



**Looking Ahead:
Vermonters' Values and Concerns
Full Report**

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Introduction

The Council on the Future of Vermont (CFV), a project of the Vermont Council on Rural Development, is in the midst of a statewide public dialogue on the values, challenges, opportunities, priorities and visions for the future of the state. The council's mission is to answer the questions: "What do these challenges and opportunities mean to Vermonters?" and "What do they believe we will need to do to meet the future with confidence?"

As part of this process, the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont implemented a statewide telephone survey in March of 2008 to gauge Vermonters' opinions on a specific set of values and challenges initially identified during a series of public forums hosted by CFV.

Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements related to values and then their level of concern about a series of statements related to challenges. Their answers give insight into the prevailing values and concerns that Vermonters consider important in their daily lives in 2008 and beyond. The statements were drafted by the Council on the Future of Vermont with expert design from the Center for Rural Studies. The survey was meant to measure level of agreement with ideas that had already been heard throughout the Council on the Future of Vermont project through the public forums and listening sessions.

Section I of this report presents a descriptive (univariate) analysis of the 37 closed-ended variables as well as the demographic variables.

Section II presents a bivariate analysis to investigate the relationships between the 12 value and 24 challenge statements and the demographics.

Section III presents the results of the open-ended questions. The responses were categorized, collapsed and tallied to show the top categories and subcategories identified by respondents as the important goals for the future in Vermont and the steps for achieving those goals.

This report is a companion to the *Summary Findings and Analysis* report. These two reports, as well as the notes from public forums, are available online at www.futureofvermont.org or by contacting the Vermont Council on Rural Development at cfv@sover.net, or 802-223-6098.

Methodology

The data used in this report were collected by the Center for Rural Studies from March 10 to 17, 2008. The telephone polling was conducted from the University of Vermont between the hours of 1 and 8 p.m. on weekdays using computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI). A random sample for the poll was drawn from a Vermont phone list that is updated quarterly. Only Vermont residents over the age of 18 were interviewed. There were 699 respondents to the poll. Results based on a sample of this size have a confidence interval of 99 percent with a margin of error of plus or minus five percent. This means that if the survey were to be repeated in Vermont, 99 percent of the time the results would be within plus or minus five percent of the numbers reported here.

The survey instrument consisted of a series of 37 closed-response questions, two open-response questions and a demographic question set. For the closed-ended questions, respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements related to values and their level of concern about a series of statements related to challenges. For the open-ended questions, respondents were free to answer in any way they liked. (See Appendix 2 for the survey instrument.)

The questions about challenges were intentionally left vague in an effort not to bias the respondents. For example, when asked to state a level of concern about the “rate of business development in Vermont,” a respondent’s “very concerned” response could either refer to concern about business development being too fast or not fast enough. Analysis of respondents’ interpretation of “concern” is readily accomplished through the lens of the open-ended questions, where respondents were able to specify their responses.

Key Findings

Survey respondents were asked for their input on a series of 12 values and 24 challenges. The overall greatest value was placed (97.2%) on *the state’s working landscape and heritage*. Together with the second and third-ranked values – *I am proud of being from or living in Vermont* and *I value Vermont’s spirit of independence* – these statements provide a picture of the most compelling attributes of the state that bring Vermonters together. Of the survey respondents, 15 had lived in Vermont for fewer than three years, 70 had lived in Vermont for three to 10 years and 600 had lived in Vermont for more than 11 years. The average number of years living in Vermont for all respondents was 35, with the mode being 40 years; overall this survey group could be said to have long experience with the state and its issues.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Vermonters expressed high level of concern about the increasing cost of living, jobs, the economy and healthcare. Annual statewide polls conducted by the Center for Rural Studies have consistently revealed these as top issues for Vermonters. The open-response questions near the end of this survey provided a way for Vermonters to express their concerns in a very specific way. When asked: *What do you see as the most important goal for Vermont in the next generation?* Vermonters responded with a range of answers overwhelmingly focused on subjects directly related to affordability. Their answers included commentary on tax rates, affordable healthcare, education and other services and the need for more jobs and higher wages. These concerns reflect the current increases in cost of living being experienced by Vermonters and others across the country.

The survey revealed a number of interesting, statistically significant demographic trends among some of the values and challenges. For example, the higher a respondent's education level, the more likely he/she was to be concerned about the limited availability of high speed Internet and wireless telecommunications, changes to the earth's climate and pressure to convert open lands to residential, commercial or other development. Also, the higher a respondent's education level, the less likely he/she was to be concerned about public safety in Vermont.

Also, respondents at both ends of the age spectrum (ages 18-24 and older than 75) answered several questions in a similar fashion. For example, these two age groups were much less concerned about the limited availability of high speed Internet and wireless telecommunications than those in the 25-44, 45-59 and 60-74 age groups. Respondents at both ends of the age spectrum were more likely to value participatory government in Vermont than those in the other age groups. And the higher a respondent's age, the more likely he/she was to value the accessibility of government in Vermont.

Ninety-six point one percent of respondents reported being either very or moderately concerned about *the increasing costs of living, such as transportation, heating and electricity*. These findings reveal the common theme of affordability expressed by Vermonters throughout this survey. Three of the top seven challenges relate to affordability (increasing costs of living, tax rate and shortage of affordable housing). The second most concerning statement (92.1%): *The health and viability of Vermont farms and the agricultural sector*, further verifies the high level of agreement with the *working landscape and its heritage* value statement. When considering these two together it is interesting to note that working landscape resonated highly with respondents, both as a source of concern for its future and as a source of value.

Conversely, high percentages of Vermonters reported being slightly or not at all concerned about some of the challenges identified through the CFV public forums. Fifty-six point two percent of respondents were “slightly” or “not at all” concerned about *the level of engagement of Vermonters in their local governments*. This is interesting, especially because in the open-ended questions, nearly 30 percent of respondents later identified some form of increased civic action as a next step for addressing Vermont’s most important future goals. The fact that respondents expressed a low level of concern can be interpreted in at least two ways: they may not be worried about the issue, or they may believe that the level of engagement in local governments is high enough so that they do not see it as concerning.

Similarly, more than half of respondents were “slightly” or “not at all” concerned about public safety, the increase in the average age of Vermonters and the level of engagement in local communities. These findings verify that some challenges identified through the public forums are not of as great concern to Vermonters as others. They could also be seen as an expression of confidence in Vermont’s public safety, future demographics and level of engagement in communities and the state’s ability to respond to the challenges of the future.

For a fuller analysis of the key findings of the survey, please read the companion report, *Summary Results and Analysis*, which is also available online at www.futureofvermont.org. This remainder of this report is dedicated to a detailed reporting of the univariate and bivariate analyses for the closed-ended questions and a summary of the open-ended questions.

Demographics

The general demographic characteristics of the respondents are roughly in line with those of the state as a whole, although the respondents were generally of a higher age and education level than the general population.¹

The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 103, with a median age of 56 (mean: 56). This is 15 years higher than the median age of Vermonters, 41 years. Respondents were almost evenly split along gender lines with 52 percent being female and 48 percent being male. Statewide, the split is 51 female and 49 male.

Respondents reported an average of 2.6 household members, with a range of one to eight, and the average number of household members under the age of 18 of .55, with a range of zero to five. The average household size for the state is 2.4 people.

¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

The total number of years respondents reported having lived in Vermont, including all earlier periods, ranged from one to 96 years, with an average of 35 years and a mode of 40 years.

Almost all the respondents (96.5 percent) had graduated high school and 55.3 percent had a Bachelor's or higher degree. However, according to the U.S. Census, 89.8 percent of Vermonters aged 25 and older are high school graduates and 32.4 percent have Bachelor's or higher degree.

Table 1
Education level

	Frequency	Percent
<9th grade	4	.6
9-12 grade (no diploma)	20	2.9
High school graduate (incl. GED)	159	23.1
Some college (no degree)	125	18.1
Associates/technical	91	13.2
Bachelor	143	20.8
Post-graduate/professional	147	21.3
Total	689	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

The majority of respondents (73.9 percent) had household incomes above the median for Vermont; 26.1 percent of respondents had household incomes equal to or lower than the median household income for Vermont.²

Table 2
Income

	Frequency	Percent
<\$25,000	87	13.4
\$25,000-\$34,999	12	1.8
\$35,000-\$49,999	71	10.9
\$50,000-\$74,999	141	21.7
>\$75,000	339	52.2
Total	650	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

² \$47,665 with a margin of error of +/- \$1,270, Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey (2006 inflation-adjusted dollars)

Respondents were spread throughout the state, roughly in line with the population. The percent of respondents from each county was within 2.5 percent of the U.S. Census 2006 population estimates.

Table 3
Respondent town of residence by county

County	Frequency	Percent	Percent of Vermont population ³
Addison	58	8.4	5.9
Bennington	30	4.3	5.9
Caledonia	27	3.9	4.9
Chittenden	155	22.5	24.1
Essex	8	1.2	1.1
Franklin	48	7.0	7.7
Grand Isle	10	1.4	1.2
Lamoille	25	3.6	3.9
Orange	48	7.0	4.7
Orleans	39	5.7	4.4
Rutland	67	9.7	10.2
Washington	73	10.6	9.6
Windham	39	5.7	7.0
Windsor	63	9.1	9.2
Total	690	100.0	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

(N=699)

³ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 population estimate

Results

Section I: Closed-ended questions

This section shows the results from the the closed-ended questions. This includes the value statements, about which respondents were asked to state their level of agreement, and the challenge statements, about which they were asked to state their level of concern. Each question is listed with the frequency and percentage of responses.

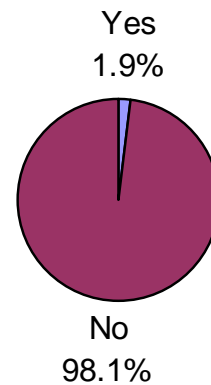
Attendance

Table 4

Have you attended a Conversation on the Future of Vermont forum?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	1.9
No	684	98.1
Total	697	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey



Values

For the next 12 questions, respondents were presented with a range of some of the values that Vermonters identified at the Council on the Future of Vermont’s community forums and asked to state their level of agreement with these values. Respondents were prompted to answer from among the following categories: “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree.”

The statement “I value the working landscape and its heritage” received the highest percentage of “strongly agree” responses (71.2%) and “I value the accessibility of government in Vermont” received the highest percentage of “strongly disagree” responses (2.5%). See Tables 5 and 6 for the statements that received the top five percentages in each of these categories.

Table 5
Highest percentage of “strongly agree” responses

Statement	Percent
I value the working landscape and its heritage	71.2
I value Vermont’s spirit of independence	63.6
I am proud of being from or living in Vermont	62.3
I value the privacy that I get in Vermont	51.5
I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont	51.5

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

Table 6
Highest percentage of “strongly disagree” responses

Statement	Percent
I value the accessibility of government in Vermont	2.5
I trust my neighbors	1.1
I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont	1.0
I value the participatory government in Vermont	1.0
I believe there is a strong sense of community where I live	0.9

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

More generally, the statement with the highest percentage of overall agreement (strongly agree or agree collapsed together) was “I value the working landscape and its heritage” (97.2%) and the statement with the highest percentage of overall disagreement (strongly disagree or disagree collapsed together) was “I believe that private property rights are well respected in Vermont” (15.4%). See Tables 7 and 8 for all the statements ranked by percentage for both of these grouped categories.

Table 7
Ranked percentage of combined “strongly agree” and “agree” responses

Statement	Percent
I value the working landscape and its heritage	97.2
I am proud of being from or living in Vermont	93.6
I value Vermont’s spirit of independence	93.1
I value the privacy I get in Vermont	91.0
I believe Vermont’s creative communities are valuable to the state	89.2
I value the small size and scale of the state	87.9
I trust my neighbors	86.2
I believe there is a strong sense of community where I live	85.4
I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont	84.8
I value the participatory government in Vermont	82.9
I value the accessibility of government in Vermont	73.9
I believe that private property rights are well respected in Vermont	69.9

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Table 8
Ranked percentage of combined “strongly disagree” and “disagree” responses

Statement	Percent
I believe that private property rights are well respected in Vermont	15.4
I value the accessibility of government in Vermont	13.2
I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont	6.9
I believe there is a strong sense of community where I live	6.8
I value the participatory government in Vermont	5.9
I trust my neighbors	4.7
I believe Vermont’s creative communities are valuable to the state	3.7
I value the accessibility of government in Vermont	2.9
I value the privacy I get in Vermont	2.6
I am proud of being from or living in Vermont	2.6
I value Vermont’s spirit of independence	2.4
I value the working landscape and its heritage	0.9

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Tables 9 to 20 show the total responses for each statement.

