1	Introduced by Senator Ram Hinsdale
2	Referred to Committee on
3	Date:
4	Subject: Housing; land use; municipal zoning; Act 250; Human Rights
5	Commission
6	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to increase the
7	supply of affordable housing in this State, promote homeownership, and
8	broaden housing opportunities for Vermonters.
9	An act relating to housing opportunities made for everyone
10	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
11	* * * Municipal Zoning * * *
12	Sec. 1. 24 V.S.A. § 4414 is amended to read:
13	§ 4414. ZONING; PERMISSIBLE TYPES OF REGULATIONS
14	* * *
15	(4) Parking and loading facilities. A municipality may adopt provisions
16	setting forth standards for permitted and required facilities for off-street
17	parking and loading, which may vary by district and by uses within each
18	district. For residential uses, a municipality shall not require more than one
19	parking space per dwelling unit or accessory dwelling unit. However, a
20	municipality may require 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit if the

1	development is located more than one-quarter of a mile away from public
2	parking or the need for parking cannot be reasonably met through the use of
3	on-street parking, public parking, or shared parking Municipalities may round
4	up to the nearest whole parking space. These bylaws may also include
5	provisions covering the location, size, design, access, landscaping, and
6	screening of those facilities. In determining the number of parking spaces for
7	nonresidential uses and size of parking spaces required under these regulations
8	the appropriate municipal panel may take into account the existence or
9	availability of employer "transit pass" and rideshare programs, public transit
10	routes, and public parking spaces in the vicinity of the development. However
11	municipality shall not require an accessory dwelling unit to have more than
12	one parking space per bedroom.
13	* * *
14	Sec. 2. 24 V.S.A. § 4412 is amended to read:
15	§ 4412. REQUIRED PROVISIONS AND PROHIBITED EFFECTS
16	Notwithstanding any existing bylaw, the following land development
17	provisions shall apply in every municipality:
18	(1) Equal treatment of housing and required provisions for affordable
19	housing.
20	* * *

- (D) Bylaws shall designate appropriate districts and reasonable regulations for multiunit or multifamily dwellings. No bylaw shall have the effect of excluding these multiunit or multifamily dwellings from the municipality. In any district that allows year-round residential development, duplexes shall be an allowed use with the same dimensional standards as a single unit dwelling. In any district that is served by municipal sewer and water infrastructure that allows residential development, multiunit dwellings with four or fewer units shall be an allowed use.
- (E) Except for flood hazard and fluvial erosion area bylaws adopted pursuant to section 4424 of this title, no bylaw shall have the effect of excluding as a permitted use one accessory dwelling unit that is located within or appurtenant to a single-family dwelling on an owner-occupied lot. A bylaw may shall require a single-family dwelling with an accessory dwelling unit to be subject to the same review, dimensional, or other controls as required for a single-family dwelling without an accessory dwelling unit. The criteria for conversion of an existing detached nonresidential building to habitable space for an accessory dwelling unit shall not be more restrictive than the criteria used for a single-family dwelling without an accessory dwelling unit. An "accessory dwelling unit" means a distinct unit that is clearly subordinate to a single-family dwelling; and has facilities and provisions for independent living,

1	including sleeping, food preparation, and sanitation, provided there is
2	compliance with all the following:
3	(i) The property has sufficient wastewater capacity.
4	(ii) The unit does not exceed 30 percent of the total habitable floor
5	area of the single-family dwelling or 900 square feet, whichever is greater.
6	* * *
7	(H) No bylaw shall have the effect of prohibiting or penalizing a
8	hotel from renting rooms to provide housing assistance through the State of
9	Vermont's General Assistance program, or to any person whose room is
10	rented with public funds. The term "hotel" shall have the same meaning as in
11	32 V.S.A. 9202(3).
12	* * *
13	(12) In any district served by municipal sewer and water infrastructure
14	that allows residential development, bylaws shall establish lot and building
15	dimensional standards that allow four or more dwelling units per acre for each
16	allowed residential use, and density standards for multiunit dwellings shall not
17	be more restrictive than those required for single-family dwellings.
18	(13) In any district served by municipal sewer and water infrastructure that
19	allows residential development, any mixed use developments and affordable
20	housing developments, as defined in section 4303(2) of this title, may exceed
21	building height limitations by one additional habitable floor beyond the

1	maximum height and using that additional floor may exceed density limitations
2	for residential developments by an additional 40 percent, provided that the
3	structure complies with the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code.
4	(14) No bylaw shall have the effect of limiting the square footage of a
5	duplex that otherwise complies with the applicable building code.
6	(15)(A) For purposes of this section, an area "served by municipal water
7	and sewer infrastructure" means:
8	(i) that residential connections and expansions are available to
9	municipal water and direct and indirect discharge wastewater systems and not
10	prohibited by:
11	(I) State regulations or permits;
12	(II) identified capacity constraints; or
13	(II) municipally adopted service and capacity agreements; or
14	(ii) areas established by the municipality by ordinance or bylaw
15	that:
16	(I) exclude flood hazard or inundation areas as established by
17	statute, river corridors or fluvial erosion areas as established by statute,
18	shorelands, and wherever year-round residential development is not allowed;
19	(II) reflect identified service limits established by State
20	regulations or permits, identified capacity constraints, or municipally adopted
21	service and capacity agreements;

1	(III) exclude areas served by water and sewer to address an
2	identified community -scale public health hazard or environmental hazard;
3	(IV) exclude areas serving a mobile home park that is not
4	within an area planned for year-round residential growth;
5	(V) exclude areas serving an industrial site or park;
6	(VI) exclude areas where service lines are located to serve the
7	areas described in subdivisions (III)-(V) above, but no connections or
8	expansions are permitted; or
9	(VII) modify the zoning provisions allowed under this chapter
10	in areas served by indirect discharge designed for less than 100,000 gallons per
11	day.
12	(B) Municipally adopted areas served by municipal water and sewer
13	infrastructure that limit water and sewer connections and expansions shall not
14	result in the unequal treatment of housing by discriminating against a year-
15	round residential use or housing type otherwise allowed in this chapter.
16	Sec. 3. 24 V.S.A. § 4413 is amended to read:
17	§ 4413. LIMITATIONS ON MUNICIPAL BYLAWS
18	(a)(1) The following uses may be regulated only with respect to
19	location, size, height, building bulk, yards, courts, setbacks, density of
20	buildings, off-street parking, loading facilities, traffic, noise, lighting,
21	landscaping, and screening requirements, and only to the extent that

1	regulations do not have the effect of interfering with the intended functional
2	use:
3	(A) State- or community-owned and operated operated institutions
4	and facilities;
5	(B) public and private schools and other educational institutions
6	certified by the Agency of Education;
7	(C) churches and other places of worship, convents, and parish
8	houses;
9	(D) public and private hospitals;
10	(E) regional solid waste management facilities certified under 10
11	V.S.A. chapter 159;
12	(F) hazardous waste management facilities for which a notice of
13	intent to construct has been received under 10 V.S.A. § 6606a; and
14	(G) emergency shelters.
15	(2) Except for State-owned and -operated institutions and facilities, a
16	municipality may regulate each of the land uses listed in subdivision (1) of this
17	subsection for compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program and for
18	compliance with a municipal ordinance or bylaw regulating development in a
19	flood hazard area or river corridor, consistent with the requirements of
20	subdivision 2291(25) and section 4424 of this title. These regulations shall not
21	have the effect of interfering with the intended functional use.

