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Report to The Governor

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**HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES  
2018**

In Accordance with Executive Order 07-15 (2015),  
*Health in All Policies Task Force*

Submitted to: Governor Phil Scott

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## Background

Health in All Policies is a collaborative approach to improve the health of all people by incorporating population health considerations into policy decision making. A Health in All Policies approach identifies the ways in which decisions in any sector influences health and how better population health can support the goals of many sectors.

## The Health in All Policies Task Force

The Health in All Policies Task Force was established by Executive Order, October 2015 (see Appendix A) to stimulate and coordinate action across agencies to create healthy communities. The Task Force identifies programs, policies, and strategies to improve the health of Vermonters, especially vulnerable populations, while advancing shared goals such as promoting economic growth, protecting natural resources and agricultural lands, increasing the availability of affordable housing, improving air and water quality, improving infrastructure systems, promoting public health and active lifestyles, planning sustainable communities, increasing educational attainment and meeting the state's climate change goals.

The Task Force's work is based on the shared [Health and Equity Framework](#) that describes the elements needed in Vermont communities to ensure that all people in Vermont have an equal opportunity to be healthy and live in healthy communities. The Task Force is committed to the values of equity, access and affordability in alignment with the governmental priorities to promote economic vitality and address vulnerable populations.

The Health in All Policies Task Force is charged with reporting annually on the following:

1. Potential opportunities to include health criteria in regulatory, programmatic and budgetary decisions;
2. Promising practices in other jurisdictions to identify opportunities for innovation and coordination across sectors that include consideration of potential positive and negative health impacts of decisions; and
3. Evidence-based actions and policies to improve the wellness of state employees across state government, including healthy food procurement policies.

## Vermont's HiAP Task Force Accomplishments

### Health Impact Assessments

Health Impact Assessments (HIA) are data-driven examinations of proposed projects and policies that shape our communities. Based on the data collected in the HIA process, recommendations are offered for practical strategies to enhance positive health outcomes – and minimize negative ones – in a broad array of policies and projects that fall outside of the traditional public health arena, including transportation, land use, housing, and economic development. The following HIAs were conducted in 2017:

- The Department of Health Burlington District Office completed a Health Impact Assessment of school transportation policy in the newly consolidated Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District. Prior to consolidation the separate school districts had three different policies. School consolidation compelled the district to create a single transportation plan that was equitable across the district. The HIA sought to consider how the options would impact student

walking and biking to school.

- Currently, the Health Department is working with the Agency of Transportation and private partners (Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, the Chittenden Regional Planning Commission) to conduct a HIA on a proposed policy for the state to incentivize public transit use for all state employees.

### Best Practices by Sector

The Task Force developed inventories of best practices for including health in departmental regulatory, programmatic and budgetary decisions for each relevant sector (e.g. energy, natural resources, economic development). As a first step, the Health Department developed best practice inventories based on a review of the literature, actions in other states and localities, and discussions with leaders engaged in promoting HiAP approaches. The best practice inventory was then reviewed by appropriate agency to identify which practices have been adopted in Vermont, and which might be considered for future action. The final best practice inventories are published on the Health Department website (<http://www.healthvermont.gov/about/vision/health-all-policies>).<sup>1</sup>

### Total Health Expenditure Analysis

The [Total Health Expenditure Analysis](#) (THEA) is a tool for assessing cross-sector investments in health promoting and protecting programs by non-health sectors. Using the taxonomy and framework developed by the Health Department, fiscal year 2015 expenditure data was collected and analyzed from the Health Department, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Agency of Transportation (AOT), and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM). Following are a few highlights from the analyses:

- VAAFAM attributed 74% of its State Fiscal Year 2015 spending on the health-related issues of food availability and access; food safety, and occupational health; which amounted to approximately \$13,114,000. VAAFAM spent 62% of this health-related spending on the programs related to the natural/built environment and 29% on programs related to economic stability.
- AOT attributed 7% of its spending as health-related activities (approximately \$46,000,000) to improve safety, walkability, biking and transit with 62% of that spending on programs and investments related to the natural/built environment.

### Performance Dashboard/Scorecard

The Task Force is developing a performance dashboard to track progress in meeting its work and to demonstrate the shared commitment to including health in all agencies' policies, programs and budgets. This Dashboard is intended to align with other existing performance management activities within agencies and report on progress related to best practices. Each Task Force member identified one to two performance metrics.

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<sup>1</sup> Inventories have been developed and published for the following: Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM), Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD), Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), Agency of Transportation (AOT), Agency of Education (AOE), Public Service Department (PSD), and Housing (as part of ACCD). A best practice inventory for the Agency of Administration, specifically, the Department of Building and General Services (BGS), is currently in progress.

## Vermont's Cross-Sector Collaboration and Accomplishments

There are numerous examples of cross-sector and multi-agency collaboration at the state and local level that either directly seek to protect and promote health or are aimed at creating communities with the conditions for health and well-being. The following is a brief description of a few illustrative and notable initiatives in 2017.

