meet the needs of hard-to-electrify sectors;
- Development of a broad array of electric vehicle customer and dealer incentives and charging rates, to reduce upfront and ongoing costs;
- To ease concern about electric vehicle ranges, development of public charging infrastructure that will soon place a fast-charging public station within 30 miles of nearly all Vermont residences, with continued expansion planned;
- Installation of over 400MW of solar power generation and approximately 50 MW of solar-energy storage, with permits to interconnect to the grid;
- Continued improvement of the net-metering programs, including review of siting and rates to better reflect development costs and relative contribution toward meeting targets and reducing cost shift to non-participating customers;
- Updated building energy codes to put Vermont on a path to net-zero-ready for new buildings by 2030;
- Increased access to affordable financing for residential and commercial borrowers through a variety of financial institutions, for investments and measures that help Vermont reach its energy and emissions goals; and
- Development and approval, under Act 174, of enhanced energy plans for all 11 regional planning commissions and roughly 30% of Vermont’s municipalities.

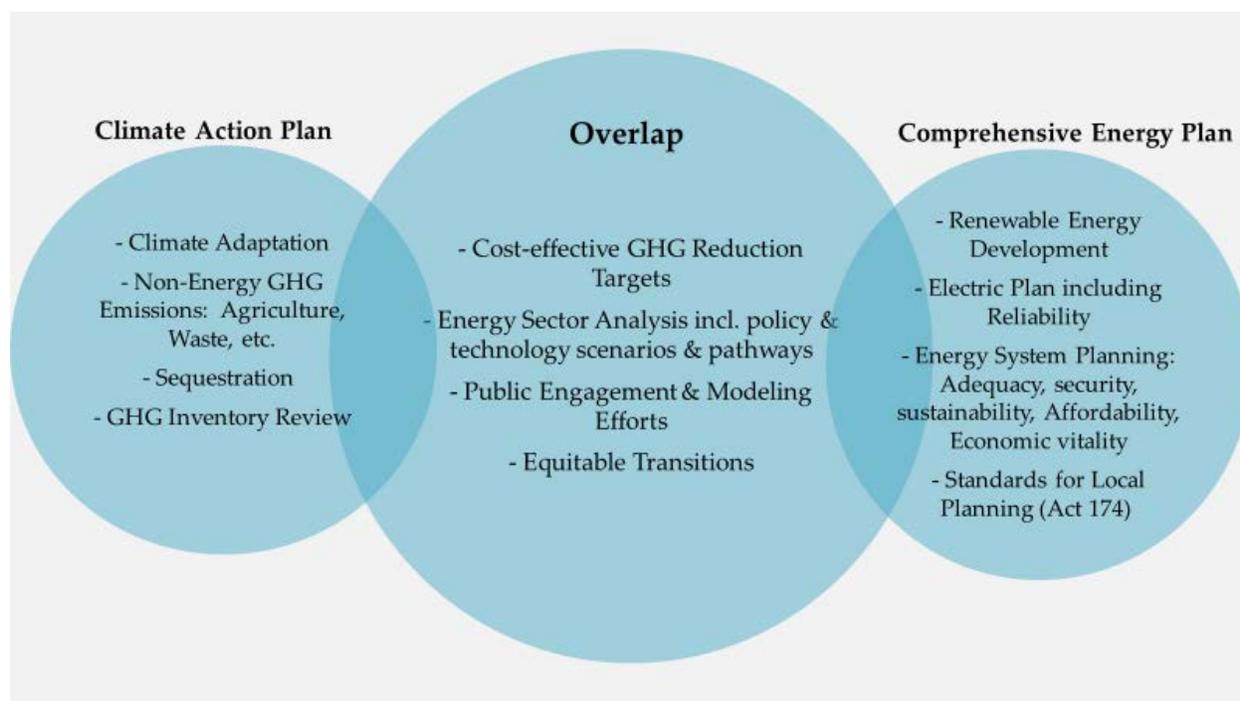
These, and many other, successes are discussed throughout the remainder of this CEP.

## **The Vermont Climate Council and Climate Action Plan**

The development of this CEP has coincided with development of the Vermont Climate Council’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), as required by the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA, 10 V.S.A. § 592). The CEP is a mechanism for implementing statutory energy policy, based on a comprehensive analysis of challenges and opportunities in Vermont. The CAP is an action plan specifically for greenhouse gas mitigation, sequestration, and adaptation strategies in the face of climate change.

As Exhibit ES-1 shows, while the CEP and the CAP have considerable areas of overlap, they remain distinct planning requirements with different objectives. While the CEP must be consistent with and fundamentally aligned with meeting the state’s GHG requirements, it is not a climate change plan, nor is it a comprehensive look at Vermont’s non-energy GHG emissions or climate adaptation needs.

## Exhibit ES-1. Comprehensive Energy Plan and Climate Action Plan



The CEP reviews energy-system planning in ways that are beyond the scope of the Global Warming Solutions Act. For example, it focuses on planning for electric-system reliability, given the pathways necessary to meet our climate goals. In turn, the CAP looks at the impacts of climate change beyond the scope of the CEP, addressing resiliency in the natural and built environment, adaptation, sequestration, and non-energy mitigation.

Of course, energy consumption drives a large majority of Vermont’s greenhouse gas emissions, and it was important that the processes for the CAP and CEP aligned. Accordingly, the Department of Public Service, in its role developing the CEP, and the Agency of Natural Resources, in its role supporting the Climate Council, have closely coordinated these two required plans. Public engagement efforts have notably been aligned, with the Department of Public Service supporting technical workshops with Climate Council participation, and the Climate Council supporting robust public engagement with Department of Public Service participation. As a result, targeted outreach to both Vermonters and technical experts was not duplicated. In addition, modeling that was conducted for the CEP was reviewed, modified, and adopted for the CAP, ensuring that there is one set of energy-related assumptions on which the two plans are based. (See Appendix D regarding modeling for a detailed summary of these efforts). State agency staff have diligently worked on both the CAP and the CEP.

The CEP is required to be consistent with the requirements of the GWSA and the CAP, and the CAP is required to be informed by the CEP. The requirements to closely coordinate these efforts has allowed for clearer consideration of the issues, rather than a debate of the facts — and even if the resulting actions are not necessarily identical, the basis on which they are formed was efficient and practical.

## Public Engagement and Support

Development of this CEP included a range of inputs and actions designed to obtain insights and expertise from state agencies and the Climate Council members, combined with input from community, business, nonprofit, and regional planning organizations along with academic institutions, municipalities, advocacy groups, and citizens from across the state. As just noted, significant coordination among state agencies on the two plans took place, given the substantial overlap of the CEP with the Climate Action Plan, and to prevent duplicative meetings that might have confused participants and muddled their feedback.

Core components of the Department's engagement throughout the course of 2021 included:

- *Request for Information (RFI)* on what should be considered in the plan, and what should be modeled;
- *Public regional forums*, focused on gathering input from municipalities and regional planning commissions on what they need from the Comprehensive Energy Plan in terms of guidance and standards for Act 174 enhanced energy planning;
- *Topical stakeholder meetings*, led by the Department in coordination with the Climate Council, where industry experts were invited to provide technical feedback related to the electric, thermal, and transportation sectors, with an additional workshop related to electric grid evolution; and
- *Public engagement*, led by the Climate Council in coordination with the Department of Public Service, to meet Vermonters through several in-person meetings and — following publication of the draft CEP — additional public hearings around the state and online to gather more feedback on the draft.

Each of these efforts has resulted in valuable comments that are addressed in the plan.

Vermont can only meet the goals established in this plan with the support and active involvement of individuals, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and all levels of government. Individual decisions — for example, about where to live, what car to buy (or whether to buy a car at all), what appliances to buy, whether and how to weatherize your home or invest in renewable energy — will have a significant impact in shaping Vermont's energy future. The same is true of business decisions. Engagement on the pathways and strategies included in this plan will continue upon release of the final CEP, in coordination with the Climate Council's engagement on the Climate Action Plan.

## Pathways and Strategies to Meet Vermont's Energy Needs

Addressing Vermont's energy policy and meeting statutory requirements requires not only a vision, as articulated by previous energy plans, but also a clear direction for tackling the presented challenges and seizing the opportunities before us. This CEP is organized around two key themes: equitable solutions and grid evolution. Within that context, three major energy sectors are discussed: transportation, thermal, and electricity. Although technology and policy priority evolution has blurred the lines between these

sectors, they remain useful distinctions for discussing the specific challenges and opportunities associated with each end-use energy service.

An all-of-the-above approach is necessary to equitably meet Vermont's energy service needs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Within each chapter, the CEP describes pathways, strategies, and recommendations for actions. In this plan, a *pathway* is a general means of reaching energy goals; *strategies* are coordinated efforts for advancing along a pathway; and *recommendations* are more specific tactics or actions that can be taken to further the strategy.

This general structure is meant to be consistent with the general structure of the Climate Action Plan. Indeed, many of the pathways, strategies, and recommendations presented by the two plans are similar, though not identical — a result of the close coordination between plans with overlapping but differing scopes.

## **Electric Sector**

Because Vermont's electric sector will play a critical role in decarbonizing the transportation and thermal sectors, this raises the importance of affordable electric rates and an electric system that is reliable and resilient for all Vermonters. Currently, Vermont's electric generation mix is 94% carbon-free, and the statutory Renewable Energy Standard requires that all electric utilities meet at least 66% of electricity deliveries with renewable power. Overall, the electric sector contributed less than 6% of Vermont's GHG emissions in 2017, a number that is forecasted to decline even further.

### **Pathway: Carbon-Free Power Supply**

**This CEP sets a goal for the electric sector to be fully decarbonized and at least 75% renewable by 2032.** Vermont benefits from a strong regional transmission grid that includes ties to neighboring areas. Working collaboratively, the region can more effectively achieve greater reliability, access to renewable generation, and decreases in costs than if Vermont were to try reaching all these goals by itself. This will be increasingly important as load from electric vehicles and heat pumps increases, particularly during the winter months when heat pumps draw the most power, and the cold affects charging time and capacity for EV batteries.

### **Consider a requirement for carbon-free power supply**

While some utilities have internal goals of increasing the carbon-free portion of power they supply to customers, there is no binding requirement, beyond the Tier I Renewable Energy Standard that utilities must procure 75% of their retail electric sales from any source of renewable energy by 2032. Vermont should develop a carbon-free power supply requirement, designed to equitably reduce GHG emissions in the electricity sector — which in turn will deepen the GHG emission reductions achieved through electrification measures.

Power supply choices are long-lived, and electricity costs are key to customer decision-making on whether to electrify home heating and personal transportation. Thus, it is crucial that any changes to the Renewable Energy Standard be made in a deliberative and careful manner, to minimize the economic burden on Vermonters and to make electrification of the transport and thermal sectors as cost-effective as possible.

The development of a carbon-free power supply requirement should consider and include transparent information on the costs and benefits of different design considerations, including, at a minimum, (1) the addition of new resources, (2) time and locational considerations, and (3) resource size and diversity.

## **Transportation and Land Use**

Vermont's transportation system is critical to the state's economy and quality of life. It provides access to jobs and mobility for the movement of goods and services that are essential to Vermont businesses; it brings tourists and other visitors to the state; it makes many daily activities convenient and feasible for Vermonters; and it delivers food and other products that Vermonters need for everyday living.

Transportation fuels continue to account for the largest portion of Vermont's total energy consumption, and they include more fossil fuels than any other energy source. Transportation makes up 38% of the total energy consumed in Vermont, and produces more GHG emissions — around 40% — than any other sector.

**This CEP sets goals for the transportation sector of increasing the number of electric vehicles in Vermont, and of having zero-emission vehicles account for 100% of light-duty vehicle sales in Vermont by 2035.** In addition, this CEP aims to increase the share of renewable energy in transportation through both electrification and encouraging the use of other renewable and less carbon-intensive fuels. While it does not specify targets for reducing transportation demand, **this CEP continues to prioritize Transportation Demand Management (TDM) due to its broad benefits across Vermont's energy policy goals**, recognizing that the choices available to Vermonters about where they live, work, shop, and recreate affect the amount of energy and money that is spent in moving across the landscape.