1	(3) For purposes of this subsection, regulating the daily or seasonal
2	hours of operation of an emergency shelter shall constitute interfering with the
3	intended functional use.
4	* * *
5	Sec. 4. 24 V.S.A. § 4303 is amended to read:
6	§ 4303. DEFINITIONS
7	The following definitions shall apply throughout this chapter unless the
8	context otherwise requires:
9	* * *
10	(38) "Accessory dwelling unit" has the same meaning as defined in
11	section 4412(E) of this title.
12	(39) "Duplex" means a residential building that has two dwelling units
13	in the same building and neither unit is an accessory dwelling unit.
14	(40) "Emergency shelter" means any facility, the primary purpose of
15	which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for
16	specific populations of the homeless and that does not require occupants to
17	sign leases or occupancy agreements.
18	(41) "Multiunit or multifamily dwelling" means a building that contains
19	three or more dwelling units in the same building.

1	Sec. 5. 24 V.S.A. § 4441 is amended to read:
2	§ 4441. PREPARATION OF BYLAWS AND REGULATORY TOOLS;
3	AMENDMENT OR REPEAL
4	* * *
5	(c) When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission
6	shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report
7	may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning
8	bylaw amendments and subsection 4384(c) of this title concerning plan
9	amendments. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall
10	provide all municipalities with a form for this report. The report shall provide
11	a brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal and shall
12	include a statement of purpose as required for notice under section 4444 of this
13	title, and shall include findings regarding how the proposal:
14	(1) Conforms conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained
15	in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of
16	safe and affordable housing, and sections 4412, 4413, and 4414 of this title;
17	(2) Is \underline{is} compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of
18	the municipal plan-; and
19	(3) Carries carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any
20	planned community facilities.
21	* * *

1	(h) Upon adoption or amendment of a bylaw, the planning commission
2	shall prepare an adoption report in form and content provided by the
3	Department of Housing and Community Development that:
4	(1) confirms that all changes to zoning districts have been uploaded to
5	the Vermont Open Geodata Portal;
6	(2) confirms that the complete bylaw has been uploaded to the
7	Municipal Plan and Bylaw Database;
8	(1) demonstrates conformity with sections 4412, 4413, and 4414 of this
9	title; and
10	(2) provides information on the municipal application of subchapters 7
11	(bylaws), 9 (administration), and 10 (panels) of this chapter for the Municipal
12	Planning Data Center and the prospective development of a statewide zoning
13	<u>atlas.</u>
14	Sec. 6. 24 V.S.A. § 4465 is amended to read:
15	§ 4465. APPEALS OF DECISIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
16	(a) An interested person may appeal any decision or act taken by the
17	administrative officer in any municipality by filing a notice of appeal with the
18	secretary of the board of adjustment or development review board of that
19	municipality or with the clerk of that municipality if no such secretary has been
20	elected. This notice of appeal must be filed within 15 days of the date of that

1	decision or act, and a copy of the notice of appeal shall be filed with the
2	administrative officer.

- (b) For the purposes of this chapter, an interested person means any one of the following:
- (1) A person owning title to property, or a municipality or solid waste management district empowered to condemn it or an interest in it, affected by a bylaw, who alleges that the bylaw imposes on the property unreasonable or inappropriate restrictions of present or potential use under the particular circumstances of the case.
- (2) The municipality that has a plan or a bylaw at issue in an appeal brought under this chapter or any municipality that adjoins that municipality.
- (3) A person owning or occupying property in the immediate neighborhood of a property that is the subject of any decision or act taken under this chapter, who can demonstrate a physical or environmental impact on the person's interest under the criteria reviewed, and who alleges that the decision or act, if confirmed, will not be in accord with the policies, purposes, or terms of the plan or bylaw of that municipality. (b) For the purposes of this chapter, an interested person means any one of the following:
- (4) Any ten persons who may be any combination of voters or real property owners within a municipality listed in subdivision (2) of this subsection who, by signed petition to the appropriate municipal panel of a

municipality, the plan or a bylaw of which is at issue in any appeal brought
under this title, allege that any relief requested by a person under this title, if
granted, will not be in accord with the policies, purposes, or terms of the plan
or bylaw of that municipality. This petition to the appropriate municipal panel
must designate one person to serve as the representative of the petitioners
regarding all matters related to the appeal.
(5) Any department and administrative subdivision of this State owning
property or any interest in property within a municipality listed in subdivision
(2) of this subsection, and the Agency of Commerce and Community
Development of this State.
* * *
* * * Subdivisions * * *
Sec. 7. 24 V.S.A. § 4463 is amended to read:
§ 4463. SUBDIVISION REVIEW
(a) Approval of plats. Before any a plat for a subdivision is approved, a
public hearing on the plat shall may be held by the appropriate municipal panel
after public notice. A bylaw may provide for when a public hearing is
required. A copy of the notice shall be sent to the clerk of an adjacent
municipality, in the case of a plat located within 500 feet of a municipal
boundary, at least 15 days prior to the public hearing.

- (b) Plat; record. The approval of the appropriate municipal panel or administrative officer, if the bylaws provide for their approval of subdivisions, shall expire 180 days from that approval or certification unless, within that 180-day period, that plat shall have been duly filed or recorded in the office of the clerk of the municipality. After an approved plat or certification by the clerk is filed, no expiration of that approval or certification shall be applicable.
- (1) The bylaw may allow the administrative officer to extend the date for filing the plat by an additional 90 days, if final local or State permits or approvals are still pending.
- (2) No plat showing a new street or highway may be filed or recorded in the office of the clerk of the municipality until it has been approved by the appropriate municipal panel, or administrative officer if allowed under the bylaws, pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, and that approval is endorsed in writing on the plat, or the certificate of the clerk of the municipality showing the failure of the appropriate municipal panel to take action within the 45-day period is attached to the plat and filed or recorded with the plat. After that filing or recording, the plat shall be a part of the official map of the municipality.

