

Village Center Designation Program

TOWN HALL
835

Why do Village Centers Matter?



Home to Civic and Government Life



Place for People to Come Together



Concentration of Homes and Businesses



Economic Center of the Community



Where We Come to Celebrate

Statewide Planning Goals

24 VSA Chapter 117 §4302(c)(1)



... plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages and urban centers separated by rural countryside...

What is Village Center Designation?

The Vermont Village Center Designation Program **recognizes and supports local revitalization efforts** across the state **with dedicated staff and funding** to help designated municipalities build and foster strong communities.



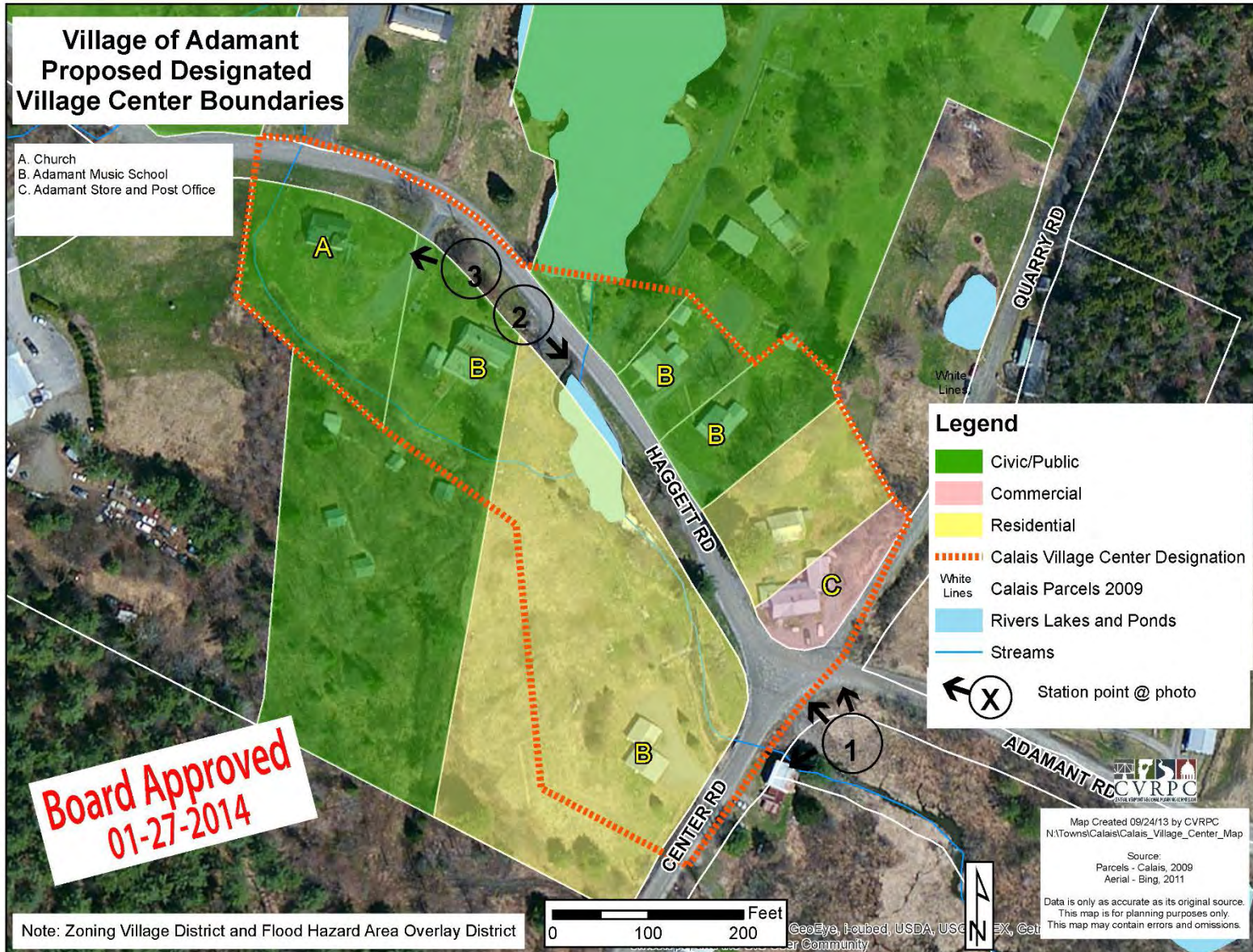
What is a Designated Village Center?

Statutory Definition:

