



Vermont Climate Economy Partnership

Update and Work Plan: May 2016

At the Vermont Climate Economy Summit on February 22 2016, the Vermont Climate Change Economy Council (VCCEC) formally completed its work, and delivered “*Progress for Vermont*,” its seven-point platform of action. The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) will carry the VCCEC platform and, in partnership with many other organizations and individuals, work to implement the goals, recommendations, and programmatic ideas entailed in it. Toward that end, VCRD will:

A. Develop the Vermont Climate Economy Partnership and Lead with Partners in Advocacy for the Implementation of VCCEC Platform Elements

While some ideas from the VCCEC action plan can be implemented directly by VCRD and our partners, several of the recommendations of the VCCEC, along with additional ideas from the Summit, will require positive, consistent, practical, and non-partisan advocacy. VCRD will invite Summit participants, key business and policy leaders, and citizens to join together in the Vermont Climate Economy Partnership to advance climate economy development through project implementation, education, advocacy, and, when appropriate, lobbying to advance key VCCEC positions.

There is no litmus test for membership in the Partnership; and no member must adhere to all the ideas from the VCCEC platform or the Summit. Instead, the Partnership will act as an evolving dialogue that will rally people to take practical or political action. Advocacy efforts to support key action related to elements of the VCCEC Action Plan may include:

1. Advancing Comprehensive Energy Efficiency.

Led by a consortium of partners and facilitated by VEIC, work is proceeding in line with the VCCEC's recommendation to expand comprehensive energy efficiency programs in Vermont. The Partnership can encourage this work, support statutory authority if needed, and potentially advocate for funding.

2. Climate Economy Entrepreneurship Initiative. A team of economic development leaders, technical assistance providers, and business and finance leaders are working together to frame a

network of support and seed investment to stimulate entrepreneurship and growth in climate economy businesses in Vermont. With the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund as its foundation and VCRD as a convening partner, this group is building a plan of action. It will need partnership and funding.

3. Advancing Codes, Regulations, and Incentives will be an arena for ongoing advocacy by the Partnership.

4. The Clean Energy Finance Collaboration

recommendations in the VCCEC plan were built with substantial leadership from the Energy Action Network (EAN) which has played a key role in evaluating financing needs and developing financing structures to realize the ambitious goals in the state's Comprehensive Energy Plan. The Department of Public Service is convening the Finance Collaborative and EAN will be building tools and structures to help advance the energy and efficiency marketplace. Advocacy by the partnership may be needed to help this initiative fully succeed.

5. Carbon Pricing. The dialogue around carbon pricing will be challenging and nuanced. Members of the Partnership will have opportunities to advocate for features of a carbon pricing structure that supports and reinvests in creative economic development, efficiency, transportation change, and other features of the comprehensive economic renewal strategies in the VCCEC platform.

B. Produce the Vermont Climate Economy Model Communities Program

The Climate Economy Model Communities Program will be developed to encourage economic development that answers climate change, builds jobs and businesses locally, and promote selected communities as model in Vermont and in the nation. VCRD is working with VEIC/Efficiency VT, Green Mountain Power, and other utilities as

partners in concentrating services to dramatically effect local and community-driven progress in distributed generation, home energy systems, household and business efficiencies, transportation systems change, business incubation, and locally-prioritized community and economic development.

C. Market Vermont as a National Climate Economy Leader and Small Business Destination

Vermont's economic success will depend on the state's ability to capture the imagination of young people and creative entrepreneurs who want to be part of the solution to climate change as well as share in our great quality of life. Vermont has a powerful brand and can be the "beckoning country" for creative entrepreneurs and mission oriented

youth. VCRD is working to raise funds and build a team to develop a marketing campaign to promote Vermont as a climate innovation center to attract entrepreneurs and others who want to be the center of the movement. Vermont can be the friendliest place in the country for entrepreneurs and small business startups in the climate economy.

D. Plan and Lead a National Climate Economy Leadership Conference for 2017

VCRD is working with Vermont organizational partners to build a 2017 Climate Economy Leadership Conference that invites state and business leaders from across the country to share innovative business stories and best policy practices to advance the climate economy. With this team, VCRD will develop a national invitation strategy, raise funds, build a first day agenda

celebrating work going forward across the country, and frame a second day using VT as a model-with tours to farms, businesses, utilities, and colleges: all telling stories of VT as a center of innovation in the climate economy. Pre- and post-conference media efforts will amplify this theme as a key brand message for VT's future.

**JOIN THE
VT Climate
Economy
Partnership**

Over time, we'll be sharing notes and building a communications network for everyone who wants to work with us through the **Vermont Climate Economy Partnership**. If you haven't already, you can join the Partnership at: <http://vtrural.org/programs/climate-economy/join-the-partnership>.