



The Road Home

A plan for creating permanent, affordable, and service-supported housing for Vermonters who participate in Developmental Disabilities Services

Presentation by

Kirsten Murphy, Executive Director, VT Developmental Disabilities Council

Act 69 – What?

Create a Plan to develop housing for individuals who participate in Developmental Disabilities Services.

Plan must have:

1. How long will it take to get to 600 units?
2. What would this cost?
3. Are there State policies that need to change?
4. Will the Plan address the full range of support needs for this group?



Act 69, Section 5 – Who?

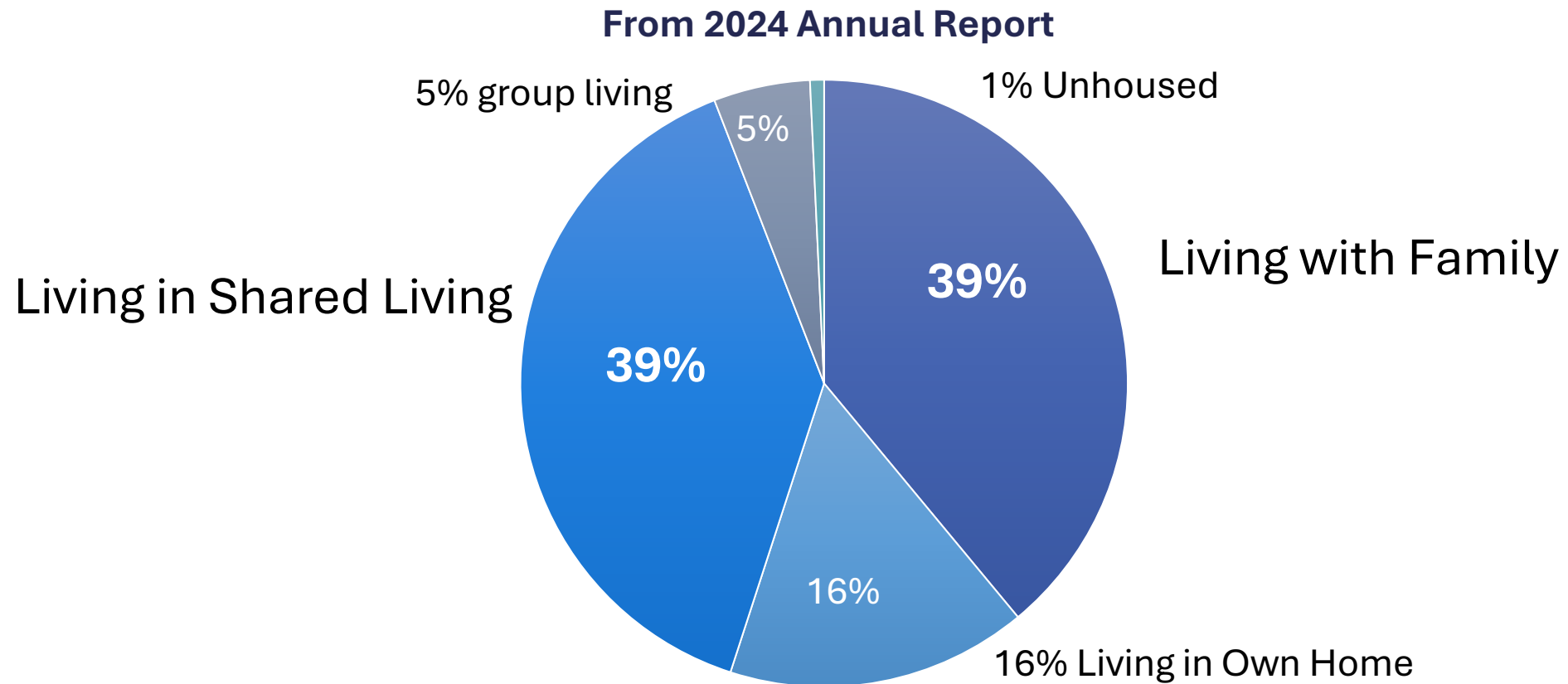
Representatives from:

- Agency of Human Services, Secretary's Office
- State Treasurer's Office
- Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)
- Department of Housing and Community Development
- Associated General Contractors of Vermont
- Vermont Care Partners
- Parent-led Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative
- Green Mountain Self-Advocates
- Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council
- Legislature -- Senator Alison Clarkson and Rep. Ann Donahue

Touchstones

- Every Vermonter with I/DD deserves to live with dignity, safety, and self-determination in the community they call home.
- It's not about the Building! It's about having the right supports in place.

