



Revitalizing the Rural Economy in Windsor County: Housing and Conservation Investments

Since 1988, VHCB has made strategic investments to revitalize Windsor County towns, conserving farmland, recreational land, forest land, natural areas and historic properties and providing affordable housing. With \$17.8 million in state funding, VHCB has leveraged \$77.2 million to develop 1,372 affordable homes in Windsor County including rental housing for families and seniors, mobile home parks, housing with support services, and homeownership. Housing Vermont and the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust have used VHCB funding to invest in housing in Springfield, White River Junction, Hartford, Rochester, and Windsor. VHCB, the Upper Valley Land Trust and the Vermont Land Trust have conserved 32 farms in Windsor County ranging from dairy farms to working sugarbushes, diversified livestock farms, and vegetable operations. In partnership with the State of Vermont, The Nature Conservancy, and local communities, VHCB funding has helped to protect 32 natural area projects. VHCB's Farm & Forest Viability Program has provided business planning services to 29 Windsor County ag and forestry related enterprises with \$4.3 million in annual sales.

Creating and Preserving Affordable Housing

- Safford Commons addressed the severe shortage of affordable housing in Woodstock with 28 new homes in 10 buildings. After 9 years in permitting appeals, the housing was completed and leased up within 10 days.
- The historic Ellis Block in the heart of the downtown Springfield, damaged by fire in 2008, was rehabilitated into 9 affordable units and ground floor commercial space occupied by the Springfield Cinema.
- Ten mobile home parks in six different communities with 260 lots have been protected and improved, upgrading essential park infrastructure to protect the housing equity of residents, many of whom have very low incomes.
- A public-private partnership with VERMOD® High Performance Homes in Wilder provides jobs building net-zero modular homes that are being placed in mobile home parks and on private lots across Vermont.



Conserving Land, Supporting Agriculture

- In partnership with the Trust for Public Land and the Town of West Windsor, VHCB supported the acquisition of the former Ascutney Ski Area for addition to the West Windsor Town Forest with miles of hiking, Nordic skiing and mountain bike trails.
- VHCB and the Upper Valley Land Trust have worked together to conserve 21 farms in Windsor County including the Richardson dairy and sugarbush in Hartland, which helped facilitate a family transfer.
- Working with the Upper Valley Land Trust, Nancy LaRowe, owner of Hogwash Farm, a livestock business operated on rented land, was able to purchase conserved farmland in Norwich.
- Six farms in Windsor County, including Four Springs, Cloudland and Luna Bleu Farms, have received grants for infrastructure improvements from the Viability Program, totaling \$27,200, and leveraging \$129,650 in further investment on the part of recipient businesses, nearly a 5:1 ratio.
- VHCB supported the restoration of the American Precision Museum, located in the historic, 1846 Robbins and Lawrence factory, which is said to be the first U.S. factory at which interchangeable parts were made, giving birth to the precision machine tool industry.