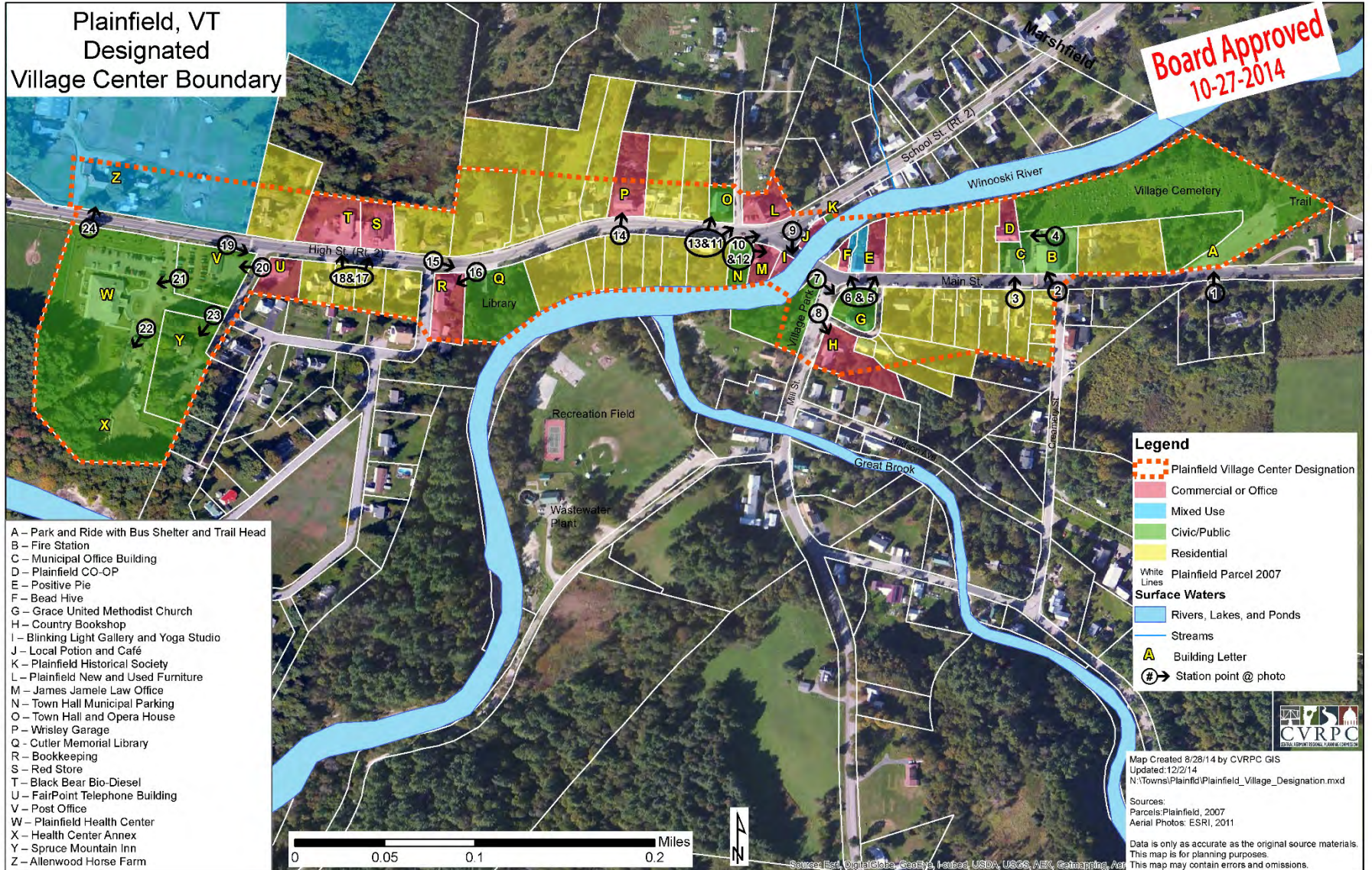
“Village center” means **the core of a traditional settlement, typically comprised of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed use buildings**, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core. Industrial uses may be found within or immediately adjacent to these centers.



Village Centers Varies in Size and Scale



Village Centers Varies in Size and Scale



What is Not a Village Center?

