

# Planning Commission Reporting Form For Municipal Plan Amendments Town of Chester, Vermont

October 15, 2018

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §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 amendment consists of revisions to four chapters as described below:

## Chapter 3 Utilities and Facilities

This chapter has been updated to reflect current conditions since the Town Plan was last amended in 2015 as follows:

- The updated description of town departments, facilities and their needs was developed based on input from individual Department Heads and other town staff members.
- An inventory, status and needs of town owned historic buildings was added based on the input of the Historic Preservation Committee.
- References to identify potential funding sources for improvements were included.

The revised Chapter 3 identifies the town goals for transportation improvements and furthers the following goal: *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 revised Chapter 3 also presents recreational goals and furthers the following goal: *To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors*

The addition of potential funding to Chapter 3 furthers the following goal: *To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.*

## Chapter 5 Education and Child Care Facilities

This chapter has been updated to reflect the current status (in 2018) of the school district after enactment of Act 46. Enrollment numbers for local schools were also updated. Information about homeschooling in Chester was included.

The chapter continues to support the development and operation of child care facilities in town.

## Chapter 6 Energy

The Energy Chapter was completely rewritten for this Town Plan amendment to serve as an enhanced energy plan to provide the Town of Chester greater standing in Public Utilities Commission proceedings.

The primary goal of the Energy Chapter is to make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources and reduce emissions of green house gases.

In addition to reflecting the State goals for energy conservation, the revised chapter reflects the Town Plan Land Use chapter goals to conserve natural resources and to encourage and promote high density development and government buildings in village areas within walking distance of village residents. The revised chapter is consistent with the Town Plan Transportation chapter goals of expanding public and rail transportation as an alternative to automobile and truck traffic and of encouraging bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

## Chapter 10 Economic Development

A section describing the Village Center designation was added to the Economic Development chapter, along with a map of the Village Center, to comply with statutory requirements.

The additional language furthers the following goal: *Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both, and should be encouraged in growth centers designated under chapter 76A of Title 24 of the Vermont statutes.*