



# VERMONT

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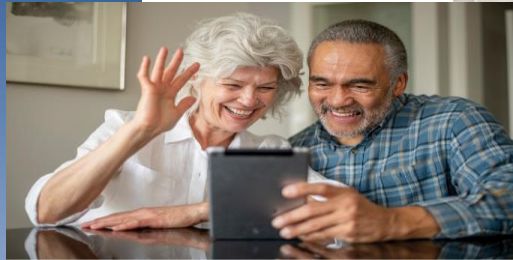
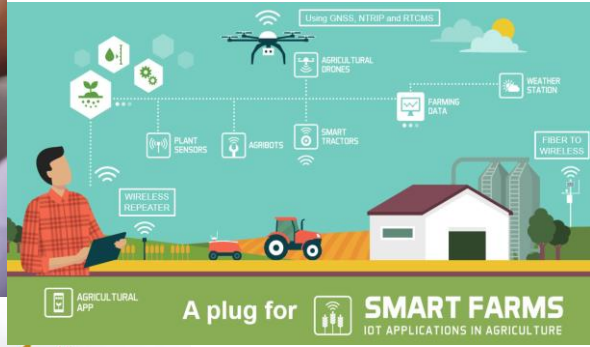
## **VERMONT COMMUNITY BROADBAND BOARD**

VCBB Background and Update  
Joint Information Technology Oversight Committee  
Christine Hallquist, Executive Director  
October 20, 2023

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[HTTPS://PUBLICSERVICE.VERMONT.GOV/VCBB](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/vcbb)

# Vermonters Benefit from Broadband



Public Safety

Climate

Health

Workforce

Economy

Education

Farming

Social Connections and More...

# Back to the Beginning

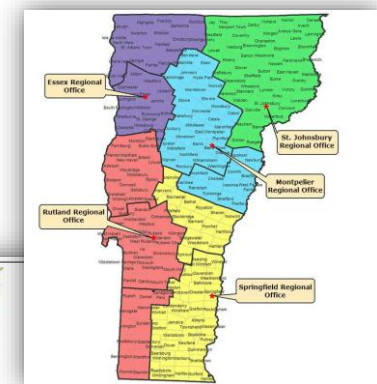
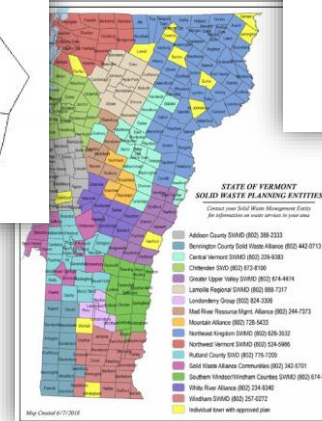
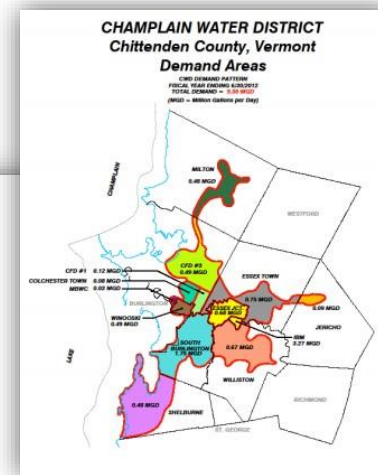
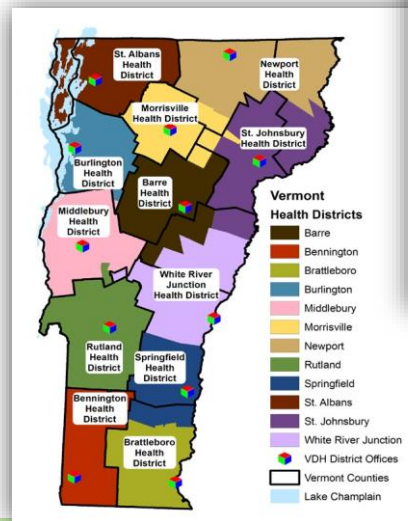
## Communications Union Districts

*Two or more towns and cities may elect to form a communications union district for the delivery of communications services and the operation of a communications plant.*

- Organized under [Title 30: Public Service, Chapter 82: Communications Union Districts \(2015\)](#)

### Other types of Municipal Districts:

- Solid Waste Districts
- Consolidated Sewer Districts
- Emergency Medical Service Districts
- Natural Resources Conservation Districts
- Consolidated Water Districts





The Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) was established by Act 71 (2021), an act relating to accelerated community broadband deployment.