### **Pathway: Vehicle Electrification**

Vermont must continue to advance the market share of electric cars and trucks as quickly as possible. A robust policy environment is critical for rapidly increasing the market share of plug-in electric vehicles (EVs), and is supported by ongoing and dramatic advances in electric vehicle technology, especially batteries. Strategies along this pathway can move the transportation sector toward energy and emissions goals faster than any other single measure.

#### **Accelerate electric vehicle market share through incentives**

The principal strategy for advancing vehicle electrification is ramping up deployment of electric vehicle technology. Electric technology can power light- and medium-duty cars and trucks, transit and school buses, short-haul aviation, and short-haul marine in the immediate and near terms, and possibly heavy-

duty trucking in coming years. The overall objective of vehicle electrification policies is to create an economic and regulatory environment where market forces can move forward without the need for government support. This plan supports incentive programs for new and used electric vehicles, as well as continuation of programs such as MileageSmart and Replace your Ride, and it recommends enhanced support for medium- and heavy-duty electric vehicles.

### **Accelerate EV market share through supporting infrastructure and policy**

Electrifying Vermont's entire fleet will require a vast expansion of the state's charging network. Until EVs reach some critical mass, charging infrastructure will continue to require some public support to help accelerate EV market share. This plan recommends support for both direct current fast charging (DCFC), also known as Level 3 charging, as well as Level 2 charging until a sufficient free-market charging network can stand on its own. It also seeks to address the EV barrier of model availability, through continuing participation in California's Advanced Clean Car program; and it calls for the undertaking of a rulemaking process for adopting California's Clean Cars II regulations, to require that 100% of light-duty vehicles available for sale in Vermont be Zero-Emission Vehicles by 2035.

The transition to EVs also will require new regulations and oversight to ensure strong consumer protection and transparency associated with charging electric vehicles. This plan calls for the Agency of Agriculture, Food, & Markets to adopt appropriate protocols in this area.

### **Managing electric grid impacts**

Increasing loads from vehicle electrification, as well as other forms of electrification, will eventually reverse years of declining loads that have resulted from energy efficiency. To the extent that Vermont electric distribution utilities can accommodate increasing off-peak loads from vehicle electrification without significant system upgrades, the result will be downward rate pressure for all customers, as more electricity is sold based on fixed or moderately increasing costs associated with local upgrades to substations, transformers, and other supporting infrastructure.

The Vermont grid may currently have some "headroom" to accommodate the early stages of electrification, but it will be critical to manage loads associated with the electrification of Vermont's vehicle fleet, to ensure that objectives of affordability and reliability are achieved. Efficient rate design, including appropriately addressing demand charges, is a supporting strategy needed to manage the impacts of electric vehicles on the grid as we continue to encourage EV adoption.

### **Pathway: Cleaner Vehicles and Fuels**

Even though Vermont and other jurisdictions are working to electrify their transportation systems as quickly as possible, combustion vehicles will still be on the road for years to come. More fuel-efficient combustion vehicles and the use of lower carbon-intensity combustion fuels, like biofuels and renewable natural gas, could significantly reduce GHG emissions from combustion vehicles while the transportation

sector electrifies. Low-carbon fuels could also potentially provide an alternative to combustion fuels for heavy-duty transportation modes, like long-haul trucking or aviation.

### **Increase vehicle fuel efficiency**

The many factors that shape the number, type, and relative efficiency of the vehicles registered in Vermont include federal and state emissions and efficiency standards, the diversity and quantity of vehicles available in new and used markets, the price of gasoline or other fossil fuels, consumer preferences, and evolving consumer knowledge about vehicle technologies. While the pace of the transformation of vehicle markets is a complex process, much of which is out of Vermont's control, state government and partner organizations can play a role in spurring change. Vermont can and should support increasingly stringent federal fuel efficiency standards, and should continue to explore options for improving the average fuel economy of the state's vehicle fleet.

### **Increase targeted use of low-carbon fuels and biofuels**

While electrification for Vermont's light-duty fleet is a viable option, there are many heavy- and medium-duty applications for which electric options are limited. In those applications, alternative fuels — including biodiesel, ethanol, compressed or liquefied natural gas, and potentially hydrogen — could offer a lower-carbon alternative to gasoline and diesel, with significant GHG savings and fewer emissions. While biodiesel is preferred to natural gas for heavy- and medium-duty applications, both biodiesel and natural gas are preferred over petroleum products, and renewable natural gas is increasingly being used to meet national low-carbon transportation standards. Vermont can and should continue to support targeted use of low-carbon fuels and biofuels, particularly in hard-to-electrify sectors.

### **Pathway: Supporting Land Use Patterns that Increase Transportation System Efficiency**

Land use patterns—what we build and where we build it—are a foundational building block of our transportation system. The choices we make about what and where we build have significant impacts on how the transportation system is designed and operated to facilitate the movement of people and goods. The decisions we make today will be long-lived and will define many aspects of our daily lives in the future, including our energy use. Land use choices that support compact and mixed-use settlement can improve transportation system efficiency overall, by reducing the distances between the places to which Vermonters regularly travel.

### **Enhance integration of land use planning into transportation decision-making frameworks**

Vermont has worked hard to support land use decisions that can meet multiple state goals, including revitalizing communities, increasing affordable housing and transportation options available to Vermonters, reducing energy consumption, and protecting important natural resources. The decisions we make around land use can either enable or impede our energy goals. Land use planning in Vermont includes a diverse set of actors with different expertise, interest, and authority. Better outcomes develop

from a common framework for evaluating and balancing land use goals for public infrastructure, energy supply, housing, transportation, working lands for agriculture and forestry, conservation lands, and other purposes.

### **Pathway: Increasing Transportation Choices**

Transportation infrastructure that increases the quality and types of available transportation choices is often called Transportation Demand Management, or TDM. Choices like public transit, ride share, bicycling, and walking — all of which provide alternatives to getting around by single-occupancy vehicle — can increase the affordability of transport for Vermonters, encourage economic development in downtown and city centers, provide options for those who may have no alternative means, and promote an active and healthy lifestyle. These choices make the transportation system more accessible and equitable. They also create more livable, vibrant communities, and they can reduce transportation-related energy use and emissions.

#### **Provide safe, reliable, and equitable public and active transportation options**

Transportation Demand Management options can reduce vehicle miles traveled, decreasing both energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. This CEP describes the current status of public transit, park & ride availability, rideshare programs, telecommuting, biking and pedestrian programs, and rail. Vermont already invests substantially in TDM options, and should continue to do so.

### **Thermal and Process Energy Use**

The heating of Vermont’s residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and the fueling of our industrial processes are responsible for nearly 50% of Vermont’s total site energy consumption, and 34% of our greenhouse gas emissions. Renewable sources, primarily wood, currently provide approximately 25% of the energy used to heat buildings, and to supply process heat for industrial applications.

**This Comprehensive Energy Plan expands the target of increasing renewable thermal and process supply to 30% by 2025, increasing to 45% by 2032 and 70% by 2042.** With support from current programs, over 10,000 cold-climate heat pumps have been installed in 2020, and even more are expected to be installed in 2021, heating more and more of our buildings with renewable electricity. But more needs to be done. Reaching these goals will also require more weatherization measures, increasing the use of bioenergy, and continuing progress on heat pumps to significantly reduce the amount of thermal energy that Vermonters need.

### **Pathway: Reduce Thermal Energy Demand**

The two dominant areas of strategic focus for reducing thermal energy demand are, first, significantly scaling up weatherization activities; and second, making new buildings as efficient as possible.

## **Weatherization at scale**

Investing in thermal efficiency improvements can dramatically reduce a building's thermal fuel requirements while increasing its affordability, health, and comfort. Investments in thermal demand reductions through weatherization programs are good for Vermont's economy and, perhaps more importantly, for the health of Vermonters. Previous weatherization targets have come and gone without being met, but the efforts to reach them have highlighted key barriers to address — including lack of information and access to capital, differing tenant and landlord investment priorities, and a qualified workforce that is currently not large enough to meet the need. Low-income Vermonters are particularly sensitive to these challenges, even if they may benefit the most from tighter buildings.

**This Comprehensive Energy Plan sets a new target of weatherizing 120,000 households by 2030**, relative to a 2008 baseline. Consistent with the recommendations of the Climate Action Plan, this target is intended to be aggressive but technically feasible, and will require the expansion of Vermont's weatherization workforce. Progress will not happen overnight; significant public and private investments will be necessary to ramp up programs and services available to Vermonters. Actions recommended in this plan include devoting significant federal monies to kickstart the pace of weatherization, while building the workforce and exploring opportunities for sustainable funding — including the development of partnerships in areas where weatherization leads to positive outcomes across sectors, such as healthcare and property insurance. The plan also supports initiatives, such as energy counseling programs, that make the weatherization process easier and more productive for customers.

## **Encourage efficient new buildings**

Ensuring that new buildings are constructed with the best available cost-effective technologies and practices is critical to avoiding lost opportunities for reducing Vermont's thermal demand. Around 1,000 single family homes are built in Vermont each year, as well as hundreds of commercial buildings; and once built, they can last 75 to 100 years or more. These buildings must comply with residential or commercial building energy standards that are updated every three years. **This Comprehensive Energy Plan maintains the target to achieve net-zero ready construction for all newly constructed buildings by 2030** through building energy standards. *Net-zero ready* is defined as “a highly efficient and cost-effective building, designed and constructed so that renewable energy could offset all or most of its annual energy consumption.”

## **Pathway: Enhance Low-Carbon Technology and Fuel Choices**

Energy consumption serves a variety of end uses, in different types of processes and buildings, and the choice of energy fuel and enabling technologies should match end-use application and space with the most efficient, renewable, affordable, stably priced option that fully serves the end use. Vermont home and business owners are often limited, however, in the types of fuel they can use to meet their energy needs, due to significant past capital investments in heating systems and/or limitations in delivery infrastructure.

It is critical that energy needs for end users be met adequately and equitably with low- or no- carbon fuels, and providing Vermont homes and businesses access to a wide variety of fuel choices will allow them to select the most effective fuel for their application. In this light, strategies are necessary for advancing access to low-carbon fuels and the technologies for using them. The two main strategies here include consideration of a Clean Heat Standard (CHS), a performance-based obligation to reduce emissions from this sector; and the continued promotion of the use of low-carbon fuels such as electricity, advanced wood heat, biodiesel, renewable natural gas, and hydrogen, among others.

### **Consider a Clean Heat Standard**

Although Vermont has a variety of programs that seek to promote low-carbon fuel choices in various ways, the state does not have a unifying mechanism to ensure reduced emissions from this sector. Over the past year, the Energy Action Network has convened a Network Action Team to evaluate and design a Clean Heat Standard that would create a market for a range of clean fuel choices.

Much as Vermont's Renewable Energy Standard does for electricity, a Clean Heat Standard would seek to create a performance-based, technology- and fuel-neutral obligation on affected heating fuel providers, either wholesale or retail, to procure an increasing percentage of their retail sales from low-carbon thermal solutions, at a pace set by the Legislature. Obligated providers could comply with the requirement through an array of supply- or demand-side opportunities, such as increasing the supply of renewable fuels (e.g., biodiesel or renewable natural gas) or installing clean heat measures (e.g., weatherization, advanced wood heat, or cold-climate heat pumps).

**This Comprehensive Energy Plan calls for the formal consideration of a Clean Heat Standard.**

Consistent with the Climate Action Plan, this measured step will allow for full evaluation of equity considerations together with the total costs and benefits to all Vermonters.

