

WHAT TO KNOW?

- **Five current programs.** First launched in 1999. Downtown, village center, new town center, neighborhood development area, growth center.
- **Strong participation:** 280+ designations in 67% of Vermont communities.
- **Goals** include revitalization, housing, historic preservation, infrastructure in centers.
- **Benefits** include tax credits, Act 250 and permit relief, grant priority, technical assistance.

WHY REFORM?

- **Vermont needs smart growth.** Investment in compact centers boosts resilience, economy, livability, conservation, equity.
- **Urgent issues need action.** Vermonters need housing, climate and flood resilience, livability *action now*.
- **Designations have potential but are currently falling short.** Hundreds of stakeholders say programs are valued, but hard to access and use. Places need more impactful benefits.

Vermont Designation Reform Key Points

1. Vermont needs vibrant communities.
2. Vibrant communities need support.
3. Designation Programs can deliver – with reform.

H.683 aims to make the programs simpler more accessible and impactful.

WHAT'S RECOMMENDED?

- **Simpler programs, coordinated administration.** Shift from five programs to one. Reduced requirements. Alignment with local/regional planning.
- **More benefits and capacity, strategic investments.** Growth in funding, regulatory relief, technical assistance; strategic action in housing, resilience.
- **Accessibility, information, evaluation.** Accessible and proactive outreach, 1-1 support, impact monitoring, sharing.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- **Legislative review in 2024.** H.683 outlines the modernized designation program framework
- **Refinement and transition.** DHCD is working with stakeholders to refine the bill and ensure the transition plan preserves existing designations and benefits.
- **Bill Coordination.** DHCD is also working to align the H.683 with Act 250 reform and regional land use maps. Policy integration will grow the benefits, equity, reach of the proposed changes.