



VERMONT CREATIVE INITIATIVE

create vermont

CORNERSTONE CREATIVE COMMUNITY

*Vermont Creative Network Strategic Plan
CDAE 278: Applied Community Planning
Peri Buck
March 5, 2020*

INTRODUCTION

The Vermont Creative Network is a broad collective of organizations, businesses, and individuals working to advance Vermont's creative sector. The network is organized into six zones, each with a local coordinator and committee. In the spring semester of 2020, a University of Vermont Community Development and Applied Economics class (CDAE 278) prepared a profile for each zone. Volunteer students from Champlain College provided graphic design support.

These profiles offer a snapshot of the creative economy including assets, challenges, and action ideas. They pull data from past plans and studies as well as a 2019 study by Mt. Auburn Associates. The information from these various sources is compiled and organized by the Vermont Creative Network's four strategic priorities, which are:

- 1. Marketing Creativity;*
- 2. Investing in creative enterprises and individuals;*
- 3. Educating, training, & supporting emerging entrepreneurs; and,*
- 4. Leveraging cross-sector intersections/ partnerships.*

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a major disruption during the student's research and forced everyone to work remotely. The students shifted gears by interviewing creatives across the state about their experiences during the pandemic. Just over a dozen interviews were completed and will be published in the next draft of these profiles.

The UVM and Champlain College students hope that these profiles will help the Vermont Creative Network make progress towards a stronger, more resilient creative economy in Vermont.

— David Hohenschau

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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East Central Vermont Economic Development District

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Mt. Auburn & Associates

Vermont Arts Council

Vermont Council on Rural Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cornerstone Creative Community is a beautiful region of Vermont that is characterized by inspiring natural landscapes, vibrant communities, and a welcoming feel.

The creative sector is strong throughout this zone, especially in the Design, Performing Arts, and Artisanal Foods sector. The natural scenery and rich historical presence are main draws for tourism, but the zone needs to develop and maintain a strong “downtown” presence in order to grow the industry further.

A main theme seen throughout each of the reports and the 2019 feedback is the need to create a “creative identity” for this region of Vermont. Part of this will include investing in the creative enterprises and individuals in the area. There is a widespread need for more shareable spaces for creatives to work and collaborate with others. In addition, training and assistance on basic entrepreneurial matters like social media marketing and effective advertising were aspects that has emerged as a clear need for this creative community.

This zone has great support from the presence of educational centers, like Vermont Technical College, that encourage cross-sector partnership between the arts and technical careers. There is also a variety of cultural heritage sites that have a large presence in the zone through educational programs and community outreach.

There is no lack of amazing creatives that work in this zone. Everything from Hip-Hop to Glassblowing is represented by individuals and businesses across the region. Supporting the creative economy through initiatives like: will ensure the vitality of the Cornerstone Creative Community for years to come.

CORNERSTONE CREATIVE COMMUNITY BY THE NUMBERS

Most significant segment is Design with

26%

of jobs compared to 26% in state

Jobs in the creative economy are

10.8%

of regional jobs in the zone, slightly
higher than all other zones

Jobs in the creative economy grew by

14%

between 2010 and 2018, greater than
regional job growth of 2% in this zone

Most growth in Artisan Foods

67%

and Performing Arts

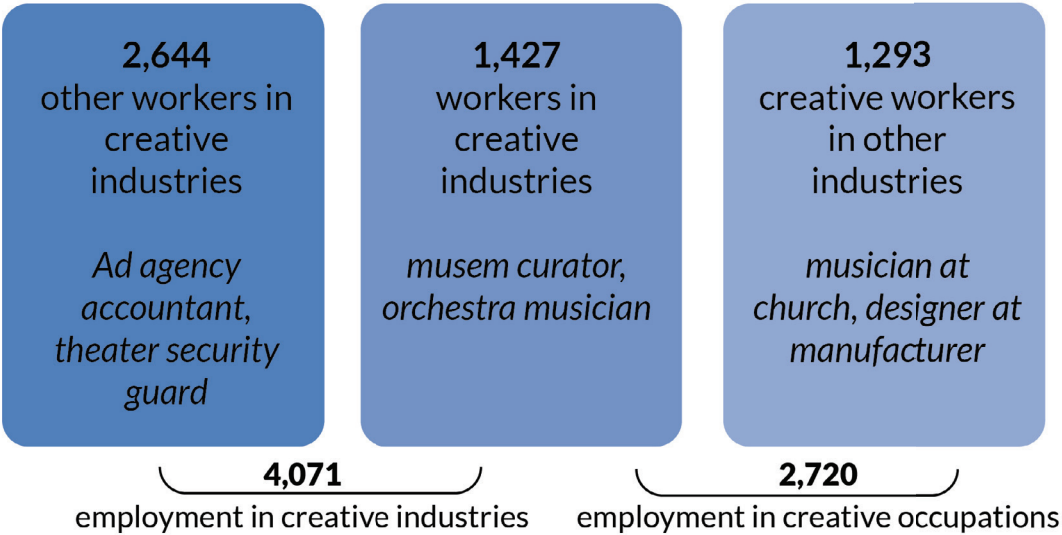
26%

*Between 2010-2018 highest growth in employment
in creative industries (13.8%) across all zones and
comparable to statewide growth (14.1%)*

