



# Community Planning + Revitalization



AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DEPT. HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

# Community Planning + Revitalization Division

The CP+R team uses a collaborative, **place-based approach** to land-use planning and community development that **empowers state and local leaders** to plan for and build vibrant, inclusive, and resilient downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods.

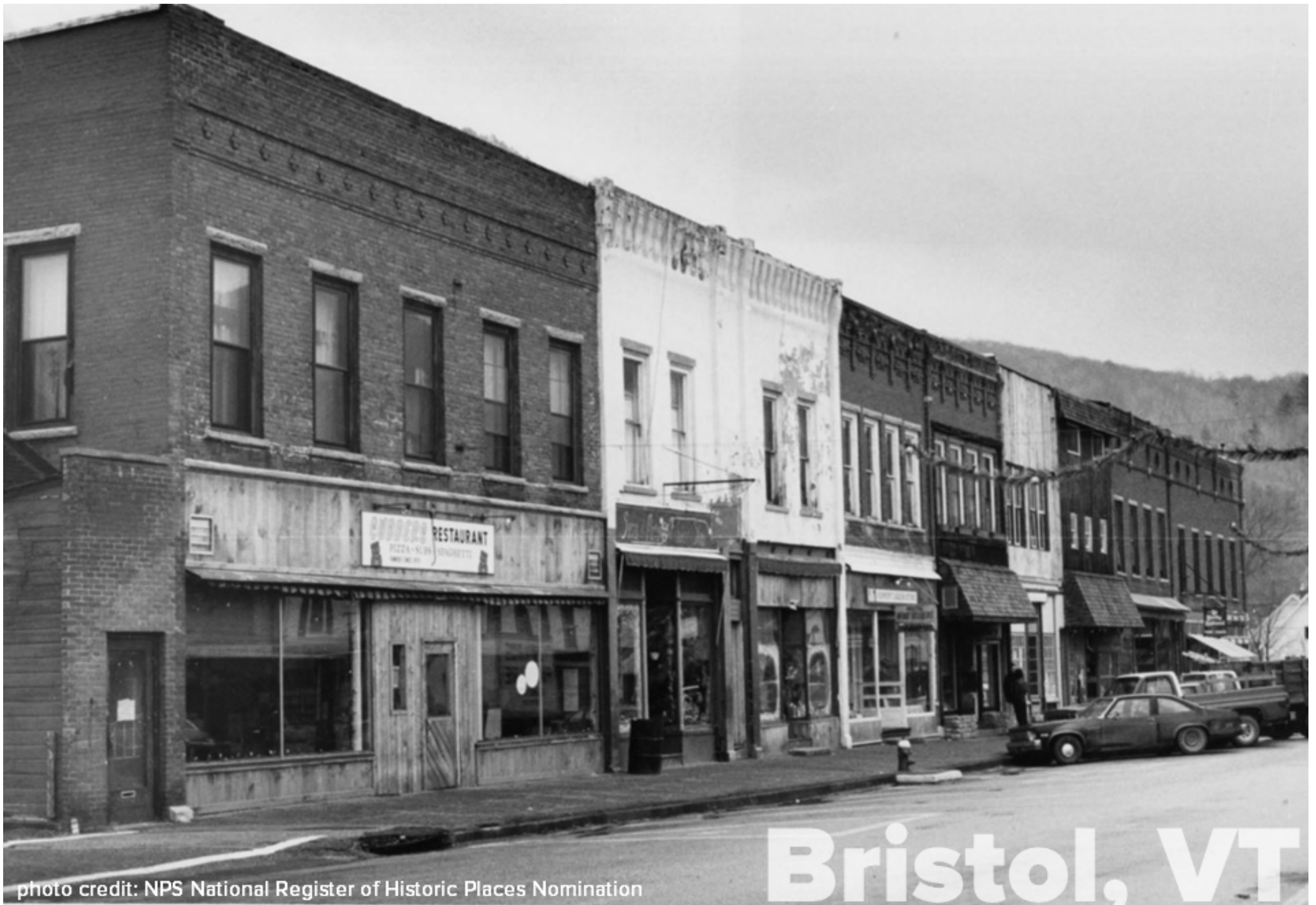


photo credit: NPS National Register of Historic Places Nomination

# Bristol, VT

**Bristol, Vermont**  
population: 3,782

**There's no better  
marketing, tourism draw,  
or talent recruitment  
strategy than investing in  
vibrant places where  
people want to live, work,  
and visit**

