

**TOWN OF HIGHGATE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 18th, 2023 6:00 PM
HIGHGATE TOWN OFFICES
2996 VT ROUTE 78
HIGHGATE CENTER, VT 05459**

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the Town of Highgate, Vermont that the Highgate Planning Commission will hold a hearing on **April 18th, 2023 at 6 PM at the Highgate Town Offices at 2996 VT Route 78, Highgate Center** to consider for adoption the following Highgate Town Plan pursuant to Chapter 117 of Title 24, Section 4387 and 4384, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

According to Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, Municipal Plans must be readopted every eight years or they will expire. This plan update focused on updating data and information, adding a new implementation table and incorporating the work of the VCRD Highgate Community Visit and economic development initiatives to the plan. The purpose of this hearing is to receive and discuss public comment on the Highgate Town Plan. The Plan will impact all geographic areas in Highgate.

The Highgate Town Plan includes 11 Chapters and 2 Appendices: Introduction, Visions for the Future of Highgate, Social and Economic Resources, Natural and Cultural Resources Energy, Transportation, Community Facilities and Services, All Hazards Resiliency, Land Use, Neighboring Communities and the Region, Recommendations for Implementing the Plan, Appendix A- Enhanced Energy Maps, and Appendix B- Highgate Housing Needs Assessment. These chapters are consistent with the 14 goals established in Chapter 117, Section 4302. A full version of the plan is available for viewing at the Highgate Town Offices.

REPORT ON TOWN OF HIGHGATE TOWN PLAN UPDATE

The Highgate Planning Commission has been working to complete an update of the Highgate Town Plan. This effort is part of a continuing planning process that guides the Town's decisions for future growth. The planning process conforms to the State's four planning goals of Chapter 117, Section 4302, which strive for a comprehensive planning process that includes *citizen participation*, the *consideration for the consequences of growth*, and *compatibility with surrounding municipalities and encouragement of municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans*.

The current Highgate Town Plan will expire on July 23, 2023. The plan update focuses on updating data and information, adding a new implementation table and incorporating the work of the VCRD Highgate Community Visit and economic development initiatives to the plan.

The plan update does make 2 minor alterations the designation of land area in Highgate. The proposed land use map has been altered to add two overlay districts:

- (1) Airport Overlay District: Added the airport overlay district to the future land use map with the purpose of limiting the height of structures in the immediate vicinity of the airport and to allow modifications to dimensional standards that support airport related commercial and industrial uses.
- (2) Floodplain Overlay District: Added floodplain overlay to the future land use map based on the 100-year floodplain as mapped by FEMA. The purpose of the floodplain overlay is to restrict and regulate development in the floodplain in order to prevent loss of life and property by flooding.

These changes will most likely have a minimal impact on the surrounding area. These districts were already identified in the text of the previous plan and in the existing development regulations, the only change this plan makes is adding these areas to the future land use map. These areas represent a relatively limited area of Highgate. These changes are not expected to lead to major changes in the overall pattern of compact development in the villages and open space elsewhere or have any significant impact on traffic. These changes will affect a long-term benefit on the municipality by limiting development in areas where such development could result in high costs for the maintenance of infrastructure and public safety and, in the case of the airport overlay district, support appropriate development for an airport area that may expand the Town's tax base.

After considering alternative locations, uses, and impacts on other areas similarly designated, it has been determined that the areas under consideration are suitable for the proposed land use designation. The size and boundaries of the proposed change are appropriate for the proposed use, land capability, and existing development in the area.

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Highgate's Development Regulations are based on the information compiled and the goals expressed within the Town Plan. Highgate Planning Commission members have spent many hours discussing and compiling this document and would sincerely like to receive your feedback.