

# A Vision of V

In 2012, Vermont was still recovering from a devastating natural disaster named Irene and, like many places, suffering the effects of escalating global fuel prices and a struggling national economy.

Vermonters realized that issues related to climate change, peaking oil production and an unstable, growth-based economy were all inherently national and global issues — and therefore out of their control — but they also understood they had a great deal of power in how they chose to act and what they chose to do. They recognized that the state's response to these challenges had the potential to be locally transformational while influencing national conversations.

The people of Vermont also understood that sustainable, local solutions would require courage to implement, but that making those choices would strengthen the local economy, bolster the overall health and well-being of their communities and increase capacity to withstand all manner of economic, energy and environmental disruptions.

Fortunately, they had a number of tools essential for turning the tide, including:

- A working democracy, reflected in a Town Meeting Day tradition, an accessible, proactive citizen Legislature, and committed local governments.
- An engaged citizenry, including strong town energy committees, a diversifying farming community and many businesses committed to social and environmental justice.
- Public consensus that climate change is real and warranted swift, bold action.
- A landscape offering invaluable natural resources and unparalleled recreation opportunities.
- Diverse stakeholders committed to deepening public understanding of climate change and peak oil.
- The *Resilient Communities Scorecard*, which helped identify the strategies for developing resilient, 21st century communities.

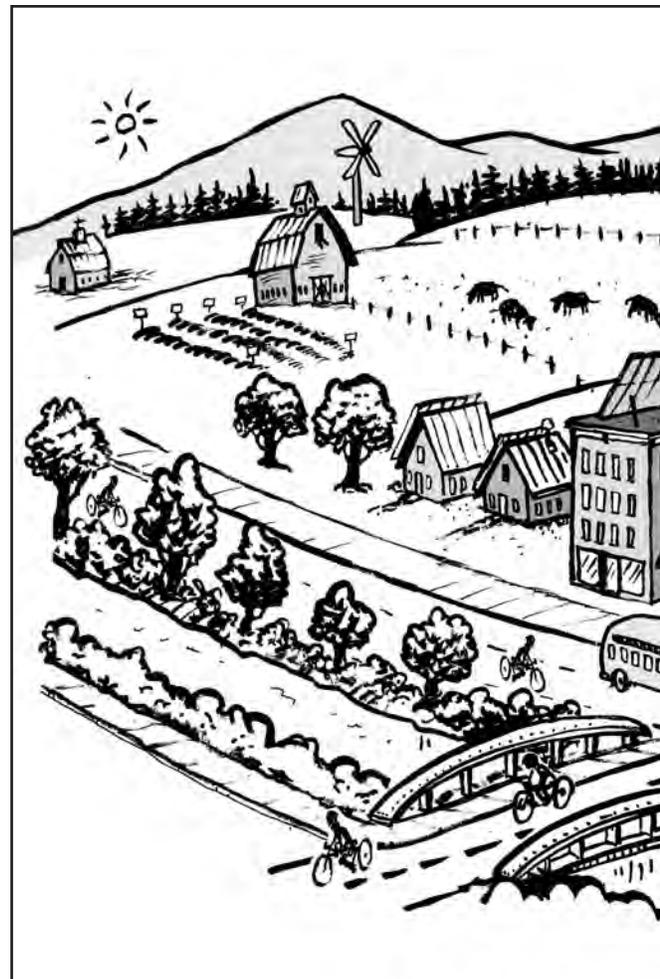
Thanks to the vision and fortitude of past generations, Vermonters in the year 2032 enjoy:

## **COMPACT, WALKABLE COMMUNITIES**

Vermont's communities are tight-knit, active and vital. Sprawl has been stopped as communities employ concentrated land use patterns and focus businesses, institutions, and housing in and around town centers.

## **TRANSPORTATION CHOICES**

Vermonters successfully transformed the state's biggest greenhouse gas emitter: the transportation sector. Electric vehicle recharging units replaced gas stations. Widespread public transit has made local and regional travel swift, easy, and affordable. Streets are safe for bikes and pedestrians — with the added benefit that people have gotten healthier, dramatically reducing the amount of state money spent on health care and obesity-related illnesses.



# Vermont: 2032

## ENERGY SECURITY AND HOMEGROWN GENERATION

Nearly all homes have undergone significant, whole-building energy efficiency improvements, making them both more comfortable and significantly more affordable. The state's energy needs for electricity, heating and cooling are now met by a diverse network of largely locally-owned projects. All of them — from wind, solar, and geothermal to low-impact micro-hydro, efficient biomass, farm-based methane capture projects and more — have been strategically developed to ensure the greatest financial, energy and public benefit with the least impact on communities and natural resources.

## THRIVING FARMS AND FORESTS

Supported by a robust network of local food processing and distribution facilities, small and mid-sized farms now meet most of Vermonters' food needs. Concentrated development and appropriately scaled agricultural activity has kept vast reaches of forest intact as well. Fragmented wildlife habitat has been restored, water systems cleansed, and floodplains left open to accommodate naturally shifting rivers and lakes.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACES

The state's many magnificent historic buildings have been preserved, renovated, and updated and are models of energy efficiency and important civic spaces. Important public spaces — from parks, playgrounds, and town greens to lakes, rivers, and wetlands — have been maintained to preserve both the health of natural ecosystems as well as public access for recreational activities.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There is a mix of housing that all people can afford, designed to meet the full range of local and regional needs and the increasing diversity of Vermonters. All residential buildings, both new

and refurbished, are highly energy efficient, and many generate their own electricity through individual or neighborhood-based solar, wind, and geothermal projects.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Through collaboration, planning, and local action, Vermont has become a state full of climate and resource conservation experts responding to land use, transportation, and energy challenges. The science of climate change and peak oil has penetrated people's awareness and is woven into both public and private decision-making about energy and resource use.

Because in 2012 Vermonters understood that they had both the capacity and the courage to turn tentative dreams into concrete reality, Vermont in 2032 is a place where people live, thrive, and are resilient because they have worked together to adapt to a changing world.

