



Common Goal Statements

As of October 26, 2011

Background

This project was started with the understanding that there has been a lot of planning done in Chittenden County, our municipalities and the state. We want to build on the work that has been done previously and pull it together into a more cohesive whole in order to accomplish more together than we would working separately.

The following goal statements were developed after reviewing about 60 planning documents that have applicability to Chittenden County. These planning documents included municipal plans, regional and organizational plans, and state agency policy documents. In total, about 2,500 statements were collected. They covered the spectrum from very broad vision statements to specific objectives in a specific neighborhood. The first draft goal statements were reviewed by the ECOS Steering Committee and revised in a workshop on May 25, 2011. The revised comments were released for a public comment period from July 14 to September 30, 2011. About 200 individual comments were received from 65 individuals during this period. Some of these individual comments were quite extensive. Please go to <http://ecosproject.com/goals> to review and provide additional comments.

Below is a revised structure and goal statements resulting from this public review. Numbering is only included for ease of reference and is in no way related to any prioritization. It should be noted that **these goals may be revised as the process progresses and we identify improvements.**

Structure of Goals

A vision, mission, principles, and overarching broad goals have been developed to improve understanding of the purpose and intention of the effort. While reading and revising these statements, please keep in mind the following definitions.

Principles describe our underlying values and guide the selection of strategies and actions to achieve our goals.

Goals are the general, long-range desired outcomes of the community. For this project, we have divided the goals into two categories: broad and specific goals. Goals will be used to help define indicators that will gauge our progress towards achieving these goals.

Objectives are specific goals with measurable targets. The specific goals beneath the broad goals may be turned into objectives if measurable targets are developed. This may occur in April when the Steering Committee considers indicators for approval.

Strategies are the basic approaches or methods for achieving the goals. If a proposed action is not specific with regards to location and responsible parties it is defined as a strategy. Strategies and actions will be reviewed by the Steering Committee from April to October, 2012.

Implementation Actions are the actual tasks to be accomplished that might include capital investments, program investment and delivery, or legislative changes. Strategies and actions will be reviewed by the Steering Committee from April to October, 2012. Implementation actions will be evaluated and prioritized for their ability to most effectively and efficiently help us reach our goals.



VISION – A healthy, inclusive and prosperous community.

MISSION – We will have a collaborative planning process with citizens, public and private organizations to develop a consensus regarding priority actions to achieve the goals below. The intent of this effort is to strengthen and enhance coordination, accountability and implementation of the plans of participating organizations such as state and local governments, planning organizations and other partner organizations - including business, environmental, education, and human services.

PRINCIPLES - These 10 principles will guide the selection of strategies and actions to achieve our goals (adapted from Sustainability Goals & Guiding Principles, ICLEI, October 2010).ⁱ

1. **Think—and act—systemically.** Sustainable communities take a systems perspective and recognize that people, nature and the economy are all affected by their actions. Local governments in these communities consider the broader implications before embarking on specific projects, and they look for ways to accomplish multiple goals rather than default to short-term, piecemeal efforts.
2. **Instill resiliency.** Sustainable communities possess a strong capacity to respond to and bounce back from adversity. Local governments in these communities prepare for and help residents and institutions prepare for disruptions and respond to them swiftly, creatively and effectively.
3. **Foster innovation.** Sustainable communities capture opportunities and respond to challenges. Local governments in these communities cultivate a spirit of proactive problem solving to provide access to futures otherwise unobtainable and to enable the risk-taking inherent in innovation.
4. **Redefine progress.** Sustainable communities measure progress by improvements in the health and wellbeing of their people, environment and economy. Instead of focusing on GDP (throughput of dollars), local governments in these communities use a broad set of indicators.
5. **Live within means.** Sustainable communities steward natural resources so that future generations have as many opportunities available to them as we do today. They also recognize that resources exist for the benefit of life forms other than humans. Local governments in these communities assess resources, track impacts, and take corrective action when needed so that they meet the needs of today while maintaining and improving what they leave for future generations.
6. **Cultivate collaboration.** Sustainable communities engage all facets of society in working together for the benefit of the whole. Local governments in these communities bring government representatives, community members and organizations together and create a culture of collaboration that encourages innovation, sharing of resources, and jointly shared accountability for results.
7. **Ensure equity.** Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.



8. **Embrace diversity.** Sustainable communities feature a tapestry of peoples, cultures and economies underpinned by a richly functioning natural environment. Local governments in these communities celebrate and foster ethnic, cultural, economic and biological diversity and encourage multiple approaches to accomplish a goal.
9. **Inspire leadership.** Sustainable communities provide leadership through action and results. Local governments in these communities recognize their opportunity to effect change by backing visionary policies with practices that serve as an example for citizens and businesses to emulate.
10. **Continuously improve.** Sustainable communities engage in continuous discovery, rediscovery and invention as they learn more about the impacts of their actions. Local governments in these communities track both performance and outcomes, are alert for unintended consequences, and modify strategies based on observed results.