# Mission

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It is the purpose of the VCBB and Vermont Community Broadband Fund to support policies and programs designed to accelerate community efforts that advance the State's goal of achieving universal access to reliable, high-quality, affordable, and fixed broadband.

The VCBB was created to coordinate, facilitate, support, and accelerate the development and implementation of universal community broadband solutions.



# Transparency Matters

## VCBB



**First Meeting –  
August 2021**



**56 Public Meetings  
4 hrs each**



**Average attendance  
30 participants**



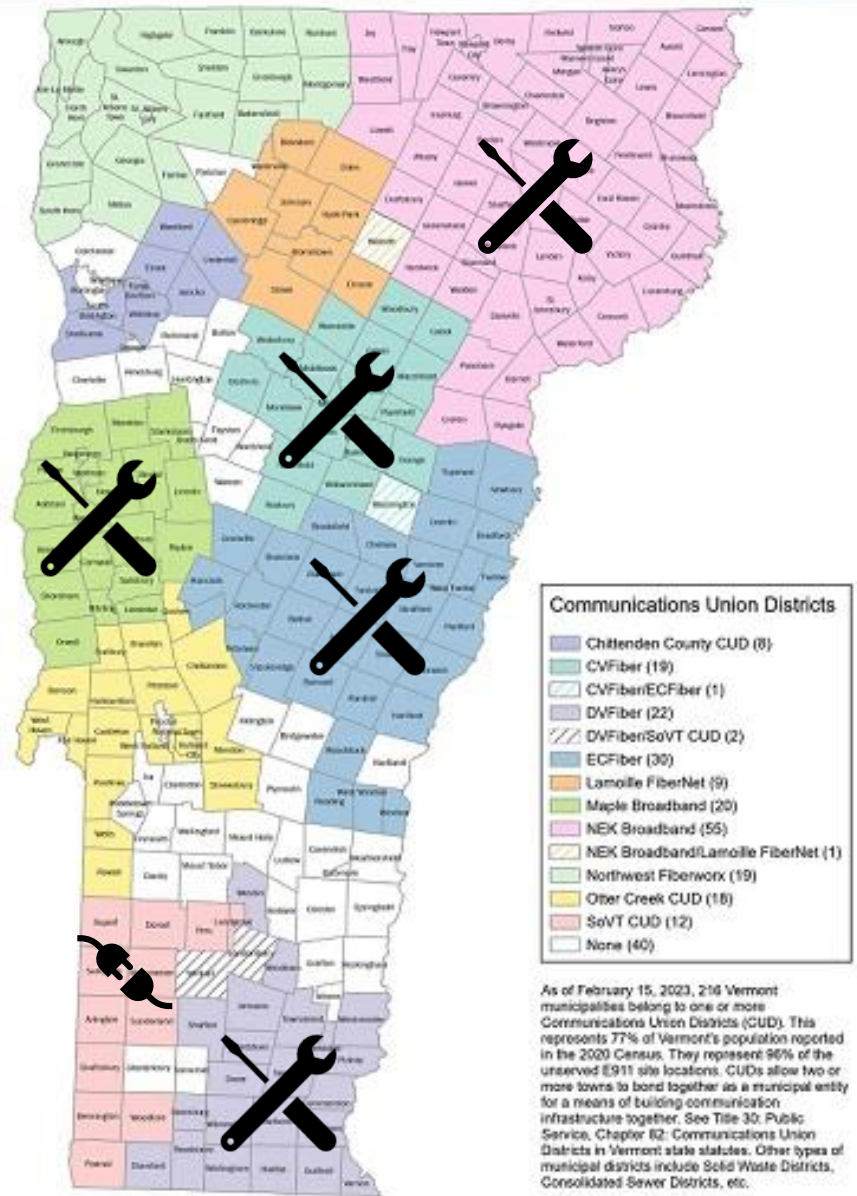
**Minutes and  
Recordings Posted  
on Website**

## VCBB Board Accountability Subcommittees

- ❖ consumer standards certification
- ❖ construction standards
- ❖ annual report
- ❖ grantee agreement
- ❖ lien
- ❖ sunset provision

