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**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020  
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30PM  
SPECIAL MEETING – 6:15PM  
HELD REMOTELY USING ZOOM  
MINUTES**

***NOTE: Due to the ongoing social distancing requirements of COVID-19, this meeting was held remotely with no physical location using Zoom.***

Selectboard members in attendance: Tim Wessel, Elizabeth McLoughlin, Ian Goodnow, Brandie Starr, and Daniel Quipp.

Staff participating: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Others participating: Eli Coughlin-Galbraith, Drift Mavyn, Kelsey Rice, Annaliese Griffin, Cassandra Holloway, Scott Couper, Doug Cox, Lana Dever, Terry Carter, Malaika Puffer, Kazimir Dewolfe, Robert Oeser, Alex Fischer, Maya Shulman-Ment, Sonia Silbert, Lisa Rae (a/k/a Rae Elle), Art "Fhar" Miess, Ain Thompson, Laura Stamas, Molly Steinmark, Franz Reichsman, Darlene Derby, ASL interpreters Janet Dickinson and Karen Todd, and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Chair Tim Wessel called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. He confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.

**MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE NEGOTIATING OR SECURING OF REAL ESTATE PURCHASE OR LEASE OPTIONS AND THE APPOINTMENT OR EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE WHERE THE BOARD HAS DETERMINED THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD CLEARLY PLACE THE SELECTBOARD OR PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE TOWN MANAGER AND ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER WERE INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Chair Wessel reconvened the meeting at 6:15pm.

***CHAIR'S REMARKS***

None.

***MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

None.

***SELECTBOARD COMMENTS***

None.

***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION***

None.

***NEW BUSINESS***

Adjustment of Human Services Funding Allocations for FY21 – *Follow-up to Recommendation of Representative Town Meeting.* Elwell said that Representative Town Meeting (RTM) had voted to increase the amount of Human Services Funding from the recommended (and budgeted) amount of \$190,105 to \$210,340.50. He said that the funded agencies would see an increase of 10% of the recommended amount, plus The Root Social Justice Center would receive its full ask of \$7,000, as set forth on the list included in the Board's back-up materials. He noted that the Board was not required to

1 approve the additional funding, but staff recommended that the Board follow RTM's vote. There was no  
2 discussion by the Board.

3  
4 **MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP TO APPROVE FY21 FUNDING FOR HUMAN SERVICES AGENCIES IN**  
5 **THE AMOUNTS RECOMMENDED BY MAJORITY VOTE OF REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING ON**  
6 **SEPTEMBER 12, 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

7  
8 Community Safety Review – Interview and Appoint Committee Members. Wessel read the committee  
9 voting rules from the Selectboard's Rules for Conduct of Meetings and Hearings, dated April 7, 2020, and  
10 asked for a discussion about how to proceed with nominations for the Community Safety Review  
11 Committee. Elwell confirmed that 3 applicants had withdrawn, so the list now contained 23 applicants for  
12 a committee of 9 members. He then clarified the nominating and voting processes. There was some  
13 discussion. The Board agreed to nominate the slate of applicants, limit interviews to 5 minutes each, and  
14 ask the same three following questions to each of the applicants: "Why do you want to serve on this  
15 committee? Do you have any potential conflicts of interest or conscious bias that we should know about?  
16 Is there anything else you would like us to know about you before we vote?" Quipp offered an alternate  
17 question concerning policing experiences; however, the Board decided to ask the three original  
18 questions. Franz Reichsman asked whether a second round of questions would be asked later in the  
19 process, and the Board agreed to only ask each candidates the three questions.

20  
21 **ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN NOMINATED THE ENTIRE SLATE OF TWENTY-THREE INDIVIDUALS**  
22 **FOR THE COMMITTEE. NOMINATIONS CARRIED 5-0.**

23  
24 The following applicants were interviewed and asked to answer the three agreed-upon questions: Eli  
25 Coughlin-Galbraith, Drift Mavyn, Kelsey Rice, Annaliese Griffin, Cassandra Holloway, Scott Couper, Doug  
26 Cox, Lana Dever, Malaika Puffer, Kazimir "Kaz" Dewolfe, Bob Oeser, and Alex Fischer.