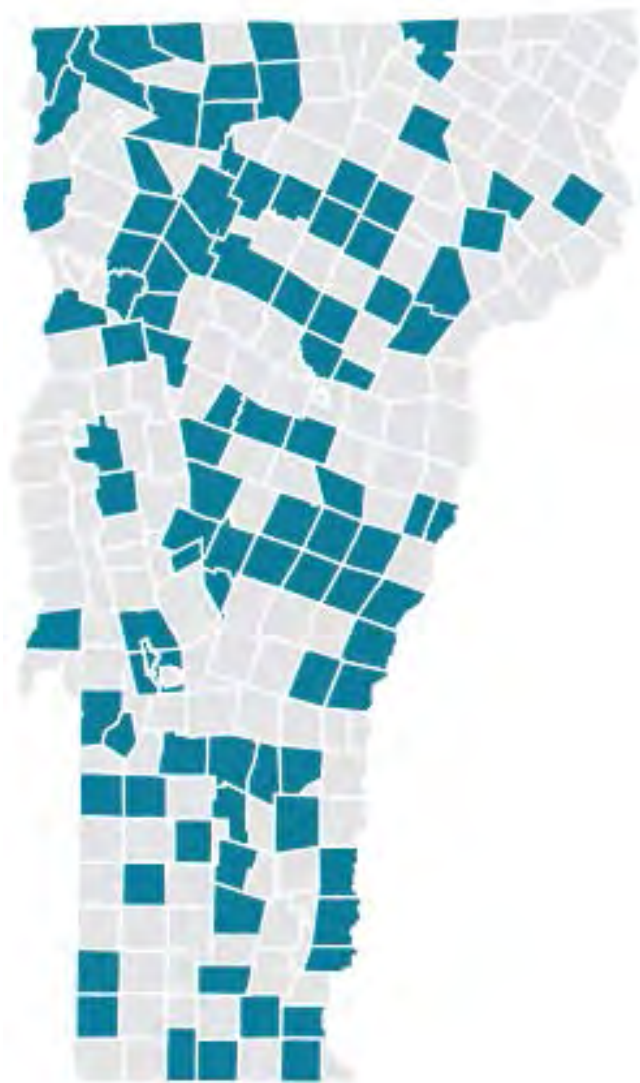




Village Center Designation Program

123 designated village centers

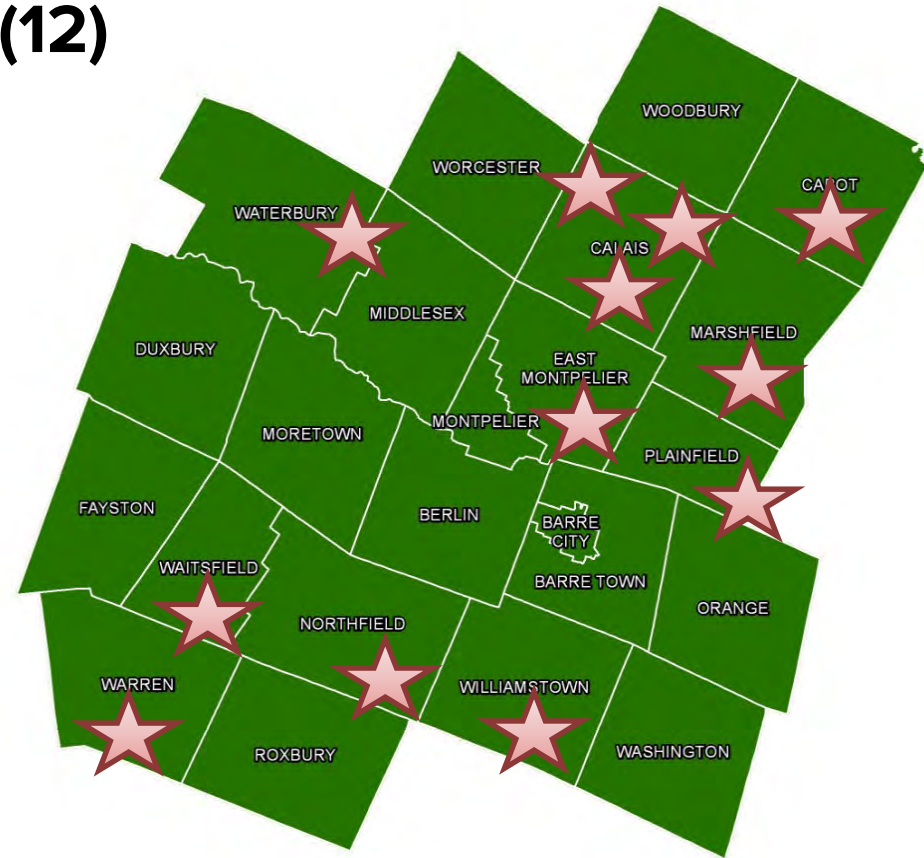
- For historic centers with existing civic and commercial buildings
- Targets training and financial incentives to bring additional public and private investment to spark village revitalization.



Who is Designated in the Washington County?

Designated Village Centers (12)

Cabot	Williamstown
Marshfield	Plainfield
Calais (3)	Waitsfield
East Montpelier	Warren
Northfield	Waterbury Center



Moretown Map



Benefits of Village Center Designation



Designation Benefits

- Technical Assistance
- State Grants Priority
- State Buildings Priority
- Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits
- Eligible for Neighborhood Development Area Designation



Technical Assistance



State Grant Priorities

- VTrans Bike/Ped Grants
- VTrans Transportation Alternative Grants
- Vermont Community Development Program (CDBG)
- Historic Preservation Grants
- Municipal Planning Grants
- Brownfield Clean-up Grants
- And many others!



Benefits - Funding Directory

Designated Downtown and Village Centers Funding Directory

Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit*
State investment tax credit for qualified historic rehabilitation, façade, code and technology upgrades for properties constructed before 1983 located within a Designated Downtown or Village Center.
Range: 10 – 50% of eligible expenditures
Eligibility: Properties within Designated Downtown or Village Center
Deadline: Annually in July
Contact: Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_village_tax_credit

Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit
Federal investment tax credit for 20% of the rehabilitation costs (including labor, materials and architects or other consultant fees) for income-producing buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
Range: 20% of eligible expenditures
Eligibility: Owners of income-producing historic buildings
Deadline: Rolling application deadline; file application before construction
Contact: Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
Website: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

Sales Tax Reallocation Program*
Municipalities and the developer of a qualified project jointly apply for a reallocation of sales taxes on construction materials. Qualified projects must be located within a Designated Downtown.
Range: Based on sales tax generated in excess of \$100,000 to \$1M depending on size of municipality
Eligibility: Joint application between municipality and developer located within Designated Downtown
Deadline: Annually in July
Contact: Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/salestaxreallocation

Vermont Community Development Program (CDBG)*
Accessibility Modification Grants – Federal grants to bring existing municipal buildings and non-school libraries into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
Implementation Grants – Federal grants for economic development, housing, public facilities, and public services that will benefit low/moderate income individuals, eliminate slums or blight, or address an urgent need.
Planning Grants – Federal grants for community development planning, downtown planning studies, and project development to benefit people with low to moderate incomes and/or eliminate "slums and blight."
Range: \$30,000 - \$1,000,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and/or municipalities on behalf of organizations and private owners
Deadline: Open application with funding decisions made throughout the year
Contact: Josh Hanford, (802) 595-1385 josh.hanford@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/vcdbg

Downtown Transportation Fund*
State grants for municipalities to finance transportation-related capital improvements in support of economic development, within or serving a Designated Downtown, including construction or alteration of roads and highways, parking facilities, pedestrian and streetscape improvement, rail or bus facilities or equipment, and underground relocation of electric utility, cable and telecommunications lines.
Range: 50% of overall project costs up to maximum of \$100,000
Eligibility: Municipalities with a Designated Downtown
Deadline: Annually in March
Contact: Gary Holloway, (802) 828-3220 gary.holloway@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_transportation_fund

* Grant program receives priority consideration due to state designation
For more information, please contact:
Richard Amore, richard.amore@vermont.gov or 802.828.5229
Gary Holloway, gary.holloway@vermont.gov or 802.828.3220