Why are we talking about this?



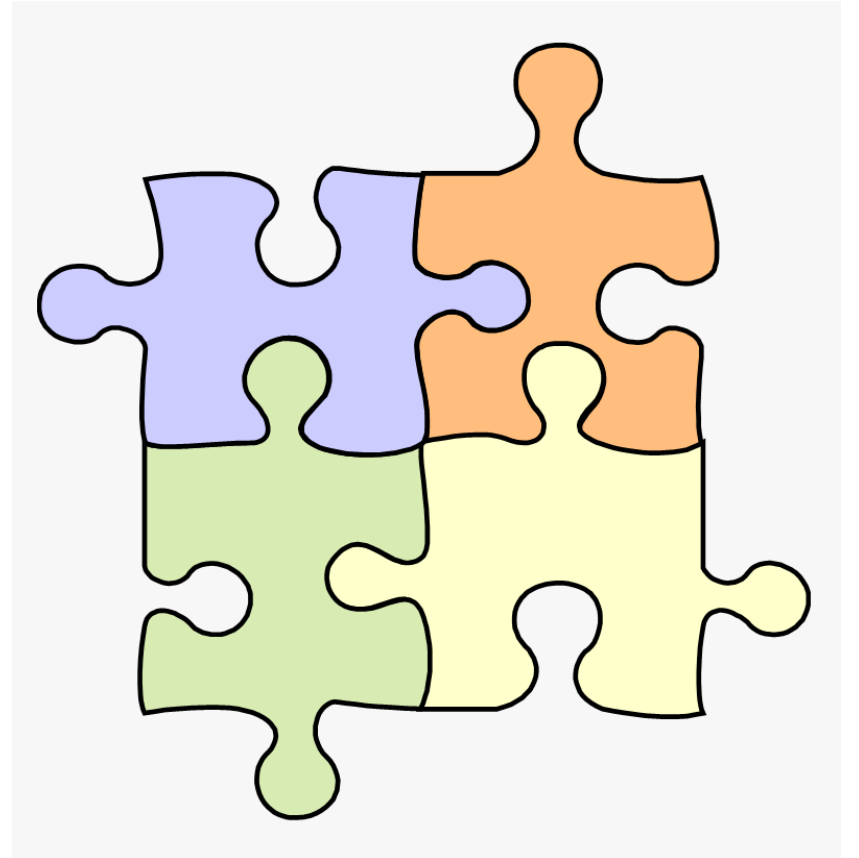


The world has changed....

- Fewer Vermonters want to be shared living providers.
- New Rules, like the Settings Rule.
- Medicaid says people are supposed to have choice.
- Expectations of people with I/DD have changed.
- Parents are aging.
- Vermont has an affordable housing crisis.

The Act 69 Report

- Provides a 13-point Plan with high priority recommendations:
 - 5 are about how to pay for this housing
 - 2 are about getting better information about the housing needed.
 - 2 focus on state policies that make it harder to develop this housing.
 - 4 are about coordinating this effort.
- The recommendations work together.



The Act 69 Report

Ties housing to other important issues facing the DDS system of care and people with I/DD:

- The Workforce Crisis
- Ableism and low expectations
- Quality Assurance Concerns





What the
report does
not do....

Compare housing models.

The 13-Point Plan

How does Vermont get to 600 units of permanent, affordable, service-supported housing?

Affordable

Need two things:

- Money to build the housing.
- A rent that people living on SSI can afford.



How to Pay for this Housing

Invest \$10 million each
year for 5 years.
Creates 50-60 units/year
Apply for federal money.

Create housing
vouchers that are state-
funded.
Costs \$1-\$2 million.

Take advantage of
existing federally funded
housing vouchers.
Get on waiting lists.

Because people have been steered away....

From housing and vouchers administered by the VT State Housing Authority and local housing authorities.

- Make sure DDS participants know about Section 8 and other vouchers.
- Make sure DDS participants know Section 8 vouchers can be used flexibly. For example, you can live with a service provider.
- Open waiting lists for 90 days.