## Outreach & Engagement

- In-person & virtual listening sessions held across VT for BEAD during summer
  - In-person and virtual listening sessions for digital equity start today
  - Public comments gathered by email, mail, phone, and surveys

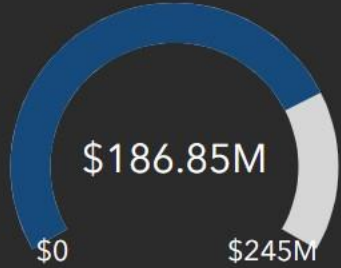


Progress meeting Vermont's goal of 100/100 mbps broadband service at every E-911 location:

- 10 Districts
- 216 Member Towns
- 428 Volunteer Board Representatives & Alternates
- More than 76% the state's population
- 93% of premises un- and underserved statewide
- 76% of all serviceable addresses



# VCBB Act 71 Grant Funding



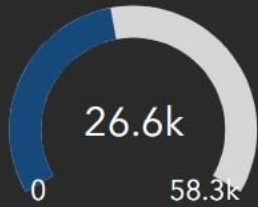
## Total Obligated Act 71 Grant Funding

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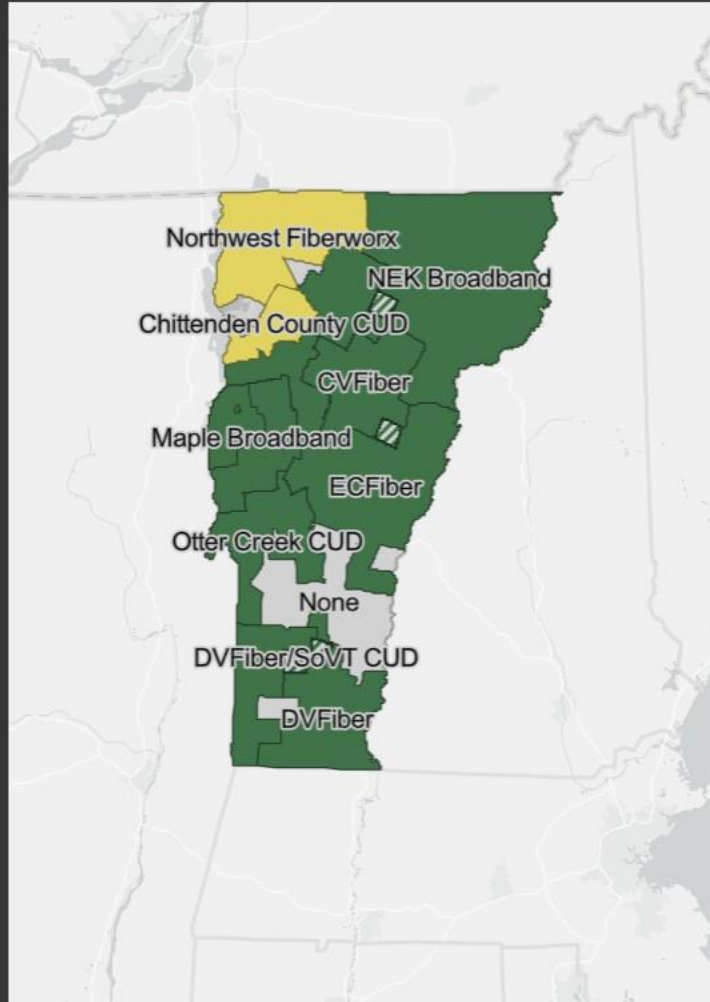
## Project Miles Funded

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## Eligible Addresses Funded

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VCGI, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, US... Powered by Esri

## Act 71 Construction Grants to Date

CVFiber  
\$14,200,118

DVFiber  
\$21,945,429

ECFiber  
\$13,227,657

Maple Broadband  
\$10,843,386

NEK Broadband  
\$38,805,525

Lamoille FiberNet  
\$13,588,636

Otter Creek CUD  
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# \$148.92M

