

# State of Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development Department of Housing & Community Development **Municipal Planning Commission Municipal Plan Report**

*This form is issued pursuant to the Vermont Planning & Development Act and subject to periodic updates.*

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## Overview

Vermont's Municipal & Regional Planning & Development Act (24 V.S.A §4384) requires a municipal planning commission to prepare a written report on a proposed plan/plan amendment.

The report addresses necessary content, how the plan is consistent with the Act's goals, changes to land areas, and other matters.

After completion of the prompts below, save the document and upload the report as a PDF on the State's [Plan and Bylaw Intake Form](#). The municipal plan is also submitted as a PDF upload on the intake form. If you need assistance, please reach out to the contact above or your municipality's regional planning commission.

Submission of the intake form and written report serves as notification to the Department of Housing and Community Development within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development under 24 V.S.A. §4384(e).

The submitted written report and proposed plan are public records published on the [Vermont Planning Data Center and Library](#). Municipal plan submission and posting

## Vermont Municipal Plan Written Report/Reporting Form

supports transparency and the availability of Vermont's proposed and adopted plans from a central digital source for statewide access and use.

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4348(c), which states:

### Goal Consistency

*(c) When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. **The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in [section 4302 of this title.](#)***

*If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:*

### Impacts

*(1) The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.*

## Benefits

*(2) The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on:*

- (A) the municipal tax base; and*
- (B) the need for public facilities.*

## Availability of Vacant Land

*(3) The amount of vacant land which is:*

- (A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and*
- (B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.*

## Suitability of Area

*(4) The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of:*

- (A) appropriate alternative locations;*
- (B) alternative uses for the area under consideration; and*
- (C) the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated.*

## Size & Boundaries

*(5) The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability, and existing development in the area.*

## Prepared By:

*Name, title, and organization of person completing this form.*

*Thank you.*

## **Brookline Planning Commission Report on the Town Plan Update**

December 22, 2025

This report is in accordance with 24 VSA § 4384(c), which states: “*When considering an amendment to a plan, the Planning Commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in § 4302 of this title.*”

The last revision of the Brookline Town Plan was completed in 2018. The proposed 2026 Brookline Town Plan is an update from this prior plan. The Planning Commission has reviewed all aspects of the plan and made updates to reflect the changes in our community. The Planning Commission believes this update makes the plan more compatible with all of the Vermont planning goals listed in 24 VSA § 4302, as described in more detail below:

*Goal 1. To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.*

The Land Use Chapter encourages higher density types of development within two village areas located towards the northern and southern end of Brookline along Grassy Brook Road. These areas are already developed and are relatively flat located along existing roads. The plan includes three rural land use districts (Rural/Residential, Resource, and Conservation) which support a range of uses from more moderate residential and mixed uses in the Rural/Residential District to very minimal development in the Conservation District. The future land use plan and the policies in the Land Use Chapter support a development pattern that will maintain Brookline’s historic settlement areas and preserve the surrounding rural countryside.

*Goal 2. To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.*

The plan encourages business growth and development that is consistent with the existing rural character of the community. The plan includes strong policies to support existing agricultural and forestry enterprises and home-based businesses in the community. With the improvement in telecommunications infrastructure, the plan also recognizes the opportunity for more low-impact professional services.

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

Brookline children attend the NewBrook Elementary School in Newfane and Leland & Gray Union Middle and Highschool in Townshend. The plan supports School Board members in developing and maintaining the highest quality education opportunities for the community. The plan also identifies adult educational opportunities available in the larger region and encourage residents to take advantage of these programs.

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

The Brookline Town Plan promotes a safe and well maintained road network that protects the rural character of the community. The plan supports including accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians when feasible for major road reconstruction projects. The Town maintains an inventory of municipal road infrastructure and a maintenance priority list. A recent priority for the Town has been improving the resiliency of its transportation infrastructure due to the increased intensity of flood events and this is highlighted in the Town Plan.

