

VCRD in Action

The Vermont Council on Rural Development is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Vermonters and Vermont communities develop their capacity to create a prosperous and sustainable future through coordination, collaboration, and the effective use of public and private resources. This year our work includes:

Building Strong Communities

Over its 18 year history, the **Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD)** has carried out intensive community organizing in 60 Vermont towns. In these “**Community Visits**” hundreds of residents come together to identify and advance key priorities. **VCRD** brings a team of state, federal, business, and non-profit leaders to listen, facilitate discussion, and match resources with the towns’ needs. Visited towns have built projects gaining millions of dollars in grants for community improvements. Even more important is the unity and momentum that these processes inspire, and the new leadership that develops. This year we are working intensively in **Cambridge, Swanton, St. Johnsbury, and Craftsbury.**



Advancing the Rural Digital Economy



VCRD has worked with community members, businesses, nonprofits and municipalities to bring digital tools to strengthen online presence, modernized communications, and develop informative websites. Downtown Wi-Fi zones have broadened internet access and with VCRD help every town in Vermont now has access to Front Porch Forum. To find out more about advancing the digital economy in your town, go to vtdigitaleconomy.org.

Strengthening our Working Landscape

In 2010 VCRD started the **Working Landscape Partnership** to advance the legislation that built the **Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Fund**. Today, we lead the **Working Lands Coalition** promoting investment to grow farm, forest, and value-added businesses, to expand rural opportunities, and to conserve land in production. Find out more at vtworkinglands.org.

In 2013 VCRD founded the **Vermont Higher Education Food Systems Consortium** dedicated to making Vermont the epicenter of the food movement in higher education and capturing the imagination of a new generation of working lands entrepreneurs.



Growing Vermont’s Climate Economy



At the **VCRD Summit on “Creating Prosperity and Opportunity Confronting Climate Change”** in February, VCRD founded the **Vermont Climate Change Economy Council (VCCEC)** and charged it to develop a platform to create jobs and boost prosperity while reducing carbon impacts. The new council will frame ways that Vermont can confront climate change through innovative economic development, build national reputation, create jobs, and attract youth and entrepreneurship.

VCRD Programs, 1997-2014

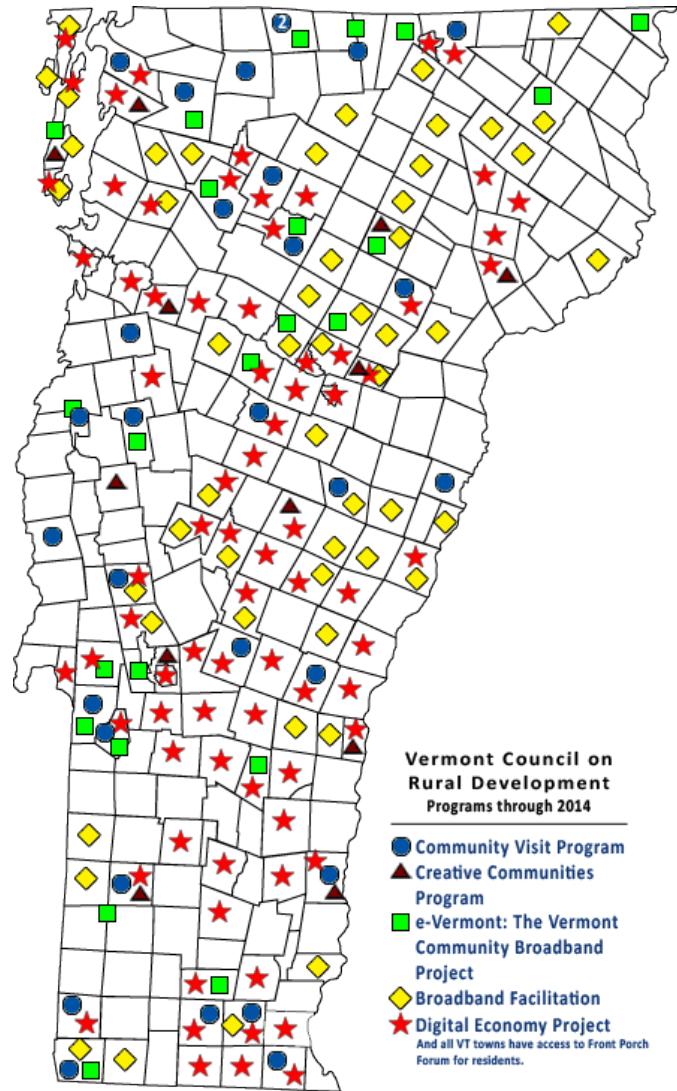
In addition to work in communities through **Community Visits**, **Creative Communities**, the **Digital Economy Project**, **e-Vermont**, and **Broadband Facilitation** (shown on map) VCRD also brings people together to address issues of fundamental importance to Vermonters through **Summits**, **Policy Councils**, and **Other Program Initiatives**:

Summits & Conferences:

- Summit on Creating Prosperity & Opportunity
Confronting Climate Change, 2015
- Envisioning the Future of Vermont's Digital Economy, 2014
- Summit on the Future of VT's Working Landscape, 2013
- Governor's Retreat on Efficiency, 2013
- Grafton Conference of Vermont's Forest Products
Industry, 2013
- National Rural Policy Roundtable, 2013
- Governor's Workshop on Education, 2012
- Vermont's Digital Future Conference, 2012
- Governor's Summit on Green Innovation, 2011
- Vermont's Working Landscape Summit, 2010
- Regions Connecting for Rural Innovation, a Northeastern
U.S. Rural Policy Convening, 2010
- Summit on the Future of Vermont, 2009
- Advancing Creativity and Innovation in Rural America
(a National Conference for the Partners for Rural
America), 2008
- Advancing Vermont's Creative Economy, 2007
- Local Power: Energy & Economic Development in Rural
Vermont, 2006
- Beyond the Divide: Conflict and Paths to Community
Success, 2005
- The Structure of Planning in Vermont, 2004
- Vermont Rural Roundtable, 2003
- Rural Economic Development, 2002
- Rural Summit on Housing, 2001
- The First Governor's Rural Summit, 1999

Councils:

- Vermont Climate Change Economy Council, 2015
- Vermont Working Landscape Council, 2011-12
- Council on the Future of Vermont, 2007-09
- Vermont Rural Energy Council, 2006-07
- Vermont Council on Planning, 2004-05
- Vermont Council on Culture and Innovation, 2003-04
- Vermont Agriculture Viability Council, 2002-03
- Vermont Forest Products Council, 2001-03
- Vermont Broadband Working Group, 2000-05



Initiatives:

- Vermont Climate Change Economy Initiative, 2015
- Vermont Higher Education Food Systems Consortium,
2013-present
- Vermont Digital Economy Project, 2013-14
- Vermont Working Landscape Partnership, 2010-14
- e-Vermont: The Community Broadband Project, 2010-12
- Vermont Forest Products Marketing Initiative, 2007

Find out more at vtrural.org
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43 State Street, PO Box 1384 | Montpelier, Vermont 05601-1384
802-223-6091 | info@vtrural.org