



New Hampshire Legislative Toolkit

Planning, Zoning, and

Housing Bills

2025

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2025 PLANNING, ZONING, & HOUSING BILLS

Summary

This toolkit is generalized for all municipalities in the SRPC region, and therefore your community may or may not have applicable amendments. Furthermore, please note that the description of each bill is meant to be a high-level overview and should not be taken to represent the bills in their entirety. Municipalities should review each individual bill in its entirety to ensure thorough understanding. As always, municipalities should seek guidance from and review of amendments by their legal counsel.

The table below is a quick index of key bills of this legislative session and the impacts they might have. The following pages include more detailed summarizing bill content and actions to take.

Note: For bills highlighted in orange, SRPC has funding to support municipalities with zoning and/or land use regulation housing related changes to reflect the new legislative updates.

Bill	Topic	Zoning Change	Land Use Regulation Change*	Procedure Change	Building Code	Other	Effective Date
HB 2	Partners in Housing and Pattern Zoning	~	~			X	30-Jun-25
HB 92	Recusal of ZBA and Planning Board members			X			22-Aug-25
HB 134	State Building Code (definition)	~			X		1-Jul-25
HB 168	Municipal public works facilities and impact fees	X				X	1-Aug-25
HB 265	Public Body Meeting Minutes			X			11-Aug-25
HB 272	Exempting certain agricultural practices from municipal noise regulation	X				X	1-Aug-25
HB 296	Building permits on private roads and deadline to hear ZBA appeals	X	~	X			13-Sept-25
HB 399	Commission to study zoning enabling act					X	Sect. 1: 1-Jul-2025 Sect. 3: 1-Nov-2026 Remainder 10-Mar-2025
HB 413	Vesting periods and building code appeals	~	X	~	X		1-Jul-25
HB 428	State Building Code (changes to)					X	1-Jul-26
HB 457	Zoning restrictions on dwelling units/occupancy requirements	X	~				13-Sept-25



Bill	Topic	Zoning Change	Land Use Regulation Change*	Procedure Change	Building Code	Other	Effective Date
HB 467	Social Districts					X	5-Sep-25
HB 577	ADUs	X					1-Jul-25
HB 631	Permitting residential uses in commercial zones	X	X				1-Jul-26
HB 633	Housing Trusts					X	24-Jun-25
HB 731	Supportive housing options for individuals with disabilities	~					5-Sept-25
SB 4	C-PACER					X	1-Jan-26
SB 91	Appraisals of residences located in commercial zones					X	1-Apr-26
SB 95	Youth recreation camp cabins and state building and fire codes	X			X		13-Sept-25
SB 153	Driveway permitting decision timeframe and expedited permitting for residential use of 20+ units					X	5-Oct-25
SB 173	LIHTC program assessing					X	1-Jul-25
SB 188	State building code - "Speeding Development Act"				X		15-Jul-25
SB 281	Waiver for building on class VI roads	X	~	X			1-Jul-26
SB 282	Residential stairway requirements				X		15-Jul-25
SB 283	Floor-area-ratios under local building ordinances	X					30-Sept-2025
SB 284	Minimum on-site parking requirements	X	X				13-Sep-25
SB 291	Religious use of land property tax exemption					X	1-Jul-25

* Site Plan/Subdivision Regulation Changes

~ You may need to make changes/updates

X It is very likely that changes/updates will need to be made



HB 2 Partners in Housing and Other Land Use Board Related Items

Title	An act relative to state fees, funds, revenues, and expenditures.
Description	<p>Section 141:209, relative to Town Property and the Authority of Select Board. Amend RSA 41:11-a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replaces the term “selectmen” with “select board”.• Clarifies that the select board has the authority to manage all town-owned real property, unless otherwise delegated.• Allows select board to rent or lease property when not needed for public use. Leases over one year still require town vote approval.• Clarifies that towns can authorize the select board to lease property for up to 5 years without further votes; this authority continues unless formally rescinded, however, such rescission shall not terminate any existing leases.• Adds that governing body may refer a list of suitable town-owned properties to the planning board for potential residential development. <p>Section 141:210, relative to the Duties of the Planning Board. Amends RSA 674:1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adds a paragraph noting that the planning board may vote to approve properties recommended by the select board as suitable for residential development (per RSA 41:11-a, IV) and then forward the property description to the Office of Planning and Development under RSA 12-O:55, VIII. <p>Section 141:211, relative to Data and Information Services. Amends RSA 12-O:55 by inserting a paragraph to note that the Office of Planning and Development shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Pursuant to RSA 674:1, VII, compile descriptions of municipally and county-owned property determined to be appropriate for residential development by the select board as a residential use into a publicly available list of properties available for grant or loan funding pursuant to RSA 12-O:72-a.</i> <p>Section 141:212, relative to Partners in Housing Program. Amends RSA 12-O:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates the "partners in housing" program, an initiative under the housing champions fund to assist municipalities, counties, and developers in building modestly priced housing on municipally or county owned land that is suitable for development. <p>Section 141:213, relative to Power to Review Site Plans. Amends RSA 674:43 by adding new paragraphs relative to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expedited review authorization:



