

2019

NVEDD Annual Report



Northern Vermont Economic Development District

Creating a thriving, resilient region with a diverse, sustainable economy



The Congregational Church, the Courthouse, and the Town Hall on the Green Guildhall, Essex County, Vermont

NVEDD is a partnership between the Regional Planning Commissions and Economic Development Corporations of Northern Vermont



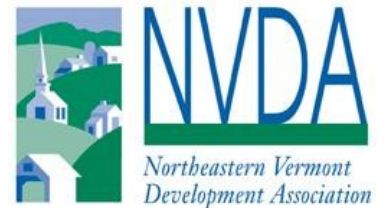
LAMOILLE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

LEDC

LAMOILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NVEDD—Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille and Orleans Counties of Vermont

This *2019 Annual Report* of the Northern Vermont Economic Development District is the third update on the economic conditions of the district based on implementation of actions recommended in *2016 NVEDD CEDS Plan*. The plan identifies 5 goals to achieve the vision of a thriving, resilient region with a diverse, sustainable economy.

In year three, there are emerging encouraging trends of economic growth, particularly in the district's natural resource-related sectors. The district has adopted a strong focus on building the outdoor recreational economy, a statewide initiative that leverages local outdoor recreational assets to increase visitor traffic to the region, increase consumer spending and create new jobs in the region, promote healthier communities, and strengthen stewardship and management of land and water resources that are the foundation of the outdoor recreational economy.



In the agricultural sector, the continuing development of specialty foods and culinary arts through the farm to plate strategy are creating new products and markets for both established and new business growth. Vermont brands like Eden Ice Cider, which produces high quality, boutique wines from traditional and heirloom varieties of apples (100% of which are produced in Vermont), and Jasper Hill Farm, producers of artisan cheeses at their onsite creamery, both received national acclaim this year drawing attention to products unique to the district.

Another emerging economic sector across the district is the nascent creative economy, a fusion of arts and technology, tradition and innovation. The creative economy thrives at the crossroads of arts, culture, business, and technology—and fosters the imaginative capacity needed for innovation. Long under-valued as having significant economic value, the region is beginning to quantify creative enterprises and industries, to better understand their economic value and impact on communities across the district.

Despite these strides, the district continues to face long-term challenges that will have a significant impact on future economic prosperity. Declining birthrates and an aging population have impacts on the current and future workforce; access to healthcare services in the district—both physical and mental—continues to lag significantly behind the state, with health outcomes, not surprisingly, negatively impacted in several counties of the district.



One of the greatest emergent threats to the region is the growing opioid use epidemic that is robbing communities across the district of their health, their workforce, their resources and their current and future prosperity.

However, starting this year, the District is leading an innovative effort to create a coordinated response by a multi-sector consortium of organizations to develop sustained and effective prevention, treatment and recovery strategies at the community level to reduce the negative impacts of opioid use disorder. The results of these efforts will be important benchmarks in the over-

all economic health of the Northern Vermont Economic Development District in the coming years.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NVEDD—Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille and Orleans Counties of Vermont



In 2016 the Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD) adopted its *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*. This plan includes five interconnecting goals to achieve regional economic prosperity in Northern Vermont by:

- Cultivating Business Growth;
- Improving and Expanding Infrastructure;
- Developing the Workforce;
- Promoting the Quality of Life in Communities and;
- Building economic resilience in the Northern Vermont region;

As the image indicates, building a foundation of economic resilience in the region is both an outcome and a strategy that informs the development of four other interdependent goals. Investments made in the development of each of these goals can have a positive impact on each of the other goals. What follows is a snapshot of economic indicators with highlights of investments in some of the goals across the region.

The 2019 NVEDD Region at a Glance

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

150,479

Population

3.3%

Unemployment Rate

2.4

Average Household Size

43.4

Median Age

INCOME CHARACTERISTICS



\$52,684

Median Household Income



\$28,940

Per Capita Income



\$114,227

Median Net Worth

Households By Income

The largest group: \$50,000 - \$74,999 (19.1%)

The smallest group: \$150,000 - \$199,999 (3.7%)

