

RESOURCES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Each group that worked with the Creative Communities Program identified several priorities to pursue. In each case, resource teams composed of state, federal, and nonprofit expertise made suggestions on places for the action teams to follow-up. These are compiled here under broader categories, with hot links to many of the resources.

You are encouraged to use these links to find out more about the wide variety of assistance that may be available for your projects.

The categories are:

- Recreation/Parks/Environment
- Community, Arts and Business Spaces
- Internet and Technology
- Developing Collaborations
- Sustainability, Energy and Green Business
- Agriculture
- Cultural Connection
- Downtown Improvements
- Establish Your Area as a Learning Community
- Increasing Off-Season Activity

Recreation/Parks/Environment

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Expand Recreation in the Hardwick Lake Area
- Bring Arts and Community Projects to Taylor Park (St. Albans)
- Develop an Eastern Avenue Park (St. Johnsbury)
- Make Better Use of the River (Middlebury)
- Develop and Market a Richmond Trails System
- Rutland as a Recreation Center
- Make Downtown Plainfield More Welcoming to Pedestrians

Trails

Public/ private partnerships often produce the largest pot of money for recreation. Building small scale institutional capacity can help – for example in Stowe a local Mountain Bike Club formed to maintain bike trails.

Kiosks can be a useful starting project. The information provided by a kiosk can begin with something as simple as boxes similar to trail head sign-in boxes, attached to willing business entryways and containing pamphlets or a few notices of local events.

Some outdoor trails focus on the activity (biking, jogging, hiking, etc.) others can focus on a series of particular sites to visit. For example, you could feature migratory bird concentration sites that are accessible to the public or a tour of top photography sites.

There are many options for designating village/town walks along existing paths. The most important step is to have something on paper – even if it's only photocopies of a simple guide. Local residents can organize theme walks of all sorts, some of which might get published or written up in a local newspaper, others just for those who attend on a weekend afternoon.

Springfield has a frequently used riverside trail. Visit Springfield and talk with the group that put it together.

Rutland took on a trails system as a key part of its creative economy work. **EJay Bishop** at the Rutland Recreation Department: 773-1822x14.

Chittenden County's Regional Planning Commission created a master plan for paths that could serve as a model. For questions about trail planning in Chittenden County, **Chapin Spencer** at Local Motion, (802) 652-2453, will either know the answer or know who to ask.

Funding for outdoor recreation and trails is available through the State of Vermont **Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation**. For details, explore their site at vtfpr.org/recgrant/trgrant.cfm and vtfpr.org/reclwcf/index.cfm.

A statewide source of information is the **Vermont Trails & Greenways Council** at the **Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation**, 241-3683.

If part of a trail system includes conservation projects near rivers, then you can also check with the **Natural Resources Conservation Service** which works with farmers and landowners to do stream bank erosion work. Contact Bill Forbes at NRCS (802) 775-8034 for information. You could also check with your **local Watershed Association**.

The **National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program** helps plan and implement local trail, greenway and river protection projects. Contact Jennifer Waite, VT Projects Director, NPS Rivers and Trails, PO Box 178, Woodstock, VT 05091, 802-457-3368, Jennifer_waite@nps.gov.

VT Conservation Youth Corp may be able to help build, clear, and clean up trails and access points. Call (802) 434-3969.

College students often can assist with trail building – either the physical building or mapping out the trail systems. Check with **area schools**.

Working with landowners and gaining rights to use their land can be the most difficult part of a trail project. The **Vermont Center for Geographic Information** (vcgi.org) might be able to assist with mapping parcels.

The **Vermont Recreation Trails Grants Program** of the **Agency of Natural Resources** may have funding. Matching grants are offered for maintenance of existing trails and the construction of new trails on state, municipal and private lands. These grants can also help prepare and print trail maps and more. Contact Sherry Smecker, grants administrator at (802) 241-3690.

The **VT Agency of Transportation** (VTrans) administers a Bicycle/Pedestrian program that provides advice and connections to grant resources. Amy Bell is the coordinator: 828-0457.

The **Bikes Belong Coalition** (BBC) assists local organizations in developing bicycle facility projects with grants of up to \$10,000. Bikes Belong Coalition, 1368 Beacon St. Suite 102, Brookline, MA 02446-2800, (617)734-2800 tim@bikesbelong.org.

The **Vermont Bike and Pedestrian Coalition** could be a resource (vtbikeped.org). Also Becka Roofl, **Going Green**, 802-279-4037, becka_roofl@pobox.com

The **National Recreation and Park Association** has recreation funding ideas. Betsy Orselet of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association can provide information: orselet@adelphia.net or visit the website calcaminedesign.com/vrpa

Many towns are interested in improving their pedestrian-ways in the downtown, and so many guidelines exist to help plan. A first stop for references is: aot.state.vt.us/progdev/Sections/LTF/LTF.htm. This webpage brings you to the Program Development division of the Agency of Transportation, and the Local Transportation Facilities section.

Information on Vermont State Standards for highway design is available at: aot.state.vt.us/progdev/standards/statabta.htm. These guidelines will include answers to questions about designing bike lanes, shoulders, and minimum distances for tree plantings.

Information on Traffic Calming is available at aot.state.vt.us/planning/TCSandAP.htm. More detailed drawings of items that can help with calming are available from **Kevin Marshia**: (802) 828-2664

The **Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program** offers grants for planning, planting and maintaining street plantings. They publish *Recommended Trees for Vermont Communities*. Also contact **Kate Forrer** (katherine.forrer@uvm.edu) with UVM extension who is a wealth of knowledge with regard to street tree planting and programs.

VTrans gives priority in **Enhancement Grants**, and funding generally, to towns that have a clear plan for where sidewalks and other amenities need to go.

A Town Plan should address the characteristics that make downtown an attractive place to work, shop, live and recreate, and to consider how changes proposed in the future might affect its character. Some useful references are

- *Above and Beyond: Visualizing Change in Small Towns and Rural Areas* by Julie Campoli, Elizabeth Humstone and Alex MacLean (American Planning Association)
- *Saving Place: A Guide and Report Card for Protecting Community Character* (National Trust for Historic Preservation)
- *The Roadscape Guide: Tools to Preserve Scenic Road Corridors* (Champlain Valley Greenbelt Alliance for the Vermont Forum on Sprawl)
- Publications by the Vermont Forum on Sprawl vtsprawl.org.

Rivers

The **Vermont Center for Geographic Information** will have options both for mapping the river area and for integrating that knowledge into community planning (vcgi.org).

The Connecticut River is a key resource to towns on Vermont's eastern edge. Studying the **Connecticut River Byways** program (byways.org) or the **Connecticut River Joint Commissions** (crjc.org) could offer ideas of what other places have done with a river asset. Three towns participating in the Creative Communities Program also participate in the Connecticut River Byways program – **Bellows Falls, Windsor and St. Johnsbury**.

