Overview

This community revitalization program helps maintain or evolve small to medium-sized historic centers with existing civic and commercial buildings. The designation supports the historic center and targets training and financial incentives to bring additional public and private investment to spark village revitalization. Multiple village centers may be designated in a community and the designation must be renewed every five years to maintain the benefits. Once designated, the community can apply for additional benefits to encourage new housing within walking distance to the center with the Neighborhood Development Area designation.

Expanded outreach efforts have led to an increase in designated village centers by 30% (93 to 121) in three years and a 200% increase in historic tax credit applications from village centers over the past two years. A record number of tax credits (12 grantees) were awarded to village centers this year. This includes the revival of general stores that are the crucial economic and social foundations of Pawlett, Greensboro and Hancock. The iconic Craftsbury Inn, long a centerpiece in this small community will be rehabilitated and re-opened as the Craftsbury Public House, while in Jamaica, tax credits will support rehabilitation of a building that has long housed the local Post Office and in Putney, the Next Stage Performing Arts center is in the midst of a multi-year rehabilitation.

By the Numbers

Designated Village Centers
121 designated village centers

Village Center Tax Credits [2010-2015]
45 projects awarded tax credits
32 unique communities served
$2.6 million in tax credits awarded
$26.7 in private investment

Municipal Planning Grants [2010-2015]
117 grants awarded
76 communities served
$1,222,119 awarded

For more information, please contact:
Richard Amore: richard.amore@vermont.gov or 802.828.5229
or visit: http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/village_center
Village Center Designation Benefits

The Vermont village center designation program supports local revitalization efforts across the state by providing technical assistance and state funding to help designated municipalities build strong communities. Once designated, the community will be eligible for the following benefits:

10% Historic Tax Credits
- Available as an add-on to approved Federal Historic Tax Credit projects.
- Eligible costs include interior and exterior improvements, code compliance, plumbing and electrical upgrades.

25% Facade Improvement Tax Credits
- Eligible facade work up to $25,000.

50% Code Improvement Tax Credits
- Available for up to $50,000 each for elevators and sprinkler systems and $12,000 for lifts.
- Eligible code work includes ADA modifications, electrical or plumbing up to $25,000.

50% Technology Tax Credits
- Available for up to $30,000 for installation or improvements made to data and network installations, and HVAC (heating, cooling or ventilation systems) reasonably related to data or network improvements.

Priority Consideration for State Grants
- Priority consideration for Municipal Planning Grants, Vermont Agency of Transportation grants, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources grants and funding from Vermont’s Community Development Program (VCDP).

Priority Consideration by State Building And General Services (BGS)
- Priority site consideration by the State Building and General Services (BGS) when leasing or constructing buildings.

Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) Eligibility
- Communities may also designated Neighborhood Development Areas within 1/4 mile from the designated village center. Qualified projects are:
  - Exempt from Act 250 regulations and the land gains tax.
  - Eligible for, once designated, reduced Agency of Natural Resources review fees.
Overview

The State’s historic tax credit program supports building and code improvements and is one of the primary benefits of Downtown and Village Center designation, and sparks revitalization seen in community centers across the state. To date there are 24 designated Downtowns and 121 Village Centers. Annually, applicants in these communities submit well over 30 rehabilitation and renovation project applications to help support investments that exceed $20 million. In July 2015, the Downtown Board allocated $2.37 million in tax incentives for 27 projects, supporting nearly $40 million in downtown and village center construction and rehabilitation projects. This means for every dollar in credits awarded by the State in FY 2015, nearly $17 will be leveraged.

Expanded outreach efforts has led to a 200% increase in applications from village centers over the past two years, with projects in a record number of designated village centers receiving tax credit awards this year. This includes the revival of general stores that are the crucial economic and social foundations of Pawlett, Greensboro and Hancock. The iconic Craftsbury Inn, long a centerpiece in this small community will be rehabilitated and re-opened as the Craftsbury Public House, while in Jamaica, tax credits will support rehabilitation of a building that has long housed the local Post Office and in Putney, the Next Stage Performing Arts center is in the midst of a multi-year rehabilitation and renovation with the support of several grants and state tax credits.