Total Awarded for Construction Grants

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# \$28.11M

Total Awarded for Pre-Construction Grants

Last update: 9 seconds ago

# \$9.82M

Total Awarded for Pre-Project Materials

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# \$13.27M

Total Construction Funding Spent

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Funding Progress

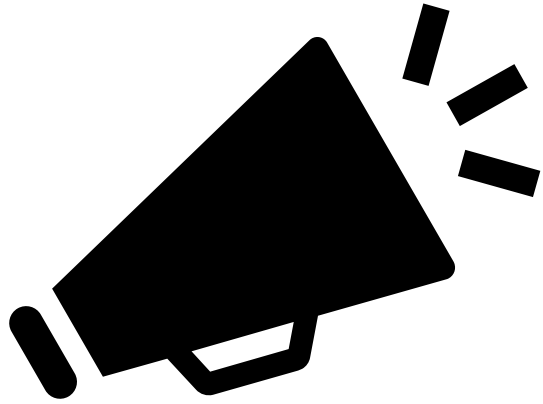
Construction





# Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD)

- \$42.5 billion to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure, and adoption across the country.
- Program priorities:
- Unserved locations (no access to 25/3 Mbps)
- Underserved locations (no access to 100/20 Mbps)
- Community anchor institutions (without gigabit connections)



# Big News – “Vermont Allocated \$229 million from the Federal Government”

- VCBB and PSD engagement in the challenge process resulted in tens of millions more than expected (\$150 million planned)
- \$30 million appropriated last year by the legislature will be used to leverage federal funds

# BEAD: Where We Are





















- Five-Year Action Plan - describes Vermont's broadband goals and priorities/serves as a comprehensive needs assessment – submitted to NTIA
- Initial Proposal Vol. 1 – includes initial identification of unserved/underserved locations, definition of community anchor institutions, and challenge process to modify the federal mapping data and make it more relevant to Vermont – submitted to NTIA
- Initial Proposal Vol. 2 – outlines process Vermont will use to select the Internet Service Providers who will receive BEAD money to build out unserved/underserved addresses and details the requirements these providers must meet to be eligible for funding – public comment recently ended
- BEAD Initial Proposal Progress Dashboard | Internet for All – website that shows how states are progressing through BEAD milestones.





# BEAD IP Eligible Entity Progress Dashboard

INTERNET FOR ALL

	Vol I Draft Shared with NTIA	Vol I Released for Public Comment	Vol I Submitted for NTIA Approval	Vol I Approved by NTIA	Vol II Draft Shared with NTIA	Vol II Released for Public Comment	Vol II Submitted for NTIA Approval	Vol II Approved by NTIA
(7/8) Louisiana 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
(6/8) Virginia 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
(5/8) Delaware 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
(5/8) Kansas 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
(5/8) Vermont 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
(4/8) Colorado 	✓	✓	✓		✓			
(4/8) Idaho 	✓	✓			✓	✓		
(4/8) Illinois 	✓	✓			✓	✓		
(4/8) Montana 	✓	✓			✓	✓		
(4/8) Nevada 	✓	✓			✓	✓		
(3/8) Alaska 	✓	✓			✓			
(3/8) Ohio 	✓	✓	✓					
(3/8) Pennsylvania 	✓	✓			✓			
(3/8) Wyoming 	✓	✓			✓			
(2/8) American Samoa 	✓	✓						
(2/8) Arizona 	✓	✓						
(2/8) Arkansas 	✓				✓			
(2/8) Georgia 	✓	✓						
(2/8) Indiana 	✓	✓						
(2/8) Kentucky 	✓	✓						

# BEAD Funding Flow

Money appropriated for BEAD in IIJA; recipient is State of Vermont

BEAD program designed by VCBB

Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee approves VCBB proposed BEAD program

Funds flow on reimbursement basis to Vermont (do not pass through VT Community Broadband Fund)

VCBB selects subgrantees in competitive process that complies with both BEAD NOFO and VCBB mission

# Vermont BEAD Timeline

## -Looking Ahead-

Program Fund Allocation/Notice of Available Amounts June 2023 (\$100M VT Minimum Allocation)

On/After the FCC Maps Made Public

Initial Proposal

180 Days to Submit after Notice of Available Amounts (~ end of 2023/early 2024)

State Challenge Process

Start After Submission of Initial Proposal and Before Allocating BEAD Funds

Final Classification: After Resolving Each Challenge and At Least 60 Days Before Allocating Grant Funds

20% Funding Release

Final Proposal/Release of Remaining Funds

No Later Than 12 Months After Approval of Initial Proposal (~ end of 2024/early 2025)





Digital divide is the issue.  
Digital equity is the goal.  
Digital inclusion is the work.

