



southburlington

PLANNING & ZONING

South Burlington Planning Commission Proposed Municipal Plan Adoption Report Report Approved by Planning Commission August 22, 2023 Public Hearing Scheduled for September 26, 2023, 7:00 pm

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c), the South Burlington Planning Commission has prepared the following Report regarding the City's proposed Municipal Development Plan, titled CityPlan 2024.

Introduction & Guiding Principles

CityPlan 2024 presents a vision of how the City desires to evolve in the coming decades. Four Guiding Principles run through the entire Plan and inform the assessment, analysis, goals and actions within each Section of the Plan. The Plan has been prepared with the objective of being approved by the Regional Planning Commission and, further, serving as the City's Enhanced Energy Plan. Existing supporting plans are both referenced in the Plan; simultaneously, the Plan envisions a series of supporting Plans to be developed during the eight-year life of the document.

The overriding guiding principle of the Plan is to make every policy decision through the lens of climate resilience and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

- *Climate-Resilient.* Prioritize goals that mitigate climate change impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Emphasize sustainability by rapidly shifting our energy profile to renewable and carbon-free sources and increasing energy efficiency. Promote clean air, clean water, historic conservation, environmental conservation, and recreational space for all residents.

South Burlington also holds high the following guiding principles, in every action we take as a community.

- *Inclusive, Fair, and Just.* Be equity-oriented, transparent, and fiscally responsible in governance. Support high quality of life, public safety, housing affordability, and education for people of varying incomes, lifestyles, and stages of life.
- *Thoughtful and Sustainable Built Environment.* Invest in a welcoming and walkable built environment, thriving neighborhoods, and a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented City Center. Build community through housing, parks, facilities, and infrastructure. Support a safe, resilient, and varied transportation system that promotes our built areas.
- *Collaborative and Engaged.* Be a leader and collaborator in the regional and statewide community. Support the City's role as an economic engine for Vermont by encouraging community businesses and local job creation. Make decisions considering future implications on tomorrow's South Burlington, Chittenden County, and Vermont.

Public Engagement

Preparation of CityPlan 2024 involved several rounds and methods of public engagement. Below is a description of the engagement undertaken between March 2022 and summer 2023

Method	Purpose	Timeframe	Number of Events
City Committee Initial Questions	Key Topics to assess; initial questions for community conversations	Nov-Dec '23	1-2 meetings each committee
Online Community Poll	Feedback on draft Vision & Goals; top priorities	Feb '23	n/a
Community Conversations	Facilitation discussion Plan's topic areas and geographies	Feb-March '23	11 sessions
Invited events	Presentation & feedback to community groups	March-Aug '23	3 sessions
City Committee First Draft Review	Review of first draft of each relevant section, recommendations for goals and actions	March-May '23	1-2 meetings each committee
Planning Commission Listening Series	Open public feedback on draft Plan	July-Aug '23	4 sessions
City Committee Complete Draft Review	Review of Complete Draft of CityPlan 2024	July-Aug '23	1 meeting each committee
Open Comment on Complete Draft	Open public feedback on draft Plan	July-Aug '23	n/a
City Council Meetings	Updates/Discussion with City Council	Oct '22, July '23	2 sessions
Planning Commission Meetings	Public Planning Commission Meetings to prepare plan	March '22 - Aug '23	24+ meetings

Statutory Plan Report Requirements

The following Report is prepared in accordance with and in response to the specific criteria of 24 VSA § 4384(c).

24 VSA 4384(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...

Enumerated below are the general and specific goals established in 24 VSA 4302, followed by the Commission’s assessment:

24 VSA 4302 (b) It is also the intent of the Legislature that municipalities, regional planning commissions, and State agencies shall engage in a continuing planning process that will further the following goals:

Goal 1: To establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework to guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and State agencies.

The City of South Burlington has engaged in a continuing planning process for three-quarters of a century, from establishment of the first zoning regulations in 1948 to the present time. The City had

adopted Municipal Plans in accordance with State Statutes since at least the 1960s and has revised and updated them on a regular basis. The City's Planning Commission meets twice monthly and is supported by a professional staff team. The City continually engages in planning projects on a range of topics.

Goal 2: To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process, and to assure that decisions shall be made at the most local level possible commensurate with their impact.