Mt. Auburn Figures

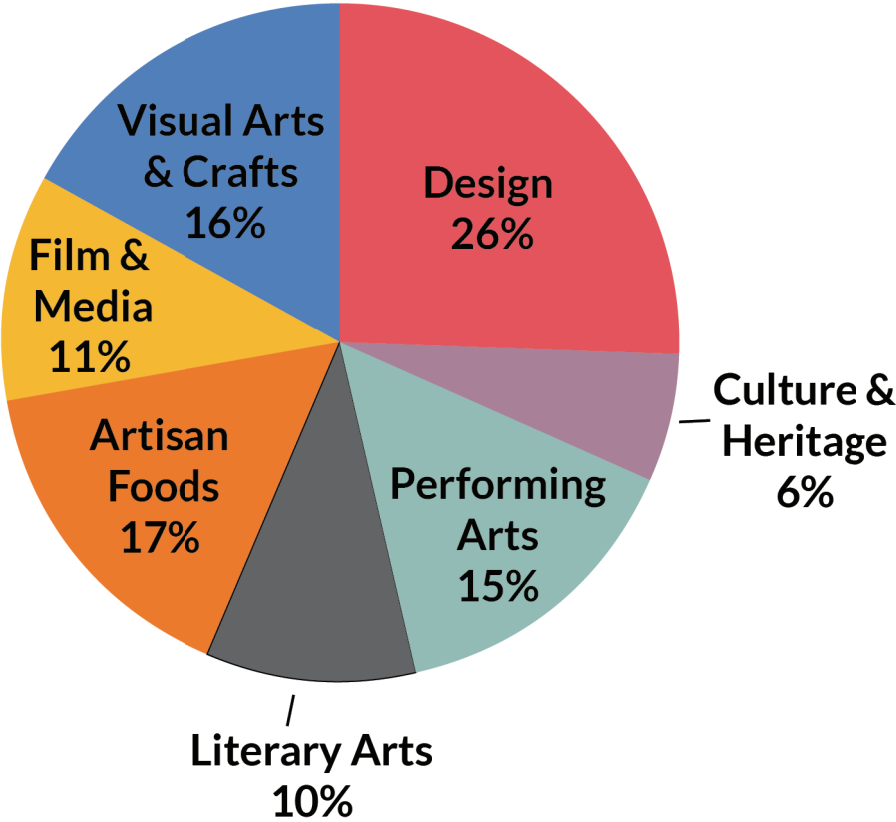
Economic Importance of Creative Economy: Cornerstone

5,364 jobs total (2018)



Segment Distribution: Cornerstone

Segment Distribution: Cornerstone



PAST PLANS REVIEW

In this section we have reviewed and summarized relevant plans from this zone.

The plans include:

Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs: Creative Economy of East Central Vermont

Michael Kane Consulting, Inc., 2016

Randolph Area Creative Communities Program

Vermont Council on Rural Development, 2007

East Central Vermont Economic Development District 2016-2021 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Actions and Tasks

ECVEDD, 2016

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

ECVEDD, 2020

We have organized these summaries as much as possible using the four priorities of the Vermont Creative Network. These four priorities were identified in from VCN's outreach in 2019 and provide a helpful starting point for this year's conversations.

1.1 Priority: Marketing Creativity

Objectives for this priority include:

Build Vermont's reputation for creativity and innovation

Retain and attract creative entrepreneurs and young people to our state.