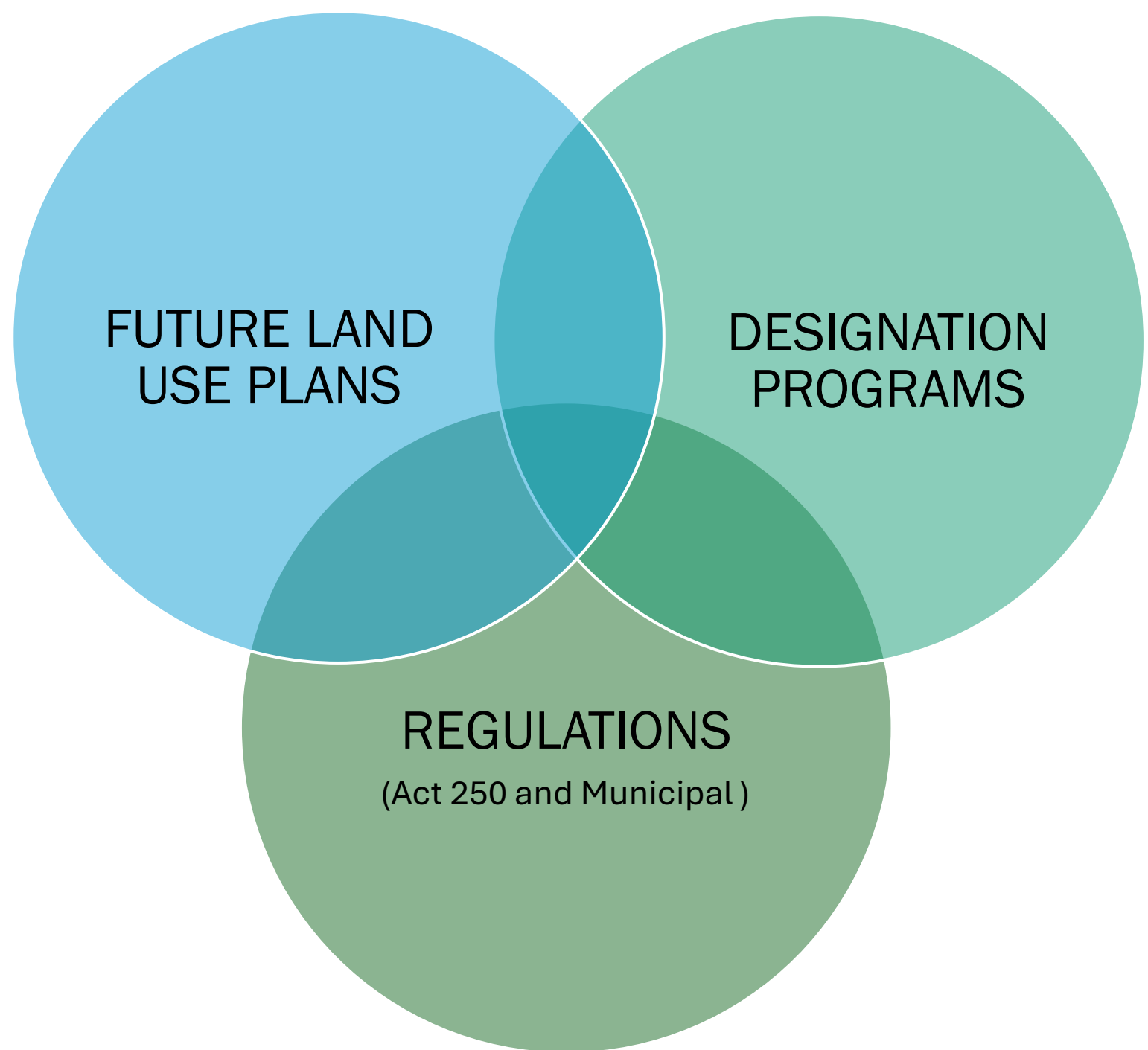




Place-based

# Act

# 181



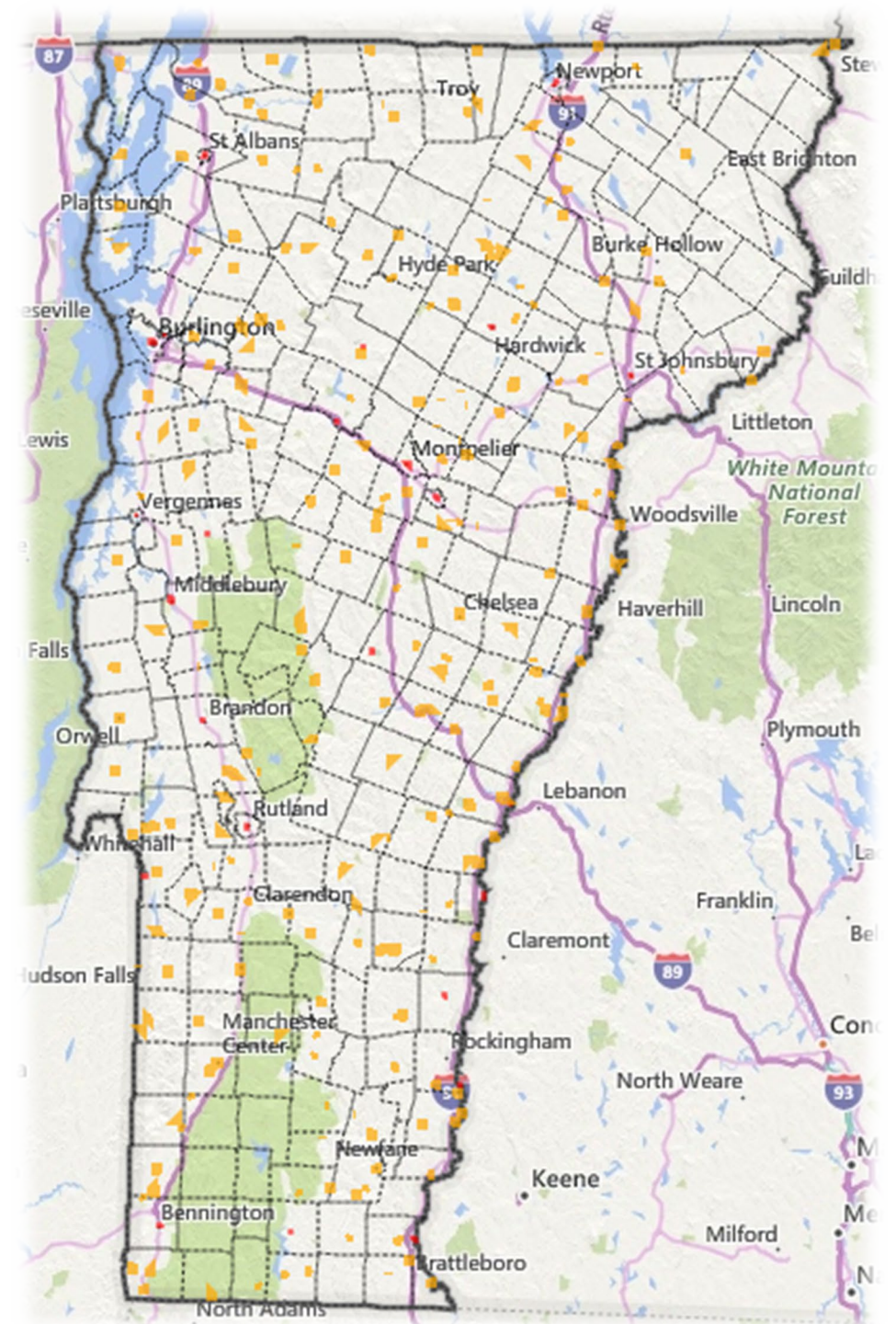
# Better Designations

Improved access and better benefits