The **Vermont River Conservancy** can provide statewide information on river preservation (vermontriverconservancy.org/). Contact Steve Libby.

An important part of any conservation work will be the land surrounding the river. Some organizations that deal with these types of land issues are: **Vermont Land Trust** and **Middlebury Area Land Trust, Natural Resources Conservation Service** (vt.nrcs.usda.gov), **The Nature Conservancy**, which has a Vermont office (nature.org) and **Clean & Clear Watershed Coordinators** (Ethan Swift, 802-786-2503).

Many communities are planning recreational trails around their natural assets. A resource for water-specific recreation would be the **Vermont Paddlers' Club** vtpaddlers.net.

Developing an overall map and creating specific implementation plans may require outside assistance. It will be important to find someone to work with who doesn't simply complete the project, but also builds a team within the community. Talk to **Lou Bressee** at **Lake Champlain Bikeways** (802) 652-BIKE, to navigate this question.

Park Activities

Build the local knowledge bank for park upkeep through the **Master Gardener** program.

Outdoor movies could be a simple addition to a park – but should be discussed with local theaters to avoid unforeseen impact.

Knight Point State Park is an example of a large scale arts / park partnership in the Lake Champlain Islands.

Charlie Hunter is an excellent resource for both visual art and music performances. Write flyradar@sover.net or (802) 463-3669.

Indoor Rec Centers

Jim Davis at **Indoor Recreation of Orleans County (IROC)** would be happy to answer questions – (802) 334-8511 x104. Or **David Kimell** (802) 527-1202 at the **Collins-Perley Sports Complex** in St. Albans.

Community, Arts and Business Spaces

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Build an Arts Center (St. Albans)
- Create an Arts Incubator (Windsor)
- Create a Business Incubator and Arts Space (Hardwick)
- Develop the Future of the Hardwick Town House
- Establish a Business Incubator (Middlebury)
- Expand Options for Indoor Community Space (Grand Isle)

Art/Community Centers

The first objective should be selling the community on why arts are something to invest in – and at the same time get feedback from the community about what types of arts & cultural activities are needed. This effort needs a broad interest base. A comprehensive feasibility study should be the first step before fundraising for an arts center. This would include identifying what the community sees as important for the project, what resources are currently available in the region, and investigation of possible redundancies.

The **Center for Rural Studies** is one group that performs surveys and evaluations for non-profit organizations; they could be a place to start for exploring what options exist to generate a useful profile of community interests (crs.uvm.edu). Interns may be available to develop and distribute surveys. Contact Will Sawyer at 656-0892.

Preservation Trust of Vermont has extensive experience with both restoring historical buildings and using physical structures as a foundation for strengthening community life. ptvermont.org.

The **Vermont Humanities Council** can help non-profits find new ways to engage people in town – there is a small grants program to support community initiatives of certain kinds (call Peter Gilbert at (802) 262-2626).

Burlington Community Land Trust (Brenda Torpy) might have some technical advice for the organization - board constitution, fund raising, capital campaign, and project development. Phone: (802) 862-6244.

Talk to towns that have done similar projects around arts-oriented facilities as a centerpiece for the community. A good starting point could be **Gerianne Smart** and others in Vergennes about what they did to restore their Opera House ((802) 877-2524). Call **Alex Aldrich** ((802) 828-5420), Executive Director of the **Vermont Arts Council**, or **Doug Porter**, from the Preservation Trust of Vermont ((802) 658-6647), for ideas of people to speak with.

Arts and business incubators

The **Vermont Community Development Association** toured of Randolph to see the town's incubation space. Contact VCDA at (802) 229-9111.

There are many arts and business incubator developments in Vermont.

- **Studio Place Arts** in Barre combines studio, gallery and classroom space. Janet Van Fleet, can describe the successes of SPA and on-going challenges of managing an arts incubator.
- The **Rockingham Arts and Museum Project** in Bellows Falls (Robert McBride, 463-3252) offers an example of incorporating artists' living space with retail space in a downtown building as part of a larger community revitalization project.
- The **Burlington Community Land Trust** established an artists' cooperative including living space in Burlington through their affordable housing programs – the **Rose Street Artists' Cooperative**, bclt.net/c_rosest.shtml.
- The **Tip Top Bakery Building** provides reasonably priced studio space in a building that generates a “creative collaborative environment” in White River Junction (Matt Bucy, tiptopmedia.com/).

Tour several similar facilities and learn about what works, where they've found financing, how they've attracted artists and businesses, and how their business model works. The **Preservation Trust** could potentially provide a tour of centers (802 434-5014).

Inventory major options for available space in the region and talk to the **Regional Planning Commission** and **Regional Economic Development Corporation** to seek assistance.

Depending on the strategic plan for the incubator, needed space may range anywhere from single rooms for classes a few hours a week to a full building dedicated to the arts.

If the incubator focuses on helping small, arts-related businesses, USDA Rural Development **Rural Business Opportunity Grant** (RBOG) might be able to fund a comprehensive development planning activity. These grants can exceed \$40,000. Rhonda Shippee at 828-6033 or rurdev.usda.gov/VT/vtnhcf.htm.

USDA also provides **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)** to non-profits and municipalities to help facilitate business development. If there is a planning, feasibility study, marketing or other technical component needed to launch this effort, they may be able to help. Contact **Sherry Paige** at USDA: (802) 828-6034.

The **Vermont Business Incubator Network** can provide contact information for incubators around the state that might serve as examples of different approaches. **AJ Rossman** ((802) 865-3866) would be a good starting point. Incubators are listed online at: vtbusinessincubatornetwork.com.

Some incubators target new businesses that would not have located in their town otherwise. Other incubators primarily support the development plans of existing small businesses. Often incubators will serve community development goals, like bringing focus, activity and excitement to downtown through an attractive building. For some ideas of what is happening around the country, look at the **National Business Incubation Association** (nbia.org).

Many incubators become useful only after businesses reach a certain size. **Invent Vermont** provides a virtual incubation service, helping inventors who are not yet at the size to enter an existing incubator. Invent Vermont provides workshops, technical assistance, networking and socializing opportunities and serves as a virtual incubator (inventvermont.com).

Sometimes business development needs are better met by programming than by an incubator building. However, a building can be key for some businesses that have high utility demands and/or need equipment that is more affordable when shared. The **Food Venture Center** is one example, where businesses can share equipment and production facilities along with receiving technical assistance (contact Brian Norder at (802) 849-2000).

The **Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies** is an example of a new high-tech incubator. **Tom Rainey** led the start of VCET and has experience with business incubation in other states as well. vermonttechnologies.com

The **Vermont Community Loan Foundation** provides loans for projects that will contribute to the local economy and strong community in towns around Vermont. Visit vclf.org.

Mark Blanchard is the **Small Business Development Center** expert on incubators. (800 464-SBDC).

