

1. Pitch Submitted By (Your Name or Organization):

Ben Jervey, Clean Transportation Team leader, Institute for Energy and the Environment at Vermont Law School

2. Contact Email Address:

bjervev@vermontlaw.edu

3. Contact Phone Number:

802-282-3071

4. Pitch Title: (one line)

Preparing Vermont's cities and towns for the transition to electric vehicles.

5. Pitch Summary: (one paragraph)

The electrification of personal vehicles is underway. Municipalities must take action now to both accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) by their citizens and to prepare for the inevitable market shift and make the transition as easy as possible for all Vermonters. There are a number of policies and incentives that cities and towns can implement to prepare for and catalyze EV adoption, however very few municipalities are integrating these policies into laws, rules, and town plans. Vermont cities and towns need clear guidance—through a policy roadmap or guide, and through coordination with regional planning commissions and local community organizations—to integrate EV-ready policies at the municipal scale.

6. What energy sector(s) does this Pitch apply to? (Check all that apply):

- Energy Efficiency
- X-Electricity
- X-Transportation
- Thermal Heating &/or Cooling
- All (Total Energy)
- None: Non-energy related carbon reduction proposal

7. Which criteria category(ies) does it address? (Check all that apply):

- Economic Activity
- X-Affordability (EV ownership of currently available economy class models is cheaper over life cycle of vehicle)
- Vulnerable Vermonters
- X-Other (Provides solutions for all Vermonters to reduce their carbon impact and save money.)

- 8. Scale of impact on Vermont’s energy and climate goals:** If this proposal came to fruition, how might it move the needle in helping to meet Vermont’s energy and climate goals by 2025 and/or 2050? Please outline assumptions and, if available, provide calculations.

Transportation is responsible for nearly half of Vermont’s greenhouse gas emissions, the vast majority of which come from personal vehicles. Meanwhile, the Comprehensive Energy Plan sets a goal of 10% of Vermont’s vehicle fleet to be powered by electricity by 2025. While the shifting market alone will help get Vermont a long way towards that goal, smart municipal policies can both help accelerate the transition and, critically, ensure that residential and commercial properties are prepared for the charging infrastructure necessary to handle such widespread electrification.

- 9. Benefits/costs of this proposal for Vermont and Vermonters:** Including, where possible, economic, financial, social, and environmental.

The benefits of municipalities planning for the EV transition are considerable. If cities and towns aren’t prepared for their citizens to who will soon need to “plug in” their vehicles overnight, it could severely hamper the rate of EV adoption in residential areas where residents don’t have access to garages or driveways with electric outlets. According to a recent nationwide study, more than 80% of EV charging is done at home. If residences—and particularly residences that aren’t single family homes—are not prepared for this behavior, fewer Vermonters will be willing to replace a gas-powered vehicle with an EV.

There are no immediate financial costs for municipalities to consider and implement these policies. Some may generate marginal costs for property owners, landlords, or developers, such as a zoning provision that mandates a certain number of parking spots must be EV-ready in public lots, or building code that requires multi-family residential buildings are wired to be ready for EV chargers when residents want to install them. However, these costs are small compared to the costs of retroactively installing charging infrastructure—running conduit and cable—after a building has already been built or renovated.

- 10. Decision-makers necessary for this proposal to be adopted or move forward (e.g., Legislature, Governor, a regulatory agency, a business, organization, media outlet, or financing institution, etc.)**

The Clean Transportation Team at the Institute for Energy and the Environment at Vermont Law School is currently working on a policy roadmap to help cities and towns become EV-ready. The report will include descriptions of various policies and incentives available, case studies and best practices from around the country, the first comprehensive catalog of municipal-level EV policies nationwide, and model codes and ordinances.

To help coordinate city and town efforts, we would ideally engage the eleven Regional Planning Commissions, as well as community organizations that work on sustainability and planning.

11. Strategy and key considerations: Outline the overall strategy, including gaps, barriers and opportunities for moving this proposal forward.

This plan is carried out in two parts. First, the Clean Transportation Team at the Institute for Energy and the Environment will complete the comprehensive municipal EV policy roadmap. The lessons and models included therein can be used by Vermont cities and towns to adopt and implement the policies and incentives that make the most sense in their communities. The second part of the strategy involves engaging the Regional Planning Commissions and other regional community organizations to help coordinate with individual municipalities. Regional Planning Commissions have established relationships with town and city planners, and many community organizations (such as Vital Communities in the Upper Valley and ACORN in Addison County) already work closely with town energy committees. They established relationships can help get the critical resources into the hands of municipal policymakers.

12. Timeline: To meet our 2025 goals, we need some proposals that can be implemented in the next couple of years as well as some “game changers” that will bend the curve even further out. What timeline do you foresee for your proposal to be developed and implemented?

This plan is low cost, low commitment, and ready to implement. By the end of 2017, the municipal EV policy roadmap will be complete, and the Clean Transportation Team at the IEE will be ready to work with Regional Planning Commissions, community organizations, and cities and towns to educate and begin implementing EV-friendly policy.