### **Continue to encourage cleaner technologies and fuels**

It is critical to expand low-carbon and renewable fuel supply to meet the demand, including electrification, and to develop enough sustainable biofuels to supply difficult-to-convert segments of the fossil fuel market. To respond to this challenge and improve access to fuel choice, the state must encourage use of the most efficient, renewable, cost-effective technology that will meet fuel users' end needs. This is done through the promotion of electrification of thermal loads, development of the advanced wood heat market, and support for district heat, biofuels, and alternatives to natural gas such as renewable natural gas, syngas, and hydrogen.

## **Affordability and Economic Vitality**

Pursuing the goals and strategies in this CEP will support a vibrant economy, promoting an affordable and stable cost of living and doing business. Vermonters spend an average of about \$2.8 billion per year on energy across sectors, from 70% to 75% of that on imported fossil fuels. These purchases have little

benefit in terms of local economic activity. Per dollar spent, investments in energy efficiency, electricity, and wood heat contribute far more to local economic activity.

Fossil fuels are expensive, and price swings are challenging for customers to budget for; electricity rates are generally more stable. As Vermont electrifies its transport and thermal use, it is imperative to keep in mind that electric bills will have increasing importance. To ensure that our energy transformation is equitable, cost pressures in the electric sector need to be transparent and carefully considered.

The clean energy transition creates many challenges, but many opportunities as well. Vermont has a cutting-edge energy industry and infrastructure with which entrepreneurs can engage: innovative utilities, leading efficiency and regulatory expertise, a near-statewide deployment of advanced metering infrastructure, and a robust renewable energy development community. Our transition to clean energy can ensure an affordable and stable cost of living and doing business, while creating well-paying jobs in industries that support renewable energy and efficiency services. It will be critical, however, to transition carefully, making sure that opportunities are equitably distributed and costs are not shifted onto Vermonters or Vermont businesses that are not positioned to pay. (See Chapters 2 and 3.)

## **Conclusion**

This CEP recognizes that there are many paths that must be pursued to meet our energy policy goals. It identifies many strategies that collectively can transform our energy future. Vermont must work through both public and private sector partnerships to advance an energy future that is affordable, reliable, environmentally sound, and equitably distributes the benefits and burdens of the state's energy service needs.

Chapter 1 introduces this energy plan, including the statutory framework and introduction of key themes of equity and grid evolution that are addressed in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively. Chapter 2 describes the plan development process, including the analytical basis for the CEP.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 detail historical and current energy use and prices in the transportation, thermal, and electricity sectors, respectively. Chapter 8 describes clean energy financing opportunities that can support the strategies outlined in the previous three chapters. Finally, Chapter 9 provides Vermont's State Agency Energy Plan.

The appendices provide additional resources, including a description and results of the modeling efforts and Act 174 Energy Planning Standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4352.

## Appendix B: Act 174 Enhanced Energy Planning Standards for Regions and Municipalities

Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 202b, the State Comprehensive Energy Plan (“CEP”) must now, as of the 2022 CEP, include, “recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning and standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance (“standards”) pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4352. Recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning are included throughout the chapters of this CEP and a list of these recommendations will be posted to the Department of Public Service’s (“Department”) [Act 174 website](#). This Appendix includes updated standards for regions and municipalities. Plans submitted after the 2022 CEP is issued are expected to meet these updated standards, except for plans for regions or municipalities who can demonstrate they had meaningfully initiated the planning process (e.g. through proof of a publicly noticed meeting) before the 2022 CEP was published. These standards are also posted separately to the [Department’s website](#).

The updated standards include several updates incorporating lessons learned from best practices developed from the initial rounds of regional and municipal enhanced energy plans that have received affirmative determinations and reflect changes in state energy policy. Updates to the standards have been informed by numerous pathways including:

- The series of regional forums conducted for the CEP in June with the regional planning commissions (RPCs) and municipalities
- Feedback received to date from RPCs, state agencies, and other stakeholders regarding lessons learned to date and areas of improvement needed, and including verbal and written comments submitted by:
  - the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies (“VAPDA”) and some of RPCs through the Department’s December 2020 Request for Information
  - RPCs and municipalities during the November/December 2021 draft CEP public comment period
  - Stakeholders during virtual public meetings and in-person public hearings in November/December 2021 on the draft CEP and updated standards

Updates to the standards include, but are not limited to:

- Streamlined language, where possible, and references to existing guidance documents to better support regions and municipalities as they complete the planning process
- Enhanced consideration of climate and grid resilience, equity, and advances in technologies, such as electric vehicles and the need to plan for related infrastructure, which reflect priorities of the 2022 CEP
- Updates to the *Mapping Standards* to emphasize the value of forest lands in sequestering and storing carbon, consistent with Vermont’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Act 171 of 2016.

With the completion of the CEP, updates to the standards, and the statewide LEAP modeling undertaken to support this iteration of the CEP, Department staff will begin the work of updating associated guidance documents and tools. The Department anticipates the generation target scenarios tool, in particular, will be substantially updated to include a number of potential scenarios for planners to

consider in their selection of desired local generation, including sensitivities for electrification demand, grid constraints, and renewability of utility power supply.

The Department will begin updating the Act 174 resources in January 2022, with final products expected by summer 2022. A tentative timeline for expected completion is included here to support regions and municipalities plan as they enter or complete energy planning processes:

- January 2022:
  - Compilation and posting of all the municipal and regional recommendations in the CEP
- April 2022:
  - Updated guidance for regional and municipal plans
- May 2022:
  - Regionalized LEAP scenarios/workbook tools, consistent with statewide LEAP modeling and targets adopted for the CEP and CAP
- July 2022:
  - Generation target scenarios tool
  - Map layers in VCGI

As the Department completes these updates, it looks forward to continuing engagement with stakeholders to ensure these resources meet the needs of regional and municipal planners across Vermont.

# Energy Planning Standards for Regional Plans

## Instructions

Before proceeding, please review the requirements of Parts I and II below, as well as the Overview document. Submitting a Regional Plan for review under the standards below is entirely voluntary, as enabled under [Act 174](#), the Energy Development Improvement Act of 2016. If a Regional Plan meets the standards, it will be given an affirmative “determination of energy compliance,” and its land conservation measures and specific policies will be given “substantial deference” in the Public Utility Commission’s review of whether an energy project meets the orderly development criterion in the Section 248 process. Specifically, with respect to an in-state electric generation facility, the Commission:

*[S]hall give substantial deference to the land conservation measures and specific policies contained in a duly adopted regional and municipal plan that has received an affirmative determination of energy compliance under 24 V.S.A. § 4352. In this subdivision (C), “substantial deference” means that a land conservation measure or specific policy shall be applied in accordance with its terms unless there is a clear and convincing demonstration that other factors affecting the general good of the State outweigh the application of the measure or policy. The term shall not include consideration of whether the determination of energy compliance should or should not have been affirmative under 24 V.S.A. § 4352*

Regional Plans may be submitted to the Department of Public Service (PSD) for a determination of energy compliance (determination), along with the completed checklist below. After a Regional Plan and completed checklist have been submitted to the PSD, the PSD will schedule a public hearing noticed at least 15 days in advance by direct mail to the requesting regional planning commission, on the PSD website, and in a newspaper of general publication in the region. The Commissioner of the PSD shall issue a determination in writing within two months of the receipt of a request. If the determination is negative, the Commissioner shall state the reasons for the denial in writing and, if appropriate, suggest acceptable modifications. Submissions for a new determination following a negative determination shall receive a new determination within 45 days.

The plans that Regions submit must:

- Be adopted
- Include the energy element as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)
- Be consistent with state energy policy (described below), in the manner described in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1)
- Meet all standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance (see below)

Regions are encouraged to consult with the PSD before undertaking the process of plan adoption, which may help in identifying any deficiencies or inconsistencies with the standards or other requirements that would be more difficult to remedy after a plan has gone through the formal adoption process.

The 2022 Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), published on January 14, 2022, includes several important updates to the Act 174 enhanced energy standards:

- A revised set of standards, presented in this document, updated to reflect current developments in state energy policy

- An updated suite of recommendations tailored specifically toward the work of the regions and municipalities. Unlike the set of recommendations published with the original standards, which were written prior to the passage of Act 174, these recommendations are included in the 2022 CEP itself.

In addition, a revised guidance document will be published within six months after the publication of the 2022 CEP to reflect new issues and best practices that have emerged from the regions and municipalities that have gone through an initial process of applying for a determination of energy compliance. This document will also include the recommendations for regions and municipalities outlined in the 2022 CEP.

Affirmative determinations are valid for the life cycle of a revision of the Regional and/or Municipal Plan. Plans submitted after the 2022 CEP is issued are expected to meet the updated Standards issued with the 2022 CEP, with the exception of plans for regions or municipalities who can demonstrate they had meaningfully initiated the planning process (ex. through proof of a publicly noticed meeting) before the 2022 CEP was published. Regions are encouraged to consult with the PSD regarding interim amendments that might affect any of the standards below, to discuss whether a new review is triggered. Plans approved under the previous Standards will not lose their existing determination of energy compliance as a result of new Standards being issued.

If you wish to submit your Regional Plan to the PSD for a determination, please read closely the specific instructions at the start of each section below, and attach your Regional Plan to this checklist.

Determination requests and any other questions should be submitted to: [PSD.PlanningStandards@vermont.gov](mailto:PSD.PlanningStandards@vermont.gov).

| <b>Part I: Applicant Information</b> |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Applicant:</b>                    |              |
| <b>Contact person:</b>               |              |
| <b>Contact information:</b>          |              |
| <b>Received by:</b>                  | <b>Date:</b> |

## Part II: Determination Standards Checklist

The checklist below will be used to evaluate your plan’s consistency with statutory requirements under Act 174, including the requirement to be adopted, contain an enhanced energy element, be consistent with state energy policy, and meet a set of standards designed to ensure consistency with state energy goals and policies.

Please review and attach your plan (or adopted energy element/plan, along with supporting documentation) and self-evaluate whether it contains the following components. Use the Notes column to briefly describe how your plan is consistent with the standard, including relevant page references (you may include additional pages to expand upon Notes). If you feel a standard is not relevant or attainable, please check N/A where it is available and use the Notes column to describe the situation, explaining why the standard is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures your region is taking instead to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward this standard. If N/A is not made available, the standard must be met (unless the instructions for that standard indicate otherwise) and checked “Yes” in order to receive an affirmative determination. There is no penalty for checking (or limit on the number of times you may check) N/A where it is available, as long as a reasonable justification is provided in the Notes column.