Organize existing resources so that entrepreneurs can easily determine where to go to meet their needs. The state maintains thinkvermont.com as a business resource. Communities have become more sophisticated in presenting community-wide resources. An example of a recently launched site is St. Johnsbury's page: discoverstjvt.com. Free tools also offer a surprisingly professional web presence. A popular one is **pbwiki** (pbwiki.com).

Funding

The **Vermont Arts Council** awards annual Cultural Facilities Grants to assist Vermont nonprofit organizations and municipalities to enhance, create or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural activities for the public. Visit vermontartscouncil.org/.

Send for the **Vermont Directory of Foundations** at cpgfundraising.com or call **Christine Graham** at 862-0327. It is a great resource for grant seekers with an interest in Vermont and lists federal and state funding sources for a wide range of community interests.

Contact the **Vermont Community Foundation** (388-3355) for list of potential grant sources for community centers or facilities.

Search the **Foundation Library Directory** (foundationcenter.org). Contact **Marjorie Zunder**, Dept. of Libraries, Montpelier, VT, 828-3261. This is a very large database which can give you foundation information from around the country as well as Vermont: what they fund, grant application cycles and contact information.

The **Warren & Cecile Thompson Charitable Trust** funds community facilities:

Warren & Cecile Thompson Charitable Trust
16709 Port Royal Circle
Jupiter, FL 33477
Warren L. Thompson (561) 747-6612

Write them a letter of interest and describe the project.

The **W. K. Kellogg Foundation** also funds community facilities: wkkf.org

Rural Development's Community Facility Direct (or guaranteed) **loan program** may be able to assist in delivering capital related to construction costs. Very early involvement with the agency is critical especially if the arts center will be a "start-up" non-profit. One recommendation is to bring an experienced non-profit real estate owner/operator/investor to the table to "own" the facility.

Early discussions should be held with the **Agency of Commerce and Community Development** (Molly Dugan – (802) 828-3211) to determine if there is a role that Community Development Block Grant money can play.

Internet and Technology

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Create the Infrastructure for State-of-the-Art Communications Technology (Manchester)
- Improve St. Johnsbury's Online Presence
- Internet Access (Randolph)
- Promote the Digital Culture through a St. Albans Technology Service Provider

It's important to understand how infrastructure fits into the creative economy and economy in general. Businesses interested in locating in a community will expect

broadband availability not only in their offices, but also for their employees at home. Having a visible Wi-Fi presence in downtown, including providing computers in key locations for people without laptops, will help establish a community as up-to-date. Assess what businesses see as their technology needs and also brainstorm with them about what could be possible with better Internet access. Look at ways Internet connections tie into regional initiatives.

Be sure to explore what other communities have done. Ask about strategies, pitfalls, lessons learned and about what options look best not only today, but ten years from now (including fiber optics). To connect with communities contact:

VCRD's **Vermont Rural Broadband Project**, which assists rural towns with broadband issues, has many contacts. The web site, VTRuralBroadband.org, contains links to other local projects across the state. Project managers: Al & Laura Duey, 802 467-1266.

The 5 Town (Tunbridge/Thetford/Chelsea/Royalton/Vershire) broadband project contact is **Janet Zug** at janet@zugglass.com.

Talk with **Ruth Wallman** at the **Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce**. They introduced a wireless system in their community with support from VCRD.

Patrick Warn (patrick.warn@gmail.com) in St. Albans or Joe Boyd in the Randolph Area (jboyd@rnbvt.com).

Topsham Telephone Company's parent company completed a project to bring fiber to all homes in Gouverneur, NY. The contact for Topsham Telephone Company is telco@tops-tele.com, 802-439-5325.

In addition to community-based contacts, many statewide programs can provide assistance. Start your investigation of local Internet availability by requesting a **Vermont Department of Public Service** map of existing services (publicservice.vermont.gov/). State of Vermont resources include:

Tom Murray, Commissioner, Dept. of Information and Innovation, Thomas.Murray@state.vt.us, 802-828-4141 – has responsibility for over-all telecommunications planning in Vermont.

Charlie Kremer, Dept. of Information and Innovation, wireless coordinator, Charlie.Kremer@state.vt.us, 802-828-3224 – works with wireless providers and project; coordinates state broadband grant program.

Chris Campbell, Director, Telecommunication Division, Vermont Public Service Department, Chris.Campbell@state.vt.us, 802-828-4074 – author of the current state telecommunications plan; responsible for the regulatory side of telecommunications.

Various programs around the state provide assistance to new businesses. See if any fit your model for providing technology. Examples include:

- **Vermont Small Business Development Center** (sbdcvt.org)
- **Champlain College's BYOBiz Program.** The Bring Your Own Business program specifically targets young people who have started their own business. It is an example of meshing education with existing entrepreneurship. The contact there is **Charlie Nagelschmidt** (nagelschmidt@champlain.edu).
- **Business Incubators:** A new network for Vermont incubators can help this group get in touch with successful incubator programs - vtbusinessincubatornetwork.com. The Middlebury Creative Communities team is tackling a business incubator concept. The contact there is: **Steve Terry** (steveterry1@verizon.net).
- **Workforce Development Council and Workforce Investment Boards** do workforce skills training programs around the state. They will know successful strategies in engaging community residents in building new job skills. Contact **Chip Evans** at 802-828-4156.
- **College and University Programs:** Colleges and universities train their students in skills necessary for the future workforce. They would have a sense of how to stay current with technology trends and teach the skills individuals need.

USDA provides loans for start-up and expansion to companies through the **Intermediary Relending Program**, **Industrial Development Corporations**, **Vermont Community Loan Fund** (Sam Buckley) and the **VEDA Small Business Loan Program** all have capital available to lend for business development.

USDA also provides **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)** to non-profits and municipalities to help facilitate business development. If there is a planning, feasibility study, marketing or other technical component needed to launch this effort, they may be able to help. Contact **Sherry Paige** at USDA: (802) 828-6034.

Web Sites

Delivering web site content to hand-held devices will be especially important to visitors who are already in town and a citywide WiFi capability will be a benefit. Marketing to people already in the area is different than marketing to a broad web-wide audience.

Identify what websites already exist in the community. A next step will be to get an up to date picture of what these websites offer, how they are managed, and whether they would be interested in participating in this project. Put together a short list of simple survey questions and distribute using surveymonkey.com, with follow-up phone calls where needed. All community businesses will benefit from a web presence, even if it is only used to present contact information.

VCRD has worked with communities that undertake web projects at different levels of investment. A simple solution to a community website is a wiki or a blog. **Pownal**, **Putney** and **Brattleboro** offer examples of these easily-started websites.

St. Johnsbury and **Rutland** offer examples of major website projects that require a significantly greater investment of time and funds. The St. Johnsbury Creative Communities report includes a detailed outline of action steps for creating a community website. More details are available from **Linda Fogg**, Director of St. Johnsbury WORKS! (802-748-7121) or visit discoverstjvt.com.

