



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Remote Participation via Zoom¹

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81136818419?pwd=dDFDbDhrTm56TUNQUlp3WEorYzRZZz09>

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,81136818419#,,, *722490# US (New York)

Dial in via phone: 1-929-436-2866 • Meeting ID: 811 3681 8419 • Passcode: 722490

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Download the app at least 5 minutes before the meeting starts: <https://zoom.us/download>

Page **AGENDA**

6:30² Adjustments to the Agenda
Public Comments

2 **6:35 Vermont Climate Action Plan, Samantha Lash, Planner** (enclosed)
 Plan presentation and Board discussion/exercise of CVRPC priorities.
<https://climatechange.vermont.gov/readtheplan>

7:35 Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy Compliance, Bill Arrand, Municipal Plan Review Committee Chair (enclosed; additional information to follow)³

Report and recommended from Municipal Plan Review Committee regarding:

- a) Town of Cabot - approval and confirmation
- b) Town of Roxbury - approval and confirmation

35 **8:00 S.148 - An Act Relating to Environmental Justice in Vermont**
 Discussion and CVRPC support

64 **8:15 Minutes** (enclosed)²

69 **8:20 Reports** (enclosed)
 Update/questions on Staff, Director, and Committee Reports

8:30 Adjourn

Next Meeting: April 12, 2022

¹ Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in programs or activities are encouraged to contact Nancy Chartrand at 802-229-0389 or chartrand@cvregion.com at least 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

² Times are approximate unless otherwise advertised.

³ Anticipated action item.



MEMO

Date: March 8, 2022
To: Board of Commissioners
From: Sam Lash, Planner
Re: Climate Action Plan

✉ ACTION REQUESTED: Begin defining CVRPC's priorities for Climate Action Plan implementation.

Per the Board's request, staff will present the Vermont Climate Action Plan (CAP). The Vermont 2022 State Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) overlaps the Climate Action Plan (CAP), especially regarding greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The presentation reviews the context and purpose of the CAP, its overarching structure and pathways, ongoing-action, and explicit mentions of RPCs in the plan. Staff requests the Board define CVRPC's priorities for its approach to plan implementation. The priorities will be used in the Regional Plan update.

Questions the Board will be asked include:

- What is being done at the municipal level now? At the regional level?
- What gaps do you see at the municipal level? At the regional level?
- What roles should CVRPC play to support or expand municipal and regional actions?

Climate Action Plan Implementation

The Plan is organized around five areas:

- Emissions reductions (focused on five pathways (transportation, building and thermal, electricity, agriculture, and other non-energy emissions),
- Building resilience and adaptation in Vermont's natural and working lands,
- Building resilience and adaptation in Vermont's communities and built environment,
- Enhancing carbon sequestration and storage, and
- Cross-cutting pathways (areas supporting both emissions reduction and resilience and adaptation efforts – ex. Compact settlement, education, personal action, environmental justice policy, etc.).

In reviewing the CAP, staff focused on pathways, strategies, and actions that explicitly mentioned RPCs and relate to ongoing municipal and regional programs, policies, and opportunities for future action. These include but are not limited to those listed in the table below. RPCs can choose to support any pathways and actions in the Plan. Those actions that specifically mention RPCs are areas in which RPCs generally work and are supported by state and local funding.

Included with the Board packet is *Guiding Principles for a Just Transition* developed by the Climate Council's Just Transitions Sub-Committee. Historically, the term "Just Transitions" is a way of framing action on climate change using an equity lens for government and business. This work represents how state-level entities are incorporating equity and inclusion into their work.

Background¹

In 2020, the Vermont Legislature passed the Global Warming Solutions Act ([Act 153 as Enacted](#)), which created legally binding emission reduction targets. The Act was created in response to concerns around Vermont's changing climate and the magnitude of what must be done to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change on Vermont's landscape.

The Act requires Vermont to reduce greenhouse gas pollution to 26% below 2005 levels by 2025. Emissions would need to be 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below by 2050. In addition to the emission reductions required by the statute, the law formed the Vermont Climate Council and directed the Council to consider opportunities for conservation through long-term carbon sequestration and identify actions Vermont communities can take to better prepare for more extreme weather.

The [Climate Action Plan](#) includes strategies to:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation, building, regulated utility, industrial, commercial, and agricultural sectors;
2. Encourage smart growth and related strategies;
3. Achieve long-term sequestration and storage of carbon and promote best management practices to achieve climate mitigation, adaption, and resilience on natural working lands;
4. Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all sectors;
5. Reduce energy burdens for rural and marginalized communities;
6. Limit the use of chemicals, substances, or products that contribute to climate change; and
7. Build and encourage climate adaptation and resilience of Vermont communities and natural systems.

The Climate Action Plan serves as a guide for the Vermont Legislature in setting policy that supports climate change solutions for Vermonters and Vermont's landscape.

¹ www.climatechange.vermont.gov/about

Impact Area	Pathway	Strategy	Action	Detail	Page
Transportation Mitigation	3. Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled	1. Increase capacity and implement	Require VTrans to create a State Sustainable Transportation Implementation Plan	Fund and provide technical assistance to RPCs & M through expanded TPI incorporating transportation sustainability	86
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Communities and the Built Environment	1. Increase capacity for climate resilience planning & implementation; address inequities of under-resource communities	2. Establish permanent statewide funding and technical support for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation	<p>Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index</p> <p>Create & fund one natural resource staff position at every RPC to assist with implementation of climate policies and natural resources requirements such as Act 171 (forestry and habitat blocks)</p>	TPI as funding model	142
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Communities and the Built Environment	3. Support the reduction of municipal, school district, residential, university, and hospital fossil fuel use in rural areas	1. Provide tools and resources to help assess data needs and establish best practices for rural communities, businesses, and institutions to reduce fossil fuel use	<p>Require the collection of fossil fuel usage data for municipal operations for buildings, vehicle fleets, and utilities; identify data gaps and ways to collect that data for measuring change in fossil fuel use going forward</p> <p>Ensure data on fossil fuel usage at the municipal level is available and accessible in one location for municipal and public use</p> <p>Engage higher education institutions to actively participate in developing systems to gather,</p>	Model is 2009 RPCs statewide effort used DOE American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding to provide energy audits and management of energy efficiency projects for municipal buildings	155

			<p>compile, update, extrapolate fossil fuel data and make that available to the public</p> <p>Identify, develop, and share best practices for reducing municipal, school district, residential, commercial, and industrial fossil fuel consumption. Identify and assess existing practices and note gaps</p>	Id barriers to data access, best practices	
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Communities and the Built Environment	3. Support the reduction of municipal, school district, residential, university, and hospital fossil fuel use in rural areas	2. Equitably expand access to programs that provide options to rural homeowners, landlords, municipalities, school districts, universities, and hospitals for weatherization, electrification, and utility upgrades	n. Help individuals, municipalities, and businesses through the process of weatherization, energy efficiency and fuel switching upgrades by establishing and funding Weatherization and Efficiency Navigators at each Regional Planning Commission (RPC), expanding the services currently available at CAP agencies and VEIC, and ensuring coordination and a whole systems approach among the entities providing services		157
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Communities and the Built Environment	5. Ensure that all people have access to safe, accessible, energy efficient, and affordable housing	1. Update state and local land-use governance, regulations, practices, and investments to eliminate barriers to housing development	<p>d. Expand pilot program to train a network of local builders in the design and building of small and mid-sized and accessory dwelling units (mother-in-law apartments) and fund homes starts within communities planning and investing in development-ready infrastructure, building development partnerships, and updating zoning bylaws to welcome new homes</p> <p>e. Convene a statewide conversation on the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act's (24 VSA, Chapter 117) provisions on land use and housing to outline amendments and strategies that will expand</p>		163

			housing choice, opportunity, and improve community resilience		
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Natural and Working Lands	1. Sustain, restore, and enhance the health and function of Vermont's lands and water to help both natural and human communities adapt to climate change	1. Increase technical assistance, capacity, education, and resources to support private and municipal farm and forestland owners, planners, and managers for climate change adaptation	b. Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to hire and support natural resource staff, potentially through Natural Resource Conservation districts		169
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Natural and Working Lands		5. Plan and regulate for climate resilience and adaptation	<p>a. Establish "climate resilience zones" informed by existing data, bolstered with new research/science, to identify locations that have high resilience potential for both the natural and built environments and use to inform land use development and regulations</p> <p>b. Per the formula in statute, fully fund Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to ensure sufficient capacity necessary to address climate change in regional and municipal plans</p>		174
Adaptation and Building Resilience in Natural and Working Lands	4. Land use - Shape land use and development that support carbon sequestration and storage, climate resilience and adaptation, and natural and human communities for a	5. Avoid, minimize, and mitigate the negative impacts of renewable energy generation, like other land development, on natural and working lands	a. Evaluate the effectiveness of the program of Regional and Municipal Enhanced Energy Plans and the application of these plans to decisions by the PUC in terms of their ability to direct the siting of renewable energy projects in a manner that avoids the conversion of working and natural lands and the loss of the carbon storage and sequestration, climate resilience, and other co-benefits that are associated with those lands if alternative sites are reasonably available. If the		202

	sustainable and equitable future		<p>process of developing and implementing the system of Regional and Municipal Enhanced Energy Plans is not achieving this goal, then adjust the laws and regulations applicable to renewable energy siting to ensure the effectiveness of the plans</p> <p>b. Incentivize or carefully consider mandating solar and wind capacity on new buildings as well as in previously-disturbed/developed areas and avoid and minimize forest clearing for renewables through incentives and other siting policies, rules, and regulations</p> <p>c. Consider the need for incentives to site new renewable energy generation on parking lots, rooftops, and already altered locations. And discourage siting of new renewable energy generation on intact ecosystems, forests, and natural land if alternative sites are reasonably available</p>		
Cross-Cutting Pathways: Education	1. Create accessible, equitable research, partnerships, and education; promote shared understanding; and invest in sustainable workforce development for the natural and working lands sector	1. Provide funding for climate-related education at all levels, outreach, research, and technical assistance programs	h. Establish stronger relationships between state agencies and regional planning commissions, and faculty at Vermont and adjacent state institutes of higher learning, creating opportunities for state and regional research needs to become an aspect of faculty research agendas		227

Cross-Cutting Themes: State Government, Community, and Partner Capacity			1. Invest in and appropriately expand state government and community partner capacity (e.g. Regional Planning Commissions, Community Action Agencies, etc.) to support necessary integrated climate action planning and implementation with specific investment in and capacity built for community outreach, translation, and language access		239
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Vermont Climate Action Plan

SUMMARY



The Vermont Climate Action Plan

Vermont and the world are facing the impacts of climate change and it's time to act. The initial Vermont Climate Action Plan, released on December 1, 2021, outlines steps to cut climate pollution and help Vermonters prepare for extreme weather and other impacts caused by climate change.

Vermont must get ready for a changing climate and cut its climate pollution, such as carbon and methane emissions, in half by 2030 to meet the target in Vermont's Global Warming Solutions Act. To do this, Vermont will need to prioritize helping the people who will be most affected by climate change.

The Legislature established the Vermont Climate Council to draft the plan. As they drafted the plan, the Climate Council incorporated ideas and feedback from a wide range of Vermonters. In addition, the Climate Council developed this plan in coordination with the State of Vermont's Comprehensive Energy Plan (released November 2021), which details energy opportunities and challenges for the state. Five subcommittees shaped the plan: Rural Resilience and Adaptation, Agriculture and Ecosystems, Cross Sector Mitigation, Just Transitions and Science and Data.

The initial Vermont Climate Action Plan is a first step in climate action and will be updated at least every four years. The plan includes an implementation section for legislators and other state-level stakeholders to inform decision-making. The Climate Council will continue to build out the framework for measuring and assessing progress that government, nonprofit, private sector and municipal partners across the state can use to evaluate their impacts in achieving plan goals.



Vermonters must be part of determining and implementing solutions to climate change. The Just Transitions subcommittee created *Guiding Principles for a Just Transition* to provide a framework for the Council and subcommittees to evaluate, adjust and prioritize recommendations based on how they will impact Vermont's impacted and frontline communities including those who are highly exposed to climate risks; experience oppression and racism, are excluded from opportunities or have less resources to adapt to climate and economic change; bear the brunt of pollution and negative effects from fossil fuels and extractive economies and are more likely to experience a job transition as Vermont addresses climate change.

Guiding Principles for a Just Transition

- Ensuring **inclusive, transparent, and innovative engagement** in the development of the plan and associated policies and program.
- Creating **accountable and restorative** recommendations that recognize inequality and seek to resolve them using clearly identified strategies.
- Moving at **the speed of trust** to provide adequate time to incorporate people's voices and prepare Vermonters for the transition to a sustainable climate future.
- Incorporating **solidarity** to create inclusionary spaces for all traditions and cultures, particularly for Indigenous communities, recognizing them as integral to a healthy and vibrant Vermont.
- Prioritizing the **most impacted first** through recommendations that address the needs of impacted and frontline communities first, providing the greatest benefits of transitions to these communities.
- Developing **supports for workers, families, and communities** that consider and plan for potential impacts on workers, families and their communities based on the implementation of Vermont's Climate Action Plan.

Climate Change in Vermont

The last decade was the warmest on record. The disruptions are already being felt, from extremely hot days in the summer to increasingly severe storms. If action isn't taken soon, when young Vermonters reach retirement age, summer in Vermont will feel similar to northwest Georgia, with more than 17 days a year exceeding 95°F.

Climate change presents many risks for Vermont, as the [Vermont Climate Assessment](#) shows. Not everyone is affected equally. This includes outdoor workers, low-income community members, BIPOC Vermonters, the old and young, people with health conditions or a disability, LGBTQ2 community members and others.

Here's what Vermont is facing:

- **More rain and flooding:** Precipitation will increase and become more frequent and intense, particularly in mountainous areas with an 80% increase in the likelihood of flooding threatening homes, businesses, infrastructure, communication and transportation systems.
- **Changes to agriculture:** Shifts in growing season lengths and more rain will complicate growing conditions for many crops, including apples and maple syrup, increasing the likelihood of crop damage or crop failure. Rising temperatures can also lead to heat-stress for livestock.
- **Different forests:** Ecosystems will be increasingly threatened by invasive species and shifts in the seasons.