- *If the planning board has submitted a property description to the office of planning and development, then the local governing body may further vote to authorize that properties in the municipality on the list generated pursuant to RSA 12-O:55 VIII qualify for expedited review and approval pursuant to RSA 676:4, III.*
- Workforce housing review:
 - *If the local legislative body of a municipality has by ordinance or resolution authorized minor site plan review pursuant to RSA 674:43, III, then all solely residential development projects proposing to construct workforce housing, as defined in RSA 674:58, IV, that are included on the list generated pursuant to RSA 12-0:55, VIII, may also qualify for expedited review and approval pursuant to RSA 676:4, III.*
- Pattern zoning for infill housing development:
 - *The local legislative body of a municipality may by ordinance or resolution adopt pattern zoning regulations to accelerate the construction of infill housing in neighborhoods. To meet the definition of infill housing, projects must be new residential development constructed on vacant lots interspersed among lots with existing, non-vacant development. Pattern zoning provides permit-ready designs with appropriate zoning and regulations to speed the process of building high quality infill housing that is compatible with existing homes in the neighborhood.*

Section 141:214, relative to Housing Champion Designation and Grant Program Fund. Amends RSA 12-O:74 by adding that:

- The New Hampshire Housing Champion Designation and Grant Program Fund is expanded to also support the compilation of municipally and county-owned properties suitable for residential development.

Actions to Take	Municipal staff, Select Boards, and Land Use Boards should be aware of new legislation. Each of the various options provided within HB2 are enabling in nature – thus if a community is interested, they may implement the provisions.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 27, 2025; Chapter 141: July 1, 2025 Effective Date: Sections 141:209 through 141:214 shall take effect June 30, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 141



HB 92 Recusal of Zoning and Planning Board Members

Title	An act requiring recusal of members of zoning boards of adjustment and planning boards in certain circumstances
Description	Introduces a new provision to RSA 673:3, stating that if a member of the ZBA also serves on the planning board, they must abstain from voting on any matters that were either previously decided by or are currently pending before the planning board, provided they participated in those matters as a voting member.
Actions to Take	<p>Update ZBA and Planning Board Bylaws/Rules of Procedure.</p> <p>When an application comes before the Zoning Board, it should identify if any previous Planning Board action has been taken on the proposal or if Planning Board action may be required. If so, any Zoning Board member who currently or previously has served on the Planning Board should review the case to verify if they cast a vote on the application. If the answer is yes, they should recuse themselves from any Zoning Board action. If an application is currently before the Planning Board, the Zoning Board member who serves on both Boards should recuse themselves from any Zoning Board action. If an application requires or may require Planning Board action but is not currently before the Planning Board then the Zoning Board member is able to vote on the Zoning Board action.</p>
Status	Signed by Governor: June 23, 2025 Effective Date: August 22, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 108

HB 134 State Building Code (Definition)

Title	An act relative to the state building code.
Description	Amends the definition of the state building code in New Hampshire to adopt more recent editions of various codes and updates to the National Electrical Code.
Actions to Take	Building Inspector/Code Enforcement will need to update documents and references to the building code versions. Some municipalities may need to update references to the NH State Building Code in Zoning Ordinance.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 23, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 135



