

Housing & Conservation Legislative Day

AHW Testimony to House Human
Services Committee, February 14,
2025



Who We Are

- Addison Housing Works is a nonprofit affordable housing owner, developer, and manager based in Vergennes, Vermont.
- We provide over 750 permanently affordable homes in Addison County including rental apartments, manufactured housing communities, and shared equity single-family homes and condos.
- We also offer resident services to vulnerable families and to seniors to help them age safely at home (SASH).





Full Statutory Funding (\$36.9M) for VHCB Supports:

- Permanent affordability
- Healthy homes with wraparound supports
- Smart growth & energy efficiency
- Downtown revitalization
- But, it's not enough—an additional \$40 million is needed just to meet the demand for new construction over the next year.
- Shown: 66 apartments built since 2015 including a new mixed-use neighborhood, an infill project, and a downtown revitalization project—all close to jobs and services in Middlebury, Bristol, and Vergennes.



VHCB & AHW Support the Most Vulnerable Vermonters

- 80 of AHW's 353 apartments (22%) are currently dedicated to formerly homeless households
- 28% of apartments leased in 2025 were to families and individuals exiting homelessness (18 households)
- Over half of our apartment residents qualify as “Extremely Low Income” – they subsist on incomes at or below the poverty line (hundreds of households in Addison County) ~\$25,000/yr
- 37% are elderly, and 32% have a disability
- Capacity grant from VHCB supports almost 10% of our operating budget – we could not do what we do without VHCB



Need for Resident Services

- Increasing need to serve more people exiting homelessness
- Higher acuity of need among residents since the pandemic
- Growing body of evidence for “Housing as a Platform for Health”
- AHW launched the Family Support Program in 2021 through local philanthropy; expanded in 2024
- Recognizing success and importance of resident services, VHCB received three-year grant to continue supporting this work through 2027



Family Support Program

- Focuses on families with children who are at-risk of eviction, but can serve anyone in AHW housing
- Entirely voluntary, resident signs a release so AHW can coordinate with other local service provider of resident's choice
- Goal is to stabilize housing and increase resident well-being, both at the individual level and the community level
- Fills gap in “upstream services” which often aren't available to residents who are currently housed but struggling – intervenes before they lose their housing



Impact

- 104 households with 68 children participated in the program in 2023
- Grew to 144 households with 94 children in 2024
- 96% remained stably housed at the end of the year
- Highlights:
 - Helped MHC residents access \$454,344 through MHIR and Weatherization
 - 34 Households brought current on rent; helped access \$27,352 from community partners
 - Helped households with:
 - Emotional Support (104)
 - Forms Assistance (255)
 - Squalor Intervention (42)
 - Referrals to Other Agencies (309)



Other Benefits

- Food security
 - Community Gardens
 - SNAP Forms
 - Food Shelf Deliveries
 - Fresh Veggies
- Community building
 - Community Suppers
 - DREAM Program
 - Literacy Initiatives
 - Intergenerational Valentines Exchanges



Thank You for Supporting VHCB & AHW!

Please support the Governor's recommendation of full base funding for VHCB to support critical housing and conservation projects.

There are more projects in the works than there is funding available, even with full base funding. AHW and other nonprofit developers like us may not be able to build more housing or invest in our existing infrastructure without additional funding for VHCB. This includes projects in which we have already invested thousands of dollars in pre-development expenses, supporting hundreds of homes in Addison County.

Please support additional funding for VHCB so we can continue to address the housing crisis in Addison County and across the state, with safe and decent affordable housing for all.