



# House Committee on General and Housing

January 12, 2023



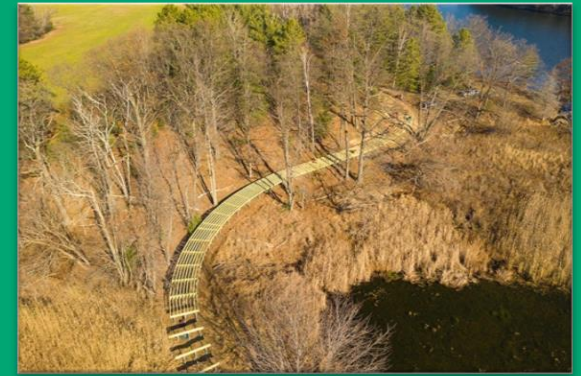
# Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Statutory Purpose



“the dual goals of creating affordable housing for Vermonters, and conserving and protecting Vermont’s agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important natural areas, and recreational lands of primary importance to the economic vitality and quality of life of the State.”

10 V.S.A.15 §302

# Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Multiple Goals



VHCB's multiple goal mission illustrated in Newport, where VHCB acts as the Clean Water Service provider for the Lake Memphremagog Basin; where its investments through the Vermont Land Trust have helped to preserve the Scott Farm; and where housing investments through Rural Edge are helping to rehabilitate homes in Newport Center and create homes at the Sacred Heart school and convent.

# 10 V.S.A. Chapter 15 § 322

## § 322. Allocation system

(a) .... The Board shall consider, but not be limited to, the following factors:

- (1) the need to maintain balance between the dual goals in allocating resources;
- (2) the need for a timely response to unpredictable circumstances or special opportunities to serve the purposes of this chapter;
- (3) the level of funding or other participation by private or public sources in the activity being considered for funding by the Board;
- (4) what resources will be required in the future to sustain the project;
- (5) the need to pursue the goals of this chapter without displacing lower income Vermonters;
- (6) the long-term effect of a proposed activity and, with respect to affordable housing, the likelihood that the activity will prevent the loss of subsidized housing units and will be of perpetual duration;
- (7) geographic distribution of funds.

(b) The Board's allocation system shall include a method, defined by rule, that evaluates the need for, impact, and quality of activities proposed by applicants.

## 10 V.S.A. Chapter 15 § 303. Definitions

(3) “Eligible activity” means any activity which will carry out either or both of the dual purposes of creating affordable housing and conserving and protecting important Vermont lands, including activities which will encourage or assist:

(A) the preservation, rehabilitation, or development of residential dwelling units that are affordable to:

(i) lower income Vermonters; or

(ii) for owner-occupied housing, Vermonters whose income is less than or equal to 120 percent of the median income based on statistics from State or federal sources;

(B) the retention of agricultural land for agricultural use, and of forestland for forestry use;

(C) the protection of important wildlife habitat and important natural areas;

(D) the preservation of historic properties or resources;

(E) the protection of areas suited for outdoor public recreational activity;

(F) the protection of lands for multiple conservation purposes, including the protection of surface waters and associated natural resources;

(G) the development of capacity on the part of an eligible applicant to engage in an eligible activity.



