

## **Transportation Session (Morning, April 7, 2011)**

### **– Discussion Questions and Participant Responses**

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS**

- 1) What are the top 1 or 2 aspects of **transportation** that the Comprehensive Energy Plan should consider in the next ten years to decrease energy consumption?

Reduce vehicle miles traveled, complete streets in populated areas.

1. Vehicle electrification
2. Fuel efficiency, mpg standards
3. Low carbon fuel standard

Decrease fuel displacement; electricity for gasoline-as related to smartgrid build out. Essential to get utilities to deploy smart meters that offer bi-directional, wireless communication with vehicles.

A carbon tax-check out British Columbia. It is successful and non-regressive. Take transportation of school kids out of the school districts and make public transportation for everyone including the kids.

Heavy trucking & reduce use, alternate fuel infrastructure.

1. Travel demand management, focusing on employer trip reduction programs

2. Complete streets policies

3. The real cost of free parking

1. Transit oriented development

2. Move multimodal transit corridors to population corridors. i.e. Transition in Burlington

Commuter rebate to reduce effects of gas tax on low-income and middle-income Vermonters. (Assuming possibility of increased gas tax to spur demand reduction.)

1. Integrate all transport, modes to create more options and increase vehicle occupancy

2. Deal with transportation as a human service that is more efficient of fuel utilized and available to all VT residents irrespective of all status, Etc.

Public transit increases imperative regardless of cost as it will be a savings soon enough.

-Reducing vehicle miles travelled/single passenger trips (e.g. promote telecommuting)

-Develop infrastructure to support vehicle->grid technology while ensuring electricity supply is "clean" energy source

Fuels-Diesel-much more efficient, & improved pollution, but taxes make fuel much higher. Demographic-aging population will mean shift to downtown/villages, should create more transit opportunities

B/t trans. commuters opportunities different from within town 15 minute service

-Establish polices that incentivize smart growth development and disincentivize sprawl development

-Disincentivize the development of infrastructure incuse of transit (where practical) and disincentivize sov use

1. Address cultural norms: individualistic mindsets reinforce single occupancy vehicle use

2. Marketing plan: make public transportation more desirable than private transportation; create a cultural demand

-Solar buses

-Smaller buses, more accessible

-Tap into Energy Committees in towns

- 2) What options do you see that can help Vermonters meet their energy needs regarding transportation and land use in the future?

Use the VECAN (Vermont Energy Climate Action Network) website to distribute info. This group of town energy coordinators/committees meets annually communicates regularly over email, & its website could be used to collect & disseminate info on projects statewide.

Amtrak Northern Expansion, more Amtrak flag stops

Incentives for fuel efficiency & electric drive vehicles

PACE program should be implemented. The people can put up solar panels to charge batteries on their electric vehicles. Also supplement their energy use.

More park & rides with education about their use. Tax abatement for land owners who donate space for public use (bike/walk paths, parking areas)

Vanpools, carpooling, telecommuting, transit, complete streets, shared used of vehicles.

Creation of a "Local Food Portfolio Standard" to encourage (or mandate) local food consumption. Possibly coupled with public schools (both for purchasing power, and to start school gardens.) Goal to reduce transportation cost of food.

Coordinating the various rides programs and systems that exist, toward efficiency.

-Enhance access to high speed internet, which would allow:

1. Telecommuting,
2. Coordinating ridesharing
3. Engage in on-line purchasing that allows for coordinated deliveries
4. Creates jobs
5. Enhances VT's appeal for business development
6. Reduces brain drain.....

-Develop local & corridor commuter transit service where potential ridership makes it practical. Education about transportation costs is critical a well.

-Incentivize smart growth settlement

Encourage development of urban centers to streamline transportation routes, decrease demand (walking/biking options), overall less infrastructure and energy demands. -> At the same time: make moving to cities/towns affordable..... and promote mixed use zoning: live & work & shop within walking/biking distances.

Host stakeholder meetings to see if collaboration can occur.