19 ***

- 20 Sec. 8. 24 V.S.A. § 4418 is amended to read:
- 21 § 4418. SUBDIVISION BYLAWS

1	* * *
2	(2) Subdivision bylaws may include:
3	(A) Provisions provisions allowing the appropriate municipal panel
4	to waive or modify, subject to appropriate conditions, the provision of any or
5	all improvements and requirements as in its judgment of the special
6	circumstances of a particular plat or plats are not requisite in the interest of the
7	public health, safety, and general welfare, or are inappropriate because of
8	inadequacy or lack of connecting facilities adjacent or in proximity to the
9	subdivision-;
10	(B) Procedures procedures for conceptual, preliminary, partial, and
11	other reviews preceding submission of a subdivision plat, including any
12	administrative reviews-;
13	(C) Specific specific development standards to promote the
14	conservation of energy or to permit the utilization of renewable energy
15	resources, or both-:
16	(D) State standards and criteria under 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)-; and
17	(E) provisions to allow the administrative officer to approve
18	subdivisions.
19	* * * Appeals * * *
20	Sec. 9. 24 V.S.A. § 4471 is amended to read:
21	§ 4471. APPEAL TO ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

1	Υ·Υ·Υ·
2	(e) Neighborhood development area Designated areas. Notwithstanding
3	subsection (a) of this section, a determination by an appropriate municipal
4	panel that a residential development will not result in an undue adverse effect
5	on the character of the area affected shall not be subject to appeal if the
6	determination is that a proposed residential development seeking conditional
7	use approval under subdivision 4414(3) of this title is within a designated
8	downtown development district, designated growth center, designated Vermont
9	neighborhood, or designated neighborhood development area seeking
10	conditional use approval will not result in an undue adverse effect on the
11	character of the area affected under subdivision 4414(3) of this title. Other
12	elements of the determination made by the appropriate municipal panel may be
13	appealed.
14	* * * By Right * * *
15	Sec. 10. 24 V.S.A. § 4464(b) is amended to read:
16	(b) Decisions.
17	* * *
18	(7)(A) A decision rendered by the appropriate municipal panel for a
19	housing development or the housing portion of a mixed-use development shall
20	not:

1	(i) require a larger lot size than the minimum as determined in the
2	municipal bylaws;
3	(ii) require more parking spaces than the minimum as determined
4	in the municipal bylaws and in section 4414 of this title;
5	(iii) limit the building size to less than that allowed in the
6	municipal bylaws, including reducing the building footprint or height;
7	(iv) limit the density of dwelling units to below that allowed in the
8	municipal bylaws; and
9	(v) otherwise disallow a development to abide by the minimum or
10	maximum applicable municipal standards;
11	(B) However, a decision may require adjustments to the applicable
12	municipal standards listed in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (b)(7) if the
13	panel or officer issues a written finding stating:
14	(i) why the modification is necessary to comply with a
15	prerequisite State or federal permit, municipal permit, or a nondiscretionary
16	standard in a bylaw or ordinance, including requirements related to wetlands,
17	setbacks, and flood hazard areas and river corridors; and
18	(ii) how the identified restrictions do not result in an unequal
19	treatment of housing or an unreasonable exclusion of housing development
20	otherwise allowed by the bylaws.
21	Sec. 11. 24 V.S.A. § 4348a is amended to read:

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§ 4348a. ELEMENTS OF A REGIONAL PLAN

- (a) A regional plan shall be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and shall include the following:
- 4 ***

(9) A housing element that identifies the regional and community-level need for housing for all economic groups in the region and communities that will result in an adequate supply of building code and energy code compliant homes where most households spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing and no more than 15 percent on transportation. To establish housing needs, the Department of Housing and Community Development shall publish statewide and regional housing targets or ranges as part of the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment. In establishing the identified need, due consideration shall be given to The regional planning commission shall consult the Statewide Housing Needs Assessment; current and expected demographic data; the current location, quality, types and cost of housing; other local studies related to housing needs; and data gathered pursuant to subsection 4382(c) of this title. If no such data has been gathered, the regional planning commission shall gather it. The regional planning commission's assessment shall estimate the total needed housing investments in terms of price; quality; unit size or type; zoning district as applicable; and shall disaggregate regional housing

1	targets or ranges by municipality. The housing element shall include a set of
2	recommended actions to satisfy the established needs.
3	* * *
4	Sec. 12. 24 V.S.A. § 4382 is amended to read:
5	§ 4382. THE PLAN FOR A MUNICIPALITY
6	(a) A plan for a municipality may shall be consistent with the goals
7	established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of
8	other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan and shall include
9	the following:
10	* * *
11	(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for
12	addressing low and moderate income persons' public and private actions to
13	address housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission
14	pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should <u>include</u>
15	specific actions to address low and moderate income persons' housing needs
16	and account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision
17	4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing as well as any
18	material impact of short term rental units.
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* * * Energy Codes * * *

- Sec. 13. 24 V.S.A. § 3101(a) is amended to read:
 - (a) The mayor and board of aldermen of a city, the selectboard of a town, or the trustees of an incorporated village, may, in accordance with this chapter, establish codes and regulations for the construction, maintenance, repair, and alteration of buildings and other structures within the municipality. Such codes and regulations may include provisions relating to building materials, structural design, passageways, stairways and exits, heating systems, fire protection procedures, and such other matters as may be reasonably necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of the public, but excluding electrical installations subject to regulation under 26 V.S.A. chapter 15. Any energy codes and regulations adopted after July 1, 2023 shall not be more restrictive than the Residential Building Energy Standards or the stretch code adopted under 30 V.S.A. § 51 or the Commercial Building Energy Standards adopted under 30 V.S.A. § 53, except where enabled by a municipal charter. Municipalities may enact more stringent local residential building energy standards only for homes that are larger than 1,800 square feet per unit if the municipality receives approval by the Department of Public Service that the municipality followed 30 V.S.A. § 51(c)(1) and (2). Municipalities may enact more stringent local commercial building energy standards only for homes that are larger than 1,800 square feet per unit, if the municipality receives approval

1	by the Public Service Department that the municipality followed 30 V.S.A. §
2	53(c)(1) and (2).
3	Sec. 14. APPROPRIATION
4	The sum of \$750,000.00 is appropriated in fiscal year 2024 from the
5	General Fund to the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund.
6	Sec. 15. HOUSING RESOURCE NAVIGATOR FOR REGIONAL
7	PLANNING COMMISSIONS
8	(a) The Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies shall
9	hire Housing Resource Navigators, to work with municipalities, regional and
10	local housing organizations and private developers to identify housing
11	opportunities, match communities with funding resources, and provide project
12	management support.
13	(b) There is appropriated the sum of \$300,000.00 in fiscal year 2024 to the
14	Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies for the purpose
15	of hiring the Housing Navigators as described in subsection (a) of this section.
16	* * * Act 250* * *
17	Sec. 16. 10 V.S.A. § 6001 is amended to read:
18	§ 6001. DEFINITIONS
19	* * *
20	(3)(A) "Development" means each of the following:
21	* * *

