



## Vermont Housing and Conservation Coalition

### **VERMONT'S PARTNER IN ENSURING AFFORDABILITY, ACCESS, AND RESILIENCE**

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and its partners in the Vermont Housing and Conservation Coalition (VHCC) are on the frontlines of Vermont's most urgent challenges. Workforce and housing shortages, climate change, and the affordability crisis deepen every year, while the loss of working and natural lands and the decline of rural communities threaten the very character of our state.

#### **Since 2020, VHCB investments have supported:**

- 2,275 multi-family rental homes — including 1,920 newly created or newly affordable units, and 696 reserved for Vermonters exiting homelessness.
- 4,530 households — through homeownership development, home access modifications, farmworker housing, and shelter investments.
- 22,000+ acres of conserved land — including 12,000 acres of farmland and nearly 10,000 acres of natural areas, forests, and recreation lands.

These investments protect what we value most about Vermont—our people, our natural and working lands, and our quality of life. High real estate prices continue to erode affordability and strain Vermont's workforce and communities, yet community-driven housing and conservation projects are ready to move forward across the state.

### **SUPPORT VHCB AT \$37.6M**

Investing in VHCB isn't just about meeting today's needs—it's about ensuring long-term affordability and conservation for generations to come.

### **VHCB PROJECTS ENSURE PERMANENT AFFORDABILITY AND COMMUNITY VITALITY**

- New housing reduces homelessness and stabilizes families, ensuring every Vermonter has a safe, affordable place to live.
- Affordable homes, open spaces, and natural areas help attract and retain employers and workers, strengthening Vermont's economy.
- Conservation keeps farmland and forests productive, safeguarding working lands, long-term affordability, and Vermont's rural vitality.
- Protection of natural areas improves the health of our land, water, and soil, and advances climate resilience.
- Access to trails, shorelines, and the outdoors fuels Vermont's \$2.8 billion tourism economy and supports public health and well-being.
- Farmers produce world-class food that feeds local communities and draws revenue from across the country.

- Conserved lands sustain Vermont's \$1.5 billion forest products industry, supporting more than 10,000 jobs statewide.
- Farm and forest viability programs help land-based businesses adapt and thrive in changing conditions.
- Investments in historic village centers keep our downtowns vibrant, strengthening local economies and growing grand lists.

## **WHAT VHCB CAN DO WITH FULL FUNDING**

With full funding, VHCB can accelerate results that meet Vermont's most urgent housing and conservation needs.

### **In Affordable Housing, VHCB Can:**

- Create more homes for Vermonters of all ages who struggle to cover basic expenses.
- Reduce homelessness and reliance on motels, curbing growth in state health care costs.
- Support employers by building workforce housing close to jobs and services.
- Provide safe, high-quality housing with supportive services for older adults, vulnerable populations, and individuals reentering from the criminal justice system.
- Preserve existing assisted housing at risk of losing affordability.
- Revitalize community centers and strengthen neighborhoods, creating jobs and boosting local economies.
- Reduce transportation costs and pollution by locating housing near downtowns, growth centers, services, and transit.
- Leverage available federal funds to multiply state investments. The average VHCB state funds grant is around \$150K/unit, which is about a third of the overall total cost.

### **In Conservation, VHCB Can:**

- Strengthen rural economies by keeping working lands viable.
- Help farmers succeed by providing access to technical support and affordable, protected farmland.
- Improve water quality and soil health through stewardship and restoration.
- Boost climate resilience and improve water quality by conserving forests, floodplains, and wetlands.
- Support Vermont's tourism economy by maintaining scenic landscapes and access to trails, shorelines, and recreation areas.
- Ensure equitable access to the outdoors for all Vermonters.
- Protect community and Indigenous gathering places and cultural sites.
- Conserve irreplaceable natural areas and stem biodiversity loss.
- Leverage federal matching funds to maximize the impact of every state dollar.

## **ABOUT VHCC**

VHCC represents over 50 businesses and nonprofit organizations, from statewide affordable housing developers to community-based land trusts. The Coalition advocates for robust investments through VHCB to address Vermont's housing and conservation needs now and in the future.

A fully funded VHCB is an investment in a stronger, more resilient Vermont. It is an investment in permanent affordability, in our working lands, and in the health of our communities. By fully supporting VHCB's statutory share, we can ensure that a pipeline of community-driven housing and conservation projects continues to move forward, benefiting every Vermonter now and for generations to come.

**We urge you to support VHCB at \$37.6M.**

For more information, please contact the VHCC co-chairs listed below.

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