Don't forget to advertise what already exists. This marketing includes letting people know about wireless hotspots, their options for high speed Internet, and potentially creating an online presence that shows the community is skilled in working with current technologies.

Your web presence should tie in closely with brand identity. The **Place Creative Company** has a sophisticated and fun workshop called "Brand Focus" that could help. Contact Dave Speidel, Steve Crafts or Keri Piatek (placecreativecompany.com).

Funding sources will be important for both launching and maintaining a successful website. One resource for researching opportunities is: **Everything Technology: Directory of Technology Grants** technologygrantnews.com/free-cash-grants-catalog.html. Talk with the **Vermont Community Foundation** about its **Sustainable Communities** grant program (vermontcf.org) or with the VT / NH branch of USDA about **Rural Business Opportunity Grants** (rurdev.usda.gov/rd/nofas/index.html)

The *Rutland Herald* is one place to check. They have partnered with creative economy teams in Rutland around development of online community information.

Developing Collaborations

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Establish strong Creative Economy Collaborations (Randolph)
- Form a Local Creative Economy Association (Plainfield)
- Form an Alliance for Creative Development of Existing Properties (Richmond)
- Found a Creative Economy Association (Middlebury)
- Begin a Public Relations Campaign (Windsor)
- Form a Local Leadership Group (Windsor)

One popular format for building an inventory of local assets is **Asset-Based Community Development**. Information about this method, including multiple publications, is online at: northwestern.edu/jpr/abcd.html.

The Web project can serve as a complement to the inventory and as a starting point to build communications to all active groups in the community. Work with the town to ensure the interactivity of the developed site and that it includes information that will interest and ultimately unite a wide variety of constituencies. Be responsive to community interests in what a website should provide.

To address the larger issue of collaboration, do a road trip to see how other towns are building collaboration. Contact **Whitney Lamy** at the Chaffee Art Center in Rutland (802-775-0356) or **Gail Nunziata** of the Brattleboro Arts Initiative (254-1109). Ask **Preservation Trust of VT** to help organize it (and maybe provide funding); contact Paul Bruhn at 658-6647.

Several communities, both in Vermont and elsewhere, have attempted to build platforms that unify local creative economy resources. Here are some examples:

- **Rutland** and **St. Johnsbury** chose to focus on building collaborations among arts and cultural organizations as part of their Creative Communities Program efforts. The contacts are, in Rutland, **Patricia Kreitzer** (kreitzer@sover.net) and in St. Johnsbury **Jerry Aldredge** (catamount_jerry@charterinternet.com).
- The **Randolph Area** also selected ongoing creative economy organization as a priority. Contact **Julie Iffland**: (802) 728-6014.
- The **Plainfield Area** has started PACA (Plainfield Area Community Association) to build a platform for future creative economy work. They are starting with a skills / resources directory. Contact **Karl Bissex** at kbmt@ezcloud.com.
- The **Lake Champlain Islands** is building several community projects that bring together multiple businesses, organizations, and area residents around the creative economy. Contact **Ruth Wallman** at 802 372-8400.
- A well-known example of bringing creative and cultural businesses together is **HandMade in America**, an organization formed to focus on the economic value of craft and the handmade object in Western North Carolina. Go to handmadeinamerica.com.

The **Vermont Arts Council** may have funds to facilitate relationship-building between arts and cultural organizations and the business community. Contact **Sonia Rae** at (802-828-5425).

For the Business Resource Directory project, the Plainfield area can learn from towns that have already done it. Middlesex is one such town; go to middlesex-vt.org/html/business_services.html to learn more.

Surveys

Finally, there are many ways to design surveys and use the final results. The **Center for Rural Studies** at the **University of Vermont** consults with non-profits around the state on survey techniques and also conducts the annual Vermonter Poll. Visit their website, crs.uvm.edu, to find out what tools they have available and for a list of contacts.

Building Reuse and Restoration

When discussing currently-owned buildings, it's important to have a clear vision for what the building *could* become. The owners are participating in projects, or selling their building, because of opportunity – not because someone disapproves of a current use. There are many examples of this process:

- **Vergennes** A group of interested citizens restored the local Opera House (located in their town office building) in 1997 and that sparked several other building restoration projects. Contact Gerianne Smart at (802) 877-2262. An LLC of local investors recently also purchased the Basin Block for revitalization. The contact there is Jeffry Glassburg (877-0019). Ed Biello (210-819-4951) put together a positive proposal for the A&P building and it is now used by a local engineering business.
- **Bellows Falls** began creative economy work with restoring the downtown Exner Block for a combination of affordable housing, studio space and art galleries. Since that time, buildings throughout the downtown have been returned to active use. Contact Robert McBride (802) 463-3252 or Richard Ewald (802) 463-3456
- **Hardwick** is focused on redevelopment of the Centennial Building in downtown, with possible uses including arts, business, and start-up business space. The contact for this project is John Mandeville (802) 748 8235.
- **St. Albans** is considering options for creating a community arts facility. Contact Mike Curtis (802) 524-9000.

USDA Rural Development's Community Facility direct (or guaranteed) loan program may be able to assist in delivering capital related to construction costs. More information on this program is available at: rurdev.usda.gov/VT/vtnhcf.htm.

Some of the potential uses for existing properties could be eligible for USDA grants specific to market studies. **Hardwick** applied for these funds in connection with its Centennial Building. A USDA Rural Development **Rural Business Opportunity Grant** (RBOG) might be able to fund a comprehensive development planning activity. These grants can exceed \$40,000 and could serve as a starting point for a development strategy around assisting emerging businesses. Contact Rhonda Shippee at (802) 828-6033.

The **Preservation Trust of Vermont** can help get work started on historic structures. The amount of money available depends partially on how much a place has already received. **Ann Cousins** (802) 434-5014.

The **Vermont Community Loan Fund** will lend to projects that include community facilities, small business support, and agriculture. Loans are tailored to meet the needs of the group receiving the funds. Contact **Will Belongia** at (802) 223-1448.

Communication

An early challenge for many of the creative economy associations is how to communicate efficiently both with each other and with others who might be interested in their work. The Internet offers multiple options: e-mail lists, blogs, wikis (see pbwiki.com) and also free survey software to gather information (surveymonkey.com). At the same time, it can also be important to have a physical place to go for information. Plainfield, for example, will be keeping information in the former town clerk's office in the center of town.

Art hops

Many towns have successful art hops that can serve as a starting point for exploring the “Open Middlebury” concept. Consider visiting the following locations:

- **Bellows Falls** (Contact Robert McBride – ramp@sover.net, 463-3252)
- **Rutland** (Contact Whitney Lamy - whitney.lamy@chaffeeart.net)
- **Brattleboro** (Betsy Gentile - betsgentile@verizon.net)
- **South End Arts and Business Association, Burlington** (seaba.com)

Sustainability, Energy and Green Business

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Establish Manchester as a Leader in Sustainability and Green Business
- Establish Middlebury as a Pioneer in Alternative Energy Production and Management
- Promote Environmental Initiatives that Define Randolph as a Green Community
- Sustainable Rutland

Events around the state offer plenty of opportunities to network with others who are also tackling sustainability at a community level. To find out about major events, check the calendars of groups like the Vermont Environmental Consortium, Renewable Energy Vermont, Northeast Organic Farmer’s Association, and the Environmental Law Center at Vermont Law School.