HB 168 Municipal Public Works Facilities and Impact Fees Impact Fees

Title	Ac act relative to including municipal public works facilities as eligible capital facilities for the assessment of impact fees.
Description	Amends existing legislation to allow municipalities to include public works facilities as eligible capital facilities for the assessment of impact fees on new developments. Specifically, it modifies the definition of "impact fee" in RSA 674:21, V to incorporate "public works facilities."
Actions to Take	If a municipality has impact fees or seeks to establish impact fees, they may also collect fees for public works facilities. To do so, municipalities will need to amend their impact fee provisions in Zoning as well as the basis of calculation to establish a rate for public work facilities. If there is a definition of impact fee that quotes or differs from state statute, it should be updated to reflect the amended statutory definition.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 02, 2025 Effective Date: August 1, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 58

HB 265 Public Body Meeting Minutes Per RSA 91-A

Title	An act requiring that a public body's meeting minutes include start and end times of the meeting and the printed name of the recording secretary.
Description	The bill amended RSA 91 A:2, II to require that public meeting minutes be documented with the meeting start time, end time, and the recording secretary's name.
Actions to Take	Municipalities should coordinate with their recording secretary, staff, and/or contractors responsible for preparing minutes to ensure these new items are included in all meeting minutes, starting with meetings held on or after the bill's effective date.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 23, 2025 Effective Date: August 22, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 112



HB 272 Noise and Agricultural Practices

Title	An act exempting certain agricultural practices from municipal noise regulation.
Description	Amends existing laws regarding municipal noise regulations by removing the provision for "quiet hours" that previously applied to agricultural practices. Specifically, it modifies RSA 31:39, I(n) and RSA 47:17, XX to state that no ordinance or bylaw aimed at regulating noise from farming activities, as defined in RSA 21:34-a, will be enforceable within towns or cities. Note, this exemption does not extend to agritourism activities.
Actions to Take	Review and update Noise Ordinance and any sections in the Zoning Ordinance that may reference to noise regulations, including "agricultural zone" districts.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 02, 2025 Effective Date: August 1, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 61

HB 296 Private Roads and ZBA Appeals Deadlines

Title	An act relative to issuing building permits along private roads [and deadline to hear ZBA appeals]
Description	Amends RSA 674:41,I(d)(1) to allow a local governing body to authorize the issuance of building permits for buildings on private roads after review and comment from the planning board OR "after establishing that the private road identifies and complies with policy adopted by the governing body of the municipality." Furthermore, it amends RSA 676:5, I to require a ZBA to hear appeals within 30 days of decision instead of within a "reasonable time."
Actions to Take	Update any policies and ordinances that speak to development on private roads. Where applicable, amend regulations to limit the appeal period to 30 days.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: September 13, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 175



HB 399 Commission to Study Zoning Enabling Act

Title	An act establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act and relative to the effect date of the C-PACER program.
Description	<p>Creates a commission to study the relevance and effectiveness of the NH Zoning Enabling Act and explore potential revisions or removal of certain powers. The commission is required to submit an interim report by November 1, 2025, and a final report by November 1, 2026.</p> <p>Also includes the investigation of the relationship between the zoning provisions of RSA 674:16 et seq. and the subdivision provisions of RSA 674:35 et seq. and exploration of opportunities for aligning or combining these provisions.</p> <p>Additionally, the bill modifies the definition of "municipality" in the energy efficiency and clean energy districts chapter to include "unincorporated town" and "unorganized place." It also changes the effective date of the C-PACER program from January 1, 2026, to upon passage.</p> <p>Furthermore, the bill includes a provision for the repeal of RSA 674:23-a, which pertains to the commission studying the zoning enabling act.</p>
Actions to Take	None at this time. Municipalities can attend meetings of the commission once formed, submit testimony, and keep apprised of final recommendations.
Status	Signed by Governor: March 10, 2025 Effective Dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Section 1 effective July 1, 2025▪ Section 3 effective November 1, 2026▪ Remainder effective March 10, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 2

HB 413 Vesting and Building Code Appeals

Title	An act relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits.
Description	<p>For subdivision and site plan approvals granted on or after July 1, 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Extends the existing 5-year exemption for approved subdivision plats and site plans from changes to subdivision regulations, site plan review regulations, impact fee ordinances, and zoning ordinances to 7 years