## Central & Main, Windsor

### Housing for Vermonters

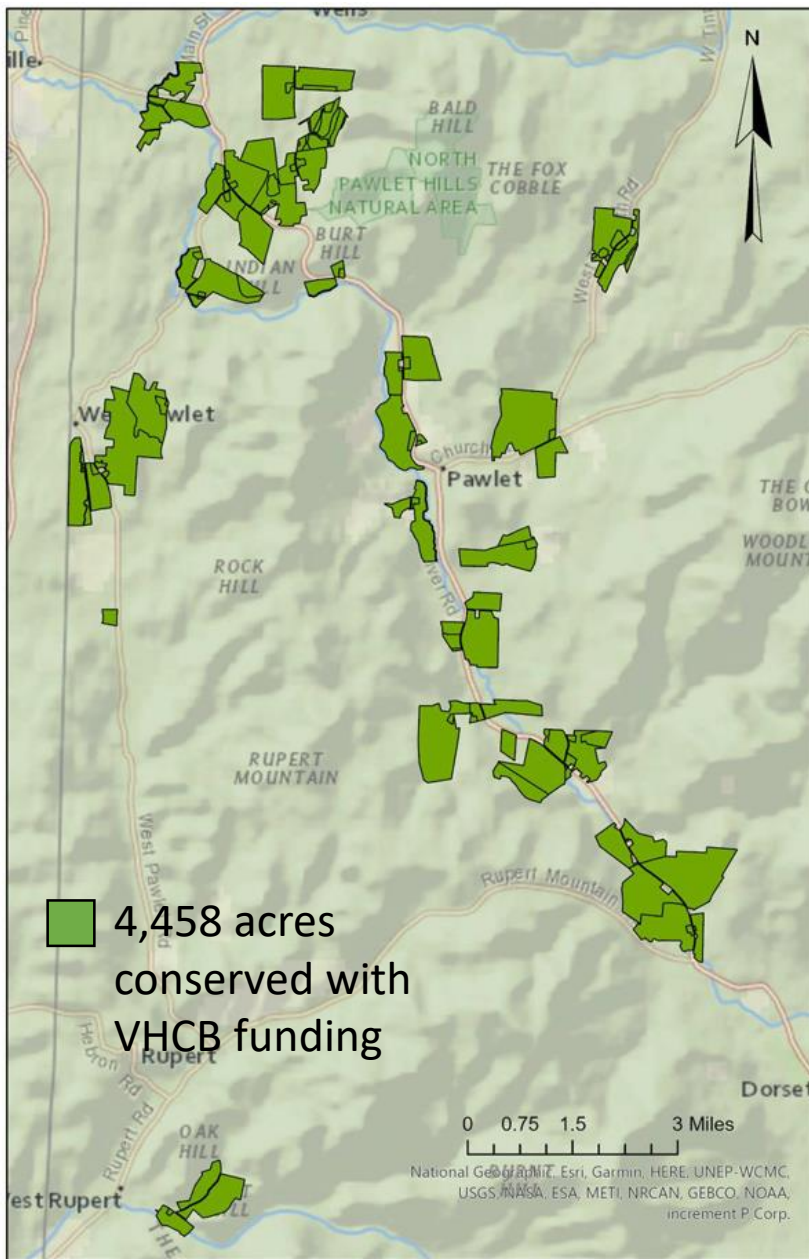
- Rental Housing Development, Rehabilitation & Preservation
- Home Ownership
- Home Accessibility Improvements
- Community Planning & Technical Assistance
- Farm Worker Housing
- Manufactured Home Communities
- Housing for persons experiencing homelessness



Little Avriil Pond

## Conserving Vermont's farms, forests and lands

- Recreational Lands, Forests, and Natural Areas Conservation
- Historic Preservation
- Water Quality
- Land Access & Opportunity Board
- VHCB AmeriCorps



**Conserved Farmland in the Mettowee Valley: Pawlet, Rupert and Dorset**



## VHCB Agricultural Programs

- Farmland Conservation
- Support for VLT Farmland Access Program, helping farmers find land
- VHCB's Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program



# Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

- 20 years of in-depth advising
- 900+ farm, food & forest products businesses served
- 1/3 clients engage in transition planning
- Businesses report skills improvement in:
  - Financial analysis
  - Accessing resources/ specialists
  - Planning investments
  - Strategic planning
  - Marketing & sales

*Tim & Janet Taylor, founders of Crossroads Farm in Post Mills, with advisor Mike Ghia*



# Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)

- Assists small towns, businesses, and organizations with accessing critical funding for economic development projects
- Focused on working lands, outdoor recreation, and community-based economic development
- *Since 2017, \$525,000 in REDI funds has helped secure more than \$10M in grants for businesses & communities*



*Vermont Community Development Program Grant for Arlington Common Wellness Center (\$250,000)*



*NBRC Grant for Sanborn Covered Bridge Rehabilitation & Riverfront Park, Lyndonville (\$350,000)*



## **VHCB Results: FY 2022 and FY 2023**

**State Investment: \$56.6M**  
**Leverage: \$352.7M**

- 1,218 homes and apartments
- 24 farms; 4,176 acres conserved
- 20 natural areas; forests; parks and trails: 4,500 acres conserved
- 4 historic preservation projects
- 154 farm and forest enterprises were provided business planning and technical assistance.

### **VHCB Program Impacts**

- Downtown/Village Revitalization
- Outdoor Recreation
- Housing the Homeless
- Rural Community Development
- Homes for Workers
- Farm and Forest next generation transfers
- Water Quality
- Historic Gathering Places



## 35 Years of Housing & Conservation

- 275,699 acres of working forests, natural areas and recreational lands
- 15,000 affordable homes – rental and homeownership
- 170,918 acres on 789 farms
- 81 historic buildings have been restored for community use
- 900 businesses have enrolled in our Farm & Forest Viability Program
- Over 600 AmeriCorps members have served through VHCB  
AmeriCorps
- 2,828 homes with reduced lead paint hazards