Non-profits, Education, Town Government, State Government services

- 3) Should the state set additional goals or targets, or modify existing goals/policies for energy areas related to transportation and land use, and if so, what targets and through what mechanisms should they be encouraged or required?

Yes, critical. Need some "stretch" targets that challenge us to dig deep to find solutions.

Market penetration of alternatively – fueled vehicles. Loan fund for municipalities to cover incremental cost of hybrid heavy duty vehicles.

Educate our children. They are very concerned about their future and will have to live with the problem, we have left them with.

Need over-arching goal of zero carbon (GHG) by 20—with steps to be achieved in 5 year increments. Trans & land use should be dealt with as a unit, not separately.

Yes. The state should set goals for vehicle efficiencies. VMT reductions and low-carbon fuels. Policies could include complete streets, mandatory employer trip reduction programs, flexibility in the use of postal & school vehicles for other travel, etc.

Mandating municipalities to incorporate transportation costs into housing costs for assessing affordable housing. Target taxes to non-business related vehicle purchases to non fuel efficient vehicles to increase up-front vehicle price.

-Decouple transportation budget tied to VMT

We should look at two things immediately. First, based on the best resource information available, where do we need to be in the coming years. Secondly, we need to look at how well we are meeting current goals and ask why,

or why not, we are meeting them. We also have to look at how those state goals relate to the actual resource availability. Goals & targets reflect both the ultimate need & practicality.

Diversify in the short term to reduce fossil fuel dependency. Plan to phase out fossil fuels (and other carbon emission fuels) in concrete, aggressive, step-by-step strategic planning.

Integrated Planning with Non-Profits, schools, town government, state services for all ages, staff commuters & clients getting to service

- 4) What can the Comprehensive Energy Plan do to improve the understanding of the relationship between energy, transportation and land use?

Revise town planning incentives to consolidate and stop using farmland for housing.

Citizen education-subsidize the aid of local radio & TV programs & community forums.

-Consider real cost of “affordable” housing in outlying areas

-Actually implement this plan

-Differentiate different sources of VMT and plan accordingly.

-Research appropriate technology for mountainous areas

Better connected development position & VMT/Energy use

Provide information and incentive support for local energy groups. Enforce existing statutes pertaining to land use to achieve more integrated transportation system.

Educate the public of the needs of the future

-Engage community-based social marketing to foster broad understanding of importance/relevance of these issues

Compact development requires water & wastewater service-infrastructure needs don't end with transportation

The plan can show average costs in ways that individuals can relate to. Show how it impacts individuals and their budgets.

Address these issues with the philosophy of sustainability (people, social needs, planet environmental needs, profit economic needs).

## QUESTIONS FOR LARGE GROUP

- 1) What should be the government's role in addressing transportation related energy use when many transportation decisions are made by individuals?

Educate, market, and create demand for sustainable options. Create networks & partnerships with non-profits and small local governments to gain input, improve buy-in, and influence the greatest number of people.

State taxes – incentives & disincentives – raise gasoline price with state tax.

Greater planning, integration, and network trans.

Provide more info to local planning & energy committees

Possibly increase registration fees on carbon consuming models of vehicles.

Encourage public transit use with weather-shelter bus stops-safe park and ride spaces, bike path & off road paths' care/allowance, educate

Individual decisions will made in then sol/interest, state policies, need to ensure saving energy is in their self interest so in need better infrastructure cost of energy in home purchase, cost of transportation in you purchase some distances from town?

Change town plans to comply and force life styles adaptations.

1. Develop in density options

2. Quit referring to transit, carpooling, etc. as “alternative.”

3. Subsidize vanpool routes in areas where transit best feasible.

4. Always give preference to non-road building activities for congestion mitigation.

Overt influence of decisions that support legislation endorsed policy, goals

Income-sensitivity associated with the state's Energy Plan in whatever form it takes.

- 2) Where can the state make the biggest energy impacts regarding transportation and land use (e.g., infrastructure, commuting, logistics, etc.)?