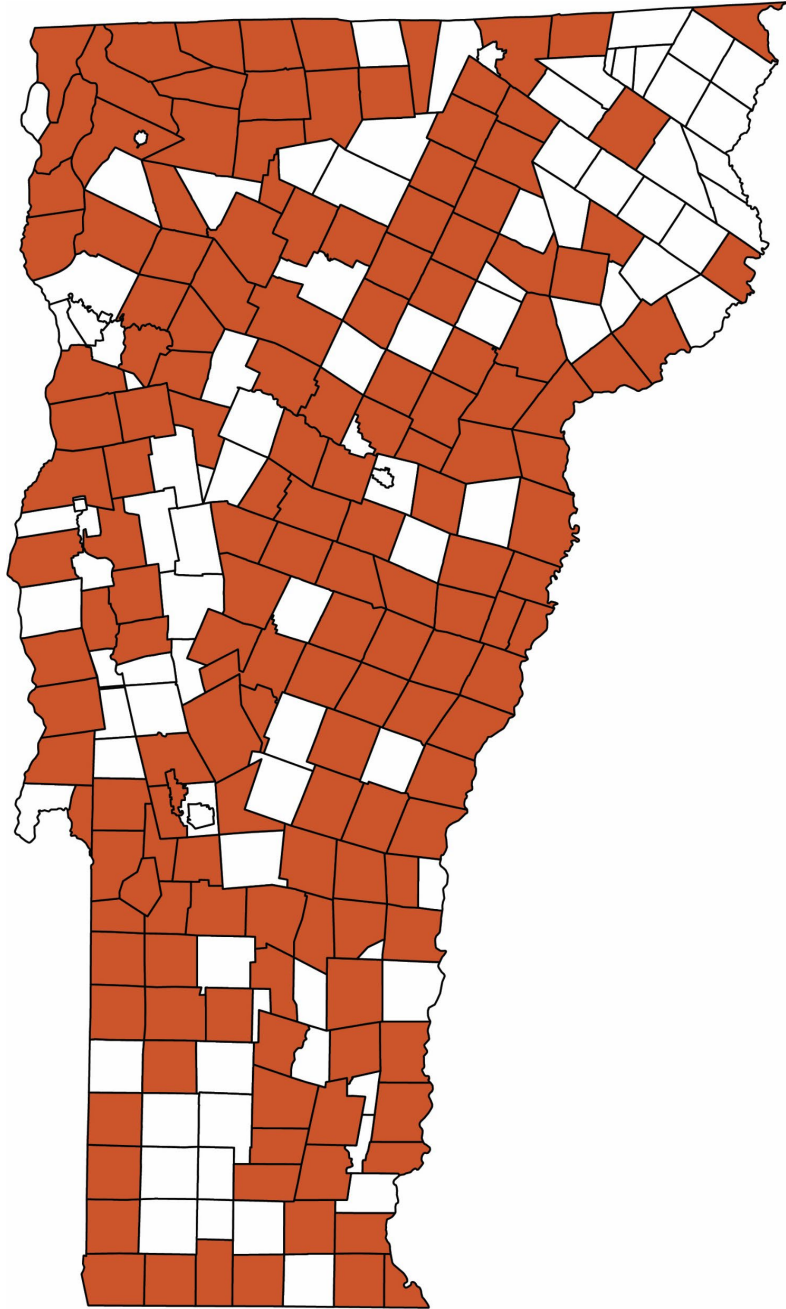


# State Designation

- 25 Years
- 295 designated areas
  - Every county
  - Every region
- A coordinating platform for shared priorities & investments
- Used as a proxy for state land use
- Rooted in Vermont's common goals and smart growth principles