Extreme weather events disrupt lives, and place people, communities, farms, forests, waterways, businesses and livelihoods at risk. At the same time, tackling the challenge of climate change presents opportunities. Reducing emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change improves people's health, protects Vermont's farms, forests, and water bodies, and supports new jobs in clean energy.

ENERGY ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES RELATED TO CLIMATE ACTION

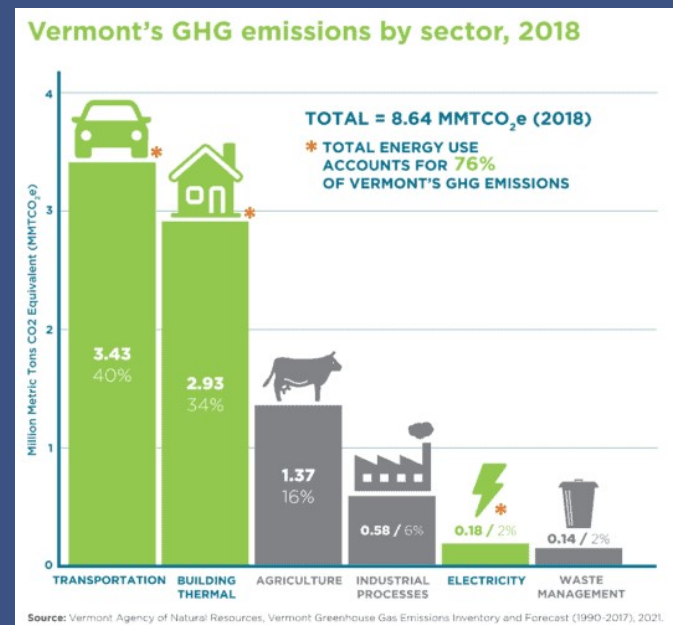
Vermont's current dependence on fossil fuels leads to high and unpredictable energy costs for Vermont households and businesses. Some are more burdened by energy costs than others. For example, renters and low-income Vermonters pay a greater percentage of their income for energy and rural households tend to spend more on transportation.

Transitioning off fossil fuels presents significant opportunities for Vermonters including lower energy costs, greater investment in the regional economy and more high-paying jobs in the weatherization, electricity and clean energy sectors.

With federal, state and utility incentives, the up-front costs of electric or renewable energy options can often be lower than costs for new fossil fuel equipment and less expensive to operate. For example, electric vehicles can save rural Vermonters more than \$1,500 per year on average to operate, require less maintenance and cost less due to incentives.

Delivering clean energy is also an opportunity for local energy providers, helping home and business owners weatherize buildings and install heat pumps or other alternatives. In 2020, clean energy jobs made up 6 percent of total employment in Vermont, with the median wage being higher than the statewide median. Growing this sector can be a win for the local economy, workers, and Vermont households.

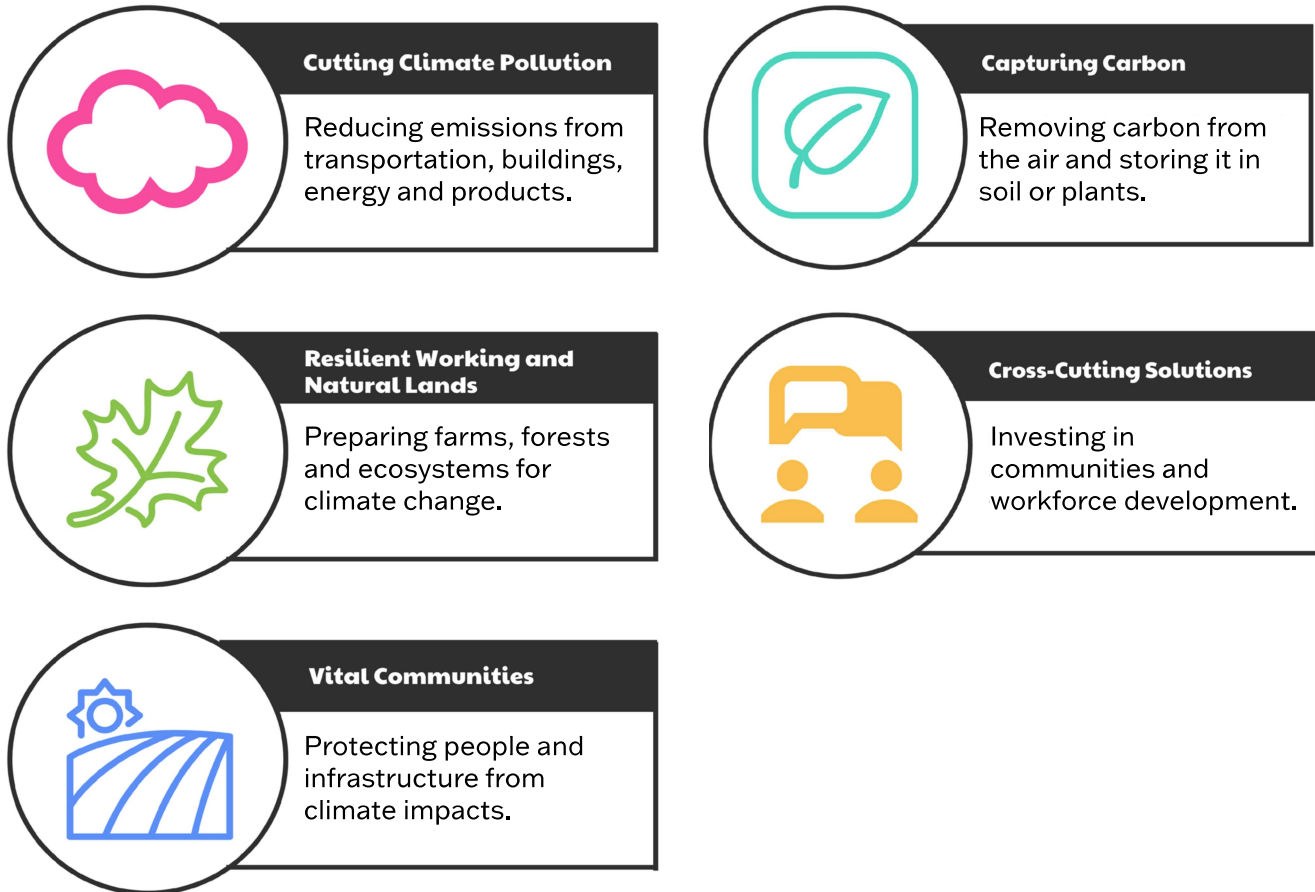
In Vermont, emissions come from the following sources and are addressed in the Climate Action Plan:





Vermont Climate Action Plan Pathways and Strategies

The Vermont Climate Action Plan is organized into five impact areas:



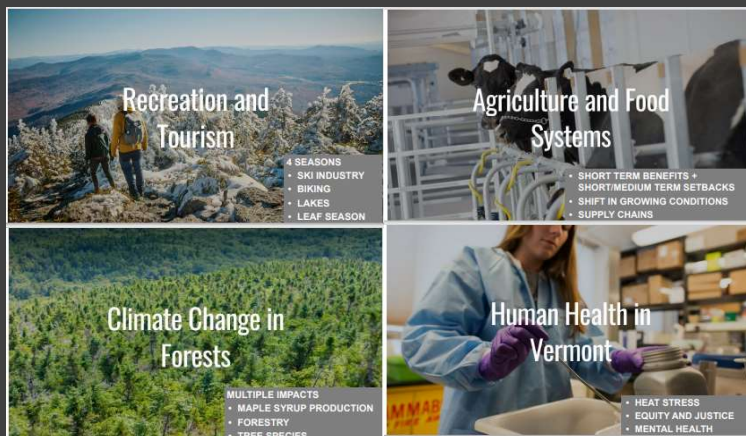
The criteria used to evaluate strategies in the Vermont Climate Action Plan included the ability to reduce climate pollution and prepare for climate impacts, cost effectiveness, and how actions will have the most benefit and harm reduction for frontline communities.

A summary of each impact area is outlined in the Pathways, Strategies and Actions table. For more information including the cost effectiveness, co-benefits and feasibility of the actions visit <https://climatechange.vermont.gov>.

Initial Climate Action Plan

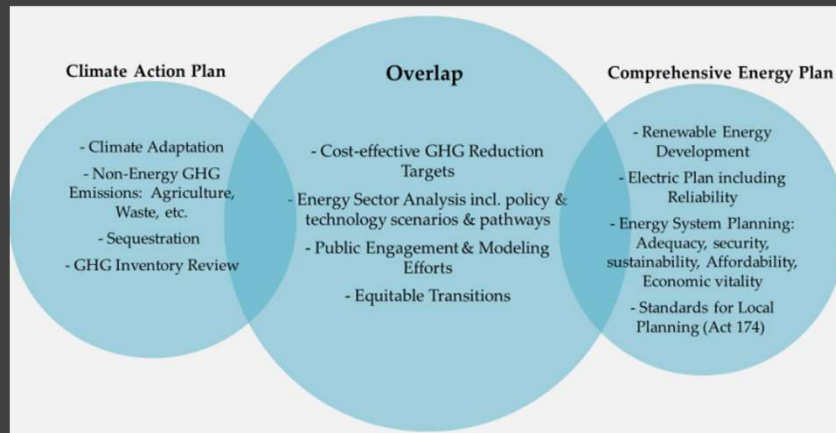
MARCH 8, 2022

Climate Change in VT... right now



Stephen Posner, Director of Policy, VT Climate Assessment Strategic Advisor, GUND, UVM

Context



Source: draft 2022 CEP

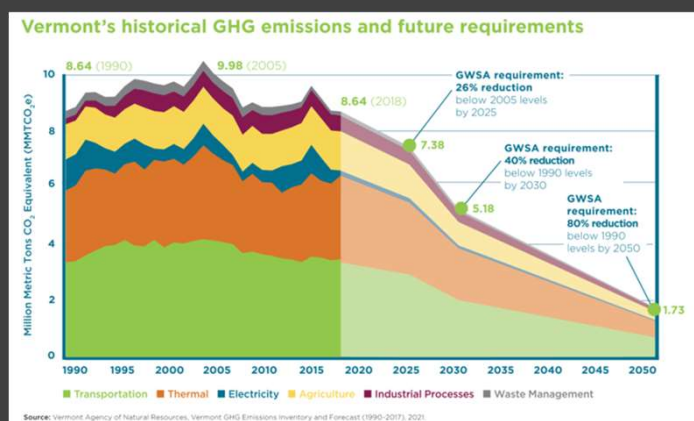
Global Warming Solutions Act

Emissions Reductions Requirements

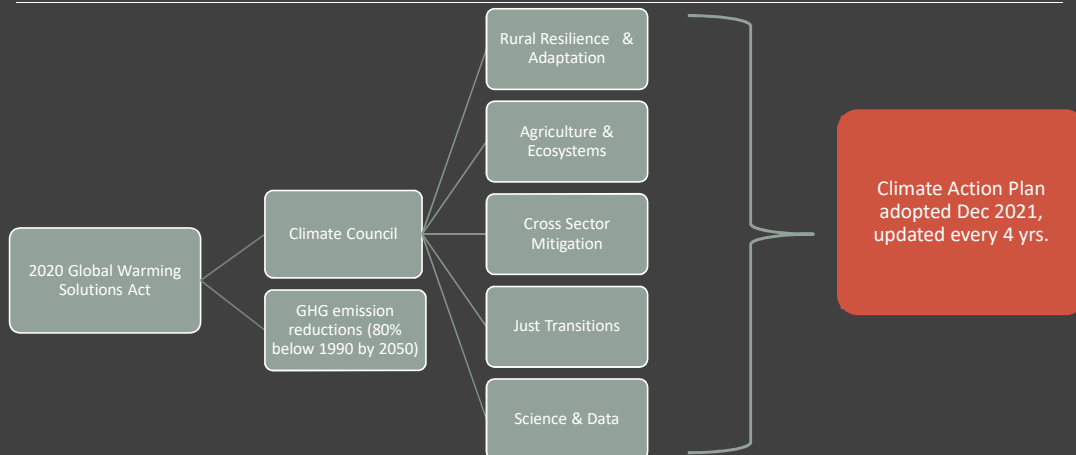
By 2025: 26% below 2005 levels

By 2030: 40% below 1990 levels

By 2050: 80% below 1990 levels



Background



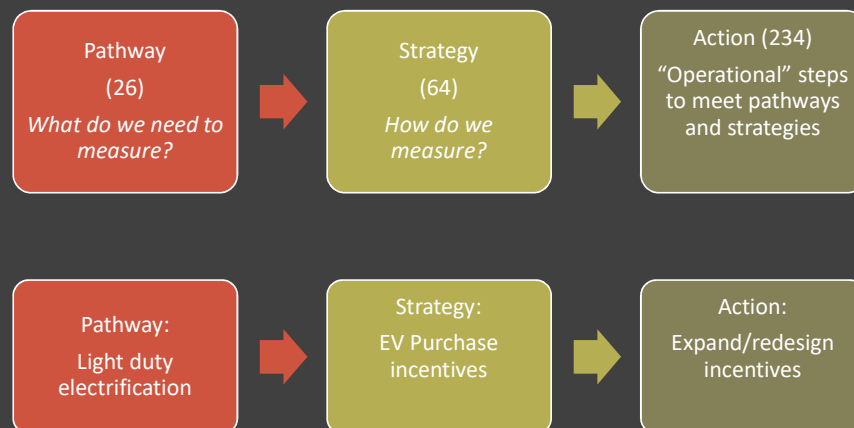
Climate Council Charge

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation, building, regulated utility, industrial, commercial, and agricultural sectors;
2. Encourage smart growth and related strategies;
3. Achieve long-term sequestration and storage of carbon and promote best management practices to achieve climate mitigation, adaption, and resilience on natural [and] working lands;
4. Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all sectors;
5. Reduce energy burdens for rural and marginalized communities;
6. Limit the use of chemicals, substances, or products that contribute to climate change; and
7. Build and encourage climate adaptation and resilience of Vermont communities and natural systems.