1	(iv) The construction of housing projects such as cooperatives,
2	condominiums, or dwellings, or construction or maintenance of mobile homes
3	or mobile home parks, with 10 25 or more units, constructed or maintained on
4	a tract or tracts of land, owned or controlled by a person, within a radius of five
5	miles of any point on any involved land and within any continuous period of
6	five years. However:
7	(I) A priority housing project shall constitute a development
8	under this subdivision (iv) only if the number of housing units in the project is:
9	(aa) [Repealed.]
10	(bb) [Repealed.]
11	(cc) 75 or more, in a municipality with a population of 6,000
12	or more but less than 10,000.
13	(dd) 50 or more, in a municipality with a population of less
14	than 6,000.
15	(ee) [Repealed.]
16	* * *
17	(ix) Notwithstanding subdivision (iv) of this subdivision (3)(A),
18	the construction of improvements in a designated downtown, village center,
19	and designated neighborhood development area for a housing project or
20	mixed-use development, with 25 or more units, constructed or maintained on a

1	tract or tracts of land, owned or controlled by a person within any continuous
2	period of three months.
3	* * *
4	(D) The word "development" does not include:
5	* * *
6	(viii)(I) The construction of a priority housing project in a
7	municipality with a population of 10,000 or more.
8	* * *
9	(19)(A) "Subdivision" means each of the following:
10	* * *
11	(iv) A tract or tracts of land, owned or controlled by a person, that
12	the person has partitioned or divided for the purpose of resale into 15 or more
13	lots located within a designated downtown, village center, and designated
14	neighborhood development area within any continuous period of three months.
15	* * *
16	(35) "Priority housing project" means a discrete project located on a
17	single tract or multiple contiguous tracts of land that consists exclusively of
18	mixed income housing or mixed use, or any combination thereof, and is
19	located entirely within a designated downtown development district,
20	designated new town center, designated village center that has permanent

1	zoning and subdivision bylaws, designated growth center, or designated
2	neighborhood development area under 24 V.S.A. chapter 76A.
3	* * *
4	Sec. 17. 10 V.S.A. § 6081 is amended to read:
5	§ 6081. PERMITS REQUIRED; EXEMPTIONS
6	* * *
7	(p) No permit or permit amendment is required for a priority housing
8	project in a designated center if the project remains below any applicable
9	jurisdictional threshold specified in subdivision 6001(3)(A)(iv)(I) of this title.
10	* * *
11	(y) No permit amendment is required for the construction of improvements
12	for 24 units or fewer of housing.
13	* * * Enhanced Designation * * *
14	Sec. 17a. 10 V.S.A. § 6081 is amended to read:
15	§ 6081. PERMITS REQUIRED; EXEMPTIONS
16	* * *
17	(z) No permit or permit amendment is required for any subdivision or
18	development located in an enhanced designation area. If the enhanced
19	designation is terminated, a development or subdivision within the designated
20	center must receive a permit, if applicable.

1	Sec. 17b. 24 V.S.A. § 2799 is added to read:
2	§ 2793f. ENHANCED DESIGNATION
3	(a) Application and approval. A municipality, by resolution of its
4	legislative body, may apply to the Natural Resources Board for an enhanced
5	designation for any designated downtown development district. The Natural
6	Resources Board shall issue an affirmative determination on finding that the
7	municipality meets the requirements of subsection (c) of this section.
8	(b) Enhanced designation requirements.
9	(1) To obtain an enhanced designation under this section, a municipality
10	must demonstrate that it has each of the following:
11	(A) An approved designated downtown development district;
12	(B) Municipal bylaws that are identical or are determined to be
13	consistent with the model bylaws written by the Natural Resources Board
14	pursuant to subsection (f) of this section;
15	(C) Municipal bylaws that do not include broad exemptions
16	excluding significant private or public land development from requiring a
17	municipal land use permit;
18	(D) Adequate municipal staff to support coordinated comprehensive
19	and capital planning, development review, and zoning administration; and
20	(E) If any party entitled to notice under subdivision (4)(A) of
21	subsection (c) or any resident of the municipality raises concerns about the

1	municipality's compliance with the requirements for the underlying
2	designation, those concerns must be addressed as part of the municipality's
3	application.
4	(c) Process for issuing enhanced designation.
5	(1) A preapplication meeting shall be held with Department staff to
6	review the program requirements. The meeting shall be held in the
7	municipality unless another location is agreed to by the municipality.
8	(2) An application by the municipality shall include the information and
9	analysis required by the Department's guidelines established pursuant to
10	section 2792 of this title on how to meet the requirements of subsection (b) of
11	this section.
12	(3) The Department shall establish a procedure for submission of a draft
13	application that involves review and comment by all the parties to be noticed in
14	subdivision (4)(A) of this subsection and shall issue a preapplication memo
15	incorporating the comments to the applicant after receipt of a draft preliminary
16	application.
17	(4) After receipt of a complete final application, the Natural Resources
18	Board shall convene a public hearing in the municipality to consider whether
19	to issue a determination of enhanced designation under this section.
20	(A) Notice.

1	(i) At least 35 days in advance of the Board's meeting, the
2	Department shall provide notice to the municipality and post it on the
3	Agency's website.
4	(ii) The municipality shall publish notice of the meeting at least
5	30 days in advance of the Board's meeting in a newspaper of general
6	circulation in the municipality, and deliver physically or electronically, with
7	proof of receipt or by certified mail, return receipt requested to the Agency of
8	Natural Resources; the State Downtown Board; the Division for Historic
9	Preservation, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; the Agency of
10	Transportation; the regional planning commission; the regional development
11	corporations; and the entities providing educational, police, and fire services to
12	the municipality.
13	(iii) The notice shall also be posted by the municipality in or near
14	the municipal clerk's office and in at least two other designated public places
15	in the municipality and on the websites of the municipality and the Agency of
16	Commerce and Community Development.
17	(iv) The municipality shall also certify in writing that the notice
18	required by subdivision (4)(A) of this subsection (c) has been published,
19	delivered, and posted within the specified time.
20	(B) No defect in the form or substance of any requirements of this
21	subsection (c) shall invalidate the action of the Board where reasonable efforts

1	are made to provide adequate posting and notice. However, the action shall be
2	invalid when the defective posting or notice was materially misleading in
3	content. If an action is ruled to be invalid by the Superior Court or by the
4	Board itself, the Department shall provide and the municipality shall issue new
5	posting and notice, and the Board shall hold a new hearing and take a new
6	action.
7	(5) The Board may recess the proceedings on any application pending
8	submission of additional information. The Board shall close the proceedings
9	promptly after all parties have submitted the requested information.
10	(6) The Board shall issue its determination in writing. The
11	determination shall include explicit findings on each of the requirements in
12	subsection (b) of this section.
13	(d) Review of enhanced designation status.
14	(1) Length of designation. Initial determination of an enhanced
15	designation may be made at any time. Thereafter, review of the enhanced
16	designation shall be concurrent with the next periodic review of the underlying
17	designated downtown.
18	(2) The Board, on its motion, may review compliance with the enhanced
19	designation requirements at more frequent intervals.