**250**

Designated Village Centers

# The 5 Designations

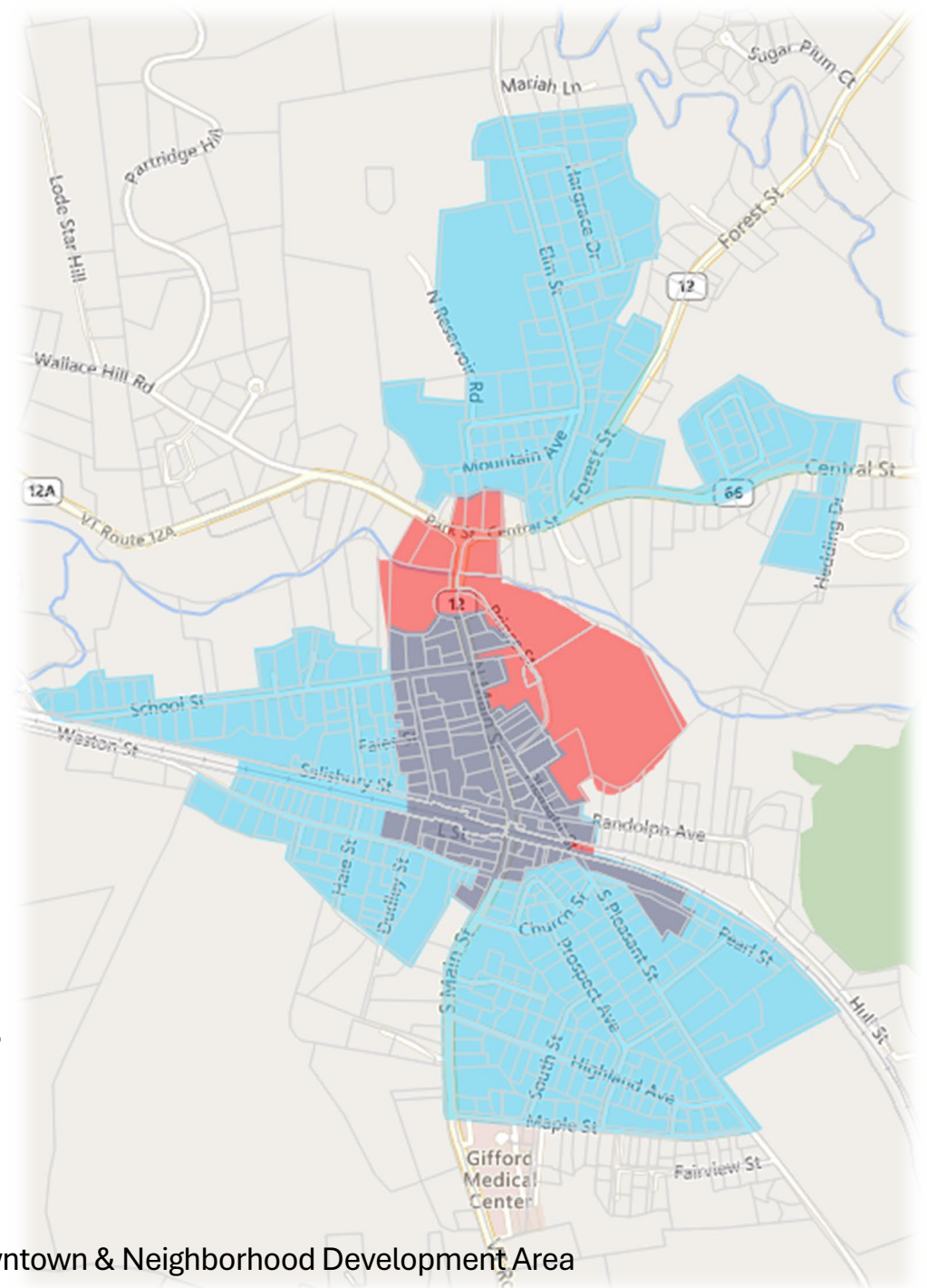
Distinct requirements & benefits

## 3 CORE DESIGNATIONS

1. Village Centers
2. Downtown Centers
3. New Town Centers

## 3 ADD-ON DESIGNATIONS

4. Growth Centers
5. Neighborhood Development Areas



# Designation 2050

Robust public outreach and engagement led by Smart Growth America & Community Workshop

In...



**6 months**

We aimed to reach...

**6** core stakeholder groups

local program users & leaders • program staff  
state agencies & partners  
legislators • planners & local gov • underrepresented Vermonters • leaders in business, climate health, and others sectors

We created and used...

**1 website**

~**350** grew a...  
**person e-news list**

planned and held...

**1 statewide summit**

**5 virtual conversations**

**9 strategic focus groups**

**20+ chats & interviews**

and gathered input from...

**4 targeted surveys**

plus special events, emails, and other sources

We asked...



What's working? What's not?

Are these the right designations?

Do they achieve our goals?

Do they offer the right benefits?

Who's left out? Who faces barriers?

What's our new vision?

What should we change & improve?

Hundreds of Vermonters responded, connected, shared ideas and shaped plans. Engagement looked like...

**500+**  
event registrations

Sign Up!

**359**  
survey & poll responses



**229**  
6-word visions

With participation from ...



and representation from organizations and interests like...

business • climate resilience • equity and social justice • regional planning • housing • economic development • education • research • historic preservation • zoning • consulting • rural development • media