### Plan Adoption Requirement

[Act 174](#) requires that regional plans be adopted in order to qualify for a determination of energy compliance. The plan adoption requirement can be met through an amendment to an existing plan in the form of an energy element or energy plan, as long as the amendment or plan itself is duly adopted as part of the regional plan and incorporated by reference or appended to the underlying, full plan (i.e., is officially “in” the regional plan). If this route is chosen, regions should also provide a memo that discusses the internal consistency of the energy plan/element with other related elements of the underlying plan (particularly Transportation and Land Use), and/or whether the energy plan/element supersedes language in those other elements. Standards 1 and 2 below must be answered in the affirmative in order for a plan to receive an affirmative determination of energy compliance.

|   |   |                             |  |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Has your plan been duly adopted?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>Adoption date:<br>_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |
| 2. Is a copy of the plan (or adopted energy element/plan, along with underlying plan and memo addressing consistency of energy element/plan with other elements of underlying plan) attached to this checklist? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                            | <input type="checkbox"/> No |  |

### Energy Element Requirement

To obtain a determination of energy compliance, Act 174 requires regions to include an “energy element,” revised through Act 174 to explicitly address energy across all sectors and to identify potential and unsuitable areas for siting renewable energy resources, as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3):

*An energy element, which may include 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.*

The standards below are generally organized to integrate each component of the enhanced energy element with related determination standards that evaluate the plan’s consistency with state goals and policies. **Energy element components are identified in bolded text.**

While regions may choose to primarily address energy used for heating, transportation, and electricity in the required energy element, they may also choose to address some of these components in related plan elements (e.g., Transportation and Land Use) and should indicate as much in the Notes column. To the extent an energy element is designed to comprehensively address energy, it should be complementary to and reference other relevant plan elements.

|   |                              |                             |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p><b>3. Does the plan contain an energy element, as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)?</b><br/> <i>Individual components of the energy element will be evaluated through the standards below.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

### Consistency with State Goals and Policies Requirement

Act 174 states that regional and municipal plans must be consistent with the following state goals and policies:

- Greenhouse gas reduction requirements under [10 V.S.A. § 578\(a\)](#) (26% from 2005 levels by 2025; 40% from 1990 levels by 2030; 80% from 1990 levels by 2050)
- The 25 x 25 goal for renewable energy under [10 V.S.A. § 580](#) (25% in-state renewables supply for all energy uses by 2025)
- Building efficiency goals under [10 V.S.A. § 581](#) (e.g., reduce fossil fuel consumption across all buildings by 10% by 2025)
- State energy policy under [30 V.S.A. § 202a](#) and the recommendations for regional and municipal planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the [State energy plans](#) adopted pursuant to [30 V.S.A. §§ 202](#) and [202b](#)
- The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under [30 V.S.A. §§ 8004](#) and [8005](#)

The standards in the checklist below will be used to determine whether a plan is consistent with these goals and policies. The standards are broken out by category. *Analysis and Targets* standards address how energy analyses are done within plans, and whether targets are established for energy conservation, efficiency, fuel switching, and use of renewable energy across sectors. *Pathways (Implementation Actions)* standards address the identification of actions to achieve the targets. *Mapping* standards address the identification of suitable and unsuitable areas for the development of renewable energy.

Regions may choose to incorporate the information necessary to meet the standards in their energy elements, and/or in other sections of their plans (many transportation items may fit best in the Transportation chapters of plans, for instance). However, plans must be internally consistent, and applicants should cross-reference wherever possible.

## Analysis and Targets Standards

For the analysis determination standards below, regions are expected to develop or update their own analysis (which the PSD will support through regionalization of the modeling efforts conducted to support the 2022 CEP), and to then break out the analysis for their municipalities, who can use their region-provided analysis to meet the municipal *Analysis & Targets* standards. The PSD and regional planning commissions developed several guidance documents to explain the expected level of detail in and suggestions regarding data sources and methodologies available for meeting the *Analysis & Targets* standards below. These guidance documents can be retrieved from the following links:

- In 2017, the PSD developed two guidance documents, one for regional plans and one for municipal plans:
  - o [Guidance for Regional Plans](#)
  - o [Guidance for Municipal Plans](#)
- In addition, in 2019 the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, with input from all 11 RPCs in the state, created [a best practices and resources guide](#) for municipalities to use when undertaking enhanced energy planning.

The guidance developed by the PSD will be updated in 2022 to incorporate best practices that have emerged from the regions and municipalities who have completed an initial round of energy plans. Note that standards 4A-4E are all derived directly from requirements in Act 174 (with minor modifications to make them feasible) and must be met affirmatively in order for a regional plan to receive an affirmative determination of energy compliance. Standard 5 is also required and addresses “municipalization” of analysis and targets; regions should check “Yes” if they have or if they have a plan to supply this information to their municipalities.

Targets set by regions should be aligned with state energy policy (see the goals and policies listed above). Where targets (and efforts to reach them) depart significantly from state energy goals and policies, an explanation for how the plan otherwise achieves the intent of the state goal or policy should be provided. The guidance document also offers additional clarification on alignment with state goals and policies.

The analysis items below are intended to provide regions with an overview of their current energy use, and with a sense of the trajectories and pace of change needed to meet targets, which can be translated into concrete actions in the *Pathways* standards below. Targets provide regions with milestones or checkpoints along the way toward a path of meeting 90% of their total energy needs with renewable energy, and can be compared with the potential renewable energy generation from areas identified as potentially suitable in the *Mapping* standards exercise below to give regions a sense of their ability to accommodate renewable energy that would meet their needs.

|   |                              |                             |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p><b>4. Does your plan’s energy element contain an analysis of resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the region across all energy sectors (electric, thermal, transportation)?</b></p> <p><i>Note: You may want to reference <a href="#">the guidance document</a>, developed by Northwest Regional Planning Commission, with input from all 11 regional planning commissions, on best practices for conducting such an analysis, including examples and suggested units to use when developing analyses.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

|   |                              |                             |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p>A. Does the plan estimate current energy use across transportation, heating, and electric sectors?<br/><i>As noted in the Guidance Document, plans meet this standard by transparently calculating estimated energy consumption by region by 1) transportation, 2) building heat, and 3) electricity consumption. More detailed support is available in Appendix A of the <a href="#">Guidance</a> developed by the PSD.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>B. Does the plan establish targets for 2025, 2035, and 2050 for thermal efficiency improvements and use of renewable energy for heating and evaluate the amount of thermal-sector conservation, efficiency, and conversion to alternative heating fuels needed to achieve these targets?</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>C. Does the plan establish targets for 2025, 2035, and 2050 for use of renewable energy for transportation and evaluate transportation system changes and land use strategies needed to achieve these targets?</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>D. Does the plan establish 2025, 2035, and 2050 targets for electric efficiency improvements and use and renewable energy for electricity and evaluate electric-sector conservation and efficiency needed to achieve these targets?</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>5. Has your region provided (or do you have a plan to provide) a breakout of the analyses and targets above to your municipalities?<br/><i>Please explain your timeline for completing this task in the Notes column.</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

### Pathways (Implementation Actions) Standards

This section examines whether plans meet the Act 174 expectation that they include pathways and recommended actions to achieve the targets identified through the *Analysis and Targets* section of the Standards (above). Plans are expected to include or otherwise address all of the pathways (implementation actions) below, unless N/A is provided as an option. There is no penalty for choosing N/A one or more times, as long as a reasonable justification is provided in the Notes column, preferably including an explanation of how the plan alternatively achieves attainment of the targets should be included. If N/A is not provided as an option, the plan must meet the standard, and “Yes” must be checked, in order for the plan to meet the requirements for a determination (unless the instructions particular to that standard indicate otherwise).

PSD will be updating its guidance documents in 2022 with potential implementation actions included in the 2022 Comprehensive Energy Plan, from existing regional plans that have received a determination of compliance, and from other sources. We also offer potential starting points for consideration as italicized text under each standard. Plans are encouraged to promote as diverse a portfolio of approaches as possible in each sector, or if not, to explain why they take a more targeted approach. Implementation actions may fit best in a holistic discussion contained within a plan’s energy element, though cross-referencing to other relevant plan elements is also acceptable.

Regions must demonstrate a commitment to achieving each standard in policies, objectives, and implementation actions in clear, action-oriented language. Definitions of policies, objectives, and actions can be found on p. 52 of the [Vermont State Planning Manual Module 1](#).

|   |                              |   |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>6. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies or objectives on the conservation and efficient use of energy in buildings?</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| A. Does the plan encourage conservation by individuals and organizations?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could include educational activities and events such as convening or sponsoring weatherization workshops, supporting local energy committees, encouraging the use of existing utility and other efficiency and conservation programs and funding sources, etc.)</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| B. Does the plan promote efficient and climate resilient buildings?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could include education on and promotion of residential and commercial building energy standards for new construction and existing buildings, including additions, alterations, renovations and repairs; promoting the implementation of residential and commercial building efficiency ratings and labeling; assistance to municipalities considering adopting stretch codes; identification of buildings and facilities that serve critical community functions, etc.)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| C. Does the plan promote decreased use of fossil fuels for heating?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could promote switching to wood, liquid biofuels, biogas, geothermal, and/or electricity (e.g. beneficial electrification). Suitable devices include advanced wood heating systems and cold-climate heat pumps, as well as use of more energy efficient heating systems; and identifying potential locations for, and barriers to, deployment of biomass district heating and/or thermal-led combined heat and power systems in the region)</i>                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| D. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your region is taking)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <b>7. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies and objectives on reducing transportation energy demand and single-occupancy vehicle use, and encouraging use of renewable or lower-emission energy sources for transportation?</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| A. Does the plan promote a shift away from single-occupancy vehicle trips through strategies appropriate to the region?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include facilitation of rideshare, vanpool, car-sharing, or public transit initiatives; working with public transit providers and other stakeholders to identify and develop new public transit</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|  |                              |   |                                   |
|--|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p><i>routes and promote full utilization of existing routes; efforts to develop or increase park-and-rides; enhancement of options such as rail and telecommuting; deployment of broadband to support remote services such as teleworking or telemedicine, education; intergovernmental cooperation; or assistance with grants related to any of the above, etc.)</i></p>   |                              |   |                                   |
| <p>B. Does the plan promote a shift away from gas/diesel vehicles to electric or other non-fossil fuel transportation options through strategies appropriate to the region?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include developing a plan for preferred siting of charging infrastructure (ex. placement of fast or level two chargers), installing or promoting the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, providing education and outreach to potential users, supporting electric and non-fossil fuel vehicle availability through outreach to vehicle dealers, etc.)</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>C. Does the plan facilitate the development of walking and biking infrastructure through strategies appropriate to the region?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include studying, planning for, seeking funding for, or implementing improvements that encourage safe and convenient walking and biking; adopting a "Complete Streets" policy, etc.)</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>D. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your region is taking)</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p><b>8. Does your plan's energy element contain policies and objectives on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy and climate resilience?</b></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>A. Does the plan include land use policies (and descriptions of current and future land use categories) that demonstrate a commitment to reducing sprawl and minimizing low-density development?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include promoting wastewater infrastructure in planned growth areas, policies or zoning that require design features that minimize the characteristics of strip development [multiple stories, parking lot to the side or back of the store], requirements that development in those areas be connected by means other than roads and cars, policies or zoning that limits conversion and fragmentation of forest blocks and impacts to primary agricultural soils, etc.)</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>B. Does the plan strongly prioritize development in compact, mixed-use centers when physically feasible and appropriate to the use of the</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|  |                              |   |                                   |
|--|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| development, or identify steps to make such compact development more feasible?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include promoting and assisting with municipal participation in the state designation programs; facilitating the exploration of water or sewage solutions that enable compact development; working with state agencies and local utilities to identify priority areas for EV charging, storage, and other resources to promote downtown economic and energy resilience; etc.)</i> |                              |   |                                   |
| C. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your region is taking)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <b>9. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies and objectives on the development and siting of renewable energy, storage, and transmission and distribution resources?</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 |                                   |
| A. Does the plan evaluate (estimates of or actual) generation from existing renewable energy generation in the region, and break this information out by municipality?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| B. Does the plan analyze generation potential, through the mapping exercise (see <i>Mapping</i> standards, below), from potentially suitable areas in the region, and break this information down by municipality?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| C. Does the plan identify sufficient land in the region for renewable energy development to reasonably reach 2050 targets for renewable electric generation, based on population and energy resource potential (from potential resources identified in the <i>Mapping</i> exercise, below), accounting for the fact that land may not be available due to private property constraints, site-specific constraints, or grid-related constraints?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| D. Does the plan ensure that any regional or local constraints (regionally or locally designated resources or critical resources, from 12B and 12C under <i>Mapping</i> , below) do not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the provision of sufficient renewable energy to meet state, regional, or municipal targets?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| E. Does the plan include policies and objectives to accompany maps (could include general siting guidelines), including policies and objectives to accompany any preferred, potential, and unsuitable areas for siting generation (see 12 and 13 under <i>Mapping</i> , below)?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| F. Does the plan prioritize maximizing renewable generation on preferred locations (such as the categories outlined under 12E in the <i>Mapping</i> standards, below)?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|  |                              |   |                                   |
|--|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| G. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your region is taking)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <b>10. Does your plan’s energy element assess the potential equity impacts of the policies and objectives included to meet standards 6-9?</b><br><i>Such an assessment could consider, for example, what communities will be most impacted by the policy or objective, the distribution of benefits and burdens related to specific actions, whether actions will address existing inequities, or the extent to which communities were or will be consulted in the development of any programs or actions.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

### Mapping Standards

Act 174 requires plans to identify potential areas for the development and siting of renewable energy, storage, transmission, and distribution resources and areas that are unsuitable for siting those resources or particular categories or sizes of those resources. It furthermore requires that the standards address the potential generation from the potential siting areas. Lastly, it requires that – in order to receive an affirmative determination – regional plans allow for the siting in the region of all types of renewable generation technologies.