Housing planners want to know how many people in a county needs this type of housing.

Get Better Data

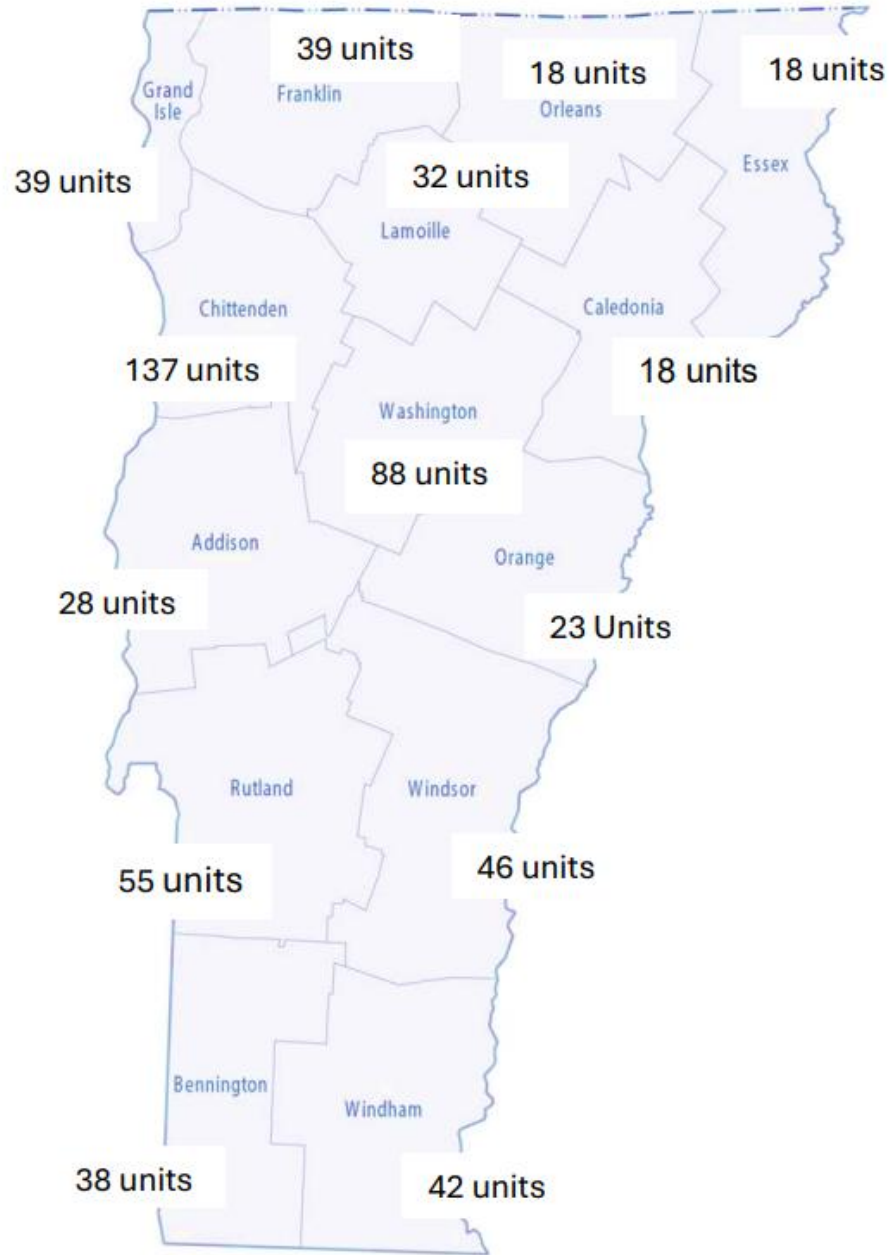


Collect data about housing needs

Case Management Organizations could ask people.

- What do you want for housing now?
- What do you want for housing in 3 years?
- Is there anyone you want to live with?





Map Data

- Where in the state do people in DDS need housing?
- Where are there project-based vouchers?

Licensing

Homes where more than 2 DDS participants live usually need a license.

There are 3 types of license:

- Therapeutic Community Residence (TCR) – 7 homes
- Residential Care, level 3 – 11 homes
- Residential Care, level 4 – none right now

There are also some group living settings that are not licensed.



