

Sec. 6. Statement of intent

(a) This act constitutes the capability and development plan provided for in section 6042 of Title 10, and is adopted by the general assembly for the purposes set forth in that section and in section 4302 of Title 24.

(b) This act is not intended and shall not be construed to limit in any way the freedom of any person to sell or otherwise dispose of his land unless by so doing he will create a subdivision as defined by section 6001(18) of Title 10.

Sec. 7. Legislative findings

(a) In order to provide general and uniform policies on land use and development to municipal, regional, and state governmental agencies, for their guidance and consideration, and to provide the basis for the Vermont land use plan to be adopted under section 6043 of Title 10, the general assembly hereby finds and declares as follows:

**PLANNING FOR LAND USE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

(1) THE CAPABILITY OF THE LAND

The capability of land to support development or subdivision provides a foundation for judgment of whether a proposal of development or subdivision is consistent with policies designed to make reasonable use of the state's resources and to minimize waste or destruction of irreplaceable values. Accordingly, such information regarding the physical characteristics of land as is found in the interim land capability and development plan adopted under section 6041 of Title 10, and as may hereafter be adopted as a rule of the environmental board, shall be considered a part of this capability and development plan.

(2) UTILIZATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Products of the land and the stone and minerals under the land, as well as the beauty of our landscape are principal natural resources of the state. Preservation of the agricultural and forest productivity of the land, and the economic viability of agricultural units, conservation of the recreational opportunity afforded by the state's hills, forests, streams and lakes, wise use of the state's non-renewable earth and mineral reserves, and protection of the beauty of the landscape are matters of public good. Uses which

threaten or significantly inhibit these resources should be permitted only when the public interest is clearly benefited thereby.

(3) PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CAPITAL INVESTMENT

(A) A balance of public and private capital investment determines the economic well-being of a town or region. An area of industrial, recreational, or residential growth requires highways, schools, utilities, and services the cost of which is borne in large part by others. A settled area, with a full complement of public services, needs continuing private capital investment to create a tax base to pay for the services. Increased demands for and costs of public services, such as schools, road maintenance, and fire and police protection must be considered in relation to available tax revenues and reasonable public and private capital investment. The location and rate of development must be considered, so that the revenue and capital resources of the town, region or state are not diverted from necessary and reasonably anticipated increased governmental services. Accordingly, conditions may be imposed upon the rate and location of development in order to control its impact upon the community.

(B) Consideration must be given to the consequences of growth and development for the region and the state as well as for the community in which it takes place. An activity or project that imposes burdens or deprivations on other communities or the state as a whole cannot be justified on the basis of local benefit alone.

(4) PLANNING FOR GROWTH

(A) Strip development along highways and scattered residential development not related to community centers cause increased cost of government, congestion of highways, the loss of prime agricultural lands, overtaxing of town roads and services and economic or social decline in the traditional community center.

(B) Provision should be made for the renovation of village and town centers for commercial and industrial development, where feasible, and location of residential and other development off the main highways near the village center on land which is other than primary agricultural soil.

(C) Planning at all levels should provide for the development and allocation of lands and resources of existing cities, towns, and villages generally in proportion to their existing sizes as related to distribution state-wide and a projection of the reasonably ex-

pected population increase and economic growth, unless a community, through duly adopted plans, makes the determination that it desires and has the ability to accommodate more rapid growth.

(D) Consistent with all other policies and criteria set forth in this act, development as defined in section 6001 of this chapter in areas which are not natural resources as referred to in paragraph (9) of this section should be permitted at reasonable population densities and reasonable rates of growth, with emphasis on cluster planning and new community planning designed to economize on the costs of roads, utilities and land usage.

(5) SEASONAL HOME DEVELOPMENT

Seasonal homes not only are convertible to permanent homes but are often so converted and may require increased municipal and public services. There should, therefore, be imposed such conditions upon a seasonal home development or subdivision as should be imposed upon a permanent residential development or subdivision.

(6) GENERAL POLICIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(A) In order to achieve a strong economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job and investment opportunities and sufficient income to meet the needs and aspirations of the citizens of Vermont, economic development should be pursued selectively so as to provide maximum economic benefit with minimal environmental impact.

(B) Any effort which directly or indirectly accelerates economic growth should be consistent with local, regional and state objectives.

(C) One of the long-range benefits to the community of commercial and industrial development should be to provide stable employment opportunities at all economic levels, particularly for Vermont's unemployed and underemployed.