The *Mapping* standards lay out a sequence of steps for planners to examine existing renewable resources and to identify potential (and preferred) areas for renewable energy development, and to identify likely unsuitable areas for development, by layering constraint map layers on to raw energy resource potential map layers. The maps should help regions visualize and calculate the potential generation from potential areas, and compare it with the 2025, 2035, and 2050 targets from the *Analysis and Targets* standards to get a sense of the scale and scope of generation that could be produced within the region to meet the region’s needs. The PSD will provide additional guidance to accompany the standards that fleshes out the steps, layers, and standards more fully.

Plans must include maps that address all of the standards below, unless N/A is provided as an option, in which case a compelling reason why the standard is not applicable or relevant should be provided in the Notes column. Regions must develop their own maps, and to then break out the maps for their municipalities, who can use their region-provided maps to meet the municipal *Mapping* standards.

The map and the text describing the policies or rules used to construct the map, as well as the text describing specific policies applicable to map features, should be complementary. That should help ensure that any “land conservation measures and specific policies” that might be given substantial deference in the context of a particular project review under 30 V.S.A. § 248 are clearly identifiable in the text, should a map lack sufficient clarity or granularity regarding the area in which a project is proposed. Policy language must be clear, unqualified, and create no ambiguity in relation to the specific area and the type of permissible development.

Consistent with the Climate Action Plan and Act 171 of 2016, the 2022 update to the Act 174 standards adds standard 12F to emphasize the value of forest lands in sequestering and storing carbon. By the 2028 update to the standards, the Department expects to incorporate Vermont Conservation Design priority interior forest and connectivity blocks into the possible constraints in standard 12C.

|   |                              |                             |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p>11. Does the plan identify and map existing electric generation sources?<br/> <i>Maps may depict generators of all sizes or just those larger than 15 kW, as long as information on generators smaller than 15 kW is summarized and provided or referenced elsewhere. It is expected that the best available information at the time of plan creation will be used. This information is available from the PSD.</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>12. <b>Does the plan identify potential areas for the development and siting of renewable energy resources</b> and the potential generation from such generators in the identified areas, taking into account factors including resource availability, environmental constraints, and the location and capacity of electric grid infrastructure?<br/> <i>Maps should include the following (available from VCGI and ANR), and the resulting Prime and Secondary Resource Maps will together comprise “potential areas”:</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>A. Raw renewable potential analysis (wind and solar), using best available data layers (including LiDAR as appropriate).</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>B. Known constraints (signals likely, though not absolute, unsuitability for development based on statewide or local regulations or designated critical resources) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vernal Pools from Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE; confirmed layers)</li> <li>• DEC River Corridors</li> <li>• FEMA Floodways</li> <li>• State-significant Natural Communities</li> <li>• Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species</li> <li>• National Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Class 1 and Class 2 Wetlands (VSWI and advisory layers)</li> <li>• Regionally or Locally Identified Critical Resources</li> </ul> <p><i>If areas are constrained for the development of renewable energy due to the desire to protect a locally designated critical resource (whether a natural resource or a community-identified resource), then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development in this area must be similarly restrictive; for this category, policies must prohibit all permanent development (and should be listed in the Notes column).</i></p> <p><i>These areas should be subtracted from raw renewable energy resource potential maps to form Secondary Resource Maps</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|   |                              |   |                                   |
|---|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>C. Possible constraints (signals conditions that would likely require mitigation, and which may prove a site unsuitable after site-specific study, based on statewide or regional/local policies that are currently adopted or in effect), including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vernal Pools from VCE (potential and probable layers)</li> <li>• Agricultural Soils</li> <li>• FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas</li> <li>• Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands)</li> <li>• Act 250 Agricultural Soil Mitigation areas</li> <li>• Deer Wintering Areas</li> <li>• The following features from ANR’s Vermont Conservation Design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interior Forest Blocks – Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Connectivity Blocks – Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Physical Landscape Blocks – Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Surface Water and Riparian Areas – Highest Priority</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hydric Soils</li> <li>• Regionally or Locally Identified Resources</li> </ul> <p><i>If locations are constrained for the development of renewable energy due to the desire to protect a locally designated resource (whether a natural resource or community-identified resource, like a viewshed), then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development must be similarly restrictive (and should be listed in the Notes column).</i></p> <p><i>These areas should be subtracted from Secondary Resource Maps to form Prime Resource Maps.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>D. Transmission and distribution resources and constraints, as well as transportation infrastructure.<br/> <i>(Including three-phase distribution lines, known constraints from resources such as Green Mountain Power’s solar map, known areas of high electric load, etc.)</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>E. Preferred locations (specific areas or parcels) for siting a generator or a specific size or type of generator, accompanied by any specific siting criteria for these locations<br/> <i>Narrative descriptions of the types of preferred areas in accompanying plan text are acceptable, though mapping of areas and especially specific parcels (to the extent they are known) is highly encouraged, to signal preferences to</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|  |   |   |                                   |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p><i>developers, particularly for locally preferred areas and specific parcels that do not qualify as a statewide preferred location under i. below.</i></p> <p><i>The locations identified as preferred must not be impractical for developing a technology with regard to the presence of the renewable resource and access to transmission/distribution infrastructure.</i></p>  |   |   |                                   |
| <p>i. Statewide preferred locations such as rooftops (and other structures), parking lots, previously developed sites, brownfields, gravel pits, quarries, and Superfund sites.</p> <p><i>Note: These preferred locations align with the locations identified in the net metering rule 5.100. As of January 14, 2022 that rulemaking is currently active. Should the preferred locations identified in the rule change during that rulemaking, plans would be required to consider the updated preferred locations identified.</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>ii. Other potential locally preferred locations</p> <p><i>For example, customer on- or near-site generation, economic development areas, unranked and not currently farmed agricultural soils, unused land near already developed infrastructure, locations suitable for large-scale biomass district heat or thermal-led cogeneration, potential locations for biogas heating and digesters, etc.</i></p> <p><i>These are particularly important to map if possible (with the input of municipalities), as “a specific location in a duly adopted municipal plan” is one way for a net metering project to qualify as being on a preferred site.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>F. Does the plan (a) evaluate whether forest blocks or habitat connectors identified pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(2)(F) [for regional plans] and 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(2)(D) [for municipal plans] should be treated as possible constraints, and (b) ensure that land conservation measures and specific policies established for the development and siting of renewable energy resources incorporates consideration of the evaluation undertaken in part (a)?</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>13. <b>Does the plan identify areas that are unsuitable for siting renewable energy resources or particular categories or sizes of those resources? Either Yes or No (“No” if the plan chooses not to designate any areas as unsuitable) is an acceptable answer here. “Resources” is synonymous with “generators.”</b></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>(“Yes” for A and B must also be | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |

|  |                              |  |                                   |
|--|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|  | select<br>ed<br>below<br>)   |  |                                   |
| <p>A. Are areas identified as unsuitable for particular categories or sizes of generators consistent with resource availability and/or land use policies in the regional or municipal plan applicable to other types of land development (answer only required if “Yes” selected above, indicating unsuitable areas have been identified)?</p> <p><i>If areas are considered unsuitable for energy generation, then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development in this area with similar impacts should similarly prohibit those other types of development. Please note these policies in the Notes column.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A<br>(if no unsuitable areas are identified) | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| <p>B. Does the plan ensure that any regional or local constraints (regionally or locally designated resources or critical resources, from 12B-12C above) identified are supported through data or studies, are consistent with the remainder of the plan, and do not include an arbitrary prohibition or interference with the intended function of any particular renewable resource size or type?</p> <p><i>Please explain in the Notes column.</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  | Page: _____<br>Paragraph #: _____ |
| 14. Does the plan allow for the siting in the region of all types of renewable generation technologies?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                                   |
| 15. Has your region provided (or do you have a plan to provide) a breakout of the map product(s) above to your municipalities?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                                   |
| <i>Please explain your timeline for completing this task in the Notes column.</i>  |                              |  |                                   |

# Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans

## Instructions

Before proceeding, please review the requirements of Parts I and II below, as well as the Overview document. Submitting a Municipal Plan for review under the standards below is entirely voluntary, as enabled under [Act 174](#), the Energy Development Improvement Act of 2016. If a Municipal Plan meets the standards, it will be given an affirmative “determination of energy compliance,” and its land conservation measures and specific policies will be given “substantial deference” in the Public Utility Commission’s review of whether an energy project meets the orderly development criterion in the Section 248 process. Specifically, with respect to an in-state electric generation facility, the Commission:

*[S]hall give substantial deference to the land conservation measures and specific policies contained in a duly adopted regional and municipal plan that has received an affirmative determination of energy compliance under 24 V.S.A. § 4352. In this subdivision (C), “substantial deference” means that a land conservation measure or specific policy shall be applied in accordance with its terms unless there is a clear and convincing demonstration that other factors affecting the general good of the State outweigh the application of the measure or policy. The term shall not include consideration of whether the determination of energy compliance should or should not have been affirmative under 24 V.S.A. § 4352.*

Municipal Plans should be submitted by the municipality’s legislative body to the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) if the Regional Plan has received an affirmative determination of energy compliance (determination), along with the completed checklist below. After a Municipal Plan and completed checklist have been submitted to the RPC, the RPC will schedule a public hearing noticed at least 15 days in advance by direct mail to the requesting municipal legislative body, on the RPC website, and in a newspaper of general publication in the municipality. The RPC shall issue a determination in writing within two months of the receipt of a request. If the determination is negative, the RPC shall state the reasons for the denial in writing and, if appropriate, suggest acceptable modifications. Submissions for a new determination following a negative determination shall receive a new determination within 45 days.

The plans that Municipalities submit must:

- Be adopted
- Be confirmed under 24 V.S.A. § 4350
- Include an energy element that has the same components as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)
- Be consistent with state energy policy (described below), in the manner described in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1)
- Meet all standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance (see below)

Municipalities are encouraged to consult with their RPC before undertaking the process of plan adoption, which may help in identifying any deficiencies or inconsistencies with the standards or other requirements that would be more difficult to remedy after a plan has gone through the formal adoption process.

The 2022 Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), published on January 14, 2022, includes several important updates to the Act 174 enhanced energy standards:

- A revised set of standards, presented in this document, updated to reflect current developments in state energy policy
- An updated suite of recommendations tailored specifically toward the work of the regions and municipalities. Unlike the set of recommendations published with the original standards, which were written prior to the passage of Act 174, these recommendations are included in the 2022 CEP itself.

In addition, a revised guidance document will be published within six months after the publication of the 2022 CEP to reflect new issues and best practices that have emerged from the regions and municipalities that have gone through an initial process of applying for a determination of energy compliance. This document will also include the recommendations for regions and municipalities outlined in the 2022 CEP.

Affirmative determinations are valid for the life cycle of a revision of the Municipal Plan. Plans submitted after the 2022 CEP is issued are expected to meet the updated standards that are issued at that time, with the exception of plans for regions or municipalities who can demonstrate they had meaningfully initiated the planning process (ex. through proof of a publicly noticed meeting) before the 2022 CEP was published. Municipalities are encouraged to consult with their RPC regarding interim amendments that might affect any of the standards below, to discuss whether a new review is triggered.

If you wish to submit your Municipal Plan to your RPC for a determination, please read closely the specific instructions at the start of each section below, and attach your Municipal Plan to this checklist.