Development planning: promote self-sustaining communities, localization of economy, network townships for shared knowledge/collective wisdom. Be the platform to facilitate the change.

Short-term: commuting

Mid-long-term: infrastructure (For EV & telecommunications)

State taxes should be designed to provide people working at home with a reduction for cutting down on commuting to/from work. Home offices reduce fuel use.

Individual consciousness raising

Push for statewide smartgrid and make energy distribution local.

Force people to be more efficient with taxes and incentives.

-Demand reduction for all types of trips

-Commuting is probably the easiest to address because travel patterns are easy to identify.

Align development grants/funding with energy, transportation, land goals.

Integrate planning efforts involving state services, non-profits, education & town governments

- 3) What are some examples of successful transportation and land use programs, policies or initiatives that reduced energy upon which Vermont can build or replicate?

California Bay Area (BART: Bay Area Rapid Transit)

-Biking in Sweden

-All dependant on broad internet & cell phone availability

-Telecommuting

-Peapod (on line grocery purchase)

-Shared vehicles (being developed in France by Robin Chase/Smart car founder)

-Smart tax deployment in Bermuda

-Ridesharing in Australia

British Columbia carbon tax example, very successful

Complete streets

Google: British Columbia/carbon tax.

Encourage people to get back into town.

More solar power as per VEPERC.

1. Washington State's Employer Trip Reduction program
2. Look at VT's successful park-and-ride program and keep building it up
3. How about a transportation version of Efficiency Vermont?
4. Use of postal vehicles for ridesharing in Ireland & Sweden
1. Residential rental energy efficiency standards & incentives (e.g. Wisconsin)
2. Commuter rebates for working Vermonters.
3. Local food "Portfolio standards."

- 4) What is the appropriate balance between carbon as a driver for energy policy and other criteria for transportation/energy development such as cost?

Evaluate social, environmental, and economic costs/investments equally.

Use price/economic incentive to shift transportation options to those forms with highest efficiency & impact (carbon) – for instance, vehicle registration fees based on fuel efficiency eg. high fees for gas guzzlers.

Tax carbon use

Cost varies widely – use gallons of gas as a metric.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

- 1) Are there any areas in the prior plan draft that you feel the state should de-emphasize as we move forward?
- 2) Is there something missing?

Educate general public

- 3) What suggestions do you have for making the plan as useful as it can be?
- 4) What suggestions do you have regarding the process for revitalizing the CEP?

***Land Use Session (Afternoon, April 7, 2011)***

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please provide comments, recommendations or suggestions on the revised Comprehensive Energy Plan for the Department of Public Service using this form. Use additional sheets as needed.*

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS**

- 1) What are the top 1-2 aspects of **land use** that the Comprehensive Energy Plan should consider in the next ten years to decrease energy consumption?
    1. Set goal for energy use/reduction in existing buildings, require regional & town plans to be consistent with & achieve reductions.
    2. State goal for % of new development to occur in smart growth locations – require regional & local plan comply
    3. Consistent State guidance on local/regional energy inventory tool
      - Smart growth incentives; sprawl disincentives
      - Preserve local resource bases that reduce transportation consumption.
    1. Preserve local Ag land
    2. Preserve & grow local energy generation options
      - Building codes alt insulation, siting options
      - Zoning for efficiency -> policy changes, smaller lot sizes, "sending"/"receiving" areas for development
      - State protection/development areas & alignment of attitudes/values on all levels
      - Conservation first
      - Coordination (because lack of) statewide land use plan
      - Particularly for land lords- energy efficiency building codes
      - Better coupled transmission costs in energy prices, i.e. economics of scale of delivering power to urban areas than rural housing
      - Connection with local municipal, town moratorium necessary on incursions or forest & Ag land
    1. Diversity/Diversify: sustainable urban and rural communities
    2. Systems thinking/planning: integration, innovation, plan land use holistically for developing & supporting sustainable communities
- Demographic changes, broadband/cell phone

- 2) What are the top 1-2 obstacles in meeting current land use and energy goals? How might these be overcome? What role should state government play in doing so? How can the Comprehensive Energy Plan address these concerns?

