

Consolidated Summaries of Vermont Climate Action Plan Engagement

Spring 2025

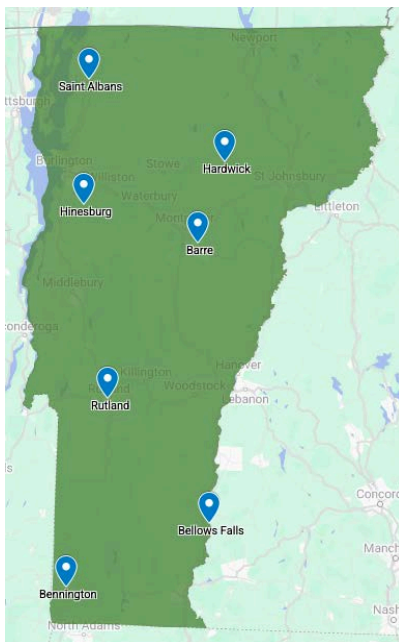
Overview

The Vermont Climate Council is updating the state's Climate Action Plan. The Council released an initial draft of the plan's [priority actions](#) in late March to solicit public feedback.

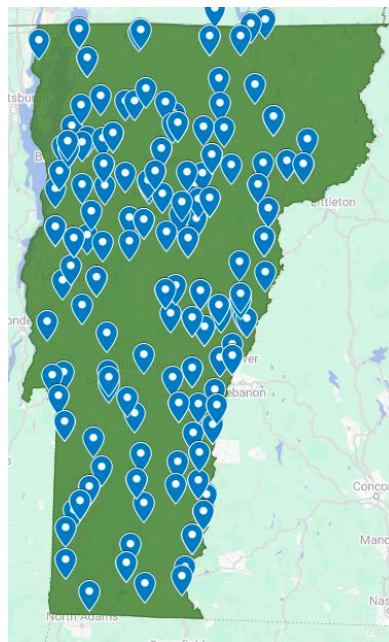
This packet consolidates feedback from 12 input sessions (three virtual, nine in-person) that sought feedback on these draft priority actions under discussion by the Council. It also contains a high-level summary of about 125 written comments.

Nearly 400 people participated in the input sessions, from all corners of the state.

In-person meeting locations



Virtual Meeting Registrations



Meetings details:

- April 10th via Zoom (112 attendees)
- April 10, Barton (18 attendees)
- April 14th, Hardwick (28 attendees)
- April 15th, Hinesburg (60 attendees)
- April 16th, St. Albans (24 attendees)
- April 17th, Bennington (16 attendees)
- April 21st, Burlington (15 attendees)
- April 23rd, Bellows Falls (25 attendees)
- April 28th, Barre (40 attendees)
- April 30th, Rutland (19 attendees)
- May 1st via Zoom (73 attendees)
- May 6th via Zoom (7 attendees)

To be sure, these participants are not a scientific representative sample of all Vermonters. Participants reflect a group of Vermonters who felt compelled to attend a public meeting about climate action and had the means to participate¹. Many participants said they were already involved in climate action through their town energy committees or in other ways.

¹To encourage participation, meeting facilitators worked with community-based organizations and offered stipends to participants meeting an income eligibility threshold.

Feedback to the Council

The nine meetings all used similar agendas. Participants spent most of each meeting offering input on the draft priority actions, discussing their reactions in small groups and in the plenary. Prior to reviewing and commenting on the draft priority actions, participants engaged in conversation around how they are experiencing a changing climate, and about actions their communities and families are taking today.

This summary document includes a high-level synthesis of feedback coming from each meeting, together with a detailed annex of all participant input at each meeting. It also includes an overview of written comment and the [full text of written comments](#)².

When providing feedback on the draft priority actions, participants were prompted with two guiding questions:

- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

Participants provided a range of comments, which are captured in the meeting summaries and detailed annexes. However, several key themes emerged. Common points included:

Actions that resonated:

- A lot of enthusiasm around actions to cut emissions, including weatherization and electrification of heating and transportation.
- In particular, participants called out Cap and Invest as an important program that could reduce emissions and raise revenue to support weatherization and other activities, though participants also raised concerns about the cost and complexity of it.
- Actions that sought to benefit, not harm, low- and moderate-income Vermonters
- Public transportation
- Workforce development
- Education actions
- Actions to support community resilience

What's missing:

- Many participants raised concerns about the cost of the actions, and how Vermont would fund them.
- Several participants asked for more focus on today's hazards, such as flooding, and recovery from disasters in 2024 and 2023.

²https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/anr/climatecouncil/Shared%20Documents/Vermont_Climate_Council/Public%20Comments/WrittenComment5-2-25-All.pdf

- Several participants said the plan should prioritize geothermal networks
- Several participants said the actions should focus more on conserving forests and limiting/ending burning of biomass
- Some participants asks for actions that protect outdoor workers
- Some participants asked from more emphasis on resilience hubs and mutual aid networks
- Several participants said Vermont should enforce building codes

Focus and clarity:

- Many participants asked the Council to further prioritize and simplify the plan. The plan should emphasize just a handful of highest priority measures, they said.
- Many participants also urged the Council to use plain language to better communicate the actions, and be more specific around the actions requested.

In-person meetings included an exercise to test participants’ funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. Taken together, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	37%
Cross-Cutting Issues	23%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	18%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	22%

Participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to provide input and the structure of the meetings. The summaries and detailed annexes below contain additional input that will be useful for the Council as it revises and finalizes the updated Climate Action Plan.

This summary was prepared by the Consensus Building Institute and Vermont’s Climate Action Office, which together convened and facilitated the meetings, with the assistance of Vermont’s Regional Planning Commissions.

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Climate Action Virtual Input Session - April 10

Summary of Input

Thursday, April 10, 5:30-7:00pm

Overview

This document summarizes an April 10 virtual public input session that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 112 people attended the meeting on Zoom.

Meeting Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Many participants called for urgent investment in transportation infrastructure, including support for electric vehicle (EV) adoption, to reduce pollution and promote sustainability.
- Several participants lifted up weatherization as a compelling action.
- Several participants highlighted Cap and Invest as a key strategy to meet goals, reduce pollution, promote equity, and fund incentives and transportation infrastructure.
- Some participants called for electrification and improving transmission infrastructure expansion of in-state wind and solar and buildout of renewable energy in general.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Participants called for strengthening protections for outdoor workers.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- One participant encouraged funding resilience at the local level through Community Resilience Hubs .
- Some participants noted resilience planning, specifically infrastructure to prevent flooding as crucial actions.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Several participants advocated for protecting forests by ending logging on public lands and stopping the use of biomass for energy, highlighting environmental and public health concerns.

General feedback:

- How will these actions be funded?
- Be bold; meet legal requirements

- Simplify

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Barton

Summary of Input

Thursday, April 10, 1:00-2:00pm, Barton Memorial Hall

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Barton**, Vermont. The event was a collaboration with Northeast Kingdom Organizing's Elder Caucus, held after the weekly senior free lunch at the Barton Hub. In the conversation, participants provided ideas and feedback about the climate action areas under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 18 people attended the meeting on April 10.

Overarching themes

- Affordability, cost of living (housing, food), limited resources
- Resourcing community groups, emphasis on local neighbor-to-neighbor solutions
- Considerations for how those with barriers can still access and benefit from climate action solutions
- Access to local food
- Benefits of weatherization
- Creative approaches to housing and land access
- Flood impacts are still felt by many; fear around future floods especially since resources have not come through

For additional detail, see the [annex](#).

Climate Action Input Session: Hardwick

Summary of Input

Monday, April 14, 6:00-8:00pm, Hardwick Town Hall

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Hardwick**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council.

Approximately 28 people attended the meeting on April 14.

Hardwick Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions.

Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Weatherization initiatives stood out as a compelling recommendation, with many emphasizing the need for cost reductions, education, built in funding for vermiculite remediation, collective buying, and minimum standards to protect investments.
- Many supported a Cap and Invest program that protects low-income communities, though some raised concerns about delays, unintended impacts, and the need to regulate fuel delivery companies. Participants expressed different views on a Clean Heat Standard.
- Several raised concerns about grid capacity and highlighted community solar, especially VEC's Community program, as a good example.
- Several participants emphasized the need for more public transit and lower-emission travel options.
- Participants highlighted the importance of realistic efficiency standards, expanding EV charging networks, and supporting affordable EV adoption, especially in rural areas

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Many participants emphasized workforce development and education around the trades as most compelling, with specific mentions of incentives for contractors to be trained in weatherization

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Participants highlighted the importance of education to engage communities, shift behavior, and build climate resilience.
- Participants supported compact settlement through new wastewater treatment technologies to enable housing in small towns and improve transportation infrastructure.

- Many participants supported increased municipal funding for towns, RPCs, and organizations involved in this work
- Several participants emphasized climate-related public health concerns

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Several participants supported farmer to farmer education, resources, funding
- Participants emphasized the urgency of investing in food system resilience and support.
- Several comments supported incentives for renewable energy siting, specifically highlighting solar installations that allow for agricultural use.

General feedback:

- Funding: Participants offered comments and ideas around funding the actions, and asked where funding would come from.
- Equity: Actions must work for low-income Vermonters
- Language and communication: Communicate these ideas in ways that anyone could understand

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In Hardwick, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	32%
Cross-Cutting Issues	23%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	20%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	24%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Hinesburg

Summary of Input

Tuesday, April 15, 6:00-8:00pm, Champlain Valley Union High School

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Hinesburg**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council.

Approximately 60 people attended the meeting on April 15.

Hinesburg Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Many participants supported a Cap and Invest program or a modified Clean Heat Standard, and noted that implementation must include equity considerations.
- Participants emphasized the importance of weatherization.
- Many highlighted the importance of redesigned public transit and connected bike paths.
- Participants supported EV incentives, shared housing charging, home upgrade funding, and mentioned Advanced Clean Cars II, Clean Trucks, and fuel tracking.
- Several emphasized the need for electrification, along with support for the grid and assistance for low- and moderate-income households.
- Participants emphasized the need to enforce energy codes for new homes and require renewable energy for heating in all new buildings
- Participants highlighted that geothermal and thermal energy networks do not show up in the plan.
- Support for funding to electrify space and water heating for low- and moderate-income households, and ensure new multi-family housing is built ready for electrification and EV charging.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Many highlighted workforce development as a top priority, noting the need to expand apprenticeships in the trades and offer training incentives to work in Vermont.
- Many highlighted the need to expand education for weatherization jobs, integrate climate change curriculum, and support educational initiatives to foster a culture shift.
- Participants felt that protections for outdoor workers are missing from the priority actions.
- Support for investing in infrastructure for compact development, expanding multimodal transportation, and enforcing siting criteria to avoid flood-prone areas.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Participants called for dedicated funding and staffing for Regional Planning Commissions, local organizations/businesses, and municipalities to support resilience planning, hazard mitigation efforts, and regional collaboration more broadly.
- Participants supported prohibiting new housing development in flood zones.
- Participants emphasized the importance of rural and flood resilience, including the dedicated Flood Resilient Communities Fund.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Participants called for an end to burning-based energy sources and full life-cycle emissions accounting, though one participant supported limited biomass waste heat for heating.
- Participants supported creating a dedicated emergency recovery fund for farms and forests to address climate-related disasters.
- Participants also emphasized other ways to support farm and forestry businesses
- Support for recommendation 1 by promoting carbon sequestration through regenerative farming practices like no-till, cover crops, biochar, and rotational grazing.

General feedback:

- The Council to further prioritize
- Accessibility: consider shortening and using plain language.

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In Hinesburg, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	38%
Cross-Cutting Issues	21%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	20%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	22%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: St. Albans

Summary of Input

Wednesday, April 16, 6:00-8:00pm, St. Albans City Hall

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **St. Albans**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 24 people attended the meeting on April 16.

St. Albans Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Many participants supported Cap and Invest but raised concerns about how to communicate costs effectively. Participants emphasized improving access to clean energy for low-income individuals and those facing logistical barriers.
- Many participants favored weatherization, highlighting the need for increased access to renters in particular, statewide efficiency standards, and stronger building code enforcement.
- Some participants called for more funding to support public transit use and transportation infrastructure
- Some Participants emphasized the grid and EV chargers as key enablers for climate transition.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Many participants supported initiatives to increase education and build workforce capacity in the trades and named specific groups to keep in mind.
- Several participants highlighted youth and young professionals as key groups to target for education initiatives.
- Many participants supported compact settlements with safe , accessible walking and biking infrastructure, stormwater/wastewater solutions, and locally built housing to support livability, reduce carbon, and strengthen local economies.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Some participants recommended supporting towns in developing sustainable wastewater infrastructure.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Participants supported developing solar in compact settlements and strategies to protect farmland and pollinator habitats.

General feedback:

- Some participants hoped for ongoing transparent communication with communities and accessible language within actions.

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In St. Albans, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	43%
Cross-Cutting Issues	23%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	19%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	15%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Bennington

Summary of Input

Thursday, April 17, 6:00-8:00pm, Bennington Fire Department

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Bennington**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 16 people attended the meeting on April 17.

Bennington Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Participants highlighted the need for grid improvement to support energy innovation and address current grid challenges.
- Participants highlighted the importance of weatherization and ensuring that it reaches those who need it most (e.g. offering higher incentives and subsidies).
- Some expressed hesitation about Cap and Invest, raising concerns about potential fund misallocation, greenwashing, and restrictions on dividend spending.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Participants emphasized addressing gaps in climate change education, improving communication with schools about resources, rethinking trades and tech education, and leveraging local expertise to build capital.
- Many emphasized the importance of workforce development to transition to a green economy, including recruiting young people and involving installation industries like HVAC.
- Several supported funding programs to educate Vermonters on energy choices and funding options to increase energy efficiency in homes, and expanding outreach to second homeowners and landlords.
- Some Participants the potential of a gas tax to fund these initiatives, while acknowledging concerns about financing amid federal changes.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Several participants supported increasing the capacity of RPCs through additional funding.

- Some participants emphasized the need for better communication and stronger social networks to engage people and build social capital around these issues.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Several participants mentioned the need to support farmers and foresters in adapting to climate change, but were concerned about funding methods that could limit their agency.
- Several comments about the food system resilience
- Participants recommended riparian buffer projects, floodplain restoration, and statewide river corridor regulations.

General feedback:

- Several participants expressed interest in the associated costs of actions while other participants hoped for more information on potential funding constraints

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In Bennington, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	35%
Cross-Cutting Issues	21%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	19%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	26%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Burlington

Summary of Input

Monday, April 21, 5:30-6:30 pm, University of Vermont

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Burlington**, Vermont. The event was with members of the University of Vermont Eco-Reps club and other students. Approximately 15 people attended the meeting on April 21.

Overarching themes

- Language and communication: plenty of jargon (such as ag, Invest, transportation); vague language such as “support, increase, capacity” creates loopholes, not actionable.
- How to establish funding long-term. Funding and investment Plan unspecific; need transparency in what long-term and permanent investment means/how it may work realistically.
- Transportation: walk/bike infrastructure
- Give a timeline, encourages revisiting. Use SMART Goal format.
- Indigenous knowledge: how will indigenous voices be heard? Incorporate indigenous stakeholders to the table, emphasis on collaboration.

For additional detail please see the [annex](#).

Climate Action Input Session: Bellows Falls

Summary of Input

Wednesday, April 23, 5:30-7:30pm, Rockingham Free Public Library

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Bellows Falls**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 25 people attended the meeting on April 23.

Bellows Falls Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Many participants emphasized accelerating weatherization through increased funding, accessible grants, regional support, and expanded services for all income levels.
- Several participants emphasized the importance of expanding public transit, adding EV school buses, incentivizing EV access for low- and moderate-income households, and increasing charging stations.
- Many found joining a Cap and Invest program or adopting a modified Clean Heat Standard to be compelling.
- Participants called for abundant, affordable electricity to enable upgrades and strengthen the grid. Participants expressed support for easier residential solar permitting/implementation and expanded access for low- and middle-income Vermonters.
- Two participants lifted up green building incentives and carbon pricing as disincentives as ideas for the Council to consider.
- Participants called for reducing visitor vehicle emissions and improving enforcement and infrastructure.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Many supported workforce development for climate change careers, such as weatherization, and increasing enrollment in trade programs.
- Participants called for education across sectors, including about the waste system and about current law, with follow-through on composting and recycling.
- Participants supported increasing municipal stormwater investments, promoting compact settlements with multimodal transportation, and disincentivizing development outside village areas.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Several highlighted the need for funding and technical support to implement hazard mitigation plans, particularly for rural resilience, community capacity, and 1:1 business support.
- Some emphasized the urgency of replacing culverts to handle increased water flow and making other changes to store or slow water.
- Some participants asked how buyouts would be incorporated into the plan.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Some participants stressed the need to avoid clearing forests or farmland for solar, while also addressing heat impacts of solar in developed areas, especially for vulnerable communities.
- Some participants called for an end to wood burning and accompanying incentives, and opposed promoting or using renewable natural gas.
- Some participants highlighted the need for better enforcement of the UVA program to prevent forest and biodiversity loss, improve forest resilience, and increase the use of wood in construction.
- Support for promoting healthy river corridors and state regulation of them.
- Some participants supported increasing funding for the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative to promote climate-smart practices and strengthen the local economy.

General feedback:

- Several participants noted the importance of prioritizing actions given the potential for constrained funding. Some participants expressed interest in less broad actions that build from ongoing work.

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In Bellows Falls, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	38%
Cross-Cutting Issues	28%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	13%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	21%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Barre
Summary of Input
Monday, April 28, 5:30-7:30pm, Old Labor Hall

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Barre**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting on April 28.

Barre Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Several participants supported joining a Cap and Invest program.
- Participants supported weatherization, advocated for securing or subsidizing funding to bring homes up to code, and emphasized the need for grid support.
- Support for making public transportation more accessible, electrifying it, and creating safer biking routes.
- Support for funding electrification incentives, upgrading the grid, and launching pilot projects to address electrification challenges.
- Support for electrifying space and water heating for low- and moderate-income households, with a need for upfront incentives.
- Participants stressed the need for Level 3 chargers and support in facilitating the purchase of affordable used electric vehicles, including rebates.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Participants stressed the need for strong funding and climate education at all levels, starting in kindergarten and spanning all subjects, including public outreach and CTE programs.
- There was support for green workforce development, funding for trades training, apprenticeships, and certification for carpenters/builders.
- There was support for expanded transportation services, bike paths, sidewalks, and Level 2 or 3 charging stations.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Several participants urged state-funded buyouts to support flood-resilient redevelopment, restrict new floodplain construction, align with housing targets, and phase out federal flood insurance that incentivizes rebuilding in flood zones.

- Some urged to keep the Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF) well-funded to support hazard mitigation, landslide buyouts, and protect vulnerable Vermont communities.
- Several participants supported culturally informed, community-led public health efforts that promote resilience and language justice.
- Many were interested in strengthening and fully funding Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to support rural towns with technical guidance, energy and hazard planning, grant management, and resilience-building in the absence of county government.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Support for the siting recommendation, specifically placing solar panels on parking lots, is effective in generating local energy and providing vehicle shading.
- Prioritize restoring river corridors and wetlands for natural floodplain storage, supporting local farms, and building non-paved paths that allow water to flow freely.
- Support for recommendation #5, highlighting its importance to small and organic farms.
- Advocate for farm bill funding and expand Vermont programs that cut emissions, boost soil carbon, and support climate resilience on working lands—coordinated with USDA NRCS efforts.
- Support for PES to pay farmers for floodplain restoration and river meandering, and prioritize subsidies for organic agriculture.
- Expand the Municipal Vulnerability Indicators tool to include BIPOC-centered grants and loans for farmworkers and renters on farms.

General feedback:

- Many participants urged that the actions be written in plain language that was accessible to a broad range of people in Vermont.
- Some participants hoped for transparency in prioritization of actions and measuring impact.

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Input Session: Rutland
Summary of Input
Wednesday, April 30, 5:30-7:30pm, RRPC Offices

Overview

This document summarizes an in-person public input session in **Rutland**, Vermont that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 19 people attended the meeting on April 30.

Rutland Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions around the draft priority actions. Additional details can be found in the annex, which includes all of participants' inputs during the meeting.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Several participants expressed skepticism about Cap and Invest, citing concerns about misuse, unfair costs to fuel dealers, and called for caps on consumer energy prices or heat use.
- Some participants highlighted the importance of equitable EV charging access and targeted incentives for low- and moderate-income buyers.
- Several participants supported grid upgrades with public financing, a solar + battery project in Brandon for low-income Vermonters, and universal community solar with ownership options.
- There was some support for weatherization and removing barriers.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Support teachers and others with professional development to effectively integrate climate change education.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Participants supported updating building codes for solar resilience and emphasized the importance of independent data collection to reduce reliance on changing federal policies.
- Some participants recommended encouraging multi-story housing and increased density to support public transport, reduce infrastructure costs, and improve flood resilience, while prioritizing clean water and safe homes.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Some support for the siting recommendation with emphasis on prioritizing soil health, clean water, and reduced consumption as well as strong incentives

- Several supported recommendation #1. Participants recommended some added focus on research and outreach for regenerative and organic farming, reduced chemical use, and evidence-based carbon sequestration, prioritizing soil health.
- Some opposition to the biomass recommendation
- Some support for prioritizing practical, resilient agriculture to address food insecurity.
- Several prioritized incentives to improve and maintain water sources, and clarify the role of PES in farm programs.