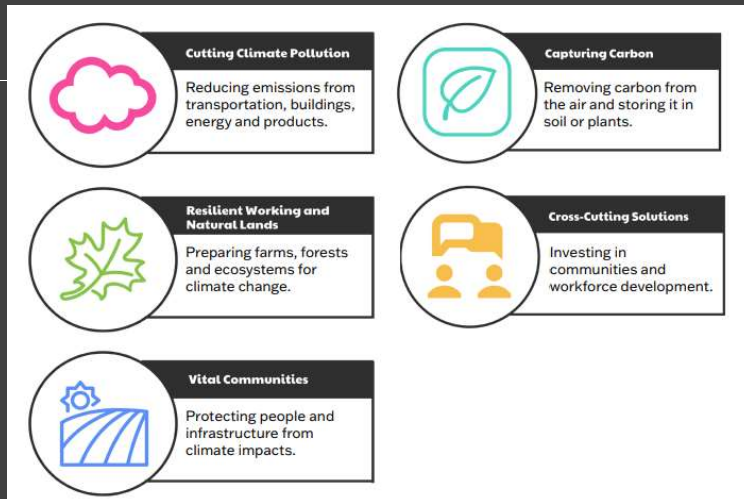
What's in the CAP?

- Initial Climate Action Plan identifies:
 - 26 pathways (high-level, broadly written)
 - 64 strategies (statements of measurable activity)
 - 234 specific action steps (operational tasks)
- Implementation Section to inform decision-making
- Additional Frameworks

CAP Framework



Impact Areas



CAP 2021, Summary

GHG Mitigation Pathways

Transportation (~40%)

Buildings & Thermal (~34%)

Electricity (2%)

- Electrification of transportation/building sector (100% carbon free/renewable by 2030)
- Upgrade electric service and equipment
- Load Management and Grid Optimization

Agriculture (~16%)

- Reduce sources of emissions; enhance GHG sinks

GHG Mitigation Pathways

pp. 86 Fund and provide technical assistance to RPCs & Municipalities through expanded TPI incorporating transportation sustainability

Transportation (~40%)

- CA Clean Cars policy (100% ZEV by 2035)
- Light-duty EVs (170,000 by 2030) and heavy duty EVs' (50,000 by 2030) *(504 registered EVs in our region)*
- Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled *(micro-transit projects)*

Considerations

- \$1 billion on fossil fuels for transportation – 70% leaves the state
- Average Vermonter spends 45% of total energy expenditures on transportation
 - Particularly burdens Low-Income and rural Vermonters
- Opportunities: New Markets, Workforce Development

GHG Mitigation Pathways

Buildings & Thermal (~34%)

- Weatherization (90k homes by 2030) *(179 ENERGY STAR/weatherization projects in our region 2020)*
- Rental & residential energy codes *(Barre City Energy Committee outreach/engagement re weatherizing rental properties)*
- Clean Heat Standard

Key Motivators:

- \$765 million on fossil fuel heating- 63% leaves the state
- Vermonters spend average 10% of annual income (\$5,800) on energy expenditures, *7 Central VT communities spend 10% or more of income on energy- electricity, thermal, transportation*

GHG Mitigation Pathways

Buildings & Thermal (~34%)

Pathway 1: Weatherization and Energy Code

- ▶ Weatherize 90,000 homes by 2030
- ▶ Workforce development
- ▶ Energy and financial coaching
- ▶ On-bill financing
- ▶ Efficiency standards for rental properties (RPES)
- ▶ Zero Energy Ready building energy code by 2030
- ▶ Code training and enforcement assistance to municipalities
- ▶ WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Adaptation and Building Resilience in Communities and the Built Environment

Pp 157 Help individuals, municipalities, and businesses through the process of weatherization, energy efficiency and fuel switching upgrades b:

- establishing and funding Weatherization and Efficiency Navigators at each RPC,
- expanding the services currently available at CAP agencies and VEIC,
- ensuring coordination and a whole systems approach among the entities providing services to

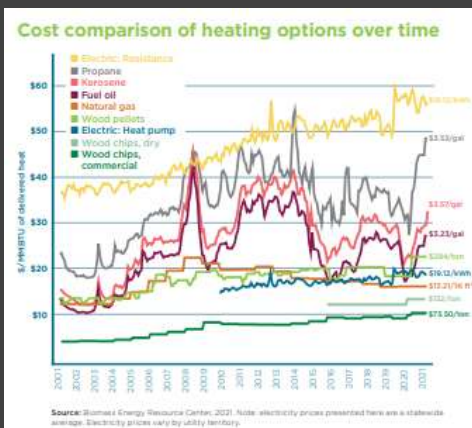
Source: Energy Action Network Progress Report

GHG Mitigation Pathways

Buildings & Thermal (~34%)

Pathway 2: Reduce carbon content of fuels

- ▶ Clean Heat Standard for fossil fueled heat wholesalers
- ▶ Timeline to Implement - Legislation by May 2022, followed by no longer than 18-24 months for administrative process



Source and Resource: [Clean Heat Standard - Network Action Team - Energy Action Network \(eanvt.org\)](#)

Building Resilience & Adaptation in Community & Built Environment Pathways

Increase capacity for climate resilience planning and implementation

- Climate resilience plans
- Enhanced Energy Plans
- Technical support for implementation (more \$\$ to RPCs and municipalities)
- *(8 Enhanced Energy Plans)*

2010-2019: 17 Major Disasters (over \$95 million in property damage from 77 flood/flash flood events in our region from 1996-2021)

Support investments in resilient infrastructure (transportation, electric, and water)

- Vulnerability index
- Flood vulnerability assessment of all bridges/culverts, etc.
- *Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool*

Reduction of municipal, school, fossil fuel use

Change land use policies to increase resilience

9 communities have river corridor regulations

Access to safe and affordable housing

Implementation

- Legislature:
 - Lead Implementer
 - *Authorize, direct, staff, and fund*
- VCV:
 - Develop strategies for transportation sector GHG emissions reductions
 - *Request budget to support further technical analyses/study*
 - Build equity into climate action and ensure a just transition**
 - *Develop Measurable resilience, adaptation and sequestration goals*
- ANR:
 - Complete Pathways Analysis
 - GWSA Rule-Making Requirement

Resources

- Vermont Climate Action Plan (2021)
 - [PDF](#) Short Summary
 - [PDF](#) Full Plan
 - [Public Comments Received by VCC](#)
 - [Appendices](#) Including [Dissenting Opinions](#)
 - Learn more at: <https://climatechange.vermont.gov/>
- Input and community engagement
 - Council and subcommittee meetings ways open to the public: <https://climatechange.vermont.gov/getinvolved/calendar/month>
 - Comment portal: <https://climatechange.vermont.gov/getinvolved>
- [Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan](#)
- [Vermont Climate Assessment 2021](#)
- [NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information State Climate Summaries VT 2022](#)

Board Action

Begin defining CVRPC's priorities for Climate Action Plan implementation.

- What **actions** are **happening now** at the municipal level? At the regional level?
- What **gaps** do you see at the municipal level? At the regional level?
- What **roles should CVRPC play** to support or expand municipal and regional actions?

GUIDING PRINCIPLES **FOR A JUST TRANSITION**

Vermont Climate Council, Just Transitions Subcommittee

August 2021

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I. Introduction

The Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), also known as Act 153, was passed by the Vermont State Legislature in September of 2020 to require the State to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent of its 1990 levels by 2050. The GWSA also stood up the Vermont Climate Council (Council) and five subcommittees, including the Just Transitions Subcommittee.

Historically, the term “Just Transitions” is a way of framing for government and business action on climate change. Its work encompasses both public policies and business action to deal with the impacts of industry transition away from greenhouse gas emissions for jobs and livelihoods (the transition “out”) and aims to generate the low or zero greenhouse gas emission jobs and livelihoods of a sustainable society (the transition “in”). Through the GWSA, the Just Transitions Subcommittee is charged with ensuring that strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to build resilience to the effects of climate change benefit and support all residents of the State of Vermont fairly and equitably.

The Just Transitions Subcommittee believes in proactively centering equity in this work rather than reactively measuring it. These Guiding Principles are therefore meant to frame the work of the Council and subcommittees around an equity lens. While the Legislature has asked us to focus on Vermont, we recognize that the decisions we make in Vermont have repercussions outside of our borders, for which we are also accountable.

First, we offer key **definitions** and clarify indicators of “rural, low income, and marginalized communities” as outlined in the GWSA. Next, we lay out draft **guiding principles** for a Just Transition. These are intended for the Council and subcommittees to evaluate as they develop their respective recommendations. The Guiding Principles are meant to spark dialogue within subcommittees and to serve as a grounding checkpoint to ensure the inclusion of equity. They will be especially useful in policy areas that might not traditionally be considered within an equity lens and would otherwise reinforce historically marginalized, disadvantaged and underserved communities.

Finally, we translate the Guiding Principles into more precise **questions** that the Subcommittee should use directly in assessing the “equity & justice” implications of their ideas and strategies. The Guiding Principles and questions also provide a foundation for an equity assessment tool that the Just Transitions Subcommittee plans to build before draft strategies are proposed, which will include more measurable criteria and suggested information sources.

When developing these draft principles and questions, the subcommittee was influenced by the perspectives of Indigenous voices, who urged the group to expand our understanding of frontline communities to include the Earth and all living beings, as our human survival is not possible without taking all life into consideration. Indigenous communities have long held the belief that we, as humans, are here to steward the land that we thrive upon. Many Indigenous people have felt their voices have been unheard and this stewardship ignored. In this context, a Just Transition can help to establish reparations for the Earth’s healing.

“A Just Transition acknowledges the Earth is a living female organism – our Mother. Water is her lifeblood. The Earth and Father Sky, with its air and atmosphere, are the source of life to be protected, not merely a resource to be exploited, degraded, privatized and commodified.”

*Excerpt from The Indigenous Principles of
Just Transitions, Indigenous Environmental Network*

II. Just Transitions Key Terms

In this section, the Just Transitions Subcommittee offers definitions for “equity” and “justice” – both vital components of a Just Transition and the implementation of the Guiding Principles. These words are defined differently across disciplines, but the meanings presented here served as the foundation for our work.

Equity



Distributive

Distributive equity starts by recognizing disparities in the allocation of resources, health outcomes, the inequities in living conditions and lack of political power place frontline / impacted communities at greater risk.

Distributive equity strategies target resources to adaption and mitigation affecting the communities and populations most impacted.



Procedural

Procedural equity is often referred to as equitable planning and implementation.

Equitable planning and implementation require that communities have a meaningful opportunity to participate. Policymakers must collaborate with communities to learn about their perspectives so that solutions meet community needs. Equitable planning focuses on the local level and ensures that local communities have the opportunity to provide input on policies that directly affect them.



Contextual

Contextual equity ensures that mitigation and adaption strategies take into account that low-income communities, black communities, indigenous communities and people of color, and people with disabilities, amongst others, are often more vulnerable to climate change.

Contextual equity ensures that the development of mitigation and adaption strategies at statewide and local levels take these disparities into account.

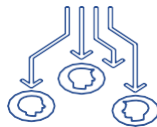


Corrective

Corrective equity ensures that mitigation and adaption strategies provide communities with clear processes to hold the state accountable to its commitments to pursue equity¹

¹ Equity & Environmental Justice Working Group, Connecticut. (2020). *Equity & Environmental Justice Working Group Report*. https://port.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/GC3/GC3-working-group-reports/GC3_equity_EJ_Final_Report_111320.pdf

Justice



Environmental

Environmental justice is the equitable access to environmental benefits, proportionate distribution of environmental burdens, fair and equitable treatment and meaningful involvement in decision making, and recognition of the unique needs of people of all racial and ethnic groups, cultures, socioeconomic statuses, and national origins.

It works to redress structural and institutional racism, colonialism, and other systems of oppression and harm done to Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color and other communities and ecosystems that have experienced marginalization and degradation.

Environmental Justice also seeks to address insufficient governmental responses at the local, state and federal level to environmental crises due to the racial/ethnic demographics, national origin, or socioeconomic status of highly-impacted communities.



Climate & Energy

Climate justice operates at the intersection of racial and social rights, environmental and economic justice. It focuses on the root causes of climate change, and call for a transformation to a sustainable, community-led economy.

