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For Immediate Release: Southern Vermont CEDS 2022 Vital Projects Announced

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The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) and the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) are pleased to announce that ten projects submitted as part of the Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) have received Vital Project designation. The Southern Vermont CEDS is a federally-approved action plan for growing the regional economy. Each year, the CEDS includes new and updated project submissions from businesses and organizations that highlight activities strengthening the region.

Projects were selected by a CEDS Project Review Committee composed of members of the public and business community. The committee reviewed 78 projects from municipalities, businesses, and non-profit organizations across the two-county region. They met in Dover in early November to complete a final project review and select 10 vital projects. The committee offers its thanks and appreciation to all the organizations that submitted projects, and its congratulations to those receiving Vital Project designation.

Said Bill Colvin, Executive Director of the BCRC, “the CEDS continues to provide a flexible framework to capture all the ways our communities are responding to new challenges and opportunities.” Adam Grinold, Executive Director of the BDCC, added “Southern Vermont remains a dynamic region willing to make investments in itself and its assets, and to create new ones where needed. Partnerships run through many of the projects submitted this year, and these Vital Projects are pursuing common visions through shared resources.”

The following list of Southern Vermont CEDS 2022 Vital Projects is presented in alphabetical order by project name.

Project: Area-Wide Plan

Impact Region: A single town in Windham County

Submitting Organization: Town of Rockingham

Description: The potential for continued reinvestment and redevelopment of Bellows Falls Island and the Under the Hill area presents a unique opportunity for the Village of Bellows Falls, the Town of Rockingham, and the entire southeast region of Vermont. The Area-Wide Plan has provided a thoughtful and feasible plan for the future of the Island and Under the Hill that addresses a wide range of community needs including housing, job creation, increased tax base, recreational opportunities, and celebrating the history and culture of the area. This work helped align local organizations and groups, stakeholders of property and business owners of the target area, the Railroad, State and Hydro companies in the target area, and community members and downtown merchants to create a fluid document with the vision of the Island District as a Transit Oriented Development centering on remediated brownfield properties with mixed-use facilities and



the Under the Hill District a combination of Destination Tourism Cultural Heritage Center Historic Riverfront Park, and Renewable Energy storage and use activities.

Project: BDCC Business Park Expansion

Impact Region: A single town in Windham County

Submitting Organization: Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation



Description: The BDCC Business Park Expansion would entail a complete final buildout of the BDCC's 300,000sf business park property using a 4 acre parcel adjacent to the existing building. This project has the advantage of intensifying use on a property that has all of the necessary conditions for industrial businesses including adjacency to road, rail and public transit. As the home of two of Vermont's fastest growing manufacturers and more than 225 employees coming to work every day, demand which cannot be met within the existing Business Park. Nor can these needs be met elsewhere in the region, as there is a shortage of available, suitable real estate for light industrial and industrial uses. Given the tight commercial real estate market and the high costs to build, maximizing use of properties we own is an efficient way to address pent up demand.

Project: Bennington Community Market

Impact Region: Multiple Towns in Bennington County

Submitting Organization: Bennington Community Market



**Bennington
Community
Market**

Description: Bennington Community Market is a community-supported grocery store that supports local farmers and makes healthy food accessible to everyone in our community, and aims to open its doors in Fall 2022. Our mission is to support local farmers, increase access to healthy food for all members of our community, and contribute to the revitalization of downtown Bennington. The market will be a year-round hub to enjoy seasonal cooking and eating, as well as to provide grocery staples and take-home meal options from our kitchen. In partnership with area organizations that work with food-insecure populations, our Healthy Food Access Fund will provide discounts to our neighbors in need. We will also accept SNAP benefits and participate in the WIC program. We are thrilled to share that the Market, along with other partners in the Bennington Fair Food Initiative, was recently nominated for a federal earmark by Representative Peter Welch to support our regional food system efforts.

Project: DVFiber

Impact Region: Windham Region **Submitting Organization:** DVFiber

Description: DVFiber, the trade name for the Deerfield Valley Communications

Union District, is on a mission to secure reliable, affordable broadband for all

homes and businesses in towns throughout the Windham Region. In the past year the Vermont Community

Broadband Board (VCBB) has awarded DVFiber a \$26 million in grant funding to finance buildout of a

fiber-optic broadband network. At the same time, DVFiber has entered into a partnership with GWI as its

internet service provider, and hired its first Executive Director.