Assets of the Cornerstone Creative Community

- Very innovative; ingenious workspaces create a vibrant community
- Rich in book publishers - great place for writers to enjoy life
- Network of bookstores and libraries that act as community hubs
- Slow pace and beautiful natural environment
- Historic sites are effectively used for education and community heritage
- Local print media is very effective at reporting the creative economy
- Arts education is very prevalent:
- Close proximity to institutions that offer programs for creative occupations
- Strong music community
- Central region of VT - high accessibility
- Great downtown spaces
- Youth and families are celebrated

Limitations of the Cornerstone Creative Community

- Need to develop a clear identity as a region in order to establish the area as a creative hub
- Promote more historic places in the region
- Improve funding for museums and heritage sites to reduce the dependence on volunteers
- Promote environmental initiatives that define the zone as a green community
- Promote downtowns in the zone as "hubs" of the creative culture
- Make existing festivals a cycle of festivals on a cohesive schedule

1.1 Priority: Marketing Creativity



2019 Feedback:

“Desiring assistance with marketing records”

“Funding to help completely redesign and launch a new, interactive website in order to replace an old, static platform”

“More folks, better distribution”

“More visitors”

1.2 Priority: *Investing in creative enterprises and individuals*

Objectives for this priority include:

Encourage & sustain creative enterprises

Assets of the Creative Cornerstone Community

- Creative enterprises in this zone have great reputations
- Great tourism draw
- Strong arts presence
- Great relationship with the technical college
- Proximity to numerous metro centers
- Proximity to two interstate highways
- Served by three freight rail lines
- Amtrak Vermonter passenger service
- Proximity to bus services
- Growing pockets of high-speed Internet and Fiber
- Hartness airport
- Green Mountain Railway
- Growing broadband coverage
- Availability of grants and loans for broadband and fiber optic Internet expansion
- Strong Relationships between housing organizations, towns, RDCs and RPCs
- Proximity Of Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Regional Technology Center
- Strong Relationship between RDCs, regional technical centers, high schools, and workforce investment boards
- Strong Volunteer base centered around schools
- Good schools throughout a majority of the region
- 4 Career and Technical Education Centers and VT Technical College
- Low Crime Rates
- Relatively low cost of middle income/workforce housing in the southern half of the District
- Potential to expand transit industry
- Ongoing transition to advanced manufacturing
- Recovery-friendly workplaces, housing, and policies
- Pop-up trainings and education events
- Expanding creative economy
- Tourism as potential workforce recruitment tool
- Regional co-working spaces provide workspace for distributed and remote workers
- Technical training at both high-school and post-high school levels
- Full development of career pathways
- VTC major in Renewable Energy

1.2 Priority: *Investing in creative enterprises and individuals*

Limitations of the Creative Cornerstone Community

- Too stringent of regulations
- Difficult and unclear permitting process
- Need to help lower income communities develop community pride
- Improve growth and economic stability of creative individuals and processes
- Increase marketing (newsletters, email chains, etc.)
- Aging infrastructure and lack of funding for maintenance
- Truck access to industrial parks through downtowns creates potential conflicts
- Limited rural public transit
- Limited rural broadband services
- Insufficient cellular infrastructure
- Very limited presence of rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, etc)
- Unmet school infrastructure needs and lack of state funding support
- Declining student enrollment = higher cost per pupil
- Elderly & Disabled transportation needs
- Distance to ports and international airports
- Uncertainty about future energy costs and dependency on non-local energy sources
- Climate change impacts can affect a range of transportation-related decisions
- Need for more education and job training programming for all ages
- Slow wage growth compared to other regions in VT and adjoining regions of NH
- Lack of human capital, particularly for middle and upper-level positions
- Dependency on NH side of UV for jobs
- Lack of a statewide workforce development strategy
- Weak links between economic development, human services, and education initiatives
- Difficulty informing businesses of resources
- Fragmentation and dilution of advertising due to proliferation of platforms
- Lack of quality adult day care
- Disproportionate share of subsidized housing in towns with sewer and water
- Inadequate supply of all housing types
- Substandard and aging housing stock
- High cost of living
- VT tax policy with respect to remoteworkers
- Lack of reliable transportation
- Fragmented relocation resources
- Workforce shortages
- Aging population
- resulting in higher healthcare costs and a declining workforce
- Lack, and high cost of, qualified childcare
- Stigma associated with “affordable” housing
- Social Isolation
- High employee turnover

1.2 Priority: *Investing in creative enterprises and individuals*

2019 feedback:

“Retreat centers where artists can go to rejuvenate and create”

“Funding open to creatives and businesses to do creative/design work (not just art/artists/non-profits) Networking ops are great More chances to see, share and learn about each other’s work.”

“Affordable retail space in the ‘downtown’ core”

“Fewer restrictive funding. We almost qualify. More emergency grant funding opportunities.”

“Space!”

“More information about grants available in Vermont to teach songwriting. More live music opportunities.”

“...I very much need a small and affordable studio space!!”

“Easy available stipends and grants to older artists”

“I need to move from the volume I am able to generate in a teaching studio to the level of setting up my stored kiln and adding some equipment in my own studio where I am not limited in the volume of work I can generate. I am working in a small space that was “gifted” to me and I can’t overwhelm the existing student and professional work flow”

“Grant funding would be a godsend so I could actually build a portfolio to move myself to the next level instead of doing subsistence commissions. I am lucky to have an affordable studio, but it is 30 miles from home—there is nothing affordable in my area.”