The meeting included an exercise to test participants' funding priorities. Each participant was given 10 chips representing funds, and asked to distribute those funds across the four buckets of draft priority actions. In Rutland, the exercise had the following result:

Topic	% of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	38%
Cross-Cutting Issues	23%
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	16%
Agriculture and Ecosystems	24%

Please see the [annex](#) for more detailed feedback received during the meeting discussions.

Climate Action Virtual Input Session - May 1

Summary of Input

Thursday, May 1, 12-1:30pm

Overview

This document summarizes a May 1 virtual public input session that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 70 people attended the meeting on Zoom.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Several expressed support for Cap and Invest and including equity planning.
- Support for expanding public transportation
- Broadband development is missing.
- Support for weatherization
- Support a resilient grid, local energy generation, and fair transition benefits.
- Geothermal is missing from the plan.
- Other ideas about raising revenue were suggested for consideration.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Prioritize education as a climate action strategy by supporting teacher training, leveraging existing curricula, and expanding adult programs like the Energy Navigator.
- Support for cluster housing in underused spaces, expanding trail networks, connecting towns, and prioritizing microgrid development in small villages with clear, specific support.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Concern about support for public health
- Support flood resilience in municipalities with more funding for County Conservation Districts, strengthened planning and streamlined grantmaking, as well as a focus on mitigation and recovery for flooded cities and villages.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Participants supported phasing out biomass and conducting the additional study.
- Support for keeping large trees in the ground across urban, rural, and forested areas, supporting loggers and timber companies in transitioning to tree stewardship.
- Offer incentives for landscapers to invest in electric equipment and improve efficiency.

General feedback:

- Feasibility: Significant concern exists regarding the cost and affordability of climate actions, particularly for low- and moderate-income Vermonters, coupled with challenges in securing adequate funding.

- Prioritization: Participants emphasized prioritizing actions based on impact, implementability, and cost-effectiveness, suggesting a need to focus efforts rather than spreading them too thinly.
- Engagement efforts: Continued and improved public engagement, communication, and accessibility of information are crucial for understanding, buy-in, and implementation

For additional information, please see the [annex](#).

Climate Action Youth Input Session

Tuesday, May 6, 6:00-7:30 pm

Overview

This document summarizes a May 6 virtual public input session for youth that sought feedback on draft priority actions under discussion by the Vermont Climate Council. Approximately 7 people attended the meeting on Zoom. Another 7 people submitted written comments. Participants mentioned hearing about the event through their schools or as members of the Youth Lobby.

Summary

The following key themes emerged in the discussions and via written comments around the draft priority actions.

Cross-Sector Mitigation:

- Electric vehicles (EVs) are helpful but still emit, are expensive, and strain the grid. Reducing car use overall is better – via walkable cities and better intercity rail.
- Cap and Invest (recommendation #1) and public transit (recommendation #3) were highlighted as important, along with suggestions for how to sustainably fund these programs.
- Little is said in the priority actions about expanding power generation. There's focus on efficiency and electrification, but little on boosting capacity to meet demand.
- Refrigerant management, which is key for scaling AC and heat pumps, should be lifted up as priority.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

- Support for integrating climate change education into the curriculum, including middle school or younger, with a suggestion to allow students to choose the depth of their engagement
- Expand adult education, apprenticeships, and support for entrepreneurship and career pathways in the trades. Offer incentives (such as paying for or forgiving loans) for students to pursue these education and career options; offer job-shadowing of climate careers.
- Concern that current education efforts may mainly reach those already supportive of climate action, missing broader or more skeptical audiences.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Support resources to help communities aid vulnerable Vermonters after climate events – reducing impacts on those most at risk is key.

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- Many of the Ag and Eco actions are important for supporting Vermont's farming communities.
- Is there anything about funding farmers to adopt sustainable practices?

General feedback:

- Consider marketing materials and climate change innovation grants.
- Promote positive actions already underway to boost hope and community engagement.
- Include quick visuals to explain lesser-known or out-of-state legislation referenced in draft actions, which currently lack context.

For additional information, please see the [annex](#).

Written comments

April 1 through May 2, 2025

All written comments on the 2025 Climate Action Plan Update, including those submitted prior to April 1, 2025, may be viewed on the [Public Comment Webpage](#). A consolidated PDF of comments received from April 1, 2025 through May 2, 2025 can be found [here](#)³.

Summary

During the public engagement period (April 1 through May 2, 2025) 127 written comments were received. Many commenters expressed support for Vermont taking action on climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A number of those specifically expressed support for a Climate Action Plan that meets the goals and requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act. Others expressed doubts about Vermont's ability to make a difference due to the state's small size compared to the global nature of climate change. Concerns or caveats about affordability and/or a just transition appeared often.

The majority of comments came from individuals. Several organizations or coalitions also sent letters on behalf of the groups, people, or interests they represent. Those included:

- [Vermont Outdoor Business Association](#)
- [Transportation for Vermonters](#)
- [Vermont Natural Resources Council & Vermont Conservation Voters](#)
- [Vermont Public Interest Research Group](#)
- [Conservation Law Foundation Vermont](#)
- [Forest Partnership](#)
- [Sierra Club](#)
- [Vermont Interfaith Power and Light](#)
- [350VT](#)
- [Vermont Community Thermal Networks](#)
- [Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility](#)
- [Local Motion](#)

³https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/anr/climatecouncil/Shared%20Documents/Vermont_Climate_Council/Public%20Comments/WrittenComment5-2-25-All.pdf

Themes

1. **Renewable Energy:** Support for renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal; the importance of transitioning away from fossil fuels and biomass.
2. **Alternative Transportation Methods:** Support for prioritizing public transit, active transportation (walking/biking), ride-sharing, and generally reducing car use as ways to reduce transportation-related emissions and promote equitable access to clean transportation options.
3. **Weatherization and Energy Efficiency:** Support for weatherizing homes and improving energy efficiency, with several mentions of ensuring benefits to low-income households.
4. **Cap-and-Invest Programs:** Cap-and-invest programs were highlighted as a potential policy to reduce emissions and generate revenue for clean energy initiatives.
5. **Community Involvement and Public Participation:** Ensuring public participation and community involvement in climate action efforts is emphasized, with calls for supporting local initiatives and mutual aid networks. Communication and education were also touched upon in various ways.
6. **Economic and Social Equity:** There is concern about ensuring that climate policies are affordable and accessible to all Vermonters, particularly low- and moderate-income populations.
7. **Environmental Protection and Conservation:** Protecting forests, wetlands, and biodiversity is mentioned as crucial for ecological resilience, as well as nature's ability to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and store it in plants and soil.

Annex - April 10 Virtual

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with the input from small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

Who is in the room?



This is my first meeting about climate action –
I'm just getting started!



I've heard about climate action, but I'm not
super familiar with the details.



I've been a part of the conversation and
understand the basics.



Feels like I live and breathe this topic!

What is the first word that comes to mind when I say, 'Climate Action'?

84 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate (responses from Menti and the chat):

- *Flooding:*
 - Wetter climate problem for agriculture
 - Floods
 - Severe flooding and damage to homes and businesses.
 - Intense rainfall
 - Rain affecting my garden yield
 - Flooding
 - feeling increasingly insecure about the safety of my community's ability to adapt and recover to the flooding and other weather disasters happening more frequently
 - Mountain road washouts
 - Roads washing out
 - Flooding
 - Office was flooded out in 2023.
 - Floods
 - Flooding
 - bad water, failed infrastructure
 - Less snow. Flooding
 - Flood disaster in Plainfield
 - my dirt road was washed out by flood. concern about future
 - wet summers

- Flooding
- Century flood became decade thing and now it's annual? Something is wrong, people.
- *Temperature/Seasons:*
 - No December winter
 - Warmer summers, more ticks!, need AC, especially for humidity
 - Hotter summers and shorter winters
 - Hot summers, not enough snow
 - Very hot summers with smoke from forest fires.
 - Rain / Temperatures
 - Warmer winters, wetter summers.
 - Less snow, warmer summer
 - Less snow
 - Shorter winters
 - Weather
 - Horrible weather
 - Shorter winters, hotter summers
 - Temperature
 - I have air conditioning now
 - HOT SUMMERS
- *Ticks and invasives:*
 - Increased tick-borne illness.
 - Ticks
 - Ticks!
 - Ticks and tick borne illness
 - Ticks
 - Ticks
 - Ticks
 - Ever decreasing number of bugs, birds, more invasives, sick trees
 - Invasives - chump and eely
 - Invasives - chump & eely
 - fewer butterflies
- *General Weather/Unpredictability:*
 - Unpredictable weather
 - Weird Weather
 - High winds
 - Weather changes
 - Irregular weather
 - extreme weather
 - Weird weather
 - High winds

- *Economic/Community Impacts:*
 - High costs - direct and indirect - of fossil fuel use.
 - Economic instability
 - as a farmer shifting their work
 - Economic rural collapse, gender and racial equity being sacrificed, and extreme loss of climate resilience and mitigation program supports.
 - Dwindling resources
 - HUGE economic costs to my community. Budget breaking.
 - Business failure
 - Higher costs of insurance
 - economic costs

- *Personal/emotional Effects:*
 - Anxiety.
 - More worried about other locales, but want to take action here.
 - Extremely concerned for the lives and well being of my children and grandchildren
 - fear, grief, dismay, despair about the future, sadness for children, poor mental health for teens and kids
 - Worry
 - fear for our vulnerable neighbors
 - losing the battle
 - consternation about federal chaos

- *Other:*
 - We are not the cause
 - Changing climate and adaptation.
 - wildfire smoke, diminishing species in my lifetime, algae blooms
 - Less pollinators
 - running the AC ALL DAY EVERY DAY in the summer :(
 - Loss of snow and winter sports
 - Shorter winters, wildfire smoke , ticks, lots of mud seasons during winters, flooding , storms
 - Decisions about what to do
 - disasters everywhere
 - Bad driving conditions
 - Conserving
 - more mud
 - Less snow, new species of trees, insects...South moves North, extinction, warmer summer, Logging public lands!

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls and comments in the chat.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendations #2 and #3: Public transportation and EVs

- *Participants called for urgent investment in transportation infrastructure, including support for electric vehicle (EV) adoption, to reduce pollution and promote sustainability.*
 - RCT is doing a lot to foster electric public transport in the kingdom.
 - VTRANS work - mostly because it's actual action and not just "plans." And also because transpo is the biggest climate polluter
 - Need for transportation infrastructure
 - Invest in public, active, and shared transportation, such as transit, micro transit, passenger rail, biking and walking.
 - make car free transportation easier. Infrastructure
 - Transportation- EV adoption
 - Urgency, pick the low hanging fruit, Cap and invest, incentivize EV's, Public Transit.
 - Invest in resilient infrastructure to support efficient transportation and ways of working
 - Urgent public transportation investments including amenities
 - VT is missing an opportunity to utilize 12 self-power passenger train cars to get rail transit working here. They are up for sale. Seven years of getting the state to get these Budd cars on the rails has been resisted by VTrans and the railroads.
 - Upgrading and expanding sustainable transportation.

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Several participants lifted up weatherization as a compelling action.*
 - Fully fund and increase the pace of home weatherization initiatives
 - Low income weatherization
 - Weatherization
 - Weatherization
 - Weatherization is a subtle effective boycott of fossil fuels.
 - Building and weatherization
 - Fund the heck out of weatherization and electrification
 - While low income folks are more affected by lack of heat/weatherization, many with the resources do nothing because the cost of energy doesn't affect them. What is the incentive for those folks?

- YES to weatherization for low income Vermonters. YES to CONSERVATION.

Recommendation #1: Cap and Invest

- *Participants highlighted Cap and Invest as a key strategy to meet goals, reduce pollution, promote equity, and fund incentives and transportation infrastructure.*
 - With insecurity around federal funding, joining a cap and invest program would help meet our 2030 and 2050 requirements as well as generate revenue for incentives and rebates for projects and LMI
 - Cap and Invest.
 - Cap and invest = pollution reduction and equity opportunities
 - cap and invest
 - Cap & Invest Program
 - Most compelling: Cap and Invest

Recommendations #4 & #5: Grid and community solar

- *Participants called for electrification and improving transmission infrastructure expansion of in-state wind and solar and buildout of renewable energy in general*
 - Using our variety of energy resources, green to electrify our energy grid
 - Electrical transmission infrastructure
 - Increasing renewable energy for public and private orgs and homes.
 - Urgent build-out of instate wind and solar by 5x
 - Faster permitting of energy projects
 - Community Solar for all

Cross-Sector Mitigation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Systemic changes are necessary- they will be more effective than just individual action. E.G., cap and invest as well as transportation infrastructure.
 - (Transit - Cap & Invest) + (Thermal - Wx and Electrification) + (In-state renewable generation)
 - Don't support nuclear power
 - Where are big batteries in electric system
 - Energy resiliency
 - Be bold, aim high! Don't support nuclear, do support conservation and renewables!
 - Prioritize: Public Transit, Walkable Communities, over EV subsidies, Carbon Tax, Instate renewables by 3x

Cross-Cutting Issues

Missing recommendation: outdoor worker protections

- *Participants called for strengthening protections for outdoor workers.*
 - Improve protections for outdoor workers. Insurance, cooling, breaks, time off during heat
 - Where's workers' protection?

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Education for builders, families, municipalities
 - Compact settlement advancing green infrastructure and jobs
 - Change climate wording to conservation wording in education.
 - Urging recognition and coordination among so many of Vermont's organizations focused on natural history, the natural world, and preservation of wild areas from Vermont master naturalist program to the Long trail club. The more you know about the natural world, the more you will love it and the more you'll want to take care of it.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- Community Resilience Hubs - funding resilience at the local level
- Infrastructure to prevent flooding
- Resilience planning

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Recommendation #15: Biomass

- *Participants advocated for protecting forests by ending logging on public lands and stopping the use of biomass for energy, highlighting environmental and public health concerns.*
 - Stop logging on public lands. Stop burning biomass for electricity.
 - On logging public lands: it's because VT believes we should prop up the forestry industry at the expense of the environment and our health.
 - Most compelling is to stop logging public lands! Please vote yes for Bill H276 for the Vermont Wildlife and Wildlands act!
 - I'm so disappointed that Vermont prioritizes industry over climate, biodiversity, and human health. VT defies basic climate science and doesn't count pollution from wood burning. It's cooking the books.
 - Please support bill H276 Wildlife and Wildlands act!
 - Protect the forests!

- Protect nature, stop propping up the forestry industry, stop burning wood for energy, stop promoting wood burning for heat
- Why is logging public lands not part of your discussion?
- Agree with getting away from biomass for generating electricity without capturing the waste heat.
- Where is solar and wind? Biomass- the McNeil Plant- is a huge contributor to carbon- and needs to be shut down.
- Shut down McNeill!!!! It creates a huge amount of air pollution.
- I think McNeil shouldn't shut down unless we have a serious actionable and sustainable plan to replace it with something better.
- Using McNeil's waste heat is only a 5% increase in efficiency from 24%

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Reducing emissions through agricultural practices
 - Proper accounting for ghg, esp biomass
 - Grow food.
 - What about methane reduction?
 - As an educator/naturalist, protecting Vermont's biological diversity is critical to the welfare of Vermonters.
 - Our intact forests are extremely important to preserve our health and sequester carbon !Conserves are water! We need to resist our national government's reckless environmental policies!
 - Increasing and protecting natural carbon sinks.
 - Clean water.

General:

- *Funding*
 - Tax the UNEARNED income to fund these programs.
 - Don't make the plan so detailed and expansive for funding success
 - important to base what we end up doing on science, facts, affordability, prioritizing limited funds on best return on investment and not based on emotion / opinion.
 - Identify the cost of every recommendation.
 - Do not rely on federal funding for any help
 - a lot of curiosity about funding and implementation
 - Funding!
 - Work on plans that do not require a ton of new funding. Action is needed even if/when funds become more limited.
 - Reliance on Federal Funding for so many topics
 - How to fund it all
- *Be bold; meet legal requirements*

- A final plan that includes recommendations that will meet our legal requirements is vital
- Be bold! Provide real leadership, don't hold back. too urgent.
- Provide genuine leadership. Be bold.
- Big change is necessary now
- Time is wasting the climate won't wait - no roll=back
- Climate change is an emergency. Act on your and our ideas!!!!
- Whatever you do, don't roll back on climate commitments or give in to pressure from Trump.
- Councilors should do what they were appointed to do -- craft a climate action plan that reduces greenhouse gasses on the scale and timeline required by law.
- Please write a plan that aligns with our legally binding the GWSA reqs.
- Deliver a plan that adds up to the letter of the GWSA law.
- Urgency. Timeline should be the biggest consideration. Biggest bang for the buck.
- meet the scale and timeline for reductions, as required by law
- Ensure that genuine leadership takes place--don't drop initiatives back onto the general population to respond to. Take the reins and make solid programs that re-invest in the goal at hand, GHG
- Given the federal and state budget situation, practical actions NOW must be prioritized over complex legislation that takes studies and years to implement
- Follow the law.
- Be a leader in the country!
- Be bold with limited resources we have
- *Simplify*
 - Keep it simple
 - keep it simple / borrow ideas that are already working elsewhere
 - Keep it simple
 - Keep it simple
- *Other*
 - How can thrift stores play a role in addressing climate change?
 - More community involvement. Encourage all to participate, especially those with the resources.
 - Community gardens
 - Same goes for improving infrastructure. Makes people's lives better!
 - Intersectional solutions! (use what we have, transform wastes into resource)
 - The Climate Council needs specific comments on the specific recommendations that you reviewed, not just general comments. Please identify the numbered items in your comments.
 - As motivated as we all may be on climate, for many folks its 1) Cost 2) comfort 3) choice and maybe 4th is climate. We gotta meet people on 1-3 as well as 4!
 - Let your Representative/Senator know that you want them to support Climate Legislation

- To the council. Make a plan/checklist to submit to the households in VT to make changes in their homes and lifestyles that will add to the total effort. Each small change adds up!
- Preservation is vital. Thank you!
- Real greenwashing!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- show more how the proposals will change things.
- Keep the climate goals in public discussions at all state agencies
- Exuding climate and social justice.
- Independence from governor
- Be realistic.
- Concerned about the groupthink that dominates these types of outreach meetings.
- need to hear from the people who aren't on these calls. Somehow
- Need to give the ideas some teeth!
- Always keep accessibility in mind
- Maintain the Climate Council's independence and sovereignty.
- Emissions must have a cost
- We are trying. But we have more to do.
- Many ideas we can do TODAY to cut emissions
- Protecting nature.
- Reduce emissions
- How do we make up for the end of all climate work at the federal level?
- the ones that REDUCE emissions; that is crucial!
- use real numbers
- Council's independence from the governor -- he's not about climate change.
- People think the energy transition is too expensive! We need to compare these costs to the millions we're spending on disaster recovery, etc.!
- Stop mandating how we live and what we buy.
- prioritize actionable and (relatively) inexpensive actions to reduce emissions quickly

Plenary notes

- Put an end to logging on public lands, advocating for preservation over conservation, and supported Bill H.276 to protect Vermont's forests and biodiversity.
- A participant opposed burning wood solely for electricity but supported capturing McNeil's waste heat for heating buildings.
- Prioritize the impacts of climate action on low-income and marginalized communities.
- Support for home weatherization, noting that solutions like insulation reduce emissions, improve quality of life, and can help gain community buy-in.
- Getting landlords to invest in energy efficiency is challenging when tenants are responsible for heating costs.

- We need to shift funding for climate initiatives away from regressive fuel and electricity bills, and towards alternatives like general fund income taxes or bonding to place more of the burden on wealthier individuals.

Annex - Barton

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback in full group discussion as well as smaller breakout groups. Participants responded to the following questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Where should the state focus its resources?*

Full Group responses to 'What comes to mind when you hear 'climate action?'' or 'What are your experiences of a changing climate?'

- Cost of living
- Cost of fuel
- Home insulation and home heating/cooling
- Efficiency
- Hydrogen fusion
- Houses in flood zones
- Information (reliable information vs. misinformation)
- Flooding
- Dams and bridges
- Resilience
- Relationships
- Diseases
- Adaptation
- Housing availability and affordability
- Community
- Insurance (flood maps in municipalities, need for updates and municipal changes)
- Food supply
- Cost of Food
- Erosion
- Community gardens
- Local food businesses
- Affordability and access to resources was mentioned many times

Breakout Group Notes

- Access to good and local food.
 - -Not a lot of food grown in Orleans County.
 - -Farmers losing crops from farms.
- Community resilience hubs
- Clean water/Drought
 - -Landfill
- A stabilized state level funding stream – federal funding is unreliable.
 - -Go after private industry who are responsible for climate change.