Table 9

I value Vermont's spirit of independence.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	442	63.6
Agree	205	29.5
Neutral	31	4.5
Disagree	14	2.0
Strongly disagree	3	.4
Total	695	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

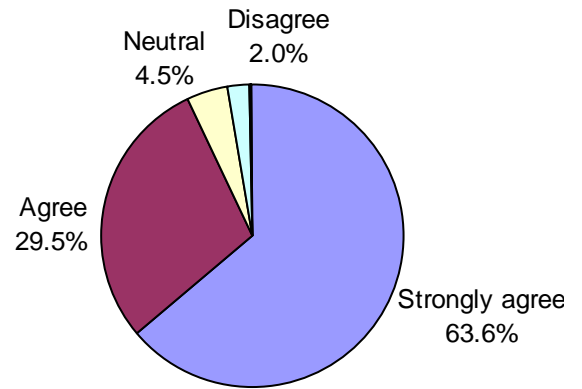


Table 10

I am proud of being from or living in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	434	62.4
Agree	217	31.2
Neutral	27	3.9
Disagree	15	2.2
Strongly disagree	3	.4
Total	696	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

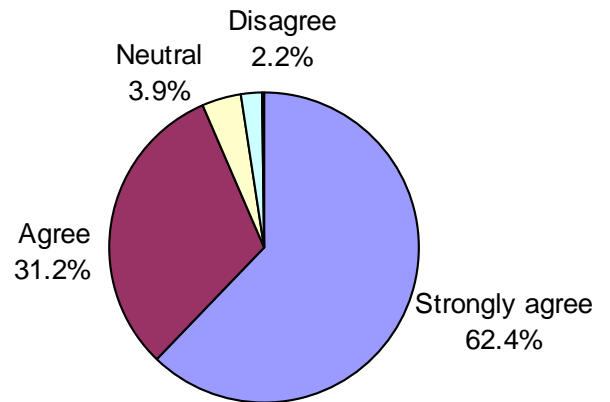


Table 11

I trust my neighbors.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	345	49.5
Agree	256	36.7
Neutral	63	9.0
Disagree	25	3.6
Strongly disagree	8	1.1
Total	697	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

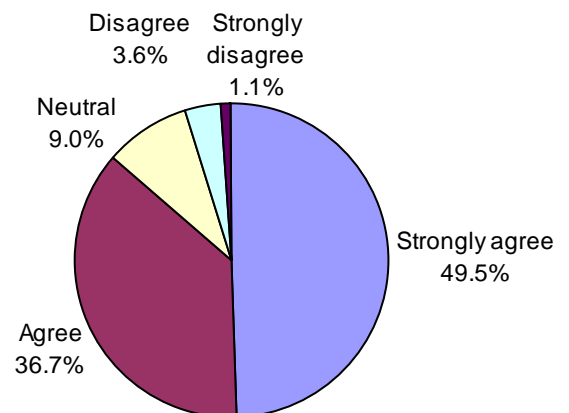


Table 12
I value the privacy that I get in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	359	51.6
Agree	274	39.4
Neutral	45	6.5
Disagree	14	2.0
Strongly disagree	4	.6
Total	696	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

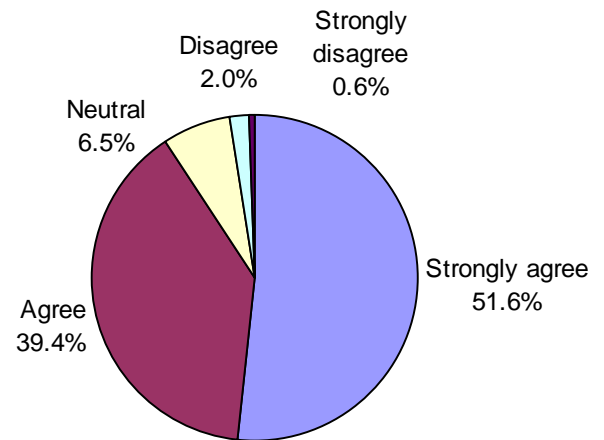


Table 13
I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	355	51.4
Agree	231	33.4
Neutral	57	8.2
Disagree	41	5.9
Strongly disagree	7	1.0
Total	691	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

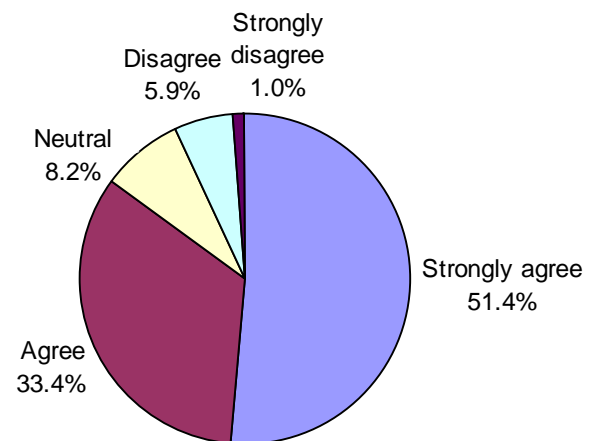


Table 14.
I believe there is a strong sense of community where I live.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	302	43.5
Agree	291	41.9
Neutral	55	7.9
Disagree	41	5.9
Strongly disagree	6	.9
Total	695	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

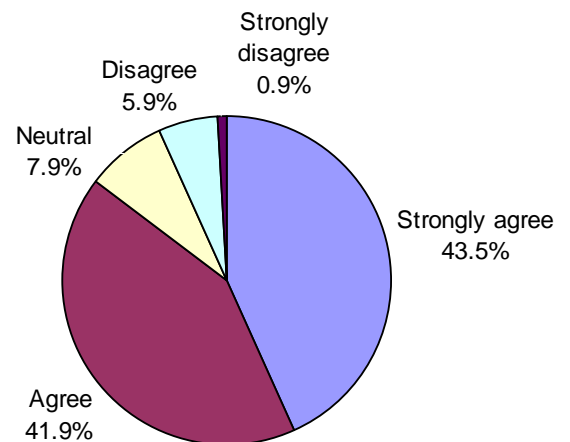


Table 15

I believe that Vermont's creative communities are valuable to the state.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	342	49.1
Agree	279	40.1
Neutral	49	7.0
Disagree	23	3.3
Strongly disagree	3	.4
Total	696	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

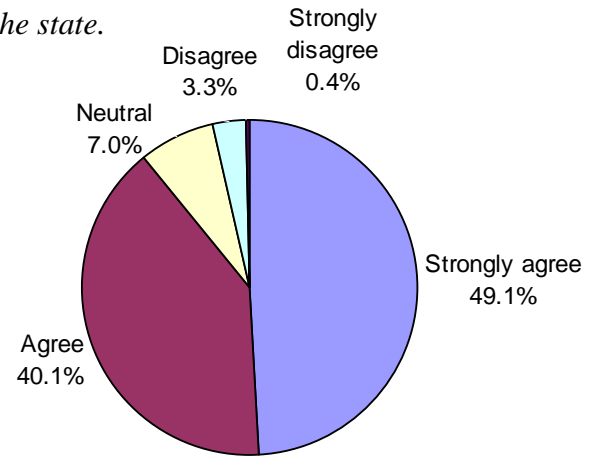


Table 16

I value the working landscape and its heritage.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	492	71.2
Agree	180	26.0
Neutral	13	1.9
Disagree	4	.6
Strongly disagree	2	.3
Total	691	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

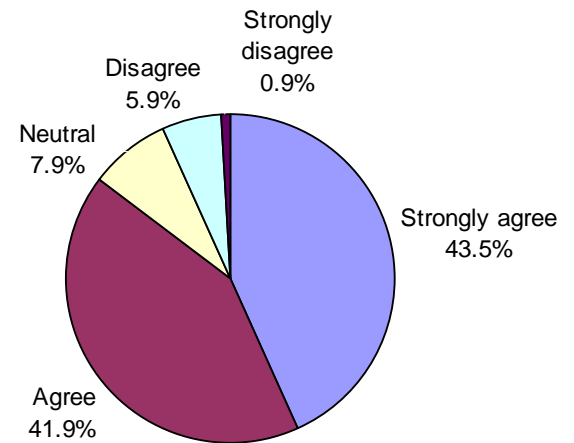


Table 17

I value the participatory government in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	316	45.7
Agree	257	37.2
Neutral	77	11.1
Disagree	34	4.9
Strongly disagree	7	1.0
Total	691	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

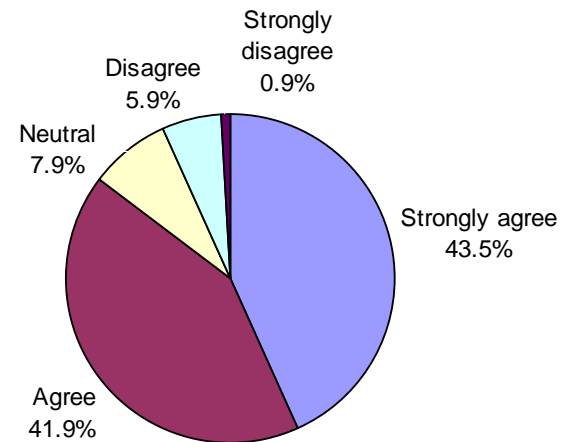


Table 18
I value the accessibility of government in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	222	32.1
Agree	289	41.8
Neutral	89	12.9
Disagree	74	10.7
Strongly disagree	17	2.5
Total	691	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

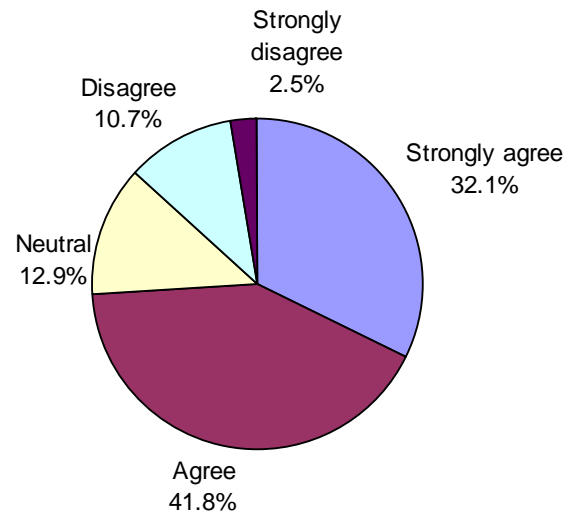


Table 19
I value the small size and scale of the state.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	356	51.2
Agree	255	36.7
Neutral	64	9.2
Disagree	18	2.6
Strongly disagree	2	.3
Total	695	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

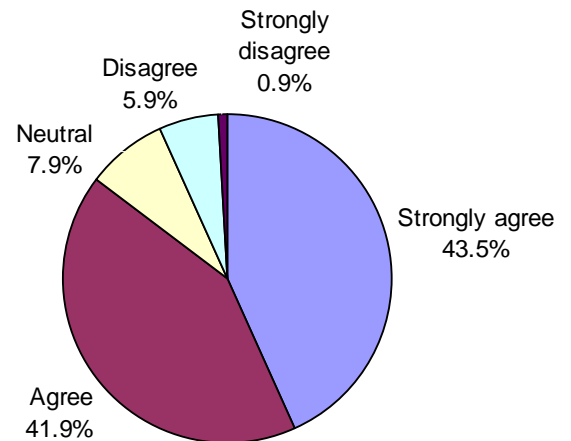
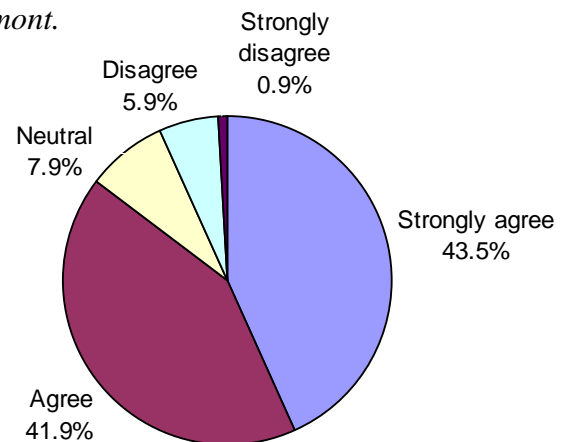


Table 20
I believe that private property rights are well respected in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	163	23.8
Agree	315	46.1
Neutral	101	14.8
Disagree	84	12.3
Strongly disagree	21	3.1
Total	684	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey



Challenges

For the next 24 questions, respondents were presented with a range of some of the challenges that Vermonters identified at the Council on the Future of Vermont’s community forums and asked to state their level of concern about them. Respondents were prompted to answer from among the following categories: “Very Concerned”, “Moderately Concerned”, “Neutral”, “Slightly Concerned” and “Not at all Concerned.”