# Vermont Delivers Affordable Housing through a Non-profit Network

## Regional

Addison County Community Trust

Champlain Housing Trust

Downstreet Housing &

Community Development

Housing Trust of Rutland County

Lamoille Housing Partnership

Rural Edge

Shires Housing

Twin Pines Housing

Windham & Windsor Housing Trust

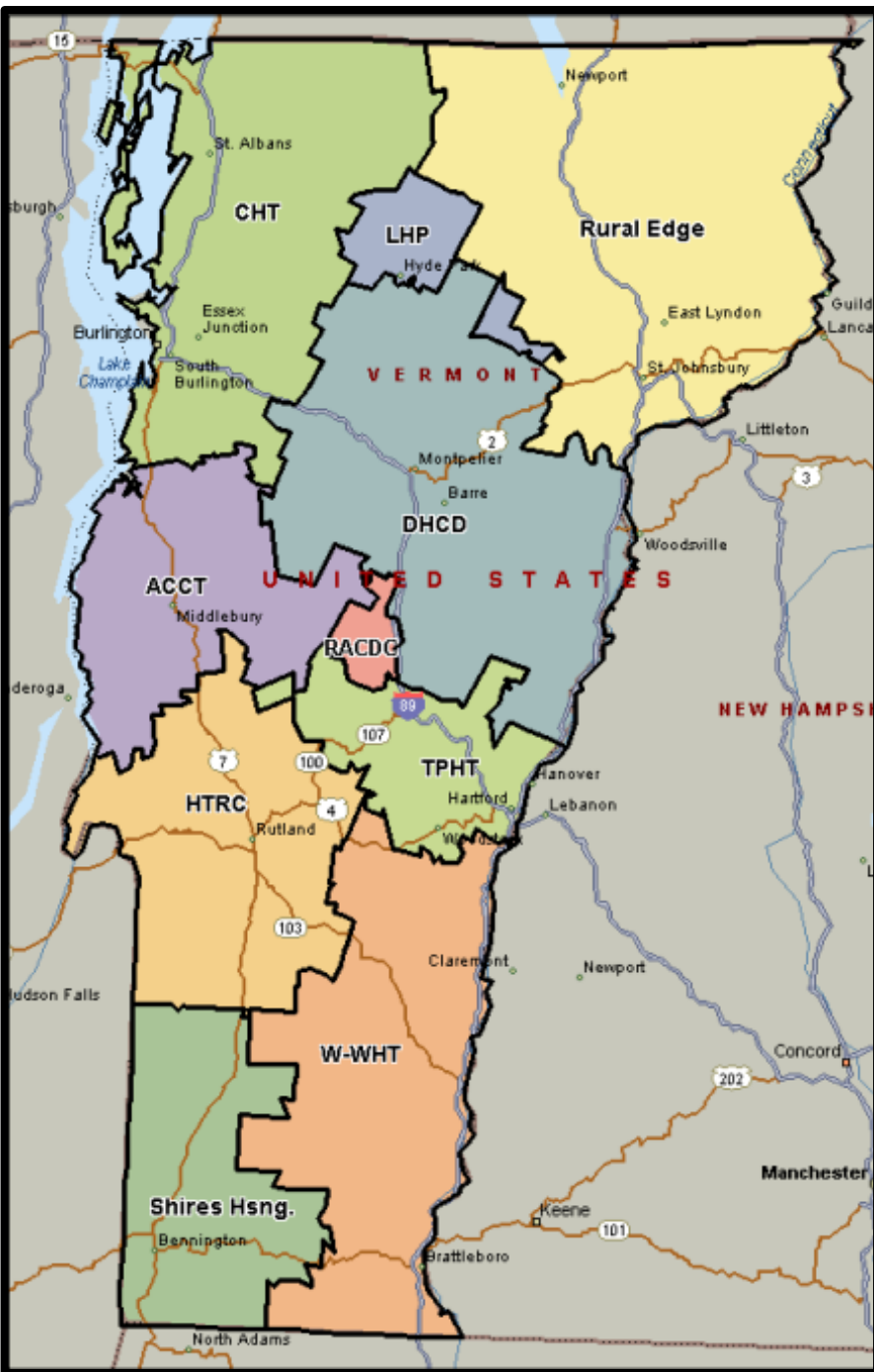
## Statewide

Cathedral Square Corporation

Evernorth

Housing Foundation, Inc.

Cooperative Development Institute



# Core Values: Permanent Affordability



Northgate Apartments in Burlington, 336 homes 100% owned and controlled by the Northgate Residents Ownership Corporation.

## Bove Brothers Plan to Evict Low-Income Refugee Families in Winooski – and Raise Rents

By **DEREK BROUWER** and **LIAM ELDER-CONNORS (VPR)**



Published February 16, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. | Updated March 7, 2022 at 6:34 p.m.



