



VCUDA

Vermont Communications Union Districts Association

House and Senate Committee Presentations
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About the Communications Union Districts

- Each CUD is organized as a multi-town municipality, as a result of a ***Town Meeting vote to create a CUD. Towns may join a CUD via a Select Board vote.***
- Each ***town*** appoints ***representatives*** to ***participate directly in the CUD governance*** and transparent administration, including compliance with Open Meeting Law.
- ***Committed to universal service*** - will reach every on-grid address starting with the currently unserved and underserved.
- ***Accountable and Transparent*** - Town representation in governance assures grassroots involvement, transparency, and accountability.
- ***Public Ownership*** - All assets funded by the CUD are owned by the district.
- ***Private Partnership*** - CUDs have partnered with commercial partners to operate the CUD infrastructure.
- ***Financing*** - CUDs may pursue revenue bonds and other forms of debt. CUDs do not have general tax or bond authority: public control without local tax financing.

Communications union districts (CUDs) were created ... to coordinate and implement creative and innovative solutions in their respective territories, particularly where existing providers are not providing adequate service that meets the needs of their residents and businesses

...

Vermont Act 71 2021
Findings and Intent (13)

CUDs are Mission-Driven and locally governed.



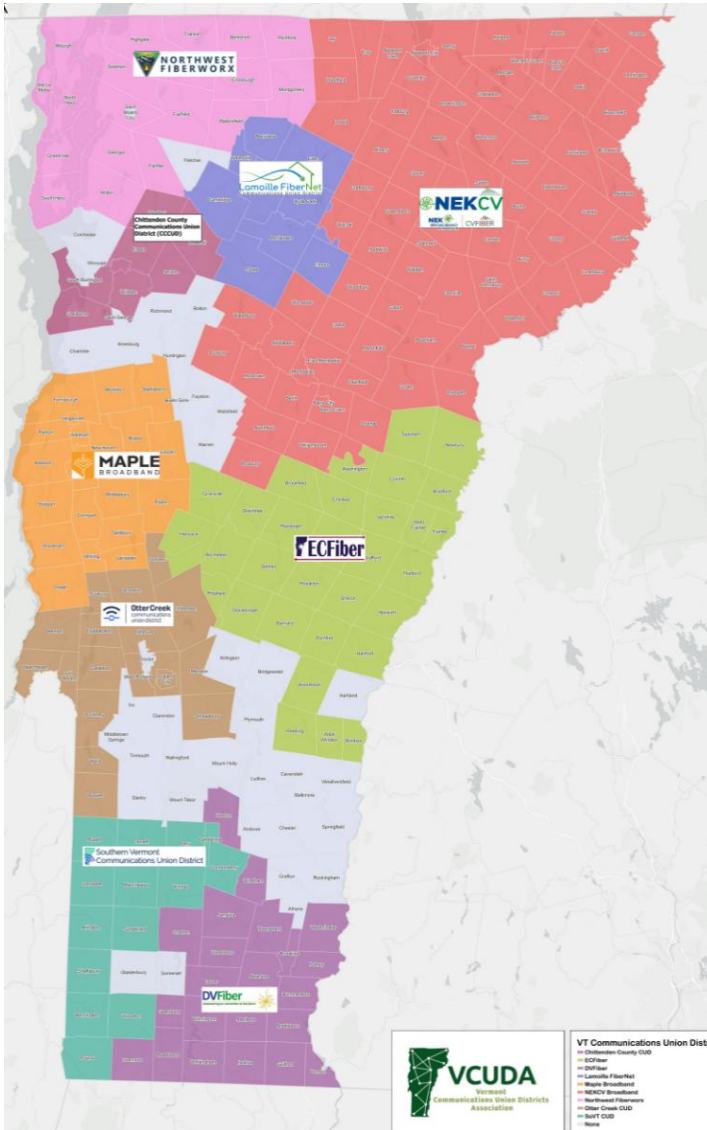
The Vermont Communications Union Districts Association serves to unite the interests of Vermont's municipal internet networks, devising ways to share resources and voicing CUD consensus on critical policy issues.