Designated Downtown and Village Centers Funding Directory

Municipal Planning Grant Program*
State grants for a wide range of municipal planning projects including municipal land use plans, zoning and subdivision bylaws, designated downtown, village and neighborhood planning.
Range: \$2,500 - \$20,000
Eligibility: Municipalities with adopted plans confirmed by their regional planning commission
Deadline: Annually in September
Contact: Annina Seller, (802) 828-1948 annina.seller@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/overview/municipal_planning_grants

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
Provides grants to implement long-term hazard mitigation actions that reduce structure damage or loss of life due to natural disasters. Examples include upsizing culverts, floodproofing buildings and mitigation planning.
Range: No minimum or maximum. Local match of 25%.
Eligibility: Municipalities, state agencies, regional planning agencies, non-profits in select circumstances. Eligible entities on behalf of private owners.
Deadline: Funding available after a major disaster declaration. Rolling application deadlines.
Contact: Ray Doherty, 802-241-5258 ray.doherty@vermont.gov
Website: <http://vermont.gov/mitigation/applications/>

State Historic Preservation Grants*
State 50:50 matching grants for the repair and restoration of historic buildings listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
Range: \$1,000 - \$20,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in October
Contact: Caitlin Corkins, (802) 828-3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/preservation/grants/historic_preservation

Certified Local Government Program
Federal grants available for resource identification and planning, National Register nominations, downtown planning, public education, archeological studies, and building feasibility studies.
Range: \$500 - \$25,000
Eligibility: Municipalities that are enrolled as Certified Local Governments
Deadline: Annually in January
Contact: Devin Colman, (802) 828-3043 devin.colman@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/preservation/planning/clgp

Brownfield Revitalization Fund*
Grants and loans for remediation of brownfield sites. The funds are made available to Vermont by the EPA and eligible applicants can be private developers, non-profits and municipalities.
Range: Grants are capped at \$200,000
Eligibility: Municipalities, non-profit organizations and private developers
Deadline: Rolling
Contact: Kiersten Bourgeois, (802) 793-4899 kiersten.bourgeois@vermont.gov
Website: http://eccd.vermont.gov/business/relocate_expand/capital/brownfields

Cultural Facilities Grant Program
Matching state grants for community facilities used to provide cultural activities to the public and to enhance or expand the capacity of an existing building to provide cultural programming.
Range: \$1,000 - \$30,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in the spring
Contact: Michelle Bailey, (802) 828-3294 mbailey@vermontartsCouncil.org
Website: <http://www.vermontartsCouncil.org/grants-and-services/organizations/cultural-facilities>

* Grant program receives priority consideration due to state designation
For more information, please contact:
Richard Amore, richard.amore@vermont.gov or 802.828.5229
Gary Holloway, gary.holloway@vermont.gov or 802.828.3220



State Building Priority



STATE OF VERMONT
252 MAIN STREET

LAMOILLE COUNTY STATE'S
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND
LAMOILLE COUNTY SPECIAL
INVESTIGATION UNIT
← ENTRANCE ON SIDE

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND
HEALTH SERVICES
← ENTRANCE IN REAR

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF AGING
AND INDEPENDENT LIVING
OFFICE OF PUBLIC GUARDIAN
← ENTRANCE IN REAR

KEN-GAR BUILDING

Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

Hardwick, VT

Hardwick - Designation Sparks Revival



“The amount of new activity, life and excitement on Main Street is unprecedented. It’s clear to me that strong communities need vital urban cores -- and with the help of the tax credits, we’ve made a great start in Hardwick.”

Michael Gohl, local architect
and tax credit recipient

Downtowns & Village Centers Tax Credits

Hardwick, VT

\$625,000 in state tax credits has leveraged **over \$7.5 million in investment** so far, jump-starting new businesses, adding quality housing and creating jobs and raising grand list values.