	<p>2) Extends period to reach active and substantial development from 2 years to 3 years after the date of approval</p> <p>Changes the building code and fire code appeals process, limiting the jurisdiction of the local building code board of appeals to hearing decisions made under local amendments to those codes.</p> <p>Provides that decisions of the building code review board regarding decisions of the fire marshal and local building code board of appeals may be appealed to the Housing Appeals Board in addition to Superior Court</p>
Actions to Take	<p>Municipalities will need to update their subdivision and site plan regulations to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reflect the extended exemption period for subdivisions and site plans. 2) Reflect the period in which approvals need to reach active and substantial development. <p>Municipalities will also need to update local building code board of appeals bylaws or rules of procedure to reflect new changes.</p>
Status	<p>Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2025</p>
Chaptered Final Version	<p>Chapter 186</p>

HB 428 State Building Code (Changes To)

Title	<p>An act relative to the state building code.</p>
Description	<p>Prohibits local legislative bodies from making any new changes to the state building codes.</p>
Actions to Take	<p>None at this time, just be aware of this change.</p>
Status	<p>Signed by Governor: August 1, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2026</p>
Chaptered Final Version	<p>Chapter 276</p>



HB 457 Zoning Restrictions on Dwelling Units/Occupancy Requirements

Title	Relative to zoning restrictions on dwelling units.
Description	Prohibits municipalities from adopting or enforcing ordinances that limit the number of occupants in a dwelling unit to fewer than 2 occupants per bedroom. Additionally, it prevents municipalities from enacting ordinances that discriminate based on familial or non-familial relationships; occupation; or marital, employment, or educational status, including factors such as scholastic enrollment or academic achievement, particularly concerning college students.
Actions to Take	Ensure that Zoning Ordinance does not limit the number of occupants in a dwelling unit to fewer than 2 occupants per bedroom; or does not discriminate based on familial or marital status, occupation, employment, and/or education status (including college students). While less likely, verify whether site plan regulations will also need a similar change for multi-family.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: September 13, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 188

HB 467 Social Districts

Title	An act defining "social districts" and enabling municipalities to create social districts.
Description	Bill introduces the concept of "social districts" and allows municipalities to establish such districts, defined as an outdoor area in which individuals can consume alcoholic beverages sold by licensed establishments. It outlines the process for towns and cities to approve the operation of social districts and establishes requirements within the districts, such as appropriate signage, management and maintenance plans, and district boundaries. Municipalities that approve social districts must also submit a detailed map, along with the proposed days and hours during which alcoholic beverages may be consumed to the liquor commission. Additionally, it sets forth specific requirements for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages within social districts.
Actions to Take	No immediate action is required, as this bill just gives municipalities the option to establish social districts. Separately, while a municipality might want to consider updating zoning to allow for more outdoor seating, entertainment venues, bars, etc. that would go with a social district, there is no direct requirement to update zoning.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 7, 2025



Effective Date: September 5, 2025

**Chaptered Final
Version**

[Chapter 158](#)

HB 577 Accessory Dwelling Units “ADUs”

Title

An act relative to modifying the definition of ADUs.

Description

Expands the existing ADU law (RSA 674:71-73) to allow one attached or detached ADU as a matter of right in all zoning districts where single-family homes are permitted and increases the maximum square footage. In addition, this bill:

- allows for conversion of existing structures, including detached garages, into ADUs even if structure doesn't meet setback or lot coverage dimensional standards
- adds flexibility for ingress and egress
- retains local option to require owner occupancy of the principal dwelling unit or ADU
- allows ADUs to be up to 950 square feet *unless* otherwise authorized by the municipality. A municipality can't limit to less than 750 square feet.

Applicants are still required to (1) pull a building permit, (2) make adequate provisions for water supply and sewage disposal in accordance with RSA 485-A:38, and (3) have an approved septic design from DES

Municipalities cannot:

- impose stricter setback requirements, aesthetic standards, or design review requirements for the ADU that go beyond what would be required for a single-family dwelling without an ADU
- impose greater requirements for a septic system than is required by the department of environmental services
- require more than 1 parking space per ADU
- deny the establishment of a separate electrical panel and service to the ADU

Actions to Take

Update Zoning Ordinance and related requirements to reflect new changes, including but not limited to sections that make reference to ADUs, zoning districts where single-family homes are permitted, and permitted use tables. This includes removing the requirements for ADUs to seek a Special Exception or Conditional Use Permits. Applicants may withdraw any pending applications for a Special Exception or Conditional Use Permit as of the bill's July 1, 2025 effective date and proceed to pull a building permit. Until such time as any applicable zoning regulations are amended, municipalities should review the new law to ensure that any ADU applications submitted to the town comply with new state requirements.

