

# Community Capacity and Planning Task Group

Results of discussions through October 2024

# Task Group Scope

- Training/capacity strengthening
- Funding as it impacts community capacity and planning
- Coordination of state/local municipalities and NGOs
- Increasing staff capacity and needs
- Technical support (e.g. tools, etc.)
- Policy as it impacts community capacity and planning
- Planning
- Education and public awareness

# CC&P TG Members

- ❖ Chris Company
- ❖ Dahlia Cohn
- ❖ Bronwyn Cooke
- ❖ Otis Ellms-Munroe
- ❖ Scott McCormick
- ❖ Caroline Paske
- ❖ Candace Pearson
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# Toolkits, Planning and Implementation

<b>Pathway 14</b>	<b>Increase capacity for climate resilience planning and implementation, and address inequities of under-resourced communities</b>
Strategy 14a (proposed revision)	<p>Provide tools, technical support, and permanent funding for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Develop a climate planning toolkit that serves as a hub to for existing tools, resources, and information, relevant for designing and implementation climate action measures or strategies at a municipal level.</li><li>❖ Expand capacity for the State to train on and support the use of the Municipal Climate Toolkit through development of education materials, expanded technical assistance, and streamlined tools to help municipalities access planning and implementation support related to climate action.</li><li>❖ Develop a Municipal Climate Planning Framework and Guide that helps Vermont municipalities develop and integrate climate actions into their planning processes that are locally relevant and aligned with State climate goals.</li><li>❖ Align the Municipal Planning and Resilience Grant Program with the Municipal Climate Planning Framework and Guide to provide funding for the development of municipal plans that incorporate and yield climate resilience outcomes.</li><li>❖ Establish permanent, dedicated funding for Regional Planning Commissions to cover overhead costs related to their application for and management of hazard mitigation grants.</li></ul>

## Proposed Revised Strategy 14a:

Provide tools, technical support, and permanent funding for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Notes	Next Steps
<p>Have strategy speak to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Toolkit</li><li>❖ Planning Framework</li><li>❖ MPG funding to support use of planning framework</li><li>❖ Resilience Implementation Strategy</li><li>❖ RPCs funding</li><li>❖ Implementation funding and planning funding</li><li>❖ fund overhead costs for RPCs so they can access hazard mitigation grants directly to help with funding</li><li>❖ need more education and technical support on existing programs for municipalities to be aware of.</li></ul> <p>Add additional actions that speak to supporting the implementation of the toolkit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Revise strategy: remove reference to "create climate resilience plans" and focus on supporting existing planning processes.</li><li>❖ How do we support municipalities use of existing tools and plans?</li><li>❖ Make clearer that we are not asking for new things - asking for this to be used to support existing municipal requirements.</li><li>❖ Add another action about climate planning framework project.</li></ul>

### Strategy 14b:

Establish permanent statewide funding and technical support for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation to enhance rural resilience to impacts of climate change – **REVISE STRATEGY**, combine with 14a.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Create and fund one natural resource staff position at every Regional Planning Commission to assist with implementation of climate policies and natural resources requirements such as Act 171 (forestry and habitat blocks). Use the Transportation Planning Initiative as a model to fund RPC natural resource staff and support trainings with ANR and other partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Need options to pay for the staffing to do this (natural resource, climate adaptation, etc.) type of work</li><li>❖ Echo navigator role action in P3 to help municipalities access funding and TA broadly.</li><li>❖ Ensure actions are implementable and have a clear implementor.</li><li>❖ What is the role?</li><li>❖ How do we ensure that coordination is integrated from state to regional to municipal to residential levels?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Check with RPCs</li><li>❖ Ensure actions are implementable and have a clear implementor.</li></ul>

### Strategy 14b:

Establish permanent statewide funding and technical support for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation to enhance rural resilience to impacts of climate change – **REVISE STRATEGY**, combine with 14a.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Provide technical assistance to municipalities to assess the flood and erosion risks facing their drinking water and wastewater systems and identify potential mitigation improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ What about drought risk?</li> <li>❖ Why not assess this as well as part of a water and wastewater facilities/operations plan?</li> </ul>	<p>Coordinate with Infrastructure TG</p>
<p>Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Consider funding and continuous education for RPCs to stay up to date on myriad climate change tools and information.</li> <li>❖ There is a need for a programmatic shift that supports RPCs and municipalities and long-term institutional sustainability.</li> <li>❖ Combine actions that reference RPCs and speak to creating a long-term program for climate mitigation and adaptation work - call out integration of municipalities in that program; <b>include communication and integration network. Need someone/organization/framework to facilitate integrating climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning into municipal planning/operations.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Change reference to MVI.</li> <li>❖ Include for discussion with municipality/regional organization focus group discussion</li> </ul>