Project: Grace Cottage Primary Care Clinic Upgrade

Impact Region: Southern Vermont

Submitting Organization: Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital



Description: The Grace Cottage Family Health building has been bursting at the seams for decades. A great

deal of time and money has been spent on makeshift solutions because this federally-designated Rural Health Clinic is located in two 1840s-era, wood-framed houses connected by a narrow hallway donated to Grace Cottage many years ago. Last fall, generous donors pledged \$5M toward a new clinic building, and Grace Cottage has been working with an architectural firm since January to design a modern, efficient, professional space in which to provide primary care for the coming decades. The plans call for construction of a new, three-story clinic wing with approximately 25,000 square feet on the north end of the current building.

Project: Greater Rockingham Area Services Energy Improvements

Impact Region: Multiple towns in the Windham Region

Submitting Organization: Greater Rockingham Area Services

Description: GRAS is working to replace our antiquated inefficient oil burning heating system with an energy efficient wood chip fired steam boiler system. The system will include installation of a biomass boiler, an LP boiler backup and an exterior wood chip silo. The health care and social service providers who lease space in our buildings serve the needs of the community of Bellows Falls and its surrounding communities in Windham County, providing 85 jobs in the region. Due to largely antiquated building infrastructure, we see constantly rising operating costs. This project will provide lasting benefits to our operations and allows us to retain the existing tenants and the jobs and services they provide.

Project: Putnam Community Health (Putnam Block Redevelopment - Phase 2)

Impact Region: A single town in Bennington County

Submitting Organization: Putnam Community Health LLC

Description: Putnam Community Health (PCH) is the second phase of the Putnam Block Redevelopment project. The project continues the revitalization of this gateway property. The project plans a single five story, mixed use building. The project expects to draw Southwestern Vermont Health Care (SVHC) as its anchor tenant with approximately 12,000 SF of medical office space. Retail spaces will line the street on the first floor. High-quality apartments will occupy floors two through four. The fifth floor is slated to be leasehold residential condominiums. There will be approximately sixty (60) residential units. The project will continue the Brownfields remediation begun in Phase I of the project completing the clean up activities on the four-acre site.

Project: Southshire Regenerative Food Center

Impact Region: Southern Vermont

Submitting Organization: Southshire Meats

Description: The Southshire Regenerative Food Center (RFC) is a 43,453sf facility that will serve as an aggregation/distribution, meat finishing, and co-packing facility for Southshire Meats. Southshire is moving its headquarters to the facility and is already using a portion of the building for frozen storage and distribution while construction is completed. The RFC will be the aggregation point for a network of small abattoirs located throughout the region. The first of these abattoirs, Higley Hill Processing, is already operational in Wilmington where Southshire and RFN re-opened the mothballed processing facility on Adams Farm. This model of distributed abattoirs allows slaughter to occur closer to the farms where animals are raised, providing greater animal welfare and greater resilience to the foodshed.



Project: Southwestern Vermont Health Care and Castleton University Nursing Partnership

Impact Region: Bennington County

Submitting Organization: Southwestern Vermont Health Care



Description: Southwestern Vermont Health Care (SVHC) has partnered with Castleton University to retain qualified professionals, increase equitable access to education, and to address the shortage of registered nurses with a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree. SVHC has committed to offer employment to Castleton students who satisfactorily complete the BSN program, obtain licensure, and meet pre-employment requirements. For students who accept the offer, SVHC will pay back (in full) tuition debt over the course of six years of employment. Encouraging this talented pool of individuals to remain in the community provides a number of economic benefits for the region. Many of the individuals graduating from the program are young professionals, starting new families and establishing personal and professional networks and roots. This six-year program is an incentive to remain in the area, and in turn to purchase or rent local housing, purchase local goods and services, and more. The absence of education debt for these individuals will encourage investment and spending beyond peers who are burdened with high monthly student loan payments.