‘Sustainability’ is a tremendously broad concept. Some communities begin from a broad base by offering community forums around particular big issues. For example, Williston designed a forum where community members could speak with representatives from several groups about how to lower their carbon footprint. This event was co-sponsored by the **Chittenden Solid Waste District**, **10% Challenge**, **Vermont Earth Institute**, and **Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District**.

Another place to look for groups tackling a broad perspective on sustainability is college campuses. Colleges have a contained community and often use this unique situation to pilot different approaches to being green. **Dartmouth College** (dartmouth.edu/~sustain/), **Middlebury College** Department of Environmental Affairs: middlebury.edu/administration/enviro/, **University of Vermont** Environmental Council at: uvm.edu/greening/envcouncil/.

Several other communities in the Creative Communities Program have undertaken environmental initiatives. **Randolph** and **Rutland** (**Tara Kelly** at (802) 775-0871) began with a general environmental interest. **Middlebury** is undertaking environmental work tied directly to alternative energy. Their reports give background information on the projects and also contacts. Another community known for sustainability work is **Burlington**, particularly their legacy project (cedo.ci.burlington.vt.us/legacy/).

Some sustainability projects don't require much funding. However, other projects will require start up investment and there are grants available. The **New England Grassroots Environmental Fund** supports grassroots organizations with an environmental focus. grassrootsfund.org. NEGEF has funded many community initiatives, and a number of energy and climate action groups in and out of Vermont. Contacting NEGEF and leaders of groups that have received their assistance can generate a long list of possible strategies.

The **Vermont Peak Oil Network (VPON)** is full of information on building sustainable communities: vtpeakoil.net/index.html.

The **Vermont Natural Resources Council** has information on a variety of environmental initiatives, along with staff that can provide technical assistance in some areas. Visit vnrc.org/.

Waste Management/Recycling

For the particular issue of recycling and solid waste management, a first stop for information on all the possibilities can be zero waste campaigns.

The **Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District** has zero waste materials online at: cvswmd.org/.

The **Toxics Action Center**, (toxicsaction.org/) with an office in Vermont, has partnered with CVSMD to develop resources for zero waste initiatives.

The **Association of Vermont Recyclers** has established its reputation for finding fun, creative ways to educate Vermonters about recycling and other waste issues. Visit their website at: vtrecyclers.org.

The University of Vermont can offer creative ideas for recycling and re-use. **Erica Spiegel** leads recycling efforts (802-656-4191).

Energy

Some towns like **Manchester** and **Hinesburg** have done early projects with lightbulb exchange programs, others have set goals to shut down idling school buses, worked toward the transition of town vehicles to biofuels, or improved electric efficiency in all town-owned buildings. To form a sense of how your community fits into the larger scheme of energy production in Vermont, refer to the recently released Energy Digest from the **Vermont Council on Rural Development** (vtrural.org).

Middlebury town has already started to investigate hydropower options for the river. A basic introduction to the regulatory process for hydro is available from the **Agency of Natural Resources** at anr.state.vt.us/dec/fed/damsafety/hp_workshop.htm.

The **Addison County Relocalization Network (ACoRN)** is designing its own local initiative using as a template the Energy Independence Plan from Willits, CA.

willitseconomiclocalization.org/Papers/EnergyIndependencePlan.pdf. Fred Dunnington is involved and can be reached at: (802) 388-8106.

Also see the **Vermont Peak Oil Network (VPON)** vtpeakoil.net/index.html.

Colleges often provide good examples of communities that undertake a transformation of their energy footprint. **Dartmouth College** (dartmouth.edu/~sustain/), **Middlebury College** Department of Environmental Affairs: middlebury.edu/administration/enviro/, the **Energy Institute at Vermont Law School** vermontlaw.edu/elc/energy/. The **University of Vermont** has also launched significant energy projects, including on-campus energy production and biodiesel use. Their environmental coordinator is **Gioia Thompson** (Gioia.Thompson@uvm.edu, 802-656-3803)

Green Business

A general resource for Green Businesses in Vermont is the **Vermont Environmental Consortium**, directed by **Daniel Hecht** (vecgreenvalley.org/; (802) 485-2455).

Marlboro Graduate Center now also has an MBA in sustainable business. They could be a resource for both information and (if needed) interns gradcenter.marlboro.edu/academics/MBA.html. The **Snelling Center for Government** is affiliated with **UVM** and places graduate students in policy-related internships (Phone: (802) 859-3090).

Deb Sachs (865-7330) of the **10% Challenge** helps facilitate community planning around energy efficiency and development throughout VT. **Efficiency Vermont** could lend expertise to consult with the committee on setting short and long-term goals.

Agriculture

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Hold a Harvest Festival to Celebrate Local Agriculture (Richmond)
- Establish a Local Foods Retail Center (Manchester)
- Provide Year-round Access to Local Foods (Bellows Falls)
- Develop Trails to Tour Local Farms, Arts, and Other Islands Highlights (Grand Isle)

Supporting Local Producers

Already, assets like the farmers' market, Local First Vermont campaign and statewide local foods promotion have sparked consumer interest in the concept of local foods. It is important to keep in mind the *range* of reasons why someone might get involved with local foods, interest in the local economy, environmental concerns, finding fresh foods, community building, drawing in tourists.

An early question that will come up is defining "local." Since there is no single accepted definition, having a clear definition is the next best thing. Many groups use a 100-mile

radius; this measurement is big enough to include a variety of products but small enough to be easily recognized as local. It also mirrors the work done in others regions of the country. To view a map of your 100-mile circle, visit 100milediet.org. Some adjust this measurement. For example, the Hannah Grimes Center uses 150 miles, which brings their territory out to the seashore. State organizations, like the Agency of Agriculture, tend to use state borders. Others take a more bioregional approach –local foods advocates in Lamoille County, for example, emphasize eating from within their watershed.

The Project Team can look to several other models for how other groups navigate the questions around local foods and bring consumer interest to a higher level.