Bemis Block - 73 South Main Street



Grand List Before
\$257,800



Grand List After
\$797,400

Hill Block [1874] - 35 South Main Street



Grand List Before
\$55,400



Grand List After
\$314,500

Hardwick Inn - 1 North Main Street



Grand List Before
\$147,800



Grand List After
\$583,300

Marshall Block - 87 South Main Street



Grand List Before
\$145,500



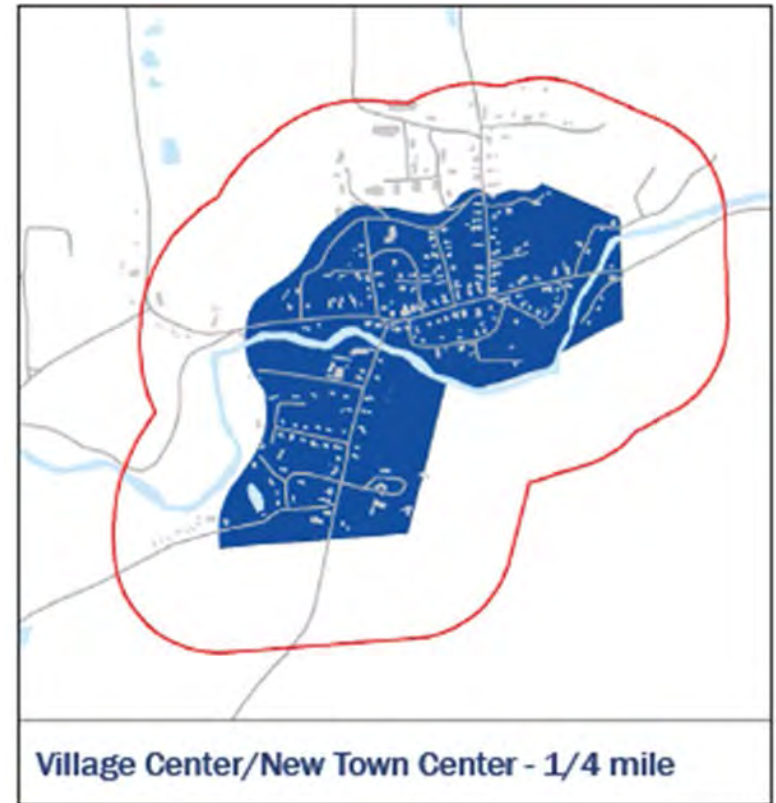
Grand List After
\$297,200



Neighborhood Development Areas

Overview

This housing incentive program helps lower the cost to build housing in areas within easy walking distance of commercial centers — whether its converting a barn or wing of a house into a “grandmother” apartment or developing an entirely new neighborhood. Communities must have an existing designation in place with adopted plans, policies and regulations that support housing and smart growth development.



5-10 min walk

Tax Credits Spark Revitalization



Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

What are Tax Credits?

- Tax credits are not grants
- Better than a tax deduction
- Reduces income-tax liability



Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit program

- 20% credit on federal income taxes for qualified rehabilitation
- Eligible expenses include interior and exterior work, including utilities
- Credits are awarded on a rolling basis to any qualified project with an approved application
- To qualify a building must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places and work must meet preservation standards



Landry Block, St. Johnsbury

Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

Overview

- Goal to stimulate investment in commercial centers
- Award \$2.2 Million in credits annually
- Applications are competitive
- Project must be a Designated Downtown or Village Center
- Applications are due annually on July 1



Waterbury Center and Stowe

Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

Tax Credit Tiers

- 10% credit for rehabilitation with approved federal application
- 25% credit for façade repairs (up to \$25k)
- 50% credit for technology improvements such as data and network wiring (up to \$30k)
- 50% credit for code improvements including elevators and sprinkler systems (up to \$50k)



Waterbury, Brandon, and Vergennes

Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

What do I do with my credit?

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



North Main Street, Barre



Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits



Hancock General Store

\$145,000 Project

\$ 6,000 - 25% State Façade Credit

\$13,850 - 50% State Code Credit

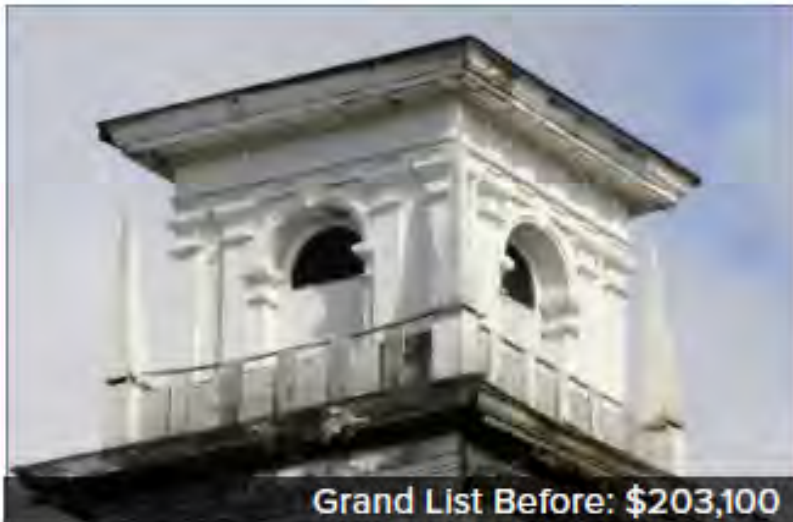
\$19,850 Total Tax Credits

Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits

Next Stage Arts, Putney

Total Project Cost: \$1,498,665; Tax Credits Awarded: \$150,011

A former Greek Revival church constructed in 1841, the Putney Historical Society transformed this historic building into a performing arts center and community gathering space, Next Stage Arts. The rehabilitation was extensive and included several phases. Work completed includes major repairs to the building's exterior, asbestos abatement, installation of an elevator, new kitchen and bathrooms, and conversion of the former sanctuary into a theater space. The project was supported by multiple funding sources, including two rounds of downtown and village center tax credits awarded in 2012 and 2015.



Downtown & Village Center Tax Credits



Cliff Street, Montpelier

\$200,000 Project

\$ 40,000 – 20% Federal RITC

\$20,000 – 10% State Historic Code Credit

\$60,000 Total Tax Credits

State Historic Preservation Grants

The Essentials

- 50/50 Matching grants of up to \$20,000
- Awarded by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Bricks and mortar projects for repair of historic building fabric
- Does not fund upgrades to systems, accessibility work, planning projects or temporary repairs
- Applications are due annually in October



Underhill and Montpelier



State Historic Preservation Grants

To qualify

- Eligible buildings must be owned by municipalities or non-profit organizations
- Buildings must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- Typical projects include work to repair town halls, libraries, schools, churches, museums, and community gathering places



Chelsea

Application Process



Village Center Designation Application Process

- 1) Meet with DHCD
- 2) Build Local Support
- 3) Begin Application Process
- 4) Complete Application Checklist
- 5) Submit Application
- 6) DHCD Staff Reviews Application
- 7) Attend Downtown Board Meeting

Application Guidelines

New Checklist

1. Cover Letter, including:

- Name of the Municipality.
- Brief narrative of why you seek village center designation and a list of previous and current revitalization activities.
- Name, address, daytime phone number and email address of the primary contact person for application.
- A list of documents included in application.

2. Authorization from Town or Village Selectboard or Trustees

- Minutes from publicly held meeting, showing that the application for village center designation has been authorized by the Town or Village (if separately confirmed municipality).
- Or Municipal Resolution from majority of Selectboard/Trustees authorizing application.