300 North Main apartments

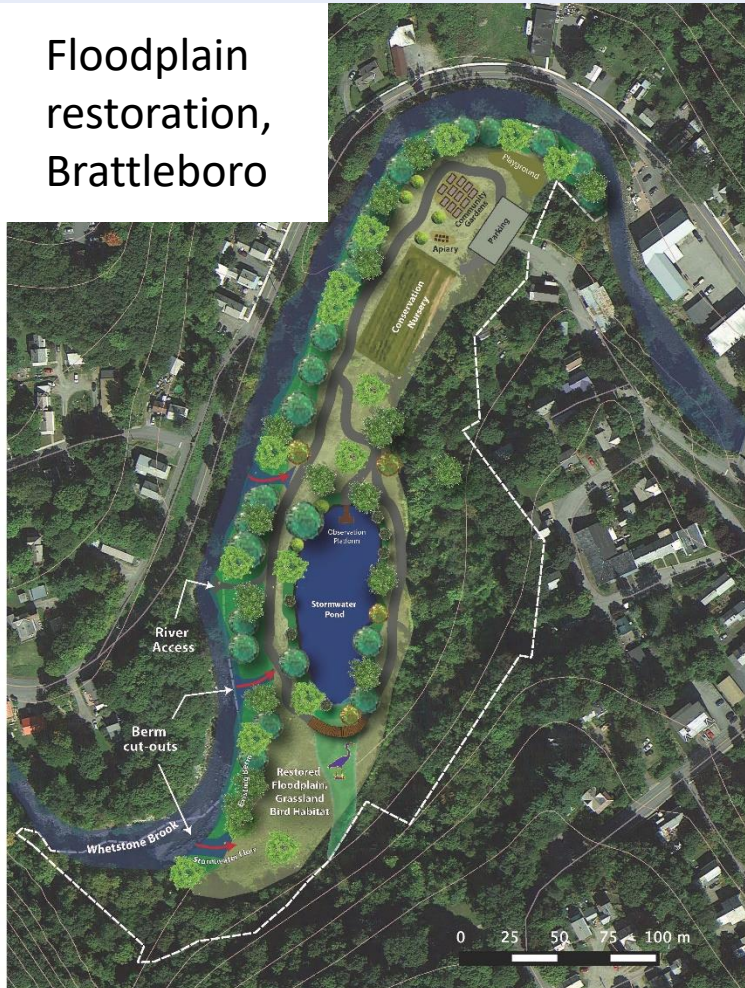
DEREK BROUWER © SEVEN DAYS

After substantial advocacy work, the landlords agreed not to evict the residents.

# Core Values: Energy & Climate

## Whetstone Brook

Floodplain restoration,  
Brattleboro



Red Clover  
Commons 2



Melrose Terrace

# McKnight Lane Net Zero Modular Homes, Waltham



The Addison County Community Trust and Cathedral Square replaced abandoned mobile homes with 14 energy efficient modular homes rented to low- and moderate-income households.



# Core Values: Service-Supported Housing

## Service Supported Housing



At 3 Cathedral Square, older Vermonters enjoy meals and activities together. Health care is coordinated through the SASH program.



The Rutland Housing Authority converted a former commercial building to create 9 apartments with support services.

# Smart Growth and Revitalizing Downtowns



Rutland



Springfield



Brattleboro

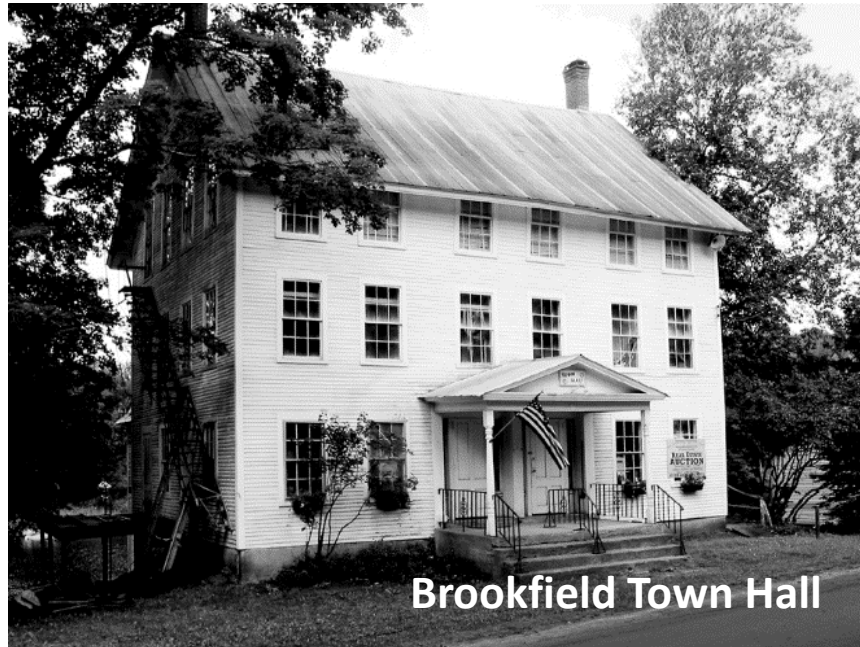


St. Albans



South Burlington

# Rural Community Gathering Places



# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice



FREE PUBLIC SPEAKER SERIES

## Increasing Racial Justice in Vermont Housing

Scan For  
Information



**Shanti Abedin**

Vice President  
Housing and Community Development  
National Fair Housing Alliance