- **Tiffany Mannion** at the **Hannah Grimes Center** (hannahgrimes.com) is a great starting place.
- The **Localvores** network spans Vermont and western New Hampshire. Community groups support Eat Local Challenges throughout the state. A central website provides contact information localvoreproject.org. A localvore group is easy to establish and might be an effective first step.
- The **Northeast Organic Farmers' Association** works with both producers and consumers. Their website is nofavt.org.
- **Vital Communities** provided an early foundation for the localvores movement and promotes local foods in the Upper Valley region. Their website is: vitalcommunities.org
- The **Randolph** area has worked as a community on promoting local foods. The **Rutland Area Family Farms** organization formed after a visioning process with Vital Communities in 2001. Visit raffarms.org
- Another community-based group that promotes connections between local farmers and consumers is **Rutland Area Farm and Food Link**. rutlandfarmandfood.org
- **The Vermont Fresh Network** works on farmer-chef partnerships for local food (vermontfresh.net) or call Meghan Sheradin (802) 434-2000). Groups are also working on local foods in schools, particularly **VT FEED** (Food Education Every Day) vtfeed.org.
- **Local Agriculture and Community Exchange** recently opened a store in Barre which specializes in local food and includes educational and community components. They are online at lacevt.org.
- The Burlington Community and Economic Development Office hosts a **Burlington Food Council**. The contact there is **Betsy Rosenbluth**: 802-865-7515
- The Massachusetts-based **Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture** (CISA) organization has a useful, comprehensive guide to starting your own buy local campaign. Ordering information at: buylocalfood.com/

These groups can provide information:

- **Vermont Agency of Agriculture** (vermontagriculture.com)
- **Intervale Center** (intervale.org)
- **Food Venture Center** ((802) 849-2000)

Hinesburg participated in a VCRD Community Visit in which local foods emerged as a priority project. The report on their work, including contact information, is available at vtrural.org.

Salvation Farms works specifically on reducing food waste by bringing excess food to Vermonters in need. The organization offers materials to help start local gleaning projects. Visit them at: salvationfarms.org/. Or, contact **Theresa Snow** to arrange a visit to their center in Wolcott (802-888-5055).

Tom Gilbert at **Highfields Institute** in Hardwick offers consulting on composting at any scale. He is available at 802-475-5138 or highfieldsinstitute.org.

One more way to combine local foods and waste management is to organize local bulk orders. For advice on how to set up a local order, contact **Erika Mitchell**, the bulk ordering coordinator in Adamant, via e-mail at: frizzles@integrate.com.

Community Gardens

Jim Flint of **Friends of Burlington Gardens/Vermont Community Garden Network (VCGN)** is probably the leading resource in Vermont for creating and sustaining a community garden. Contacts: burlingtongardens.org, 802-861-GROW. **New England Grassroots Environmental Fund (NEGEF)**, Montpelier, is interested in some aspects of community garden work and offers grants up to \$2,500. Contact **Ginny Callan**, Callan@grassrootsfund.org (802) 229-1734 or visit grassrootsfund.org.

Farmers Markets

The **Trust for Public Lands** has a goal of conserving land for *people*. The combination of landscaping a lot in downtown while supporting the working agricultural landscape surrounding the downtown could appeal to this organization. See tpl.org

The **Project for Public Spaces** is another organization that might have an interest in the farmers' market / downtown gathering space combination. It provides training, technical assistance, and information to communities. See pps.org.

The **Northeast Farming Association (NOFA-VT)** in Vermont provides support for developing farmers' markets. See nofavt.org.

At **Vermont's Agency of Agriculture**, a good resource for local agriculture and marketing is **Helen Jordan** who can be reached at (802) 828-3828.

The **Intervale Foundation** in Burlington has significant experience working with downtown locations for farmers and farmers' market. Contact **Lindsey Ketchel** at (802) 536-5030 or Lindsey@intervale.org.

The **US Department of Agriculture** promotes rural development in many ways, including assisting towns and non-profits develop community facilities and establish farmers markets. Contacts: usda.org. For example, the **Farm Service Agency** can

provide micro-grants that get kids involved in producing for the Farmers' Market at Taylor Park in St. Albans (contact **Paul Remillard** Paul.remillard@vt.usda.gov)

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) provides support to conserve historic properties. They also have an interest in viable agriculture in Vermont. Contacts: vhcb.org, (802) 828-3203.

The **University of Vermont's Department of Community Development and Applied Economics** has assisted some communities in strengthening their local farmers' markets. Contact **Dan Baker** at (802) 656-0040 or dbaker@uvm.edu. Another resource is **Allen Matthews** at UVM's **Center for Sustainable Agriculture** (802) 656-0037 or allen.matthews@uvm.edu.

Food Center

Vermont has a strong brand reputation to begin with, particularly in food, crafts, and arts. Tourists tend to respond to phrases like "Vermont Produce", "Vermont Made" and "Vermont Grown". The **Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing** (vermontpartners.org) and the **Tourism Data Center (UVM)** (uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/) have research on visitors' interests. Also, check with VDTM before designing a building to make sure you catch important infrastructure details, such as providing space for bus tours.

There are several organizations that can provide an overview of the funding sources possible for a Local Foods Center.

- **Vermont Economic Development Authority** (veda.org)
- **Vermont Community Loan Fund** (yclf.org)
- **Agency of Agriculture**
- **Small Business Development Center** (vtsbdc.org)

Theme Festivals

Many different options exist for funding a Harvest Festival. Area businesses might sponsor in return for advertising. Larger statewide organizations might be partial sponsors. Some places charge entrance fees or suggested donations. There can be fundraisers at the event itself. A small fee could be charged for sellers if there is a market. In-kind donations can also cover some costs.

Shelburne Farms, the Intervale, Vermont Fresh Network, and Danville all have sizeable Harvest Festivals. **Manchester, VT** and **Keene, NH** have both competed for the size of their pumpkin carving events. In early summer you can visit Vermont traditions like the **Strolling of the Heifers (Brattleboro)**, **Maple Festival (St. Albans)** and **Dairy Days** in early June. Also, talk to people who have started new festivals. The **Heart of the Islands Open Farm / Open Studio** tour introduced participants to Grand Isle County agriculture (contact Jim Holzschuh at holzschuh@aol.com) and many of the new Localvore groups have started their own local foods celebrations (see the regional contacts list at localvoreproject.org).

It is also important to work with general events planners to be sure that the date you choose avoids conflicts and can get onto their calendars early. The **Area Business Associations, Regional Chambers of Commerce**, and the Vermont tourism website vermontvacation.com are all places to check in with.

Several statewide organizations will have early deadlines for publishing festival information. Check with **Vermont Life Magazine**, the **Vermont Agency of Agriculture** and **NOFA-VT** (Meg Klepack – 434-4122) to find out if they could promote the event. Ongoing involvement from area farmers is crucial to planning a successful day, one that meets the needs of both festival-goers and the businesses the festival is meant to support. Technical assistance may be available to help farmers prepare to open their business for visitors. **UVM Extension** often works with farmers on how to run successful workshops and/or presentations. Beth Holtzman will know the best options at UVM (802) 223-2389. Also try **NOFA-VT** and the **Vermont Farm Bureau** (vtfb.org).

Another useful group for information and advice is others who do public events on a tight budget. Seniors and church groups are veterans of these events. **Rose Wilson** in Windsor (Rosalie.Wilson@earthlink.net), is an excellent resource.