3. Notification to Regional Planning Commission and Regional Development Corporation

- Letters notifying the regional planning commission and regional development corporation of the application. The application must include copies of the letters to each of these organizations notifying them of the intent to apply.

4. Confirmed Planning Process

- A letter from the municipality's regional planning commission must be included in the application, stating that its planning process is "confirmed" under 24 V.S.A. §4350 by the commission. Confirmation means that the adopted municipal land use plan and planning process, have been reviewed and approved by that regional commission.

5. Village Center Designation Boundary Map

- A color map must be included, delineating the boundary of the proposed village center district, clearly showing the buildings and properties that are within the district. In most cases, an orthophoto should be used as the base map with the information below superimposed over it:
 - Streets identified by name.
 - Significant buildings and all businesses indicated by number with a separate key identifying each number and name of the building/business - see example map.
 - Photograph locations identified and keyed on the map. See item 6 below and example map.
 - Land/building use identified clearly with colors and symbols that will very clearly indicate the various land usages - see example map.
 - North arrow, scale and current date.
 - Property lines should be shown, but if not available, are not required.
 - Zoning District Boundaries should be included on the map or on a separate map. But if not available, are not required.

6. Photographs

- Color photographs are required showing key areas of the village center district, particularly at the edges and other areas where there may be questions about consistency with the definition of a village center. Photographs should show the streetscape rather than just individual buildings, giving a sense of the context of the area. Photos should be clearly keyed on the map to identify the location of where the photographs were taken. See example map.

7. Municipal Plan Integration

- Evidence that the Municipal Plan includes the intention to apply for village center designation and the municipal plan explains how the designation would further the plan and statewide goals (include Municipal Plan excerpts).

8. Other Required Information

- Zoning District Map with corresponding bylaw language should be submitted, but if not available or there is no adopted zoning, is not required. Zoning boundaries and bylaws help explain the community's development and uses within the village center.
- National or State Register Historic District Boundary Map should be submitted, but if not available, is not required. If available, the applicant should provide the boundary of any National or State Register Historic District or any individual building listed on the Register.

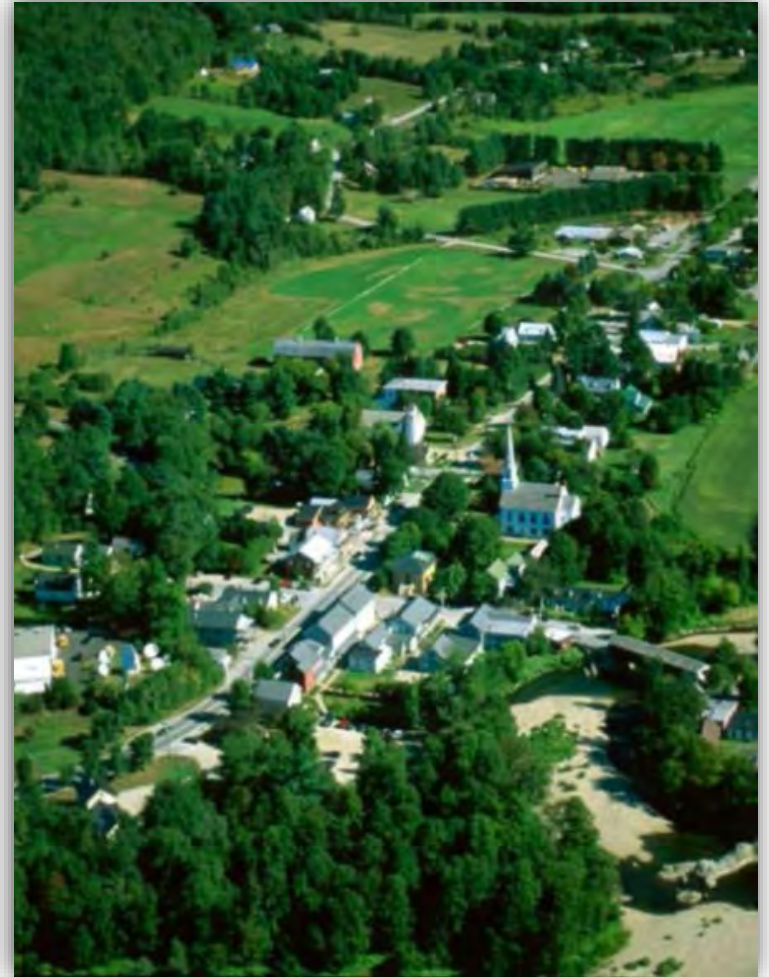
Application Requirements

- 1) Cover Letter
- 2) Authorization from Town
- 3) Notification to RPC and RDC
- 4) Confirmed Planning Process
- 5) Integrate with Town Plan
- 6) Zoning and Historic District Maps
- 7) Boundary Map
- 8) Photographs