**Tony Pickett**

CEO  
Grounded Solutions Network



**Dr. Ted Rutland**

Associate Professor  
Geography, Planning and Environment  
University of Concordia



**Dr. Valesca Lima**

Assistant Professor  
Political Science  
Dublin City University

### Exclusive Speakers

To find innovative solutions, this statewide initiative brings together speakers who are housing professionals, researchers and individuals with lived experience from Vermont and around the world. The series will explore: how racial injustice has played a role in housing policies historically; how current systems continue to reinforce discriminatory practices; the real effects these have on people's daily lives; and what new approaches could increase justice.

### Save the Dates

Thursday, 03 November 2022  
Thursday, 01 December 2022  
Thursday, 12 January 2023  
Thursday, 02 February 2023

4:30pm –  
6:00pm EST



- Convening and financially supporting the Housing Jam to examine and address racial inequities through Vermont's housing network.
- Participating and financially supporting Vermont Conservation Leaders in Solidarity
- Providing administrative support to the Land Access and Opportunity Board

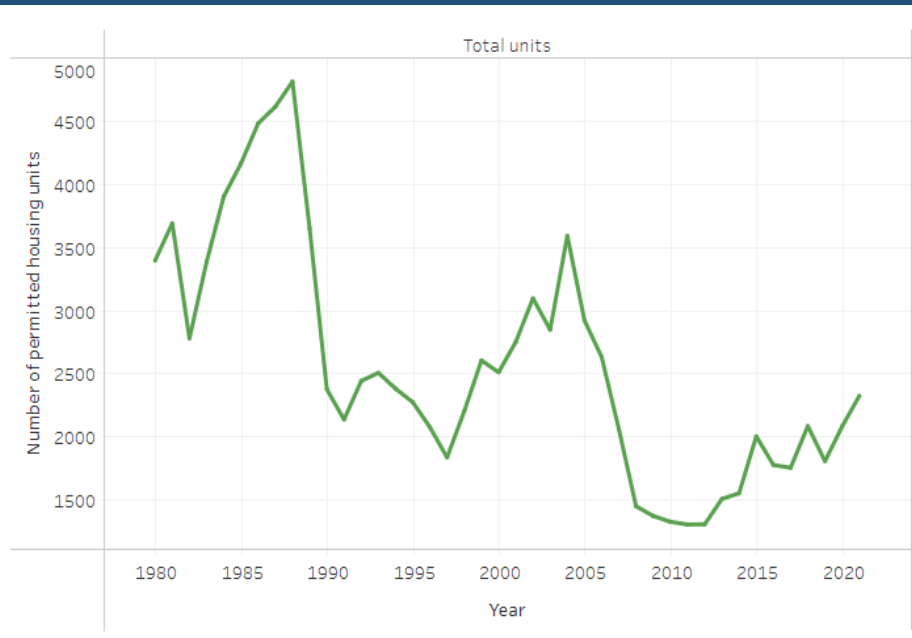
# Nationwide decline in the affordability of housing



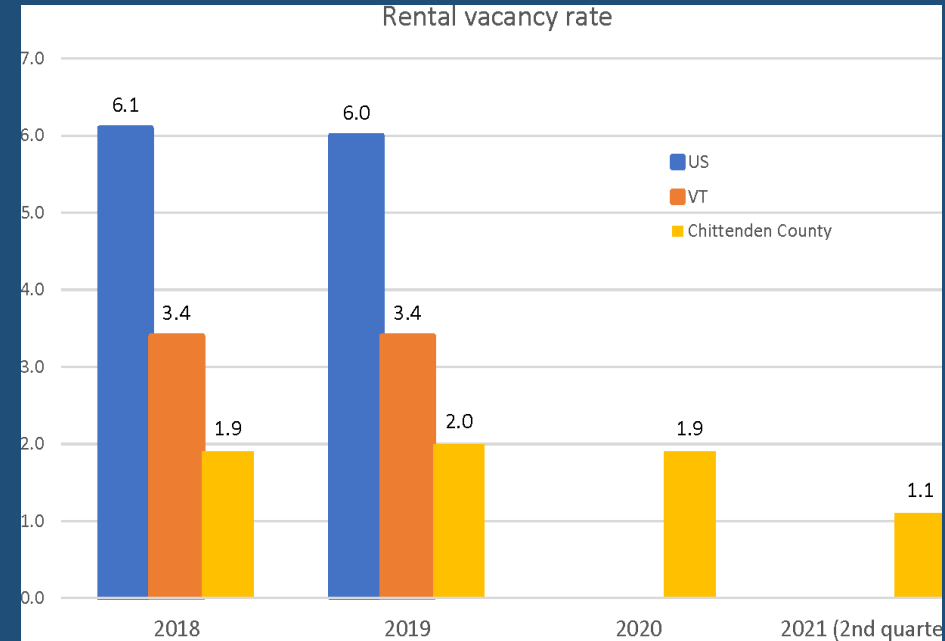
Source: 1960-2000 Decennial Censuses and 2008, 2010 and 2017 American Community Surveys