Project: Winston Prouty Campus Development Project

Impact Region: Windham Region

Submitting Organization: Winston Prouty Center



Description: The Winston Prouty Development Project is one of the most significant housing and development undertakings in New England. The overarching goal of this project is to create an inclusive neighborhood comprising up to 500 units of mixed income housing suited to all people regardless of age, income, ability or disability, gender or gender identity. Furthermore, the project will incorporate additional programmatic assets in arts, recreation, and cultural uses. The housing program intends to respond to the statewide housing deficit, in which Brattleboro is particularly gridlocked in attracting new residents and demographics due to a lack of quality and affordably priced housing.

2022 Southern Vermont CEDS Projects (alphabetical by project name)

47 Flat Street - M&S Development LLC

814 Arts Hub in Southern Vermont

Area-Wide Plan - Town of Rockingham

BDCC Business Park Expansion - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

BDCC Business Services - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation/SeVEDS

Bellows Falls Incremental Neighborhood Housing Development - Town of Rockingham

Bellows Falls Opera House Lower Theater - Town of Rockingham

Bellows Falls Vacuum Coating Training Center - Sustainable Valley Group, Inc.

Bennington Armory Reuse - Town of Bennington

Bennington Community Market - Bennington Community Market

BF Historic Trains Station Purchase and Renovation - Town of Rockingham

Brattleboro Multi-Use Industrial Park - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Brattleboro Quality Youth Development Project and Youth Council - Building a Positive Community

Build to Scale - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

CCC New Childcare Center Series - Child Care Counts

Chroma Slope Stormwater Protection - Chroma Technology Corporation

Commercial Real Estate Analysis for Windham Region - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Community Facilities Technical Assistance - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Cotton Mill Expansion - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Development Discussions - Bennington County Regional Commission

DeWitt Housing and Small Business Training Center Redevelopment - M&S Development, LLC

Dover & Wilmington Bi-Town Strategic Marketing Plan - Southern Vermont Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce

DVFiber - Deerfield Valley Communications Union District

Economic Dignity and Health Equity Community of Practice - Bennington Office of Local Health, Vermont Department of Health

Energizer Facility Reuse - Town of Bennington

Everett Estate Redevelopment - Southwestern Vermont Health Care

Flood Hazard Mitigation in Jacksonville Village - Town of Whitingham

Food Connects Capital Expansion Project - Food Connects Inc.

Food Scrap Composting Facility Expansion - Windham Solid Waste Management District

Gamer's Grotto Structural Upgrades - The Gamer's Grotto

Governor Hunt House Community Center - Friends of Vernon Center

Grace Cottage Primary Care Clinic Upgrade - Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital

Greater Rockingham Area Services Energy Improvements - Greater Rockingham Area Services

Green Island Project: Great Falls Food Hub - Sustainable Valley Group, Inc.

HatchSpace - The Hatch, Inc.

Improving Energy Efficiency and Building Community - WindowDressers of Bennington County

Intersecting Recreation, Environmental Education and Food Security at Lake Paran - Paran Recreations

Island St. Revitalization - Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation

Leveraging Start-Up Success to Expand Engagement and Impact - Flat Iron Cooperative, Inc.

Library Roof - South Londonderry Free Library Association LLC

Media Skills Training Program - GNAT-TV/BCTV/CAT-TV

Museum New Site Expansion - Southern Vermont Natural History Museum

Old School Community Center - Old School Enrichment Council, Inc.

Pipelines and Pathways Program (P3) - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Pownal Center Business Revitalization - C&T Adventures LLC

Putnam Community Health (Putnam Block Redevelopment Phase 2) - Putnam Community Health LLC

Refugee Rental Assistance Program - Bennington County Open Arms

Resourcing Southern Vermont's Co-operative Economy - Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives

Retreat Farm as a Public Common - Retreat Farm

Retreat Farm Market and Food Center - Retreat Farm

Rich Earth Institute's Urine Nutrient Reclamation Project - Rich Earth Institute

Robertson Paper Site Redevelopment - Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation

Rockingham Industrial Expansion Project - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Rockingham Industrial Park Stormwater Project - BDCC Holdings II

Route 9 Infrastructure Improvement - Town of Wilmington

Skillab Tech Enabled Workforce Support - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Southern Vermont Economy Summit - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Southshire Regenerative Food Center - Southshire Meats LLC

Southwestern Vermont Health Care and Castleton University Nursing Partnership - Southwestern Vermont Health Care

Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Emergency Department Transformation - Southwestern Vermont Health Care

SoVT CUD Public-Private Partnership - Southern Vermont Communications Union District

SoVT Zone Wide Water Infrastructure Assessment - Windham Regional Commission

SVEP 3.0: CAPP - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

The Arlington Common - Arlington Arts Enrichment Program

The Bike Hub - The Bike Hub, Inc.