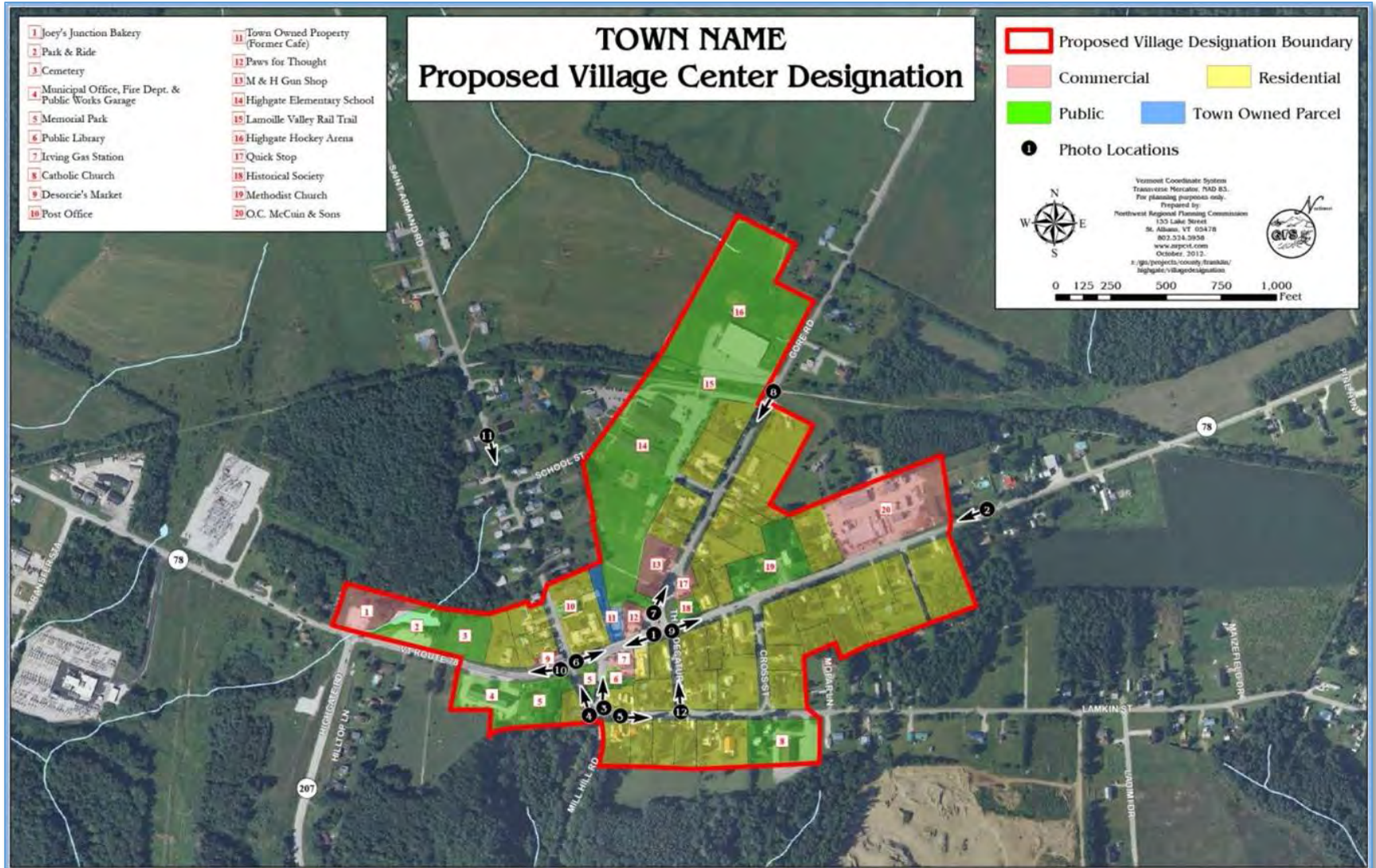


Boundary Map

“Village center” means the **core of a traditional settlement**, typically comprised of a cohesive mix of civic, religious, commercial, residential and mixed use buildings...”