BROAD GOALS

1. **Built Environment** - Make public and private investments in the built environment to minimize environmental impact, maximize financial efficiency, optimize social equity and benefits, and improve public health.
2. **Economic Infrastructure** – Build the region’s capacity for shared and sustainable improvements in the economic well being of the community through support of both local and globally competitive initiatives.
3. **Natural Systems** – Design and maintain a strategically planned and managed green infrastructure network composed of natural lands, working landscapes, and open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide associated benefits to our community.
4. **Social Community** – Promote the skills, resources, and assurances needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community.

Built Environment

1. All future development will support, maintain, and reinforce Vermont’s historic settlement pattern of compact hamlets, villages and urban centers separated by and harmonizing with working and natural rural countryside; adhere to sustainability principles of environmental quality, economic vitality, fiscal responsibility, and social and inter-generational equity.
2. Encourage and reward the generation and use of renewable energy sources and foster distributed environmentally responsible energy generation.
3. Ensure adequate water supply and quality for all users.
4. Ensure adequate infrastructure for wastewater and stormwater.
5. Ensure equal access to appropriate and affordable communication services for all.
6. Increase the opportunities for safe, decent, energy efficient, affordable and fair housing for all types of households in diverse neighborhoods.
7. Increase and improve the accessibility, affordability, safety, connectivity, security, social equity and choices of our regional and local multi-modal transportation system.



8. Increase the availability and accessibility of diverse, year round recreational areas and facilities, arts, and cultural opportunities for all residents and visitors.
9. Maintain and develop energy production, transmission, and distribution infrastructure in Chittenden County that is more efficient, reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible.
10. Maintain our transportation system and improve its safety and efficiency.
11. Reduce energy consumption through energy conservation and efficiency.
12. Reduce the loss of life and property from natural and manmade hazards pull to strategy.
13. Respect, preserve, restore, interpret, and make accessible archeological and historic resources.

Economic Infrastructure

1. Advance and develop key employer clusters.
2. Increase and support the recruitment and development of new target sector employers and jobs
3. Improve economic development, housing opportunities, and infrastructure (transportation, waste water, water, energy, telecommunications) in town centers, villages and other areas planned for development.
4. Improve and broaden economic, employer, employee and workplace diversity.
5. Improve education, workforce education, and training.
6. Improve the financial security of households.
7. Increase local business ownership and entrepreneurial activities.
8. Retain key employers and jobs.

Natural Systems

1. Conserve, protect and improve the health of native plant, fish, and wildlife habitats.
2. Conserve water resources and aquatic ecosystems; use clean water appropriately; protect and improve water quality, addressing Federal and State-identified pollutants of concern.
3. Decrease materials consumption and increase the use of renewable resources, resource recovery and recycling.
4. Enable access to and appropriate use of open land and recreational resources, both public and private.
5. Improve collaboration with neighboring communities, counties, and state regarding protection of important natural features and environmental systems.
6. Preserve native soils and clean up contaminated soils.
7. Protect and enhance working landscapes specifically agricultural (including local food production) and forestry land uses.
8. Protect the valued scenic and recreational resources of the mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, and other natural areas.
9. Reduce emissions of Federal and State-identified local and global air pollutants, and greenhouse gases.

Social Community

1. Ensure physical access to the built environment (buildings and transportation) for all people
2. Decrease the proportion of residents engaging in unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and binge drinking
3. Improve the ability of Chittenden County residents to access safe, affordable, healthy food, especially locally produced.
4. Increase the ability of residents to engage in physical activity.



5. Diversify workforce training programs and the Vermont Brand to include the creative economy.
6. Improve public safety.
7. Increase active individual and organizational participation in all levels of government by ensuring that government processes are open, transparent, and accessible.
8. Increase opportunities for underserved populations to access and contribute to arts and cultural activities
9. Increase the accessibility of social services in the County.
10. Increase the use of and access to school facilities for multiple functions that serve the entire community.
11. Provide diverse recreational and cultural opportunities for all residents.
12. Provide youth with high-quality education and social supports.
13. Provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.
14. Integrate diverse cultural, racial, and ethnic groups into the social fabric and activities of the community.

ⁱ The following HUD grant principles were reviewed and are addressed in our goals. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities (HUD, EPA, DOT) established six livability principles that will act as a foundation for interagency coordination:

1. **Coordinate policies and leverage investment.**
Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
2. **Enhance economic competitiveness.**
Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
3. **Promote equitable, affordable housing.**
Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
4. **Provide more transportation choices.**
Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.
5. **Support existing communities.**
Target federal funding toward existing communities - through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling - to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
6. **Value communities and neighborhoods.**
Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods - rural, urban or suburban.