

Steps to Adopt an Updated Town Plan in Vermont:

Step 1: Preparation and Community Engagement

- The Planning Commission (PC) begins the update process, which typically happens every eight years.
- The Planning Commission gathers necessary data, often using existing regional data, and drafts the updated plan.
- Community input is solicited through public forums, surveys, and meetings to ensure broad participation.
- The Planning Commission holds a public hearing(s) on the draft plan to solicit community feedback.
- The Planning Commission prepares a written report on the proposal and sends it to the Selectboard.

Step 2: Selectboard Review and Public Hearings

- The Selectboard reviews the draft plan submitted by the Planning Commission.
- The Selectboard holds at least one public hearing on the draft plan.
- If the town has a population of 2,500 or more, the Selectboard must hold at least two public hearings. (Westfield does not meet this population threshold)
- The Selectboard must provide a 15-day notice for its hearings.
- The Selectboard can make changes to the plan, but must do so at least 15 days before the final public hearing.
- Abutting towns receive notification of the Town Plan update and draft of the Plan, and can submit comments and questions.

Step 3: Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Approval (if requested)

- The town can request the Regional Planning Commission to review and approve the plan for consistency with state and regional goals.
- Regional Planning Commission staff conduct an informal review and provide feedback before the formal adoption process begins.
- The Regional Planning Commission's Board holds a public hearing and a vote to approve the plan if it meets the statutory criteria.

Step 4: Selectboard Adoption

- The Selectboard holds its final public hearing(s).
- The Selectboard votes to adopt the plan, either at this hearing or at a town meeting.
- The plan must be adopted within one year of the final Planning Commission hearing.
- The adopted plan, along with the required reporting form, must be submitted to the Regional Planning Commission and the State of Vermont.