“In order to create choreographies, rehearsal space and performance space are necessary, without these two components, it’s almost impossible to create a piece that is not a solo. Unfortunately space is expensive. When I work on a piece I am renting out \$50-\$100 per rehearsal. Similarly dance performers in general have few opportunities to showcase their work as theater rentals are exorbitant. Perhaps for this reason there are few choreographers in the state of Vermont who are able to live off their arts”

“Infrastructure grants”

“Financial resources to expand the capacity of the statewide services we offer to schools, agencies and individuals”

1.3 Priority: *Educating, training, & supporting emerging entrepreneurs*

Objectives for this priority include:

Provide creative sector-related skills matched to the workforce needs of Vermont's businesses.

Assets of the Cornerstone Creative Community

- Proximity to New Hampshire opens up larger markets
- Vermont Technical College (VTC) has a career center that provides young people with information about cross-sector creative work
- Strong arts programs in elementary and secondary education in partnership with higher education (VTC) expose youth and older people alike to work in the creative sector
- Partnerships between PCs and RDCs
- ED support system interfaces well with businesses
- Professional Training resources available via collaborations between elected officials and development groups
- Cross Pollination Among businesses and entrepreneurs
- Ease Of Access To Business owners and politicians
- The "Vermont Brand" as advertising tool
- State incentive programs available
- Availability of commercial and industrial space for lease and/or purchase
- Multiple Opportunity Zones
- Commercial hemp and cannabis market
- Collaboration between schools, communities, and businesses to identify and address skill shortages among the workforce

Limitations of the Cornerstone Creative Community

- Provide marketing assistance through technology and in-person tactics in order to facilitate a higher number of sales
- Embrace "tech" career paths in the creative sector in local schools
- Lack of support for theater companies that rely on donors; they need tools to be self-sufficient
- More affordable, collaborative spaces
- Strengthen social infrastructure
- Establish an effective marketing and communications plan that increases the creative economy's visibility
- Create a forum for presenting/marketing assets
- Perceived and real conflicts between regulatory hurdles and development demand
- Expense, time and regulatory constraints, around permit approval, combine to limit development
- Lack of pre-permitted buildings and land
- General lack of investment capital
- Difficulty retaining successful local ownership
- Small businesses lack capacity and resources to perform vital professional functions (technological, marketing, human resources, etc.) to meet long-term growth needs
- Perception of poor business climate
- Disengaged citizens, town official's volunteerism, and lack of participation
- Lack of state-level political consensus
- Changing tax structure in NH and NY
- Competition from NH, which has no sales or income tax

1.3 Priority: *Educating, training, & supporting emerging entrepreneurs*

2019 feedback:

"I live in Orange County...there is a real problem with access to arts in my area because of topography. When there was a 'local creative economy' study done by Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, the first meeting was in Randolph, then Springfield, I can't remember the third. That is not local. We need to look at topography and how that can isolate artists. We are such an undeserved area, it's like we are invisible."

"Quite honestly, more state support for the arts and for artists for whom our creative work is our "day job". I make at least as much money yearly through teaching and mentoring composition as I do actually composing. I have learned to be quite successful fundraising for projects, but it's dangerous to go to the same donors too frequently, and while both the Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Community Foundation are doing their best, it's too little for too many artists."

"Local sculptors group for collaboration, more venues for small scale sculpture, more frequent solo show opportunities."

"Access to web designers and social media marketers. Help monetizing services"

"Mentorship and time"

"A deeper understanding of reliable markets and a push to develop markets."

"I am ready to set up a more professional website, and am broadening the sectors where I offer services to include a greater focus on health and wellness. Assistance in connecting with people in the Preventative Health Care services would be helpful."

"More artist opportunities, jobs and teaching art jobs in rural areas would help. More networking opportunities for artists and teaching artists in rural areas is also important, along with more Vermont Arts Council presence and workshops in Central and Southern Vermont."