1	(3) If at any time the Board determines that the enhanced designation
2	area no longer meets the standards for the designation, it shall take one of the
3	following actions:
4	(A) require corrective action within a reasonable time frame; or
5	(B) terminate the enhanced designation.
6	(4) If the underlying designation is terminated, the enhanced designation
7	also shall terminate.
8	(e) Appeal.
9	(1) An interested person may appeal any act or decision of the Board
10	under this section to the Environmental Division of the Superior Court within
11	30 days following the act or decision.
12	(2) As used in this section, an "interested person" means any one of the
13	following:
14	(A) A person owning a title to or occupying property within or
15	abutting the designated center.
16	(B) The municipality making the application or a municipality that
17	adjoins the municipality making the application.
18	(C) The regional planning commission for the region that includes
19	the designated center or a regional planning commission whose region adjoins
20	the municipality in which the designated center is located.

1	(f) Model bylaws. The Natural Resources Board shall publish model
2	bylaws that may be adopted by a municipality seeking an enhanced
3	designation. These bylaws shall address all Act 250 criteria provided for in
4	10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(1)–(10).
5	Sec. 17c. 10 V.S.A. § 6001(45) is added to read:
6	(45) "Enhanced designation" means the process by which a designated
7	downtown demonstrates that it has satisfied the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §
8	2793f. The term shall also refer to the resulting status.
9	Sec. 17d. ENHANCED DESIGNATION BYLAW ADOPTION
10	On or before January 1, 2023, the Natural Resources Board shall publish
11	model bylaws that a municipality may adopt in order to achieve an enhanced
12	designation. These bylaws shall encompass of the Act 250 criteria found in
13	10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(1)–(10).
14	* * * Covenants * * *
15	Sec. 18. 27 V.S.A. § 545 is amended to read:
16	§ 545. COVENANTS, CONDITIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS OF
17	SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC INTEREST
18	(a) Deed restrictions, covenants, or similar binding agreements added after
19	March 1, 2021 that prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting land development
20	allowed under 24 V.S.A. § 4412(1)(E) and (2)(A) shall not be valid.

1	(b) Deed restrictions or covenants added after July 1, 2023 shall not be
2	valid if they require a minimum dwelling unit size on the property or more
3	than one parking space per dwelling unit.
4	(c) This section shall not affect the enforceability of any property interest
5	held in whole or in part by a qualified organization or State agency as defined
6	in 10 V.S.A. § 6301a, including any restrictive easements, such as
7	conservation easements and historic preservation rights and interests defined in
8	10 V.S.A. § 822. This section shall not affect the enforceability of any
9	property interest that is restricted by a housing subsidy covenant as defined by
10	section 610 of this title and held in whole or in part by an eligible applicant as
11	defined in 10 V.S.A. § 303(4) or the Vermont Housing Finance Agency.
12	* * * Road Disclosure * * *
13	Sec. 19. 27 V.S.A. § 617 is added to read:
14	§ 617. DISCLOSURE OF CLASS 4 ROAD
15	(a) Disclosure of maintenance on class 4 highway. Any property owner
16	who sells property located on a class 4 highway or legal trail shall disclose to
17	the buyer that the municipality is not required to maintain the highway or trail
18	as described in 19 V.S.A. § 310.
19	(b) Marketability of title. Noncompliance with the requirements of this
20	section shall not affect the marketability of title of a property.
21	* * * Grand List * * *

1	Sec. 20. 32 V.S.A. § 4152(a)(3) is amended to read:
2	(3) A brief description of each parcel of taxable real estate in the town.
3	"Parcel" means all contiguous land in the same ownership, together with all
4	improvements thereon, including the number of residential dwelling units.
5	* * * Wastewater Connection Permits * * *
6	Sec. 21. 10 V.S.A. § 1974 is amended to read:
7	§ 1974. EXEMPTIONS
8	Notwithstanding any other requirements of this chapter, the following
9	projects and actions are exempt:
10	* * *
11	(9) A project completed by a person who receives an authorization from
12	a municipality that administers a program registered with the Secretary
13	pursuant to section 1983 of this title.
14	Sec. 22. 10 V.S.A. § 1983 is added to read:
15	§ 1983. AUTHORIZATION FOR MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER SYSTEM
16	AND POTABLE WATER SUPPLY CONNECTIONS
17	(a) A municipality may issue an authorization for a connection or an
18	existing connection with a change in use to the municipal sanitary sewer
19	collection line via a sanitary sewer service line or a connection to a water main
20	via a new water service line in lieu of permits issued under this chapter,

1	provided that the municipality documents the following in a form prescribed
2	by the Secretary:
3	(1) The municipality owns or has legal control over connections to a
4	public community water system permitted pursuant to chapter 56 of this title
5	and over connections to a wastewater treatment facility permitted pursuant to
6	chapter 47 of this title.
7	(2) The municipality shall only issue authorizations for:
8	(A) a sanitary sewer service line that connects to the sanitary sewer
9	collection line; and
10	(B) a water service line that connects to the water main.
11	(3) The building or structure authorized under this section connects to
12	both the sanitary sewer collection line and public community water system.
13	(4) The authorizations from the municipality comply with the technical
14	standards for sanitary sewer service lines and water service lines in the
15	Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules.
16	(5) The municipality requires documentation issued by a professional
17	engineer or licensed designer that is filed in the land records that the
18	connection authorized by the municipality was installed in accordance with the
19	technical standards.
20	(6) The municipality requires the authorization to be filed in the land
21	records.

1	(7) The municipality requires the retention of plans that show the
2	location and design of authorized connections.
3	(b) The municipality shall notify the Secretary 30 days in advance of
4	terminating any authorization. The municipality shall provide all
5	authorizations and plans to the Secretary as a part of this termination notice.
6	(c) A municipality issuing an authorization under this section shall require
7	the person to whom the authorization is issued to post notice of the
8	authorization as part of the notice required for a permit issued under 24 V.S.A.
9	§ 4449 or other bylaw authorized under this chapter.
10	* * * ADU Jurisdiction * * *
11	Sec. 23. 20 V.S.A. § 2730 is amended to read:
12	§ 2730. DEFINITIONS
13	(a) As used in this subchapter, "public building" means:
14	(1)(A) a building owned or occupied by a public utility, hospital, school,
15	house of worship, convalescent center or home for elders or persons who have
16	an infirmity or a disability, nursery, kindergarten, or child care;
17	* * *
18	(D) a building in which people rent accommodations, whether
19	overnight or for a longer term;
20	* * *
21	(b) The term "public building" does not include:

1	(1) An owner-occupied single family single-family residence, unless
2	used for a purpose described in subsection (a) of this section.
3	* * *
4	(4) A single family An owner-occupied single-family residence with an
5	accessory dwelling unit as permitted under 24 V.S.A. § 4412(1)(E), unless
6	rented overnight or for a longer term as described in subdivision (1)(D) of
7	subsection (a) of this section.
8	* * *
9	* * *Enforcement * * *
10	Sec. 24. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION; POSITION; APPROPRIATION
11	(a) One new full-time, exempt litigator position is created in the Human
12	Rights Commission to prosecute violations of Vermont's anti-discrimination
13	laws including the fair housing laws.
14	(b) In fiscal year 2024, \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund
15	to the Human Rights Commission for personal services related to the new
16	litigator position.
17	Sec. 25. [Reserved.]
18	Sec. 26. 9 V.S.A. § 4507 is amended to read:
19	§ 4507. CRIMINAL PENALTY
20	A person who violates a provision of this chapter shall be fined not more
21	than \$1,000.00 \$10,000.00 per violation.