- Unites the interests of Vermont's municipal internet networks
- Devises ways to drive efficiencies
 - Shared Procurement
 - Financial and Technical Best Practices
 - Utility company coordination
 - Understanding State, Federal grant, and compliance requirements
- Voices CUD consensus on policy issues

Each CUD appoints a representative and alternate member to VCUDA.
VCUDA currently maintains part-time staff and contractor support.

Goal: Statewide World-Class Broadband

- Fiber to the premises (FTTP) only technology certain to deliver symmetrical broadband
- FTTP is a long-term infrastructure investment
- CUD-controlled infrastructure enables upgrades and pricing/consumer protection considerations
- ECFiber was the pioneer
- Act 71 of 2021 formed the Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) and Vermont Community Broadband Fund (VCBF), kick-started CUDs, and brought universal service mandate
- CUDs pursued different strategies



CUDs are rapidly expanding to unserved areas

2022-25 delivered fiber broadband service to many Vermonters



“Broadband internet service from DVFiber was a key factor for me starting my own business and prevented us from moving elsewhere. We didn't want to leave Vermont, but needed work and finally came to the decision that it was our only option to survive. Our line of work necessitated high quality, high-speed internet for remote work opportunities.”

Peder Rude, DVFiber Customer, Readsboro Resident, Business Consultant



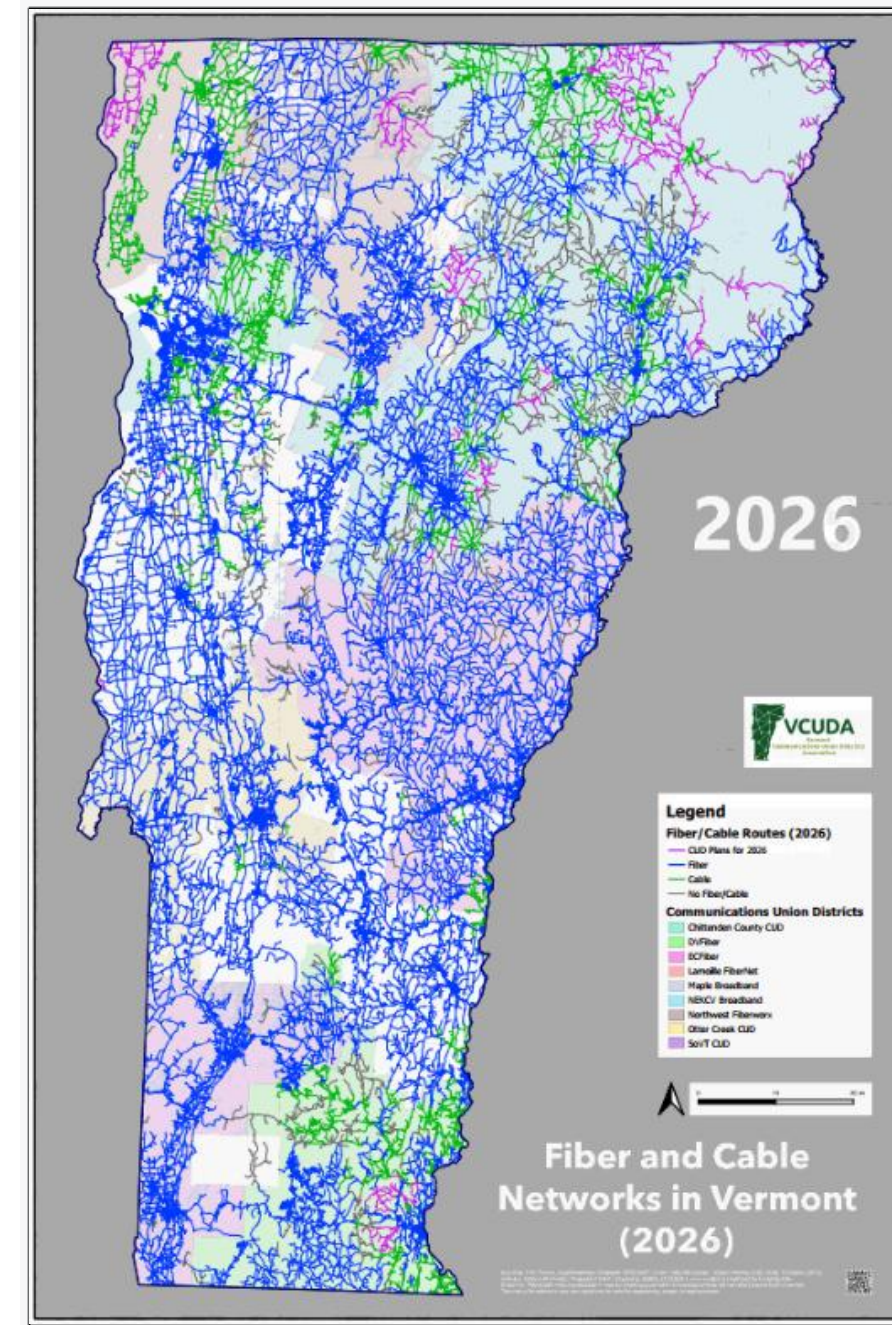
“Vermont as a state offers so much of what we are seeking in the way of community connectedness, beautiful landscape, schools, recreational opportunities and a general set of values that we relate to. What is deeply missing at this time in our state's history is rural and reliable high-speed internet.