Indicator ▲	Value	Difference	
<\$15,000	11.7%	+1.0%	
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11.4%	+1.3%	
\$25,000 - \$34,999	10.4%	+0.9%	
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13.4%	+0.9%	
\$50,000 - \$74,999	19.1%	+0.5%	
\$75,000 - \$99,999	13.3%	-0.7%	
\$100,000 - \$149,999	13.2%	-1.5%	
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3.7%	-1.4%	
\$200,000+	3.7%	-1.2%	

bars show deviation from Vermont

BUSINESS



63,202

Total Employees



6,430

Total Businesses

10%

No High School Diploma



35%

High School Graduate



29%

Some College



27%

Bachelor's/Grad/Prof Degree

EMPLOYMENT



57%

White Collar



26%

Blue Collar



17%

Services

GOAL

CULTIVATE BUSINESS GROWTH

The NVEDD region continues to face challenges in cultivating business growth. According to the 2018 Forbes State Rankings Report for Best States for Business, Vermont ranks 47th overall in the country. This is due to higher business costs, poorer overall economic climate rank, the regulatory environment rank, and poorer overall growth prospects rank.

YEAR	FORBES Vermont Ranking for Business (out of 50)	Business Costs Rank	Labor Supply Rank	Regulatory Environment Rank	Economic Climate Rank	Growth Prospects Rank	Quality of Life Rank	Population
2017	47	47	28	44	44	49	23	624,600
2018	47	47	22	46	44	49	26	623,700

The NVEDD Business Profile

Total Businesses:	6,430
Total Employees:	63,202
Total Residential Population:	150,479
Employee/Residential Population Ratio (per 100 Residents)	42

In 2019 the NVEDD region contained just over 6,400 businesses employing 63,202 people.

The largest number of business establishments are :

- Retail trade (1,024)
- Services (except public administration) (822)
- Construction (538)
- Accommodation and Food Services (494)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (477)
- Public Administration (470)

Businesses with largest number of employees are:

- Accommodation and Food Services (11,526)
- Retail trade (8,496)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (7,708)
- Educational services (7,124)
- Manufacturing (4,953)

by NAICS Codes	Businesses		Employees	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	179	2.8%	942	1.5%
Mining	3	0.0%	47	0.1%
Utilities	23	0.4%	225	0.4%
Construction	538	8.4%	2,885	4.6%
Manufacturing	233	3.6%	4,953	7.8%
Wholesale Trade	233	3.5%	1,655	2.6%
Retail Trade	1,024	15.9%	8,496	13.4%
Transportation & Warehousing	203	3.2%	1,459	2.3%
Information	143	2.2%	1,014	1.6%
Finance & Insurance	199	3.1%	1,177	1.9%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	264	4.1%	1,151	1.8%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	374	5.8%	2,334	3.7%
Legal Services	64	1.0%	266	0.4%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	9	0.1%	185	0.3%
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services	156	2.4%	876	1.4%
Educational Services	215	3.3%	7,124	11.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	477	7.4%	7,708	12.2%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	159	2.5%	1,050	1.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	494	7.7%	11,526	18.2%
Accommodation	195	3.0%	7,893	12.5%
Food Services & Drinking Places	299	4.7%	3,663	5.7%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	822	12.8%	3,285	5.2%
Public Administration	470	7.3%	4,840	7.7%
Unclassified Establishments	223	3.5%	270	0.4%
Total	6,430	100.0%	63,202	100.0%

INVESTMENTS IN THE DISTRICT

Incentives for Business Growth

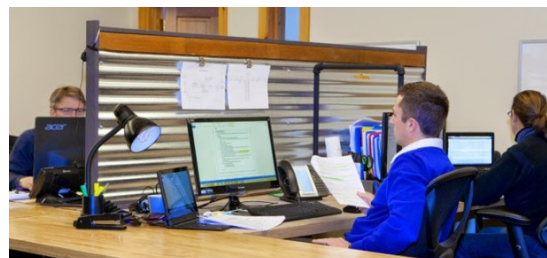
The State of Vermont offers an economic incentive for business recruitment, growth and expansion. The Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI) program provides cash payments to businesses that have been authorized to earn the incentive and who then meet performance requirements. The value of each payment is based on the revenue return generated to the State by prospective qualifying jobs, payroll creation, and capital investments.

The VEGI program provides incentives from the State of Vermont to encourage prospective economic activity in Vermont that is beyond a business's organic growth—growth that would not occur, would not occur in Vermont, or would occur in a significantly less desirable manner without the incentive. The economic activity can be generated by a Vermont company, a Vermont division adding new qualifying employees, a company that is considering Vermont as a new location, or a start-up business. Once authorized, the incentives are earned and installments paid if performance requirements are met and maintained.