1.4 Priority: *Leveraging cross-sector intersections/ partnerships*

Objectives for this priority include:

*Forge profitable connections between creative businesses and other sectors
of Vermont's economy*

Amplify economic and community development

Assets of the Creative Cornerstone Community

- Deep agricultural and industrial history, which facilitates the preservation of culture while mixing creative pursuits with the non-creative sector
- Artisanal food sector is a great example of cooperation with local farms
- Strength in the convergence of healthcare, tourism, construction, education, energy, and the environment
- High community trust means a tendency
- toward cooperative forms of business
- Clubs like the Garden Club in Randolph make downtowns and village centers aesthetically appealing
- Working landscape and rural entrepreneurial spirit
- Natural beauty
- Heritage-based tourism
- Rural character
- Four season resorts
- Forest products economy
- Heritage-based tourism
- Growth in Value-added agriculture
- Expand Year-round recreation opportunities
- Strengthen Outdoor recreation economy
- Eco-tourism
- State Designated Downtown Program
- Hemp Business
- Expansion of modern wood heating market
- Access To Federally Qualified health centers
- Access To Quality Food And fresh produce
- Diversified Farmers markets
- Farm to table initiatives
- Dartmouth Hitchcock Health and Mount
- Ascutney hospitals
- Recent Community Health
- Needs Assessment completed for MAHHC
- Community partnerships
- Collaboration between healthcare and community improvement groups
- Improve health outcomes through connections to local food options and recreational opportunities
- "Age in Place" community nursing model
- Lifestyle medicine
- Community nurses
- Regional health advisory network

1.4 Priority: *Leveraging cross-sector intersections/ partnerships*

Limitations of the Creative Cornerstone Community

- Help local artisanal foods reach farther markets
- Provide support for topographically distant creators and consumers
- Implement recreational activities like the BikeFest, which had been done in the past
- Help creators integrate with other sectors in a more effective manner
- Struggling “conventional” agriculture
- Fragmentation threatens ecological systems and the forest products industry
- Climate change impacts on seasonal tourism businesses
- Substance misuse
- Attracting and retaining professionals
- Challenging payer mix due to socioeconomic conditions
- Lack of Maternity serviced
- Public policies supporting cannabis use
- Large share of region’s population depends on social services
- Aging population will increase demand for support services
- Workforce shortages and difficulty retaining qualified workers
- Tick-borne diseases

2019 Feedback:

“I am ready to set up a more professional website, and am broadening the sectors where I offer services to include a greater focus on health and wellness. Assistance in connecting with people in the Preventative Health Care services would be helpful.”

1.5 Priority: Creating an Identity

Objectives for this priority include:

Although this is not one of the priorities set out by the Vermont Creative Network, this theme became apparent as a common thread between all three reports.

Cultivating a Cornerstone Creative identity is essential to the preservation and development of the arts community in this region.

Situation

The Cornerstone Creative Community is really focused on establishing themselves as a creative hub

There is a large diversity of creatives here, allowing for a vibrant cultural community

Randolph has the Fiddlehead Festival, a great combination of the arts combining with heritage!

The desire to create a strong downtown presence is reflected by all communities in the zone

2019 FEEDBACK ANALYSIS

No focus group for this zone

There is not a big focus on cross-sector partnerships

Artists in these communities expressed the most need for basics, like space and grant funding. Things that will facilitate business growth.

Majority of the comments called for space

These spaces should be collaborative, allowing for creatives to work off of one another and build diverse and expansive profiles

This coincides with priority 1.3: Investing in creative enterprises and individuals

In addition, there is a need for not only more grant funding and state involvement, but for more EDUCATION about how to get these grants and additional funding.

The next priority expressed was that of entrepreneurial training. They need the tools to be able to access wider markets in this increasingly wide-spread and digital world.

Marketing the art in these communities in order to attract more tourists will benefit all stakeholders.

CEDS ACTIONS AND TASKS

Strategy 1.5: Support the concept of a “super-region” across New England to maintain and support the growth of advanced manufacturing (AM).

Action 1: Advocate for the creation of a multi-state consortium that strengthens New England’s economy as a whole

Continually provide data to political leaders in an effort to help them understand the importance of Advanced Manufacturing (AM) to Vermont’s future.

Support efforts to convene and align stakeholders and focus them on a unified agenda for growth.

Action 2: In an effort to become a National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI) hub, support state efforts to establish an Advanced Manufacturing Institute in New England.

Support cross-state meetings and discussions.

Create and disseminate briefing packets for manufacturers to use to educate local leaders and educators.

Aggregate inventory of cross-sector partnerships and analyze gaps.

Volunteer to serve as coordinator for a NNMI working group.

NETWORK ANALYSIS: STAKEHOLDERS

Attractions

Vermont Cheese Trail

- Vermont Cheese Council; introduction to more than 45 cheesemakers

Breweries

Long Trail Brewing Co.