# Act 181: Same Basic Concept

From 5 to 2 Designations

Each have requirements & benefits

Anticipate larger areas

## CENTERS

Step 1: Beginner

*Starter Village*

Step 2: Intermediate

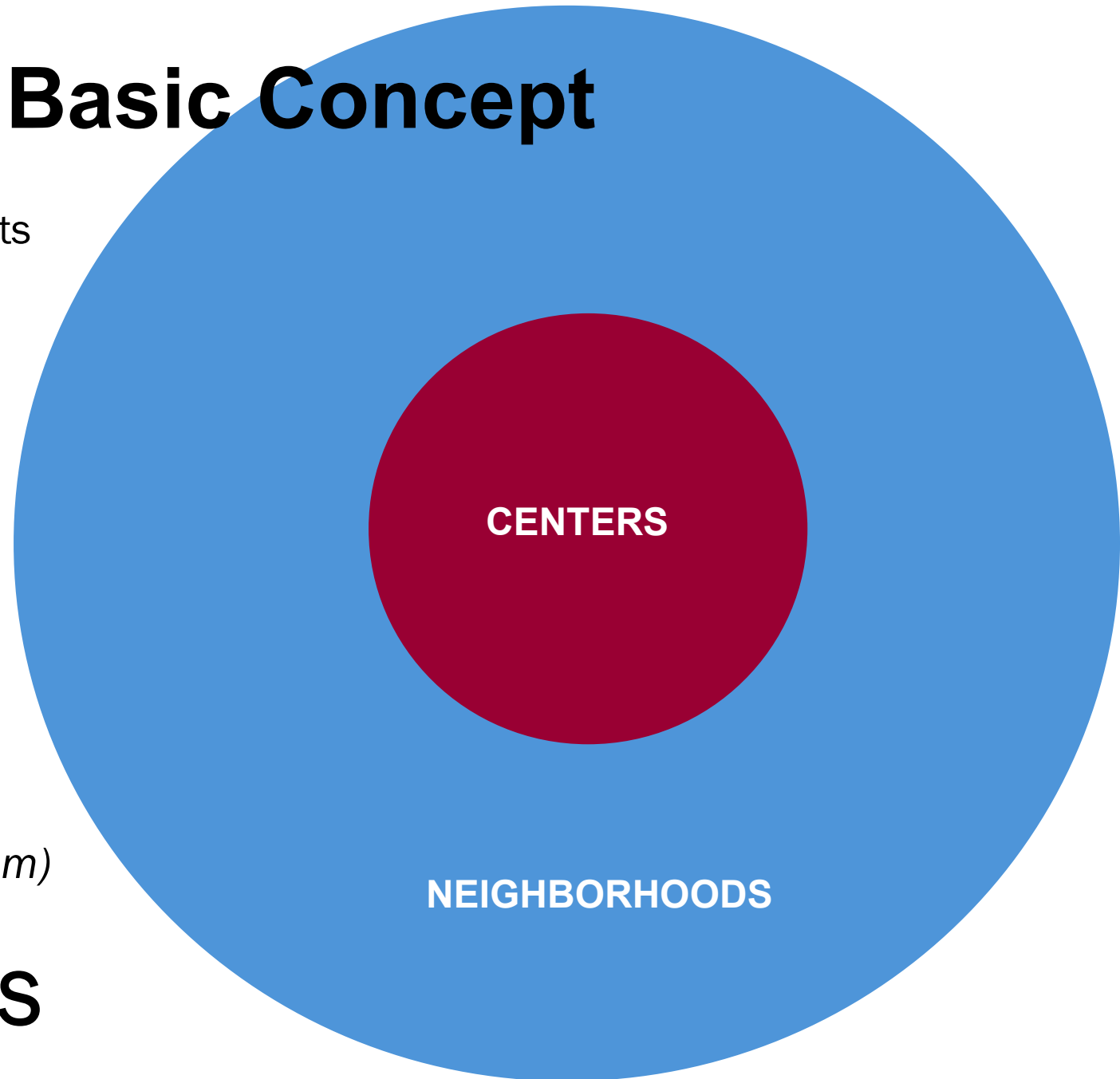
*Growing Village*

Step 3: Advanced

*Downtowns*

*(Main Street Program)*

## NEIGHBORHOODS



# Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Program



**Caitlin Corkins, Tax Credits & Grants Coordinator**  
VT Department of Housing and Community Development

# State Designation Program

The Vermont Downtown and Village Center Designations **recognize and support local revitalization efforts** across the state **with dedicated staff and funding** to help designated municipalities build and foster strong communities.

**24**

designated  
downtowns



**249**

designated  
village centers



**3**

new town  
centers



**17**

neighborhood  
development  
areas



**6**

growth  
centers



# Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

## By the Numbers [2021-2025]



**173**  
projects awarded



**84**  
communities  
served



**\$21.2 m**  
awarded tax  
credits



**\$698.3 m**  
in private  
investment

- Program was created in 1998
- Awards \$3 Million in credits annually
- Applications are competitive
- Building must be over 30 years old
- Must be located within a Designated Downtown or Village Center
- Applicants have 3 years from date of award to complete project

# Tax Credit Categories

## Historic Credit:

- Property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- 10% credit for all exterior and interior work.
- Must have an approved federal RITC application

*Smith Block, Brandon*





# Tax Credit Categories



## Façade Credit

- 25% credit for façade repairs
- Cap of \$25k in credit
- Work must meet preservation standards



*Wallingford Block & Chapman's Store, Fairlee*

# Tax Credit Categories

## Code Credit

- 50% credit for code improvements
- Elevators up to \$75K in credit
- Sprinkler systems up to \$50k in credit
- “Other code improvements” up to \$100K in credit

*Craftsbury General Store &  
Odd Fellows Building, Ludlow*



# Tax Credit Categories



## Flood Mitigation Credit

- Added to the program in FY 2023
- 50% credit for flood mitigation improvements
- Cap of up to \$100,000 in credits
- Helps flooded properties build back better, and encourages proactive improvements