The challenge that generated the highest percentage of “very concerned” responses was “The increasing costs of living, such as transportation, heating and electricity” (82%). The highest percentage of “moderately concerned” responses came from “A shortage of affordable housing” (39.1%), the highest percentage of “slightly concerned” responses came from “An increase in the average age of the Vermont population” (26.9%) and the highest percentage of “not at all concerned” responses came from “The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local government” (32%). See Tables 21 through 24 for the challenges that received the top five percentages for each level of concern.

Table 21
Highest percentage of “very concerned” responses

Statement	Percent
The increasing costs of living, such as transportation, heating and electricity	82.0
The health and viability of Vermont farms and the agricultural sector	69.4
The tax rate in Vermont	62.9
An increasing gap between high-income and low-income populations	58.9
The future of Vermont’s renewable and alternative energy infrastructure	56.7

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Table 22
Highest percentage of “moderately concerned” responses

Statement	Percent
A shortage of available housing	39.1
The state’s existing public infrastructure and its future maintenance	31.8
The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local communities	31.1
The quality of education	30.8
The maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers in Vermont	29.9

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Table 23
Highest percentage of “slightly concerned” responses

Statement	Percent
An increase in the average age of the Vermont population	26.9
The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local communities	26.2
The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local governments	24.2
Public safety in Vermont	23.6
The maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers in Vermont	23.4

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Table 24
Highest percentage of “not at all concerned” responses

Statement	Percent
The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local governments	32.0
Public safety in Vermont	31.7
The limited availability of high speed Internet connections and wireless communications in Vermont	27.3
An increase in the average age of the Vermont population	27.0
The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local communities	25.9

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Tables 25 to 48 show the total responses for each statement.

Table 25
A shortage of affordable housing.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	370	53.7
Moderately concerned	204	29.6
Slightly concerned	64	9.3
Not at all concerned	51	7.4
Total	689	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

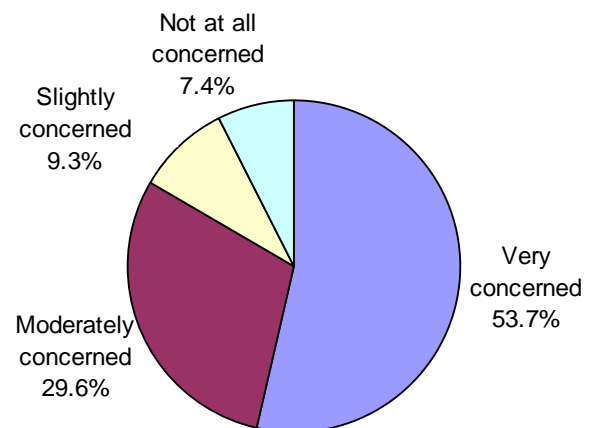


Table 26
A shortage of available housing.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	208	30.8
Moderately concerned	264	39.1
Slightly concerned	113	16.7
Not at all concerned	90	13.3
Total	675	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

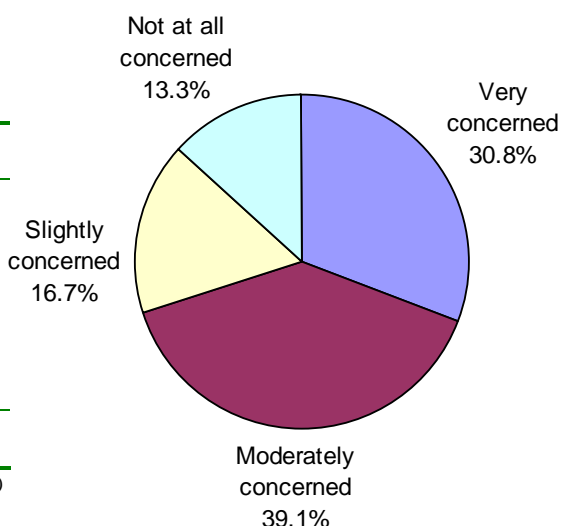


Table 27
The accessibility of health care.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	379	55.2
Moderately concerned	169	24.6
Slightly concerned	63	9.2
Not at all concerned	76	11.1
Total	687	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

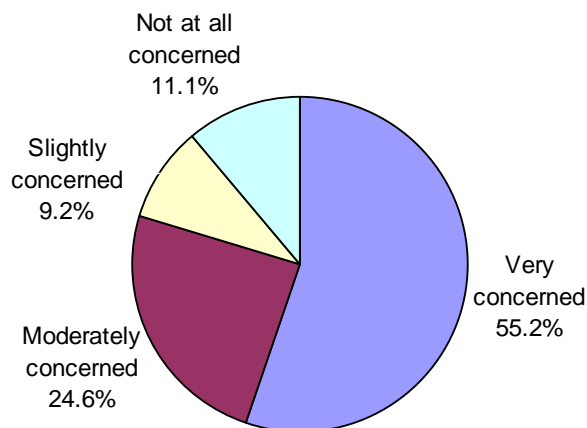
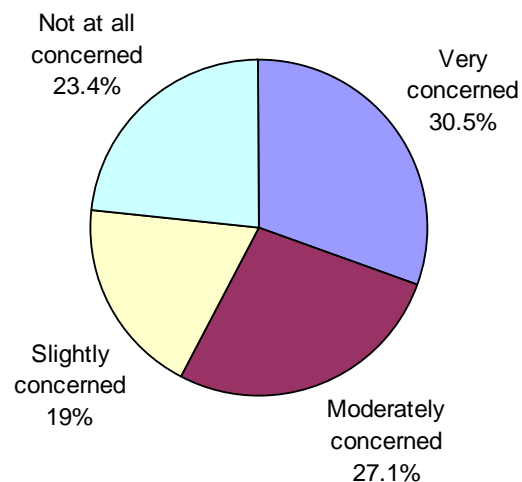


Table 28
The quality of health care.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	210	30.5
Moderately concerned	187	27.1
Slightly concerned	131	19.0
Not at all concerned	161	23.4
Total	689	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey



Question 29

The rate of business development in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	313	46.4
Moderately concerned	200	29.6
Slightly concerned	95	14.1
Not at all concerned	67	9.9
Total	675	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

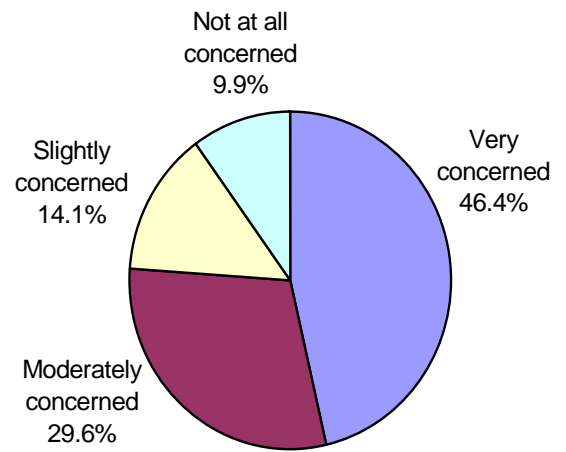


Table 30

The development of an adequate workforce for the future.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	386	56.7
Moderately concerned	189	27.8
Slightly concerned	61	9.0
Not at all concerned	45	6.6
Total	681	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

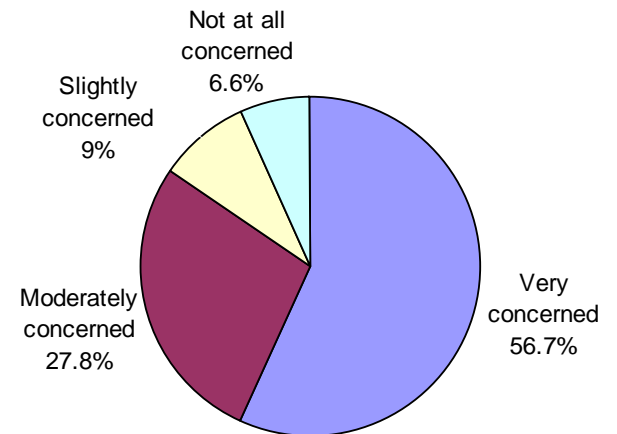


Table 31

The increasing costs of living, such as transportation, heating and electricity.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	569	82.0
Moderately concerned	98	14.1
Slightly concerned	16	2.3
Not at all concerned	11	1.6
Total	694	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

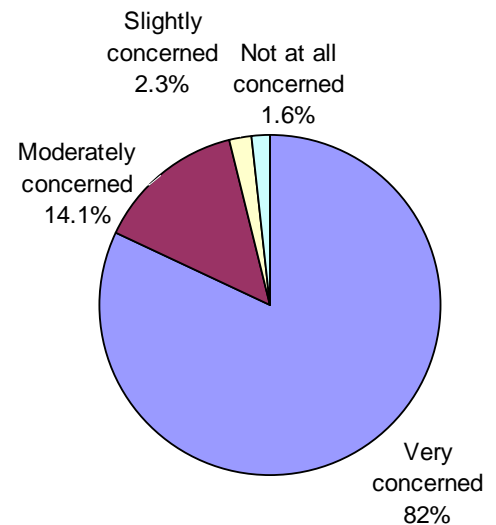


Table 32
The quality of education.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	278	40.4
Moderately concerned	212	30.8
Slightly concerned	107	15.6
Not at all concerned	91	13.2
Total	688	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

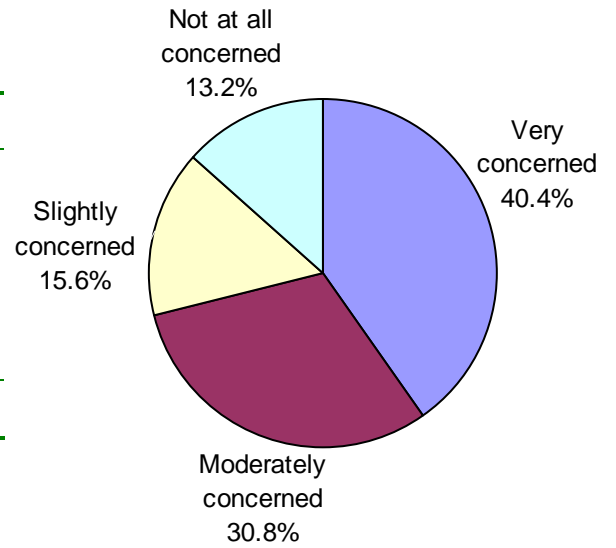


Table 33
The way Vermont finances public education.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	373	55.8
Moderately concerned	182	27.2
Slightly concerned	60	9.0
Not at all concerned	54	8.1
Total	669	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

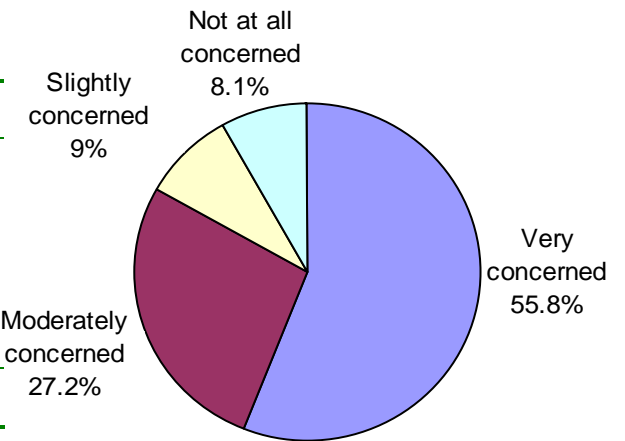


Table 34
Pressure to convert open lands to residential, commercial, or other development.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	365	54.0
Moderately concerned	176	26.0
Slightly concerned	73	10.8
Not at all concerned	62	9.2
Total	676	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

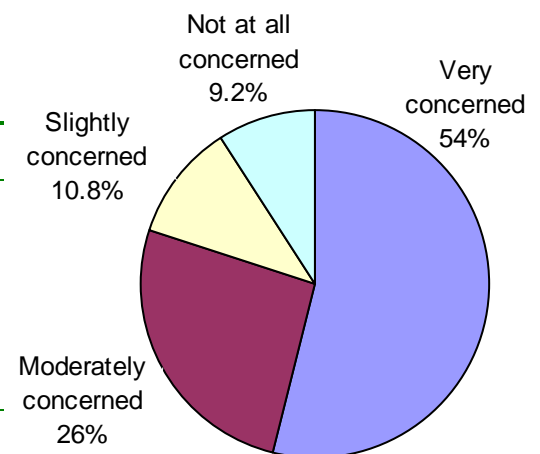


Table 35

The changes in the earth's climate and their potential impacts on the Vermont landscape and seasons.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	360	52.5
Moderately concerned	181	26.4
Slightly concerned	52	7.6
Not at all concerned	93	13.6
Total	686	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