Status

Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025



Effective Date: July 1, 2025

Chaptered Final Version

[Chapter 197](#)

HB 631 Residential Uses in Commercial Zones – aka “Homes Near Jobs”

Title

An act permitting residential building in commercial zoning.

Description

Municipalities would be required to allow multi-family residential development (3 or more units) on commercially zoned land (including land zoned for retail and office space), provided that adequate infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewage systems, shall be available or provided to support the development. A municipality:

- can prohibit residential development in zones where industrial and manufacturing uses are permitted which may result in impacts that are incompatible with residential use, such as air, noise, odor, or transportation impacts
- may require all available ground floor space or a percentage thereof to be dedicated to retail or similar uses
- shall provide an exemption to any dimensional requirements regarding setbacks, height, or frontage of a building being converted to multi-family or mixed-use through adaptive reuse, provided that the building’s floor area, height, and setbacks do not change

Of note, the bill doesn’t define “adequate infrastructure” needed to support a multi-family residential development and would need refining by the municipality to determine what is adequate.

Actions to Take

Municipalities must:

- update Zoning Ordinance to reflect the allowance of multi-family residential development on commercially zoned land, and related requirements.
- review Site Plan Regulations to reflect that commercial areas are now mixed use and to incorporate provisions for multi-family residential in those areas.
- determine if a zoning district allows both commercial and industrial and determine applicability.

Status

Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025
Effective Date: July 1, 2026

Chaptered Final Version

[Chapter 201](#)



HB 633 Housing Trusts

Title	An act creating a legislative study committee to investigate the implementation of housing investment trusts in New Hampshire.
Description	Establishes a legislative study committee tasked with investigating amending current legislation on investment trusts to enshrine housing investments trusts in statute. The committee's primary duty is to explore the potential implementation of housing investment trusts and to report its findings and any legislative recommendations by November 1, 2025, to various state officials, including the Speaker of the House and the Governor.
Actions to Take	None at this time. Municipalities can attend meetings of the committee once formed, submit testimony, and keep apprised of final recommendations.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 23, 2025 Effective Date: June 24, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 130

HB 731 Supportive Housing Options for Individuals with Disabilities

Title	An act relative to supportive housing options for individuals with developmental disabilities.
Description	Aims to enhance housing options for individuals with disabilities by broadening the scope of facilities that can operate without a full license. Specifically, it amends the existing law to provide a limited license exemption for certain supportive housing options for individuals with disabilities located within a larger facility or apartment building.
Actions to Take	Update references, if any, in Zoning Ordinance and other related documents. Planning Boards should also be informed of this update.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 7, 2025 Effective Date: September 5, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 153



SB 4 C-PACER Program

Title	An act relative to Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency (C-PACER).
Description	<p>This bill replaces the energy efficiency and clean energy districts statute with a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency program (C-PACER). Highlights of the bill include broadening the scope of the program to allow for the establishment of C-PACER districts that can encompass multiple municipalities in an effort to enhance community-wide energy efficiency and resiliency improvements. It also empowers municipalities to create energy efficiency and clean energy districts. Furthermore, the bill designates the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority (BFA) as the program administrator.</p> <p>This bill allows developers or property owners to apply to the NH BFA for low-cost, long-term financing for projects that support energy efficiency and related projects, with repayments made via voluntary special assessments tied to a property's tax bill.</p>
Actions to Take	At its discretion, a municipality may establish the district within the entirety of its jurisdictional boundaries by formally adopting RSA 53-F, the enabling chapter for C-PACER.
Status	Signed by Governor: February 27, 2025 Effective Date: January 1, 2026
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 1

SB 91 One-Time Special Appraisals of Residences in Commercial Zones

Title	An act allowing one-time special appraisals of residences located in commercial zones.
Description	Amends the current law regarding the appraisal of residences located in industrial or commercial zones. It allows owners of such residences to submit a single application for a special appraisal based on the property's current use as a residence, rather than requiring annual reapplications as was previously required.
Actions to Take	Municipalities may need to edit forms if current ones specify the need to re-apply annually. No other action required by municipalities, just be aware of the new change.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 10, 2025