The Commons at High Street & Green - High Street & Green

Thursday Night Live! - Better Bennington Corporation

TLR Master Plan BF Greater Island District and FERC - Town of Rockingham

Trails and Outdoor Recreation - Town of Rockingham

Tri-Park Master Plan Projects - M&S Development LLC

Tri-Park Mobile Cooperative Housing Capital Improvements - Tri-Park Cooperative Housing Corporation/M&S Development

UVM Spatial Analysis Initiative for Bennington County - Bennington County Regional Commission

Voices of Hope - Voices of Hope

WheelPad L3C Manufacturing Facility - WheelPad L3C

Whitingham Sewer Infrastructure - Town of Whitingham

Winston Prouty Campus Development Project - Winston Prouty Center

Workforce Center of Excellence - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

Working Communities - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

CEDS Project Ranking Committee: BDCC and BCRC staff brought together ten individuals representing the region, and who are firmly established in their field of expertise, to review, rank, and discuss the 78 project submissions. This year's committee: Andrea Bacchi, Think Dynamic Digital; Gordon Black, Town of Manchester; Linda Bow, Heritage Financial Credit Union; Michael Corey, Bennington College; Bob Donald, Windham Foundation; Mark Halversen, US Department of Energy (retired); Patrick McAllister, Town of Halifax; James Salerno, Hale Mountain Research; Kate Trzaskos, Downtown Brattleboro Alliance; Betsy Thurston, Bellows Falls Downtown Development Alliance.

The 2019 Southern Vermont CEDS is the five year federally recognized regional economic development plan which the public and private sectors collaborated to create. A CEDS must be the result of an ongoing economic development planning process, developed with broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation, and must include a section listing all suggested projects. A CEDS also contains a section identifying and prioritizing vital projects, programs and activities that address the region's greatest needs or that will best enhance the region's competitiveness. Progress on all the goals and projects will be updated annually. The 2019 Southern Vermont CEDS can be found here: <https://www.sovermontzone.com/ceds>. BDCC and BCRC are the lead regional agencies for the 2019 Southern Vermont CEDS, and the region's standing CEDS Committee consists of members of the Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies and Regional Economic Development Working Group (see below)

The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) is a private, nonprofit economic development organization that serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, Winhall and Weston. BDCC serves as the State of Vermont's certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) for the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont. This BDCC activity was made possible in part by a grant from

the State of Vermont through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. For more information visit: <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/>

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) was created by the seventeen towns and villages it serves and works on behalf of those municipalities to build strong, resilient and sustainable communities, to foster economic prosperity, and to promote a high quality of life for residents of the region. For more information visit www.bcrcvt.org.

Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) is an affiliate of BDCC that grew from a 2008 grassroots effort, initiated by BDCC, to understand and create long term strategies needed to reverse the economic decline of the Windham Region and plan for the economic impacts from the closure of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. In 2014, after multiple years of regional input, education and data gathering, SeVEDS received federal approval for the Windham Region's federally recognized S.M.A.R.T. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). SeVEDS partnered with Bennington's Regional Economic Development Group in 2018 to develop the 2019 Southern Vermont Zone CEDS. For more information visit: www.seveds.com

The Regional Economic Development Working Group (RED Group) is a volunteer body committed to increasing the shared prosperity and quality of life for the seventeen municipalities in southwestern Vermont. The group has a diverse membership that reflects the varied community, business, workforce, and demographic characteristics of the region. The RED Group focuses on the internal and external economic development issues that affect the Bennington County region as a whole; the regional implications of local economic development issues; the process of regional economic development from local, state, and federal perspectives; and options for future initiatives.