



## South Burlington Energy Committee

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Jessica Louisos, Chair of South Burlington Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Tim Perrin, Chair of South Burlington Energy Committee  
**CC:** Paul Conner, South Burlington Director of Planning & Zoning  
**DATE:** July 31, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** Energy Committee Feedback on Draft City Plan 2024

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The charge of the South Burlington Energy Committee is to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency, and the use of renewable energy resources among the city's residents, businesses, and in municipal affairs. At our July 12, 2023 meeting, the Committee reviewed the "Draft 2023-07-07" version of the City Plan 2024 and approved comments included in the attached version.

This City Plan includes language within the Introduction (page 2) that reads, "The overriding objective of this Plan is to make every policy decision through the lens of climate resilience and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions." A majority of the Committee voiced their support for the inclusion of this statement and elevating the importance of value #1: "Climate-Resilient" ahead of other values that guide every action we take as a community. The Committee would like to reinforce the importance of how this Introduction is organized to prioritize goals that mitigate climate change impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As outlined in the City's Climate Action Plan, which was adopted in 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and other summaries of climate change impacts warn that without immediate concerted action, coastal cities will flood, drought will deplete the breadbaskets that today freed the world, and ecosystems will fail. The summer of 2023 is offering our state an unfortunate glimpse into the effects of extreme weather due to global warming. In June, smoke from Canadian wildfires, which started two months earlier than any season in recent history, blanketed Vermont, much of the Northeast, and extended into both the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. Air quality for much of the region was ranked at unhealthy, very unhealthy, or hazardous for many weeks as a result. This month, thousands of Vermonters were displaced from their homes and businesses due to disastrous flooding when up to 9 inches of rain fell on parts of the state. This "100-year storm" hit Vermont only 12 years since the last "100-year storm" of Tropical Storm Irene. July 2023 was just determined to be the hottest



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month since records have been kept and likely the hottest in 120,000 years based on evidence from climatological and geologic records.

These weather anomalies are becoming all too common on a warming planet. Our collective opportunity to act boldly—and swiftly—to hopefully mitigate the most catastrophic effects or ecological tipping points is now upon us. This latest City Plan presents the mechanism to codify how the South Burlington community can do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect our natural resources, and build community resilience. We as a Committee strongly urge you to prioritize this focus in the final version of this City Plan.