- -Tax the Uber rich
- Housing for folks who want to stay here
- Climate refugees already coming here
- Resources: each other, local e.g. not federal government, local fundraising, senators/house lucky we trust our representatives, good politics.
- Food: expensive!
- Housing: community fix up old houses/they are just sitting there. We have carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, landscapers...
 - Habitat [for Humanity] to organize to create or fix homes in town – people receiving the house help build it
 - cooperative housing/land trusts (there is a local example of one trying to start up)
- Grants for heat pumps and ADU are great but having to front the money to participate limits who can access the grant only to people with large amounts of savings or equity– high school trays program/career centers funded to learn to build affordable housing.
- Front money to builders to rehab houses – housing improvement
- Relax requirements to be certified and licensed as builders.
- Home share development/expansion/funding in the north east Kingdom
- Act 250 – most affordable housing is in flood prone areas
- Tree and Forest health.
- Fields, prime ag land is often in flood zones – identify and offer alternative locations
- FEMA fails people and municipalities – need state funding.
- widespread public comment/information periods (NVDA)
- groups are pitted against one another for limited resources
- Poor people live in flood Plains.
- People are scraping by; no transportation, food, income.
- State funding.
- NETO – funded weatherization work on a house and the folks working on it were learning the trade. 250-year-old house was so much warmer went from 10 cords of wood down to 4.5 cords. Widen the income criteria for this program to include families who are barely getting by (e.g. increase income eligibility)
- how do We flood safely – it's going to happen again. What can we do now to make it better next year? Preparing our roads and culverts so they can stay open and respond better
- Window inserts Made house a lot warmer, Glover energy committee and equity committee helped with this.
- If Shadow Lake Dam breaks, it will take the town of Glover out.
- FEMA money not coming through to towns
- No way to quickly charge an electric vehicle to get all the way to Boston. Local mechanics say they don't know how to work on electric vehicles
- Lake Parker does not have a sufficient sewage system around the lake; when flooding happens we can't swim there

Annex - Hardwick

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

43 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate?

- *Flooding:*
 - Floods
 - Flooded basement
 - Flooding
 - Flooding ticks Habitat migration
 - More rain less snow
 - Too much water for the Stormwater systems
 - Flooding
 - Flood damage

- Taking into account so much more rain during growing season.
- Floods. Need for cooling
- Fear when it rains a lot.
- Flooded basement
- Flooding
- *Temperature/Weather Patterns:*
 - heat
 - Extreme weather related events
 - Extreme weather.
 - Unpredictable weather
 - Shorter winters e.g. early sugaring
 - So hot in the summer. Never used to need AC.
 - Late frost in fall. Pumpkin crops. Landslides
 - Heating & cooling costs
 - Wildly fluctuating temperatures
 - Shorter winter
- *Livelihood impacts*
 - Destruction to livelihood.
 - More impacts to cover as news
 - I work for NEKO, which mucked and gutted 500 homes in 2024, managing 350 volunteers across the Northeast Kingdom.
 - Making Vermont unaffordable.
 - Second hand
 - Lots of taxes
 - Anxiety Concern about adequate housing Effects on ecology
 - Education. Incorporating environmental and climate change education at all grade levels. Compelling.
 - Allergies
 - Emergency management response
 - Loss of power
- *Other*
 - ticks
 - Flooding ticks Habitat migration
 - More ticks wetter pastures
 - Less bats = more insects
 - Invasive!
 - More downed trees

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

*This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes. **Italicized text is summary language written by the team preparing these notes, while non-italicized text is unedited text from participants.***

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Weatherization initiatives stood out as a compelling recommendation, with many emphasizing the need for cost reductions, education, built in funding for vermiculite remediation, collective buying, and minimum standards to protect investments.*
 - Continued funding for low income weatherization.
 - Address low-income needs for weatherizing mobile homes and rental apartments.
 - Actions that can contribute to more than climate action, to mobilize more support, such as weatherization which helps with resilience and also improves quality of life.
 - Invest in our weatherization workforce! Bring back the trades.
 - Support for home weatherization
 - Weatherization: push it
 - Weatherization
 - Continue promoting weatherization - MERP was a great opportunity for municipalities
 - Weatherization across all sectors
 - #8: Education for landowners and contractors
 - Pre-carbon load should be the focus -- VTers need to see lower costs, such as cutting oil usage. Weatherization should include funding to remediate vermiculite and improve wiring. We have older homes that need retrofitting, and (as noted above) there is no one-size fits all.)
 - Incorporate collective buying into weatherization -- this might help lower costs for all contractors, who are all sourcing things like cellulose independently.
 - There needs to be a minimum standard in weatherization and fuel switching -- people who make the investment should be ensured that their investment is protected.

Recs #1 and #7: Cap and Invest and/or a Modified Clean Heat Standard

- *Many supported a Cap and Invest program that protects low-income communities, though some raised concerns about delays, unintended impacts, and the need to regulate fuel delivery companies. Participants expressed different views on a Clean Heat Standard.*

- Finding ways, like cap & trade, to put a price on carbon/fossil fuels, to start lowering emissions while also supporting the most vulnerable folks who will be impacted, like the way Canada does it
- Cap and invest as it will generate revenue to fund other programs
- The cap and invest program when it's explained clearly.
- Pre-fund low-income people in a cap and invest framework
- Cap and invest is complicated with unknown costs and would take longer to implement
- #1: Generate revenues to help different programs for a just transition
- #7: Need regulation of fuel delivery companies – incentives to help them offer ways to transition to renewable energy
- #1: Complicated. Too many unknowns
- #7: A over B
- #7: additional detail on clean heat standard - No.

Recommendations #4-6: Grid and Community Solar

- *Several raised concerns about grid capacity and highlighted community solar, especially VEC's Community program, as a good example.*
 - Grid infrastructure
 - Support grid flexibility that includes making community solar feasible
 - Community solar and grid upgrades paired with local storage for resilience
 - Grid hardening
 - #5: Grid constraints in northern VT
 - #6: Just transition supporting lower-income Vermonters is really important
 - Focus on incentives for community solar.
 - Community solar
 - NVDA used EECBG funds for low-income ratepayers to buy into VEC's solar infrastructure where they will see reduced electric bills for 10 years.

Recommendation #3: Public transportation

- *Participants emphasized the need for more public transit and lower-emission travel options.*
 - More public transportation! Not everyone has a car. Car-sharing infrastructure
 - No mention of cutting back on air travel specifically. I don't think people realize How bad it is for the environment. Maybe a PR campaign 'one flight a year'? Incentives for non-air travel?
 - Reduce transportation emissions
 - #3 is compelling
 - #3: So important to continue to invest – transit, change behavior, equitable, support lower income folks

Recommendation #2: EVs

- *Participants highlighted the importance of realistic efficiency standards, expanding EV charging networks, and supporting affordable EV adoption, especially in rural areas.*
 - EV infrastructure
 - Set minimum real life use standards on efficiency on EVs, heat pumps, and other new technologies. Often these are only discussed in the optimal numbers.
 - #2: Charging network needed
 - #2: Support affordable EV transition and EV charging in rural areas and rental/urban areas
 - Don't put the cart before the horse... You can't penalize how things are now without having the tools to improve. Low income people can't afford EVs. Cumbersome regulations prevent innovation.

Cross-Sector additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Some of the recommendations are way too jargony, so I don't know if they are compelling. What's the big idea? Needs to be clear for each one and understandable.
 - #11: Too many studies
 - #12: Impacts to lower income
 - Encourage renewable energy adoption across all sectors

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #7-14: Workforce

- *Many emphasized workforce development and education around the trades as most compelling, with specific mentions of incentives for contractors to be trained in weatherization.*
 - Workforce recommendations - career & tech Ed centers including all trades
 - Workforce development Education pre-k to 12 on reasons for the changing climate
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development
 - Education: retain young people with a focus on green energy and training. More HVAC training. More trades!

- Weatherization without the trades to support innovation and improvement will not be sustainable
- #7: Yes! Career pathway jobs
- Education and workforce development to provide opportunities for young people to have them stay in Vermont and help
- #8 & 10. Change ed funding to incentivize kids to do tech ed Community Solar in cross sector
- #8: Yes! Start young students
- #9: Useful for retaining young people. Reduce fear of change that might be necessary
- #11: Useful to change behavior
- Mentoring middle school kids on climate actions and the connected jobs
- Workforce development opportunities are many. CTEs are important here, but they are underfunded
- Change ed funding to NOT follow the students so tech centers get students!
- Need to incentivize contractors to be registered and have training on building/renovating homes to be energy efficient
- Education for both landowners and contractors.
- Need more qualified resources to help with energy efficiency work

Recommendations #1-3: Education

- *Participants highlighted the importance of education to engage communities, shift behavior, and build climate resilience.*
 - Educate and explain
 - Early education in public schools
 - Training and education will help change behavior

Recommendations #4-6: Compact Settlement

- *Participants supported compact settlement through new wastewater treatment technologies to enable housing in small towns and improve transportation infrastructure.*
 - Support compact settlement
 - Ideas for new ways and/or technologies for wastewater treatment to enable new housing in small towns
 - #5: Yes! Transp for ppl w/o cars

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Housing for weatherization workforce. These issues are connected!

Rural Resilience and Adaptation

Recommendations #13: Public Health Recommendations #1 & #2: Capacity and Planning

- *Many supported increased municipal funding for towns, RPCs, and organizations involved in this work.*
 - Funding for RPCs to provide TA to towns
 - Funding for technical assistance for municipalities to have more capacity when applying for grants, etc
 - Fund RPCs to support small towns more effectively
 - Provide more regional planning guidance
 - Money for towns - not just Regional Planning Commissions
 - Community Capacity and Planning - So important to have more resources @ RPCs as towns are resources. Don't have technical expertise. Climate is not restricted to town boundaries.
 - #13: It isn't just physical items that create resilience hubs, it's also social connection and networks. It's also funding mutual aid and volunteer orgs that are doing this work already!

Recommendations #14: Public Health

- *Several emphasized climate-related public health concerns.*
 - Public health related to a changing climate like fans, cooling, air purifiers etc
 - Public health related to heat and climate

Rural Resilience and Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #3: Expand funding to Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF) - permanent!!!
 - #7: Match to other health indicators
 - Education and shared resources to help communities better prepare for climate challenges.

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Recommendation #4 & 5: Support Adaptation

- *Supporting farmer to farmer education, resources, funding*
 - Farmer to farmer education is important

- Climate resiliency for farmers. Don't let farms go out of business due to climate change
- Supporting farms through climate change
- Protect and support farmers
- #4: Farms to farmer
- Reduce and sequestration: Help the farmers. They don't have the money to do this.
- The best adoption strategy is to speak farmer to farmer, or neighbor to neighbor

Recommendation #6: Support Adaptation

- *Participants emphasized the urgency of investing in food system resilience and support.*
 - Food resiliency
 - Food system support.
 - 9-14 year time horizon before weather events destabilize supply chains and economies—VT should focus on rapid food system resiliency investments instead of trying to shut off the faucet
 - Build and sustain resilient local food systems
 - #6 is compelling
 - Looking at the data there are strong implications of the supply chain breaking down. We need to support adaptive nature-based solutions and ensure that our local food supply is resilient. This is a public health issue.
 - Supply chain within VT examine
 - #6: In view of fed \$ withdrawn, this is [****]

Recommendation #9: Siting

- *Several comments supported incentives for renewable energy siting, specifically highlighting solar installations that allow for agricultural use.*
 - #9: Incentives are key
 - Electricity. Solar panel installation that allow for ag (grazing, crops) incentives (maybe it's already mentioned?)

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #1: No unfunded mandates
 - #3 is compelling
 - Carbon consumption diet done by Scotland in small crops. Biochar carbon dated to 1000+ yr. (referring to carbon sink)
 - #7: Inclusive!
 - #10: Yes! I use the knowledge of ancestral inhabitants
 - Adopt regenerative agricultural practices
 - Hemp can be rotated into crops to improve soil health.

- Learning ancestral ways of caring for Turtle Island

General:

- *Funding*
 - Ideas on how to fund initiatives beyond Cap and Trade
 - Where to get finances to gear our educational system toward energy efficiency and sustainability
 - Finding Funding for climate actions
 - How do we pay for this, e.g. payment for ecosystem services? Maybe private money.
 - Work with private sector for funding
 - Think about non-federal funding opportunities.
 - Recognize the federal funding and policy changes and how they might be addressed and overcome.
 - We should plan for less reliance on federal funds
- *Equity / involving low and moderate income Vermonters*
 - Focus on equity. Make sure the most vulnerable Vermonters are not sacrificed for the greater good
 - Lower income people do not think that this applies to them. They need to see that this is a bread-and-butter issue.
 - Easier programs for low income Vermonters to access assistance
 - Be sure that low income folks can participate equally in actions
 - Persuading especially low income folks to be interested in energy efficiency
 - Low income VT outreach
- *Language-specific feedback*
 - Introduce a summary sentence prior to each longer description.
 - Simplify regulations to allow people to help themselves
 - Communicate the ideas in a way that anyone can understand
- *Other input*
 - Pre carbon load being factored in net positive on the environment
 - Ensure actions taken to address and prepare for climate challenges, simultaneously address other issues faced by Vermonters to gain more support.
 - Work ASAP!
 - Focus on what brings emissions down the fastest. We are running out of time
 - Prioritize based on funding you have
 - We have to try something denial won't help anyone
 - Education and shared resources to help communities better prepare for climate challenges.
 - More educational meetings like this
 - Keep holding meetings like this until most of the state is engaged

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	81
Cross-Cutting Issues	58
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	51
Agriculture and Ecosystems	61

Annex - Hinesburg

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

76 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate?

- *Extreme weather events and other impacts*
 - Stranger weather
 - Intense rain
 - Big rain events
 - Dramatic, intense weather events, especially rain and 90+ degree days
 - More extreme weather patterns
 - Increasing weather extremes – hot summers, flooding
 - Extreme weather events
 - Catastrophic flooding, heatwaves, and wildfires

- Three 100-year floods in the past year
- Catastrophic flooding
- Windy!
- Freezing rain
- Rain and high wind have become stressful—worry for our towns and communities
- Is flooding becoming an annual event?
- Threatening weather patterns
- Drought
- Concern about drought, floods, and excessive heat
- Less assurance
- Summers are increasingly hot
- Hot summers
- Summers are too hot! Winters are not normal!
- Hotter summers, warmer winters
- Warmer summers
- Humidity
- Heat
- ***Winters, Snow, and Recreation Loss***
 - Less snow
 - Shorter and warmer winters are a loss of a way of life
 - Short ski season
 - Shortened ski season
 - Winters aren't what they used to be—hard to ice skate, skiing more variable
 - Less consistent snow and cold, shorter winters
 - Not enough snow
 - Fewer days to cross-country ski
 - Less extreme temperatures in winter
 - I enjoyed the winter snow
 - Inconsistent snowfall, warmer winters, hotter summers
 - Earlier tapping for sugaring
 - Too little snow, too warm, too many bugs—it's scary
 - Outdoor recreation (nordic skiing, swimming) is impacted by inconsistent seasons and heat
- ***Flooding & Infrastructure Challenges***
 - Property damage
 - Wet basement and missing shingles
 - Installed a French drain due to repeated flooding
 - Road washed out for 9 months
 - Friends moving due to flooding
 - Devastated downtown and crippling budget crisis for our community
 - Tragic flooding hits low-income communities hardest

- Struggling to maintain historic settlement patterns in floodplains—need smart growth
- Mud seasons are harder on infrastructure
- Dispersed settlement = infrastructure gaps, harder disaster response
- Need better building ventilation
- High costs
- *Ecology, Health & Agriculture*
 - Ticks
 - Ticks and worries
 - Ticks and tick-borne illness
 - Novel diseases (e.g., Lyme)
 - Invasive plants
 - Invasive species
 - Cyanobacteria blooms in the lake
 - Farmers are struggling
 - Drought affecting farms
 - Fruit trees are stressed
 - Concern about ecological balance
 - Buying food from farmers affected by variable weather and heat
 - Concern for vulnerable populations
- *Emotional, Mental, and Social Impacts*
 - Fearful
 - I find it terrifying
 - Climate anxiety
 - Worrying about the planet due to rapid climate change
 - Concern for my children's future
 - Anxiety and grief over biodiversity loss
 - Feeling more insecure about the future
 - Concern about resilience
 - Threats to grandchildren
 - Frustrated with Phil Scott
 - Stressed about political will to act
- *Other*
 - Changing energy use
 - Looking for new thermal energy sources
 - Need housing for workforce
 - Increase in second homes
 - Rising climate migration to Vermont
 - Growing need for climate mitigation jobs
 - Development pressure shifting to Vermont
 - Planting trees
 - Need for smart growth and shared infrastructure

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recs #1 and #7: Cap and Invest and/or a Modified Clean Heat Standard

- *Many participants supported a Cap and Invest program or a modified Clean Heat Standard, and noted that implementation must include equity considerations.*
 - Cap and Invest!
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest for transportation emissions
 - Join a Cap and invest program for buildings and thermal
 - Cross-sector mitigation for transportation and buildings: numbers 1 & 2 in blue draft stack: cap and invest programs.
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest with strong guards for how money is spent and who decides
 - Cap and invest to reduce pollution and provide funding for mitigation
 - Cap and trade to raise funds. stick to the plan
 - Cap and invest. Yes, pricing is one of the most effective policy to nudge action in the right way. We can design things in an equitable way.
 - Cap-and invest program
 - Cap and invest
 - CAP AND INVEST
 - Cap and invest
 - Mitigation 1 is compelling
 - Cap and invest
 - Start figuring out cap and invest
 - Cap and invest for transportation and heating/cooling
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap & invest
 - Cap and invest should explicitly commit revenue to fund existing low & moderate income weatherization and fuel switching programs
 - Cap/invest: making sure that reinvestment is guided by equity and ensuring limits on loopholes
 - Make significant progress on cap and invest this biennium

- Design the cap and invest policy to work. And make it politically acceptable.
- Invest in implementation for cap and invest now
- Go for cap and invest
- Cap and invest workable for a rural state
- Let's get something done. Cap & invest addresses our requirement to reduce emissions and has a good track record in other states
- Coordinate with NY on Cap and Invest
- #1: Use the Cap and Invest program to fund weatherization and alternative transportation programs like public transit.
- #1: Support cap and invest for both transportation and thermal sectors. But I desperately would like to see explicit commitment to a good portion of revenue will go directly to implement existing low-income weatherization and fuel switching and funding pilot shared community infrastructure projects like TENS (Thermal Energy Networks).
- #1: I like what I'm hearing about Cap and Invest, which is working well in CA and Quebec and could provide money to low-income Vermonters.
- #1: This is a very important program to support: Cap and invest.
- #1: Vital if we take climate seriously
- #1: Yes
- Need to pass Cap and Invest program to provide funding for actions
- #1: We are running out of time. We must take bold action if we are to have any hope of catching up. The Cap and Invest approach would have the most impact.
- #1: Incentivize transitioning infrastructure that will make it easier for people to get off of fossil fuel e.g. thermal energy networks
- #1: instead of CHS, create incentivized pathways for homes and buildings to get carbon free. Instead of pulling businesses away from fossil fuels, push them out by making them obsolete
- #1: Small incentive efforts that help people eliminate carbon emissions by getting off fossil fuels will convince fuel purveyors to move away from fossil fuels.
- Transportation actions are very specific and seem feasible. Like trade & invest plan if funds are invested back into community including support for upgrades (ex: electrical pane 2 support heat pumps)
- #7: Consider climate justice, equity, and affordability when planning
- #7: Vital if we take climate seriously
- Clean Heat Standard
- Clean heat standard replacement
- Clean heat standard
- Amend clean heat standard
- Clean Heat Standard
- Modified clean heat standard: make fossil fuels more expensive and return the money to low and moderate income Vermonters

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Participants emphasized the importance of weatherization.*
 - Weatherization programs
 - Weatherization
 - Weatherization!
 - Weatherization!
 - Fund weatherization for low income
 - #9 weatherization is compelling
 - #9: Vital for protecting Vermonters
 - Spend more time and money on weatherization
 - Mitigation 8 is compelling
 - Fund more MERP projects
 - Yes to weatherization of homes actions.
 - #8: Yes
 - Support for #8.
 - Concern about “notch groups”—middle-income Vermonters who earn too much for aid but can’t afford the upfront costs to weatherize or electrify their homes.
 - Perhaps targeted low-interest loans with manageable payments could be a possible solution.

Recommendation #3: Public/Active/Shared Transit

- *Many highlighted the importance of redesigned public transit and connected bike paths.*
 - Public transportation
 - Public transit
 - Redesign of public transportation
 - Transportation- more public chargers, electric buses, incentives for ev’s , bike lanes!
 - Multi-modal transport - especially bike infrastructure! Connecting bike paths between towns, instead of building bike paths that lead to nowhere!
 - mitigation 3 is compelling
 - #3: Yes
 - #3: Fund the transit solutions that exist today (e.g. GMT)
 - [Unintelligible] Second home tax rate. Those who have more, pay more. Local farm products. Have the state buy heat pumps and heat pump hot water heaters in bulk and give them to low income people.”
 - Support for #3

Recommendation #2: EVs

- *Participants supported EV incentives, shared housing charging, home upgrade funding, and mentioned Advanced Clean Cars II, Clean Trucks, and fuel tracking.*
 - EV incentives
 - Enabling EV charging in shared housing

- Funding for getting homes ready for EVs, heat pumps, etc
- Advanced Clean Cars II and Clean trucks in cross sector mitigation.
- Yes to EV incentives.
- #2: Yes
- #2: Stop the course with Advanced Clean Cars rule.
- #2: We should track gasoline and diesel fuel consumption annually by town, so that communities can track progress toward climate goals.
- #2: Transportation issues ARE land use issues. Let's add a fee for development outside density center that goes toward shared community infrastructure (unless a future [unintelligible] growth area)
- #2: Love CA's Clean Cars Act and EV incentives for low-income residents. Yes to charging stations which are pathetic in VT.
- Maintain Advanced Clean Car rules - one of the only emissions cutting policies that the State of VT has implemented.