Other project highlights include rehabilitation of the former Catholic high school in downtown Bennington to expand a popular community sports and recreation facility serving hundreds of residents of southern Vermont; hazard abatement and critical building repairs at the Marble Museum, which will bring 40,000 square feet of space in the heart of Proctor back into productive use; and affordable housing projects involving historic buildings in Winooski, Rochester and Lyndonville.

By the Numbers

Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits [2010-2015]

157 projects awarded
55 communities served
$12 million awarded credits
$202 million in private investment

For more information, please contact:
Caitlin Corkins: caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov or 802.828.3047
or visit: http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/downtown_village_tax_credit
### Designated Downtowns and Village Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax Credit Matrix</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>20% Historic (Federal)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total credits capped at $2.2 M per state fiscal year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time limit</td>
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<td>Carry forward</td>
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<td>Carry forward</td>
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<td>Application Process</td>
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<td>Carry forward</td>
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</table>

For More Information Contact: Caitlin Corkins at (802) 828.3047 caitlin.corkins@vermont.gov
Downtown Historic Tax Credits

Overview
Several years ago Hardwick’s Main Street was in a state of decline like many communities throughout Vermont. Buildings were run down, underused or even condemned. Adding to these issues, in 2006, a tragic fire gutted the Bemis Block, a prominent building in the heart of downtown. Rather than tearing it down to create a parking lot, the community chose restoration and created new business and housing within the historic building. This key decision not only sparked a new direction for Hardwick, it also showed other small towns how saving one historic building can spur redevelopment of an entire community.

Challenge
The expense to repair and bring historic downtown buildings up to code (especially costly items like sprinklers and elevators) often exceeds the value of the building. Rents in many of Vermont’s smaller downtowns and village centers are often low and may not generate significant capital to finance a major rehabilitation. With insufficient funding to fill the gap, banks are reluctant to make loans to upgrade buildings. As a result, buildings are not maintained and Main Street slowly closes down. Over time, property values decline along with the local economy.

Solution
Downtown and Village Center tax credits help close this financial gap, make projects economically viable, spark community revitalization, cement a sense of place, and bring buildings back onto the tax rolls.

“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
Hardwick Architect

For More Information Contact:
Caitlin Corkins at (802) 828.3047 or caitlin.corkins@state.vt.us
The Result

In Hardwick, seven buildings have been rehabilitated with the help of tax credit-financing and another five are in progress, or near completion. Approximately $820,000 in state tax credits have leveraged over $5 million in outside investments to date, jumpstarting new businesses and creating jobs, developing quality housing, and bringing new vitality to the commercial district. An analysis of Hardwick’s downtown property values (Grand List) is evidence that public investment to improve these buildings results in increased property tax revenue. By promoting reinvestment and encouraging projects that put dollars back into the local economy, tax credits are a critical factor in promoting economic vitality for communities that take advantage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bemis Block - 73 South Main Street</th>
<th>Hill Block [1874] - 35 South Main Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand List Before $257,800</td>
<td>Grand List Before $55,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand List After $797,400</td>
<td>Grand List After $314,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hardwick Inn - 1 North Main Street</th>
<th>Marshall Block - 87 South Main Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand List Before $147,800</td>
<td>Grand List Before $145,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand List After $583,300</td>
<td>Grand List After $297,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For More Information Contact: Caitlin Corkins at (802) 828.3047 or caitlin.corkins@state.vt.us
The damage in Wilmington resulting from 2011’s Tropical Storm Irene was among the worst in the state with over 48 businesses flooded. Tucked in the mountains in southern Vermont, this classic skiing and recreation town is now a poster child for what can happen when people collaborate and unite around a shared goal to rebuild a devastated downtown economy. Thanks to the hard work of municipal leaders, local residents, a strong and dedicated group of second-homeowners, local foundations, businesses, private investors, and state policymakers, Wilmington’s revival is now well on its way.

