

Summary of Key Issues

Survey Responses – Cross-Cutting Issues

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5 responses

Lauran Oates
Chris Company
Bram Kleppner
Johanna Miller
Liz Miller

Compact Settlement

- Compact Settlement section became more of a catch-all Land Use section, which may confuse CAP audience, as many Land Use actions are scattered in other parts of the CAP (especially within Ag & Eco).
- I disagree with the following assertion: "With thoughtful review and modest changes, policymakers can modernize the state's existing framework of regulations and incentives to not only strengthen Vermont's brand, economy, and communities -- but drive down emissions, expand equity and environmental justice, prepare communities for warmer and wetter weather, and remove the carbon already in the atmosphere."
- Following line 109, under equity, it says: "Investment in infrastructure should ensure that those most impacted by climate change and experience contextual, procedural, corrective, and distributive equity in the implementation of infrastructure investments to address climate change." I believe the word "and" between "change" and "experience" should be removed. The same correction applies to the section following line 175.
- What does "bank land" mean? Line 133, it says " Create a State-wide redevelopment authority to bank land, underwrite acceptable risk, address blight, vacancy, and brownfields, improve building flood resilience in settled areas, and plan for new neighborhood development and infrastructure."
- What does this mean: Line 143, it says "Update Act 250 to promote compact settlement by: i) waiving the mitigation fees for prime agricultural soils for alternative or community wastewater systems that will serve a state designated center.
- One issue not raised is whether we should be relocating wastewater treatment facilities away from waterways to improve water quality, reduce the risk of flood damage to these facilities, and improve the air quality in the housing near these facilities, which is often low- income housing.
- One tension not addressed is the need to focus development in historic village centers, and the desire to preserve their character, charm, and scale.

Education

- I suggest reference should be made to the need for ongoing education of the Vermont Climate Council itself. Suggest a 4th action be added along the lines of:
 - Ensure the Council is educated about critical issues associated with all aspects of its tasks.
 - a. The latest research on GHG emissions and global priorities related to harms and efficacy of mitigation strategies and tactics.
 - b. Evolving adaptation and resilience needs.
 - c. Evaluation of GWSA implementation effectiveness, including the meeting of just transitions goals and objectives.
 - d. Evaluation of VCC ongoing engagement with the public, and the extent to which its efforts are inclusive of all Vermonters, especially those on the front lines of change and global warming impacts/risks.

Personal Actions

- The personal action section is great, but it only speaks to emissions reductions actions and not those actions that promote adaptation, resilience, or anything that helps Vermonters understand what actions they can take on their land/property to mitigate impacts of a changing climate.
- I think it would be helpful to create a website that Vermonters (and indeed anyone) could use to find the currently available alternatives to gas powered cars, gas/diesel powered pick-ups, fossil-fuel heating systems, gas water heaters, and gas-powered lawn mowers, snow blowers, leaf blowers, motor boats, jetskis, snow mobiles, and motorcycle
- In the section intro, it seems important to reference the time of sale/lease or transition as a key moment to support VTers in investing in more clean heat, transportation options.

Cross-cutting Themes

EJ Policy

Workforce

- The Workforce section should read "Workforce Development" and is framed up oddly (opens with two actions, then drops down into strategies with specific actions - recommend a strategy for the first two actions).

State govt, community, and partner capacity

- I do not think a single Climate Director is sufficient to do the necessary work to align regulatory and funding programs across state government. I'd like the developer of this action to describe what they're envisioning before signing off on it.

Building Codes

- Final action under Building Code - recommend adding "and substantially improved structures".
- Re building codes, I think there needs to be more of a carrot or stick approach that we're recommending. That is, in the absence of creating a statewide building code, there should be language that recommends incentives for municipalities that adopt, for example, the "sample building standards for resilient design and construction", and those that aim to increase efficiency and reduce emissions.
- I'd like to see specific mention of the exploration of the adoption of comprehensive building codes (grading, structural, electrical, plumbing/gas, etc.)
 - Audit existing residential building codes to ensure that standards account for anticipated climate change impacts to Vermont, including but not limited to increased temperatures extremes and precipitation. Determine the efficacy of the residential energy code in achieving GWSA goals and objectives in the absence of a more comprehensive building code and permitting and inspection structure that includes grading, structural, electrical, and plumbing and gas.

Other

- All state agencies, departments, boards, commissions, and authorities should be required to consider the foreseeable climate change impacts when considering and issuing permits, licenses, and other administrative approvals and decisions. All permit applications should require the applicant to disclose relevant climate risks and adaptation measures. Likewise, all applicants for state grants, loans, and other funding should be required to demonstrate that the planning and design of the project include adaptation measures that address foreseeable climate change impacts, as should all RFPs for state capital projects.
- The draft appears to be lacking several items/actions that were early priorities. I will need to take some time to review past drafts to find these.
- Not a concern, but potentially a gap - relates to how the CAP recognizes and frames up needed public engagement (how it can/should occur and is envisioned in both the short term and over time, recognizing this is a long-standing, iterative endeavor). I understand that is a key component of the Just Transitions piece of the CAP. That makes sense. It may also be helpful to frame out elsewhere in the plan, potentially in the implementation section, as it relates to the need for and opportunity in engaging key partners and practitioners for successful program implementation (e.g. transit agency officials, automobile dealers etc, etc). Perhaps this is already happening/addressed in the JT implementation element and it's not an issue. If not, it seems important to highlight and incorporate elsewhere...
- The organization of this section may need some work, maybe with bulleted summary or list up front; prioritization within the section is not clear.
- Substantively it is missing a section on energy tradeoffs - all sources have benefits and burdens here and elsewhere and ancillary impacts (chemicals/resource usage, disposal issues etc.) This is true of fossils and all RE sources too. This came up in multiple

places/ways in the CC process and should be included in this section as a theme, probably - it is not a pathway itself but something that will have to be taken into account in all pathway choices.