*Goal 5. To identify, protect and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape, including significant natural and fragile areas; outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and wetlands; significant scenic roads, waterways and views; important historic structures, sites or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas.*

The Brookline Town Plan includes an extensive review of natural areas and water, forest, and agricultural resources, and recognizes the importance of protecting these resources. A thorough inventory of these areas is included in the Natural Resources chapter and shown on the Natural Resources, Water Resources, and Earth Resources maps. The Cultural and Scenic Resources Chapter includes an inventory of special historic sites in Brookline and the Town's efforts to preserve these resources. This chapter also includes a section on the importance of local scenic resources to the community and includes strong policies to preserve scenic resources. The Scenic Resources map identifies local scenic roads, areas within a scenic viewshed, and scenic viewpoints. The future land use plan in the Land Use Chapter creates land use districts that encourage moderate and high density development in areas that are suitable for growth and minimize development in areas with water, wildlife, and forest resources.

*Goal 6. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources.*  
To a great extent, this goal has been addressed under the response to State Goal #5 above.

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

The Town Plan encourages new development to be designed to maximize efficiency and supports conservation measures. The plan provides for opportunities for residential and commercial solar development while protecting the aesthetics of the rural countryside and scenic corridors of the town. While small-scale residential wind installations may be allowed, commercial wind facilities are prohibited due to their potential impact on natural and scenic resources on Brookline. Finally, the plan includes a recommendation on the Town pursuing energy assessments of municipal facilities and implementing energy cost saving measures where feasible.

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

Many of the recreational opportunities in Brookline are found on conserved or private lands and are low impact, outdoor activities, such as hiking and skiing. The Town Plan includes a policy that the use and development of land and water should support the continued availability of these types of outdoor recreational opportunities. Existing large tracts of contiguous open space lands are encouraged to be preserved to allow for recreational uses. The plan also recommends considering which town roads currently used as trails might be available for public use for hiking, skiing, and other recreational activities.

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

Brookline has significant agricultural and forest resources. Prime agricultural soils are generally located in the central valley along Grassy Brook. Forest resources are found in the upland areas along the eastern and western boundaries of the town. Currently, 3,763 acres of land in Brookline are enrolled in the Current Use Program, which is approximately 46% of the total land area of the town. The plan encourages several policies meant to support agricultural and forest industries.

*Goal 10. To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.*

The Town Plan seeks to preserve lands that have mineral and earth resources from development that would negatively impact future extraction and processing of these materials. At the same time, the plan also requires that extraction and processing activities do not have an adverse impact on neighboring properties or the environment, and that all proposals shall include a site rehabilitation plan.

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

The Housing Chapter includes information on existing housing characteristics in Brookline. The plan supports a diversity of housing options that meet the various needs of household types and income groups in Brookline. Housing development is required to be coordinated with the provision of public services, facilities, and utilities.

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

The Community Facilities and Services Chapter includes a thorough discussion on existing public facilities and services and the Town's plan for addressing future needs. This chapter covers police and fire protection, emergency planning and disaster preparedness, public health and emergency services, solid waste disposal, town government, and telecommunications. The Plan encourages the Town to regularly review current services and facilities and to make improvements to meet the needs of residents.

*Goal 13. To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers and child care work force development.*

The Town Plan encourages the provision of quality childcare services and facilities to meet the needs of town residents, workforce, and employers. The Town supports local and regional efforts to increase the availability and affordability of child care.

*Goal 14. To encourage flood resilient communities.*

The Flood Resilience section in the Natural Resources Chapters discusses the impacts of inundation flooding and fluvial erosion in Brookline and includes strategies for how the Town can prepare for and respond to flood events. The Transportation section of the plan includes more detailed information on planning for a more flood resilient road network as well. The Plan incorporates the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by reference and includes a recommendation on pursuing the mitigation projects identified in the LHMP.

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

The Town Plan addresses and provides for environmental benefits equitably across the community. Brookline is a small, rural community with minimal environmental burdens currently. No population or geographical area would share a disproportional impact of environmental burdens based on the policies in the Plan.