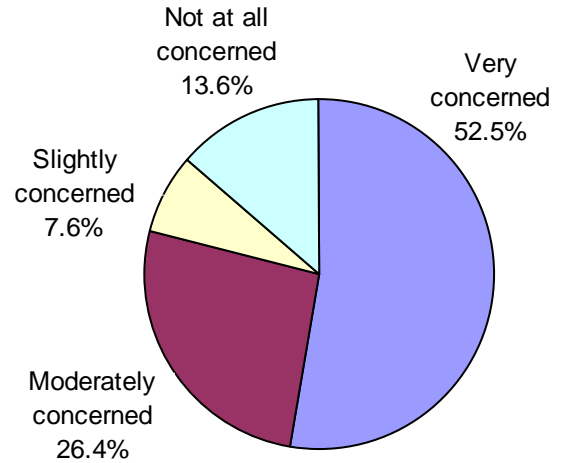


Table 36

The increasing price of land in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	335	49.0
Moderately concerned	201	29.4
Slightly concerned	75	11.0
Not at all concerned	72	10.5
Total	683	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

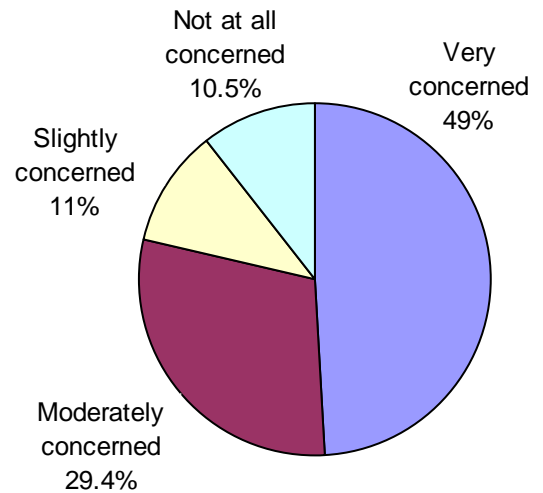


Table 37

The potential for an increased rate of population growth in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	199	29.3
Moderately concerned	190	27.9
Slightly concerned	154	22.6
Not at all concerned	137	20.1
Total	680	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

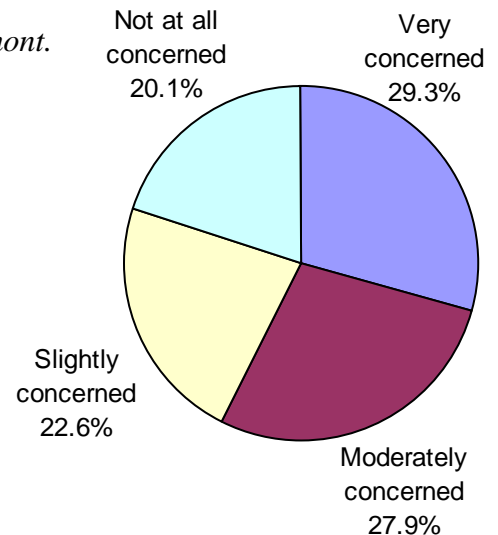


Table 38
An increase in the average age of the Vermont population.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	127	18.6
Moderately concerned	187	27.5
Slightly concerned	183	26.9
Not at all concerned	184	27.0
Total	681	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

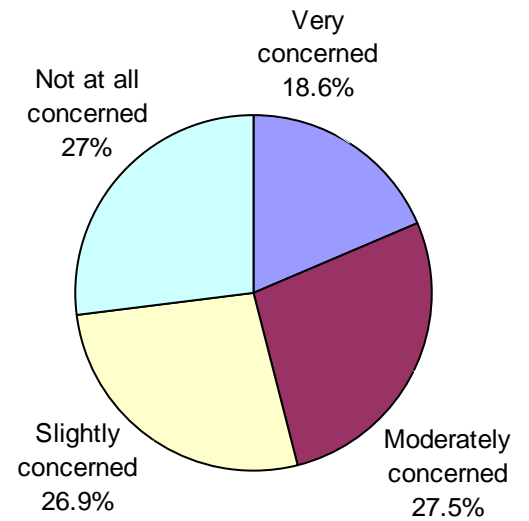


Table 39
The limited availability of high speed Internet connections and wireless telecommunications in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	240	35.0
Moderately concerned	151	22.0
Slightly concerned	107	15.6
Not at all concerned	187	27.3
Total	685	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

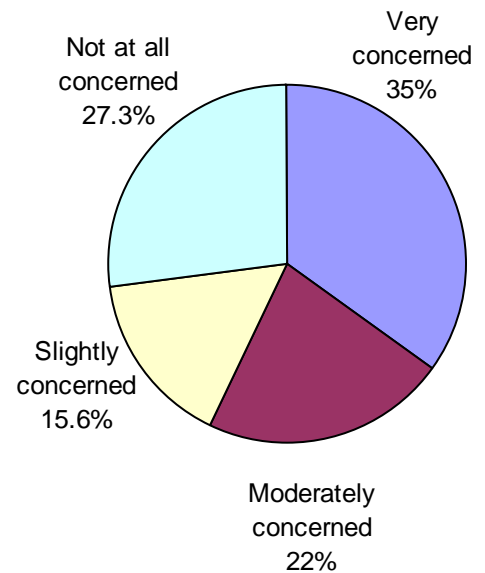


Table 40
An increasing gap between high-income and low-income populations.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	404	58.9
Moderately concerned	164	23.9
Slightly concerned	63	9.2
Not at all concerned	55	8.0
Total	686	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

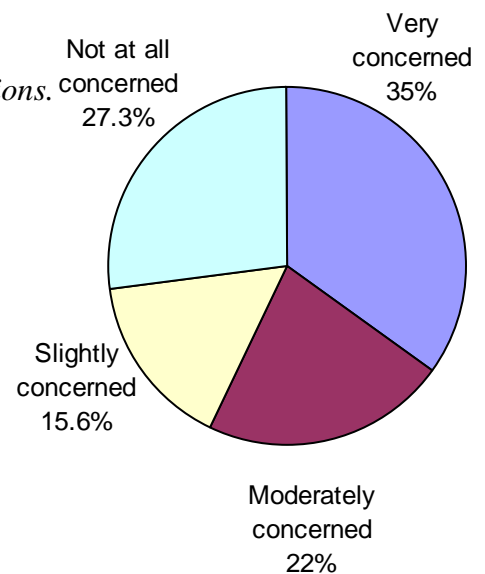


Table 41

The health and viability of Vermont farms and the agricultural sector.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	474	69.4
Moderately concerned	155	22.7
Slightly concerned	31	4.5
Not at all concerned	23	3.4
Total	683	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

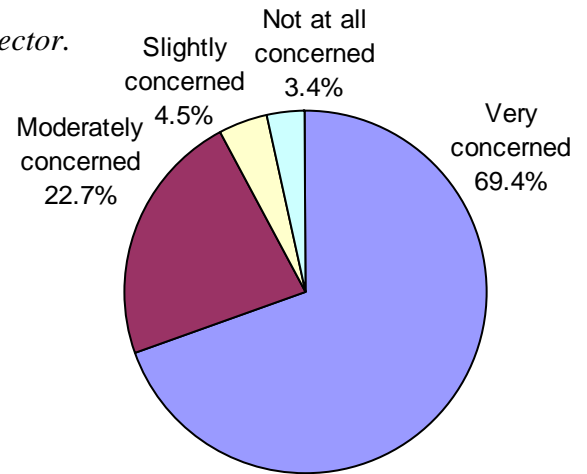


Table 42

The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local communities.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	115	16.8
Moderately concerned	213	31.1
Slightly concerned	179	26.2
Not at all concerned	177	25.9
Total	684	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

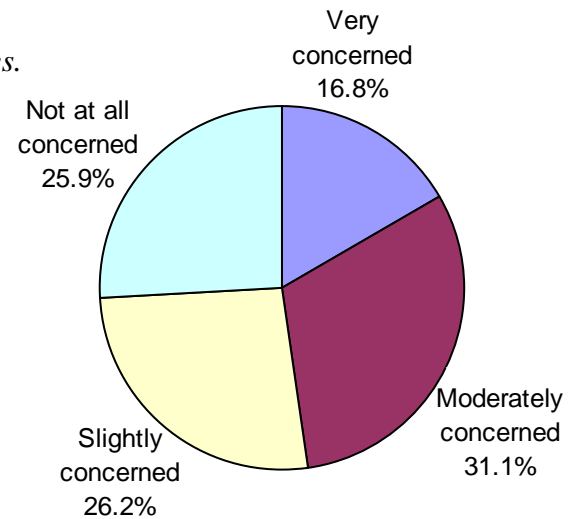


Table 43

The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local governments.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	103	15.1
Moderately concerned	195	28.6
Slightly concerned	165	24.2
Not at all concerned	218	32.0
Total	681	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

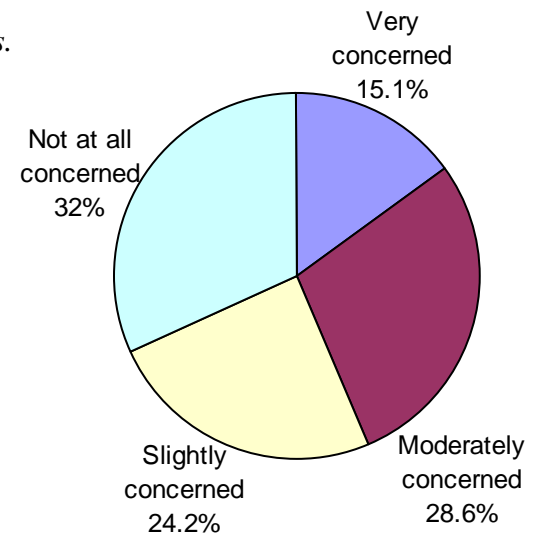


Table 44
The tax rate in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	427	62.9
Moderately concerned	151	22.2
Slightly concerned	62	9.1
Not at all concerned	39	5.7
Total	679	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

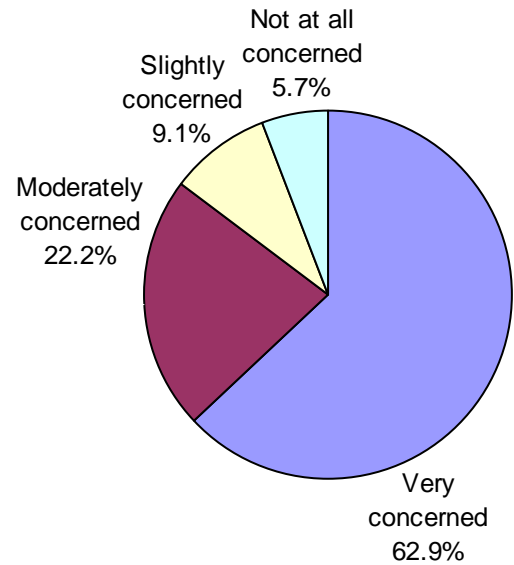


Table 45
The state's existing public infrastructure and its future maintenance.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	353	51.8
Moderately concerned	217	31.8
Slightly concerned	77	11.3
Not at all concerned	35	5.1
Total	682	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

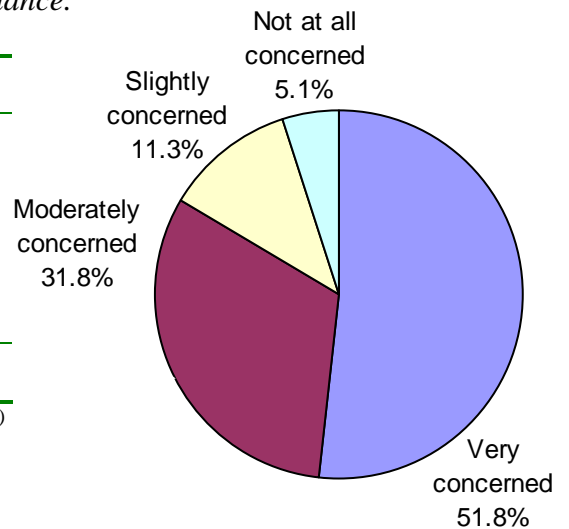


Table 46
Public safety in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	107	15.5
Moderately concerned	201	29.1
Slightly concerned	163	23.6
Not at all concerned	219	31.7
Total	690	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