The Challenge

In 2011, the community was struggling economically with declining population and slowing tax revenue. Irene’s flood destruction drove retail sales to new lows. Worse still, in the historic downtown, 80% of the buildings were damaged by flood waters, two were completely swept away by the raging waters, and every business was forced to close. Although some businesses began to re-open in the coming months, others closed for good. With so many vacant or severely damaged buildings the cost to rebuild was difficult to comprehend. In addition to structural problems and water damage, state building codes required owners to bring their historic buildings up to current codes. Even for building owners fortunate to have flood insurance, the cost of the flood repairs and code improvements often exceeded the value of the property.

The Solution

In response, an energetic organization, Wilmington Works was founded to champion and lead downtown’s revival. Working alongside municipal staff, a major goal of the group was to foster economic development via a new partnership between the public and private sector. The Downtown and Village Center tax credit program, along with the special flood provisions enacted by the legislature, played a critical role bridging the financial gap and attracting investors needed to restore the downtown to its former glory.

The Result

Since Irene, ten projects in Wilmington have received state tax credits. The resulting reconstruction projects gave the community hope at a critical time and created the momentum needed to spark a larger revival. Today, iconic landmarks in Wilmington are back in business, including Dot’s Restaurant and the Vermont House, and additional tax credit projects are in progress or nearing completion. Over $550,000 in state tax credits is anticipated to leverage almost $6 million in private investment. “Without this program, there are several projects in Wilmington that could not have happened or would have been a lot harder,” says Adam Grinold, former Director of Wilmington Works. “We would still be looking at vacant storefronts instead of new businesses and ongoing construction.” Now the local economy is on the upswing with receipts returning to their pre-Irene levels, jumping 22% between 2012 and 2013. “This community really came together after Irene,” says Grinold “but without the help of the tax credits, we wouldn’t have been able to come back this quickly or strongly.”
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://accd.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 the qualified project may jointly apply for a reallocation of sales taxes on construction materials. Qualified projects must be located within a Designated Downtown and reallocated taxes must be used by the municipality to support the qualified project. Projects are awarded on a competitive basis.

- **Range:** Based on sales tax generated in excess of $100,000 to $1M depending on the 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://accd.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://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/vcdp

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://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_transportation_fund

* Grant program receives priority consideration due to designation
**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 Seiler, (802) 828-1948 annina.seiler@vermont.gov  
**Website:** http://accd.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, elevating or floodproofing buildings, property acquisitions/demolitions, and mitigation planning. Details on website.

**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 vary depending on funding.  
**Contact:** Ray Doherty, 802-241-5258 ray.doherty@vermont.gov  
**Website:** http://vem.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 in Vermont.

**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://accd.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://accd.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://accd.vermont.gov/business/relocate_expand/capital/brownfields

**Cultural Facilities Grant Program**
Matching state grants to improve community facilities used to provide cultural activities to the public 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 designation
Human Services and Educational Facilities Grant Program
Matching state grants for capital costs associated with the major maintenance, renovation, and development of facilities used for human services and health care, or educational opportunities.

Range: $1,000 - $25,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in October
Contact: Chrissy Gilhuly, (802) 828-3519 christine.gilhuly@vermont.gov
Website: http://bgs.vermont.gov/formsandpublications

Regional Economic Development Grant Program
Matching state grants to stimulate the creation and development or retention of economic development of individual or regional Vermont communities.

Range: $1,000 - $25,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in October
Contact: Chrissy Gilhuly, (802) 828-3519 christine.gilhuly@vermont.gov
Website: http://bgs.vermont.gov/formsandpublications

Windham County Economic Development Program
Private funding of $2 Million annually through 2019 to promote economic development in Windham County, in the form of grants or loan financing in partnership between ACCD and the VEDA.

Range: Grants - $25,000-$2 Million; Loans - $25,000-$350,000
Eligibility: Municipalities, non-profit organizations and governmental organizations located in Windham County are eligible. Businesses will be considered for financing
Deadline: July 2015
Contact: Kimberly Woolaver, (802) 828-3230 kimberly.woolaver@vermont.gov
Website: http://accd.vermont.gov/business/WCGP

ANR Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Construction Fund*
State Revolving Loan to assist in construction of public, private and nonprofit community water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Details on various programs on website.