Recommendations #4-6: Grid and community solar

- *Several emphasized the need for electrification, along with support for the grid and assistance for low- and moderate-income households.*
 - Electrify everything
 - Fund low-income households to electrify.
 - Supporting electrification with funding to support low and moderate income households
 - Mitigation 6 is compelling
 - Need a plan for grid infrastructure - community solar, microgrids.
 - Mitigation 4 is compelling
 - Support for #5
 - Community solar
 - Encourage electrification of the heating and transportation sectors by lowering electricity rates, especially for LMI Vermonters through an expanded program like GMP offers. The program could be paid for by a small fee on fossil fuels.

New/Missing Recommendations: Building Energy Codes & Geothermal

- *Participants emphasized the need to enforce energy codes for new homes and require renewable energy for heating in all new buildings*
 - Enforce energy codes for new homes
 - Energy codes
 - New construction should be required to use renewable energy for heating.
 - Require all new buildings to use renewable energy for heating
 - #12: Building inspectors for new construction. Heat pumps for new construction.
 - Increase energy code compliance for new homes
 - Need specific action regarding RBES/CBES

- Need RBES/CBES action
- [Note: Need action to support allowing Efficiency VT to claim energy savings for assisting builders to comply with RBES/CBES. This would unlock funding that already exists to pay for energy professionals to partner with contractors as they build all the new housing that VT desperately needs. This was an element in S.65 that was not advanced this legislative session.]
- *Participants highlighted that geothermal and thermal energy networks do not show up in the plan.*
 - Thermal energy networks for growth centers not in plan but should be #1 for reducing building emissions Shares waste water and excess heat and ground source heat pump for multiple buildings
 - Geothermal for growth centers
 - Thermal energy networks are not in this draft
 - Thermal energy networks efficiency matters
 - Support ground source heat pumps and waste heat recovery (and sharing)
 - Pilot thermal energy networks
 - There is no mention of geothermal networks in this draft. TENS (Thermal Energy Networks) are CO2 free, use the ROWs of gas and power companies; have the same worker skills and tools and use off-the-shelf parts and technologies and with the bill passed this year that allows towns, groups and organizations to form companies to create TENS.
 - TENS
 - Waste heat Recovery

Recommendation #10: Electrification of space and water heating

- *Support for funding to electrify space and water heating for low- and moderate-income households, and ensure new multi-family housing is built ready for electrification and EV charging.*
 - #10: Yes
 - #10: New multi-family development should be built ready for electrification, panels, conduit for charging, etc.

Cross-Sector Mitigation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Fund and provide technical assistance for municipalities to establish wastewater systems with heat recovery.
 - We need to make PUC data more accessible (e.g. mileage driven by specific communities) to identify which practices are more effective and ultimately offer credits or incentives to encourage reductions.
 - Time! Weatherization. Low-income solar. Cap and Invest and low-income payment to ecosystem services smart growth and intermodal transportation. Incentivizing public use. Connect bike routes. Support plug-in hybrid.

- Cross sector mitigation #1, 2, 8, and 9 are most compelling
- Funding, rebates, credits
- Incentives and regs for solar & wind
- We should track heating fuel oil by town so that towns can track their climate goals.
- Develop statewide energy mandates and standards for buildings , transportation, industrial processes etc
- Upgrade electric system to support fuel switching from transportation and thermal

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #7-14: Workforce

- *Many highlighted workforce development as a top priority, noting the need to expand apprenticeships in the trades and offer training incentives to work in Vermont.*
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development. Encouraging trades.
 - Workforce development
 - Find more electricians
 - More electricians
 - Creating a climate workforce
 - Climate careers
 - Training for workers to do trades and weatherization projects.- offer free tuition in exchange for working in VT.
 - Cross-cutting 12 is compelling
 - #7: A climate workforce is critical and needs to be prioritized. Also, a clear win that should be supported by both sides of the aisle.
 - #7: Need workforce training and licensing or some other check on quality of work
 - #10: Service jobs should be invested in! Low-cost, great reward.
 - #10: We need more electricians!
 - Weatherization workforce plans aren't developed enough. Need more specificity. Need to partner with industry.
 - Increase weatherization workforce

Recommendations #7-8: Workforce & #1 Education

- *Many highlighted the need to expand education for weatherization jobs, integrate climate change curriculum, and support educational initiatives to foster a culture shift.*
 - Expand educational opportunities for weatherization jobs
 - Education
 - Education at the elementary school curriculum.

- Support education and funding for weatherization
- Education is an essential investment
- Funding for education
- Interdisciplinary climate change curriculum is critical
- Add public education initiatives for a massive culture shift!
- Shifting culture so everyone feels like they can do this climate work (education)
- Change education funding to not follow the student — so teachers get students!

Missing recommendation: outdoor worker protections

- *Participants felt that protections for outdoor workers are missing from the priority actions.*
 - We need outdoor worker protections in here
 - Add protections from heat related illness for outdoor workers like California has!
 - Outdoor Worker protection provisions are MISSING
 - Protecting outdoor workers is MISSING
 - Worker protections

Recommendations #4-6: Compact Settlement

- *Support for investing in infrastructure for compact development, expanding multimodal transportation, and enforcing siting criteria to avoid flood-prone areas.*
 - cross-cutting 5 is compelling
 - cross-cutting 4 is compelling
 - Compact settlement - walkable downtown
 - #4: Siting criteria for housing so not built in flood prone or sensitive areas.
 - Land use and compact dev. With supportive infrastructure, and policies, such as transfer of development rights
 - We need stronger land use policies, such as a cap-and-trade-style system for development rights, allowing rural landowners to sell housing allowances to urban developers and concentrate growth in climate-favorable areas.

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Implement act 181.
 - Workforce development - public transit
 - #3: Sustainably fund our community action [unintelligible]
 - #1: The state has reduce the use of fossil fuels for transportation – which has resulted in the loss of fuel taxes. The administration and legislature have rewarded those choosing high mileage cars and EVs by proposing to charge by mileage. Winners – big motor vehicles; losers – efficient vehicles.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation

Recommendations #1, #2, #4: Capacity and Planning

- *Participants called for dedicated funding and staffing for Regional Planning Commissions, local organizations/businesses, and municipalities to support resilience planning, hazard mitigation efforts, and regional collaboration more broadly.*
 - Dedicated funding for regional commissions for resilience and hazard mitigation preparedness
 - Community capacity building
 - Resilience planning
 - RPC staff support for planning
 - Add more staff to regional planning to help with planning.
 - Community resilience hubs
 - Support communities that don't have the resources to fix what can be fixed and improve what can be improved; help us to support our residents plan for resilient development and pay for larger culverts
 - Regional/community approaches and funding for that is important
 - Regional level collaborations- human, financial, opportunities at scale
 - #1: Regional cooperation: increase the role of RPC to support, pool resources, share lessons and opportunities with smaller towns.
 - #1: It's not only building state capacity, but building municipal/community capacity
 - \$ to implement existing planned community projects
 - #2: Yes to regional/community frameworks. We need to make up for lack of county government.
 - Establish permanent, dedicated funding for RPCs to do climate resilient planning
 - #4: We need to connect more local organizations to each other.
 - Business support network
 - Funding for RPCs (all in agreement) to help plan for eventual disasters and increase public awareness of steps to take. Need to keep communities connected on this issue. Smaller communities need the support - RPCs enable networking among communities.
 - No new municipal action plans. Small communities don't have staff or committees that are able to do anything with them. They can utilize other plans (Enhanced Energy Plans and Hazard Mitigation Plans) to develop strong actions. [Note: Another option is to simply adopt the State's CAP. Planning with no funding or resources for implementation will waste money and effort. Plans will sit on shelves while pressing matters are attended to.]
 - Need to make a list of what not to spend funds on (see above)
 - Support for businesses for resilience and disaster response needs to be more specific
 - Stronger communities. Know your neighbors.

Recommendation #5: New building

- *Participants supported prohibiting new housing development in flood zones.*
 - Rural resilience # 5- stop building in flood zones
 - No housing in flood areas (river corridors & Special flood hazard areas) full stop. No exceptions.
 - Avoid future development in sensitive or flood prone areas
 - Housing: need to integrate housing targets with flood insurance rate map updates, river corridors.
 - What is “climate safe” housing? Is there such a thing?
 - All new housing developers should be incentivized to be mixed use, have affordable units, include heat recovery and sharing in at least - option - Not be in River corridor, SPHA, nor wetlands ever.
 - #1-2: There is no such thing as adapting to a constantly changing/ unstable environment. Until we stop burning fossil fuels and the climate stops its continuing decline, adaptation is next to impossible.

Recommendation #3: Flood Resilient Communities Fund

- *Participants emphasized the importance of rural and flood resilience, including the dedicated Flood Resilient Communities Fund.*
 - Rural resilience
 - Flood resilient fund
 - Resilience and flood mitigation initiatives.
 - Flood resilience
 - #3: This funding needs to fund sustainable jobs involving this
 - Rural resilience #3 is compelling

Rural Resilience & Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Shared community infrastructure
 - Do not forget to add state making difficult decisions on what projects NOT to fund - see rural resilience 8
 - #6: Much of GMP’s electrical transmission is maxed out (North of Middlebury) and this MUST be upgraded if we are going to meet our goals of basically electrifying everything possible and decarbonizing the power. GMP has been dragging its heels on upgrades since it's not a very profitable proposition (short-term). We need to make transmission public and do upgrades ourselves ASAP.
 - #6: Creating municipal scale thermal energy networks should be added to the program list
 - #7: Yes, when looking at MERP, just EVT Energy Burden Report is skewed

- #14: Refrigerants used in heat pumps, air conditioners, refrigerators, etc. are mostly highly potent - GHG's thousand times more potent than CO2 and I see no plans to prevent these refrigerants from eventually getting into the atmosphere (e.g. require regular maintenance, capture at end of life, etc.).
- Strong support for #2 and #14 (community capacity), #5 and #10 (rural resilience and adaptation), and #13 (public health)

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Recommendation #15: Biomass Study

- *Participants called for an end to burning-based energy sources and full life-cycle emissions accounting, though one participant supported limited biomass waste heat for heating.*
 - Stop burning anything count emissions for whole life cycle Listen to the Just Transitions subcommittee
 - Please count emissions accurately. Count methane from Hydro Quebec, from fracking and leaks, transporting. Count biomass - it is not neutral. Please listen to the Just Transition Subcommittee.
 - No burning of anything!
 - Stop thinking biomass is renewable it is not
 - No biomass
 - #15: Be honest and acknowledge that burning anything - biomass, biofuels - compounds the climate problem and is not sustainable. Do not build any biomass plants.
 - Do the biomass study
 - I believe the single important issue (OMG there are so very many!) is lowering CO2 as quickly as possible. Quickly! That means to stop/greatly reduce burning anything - oil, gas, wood. That means 'NO' to biomass (trees will never grow fast enough to compensate! Don't even 'study' the industry- it's dirty).
 - #15: Biomass is best used for heating. We should use the waste heat from McNeil to heat buildings in Burlington and support all the schools that heat with this renewable fuel, biomass.

Recommendation #5: Support Adaptation

- *Participants supported creating a dedicated emergency recovery fund for farms and forests to address climate-related disasters.*
 - Ag and eco #5- dedicated climate impact emergency recovery fund for farms

- Dedicated impact emergency recovery fund for farms and forestry operations to ensure they can viably recover from the climate induced disasters.
- Climate resilient fund
- Enthusiasm about creating funds to support those affected by climate-related disasters, especially farmers and small business owners who may struggle to recover.
- *Participants also emphasized other ways to support farm and forestry businesses*
 - Educational services to staff in new hazard if climate change.
 - Ag technical assistance is compelling
 - Concrete ways to incentivise promoting ecosystem services/land management practices

Recommendation #1: Reduce and Sequester

- *Support for recommendation 1 by promoting carbon sequestration through regenerative farming practices like no-till, cover crops, biochar, and rotational grazing.*
 - Ag and Eco #1 - sequester carbon
 - #1: We can't just stop adding GHGs to the atmosphere. We must take the CO2 in the atmosphere and sequester it back in the ground – harness VT's farmers to do this. No till, cover crops, no pesticides, Biochar, intensive rotational grazing

Recommendations #9-13: Climate-Resilient Land

- Climate-resilient land 9 is compelling
- Climate-resilient land: River corridors, conservation
- Climate-Resilient Land Workforce training and quality assurance
- Water storage
- Educate and support water management to mitigate and avoid harmful flooding
- Support for #9, 12, and 13
- Transitional forests and clearings are also important
- Since our forests are the only known mechanisms that can reduce the CO2 in the air, VT should prioritize conservation, expansion, preservation, and connection of our forests if we are to stop the irreversible warming of our planet.
- Most urgent and perhaps missing - go ahead and conserve land and fund that, but then manage that land for the overall health and resilience rather than for timber, syrup, recreation and viewsheds

Ag & Eco additional input

- Ag sector programs #'s 1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13 seems fairly easy to implement and so important
- Incentivize electric lawn equipment. Switching to electricity for small engines reduces emission and noise pollution.
- *Improved data*

- Improve data systems and data collection on land use
- Improving data tracking land use
- *Tightening up the actions*
 - Agriculture and ecosystems actions could be combined (1-3 very related)
 - Agriculture and ecosystems are very important. Could be combined to be more concise

General:

- *Prioritize, shorten, and use plain language*
 - Choose a few top priorities
 - Cut 25% of the wording
 - There are too many actions! Can we cut down, or consolidate? Or find some common threads throughout so that we are working on one we can be advancing several?
 - Focus in on the top 10 or so priorities
 - For these input sessions, put the provisions in plainer language
 - Write the actions in plain language
 - Shorter actions
 - Maybe make it shorter?
- *Implement the plan/ meet legal requirements*
 - Stick to the plan.
 - Urgency, implement the climate action plan now!!!! No roll back
 - Meet the required Climate Action Plan goals or be sued.
 - Sticking to the deadlines!!!
 - Don't give up
 - IMPLEMENT THE PLAN it is LAW
 - Stick to the goals!
 - Move faster!
 - Go big or go home
 - No delays - implement the plan.
 - Meet the deadlines!
 - Make sure these points are made into law
 - Keep hope in the process
 - Implement the law
 - Honor the plan
 - Keep going
 - Honor the Plan
 - Mandates
 - Please finalize a plan that includes recommendations to meet our legal requirements and ensure long term affordability and sustainability for Vermont
- *Funding concerns*
 - Permanent funding for CVOEO, Capstone, etc!
 - Private public financing solutions

- \$ to implement plans
- Align budgets with emission reduction requirements
- Emphasize actions that don't require funding
- Remember we have to be able to afford it
- *Participants supported other ways of raising revenue.*
 - Raise the gas tax
 - Carbon pricing
- Concern that the recommendations would burden low-income and rural Vermonters, especially with high gas prices, and saw California comparisons as irrelevant.
- Keep the ability to sue the state.
- Can we express this information in financial terms? How much would one save?
- Identify similarities in strategies across priorities to facilitate implementing multiple goals
- Streamlining the process
- A plan that adds up
- Time!
- How do you treat economic growth and the drive for 33000 more houses in reducing GHG
- Bias towards near-term action
- Sticks not carrots
- Don't take options off the table until the problem is solved
- Keep it up!
- Focus on fossil fuels
- Consider climate justice and equity in planning.
- I admire your efforts to try to find consensus on these complicated issues.
- Realize that adaptation to a constantly changing environment is not possible.
- We need regs. People won't do what's necessary without laws.
- Get the data
- Push through the bureaucracy of it and get in people's faces
- Utilize local heroes to do the work!
- Continue to develop outside resources so new ideas are thrown into the mix
- These meeting using less paperwork and narrow the view. This system is overwhelming.
- You are on the right side of history
- Flow chart of all our env refs and statutes and mandates
- Thank you! Keep up the good work!

Plenary notes:

- Concern that the economic, housing, and population growth goals of the state are incongruous with the climate and environmental needs of the state. That GDP growth will yield increased energy demand. The specific issue: how do home and pop. increases help reduce energy use/GHG production? Housing, land-use, economic climate goals need to be complimentary.
- Energy committees are often at odds with the state because the initiatives they want to advance require action at the state level.

- All new buildings/homes should be required to have electricity powered heating, be solar ready, and weatherized. It is so much more challenging and expensive to retrofit an old home than it is to build a new home using new, best climate change resilience practices. Use and enforce building codes. Noted that some places (South Burlington) have already adopted practices such as this, and suggested that the approach needed to be statewide.
- Expressed concern about the pattern of historic flooding that is emerging in his community. There is no time to waste for climate action; its impacts are already here.
- Support for Cap and Invest - it's the most significant one and would help fund other actions.
- Dept. of Ag. Silvopasture program must be fully funded and deployed statewide. We should subsidize farms to adopt silviculture/agro-ecological practices, while also, ultimately, making those practices the standard for the state.
- Concerned about the impact of certain recommendations on low-income workers who live far from work (i.e. Cap and Invest).
- At one point, we had an option to revise the Clean Heat Standard... There was good work to be done, but in the end it was just too complicated.
- Concerned about disease threats from climate change. How are we addressing disease and public health impacts of climate change? How do we define land-use types and specifically "conservation?" Should land that is managed using pesticides and non-ecologically friendly options count as conserved? That is not its natural state, and the pesticides that are often used on these "conserved lands" can last for extended periods of time. We need to manage our lands in ecologically sound, sustainable ways if we are to consider them to be "conserved."
- We need to protect outdoor workers. Protecting outdoor workers does not show up in the plan. Need to protect the frontline workforce that is key to decarbonization and infrastructure hardening to threats and that is also the most impacted by the climate threats, such as extreme heat.
- We haven't really talked about regional cooperation (i.e. RGGI). Going at this alone is not a good strategy, we need to work with our neighbors.
- The state must find ways to "honor the plan," meaning implement it as wholly as possible. It should not be an aspiration; it should be a tool for actually implementing change. This includes getting serious about mandates. Policies need to be mandatory. Please do not cut it in an era of crisis. The government must step up and fulfill its role of keeping its constituents safe from harm.
- More emphasis on incentivizing the development of pro-climate markets. Wonkish stuff is complex and easy to politicize. How do we ensure that the future economy is effectively incentivizing market actors to pursue climate friendly opportunities.

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	170
Cross-Cutting Issues	93
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	88
Agriculture and Ecosystems	98

Annex - St. Albans

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

27 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate?

- *Temperature Changes/Heat:*
 - Hotter summers
 - Heat
 - Warmer climate hotter summers
 - Heat, air quality,
 - Strong temperature flux
 - Ac needed
 - Hatter summers

- *Snow/winter Changes:*
 - Less snow
 - Shorter/different sugaring season
 - No backyard ice rinks.
 - Less snow for skiing, hotter summers
 - Ski and Maple sugaring seasons are erratic
 - less snow at beginning of winter
 - Less snow less skiing
 - More rain, warmer winter
 - Less snow
 - shorter winters
- *Flooding/Water Issues:*
 - Erratic flooding
 - Wild weather, communities flooded
 - Annual flooding events rather than 1-in-100 year flooding events
 - Algae bloom in St Albans Bay
 - Flooding in cities near me but not mine
 - Increased rainfall changing home garden potential
 - Flooding
 - My community garden flooded two years in a row.
 - Water quality—the lake is gross
- *Ecological/Biological Impacts:*
 - bird loss
 - More rain, warmer winter, tics
 - Vector diseases
 - More mosquitos
 - Invasive species
 - Ticks
- *Personal/emotional impacts:*
 - Ski and Maple sugaring seasons are erratic, friends' properties are flooding out, my daughter is scared.
 - Anxious for the future
 - Climate grief and anger
 - All around me almost every day
 - No Climate Substitute For Protection of The Public
- *Other*
 - Still being able to wear sweaters instead of coats in December
 - bad air
 - Unpredictable growing climate.

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendation #1: Cap and Invest

- *Many supported Cap and Invest but raised concerns about how to communicate costs effectively and improve clean energy access for low-income individuals and those facing logistical challenges.*
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest
 - Cap and invest or clean heat standard.
 - Cap and Invest (because without it you can't fund the others)
 - Cap and invest once the cost effectiveness is determined
 - Adopt cap and invest.
 - Cap & invest is the dream! But how does cost getting passed on to consumer get communicated in a way that still makes it appealing because of long-term benefits?
 - Cap money has to be used to invest in access to heat pumps, solar panels, etc. for lower income people.
 - Also money isn't always the issue: logistical constraints like too much shade for solar, being a renter
 - Reduced emission Via cap and trade
 - Cap and trade
 - So many of the priorities are around increasing funding, but there is not necessarily a noted path forward to that funding. Being more specific and clear and make actual recommendations on funding sources. One good example is Cap and Invest. Cap and Invest could fund flood buyouts. Gas taxes.
 - #7: Vital for climate

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Many favored weatherization, highlighting the need for increased access to renters in particular, statewide efficiency standards, and stronger building code enforcement.*
 - Weatherization is compelling
 - Weatherization!!!!
 - Increase weatherization for low income. Statewide efficiency standard for all residential and rent

- Specific incentives for rental property owners to upgrade, they don't qualify for incentives usually and don't engage.
- Enforcement of building code for weatherization/efficiency
- #10: Extend wrap VFHA program
- Renters need to be addressed better, they are blocked.
- Program that goes house to house and just spray foams. These low cost, high reward steps.