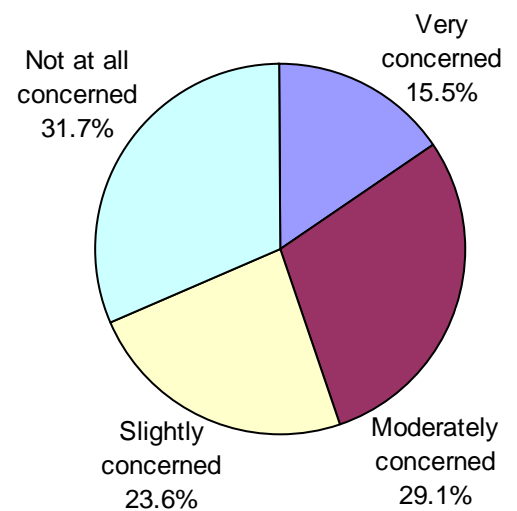


Table 47

The future of Vermont's renewable and alternative energy infrastructure.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	387	56.7
Moderately concerned	178	26.1
Slightly concerned	67	9.8
Not at all concerned	50	7.3
Total	682	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey

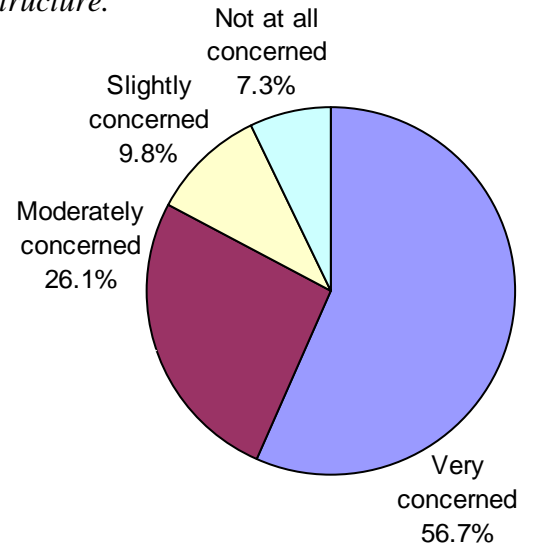
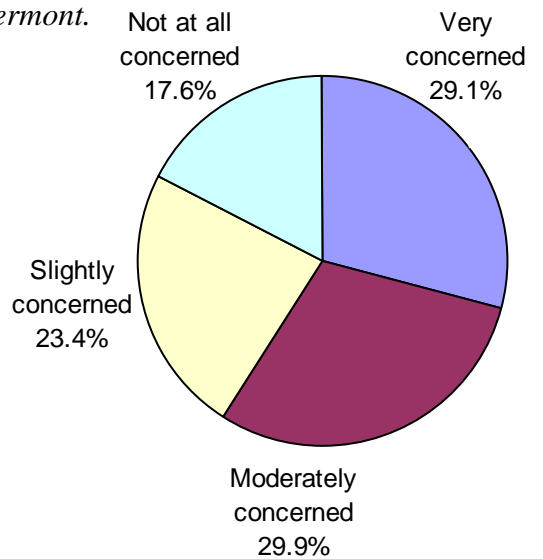


Table 48

The maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	198	29.1
Moderately concerned	203	29.9
Slightly concerned	159	23.4
Not at all concerned	120	17.6
Total	680	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) (N=699)
 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey



Section II: Crosstabs

A bivariate analysis was used to investigate the relationships between the 12 value and 24 challenge statements and the demographics. The levels of agreement and concern were collapsed for this portion of the analysis. “Strongly agree” and “agree” were combined, as were “strongly disagree” and “disagree.” Similarly, “very concerned” and “moderately concerned” were combined, as were “slightly concerned” and “not at all concerned.” This section includes findings of interest, identified by Council on the Future of Vermont and Center for Rural Studies, as well as the bivariate analyses with statistically significant results.

Findings of interest

The following findings represent crosstab analysis on topics that were identified as being themes, or seemed meaningful or interesting in how they related to the results of the Council on the Future of Vermont’s public forums and listening sessions.

Please note that although these findings describe how different groups answered the questions, they are not all statistically significant. The statistically significant findings ($P < .1$) are marked with *. This means that there is at least a 90 percent probability that the relationship between the demographic group and the response did not occur by chance — that at least 90 times out of 100 we would get the same result. The smaller the p-value, the closer the sample is to representing the group as a whole.

The statistically significant results can be generalized to the Vermont population as a whole within the specified demographic groupings. The full set of statistically significant findings begins on Page 27.

Working landscape and heritage: The higher a respondent’s level of education, the more likely it was that he/she agreed with the statement “I value the working landscape and heritage.”* Those above median income were more likely to agree.* Years lived in Vermont and age did not appear to make a difference.

Healthy downtowns: Respondents in the youngest (18-24) and the oldest (>75) age groups were more likely to be concerned than those between those ages. Women were more concerned than men.* The higher a respondent’s level of education, the more likely it was that he/she was concerned about the maintenance of healthy downtowns. Respondents who had lived in Vermont for 6-20 years were more concerned about healthy downtowns than those who had lived in Vermont for shorter and longer amounts of time.* Respondents at or below median income were more concerned than those above median income.

Level of engagement in local communities: Respondents who had lived in Vermont for less than 2 years were the most likely to be moderately or very concerned about the level of engagement in local communities. Those having lived in Vermont for 2-5 years were most likely to be slightly or not at all concerned. People older than 75 and 18-24 were slightly more likely to be moderately to very concerned than those aged 25-74. Women were slightly more concerned than men. Respondents without high school degrees were more concerned than those with high school diplomas and higher degrees. Respondents at or below median income were slightly more concerned than those above median income.*

Level of engagement in local government: Respondents aged 18-24 and those older than 75 were more likely to be concerned than the 25-74-year-olds. People without a high school diploma were slightly more likely to be concerned than those with high school diplomas or higher degrees. Women were slightly more likely to be moderately to very concerned than men.* Respondents at or below median income were slightly more concerned than those above median income.*

Public safety: Respondents aged 18-24 were least likely to be concerned about public safety. Women were slightly more concerned than men. The lower a respondent's level of education, the more likely it was that he/she was concerned about public safety.* Respondents who had lived in Vermont for less than 2 and more than 21 years were more likely to be concerned than those in the other groups.* Respondents at or below median income were more concerned than those above median income.*

Future of renewable and alternative energy infrastructure: Respondents with incomes above the median were slightly more likely to be concerned than those at or below the median. Respondents without high school diplomas were slightly less likely to be concerned than those with high school diplomas and higher degrees. Age, gender and years lived in Vermont did not appear to make a difference.

Climate change: Respondents in the 18-24 and 45-59 age ranges were the most concerned about changes in the earth's climate and their potential impacts on the Vermont landscape and seasons.* Those older than 75 were the least concerned.* The higher a respondent's education level, the more likely he/she was to be concerned.* Respondents without high school diplomas were less likely to be concerned than those with high school diplomas and higher degrees. Age, gender and years lived in Vermont did not appear to make a difference.

Public infrastructure: Respondents in the 60-74 age range were slightly more concerned about public infrastructure and its future maintenance than those in the other age groups. Respondents without high school diplomas were slightly less likely to be concerned than those with high school diplomas and higher degrees. Gender, years lived in Vermont and income did not appear to make a difference.

Values

When crosstabulating the demographic indicators with the values statements, the following results were statistically significant (which means there is at least a 90 percent probability that the relationship between the demographic indicator and the response did not occur by chance and the findings can be generalized):

- Value spirit of independence by Income.
- Trusting neighbors by Education level
- Trusting neighbors by Gender
- Trusting neighbors by Income
- Tolerance for diverse lifestyles by Years lived in Vermont
- Tolerance for diverse lifestyles by Education level
- Tolerance for diverse lifestyles by Gender
- Value creative communities by Gender
- Value working landscapes and heritage by Education
- Value working landscapes and heritage by Income
- Value participatory government by Age
- Value participatory government by Education
- Value accessibility of government by Years lived in Vermont
- Value accessibility of government by Age
- Value accessibility of government by Education
- Value accessibility of government by Gender
- Value accessibility of government by Income

Table 49

Value spirit of independence by Income

The vast majority of below median and above median income respondents (92.9% and 93.7% respectively) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: “I value Vermont’s spirit of independence” (P=0 .073).

			Below and above median income		Total
			At or below median income	Above median income	
Value spirit of independence	Agree	Count	156	449	605
		Percent	92.9%	93.7%	93.5%
	Neutral	Count	4	21	25
		Percent	2.4%	4.4%	3.9%
	Disagree	Count	8	9	17
		Percent	4.8%	1.9%	2.6%
Total		Count	168	479	647
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 50

Trust neighbors by Education level

The number of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “I trust my neighbors.” increased as the level of educational attainment increased (P=0 .007).

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Trust neighbors	Agree	Count	17	237	338	592
		Percent	73.9%	83.5%	88.7%	86.0%
	Neutral	Count	5	25	33	63
		Percent	21.7%	8.8%	8.7%	9.2%
	Disagree	Count	1	22	10	33
		Percent	4.3%	7.7%	2.6%	4.8%
Total		Count	23	284	381	688
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 51

Trust neighbors by Gender

Male respondents were more likely (88%) to agree or strongly agree with the statement “I trust my neighbors” than female respondents (84.4%) (P=0.074).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Trust neighbors	Agree	Count	292	302	594
		Percent	88.0%	84.4%	86.1%
	Neutral	Count	22	41	63
		Percent	6.6%	11.5%	9.1%
	Disagree	Count	18	15	33
		Percent	5.4%	4.2%	4.8%
Total		Count	332	358	690
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 52

Trust neighbors by Income

Above median income respondents were nearly 10 percent more likely than below median income respondents to agree or strongly agree with the statement “I trust my neighbors” (P=0.008).

			Below and above median income		Total
			At or below median income	Above median income	
Trust neighbors	Agree	Count	134	425	559
		Percent	79.3%	88.5%	86.1%
	Neutral	Count	21	37	58
		Percent	12.4%	7.7%	8.9%
	Disagree	Count	14	18	32
		Percent	8.3%	3.8%	4.9%
Total		Count	169	480	649
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 53

Tolerant of diverse lifestyles by Years lived in Vermont

The number of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont.” Was significantly higher (8.8%) for those who had lived in Vermont for more than 21 years than for those living in Vermont for shorter lengths of time (P=0.073).

			Years lived in Vermont - categories					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Tolerant of diverse lifestyles	Agree	Count	5	25	47	85	410	572
		Percent	83.3%	92.6%	95.9%	91.4%	81.8%	84.6%
	Neutral	Count	1	1	1	6	47	56
		Percent	16.7%	3.7%	2.0%	6.5%	9.4%	8.3%
	Disagree	Count	0	1	1	2	44	48
		Percent	0.0%	3.7%	2.0%	2.2%	8.8%	7.1%
Total		Count	6	27	49	93	501	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 54

Tolerant of diverse lifestyles by Education Level

The number of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont.” increased with an increase in educational attainment (P=0.036).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Tolerant of diverse lifestyles	Agree	Count	18	232	328	578
		Percent	75.0%	82.6%	87.0%	84.8%
	Neutral	Count	1	28	28	57
		Percent	4.2%	10.0%	7.4%	8.4%
	Disagree	Count	5	21	21	47
		Percent	20.8%	7.5%	5.6%	6.9%
Total		Count	24	281	377	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 55

Tolerant of diverse lifestyles by Gender

Female respondents were almost 10% more likely (89.3%) than males (79.6%) to agree or strongly agree with the statement “I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont” (P=0.002).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Tolerant of diverse lifestyles	Agree	Count	262	317	579
		Percent	79.6%	89.3%	84.6%
	Neutral	Count	35	22	57
		Percent	10.6%	6.2%	8.3%
	Disagree	Count	32	16	48
		Percent	9.7%	4.5%	7.0%
Total		Count	329	355	684
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 56

Value creative communities by Gender

Female respondents were more likely (93%) than males (84.9%) to agree or strongly agree with the statement “I value the creative the economy in Vermont” (P=0.003).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Value creative communities	Agree	Count	281	333	614
		Percent	84.9%	93.0%	89.1%
	Neutral	Count	32	17	49
		Percent	9.7%	4.7%	7.1%
	Disagree	Count	18	8	26
		Percent	5.4%	2.2%	3.8%
Total		Count	331	358	689
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 57

Value working landscape and heritage by Education

The higher a respondent’s educational attainment, the more likely he/she was to agree with the statement “I value the working landscape and its heritage” (P=0.000).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Value working landscape and heritage	Agree	Count	20	271	373	664
		Percent	87.0%	95.4%	99.2%	97.2%
	Neutral	Count	1	10	2	13
		Percent	4.3%	3.5%	0.5%	1.9%
	Disagree	Count	2	3	1	6
		Percent	8.7%	1.1%	0.3%	0.9%
Total		Count	23	284	376	683
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 58

Value working landscape and heritage by Income

Respondents with above median income were slightly more likely to value the working landscape and its heritage than those with incomes at or below the median (P=0.005).