- An awesome brewery
- 5520 US RTE 4, Bridgewater Corners

Businesses

Ellis Music

- They rent out instruments to schools and auditions
- 1709 VT Route 2017, Royalton

Education

Vermont Technical College

- Ranked 10th among top public school in the north; provide creative career education and outreach
- 124 Admin Dr. Randolph Center

Festivals

Arts on the Green

- Art market and festival with auctions, food, and family activities
- Chelsea Village, Chelsea

Final Friday Art Walk

- Exploration of Chelsea's Art scene
- Chelsea Village, Chelsea

New World Music Festival

- Takes place within Chandler; celebrates VT's Celtic and French heritage
- Address: 71 N Main St, Randolph

Tunbridge World's Fair

- Blend of active livestock shows with farm animals and a fair-time midway
- 1 Fairgrounds Lane, Tunbridge

Galleries/Stores

Country Spirit Baskets

- Handmade variety of baskets
- 142 Belknap Brook Rd, Tunbridge

Farmhouse Pottery

- retail store and pottery workshop
- 1837 W Woodstock Rd, Woodstock
- 802-774-8373

Green Mountain Glassworks

- Glassblowing shows, events, and classes
- 5523 VT Route 100, Granville

North Commons Art Gallery

- Gallery of local art/ music venue/ coffee shop
- 3 North Common, Chelsea

Two Potters

- The most adorable couple has this sustainable pottery gallery and store
- Bethel

Government

White River Valley Chamber of Commerce

- organization of arts, culture, and tourism for the white river valley region
- 31 VT Route 66, Randolph
- 802-728-9027

Stakeholders

Libraries

Kimball Library

- Historic Library
- 67 N Main St, Randolph

Markets

Woodstock Farmers Market

- Year round local market (adorable)
- 979 W Woodstock Rd, Woodstock

Museums

Billings Farm and Museum

- “one of the finest outdoor history museums in the country”; farm AND interactive events; education; film screening
- 69 Old River Rd, Woodstock

Montshire Museum of Science

- Children’s education and exploration
- 1 Montshire Rd, Norwich

Randolph Historical Society

- displays of military and school memorabilia
- 6 Salisbury St, Randolph

Performance Venues

Chandler Center for the Arts

- Music Hall, won Yankee Magazine’s “Best Music Hall” in New England
- 71 N Main St. Randolph

Radio

WCVR Sugar River Media

- Serves Randolph and the surrounding communities
- 62 Radio Dr, Randolph

Resources

Chelsea Arts Collective

- Creates public, community oriented events
- 3 North Common, Chelsea
- Carrie Caouette- De Lallo

Studios

First Light Studios

- Photography, fine arts, and music studio space
- 34 Pleasant St, Randolph

White River Craft Center

- Shared space for arts and crafts
- 50 Randolph Ave, Randolph

Theaters

Playhouse Movie Theater

- Community owned theater that shows first run features and classics
- 11 S Main St, Randolph

Chambers and Partners

Chamber of Commerce

Cohase Regional Chamber of Commerce

- Supports commerce in the Cohase region of the Connecticut River Valley
- PO Box 35, Wells River
- (802) 518 - 0030
- cohasechamber@gmail.com

Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce

- Create and enhance and economic environment where area businesses and the community thrive
- 5966 Woodstock Road; PO Box 823, Quechee
- (802) 295 - 6852
- info@hartfordvtchamber.com

Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce

- Cultivate the region as a 4-seasons recreational and artisanal destination.
- 57 Pond Street, Ludlow
- (802) 228- 5830
- info@yourplaceinvermont.com

Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce

- Goal is to promote the wonderful events and daily progress happening in the town and community
- 56 Main Street Suite #2, Springfield
- (802) 885 - 2779
- springfieldrcoc@vermontel.net

White River Valley Chamber of Commerce

- Create and enhance and economic environment where area businesses and the community thrive
- 31 VT Route 66. Suite 1, Randolph
- (802) 728 - 9027

Woodstock Area Chamber of Commerce

- Showcasing the beauty and vibrance of the Woodstock area
- Woodstock

Coworking Space

The Schoolhouse

- Workspace with small amenities
- 46 Lincoln Corners Way, Woodstock

The Space on Main

- Nonprofit event, conference, work, and gallery space
- 174 Main Street, PO Box 512, Bradford
- (802) 449 - 6246
- thespaceonmain@gmail.com

ECVEDD Partner

Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation

- Foster and develop economic vitality and prosperity in the communities that they serve.
- 35 Railroad Row, Ste. 101, White River Junction
- (802) 295 - 3710
- gmedc@gmedc.com

Springfield Regional Development Corporation

- Provide assistance to businesses in many forms, such as: technical support, financing, and direct involvement
- 14 Clinton Street; Suite 7, Springfield
- (802) 885 - 3061
- bobf@springfielddevelopment.org

Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

- Ten municipalities in southeastern Vermont
- 38 Ascutney Park Road; P.O. Box 320, Ascutney
- (802) 674 - 9201
- Various staff

Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission

- Advocate for towns in the region and develop a vision for the vibrant future of the area.
- 128 King Farm Road, Woodstock
- (802) 457 - 3188
- info@trorc.org

Chambers and Partners

Local Business Development

Green Mountain Valley Business IDIGVT

- Website dedicated to exploring and enjoying the beauty of the Green Mountain Valley
- Granville; Hancock; Rochester; Stockbridge

Randolph Area Community Development Corporation

- Unite the community behind initiatives which strengthen our region's social and economic assets in order to enrich quality of life, instill pride, and build confidence
- 21 N Main St, PO Box 409, Randolph
- (802) 728 - 4305

APPENDIX

Priority Drafts List : Priority 3.1

Situation

AAE:

- Very innovative; ingenious workspaces (restaurants, pubs, open wall space) create a vibrant community
- Rich in book publishers! A great place for writers to enjoy life
- Great network of bookstores and libraries that act as community hubs
- Slow pace and beautiful natural environment
- Historic sites are effectively used for education and community heritage
- Local print media is very effective at reporting the creative economy
- Arts education is very prevalent: close proximity to institutions that offer programs for creative occupations

Randolph:

- Center of the state
- Accessible to many people and by many different ways
- Strong music community
- Great downtown space
- Celebrate youth and families

Suggested Goal/Actions

AAE:

- Need to develop a clear identity as a region in order to establish the area as a creative hub
- All while maintaining diversity!
- Promote more historic places in the region
- Improve funding for museums and heritage site to reduce the need for volunteers
- Communities that develop, restore, and promote their creative assets

Randolph:

- Promote environmental initiatives that define Randolph as a green community
- Promote Randolph as a “center”
- Make existing festivals a “cycle” of Festivals

Priority Drafts List : Priority 3.2

Situation

AAE:

- Creative enterprises in this zone have good reputations and are a major part of bringing in tourism for the region

Randolph:

- Strong arts, tech college, medical center

Suggested Goals/Actions

AAE:

- Relieve stringent regulations and permitting processes
- Help lower income communities develop community pride
- Improved growth and economic stability of creative individuals and enterprises

Randolph:

- Create a newsletter to spread the word about the vibrant community

Priority Drafts List : Priority 3.3

Situation

AAE:

- Proximity to New Hampshire opens up larger markets
- Vermont Technical College has a career center that provides young people with information about cross-sector creative work

Randolph:

- Strong arts programs and technical college expose youth and older people alike to work in the creative sector

Suggested Goals/Actions

AAE:

- Provide marketing assistance through technology and in-person tactics in order to facilitate a higher number of sales
- Embrace “tech” career paths in the creative sector in local schools
- Support theater companies that rely on donors; give them the tools to be self-sufficient
- Provide more affordable, shareable spaces
- Strengthen social infrastructure
- An effective marketing and communications plan that increases the creative economy’s visibility

Randolph:

- Create a forum for presenting/marketing assets
- Heart of Vermont (Focus Project)

Priority Drafts List : Priority 3.4

Situation

AAE:

- Deep agricultural and industrial history; this can facilitate the preservation of culture while mixing creative pursuits with the non-creative sector
- Artisanal food sector is a great example of cooperation with local artisans and local farms
- Strength in the convergence of healthcare, tourism, construction, education, energy, and the environment
- High community trust = tendency toward cooperative forms of business

Randolph:

- The Garden Club makes the downtown gorgeous

Suggested Goals/Actions

AAE:

- Have local artisanal foods reach farther markets
- Provide support for topographically distant creators and consumers

Randolph:

- Implement recreational activities like the BikeFest, which had been done in the past