*Positive Pie in Montpelier,  
Bennington High School*

# Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

- Credits can be carried forward up to nine years
- Can be sold to banks or insurance companies for cash, debt reduction, or favorable loan terms
- Non-profits are eligible, but not municipalities or single-family homes



*East Calais General Store*

# Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

## Legislative Ask:

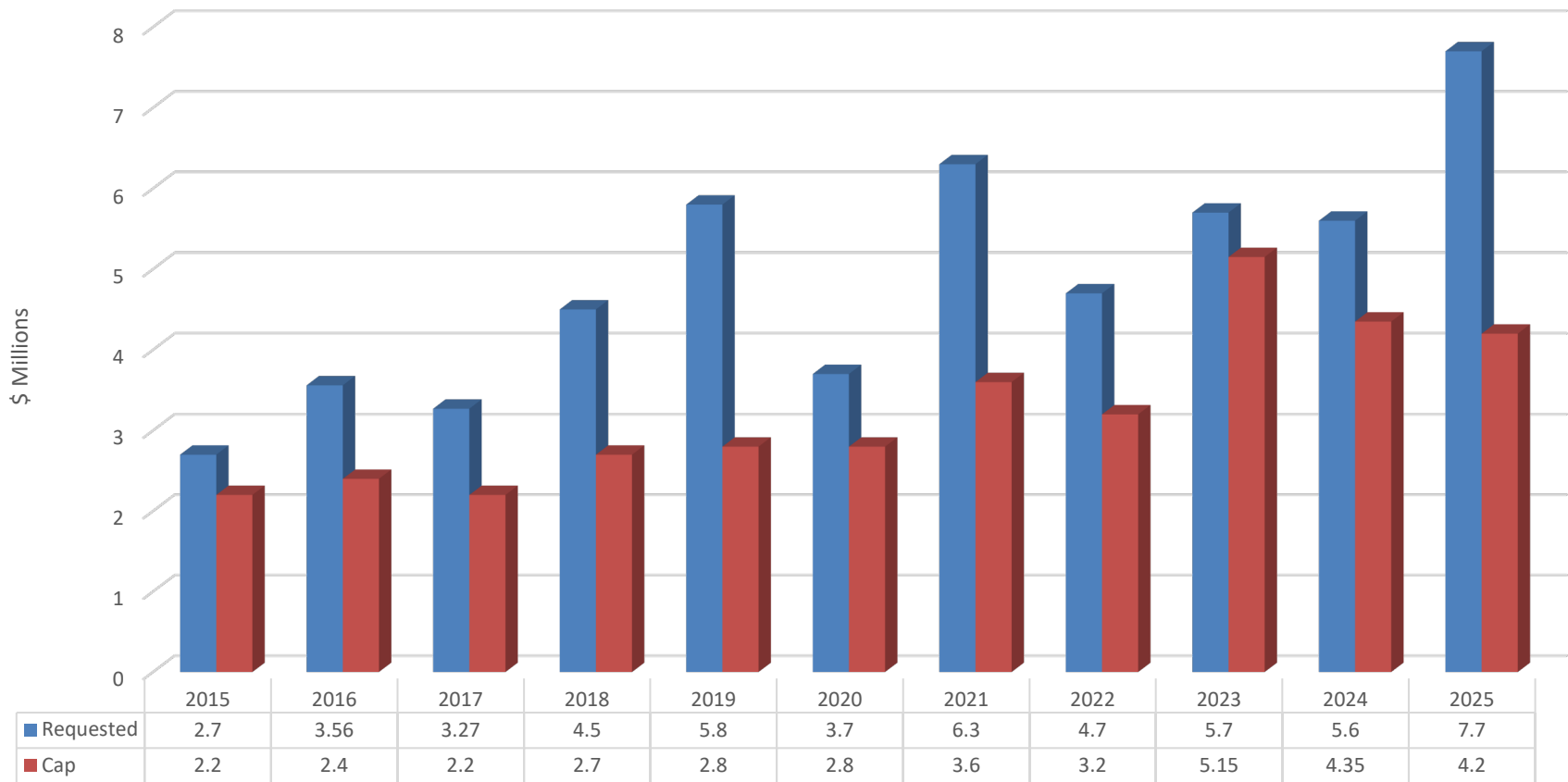
- Currently the program is funded at \$3 million annually
- Governor's proposed budget increases this to \$5 million annually