The City has a robust planning structure that strongly advocates participation at all levels, from participation in regular public meetings and voting on annual budgets to active engagement on planning, scoping, and design projects. The City uses a variety of tools to communicate with the community, include direct engagement; news coverage and municipal advertising from the weekly, privately-owned Other Paper; publication of a twice-monthly email City newsletter; regular posting of events and opportunities for feedback over Front Porch Forum and social media, regular online polls on a range of topics; in-person and interactive online workshops and outreach sessions; a regularly-updated city website & bulletin boards, and more. For more information about engagement specific to CityPlan 2024, see the introduction to this Report.

Goal 3: To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development for the region and the State, as well as the community in which it takes place.

CityPlan 2024 includes substantial discussion of these subjects. See the Plan's four Guiding Principles.

Goal 4: To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.

CityPlan 2024 includes substantial discussion of these subjects. See the Plan's four Guiding Principles.

24 VSA 4302 (c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:

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

(A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.

(B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, or employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both.

(C) Public investments, including construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.

See Pages: 21-23, 67, 71-93, 103

South Burlington has been actively pursuing the goal of directing development in areas already served by transportation and utility infrastructure. The Future Land Use map (p. 103) projects increases in housing scale along the Shelburne and Williston Road corridors, Kennedy Drive, adjacent to UVM campus, and within the newly-designated City Center centered at the intersection of Dorset and Market Streets.

The Plan calls for a focus on infill along transit-served corridors, continued conservation of land in much of the City's unbuilt areas further removed from transit and infrastructure, and to seek opportunities to provide for thoughtful evolution of existing neighborhoods to accommodate additional housing, services, and civic spaces to support thriving neighborhoods.

Specific Initiatives include the adoption of form-based code in the City Center and designation and renewal of that area as a New Town Center, Neighborhood Development Area, and Tax Increment Finance District. Along with these, the City has constructed a new City Hall with an attached library and senior center within the City Center district.

CityPlan 2024's Transportation chapter calls for enhanced bike and pedestrian infrastructure and transit service in areas slated for greater residential density and mixed-use development.

South Burlington does not have the classic "historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside" an envisioned by the Statutes. However, CityPlan 2024 builds on several successive Plans that have targeted the establishment of a City Center, conservation of rural resources in key areas, and most recently identifying nodes of activity along Shelburne Road.

Specific 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.

See Pages: 20-24

Investment and changes to permitting schemes have resulted in new small-scale commercial and retail space generated in the City Center district, in line with the City's goal of creating more spaces available to small businesses, especially those owned and operated by low-income residents and people of color.

Furthermore, CityPlan 2024 recognizes the connections between geography, income, housing, and transportation, and seeks to use the latter two factors to address inequality in income and opportunity for all South Burlington residents, regardless of where in the city they live.

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

See Pages: 61-63

City Plan 2024 does not deviate significantly from previous comprehensive plans; however, the plan does call for partnering with the South Burlington School District and UVM to meet future infrastructure needs- primarily, physical upgrades to school buildings, housing near schools, and transportation between these locations.

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

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

See Pages: 27, 41-47

City Plan 2024 sets ambitious goals for retrofitting South Burlington’s historic pattern of auto dependence to accommodate the safety and dignity of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and mobility aid users. The plan acknowledges that this will only be achieved through reduction in vehicle miles traveled, and sets benchmarks for progress towards an overall reduction in total vehicle miles travelled, by businesses and individuals as well as those performed in support of city operations. The plan also acknowledges the need to achieve a broad switch to EVs from fossil-fuel automobiles and anticipates changes to zoning codes designed to ready new development for enhanced EV charging options at residences.

Specific Goal 5: To identify, protect and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape including:

(A) significant natural and fragile areas;

(B) outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and wetlands;

(C) significant scenic roads, waterways and views;

(D) important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas

See Pages: 32-39, 50

An extensive chapter on Environment links several ongoing and planned strategies to achieve these goals. The plan explicitly draws connections between ongoing efforts to concentrate development in established areas and a goal of preserving a majority of land within city limits for its inherent value as well as for the ecosystem services that pristine natural resources afford to South Burlington residents. The Community, History, and Culture chapter discusses both historic sites and structures as well as about culture and cultural facilities into the future.