Effective Date: April 1, 2026

Chaptered Final Version | [Chapter 87](#)

SB 95 Camp Cabins and State Building and Fire Codes

Title	An act relative to youth recreation camp cabins and state building and fire codes.
Description	Introduces new provisions regarding residential cabins in youth recreation camps, specifically exempting them from the requirement to have automatic sprinkler systems. It amends RSA 155-A by adding a new section, 155-A:14, which states that while these cabins must comply with the existing state building code, they are not mandated to have electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems, and if these are installed, they must adhere to the state building code. Additionally, it limits new residential facilities for youth summer recreation camps to two stories above grade.
Actions to Take	Review/update Zoning Ordinance to reflect height restriction. If needed update the Building Code to reflect height restrictions and electrical, mechanical, and plumbing system exemptions.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: September 13, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 227

SB 153 Driveway Permitting for Residential Use of 20 Units or Greater

Title	An act relative to expedited driveway permitting of major entrances for residential use of 20 units or greater and the time frame for approval or denial of permit applications.
Description	Bill requires the commissioner of transportation to approve or deny permit applications for driveway or public access to a way within 60 days of receipt of application and creates an expedited driveway permit for major entrances for parcels of land for residential use of 20 units or greater.
Actions to Take	While there are no direct actions to take, boards and land use staff should be aware of the updated deadlines when reviewing plans or setting and/or reviewing conditions of approval.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 7, 2025 Effective Date: October 5, 2025



Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 154
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SB 173 LIHTC Program Assessing

Title	An act relative to residential property subject to housing covenants under the low-income housing tax credit program.
Description	Amends the appraisal process for residential properties subject to housing covenants under the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) program. Specifically, it standardizes the assessment formula for LIHTC projects where a residential property under this program shall be assessed an amount equal to 10% of the actual rental income and certain other income.
Actions to Take	Applicable property owners must notify their municipality of their election to be assessed under this new provision by October 1 of the preceding tax year. The assessment will remain in effect for the next ten tax years, provided the property continues to meet the housing covenant requirements.
Status	Signed by Governor: June 24, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 120

SB 188 Third Party Building Inspections

Title	An act relative to the state building code.
Description	<p>Allows licensed or certified third parties to certify documents and conduct building code inspections. These agencies to be approved by the local building official must meet specific requirements, which include maintaining insurance for professional liability, experienced and licensed personnel, and adequate equipment. Local enforcement agencies are required to audit a percentage of inspections performed by approved agencies to ensure compliance with applicable codes.</p> <p>Applicants choosing to have their work inspected by an approved third-party agency must separately contract with and pay that agency. Further, if they do so, local permit fees are reduced by 40% when the approved agency is used for document reviews and 40% when the approved agency is used for inspections - 80% if both document reviews and inspections are conducted by approved agencies.</p>



	Building officials are to provide timely access to relevant documents and to issue building permits or certificates of occupancy within specified timeframes, with automatic approval if these deadlines are not met. The bill also emphasizes that municipalities cannot impose more restrictive regulations than those outlined in the act.
Actions to Take	Municipalities should update local building permit applications and related materials to reflect new timelines and processes. Building and Code Enforcement Officers will need to establish a process to review and approve the credentials of approved third party agencies.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: July 15, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 246

SB 281 Building on Class VI Roads

Title	An act prohibiting municipalities from denying building or occupancy permits for property adjacent to class VI roads under certain circumstances.
Description	Allows issuance of building permits on lots adjacent to class VI roads provided that the applicant: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Signs a liability waiver acknowledging that the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Municipality shall not maintain the highway nor provide any services to any lot accessible by the highway; b. Municipality shall not accept any responsibility for losses or damages caused by a lack of services; and c. Responsibility for such services falls solely on the applicant; and 2) Provides evidence that this waiver has been recorded in the county register of deeds prior to the issuance of a building permit; and 3) Proves the lot and any buildings thereon are insurable prior to the issuance of a building permit
Actions to Take	Update any policies and ordinances that speak to development on class VI roads.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2026
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 256



SB 282 Residential Building Stairway Requirements

Title	An act relative to stairway requirements in certain residential buildings
Description	Amends the NH Building Code to permit residential buildings that are up to four stories above grade to have only one stairway, provided that specific conditions set by the state building code review board are met.
Actions to Take	Update Building Code to reflect changes.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: July 15, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 257