*Customs House,  
St. Albans*



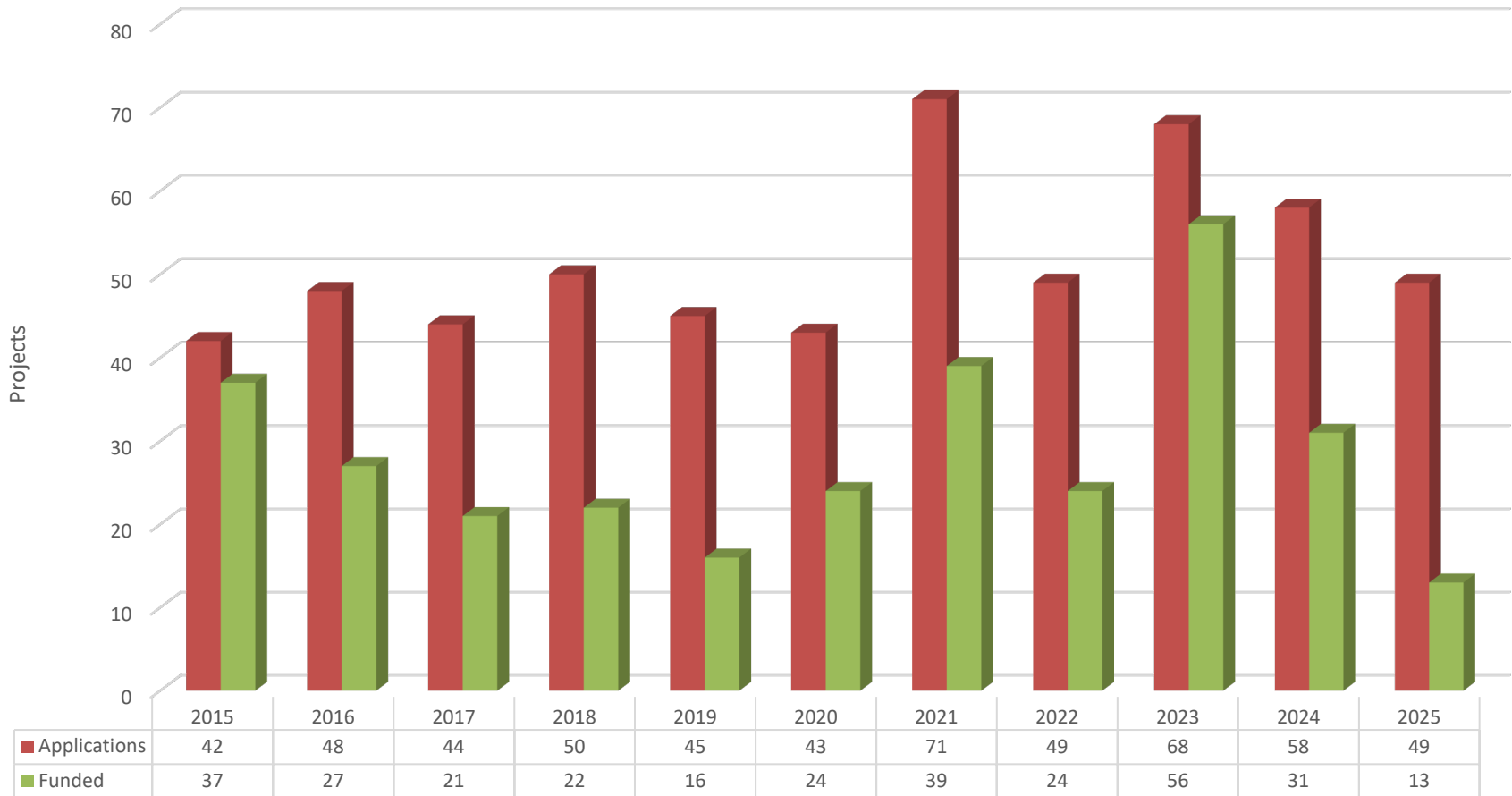
# Program Demand

Oversubscription - Dollars



# Program Demand

## Oversubscription - Projects



# Project Examples



Emerson DeWitt Warehouse, Brattleboro

**\$10.3 Million Project**

\$1.7M in Federal RITC funding  
\$408,100 in State Historic Credits

**\$2.1 Million - Total Tax Credits**



# Project Examples



## Former Caplan's, St. Johnsbury **\$680,000 Project**

\$16,225 - 25% State Façade Credit  
\$50,000 - 50% State Code Credit

**\$66,225 Total Tax Credits**

# Project Examples



Northfield, Grey Building

**\$23,392 Project**

\$11,696 – 50% Other Code Credit

**\$11,696 Total Tax Credits**



# Questions?

**Caitlin Corkins**

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