			Below and above median income		Total
			At or below median income	Above median income	
Value working landscape and heritage	Agree	Count	160	467	627
		Percent	94.7%	98.1%	97.2%
	Neutral	Count	4	8	12
		Percent	2.4%	1.7%	1.9%
	Disagree	Count	5	1	6
		Percent	3.0%	0.2%	0.9%
Total		Count	169	476	645
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 59

Value participatory government by Age

Respondents aged 18 to 24 years old were more likely (94.1%) than all other age categories to agree or strongly agree with the statement “I value the participatory government in Vermont.” The over 75 age category followed 18-24 year-olds with 92.4%. (P=0.025).

			Age categories					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Value participatory government	Agree	Count	16	103	198	174	73	564
		Percent	94.1%	81.1%	79.2%	84.5%	92.4%	83.1%
	Neutral	Count	1	21	30	20	4	76
		Percent	5.9%	16.5%	12.0%	9.7%	5.1%	11.2%
	Disagree	Count	0	3	22	12	2	39
		Percent	0.0%	2.4%	8.8%	5.8%	2.5%	5.7%
Total		Count	17	127	250	206	79	679
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 60

Value participatory government by Education level

Respondents with college degrees were most likely (88.2%) to value Vermont’s participatory government (P=0.002).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Value participatory government	Agree	Count	18	212	336	566
		Percent	81.8%	76.0%	88.2%	83.0%
	Neutral	Count	3	43	30	76
		Percent	13.6%	15.4%	7.9%	11.1%
	Disagree	Count	1	24	15	40
		Percent	4.5%	8.6%	3.9%	5.9%
Total		Count	22	279	381	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 61

Value accessibility of government by Years lived in Vermont

Respondents living in Vermont for less than two years and more than 21 years were the most likely to disagree or strongly disagree (16.7% and 15.3% respectively) with the statement “I value the accessibility of government in Vermont” (P=0.015).

			Years lived in Vermont					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Value accessibility of government	Agree	Count	3	16	41	69	370	499
		Percent	50.0%	59.3%	87.2%	75.0%	73.4%	73.8%
	Neutral	Count	2	7	6	15	57	87
		Percent	33.3%	25.9%	12.8%	16.3%	11.3%	12.9%
	Disagree	Count	1	4	0	8	77	90
		Percent	16.7%	14.8%	0.0%	8.7%	15.3%	13.3%
Total		Count	6	27	47	92	504	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 62

Value accessibility of government by Age

The older the respondent, the more likely he/she was to value the accessibility of government in Vermont (P=0.004).

			Age					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Value accessibility of government	Agree	Count	11	87	180	156	68	502
		Percent	64.7%	68.5%	72.3%	75.4%	86.1%	73.9%
	Neutral	Count	5	26	31	24	1	87
		Percent	29.4%	20.5%	12.4%	11.6%	1.3%	12.8%
	Disagree	Count	1	14	38	27	10	90
		Percent	5.9%	11.0%	15.3%	13.0%	12.7%	13.3%
Total		Count	17	127	249	207	79	679
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 63

Value accessibility of government by Education

Respondents with no diplomas were most likely to value the accessibility of government in Vermont (81.8%), followed by those with college degrees (78.2%) (P=0.036).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Value accessibility of government	Agree	Count	18	189	297	504
		Percent	81.8%	67.5%	78.2%	73.9%
	Neutral	Count	2	44	41	87
		Percent	9.1%	15.7%	10.8%	12.8%
	Disagree	Count	2	47	42	91
		Percent	9.1%	16.8%	11.1%	13.3%
Total		Count	22	280	380	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 64

Value accessibility of government by Gender

Female respondents were nearly 10 percent more likely to report valuing the accessibility of government in Vermont than males (P=0.004).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Value accessibility of government	Agree	Count	228	277	505
		Percent	68.9%	78.5%	73.8%
	Neutral	Count	45	43	88
		Percent	13.6%	12.2%	12.9%
	Disagree	Count	58	33	91
		Percent	17.5%	9.3%	13.3%
Total		Count	331	353	684
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 65

Value accessibility of government by Income

Respondents at or below median income were more likely than those above median income to value the accessibility of government in Vermont (P=0.109).

			Below and above median income		Total
			At or below median income	Above median income	
Value accessibility of government	Agree	Count	134	342	476
		Percent	79.8%	72.0%	74.0%
	Neutral	Count	19	64	83
		Percent	11.3%	13.5%	12.9%
	Disagree	Count	15	69	84
		Percent	8.9%	14.5%	13.1%
Total		Count	168	475	643
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Concerns

The following crosstabulations of concerns and demographics were found to be statistically significant:

- Accessibility of healthcare by Age
- Quality of health care by Gender
- Development of adequate workforce by Age
- Increasing costs of living by Education
- The way Vermont finances public education by Gender
- Pressure to convert open lands by Education
- Changes in the earth's climate by Age
- Changes in the earth's climate by Education
- Increasing price of land by Age
- Increase in average age of population by Age
- Increase in average age of population by Gender
- Increase in average age of population by Education
- Limited availability of high-speed internet and wireless telecommunications by Age
- Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications by Gender
- Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications by Education
- Limited availability of high-speed internet and wireless telecommunications by Years lived in Vermont
- Level of engagement in local government by Gender
- Tax rate by Education
- Tax rate by Years lived in Vermont
- Public infrastructure and its future maintenance by Gender
- Public safety by Education
- Public safety by Years lived in Vermont
- Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers by Gender
- Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers by Years lived in Vermont

Table 66

Accessibility of healthcare by Age

Respondents aged 25-44 were most concerned about the accessibility of health care and respondents over the age of 75 were least concerned (P=0.014).

			Age					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Accessibility of healthcare	Moderately to very concerned	Count	14	111	203	158	53	539
		Percent	82.4%	86.7%	81.9%	76.7%	67.9%	79.6%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	3	17	45	48	25	138
		Percent	17.6%	13.3%	18.1%	23.3%	32.1%	20.4%
Total		Count	17	128	248	206	78	677
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 67

Quality of health care by Gender

Women were more concerned about the quality of health care than men (P=.003).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Quality of health care	Moderately to very concerned	Count	169	222	391
		Percent	51.5%	62.7%	57.3%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	159	132	291
		Percent	48.5%	37.3%	42.7%
Total		Count	328	354	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 68

Development of an adequate workforce by Age

Respondents at the higher (<75) and lower (18-24) ranges of the age spectrum were less concerned about the development of an adequate workforce for the future than respondents aged 25-74 (P=0.036).

			Age					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Development of an adequate workforce	Moderately to very concerned	Count	12	105	217	178	55	567
		Percent	70.6%	82.0%	87.1%	87.3%	75.3%	84.5%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	5	23	32	26	18	104
		Percent	29.4%	18.0%	12.9%	12.7%	24.7%	15.5%
Total		Count	17	128	249	204	73	671
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 69

Increasing costs of living by Education

Respondents without high school diplomas were slightly less concerned about the increased cost of living than those with high school diplomas and higher degrees. (P=0.088)

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Increasing costs of living	Moderately to very concerned	Count	21	274	366	661
		Percent	87.5%	96.5%	96.3%	96.1%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	3	10	14	27
		Percent	12.5%	3.5%	3.7%	3.9%
Total		Count	24	284	380	688
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 70

The way Vermont finances public education by Gender

Men were slightly more concerned than women about the way Vermont finances public education (P=0.069).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Way Vermont finances public education	Moderately to very concerned	Count	281	270	551
		Percent	85.7%	80.4%	83.0%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	47	66	113
		Percent	14.3%	19.6%	17.0%
Total		Count	328	336	664
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 71

Pressure to convert open lands by Education

The higher a respondent's education level, the more likely he/she was to be concerned about the pressure to convert open land to residential, commercial or other development (P=0.008).

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Pressure to convert open lands	Moderately to very concerned	Count	12	216	309	537
		Percent	54.5%	79.4%	81.7%	79.9%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	10	56	69	135
		Percent	45.5%	20.6%	18.3%	20.1%
Total		Count	22	272	378	672
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 72

Changes in the earth's climate by Age

Respondents in the 18-24 and 45-59 age ranges were the most concerned about changes in the earth's climate and their potential impacts on the Vermont landscape and seasons. Those older than 75 were the least concerned (P=0.057).

			Age categories					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Changes in the earth's climate	Moderately to very concerned	Count	14	99	211	157	56	537
		Percent	82.4%	77.3%	84.7%	76.6%	70.9%	79.2%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	3	29	38	48	23	141
		Percent	17.6%	22.7%	15.3%	23.4%	29.1%	20.8%
Total		Count	17	128	249	205	79	678
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 73

Changes in the earth's climate by Education

The higher a respondent's education level, the more likely he/she was to be concerned about changes in the earth's climate and their potential impacts on the Vermont landscape and seasons (P=0.014).

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Changes in the earth's climate	Moderately to very concerned	Count	14	213	312	539
		Percent	60.9%	76.1%	82.3%	79.0%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	9	67	67	143
		Percent	39.1%	23.9%	17.7%	21.0%
Total		Count	23	280	379	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 74

Increasing price of land by Age

Respondents aged 18-24 were less concerned about the increasing price of land than their older counterparts. Respondents in the 45-59 age range were the most concerned (P=0.041).

			Age categories					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Increasing price of land	Moderately to very concerned	Count	10	97	209	159	56	531
		Percent	58.8%	75.2%	83.9%	77.2%	74.7%	78.6%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	7	32	40	47	19	145
		Percent	41.2%	24.8%	16.1%	22.8%	25.3%	21.4%
Total		Count	17	129	249	206	75	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 75

Increase in average age of population by Age

Respondents aged 18-24 were less concerned about the increase in the average age of the population than their older counterparts. Generally, the older a respondent was, the more likely he/she was to be concerned (P=0.095).

			Age categories					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Increase in average age of population	Moderately to very concerned	Count	4	49	115	103	39	310
		Percent	23.5%	38.9%	46.6%	50.2%	49.4%	46.0%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	13	77	132	102	40	364
		Percent	76.5%	61.1%	53.4%	49.8%	50.6%	54.0%
Total		Count	17	126	247	205	79	674
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 76

Increase in average age of population by Gender

Women were slightly more concerned than men about the average age of the population (P=0.031).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Increase in average age of population	Moderately to very concerned	Count	135	175	310
		Percent	41.4%	49.9%	45.8%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	191	176	367
		Percent	58.6%	50.1%	54.2%
Total		Count	326	351	677
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 77

Increase in average age of population by Education

Respondents with high school diplomas and/or some college were slightly less concerned about the increase in average age of population than those without high school diplomas and those with degrees (p=0.073).

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Increase in average age of population	Moderately to very concerned	Count	11	114	187	312
		Percent	45.8%	40.9%	49.9%	46.0%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	13	165	188	366
		Percent	54.2%	59.1%	50.1%	54.0%
Total		Count	24	279	375	678
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 78

Limited availability of high-speed Internet and wireless telecommunications by Age

Respondents at the higher (<75) and lower (18-24) ranges of the age spectrum were less concerned about the limited availability of high-speed Internet and wireless telecommunications than those aged 25-74 (P=0.003).

			Age					Total
			18-24	25-44	45-59	60-74	>75	
Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications	Moderately to very concerned	Count	6	79	136	133	32	386
		Percent	35.3%	61.2%	54.6%	64.3%	42.1%	56.9%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	11	50	113	74	44	292
		Percent	64.7%	38.8%	45.4%	35.7%	57.9%	43.1%
Total		Count	17	129	249	207	76	678
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 79

Limited availability of high speed Internet and wireless telecommunications by Gender

Men were slightly more concerned about the limited availability of high-speed Internet and wireless telecommunications than women (P=0.072).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications	Moderately to very concerned	Count	200	190	390
		Percent	60.8%	54.0%	57.3%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	129	162	291
		Percent	39.2%	46.0%	42.7%
Total		Count	329	352	681
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 80

Limited availability of high speed Internet and wireless telecommunications by Education

The more education the respondent had, the more likely it was that he/she was concerned about the limited availability of high-speed Internet and wireless telecommunications (P=0.004).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications	Moderately to very concerned	Count	6	154	229	389
		Percent	26.1%	55.2%	60.3%	57.0%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	17	125	151	293
		Percent	73.9%	44.8%	39.7%	43.0%
Total		Count	23	279	380	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 81

Limited availability of high-speed Internet and wireless telecommunications by Years lived in Vermont

Respondent who had lived in Vermont for 2-10 years were more concerned about the limited availability of high speed Internet and wireless telecommunications than those who had lived in the state for less than two years or more than 11 (P=0.068).

