



About the Snelling Center and e-Vermont

Broadband Use in Rural Vermont

Broadband is a tool for building citizen participation in all aspects of rural life, and a critical part of policy for economic, civic and community development in Vermont. However, in some regions of the state with new broadband service, 'take rates' or subscriptions are under 10 percent.

Reasons for this low take rate may include residents and businesses not knowing how to use the service, thus seeing it as not useful. Towns may not understand how to use the Internet for civic participation. Low subscription rates threaten to leave Vermont households on the wrong side of a digital divide, and undermine the case for expanding broadband in rural regions

The Snelling Center Partnership

The mission of the **Snelling Center for Government** is to foster responsible and ethical civic leadership, encourage public service by private citizens, and promote informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont.

The **Snelling Center** is one of eight partners in the e-Vermont Community Broadband Project, and will provide assistance to towns on best practices, templates for town websites and other online resources. They will also organize workshops and conferences for technology learning opportunities and to share information statewide.

The e-Vermont Project

e-Vermont is a new initiative to help rural Vermont towns take full advantage of the Internet to advance a wide variety of local needs including economic development, school innovation, job creation, downtown marketing, community engagement, and e-commerce.

Twenty four communities statewide have been selected to work with the **e-Vermont Partnership** in a comprehensive effort combining online services, training, access, awareness, and planning. In addition, best practices in the uses of digital tools will be shared through symposia and conferences statewide.

The e-Vermont partnership will focus on the grassroots needs of each community, provide technical assistance, equipment and facilitation, and in some cases limited funding to 24 towns over the next two years. Local task forces will lead the way in developing specific plans for their community.

Contact the Snelling Center

For more information email Joanna Cummings, the Snelling Center's e-Vermont Community Coordinator at: joanna@snellingcenter.org