### Strategy 14b:

Establish permanent statewide funding and technical support for local and regional climate resilience planning and project implementation to enhance rural resilience to impacts of climate change – **REVISE STRATEGY**, combine with 14a.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Increase and create a permanent state fund for design and implementation of local and regional climate adaptation and resilience projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This was established through VEM program established in S.310 - Community Resilience &amp; Disaster Mitigation Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Revise action so it's not so broad. STORM Act - creates authority to create a revolving loan fund for climate haz mit projects.</li> <li>❖ This works well with the above. Do the planning, then fund the design and implementation of specific projects Id'ed through the planning</li> </ul>
<p>Establish a state level individual assistance program to provide financial assistance to uninsured or underinsured households impacted by disasters not federally declared. Program should incorporate Community Action Agencies and supporting networks to ensure assistance is received expeditiously by those that need it most.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Would this cover immediate assistance and long-term repairs?</li> <li>❖ Case management support and understanding what the needs are?</li> <li>❖ When does this cross the line from capacity to public health?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ask Chris Campany before moving forward with revisions</li> <li>❖ Coordinate with Public Health TG</li> </ul>



### Strategy 14c:

Expand cross-sector collaboration to align efforts, share best practices, and leverage resources to advance resilience and preparedness efforts statewide.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Identify and develop new programs to address the full range of climate impacts, especially those that impact important Vermont industries, including drought, less or irregular snowfall, and shorter or irregular sugaring season.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ BEGAP has some funding to help small businesses; connect with VSJF about Climate Ready VT program?</li> <li>❖ Action seems focused on winter tourism, should expand to encompass impacts on other natural resources (fishing, snowmobile associations, recreation sector). Addressing climate from a community perspective yields one thing. Looking at climate vulnerability/adaptation from key economic sectors/industry is another (e.g. already doing this a little with Ag).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Expand to wider array of businesses – facilitate discussion during Business Focus Group meeting</li> </ul>
<p>Complete a Statewide climate change impact assessment for Vermont’s commercial sector and natural resource-based industries including but not limited to the ski, sugaring, and logging industries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ How would this be funded? Who would be the key implementor? Key agencies may need resources and TA to go about doing vulnerability assessments for economic sectors.</li> <li>❖ How does this action improve capacity for communities to tackle planning for climate adaptation? This would help to organize industries to align with state objectives, identify the types of actions and strategies to give municipalities easier access to industry efforts and information about climate adaptation. How can municipalities better work with the commercial sectors in their region?</li> <li>❖ Could be a BRIC grant; look into diversified funding options with contributions from private sector/industry</li> </ul>	

Strategy 14d:

Increase community participation in local governance and support civic engagement and citizen involvement.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Require remote meeting options, including a call-in option for all meetings of public bodies; allow fully virtual meetings of public bodies with guidelines similar to the State of Emergencies; evaluate options for online collaboration in preparation for a meeting that can be done with transparency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Completed. Legislature passed a bill.</li> </ul>	
<p>New actions need to be developed. Link to other Pathway strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Need someone/organization/framework to facilitate integrating climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning into municipal planning/operations.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To be coordinated with Just Transitions SC</li> </ul>

## Pathway 15:

Proactively and strategically invest to enhance resilience in transportation, communications, water/wastewater, and energy infrastructure statewide

Strategy 15a: Public, private, and nonprofit entities should be prepared to respond and recover quickly to disruptions caused by severe weather and other climate change threats.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Strategically integrate planning and preparedness across disciplines and geographies addressing the interdependencies of transportation, energy, communications, and other systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Maybe make this narrower to focus on resilience hubs - led by VEM. Otherwise this seems like it'd be covered by LEMPs on the municipal level and mutual aid agreements on the regional level - support for both already provided by RPC emergency management planners? Strategy 15c seems like it'd be the place for actions around infrastructure adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Break out to speak specifically to how planning and preparedness across infrastructure sectors is integrated with municipal capacity and planning structures.</li> <li>❖ How do we build the capacity to integrate infrastructure response across multiple levels?</li> <li>❖ Do we want to adjust this action to encompass mitigation, or speak to the structures that make recovery less difficult? Coordinate municipal climate adaptation with sector specific, with state infrastructure etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Identify mission critical facilities in collaboration with local and regional planners, utilities and transportation providers to identify actions, procedures, or investments to mitigate the impact of extreme weather events to services provided by these facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Perhaps need to differentiate between public and private facilities/services? Public facilities could be inventoried/protected/relocated by individual municipalities. Privately controlled facilities could be more difficult to track and control - zoning/floodplain regs one of few levers to influence location/protection?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Check in with VEM HSU about identified critical infrastructure - how was it identified, what was identified?</li> <li>❖ TRPT identifies some?</li> <li>❖ Be more clear about the outcome of this action? For use for municipalities for planning? For identification of locations for adaptation/buyouts/relocation? For identification funding?</li> </ul>

