

1 We adopt this initial Climate Action Plan under the Vermont Global Warming Solutions Act  
2 (GWSA) with feelings of both urgency and responsibility to do our part to mitigate climate  
3 change through transformation of how we use and source energy; to adapt our communities and  
4 built environment to the warming planet; to protect our natural and working lands from the  
5 damage created by climate change; and to support and enhance the resilience of Vermont’s  
6 landscape and communities. Climate change represents an existential threat for humanity and the  
7 natural systems upon which we depend for our health and well-being. It is now critical that we  
8 act to become more resilient and adaptive to climate change already underway and that we do  
9 more to reduce the emissions that have brought us to this precarious point, in order to create a  
10 habitable future.

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12 We also have a strong desire to engage Vermonters deeply and equitably in this transition,  
13 recognizing the harm and systemic injustices at work here in Vermont and elsewhere. This  
14 initial Climate Action Plan represents the first public process in the State of Vermont to  
15 acknowledge and try purposefully to incorporate equity and the principles of a just transition in  
16 both its development and outcome – but we know we fell short. During our meetings and  
17 outreach, too few Vermonters had their voices lifted up to join the voices of those who have also  
18 participated in similar endeavors in the past. In our development of pathways, strategies, and  
19 actions, we faced challenges creating programs and policies organically in partnership with all  
20 marginalized communities and individuals in Vermont and to envision new ways to ensure a just  
21 transition for all of us. As we continue forward, we have a strong desire to engage more  
22 Vermonters deeply and equitably in this transition, recognizing the historical and present harms  
23 and systemic injustices that are at work here in Vermont and elsewhere.

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25 And yet, there is much in this initial Climate Action Plan to embrace and act upon now, and from  
26 which we must build going forward. The recommendations set forth aim to make real and lasting  
27 progress toward the significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions required by the GWSA and  
28 to strengthen Vermont’s ability to adapt to a changing climate. Many essential, detailed ancillary  
29 reports represent new analyses that underpin our work and point the way forward. We adopted  
30 several concrete recommendations with wide consensus, designed to promote mitigation,  
31 adaptation, and resilience, and we look forward to implementation by the Legislature, state

32 agencies, and our partners in climate action throughout the State. We also identified many areas  
33 that will require more conversation and will be the focus of further development at the Council in  
34 the years ahead. Just as we have acknowledged the need for the Council to better partner with  
35 marginalized communities and individuals in our work moving forward, we urge those involved  
36 in Plan implementation likewise to commit to meaningful, effective engagement with those on  
37 the front lines to make just transitions possible.

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39 We are grateful for the dozens of devoted subcommittee members; the many committed  
40 participants, from members of the public to technical consultants, who attended our meetings and  
41 events; and the thousands of Vermonters who were able to engage with us in this process. Many  
42 of you spent countless hours helping us develop Vermont's initial Climate Action Plan – thank  
43 you.

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45 The Council's work continues and is ongoing, as contemplated by the GWSA and demanded by  
46 the imperatives of climate change. The measure of our efforts now will be in the ways our  
47 energy sources change, our natural and built environments adapt, and Vermonters engage in a  
48 just transition away from climate pollution and toward a cleaner and sustainable future.

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