Determination requests to an RPC (and any other questions) should be submitted to your RPC's designated contact.

| <b>Part I: Applicant Information</b> |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Applicant:</b>                    | <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| <b>Contact person:</b>               | <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| <b>Contact information:</b>          | <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |

**Received by:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Date:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

## Part II: Determination Standards Checklist

The checklist below will be used to evaluate your plan's consistency with statutory requirements under Act 174, including the requirement to be adopted, contain an enhanced energy element, be consistent with state energy policy, and meet a set of standards designed to ensure consistency with state energy goals and policies.

Please review and attach your plan (or adopted energy element/plan, along with supporting documentation) and self-evaluate whether it contains the following components. Use the Notes column to briefly describe how your plan is consistent with the standard, including relevant page references (you may include additional pages to expand upon Notes). If you feel a standard is not relevant or attainable, please check N/A where it is available and use the Notes column to describe the situation, explaining why the standard is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures your municipality is taking instead to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward this standard. If N/A is not made available, the standard must be met (unless the instructions for that standard indicate otherwise) and checked "Yes" in order to receive an affirmative determination. There is no penalty for checking (or limit on the number of times you may check) N/A where it is available, as long as a reasonable justification is provided in the Notes column.

### Plan Adoption Requirement

[Act 174](#) requires that municipal plans be adopted and approved in order to qualify for a determination of energy compliance. In the near term, it is likely municipalities will revise and submit isolated energy plans or elements, particularly due to long planning cycles. Therefore, the plan adoption requirement can be met through an amendment to an existing plan in the form of an energy element or energy plan, as long as the amendment or plan itself is duly adopted as part of the municipal plan and incorporated by reference or appended to the underlying, full plan (i.e., is officially "in" the municipal plan), as well as approved for confirmation with the region. If this route is chosen, the municipality should also attach the planning commission report required for plan amendments under 24 V.S.A. § 4384, which should address the internal consistency of the energy plan/element with other related elements of the underlying plan (particularly Transportation and Land Use), and/or whether the energy plan/element supersedes language in those other elements. Standards 1 and 2 below must be answered in the affirmative in order for a plan to receive an affirmative determination of energy compliance.

1. Has your plan been duly adopted and approved for confirmation according to [24 V.S.A. § 4350](#)?

Yes. Adoption date:  
[Click here to enter](#)

No

[Click here to enter text.](#)

|   |  |                             |                                  |
|---|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   | text.<br>Confirmation date:<br>Click here to enter text. |                             |                                  |
| 2. Is a copy of the plan (or adopted energy element/plan, along with underlying plan and planning commission report addressing consistency of energy element/plan with other elements of underlying plan) attached to this checklist? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                             | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Notes: Click here to enter text. |

| Energy Element Requirement   |                              |                             |   |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <p>To obtain a determination of energy compliance, Act 174 requires municipalities to include an “energy element” that contains the same <u>components</u> described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3), which was revised through Act 174 to explicitly address energy across all sectors and to identify potential and unsuitable areas for siting renewable energy resources:</p> <p><i><u>An energy element, which may include 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.</u></i></p> <p>The standards below are generally organized to integrate each component of the enhanced energy element with related determination standards that evaluate the plan’s consistency with state goals and policies. <b>Energy element components are identified in bolded text.</b></p> <p>While municipalities may choose to primarily address energy used for heating, transportation, and electricity in the required energy element, they may also choose to address some of these components in related plan elements (e.g., Transportation and Land Use) and should indicate as much in the Notes column. To the extent an energy element is designed to comprehensively address energy, it should be complementary to and reference other relevant plan elements.</p> |                              |                             |   |
| 3. Does the plan contain an energy element, that contains the same components described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: Click here to enter text.<br>Notes: Click here to enter text. |
| <i>Individual components of the energy element will be evaluated</i>   |                              |                             |   |

through the standards below.

### Consistency with State Goals and Policies Requirement

Act 174 states that regional and municipal plans must be consistent with the following state goals and policies:

- Greenhouse gas reduction requirements under [10 V.S.A. § 578\(a\)](#) (26% from 2005 levels by 2025; 40% from 1990 levels by 2030; 80% from 1990 levels by 2050)
- The 25 x 25 goal for renewable energy under [10 V.S.A. § 580](#) (25% in-state renewables supply for all energy uses by 2025)
- Building efficiency goals under [10 V.S.A. § 581](#) (e.g., reduce fossil fuel consumption across all buildings by 10% by 2025)
- State energy policy under [30 V.S.A. § 202a](#) and the recommendations for regional and municipal planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the [State energy plans](#) adopted pursuant to [30 V.S.A. §§ 202](#) and [202b](#)
- The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under [30 V.S.A. §§ 8004](#) and [8005](#)

The standards in the checklist below will be used to determine whether a plan is consistent with these goals and policies. The standards are broken out by category. *Analysis and Targets* standards address how energy analyses are done within plans, and whether targets are established for energy conservation, efficiency, fuel switching, and use of renewable energy across sectors. *Pathways (Implementation Actions)* standards address the identification of actions to achieve the targets. *Mapping* standards address the identification of suitable and unsuitable areas for the development of renewable energy.

Municipalities may choose to incorporate the information necessary to meet the standards in their energy elements, and/or in other sections of their plans (many transportation items may fit best in the Transportation chapters of plans, for instance). However, plans must be internally consistent, and applicants should cross-reference wherever possible.

### Analysis and Targets Standards

For the *Analysis & Targets* determination standards below, municipalities will be provided with analyses and targets derived from regional analyses and targets by their RPC. Municipalities may choose to rely on these “municipalized” analyses and targets to meet the standards in this section. Municipalities which elect to use the analysis and targets provided by a region will be presumed to have met the standards in this section. Alternatively, municipalities may develop their own custom analyses and targets or supplement the analyses and targets provided by the regions with specific local data; if this option is chosen, the analysis and targets must include all of the same components and meet the

standards required of regions, as described below.

For municipalities that choose to undertake their own analysis and target-setting (and for regions), the Department of Public Service (PSD) has provided guidance documents to explain the expected level of detail in and data sources and methodologies available for meeting the standards (including areas where it is understood data at the municipal level is unavailable, and therefore not expected). These guidance documents can be retrieved from the following links:

- In 2017, the PSD developed two guidance documents, one for regional plans and one for municipal plans:
  - o [Guidance for Regional Plans](#)
  - o [Guidance for Municipal Plans](#)
- In addition, in 2019 the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, with input from all 11 RPCs in the state, created [a best practices and resources guide](#) for municipalities to use when undertaking enhanced energy planning.

The guidance developed by the PSD will be updated in 2022 to incorporate best practices that have emerged from the regions and municipalities who have completed an initial round of energy plans. Note that standards 5A-5E are all derived directly from requirements in Act 174 (with minor modifications to make them feasible) and must be met affirmatively in order for a municipal plan to receive an affirmative determination of energy compliance.

Targets set by regions and municipalities should be aligned with state energy policy (see the goals and policies listed above). Where targets (and efforts to reach them) depart significantly from state energy goals and policies, an explanation for how the plan otherwise achieves the intent of the state goal or policy should be provided. The guidance document also offers additional clarification on alignment with state goals and policies.

The analysis items below are intended to provide regions and municipalities with an overview of their current energy use, and with a sense of the trajectories and pace of change needed to meet targets, which can be translated into concrete actions in the *Pathways* standards below. Targets provide regions and municipalities with milestones or checkpoints along the way toward a path of meeting 90% of their total energy needs with renewable energy, and can be compared with the potential renewable energy generation from areas identified as potentially suitable in the *Mapping* standards exercise below to give regions and municipalities a sense of their ability to accommodate renewable energy that would meet their needs.

**4. Does your plan’s energy element contain an analysis of resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems within the municipality across all energy sectors**

Yes

No

Page: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Notes: [Click here to enter text.](#)

|   |  |                             |  |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <p><b>(electric, thermal, transportation)?</b></p> <p><i>Note: You may want to reference <a href="#">the guidance document</a>, developed by Northwest Regional Planning Commission, with input from all 11 regional planning commissions, on best practices for conducting such an analysis, including examples and suggested units to use when developing analyses.</i></p>   |  |                             |  |
| <p>5. Does your plan contain an analysis that addresses A-E below, either as provided by your Regional Planning Commission or as developed by your municipality?</p> <p><i>Municipalities may meet this standard by using the analysis and targets provided by their regions, or by developing their own analyses and targets. If using the analysis &amp; targets provided by your region, please answer “Yes-Region” and skip ahead to #6. If developing a custom analysis, please answer “Yes-Custom” and address 5A-5E separately, below.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes-Region<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes-Custom | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>A. Does the plan estimate current energy use across transportation, heating, and electric sectors?</p> <p><i>As noted in the Guidance Document, plans meet this standard by transparently calculating estimated energy consumption by region by 1) transportation, 2) building heat, and 3) electricity consumption. More detailed support is available in Appendix A of the <a href="#">Guidance</a> developed by the PSD.</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>B. Does the plan establish targets for 2025, 2035, and 2050 for thermal efficiency improvements and use of renewable energy for heating and evaluate the amount of thermal-sector conservation, efficiency, and conversion to alternative heating fuels needed to achieve these targets?</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>C. Does the plan establish targets for 2025, 2035, and 2050 for use of renewable energy for transportation and evaluate transportation system changes and land use strategies needed to achieve these targets?</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |

|   |                              |                             |   |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| D. Does the plan establish 2025, 2035, and 2050 targets for electric efficiency improvements and use and renewable energy for electricity and evaluate electric-sector conservation and efficiency needed to achieve these targets? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|

### Pathways (Implementation Actions) Standards

This section examines whether plans meet the Act 174 expectation that they include pathways and recommended actions to achieve the targets identified through the *Analysis and Targets* section of the Standards (above). Plans are expected to include or otherwise address all of the pathways (implementation actions) below; some actions may not be applicable or equally relevant to all applicants (small vs. large municipalities, for instance), in which case N/A may be checked (if available) and the justification provided in the Notes column. There is no penalty for choosing N/A one or more times, as long as a reasonable justification is provided in the Notes column, preferably including an explanation of how the plan alternatively achieves attainment of the targets should be included. If N/A is not provided as an option, the standard must be met, and “Yes” must be checked, in order for the plan to meet the requirements for a determination (unless the instructions particular to that standard indicate otherwise).

The PSD will be updating its guidance documents in 2022 with potential implementation actions included in the 2022 Comprehensive Energy Plan, from existing regional and municipal plans that have received a determination of compliance, and from other sources. We also offer potential starting points for consideration as italicized text under each standard. Plans are encouraged to promote as diverse a portfolio of approaches as possible in each sector, or if not, to explain why they take a more targeted approach. Implementation actions may fit best in a holistic discussion contained within a plan’s energy element, though cross-referencing to other relevant plan elements is also acceptable.