The work of CVFiber and other communication districts is historic and deeply important.”

Megan and Matt McLane, CVFiber Customers, Worcester Residents, Occupational Therapist and Educator

Act 71: Five Years On

- VCBF has funded over 2,500 miles of new FTTP
- Public investment and CUD public-private partnerships have stimulated private investment
- Universal service is in sight for most of the state
- The job is not finished but the progress is huge
- Legislative support and funding have been pivotal



Legislative Appreciation



YOU MADE THIS HAPPEN!



2015 – Formation of CUDs: Title 30 VSA Chapter 82

2021 – Formation of VCBB and VCBF: Title 30 VSA Chapter 91A

2023 – Merger Legislation for CUDs

2024 – Match Funding to Enable CUDs to Compete in BEAD

The Road Ahead



Continuation of existing deployment programs

- Continued expansion: DVFiber, ECFiber, Maple Broadband, NEKCV, Northwest Fiberworx
- Project closeout and sustainability for Lamoille Fibernet, Otter Creek, Southern VT CUD

Participation in Federal "Broadband Equity Access and Deployment" Program

- Next phase of federal funding after ARPA-funded state program
- Rewritten by new administration, just rolling out now

Cross-CUD collaboration, Efficiencies, and Maturation

- VCUDA supporting financial, grant, and policy coordination
- Small groups of CUDs collaborating on shared interests

VCUDA Legislative Priorities



Maintain Vermont Values & Legislative Direction

- Receive NTIA and NIST approval and begin receiving BEAD funds
- Continued support for Act 71 programs
- Promote coordination between broadband and other utilities, housing developments, etc

Longer-term Challenges

- Maximizing the use of public infrastructure for public good
- Affordability, digital skills, and barriers to access
- CUDs experimenting with affordability programs
- Foreseeing the next challenge

Community Broadband is about Vermonters.

Led by staff experts and hundreds of community volunteers, Vermont and its Communications Union Districts are on the move, delivering world class broadband where it has never been available before.



Vermont Communications Union Districts

Developed under the direction of hundreds of community volunteers.