# Housing Supply and Affordability - Vermont

## Vermont's Rate of Home Construction



## Rental Vacancy Rates



The median home price in Vermont rose 9.3% from Jan. 2022 to June 2022. The median sale price is \$295,000, compared to \$215,000 in 2018.

In 2019, over 50% of Vermont renters were cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

## 'It's Never Our Time': First-Time Home Buyers Face a Brutal Market

Unable to compete against older buyers with cash offers, younger potential buyers feel like they are never going to own a house.

Give this article 644



# Rising Interest Rates



Junny Tsiba, a health aide at a nursing home, is a proud new owner of a shared equity home. She worked with Habitat and the Champlain Housing Trust and benefited from a purchase subsidy plus a loan for BIPOC households.

January - October 2021

January - October 2022

	January - October 2021	January - October 2022
Vermont median primary home purchase price	\$270,000	\$305,000
Average mortgage interest rate	3.11%	5.28%
Monthly mortgage payment	\$1,771	\$2,363
Income needed to afford	\$70,831	\$94,529
Estimated Vermont renters with enough income to purchase median priced home	17,500	8,500
% of Vermont renter households	23%	11%



# Homeownership Opportunities



Habitat homeowner Janet Brown and her son, Manchester



Since 1987, VHCB has provided \$3.6 million to secure land and permanent affordability for 157 Habitat for Humanity Homes.

The Champlain Housing Trust constructed 20 new condominiums in Winooski on a lot donated by the City. Marketed to BIPOC households, all the homes quickly sold and will be occupied this fall.



# Manufactured Home Communities



46 communities  
2,600 homes



## Riverwalk, White River Junction

Twin Pines Housing and Evernorth will purchase 42 apartments close to public transportation, grocery stores, schools, parks, and services. Eight homes will be reserved for households moving out of homelessness. Construction will begin in late 2022, with occupancy in early 2024. VHCB awarded \$6.6M in state, American Rescue Plan Act, and HUD HOME Program funds for the \$15.7M development.

# Housing Vermont's Workforce



- VHCB-funded housing primarily serves households at or below 80% AMI
- **80% AMI for Vermont = \$49,578**
- Occupations served by VHCB funded housing:
  - Childcare workers
  - Community social service occupations
  - Installation, Maintenance and Repair Workers
  - Nursing assistance
  - Recreation workers
  - Light truck drivers
  - Teaching assistants