Recommendation #3: Public transportation

- *Participants called for better transportation funding, improved infrastructure, and year-round walkability to support public transit use and compact settlements.*
 - #3: How feasible is it to get VT to use public transit more? How feasible is it to get people to move into towns more?
 - Strengthen funds for community transportation
 - Transportation alternatives: we're reliant on cars because of rurality and lack of infrastructure (e.g. no sidewalks); need jobs within community that can be walked/biked to
 - If you can't walk it in the winter it doesn't count: need to invest in not just having sidewalks but make them accessible (e.g. plowing); relates to compact settlement goal

Recommendations #4-6: Grid and Community Solar

- *Two participants supported and called for incentives for community solar. Participants emphasized the grid and EV chargers as key enablers*
 - Incentivize community solar.
 - Community solar
 - Grid, EV chargers (foundational, enabler)
 - Grid and rates

Cross-Sector Mitigation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Education and increasing capacity to produce electricity locally from renewable sources

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #7-13: Workforce

- *Many supported initiatives to increase education and build workforce capacity in the trades.*
 - #10: Increase education about those careers in elementary
 - #7: Include installation industries - HVAC and others to inform more boots on the ground people
 - #7: Vermont Works for Women Trailblazers - amazing example of job training, networks, sustainable energy. Outreach to more vulnerable/disadvantaged community members
 - #9: Vermont Works for Women, Resource, Habitat for Humanity, Audubon Society, VINS, NOFA - all supporting these efforts.
 - #10 Support tech programs - we need more tradesmen to build housing.
 - Workforce for trades
 - increasing tech centers and education in careers like electrician, building trades, plumbing etc
 - Sustainable energy job training program

Recommendations #1-3: Education

- *Participants emphasized education to counter misinformation and build trade skills through programs like Vermont Works for Women and VYCC.*
 - Education
 - Education for high school system
 - Educational middle school, hs, public- enabler and fights misinformation
 - Need to address misinformation about clean technologies and progress.
 - #2: Not enforceable at a high school level
 - Education: supporting education for trades that will help support this new economy, particularly apprentice/journeyman programming to apply skills within community
 - Specifically mentioned Vermont Works for Women
 - Also Resource, VYCC, other programs that have people for trades
 - Win-win investments

Recommendations #4-6: Compact Settlement

- *Participants supported compact settlements with safe, accessible walking and biking infrastructure, stormwater/wastewater solutions, and locally built housing to support livability, reduce carbon, and strengthen local economies.*
 - #4 compact settlement stormwater/wastewater
 - #5: Separate bike and walking area! To get a critical mass of people walking and biking IT NEEDS TO BE SAFE! Create separation from cars, with physical barriers (at least a curb) if possible. Don't ONLY listen to people who say "well, I'm not afraid...". Sidewalk plows!! Winter walking is required for walkable!
 - #5: St. Albans is mostly walkable but what about how sketchy it is longer distances etc
 - Compact housing settlements
 - Village centers are good but to get the most out of them for both carbon reduction and livability for low income people, need useable and safe sidewalk and bike spaces
 - Walkable streets, clear sidewalks
 - Compact settlement pattern is the key to it all. Tangible ways to encourage this (or discourage sprawl) by developers and others.
 - Infill building. Once home built in "bad foot" cannot un[built]

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #13: Focus on ADV + composite housing - manufactured housing - building locally - helps economy

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

Recommendations #8 and #13

- *Participants emphasized the importance of community resilience hubs that combine emergency services, transportation, and other resources.*
 - Community resilience hubs!
 - #8: Community hubs with emergency services
 - Community hubs for transportation and emergency response
 - Community resilience hub

Recommendations #10: Infrastructure

- *Participants recommended supporting towns in developing sustainable wastewater infrastructure.*
 - #10: Sewer: lots of towns need help
 - #10: building wastewater infrastructure

Rural Resilience and Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Often a lot of funding through grants but not funding for the capacity and assistance for organizations to implement these grants. Add NRCDs to the priority about consistent funding for RPCs.
 - Support for #3
 - #5: Increase awareness to landlords and rental market regarding rental units and mobile home parks located within floodplains. Potential to relocate mobile home parks that have a high level at risk in flood zones
 - #7: This tool is so helpful for prepping energy action plans
 - #9: Enforce infrastructure town codes currently in place
 - #11: Wetlands - to absorb water upstream
 - Public health
 - Resilience
 - Overall agreement and focus: Really focusing on the resiliency piece, it is coming and it is going to trump all other focuses. Buy back program is crucial. Understanding when the FEMA buyouts don't actually cover people's costs and needs.

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Recommendation #9: Siting

- *Participants supported developing solar in compact settlements and strategies to protect farmland and pollinator habitats.*
 - #9: Include strategies to minimize use of potential agriculture/ pollinator habitats
 - #9 solar on compact settlements

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Promote wood-based construction. Require solar and high efficiency for new construction. Plan to transition away from biomass electric generation.
 - #3: Opportunity for new farmers to access unfarmed lands as stewards
 - #4: Include specific education and support for farmers located in flood plains or whose farms contribute to significant chemical/agricultural runoff and conversion to organic practices

- #5 Climate impact
- Food focused community hubs! Sovereign food systems!
- Incentives for farmers
- Farms in floodplain, farming in wetlands. Right now if they keep doing it they get to continue, only a two year break reverts the land to protection. There needs to be a program to revert this land more. This should be a priority action.
- Support for water quality and conservation efforts
- Reduce toxic run off

General:

- Focus on climate resilient land and preparing infrastructure to withstand the storms.
General Education on the topic
- Easy to find the plan itself, but it's not very approachable; the summary is good but it's not easy to find, especially if there are technology/language barriers
- Lot of transparency
- Communication for the general community not otherwise targeted by other outreach efforts (for students, etc.)
 - There's a fair amount about more specific things like technical assistance, funding programs to avoid being perceived as an advocacy group

Plenary notes:

- Waiting will cost more
- What will make Cap and Invest succeed when other policies have failed?
- Why have we failed at marketing this transition as the next industrial revolution?
- Communications plan for the plan itself
- Explain criteria around decision-making
- Vermont Works for Women - re envisions marketing for jobs in trades for women
- Making smart investments in our infrastructure - using AI
- Youth voice questioning how VT can combat climate change - state action even more critical now
- Climate jobs will not be susceptible to AI
- Be realistic about targets like weatherization

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	43
Cross-Cutting Issues	23

Rural Resilience and Adaptation	19
Agriculture and Ecosystems	15

Annex - Bennington

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

9 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate?

- *Weather Changes & Extreme Events:*
 - Extreme weather events
 - Many extreme weather events
 - Obvious change of weather patterns: warmer, drought, flood, less snow
 - More intense storms
 - Wetter, windier, and warmer weather
 - Obvious change of weather patterns: warmer, drought, flood, less snow
- *Temperature & Seasonal Shifts:*

- Warmer
- Longer golf season. Earlier maple season.
- Hotter summers. Limited need for my snowblower.
- Warmer
- Plant hardiness zone changing
- *Economic & Energy Impacts:*
 - Higher energy use
 - Trying to plan for affording it with heat pumps and other green tech
 - Higher and wildly fluctuating gasoline and propane costs
- *Ecological & Environmental Concerns:*
 - Many extreme weather events, invasive species
 - With great trepidation and tremendous disappointment in the Trump administration's backsliding. Experiencing declining bird and butterfly populations
 - The environment in Vermont is warning.
 - We need to make plans for what we grow, for what our forests will be in the future
 - Invasive species and other ecosystem changes
- *Other*
 - Obviously with concern and making efforts to run my home as efficiently as possible
 - Hoping FEMA will continue to exist

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendation #4-6: Grid

- *Participants highlighted the need for grid improvement to support energy innovation and address current grid challenges.*
 - #4: grid improvement essential
 - #6: Yes- Grid suffering
 - #4: we need a better grid open to the kind of energy innovation that is out there
 - #4: Big barrier to being willing to go full electric is frequent power outages
 - #6: Keep net metering
 - Diminishing net metering rate is concerning

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Participants highlighted the importance of weatherization and ensuring that it reaches those who need it most (e.g. offering higher incentives and subsidies).*
 - #9: Yes- weatherization in general
 - We need to reach those who need this the most, especially in terms of weatherization
 - Higher incentives for heat pumps
 - Increase subsidies for personal implementations (solar, heat pumps)

Recommendation #1: Cap and Invest

- *Some expressed hesitation about Cap and Invest, raising concerns about potential fund misallocation, greenwashing, and restrictions on dividend spending.*
 - #1: There are so many fueling needs in this state, how does this money not end up going elsewhere 2) Like the restrictions on how dividends are spent? What if I just want to buy coca-cola + doughnuts? Or is this for home energy resiliency?
 - #1: cap and invest = pay to pollute greenwashing

Cross-Sector Mitigation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #5: PUC only concerned with profit for stakeholders
 - #6: Communication is essential here
 - #7: More Brownfield redevelopment in downtowns and villages: civic clean up, jobs, housing, revitalization
 - #10: This is vitally important
 - #10: Cross Sector/ Cutting Pollution - priority for folks and been hard to find funding for
 - Get jargon out of the plan! Change Cross-Sector Mitigation to “Cutting Pollution”
 - Increase passenger rail! We need it in Bennington and we should consider how to collaborate with other states.
 - Tax carbon fuels - why haven’t we? Benefit efficiency charge and simplicity of a tax on fossil fuel
 - Lowering heating and cooling costs
 - Transportation
 - EVs
 - Rails

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #1-3: Education

- *Participants emphasized addressing gaps in climate change education, improving communication with schools about resources, rethinking trades and tech education, and leveraging local expertise to build capital.*
 - #1: Cross-Cutting - understand that there is currently a gap in climate change curriculum that needs to be addressed
 - #2: Develop communication with school district about curriculum resources about climate change. Currently teachers don't know where to get climate change resources
 - #2: Many people in VT have expertise and can help- lots of retired PhDs
 - For education, tap people in Vermont with expertise
 - Our educational institutions don't support innovation
 - Need education to start early and currently doesn't fit into the system well
 - Need to build social networks and capital especially through school education
 - Tech education needs to be included in the education priorities
 - Need to rethink trade education in VT, current curriculums are out of date

Recommendations #7-13: Workforce

- *Many emphasized the importance of workforce development to transition to a green economy, including recruiting young people and involving installation industries like HVAC.*
 - Workforce development is very important
 - #7, 8, 9, 10: Yes to get us to the new, green economy
 - #7: include installation industries - HVAC, and others to inform more boots on ground people
 - #7: This is so important
 - #9: I have seen some of these, thank you
 - #12: Recruit young people
 - #12: Tech Ed needs to be included here
 - #13: helps economy
 - All workforce development items are compelling - streamline apprenticeships
 - All actions pertaining to workforce development are compelling

Recommendation #3: Energy Coaches and Navigator Program

- *Several supported funding programs to educate Vermonters on energy choices and funding options to increase energy efficiency in homes, and expanding outreach to second homeowners and landlords.*
 - #3 is important
 - #3: Broaden the outreach about these
 - #3: Include Vermont second homeowners and landlords

- Energy coaches

Recommendation #14: Financing

- *Participants the potential of a gas tax to fund these initiatives, while acknowledging concerns about financing amid federal changes.*
 - #14: 1-2 cent/gal gas tax to pay for these ideas
 - Financing is scary in the face of federal change

Cross-cutting additional input

- *Additional input on repurposing brownfields for new housing development.*
 - Consider how to repurpose brownfields for new housing, etc. Provides more than just housing - important to compact settlement.
 - More support for Brownfields Program to redevelop vacant properties into housing

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

Recommendation #2: RPC Support

- *Participants supported increasing the capacity of RPCs through additional funding.*
 - #2: Rural Resilience recs lifted up as important (capacity for RPCs)
 - #3: Very important to strengthen + Support the RPCS = then they are in a great position to counsel town energy + hazard planning committees that are often made up of volunteer [unintelligible] people. We need guidance. The RPCs if well staffed could be well placed to do this
 - Dedicated funding for RPCs to support resilience and hazard mitigation
 - Provide RPC climate planning funding
- *Participants emphasized the need for better communication and stronger social networks to engage people and build social capital around these issues.*
 - How do we get people involved and build social capital around these issues?
 - Need better communication and social networks

Rural Resilience and Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #3: Would this be used to help move floods out of floodplains
 - #8: More stormwater funding for town highway departments! Bigger culverts

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

Recommendations #2-3: Support for farmers

- *Participants mentioned the need to support farmers and foresters in adapting to climate change, but were concerned about funding methods that could limit their agency.*
 - #2: Farmers will need support
 - Want/ support money for climate impacts on farms but not supportive of paying farmers/ foresters for climate practices because it takes away their agency
 - #1: How to pay for it? These can all be reduced to one priority or part of a priority. Support farmers + foresters in this changing climate
 - #2: What are the plans to reach out to private landowners to implement these changes
 - #2: Funding - Bloomberg Philanthropy - grow for young
 - #3: Do we need to pay people to adopt?
 - #3: Is the amount of land a factor - i.e. more than 25 acres?

Recommendation #6: Food system resilience

- *Several comments about the food system resilience*
 - Support local food systems
 - Support local farm: food systems - reduces energy, increases resilience, support youth getting into farming
 - Improve food system to make a major economic driver and not just a niche

Recommendations #1,5, and 12: River corridors and riparian buffer projects

- *Participants recommended riparian buffer projects, floodplain restoration, and statewide river corridor regulations.*
 - #1: Suggest riparian buffer projects and river corridor protection
 - #5: State regulate river corridor regs!
 - #12: Suggest riparian buffer and floodplain restoration projects. Statewide river corridor regulations!!

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #4: Include non farm owners - 2nd homeowners
 - #5: important
 - #6: On farm slaughter
 - #7: Important to work with indigenous communities for land management/incorporating TEK
 - #9: Avoiding forest/ag clearing for solar development is important, but solar panels in developed areas needs to consider the increase in ambient temperatures/heat island effect of heat vulnerability of surrounding communities
 - #13: Fund more town and state forests

- Anything about composting and garbage disposal

General:

- *Show costs/ address funding constraints*
 - Need to ensure funding for actions
 - Show line item costs for actions
 - Address the impending federal funding gap
 - Demonstrate the affordability of implementing the plan and the cost of not implementing the plan
 - CAP needs to be reframed so that it isn't perceived as conflicting with affordability
- *Other*
 - More citizen engagement is needed especially from youth and young people
 - Less fossil fuel dependent
 - Address climate denial and pushing against CAP

Plenary:

- Need an additional level of prioritization - we should be putting forward 3-5 recommendations!
- The actions are all interconnected, and don't actually need to be separated
- What are the communication channels that are going to work/ reach people most effectively?
- Need to reframe climate action as the most affordable approach rather than using affordability as a reason not to act
- Acknowledge demographic that denies climate change
- Incentives need to be higher to make economics work

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	49
Cross-Cutting Issues	29
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	27
Agriculture and Ecosystems	36

Annex - Burlington

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via post-it notes and discussion. Participants responded to the following questions:

- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Cross sector mitigation # 1: Just in general include specific action language to clarify and hold people accountable

Cross sector mitigation # 1: not sure what exactly cap and Invest program is, mentioned multiple times. I really don't understand a lot of what's in here, very technical and not approachable for average people.

Cross sector mitigation # 1: AFFORDABILITY Car transit is important and it stays accessible

Cross cutting issues # 2: pair with resources.

Cross sector mitigation # 2: incentives with transportation and buildings # 1 is great!

Cross sector mitigation # 3: maybe supporting Car share programs or carpool boards

Cross sector mitigation # 3: would this help address GMT service cuts?

Cross sector mitigation # 3: important. implement more safety protocols for bikes on roads, address and expand upon access (physical and financial) to public transit

Cross sector mitigation # 5: "electric customer supported" is this referring to net metering program?

Cross sector mitigation # 6: will Burden still be on solar developers to pay for grid upgrade for projects?

Cross sector mitigation # 6: accessibility to information for low income and rural residents who might not have Internet.

Cross sector # 8: is mobile homes included in this?

Cross sector mitigation # 8: important.

Cross sector mitigation # 12: what does this mean?

Cross sector mitigation # 12: anything in priorities to specifically Advance geothermal networks for resiliency not just...

Cross-Cutting Issues

Cross cutting issues # 1: how will those education initiatives work under Trump?

Cross cutting issues # 1: open source and well advertised is key since fossil fuel industry is doing the same!

Cross cutting # 1: this one is very important!

Cross cutting # 1: do we know there is a need for this in Vermont? What sectors?

Cross cutting # 1: how will this be made accessible (for low income communities with less resources)

Cross sector # 2: exciting!

Crosscutting # 2: should we implement more service oriented curriculum?

Cross cutting # 2: include environmental justice/iniquity and climate impacts, you cannot get a full understanding of climate change without analyzing who is affected and why, can also include indigenous knowledge and acknowledgment.

Cross cutting # 4: include runoff investigation, especially for pollutant such as phosphorus that impaired local water bodies with toxic algal blooms

Cross cutting # 4: ensure EJ in the creation/expansion.

Cross cutting issues # 5: what does capacity mean in this sense? This seems kind of wordy/confusing a lot of these seem to be very vague without many specific goals, words like support and capacity are not enough and could be quantified. It's difficult to keep people accountable for policies like this.

Cross cutting # 5: what is the specific goal for this? Can there be a # or specific kind of infrastructure... Such as bike lanes, more buses, larger sidewalk/smaller streets, city funded bike rental at etc..

Cross cutting issues # 7: this is great!

Cross cutting # 7 include teen internship/volunteer opportunity so people can get interested/involved young (high school)

Cross cutting issues # 8: Understand the barrier here is pay for instructors and newly trained workers

Cross sector # 8: also exciting!

Cross cutting # 8: how? Can this be more specific so that no 1 finds loopholes?

Cross cutting # 8 this could be made more specific – also what action is being taken by supporting?

Cross cutting # 9: for who? Will this work to help underserved communities? How so? Target BIPOC and low income populations

Cross cutting # 9: how to make these above liveable wage?

Cross cutting issues # 10: again if classes start as early as high school, people can get involved and gain skills early. This is especially important and underserved (BIPOC & low income) communities, can this be specifically put in writing?

Cross cutting # 11: what kind of programs? Can you provide specifics?

Cross cutting # 12: this could definitely be quantified (as an example)

Cross cutting # 13: how?

Cross cutting # 13. How will this happen specifically?

Cross cutting # 14: prioritize middle and low income communities. Focus on existing structures instead of promoting new development. Include helping fund recovery of those already impacted.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation

Rural Resilience # 1: how reliable are funds? What is timeline?

Rural resilience # 2: how do you ensure permanency?

Resilience # 2: love this, besides funding, there's a need for people to come up with climate adaptation strategies.

Rural resilience # 3: how would you secure the funding? Is this feasible?

Rural resilience # 3: how do you establish long-term funding?

Rural Resilience # 3: what will the process look like to determine which non-FEMA eligible hazard mitigation projects get funded?

Resilience # 3: how is funding managed?

Rural resilience # 4: ❤️!!!

Resilience # 4: yay, supporting businesses and local economic resilience.

Resilience # 5. Very important to align!

Resilience # 5: very important for current and prospective homeowners to be able to know the risks of their location

Resilience # 5: what is development-ready infrastructure?

Resilience # 5: implementation of GIS?

Resilience # 7: will environmental justice metrics be taken into consideration with this index?
Focusing on people who have already been impacted!

Rural resilience # 7: important to have an up-to-date index with an ever so changing quick Climate

Resilience # 7 this is so important! I love how it accounts for data that is currently missing

Resilience, # 8: for evacuations?

Resilience # 10 what about green building, nature based solutions, biophilic infrastructure?

Resilience # 10: our town needs help paying for costly improvements.

Resilience # 12: messaging and awareness of local is key plus peer to peer education.

Resilience # 12: will this be in multiple languages?

Resilience # 12: very important with how isolated towns can get and how they may become especially vulnerable.

Rural Resilience # 13: EJ focus and emphasis equity focused

Resilience # 14: Providing support to flood affected homes is important too

Resilience # 14: this should be on a graduated scale if you are \$5 more than eligibility, you lose out on any assistance and can't afford to make necessary changes, if more graduated would be helpful

Resilience # 14: so many things... How do you prioritize?

Rural resilience # 15: eco-anxiety awareness, planetary health relation, better mind greener mindset.

Resilience # 15: so important!

Rural resilience # 15: is physical health... By General recovery funding? Should this also?

Resilience # 15: through more funding? Unspecific may be harder to bring change.