### Recreation, Economic Development and Health

The [Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative](#) (VOREC) seeks to engage businesses, government, the nonprofit sector and the public to identify specific outcomes that promote business opportunities, increase participation opportunities, and strengthen the quality and stewardship of our recreational resources. Health Department staff joined VOREC to share the Department's "3-4-50" efforts as a model initiative that demonstrates the connection between outdoor recreation, economic development and health. 3-4-50 is an initiative to discuss with Vermonters how, just three behaviors (poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and tobacco use) lead to four chronic diseases (cancer, heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and lung disease), which result in more than 50% of all deaths in Vermont. Vermont will not be able to realize significant economic growth without turning the tide on chronic disease that affects workers and businesses in reduced productivity and increased health care costs. Investments that make the state a healthier place to live for all people – like expanding recreational opportunities, building bike paths, and promoting smoke-free worksites – increases desirability for both employers and employees.

### Healthy Food Access

There is a growing recognition that access to healthy, nutritious food is essential to health and wellbeing. As a result, both private and public partners are implementing policies and practices to ensure Vermont's most vulnerable populations have access to healthy food. This includes:

- Vermont State Parks (and some municipal parks) changing their offerings at concession stands,
- **State cafeterias** adjusting their menus,
- **Food shelves** across the state increasing their local fresh food and showcasing it in a way to increase distribution,
- **Farm to School** and now Farm to Preschool programs supported through a multi-agency collaboration of the Agency of Agriculture, Farms and Markets, the Agency of Education Child Nutrition Program, the Health Department and Vermont Food Education Every Day program which has led to improvements in health outcomes; and
- **Direct to consumer markets** in varying locations. This year, 2 additional markets were added to state held locations: 1 in Montpelier and 1 in Waterbury.
- **Health care providers** at UVMHC adding food insecurity questions to screenings and referring families in needs to food resources (health systems and policy change).

Of particular note this year, VAAFM led an inter-agency team on local procurement, which largely focused on local food procurement by state-run institutions. As a result, the Department of Corrections is developing strategies to procure more local produce and working to improve information technology infrastructure to better track local procurement. Currently, local purchases represent 8% of the total food budget for the Department of Corrections.

## Weatherization

The Department of Children and Families, the Health Department and non-governmental stakeholders are partnering on the Weatherization Program to identify strategies and funding opportunities to increase delivery of home-based services that improve building energy efficiency and healthy housing conditions.

## Transportation Planning

The Agency of Transportation is updating the State's [Long Range Transportation Plan](#) and has engaged a broad range of stakeholders to participate in the process. The 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan will lay the framework for a transportation system that, among many important goals, supports livable, healthy communities. As shown from the Total Health Expenditure Analysis mentioned above, the Agency of Transportation has a significant opportunity to influence health outcomes through many existing programs such as public transit, highway safety, and investments in active transportation options like bicycling and walking.

## Transportation and Community Development

The [Better Connections Program](#) seeks to align state and local investments to increase transportation options, build resilience, and strengthen economic vitality in Vermont's community centers, through an annual grant program administered by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). The Program encourages municipalities to proactively coordinate land use decisions with transportation investments that build community resilience. This program is of interest to the HiAP Task Force as it supports municipalities to improve walkability, connectivity, foster economic development, and create healthy communities.

## Lead in Drinking Water in Schools

The Health Department, Department of Environmental Conservation and Agency of Education are collaborating to test drinking water for lead at each fixture used for drinking or cooking at sixteen public schools and to assist the school in taking actions to lower levels when lead is found. The schools were selected based on the number of students served, presence of a pre-school, lead poisoning rates, and presence of corrosion control. While the schools get their drinking water from municipal water systems that monitor for lead, lead in older plumbing and drinking water fixtures can contaminate drinking water after it enters the school building. It is likely that elevated lead levels will be found in drinking water from at least one of the fixtures at most schools. The Health Department Laboratory will test water samples at no cost to the schools.

## Draft Beneficiary Mitigation Plan for the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust

Proposed language to prioritize funding project that target investments in locations that maximize health benefits to populations most vulnerable to air pollution – youngest, oldest, compromised respiratory and cardiovascular systems—and over-burdened and under-resourced communities.

## Appendix A: Participating Agencies and Departments

Agency Commerce and Community Development, Michael Schirling and Elaine Haney Sopchak

Agency of Administration, Susanne Young, Ethan Latour, Jennifer Fitch, and Erik Filkhorn

Agency of Agriculture, Alyson Eastman and Abbey Willard

Agency of Transportation, Joe Flynn, Michele Boomhower, and Dave Pelletier

Department of Health, Dr. Mark Levine and Tracy Dolan

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Gus Seeling and Jennifer Hollar

Vermont Housing Finance Agency, Leslie Black-Plumeau and Sarah Carpenter

Natural Resources Board, Diane Snelling and Kimberly Lashua

Agency of Human Services, Martha Maksym

Agency of Education, Rebecca Holcombe and Robert Stirewalt

Agency of Natural Resources, Peter Walke, Emily Boedecker and Neil Kamman

Public Service Department, June Tierney and Stacey Drinkwine

Public Service Board, Anthony Roisman and Thomas Knauer

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