



## **Vermont Housing and Conservation Coalition**

### **VERMONT'S PARTNER IN ENSURING AFFORDABILITY, ACCESS, AND RESILIENCE**

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and its partners (VHCC members) work on the frontline of Vermont's most challenging issues. The workforce shortage, affordability crisis, and the results of climate change threaten our economy, our communities, and our ecosystems. In the last three years, VHCB has invested in 1,900 affordable homes for Vermonters, one-third of which have been dedicated to previously unhoused people. Since 2020, VHCB funds have protected over 10,000 acres of farmland and almost 9,000 acres of natural areas, strengthening our economy while building climate change resilience.

These investments are essential to protecting what we value most about Vermont. The rapid rise in the real estate market continues to threaten our cost of living, our ability to attract and retain workers, and the irreversible loss of our working lands and natural areas. Today there is a strong pipeline of community-driven projects in conservation and housing ready to go.

### **FUND VHCB AT ITS FULL STATUTORY SHARE OF ROUGHLY \$26M IN FY25**

The Property Transfer Tax is holding steady due to the volume of high-end real estate transactions. This justifies the full statutory funding for VHCB—as an effective use of tax revenue to combat our affordability crisis.

### **VHCB ADDRESSES IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM NEEDS**

- New housing with embedded services reduces homelessness and stabilizes families in need, reducing budget pressures on State appropriations.
- Housing, open spaces, and natural areas attract and retain employers and their employees.
- Access to land and housing is an equity and racial justice issue that must be addressed.
- Land conservation protects against the loss of farmland, ensures permanent affordability, and strengthens our agricultural sector.
- Access to trails, shorelines, and the outdoors improves our health and supports our economy and way of life.
- Farmers produce world-class food that helps to meet local needs and attract revenue from across the nation.
- Both housing and conservation investments through VHCB's partners can mitigate climate change and use new technologies.
- Conserved land helps to sustain our \$1.5B forest products industry, which supports more than 10,000 jobs statewide.
- Investments in historic village centers keep our downtowns thriving and our grand lists growing.

### **WHAT VHCB CAN DO:**

There is a strong pipeline of community-driven projects in conservation and housing ready to go.

**In affordable housing, we can:**

- Create more housing with embedded services for people of all ages who struggle to cover basic expenses, including the most vulnerable,
- Reduce motel usage and other costs of homelessness, and slow the growth in state health care spending,
- House workers and support the businesses that employ them,
- Reduce energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions by locating housing near services and jobs, and constructing high efficiency buildings,
- Preserve existing assisted housing at risk of losing its affordability or in need of comprehensive rehabilitation,
- Boost local economies, create jobs, strengthen neighborhoods, and revitalize community centers,
- Leverage available federal funds.

**In conservation, we can:**

- Boost climate resilience by protecting connected forestland, floodplains, and wetlands,
- Protect farms and keep them affordable for the next generation,
- Preserve biodiversity and wildlife habitat, and improve water and air quality
- Support outdoor recreation and wellbeing by providing access to trails, shorelines, and open spaces,
- Expand access to the outdoors and ownership of land,
- Protect community and Indigenous gathering places and cultural sites,
- Leverage available federal matching funds.

**ABOUT VHCC**

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Coalition (VHCC) is a coalition of more than 50 businesses and nonprofit organizations that represent a wide spectrum of interests, from statewide developers of affordable housing to community-based land trusts. The Coalition advocates for strong state investments through VHCB in affordable housing and conservation that are critical for Vermont, for both today and tomorrow.

*For more information, contact the VHCC co-chairs:*

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