Cultural Connection

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Highlight Local Cultural Organizations (St. Johnsbury)
- Rutland as an Arts and Culture Destination

Strong partnerships should be used to get the general public more involved in the arts and culture and understand the benefit of investments in this sector. The team moving forward will need to host many opportunities for people to get involved in creating a shared vision. An important question for arts groups should be what they might accomplish through economies of scale, shared space, collective assets and collaborative energies.

More mundane issues beyond the big vision will be how to organize the players behind an effort, how they will make decisions, and how to sustain the infrastructure. The group will also need to find a common language. One thing to be clear on from the beginning is what information will not be shared. A particular example is in sharing mailing or e-mailing lists, which has become a concern with rising amounts of SPAM.

A good way to be sure you get everyone who might be interested in collaboration to the table is to cross check your invitations with the **Vermont Arts Council's** online arts directory (vermontartsdirectory.org/). This list isn't guaranteed to have everyone, so check for organizations that aren't on the list (and you can encourage them to join the directory). Simply helping everyone share information on a regular basis is a major accomplishment and potential partnerships will naturally emerge.

The Arts Council can help get word out about all events, such as performances, gallery openings, and community suppers, through the **Vermont Arts Calendar**. This calendar (vermontartscouncil.org/ArtsCalendar/) is also a way to keep track of what's going on in your own backyard

The **Vermont Arts Council** offers a grant for Local Arts Partnerships. Planning grants of up to \$2,500 and implementation grants of up to \$10,000 / year are available to arts organizations starting working partnerships with other community organizations. Contact the VT Arts Council's Director of Community Programs (802) 828-3778

Rutland recently initiated a process of developing greater collaboration between its arts groups. **Whitney Lamy** helped lead that effort and can be reached at director@crossroadsarts.com or (802) 775-0356.

The **AD Henderson Foundation** makes grants specifically for arts education. Talk to the **Brattleboro Music Center** about funding / operations for educational centers (bmcvt.org/).

If you decide to go forward with an arts festival, or any large event with an entertainment component, there are several conferences that will provide good information along with networking opportunities:

- **North East Regional Folk Alliance** - (nerfa.org/) – At Kutscher's Country Club in the Catskills every November. Good panels, good networking opportunities, manageable size, but very performer-based.
- **Ontario Council of Folk Festivals** (ocff.ca/) -. This annual convention is held in October each year and is a fantastic resource for those contemplating building an event. The fairly small size (around 300-400 registrants) makes it manageable. There are panels on how to break down the tasks inherent in a festival, Committee/volunteer recruitment, sponsorship, etc. Dozens of small communities in Ontario have vibrant festivals with devoted patrons returning year after year - there's no reason why New England couldn't!
- **North American Folk Music & Dance Alliance** - folkalliance.org/conference/. A wonderful opportunity to see a vast number of musical acts loosely falling within the 'contemporary folk' genre. The conference is huge (maybe 1,500+ registrants) and heavily skewed toward performers. There are useful panels, mentoring and networking opportunities, but it is more diluted than either OCFE or NERFA (above).

Downtown Improvements

Includes goals from these Creative Communities Reports:

- Open Air Mall on Center Street
- Organize Evening Events to Bring Activity Downtown after Dark (St. Albans)
- Support a Strong Restaurant Culture (Bellows Falls)
- Revitalize “The Island” (Bellows Falls)

- Spruce Up Downtown Hardwick

For the Art Park mural, the **Vermont Arts Council** could provide a grant through their Opportunities Grants program. vermontartscouncil.org. **Robert McBride** in Bellows Falls helped commission a mural for the entrance to his town. (802) 463-3252.

The **Vermont Youth Conservation Corps** provides assistance for downtown work that involves park space or conservation (for example along the river). Call (802) 434-3969.

Look at other successful downtown efforts. **Bristol** is one example, and (on a larger scale) the **Main Street Project** in Johnson. A **community development coordinator** could be key to ongoing investment in the downtown – maintaining projects started through this process, gathering new ideas, and building an overall vision that ties an appealing downtown to a strong local economy. Talk to **Lea Kilvadyova** ((802) 635-2611) for a perspective from Johnson. Call **Joss Besse** at the **Vermont Downtowns Program** (802 828-5212, joss.besse@state.vt.us) for other success stories.

St. Albans recently did extensive work on Taylor Park as a centerpiece of their downtown. Through the course of this work, they developed a list of resources for supporting green space in Vermont communities. Contact **Jeff Young** (jeffeyoung@yahoo.com) for information.

Look to Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) or Municipal Planning Grants to support **downtown revitalization**. CDBG accepts applications every 2-3 months, but the Municipal Planning Grants are only accepted in September. Call the Agency of Commerce for more information at (802) 828-3211.

When towns bring in landscape architects to design the streetscape they often find funding in transportation grants. Check **VTrans** and the **NVDA** webpage nvda.net/NVDAasRPC/grants.html

The **Partners for Livable Communities** offer another perspective on downtown districts, particularly cyber districts. One strategy for increasing pedestrian traffic in the downtown could be wireless hotspot zones.

The **Central Vermont Community Action Council** is working on ways to provide a venue for their micro business participants and their products. **Mary Niebling** is at (802) 479-1053.

Pedestrian Marketplaces

Have conversations with other Vermont locations to find out about the challenges of an open air mall. The **River Garden** in Brattleboro is a good example – talk to them about what obstacles ultimately limited the scope of their project. Visit Burlington's **Church Street Marketplace** to see what is possible. A conversation with **Joss Besse** at the **Downtowns Program** (802 828-5212) can identify who to interview.

While exploring what has happened in *other* towns, you should also identify where sticking points have been in your own community. The pedestrian mall may not be a new concept. A comprehensive understanding of both the vision that an open air mall is attempting to achieve *and* where this overlaps with merchants' specific goals is essential.

Two helpful websites/organizations could be the **Project for Public Spaces** (pps.org) and **National Main Street Program** (mainstreet.org/).

Establish Your Area as a Learning Community

- Establish Plainfield as a Learning Community

If the direction moves towards artists' residencies there are two websites representing an alliances of residencies that can give some ideas: artistcommunities.org/ and resartis.org/. **Triangle Arts** is an umbrella group for international artists' workshops (trianglearts.org/). These websites all show the diversity of forms an "artists' residency" can take.

Kathy Black, from the **Vermont Studio Center**, is available to brainstorm ideas, both about options for programs and about who might help outline a funding strategy. Contact her at: (802) 635-2727.

The new workforce bill, H.433, will provide funding options for organizations that set up and administer student internships. Look for applications from the **Department of Labor**: labor.vermont.gov/

Some institutions of higher learning offer ongoing educational opportunities. One popular program is the **Osher Lifelong Learning** program at the University of Vermont. Osher targets Vermonters over the age of 50 and reaches many communities around Vermont. The concept could be adapted to include other generations. uvm.edu/~learn/osher.