Manufacturing Solutions Inc. (MSI) in Morrisville, a contract assembly and product finishing company, was awarded a VEGI incentive from the State of Vermont. for an expansion of business that, if met, will result in 123 additional good paying jobs and a capital investment of over \$6 million to build a 40,000 sq. ft. new warehouse and factory space. This incentive, when earned, will get MSI nearly \$850,000 in incentives over 5 years.

Inntopia, an online reservation system based in Stowe that offer their service both nationally and internationally, was awarded a VEGI incentive for a business expansion that, if met, will result in 45 additional high paying jobs. This incentive, when earned, will get Inntopia \$206,000 in incentives over 5 years.



Planning for Infrastructure

The Lamoille County Planning Commission in partnership with The Lamoille Economic Development Corporation have contracted with an outside firm to do a full feasibility study to build a regional anaerobic digester facility in the area. The study is being funded by a USDA, RD RBDG of \$30,000 with matching funds from LEDC of \$15,000. The digester would provide an affordable way for high strength BOD to be effectively and efficiently disposed and would handling waste from breweries, distilleries, cideries, wineries, cheese makers, ice cream makers, maple syrup bottlers, and other producers of high strength BOD throughout Northern Vermont.

Planning for Business Growth



After several years of consideration, in 2018 the Town of Johnson bought a 26 acre parcel on route 15 on which they intend to build an industrial park. They are now working with area agencies, including LCPC and LEDC, to file grant applications to the EDA, NBRC and other agencies to obtain the funding to build the necessary infrastructure to make the park a reality.

CULTIVATE BUSINESS GROWTH

GROWING NEW ECONOMIC SECTORS — THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Vermont’s creative economy is a diverse community of individuals and businesses that together represent over 3% - or \$1B in value—of the state’s GDP. The Creative Economy is a significant employer, with over 37,000 Vermonters—or 8.6% of the total state workforce—working in the creative sector.

The New England Foundation for the Arts defines the creative economy as a “subset of the overall economy that only includes those industry sectors and occupations with a categorical focus on the ‘production and distribution of cultural goods, services and intellectual property.’”¹

These creative activities represent a variety of smaller industry segments in Vermont—galleries, textile and fiber work; metalwork; gaming software development to name a few which, when viewed in total, demonstrate a significant economic impact.



Creative industries depend on support from a variety of services, organizations, activities, and financial, spatial, associational, and educational resources. The strength of the creative economy is, to some extent, linked to the quality and quantity of the infrastructure that supports it, both from within the region and across the state. The support infrastructure includes:

- opportunities for networking to share knowledge to spur innovation and creativity
- access to formal and informal education for creative businesses and occupations
- encouragement of appreciation for the arts and creative products
- accessible places and spaces to perform, work, and exhibit creative endeavors
- festivals, fairs, and exhibits that serve as marketplaces for creative goods
- resources and technical assistance to support business startups and expansions;²



One template for this type of support infrastructure is The Foundry. Located in Lyndonville in the heart of Caledonia County, The Foundry is a combination maker space, learning place, and community workshop where the goal is to bring innovative manufacturing technologies to residents of the North East Kingdom, nurture individual business enterprises, and work with schools to attract youth to the fields of science, technology, math, arts and engineering, using a hands-on approach.



Originally formed by a group of friends with a common interest in tinkering and design, the Foundry gained official non-profit 501-C3 status in 2015 before forming a partnership with Northern Vermont University. This partnership has provided much-needed additional space and equipment, and has greatly expanded the Foundry’s capabilities and offerings.

From 3D printing to CAD/CAM workstations (computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing used to design and manufacture products), drone flying cameras, wide format printing and laminating services for video/photography/printing, equipment for woodworking, metalwork, welding, plastics, electronics, ceramics, glass, and jewelry making, the Foundry provides the space, the equipment and the opportunities to fuse modern manufacturing technology and traditional craftsmanship. The result is innovation that connects person to product and product to a history and tradition of a region.

CULTIVATE BUSINESS GROWTH

GROWING NEW ECONOMIES—THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

Nationwide, American consumers spend more on outdoor recreation than they do on pharmaceuticals and fuel combined. Consumer spending on outdoor recreation is upwards of \$887 billion and includes both outdoor recreation products (184.5 billion) such as gear, apparel, footwear, equipment, services and vehicles, and travel spending (\$702.3 billion) including airfare, fuel, lodging, groceries, lift tickets, guides, lessons etc. This spending directly supports 7.6 million American jobs and generates \$125 billion in federal, state and local tax revenue.