**NORTHWEST
FIBERWORX**



Lamoille FiberNet
Communications Union District



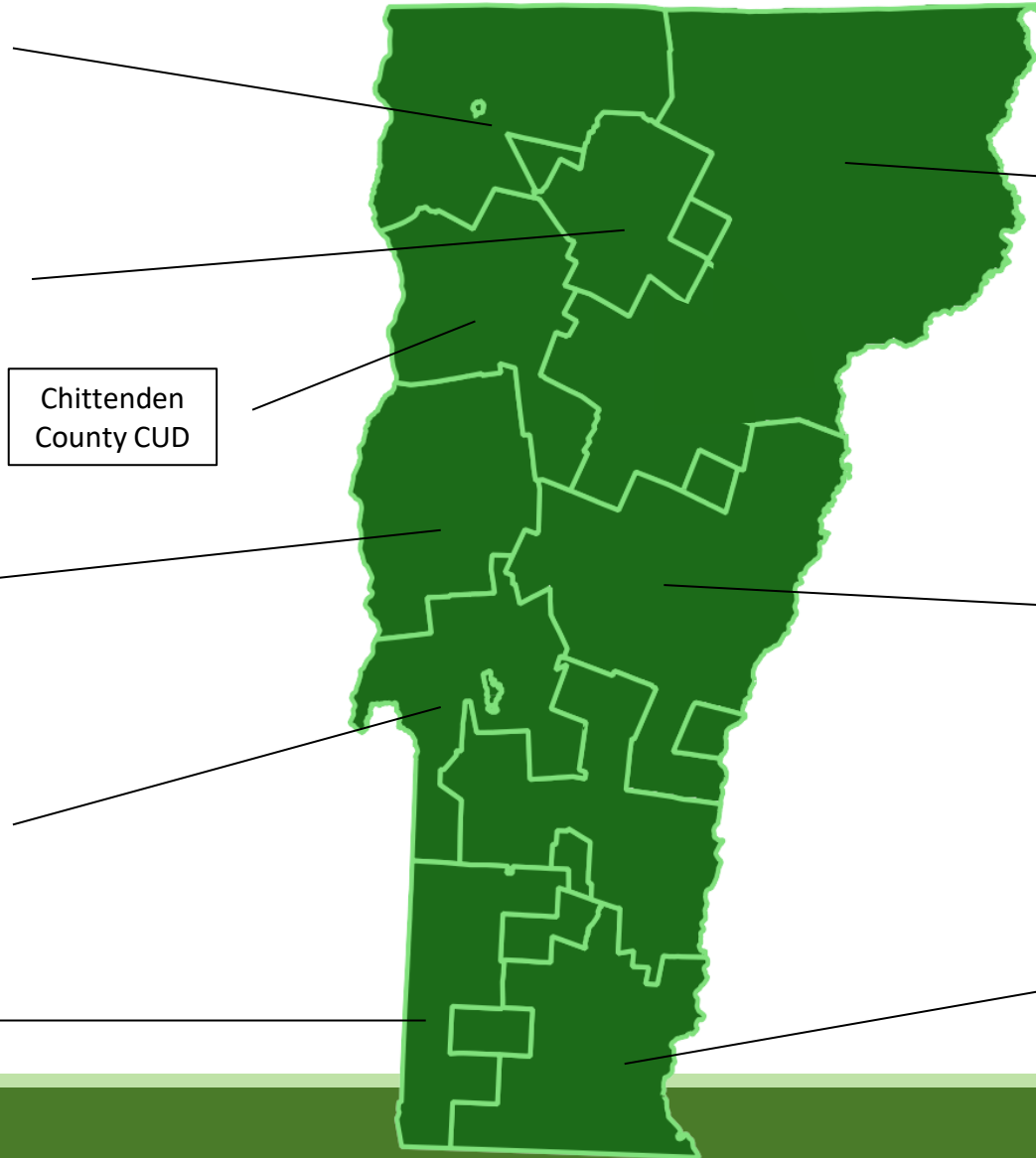
MAPLE
BROADBAND



OtterCreek
communications
union district



**Southern Vermont
Communications
Union District**



Chittenden
County CUD



NEK BROADBAND | **CV**FIBER



DVFiber

empowering our connection to the future

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