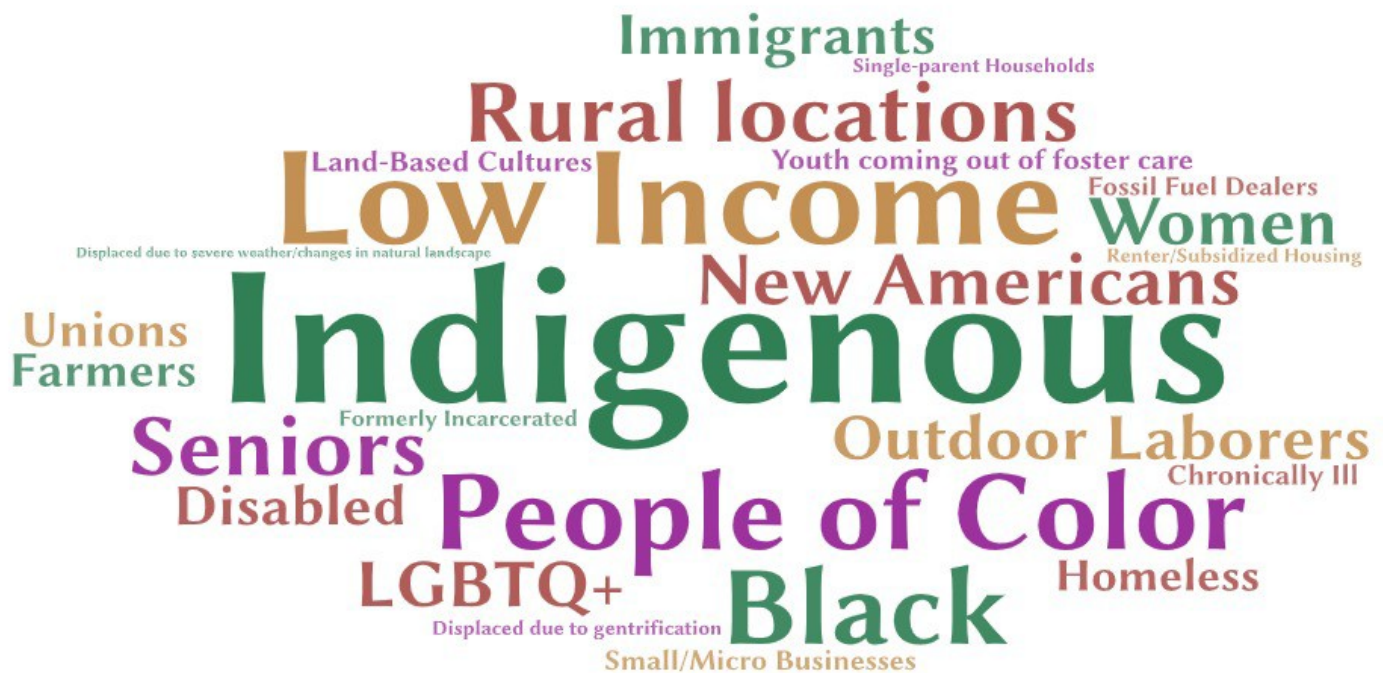
Climate justice begins with recognizing key groups are differently affected by climate change and connects the dots between civil rights and climate change.

Energy justice aims to make energy accessible, affordable, cleaner, and democratically managed for all communities.²

² Slightly Adapted from National Resources Defense Council. (July 2019). Definitions of Equity, Inclusion, Equality & Related Terms. https://www.broward.org/climate/documents/equityhandout_082019.pdf and The Initiative for Energy Justice <https://iejusa.org>.

III. Vermont's Impacted & Frontline Communities

As global warming accelerates, the Council and its Subcommittees must engage with those on the “frontlines” of the climate crisis. Studies continue to show that low-income communities, indigenous peoples, and black and other communities of color are among those who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In addition, as industry and jobs transition away from greenhouse gas emissions and towards “greener” jobs and livelihoods, particular focus must be given to the labor sector. Finally, some Vermonters may also be necessarily focused on achieving immediate goals of food, shelter, safety and health, which can impact ability to focus on long-term adaptation to climate and economic changes.



This word cloud provides a list of frontline and impacted communities and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor does it take into consideration the intersectionality of people’s lives and the multiple vulnerabilities that one may experience.

Impacted and frontline communities draw from key criteria, identifying those who:

- Are highly exposed to climate risks, such as health impacts, flooding, and extreme temperatures;
- Experience oppression and racism, are excluded from opportunities, or have less resources to adapt to climate and economic change;
- Bear the brunt of pollution and negative effects from today’s fossil fuel and extractive economies; and
- Are more likely to experience a job transition as Vermont addresses climate change.

IV. Guiding Principles for a Just Transition

These principles set expectations regarding:

- How Vermont's Climate Council and its sub committees will conduct their work;
- What Recommendations³ are made by the Council; and
- How investments, implementation and oversight of climate action plans occur.

I. **INCLUSIVE, TRANSPARENT & INNOVATIVE ENGAGEMENT**

- All Vermonters are informed and able to participate throughout decision-making and drafting of Recommendations, as well as future administration and oversight.
- The Council's process and public engagement must recognize that people are experts of their own climate and energy experience.
- Impacted communities must be recognized and their voices prioritized in conversations surrounding equity, climate change, and the effects of specific Recommendations.
- Transition planning must involve innovative and wide community engagement that prioritizes various stakeholders and community-based groups to assess Recommendations at local, state and/or regional levels.
- Recommendations must be clear and understandable to all Vermonters, with plain language that is easy to understand. Goals must be clearly identified. To ensure accessibility, the Council must consider the needs of people with limited English, those living with a visual or hearing impairment, and those with limited or no access to technology.
- Potential impacts, benefits, and burdens of recommended climate actions are identified and shared publicly. This includes considering and naming known potential impacts, benefits and burdens outside of Vermont's borders.

II. **ACCOUNTABLE & RESTORATIVE**

- Recommendations must acknowledge that the status quo continues to perpetuate ingrained systems of discrimination, inequality, inequity and racism. Recommendations must examine existing practices and redress historical injustices through concrete actions that will lead to a more equitable future.
- Ongoing assessment tools used by the Council should identify intended and unintended inequities and their root causes.
- Recommendations must recognize inequality and seek to resolve them using clearly identified strategies.
- Recommendations must recognize their potential impacts on the whole natural environment – including air, water, soil and all living things.
- Recommendations must identify and consider barriers to implementation and include strategies to overcome them.

³ In this document, the word "Recommendations" refers to the strategies, policies, programs or other recommendations that the Vermont Climate Council will make in its Climate Action Plan.

III. MOVING AT THE SPEED OF TRUST

- Candor and honesty are essential for public trust and to prepare business, industry, labor, communities and families for transition to a sustainable climate future.
- Planning and implementation must balance being time bound and honoring the varied ways of learning, understanding and agreement that exist in different cultures and communities.

IV. SOLIDARITY

- Recommendations create inclusionary spaces for all traditions and cultures, particularly for Indigenous communities, recognizing them as integral to a healthy and vibrant Vermont.

V. THE MOST IMPACTED FIRST

- Recommendations tackle the needs of impacted and frontline communities first, providing the greatest benefits of transitions to these communities.
- Recommendations must be broad enough for the well-being of all Vermonters and include targeted strategies for different groups that take into account their specific histories, sociocultural and economic realities. They should also recognize when negative impacts are being shifted onto frontline communities outside of the state.
- Where Recommendations create burdens, they also include ways to shift these burdens away from impacted communities.

VI. SUPPORTS WORKERS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

- Recommendations are explicit in their identification of potential and likely impacts on workers, families and their communities based on the implementation of Vermont's Climate Action Plan.
- Recommendations should include transition plans to respond comprehensively to protect impacted workers, including those that are seasonal, clerical and part-time.
- Transition plans must prioritize the needs and aspirations of workers, unions and disproportionately impacted communities.
- Recommendations must consider diverse, economic regeneration and spur creation of well-paying jobs with benefits.
- Recommendations must promote strong, equitable labor standards, support access to unionization, and improve access to public services, particularly for groups most disproportionately impacted.
- Recommendations for job training programs for displaced, at-risk and new workers must lead to meaningful, life-sustaining, and valued work. These programs should be designed to be accessible and affordable regardless of income or geography.
- Communities, local and regional governments, organizations, and families require the capacity to implement recommendations both in the short and long-term. Recommendations will consider current capacity and how to build needed capacity.

V. Subcommittee Self-Assessment Questions

The following questions were developed by the Just Transitions Subcommittee to help each Subcommittee put the Guiding Principles into practice. They aim to better identify, understand, and address the social impacts, types of impacted populations, and engagement process of individual policy recommendations. These are not comprehensive, but rather indicative of the analysis required to ensure a Just Transition for Vermont.

IMPACTED & FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

- Which frontline and impacted communities might be most impacted by this recommendation?
- How do these communities experience inequity today around this issue?

ANALYZING BURDENS & BENEFITS

- Does this recommendation maintain existing inequities, make them worse or improve the status quo?
- Who will benefit from this recommendation and how does this recommendation help benefits be shared or targeted to help frontline and impacted communities the most? Be specific about the communities and the ways these communities will benefit.
- Which communities will be burdened the most by this recommendation and how can that burden be shifted away from impacted communities?
- What are the long-term and potential intergenerational impacts of this recommendation for identified communities?

ENSURING EQUITABLE & JUST ENGAGEMENT

- How have frontline and impacted communities been part of creating and implementing this recommendation? And how will they in the future?
- In what ways does your engagement with frontline/impacted communities recognize different types of knowledge and expertise?
- In what ways can Vermonters hear their voices in the plan?
- Does the recommendation use plain language that is easy for all Vermonters to understand?

FUNDING & DATA

- How will this recommendation be funded? What percent of funding will be specifically to support frontline, low-income and impacted communities? Will there enough funding to make it affordable and accessible for identified communities?
- How will we know about the impacts of this recommendation on identified communities? Which data or indicators will be needed? What process was used to determine the indicators are resonate and relevant to most impacted community needs? How will it be collected and shared?

IMPLEMENTATION & OUTCOMES

- What kind of jobs will be created by this recommendation? Will those jobs be fair, high-paying jobs with good benefits? How will traditionally underserved Vermonters and unions be prioritized for these jobs?
- What capacity is needed for communities, local/regional governments, organizations and families to implement this recommendation? How will the recommendation build and/or strengthen capacity, community trust, cooperation, and mutual support?
- How does this recommendation make a specific commitment to a just transition? Is this commitment quantifiable and does it identify who is accountable?
- Does the recommendation support the natural environment? Does it promote fairness to all living things?

VI. Scoring Rubric

The Rubric is intended to accompany a narrative response for each of the Assessment Questions in Section V. In reviewing the proposal, please consider the Rubric's prompts and their resonance to the goals and vision of this project. An area is provided for comments. The Rubric allows a score of 1 (low) to 3 (high) for each criterion.

1 (low): The proposal meets the criteria to some degree but provides limited explanation or there are significant opportunities to enhance these criteria in the proposal.

2 (moderate): The proposal meets the criteria. There are additional opportunities to enhance these criteria to better meet the goals of the Guiding Principles.

3 (high): The proposal excels in meeting the criteria.

If a recommendation does not yet address the criteria at all, additional work is required.

Policy/Proposal Title:

Policy/Proposal Summary:

Frontline/Impacted Communities Score 1 – 3 on impression of meeting criteria		Please select 1 low to high 3		
Frontline/Most Impacted Communities well defined in proposal		1	2	3
Comments:				
Proposal reflects understanding of existing inequities around the issue for frontline/most impacted communities		1	2	3
Comments:				
Total				
Analyzing Burdens and Benefits Score 1 – 3 on impression of meeting criteria		Please select 1 low to high 3		
Proposal clearly identifies how benefits are shared for frontline/most impacted communities		1	2	3
Comments:				
Proposal clearly identifies who/what carries the burdens from the recommendation, if any		1	2	3
Comments:				
Proposal includes solutions to shield frontline/most impacted communities from experiencing burdens from the recommendation, if applicable		1	2	3
Comments:				

Proposal outlines the long-term/intergenerational impacts (positive or negative) of recommendations on impacted communities	1	2	3
Comments:			
Proposal outlines how it will create a future that is more equitable than the unjust status quo	1	2	3
Comments:			
Total			
Ensuring Equitable & Just Engagement Score 1 – 3 on impression of meeting criteria			
	Please select 1 low to high 3		
Proposal reflects inclusion of frontline/impacted communities in design and implementation of recommendation	1	2	3
Comments:			
Vermonters can hear their voices in the recommendation	1	2	3
Comments:			
Recommendation written in plain language and easy to understand	1	2	3
Comments:			
Total			
Funding & Data Score 1 – 3 on impression of meeting criteria			
	Please select 1 low to high 3		
Funding mechanism for recommendation is clearly defined	1	2	3
Comments:			
Funding mechanism makes recommendation affordable and accessible to frontline/most impacted communities, if applicable	1	2	3
Comments:			
Proposal identifies data and indicators to determine success	1	2	3
Comments:			
Proposal includes process for consultation with frontline/most impacted communities in assessment activities	1	2	3
Comments:			
Proposal includes plan for collection and review of data with frontline/most impacted communities	1	2	3
Comments:			
Total			

Implementation & Outcomes Score 1 – 3 on impression of meeting criteria		Please select 1 low to high 3		
Proposal identifies new jobs/business/employment opportunities for the recommendation		1	2	3
Comments:				
Jobs created by recommendation offer fair, high paying positions with good benefits		1	2	3
Comments:				
A wide range of traditionally underserved Vermonters and unions are prioritized in the jobs created by the recommendation		1	2	3
Comments:				
Communities, local/regional governments, organizations and families have the capacity to implement the recommendation.		1	2	3
Comments:				
The recommendation provides a specific, quantifiable commitment to a just transition		1	2	3
Comments:				
The recommendation supports the natural environment and promotes fairness to all living things		1	2	3
Comments:				
Total				

Total scoring (21 low to 63 high):

Direct Benefits to Underrepresented/Most Impacted Communities (use blank spaces as needed to add)

The recommendation provides direct benefits for the following groups:		
Agricultural Sector	Yes	No
Black/African-American, Brown, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Indigenous communities and Native nations	Yes	No
Disabled and chronically ill people	Yes	No
Displaced due to severe weather	Yes	No
Older Vermonters	Yes	No
Formerly incarcerated individuals	Yes	No
Immigrants, regardless of immigration status	Yes	No
LGBTQIAP+ individuals	Yes	No
People living with low or very low incomes	Yes	No
Outdoor laborers	Yes	No
Recent graduates of the foster care system	Yes	No
Unions/Organized Labor	Yes	No
Women	Yes	No
Young People	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No
	Yes	No

Narrative on Impacted Communities:

Recommend: **Yes** **Yes with Changes** **No**

Explanation:



MEMO

Date: March 8, 2022

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Bonnie Waninger, Executive Director

Re: S.148, An act relating to environmental justice in Vermont

✉ ACTIONS REQUESTED:

- 1) Express support for S.148.**
- 2) Determine whether to sign on to the joint organizational letter.**

VAPDA has been asked to sign onto a support letter for S.148, An act relating to environmental justice in Vermont. Staff requests that the Board express support for S.148 and determine whether CVRPC will agree to sign on to the joint organizational letter.

The bill (attached) has been passed by the Senate. It describes Legislative findings regarding environmental justice, definitions, and state policy. State policy begins on page 23.