1	* * * Building Safety * * *
2	Sec. 27. VERMONT FIRE AND BUILDING SAFETY CODE; POTENTIAL
3	REVISIONS; REPORT
4	(a) On or before January 15, 2024, the Executive Director of the Division
5	of Fire Safety shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that
6	identifies and examines provisions from other jurisdictions' fire and life safety
7	codes for residential buildings that:
8	(1) would facilitate in Vermont:
9	(A) the increased construction of new residential units;
10	(B) the conversion of existing space into new residential units; or
11	(C) both; and
12	(2) could be incorporated into the Vermont Fire and Building Safety
13	Code.
14	(b) The report shall include recommendations for any legislative action
15	necessary to enable the identified provisions to be incorporated into Vermont's
16	Fire and Building Safety Code.
17	* * * Single-Room Occupancy * * *
18	Sec. 28. [Reserved.]
19	* * Eviction Rescue Fund * * *
20	Sec. 29. HOUSING RISK MITIGATION; EVICTION RESCUE FUND

1	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$2,500,000 is appropriated from the
2	General Fund to the Agency of Human Services to provide eviction rescue
3	funding on behalf of tenants for rental arrears and prevent eviction for
4	nonpayment of rent if such funding will preserve a tenancy.
5	* * * Employer Housing Partnership * * *
6	Sec. 30. [Reserved.]
7	* * * Conversion of Commercial Properties to Residential Use * * *
8	Sec. 31. [Reserved.]
9	* * * HomeShare * * *
10	Sec. 32. HOMESHARING OPPORTUNITIES; APPROPRIATION
11	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$200,000.00 is appropriated from the
12	General Fund to the Department of Housing and Community Development
13	funding to expand home-sharing opportunities throughout the State.
14	* * * Mobile Homes and Mobile Home Parks * * *
15	Sec. 33. MOBILE HOMES; MOBILE HOME PARKS; APPROPRIATION
16	(a) In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the
17	General Fund to the Department of Housing and Community Development to
18	provide financial support for home repair, home improvement, housing
19	transition, park infrastructure, legal assistance, and technical assistance.
20	(b) On or before January 15, 2024, the Department of Housing and
21	Community Development, in collaboration with the Central Vermont Office of

1	Economic Opportunity, shall study and report to the General Assembly
2	concerning:
3	(1) how to incorporate the considerations and needs of mobile home
4	owners and mobile home parks, including infrastructure and habitability
5	enhancements, into all existing State housing programs; and
6	(2) opportunities and barriers to creating new mobile home parks and to
7	maximizing the efficient use of existing parks.
8	* * * Vermont Housing Finance Agency * * *
9	Sec. 34. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 2 is amended to read:
10	Sec. 2. FIRST-GENERATION HOMEBUYER; IMPLEMENTATION;
11	APPROPRIATION
12	(a) Guidelines. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall adopt
13	guidelines and procedures for the provision of grants to first-generation
14	homebuyers pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5930u(b)(3)(D) consistent with the
15	criteria of the Down Payment Assistance Program implemented pursuant to
16	32 V.S.A. § 5930u(b)(3) and with this section.
17	(b) As used in this section and 32 V.S.A. § 5930u(b)(3)(D), a "first-
18	generation homebuyer" means an applicant a homebuyer who self-attests that
19	the applicant homebuyer is an individual:
20	(1)(A)—whose parents or legal guardians:

1	(A) do not have and during the homebuyer's lifetime have not had
2	any present residential ownership interest in any State; and or
3	(B) whose spouse, or domestic partner, and each member of whose
4	household has not, during the three-year period ending upon acquisition of the
5	eligible home to be acquired, had any present ownership interest in a principal
6	residence in any State lost ownership of a home due to foreclosure, short sale,
7	or deed-in-lieu and have not owned a home since that loss; or
8	(2) is an individual who has at any time been placed in foster care.
9	* * *
10	Sec. 34a. FIRST GENERATION HOMEBUYER; APPROPRIATION
11	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
12	General Fund to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency for grants through the
13	First Generation Homebuyer Program.
14	* * * Middle-Income Homeownership
15	Development Program * * *
16	Sec. 35. 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 182, Sec. 11 is repealed.
17	Sec. 36. 10 V.S.A. § 629 is added to read:
18	§ 629. MIDDLE-INCOME HOMEOWNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
19	<u>PROGRAM</u>
20	(a) The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall establish a Middle-Income
21	Homeownership Development Program pursuant to this section.

1	(b) As used in this section:
2	(1) "Affordable owner-occupied housing" means owner-occupied
3	housing identified in 26 U.S.C. § 143(c)(1) or that qualifies under Vermont
4	Housing Finance Agency criteria governing owner-occupied housing.
5	(2) "Income-eligible homebuyer" means a Vermont household with
6	annual income that does not exceed 150 percent of area median income.
7	(c) The Agency shall use the funds appropriated in this section to provide
8	subsidies for new construction or acquisition and substantial rehabilitation of
9	affordable owner-occupied housing for purchase by income-eligible
10	homebuyers.
11	(d) The total amount of subsidies for a project shall not exceed 35 percent
12	of eligible development costs, as determined by the Agency, which the Agency
13	may allocate consistent with the following:
14	(1) Developer subsidy. The Agency may provide a direct subsidy to the
15	developer, which shall not exceed the difference between the cost of
16	development and the market value of the home as completed.
17	(2) Affordability subsidy. Of any remaining amounts available for the
18	project after the developer subsidy, the Agency may provide a subsidy for the
19	benefit of the homebuyer to reduce the cost of purchasing the home, provided
20	<u>that:</u>

1	(A) the Agency includes conditions in the subsidy, or uses another
2	legal mechanism, to ensure that, to the extent the home value has risen, the
3	amount of the subsidy remains with the home to offset the cost to future
4	homebuyers; or
5	(B) the subsidy is subject to a housing subsidy covenant, as defined
6	in 27 V.S.A. § 610, that preserves the affordability of the home for a period of
7	99 years or longer.
8	(3) The Agency shall allocate not less than 33 percent of the funds
9	available through the Program to projects that include a housing subsidy
10	covenant consistent with subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection.
11	(e) The Agency shall adopt a Program plan that establishes application and
12	selection criteria, including:
13	(1) project location;
14	(2) geographic distribution;
15	(3) leveraging of other programs;
16	(4) housing market needs;
17	(5) project characteristics, including whether the project includes the use
18	of existing housing as part of a community revitalization plan;
19	(6) construction standards, including considerations for size;
20	(7) priority for plans with deeper affordability and longer duration of
21	affordability requirements;