			Years lived in Vermont					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Limited availability of high speed internet and wireless telecommunications	Moderately to very concerned	Count	3	21	35	53	276	388
		Percent	50.0%	75.0%	71.4%	57.6%	55.1%	57.4%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	3	7	14	39	225	288
		Percent	50.0%	25.0%	28.6%	42.4%	44.9%	42.6%
Total		Count	6	28	49	92	501	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 82

Level of engagement in local government by Gender

Women were more concerned (47.9%) about the level of engagement in local government than men (39.6%) (P=0.018).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Level of engagement in local government	Moderately to very concerned	Count	129	168	297
		Percent	39.6%	47.9%	43.9%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	197	183	380
		Percent	60.4%	52.1%	56.1%
Total		Count	326	351	677
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 83

Tax rate by Education

Respondents without high school diplomas were less concerned about the tax rate than those with high school diplomas or higher degrees (P=0.071).

			Education level recode			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Tax rate	Moderately to very concerned	Count	18	249	310	577
		Percent	78.3%	88.9%	83.1%	85.4%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	5	31	63	99
		Percent	21.7%	11.1%	16.9%	14.6%
Total		Count	23	280	373	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 84

Tax rate by Years lived in Vermont

Respondents who had lived in Vermont for more than 21 years were most concerned about the tax rate (P=0.001).

			Years lived in Vermont					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Tax rate	Moderately to very concerned	Count	3	23	41	67	437	571
		Percent	50.0%	82.1%	85.4%	73.6%	87.9%	85.2%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	3	5	7	24	60	99
		Percent	50.0%	17.9%	14.6%	26.4%	12.1%	14.8%
Total		Count	6	28	48	91	497	670
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 85

Public infrastructure and its future maintenance by Gender

Men were more concerned about the state’s public infrastructure and its future maintenance than women (P=0.022).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Public infrastructure and its future maintenance	Moderately to very concerned	Count	287	280	567
		Percent	87.0%	80.5%	83.6%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	43	68	111
		Percent	13.0%	19.5%	16.4%
Total		Count	330	348	678
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 86

Public safety by Education

The lower a respondent’s level of education, the more likely he/she was to be concerned about public safety in Vermont (P=0.004).

			Education level			Total
			No high school diploma	High school grad, some college	Degree	
Public safety	Moderately to very concerned	Count	13	145	148	306
		Percent	54.2%	51.2%	38.9%	44.5%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	11	138	232	381
		Percent	45.8%	48.8%	61.1%	55.5%
Total		Count	24	283	380	687
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 87

Public safety by Years lived in Vermont

Generally, the longer a person had lived in Vermont, the more likely he/she was to be concerned about public safety (P=0.061).

			Years lived in Vermont					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Public safety	Moderately to very concerned	Count	2	7	16	39	239	303
		Percent	33.3%	25.0%	32.7%	42.4%	47.1%	44.4%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	4	21	33	53	268	379
		Percent	66.7%	75.0%	67.3%	57.6%	52.9%	55.6%
Total		Count	6	28	49	92	507	682
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 88

Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers by Gender

Women were more concerned about the maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers than men (P=0.001).

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers	Moderately to very concerned	Count	171	227	398
		Percent	52.1%	65.2%	58.9%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	157	121	278
		Percent	47.9%	34.8%	41.1%
Total		Count	328	348	676
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 89

Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers by Years lived in Vermont

Respondents who had lived in Vermont for 2-5 years and more than 21 years were less concerned about the maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers than those who had lived in the state for less than 2 years and 6-20 years (P=0.045).

			Years lived in Vermont					Total
			<2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	>21 years	
Maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers	Moderately to very concerned	Count	4	14	34	64	278	394
		Percent	66.7%	51.9%	69.4%	70.3%	55.8%	58.7%
	Slightly to not at all concerned	Count	2	13	15	27	220	277
		Percent	33.3%	48.1%	30.6%	29.7%	44.2%	41.3%
Total		Count	6	27	49	91	498	671
		Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

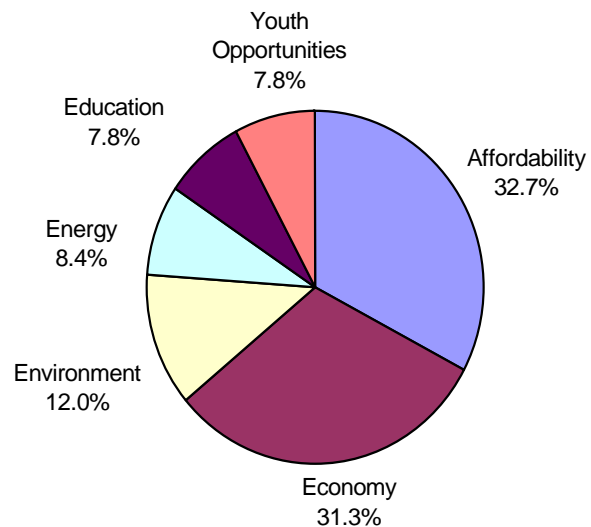
Section III: Open-ended questions

The survey included two open-response questions in which respondents were asked: *What do you see as the most important goal for Vermont in the next generation?* And *What would be the first step in achieving that goal?* These questions were asked near the end of the survey after the key survey themes had been introduced to respondents. Through analysis of the results, the responses were collapsed and grouped into general categories (see Tables 90 and 91).

“Open- response” refers to those questions that respondents were free to answer in any way they liked. These responses were categorized into several general themes that emerged from among all the answers received. For example, the response *“Attracting jobs that will keep young people in the state working”* was categorized under “Economy” broadly and subcategorized under “Jobs for Youth”, whereas a response like *“Keeping young people in the state”* was categorized under “Youth Opportunities” because there was no specific mention of “jobs” in the statement.

Many responses included multiple goals. In these instances the respondent’s first goal mentioned was utilized in the count. For example the statement; *“Energy, jobs, good, higher paying jobs”* was categorized under “Energy” because this was the primary response listed.

For the open-response question *What do you see as the most important goal for Vermont in the next generation?* responses were collapsed into the following general categories: affordability, economy, environment, energy, education and youth opportunity. The pie chart at right shows the percent of responses for each of these general categories and Table 90 provides a closer examination of some of the subcategories.



In Tables 90 and 91 “Frequency” refers to the actual number of respondents who indicated a particular topic. “Percent within Category” refers to the proportion of the response within each category. “Percent within all Responses” describes the proportion of each subcategory within the entire response set.

Table 90

What do you see as the most important goal for Vermont in the next generation?

Top Six Response Categories		Frequency	Percent within Category	Percent within all Responses
Total Affordability		164	100.0	32.7
	Affordable/Accessible Healthcare	47	28.7	9.4
	Lower/Change Taxes	31	18.9	6.2
	Cost of Living	30	18.3	6.0
	Affordable/Accessible Education	27	16.5	5.4
	Livable Wage	15	9.1	3.0
	Affordable Housing/Land	14	8.5	2.8
Total Economy		157	100.0	31.3
	Attract Businesses and Jobs	80	51.0	16.0
	Create Jobs for Youth	38	24.2	7.6
	Be Business Friendly/Less Restrictions	19	12.1	3.8
	Green Economy/Industry	10	6.4	2.0
	Economy/Stability	10	6.4	2.0
Total Environment		60	100.0	12.0
	Environment	21	35.0	4.2
	(Maintain) Rural Character	13	21.7	2.6
	Smart Growth/Control Sprawl	11	18.3	2.2
	Open Space/Recreation	6	10.0	1.2
	Reduce Pollution	5	8.3	1.0
	Land Conservation	4	6.7	0.8
Total Energy		42	100.0	8.4
	Develop Alternative/Renewable Energy	29	69.0	5.8
	Increase Efficiency/Lower Consumption	6	14.3	1.2
	Independence	4	9.5	0.8
	Energy	3	7.1	0.6
Total Education		39	100.0	7.8
	Increase the Quality of Education	34	87.2	6.8
	Increase Education Funding	5	12.8	1.0
Total Youth Opportunities*		39	100.0	7.8
	Youth Opportunities	39	100.0	7.8
Total for all Responses		501	100.0	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

*Youth Opportunities does not include job opportunities for youth as a response. This response is included under economy.

About a third (32.7%) of respondents specifically referred to topics of affordability as the most important goals for Vermont in the next generation. Among these, affordable healthcare ranked highest beating out lower/change taxes. Nearly an additional third (31.3%) of respondents listed topics relating to the economy as important goals for Vermont in the next generation. Among these, an increase in businesses and jobs ranked highest.

Table 91

What would be the first step in achieving that goal?

Top Six Response Categories		Frequency	Percent within Category	Percent within all Responses
Total Business and Jobs		128	100.0	30.5
	Become more business friendly, remove business constraints	85	66.4	20.2
	Increase the number of well-paid jobs	36	28.1	8.6
	Increase small business opportunities	7	5.5	1.7
Total Governance and Citizen Involvement		118	100.0	28.1
	Change State/Federal government	27	22.9	6.4
	Increase community/citizen engagement	27	22.9	6.4
	Increase communication/ engagement with government	24	20.3	5.7
	Increase public awareness of issues	24	20.3	5.7
	Force the government to act faster/do more	16	13.6	3.8
Total Education		65	100.0	15.5
	Increase educational options and quality	32	49.2	7.6
	Increase and change educational financing	25	38.5	6.0
	Increase educational financing for VT youth	8	12.3	1.9
Total for Energy		42	100.0	10.0
	Increase funding/sourcing for alternatives and efficiency	42	100.0	10.0
Total Cost of Living		35	100.0	8.3
	Change/decrease the tax structure/rate	35	100.0	8.3
Total Healthcare		32	100.0	7.6
	Increase healthcare options/availability	22	68.8	5.2
	Make healthcare affordable	5	15.6	1.2
	Increase competition	5	15.6	1.2
Total for all Responses		420	100.0	100.0

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>) 2008 Council on the Future of Vermont Telephone Survey (N=699)

Although most of the top six categories in Table 91 reflect the previously identified goals in Table 90, of interest is the emphasis placed upon governance and citizen involvement. Nearly 30 percent (28.1%) of respondents identified some form of increased civic action as a next step for addressing their most important goal for Vermont in the next generation.

Conclusion

This Council on the Future of Vermont survey gives a glimpse into the hearts and minds of Vermonters. When combined with the public forums, discussions with specific stakeholders and online survey and dialogues, it will allow the Council to describe a broad picture of the values and challenges that Vermonters share as well as document future priorities.

The three most significant values that emerged from the Council on the Future of Vermont survey are 1) independence, 2) community ties and 3) working landscape. Vermont residents are connected at a very intimate level with their environment and the heritage that exists in the state. It is clear from the closed-ended questions, as well as the more flexible open-ended that these three values are found across demographic lines – to repeat, Vermont residents of all types respond that their independence, their communities and the working landscape are of great importance to them.

For three decades, the Center for Rural Studies has conducted the annual Vermonter Poll, a statewide telephone public opinion poll. Through its survey work, the Center has seen how economic, social, political and environmental trends are reflected in the population's goals and values. The fact that respondents to the Council on the Future of Vermont survey placed the most value on the state's working landscape and heritage confirm patterns observed by the Center for Rural Studies research over the years. For example, respondents to the 2006 Vermont Land Trust Conservation Survey ranked having working farms as first in importance from a list of specific indicators. Similarly, in the 2007 Vermonter Poll, almost all respondents (96.2 percent) agreed with the statement "Developing agriculture that is both profitable and environmentally friendly is a priority in Vermont."

Vermonters have long perceived themselves as independent and community minded. These values are reflected in the survey work of the Council for the Future of Vermont and parallel the more focused concerns depicted on the Vermonter polls. These values are reflected in action as well. Consider the following selected statistics: we are a state with almost 80,000 reported small businesses/ economic activities,⁴ more than 6,000 operating farms,⁵ natural resource oriented endeavors include 30,500 woodlot managers⁶ and a significant gardening culture.⁷ In terms of community action we have an adult population where more than half acknowledge active community service.⁸ These data suggest that, in action, Vermonters practice a variety of activities reflecting self-sufficiency and thus, the value of independence.

And yet we are reminded that this independence and self-sufficiency is constrained by the size of our place. Vermont is a very small state with just over 620,000 inhabitants in 2007⁹ and is ranked 49th of 50, a small city by national standards.¹⁰ Vermont is small in physical size as well (a "place" of less than

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau 2005 Statistics of U.S. Businesses and 2005 Nonemployee Statistics. This estimate is obtained by adding the 19,140 establishments employing fewer than 100 to the non-paid employee businesses (59,806) reported by Census for 2005. The non-paid employee category is often enterprise specific, e.g. there may be several businesses per respondent, typically self-employed individual operating very small unincorporated businesses. In 2005, U.S. Census reports that 86% of small business establishments (fewer than 100 employees) employed 26% of Vermont's paid employees (Census Bureau 2005 Statistics of U.S. Business, released in 2006).