Municipalities must demonstrate a commitment to achieving each standard in policies, objectives, and implementation actions in clear, action-oriented language. Definitions of policies, objectives, and actions can be found on p. 52 of the [Vermont State Planning Manual Module 1](#).

|  |                              |                             |   |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>6. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies or objectives on the conservation and efficient use of energy?</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| A. Does the plan encourage conservation by individuals and organizations?<br><i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could include educational activities and events such as convening or sponsoring weatherization workshops, establishing local energy committees, encouraging the</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |

|   |                              |   |  |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| <p><i>use of existing utility and other efficiency and conservation programs and funding sources, etc.)</i></p>   |                              |   |  |
| <p>B. Does the plan promote efficient and climate resilient buildings? <i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could include education on and promotion of compliance with residential and commercial building energy standards for new construction and existing buildings, including additions, alterations, renovations and repairs; promoting the implementation of residential and commercial building efficiency ratings and labeling; considering adoption of stretch codes, identification of buildings and facilities that serve critical community functions, etc.)</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>C. Does the plan promote decreased use of fossil fuels for heating? <i>(Actions, objectives, and policies could promote switching to wood, liquid biofuels, biogas, geothermal, and/or electricity (e.g. beneficial electrification). Suitable devices include advanced wood heating systems and cold-climate heat pumps, as well as use of more energy efficient heating systems; and identifying potential locations for, and barriers to, deployment of biomass district heating and/or thermal-led combined heat and power systems in the municipality)</i></p>              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>D. Does the plan demonstrate the municipality’s leadership by example with respect to the efficiency of municipal buildings? <i>(Actions could include building audits and weatherization projects in schools and town offices, etc.)</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>E. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your municipality is taking)</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p><b>7. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies and objectives on reducing transportation energy demand and single-occupancy vehicle use, and encouraging use of renewable or lower-emission energy sources for transportation?</b></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |

|   |                              |   |  |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>A. Does the plan promote a shift away from single-occupancy vehicle trips, through strategies appropriate to the municipality?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include rideshare, vanpool, car-sharing initiatives; participation in efforts to identify and develop new public transit routes, promote full utilization of existing routes, integrate park-and-rides with transit routes, efforts to develop or increase park-and-rides; enhancement of options such as rail and telecommuting; deployment of broadband to support remote services such as telework or telemedicine; education; intergovernmental cooperation; etc.)</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>B. Does the plan promote a shift away from gas/diesel vehicles to electric or other non-fossil fuel transportation options through strategies appropriate to the municipality?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include developing a plan for preferred siting of charging infrastructure (ex. placement of fast or level two chargers), installing or promoting the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, providing education and outreach to potential users, supporting non-fossil fuel vehicle availability through outreach to vehicle dealers, etc.)</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>C. Does the plan facilitate the development of walking and biking infrastructure through strategies appropriate to the municipality?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include studying, planning for, seeking funding for, or implementing improvements that encourage safe and convenient walking and biking; adopting a "Complete Streets" policy, etc.)</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>D. Does the plan demonstrate the municipality's leadership by example with respect to the efficiency of municipal transportation?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include purchasing energy efficient municipal and fleet vehicles when practicable, installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, etc.)</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>E. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>   |

|  |                              |   |  |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>approaches that your municipality is taking)</p>  |                              | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A                                | <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>  |
| <p><b>8. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies and objectives on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy and climate resilience?</b></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>A. Does the plan include land use policies (and descriptions of current and future land use categories) that demonstrate a commitment to reducing sprawl and minimizing low-density development?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include promoting wastewater infrastructure in planned growth areas, policies or zoning that require design features that minimize the characteristics of strip development [multiple stories, parking lot to the side or back of the store], and requirements that development in those areas be connected by means other than roads and cars; policies or zoning that limits conversion and fragmentation of forest blocks and impacts to primary agricultural soils, adopting a capital budget and program that furthers land use and transportation policies; etc.)</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>B. Does the plan strongly prioritize development in compact, mixed-use centers when physically feasible and appropriate to the use of the development, or identify steps to make such compact development more feasible?<br/><i>(Actions, objectives, or policies could include participating in the state designation program, such as obtaining state designated village centers, downtowns, neighborhoods, new town centers, or growth centers; exploration of water or sewage solutions that enable compact development; working with state agencies and local utilities to identify priority areas for EV charging, storage, and other resources to promote downtown economic and every resilience, etc.)</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>C. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your municipality is taking)</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>   |

|  |                              |   |   |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|
|  |                              |   | Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>  |
| <b>9. Does your plan’s energy element contain policies and objectives on the development and siting of renewable energy, storage, and transmission and distribution resources?</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>  |
| A. Does the plan evaluate (estimates of or actual) generation from existing renewable energy generation in the municipality?<br><i>Municipalities should be able to obtain this information from their regions.</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| B. Does the plan analyze generation potential, through the mapping exercise (see <i>Mapping</i> standards, below), from potentially suitable areas in the municipality?<br><i>Municipalities should be able to obtain this information from their regions.</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| C. Does the plan identify sufficient land in the municipality for renewable energy development to reasonably reach 2050 targets for renewable electric generation, based on population and energy resource potential (from potential resources identified in the <i>Mapping</i> exercise, below), accounting for the fact that land may not be available due to private property constraints, site-specific constraints, or grid-related constraints?<br><i>If N/A, please describe how you are working with your regional planning commission to ensure overall regional objectives are achieved.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| D. Does the plan ensure that any local constraints (locally designated resources or critical resources, from 13B and 13C under <i>Mapping</i> , below) do not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the provision of sufficient renewable energy to meet state, regional, or municipal targets?<br><i>If N/A, please describe how you are working with your regional planning commission to ensure overall regional objectives are achieved.</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| E. Does the plan include policies and objectives to accompany maps (could include general siting guidelines), including policies and   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>   |

|  |                              |   |   |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|
| objectives to accompany any preferred, potential, and unsuitable areas for siting generation (see 13 and 14 under <i>Mapping</i> , below)?   |                              |   | Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>  |
| F. Does the plan maximize the potential for renewable generation on preferred locations (such as the categories outlined under 13E in the <i>Mapping</i> standards, below)?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| G. Does the plan demonstrate the municipality's leadership by example with respect to the deployment of renewable energy? ( <i>Actions could include deploying renewable energy to offset municipal electric use, etc.</i> )   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| H. Other (please use the notes section to describe additional approaches that your municipality is taking)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| <b>10. Does your plan's energy element assess the potential equity impacts of the policies and objectives included to meet standards 6-9?</b><br><br><i>Such an assessment could consider, for example, what communities will be most impacted by the policy or objective, the distribution of benefits and burdens related to specific actions, whether actions will address existing inequities, or the extent to which communities were or will be consulted in the development of any programs or actions.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |

### Mapping Standards

Act 174 requires plans to identify potential areas for the development and siting of renewable energy, storage, transmission, and distribution resources and areas that are unsuitable for siting those resources or particular categories or sizes of those resources. It furthermore requires that the standards address the potential generation from the potential siting areas. Lastly, it requires that – in order to receive an affirmative determination – municipal plans allow for the siting in the region of all types of renewable generation technologies.

The *Mapping* standards lay out a sequence of steps for planners to examine existing renewable resources and to identify potential (and preferred) areas for renewable energy development, and to identify likely unsuitable areas for development, by layering constraint map layers

on to raw energy resource potential map layers. The maps should help municipalities visualize and calculate the potential generation from potential areas, and compare it with the 2025, 2035, and 2050 targets from the *Analysis and Targets* standards to get a sense of the scale and scope of generation that could be produced within the municipality to meet the municipality’s needs. The PSD will provide additional guidance to accompany the standards that fleshes out the steps, layers, and standards more fully.

Plans must include maps that address all of the standards below, unless N/A is provided as an option, in which case a compelling reason why the standard is not applicable or relevant should be provided in the Notes column. Regions must develop their own maps and to then break out the maps for their municipalities, who can use their region-provided maps to meet the municipal *Mapping* standards.

Municipalities may choose to rely on the maps provided by the regions to meet the standards in this section. Those maps should be somewhat familiar to municipalities, who are expected to be consulted as regions develop their maps. Alternatively, municipalities may choose to undertake their own mapping, according to the same set of standards as regions. Additionally, municipalities are expected to work collaboratively with their regions and with neighboring municipalities to ensure compatibility between the final products.

The map and the text describing the policies or rules used to construct the map, as well as the text describing specific policies applicable to map features, should be complementary. That should help ensure that any “land conservation measures and specific policies” that might be given substantial deference in the context of a particular project review under 30 V.S.A. § 248 are clearly identifiable in the text, should a map lack sufficient clarity or granularity regarding the area in which a project is proposed. Policy language must be clear, unqualified, and create no ambiguity in relation to the specific area and the type of permissible development.

Consistent with the Climate Action Plan and Act 171 of 2016, the 2022 update to the Act 174 standards adds standard 12F to emphasize the value of forest lands in sequestering and storing carbon. By the 2028 update to the standards, the Department expects to incorporate Vermont Conservation Design priority interior forest and connectivity blocks into the possible constraints in standard 12C.

|   |  |                             |  |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>11. Does your plan contain one or more maps that address 12-14 below, as provided by your Regional Planning Commission or as developed by your municipality?</p> <p><i>Municipalities may meet this standard by using the maps provided by their regions, or by developing their own maps. If using the maps provided by your region, please answer “Yes-Region” and skip ahead to #15. If developing custom maps, please answer “Yes-Custom” and address 12-14 separately, below.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes-Region<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes-Custom | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>         Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>         Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>12. Does the plan identify and map existing electric generation sources?</p> <p><i>Maps may depict generators of all sizes or just those larger than 15 kW, as</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>         Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>   |

|   |                              |                              |  |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>long as information on generators smaller than 15 kW is summarized and provided or referenced elsewhere. It is expected that the best available information at the time of plan creation will be used. This information is available from the PSD.</i></p>  |                              | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>  |
| <p><b>13. Does the plan identify potential areas for the development and siting of renewable energy resources</b> and the potential generation from such generators in the identified areas, taking into account factors including resource availability, environmental constraints, and the location and capacity of electric grid infrastructure?</p> <p><i>Maps should include the following (available from VCGI and ANR), and the resulting Prime and Secondary Resource Maps will together comprise “potential areas”:</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>A. Raw renewable energy potential analysis (wind and solar), using best available data layers (including LiDAR as appropriate)</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>B. Known constraints (signals likely, though not absolute, unsuitability for development based on statewide or local regulations or designated critical resources) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vernal Pools from Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE; confirmed layers)</li> <li>• DEC River Corridors</li> <li>• FEMA Floodways</li> <li>• State-significant Natural Communities</li> <li>• Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species</li> <li>• National Wilderness Areas</li> <li>• Class 1 and Class 2 Wetlands (VSWI and advisory layers)</li> <li>• Regionally or Locally Identified Critical Resources</li> </ul> <p><i>If areas are constrained for the development of renewable energy due to the desire to protect a locally designated critical resource (whether a natural resource or a community-identified resource), then the land use policies</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No  | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/> Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |

|  |                              |                             |  |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <p><i>applicable to other forms of development in this area must be similarly restrictive; for this category, policies must prohibit all permanent development (and should be listed in the Notes column).</i></p> <p><i>These areas should be subtracted from raw renewable energy resource potential maps to form Secondary Resource Maps</i></p>  |                              |                             |  |
| <p>C. Possible constraints (signals conditions that would likely require mitigation, and which may prove a site unsuitable after site-specific study, based on statewide or regional/local policies that are currently adopted or in effect), including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vernal Pools from VCE (potential and probable layers)</li> <li>• Agricultural Soils</li> <li>• FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas</li> <li>• Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands)</li> <li>• Act 250 Agricultural Soil Mitigation areas</li> <li>• Deer Wintering Areas</li> <li>• The following features from ANR’s Vermont Conservation Design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interior Forest Blocks – Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Connectivity Blocks-- Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Physical Landscape Blocks - Highest Priority</li> <li>○ Surface Water and Riparian Areas - Highest Priority</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hydric Soils</li> <li>• Regionally or Locally Identified Resources</li> </ul> <p><i>If locations are constrained for the development of renewable energy due to the desire to protect a locally designated resource (whether a natural resource or community-identified resource, like a viewshed), then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development must be similarly restrictive (and should be listed in the Notes column).</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> <p>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |

| <p><i>These areas should be subtracted from Secondary Resource Maps to form Prime Resource Maps.</i></p>  |                              |   |  |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>D. Transmission and distribution resources and constraints, as well as transportation infrastructure.<br/><i>(Including three-phase distribution lines, known constraints from resources such as Green Mountain Power’s solar map, known areas of high electric load, etc.)</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>E. Preferred locations (specific areas or parcels) for siting a generator or a specific size or type of generator, accompanied by any specific siting criteria for these locations<br/><i>Narrative descriptions of the types of preferred areas in accompanying plan text are acceptable, though mapping of areas and especially specific parcels (to the extent they are known) is highly encouraged, to signal preferences to developers, particularly for locally preferred areas and specific parcels that do not qualify as a statewide preferred location under i. below.<br/>The locations identified as preferred must not be impractical for developing a technology with regard to the presence of the renewable resource and access to transmission/distribution infrastructure.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>i. Statewide preferred locations such as rooftops (and other structures), parking lots, previously developed sites, brownfields, gravel pits, quarries, and Superfund sites.<br/><br/><i>Note: These preferred locations align with the locations identified in the net metering rule 5.100. As of January 15, 2022 that rulemaking is currently active. Should the preferred locations identified in the rule change during that rulemaking, plans would be required to consider the updated preferred locations identified.</i></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p>ii. Other potential locally preferred locations<br/><i>For example, customer on- or near-site generation, economic</i></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                 | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>           Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p>   |