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Ag, agriculture, and Ecosystems # 1: program funding and nature based solution programs.

Agriculture and ecosystems #3: initiates local community action.

Ag and Eco # 4: focusing on communication and providing support to farmers.

Agriculture and ecosystems # 10: with this, it is important to actually drawback on development and really change Vermont's industrialization so that indigenous seal of approval is not just for show and continuing to lose indigenous land must make IK approval mean something!

Agriculture and ecosystems # 14: E/O includes local communities as well as aspiring students to work in field.

Annex - Bellows Falls

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

28 responses



How are you experiencing climate change

- *Weather changes:*
 - Heat
 - Hotter summers and rainier winters
 - Lack of winter for sustainable logging operations.
 - utility damage, flooding, shifting seasons, poor or erratic snowfall
 - Longer periods of rain and drought.
 - More ice less snow
 - Less snow but more rain.
 - Shorter growing season

- More frequent heavy downpours
- More fluctuations of temperatures
- Earlier flowering + leaves out
- Short lived fluffy snow
- Greater quantity and intensity of extreme weather events
- Drought
- Flood risk for my house
- *Ecological impacts:*
 - Ticks
 - Increased invasive plant pressure on native plant diversity.
 - Algal blooms
 - Pests, ticks, other insects
 - Loss of hemlock due to warmer winters
 - Fewer Bees
 - Too Hot, wooly adelgid
- *Economic/personal impacts:*
 - Personally: heat exhaustion in my town - landslide from excess rainfall → FEMA buyout of our former 150 year old home. Work: quit farming because of effects of droughts and floods on my crops.
 - Helping Vermonters make homes more efficient
 - Road damage
 - Hotter climate
 - As a town employee writing grants to help pay for damage and mitigation for heavy rains and increased stormwater runoff
 - Cost of living
 - Increased logging costs
 - Less stumpage values for landowners from timber harvesting.
 - Lack of education around sustainability and local food options
 - Degradation of vital natural resources
 - Terrifying idea of the future being compromised

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendations #8-9: Weatherization

- *Participants emphasized accelerating weatherization through increased funding, accessible grants, regional support, and expanded services for all income levels.*
 - Maintain and accelerate pace of weatherization
 - More grants that allow homeowners to increase efficiency themselves, without the involvement of overbooked and sometimes expensive contractors
 - Accelerate home & bldg weatherization & electrification at scale with regional services for home owners & landlords with technical assistance, a qualified contractor network & low cost loans.
 - Increase the upper range of weatherization grants to more accurately reflect the cost of living in VT
 - Professionally – Heat Pumps, forestry
 - Self weatherization incentive + grants
 - (+) provide technical + project management support for home weatherization, repairs + improvements, efficient homes + building owner
 - Help homeowner + landlords plan + manage projects, loans, rebates etc. to manage energy gains.
 - Low cost, low barrier home improvement funds for low, median and middle-income household that supplement other financial assistance CVHIP, EVT incentives, WAP, MERP
 - Increase weatherizations of homes and businesses
 - Accelerate Weatherization
 - Invest in existing programs like Window Dressers
 - Tell us the truth about what works ie heat pumps and cold climates
 - Scale up energy efficiency
 - Regional services to homes and buildings
 - Regional services to scale up home + buildings energy efficiency
 - Cross-Sector Mitigation Action #8: Funding for weatherization in low and moderate income households
 - Cross-Sector Mitigation Action #9: Support for commercial weatherization investment
 - Window dressers
 - Enforce compliance of state energy code
 - (Unintelligible) to compliance with state bldg. envelope requirements for weatherization.
 - Comm. w/ landlords to know weatherization possibility.
 - Lack of funding

Recommendations #2-3: Public transit and EVs

- *Several participants emphasized the importance of expanding public transit, adding EV school buses, incentivizing EV access for low- and moderate-income households, and increasing charging stations.*
 - Transportation 3 mass transportation add ev school buses and public availability
 - Transport #3

- Transportation 2 Focus on the topics that will move the needle
- 3 Mass transportation ADD EV school buses with public availability
- More EV charging stations
- Cross sec mit/transportation #2
- Yes – we have to take big steps with transportation
- ACC II + AC TRUCKS
- Makes sense, making funding + incentives for low + middle income folks to have access to EV's for very high MPG car.
- Regional collaboration to scale up solutions quickly and impactfully e.g. adoption of CA clean vehicle standards

Recs #1 and #7: Cap and Invest and/or a Modified Clean Heat Standard

- *Many found joining a Cap and Invest program or adopting a modified Clean Heat Standard to be compelling.*
 - Cap and invest
 - CAP invest is one way to do this. DO IT!
 - Join with a regional C+I system. We don't have to invent this because it already exists – NYC + Calif western
 - Which actions are most compelling for VT? CAP and INVEST
 - Cross sec trans + bldg. #1
 - Cross sec mit -trans + bldg. #1: Big picture is Vermont policy must quickly reduce ghg emissions. To do that we have to eliminate the use /burning of all fossil fuels. Therefore – we must reduce our use – weatherization of existing buildings for example. The energy that we use has to be renewable – sun, wind, geothermal (not bio fuel, fossil gas, etc.) AND we have to bring all Vermonters along in the transition to all clean energy
 - Cross sector mitigation: transportation & buildings #1 - Vital
 - Cross-Sector Mitigation Action #1: Cap & Invest program
 - Need to “get in on the ground floor” if a Cap and Invest program is to be successful—with this in mind, NY's program seems like a better fit for Vermont
 - Cross sector mitigation buildings and thermal #7 Option A: Vital!!

Recommendations #4-6: Grid and solar

- *Participants called for abundant, affordable electricity to enable upgrades and strengthen the grid. Participants expressed support for easier residential solar permitting/implementation and expanded access for low- and middle-income Vermonters.*
 - Electricity #6 ... plus energy abundance
 - Importance of cheap electricity
 - No plans to increase electricity abundance and reduce per kWh costs to help people outside of grants ranges afford upgrades

- Energy abundance! Cheap Electricity!
- Easier bureaucratic process for solar implementation, especially for residential scale.
- Increase solar power + make permitting for community solar + “balcony solar” much easier + accessible for low + middle income Vermonters
- Solar power

Missing recommendations: Programs to raise revenue and regulate visitor emissions.

- *Two participants lifted up green building incentives and carbon pricing as disincentives as ideas for the Council to consider.*
 - New building incentives for green building / efficiency etc higher costs for building with no future thoughts in climate change
 - Put a price on carbon + other GHG emissions
- *Participants called for reducing visitor vehicle emissions and improving enforcement and infrastructure.*
 - Reduce greenhouse gases in vehicles and how to enforce on visitors to VT
 - How to enforce reduction of greenhouse gases to visitors of VT
 - Emissions measurements of tourism and motor fuels leaving the state after purchasing and not used here. Infrastructure for transportation not in place

Cross-Sector Mitigation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - The most important action is to reduce fossil fuel use. Emphasize the implementation of renewables.
 - Pay attention to the important effects. Increase renewable sources – solar, wind. Eliminate ALL obstacles preventing #1. Replace fossil fuel with renewables
 - Prioritize actions and investments that reduce emissions in transportation and home heating where we get biggest bang for the buck.
 - Urgent to come up with plan to reduce emissions in transportation and heating as best bang for the buck.
 - Prioritize what matters most – at scale: 1 energy efficiency in homes + buildings, 2 replace fossil fuels w/ renewable energy, 3 EV transition ASAP
 - Things I like about the plan: Regional collaboration w/other states to scale up climate solutions quickly, Adaptation of CA clean fuel standards, Support for realization of a distributed electric grid
 - Lead by example. What are state buildings doing? Ex: motion activated lights on college campuses. Offer Zoom meetings for less transportation. Thank you for mentioning re-use handouts.
 - Not much in the way of encouraging rail transport
 - Resilience measures
 - Several people participate in GMP’s home battery program

- Household flood preparation/mitigation measures, like sandbags stocked in folks' basements
- Mitigation measures
 - Walking, biking, or taking public transportation to work
 - Encouraging landlords to pursue energy efficiency measures—not always enough incentive, though
 - Solar panels on several people's homes

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #7-13: Workforce

- *Many supported workforce development for climate change careers, such as weatherization, and increasing enrollment in trade programs.*
 - Workforce development
 - Workforce development
 - Need to address workforce challenges needed to increase weatherization. Requires investment
 - Workforce development for climate change jobs
 - Enhance workforce development to include a mandate for builders and carpenters to be certified in building science and energy code
 - Cross Cutting # 10 Career & Tech student support
 - Cross cutting #10 is one of my favorite actions
 - Develop + support qualified contractors network w/link to apprenticeships to support home + building weatherization + repair at scale
 - Transforming our workforce to support clean energy and weatherization transition is key to our future
 - All draft priority actions related to workforce development came up in conversation
 - A lot of support for the workforce dev programs and efforts.

Recommendations #1-3: Education

- *Participants called for education across sectors, including about the waste system and about current law, with follow-through on composting and recycling.*
 - Education with follow through about the “waste” system in the school system. (Field trips following each stream)
 - Education yes all sectors
 - Great education component, but is there follow through on the different aspects? I.e composting/recycling.
 - More education needs to happen as to what the laws actually say. I.e recycling.

Recommendations #4-6: Compact Settlement

- *Participants supported increasing municipal stormwater investments, promoting compact settlements with multimodal transportation, and disincentivizing development outside village areas.*
 - Compact 4 increase investment to municipalities for stormwater
 - Cross Cutting #7 Level 3 chargers
 - Compact settlement, investment in public infrastructure
 - Compact settlement achieves many goals at the same time: less driving and use of fossil fuels and more walkability; more housing while also preserving the character of Vermont's villages and downtown
 - Multimodal transportation
 - Cross Cutting Issues #5
 - Disincentivize -even penalize - development outside of village areas. Actively work on stopping parcelization.
 - Cross-Cutting Issues Action #4: investment into municipal water/sewer infrastructure
 - Cross-Cutting Issues Action #5: increase multimodal transportation in downtowns and village centers

Cross-cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Cross Cutting #6 Continue Act 181 implementation
 - Workforce and education. Helps all age groups to succeed
 - 1st degree promise should be expanded for tech schools
 - Need definition on "climate career"

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

Recommendation #2: RPC Support

- *Several highlighted the need for funding and technical support to implement hazard mitigation plans, particularly for rural resilience, community capacity, and 1:1 business support.*
 - As someone who made sure our Rockingham towns hazard mitigation plan included the same 14 effects of climate change in our most recent version – I see the great need to help those in charge of implementing the plan via funding, technical support.
 - Rural Resilience and adaptation: Community Capacity and planning #2 – Vital
 - Regional resources to overcome financial barriers
 - Fund/support 1:1 Business Technical Support programs for businesses to be more resilient to climate disruptions.

- *Some emphasized the urgency of replacing culverts to handle increased water flow and making other changes to store or slow water.*
 - Re: Urgency! Changing out culverts to handle huge flows must continue, while making changes to lands so that water is stored higher + longer or at minimum, slowed down by various means.
 - Bigger culverts
- *Participants asked how buyouts would be incorporated into the plan.*
 - Are buyouts somewhere in the plan?
 - How can buy outs on floodplains be done if there was vermiculite found?

Rural Resilience and Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Infra & Built # 6 & 9
 - More stormwater funding for town highway departments
 - Updating floodplain maps with projected storms and impermeable surfaces

Agriculture and Ecosystems

Recommendation #9: Siting

- *Participants stressed the need to avoid clearing forests or farmland for solar, while also addressing heat impacts of solar in developed areas, especially for vulnerable communities.*
 - Ag and Eco #9 – Avoiding forest/ag clearing for solar development is important but solar panels in developed areas needs to consider the increase in ambient temperatures/heat island effect and heat vulnerability of surrounding communities.
 - Climate resilient 9 solar on roof pkg lots

Recommendation #15: Biomass

- *Some participants called for an end to wood burning and accompanying incentives, and opposed promoting or using renewable natural gas.*
 - Stop burning wood in all places possible. Stop incentivizing wood burning.
 - Stop glorifying renewable natural gas and stop burning that methane emitter.
- *Some participants highlighted the need for better enforcement of the UVA program to prevent forest and biodiversity loss, improve forest resilience, and increase the use of wood in construction.*
 - If people in the UVA program aren't pressured to uphold their end of the agreement, we will have forest + biodiversity loss due to invasive plants + lack of active forest stewardship

- We have a lack of compliance by participants in UVA (Use Value Appraisal). If people were better pressured to complete the activities in their management plans, this would help make our forests more resilient and it would contribute to more wood being used in our buildings to replace steel and concrete.

Recommendation #12: River corridors

- *Support for promoting healthy river corridors and state regulation of them.*
 - Ag and eco # 12
 - State regulate river corridor regs!

Recommendation #6: Farm and forest supply chain resilience

- *Participants supported increasing funding for the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative to promote climate-smart practices and strengthen the local economy.*
 - Ag and eco, number 6.
 - Support the WLEI to the max. It is efficient and very Vermont appropriate.
 - We need more money for the Working Lands Enterprise board. This is an incredibly efficient way to catalyze climate smart work + local economy on the working landscape.

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Agriculture and ecosystems seems like Vermont's strength. We need to build on what we do well and strengthen it. For locals and tourism alike
 - Add forests more clearly to the agriculture sections.
 - AG + ECO #1
 - Important to work with indigenous communities for land management/incorporating TEK
 - Payments to people who manage land + water for ecosystem services- soil health improves the water cycle – co benefits
 - Include biodiversity in the plan. When protecting biodiversity it makes the most impact on climate also.
 - Make sure biogenic carbon emissions are counted to make a real difference instead of one just on paper.

General:

- *Prioritize*
 - Prioritize based on greatest effect.
 - You need to rank based on effect. It is just a public relations exercise otherwise
 - You need to prioritize!! 57 is too many. No program can pursue all of them. Communicate to top 5 to 10 and then explain how you select them

- Focus on the things we are doing well already. This slate of topics is too broad and we already have good things to do. We just need more of them.
- Too many actions for the average Vermonter to try and navigate the complexity and have input
- There are many “nice-to-have” objectives that will not move the needle
- The sections on education, weatherization, travel are most compelling
- Update the model? Weatherization based on the age of the home? Preserves Vermont History. Income based is a struggle for many working hard to live on historic properties/while also being affordable and safe for their families.
- Include rural Broadband and fiber optic. Allowing remote workers to work from home will have way more impact than most other things on this.
- Facilitate renewable energy installation- solar panels on roofs are key. Clearing some forest is ok too.
- How are we going to funding? How are Vermonters of the younger generations involved in the physical working force? How can we assist the lower income Vermonters?
- Make weatherization affordable for low AND middle income. Provide education around other climate change education. Make it easy for people to get involved and learn more. One size does not fit all. Fit your solution to your housing, travel and population.
- The utility sector is underrepresented in the actions. They can do more.
- Make a plan that adds up and gets us to the targets laid out in GWSA, prioritize recommendations that will do that
- I know it’s very difficult to eliminate or reduce jargon, but this an essential concern in my view—let’s continue to keep the discussion democratic and accessible to all Vermonters
- Give estimates of amount of GHG reductions and timescale for each option.
- Keep Vermont in mind. One size does not fit all. We are unique, the solutions should also fit that mold. Not what x state is doing.
- Ensuring needs of low income people are considered in program design
- Small personal actions
- Move forward the CAP forcefully and rapidly as possible. Don’t water down or delay
- We need progress in Vermont on GHG reduction + sequestration regardless of what the federal government does in the next 4 years.
- I strongly support the full funding + implementation of the VT superfund law. It will provide funds for the clean energy transition.
- Lots of carrots, but maybe we need some more sticks.
- Not enough ewaste recycling efforts
- Asking participants to prioritize actions when they have no contextual data to help them quantify impacts is very challenging—more data should be included in future iterations of this public process to give people sufficient information to draw conclusions.

Plenary notes:

- Rockingham Hazard Mitigation Plan incorporates 14 climate hazards
- Housing, weatherization at scale
- Working together regionally

- Protecting 50 acres in Putney
- Window dressers
- Reporting # of certificates of compliance with energy codes
- Working with SEVCA to educate landlords
- Westminster Farms methane digester supplies electricity (grant via student project)
- Methane and carbon from biomass
- Scale up EV charging
- The B&T piece on performance standards was too abstract. We should define specific performance standards for both new and renovated buildings. As builders complete projects, they should report the building's performance, helping to establish clear standards for both new constructions and renovations.
- In implementing something like energy ratings, realtors should communicate the climate costs of owning and operating a property - need education across the entire workforce.
- Just as cars have a simple miles-per-gallon rating, homes (new and existing) should have energy ratings. Montpelier is already implementing this.
- Need money for these programs
- Grants require lots of hoops to jump through (e.g. finding contractors). Homeowners should be able to do the work themselves. Include homeowners who are just outside the eligibility threshold (weatherization/home improvements).
- Safe walking and biking to school - school travel, big climate impact.
- School drop-offs need safer routes for walking and biking, with crossing guards highlighting that current conditions are unsafe and rules aren't enforced.
- The narrative around agriculture should be shifted to acknowledge that all natural lands are “working” in different ways. Change the terminology from "working lands" to reflect this view.
- Focus on reducing energy needs (consumption)

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	64
Cross-Cutting Issues	47
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	22
Agriculture and Ecosystems	36

Annex - Barre

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
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For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

44 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate?

- *Extreme weather:*
 - Extreme weather change
 - Up and down weather - rain, heat, snow
 - Milder winter
 - Wildfire smoke
 - Wet!
 - More severe weather
 - More frequent and severe floods. Warmer winters, hotter summers.

- Extreme heat, more rain
- Short high volume rain events and Droughts
- More wind more rain
- more snow and rain
- Lack of climate control (Descontrol climático)
- Weather extremes beyond what our infrastructure is designed for
- Unpredictable sugaring season
- I've seen flooding, a more changing climate, stronger cold and heat (*He visto inundaciones, clima más cambiante más fuerte tanto en frío como en calor*)
- Hotter in the summer
- *Impacts of weather changes:*
 - Wrecked roads
 - flood
 - Flooding in my community
 - flooded house
 - flooded community
 - Flooding
 - Flooding. Power outages
 - Changes to my seasonal plans and norms
 - My beloved Montpelier is suffering terribly!
 - Flooding recovery between floods
 - Unpredictable ski seasons
 - Flood damage in my community. Roads are becoming very expensive to maintain.
 - Flooding of Montpelier and other towns in Washington County
 - Flooding and road closures
 - Spending time helping in my community helping neighbors recover from floods.
 - Towns dying as cannot continue to survive flooding
 - As a new Vermonter, I'm shocked to see the damage that climate change induced flooding has had on Washington county
 - The raw materials I use in my professional work have become more difficult to obtain due to extreme weather
- *Ecological Impacts:*
 - Tick borne disease
 - Disappearing species
 - More ticks and tick borne diseases
 - Worrying. Many ticks.
 - Invasive species
 - Increasing invasive spp
 - Increase in invasive species, ticks in particular
 - Maple trees are suffering and will be moving north. Huge impact on our maple sugar industry
- *Personal/social/economic impacts:*

- Noise and environmental pollution
- energy burden
- fewer opportunities to ski
- Worrying
- Despair
- Intense sense of dread.
- Flooding impacting small businesses in my community
- Grief Fear
- Home improvement
- stress
- Flooding has caused climate anxiety
- Fear of change in my community, but change being forced on us
- Losing vibrancy in Montpelier
- Neighbors losing homes
- Increase in heat illnesses
- Hotter in the summer. Considering air conditioning for the first time in 78 years!
- Costing us all an ENORMOUS amount of money that then can't be spent on housing, food, health care for all, and better education for all.
- Desastres naturales (Natural disasters)
- Bought electric car and heat pumps. Taking advantage of state and federal incentives.
- Worrying that traditional settlement patterns in Vermont may be unsustainable.
- Reducing car dependency

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, written post-its, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendation #1: Cap and Invest

- *Several participants supported joining a Cap and Invest program.*
 - Cap and invest is needed
 - Cap and Invest
 - A Cap and Invest program This must include measures to mitigate the cost to lower income Vermonters
 - Cap and invest
 - I urge support for a program like NY Cap and Invest where some of the money from sale of allowances goes directly to low or mid income households. We need this kind of program to push the public away from fossil fuels

- #1: I am concerned Cap and Invest might reduce our emissions on paper without meaningful difference in the atmosphere. The 2019 analysis of decarbonization methods in VT(Hafstead et al - available at RFF.org) highlighted that such a policy would not make significant difference w/out being combined w/ more direct measures for reducing emissions
- #1 I want to urge support for a program like the NY cap + invest. To disincentivize fossil fuel use yet give money back to mid+lower income households to help them bear the transition away from fossil fuels.
- #1 People need a push to change and a program like the NY Cap and invest to make it less attractive to use energy sources that people are used to.