ECVEDD SWOT Analysis

	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
Land Use & Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working landscape and rural entrepreneurial spirit Natural Beauty Heritage-based tourism Rural Character Four season resorts Forest products economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived and real conflicts between regulatory hurdles and development demand Expense, time, and regulatory constraints, around permit approval, combine to limit development Lack of pre-permitted buildings and land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage based tourism Growth in value-added agriculture Year-round recreation Outdoor recreation economy Eco-tourism State Designated Downtown Program Hemp Business Modern wood heating market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggling "conventional" agriculture Fragmentation threatens ecological systems and the forest products industry Climate change impacts on seasonal tourism businesses
Public Health/ Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to federal qualified health centers Access to quality food and fresh produce Diversified farmers markets Farm to table initiatives Dartmouth Hitchcock Health and Mount Ascutney hospitals Community Health Needs Assessment by MAHHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substance misuse Attracting and retaining professionals Challenging payer mix due to socioeconomic conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partnerships Collaboration between healthcare and community improvement groups Improve health outcomes through connections to local food options and recreational opportunities "Age in Place" community nursing model Lifestyle medicine Community nurses Regional health advisory network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springfield hospital and SMCS bankruptcy Lack of maternity services Public policies supporting cannabis use Large share of region's population depends on social services Aging population will increase demand for support services Workforce storages and difficulty retaining qualified workers Tick-borne diseases
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to numerous metro centers Proximity to two interstate highways Served by three freight rail lines Amtrak Vermonter passenger service Proximity to bus services Growing pockets of high-speed internet and Fiber Water and wastewater capacity Hartness Airport State Designated Growth Center and TIF District in Hartford Opportunity zones in Randolph, Royalton, and Springfield Hospitals and rural health center systems Comprehensive upgrade and maintenance schedules for highway and bridge infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging infrastructure and lack of funding for maintenance Truck access to industrial parks through downtowns creates potential conflicts Limited rural public transit Limited rural broadband services Insufficient cellular infrastructure Very limited presence of rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, etc) Unmet school infrastructure needs and lack of state funding support Declining student enrollment = higher cost per pupil Elderly & Disabled transportation needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing broadband coverage Availability of grants and loans for broadband and fiber optic internet expansion Green Mountain Railway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance to ports and international airports Uncertainty about future energy costs and dependency on non-local energy sources Climate change impacts can affect a range of transportation-related decisions

ECVEDD SWOT Analysis

	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
Support for Economic Development & Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships between RPCs and RDCs ED support system interfaces well with businesses Professional training resources available via collaborations between elected officials and development groups Cross pollination among businesses and entrepreneurs Ease of access to business owners and politicians The “Vermont Brand” as advertising tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General lack of investment capital Difficulty retaining successful local ownership Small businesses lack capacity and resources to perform vital professional function (technological, marketing, human resources, etc) to meet long-term growth needs Perception of poor business climate Disengaged citizens, town official’s volunteerism, and lack of participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State incentive programs available Availability of commercial and industrial space for lease and/or purchase Multiple Opportunity Zones Commercial hemp and cannabis market Collaboration between schools, communities, and businesses to identify and address skill shortages among the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of state-level political consensus Changing tax structure in NH and NY Competition from NH, which has no sales or income tax
Education & Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong relationships between housing organizations, towns, RDCs and RPCs Proximity of Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Regional Technology Center Strong relationship between RDCs, regional technical centers, high schools, and workforce investment boards Strong volunteer base centered around schools Good schools throughout a majority of the region 4 Career and Technical Education Centers and VT Technical College Low crime rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more education and job training programming for all ages Slow wage growth compared to other regions in VT and adjoining regions of NH Lack of human capital, particularly for middle and upper-level positions Dependency on NH side of UV for jobs Lack of a statewide workforce development strategy Weak links between economic development, human services, and education initiatives Difficulty informing businesses of resources Fragmentation and dilution of advertising due to proliferation of platforms Lack of quality adult day care Disproportionate share of subsidized housing in towns with sewer and water Inadequate supply of all housing types Substandard and aging housing stock High cost of living VT tax policy with respect to remote workers Lack of reliable transportation Fragmented relocation resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively low cost of middle income/workforce housing in the southern half of the District Potential to expand transit industry Ongoing transition to advanced manufacturing Recovery-friendly workplaces, housing, and policies Pop-up trainings and education events Expanding creative economy Tourism as potential workforce recruitment tool Regional co-working spaces provide workspace for distributed and remote workers Technical training at both high-school and post-high school levels Full development of career pathways VTC major in Renewable Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce shortages Aging population resulting in higher healthcare costs and declining workforce Lack, and high cost of, qualified childcare Stigma associated with “affordable” housing Social Isolation High employee turnover

Stakeholder Analysis - 3CVT

Chambers of Commerce

Cohase Regional Chamber of Commerce
Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce
Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce
Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce
White River Valley Chamber of Commerce
Woodstock Area Chamber of Commerce

Coworking Space

Optimist Center, Woodstock VT
The Schoolhouse, Woodstock VT
The Space on Main, Bradford VT
White River Coworks

ECVEDD Partners

Green Mountain Economic
Development Corporation

Southern Windsor County Regional
Planning Commission

Springfield Regional Development Corporation

Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission

Local Business Development

Green Mountain Valley Business IDIGVT

Randolph Area Community Development
Corporation

State Partners

Site Locator

Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies

Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center

VT Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) Job
Links

VT Dept. of Economic Development

VT SBDC Advisors

VT Technology Alliance



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