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

See Pages: 32-39, 64-68

CityPlan 2014 sets explicit goals of removing all watersheds from the list of stormwater-impaired waterbodies, connecting wildlife habitats across administrative boundaries, and performing inventories of tree canopy coverage and health.

Habitat blocks and connectors are another new feature of City Plan 2024. A 2020 recent study by Arrowwood Environmental identified these features, and protections for these areas has been incorporated into the city's development review process in the land development regulations.

Specific Goal 7: To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

See Pages: 25-31, 94-102

The City has made addressing climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing renewable energy generation central policies objective. To that end, the city adopted a 2022 Climate Action Plan with wide-ranging goals for energy use over the coming decades, many of which directly influence policy going forward. A number of these goals are expressed in the form of targets for weatherization, replacement of internal combustion engines vehicles with EV equivalents, electrification of heating and cooling systems, and reducing vehicle miles traveled. Other goals involve changing or creating regulatory mandates to require all-renewable energy sourcing, EV charging infrastructure, and solar-readiness on certain buildings.

Finally, CityPlan 2024 is intended to function as an Enhanced Energy Plan as per Act 174. Appendices A & B are intended to satisfy the data reporting requirements necessary to establish City Plan 2024 as an Enhanced Energy Plan.

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

(A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.

(B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.

See Pages: 36, 51-54

CityPlan 2024 sets targets for, and calls for expanding the net acreage, diversity of type, and the equitable distribution of recreation resources across South Burlington. The plan acknowledges that developed and non-developed recreation opportunities are both important and that areas used for non-developed recreation can also perform essential natural resource conservation.

The plan sets goals for ratios of parkland acreage per 1000 residents, increasing recreational programming, and plans for more equitable distribution and access options for new neighborhood parks.

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

(A) Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forestlands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall density.

(B) The manufacture and marketing of value added agricultural and forest products should be encouraged.

(C) The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.

(D) Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged.

(E) Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land.

See Pages: 32-33, 35-36

Given South Burlington's largely urbanized landscape and highly-residential land use patterns, agriculture and silviculture within city limits are largely absent from the city's economic profile and daily life. However, since several working agricultural operations continue to operate within city limits, CityPlan 2024 calls for their protection and the addition of community garden spaces for residents. Furthermore, CityPlan 2024 establishes a clear symbiosis between existing agricultural operations, their need for economic protection (mostly via land conservation measures), and the City's goals for protecting open space and natural resources.

Commercial-scale silviculture and logging is not expected to increase or be a significant factor in South Burlington's current or future economic profile. CityPlan 2024 notes that such activities are exempt from local zoning; however, given the urbanized settlement pattern of the city, it is expected that future timber harvests will be limited to salvage stemming from development or natural resource maintenance such as invasive species removal.

Specific 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.

See Pages: 34-35

CityPlan 2024 catalogues the existence and status of several defunct and one working quarry in South Burlington, while stating that further mineral extraction within city limits is not compatible with the overriding environmental, economic, and social goals of the plan, and therefore should be minimized or avoided completely.

South Burlington does not seek to add extractive capacity and its planning documents focus attention to this sector in pursuit of tracking the legacy operations that do exist while planning for the non-extractive future of non-functional quarries and former industrial sites.

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

(A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income.

(B) New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.

(C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.

(D) Accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be allowed.

See Pages: 14-19

Housing is one of the first and the largest chapters of CityPlan 2024. This chapter explicitly links affordable and accessible housing to the City's success in meeting its other ambitious goals, such as increasing economic opportunity for all residents, improving city services, and achieving the goals of the Climate Action Plan. The Plan sets ambitious targets for establishment of additional affordable housing.

Along with increasing supply and decreasing average price of housing, City Plan 2024 calls for:

- Electrifying and weathering existing homes
- Setting new standards for sustainability in building materials
- Closing gaps in efficiency, safety, and comfort between owner-occupied and rental housing units
- Increasing the total number of "missing middle" housing types
- Planning for infill in land-use areas identified as ready for higher density, including by enhancing infrastructure and by streamlining permitting requirements
- Exploring new zoning options, including housing in formerly commercial-only land use areas.

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

(A) Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal.

(B) The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.

See Pages: 55-69

CityPlan 2024 provides an overview of existing community services and public facilities, with a particular focus on wastewater and potable water utilities. Wastewater treatment is particularly important at this time given the city's focus on environmental sustainability since wastewater treatment has high potential for pollution and requires high inputs from both electric and fossil-fuel energy sources to operate.