In Vermont, the Outdoor Recreation Economy generates \$5.5 billion in consumer spending annually, providing \$505 million in state and local tax revenue and supporting 51,000 direct jobs with \$1.5 billion in wages and salaries. At least 128 outdoor recreation companies are located in Vermont.

In recognition of the impact that this sector has on the State’s economy, in 2017 Governor Phil Scott established the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) by Executive Order 11-17. The 15-member task force is charged with developing strategies, recommendations and resources that would strengthen and expand Vermont’s outdoor recreation economy including enhancing business opportunities, improving participation in outdoor recreation, strengthening the recreational infrastructure and increasing stewardship of natural resources in a way that is consistent with Vermont’s strong outdoor culture of respect and sustainability. Across the district, communities have begun to invest in their outdoor recreational assets.



In Orleans County, Newport, in partnership with the Vermont Land Trust, has been working since 2015 to develop its assets around international Lake Memphremagog. The result will be a 7-mile waterfront recreational corridor that will lead from the designated downtown district to the Canadian Border. There, the trail will connect to the high use recreational Tomifobia Nature trail system. In March 2019, Newport was selected as one of only two communities statewide to receive a VOREC Community grant to help grow Newport’s economy through outdoor recreation.

In Franklin County, standing in the former tracks of the Central Vermont Railway, the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail continues an historic link between St. Albans, Sheldon, Enosburgh, East Berkshire, and Richford. Farm-to-village commerce and international trade flowed through the corridor along a plank road in the late 1800s and continued by rail until a derailment permanently closed the route in 1984. The State of Vermont and local citizens began converting the corridor to a multi-use trail in the early 1990s. Many traces of the railroad “Milk Run” days still exist along the trail including train stations, rail sidings, and creamery foundations.



CULTIVATE BUSINESS GROWTH

GROWING NEW ECONOMIES— SPECIALTY FOODS AND CULINARY ARTS

Since the state began implementing its Farm to Plate Strategic Plan, Vermont has added 6,374 food-system jobs for a total of 64,385 jobs — and increased food-system gross sales by 32 % and value-added food manufacturing by 58 %. Over the past few years, 23 new meat facilities and 25 new dairy processing facilities were opened, fueling continued sustainable growth in the state’s thriving agriculture sector.



One outcome of this focus on the food system has been an increase in the production of specialty foods across the state. Runamok Maple spans over 1,100 acres in Cambridge and 250 acres in Fairfield, where their crew taps over 81,000 trees to collect pure maple syrup. Among Runamok Maple’s offerings are a unique collection of infused, smoked and barrel-aged maple syrups.



The Jasper Hill Farm created the award-winning Harbison cheese and the Calderwood cheese at their onsite creamery in Greensboro, winning Best of Show and Second Place respectively at the annual American Cheese Society Judging & Competition in Pittsburgh, which featured 1,954 cheeses from 259 companies.

Eden Specialty Ciders was featured in November on a nationwide broadcast of CBS This Morning. The specialty ciders reflect the cold winter climate and apple heritage of Northern New England with such apples as the traditional New England heirloom varieties, local seedling varieties, and Old-World varieties, including bittersweet cider varieties that originated in France and England. The specialty ciders are unique and innovative but are created without resorting to industrial beer and wine processing techniques to manipulate the taste. Eden Specialty Ciders press once per year after harvest and use the natural winter cold at the farm to concentrate the flavors and sugars of the apples before fermentation, resulting in authentic, top-quality, award-winning ciders.



These specialty foods provide a “taste of place” in Northern Vermont, creating niche markets, employment opportunities, and authentic experiences for consumers. The specialty food sector combines well with other experiential economic activities such as outdoor recreation and heritage and cultural events, creating a unique draw for multiple new markets. In the region.

IMPROVE AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Investments in the District



Investments in infrastructure provide the foundation for a strong economy. Transportation, public buildings, water treatment systems, and other forms of vital infrastructure are key to promoting business growth, creating jobs and promoting safe and vibrant communities. In rural communities, infrastructure like roads and bridges are vital to life and commerce, but often come with challenges that increase the costs of maintaining these systems.

