

CC RRA Sub-Committee Draft Pathways and Strategies 7.22.21

1. Increase local and regional capacity, including community and civic infrastructure, for resilience planning and implementation, and address inequities of under-resourced communities.
 - Provide tools and resources to help communities assess climate vulnerabilities, and identify changes and investments needed to break the cycle of repetitive loss, speed post disaster economic recovery and reduce the long-term financial burden of disasters on impacted communities, businesses, and individuals.
 - Increase state, regional, and local capacity through outreach, training, and funding to help rural, under-resourced, and marginalized populations in climate preparedness and action; increase funding for municipal and regional planning.
 - Expand cross-sector collaboration that includes nonprofit, public, and private organizations involved in preparedness and resilience work to align efforts, share best practices, and leverage resources to advance equitable resilience and preparedness efforts statewide.
 - Support workforce development in trades and skills that are needed to implement climate resilience and emissions reduction actions including training on resilient design and construction techniques.

2. Proactively and strategically enhance resilience in lifeline critical infrastructure including transportation, communications, water/ wastewater, and energy statewide.
 - Create framework for identifying and evaluating climate resilience threats and impacts to energy and communications systems serving rural communities
 - Identify, prioritize, and protect vulnerable structures and critical infrastructure; prioritize jurisdictions that have experienced historical investment inequities.
 - Integrate planning and preparedness across disciplines and geographies addressing the interdependencies of energy, communications, and other systems
 - Expand program opportunities to establish conservation and buy-outs of flood-vulnerable properties and structures to improve natural river function and reduce repetitive loss.
 - Enhance resilience in Vermont's (rural?) transportation system to major disruptions and incremental impacts caused by climate change.
 - Develop a comprehensive framework for defining, evaluating, and measuring energy and communications resilience solutions.

- Pursue near-term, no-regrets, foundational investments in energy and communications resilience to serve rural communities.
 - Seek funding to implement cost prohibitive projects that improve rural energy and communications resilience.
 - Implement strategic upgrades to substations, distribution, and transmission capacity across the Vermont grid needed to enable the state's renewable and electrification goals, after first exploring feasibility of any lower-cost options, e.g. flexible load management, curtailment, and storage.
3. Support the reduction of municipal, school district and residential fossil fuel use in rural areas through equitable best practices that address the unique challenges of rural communities.
- Conduct thermal energy audits on publicly owned structures and work to implement audit recommendations, prioritizing ARPA funds. Collect usage data for buildings, vehicle fleets, and utilities to establish base usage and for measuring change (ideally reductions) going forward.
 - Support local energy committees with members of diverse perspectives; engage and empower the public in planning and implementation.
 - Utilize local energy plans with clear goals and strategies to prioritize efforts to reduce fossil fuel usage, including infrastructure, practices and policies, and regulatory changes.
 - Transform VT's transportation system to support the actions necessary to reduce greenhouse gases.
4. Ensure Vermont's land-use policies on current and future land development are adaptive and resilient to climate change impacts by promoting compact development, enhancing the capacity of natural and working lands, and mitigating the impacts of climate change with an emphasis on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increase investment in the infrastructure (sewer, water, stormwater, sidewalks, bike lanes, EV charging, broadband, energy supply) needed to support compact, walkable development that is more resilient to climate disruptions, equitable, resource efficient, and protects the adaptive capacity of natural resources.
 - Develop private and public funding sources to flood-proof and elevate commercial and residential properties, as well as retain and restore ecosystem services upstream to protect our people, property, environment, and economy from floods.

- Update state and local land-use governance, regulations, practices, and investments to eliminate barriers to housing development in compact, walkable development, and protect river corridors, floodplains, and wetlands, by limiting development in hazard areas and reducing the fragmentation of intact forest blocks, working forests, and habitat connectivity areas.
- Improve state designation programs (e.g. designated downtowns, villages, neighborhoods, etc.) to build stronger more diverse neighborhoods with equitable access to housing, jobs, services, schools, recreation, and transit.
- Modernize planning and development statutes and regulations to incorporate foreseeable climate change impacts, adaptation and resilience considerations including the development of resilient design and construction standards.
- State agencies, departments, boards, commissions, and authorities should coordinate resiliency efforts across agencies and evaluate climate change impacts when considering and issuing permits, licenses, and other administrative approvals and decisions.
- Fund research, data collection and digital maps to provide insights on development in Vermont and the impact it can have on climate and resilience goals and outcomes.