Police, fire response, and schools are organized under "Community Services", and discussion of these areas is largely focused on how their facilities and accompanying infrastructure will need to be strengthened or expanded as South Burlington's overall population continues to grow.

Specific 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.

See Pages: 62-63

CityPlan 2024 acknowledges that child care facilities are underdeveloped in South Burlington as well as in Vermont as a whole. It calls for affordable and accessible child care within city limits and posits that this goal might be best achieved through partnerships between municipal government, non-profits, and private enterprise.

Specific Goal 14: To encourage flood resilient communities.

(A) New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.

(B) The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.

(C) Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

Pages: 39, 65-66

City Plan 2024 takes most of its flood hazard recommendations from the city's All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (AHMP), which was updated in 2022. These include:

- Tightly regulating development in floodplains via zoning and other land use regulation
- Co-locating passive recreation/open space with mapped floodplains
- Considering 500-year flood areas as the default areas for flood protection, rather than 100-year areas
- Prioritizing infill development over sprawl

In addition to its flood hazard-specific plans, the city remains committed a comprehensive stormwater mitigation plan. It has created Vermont's stormwater utility, which will soon enter its 3rd

decade of managing stormwater in South Burlington. City Plan 2024 links the city's goals of reducing damage from kinetic weather to parallel goals of reducing pollution loading in its watersheds.

24 VSA 4384(c) When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal... If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:

- (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.**
- (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.****
- (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.****
- (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.****
- (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.**

Summary discussion of Land Use Plan and Map alterations:

CityPlan 2024 employs the same essential structure for its Land Use Plan and accompanying Map as did the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Notable exceptions and alterations in the designation of land areas are described below:

- **Emphasis on Land Use Types over Planning Areas.** The 2016 Comprehensive Plan included a relatively brief description of each of its land use types, and had a much more extensive analysis, objectives, and strategies within each geographic planning areas. CityPlan 2024 inverts this emphasis. The Planning Commission, through substantial dialogue and through significant public input, concluded that primary focus should be on Land Use Types, and the goals and actions therein, as they represent the different types of environments the community is striving for in all places where they are proposed. Where specific geographic conditions influence or affect the specific needs of that area, they are addressed in the much shorter section on Planning Areas.
- **Refined Land Use Types.** The Land Use Types contained within CityPlan 2024 include:
 - Principally Conservation & Open Space

- Principally Residential: Lower Scale
- Principally Residential: Higher Scale
- Balanced Mixed Residential and Commercial
- Principally High-Scale Commercial/Industrial with Supporting Uses
- High-Scale Commercial/Industrial

These types (except as discussed below) are substantially similar to their 2016 counterparts. Titles have been altered slightly, and importantly, CityPlan 2024 more thoroughly analyses and defines the planned characteristics and features of these areas for the community to strive for. In each, the objective is to implement the four Guiding Principles of the Plan.

- *Split “High-Scale Commercial/Industrial” into two: with, and without “supporting uses.”* The newly defined type, “with supporting uses”, is intended to foster a wider range of uses in these areas to facilitate the existing and future businesses in these areas. This can include ancillary housing (potentially shorter-term, or more permanent) as well as supporting retail and service uses directly serving the businesses in the area.

- *Altered Boundaries of Land Use Types.* The Future Land Use map intentionally depicts boundaries between land use types as slightly blurred, as was the case in the 2016 Plan as well. This is intended to depict both the importance of thoughtful transitions between districts, and to underscore that the was map was drawn at a citywide scale; zoning district and parcel-level policy making should examine these boundaries more precisely. Specific changes between the 2016 and 2024 Plans include:
 - Expanded areas designated as “Principally Conservation and Open Space”, citywide, from their prior designations. Expanded areas include Habitat Blocks and Habitat Connectors, River Corridors, land that has been conserved since 2016, and designated Natural Resource Protection areas.
 - Williston Road between Hinesburg Road and Airport Road. This section of Williston Road is proposed to be redesignated from Principally Residential: Lower Scale, to Principally Residential: Higher Scale. The area is well served by transit and presents an opportunity for additional infill housing that is context sensitive to its surrounding, including the established neighborhoods to the north and south.
 - Hinesburg Road south of I-89. The area designated as Principally Residential: Higher Scale has been expanded on the west side of Hinesburg Road from its former designation as Principally High Scale Commercial/Industrial to form a more consistent transition between uses and to promote housing in appropriate locations.
 - Dorset Street and Hinesburg Road Commercial Areas. Two areas previously identified as “Balanced Mixed Residential and Commercial” have been reclassified as “Principally Residential: Medium Scale”, and “Principally High-Scale Commercial/Industrial with Supporting Uses”, respectively to better reflect the scale and intent of these areas as lower-scale. The new type continues to include a commercial component.