1	(8) sponsor characteristics;
2	(9) energy efficiency of the development; and
3	(10) historic nature of the project.
4	(f)(1) When implementing the Program, the Agency shall consult
5	stakeholders and experts in the field.
6	(2) The Program shall include:
7	(A) a streamlined and appropriately-scaled application process;
8	(B) an outreach and education plan, including specific tactics to reach
9	and support eligible applicants, especially those from underserved regions or
10	sectors;
11	(C) an equitable system for distributing investments statewide on the
12	basis of need according to a system of priorities that includes consideration of:
13	(i) geographic distribution;
14	(ii) community size;
15	(iii) community economic need; and
16	(iv) whether an application has already received an investment or
17	is from an applicant in a community that has already received Program
18	funding.
19	(3) The Agency shall use its best efforts to assure:

1	(A) that investments awarded are targeted to the geographic
2	communities or regions with the most pressing economic and employment
3	needs; and
4	(B) that the allocation of investments provides equitable access to the
5	benefits to all eligible geographical areas.
6	(g) The Agency may assign its rights under any investment or subsidy made
7	under this section to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board or any
8	State agency or nonprofit organization qualifying under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3),
9	provided such assignee acknowledges and agrees to comply with the
10	provisions of this section.
11	(h) The Department shall report to the House Committee on General, and
12	Housing and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and
13	General Affairs on the status of the Program annually, on or before January 15.
14	Sec. 37. MISSING MIDDLE-INCOME HOMEOWNERSHIP;
15	APPROPRIATION
16	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$20,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
17	General Fund to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency for the Missing
18	Middle-Income Homeownership Development Program.
19	* * * Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program * * *
20	Sec. 38. 10 V.S.A. § 629a is added to read:
21	§ 629A. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

1	(a) Creation; administration. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency shall
2	design and implement a Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program and shall
3	create and administer a revolving loan fund to provide subsidized loans for
4	rental housing developments that serve middle-income households.
5	(b) Loans; eligibility; criteria.
6	(1) The Agency shall adopt processes, procedures, and guidelines to
7	implement the Program consistent with this section, including a simple
8	application process that is accessible to small developers, builders, and
9	contractors.
10	(2)(A) To be eligible for a subsidized loan through the Program, a
11	project shall create two or more new rental housing units, which may include
12	market rate and affordable units, provided that at least 25 percent of the units
13	in the project are affordable to a household earning between 65 and 150
14	percent of the applicable area median income.
15	(B) Projects may include new construction, acquisition with
16	substantial rehabilitation, and preservation of naturally occurring affordable
17	housing.
18	(3) A loan is available only for the costs of the project allocable to the
19	affordable units.
20	(4)(A) The Agency shall calculate the maximum amount of a loan,
21	which shall not exceed the lesser of:

1	(i) 35 percent of the costs of the project allocable to the affordable
2	units; or
3	(ii) the following amounts based on area median income bands:
4	(I) \$125,000.00 per unit for each unit that is affordable to a
5	household earning from 65 percent to 80 percent of area median income;
6	(II) \$100,000.00 per unit for each unit that is affordable to a
7	household earning not from 81 to 120 percent of area median income; and
8	(III) \$75,000.00 per unit for each unit that is affordable to a
9	household earning from 121 to 150 percent of area median income.
10	(B) The Agency shall adopt and implement a method to adjust the
11	values specified in this subdivision (b)(4)(A)(ii) of this section at least annually
12	for inflation and may adopt a smoothing mechanism to adjust the maximum
13	loan values within each band based on levels of affordability.
14	(5) The Agency shall determine the term and interest rate of a loan. The
15	Agency may adopt one or more mechanisms to provide an enhanced subsidy to
16	incentivize projects, including:
17	(A) a lower interest rate;
18	(B) an interest-only option with deferred principal repayment; and
19	(C) partial loan forgiveness.
20	(6) The Agency shall adopt a Program plan that allows for an enhanced
21	subsidy for a project that meets one or more of the following:

1	(A) The project receives five percent or more of the total funding
2	from an employer or employer-capitalized loan or grant.
3	(B) The project receives five percent or more of the total funding
4	from a municipal or regional housing fund, local fiscal recovery fund, or other
5	form of community investment.
6	(C) The project utilizes tax-exempt bond funding or federal low-
7	income housing tax credits for at least 20 percent of the project's total units.
8	(D) The project is small in scale and provides infill development
9	within a historic settlement pattern.
10	(7) The Agency shall use one or more legal mechanisms to ensure that:
11	(A) a subsidized unit remains affordable to a household earning the
12	applicable percent of area median income for the longer of:
13	(i) seven years; or
14	(ii) full repayment of the loan plus three years; and
15	(B) during the repayment period, the annual increase in rent for a
16	subsidized unit does not exceed three percent.
17	(c) Program design.
18	(1) When designing and implementing the Program, the Agency shall
19	consult stakeholders and experts in the field.
20	(2) The Program shall include:
21	(A) a streamlined and appropriately-scaled application process;

1	(B) an outreach and education plan, including specific tactics to reach
2	and support eligible applicants, especially those from underserved regions or
3	sectors;
4	(C) an equitable system for distributing investment statewide on the
5	basis of need according to a system of priorities that includes consideration of:
6	(i) geographic distribution;
7	(ii) community size;
8	(iii) community economic need; and
9	(iv) whether an application has already received an investment or
10	is from an applicant in a community that has already received Program
11	funding.
12	(3) The Agency shall use its best efforts to assure:
13	(A) that investments are targeted to the geographic communities or
14	regions with the most pressing economic and employment needs; and
15	(B) that the allocation of investments provides equitable access to the
16	benefits to all eligible geographical areas.
17	(d) Revolving funds; costs of administration.
18	(1) The Agency may use not more than six percent of Program funds for
19	the costs of administration.

1	(2) The Agency shall retain payments of principal, interest, and any fees
2	in a revolving loan fund, the amounts of which it shall use to issue future loans
3	through the Program.
4	(e) The Agency shall report to the House Committee on General and
5	Housing and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and
6	General Affairs on the status of the Program annually, on or before January 15.
7	Sec. 39. RENTAL HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM;
8	APPROPRIATION
9	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$20,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
10	General Fund to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency to implement the
11	Rental Housing Revolving Loan Program created in 10 V.S.A. § 629.
12	* * * Vermont Rental Housing Improvement Program * * *
13	Sec. 40. 10 V.S.A. § 699 is amended to read:
14	§ 699. VERMONT RENTAL HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
15	(a) Creation of Program.
16	(1) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall
17	design and implement the Vermont Rental Housing Improvement Program,
18	through which the Department shall award funding to statewide or regional
19	nonprofit housing organizations, or both, to provide competitive grants and
20	forgivable loans to private landlords for the rehabilitation, including
21	weatherization, of eligible rental housing units.