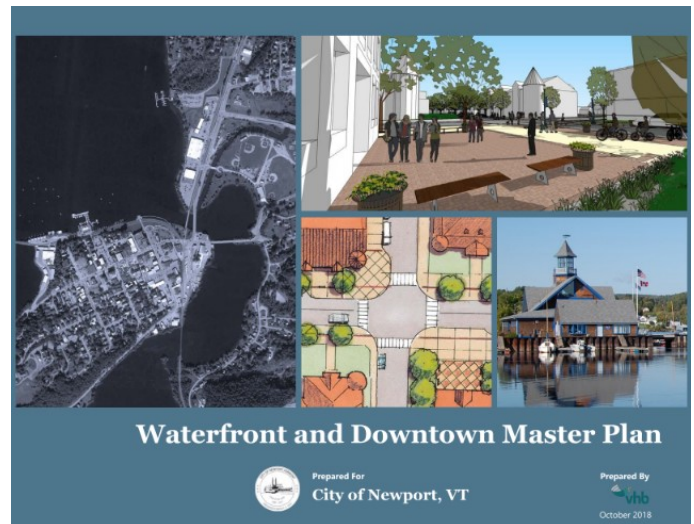
Grand Isle County, the western most county in the Northern Vermont District is made up of five islands (South Hero, Grand Isle, North Hero, Alburg, Isle La Motte). Like many rural communities in the district, Grand Isle relies on its roads as its connection to other communities and services. US-route 2 connects the towns of North Hero and Grand Isle, Vermont via

an historic twin leaf bascule bridge which is the only vehicular movable bridge in the State of Vermont. The bridge is in serious need of repair and in June 2018, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) began the repair process .

The project is not scheduled to be completed until 2022 in part because a temporary drawbridge needs to be constructed prior to replacing the existing drawbridge. This is to minimize the impact to traffic which would have had to detour nearly 30 miles one way to go into Burlington. Moreover the drawbridge is essential to navigation as it is the only access point for large boats to reach what is called the inland sea, the waterway which reaches to St. Albans and other parts of Franklin County and Milton. At a cost of \$69,492,658.85 this is one of the largest investments in infrastructure in the district.

In Newport, its downtown layout and infrastructure reflect its development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the lake was used for logging. The City was built with its “back to the lake” to avoid the sights, sounds and odors of the logging-railway industrial complex on and around the lake. Now one hundred years later, the lake is a different economic asset for the community and, with the focus on developing an outdoor recreational economy, the current downtown layout is in need of re-design and updates.

As part of its capital investment planning process, the City of Newport commissioned a study for a plan to improve the design of the streets and assets of the downtown. The result is the Waterfront and Downtown Master Plan which received



a Vermont Public Places Merit Award which recognizes public spaces, the corridors that connect them, or networks of public spaces that have been enriched by planning or design. The goal of the Master Plan is to update the infrastructure in the downtown to accommodate the needs of residents and new user groups of Newport’s magnificent outdoor recreational assets.

GOAL

PROMOTE QUALITY OF LIFE IN COMMUNITIES

ADDRESSING OPIOID USE DISORDER IN NORTHERN VERMONT



Once largely perceived to be a problem for urban inner-city communities, rural county overdose deaths increased 325 percent between 1999 and 2015,¹ surpassing the death rate in urban areas by the year 2015.² In that same time period, nonfatal prescription opioid overdoses began to concentrate in states with large rural populations.³ By 2015 opioid death rates in rural areas quadrupled among 18-25-year olds and tripled for females.

	Drug Overdose Mortality Rate <i>Deaths per 100k population Ages 15-64</i>	POPULATION	TOTAL DEATHS
US	22.5		
Vermont	23		
Orleans	33.3	27,076	25
Franklin	23.6	48,625	38
Lamoille	18.9	25,136	16
Caledonia	15.8	30,859	16
Grand Isle	*	6,945	*
Essex	*	6,173	*

**Data suppressed due to privacy concerns about potentially identifiable characteristics within a small population.*

In addition to impacts on health outcomes and mortality rates, opioid use disorder creates large economic burdens on the population: increased police services and correctional facilities; a diminished workforce; increased business costs due to lost productivity, absenteeism, injuries, fatalities, theft, legal liabilities, human resources issues, and workers' compensation costs; increased health care costs associated with substance abuse treatment, prevention, and research costs.

Service Data for the Northern Vermont Economic Development District shows that most counties in the district lag significantly behind the state in terms of health provider access. While both Grand Isle and Essex Counties fare the worst in this profile, Grand Isle consistently ranks as having the best health outcomes in the state. This is in part due to its proximity to Chittenden County which is the hub of Vermont's major medical center and services. Essex County, on the other hand, consistently ranks as

having the worst health outcomes in the state, with its geographical isolation preventing access to other provider services in the state. In one ominous statistic, Essex County has been identified by AmFAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research, as one of 220 vulnerable counties nationwide at risk for outbreaks of HIV and/or hepatitis-C as a result of the opioid epidemic.⁴ Ranking 143 out of the 220 counties, Essex County's inadequate access to healthcare providers not only translates into lack of treatment for illnesses, but also a lack of preventive and screening services that would help address additional risk factors of opioid use disorder.