27  
28 Wessel called for a recess at 7:59pm. He reconvened the meeting at 8:10pm.

29  
30 The following applicants were interviewed and asked to answer the three agreed-upon questions: Maya  
31 Shulman-Ment, Sonia Silbert, Lisa Rae (a/k/a Rae Elle), Art "Fhar" Miess, Ain Thompson, Laura Stamas,  
32 Molly Steinmark, Franz Reichsman, Terry Carter, and Darlene Derby.

33  
34 When the interviews were complete, the Board had a brief discussion and voted on the applicants. At the  
35 end of the first round of votes, Elwell reported that the following people received 5 votes: Drift Mavyn,  
36 Kelsey Rice, Annaliese Griffin, Lana Dever, Maya Shulman-Ment, and Laura Stamas. He reported that  
37 the following people received 4 votes: Darlene Derby and Robert Oeser. Elwell noted that 8 people had  
38 received either 5 or 4 votes, so only one seat remained to be filled. He said that following people had  
39 received three votes on the first round and would be considered in the second round: Cassandra  
40 Holloway, Kazimir Dewolfe, Alex Fisher, Lisa Rae Elle, Ain Thompson, and Franz Reichsman. At this  
41 point, Franz Reichsman withdrew his name. The Board voted on the five remaining candidates. After the  
42 second round of voting, Elwell reported that Cassandra Holloway, Kazimir Dewolfe, and Ain Thompson  
43 received 3 votes and were eligible for the third round of votes. After the third round of votes, Elwell  
44 reported that Kazimir Dewolfe received 3 votes and the other candidates received less. He announced  
45 that Kazimir Dewolfe would fill the last remaining seat on the committee. There was a brief discussion by  
46 the Board who thanked all of the candidates for applying for the committee.

47  
48 There was no further business.

49  
50 **MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP TO ADJOURN AT 9:26PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

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Ian Goodnow, Clerk

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**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020  
COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS – 5:15PM  
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30PM  
REGULAR MEETING – 6:15PM  
HELD REMOTELY USING ZOOM  
MINUTES**

***NOTE: Due to the ongoing social distancing requirements of COVID-19, this meeting was held remotely with no physical location using Zoom.***

Selectboard members in attendance: Tim Wessel, Elizabeth McLoughlin, Ian Goodnow, Daniel Quipp, and Brandie Starr.

Staff participating: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Town Clerk Hilary Francis, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Town Attorney Robert Fisher, Planning Director Sue Fillion, Assistant Fire Chief Leonard Howard, Police Captain Mark Carignan, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Others participating: Jon Saccoccio, Gary Stroud, Earl, Robby and Barry, Ibrahim Dahlstrom-Hakki, Josh, Kate Barry, George Perides, Barry Willis, Ralph, Jason Cooper, Marc Guillaume, Brett Holmes, Liz Francese, Paul Normandeau, Steve Heim, Monica, Ananda Brutvan, Doran Hamm, ASL interpreters Elizabeth Fox and Janet Dickinson, and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Chair Tim Wessel called the meeting to order at 5:17pm. He confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.

Wessel announced that the Board would hold interviews of two applicants for the one available seat on the Development Review Board. Jon Saccoccio and Gary Stroud provided information about themselves and spoke about their reasons for volunteering to serve on the DRB. Wessel thanked the applicants for appearing and said that the Board would make committee nominations later in the meeting.

**MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE NEGOTIATING OR SECURING OF REAL ESTATE PURCHASE OR LEASE OPTIONS AND THE APPOINTMENT OR EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE WHERE THE BOARD HAS DETERMINED THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD CLEARLY PLACE THE SELECTBOARD OR PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE TOWN MANAGER AND ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER WERE INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Chair Wessel reconvened the meeting at 6:20pm.

***APPROVE MINUTES***

Chair Wessel asked the Board to approve the minutes from the September 1, September 14, and September 15 meetings.