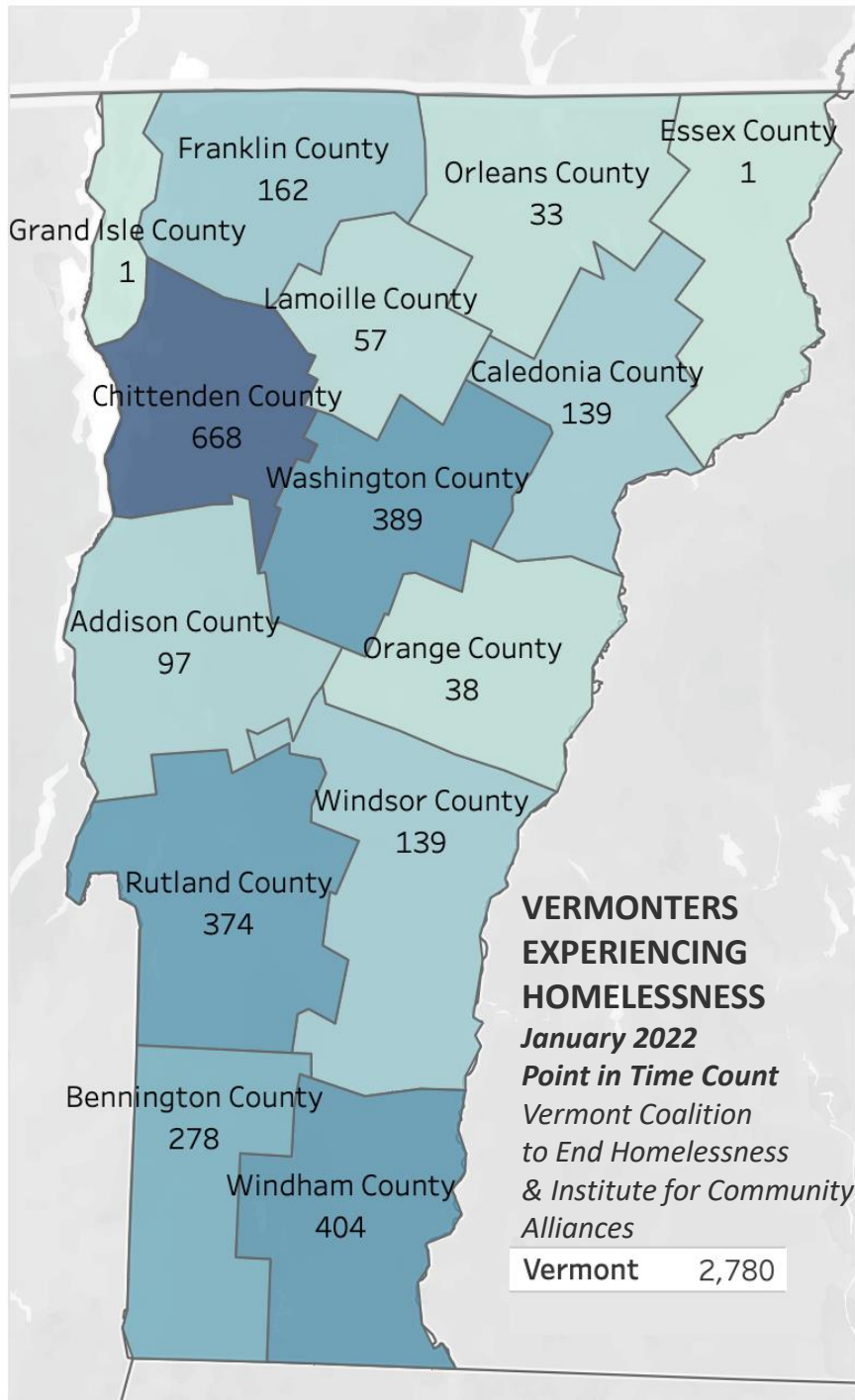


## **Champlain Housing Trust – Farmworker Housing Repair Loan Program**

A loan fund to finance the repair and improvement of farmworker housing has been recapitalized with \$906,000 and a pilot program for new construction of farmworker housing will be developed with \$620,000 awarded by VHCB. Since it was launched earlier this spring, the Champlain Housing Trust has committed \$500,000 in loan capital to improve 21 farmworker housing projects housing more than 100 farmworkers living and working on farms in Vermont. UVM Extension Service is acting as a partner with CHT in helping with outreach to farmers about the new program.

# Vermonters Facing Homelessness

- Roadmap to End Homelessness
- 2,780 Vermonters experiencing homelessness in January 2022
- 2,800 Vermonters rehoused since the start of the pandemic





## **Good Samaritan Haven Welcome Center, Berlin**

Good Samaritan Haven opened a new shelter with 35 beds in August 2022 to provide housing with support services for individuals experiencing homelessness. The need is great, with more than 400 people currently without permanent housing in Central Vermont; nearly 100 are completely unhoused and may be living on the streets or in the woods this winter.

# COVID-19 and the Housing Crisis



**Lincoln Place, Rutland**



**STEPS Shelter,  
Colchester**

The pandemic escalated housing need overnight. An influx of federal funds matched with supplemental state funds provided the opportunity to address long-standing issues and add housing.

VHCB worked with development partners to fund shelter improvements, hotel conversions and affordable housing using one-time state and federal relief resources.



# Statewide Impact 2020 - 2023

- **\$190.6 million awarded to community partners to produce, improve and reinvest in affordable rental homes and emergency shelters**
- **Housing in 38 communities in 13 counties.**
- **Over 1,500 affordable rental homes**
- **500 set-aside for Vermonters who have experienced homelessness**
- **Funding committed to produce and improve 475 shelter beds**



# Housing Recovery Working Group



- **VERAP – \$154,408,194 and 34,237 Vermonters assisted**
- **Since July 2020, VHCB has committed funds to create 1,300 new homes; 550 of these serving homeless households.**
- **383 Units rehabilitated/created between Sept. 2020 – Oct. 2022**
- **Vermont Homeowner Assistance Program has provided mortgage and utility assistance to 4,528 households.**
- **Support for Vermont’s shelter network and 2,648 Vermonters living in publically funded shelters.**

# 'It's brand new and it's mine': Redeveloped Williston hotel provides new affordable housing

By Auditi Guha

Jan 9 2023



...ent at Zephyr Place in Williston on Saturday, Jan. 7. Lucas moved into the Champlain Housing Trust building after experiencing ...

