



RuralEdge
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*Strengthening Northeast Kingdom
Communities, one home at a time.*

RuralEdge envisions Northeast Kingdom communities where every individual can live in stable, affordable housing with access to the services they need to live a healthy and prosperous life.

Organizational History



- ▶ RuralEdge began in 1986 as the Gilman Housing Trust with a focus on providing housing for families, seniors, and those with disabilities. Its first development was Gilman Senior Housing, a restoration of the Manager's House associated with the Gilman Mill. The project still is in RuralEdge's portfolio today, continuing to serve the residents of Gilman.
- ▶ RuralEdge is a non-profit housing and community-development corporation that focuses on affordability. The corporation has served the Northeast Kingdom for 39 years with their main focus being to strengthen homes and communities in and around the Northeast Kingdom.
- ▶ In 1998, RuralEdge became a Chartered Member of the NeighborWorks America Network. NeighborWorks Organizations are held to the highest standards and are intensely monitored and assessed every three years for continued membership.
- ▶ RuralEdge is governed by a Board that includes representation from the public, private and governmental sectors and also includes resident representation.





To our rural service area, VHCB funding brings...

- ▶ A diverse portfolio of nearly 1,000 perpetually affordable units by the end of 2025 spanning the Northeast Kingdom.
- ▶ A robust pipeline of new projects including both acquisitions and new construction to best serve the housing needs of the Northeast Kingdom, and additional funding for VHCB ensures that those projects move forward.
- ▶ Work with community partners and municipalities to meet the needs of residents throughout the Northeast Kingdom and develop properties that are compatible with local plans, market demand and wishes.
- ▶ Construction projects that bring millions of dollars of economic development to communities, businesses and workers throughout the region.
- ▶ A real estate portfolio that contributes over \$700,000 annually to local and school taxes in the Northeast Kingdom.
- ▶ Expertise and guidance to community partners, municipalities, and private developers regarding real estate development projects.
- ▶ Housing for the most vulnerable residents of the region. 43% of the households we serve moved in from homelessness and about 70% of our residents have household incomes less than \$20,000 annually.



With VHCB funding, we are doing exciting work, creating new neighborhoods and bringing new units online...

A group of people, including a pregnant woman in a blue and white striped dress, a man in a blue t-shirt, and a woman in a striped dress, are standing outdoors. They are gathered around a table with a logo that says "COMMUNITY Together". The background shows a building and some greenery. The overall scene suggests a community meeting or a presentation.

To our rural service area, VHCB funding brings...

- Safe, secure housing opportunities
- A new beginning and hope for the future
- A supportive environment
- Convenience and affordability
- A healthy environment where residents thrive.

▶ Randall Mudge and Sanford Compton, two of Olivia Place's first residents know what living in substandard housing is like;

▶ “We ended up doing a year without hot water, a shower, heat, or a real lock on the door,” said Randall when speaking about his previous apartment.

▶ The brothers, who both work in the area, have had a “transformative” experience living at Olivia Place for the past four years.

▶ “Our lives have gotten infinitely better. We're able to be clean and warm. We haven't been sick at all since we got here. It's a lot safer, and it's nice and quiet. It's wonderful” said Randall.

The Impact of Safe and Secure Housing



Randall Mudge (left) and Sanford Compton (right) in the hallway of their new home, Olivia Place in Lyndonville



A New Beginning and Hope for the Future

The Shelter at Moose River

Samantha Carr and Tim Kidder, guests of The Shelter at Moose River, spoke at its opening ceremony. Samantha praised the shelter for helping them to not fall back into addiction and saving their relationship. “I was worried that Tim and I would end up getting back into using. So this place kind of saved us... But it also saved our relationship. We were going through quite a bit when we first got here. Since we worked through all that, our relationship is actually better due to being here.”

Tim added, “The shelter has not only been a place for me to have a roof over my head, it's helped me find my true passion in life... to help others. You can always turn a negative into a positive with the right resources and the right people supporting you [in getting] where you want to be from where you are now.”

Samantha and Tim moved from the shelter into a permanent rental unit developed through RuralEdge’s VHIP. Samantha has gained employment locally and Tim is pursuing his goal of securing a full-time job as a peer counselor.

Stable Housing Creates a Supportive Environment and Builds Resident Leaders

► The official opening of Olivia Place was challenged by COVID, and came in the form of a Pumpkin Walk, with over 500 pumpkins carved by area school children highlighting the grounds around the property. Since that time, the resident leaders have continued the event and expanded it. With a grant from the St. Johnsbury Community Hub, residents created a haunted trail behind the property that was enjoyed by many!

► Residents love to get outside and have embraced community gardens. At Glover Senior Housing we were able to expand the decks and add accessible garden boxes. The residents were very happy with the results and share their harvests across the community.



Affordable Homeownership for Working Vermonters and our Next Generation - Homeownership through VHCB's Homeland Program

Homeownership has become increasingly out of reach for working Vermonters and our next generation.

In Orleans, using VHCB's Homeland Program, RuralEdge assisted a single mother with two children who earns \$16 an hour working at Ethan Allen, to purchase the home she was renting. Now as a shared-equity home, affordable in perpetuity, the homebuyer is paying less monthly than she did as a renter. This investment maintains our workforce, keeps children in local schools and helps create homeowners where it never would have been possible.

In Groton, VHCB's Homeland Program assisted a young couple, one working for a non-profit and one working at a hospital, who had recently returned to Vermont, in purchasing the home of their dreams - the house where one had been raised. After a December closing, they are tackling improvement projects and volunteering in the community.



What Will the Future Look Like?

We know that the creation of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board focused on improving the quality of life for Vermonters. VHCB's investments in our developments - and in housing, conservation and historic preservation projects across the state, have had a transformative impact on so many lives. We hear the stories firsthand everyday.

We are pleased to see that the Governor has recommended full statutory funding of VHCB in his budget recommendation, and while funding at that level allows our work and that of our partner organizations across the State to continue, we have the ability to do so much more.

We have worked with communities across the Northeast Kingdom to embrace new housing - to bring abandoned, forgotten spaces back to life and add new buildings, supporting vulnerable Vermonters. Additional units won't be built or won't be placed in service in the time Vermonters' need, without full statutory funding for VHCB.