# Digital Equity Act (DEA)

- Digital equity is defined as a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.
- \$2.75 billion to establish three grant programs to ensure all people have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy.
  - \$1.44 billion for state block grants
  - \$1.25 billion for competitive state grants
  - \$60 million for state planning grants

# Digital Equity Core Planning Team

## Members:

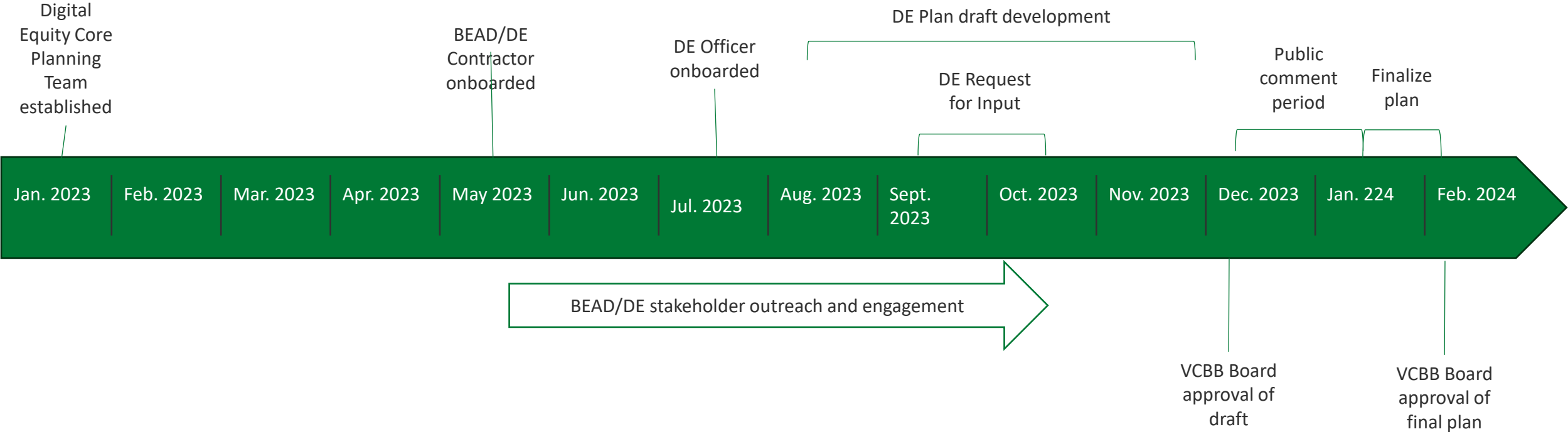
- The 16 members of the Core Planning Team represent a combination of state, federal, and nonprofit partners across Vermont working with the 8 "covered populations" of the Digital Equity Act.

**Covered Populations:** Aging individuals, individuals who live in covered households (household income below 150% FPL), incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals with a language barrier (including individuals who a. are English learners and b. have low literacy levels), individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals who primarily reside in a rural area.





# Digital Equity Plan Timeline



# Workforce Development Plan



Build-out requires the construction of 8,000 miles of fiber over a 5-year period and will require:

- Broadband Installer Apprenticeship Program – starts this winter
- Free on-the-job training
- Can lead to jobs in information technology trades, smart grid, and engineering trades
- Train the Trainer – Nov. 7-9

- 200 fiber optic technicians
- Tree-trimmers
- Electric utility line workers



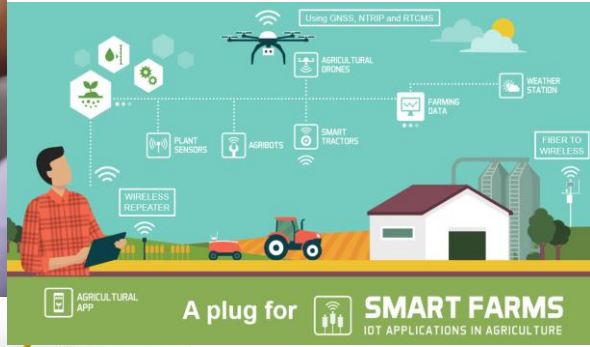
# Community Broadband is about Vermonters



VERMONT



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