Summarized, it:

- sets State policy regarding environmental justice;
- directs specific state entities (ACCD, Agriculture, ANR, Natural Resources Board, PUC, VTrans, and Depts. of Health, Public Safety and Public Services,) to consider cumulative environmental burden and access to environmental benefits when making decisions about the environment, energy, climate, and public health projects; facilities and infrastructure; and associated funding;
- directs every State agency to create and adopt a community engagement plan that describes how the agency will engage with environmental justice populations as it evaluates new and existing activities and programs;
- directs every State agency submit annual summaries detailing all complaints alleging environmental justice issues or Title VI violations and agency action taken to resolve such complaints;

- directs ANR to review the definition of “environmental justice” every five years and issue guidance as to how agencies can determine which investments provide environmental benefits to environmental justice populations;
- directs State agencies to review the past three years and generate baseline spending reports regarding where investments were made and the associated percentage of environmental benefit to environmental justice populations;
- requires direct investments to environmental justice populations with a goal that at least 55 percent of the overall benefits from those investments go to environmental justice populations;
- requires that, by July 1, 2024, ANR adopt rules to: (1) define cumulative environmental burdens; (2) implement consideration of cumulative environmental burdens within the Agency of Natural Resources; and (3) inform how the public and the State agencies, departments, and bodies specified implement the consideration of cumulative environmental burdens and use the environmental justice mapping tool;
- requires named state entities to adopt or amend policies and procedures, plans, guidance, and rules to implement the bill; and
- forms an Environmental Justice Advisory Council to provide independent advice and recommendations to State agencies and the Legislature on environmental justice and its integration into State policy and action
- requires creation of a mapping tool to depict environmental justice populations and measure environmental burdens at the smallest geographic level practicable.

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1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Natural Resources and Energy to which was referred
3 Senate Bill No. 148 entitled “An act relating to environmental justice in
4 Vermont” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends
5 that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and
6 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

8 The General Assembly finds that:

9 (1) According to American Journal of Public Health studies published in
10 2014 and 2018 and affirmed by decades of research, Black, Indigenous, and
11 Persons of Color (BIPOC) and individuals with low income are
12 disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards and unsafe housing,
13 facing higher levels of air and water pollution, mold, lead, and pests.

14 (2) The cumulative impacts of environmental harms disproportionately
15 and adversely impact the health of BIPOC and communities with low income,
16 with climate change functioning as a threat multiplier. These disproportionate
17 adverse impacts are exacerbated by lack of access to affordable energy, healthy
18 food, green spaces, and other environmental benefits.

19 (3) Since 1994, Executive Order 12898 has required federal agencies to
20 make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and
21 addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental

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1 effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and
2 populations with low incomes in the United States.

3 (4) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
4 30 percent of Vermont towns with high town household poverty have limited
5 access to grocery stores. In addition, a study conducted at the University of
6 Vermont showed that in Vermont, BIPOC individuals were twice as likely to
7 have trouble affording fresh food and to go hungry in a month than white
8 individuals.

9 (5) Inadequate transportation impedes job access, narrowing the scope
10 of jobs available to individuals with low income and potentially impacting job
11 performance.

12 (6) In 2020, the Center for American Progress found that 76 percent of
13 BIPOC individuals in Vermont live in “nature deprived” census tracts with a
14 higher proportion of natural areas lost to human activities than the Vermont
15 median. In contrast, 27 percent of white individuals live in these areas.

16 (7) The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that
17 systemic health and social inequities disproportionately increases the risk of
18 racial and ethnic minority groups becoming infected by and dying from
19 COVID-19.

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1 (8) According to the Vermont Department of Health, inequities in access
2 to and quality of health care, employment, and housing have contributed to
3 disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 among BIPOC Vermonters.

4 (9) An analysis by University of Vermont researchers found that mobile
5 homes are more likely than permanent structures to be located in a flood
6 hazard area. During Tropical Storm Irene, mobile parks and over 561 mobile
7 homes in Vermont were damaged or destroyed. Mobile homes make up 7.2
8 percent of all housing units in Vermont and were approximately 40 percent of
9 sites affected by Tropical Storm Irene.

10 (10) A University of Vermont study reports that BIPOC individuals
11 were seven times more likely to have gone without heat in the past year, over
12 two times more likely to have trouble affording electricity, and seven times
13 less likely to own a solar panel than white Vermonters.

14 (11) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized Vermont's
15 deficiencies in addressing environmental justice concerns related to legacy
16 mining and mobile home park habitability, providing grants for these projects
17 in 1998 and 2005.

18 (12) Vermont State agencies receiving federal funds are subject to the
19 antidiscrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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1 (13) In response to the documented inadequacy of state and federal
2 environmental and land use laws to protect vulnerable communities, increasing
3 numbers of states have adopted formal environmental justice laws and policies.

4 (14) At least 17 states have developed mapping tools to identify
5 environmentally overburdened communities and environmental health
6 disparities.

7 (15) The State of Vermont does not currently have a State-managed
8 mapping tool that clearly identifies environmentally overburdened
9 communities.

10 (16) The 1991 Principles of Environmental Justice adopted by The First
11 National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit demand the right
12 of all individuals to participate as equal partners at every level of decision
13 making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement,
14 and evaluation.

15 (17) Article VII of the Vermont Constitution establishes the government
16 as a vehicle for the common benefit, protection, and security of Vermonters
17 and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single set of persons
18 who are only a part of that community. This, coupled with Article I's
19 guarantee of equal rights to enjoying life, liberty, and safety, and Article IV's
20 assurance of timely justice for all, encourages political officials to identify how

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1 particular communities may be unequally burdened or receive unequal
2 protection under the law due to race, income, or geographic location.

3 (18) On January 27, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order
4 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” that created a
5 government-wide “Justice40 Initiative” that aims to deliver 40 percent of the
6 overall benefits of federal investments related to climate, natural disasters,
7 environment, clean energy, clean transportation, housing, water and
8 wastewater infrastructure, and legacy pollution reduction to “disadvantaged
9 communities” that have been historically marginalized and overburdened by
10 pollution and underinvestment.

11 (19) According to American Community Survey data from 2016–2019,
12 at least 51 percent of census block groups in Vermont (or 52 percent of
13 Vermont’s population) meet the Justice40 Initiative federal guidelines of a
14 disadvantaged community.

15 (20) Lack of a clear environmental justice policy has resulted in a
16 piecemeal approach to understanding and addressing environmental justice in
17 Vermont and creates a barrier to establishing clear definitions, metrics, and
18 strategies to ensure meaningful engagement and more equitable distribution of
19 environmental benefits and burdens.

20 (21) It is the State of Vermont’s responsibility to pursue environmental
21 justice for its residents and to ensure that its agencies do not contribute to

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unfair distribution of environmental benefits to or environmental burdens on
low-income, limited-English proficient, and BIPOC communities.

Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. chapter 72 is added to read:

CHAPTER 72. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

§ 6001. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) “Environmental benefits” means the assets and services that enhance
the capability of communities and individuals to function and flourish in
society, such as access to a healthy environment and clean natural resources,
including air, water, land, green spaces, constructed playgrounds, and other
outdoor recreational facilities and venues; affordable clean renewable energy
sources; public transportation; fulfilling and dignified green jobs; healthy
homes and buildings; health care; nutritious food; Indigenous food and cultural
resources; environmental enforcement, and training and funding disbursed or
administered by governmental agencies.

(2) “Environmental burdens” means any significant impact to clean air,
water, and land, including any destruction, damage, or impairment of natural
resources resulting from intentional or reasonably foreseeable causes.
Examples of environmental burdens include climate change; air and water
pollution; improper sewage disposal; improper handling of solid wastes and
other noxious substances; excessive noise; activities that limit access to green

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1 spaces, nutritious food, Indigenous food or cultural resources, or constructed
2 outdoor playgrounds and other recreational facilities and venues; inadequate
3 remediation of pollution; reduction of groundwater levels; increased flooding
4 or stormwater flows; home and building health hazards, including lead paint,
5 lead plumbing, asbestos, and mold; and damage to inland waterways and
6 waterbodies, wetlands, forests, green spaces, or constructed playgrounds or
7 other outdoor recreational facilities and venues from private, industrial,
8 commercial, and government operations or other activity that contaminates or
9 alters the quality of the environment and poses a risk to public health.

10 (3) “Environmental justice” means all individuals are afforded equitable
11 access to and distribution of environmental benefits; equitable distribution of
12 environmental burdens; fair and equitable treatment and meaningful
13 participation in decision-making processes; and the development,
14 implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and
15 policies. Environmental justice recognizes the particular needs of individuals
16 of every race, color, income, class, ability status, gender identity, sexual
17 orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief, or English
18 language proficiency level. Environmental justice redresses structural and
19 institutional racism, colonialism, and other systems of oppression that result in
20 the marginalization, degradation, disinvestment, and neglect of Black,
21 Indigenous, and Persons of Color. Environmental justice requires prioritizing

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1 resources for community revitalization, ecological restoration, resilience
2 planning, and a just recovery to communities most impacted by environmental
3 burdens and natural disasters.

4 (4) “Environmental justice population” means any census block group in
5 which:

6 (A) the annual median household income is not more than 80 percent
7 of the State median household income;

8 (B) Persons of Color and Indigenous Peoples comprise at least six
9 percent or more of the population; or

10 (C) at least one percent or more of households have limited English
11 proficiency.

12 (5) “Limited English proficiency” means that a household does not have
13 an adult who speaks English “very well” as defined by the U.S. Census
14 Bureau.

15 (6) “Meaningful participation” means that all individuals have the
16 opportunity to participate in energy, climate change, and environmental
17 decision making, including needs assessments, planning, implementation,
18 permitting, compliance and enforcement, and evaluation. Meaningful
19 participation also integrates diverse knowledge systems, histories, traditions,
20 languages, and cultures of Indigenous communities in decision-making
21 processes. It requires that communities are enabled and administratively

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1 assisted to participate fully through education and training. Meaningful
2 participation requires the State to operate in a transparent manner with regard
3 to opportunities for community input and also encourages the development of
4 environmental, energy, and climate change stewardship.

5 § 6002. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STATE POLICY

6 (a) It is the policy of the State of Vermont that no segment of the
7 population of the State should, because of its racial, cultural, or economic
8 makeup, bear a disproportionate share of environmental burdens or be denied
9 an equitable share of environmental benefits. It is further the policy of the
10 State of Vermont to provide the opportunity for the meaningful participation of
11 all individuals, with particular attention to environmental justice populations,
12 in the development, implementation, or enforcement of any law, regulation, or
13 policy.

14 (b) The following State agencies, departments, and bodies shall consider
15 cumulative environmental burdens, as defined by rule pursuant to subsection
16 6003(a) of this title, and access to environmental benefits when making
17 decisions about the environment, energy, climate, and public health projects;
18 facilities and infrastructure; and associated funding: the Agencies of Natural
19 Resources, of Transportation, of Commerce and Community Development, of
20 Agriculture, Food and Markets, and of Education; the Public Utility

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1 Commission; the Natural Resources Board; and the Departments of Health, of
2 Public Safety, and of Public Service.

3 (c) On or before July 1, 2025, every State agency shall create and adopt a
4 community engagement plan that describes how the agency will engage with
5 environmental justice populations as it evaluates new and existing activities
6 and programs. Community engagement plans shall align with the core
7 principles developed by the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee
8 pursuant to subdivision 6004(c)(3)(B) of this title and take into consideration
9 the recommendations of the Environmental Justice Advisory Council pursuant
10 to subdivision 6004(c)(2)(B) of this title. Each plan shall describe how the
11 agency plans to facilitate equitable participation and support meaningful and
12 direct involvement of environmental justice populations in compliance with
13 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

14 (d) Every State agency shall submit annual summaries to the
15 Environmental Justice Advisory Council established pursuant to subdivision
16 6004(a)(1)(A) of this title, detailing all complaints alleging environmental
17 justice issues or Title VI violations and any agency action taken to resolve such
18 complaints. Agencies shall consider the recommendations of the Advisory
19 Council pursuant to subdivision 6004(c)(2)(E) of this title and substantively
20 respond in writing if an agency chooses not to implement any of the
21 recommendations, within 90 days after receipt of the recommendations.

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1 (e) The Agency of Natural Resources, in consultation with the
2 Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Interagency Environmental
3 Justice Committee, shall review the definition of “environmental justice
4 population” at least every five years and recommend revisions to the General
5 Assembly to ensure the definition achieves the Environmental Justice State
6 Policy.

7 (f) On or before July 1, 2023, the Agency of Natural Resources, in
8 consultation with the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee and the
9 Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall issue guidance on how the
10 agencies, departments, and bodies listed in subsection (b) of this section shall
11 determine which investments provide environmental benefits to environmental
12 justice populations. A draft version of the guidance shall be released for a 60-
13 day public comment period before being finalized.

14 (g)(1) On or before January 15, 2024, all agencies, departments, and bodies
15 listed in subsection (b) of this section shall, in accordance with the Agency of
16 Natural Resources’s guidance document developed pursuant to subsection (f)
17 of this section, review the past three years and generate baseline spending
18 reports that include:

19 (A) where investments were made, if any, and which geographic
20 areas, at the municipal level and census block group, where practicable,
21 received environmental benefits from those investments; and

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1 (B) the percentage of overall environmental benefits from those
2 investments provided to environmental justice populations.

3 (2) The agencies, departments, and bodies shall publicly post the
4 baseline spending reports on their respective websites.

5 (h) On or before July 1, 2024, the agencies, departments, and bodies listed
6 in subsection (b) of this section shall direct investments to environmental
7 justice populations with a goal that at least 55 percent of the overall benefits
8 from those investments go to environmental justice populations.

9 (i)(1) On or before July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, all agencies,
10 departments, and bodies listed in subsection (b) of this section shall issue
11 annual spending reports that include:

12 (A) where investments were made and which geographic areas, at the
13 municipal level and census block group, where practicable, received
14 environmental benefits from those investments; and

15 (B) the percentage of overall environmental benefits from those
16 investments provided to environmental justice populations.

17 (2) The agencies, departments, and bodies shall publicly post the annual
18 spending reports on their respective websites.