**MOTION BY IAN GOODNOW TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 1, SEPTEMBER 14, AND SEPTEMBER 15, 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

***CHAIR'S REMARKS***

Wessel announced that Brattleboro's skatepark was now officially opened. He said that he attended the ribbon cutting ceremony last weekend at Living Memorial Park. He thanked the many people involved in establishing the skatepark, including the Recreation & Parks staff, BASIC (Brattleboro Area Skatepark Is Coming) committee, and the many donors.

1 **MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

2 Town Manager Elwell reported on the status of the transition of two management positions, including the  
3 Police Chief and Finance Director. He said that a search for a new Finance Director would commence  
4 soon. He said that the search to recruit a new Police Chief would commence in the spring after the  
5 Community Safety Review Committee (CSRC) had completed its review. He said that the CSRC was  
6 expected to provide results from its study by the end of the year, and then the Selectboard and Town staff  
7 would review the results and determine how to proceed. He said that Captain Mark Carignan would be  
8 the Acting Chief of Police after Chief Fitzgerald's retirement at the end of this year.

9  
10 **SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

11 Goodnow reminded voters about the election on November 3. He noted that voting was different this  
12 year and there would be no in-person early voting. He said that ballots had been mailed to all active  
13 voters, and he reminded people to carefully follow the instructions in completing their ballots. He said that  
14 completed ballots could be mailed or hand delivered and deposited into a drop box in the Municipal  
15 Center Parking Lot. He said that the drop box was emptied several times a day and on weekends. He  
16 suggested that people contact the Town Clerk's Office if they had any questions. He then thanked Chief  
17 Fitzgerald and Officers Carbone and Cunningham for arranging a ride-along for him recently. He said  
18 that he learned a great deal about what the police do in this community.

19  
20 Starr confirmed that she witnessed the ballot box being emptied over the weekend.

21  
22 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

23 None.

24  
25 **LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS**

26  
27 **MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO CONVENE AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED**  
28 **5-0.**

29  
30 Seasonal Third Class Liquor License Renewals – Echo Restaurant & Lounge, Flamingo Diner, and New  
31 England House. Town Clerk Hilary Francis said that the Board was asked to approve Seasonal Third  
32 Class Liquor Licenses for three restaurants: (1) Echo Restaurant & Lounge, located at 69-73 Main Street,  
33 (2) Flamingo Diner, located at 209 Canal Street, and (3) New England House, located at 254 Marlboro  
34 Road. She spoke about the seasonal licenses and said they would run for six months until the next  
35 annual liquor license renewal date. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

36  
37 **MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO APPROVE SEASONAL THIRD CLASS LIQUOR LICENSES FOR:**  
38 **(1) ECHO RESTAURANT & LOUNGE, LOCATED AT 69-73 MAIN STREET; (2) FLAMINGO DINER,**  
39 **LOCATED AT 209 CANAL STREET, AND (3) NEW ENGLAND HOUSE, LOCATED AT 254**  
40 **MARLBORO ROAD. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

41  
42 **MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP TO ADJOURN AS LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

43  
44 **WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS**

45 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO CONVENE AS WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS.**  
46 **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

47  
48 Pleasant Valley Water Treatment Waste Process Line Project – Ratify Public Works' Purchase of Pipe  
49 and Fittings from EJ Prescott. Public Works Director Steve Barrett said that the Board previously  
50 awarded a bid for pipe and fittings to FW Webb for the Pleasant Valley Water Treatment Waste Process  
51 Line Project. However, that vendor was unable to honor the bid price due to the increase in the pipe  
52 costs, as set forth in his memo dated September 23, 2020. He said that staff contacted the three  
53 companies that initially submitted bids and learned that only EJ Prescott could honor their initial bid price  
54 because they had the pipe and fittings in stock; however, requested an additional \$2,900 in shipping fees

1 to move the stock from their facility in Indiana. He said that staff determined it would be in the Town's  
2 best interests to accept the bid from EJ Prescott in the amount of \$31,946.52 and pay the additional  
3 shipping fee of \$2,900, for a total cost of \$34,846.52, and was now asking the Board to ratify staff's  
4 decision to accept the bid from EJ Prescott and pay the additional shipping fees. He noted that the  
5 project was estimated to save the Town about \$30,000 per year in operating costs. There was some  
6 discussion by the Board.