- Lower vs higher scale Residential Areas: In several locations, land have been redesignated between Principally Residential: Lower Scale and Principally Residential: Higher Scale. This includes portions of land near Dorset Street south of Nowland Farm Road, Hinesburg Road in the vicinity of Van Sicklen Road, Allen Road near Baycrest, Dorset Street by Aspen Drive, Joy Drive, Old Farm Road, and Patchen Road north of I-89. These changes are intended to improve consistency in the application of these different scales of existing and planned neighborhoods.

In summary: The proposed changes are relatively minor in scope; the most significant changes are the expanded Principally Open Space and Conservation and creation of the Principally High-Scale Commercial/Industrial with Supporting Uses type.

(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.

The Future Land Use Plan and Map were developed by capturing changed conditions in the community and assessing overall future needs. Fostering thoughtful transitions between land uses was a principal objective, and as such the probable impact on the surrounding area is beneficial to the community as directed by the Guiding Principles of the Plan and its accompanying goals.

The proposed patterns of development are not anticipated to substantially increase traffic and, in most cases, are anticipated to reduce vehicular traffic.

(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.

The proposed patterns of development are not anticipated to substantively affect the municipal tax base, as affected areas are either having designations better match present conditions, or are undeveloped areas of the City. The Plan as a whole places strong emphasis on compact settlement patterns, affordability, climate resiliency, and sustainable governance and as such in areas that are presently unbuilt the Plan is intended to better align to these goals. The Plan also includes anticipated population changes which are incorporated into public facilities planning through the City's annual Capital Improvement Plan.

(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.

The Plan identifies that approximately 51% of the City's land area is designated for principally Open Space and Conservation uses, whether at the landscape level, as depicted on the Future Land Use Map, or at the resource level. This represents an increase from the 2016 Plan due to

the addition of Habitat Blocks and connectors; conservation of certain parcels by the City, through neighborhood covenants, or through third parties; planned widening of wetland buffers in undeveloped areas; very steep slopes; 500-year floodplain areas, and corridors between these areas. The total increased land in these designations is approximately 1,000 acres. The Plan finds these areas – both existing private & public, and planned through the tools above, are critical components of meetings the Plan’s, and Statewide Planning Goals and are balanced by strategic goals to support thoughtful housing & economic activity in the form of infill within exiting built areas and identified areas for new construction in areas suited for that purposes.

The establishment of a Principally High-Scale Commercial/Industrial with Supporting Uses type, and the greater focus on uses incompatible with residential activity within the Principally High-Scale Commercial/Industrial category, are a reflection of the identified future needs of the community to create greater opportunities for overnight accommodation and ancillary services to support employment areas and to reserve a portion of the City’s land area for uses that cannot co-exist with housing, such as businesses with significant heavy truck operations.

The remaining alterations included in the Plan are intended to support the type and scale of anticipated needs in the area, including support for medium and lower-scale housing.

(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.

Each of the areas proposed to be altered are better suited for the proposed purposes as directed by the Plan’s Guiding Principles and Goals and the Statewide Planning Goals. They foster the goal of compact settlement surrounded by open countryside in the context of a built and growing community that serves as a delineation between the urban and more rural portions of central Chittenden County.

The Plan is intended to support and enhance existing built areas by fostering a vibrant City Center, sustainable neighborhoods and employment centers, encouraging thoughtful infill and establishment of civic spaces and supporting services and support and enhance connectivity between open spaces in the community. The updated designations reflect and implement policies to support the best land uses in each area.

(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.

The altered designations were each drawn to best capture the appropriate geographies for their use. Boundaries are based on studies of natural resources and transportation, natural features, existing physical boundaries, human acts of conservation, transportation systems, and existing land use patterns.