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><i>development areas, unranked and not currently farmed agricultural soils, unused land near already developed infrastructure, locations suitable for large-scale biomass district heat or thermal-led cogeneration, potential locations for biogas heating and digesters, etc.</i></p> <p><i>These are particularly important to map if possible, as “a specific location in a duly adopted municipal plan” is one way for a net metering project to qualify as being on a preferred site.</i></p>  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A   | Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>  |
| <p>F. Does the plan (a) evaluate whether forest blocks or habitat connectors identified pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(2)(F) [for regional plans] and 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(2)(D) [for municipal plans] should be treated as possible constraints, and (b) ensure that land conservation measures and specific policies established for the development and siting of renewable energy resources incorporates consideration of the evaluation undertaken in part (a)?</p>   |  |  |   |
| <p><b>14. Does the plan identify areas that are unsuitable for siting renewable energy resources or particular categories or sizes of those resources? Either Yes or No (“No” if the plan chooses not to designate any areas as unsuitable) is an acceptable answer here. “Resources” is synonymous with “generators.”</b></p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (“Yes” for A and B must also be selected below) | <input type="checkbox"/> No  | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |
| <p>A. Are areas identified as unsuitable for particular categories or sizes of generators consistent with resource availability and/or land use policies in the regional or municipal plan applicable to other types of land development (answer only required if “Yes” selected above, indicating unsuitable areas have been identified)?</p> <p><i>If areas are considered unsuitable for energy generation, then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development in this area should similarly prohibit other types of development. Please note these policies in the Notes column.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A<br>(if no unsuitable areas are identified) | Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a> |

|  |   |                             |  |
|--|---|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>B. Does the plan ensure that any regional or local constraints (regionally or locally designated resources or critical resources, from 13B-13C above) identified are supported through data or studies, are consistent with the remainder of the plan, and do not include an arbitrary prohibition or interference with the intended function of any particular renewable resource size or type?<br/><i>Please explain in the Notes column.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |
| <p><b>15. Municipalities seeking a determination of energy compliance from the Department and not using their region's maps only:</b> Does the plan ensure that its approach, if applied regionally, would not have the effect of prohibiting any type of renewable generation technology in all locations?</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>(also check Yes if seeking determination from region, or from DPS but using region-provided maps) | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <p>Page: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Paragraph #: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a><br/>Notes: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a></p> |



**IREC Steering Committee Meeting  
APPROVED Minutes  
November 4, 2021 via Zoom**

**Present:** Elizabeth Ferry - Barnard; Linda Gray – Norwich; Ryan Haac – Sharon; David Lutz – Strafford; Erica Ko - Thetford; Neal Leitner - Woodstock; Nancy Jones – Bradford; Geoff Martin – TRORC

**1. Additions/changes to agenda**

Add informal discussion while waiting for participants to join to future meeting agendas.

**2. Approve minutes for 10.7.21**

Discussion & approved.

**3. IREC Climate Action Plan**

Geoff shared Action Plan Table he patterned after Climate Council document.

- 2025 Goal & 2030 Goal need metrics & data to complete.
- Timeline estimated (Prioritization needed).
- Most items are no cost or low cost to Towns.

Geoff asked if columns make sense, or if more info is needed?

- Who is responsible for each action (change this to “initiator”; include “closers” – e.g., Selectboard or voters).
- Need to add Action Type, i.e., policy, project, study, planning.

Linda proposed

- Different colors for who is responsible: i.e., Resident Actions; Business Actions; Municipal Actions.
- Group or person who does promotion is responsible for the action.

Question raised: Is this meant to be a guideline for Steering Committee/Energy Committees?  
Not a hand-out to residents?

Geoff – Intentionally did not include municipal infrastructure in this plan.

Erica Proposed: Schools should be included in this document.

Linda questioned:

- Can Towns actually incentivize positive green actions?

- Drop actions from the Plan that Towns are not actually allowed to do.

All were asked to send Geoff comments regarding the document.

The Steering Committee is not ready to share this document with Energy Committees yet.

Erica proposed: Share with Mary Bryant and Alice Stewart, who were progenitors of this idea/project, for feedback prior to sharing with Energy Committees.

Next Draft will be ready to share.

#### **4. Updates**

- a. Barnard Update (Elizabeth)** – Barnard chose not to do Energy Audits by EEI, but relied on walk-throughs done by Geoff; Town is on the verge of completing weatherization work in the Barnard Town Hall.
- b. Capital Investment Grant Program (Ryan)** – Publicly available ARPA Funds w. 50% match; use link in Agenda; these are funds that are additional to funds assigned to each town.
- c. ARPA Weatherization Funds** N/A

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Jones, Acting Secretary



**IREC Steering Committee Meeting  
October 7, 2021**

**Present:** Elizabeth Ferry, Linda Gray, Erica Ko, Nancy Jones, Ryan Haac, David Lutz, Geoff Martin

**1. Additions/changes to the agenda**

The committee agreed to have a rotating minute-taker so that the responsibility doesn't fall on Elizabeth every time. Ryan requested an exemption from being the minute taker.

Geoff added an overview of Elizabeth's conversation with Green Mountain Power and a discussion of submitting comments to the Climate Council to the agenda.

**2. IREC Climate Action Plan**

Elizabeth suggested changing the name of the Climate Action Plan to distinguish between the State and Regional plans. The rest of the group felt that it should be a Climate Action Plan to indicate that there are multiple levels of levels of climate action.

Erica suggested structuring the document like Alice in Thetford – creating a table with the left column showing strategies and the right column showing actions. The group agreed that a table is the best format, and can show the timeline with responsible parties as well as strategies and actions. Linda suggested that the Norwich town plan is a good example.

Linda highlighted the importance of distinguishing between things that town bodies can do (e.g., zoning regulations), which are more actionable than actions that require convincing residents. There could be three categories – municipal actions that impact the public, municipal actions that affect municipal operations, and actions that persuade residents.

Erica proposed asking the voters to adopt the plan at town meeting. Some felt that it would be hard to convey the information to voters at Town Meeting. Others felt that it could be done by distributing just the table or an Executive Summary. There was a question about how this plan would differ from many Energy Chapters in Town Plans. Linda suggested that each Steering Committee member could review the table to see how much of it matches with their Town Plan.

**Actions:** Geoff will refine the plan and create the action table, which he will send to the Steering Committee no later than a week before the November meeting. The Committee will review the plan with their Energy Committees in November/December. The Committee will also compare the plan to their Town Plans to identify actions that already exist in the Town Plan and those that are not in their Town Plans.

**2. Updates**

a) Meeting with legislators

Elizabeth went to the Bethel Forward event and met Robert Dostis and Kristen Kelly from GMP. Robert asked why would Barnard install more solar when GMP is largely carbon free and renewable. Robert

suggested that instead, the state needs to focus on resiliency (i.e., solar plus storage in key locations). GMP is unwilling to have a genuine conversation about the REC issue. The committee acknowledged that it is not worth talking to GMP in the future. Linda suggested that there are many others in the state that are concerned about the attack on in-state renewables, and that there is talk about the need to reform the PUC.

#### b) HERS

Erica explained that the proposal to require HERS is stalled because it's not clear that municipalities have the authority to restrict compliance with RBES to HERS. Erica and Geoff have met with the Chittenden County RPC to develop a proposed amendment to the statute to enable municipalities to require a HERS rating. Erica sent the language to Tim Briglin, with hopes of getting a legal review. CCRPC and potentially TRORC are submitting comments on this topic to the Climate Council.

Action: Erica will nudge Tim a week before meeting with legislators if he doesn't respond before then.

#### c) Planning for next year

Geoff noted that the ACCD funding for energy implementation will be used to lower the amount of the second invoice for IREC towns. The funding has to be used for staff time to support implementation projects, so TRORC cannot use it as a small grant to support physical projects. The funding must also be used in FY 22, so it cannot be rolled over to FY 23. Towns may use the savings from the discounted invoice however they like.

#### d) Climate Council Comments

Geoff said that it would be inappropriate for the IREC group to submit comments to the Climate Council, given the need for Selectboard approval. Steering Committee members may submit comments as individuals. Linda mentioned that 350 VT and the Vermont Climate Coalition put together comments that steering committee members could sign on to. Energy committees can submit comments. If anyone drafts something, circulate it to the group. Linda will pass along the one from the ct climate coalition. s

Action: Linda will circulate the 350 VT and Vermont Climate Coalition letters to the group. Any Steering Committee member or Energy Committee that writes a comment will circulate the comment to the rest of the Steering Committee.



**IREC Steering Committee Meeting  
DRAFT Minutes  
January 6, 2022 via Zoom**

**Present:** Elizabeth Ferry - Barnard; Linda Gray – Norwich; Ryan Haac – Sharon; David Lutz – Strafford; Erica Ko - Thetford; Nancy Jones – Bradford; Geoff Martin – TRORC

**1. Additions/changes to agenda**

Add “Updates” to end of agenda.

**2. Approve minutes for 11.4.21**

Approved.

**3. IREC Climate Action Plan**

Review of document organization and revisions.

- Agreement to change “Responsible Party” to “Initiator” and “Closer” to clarify who handles research/development and who makes the final decision.

- Agreement to add a “Partners” column for organizations/people that should be involved (e.g., Vital Communities, VCRD, etc.).

- Agreement to organize actions in various ways, and to try to make it possible to switch “views” – i.e., see the plan organized by type (ex: Community education/Energy --- Committee campaigns, resident actions), or by Initiator or Closer, or by topic (ex: transportation, renewable energy). Discussion on how to do this, agreement to aim for simplicity. To be revisited, with the next version.

- Agreement that Municipal infrastructure plans would be in a separate document, since they vary by town. Option to include a generic version as a section in the main CAP.

- Agreement to add reference to development along existing transit routes and interstates, to the strategy re “Discourage development outside of town/village centers.”

- Agreement to include an action highlighting the need for community water and septic with denser development.

- Discussion, no final decision on how to disseminate Green Guidelines to residents.

- Agreement to revise the “public transit” strategy to “shared transit.”

Review of next steps.

- Agreement to hold a joint meeting this spring with the IREC Steering Committee and the seven town Energy Committees to discuss the CAP and prioritize strategies/actions for the coming year; and to repeat annually to update the CAP.

-Discussion on publishing the CAP and a progress report in towns' Annual Reports each year.

-Agreement to host the CAP on TRORC's website; the towns can link to that.

Geoff noted that Sustainable Woodstock is working to merge regional plan with a Woodstock-specific plan and will ask the Woodstock Selectboard to adopt.

Geoff will revise the CAP for the Steering Committee to review at the next meeting (2/3), then we will circulate it to the town energy committees for feedback.

Geoff can prepare reports on his work for Town Reports; he asked members to specify for him the deadlines and content needed.

#### **4. Updates**

- a. Barnard Update (Elizabeth)** – weatherization work in the Barnard Town Hall is complete; contractors were Earthshare Construction, ACT (lighting), and Chey Insulation.
- b. Upper Loveland Solar in Norwich (Linda)** – the 500-kW project is in an area with a cell phone tower and access road, near a transmission line, with houses and roads all around, and within about ¼ mile of the interstate. Following publication of an article in the Valley News <https://www.vnews.com/Solar-array-slated-for-Norwich-44139524> a number of comments objecting to it and motions to intervene were filed.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Gray, Acting Secretary