Increasing Off-Season Activity

- Task Force on Increasing Off-Season Activity (Grand Isle)

The off-season activities group has overlapping interests with the indoor spaces group, both for using the spaces they help access and for partnerships with local organizations, clubs, schools, who are involved in creating activities for residents. **Coordinating** efforts could be made easier by developing an event support template that includes available space, available recreational resources, parking information and a list of marketing and other related support.

Resources include:

- The **Vermont Crafts Council** (vermontcrafts.com) runs an annual Open Studio weekend statewide.
- **HandMade in America** (handmadeinamerica.org/) is located in North Carolina and focuses on local craftspeople.
- Regional Cultural Heritage Guides, including Addison County. Contact **Barbara Harding** at the **Addison County Chamber of Commerce** (802) 388-7951.
- Check **Valley Quest** at vitalcommunities.org/ValleyQuest/ValleyQuest.htm. Valley Quest is a community-educational activity centered in White River Junction. It publishes, in book form, numerous quests or community searches that follow clues from place to place to a final destination. The result is an exploration and examination of a community's history and heritage and the natural world.
- **Vermont Outdoor Guide Association** has done recreation resource inventories for three Vermont counties. They also have a large database of recreation related resources. Contact: **Graydon Stevens**, Vermont Outdoor Guide Association, P.O. Box 10, North Ferrisburg, VT. 05473, 800-425-8747, gray@voga.org
- The **Vermont Humanities Council** (VHC) vermonthumanities.org, offers a grants program to support community initiatives of certain kinds that deal with history, literature, heritage, culture, art history, archaeology, comparative religion, ethics, and the like. It also subsidizes public talks and reading and discussion programs in libraries and other nonprofit community centers.

Listings

- Check out the site listings already available on the following websites:
 - Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance vmga.org
 - The Northern Vermont Artists Association vmga.org/exhibiting/shows/novermont.html
 - Vermont Hand Crafters vermonthandcrafters.com
 - Vermont Crafts Council vermontcrafts.com
 - Vermont Travel Planner vermontvacation.com

Vermont Creative Economy Resources

Prepared by the Vermont Arts Council

Vermont Legislature

- ***Historic Preservation Grant Program (Division for Historic Preservation, ACCD)*** Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has had a 50/50 matching grants program to assist municipalities and non-profit organizations in restoring important historic buildings across the state. Grants of up to \$15,000 are awarded to help preserve and repair buildings that will promote the public's awareness and appreciation of Vermont's cultural heritage. historicvermont.org.
- ***Historic Barns Grant Program (Division for Historic Preservation, ACCD)*** The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation offers a 50/50 matching grants program to assist owners of historic agricultural buildings (barns, corn cribs,

sheds, grist mills, etc.) to assist the restoration and repair of these endangered buildings. These may be in private ownership. Grants of up to \$10,000 can be awarded. historicvermont.org

- **Broadband Development Grant Program (ACCD)** dca.state.vt.us
- **Human Service Grant Program (BGS)** A competitive grant program offering up to \$25,000 support for capital costs associated with major maintenance, renovation or construction of facilities that deliver human services and health care in Vermont communities. bgs.state.vt.us
- **Recreation and Education Facilities Grant Program (BGS)** Offers competitive grants of up to \$25,000 to stimulate the creation and development of recreational and educational opportunities in Vermont communities. bgs.state.vt.us
- **Cultural Facilities Grant Program (Vermont Arts Council)** The purpose of this grant program is to assist Vermont nonprofit organizations and municipalities to enhance, create or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural activities for the public. vermontartscouncil.org

Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

- **Ancient Roads and Mapping Grants** -- The Ancient Roads Research and Mapping Grant program makes grant funds available for the purpose of researching and mapping town highways, trails and unidentified corridors. A maximum of \$5,000 is available to each grantee. historicvermont.org
- **Municipal Education Grant Program** – The Municipal Education Grant program (MEG) provides municipalities with up to \$800 for training volunteer boards and commissions historicvermont.org
- **Municipal Planning Grants** – The Municipal Planning Grant Program provides \$15,000 (single)/\$25,000 (consortium) grant funds for technical assistance for town planning, implementation of plans and ordinances, encouragement of citizen participation and education, and innovative demonstration planning projects. historicvermont.org
- **Vermont Community Development Grants**-- Funded activities must meet at least one national objective (benefit persons of low and moderate income households; aid in the prevention and elimination of slums and blight; or meet community development needs of a particular urgency) and at least one state objective (conserve, expand, and improve housing; create and retain employment; or improve public facilities in support of housing or economic development activities, or where there is a threat to public health and safety). historicvermont.org
- **Vermont Dept. of Tourism and Marketing**-- The Fund for Tourism Marketing Initiatives (FTMI) provides a total of \$100,000 in matching grants to help organizations and businesses build or expand events, marketing programs, advertising campaigns and public relations programs vermontpartners.org

Preservation Trust of Vermont ptvermont.org

Preservation Grants -- Preservation Grants are available to non-profit organizations for rehabilitating historic buildings.

Project Development Grants -- Up to \$500 seed funding for project planning and development

Vermont Arts Council vermontartscouncil.org

Presentation Grants – Project support for Community Organizations, up to \$7,500 dollars

Local Arts Partnership Grants – Planning and implementation grants up to \$10,000 and up to two years for operations that encourage local collaborations

Technical Assistance Grants – Up to \$500 for planning, facilitation

Vermont Humanities Council vermonthumanities.org

The Council provides up to \$7,500 for public humanities programs.

Vermont Community Foundation vermontcf.org

The VCF is a family of more than 550 distinct charitable funds, each with its own name and purpose. The assets in these funds are pooled together to provide charitable support to enhance the quality of life in Vermont.

Orton Family Foundation orton.org

Technical support and planning tools. No monetary grants.

Freeman Foundation foundationcenter.org

Primarily supports preservation of open lands; Asian programs and projects; occasional support for education/library activities.

Jesse Cox Charitable Trust hemenwaybarnes.com

Jane's Trust hembar.com

Tourism Cares tourismcares.org

Awards charitable grants through its Worldwide Grant Program to worthy tourism-related nonprofit organizations for capital improvements, as well as education programs in conservation and preservation.

USDA Rural Development – Vermont and New Hampshire

Federal: usda.gov State: rurdev.usda.gov/VT/vtnhcf.htm

- ***Business and Cooperative Programs*** Programs include Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans, RBEGrants, RBOGrants, Intermediary Relending Program Loans, Value-added Agricultural Product Marketing Grants, and Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grants.
- ***Rural Broadband Access Loans and Guarantees*** For construction, acquisition of facilities and equipment for the provision of broadband services in eligible communities.
- ***Housing Programs*** Too many programs to describe.
- ***Community Facilities*** For essential (emergency, etc.) facilities.

- ***Utility Programs*** Programs include Water and Waste Disposal Loans, Loan Guarantees, Grants; Solid Waste Management Grants, and Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans/Grants.