## Pathway 16:

Support the reduction of municipal, school district, residential, university and hospital fossil fuel use in rural areas through equitable best practices that address the unique challenges of rural communities.

Coordinating with the Cross-Sector Mitigation Subcommittee

## Pathway 17:

Change Vermont's land use policies so current and future land development will be adaptive and resilient to climate change impacts

Strategy 17b: Develop permanent private and public funding sources to floodproof, elevate and purchase commercial and residential properties, as well as conserve and restore ecosystem services upstream to protect our people, property, environment, and economy from flooding.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Fund ERAF for non-federal disasters in towns that have adopted floodplain and/or river corridor bylaws and to support the 25% non-federal match for buyouts and develop criteria for distribution when funding is limited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Revise action</li> <li>❖ Assess the efficacy of and consider revisions to ERAF to contribute towards the 25% non-federal match for FEMA hazard mitigation funding applications and match for other flood disaster risk reduction opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Assess the efficacy of and consider revisions to ERAF to contribute towards the 25% non-federal match for FEMA hazard mitigation funding applications and match for other flood disaster risk reduction opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p>Establish a dedicated, comprehensive state level program with funding to strategically purchase or match funding for hazard-prone properties, easements to conserve river corridors, floodplains, forests, and wetlands to reduce overall flood risk and enhance flood storage statewide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Revise action</li> <li>❖ Sustainable funding needed, Creation of the Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund by the Legislator in 2023/24 session. \$45 million allocated for hazard mitigation.</li> <li>❖ Expand beyond flood hazards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Assess the efficacy of and consider revisions to ERAF to contribute towards the 25% non-federal match for FEMA hazard mitigation funding applications and match for other flood disaster risk reduction opportunities.</li> <li>❖ Identify sustainable, long-term funding to support hazard mitigation and local match, to include: purchase of hazard-prone properties and easements to conserve river corridors, floodplains, and wetlands identified as key flood attenuation areas.</li> </ul>

Strategy 17b: Develop permanent private and public funding sources to floodproof, elevate and purchase commercial and residential properties, as well as conserve and restore ecosystem services upstream to protect our people, property, environment, and economy from flooding.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Expand the eligibility criteria and increase funding for VHCB's conservation and buyout program, to address any flood-vulnerable structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Revise action</li> <li>❖ This is actually addressed by multiple actions in the 2023 SHMP</li> <li>❖ VHCB had developed and implemented a flood buyout program following Tropical Storm Irene, but that has not been refunded in response to the flooding last summer. We are making other flood resilience and recovery investments, but not as this action frames the work. If we are directed to do so, we could revisit this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ????</li> </ul>



## Pathway 18:

Ensure that all people have access to safe, accessible, energy efficient, and affordable housing.

Strategy 18a: Update state and local land-use governance, regulations, practices, and investments to eliminate barriers to housing development.

Actions to be Revised, Reworded or Combined	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Expand pilot program to train a network of local builders in the design and building of small and mid-sized and accessory dwelling units (mother-in-law apartments) and fund homes starts within communities planning and investing in development-ready infrastructure, building development partnerships, and updating zoning bylaws to welcome new homes.</p>	<p><b>How to integrate climate adaptation and resilience into affordable housing?</b></p> <p><b>How to link with Thermal Sector TG?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Add new action: training for PCs and DRBs on LEED construction and/or requirements for State for integration of climate-smart building. Speak to training on energy efficient, resilient and affordable housing</li> </ul>
<p>Expand the existing program to relocate mobile home park homes and residents outside of flood vulnerable locations.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Revise action and revise status notes: being advanced through FRCF; check 8/8 press release on \$\$ for new mobile homes; be more specific about what programs we are referring to expanding; action can be strengthened by being more clear and accessible; maybe the need is to make program coordination via State agencies and non-profits easier and more accessible to the public.</li> </ul>
<p>Create a rental registry and inspection program to locate all of Vermont's rental housing and improve their quality and safety.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Coordinate with Public Health TG</li> </ul>