SB 283 Floor-Area-Ratios

Title	An act relative to the calculation of floor-area-ratios under local building ordinances.
Description	Requires municipalities to exclude below-grade areas (including basements, cellars, and sublevels) from the calculation of floor-area-ratios (FAR) for new construction projects. The bill allows developers to utilize these below-grade areas for specific purposes such as parking, storage, mechanical spaces, and additional facilities without affecting the FAR calculation.
Actions to Take	Amend definitions and regulations that make reference to floor-area-ratios, if any.
Status	Signed by Governor: August 1, 2025 Effective Date: September 30, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 301



SB 284 Minimum On-Site Parking Requirements

Title	An act relative to the authority for municipalities to regulate mandatory on-site parking requirements.
Description	Modifies the maximum number of accessory parking spaces that municipalities can require for residential units. Specifically, it changes the requirement from a maximum of 1.5 residential parking spaces per unit to a maximum of 1 residential parking space per unit. Developers are not prohibited from building more than 1 parking spot.
Actions to Take	Update parking requirements in Zoning Ordinance, Site Plan, or Subdivision Regulations.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 15, 2025 Effective Date: September 13, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 258

SB 291 Religious Use of Land Property Tax Exemption

Title	An act relative to the religious use of land property tax exemption.
Description	Modifies RSA 72:23 III by adding parsonages that are rented or vacant for the purpose of applying the net income to the pastor's housing allowance to real estate tax exemptions.
Actions to Take	To be implemented by the Assessing Department. No other action required by municipalities, just be aware of the new change.
Status	Signed by Governor: August 1, 2025 Effective Date: July 1, 2025
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 303



2023 AND 2024 SESSIONS

If your municipality has not made updates to ordinances and regulatory documents in the last few years, below, you can find information on important changes to pay attention to:

<https://www.nheconomy.com/office-of-planning-and-development/resources/legislation>
[Changes to Planning & Zoning Laws in 2024: A Guide for Municipalities – a joint NHMA/OPD advisory](#)
[Changes to Planning & Zoning Laws in 2023: A Guide for Municipalities – a joint NHMA/OPD advisory](#)

Of note, a few important legislative changes that will likely impact your municipality include:

HB 1567 Home-Based Child Care Facilities

Title	An act relative to zoning provisions concerning family and group family child care uses.
Description	Mandates that family and group family child care programs be permitted as an accessory use to any primary residential use by right <i>or</i> by conditional use permit under local zoning and planning regulations. The bill specifies that family or group family child care should be allowed without being subject to local site plan review regulations in any residential zone, provided that all requirements set by the department of health and human services are met.
Actions to Take	Update Zoning Ordinance and table of permitted uses.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 26, 2024 Effective September: 24, 2024
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 271



HB 1359 Abutters (Definition and Appeals)

Title	An act relative to appeals of certain zoning decisions by abutters.
Description	<p>This bill adds to the definition of "abutter" to include those diagonally adjacent, specifically:</p> <p><i>"Directly across the street or stream" shall be determined by lines drawn perpendicular from all pairs of corner boundaries along the street or stream of the applicant to pairs of projected points on any property boundary across the street or stream that intersect these perpendicular lines. Any property that lies along the street or stream between each pair of projected points, or is within 50 feet of any projected point shall be considered an abutter."</i></p> <p>Furthermore, it includes abutters in appeals to the board of adjustment; and clarifies that abutters may apply for a rehearing.</p>
Actions to Take	Review all mentions of "abutter" in all regulatory documents and town policies. Review definition of "abutter" in ordinance and other regulatory documents.
Status	Signed by Governor: July 3, 2024 Effective Date: Sept 1, 2024
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 130

SB 78 Road Bonding

Title	An act relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements.
Description	Establishes requirements and limits on the security required for street work and utility installations, landscaping, final pavement, and fire suppression systems under subdivision regulations regarding completion of improvements prior to final approval. See SB78 guidance prepared by NHOPD.
Actions to Take	Review Subdivision and Site Plan Review regulations regarding infrastructure bonding/guarantee and inspections per changes to RSA 674:36.
Status	Signed by Governor: August 4, 2023 Effective Date: October 3, 2023
Chaptered Final Version	Chapter 208