⁵ <http://crs.uvm.edu/agriculture/2005aghandbook.pdf>

⁶ personal correspondence, Thom McEvoy, UVM Forest Resources Specialist

⁷ National Gardening Association, 2005

⁸ Center for Rural Studies Vermonter Polls

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates 2007, Washington, D.C. released., June, 2007

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau 2007 County and City Data Book 2007, 14th edition, Washington DC 2007

10,000 rock ribbed, square miles, 45th of 50 states¹¹). Here too, action compensates for size. Our citizenry routinely self-govern and vote in numbers which rank us among the highest performing populations of all the states. Local community participation is the venue of preference for both action and local allegiance. The 246 towns and cities each self-govern, mirroring national processes with judicial (Board of Civil Authority), legislative (town meeting) and administrative (selectboard and mayor or town managers) branches, complimented, in most places, by planning commissions and natural resource committees. The primacy of place – an allegiance to town of residence – is reflected in the value placed on community by Council on the Future study participants.

This Council on the Future of Vermont survey shows that Vermonters place a great deal of value on the working landscape, independence and community. However, these respondents are clearly aware of a number of forces that lie beyond local control. The results from this survey seem to reflect looming external factors include climate change and the price and availability of critical resources. Affordability and economy together made up nearly 60 percent of the responses to the open-ended questions in the telephone poll. It also seems that the very values that respondents hold may be the source of the challenges they see in the future.

These challenges (affordability and economy) have been identified by respondents in Vermonter Poll results over the past decade. Each year, one of the questions on the Vermonter Poll is “What do you feel is the most important problem facing Vermont in the coming decade?” Table 19 also shows that in 2008, the economy, healthcare, employment, taxes and affordability were the top five issues.

Table 19

Top five most important problems facing Vermont in the coming decade, 2004-2008

Rank	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1	Jobs	Health care	Health care	Health care	Economy
2	Health care	Jobs	Jobs	Jobs	Health care
3	Environment	Development/ sprawl	Government/ politics	General taxes	Jobs
4	Economy/ economic development	Taxes	Economy/ economic development	Property taxes	Taxes
5	Development/ sprawl	Economy/ economic development	Development/ sprawl	Education	Affordability

Source: Center for Rural Studies (<http://crs.uvm.edu>)

The concern for affordability and the economy reflected by two thirds of the Council on the Future of Vermont poll respondents reflects a trend identified by demographers and economists who point to the most dramatic demographic change afoot in Vermont as those changes in the so-called “dependent population” – those too young and too old to be considered a part of the active labor force. Current trends will lead us, by 2030, to a situation with a quarter of our population over age of 65,¹² challenging health care, transportation, housing and, critically, capacity to contribute to the tax base. Close behind Vermont's graying population is a “shadow” trend, namely a marked decline of young people in both the

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau 2007 County and City Data Book 2007, 14th edition, Washington DC 2007

¹² U.S. Census, Interim State Population Projections by Selected Age Groups: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2030.

proportion of our population and in absolute numbers. It would appear that this message has resonated with participants in the Council on the Future of Vermont and is reflected in concerns for affordability, as well as employment opportunities.

Demographic trends have significant ramifications for all services, especially health care, issues of infrastructure such as transportation and housing, and audiences for both formal and informal education. Although the younger age cohort (those under 18) will grow over time in absolute numbers by 2030, there will be 15,000 fewer under 18 in 2030 than in 2000; a loss of just over 10 percent. These trends portend significant changes in the coming decade. By 2030, for example the median age of Vermonters (44) is expected to exceed the national median age by some 5 years.¹³ Consensus regarding the full implications of these demographic changes has not been found yet across the state. Debate has focused, for example, on the implications for housing, health costs, transportation and the quality, availability and quantity of work for youth as well as elders.¹⁴ While respondents to the Council for the Future of Vermont survey were not overly concerned with population growth and dynamics, they identified youth activities, job opportunities and retention of youth as a great concern for the future.

In terms of those economic issues best measured by income or wages, a persistent concern for Vermonters has been income levels. Household income level in Vermont has traditionally trailed U.S. and regional averages. This gap has steadily closed over the decades, moving Vermont from one of the very poorest rural states toward the middle.¹⁵ To a degree, a legacy of isolation and frugality (“the use it up, wear it out” mentality) underpins our celebration of independence and self-sufficiency. Barring major national economic collapse, incomes are anticipated to continue a slow but steady increase here.¹⁶ Of great concern, however, are the large number of households with incomes under \$35,000 and especially those headed by elders¹⁷. Declining household size is expected to level off at approximately 2.3 inhabitants, small compared to other states and with implications for both housing and transportation.¹⁸

In addition to demographic shifts and the slow growth of household income, yet another force in Vermont may help us to understand respondents' marked concern for affordability and its counterpart, economic opportunity. As the state has grown, so too has the population spread evenly throughout our cherished 246 towns and cities. The communities of the Lake Champlain basin have witnessed the most dramatic growth, but this has been followed in the Connecticut River Valley, central Vermont and Rutland County. In similar fashion, southern Vermont, anchored east by Brattleboro and west by Bennington, has grown slowly but surely. Between 1960 and 2000 it was rare to have more than a dozen (5%) of our 246 towns experience actual decline¹⁹. The urban areas have been stable (occasional small declines), with growth most dramatic in the towns adjacent to urban population hubs.²⁰ However, as Vermont's population continues to disperse geographically, commuting has increased between both towns and counties and Vermonters are spending more time driving to and from work. More than 3 in 4

¹³ 2007 VTrans, Long Term Business Plan, Working Paper 4.

¹⁴ See for example, Vermont Housing Finance Agency, “Housing and the Needs of Vermont’s Aging Population, Summer, 2007; Wolf, Art and Richard Heaps, Northern Economic Consulting, <http://www.vteconomy.com/index.html>”; “Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Housing and Wages in Vermont; 2007, VTrans, Long Term Business Plan, Working Paper 4; or The Vermont Economy Newsletter, “Is Vermont’s Labor Force Already Shrinking?” Oct. 2007, Vol. 17, No. 10. among many other sources.

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, County and City Data Book, selected editions, Washington DC.

¹⁶ New England Economic Partnership, November 2006: Vermont Economic Outlook.

¹⁷ Vermont Housing Finance Agency, “Housing and the Needs of Vermont’s Aging Population”, Summer, 2007

¹⁸ 2007 Vtrans, Long Term Business Plan, Working Paper 4

¹⁹ U.S. Census of the Population, 2000. (compiled by the CRS, 2007).

²⁰ Ibid.

Vermont towns have a net export of day workers in recent decades, a pattern likely to fall in the face of rising fuel prices.²¹

Polling results reflecting Vermonters' concerns for affordability and economic opportunity may be in direct response to the current fuel situation and to the trend of residents moving into that cherished landscape which Vermonters value for its own sake. The expression of concern from an active citizenry around the cost of services, of transportation or of energy reflect the strong ties to communities of residence, a pride in living here and a valued working landscape in a time when outside forces are putting pressure on their preferred way of life.

The summary and complete results of this survey, as well as the notes from public forums, are available online at the Council on the Future of Vermont's website: www.futureofvermont.org.

²¹ 2007 VTrans, Long Term Business Plan, Working Paper 4

Appendix 1: Full Telephone Survey

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling from the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont on behalf of the Council on the Future of Vermont. The council is hosting conversations across the state to ask Vermonters about challenges and opportunities for the coming generation and the values Vermonters share.

Your household was randomly selected for our research study. The survey will take 10-12 minutes and your participation is completely voluntary. Do you have time to answer some questions?

[IF NO] Is there a better time to call you back? [RECORD DATE/TIME]
[IF NO TO CALLBACK] Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

[IF YES] Are you a Vermont resident 18 YEARS OLD or OLDER?

[IF NO] Is there a person home who is 18 years old and a Vermont resident?

Q: q1 *****

Thank you for agreeing to participate! All of your answers will remain strictly confidential.

First, have you attended a Conversation on the Future of Vermont forum?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know [DO NOT READ]
4. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q2 *****

The next questions mention some of the values that Vermonters have identified at the forums and ask you to state your level of agreement with these values.

Please state your level of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with the following statements:

I value Vermont's spirit of independence.

[READ FOR CLARIFICATION, IF NEEDED: For example, Vermont's history of political and cultural events and decisions.]

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
7. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q3 *****

I am proud of being from or living in Vermont.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
7. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q4 *****

I trust my neighbors.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral

- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q5 *****

I value the privacy that I get in Vermont.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q6 *****

I am tolerant of diverse lifestyles in Vermont.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q7 *****

I believe there is a strong sense of community where I live.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q8 *****

I believe that that Vermont's creative communities are valuable to the state.

[READ FOR CLARIFICATION, IF NEEDED: For example, artists, writers, musicians, artisans, craftspeople, etc.]

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q9 *****

I value the working landscape and its heritage.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q10 *****

I value the participatory government in Vermont.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q11 *****

I value the accessibility of government in Vermont.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q12 *****

I value the small size and scale of the state.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q13 *****

I believe that private property rights are well respected in Vermont.

- 1.Strongly Agree
- 2.Agree
- 3.Neutral
- 4.Disagree
- 5.Strongly Disagree
- 6.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 7.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q14 *****

During our conversations around the state, Vermonters have identified many challenges that they believe the state will face in the next generation. The following questions mention some of these potential challenges and ask you to state your level of concern about them.

Please state your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about the following challenges for Vermont:

A shortage of affordable housing?

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q15 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

A shortage of appropriate housing.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q16 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The accessibility of health care.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q17 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The quality of health care.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q18 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The rate of business development in Vermont.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q19 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The development of an adequate workforce for the future.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned

- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q20 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The increasing costs of living, such as transportation, heating and electricity.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q21 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The quality of education.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q22 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The way Vermont finances public education.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q23 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

Pressure to convert open lands to residential, commercial, or other development.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q24 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The changes in the earth's climate and their potential impacts on the Vermont landscape and seasons.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q25 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The increasing price of land in Vermont.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q26 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The potential for an increased rate of population growth in Vermont.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q27 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

An increase in the average age of the Vermont population.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q28 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The limited availability of high speed internet connections and wireless telecommunications in Vermont.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q29 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

An increasing gap between high-income and low-income populations.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q30 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The health and viability of Vermont farms and the agricultural sector.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q31 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local communities.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q32 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The level of engagement of Vermonters in their local governments.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q33 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The tax rate in Vermont.

- 1. Very concerned
- 2. Moderately concerned
- 3. Slightly concerned
- 4. Not at all concerned
- 5. Don't know [DO NOT READ]

6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q34 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The state's existing public infrastructure and its future maintenance.

[READ FOR CLARIFICATION, IF NEEDED: For example, sewer, water, bridges, roads, transportation, etc.]

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q35 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

Public safety in Vermont.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q36 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The future of Vermont's renewable and alternative energy infrastructure.

[READ FOR CLARIFICATION, IF NEEDED: For example, water, wind, biomass]

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q37 *****

[READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR PROMPT]

State your level of concern, from very concerned to not at all concerned, about:

The maintenance of healthy downtowns and village centers in Vermont.

- 1.Very concerned
- 2.Moderately concerned
- 3.Slightly concerned
- 4.Not at all concerned
- 5.Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 6.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: q38 *****

What do you see as the most important goal for Vermont in the next generation?

Q: q39 *****

What would be the first step in achieving that goal?

Q: demo *****

Finally, I have just a few demographic questions to ask you.
All of your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Q: d1 *****

In what year were you born?

Q: d2 *****

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
[LISTEN TO THE ANSWER AND CHOOSE THE MOST APPROPRIATE OPTION BELOW]

- 1.<9th grade
- 2.9-12 grade (no diploma)
- 3.High School graduate (incl. GED)
- 4.Some college (no degree)
- 5.Associates/technical
- 6.Bachelor
- 7.Post graduate/professional
- 8.Don't Know [DO NOT READ]
- 9.Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q: d3 *****

How many members are there in your household?

Q: d4 *****

How many people in your household are under the age of 18?

Q: d5 *****

How many total years have you lived in Vermont,
including any earlier periods?

Q: d6 *****

In what city or town do you live?

Q: d7 *****

And finally, for our records, please state your gender?

- 1.Male
- 2.Female
- 3.Other
- 4.Refused

Q: q118 *****

That was my final question. Thank you for your time.
If you're interested in learning more about the Council on the Future of Vermont, you can visit the website at
www.futureofvermont.org