ACCESS TO SERVICES	Robert Wood Johnson		
	Population per Primary Care Providers	Population per Dentists	Population per Mental Health Providers
VERMONT	880:1	1,420:1	230:1
Caledonia	1,170:1	1,310:1	290:1
Essex	3,090:1	2,080:1	2,080:1
Franklin	1,810:1	2,230:1	450:1
Grand Isle	2,310:1	7,000:1	3,500:1
Lamoille	1,150:1	1,950:1	240:1
Orleans	1,340:1	2,240:1	430:1

1. Karin A. Mack, Christopher M. Jones, and Michael F. Ballesteros, "Illicit Drug Use, Illicit Drug Use Disorders, and Drug Overdose Deaths in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Areas—United States," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 66, no. 19 (2017): 1-12, https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/ss/ss6619a1.htm?s_cid=ss6619a1_w. The 325 percent increase in overdose deaths is an age-adjusted calculation, meaning it allows for the comparison of communities with different age structures.
2. Ibid.
3. Katherine M. Keyes et al., "Understanding the Rural-Urban Differences in Nonmedical Prescription Opioid Use and Abuse in the United States," *American Journal of Public Health* 104, no. 2 (2014): e52-59, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3935688>.
4. Van Handel MM, Rose CE, Hallisey EJ, et al. County-Level Vulnerability Assessment for Rapid Dissemination of HIV or HCV Infections Among Persons Who Inject Drugs, United States. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr*. 2016;73(3):323-331. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5479631/#SD1>

GOAL

PROMOTE QUALITY OF LIFE IN COMMUNITIES

ADDRESSING OPIOID USE DISORDER IN NORTHERN VERMONT



Opioid use disorder is the result of complex physical, social and mental health needs and requires a comprehensive response of treatment, recovery services, prevention strategies and enforcement. No one organization has the resources or the expertise to provide this extensive range of strategies. The criminal justice system is ill-equipped to address the opioid crisis, and criminalization has had the unintended effect of increasing stigma and decreasing treatment access. Rural communities, like those in the Northern Vermont Economic Development District generally have fewer facilities, more limited services, and greater distances for patients to travel. Rural populations also tend to have higher proportions of elderly residents, higher rates of uninsured residents, a greater burden of chronic diseases, and higher rates of poverty than more urban populations, all adding to the financial burdens of providing adequate care and limiting resources for additional services.

The opioid epidemic is overwhelming an already health overburdened and often understaffed health system. A different approach is needed, one in which partnerships between organizations can create a coordinated response at the community level to reduce the negative impacts of opioid use disorder. In both the eastern and western counties of NVEDD, two regional consortium teams have formed to develop a plan to identify gaps and services related to opioid prevention, treatment and recovery in their respective counties. These Opioid Response Regional Consortium Teams are made up of several key community stakeholders:

- Northeast Kingdom Consortium: The Community Restorative Justice Center, Vermont Cares, Northern Counties Health Care, Inc., Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, North Country Hospital, Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Northeast Kingdom Community Action, and Kingdom Recovery Center, and the Department of Health St. Johnsbury Office.
- Franklin and Grand Isle Consortium: Franklin Grand Isle Restorative Justice Center, Northwestern Counseling & Support Services, Franklin County Caring Communities, Turning Point of Franklin County, Franklin-Grand Isle Community Action, the St. Albans City Police Department, Northwestern Medical Center and the Department of Health St. Albans District Office.



Funded by a \$200,000 federal planning grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Community Justice Centers in both regions have been designated as lead agencies to facilitate a restorative process to engage the community to learn from many diverse groups and voices across the region, including individuals currently in long term recovery. The overall goal of this planning effort is to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses in high-risk rural communities through planning efforts by multi-sector consortiums that strengthen their organizational and infrastructural capacity to address prevention, treatment and recovery strategies.

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said: "This grant, and what it will make possible, are proof of what can happen when our community partners come together to take on a challenge as serious as the opioid epidemic. We know that there is no single solution to this problem. This coordinated effort will lead to more effective prevention, treatment and recovery systems within these communities. I congratulate all of the partners, including the regional Community Justice Centers, who are showing us the way forward."

Northern Vermont Economic Development District



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