

Preface

The purpose of this manual is to provide a guide for the municipal planning commission in fulfilling its role and responsibilities as set forth in 24 V.S.A. chapter 117, the Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. A major role of the municipal planning commission is to develop the municipal plan. *The Planning Manual for Vermont Municipalities* provides information that will help the planning commission with this complex task, from designing the planning program to adopting the plan.

Since the planning process is a circular one rather than linear, it can often seem never-ending and thus overwhelming. It is a challenging process, but this manual is designed to help municipalities meet those challenges. It will help you break down the planning process into manageable steps. Once you outline your process, you can focus on each step, one at a time, and still keep a perspective on where that step falls within the process.

The introductory chapter describes the framework for planning in Vermont: who is responsible for planning and what the planning process is. In subsequent chapters the manual describes a municipal plan, the role of the planning commission, how to get ready to prepare or amend a plan, how to develop the plan itself, and then how to implement it.

You will spend much time going back and forth between different sections of the manual. The book is meant to become dog-eared. The margins are left wide in order to give you space to make your own notes. Throughout the manual and in the appendices we have referred to many resources that can help you. We urge you to use them.

Good luck and enjoy!

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