7  
8 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO (1) TO RESCIND THE PREVIOUS BID AWARD TO F.W.**  
9 **WEBB, AND (2) TO RATIFY STAFF'S AWARD OF THE BID FOR PIPE AND FITTINGS TO EJ**  
10 **PRESCOTT FOR \$31,946.52, AND TO PAY THE SHIPPING FEE OF \$2,900, FOR A TOTAL COST OF**  
11 **\$34,846.52. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

12  
13 Exit 1 Industrial Park Utilities Upgrade – Award Bid for Water & Sewer Upgrade. Public Works Director  
14 Steve Barrett said that the Board was asked to award a bid to Zaluzny Excavating, of Vernon, Vermont, in  
15 the amount of \$849,002, for the Exit 1 Industrial Park Water and Sewer System Upgrade. He said that  
16 Zaluzny Construction was the low bidder, as set forth in his memo dated September 24, 2020. He spoke  
17 about the project and added that the engineers recommended accepting Zaluzny's bid. There was no  
18 discussion by the Board.

19  
20 **MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO AWARD A BID TO ZALUZY EXCAVATING IN THE AMOUNT OF**  
21 **\$849,002 FOR THE EXIT 1 INDUSTRIAL PARK WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM UPGRADE. MOTION**  
22 **CARRIED 5-0.**

23  
24 **MOTION BY IAN GOODNOW TO ADJOURN AS WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS. MOTION**  
25 **CARRIED 5-0.**

## 26 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

27 Tenants' Union of Brattleboro Request for Ordinance Regulating Housing Lease Deposits – Continued  
28 Discussion. Wessel said that the Board was asked to discuss the proposal from the Tenants' Union of  
29 Brattleboro (TUB) to add an ordinance that would limit the amount of up-front payments required from  
30 tenants to occupy a rental housing unit. He said that the Board previously discussed this matter at the  
31 September 1 meeting and had requested additional information, including legal information from Town  
32 Attorney Bob Fisher. Attorney Fisher was present and said that many policy decisions faced the Board,  
33 and that his legal memo, dated September 12, 2020, was meant to outline some legal perimeters. He  
34 spoke about the legal matters set forth in his memo and about the possible creation of a Housing Board  
35 of Review. He added that he provided a draft ordinance that was based on the Burlington ordinance.  
36 Planning Director Sue Fillion then spoke about the results from her research with Burlington and Barre  
37 about such ordinances and Housing Boards of Review. She said both of those municipalities have or had  
38 such an ordinance, as set forth in her two memoranda dated September 29 and included in the Board's  
39 back-up materials. Fillion said that a grant application had been submitted to conduct a study, which  
40 would include housing, and she would not know until December if the grant would be awarded to the  
41 Town. There was a very lengthy discussion by the Board. Wessel spoke of some conflicts within the  
42 housing statutes. Starr spoke of some housing statistics that she found and of her experiences with  
43 rental waiting lists. McLoughlin inquired about the upcoming housing study and asked if information  
44 gleaned from the study could be helpful in determining housing requirements. She suggested that low  
45 income levels were the problem, rather than the amount of rents. She also mentioned a number of  
46 programs where the Town contributed to affordable housing projects. Goodnow inquired about the  
47 federal Fair Market Rent standard and the amount of Brattleboro rental households being "cost burdened"  
48 or "severely cost burdened." Quipp agreed there was a lack of housing, as well as the existence of other  
49 affordability factors, and said that an ordinance amendment was a helpful tool to assist with affordability  
50 but was not the "end all" solution. He asked landlords to offer stories of tenancies that did not end well  
51 and to discuss how the security deposit and last month's rent were used during the tenancy. Goodnow  
52 asked landlords to tell the Board how often security deposits were returned to outgoing tenants.