Range: $2,000,000 per funding cycle and $6,000,000 cap for any one project. No minimum project amount.
Eligibility: Municipalities, private developers and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in January.
Contact: Ashley Lucht, (802) 585-4904 ashley.lucht@vermont.gov
Website: http://wastewater.vt.gov/fundingdwsrfconstructionloan.htm

ANR Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Planning Fund
State Revolving Loan to assist in the planning and design of public, private and nonprofit community water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Details on various programs on website.

Range: $100,000 maximum. No minimum project amount.
Eligibility: Municipalities, private developers and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Accepted on a continuing basis.
Contact: Ashley Lucht, (802) 585-4904 ashley.lucht@vermont.gov
Website: http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/dwgwp/fundingdwsrfplanningloan.htm

ANR Recreational Trails Grant Program
State 80:20 matching grants for the maintenance, restoration, design and construction of recreational trails.

Range: Maximum of $20,000. Local match of 20%.
Eligibility: Municipalities, located outside of Chittenden County with a confirmed planning process.
Deadline: Annually in February
Contact: Sherry Winnie, (802) 760-8450 sherry.winnie@vermont.gov
Website: http://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/grants/rtp

* Grant program receives priority consideration due to designation

Downtowns
Gary Holloway
(802) 828.5229
gary.holloway@vermont.gov
Village Centers
Richard Amore
(802) 828.5229
richard.amore@vermont.gov
http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization
Recreational Facilities Grants Program
Matching state grants for capital costs associated with the development and creation of community recreational opportunities.

Range: $1,000 - $25,000
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profit organizations
Deadline: Annually in October
Contact: Chrissy Gilhuly, (802) 828-3519 christine.gilhuly@vermont.gov

ANR Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program
State grants for the design and construction projects that target nonpoint sources of pollution that cause or contribute to the state’s surface waters. Details on website.

Range: Maximum of $250,000. Local match varies.
Eligibility: Municipalities, regional organizations, non-profits associations, citizen groups, and state agencies.
Deadline: Two rounds annually, varies depending on funding.
Contact: David Pasco, (802) 490-6112 david.pasco@vermont.gov
Website: http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/grants.htm

ANR Caring for Canopy Grant Program
State 50:50 grants to help communities care for tree canopy by taking the necessary actions to developing and sustaining a community-wide tree program, including tree plantings, inventories, maintenance, and planning. Details on website.

Range: $500 - $5,000. Local match of 50%.
Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profits associations.
Deadline: Annually in April
Contact: Danielle Fitzko, (802) 598-9992 danielle.fitzco@vermont.gov
Website: http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/community_forests/community_canopy_grants

VTrans Transportation Alternative Program*
State 80:20 matching grants for the construction, planning, and design of bike and pedestrian facilities (on or off road), sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, lighting, and others. Details on website.

Range: $50,000 - $300,000. Local match of 20%.
Eligibility: Municipalities, transit agencies, school district, and regional planning commissions
Deadline: Annually in October
Contact: Scott Robertson, (802) 828-5779 scott.robertson@vermont.gov
Website: http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/bureaus/mab/local-projects/transportation-alternatives

VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program*
State 90:10 matching grants for the scoping, design, and construction of bike and pedestrian facilities, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, crosswalks, shared-use paths, and lighting. Details on website.

Range: No minimum or maximum range. Local match of 10%.
Eligibility: Municipalities, transit agencies, school district, and regional planning commissions
Deadline: Annually in July
Contact: Jon Kaplan, (802) 828-0059 jon.kaplan@vermont.gov
Website: http://vtransengineering.vermont.gov/bureaus/mab/local-projects/bike-ped

VTrans/ACCD Strong Communities, Better Connections Program*
State 90:10 matching grants for planning that align land use planning and community revitalization with transportation investments. Details on website.

Range: No minimum or maximum range. Local match of 10%.
Eligibility: Municipalities, located outside of Chittenden County with a confirmed planning process.
Deadline: Pilot year, future funding to be determined.
Contact: Jackie Cassino, (802) 828-2758 jackie.cassino@vermont.gov
or Richard Amore, richard.amore@vermont.gov
Website: http://vtransplanning.vermont.gov/programs/scbc

* Grant program receives priority consideration due to designation