

RURAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Rural Technical Assistance Supports Community Vitality

VCRD and Our Partners Urge the Legislature to include a **\$500,000** appropriation to support rural technical assistance in the State's FY'27 budget.

State, regional and local partners working together to provide coordinated navigation support and flexible funding to Vermont's rural towns to achieve community priorities aligned with state goals

Vermont's small rural towns are full of leaders with vision. While facing enormous pressures and increasing uncertainty, they demonstrate incredible dedication and ingenuity. We listened to their challenges and ideas for action as part of the Vermont Evaluation of Rural Technical Assistance (VERTA) report and they told us what they need: coordinated state, regional and local services, hands-on navigation support, and flexible funding.

This funding will support the implementation of a coordinated service delivery system that builds on the strength of an existing network of technical assistance (TA) providers across the state (VCRD, Rural Economic Development Initiative, Regional Planning Commissions, Regional Development Corporations, Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and others). Together, we will provide:

- **Flexible municipal support:** Meaningful, flexible grants for town-specific projects focused on community and economic development initiatives such as childcare, housing, water/wastewater, climate resilience or other community priorities
- **TA navigation and wraparound support:** TA providers and consultants will coordinate their services and provide navigation support to communities in the cohort
- **Evaluation and learning:** Ongoing assessment to refine program design, improve statewide TA service delivery, and implement recommendations in the VERTA report



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