19 (j) On or before December 15, 2025, the Agency of Natural Resources shall
20 submit a report to the General Assembly describing whether the baseline
21 spending reports completed pursuant to subsection (g) of this section indicate if

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1 any municipalities or portions of municipalities are routinely underserved with
2 respect to environmental benefits, taking into consideration whether those
3 areas receive, averaged across three years, a significantly lower percentage of
4 environmental benefits from State investments as compared to other
5 municipalities or portions of municipalities in the State. This report shall
6 include a recommendation as to whether a statutory definition of “underserved
7 community” and any other revisions to this chapter are necessary to best carry
8 out the Environmental Justice State Policy.

9 § 6003. RULEMAKING

10 (a) On or before July 1, 2024, the Agency of Natural Resources, in
11 consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the
12 Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, shall adopt rules to:

13 (1) define cumulative environmental burdens;
14 (2) implement consideration of cumulative environmental burdens
15 within the Agency of Natural Resources; and
16 (3) inform how the public and the State agencies, departments, and
17 bodies specified in subsection 6002(b) of this title implement the consideration
18 of cumulative environmental burdens and use the environmental justice
19 mapping tool.

20 (b) On or before July 1, 2025 and as appropriate thereafter, the Agencies of
21 Natural Resources, of Transportation, of Commerce and Community

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1 Development, of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and of Education; the Public
2 Utility Commission; the Natural Resources Board; and the Departments of
3 Health, of Public Safety, and of Public Service, in consultation with the
4 Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall adopt or amend policies and
5 procedures, plans, guidance, and rules, where applicable, to implement this
6 chapter.

7 (c)(1) Prior to drafting new rules required by this chapter, agencies shall
8 consult with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council to discuss the scope
9 and proposed content of rules to be developed. Agencies shall also submit
10 draft rulemaking concepts to the Advisory Council for review and comment.
11 Any proposed rule and draft Administrative Procedure Act filing forms shall
12 be provided to the Advisory Council not less than 45 days prior to submitting
13 the proposed rule or rules to the Interagency Committee on Administrative
14 Rules (ICAR).

15 (2) The Advisory Council shall vote and record individual members'
16 support or objection to any proposed rule before it is submitted to ICAR. The
17 Advisory Council shall submit the results of their vote to both ICAR and the
18 Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR).

19 § 6004. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL AND

20 INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

21 (a) Advisory Council and Interagency Committee.

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1 (1) There is created:

2 (A) the Environmental Justice Advisory Council (Advisory Council)
3 to provide independent advice and recommendations to State agencies and the
4 General Assembly on matters relating to environmental justice, including the
5 integration of environmental justice principles into State programs, policies,
6 regulations, legislation, and activities; and

7 (B) the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee (Interagency
8 Committee) to guide and coordinate State agency implementation of the
9 Environmental Justice State Policy and provide recommendations to the
10 General Assembly for amending the definitions and protections set forth in this
11 chapter.

12 (2) Appointments to the groups created in this subsection shall be made
13 on or before December 15, 2022.

14 (3) Both the Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall
15 consider and incorporate the Guiding Principles for a Just Transition developed
16 by the Just Transitions Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council in their
17 work.

18 (b) Meetings. The Advisory Council and Interagency Committee shall
19 each meet at least nine times per year, with at least four meetings occurring
20 jointly.

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1 (c) Duties.

2 (1) The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall jointly:

3 (A) consider and recommend to the General Assembly, on or before
4 December 1, 2023, amendments to the terminology, thresholds, and criteria of
5 the definition of environmental justice populations, including whether to
6 include populations more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in
7 response to environmental burdens; and

8 (B) examine existing data and studies on environmental justice and
9 consult with State, federal, and local agencies and affected communities
10 regarding the impact of current statutes, regulations, and policies on the
11 achievement of environmental justice.

12 (2) The Advisory Council shall:

13 (A) advise State agencies on environmental justice issues and on how
14 to incorporate environmental justice into agency procedures and decision
15 making as required under subsection 6002(b) of this title and evaluate the
16 potential for environmental burdens or disproportionate impacts on
17 environmental justice populations as a result of State actions and the potential
18 for environmental benefits to environmental justice populations;

19 (B) advise State agencies in the development of community
20 engagement plans;

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1 (C) advise State agencies on the use of the environmental justice
2 mapping tool established pursuant to section 6005 of this title and on the
3 enhancement of meaningful participation, reduction of environmental burdens,
4 and equitable distribution of environmental benefits;

5 (D) review and provide feedback to the relevant State agency,
6 pursuant to subsection 6003(c) of this title, on any proposed rules for
7 implementing this chapter;

8 (E) receive and review annual State agency summaries of complaints
9 alleging environmental justice issues, including Title VI complaints, and
10 suggest options or alternatives to State agencies for the resolution of systemic
11 issues raised in or by the complaints; and

12 (F) have the ability to accept funds from the federal government, a
13 political subdivision of the State, an individual, a foundation, or a corporation
14 and may use the funds for purposes that are consistent with this chapter,
15 including reimbursing members for their time.

16 (3) The Interagency Committee shall:

17 (A) consult with the Agency of Natural Resources in the
18 development of the guidance document required by in subsection 6002(f) of
19 this title on how to determine which investments provide environmental
20 benefits to environmental justice populations; and

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1 (B) on or before July 1, 2023, develop, in consultation with the
2 Agency of Natural Resources and the Environmental Justice Advisory Council,
3 a set of core principles to guide and coordinate the development of the State
4 agency community engagement plans required under subsection 6002(c) of this
5 title.

6 (d) Membership.

7 (1) Advisory Council. Each member of the Advisory Council shall be
8 well informed regarding environmental justice principles and committed to
9 achieving environmental justice in Vermont and working collaboratively with
10 other members of the Council. To the greatest extent practicable, Advisory
11 Council members shall represent diversity in race, ethnicity, age, gender, urban
12 and rural areas, and different regions of the State. The Advisory Council shall
13 consist of the following 17 members, with more than 50 percent residing in
14 environmental justice populations:

15 (A) the Director of Racial Equity or designee;

16 (B) one representative of municipal government, appointed by the
17 Committee on Committees;

18 (C) two representatives who reside in a census block group that is
19 designated as an environmental justice population, one appointed by the
20 Committee on Committees and one appointed by the Speaker of the House;

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1 (D) two representatives of social justice organizations, one appointed
2 by the Committee on Committees and one appointed by the Speaker of the
3 House;

4 (E) two representatives of organizations working on food security
5 issues, one appointed by the Committee on Committees and one appointed by
6 the Speaker of the House;

7 (F) two representatives of mobile home park issues, one appointed by
8 the Committee on Committees and one appointed by the Speaker of the House;

9 (G) two representatives of a State-recognized Native American
10 Indian tribe, recommended and appointed by the Vermont Commission on
11 Native American Affairs;

12 (H) two representatives of immigrant communities in Vermont, one
13 appointed by the Committee on Committees and one appointed by the Speaker
14 of the House;

15 (I) one representative of a statewide environmental organization,
16 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

17 (J) the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation
18 Board or designee; and

19 (K) the Chair of the Natural Resources Conservation Council or
20 designee.

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1 (2) Interagency Committee. The Interagency Committee shall consist of
2 the following 12 members:

3 (A) the Secretary of Administration or designee;

4 (B) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

5 (C) the Secretary of Transportation or designee;

6 (D) the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development or
7 designee;

8 (E) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee;

9 (F) the Secretary of Education or designee;

10 (G) the Commissioner of Health or designee;

11 (H) the Director of Emergency Management or designee;

12 (I) the Commissioner of Public Service or designee;

13 (J) the Chair of Public Utility Commission or designee;

14 (K) the Chair of the Natural Resources Board or designee; and

15 (L) the Director of Racial Equity or designee.

16 (3) The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee may each
17 elect two co-chairs and may hold public hearings.

18 (4) After initial appointments, all appointed members of the Advisory
19 Council shall serve six-year terms and serve until a successor is appointed.

20 The initial terms shall be staggered so that a third of the appointed members
21 shall serve a two-year term, another third of the appointed members shall serve

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1 a four-year term, and the remaining members shall be appointed to a six-year
2 term.

3 (5) Vacancies of the Advisory Council shall be appointed in the same
4 manner as original appointments.

5 (6) The Advisory Council shall have the administrative, technical, and
6 legal assistance of the Agency of Natural Resources.

7 (7) Members of the Advisory Council who are neither State nor
8 municipal employees shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
9 reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010. Members
10 may accept funds from the federal government, a political subdivision of the
11 State, or a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and may expend funds for
12 purposes that are consistent with this chapter. Any Council member who
13 receives funds pursuant to this subdivision shall report to the Secretary of
14 Natural Resources and disclose the source of the funds, the amount received,
15 and the general purpose for which they were used. The Secretary shall post
16 this disclosure information on its website or on the Advisory Council's own
17 website if such a website exists.

18 § 6005. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MAPPING TOOL

19 (a) In consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and
20 the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, the Agency of Natural
21 Resources shall determine indices and criteria to be included in a State

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1 mapping tool to depict environmental justice populations and measure
2 environmental burdens at the smallest geographic level practicable. The
3 Agency of Natural Resources shall maintain the mapping tool.

4 (b) The Agency of Natural Resources may cooperate and contract with
5 other states or private organizations when developing the mapping tool. The
6 mapping tool may incorporate federal environmental justice mapping tools,
7 such as EJSCREEN, as well as existing State mapping tools such as the
8 Vermont Social Vulnerability Index.

9 (c) On or before January 1, 2024, the mapping tool shall be available for
10 use by the public as well as by the State government.

11 Sec. 3. ANNUAL REPORT

12 Beginning on January 15, 2024, the agencies, departments, and bodies listed
13 in 3 V.S.A. § 6002(b) shall issue and publicly post an annual report
14 summarizing all actions taken to incorporate environmental justice into the
15 Agency's or Department's policies or determinations, rulemaking, permit
16 proceedings, or project review.

17 Sec. 4. APPROPRIATION; POSITIONS

18 (a) There is appropriated the sum of \$3,000,000.00 in fiscal year 2023 from
19 the General Fund. This sum shall be used to carry out the requirements of this
20 act by hiring the staff described in subsection (b) of this section, for the cost of

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1 developing the mapping tool required in 3 V.S.A. § 6005 and the per diem
2 payments described in 3 V.S.A. § 6004.

3 (b) The following positions are created for the purpose performing the
4 environmental justice work required by this act:

5 (1) 10 permanent exempt positions at the Agency of Natural Resources,
6 including two permanent exempt analysts to support the development of the
7 mapping tool;

8 (2) six permanent exempt positions at the Natural Resources Board;

9 (3) 1.5 permanent exempt positions at the Agency of Commerce and
10 Community Development; and

11 (4) 2.5 permanent exempt positions at the Department of Public Service.

12 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

13 This act shall take effect on passage.

14
15
16
17
18 (Committee vote: _____)

19 _____
20 Senator _____

21 FOR THE COMMITTEE

February 18, 2022

To the members of the Vermont Senate:

First, thank you for your continued work on behalf of Vermonters during this challenging time. We deeply appreciate your steadfast commitment to making our communities healthier and more prosperous.

The below 32 organizations write to urge your support for and passage of what would be Vermont's first environmental justice law, S.148, which is currently being considered in the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee.

We urge you to support S.148 because it seeks to create a strong framework for Vermont to work towards environmental justice. As proposed, S.148 would, critically:

- **Codify the definition and purpose of environmental justice** in Vermont, making it the State's policy that no segment of the population should, because of its racial, cultural, or economic makeup, bear a disproportionate share of environmental benefits or burdens.
- **Establish an initial definition of "Environmental Justice Population"** based on demographic criteria known to be predictive of environmental disparities in Vermont.
- **Create an Advisory Council on Environmental Justice**, made up of key community stakeholders, that would have real power to influence how State decision-making best achieves environmental justice, in part through meaningful public engagement processes and analysis of cumulative environmental burdens.
- **Create an Interagency Committee on Environmental Justice** to coordinate the efforts of key state agencies and departments towards achieving environmental justice.
- **Establish a mapping tool** to depict environmental justice issues across the state.
- **Require all state agencies to adopt formal community engagement plans by 2024.** These engagement plans help ensure that every Vermonter has the opportunity to meaningfully participate in state decisions that impact their environmental health and wellbeing.
- **Set a target, similar to the percentage threshold in the Biden Administration's Justice40 Initiative, to invest equitably in environmental justice populations.** Such a target would encourage the State to proactively deliver environmental benefits to environmental justice populations.

We know that low income individuals, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC), and other disadvantaged groups suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards. And the cumulative impacts of these harms – air and water pollution, low-quality housing, and greater exposure to (increasingly frequent) extreme weather events – are exacerbated by lack of access to environmental benefits, such as affordable energy, adequate transportation, healthy food, and

green spaces. It is also clear that, like with so many other challenges, the burden of COVID-19 has fallen hardest on these communities.

Research, and the lived experience of many, shows that Vermont is not exempt from these challenges. The REJOICE (Rural Environmental Justice Opportunities Informed by Community Expertise) Project has brought this reality to light since 2017, when the coalition began its work to inform the State on environmental justice issues through academic research, grassroots community conversations, and analysis that would lead to a future environmental justice policy.

An excerpt from the 2021 REJOICE Project Summary Reports (which you can read in full at <https://environmentaljusticevt.org/>) illustrates the cross-cutting environmental challenges facing Vermonters:

- “Spanish-speaking farmworkers and New Americans were concerned about kids losing access to outdoor recreation and parks, and about adequate sanitation and bathroom facilities in housing.
- Mobile home residents worried about standing water, failing park sewer systems, and drainage.
- Elders—both from the Rutland area and New Americans in Chittenden County, reported concerns about air quality, from neighbors’ smoking and woodstove use.
- Those with chronic illness and traumatic brain injuries shared elders’ concerns, and reported being additionally impacted by odors and dust from construction. Closing windows against those airborne contaminants worsened the impacts of heat, growing under climate change. Climate change, they noted, also increased vector-borne illnesses, like Lyme disease.
- Northeast Kingdom residents that REJOICE spoke with during the pandemic, and previously, in 2019, were concerned by the impacts of leachate from the state’s only landfill, in Coventry, on water quality, among other concerns.”

