

Vermont Climate Council 2025 Update to Vermont's Climate Action Plan

Municipal Input Session



Vermont Climate Action Plan

Dennis Curran

- **2020** Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA)
- **July 1, 2025** Climate Action Plan Update due; updated every 4 years
- Plan is a roadmap for how to achieve objectives set by GWSA
- **The Update focuses on:**
 - **Cutting Climate Pollution (aka. emissions reductions)**
 - **Adaptation & Resilience in Built and Natural Environment**
 - **Natural and Working Lands Solutions**
 - **Public Health and Housing**

Vermont Climate Action Plan Update

Vermont Climate Council & Subcommittees

Spring and Summer 2024

Council orients update and subcommittees begin work

Fall 2024

Task Groups draft updates to Pathways, Strategies, and Actions.

Subcommittees submit recommendations to Council in **December**

Winter 2025

Council compiles a draft updated plan

Spring 2025

Council revises and finalizes plan based on public input.

Plan delivered by July 1, 2025

Engagement and Outreach



Public kick-off meetings



Eight input sessions:



We are here!



Public consultation on draft plan

Community engagement throughout!

Meeting Vermonters where they are; partnering with community-based orgs; focus groups, etc.



Drafting Subcommittees

Agriculture & Ecosystems

Cross Sector Mitigation

Rural Resilience & Adaptation



Examples of Municipal-scaled Recommendations



Cross Sector Mitigation

Pathway: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with buildings and facilities through cost-effective and affordable weatherization and energy efficiency improvements, as well as through use and enforcement of energy and electrical standards and codes.

- **Strategy 1:** Ramp up implementation of the multi-year Weatherization (WX) at Scale Initiative to meet the scale and pace of residential and commercial weatherization that is [used in the Vermont Pathways model necessary to meet 2030 GWSA requirements.
 - **Action:** Through legislation or administrative action, ensure X additional commercial, industrial, municipal, and non-residential buildings are comprehensively weatherized by 2030, and secure the funding needed to achieve the target.
 - **Action:** Through legislation or administration action, secure upfront funding to comprehensively weatherize all municipal buildings and public facilities (including “weatherization ready project needs) with priority for supporting/expanding existing programs (i.e. the Municipal Energy Resilience Program, Municipal Technical Assistance Program, Building Communities, etc.).
- **Strategy 2:** Strengthen state-wide building energy standards and fund related education and code enforcement necessary to meet the 2030 and 2050 GWSA requirements.
 - **Action:** Develop and fund a state-level Energy Code Circuit Rider initiative that provides code and enforcement assistance and training to municipalities to ensure awareness of and compliance with existing and future building energy standards and/or codes.



Cross Sector Mitigation

Pathway: Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

- **Strategy:** Increase state, regional and local capacity to plan for VMT reduction and implement sustainable transportation strategies.
 - **Action: Require VTrans to create a State Sustainable Transportation Implementation Plan in collaboration with municipalities.**

Pathway: Further Reduce GHG from the Electric Sector

- **Strategy:** 100% Carbon-free or Renewable Electricity
 - **Action: Department of Public Service issuing report in January regarding considerations for community renewable access, including for municipalities, schools, affordable housing, and community led projects. CSM will consider potential Actions in light of that report.**



Rural Resilience & Adaptation

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

- **Strategy:** Increase the resilience of critical infrastructure to severe weather and other climate change threats by improving system efficiency, reliability and redundancies.
 - **Action:** Expand public investment, particularly hazard mitigation funding to flood-proof or relocate drinking water and wastewater treatment infrastructure at significant risk of flooding, when flood damaged, or during end-of-life refurbishment.

Pathway: Create a policy, planning and organizational foundation to support effective investments in infrastructure resilience.

- **Strategy:** Create a policy, planning and organizational foundation to support effective investments in infrastructure resilience
 - **Action:** Encourage adoption of low impact development regulations for municipal zoning, including low water usage landscaping practices and increased density outside of flood prone zones.



Rural Resilience & Adaptation

Pathway: Increase capacity for climate resilience planning and implementation, and address inequities of under-resourced communities.

- **Strategy:** Provide tools and resources to help communities assess climate vulnerabilities and create climate resilience plans.
 - **Action:** 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.

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

- **Strategy:** Update state and local land-use governance, regulations, practices, and investments to eliminate barriers to housing development.
 - **Action:** 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 increase funding and financing products for homes starts within communities that are planning and investing in development-ready infrastructure, building development partnerships, and updating zoning bylaws to welcome new homes.



Rural Resilience & Adaptation

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

- **Strategy:** Create a policy, planning and organizational foundation to support effective investments in infrastructure resilience.
 - **Action:** Develop a vulnerability index methodology and tool for broad use by stakeholders to identify priority areas for investment. The index will account for the vulnerability communication, energy, transportation, and water infrastructure in addition to socioeconomic and equity factors that affect community resilience.

Water & Wastewater

- **Update:** Over a dozen existing actions currently under review in the following three categories:
 - Planning
 - Investment
 - Siting



Group Discussion

- What do municipalities need to further address climate action at the town level?
- Where is action of most interest to municipalities: resilience, adaptation, nature-based solutions, or mitigation?
- Capacity has emerged as a key theme; do you agree and where would resources be most helpful to support municipalities?



Climate Action Office Projects to Support Municipalities

- 1. Municipal Vulnerability Indicators Tool**
- 2. Municipal Climate Toolkit**
- 3. Municipal Climate Planning Framework**



Next Steps

Stay involved!

- Sign up for the [Climate Action Office's newsletter](#) (link in chat)
- Attend a subcommittee meeting or another input session: climatechange.vermont.gov/calendar
- Share your thoughts!
 - [Climate Action Plan public comment form](#) (link in chat)
 - Leave a voice message at 802-404-2729