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Participants supported weatherization, advocated for securing or subsidizing funding to bring homes up to code, and emphasized the need for grid support.*
 - Weatherization
 - Secure funding for weatherization
 - #8 Funding for weatherization can not be rebate based for middle/low income homeowners it also must include funds for getting homes up-to or closer to code so that they can be weatherization ready following repairs
 - #8 Yes Please Prioritize
 - #8 Grid support
 - More programs to help people determine what they need and how to get it to be more comfortable at an affordable in their homes
 - Weatherization of homes (*Climatización de casas*)
 - For weatherization, need to focus on LMI households that otherwise would get it done

Recommendation #3: Public transportation

- *Support for making public transportation more accessible, electrifying it, and creating safer biking routes.*
 - Public transit
 - Public transportation and safer biking
 - Cross Sector Mitigation: Transportation- # 3
 - #3 Accessible transport is huge! Reduce the need for personal vehicles to reduce their efforts
 - #3 : Yes! Please prioritize this over EVs (+electrify our transit)
 - #3 “support the compact settlement patterns”: Not in river corridors or places prone to sewers movements. We should only paths along only place paths along sewers if they aren't paved and they can be moved

Recommendation #4-6: Grid

- *Support for funding electrification incentives, upgrading the grid, and launching pilot projects to address electrification challenges.*
 - Electrification
 - Fund incentives for electrification
 - Fortify the electric grid.
 - upgrade the electrical grid. Don't delay
 - Build resilient electrical grid to support increases usage
 - Pilot projects that demonstrate how to electrify. It is not that easy

Recommendation #10: Electrification of space and water heating

- *Support for electrifying space and water heating for low- and moderate-income households, with a need for upfront incentives.*
 - #10 Compelling
 - #10 Electrification of space and water heating low + moderate
 - I would like to take advantage of incentives to insulate my house- we use a lot of heating fuel but we don't have the upfront cash to take advantage of incentives we can't pay upfront for the work

Recommendation #2: EVs

- *Participants stressed the need for Level 3 chargers and support in facilitating the purchase of affordable used electric vehicles, including rebates.*
 - #2 2x Level 3 chargers needed
 - #2 Support availability and facilitate purchases of used electric vehicles ie. more affordable, including rebates for used purchases

Cross-Sector additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Cross sector mitigation
 - Incentivize generating energy at home, e.g. Solar, micro hydro, micro wind.
 - Create disincentives for extracting and using ff and incentives for use of renewable energy. Help low income households with the transition away from ff
 - Energy code compliance
 - Transportation #1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 7 option B
 - Subsidizing weatherization and public transportation (*also applies to public transportation below*)
 - Compelling, removing initial barrier allows for benefits
 - #12 Implement performance-based standards for residential homes i.e. HERS, Energy Star
 - #2 vehicle emission reduction- more public transportation
 - Include safe sidewalks as an intervention to promote walkable communities, decrease car-based travel and find ways for Vermonters to de-center car-logged living patterns

- #2 Specify where this outline investment is coming from
- #3, 1, 2, 6, 7 B option, 8
- Autonomous self-driving vehicles are coming and must be accounted for in any climate action plan. Autonomous vehicles will make VMT go up in a big way and must be anticipated
- Explore different solutions technologies not just batteries
- Develop further community start thermal

Cross-Cutting Issues

Recommendations #1-3: Education

- *Participants stressed the need for strong funding and climate education at all levels, starting in kindergarten and spanning all subjects, including public outreach and CTE programs.*
 - Educating the public and in schools
 - Public education
 - Education - interdisciplinary climate change curriculum Starting in kindergarten
 - Education at all age levels
 - Education education education WITH FUNDING!
 - Education and workforce development essential to the success of all
 - Learning outcomes for climate change shouldn't be limited to science and social studies — CTE needs climate change learning standards
 - Include environmental justice in curriculum
 - #2 How? What are the procedures and policies that impact amendments? How feasible is this?
 - This education is important to bring immediacy to all parts of the state with programs that show flooding
 - #3 BIPOC Program where energy coaches and navigator program can directly connect and serve BIPOC of all income levels
 - Tap on teachers to help. There is excitement about this.
 - Many vermonters do not feel an immediate personal impact of climate change. has destroyed part of VTs towns; Maple producers can talk about the loss of their life's work is due to warmer winter. Use VT's public libraries as focal point for education in all counties of the state

Recommendations #7-14: Workforce

- *Support green workforce development, funding for trades training, apprenticeships, and certification for carpenters/builders.*
 - Cross cutting- workforce development (13)
 - Green workforce development that includes robust funding for the necessary adjacent building/construction trades

- #8 Ensure continuing funding for workforce training center
- #8-10 - all work force, Development goals. should be prioritized b/c the amount of trades-based work needed → rebuild/ mitigate/ develop housing is huge
- #7 Mandate carpenters + builders are certified high performance builders or at least courses in building science
- #7 Implement a registered apprenticeship program for carpenters and high performance builders
- We need job training for plumbers + weatherization workers to help implement the Climate Action Plan
- *Support for expanded transportation services, bike paths, sidewalks, and Level 2 or 3 charging stations.*
 - #5 Buses available, bike paths and parking comfortable sidewalks
 - Include level 2 or 3 charging stations

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Education and workforce development are essential to the success of all other goals. They shouldn't be deprioritized.
 - Resiliency planning for schools needs to be considered and incorporated.
 - #3,4,5,9,10: Vote yes

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- *Participants urged state-funded buyouts to support flood-resilient redevelopment, restrict new floodplain construction, align with housing targets, and phase out federal flood insurance that incentivizes rebuilding in flood zones.*
 - Developing state-funded buyout programs that allow for flood-damaged parcels to be redeveloped with flood resiliency in mind.
 - Well-sited housing
 - #5 housing targets + safety
 - Restrict new building in floodplain
 - #5 Can this be dovetailed with eliminating fed flood insurance which pays for billionnaires to be reimbursed + rebuild in flood zones
- *Keep the Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF) well-funded to support hazard mitigation, landslide buyouts, and protect vulnerable Vermont communities.*
 - #3: The FRCF is so important w-fed mitigation \$ gone and we need to do landslide layouts. MR corridors and RC easements to gain floodplains that will protect our towns.
 - Establishing the Flood Resilient Communities Fund
 - Keep the Flood Resilient Communities Funded well funded to help VT communities do HMPlanning and erosion and landslide buyouts. Many Vermonters are suffering and living in extremely vulnerable places

- *Support for culturally informed, community-led public health efforts that promote resilience and language justice.*
 - Public health 13 adaptation and resilience
 - #14 Public health
 - #12 What does this look like in practice? There are local orgs and small biz that focus on language justice and public health
 - #15: Now do you do this in a culturally informed way
- *Strengthen and fully fund Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to support rural towns with technical guidance, energy and hazard planning, grant management, and resilience-building in the absence of county government.*
 - #2 Very important to strengthen + support the RPCs - then they are in a great position to counsel from energy hazard planning committees that are often made up of volunteer lay people. We need guidance. The RPC's, if well-staffed, could be well placed to do this
 - Increase capacity of small towns/ rural areas to develop a viable energy plan, apply for and administer grants + implementation pump up and expand ability of regional planning commissions
 - #2 is most important, a robust, well funded RPC is crucial to address the challenges of technical assistance and decentralization (as a result of no county govt)
 - Centralized information for towns/municipalities, Can they get information they need to plan and respond?
 - Rural resilience and adaptation #13 (community planning and preparedness)
 - More community centered projects
 - Support mutual aid in local communities

Rural Resilience additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Should include a mandate requiring all new buildings above a certain size install rooftop solar. All new parking areas should be mandated to install solar canopies
 - #14 Landowners only or can anyone receive funding?
 - #10 Rural Resilience and adaptation so important to improve infrastructure for compact development
 - #6, 8, 10
 - #15 Include schools in building weatherization needed

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- *Support for the siting recommendation, specifically placing solar panels on parking lots, is effective in generating local energy and providing vehicle shading.*

- #9 This one is just common sense! Solar panels on parking lots shade the cars and generate energy in a municipal area where the energy can be used without long transmission.
- #9: Yes
- *Prioritize restoring river corridors and wetlands for natural floodplain storage, supporting local farms, and building non-paved paths that allow water to flow freely.*
 - Ag & Eco #12 Healthy co. Extra river corridors and wetlands, prioritize restoration and conservation
 - #12- Making space for more water and floodplain is urgent also #5 and #6 which are interrelated local farms are already in economically precarious space and having a mechanism
 - #12 This is an extremely important action. We need natural storage!
 - Promote healthy rivers and flood plains
 - Floodplain restoration humans need to let water move and stop trying to control nature
 - Build only non-paved paths in river corridors. Paths should move with the river.
- *Support for recommendation #5, highlighting its importance to small and organic farms.*
 - #5 Important
 - #5 Yes
 - #5 Very important for small farmers
 - #5 Make sure organic farms are supported
- *Advocate for farm bill funding and expand Vermont programs that cut emissions, boost soil carbon, and support climate resilience on working lands—coordinated with USDA NRCS efforts.*
 - #1- [unintelligible] yes
 - #1 Federal farm bill advocacy group (vt and nationally)
 - #1 Funding, funding, funding, federal grassroots efforts for funding in VT and out of the US
 - #1 Sequestration mitigate and resilience
 - #1 Increased funding, enhance greenhouse emissions
 - #1 Yes coordinate
- *Support for PES to pay farmers for floodplain restoration and river meandering, and prioritize subsidies for organic agriculture.*
 - #3 PES should support farmers who allow certain acres to flood
 - #3 Incentives
 - #3: Organic agriculture should get as much or more subsidy than conventional ag
 - Give farmers PES for lands they allow to flood. Pay for floodplain and river meandering services. This will help save our downstream villages and downtowns.
- *Expand the Municipal Vulnerability Indicators tool to include BIPOC-centered grants and loans for farmworkers and renters on farms.*
 - #7 This is great but: It be helpful to look at BIPOC centered grants and loans to support folks who live in and on rent or lease land/housing units on farms
 - #7 Critically important

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - Ag & eco # 13 following requirements of 30 x 30 legislation
 - Reduce carbon intensity of agriculture
 - Land resilience
 - #4 Combine this with other education action initiatives “collaboration”
 - #6 High
 - #8 A big challenge
 - #2 EV machinery draft horses
 - #2: too vague include in different action as intro
 - #11 Nbs- Yes!
 - Technical Assistance
 - #10 Climate resilient land
 - #14 Important
 - AG + ECO: No mention of invasive species while not affecting climate change directly, loss of all ash, beech and hemlock will release a massive amount of CO2. Invasive plants and shrubs inhibit regen of trees which we afford. You already have a no. of great recommendations but please consider adding this.
 - Robust Funding and infrastructure of food localization -> cooperatives non profit farms school/table
 - Current use- according to your speaker - allows for leaving woods to go wild. My understanding is that this is only true when land is too steep to log.
 - One thing missing or that I couldn't find was addressing biomass. Biomass is being phased out across NE as “renewable energy” (ex. NY removed biomass in 2019 from definition of renewable energy) yet it still enjoys significant favor in VT statute at the very least would like to see the climate council fund+ undertake
 - Need the slow spread sink upland work now before our next flood! If it could help please recommend what is meant.
 - Better explain or find a simpler more accessible way of saying “carbon sequestration” so that more Vermonters can understand and buy into this.
 - Exclude all biofuels
 - Need to find a way to avert floodwaters from taking out the crops

General:

- The language use in these recommendations isn't accessible to many VTers it would be so helpful to put these in plain language. Use Just Transition Principles developed by the council as a filler for these recommendations. Thank you for your work!
- Reliable skilled contractors to do work. Health non toxic material for building insulation
- Education, electrification, transportation (Education, electrification, transporte)
- What is most urgent: Get rid of Scott + his BS pushback, Make lying fossil fuel companies pay for damages and mitigation

- Most compelling : cross sector mitigation #1 cap + invest program, AG + Eco #2 Amend VT ed to incorporate environmental and climate change ed, #12 promote healthy rivers
- Would it be possible to educate/ highlight diverse renewable sources
- Focus on equal access to all for clean energy
- More programs that help people find out what the need + how to get it
- Everything is very urgent, but focus on public transportation, educating people and children in school, and improve the culverts to avoid flooding (*Están muy urgente todo Pero lo q tiene que ver con transporte público, educar a las personas el buen uso y a los niños en la escuela mejorar las tuberías para evitar inundaciones*)
- Schools should show up as listed explicitly in cross sector mitigation and rural resilience and adaptation.
- Less emphasis on tertiary objectives (like the nature-based solutions umbrella)
- FIND FUNDING
- Don't use "renewable " energy in a way that suggests that renewable = clean (which it doesn't).
- Use Just Transition principles council developed as a filter for these recommendations
- Focus on fewer ideas
- More transparency in how the actions are ranked-how is impact determined? How is ease of execution determined?
- Emphasize things that are good for the planet and why they are also good for people and can be better financially in the long run
- Put it in language that fifth graders can understand. Narrow this down to five projects that can actually be accomplished
- Plain language!!!
- More digestible for ordinary people- who is the audience? Legislators? State Agencies? People of VT? It seems like not the people of VT... Maybe a section on what ordinary people can do in their own
- Not enough time to read, let alone discuss, them!
- Condense, more precise, then have us prioritize
- Too many goals! Prioritize!
- Get real about what can actually be accomplished
- Do not weaken the global warming solutions act
- Don't try to do everything. Pick the ones with greatest impact. We are running out of time to ameliorate the climate crisis
- Reduce the number of recommendations and identify a viable funding source
- Fewer : identify 5 most cost effective measures/programs that are affordable
- I think this plan is on point (*Pienso está muy acertado este plan*)
- Produce a plan that complies with the GWSA- Follow the law
- Great ideas but too many. Whittle down to the most impactful, most likely to succeed and result in positive benefit and success.
- plain language
- Tax the rich and put the climate superfund to work
- Focus focus focus!
- Tax the rich

- Make connections across recommendations themes (lots of overlap)
- Climate action themes activity: Make it easy and fast to do things you want done. Make it hard and slow for things you don't want done
- Climate action themes activity: Most urgent feedback. Great ideas but there are too many. Need to whittle down to the most impactful most likely to succeed and result in success and positive benefit.
- Drastic reduction in the use of fossil fuels, leadership, weatherization, education

Plenary notes:

- Need cost of items, too much expected of volunteers, need a different way
- NEK- Cold climate transportation and clean heat standard, concern of cost
- Study an ecosystem services already done; controversial
- Build Renewables in built environment.
- Education and workforce
- Slow, Spread, sink- water- explanation please, how do we do it?
- Need to act- strong leadership
- Cap + Invest or similar- funding to help low/mid income transition energy
- Get as many goals accomplished as possible
- Hot water stores heat more simply/effectively than batteries
- Getting off fuel- many would love to needs to be steps
- Cap + Invest- infrastructure needed before for electric truck adoption
- Support each other + local businesses
- Cap + Invest- 2019 Study
 - Cautious about really understanding low + moderate income VT ers
- Including Education- yes
 - Think of as a lever for systemic change including schools as a part of strategy (incl. Building/ land)
 - Think about funded professional development
- Focus on health- relevant to everyone
- Cap + Invest
 - Fuel dealers lobbying
 - Less border effects
- Mutual aid
- Electric vehicle
- Better public transit
- Heat pumps
- City v. town
- Subsidies based on income
- Disaster relief
- Resilient new homes
- Weatherization
- Limiting heat
- Culverts

Annex - Rutland

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, post-it notes, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with all of the input from post-it notes and small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'

20 responses



What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results written post-its and small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

Recommendation #1: Cap and Invest

- *Participants expressed skepticism about Cap and Invest, citing concerns about misuse, unfair costs to fuel dealers, and called for caps on consumer energy prices or heat use.*
 - #1: Cap and invest wrong if you are going to force the fuel dealers to pay for fuel use reduction! Remember 2024 Bill- Affordable Heat Act failed in 2025 was not brought up again Just tax fuels for \$
 - #1: Cap and Invest has serious pitfalls. It can be (has been) misused. Do it but exercise skepticism not bandwagons
 - #7: cap on consumer cost/price or cap on heat use

Recommendation #2: Reduce emissions from vehicles

- *Participants highlighted the importance of equitable EV charging access and targeted incentives for low- and moderate-income buyers.*
 - #2: current solutions for people charging EVs but not at houses are deeply inequitable. Those who are renters etc. need access to special rates just like homeowners
 - #2: I agree, ensuring funding for EV incentives to low and moderate income car purchasers

Recommendation #4: Electricity

- *Support grid upgrades with public financing, a solar + battery project in Brandon for low-income Vermonters, and universal community solar with ownership options.*
 - #4: what is grid hardening
 - #4: Utilities and VELCO should get ahead of electrification and 2070 Renewables by upgrading the grid, essentially paving the way using Public not rate based financing
 - #4: Look into using the 100 acres of state land next to the old Brandon training school for a super large solar + battery storage system to serve low income Vermonters. Brandon may well have grid capacity
 - #5: community solar available to ALL (not just low income) should be a common offering, vermonters should be able to own a piece of the electricity production if they choose

Recommendation #8: Weatherization

- *Support for weatherization and removing barriers.*
 - #8: Compelling removing initial barrier allows for benefits
 - #8: awesome

Cross-Sector additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #6: service drops? Sounds scary to a person who doesn't know
 - #10: 200 amp service not necessary in all cases. Smart appliances controlled, can reduce the need
 - #11: What is emissions-based equipment?
 - #3: Yes I agree in investing in more public transportation, making the towns we live in more walkable or bikeable
 - #5: Biggest barrier to sustainability is often economic status
 - Solar roofs, charging facilities at rental housing

Cross-Cutting Issues

- *Support teachers and others with professional development to effectively integrate climate change education.*
 - #1: Critical - most teachers unprepared to teach CC
 - #2: Has to be mandated w/ lots of professional development - or it won't make it into classrooms

Cross-Cutting additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #5: This is the most compelling to me, if we have better public transit I wouldn't drive
 - #8: Critically important to train - what are we suggesting as to how? Esp. include low-income people

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- *Participants supported updating building codes for solar resilience and emphasized the importance of independent data collection to reduce reliance on changing federal policies.*
 - #7: Update building codes: sloped roofs oriented South, through-roof ventilation designed to penetrate N facing, large buildings designed to tolerate added solar panel load
 - #7: Better data will leave us less vulnerable to swinging federal policies
 - #7: In the future we may have to rely on and continue to collect our own data!
- *Encourage multi-story housing and increased density to support public transport, reduce infrastructure costs, and improve flood resilience, while prioritizing clean water and safe homes.*

- #10: Allow/encourage the construction of multi-story ie, 3-5 housing structures and allow increased density to enable more public transport and lower cost of underground infrastructure and increasing feasibility of buried electrical service
- #10: Infrastructure is essential to smart growth development
- #10: Clean water + homes safe from flooding important!

Rural Resilience and Adaptation additional input

- *Additional input*
 - 14, important!
 - #5: We need to better understand how to balance this w/ environmental benefits + burdens!

Agriculture and Ecosystems

- *Support for the siting recommendation with emphasis on prioritizing soil health, clean water, and reduced consumption as well as strong incentives*
 - #9: Priority focus s/b 1) soil health 2) water purity 3) reduce consumption (as economies fittingly shrink in the coming decades)
 - #9: Incentivize solar + wind on existing structures, kind of like a "repair don't replace" mindset
 - #9: Good
- *Support for recommendation #1 with added focus on research and outreach for regenerative and organic farming, reduced chemical use, and evidence-based carbon sequestration, prioritizing soil health.*
 - #1: No mention of supporting research. Outreach by Experiment Station, Extension service, private ag input supplies VT Agency of Ag
 - #1: Carbon sequestration will, does it really work - evidence?
 - #1: Get away from chemical ag in favor of regenerative & organic ag. Depletion of ag soil health is more serious than "climate change" in my view (though deeply related)
- *Opposition to the biomass recommendation*
 - #15: Not in favor of utility scale biomass
 - #15: Biomass very polluting
- *Support prioritizing practical, resilient agriculture to address food insecurity.*
 - #6: Would like to see connections between resilient agriculture and food insecurity emphasized
 - #6: Whatever is done must be practical
- *Prioritize incentives to improve and maintain water sources, and clarify the role of PES in farm programs.*
 - #3: incentives
 - #3: high priority to improve and maintain water sources
 - #3: Never heard of PES. Not a farm program that I know of.

- *Several participants expressed support for creating a climate hazards emergency fund for farms and forestry operations*
 - #5: Important
 - #5: I love this idea! Hopefully a significant amount of money will be allocated to this.
 - #5: Bill in 2025. VT legislature does this.

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - #2: As previous and next card comment, plus attend to water quality as our waterways are equally damaged in ways that compromise our well being on a huge scale
 - #7: Love it! But maybe more intersectionality, such as specific opportunities for women farmers of color, first generation farmers or immigrants as well!
 - #11: Climate resilient land - we need to consider invasive species
 - #2: What is this?
 - #8: Not enough saw mills
 - #11: What does "nature" NbS mean?
 - #12: Water storage = dams, not good

General:

- Final plan s/b - 10 key points focused on the key priorities, points s/b action items only...

Funding Exercise

Participants received ten poker chips to allocate based on their funding priorities.

Topic	# of chips
Cross-Sector Mitigation	45
Cross-Cutting Issues	27
Rural Resilience and Adaptation	19
Agriculture and Ecosystems	29

Annex - May 1 Virtual

This annex includes detailed input from members of the public, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *What's the first word that comes to mind when I say – 'Climate Action?'*
- *How are you experiencing a changing climate?*
- *Which of these draft actions are most compelling for Vermont?*
- *What is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with the input from small group discussions, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Plenary notes are listed separately at the end.

