

Appendix D

Municipal Planning Tools

Municipal Development Tools (Regulatory)

Zoning Bylaws	Regulate the type and density of development. Administered by the ZA, PC, and ZBA, or DRB.
Zoning Districts	Standards defining allowed uses and densities of development (lot, setback, frontage, coverage requirements). Examples: Mixed Use, Industrial/Office, Traveler Service, Conservation districts.
Overlay Districts	Designated areas in which additional standards (e.g., design standards) will be applied to supplement or substitute for the standards of the underlying zoning district. May overlay one or more underlying zoning districts. Examples: Design Review, Scenic, Gateway, Corridor districts.
Site Plan Review	Standards that may apply to all allowed uses except for single- and two-family dwellings, including site layout and design, access, traffic and pedestrian circulation, landscaping and screening, and other standards as specified in the bylaws (e.g., building orientation, parking areas, and lighting). Administered by the PC or DRB; no warned public hearing is required.
Conditional Use Review	Standards applying to listed “conditional uses,” to evaluate and avoid or mitigate project impacts on the capacity of existing or planned community facilities, the character of the area, traffic on roads and highways in the vicinity, other municipal regulations, the use of renewable energy resources, and other resources or facilities as specified in the bylaws (e.g., the design and location of structures and service areas, signs, landscaping). Administered by the ZBA or DRB; a warned public hearing is required.
Design Review	Standards applying to site layout and building design (typically within a design review district); planning study required to identify design issues and criteria. Administered by the PC or DRB; a design review board may serve in an advisory capacity to the PC, DRB, and applicants.
Parking Standards	Standards for the number of required parking spaces by district and/or use type; also may include standards for parking area design, layout and screening, loading and service areas. May be administered by the ZA, and/or in association with site plan or conditional use review.
Access Management Standards	Standards for limiting the number of access points per lot, frontage distance or use by district or road type; also may include access location and design standards, and reference other state and town access permits.
Sign Standards	Standards for the location, height, sign area, design, and illumination of on-premise signs. Also may be adopted as a separate ordinance.
Use Standards	Standards that apply to specific types of use, to more specifically regulate their siting, layout, and design (e.g., gas stations, industrial/office parks).
Subdivision Bylaws	Regulate the pattern of development and supporting infrastructure. Administered by the PC or DRB; hearing required for final plat approval.

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Municipal Planning Tools (continued)

Municipal Development Tools (Regulatory)(continued)

Resource Protection Standards	Standards that limit the subdivision of, or otherwise protect, significant natural, cultural and/or scenic features (e.g., through the designation and siting of building envelopes on lots).
Settlement Pattern Standards	Standards that encourage or require compatible lot and road layouts. Examples: traditional neighborhood, transit-oriented, or conservation/open space subdivision designs.
Infrastructure Standards	Standards for the provision and design of supporting infrastructure and utilities (e.g., context sensitive road and pedestrian design, water/sewer line extensions). Should be consistent with other municipal infrastructure standards, official map.
Master Planning	May include master plan, phasing requirements for larger projects, especially in relation to an adopted municipal capital budget and improvement program.
Planned Development [PUD, PRD]	Standards for planned unit development (PUD) or planned residential development (PRD), adopted under zoning and administered in association with subdivision review, which allow density modifications to promote clustered development and protect open space. Administered by the PC or DRB.

Key: ZA – Zoning Administrator
ZBA – Zoning Board of Adjustment

PC – Planning Commission
DRB – Development Review Board

Appendix D

Municipal Planning Tools (continued)

Municipal Development Tools (Non-Regulatory)

A municipality may use the following non-regulatory tools, alone or in conjunction with local bylaws, with the purpose of implementing a municipal plan and the state land use goals.

Capital Budget and Program	A municipality may adopt a five-year capital program, updated annually and divided into annual capital budgets, to provide for maintaining current and acquiring future capital improvements.
Tax Increment Financing	Pursuant to 24 VSA 53, subchapter 5 (§1891-1900), a municipality may issue bonds to pay for new infrastructure, such as roads, water and sewer lines, in a defined growth center, and apply the incremental tax revenues to pay off those bonds for up to 10 years.
Development Agreements	When it furthers the objectives of the municipal plan and is not possible under current regulations, a municipality may adopt a process, with standards and criteria for its application, to negotiate an agreement for review of a particular parcel that establishes the rights and obligations of all parties.
Transfer, Purchase or Acceptance of Development Rights	A municipality may specify sending and receiving areas in order to transfer, purchase, or accept the donation of development rights, to further the conservation or development objectives of a plan.
Supplemental Plans to the town plan, which may ultimately become incorporated into the town plan may include:	<p>Official Map – A municipality may adopt an official map which identifies future municipal utility and facility improvements, such as road or path rights-of-ways, parkland, utility rights-of-way and other public improvements to provide the opportunity for the community to purchase land identified for public improvements prior to development for other use.</p> <p>Access Management Plan – A municipality may adopt an access management plan to manage traffic and access onto public roads from adjacent property.</p> <p>Downtown, Village Center, or New Town Center Plan – A municipality may adopt a plan for the development and revitalization of downtown and village centers, or to plan for a new town center.</p> <p>Open Space Plan – A municipality may adopt a plan to assess critical natural resources and to guide public and private conservation strategies.</p>
Conservation Commission	A municipality may form a conservation commission to work on conservation and natural resource planning issues.

Source: Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs. *Vermont Interstate Interchange Planning and Development Design Guidelines*. 2004.