These are just some of the challenges communities face across the state. Beyond the important work done by REJOICE and many others to understand environmental justice in Vermont, the State itself is implicated in another fundamental environmental injustice: the violent theft of Abenaki land. Vermont must grapple with this and other legacies of injustice to do right by the communities that have been wronged by State action and inaction – intentionally or not.

So, we have work to do to address both present and historical injustices. Despite this fact, Vermont, unlike many states, has not yet codified an environmental justice policy in statute. This is an omission you have the opportunity to remedy this legislative session. Adopting an environmental justice law is an important step towards taking a more comprehensive approach to alleviating environmental burdens and delivering environmental benefits in a just and transparent way.

Passing Vermont's first environmental justice law is one necessary step of many that we can take to pursue the goals of the environmental justice movement: the right of all people to participate as equal partners in decision-making and the enjoyment of a clean and healthy environment for all. It is now time to pass S.148.

We urge you to meet this moment of immense opportunity to pass Vermont's first environmental justice law this legislative session. We recognize the challenges of legislating in this uncertain time, and understand that this is one of many legislative priorities – we are therefore grateful for your consideration of this call to action.

Thank you again for your hard work.

Sincerely,

350Vermont

Association of Africans Living in Vermont

Audubon Vermont

Capstone Community Action

Center for Whole Communities

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County

Community Action Works

Conservation Law Foundation

Environmental Justice Clinic, Vermont Law School

Lake Champlain Committee

Renewable Energy Vermont

Rights & Democracy Vermont

Rural Environmental Justice Opportunities Informed by Community Expertise

Rural Vermont

Rutland Area NAACP

Seventh Generation

Sierra Club Vermont Chapter

SunCommon

The Nature Conservancy

Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Vermont Climate and Health Alliance

Vermont Conservation Voters

Vermont Energy Education Program

Vermont Interfaith Power and Light

Vermont Natural Resources Council

Vermont Public Interest Research Group

Vermont Racial Justice Alliance

Vermont Releaf Collective

Vermont Renews

Vermont Youth Lobby

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Draft MINUTES
February 8, 2022

Commissioners:

<input type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney, Sec/Treas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	Dara Torre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Manchester, Alt
<input type="checkbox"/> Barre Town	Byron Atwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northfield	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Clain, Alt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orange	Lee Cattaneo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plainfield	Paula Emery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Atchinson, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Amy Hornblas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Gerry D'Amico, Vice-Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Don La Haye
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jan Ohlsson, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harrison Snapp, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Clarice Cutler (Interim)	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Michael Bridgewater, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Marcella Dent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Miller, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Grace Vinson, Clare Rock

Guests: Stephen Falbel, Steadman Hill Consulting, Inc.; Marshall Distel, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Call to Order

Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comments

None.

Transit Financing Study

Chair Lotspeich welcomed Stephen Falbel of Steadman Hill Consulting and Marshall Distel of Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). Distel shared that CCRPC, in partnership with Green Mountain Transit (GMT) and VTrans, requested Falbel complete a study analyzing innovative approaches to financing public transit in Vermont. The current system for funding public transit is heavily reliant on local property taxes.

1 In Falbel's presentation, he provided an overview of the goal, scope and principles of the transit study:
2 statewide transit access; potential funding replacement alternatives; and an evaluation of the funding
3 alternatives that were identified.

4
5 Details on the above were provided and expanded upon (video of the presentation along with slides is
6 available on CVRPC website at [https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-](https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-reports/board-of-commissioners/)
7 [reports/board-of-commissioners/.](https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-reports/board-of-commissioners/))

8
9 Following Falbel's presentation, the floor was opened to discussion and questions. Distel of CCRPC
10 noted that it recently shared this presentation with its Transportation Advisory Committee and are
11 planning to share with the Board at its next meeting.

12
13 Discussion continued including concerns about inclusion of Medicaid statistics and not including fare
14 increase as an alternative. There was also comment regarding the type of funding the proposed. The
15 Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) was supposed to address this type of issue. TCI currently is not
16 moving forward. Discussion continued on how increased use of solar may affect utility, fees and the
17 inequities a utility fee may or may not impose. Concerns were raised about increased property taxes. It
18 was suggested that perhaps a mix of revenue sources would help to address income sensitivity.

19
20 B. Waninger provided an overview of how GMT is funded and the differences between urban and rural
21 area contributions. She commented that services currently provided cannot continue with the current
22 structure. Vermont eventually will face a question of whether to reduce service or change the funding
23 system. Waninger requested the Board's opinion on these choices (reduce services or change funding
24 system). Can the region support identifying alternative funding?

25
26 A. Quackenbush inquired if a motion was needed. The motion in the agenda packet was referenced –
27 "Urge the Vermont Legislature to replace the current, inequitable funding structure for public
28 transportation with a replacement revenue source so that transit services can effectively operate
29 statewide."

30
31 *A. Quackenbush moved the motion as outlined in the agenda; J. Brabant seconded.* Discussion ensued
32 regarding an energy fuel tax and a request for more discussion from the Board and providing comments
33 to Waninger before moving the motion. The motion was read again for clarification and the vote called.
34 *As the vote was not unanimous, a roll call vote was conducted as follows: (Barre City – Not present, Barre*
35 *Town – No, Berlin – No, Cabot – Not present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present,*
36 *Fayston – Not present, Marshfield – Abstain, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – Yes, Moretown – Yes,*
37 *Northfield – Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield – Yes, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant,*
38 *Washington – Not present, Waterbury – Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes.*
39 *Motion carried with 14 in favor, 2 opposing, and 1 abstaining.*

40 41 **Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy**

42 B. Arrand advised the Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) reviewed the 2016 Town of Calais
43 Town Plan as amended 2020. He noted two changes to the Town Plan: an update to make a new village
44 center designation for North Calais and an update to the Natural Resources section to address forest
45 integrity. Arrand noted the MPRC found the changes were consistent with state goals and the regional
46 plan and voted to recommend approval of the plan. The MPRC also recommends confirming the Town's
47 planning process. Rock clarified that there was not a request for a determination of energy compliance.

1
2 J. Brabant spoke about the current initiative to restore Memorial Hall in North Calais. Approval of the
3 amendment to the Town Plan will allow the building to leverage village center tax credits and continue
4 restoring this historic building.

5
6 *J. D'Amico moved to approve the 2016 Calais Town Plan as amended; A. Quackenbush seconded. It was*
7 *confirmed that the amendment went through the local public hearing process and was now coming for*
8 *regional approval. Vote called and motion carried.*
9

10 *L. Hill-Eubanks moved to confirm the planning process of the Town of Calais; R. Wernecke seconded.*
11 *Motion carried.*
12

13 *R. Wernecke moved to adopt the Resolution provided in the agenda packet; R. Turner seconded.*
14 Question raised by Clain as to where the last paragraph in resolution originated. Waninger advised it
15 was related to statute (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/117/04402>). Arrand
16 pointed out the date the plan expires is the same because it is an amendment. *Vote was called and*
17 *motion carried.*
18

19 **Winooski Basin Water Quality Council**

20 G. Vinson provided an outline regarding additional appointments to the Basin Water Quality Council
21 (BWQC). It was confirmed that three actions are requested.
22

23 Vinson advised the first action is to appoint one or two alternates for the municipal BWQC seats from
24 the pool of applications previously received: Clark Amadon, Alice Peal, and Darlene Palola. She provided
25 a brief overview of the candidate's experience. Vinson also reviewed the benefits of having two
26 alternates versus one alternate.
27

28 *G. Clain moved to appoint two alternates for the municipal Basin Water Quality Council seats; J. Brabant*
29 *seconded. It was recommended that with two alternates that they be elected as alternate for the*
30 *specific seats, i.e. Alternate A for Candidate A. Vote called and motion carried.*
31

32 *J. Brabant moved that CVRPC appoint Darlene Palola as alternate to Annie Costandi and Alice Peel as*
33 *alternate to Nigel Hicks-Tibbles; L. Hill-Eubanks seconded. As the vote was not unanimous, a roll call*
34 *vote was conducted as follows: Barre City – Not present, Barre Town – No, Berlin – Yes, Cabot – Not*
35 *present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present, Fayston – Not present, Marshfield –*
36 *Yes, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – Yes, Moretown – Abstain, Northfield – Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield –*
37 *Abstain, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant, Washington – Not present, Waterbury –*
38 *Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes. Motion carried with 14 in favor, 1 opposing,*
39 *and 2 abstaining.*
40

41 Vinson advised the second action was to appoint an alternate for the CVRPC representative to the
42 BWQC. P. Emery advised she was happy to defer to R. Wernecke. Lotspeich inquired if Wernecke was
43 still interested, and Wernecke confirmed he was.
44

45 *B. Arrand moved to appoint Robert Wernecke as alternate for Alan Quackenbush; J. Brabant seconded.*

1 *Motion carried.*

2
3 Vinson advised the third action was to appoint two watershed protection organization seats. She noted
4 that interest had been expressed by Friends of the Mad River (FMR), Friends of the Winooski River
5 (FWR) and Lake Champlain International (LCI). Watershed United Vermont (WUV) advised they did not
6 believe LCI was qualified as a watershed protection organization. CVRPC contacted LCI noting it
7 concurred with WUV's opinion and requested LCI provide additional information to support its position.
8 LCI had not provided additional information as of the date of the Board meeting. It was confirmed that
9 FMR and FWR meet the definition of watershed organization and have been recommended by WUV.

10
11 *L. Hill-Eubanks moved to appoint the Friends of the Winooski and the Friends of the Mad River to the*
12 *BWQC watershed organization seats; D. La Haye seconded.* There was discussion on an appearance of a
13 conflict of interest with these organizations voting on prioritizing projects they may be working on.
14 Vinson advised that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) currently is creating guidance
15 to address the inherent conflict of interest. Draft guidance noted that organizations proposing projects
16 would recuse themselves from any vote regarding a project they are working on. Vinson said she
17 anticipates more guidance will be forthcoming from DEC. *Vote called and motion carried.*

18 19 **USDA Grant Application**

20 Waninger provide an overview of the grant and assistance. She noted CVRPC is the applicant because
21 the entity benefiting from the study is not allowed to apply for the grant. The Plainfield Co-operative
22 needs someone to apply for and manage the grant. Waninger described the USDA grant application
23 process and roles of the Plainfield Co-operative and CVRPC. USDA requires the Board's authorization to
24 apply and administer the grant, and to authorize a signer for the grant documents.

25
26 *G. Clain moved to authorize the Chair to sign the resolution for the USDA Rural Business Development*
27 *Grant for the Plainfield Co-operative; P. Emery seconded.* Emery noted she is a member of the Plainfield
28 Co-op and asked whether she should abstain or recuse herself from the vote. As a result of discussion,
29 Emery withdrew her second and Emery, L. Cattaneo, and R. Schunk advised they would recuse
30 themselves. *B. Arrand subsequently seconded the motion.* Waninger advised the motion must be to
31 adopt the resolution or to authorize CVRPC to apply for and administer the grant and authorize to sign
32 the grant documents to meet USDA's requirements. Clain confirmed his motion was for the Chair to
33 sign the resolution. *Vote called and motion carried.*

34 35 **Resolution on Complying the Vermont Open Meeting Law**

36 Waninger advised the resolution needed to be updated again to comply with the recent change in Open
37 Meeting Law, which allow public bodies to meet remotely with electronic meeting technology through
38 January 15, 2023. She provided an overview of resolution details.

39
40 *B. Wernecke moved to adopt the resolution; J. Brabant seconded.* P. Emery inquired as to whether the
41 word "will" was necessary in paragraph 2 of item 2 as it sounded like a mandate. She requested that it
42 be changed to "may". Waninger advised if we change "will" to "may", then staff will be required to host
43 a physical location. If Board decides to start meeting with a physical location before January 15, 2023, it
44 can update the resolution. Clain stated he would vote against the resolution as it was worded currently

1 with the January 15, 2023 date and suggested the resolution states “until further notice”. It was
2 clarified that the date corresponds to the legislation and that another resolution could be approved if
3 CVRPC returns to meeting at a physical location. It was also noted that wording in the resolution allows
4 hosting with a physical location if the agenda lists a location. L. Hill-Eubanks advised she would like to
5 support the resolution to keep staff safe and return to in-person meetings when the Board feels it
6 should do so. A roll call was conducted as follows: *Barre City – Not present, Barre Town – No, Berlin –*
7 *Yes, Cabot – Not present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present, Fayston – Not*
8 *present, Marshfield – Yes, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – No longer present, Moretown – Yes, Northfield*
9 *– Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield – Yes, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant, Washington –*
10 *Not present, Waterbury – Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes. Motion carried*
11 *with 15 in favor and 1 opposing.*
12

13 **Minutes (December 14, 2021 & January 11, 2022)**

14 *G. Clain moved to accept the December 14, 2021 minutes; L. Cattaneo seconded. Motion carried.*
15

16 *D. La Haye moved to accept the January 11, 2022 minutes; B. Arrand seconded. Motion carried.*
17

18 **Reports**

19 Waninger provided an update on GMT labor negotiations. Lotspeich noted the Executive Committee is
20 using special meetings and making good progress reviewing the draft bylaws. It is trying to get
21 clarification regarding elections, whistleblower protections, and bonding before bringing the update to
22 the Board.
23

24 **Adjournment**

25 *D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:44 pm; R. Krauth seconded. Motion carried.*
26

27 Respectfully submitted,
28 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

P: 802-229-0389

Staff Report, February 2022

F: 802-223-1977

All CVRPC staff continue to work remotely per the Governor's order to support remote work for employees to the extent possible. (Addendum 12 to Executive Order 01-20)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Contact Clare Rock, rock@cvregion.com unless otherwise noted.