(7) SPECIFIC AREAS FOR RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The flow of cash into Vermont to pay for goods manufactured in the state, grown in the state, or mined and quarried in the state, and to pay for services offered in the state to out-of-staters is of primary importance to the state's economy. Enterprises adding the greatest value by conversion of native raw materials or the products of the land are particularly beneficial to the public interest.

(8) PLANNING FOR HOUSING

(A) Opportunity for decent housing is a basic need of all Vermont's citizens. A decent home in a suitable living environment is a necessary element for protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. The housing requirement for Vermont's expanding resident population, particularly for those citizens of low or moderate income, must be met by the construction of new housing units and the rehabilitation of existing substandard dwellings. It is in the public interest that new or rehabilitated housing should be: safe and sanitary; available in adequate supply to meet the requirements of all Vermont's residents; located conveniently to employment and commercial centers; and, coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities and consistent with municipal and regional plans.

(B) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations not inferior to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.

(C) There should be a reasonable diversity of housing types and choice between rental and ownership for all citizens in a variety of locations suitable for residential development and convenient to employment and commercial centers.

RESOURCE USE AND CONSERVATION

(9) NATURAL RESOURCES SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED FOR

Those natural resources referred to in section 6086(a)(1)(A) "Headwaters", (B) "Waste disposal", (C) "Water conservation", (D) "Floodplains", (E) "Watercourses", and (F) "Shorelines", and section 6086(a)(8)(A) "Wildlife habitat and endangered species", and section 6086(a)(9)(B) "Primary agricultural soils", (C) "Forests and secondary agricultural soils", (D) "Earth resources", (E) "Extraction of earth resources", and (K) "Development affecting public investments" should be planned for development and use under the principles of environmental conservation set forth in those sections.

(10) RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

(A) The use and development of land and waters should occur in such a way as not to significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities to the people of Vermont, including hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing and boating,

skiing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and other outdoor recreational activities.

(B) The effects of development and subdivision on availability of and access to lands which provide opportunities for outdoor recreation should be considered, and such availability or access should be provided for where feasible.

(11) SPECIAL AREAS

Lands that include or are adjacent to sites or areas of historical, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural or archeological value, including those designated by the rules of the environmental board, should only be developed in a manner that will not significantly reduce that value of the site or area. Sites or areas which are in danger of destruction should be placed in whatever form of public or private ownership that would best maintain and utilize their value to the public.

(12) SCENIC RESOURCES

The use and development of lands and waters should not significantly detract from recognized scenic resources including river corridors, scenic highways and roads, and scenic views. Accordingly conditions may be imposed on development in order to control unreasonable or unnecessary adverse effects upon scenic resources.

(13) CONSERVATION OF ENERGY

Energy conversion and utilization depletes a limited resource, and produces wastes harmful to the environment, while facilitating our economy and satisfying human needs essential to life. Energy conservation should be actively encouraged and wasteful practices discouraged.

(14) TAXATION OF LAND

Land should be appraised and assessed for tax purposes on the use of the land consistent with this act and any other state or local law or regulation affecting current or prospective use of land.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

(15) PLANNING FOR GROWTH

The development and provision of governmental and public utility facilities and services should be based upon a projection of reasonably expected population increase and economic growth, and

should recognize the limits of the state's human, financial, and natural resources.

(16) PUBLIC FACILITIES OR SERVICES ADJOINING AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY LANDS

The construction, expansion or provision of public facilities and services should not significantly reduce the resource value of adjoining agricultural or forestry lands unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative, and the facility or service has been planned to minimize its effect on the adjoining lands.

(17) PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITY CORRIDORS

The development and expansion of governmental and public utility facilities and services should occur within highway or public utility rights-of-way corridors in order to reduce adverse physical and visual impact on the landscape and achieve greater efficiency in the expenditure of public funds.

(18) TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Safe, convenient and economical transportation is essential to the people and economy of Vermont and should be planned so as to conform to and further the purposes of this act. Highway, air, rail and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced and integrated. The transportation system should provide convenience and service which are commensurate with need and should respect the integrity of the natural environment. New construction or major reconstruction of roads and highways should provide paths, tracks or areas solely for use by pedestrian or other non-motorized means of transportation when economically feasible and in the public interest.

(19) PLANNING FOR WASTE DISPOSAL

Development which is responsible for unique or large amounts of waste should be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that available methods will allow the environment to satisfactorily assimilate the waste and that the public can finance the disposal method without assuming an unreasonable economic burden.

Sec. 8. 10 V.S.A. § 6001 is amended to read:

§ 6001. Definitions

When used in this chapter:

- (1) "Board" means the environmental board.