What is the first word that comes to mind when I say, 'Climate Action'?

59 responses



How are you experiencing a changing climate (responses from Menti and the chat):

- *Weather/climate changes:*
 - FLOODS

- extreme weather
- heat
- Different ski seasons
- shorter winters
- warmer winters
- less snow during the winter.
- Less snow.
- Unpredictable weather patterns
- More extreme weather events
- Crazy destructive rains & winds
- unpredictable weather pattern
- winters are shorter and not as much snow summers are too hot
- very high winds more often
- I miss the consistent snow!
- Mold from extremely wet conditions
- Wetter, more humid, higher temps and less snow
- Unpredictable Weather
- Extreme weather
- Hot snowy cold wet and dry, more variable.
- More volatile weather. Thaws, flooding. Wind, etc.
- destabilized weather
- Too many extreme hot days Shorter winters, Back and forth with snow, then melting
- Extreme weather events
- *Impacts of weather changes:*
 - Farming difficulties
 - Food production pests, type of crops possible, no longer possible
 - Flooding, food production down
 - Floods were caused by ice dams.
 - species decline
 - soil declines
 - heat emergencies
 - ski industry struggling
 - big rain storms leads to flooding basement
 - It's costing us BILLIONS.
 - tick checks; less food from our CSA due to floods
 - I now need to use AC. Never had in the past.
 - Customer impacts
 - Flooding and lack of snow!
 - Floods, climate migration
 - More invasives
 - Washed out driveway three times in a year. Crazy gardening.
 - longer growing season, different birds, insects, animals more people moving here

- Can't enjoy the outdoors in the summer: ticks, heat, mosquitoes. Miserable!
- More flooding Infrastructure challenges (roads, culverts, dams, etc.) Need for new or better land management practices.
- Bad roads
- Property damage from flooding
- Floods in the neighborhood that cost neighbors 100,000 each. Change in species that tolerate the climate.
- *Emotional impacts:*
 - With anxiety and deep concern!
 - people despondent
 - With fear, dread, frustration, sorrow

What's most compelling and what is the most urgent feedback you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, the chat, and any small group discussion notes.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

- *Several expressed support for Cap and Invest and including equity planning.*
 - Cap & Invest is the most direct path between where we are and where we need to go.
 - Support Cap and INVEST.
 - Must do equity planning before CAP and Invest is rolled out not in tandem
 - Recommendations that include concrete actions and funding strategies (i.e. cap and invest)
- *Support for expanding public transportation*
 - Transportation and buildings
 - Increasing multimodal transportation
 - bicycle and micromobility incentives
 - Making public transit work in Vermont. A real sustainable way to fund and operate it.
 - Encourage bicycle use
 - Bicycling need more emphasis and concrete strategies to help Vermonters travel by bike.
 - decarbonize transportation sector
 - The immediate focus should be transportation conversion to electric to make major gains in the overall goals.
 - Electric micromobility

- There were concerns over the recent GMT cuts and how that will affect public transportation moving forward.
- *Broadband development is missing.*
 - Continue rural broadband development. Connected smart energy systems save significant energy is missing
 - Broadband category/IT AI category missing
- *Support for weatherization*
 - Funding for weatherization for LMI homes as preparation for adopting clean heat measures
 - Retrofitting buildings for efficiency
 - Municipal Energy Resilience Program increased state-wide.
 - Weatherization funding – need complementary funding too to set houses up for success
 - Getting weatherization done at the same time as preparing buildings for flood impacts may be economically challenging
- *Support a resilient grid, local energy generation, and fair transition benefits.*
 - Items 4 and 6. Need to worry about having enough electricity
 - ensuring rate payers and working people are given a cushion and financial benefit from the transition from fossil fuel to renewables
 - Work for electric dept. so think the electricity items are of great importance, any item that supports the grid to be stable. Both resilience of grid (storms) but also being able to handle new renewables and electricity demand.
 - PUC address local generation
- *Geothermal is missing from the plan.*
 - Geothermal networks is missing – leg consideration to pair geothermal networks with new housing
 - VT needs 26k-34k additional homes by 2029 to meet housing demands. Widespread consideration of networked geo in these neighborhoods rather than sole electrification focus.
- *Other ideas about raising revenue were suggested for consideration.*
 - #7 in CSM - nothing on just a simple tax on fuel; why is that missing? Use the revenue for programs such as weatherization and efficiency VT type.
 - Tax or fee on fuel to fund building energy programs rather than capping schemes and other schemes

Cross-Sector additional input

- *Additional input*
 - More specifics needed on transportation actions particularly around how to fund it
 - DPS to negotiate statewide contract for clean power like they did with HQ and NYPPA
 - Incentives for athletic programs to stay more local? Less parents driving around to games across the state.

- Only so much reasonably possible but helpful to see when and how the impacts will be felt – what actions are able to see an immediate impact? Must be a balance with resilience and cutting pollution. Transportation sector is most important.
- Getting information to Vermonters about how they will mitigate, conserve energy and sign up for renewables. Transportation
- Infrastructure upgrades to small utilities
- Small utility upgrades and more support for generation and battery storage.
- Building standards that are enforced
- Transportation and Buildings 1) Through legislation and administrative action, join a cap-and-invest program, such as the New York Cap and Invest (NYCI) or Western Climate Initiative, 2) Electricity
- Like transportation & electrification actions.
- Let's prioritize cleaning up our heating and cooling sources.

Cross-Cutting Issues

- *Prioritize education as a climate action strategy by supporting teacher training, leveraging existing curricula, and expanding adult programs like the Energy Navigator.*
 - Education as a strategy.
 - Very appreciative of the fact that education is considered a strategy for tackling climate change. Please prioritize providing more support and training for teachers. In creating curriculum, we do not need to reinvent everything.
 - Education is needed for adults as well.
 - The Energy Navigator Program should be high priority to educate Vermonters on how to actually make these important changes
- *Support for cluster housing in underused spaces, expanding trail networks, connecting towns, and prioritizing microgrid development in small villages with clear, specific support.*
 - Creative places for cluster housing—old parking lots?
 - Loved the emphasis on developing trail networks and connecting towns in the cross-cutting sector.
 - Prioritize supporting small villages to develop microgrids. Add specificity in the language.

Rural Resilience and Adaptation:

- *Concern about support public health*
 - Supporting the public's health
 - Public Health:

- Based on a 2022 VDH analysis using the EPA Co-Benefits Risk Assessment (COBRA) tool:
 - 97% of the monetizable health impact from residential heating emissions in Vermont is attributable to wood fuel combustion.
 - The monetizable health impact of residential wood heating in Vermont is \$105M-\$238M (about 30x greater than for all other residential fuels combined).
 - Pollution from wood heating is associated with 10-22 early deaths (about 20x greater than for all other residential fuels combined).
 - Cancer risk from wood heating pollution is 2.5 per million (about 20x greater than for all other residential fuels combined).
- *Support flood resilience in municipalities with more funding for County Conservation Districts, strengthened planning and streamlined grantmaking, as well as a focus on mitigation and recovery for flooded cities and villages.*
 - Flood resilience support for municipalities
 - Community capacity and planning
 - More funding for County Conservation Districts.
 - Strengthen resilience planning/flood recovery
 - Simplify grantmaking and contracting - streamlining those processes both for recipients and gov staff!
 - Have focus on mitigation and/or resilience for the many flooded cities and villages

Agriculture and Ecosystems:

- *Participants supported phasing out biomass and conducting the additional study.*
 - Encourage the completion of the study on the use of biomass for utility scale power.
 - Phase out biomass as well as fossil fuels. vermonters seem in love with burning wood
 - End biomass while ensuring electric costs don't rise
 - No new biomass facilities.
 - No new biomass facilities.
- *Support for keeping large trees in the ground across urban, rural, and forested areas, supporting loggers and timber companies in transitioning to tree stewardship.*
 - Leave large trees in the ground, help loggers transition to stewardship of trees in the ground
 - KEEP Trees in the ground
 - keep trees in the ground in urban, rural and forested areas - support loggers and timber companies in transition
- *Offer incentives for landscapers to invest in electric equipment and improve efficiency.*
 - Incentives for landscapers to invest in electric equipment?

- Help make the work of landscapers more efficient. Invest in electric equipment.

Ag and Eco additional input

- *Additional input*
 - "Simplify and assist with application processes for funding and support programs."
 - The nature-based solution and the use of traditional knowledge are compelling.
 - Ecosystem renewal/ maintenance
 - Include a definition for nature-based solution and the evaluative criteria of what qualifies as nbs.
 - 2,000,000 tons of CO2 emissions were not counted in the graph provided because ANR doesn't count CO2 from biogenic sources, in contradiction to 10 VSA 582(g).
 - Agree with incentivizing solar on parking lots and rooftops but capacity for that is limited; getting a critical amount of solar capacity requires a number of landowners to buy in, there will be a need for a certain amount of land-based solar. Plenty of disincentives to siting in ecologically sensitive areas--pretty thorough enviro review by ANR and PUC 'not pushovers'
 - No cut option for all UVA participants
 - SUGGESTED PRIORITY: Protect and expand our forests to manage storm waters and temperature extremes
 - Does the biodiversity bill limit trapping on public lands? Limits on hunting coyotes and killing bears with cubs? If not, it is not a true biodiversity bill.
 - Focus on solar and wind; not biofuels or biomass or RNG or any other such fake solutions.
 - Established plantings along riparian zones – lift up as a priority

General:

- Infrastructure updates to combat flooding; Digital Equity
- Concerned about how, if enacted, S.110 would impact these priorities.
- How do we pay for it all is something that worries me. Prioritize community capacity and avoid duplicating efforts.
- Prioritize funding options for residential homes. Continue with the energy coaches and navigator programs.
- Cost is a big challenge. Vermont is a small state, and we already have a hard time finding funding.
- Please be mindful of the impacts of the proposed actions on low- and moderate-income Vermonters. The cost of living is high in Vermont and adding more financial burden will only make people angry at the government.
- Cap and Invest as in NY state looks promising. Need to phase out burning biomass to produce electricity. Incentives for solar parking lot canopies.
- Phase out biomass. Include thermal energy networks. Despite incentivizing solar on rooftops and parking lots, will still need some in fields.
- Transportation and Buildings . . . but we have to get there through education!

- Language access
- Keep most things as-is. Make sure to align this plan with all of Vermont's other planning processes (e.g. 30x30, TBP, etc.) to minimize duplication of efforts. Streamline funding of on-the-ground work
- Financing all the goals
- Have you included anything about the work that the Rich Earth Institute is doing for clean water?
- Weatherization of current housing - her street was flooded in 2023, barely avoided that in 2024. Can't move the city out of the floodplain so we're looking at how to harden buildings - trying to find downtown businesses hardened for flooding.
- Prioritize so that limited funds can be prioritized. Also describe magnitude of funding needed and timeframe. Where can existing funds be repurposed? Where are brand new funding streams needed?
- what actions will have the most immediate impact
- Where is the money with the new legislature?
- glad to see people care about taking some action. But I don't see that people are willing to make sacrifices of our consumptive way of life. Live better with Less!
- keep engaging with the public and stakeholders
- Consider the urgency of our current federal situation and prioritize immediate/quick win actions
- Keep trying to synthesize priorities to reduce the number. Awesome work since last time.
- Can you all figure out which priorities will actually be funded by our state legislators???
- Focus more on mitigation than adaptation, and in particular, on helping people navigate this complex system.
- Consider the cost. Low- and middle-income Vermonters are struggling. We want to stay resilient and support climate actions but increased cost will be hard. Consider the impact.
- The carbon cost of the US military far exceeds by multiples anything Vermont can practically accomplish. I applaud the problem-solving/ solutions of the Climate Council and legislators AND would like to see a strong official statement that acknowledges the carbon cost of WAR and the corporate war machine.
- F-35s emit over 100,000 tons of CO2 and prohibit about 3,000 homes from being built in S Burlington.
- back up. Overall adopt a biocentric, less consumptive way of life. Stop trying to encourage us to continue the economic growth madness.
- Craft a plan that meets the GWSA goals on time.
- Reassure people that the plan will not mean that they will be impoverished paying for it.
- Focus on fewer actions, and make sure they are big impact ones (Transportation!)
- Pick the strategies that will work best from an IMPLEMENTATION and IMPACT perspective and then FUND THEM
- Continue public engagement
- Ensure that members of the public that are skeptical of Environmentalism are given an obvious and immediate benefit, hard reduction is not enough

- cross-topical , non-partisan thinking: Really listening to experiential awareness & affordable practical applications
- Don't just focus on what's easy. Some of the hardest things are the most important
- Give communities opportunities to participate.
- Show up in communities. I have seen more engagement this time around.
- More public forums and comments.
- Make them shorter, no more than 10
- Somebody has to break through the language of all this so there's less bureaucraticese. People need to know this is happening and what it means to them. If I weren't a member of VNRC I wouldn't know what's happening. "Meet Vermonters where they are" is a good idea. Where are they?
- Resiliency and affordability
- Craft a plan that meets the GWSA goals on time.
- Info to inform priorities:
- Informing priorities
- What will be the most improvement for the dollars spent.

Plenary notes:

- Can we discern what will actually get passed by legislators?
- A participant urged the Climate Action Committee to address short-term electricity cost impacts from tariffs and Hydro-Québec reliance.
- Digital equity is missing. We need broad affordable internet access statewide. Without it, exacerbates inequities - access to resources, social opportunities to participate, work opportunities/job skills. Not just internet strength/availability of technology but also skills/comfort to use it.
- The Energy Navigator Program is really important to connect Vermonters to solutions.
- We need to be precise in our use of terminology - people are mixing up energy and power.
- A participant called for realistic solar expectations, noting low winter output and encouraging data sharing.
- Rural broadband will have a major impact in terms of Vermont's economy. When people can work from home, they won't have to drive. Smart connected buildings save energy. Team with VCBB.

Annex - May 6 Virtual

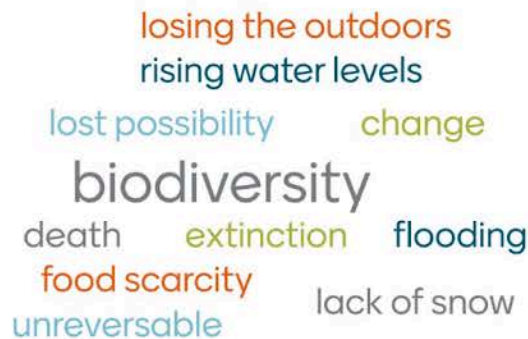
This annex includes detailed input from youth participants, who shared feedback via Mentimeter, Zoom chat, and in plenary. Participants responded to the following four questions:

- *When you hear 'Climate Change' what is your biggest fear?*
- *When you hear 'Climate Change' what is your biggest hope?*
- *How has climate change impacted you, your school, your community?*
- *Which of these draft actions do you think are most important for Vermont?*
- *Do you have feedback for the Council to make these draft ideas better?*

For the purposes of this annex, responses to the last two questions, along with the input from the chat and plenary discussion, have been combined into a consolidated set of responses, organized by thematic bucket. Additional written comments received are listed separately at the end.

When you hear 'Climate Change' what is your biggest fear?

12 responses



When you hear 'Climate Change' what is your biggest hope?

15 responses



How has climate change impacted you, your school, your community?

- Extreme rain ruined our driveway and town road. Twice.
- The floods in southern Vermont More bugs. Rainier and warmer winters
- Increased heat without air conditioning in our school
- extreme weather that impacts events at school,
- losing the winter sports because there is less snow
- Classrooms are so hot in June
- I've noticed positives and negatives over climate change. Our weather is getting more unpredictable and taking away things we love, like snow. But it has brought so many people together where I live

What's most important and what feedback do you have for the Council?

This section includes results from the Menti polls, comments in the chat, and from plenary discussion.

Cross-Sector Mitigation

- Electric vehicles are a positive step, but they still come with emissions from production, high costs, and strain on the electrical grid as well as the consumer. Reducing the number of cars overall – both gas and electric – is even better. More walkable cities like a redesigned Burlington and improved intercity rail could help. For example, trains between Rutland and Burlington exist but aren't frequent or convenient enough to be a viable alternative.
- Is there anything in there about increasing power generation? There's a lot about efficiency, load management, and helping homes electrify, but not much on actually generating more power. You mentioned that around 80% of the state's energy comes from within the state, yet it still doesn't meet demand. Is there anything addressing how to make up that shortfall by building more energy generation?
- Transportation/1
- Transportation/3
- We need a way to sustainably fund these programs (Transportation #1 and #3) without federal support—likely involving some form of taxation—and to encourage consumers to buy electric vehicles without relying solely on taxes. Ideally, this would include giving money back in a way that still motivates people to make the right choice.
- Was refrigerant management mentioned anywhere in the document? It's super important especially if we want to quintuple the amount of AC and heat pumps.

Cross-Cutting Issues

- Climate change standards in state curriculum

- Increasing climate education
- Apprenticeships
- Adult education
- Education Item 2
- Workforce development 7, 12 and 13
- I think that the education parts are focused too much on teaching the wrong set of people. The ones who already broadly believe. Not that they are bad at all, they are important. But you could get more.
- What is Act 181?

Rural Resilience and Adaptation

- I think bills like public health 13 that focus on helping community organizations that can help educate communities as well as provide assistance to low income Vermonters after weather events that are sure to come in the near future. Especially in a small state like Vermont I think focusing on reducing emissions is important but it is also especially important to help lower the burden that climate change causes on vulnerable populations.

Agriculture and Ecosystems

- A lot of the Ag and Eco bills are important when thinking about working with Vermonters and our farming communities. I think bills like ag 1 sound very interesting. Would funding go to farmers to help them implement more sustainable practices?

General feedback:

- Marketing materials
- Climate change innovation grants
- Promote the positive actions that are becoming implemented besides all the things that still must be done - this can increase hope and engagement in the community
- quick visual that describes lesser known legislation related to draft ideas
- By far the biggest thing is that it references legislation sometimes from other states without explaining them

Additional comments received in writing:

- I appreciate the Climate Council's goals and believe they will help students become more informed about climate issues. I have been exposed to these goals and have learned about climate change. In my chemistry class, we studied climate change, which was an enjoyable experience, as it covered topics like different types of fuels and oysters.

- Allowing students to choose how deeply they want to study climate change would be beneficial (goal 1: Build off existing resources and programs to create an open-source, accessible, and interdisciplinary climate change curriculum for Vermont educators). Additionally, offering incentives such as helping repay student loans could encourage climate education (goal 9: Target outreach, training, support systems for existing Vermont residents to enter and stay in climate change careers, including farm and forestry, clean energy and resilience careers).
- Cross-cutting #8: I think that it is important to teach and immerse middle schoolers into climate science and teach them about the impacts of climate change because they are at such a young and developing age, what they have learned may stick with them for a long time.
- *What have you experienced or been exposed to in school that relates to these goals?* I have been exposed to an experience at Hildene Farm that is related to goal 9. My family connected me to this as a volunteer and employment opportunity in my local town. As a Vermonter who will be attending higher education in Vermont I was exposed to tending to livestock and growing vegetables for multiple years which influenced me further to pursue a career in wildlife biology. I will most likely move out of Vermont once I am out of college because I want to go to graduate school in Montana to further my education in wildlife biology and management.
- I think one of the goals would be get middle school kids more involved in the workforce career so they can start building. Second goal We also should let students spend a day observing professionals in various industries like climate and career and technology. I think there should be more education on climate change in the workforce place with these things some programs focus on job-shadowing, where students observe professionals in various industries to gain firsthand insights into workplace environments. Others integrate career exploration into middle school curriculum.
- Education #1: I don't remember learning anything about climate in elementary school so I think applying that into schools and getting climate education in young kids is key to a healthy future.
- Workforce #9: I think lots of students leave VT and don't come back. I think we should inspire workforce members who grew up in VT to come back. I have heard about a program at UVM (I think) that supports Vermont students to come back and teach. They do this by forgiving some student loans.
- Summer jobs-> smoky house
- Gaining degrees
- Education #3: feels broad, easy to find loopholes, how to maintain given current administration
- I think the overall goals are constructive to the state, and will inform students better about the climate change and effects of it. I have been exposed to some climate change education in school, but I think it would be beneficial to students to be more immersed in climate change in their classes. For example, science classes or english classes could add more to their curriculums involving climate change. A couple examples that I have had in school revolving around climate change are writing a paper about energy use in my government class and taking a climate leadership class. I think most of the climate

change education is optional for students; they can write a paper about it or take a class on it, but it is optional for students whereas it might be more valuable to make it required.

- Education #2: Personally I feel like it should be more of an optional thing as opposed to a requirement because not everyone is going to want to take classes with relevance to climate change. For example, a kid that wants to be an astrophysicist isn't going to need to know that farmers should be rotating their crops.
- Education #1: I think Vermonters really try to add comments about climate change and people really care about making the world a better place for our future generations. Coming to Vermont has helped me to realize how important climate change, back in my school in Spain Climate change is not a spoken topic and I think Vermont as a state could even make other countries realize how important these movements are.