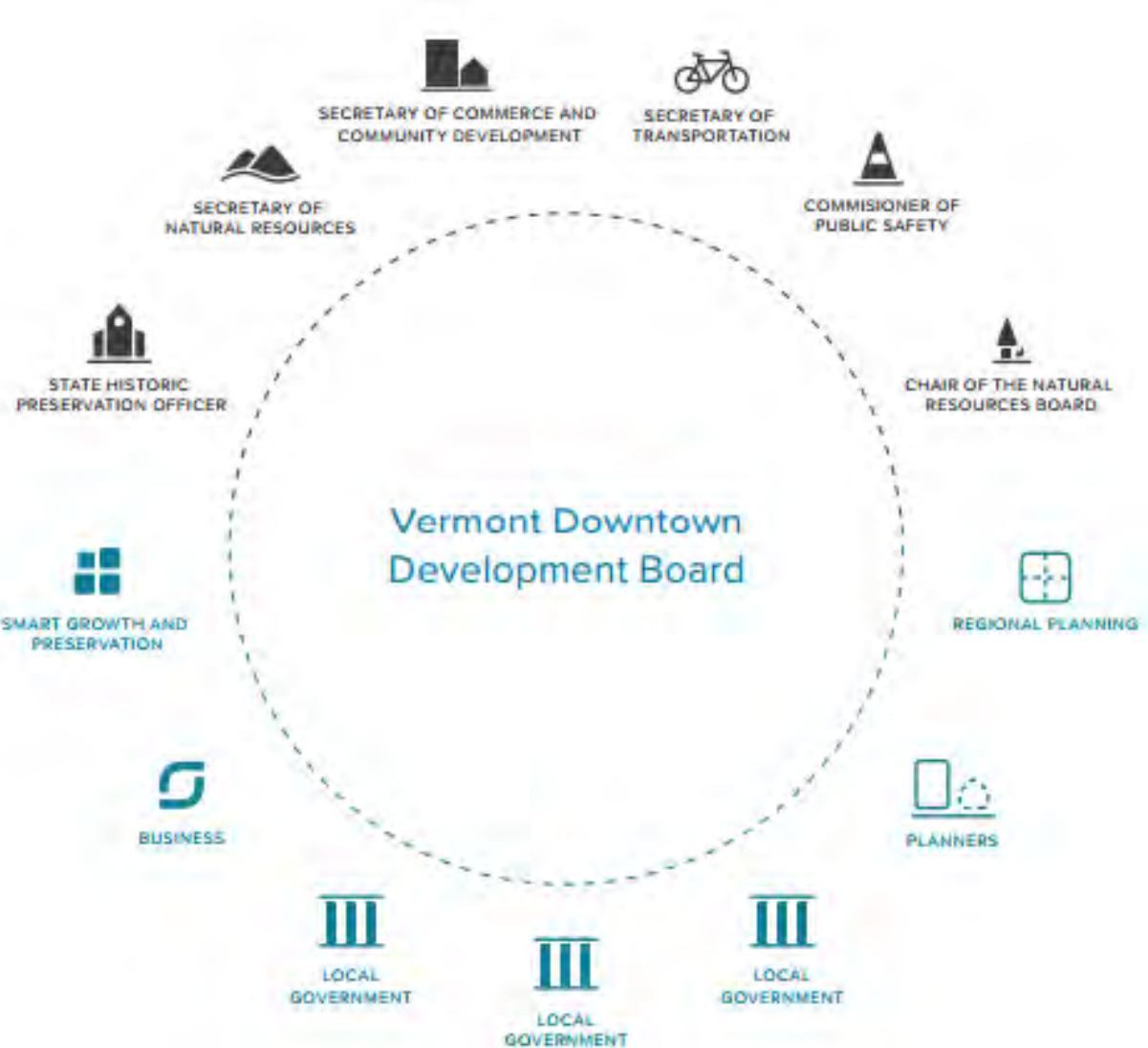
Sample Boundary Map



Moretown Map



Downtown Board



Five Year Renewal

Designation is good for 5 years and then town must send in a Renewal Application. Town **must have a confirmed planning process to renew** village center designation.

Village Centers Application Guidelines	Renewal Checklist
1. Cover Letter, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Name of Town or Incorporated Village.<input type="checkbox"/> Brief narrative of why you seek renewal of the Village Center Designation and a list of revitalization activities since original designation.<input type="checkbox"/> Name, address, daytime phone number and email address of the primary contact person for application.<input type="checkbox"/> A list of all documents included in application.	
2. Authorization from Town or Village Selectboard or Trustees <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Minutes or resolution from publicly held meeting, showing that the application for village center designation has been authorized by the Town or Village (if separately confirmed municipality).<input type="checkbox"/> And/or signatures from majority of Selectboard/Trustees authorizing application.	
3. Confirmed Planning Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> A letter from the municipality's regional planning commission must be included in the application, stating that its planning process is "confirmed" under 24 V.S.A. §4350 by the commission. Confirmation means that the adopted municipal land use plan and planning process have been reviewed and approved by that regional commission.	
4. Village Center Designation Boundary Map <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> A color map must be included, delineating the boundary of the proposed village center district, clearly showing the buildings and properties that are within the district. In most cases, an orthophoto should be used as the base map with the information below superimposed over it:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Streets identified by name.<input type="checkbox"/> Significant buildings and all businesses indicated by number with a separate key identifying each number and name of the building/business - see example map.<input type="checkbox"/> Land/building use identified clearly with colors and symbols that will very clearly indicate the various land usages - see example map.<input type="checkbox"/> North arrow, scale and current date.<input type="checkbox"/> Property lines should be shown, but if not available, are not required.<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning District Boundaries should be included on map, but if not available, are not required.	
5. Integrate with Town Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> After July 1, 2014, any community applying for renewal shall explain how the designation has furthered the goals of the town plan and shall submit an approved town plan map that depicts the boundary of the designated area.	
6. Other Required Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Zoning District Map with corresponding bylaw language should be submitted, but if not available or there is no adopted zoning, is not required. Zoning boundaries and bylaws help explain the community's development and uses within the village center.<input type="checkbox"/> National or State Register Historic District Boundary Map should be submitted, but if not available, is not required. If available, the applicant should provide the boundary of any National or State Register Historic District or any individual building listed on the Register.	
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Stay Connected – Strong Communities Newsletter



VERMONT

Strong Communities



Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit Awards Announced

With St. Albans' new five-story, 84-room Hampton Inn as the backdrop, Governor Shumlin announced the winners of \$2.25 million in state tax incentives. This year, 21 downtown and village projects, valued at over \$47 million, received support. Projects include the Trout River Brewing Co. in Springfield, renovation of a blighted block in downtown Newport, rehabilitation and code upgrades of a community arts center in Waterbury Center, expansion of the South Royalton Memorial library to make the building accessible, and housing projects in Brattleboro, St. Albans, White River Junction and Winooski. Two municipalities were awarded sales tax reallocation dollars. In [Winooski](#), the award will be used in conjunction with a new mixed use development and function venue and in [St. Albans](#), reallocated taxes will support public infrastructure improvements associated with the new hotel. For a complete list of projects, visit our [website](#).



Better Connections Grants

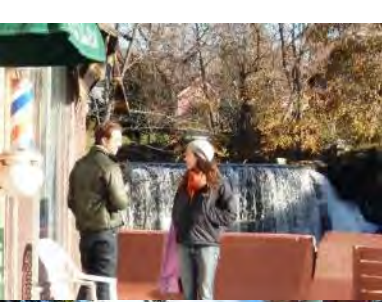
Subscribe Here:
<http://eepurl.com/qu31P>

SAVE THE DATE



VERMONT DOWNTOWN AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

White River Junction - Thursday, June 8, 2017



Planning and Revitalization

A community vision, a shared plan, funding and teamwork is a common element in revitalization – the State of Vermont and your RPC are committed to working with each other to revitalize your village center.



Richard Amore, AICP

VT DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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