38 homes for Vermonters exiting homeless and an additional 34 affordable apartments developed by Champlain Housing Trust.

# Zephyr Place, Williston

# Foundation House, Barre City

Housing for  
women in  
recovery  
from  
Substance  
Use Disorder  
and their  
children



This historic home was re-configured by Downstreet Housing & Community Development into apartments with support services provided by Vermont Foundation for Recovery, an organization operating statewide. A family-like atmosphere is created where the members are nurtured and energized by others who share common experiences, struggles, values, and goals.



# Status of FY22 & 23 Special Appropriations

**\$229 M Total for Housing**

**\$150 M Committed or in front of the Board**

**\$41 M Applications for the January Board Meeting**

**\$37 M remaining, anticipated commitment by June**

- **ARPA SFR: American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Relief Funds**
  - \$119 M for housing and shelter;
  - \$97M committed to housing production projects
  - \$21.7 in projects and supplemental funding in front of the Board
  - **Anticipate full commitment in Jan. 2023**
- **One-time: State General Fund**
  - \$70 M for housing initiatives;
  - \$53M committed to housing production projects
  - \$19.6 M in projects in front of the Board
  - **\$37 M available**



South Main, Waterbury



North Branch  
Cascades, Worcester



The Cleveland Family,  
Mettowee Valley

## Future Pipeline

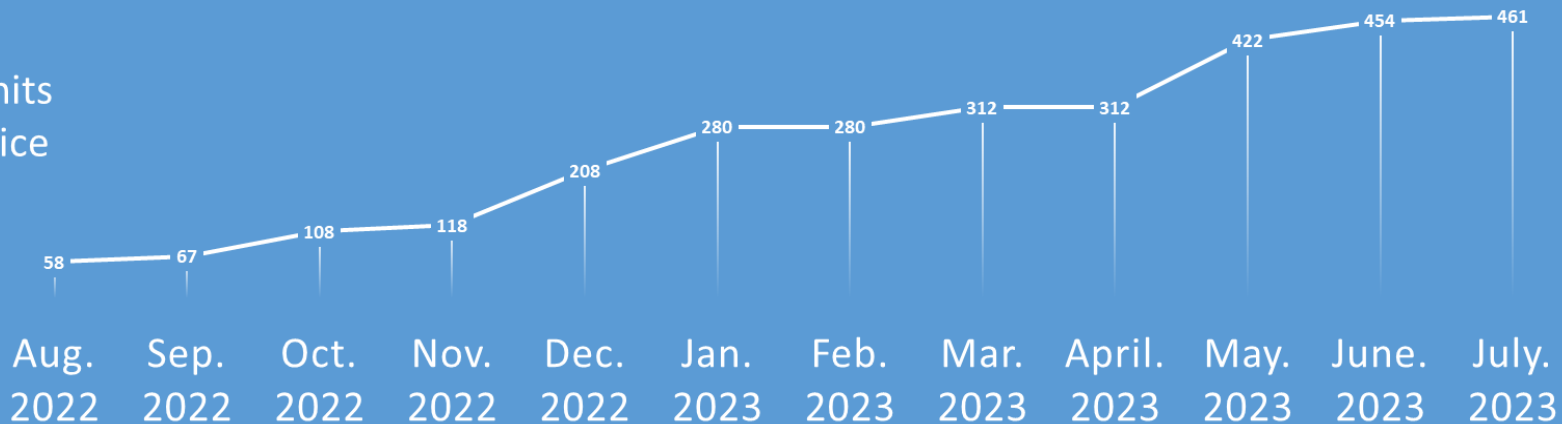
### Housing, Conservation & Historic Preservation

- \$185 million for more than 2,000 rental housing developments, homeownership and accessibility
- Agricultural and natural resources projects in the near term exceeds \$30 million in requests to conserve over 43,000 acres including 56 farms.



## NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES

Cumulative units placed in service



Homes under construction

27	15	2	39	110	162	6	72	141	18	31	<b>Total</b>
											<b>623</b>



## Firehouse Apartments, Bristol

### Opportunities

- Property Transfer Tax
- Onetime allocations: ARPA and Surplus
- Smart Growth resources and zoning updates
- Leveraging infrastructure funds for housing
- Housing revenue bond
- Municipal support for housing

### Challenges

- Local opposition/ the appeals process
- Cost of construction
- Cost of energy investments
- Income and interest rates
- Need for supportive services



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**Tuttle Block, Rutland**



**Bread & Butter Farm, South Burlington**



**Village Center Apartments, Morrisville**