1	(2) The Department shall develop statewide standards for the Program,
2	including factors that partner organizations shall use to evaluate applications
3	and award grants and forgivable loans.
4	(3) The Department shall authorize a partner organization to use not
5	more than six percent of its Program award for the organization's costs of
6	administration.
7	(4) A landlord shall not offer a unit created through the Program as a
8	short-term rental, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4301.
9	(b) Eligible rental housing units. The following units are eligible for a grant
10	or forgivable loan through the Program:
11	(1) Non-code compliant.
12	(A) The unit is an existing unit, whether or not occupied, that does
13	not comply with the requirements of applicable building, housing, or health
14	laws.
15	(B) If the unit is occupied, the grant or forgivable loan shall include
16	terms and conditions to avoid displacement of the current residents.
17	(2) New accessory dwelling units. The unit will be:
18	(A) a newly created accessory dwelling unit that meets the
19	requirements of 24 V.S.A. § 4412(1)(E);
20	(B) a newly created unit within an existing structure;
21	(C) a newly created residential structure that is a single unit; or

1	(D) a newly created unit within a newly created structure that
2	contains five or fewer residential units.
3	(c) Administration. The Department shall require a housing organization
4	that receives funding under the Program to adopt:
5	(1) a standard application form that describes the application process and
6	includes instructions and examples to help landlords apply;
7	(2) an award process that ensures equitable selection of landlords,
8	subject to a housing organization's exercise of discretion based on the factors
9	adopted by the Department pursuant to subsection (a) of this section; and
10	(3) a grant and loan management system that ensures accountability for
11	funds awarded.
12	(d) Program requirements applicable to grants and forgivable loans.
13	(1) A grant or loan shall not exceed \$50,000.00 per unit. In determining
14	the amount of a grant or loan, a housing organization shall consider the number
15	of bedrooms in the unit and whether the unit is being rehabilitated or newly
16	created.
17	(2) A landlord shall contribute matching funds or in-kind services that
18	equal or exceed 20 percent of the value of the grant or loan.
19	(3) A project may include a weatherization component.
20	(4) A project shall comply with applicable building, housing, and health
21	laws.

1	(5) The terms and conditions of a grant or loan agreement apply to the
2	original recipient and to a successor in interest for the period the grant or loan
3	agreement is in effect.
4	(6) The identity of a recipient and the amount of a grant or forgivable
5	loan are public records that shall be available for public copying and inspection
6	and the Department shall publish this information at least quarterly on its
7	website.
8	(e) Program requirements applicable to grants. For a grant awarded under
9	subdivision (b)(1) of this section for a unit that is non-code compliant through
10	the Program, the following requirements apply for a minimum period of five
11	years:
12	(1) A landlord shall coordinate with nonprofit housing partners and local
13	coordinated entry organizations to identify potential tenants.
14	(2)(A) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection (e), a
15	landlord shall lease the unit to a household that is exiting homelessness or
16	actively working with an immigrant or refugee resettlement program.
17	(B) If, upon petition of the landlord, the Department or the housing
18	organization that issued the grant determines that a household exiting
19	homelessness is not available to lease the unit, then the landlord shall lease the
20	unit:

1	(1) to a household with an income equal to or less than 80 percent
2	of area median income; or
3	(ii) if such a household is unavailable, to another household with
4	the approval of the Department or housing organization.
5	(3)(A) A landlord shall accept any housing vouchers that are available to
6	pay all, or a portion of, the tenant's rent and utilities.
7	(B) If no housing voucher or federal or State subsidy is available, the
8	total cost of rent for the unit, including utilities not covered by rent payments,
9	shall not exceed the applicable fair market rent established by the Department
10	of Housing and Urban Development.
11	(4)(A) A landlord may convert a grant to a forgivable loan upon approval
12	of the Department and the housing organization that approved the grant.
13	(B) A landlord who converts a grant to a forgivable loan shall receive
14	a 10-percent credit for loan forgiveness for each year in which the landlord
15	participates in the grant program.
16	(f) Requirements applicable to forgivable loans. For a forgivable loan
17	awarded under subdivision (b)(1) of this section for a unit that is non-code
18	compliant through the Program, the following requirements apply for a
19	minimum period of 10 years:
20	(1)(A) A landlord shall accept any housing vouchers that are available to
21	pay all, or a portion of, the tenant's rent and utilities.

1	(B) If no housing voucher or federal or State subsidy is available, the
2	cost of rent for the unit, including utilities not covered by rent payments, shall
3	not exceed the applicable fair market rent established by the Department of
4	Housing and Urban Development.
5	(2) The Department shall forgive 10 percent of the amount of a
6	forgivable loan for each year a landlord participates in the loan program.
7	(g) Requirements for an accessory dwelling unit.
8	(1) For a grant or forgivable loan awarded under subdivision (b)(2) of
9	this section for a unit that is a new accessory dwelling unit the total cost of rent
10	for the unit, including utilities not covered by rent payments, shall not exceed
11	the applicable fair market rent established by the Department of Housing and
12	Urban Development.
13	(2) A landlord shall not offer an accessory dwelling unit created through
14	the Program as a short-term rental, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4301. [Repealed.]
15	(h) Lien priority. A lien for a grant converted to a loan or for a forgivable
16	loan issued pursuant to this section is subordinate to:
17	(1) a lien on the property in existence at the time the lien for
18	rehabilitation and weatherization of the rental housing unit is filed in the land
19	records; and

1	(2) a first mortgage on the property that is refinanced and recorded after
2	the lien for rehabilitation and weatherization of the rental housing unit is filed
3	in the land records.
4	Sec. 41. VHIP; APPROPRIATION
5	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$20,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
6	General Fund to the Department of Housing and Community Development for
7	the Vermont Rental Housing Improvement Program.
8	Sec. 42. VERMONT HOUSING & CONSERVATION BOARD;
9	APPROPRIATION
10	In fiscal year 2024 the amount of \$25,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
11	General Fund to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to provide
12	affordable mixed-income income rental housing and homeownership units;
13	improvements to manufactured homes and communities; recovery residences;
14	and, if determined eligible, housing available to farm workers and refugees.
15	VHCB shall also use the funds for shelter and permanent homes for those
16	experiencing homelessness in consultation with the Secretary of Human
17	Services.
18	* * * Housing Permitting and Approval Process; Performance Audit * * *
19	Sec. 43. [Reserved.]
20	* * * Effective Date * * *
21	Sec. 44. EFFECTIVE DATES

- This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023, except that Secs. 1 (24 V.S.A.
- 2 § 4414), 2 (24 V.S.A. § 4412) except for subdivision (D), 3 (24 V.S.A.
- 3 § 4413), and 4 (24 V.S.A. § 4303) shall take effect on December 1, 2024.