Sprawl

-Should be energy rating (include transportation cost) on new development

-Get in plan & State legislation

-Value land resources first

We need to develop more stringent statewide development guidelines and all effective enforcement systems implemented.

-Belief that “there is no development” when there actually is -> just very incremental

-Lack of data or dissemination of data to develop local/regional plans

-Political vs. natural boundaries & planning around them

-Reversing bad land use

-Empowering local boards to make solid changes

-Outline/define

Lack of state vision of local plans & zoning schemes & energy planning requirements

Little to no disincentives (economic, regulation, or otherwise) to promote density

Lack of understanding of the seriousness

1. Old dogs resistant to learning new tricks: both in terms of VT citizens and policy makers

2. Complex issues require complex solutions: find inclusive, comprehensive strategies that positively influence our future without long-term negative trade-offs (find the win-wins)

-Water & sewage system – can’t grow compact, reuse info this infrastructure, & they are in poor quality, getting worse

-Knowledge of alternative costs, before buying a house – what are energy costs – what are transportation costs

-Local control vs. state priority

-Building codes – what requirements for energy savings

- 3) Should the state set additional goals or targets for energy areas related to land use, and if so, what targets and through what mechanisms should they be encouraged or required?

Set a goal for renewable energy production & require regional & municipal plans to meet

Yes

-Infrastructure investment

Zero loss of forest cover if not increase in cover

Increase of urban density – some indication of sprawl

Expansion or on-farm energy production

Indicators of home energy use with goal for reduction

Educate general public also necessary

Take out newspaper ads

-Geothermal incentives for passive design: natural lighting, passive solar heating/cooling, solar water heating systems

-Net zero energy use

Need state land use plan, along with energy plan

Make sure Regional planning commissions & local planning & energy committees are part of the discussion and implementation

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## QUESTIONS FOR LARGE GROUP

- 1) Given a goal to reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT), how can land use policy or tools be used to best achieve this goal? What policies or tools are working? Which need more support? Which should be eliminated? Any new programs to consider?

- Incentives for infill development: greater encouragement & ease for redevelopment in brownfields
- “Sending”/“receiving” areas of development & increase transfers of development rights
- Support community waste water to increase density.

- 2) What policies/programs between agencies form barriers to progress? Which work well? Are there others to consider? What kinds of funding mechanisms might pay for these programs? How can the state help municipalities/committees/organizations/businesses to achieve these goals?

- Stormwater permitting barrier to infill/redevelopment
- Need larger watershed affects (agriculture buffers) for stormwater pollution reduction
- TIFs
- Look to Europe for ideas
- Stormwater permitting & low impact development techniques as actual alternatives
- No statewide land use plan.

- 3) Would an integrated state plan provide improved policy and direction on where to grow, place renewables, locate transportation hubs, etc?

Yes if numeric targets are set and regional and local plans need to read them  
 Yes -> provide guidance & incentives of where to develop in designated areas -> faster approval of projects?  
 Yes

- 4) How can state agencies better support the Growth Center program to encourage communities to participate and promote new development in these areas as a means to reduce energy consumption?

Simplify designation process but keep high standards for mixed use, density, and walkable design in sewer – served areas – relate to regional plans maybe increase Act 250 exemption limitations  
 Restructure it, especially neighborhood program ->  
 -> A lot of overlaps  
 -> Increase incentives  
 -> Make sure zoning designated of turns reflects actual smart growth goals (not 1 acre zoning in village centers)  
 -Promoting that type/level of planning in municipal plan process.  
 -Growth center program application is expensive = few participants.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Are there any areas in the prior plan draft that you feel the state should de-emphasize as we move forward?

State targets-conservation of energy  
 -Smart growth %

-Renewable % target

- 2) Is there something missing?
- 3) What suggestions do you have for making the plan as useful as it can be?
- 4) What suggestions do you have regarding the process for revitalizing the CEP?

Require regional & town plans to address & locate renewable sites. Annually report @ state & regional level