Municipal Planning & Plan Implementation:

- Incorporated subdivision changes and review process changes into the Middlesex zoning regulations, reformatted documents, and identified additional administrative items for Planning Commission consideration. Discussed with Planning Commission.
- Prepared materials for Moretown zoning amendments and discussed with the Planning Commission.
- Provided weekly Moretown Zoning Administrative services.
- Spoke with Worcester Planning Commission Chair about Town Plan and Section 248a and Project Review processes.
- Shared land use plan map development process and general town plan update information with Waitsfield Planning Commission Co-Chair.
- Consulted with the Barre Town Planning Commission by providing information on CVRPC services. Learned about local implementation efforts. Scheduling consultations with Barre City and Fayston.
- Assisted the Plainfield Co-operative to write USDA Rural Development funds. CVRPC will act as grant applicant and provide business development assistance to the Co-op in cooperation with CVEDC.
- Researched energy planning best practices for East Montpelier; provided integrated and standalone plans samples.
- Responded to Berlin question about whether traffic impacts can be considered during site plan review.

Regional Planning and Implementation:

- Provided Regional Plan conformance and project support letters for a Downstreet housing project in Barre City and the Adamant Music School's USDA business grant.
- Reviewed Section 248a Notice for a telecommunication proposal in Worcester. Provided follow up information on CVRPC process with Worcester officials and residents.
- Participated in Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) data meeting with UVM. UVM has access to different business and occupational data. Participated in Steering Committee meeting to discuss an implementation progress dash board.
- Participated in Forest Integrity Steering Committee meeting to discuss video series outlining Act 171 and best practices from municipal planning.

Brownfields: Prepared updated program requirements and site enrollment process for environmental site assessments assistance. Spoke with two environmental consultants about new process. Responded to inquiries. For property owners/prospective purchasers inquiries about availability of funds, contact Clare at rock@cvregion.com.

Partnerships for Progress:

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC): Participated in Board meeting.

THRIVE: Prepared Leadership Committee meeting agenda and minutes. Participated in Leadership Committee meeting. Recommended THRIVE's not pursue a VISTA member for FY23 as it is hiring a Project Manager.

Washington County Hunger Council: Chaired Council meetings discussing ARPA, and updates to Food related legislature
CVFiber: Prepared Governing Board meeting minutes. Posted Executive Committee meeting minutes to website.

Coordinated use of CVRPC facilities for CVFiber meeting.

VT Urban and Community Forestry Council: Participated in Leadership Committee call to craft meeting agenda.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HAZARD MITIGATION

Contact Grace Vinson, vinson@cvregion.com, unless otherwise noted.

Local/Regional Planning:

- Attended monthly VEM/RPC meeting.
- Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC): Organized and hosted first REMC meeting on 2/23 with 15 attendees (11 voting members). Emergency Management Directors and emergency service providers discussed what keeps them up at night and ideas for working together. Natural disasters, ad hoc community response that is not coordinated with municipal event response, and cybersecurity topped the list of worries. REMC work ideas included crafting and maintaining a regional response resource document with equipment, etc. that could be borrowed and creating a public works mutual aid response agreement (mirror fire/rescue/EMS agreements).
- Participated in State Hazard Mitigation Project Review Committee to discuss Flood Resilient Communities Fund grant applications.
- LEMPs. 22 out of 23 LEMPs received, 22 out of 23 LEMPs approved by VEM.
- Act 166: Presented CVRPC Act 166 inventory at REMC meeting. Updated template to allow statewide mapping of RPC responses.

American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA):

- Monitored Selectboard meeting minutes for ARPA situational awareness.
- Communicated with Woodbury on ARPA process.
- Attended (2) Team Meetings with RRPC on ARPA RPC contract.
- Attended Woodbury Selectboard meeting to discuss ARPA.
- Read information on Final Rule released 01/06/22 including Treasury Overview of Final Rule.

TRANSPORTATION

Contact Christian Meyer, meyer@cvregion.com, unless otherwise noted.

Field Services: Please contact Ashley Andrews, Andrews@cvregion.com, to be placed on summer 2022 service list.

Public Transit: CVRPC represents Central Vermont on the Green Mountain Transit (GMT) Board of Commissioners. Staff participated in the following GMT meetings:

Board of Commissioners – See Committee updates.

Leadership Committee – Held special meeting and Executive Session to discuss Collective Bargaining negotiations; no action taken as a result of the session. Approved hosting a VISTA member in FY23. Held Executive Session to discuss Collective Bargaining negotiations; no action taken as a result of the session.

Operations Committee – VTrans presented its Zero-Emissions Transition Plan. Discussed vehicle replacement plan related to purchasing seven electric vehicles.

- Rural transit Collective Bargaining Agreement: Briefed then updated GMT Board members, Washington County urban municipals, Senators Perchlik and Chittenden, Sugarbush, and CVRPC Executive Committee and Board; maintained contact with GMT General Manager regarding negotiations; and met with VTrans Public Transit Program Manager.

Municipal Assistance:

- Northfield Town Forest Access Study: Developed budget for minor amendment of existing consultant agreement. Updated project web page to provide the public with access to the latest draft documents. Participated in steering committee meeting to review draft final recommendations.
- Provided assistance to Berlin in reviewing and accepting consultant proposals for the pedestrian and bicycle road diet study along Fisher Road.
- Supporting Williamstown and Barre Town for completion of VTrans project summary for slab removal on Route 14.
- Briefed Senator Perchlik about FEMA grant progress for Trestle 308 study in Barre City.

Regional Activities:

- Updated a regional map of the Central VT Path.
- Completed February Park and Ride Survey.
- Worked on finishing up mapping project identifying vacant commercial parcels along area railroad lines for VTrans.
- Communicated with municipalities on DEC requests regarding upcoming MRGP compliance.
- Engaged representatives on completing the complete streets inventories. The work helps municipalities meet the requirements of Act 34.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Contact Grace Vinson, vinson@cvregion.com unless otherwise noted.

Tactical Basin Planning Assistance:

- Coordinated with DEC on future CWAC meeting topics. Planned March meeting.

Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP): Developed project and grant tracking systems. Conducted outreach with stakeholder groups (NRCDs, RPCs, watershed groups, land conservation organizations) to coordinate BWQC member empanelment. Attended Board meeting to appoint alternatives for municipal seat and RPC seat, and appoint watershed protection organization (WPO) representatives. Participated in CWSP meeting with land conservation organizations to develop BWQC membership plan for all CWSPs. Participated in DEC/CWSP check in meeting.

Design Implementation Block Grant Program (DIBG):

Woodbury Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – Elementary School Design is ready for implementation upon availability of funding. Contact Grace Vinson at vinson@cvregion.com.

Calais Stormwater Mitigation Final Designs – Contractor completed the 100% design plans. Submitted deliverables to DEC. The project is ready for construction upon availability of funding.

OFFICE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office:

- Completed reference checks and hired Samantha Lash as CVRPC's new Climate and Energy Planner and Brian Voigt as Natural Resources Senior Planner; onboarded Lash.
- Completed renewal application for CVRPC's Public Officials Insurance.
- Conducted research into financial institutions for Certificate of Deposits (CD). Worked with two Credit Unions to open new accounts. The new accounts help ensure CVRPC's funds are fully insured.
- Drafted FY22 budget adjustment and FY23 preliminary budget.

Professional Development:

- Clare and Blaine participated in ACCD-DHCDs Better Places webinar.
- Staff watched a “Death by Powerpoint” TED Talk and discussed how and when to use the tool for communications.
- Bonnie reviewed VBSR’s Pay Equity Playbook and resources as a prelude to assessing equity in employee wages and benefits.

Upcoming Meetings:

All CVRPC meetings currently are being held via remote access only due to the COVID-19 pandemic unless otherwise noted. Meeting access information is provided on agendas at www.centralvtplanning.org.

March

Mar 3	4 pm	Municipal Plan Review Committee Hearing
Mar 8	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners
Mar 9	2 pm	Regional Elders and Persons with Disabilities Meeting
Mar 21	6 pm	Brownfields
Mar 22	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee

April

Apr 4	4 pm	Executive Committee
Apr 12	6:30 pm	Board of Commissioners
April 18	6 pm	Brownfields
Apr 26	6:30 pm	Transportation Advisory Committee
April 28	4 pm	Project Review Committee

WEEKLY NEWS HEADLINES

Click on a week to read more about the headlines listed. *To receive Weekly News via email, sign up on our [website](http://www.centralvtplanning.org).*

February 4th

- Help Make Your Community a Better Place
- Regional Recreation News
- 2021 Lamoille River Tactical Basin Plan Released
- Proposals Requested for Transportation Planning Services and/or Studies
- Clean Water Funding Opportunity
- April 1 Deadline: EV Charging Grant for Residents of Multiunit Housing

February 18th

- USDA Pilot Energy Program
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Request for Proposals
- Notice of Public Hearing – Municipal Plan Review Committee (Roxbury & Cabot Plans)
- ARPA Final Rule Updates - CVRPC Assistance Available
- GMT Public Transit Service Change

- Community Kitchen Academy Now Accepting Applications
- AVCC’s Annual Tiny Grants

February 25th

- State Transportation Innovative Council Incentive Awards Available
- Community & Economic Development Specialist position available
- AARP 2022 Community Challenge Grant Applications
- Funding Available to Respond to Opioid Overdoses & Prevent and Reduce Substance Abuse Among Youth

Visit CVRPC’s web site at www.centralvtplanning.org to view our blog and for the latest publications and news.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
Committee & Appointed Representative Reports, February 2022

Meeting minutes for CVRPC Committees are available at www.centralvtplanning.org.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Monday of week prior to Commission meeting; 4pm) [two meetings]

- Held a special meeting to discuss a proposed bylaw amendment recommended by the Bylaw Work Group.
- Accepted the January 31, 2022 unaudited financial reports.
- Adopted an FY22 Budget adjustment to true up revenues and expenses.
- Discussed possible next steps related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; reviewed sample scopes of work to strengthen understanding about how consultant services can be value added to CVRPC's process.
- Discussed a proposed bylaw amendment.
- Received personnel update from the Executive Director.
- Held Executive Session related to contracts. No action taken as a result of the session.
- Discussed status of Executive
- Director evaluation process.

PERSONNEL POLICY COMMITTEE (A sub-committee of the Executive Committee)

Did not meet.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (February - April; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet.

PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE (4th Thursday, 4pm)

Reviewed Section 248a proposal for cell tower in Worcester. Applicant representative provided information about the project along with a visual analysis presentation. Many Worcester residents attended and voiced concern about the proposal due to its scale and location and proximity to the Ellis Brook Trail, which links Worcester and Calais. The Committee requested additional information from the applicant and will continue project review upon receiving it.

REGIONAL PLAN COMMITTEE (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet.

MUNICIPAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE (as needed; scheduled by Committee)

Did not meet. Scheduled to meet on March 3, 2022 to review Roxbury and Cabot Town Plans.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (4th Tuesday; 6:30 pm)

Staff engaged the TAC on how the RPC can best support regional Transportation Demand Management efforts. Committee members provided diverse suggestions on new initiatives the region could undertake and discussed in greater detail the need to continue supporting the progress made with remote working during the pandemic. TAC emphasized that while remote work had become accepted, it could still be improved.

CLEAN WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2nd Thursday, 4pm)

Did not meet.

BROWNFIELDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Reviewed program components based upon funding from the Legislature. Sites wishing to enroll must demonstrate enrollment in BRELLA. Upon accepting a site into the program, a simplified bid process will be used to hire environmental consultants. The Committee will meet on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6 pm.

VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES (VAPDA)

- Costa Papis and Amy Bell from VTrans discussed federal transportation programs. Many big, new funding programs and many emphasize local and regional government. Costa emphasized off-system bridge grants. These bridges are municipally owned and >20 ft. (called “long” bridges). He emphasized regional and local entities should take advantage of the competitive grants. He recommended municipalities, RPCs, and VTrans consider joint applications for a specific culvert grant.
- Karen Mittelman of the Vermont Arts Council discussed the Creative Sector Recovery bill. The creative sector was very hard hit by the pandemic. The creative sector lost a lot of membership and sponsorship base. Examples include theaters that have not had a production for a year or two or bands that have not been able to perform. COVID related equipment is also expensive. The bill provides funding to support 300 creative based businesses via operating support, equipment for safe spaces, marketing, and maintaining the network.
- A variety of legislative bills were discussed with State agency representatives.

VERMONT ECONOMIC PROGRESS COUNCIL

No Central Vermont activity.

GREEN MOUNTAIN TRANSIT

- GMT will be surveying its employees and Board about equity and inclusion.
- The FY21 audit was presented and accepted by the Board.
- Approved applying for grant funding for seven full-size battery-electric buses and the associated charging infrastructure; directed GMT staff to collaborate with local utilities for electrical upgrades to bus facilities and on special rates for electric vehicles; and directed GMT staff to conduct a more in-depth fleet electrification plan including an analysis of infrastructure and space needs at facilities, including resilience measures such as solar panels and energy storage systems. VTrans has set a goal for transit properties move to remove internal combustion engines transit vehicles from the state fleet and be zero emission by 2050.
- Discussed a safety and security contract policy related to the Burlington Downtown Transit Center.
- Held an executive session to discuss labor relations agreements with employees. No action was taken as a result of the session.
- In Commissioner comments, the Northwest RPC noted it is working with regional coalition on the issue of parity for training for high school students. Currently students are able to take free college courses as long as they are enrolled in a formal tech program. However, if a student’s wants to seek Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) licensure or become an HVAC technician, they have to pay out of pocket. The region is working with their local delegation to correct that disparity. GMT and other transportation businesses face a significant workforce challenge related to lack of CDL drivers.

MAD RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT

Sugarbush provided a mid-year report to the Steering Committee, outlining number of skier visits, upcoming events and projects. Sugarbush anticipates undertaking a workforce house project at the site and is reviewing Warren’s proposed zoning regulations to see how the project will fit into those requirements. Committee members voiced their appreciation of Sugarbush’s report and expressed interest in having this type of information shared on a more regular basis. The Committee continued its discussion of the District’s FY23 work plan.