Licensing, continued



Positive Things:

- Licensing can make sure there are strong health and safety measures.
- Licensing can protect individual rights.

Negative Things:

- Can limit the autonomy of residents.
- Some rules can make a house feel less “homelike.”
- Some rules add cost, because staff do more reporting and checking that rules are followed.

Licensing, continued

- If more than 2 people receiving services live in a home, should a license always be required?
- There are only three types of license available in the DD system.
- The three types of license are not a good fit for some of the housing people want.

RECOMMENDED: DAIL “fast track” a study to figure out the best way to solve this problem.



Residences not run by DA/SSAs

- Are not paid enough money to deliver the services their residents need.
- Are heavily dependent on fundraising. Not sustainable. Not scalable.

RECOMMENDED: A group is working on this. Continue to use the tools of payment reform to figure out a fair way to fund residential services when they are not run by DA/SSAs



Coordinating Future Housing Development

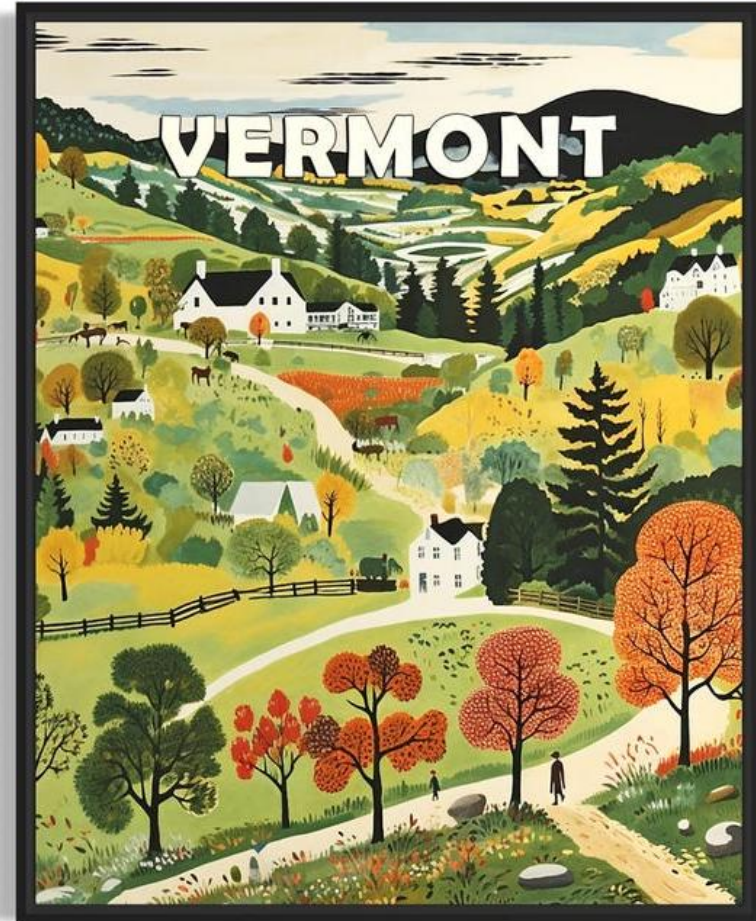
Advisory Committee

- * Time limited.
- * Annual report to the legislature.

AHS and DAIL Staff

Housing Navigator at Land Access and Opportunity Board

This must be a
statewide effort.
How do we bring all
the agencies into
this work?



Answering the Legislature's Questions

1. How long will it take to get to 600 units?

Vermont could be well on its way in 5 years.

2. What would this cost?

Report suggests \$56 to \$61 million over 5 yrs.

3. Are there State policies that need to change?

Very likely. Need to address licensing & paying non-agency operated settings.

4. Will the Plan address the full range of support needs for this group?

Yes, if we plan carefully, coordinate efforts, use good data



The Big Picture

Workforce

- Continue and expand initiatives aimed at increasing the number of well-trained direct support and residential services staff.

Ableism

- Educate widely about self-advocacy, the dignity of risk, disability rights, and the value of community inclusion.

Quality Assurance

- Continue to build DDSD's capacity for quality monitoring. Share the results of these activities transparently with state leaders, self-advocates, and family members.



For more information

- Report, meeting minutes:
<https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/partners/act-69-2025>
- Video version of this presentation is also available.
- Kirsten.Murphy@Vermont.gov