1 Wessel opened the floor for public comment, and asked speakers to limit their comments to two minutes.  
2 The following people provided their comments and opinions: Earl (from the Brattleboro Tenants' Union),  
3 Robby and Barry (tenants/member of TUB), Ibrahim Dahlstrom-Hakki (landlord), Josh (tenant), Kate Barry  
4 (realtor/landlord/property manager), and George Perides (landlord).

5  
6 Chair Wessel called for a recess at 7:58pm. He reconvened the meeting at 8:11pm.

7  
8 Wessel opened the floor for additional public comment, and the following people provided their comments  
9 and opinions: Barry Willis (tenant), Ralph (landlord), Jason Cooper (landlord/property manager), Marc  
10 Guillaume (landlord), Brett Holmes (landlord), Liz Francese (tenant/member of TUB), Paul Normandeau  
11 (landlord), Steve Heim (landlord), Monica (tenant), Ananda Brutvan, and Doran Hamm.

12  
13 There was additional lengthy discussion by the Board where each member spoke of their opinions and  
14 concerns. Goodnow, Starr, and Quipp spoke in general support of the proposed ordinance. McLoughlin  
15 and Wessel said they did not support the proposal. McLoughlin noted that two different problems existed  
16 – one being an income issue and the other being a supply issue. She suggested waiting to receive  
17 results from the housing study before considering this ordinance. She stated that one-third of Brattleboro  
18 renters lived in subsidized units so additional housing should be encouraged, and this ordinance did not  
19 accomplish that. Wessel questioned whether this proposal was an overly blunt and improper tool to  
20 address the problem. He spoke about the Rental Housing Improvement Program (RHIP) available to  
21 assist in adding housing units to existing homes and suggested that a financial program could be  
22 established to assist tenants. He also spoke of this proposal adding risk to landlords. None of the Board  
23 members spoke in support of holding deposits in an interest bearing account due, in part, to the extremely  
24 minimal amount of return given current interest rates.

25  
26 **MOTION BY IAN GOODNOW TO BREAK FROM THE PROPOSED RENTAL HOUSING SECURITY**  
27 **DEPOSIT ORDINANCE, ARTICLE 5, FROM SECTION 8-73 (SECURITY DEPOSITS), PARAGRAPH**  
28 **NUMBER (2) IN THE LINE THAT STARTS WITH "THIS SECURITY DEPOSIT MAY NOT EXCEED THE**  
29 **AMOUNT OF ONE MONTH'S RENT FOR THE UNIT RENTED" AND THEN STRIKE THE REST OF**  
30 **THE SENTENCE BEGINNING WITH ". . .AND SHALL ACCUMULATE INTEREST WITH AN INTEREST**  
31 **RATE OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT TO A CURRENT VERMONT BANK PASSBOOK SAVINGS**  
32 **ACCOUNT," AND LEAVE IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, "THIS DEPOSIT SHALL NOT BE USED BY THE**  
33 **TENANT AS THE LAST MONTH'S RENT UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN A WRITTEN LEASE**  
34 **AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES." THE REMAINING PROPOSED ORDINANCE AS WRITTEN**  
35 **BY ATTORNEY FISHER WOULD THEN BE READ FOR ITS FIRST READING AT THE OCTOBER 20,**  
36 **2020 SELECTBOARD MEETING.**

37  
38 Goodnow went on to explain that explicit language was contained in the proposed ordinance where the  
39 security deposit was a refundable amount of money that would not be used as the last month's rent, and  
40 could only be used for damages, if any. There was additional discussion to clarify the motion. Elwell  
41 confirmed that Goodnow's motion included the proposed Ordinance amendment as prepared by Attorney  
42 Fisher be added to the October 20 Selectboard agenda for a first reading, with the one deletion specified  
43 in the motion. Goodnow clarified that the proposed ordinance would be presented as written for the first  
44 reading, except that the portion of the sentence ". . .and shall accumulate interest with an interest rate of  
45 at least equivalent to a current Vermont bank passbook savings account" be omitted. Other Board  
46 members asked for a clarification to the motion and procedure. Attorney Fisher offered that the proposed  
47 ordinance was provided for discussion purposes at this meeting, and was not intended to be a first  
48 reading at this time. He said that a first and second reading would still be required in order to implement  
49 the ordinance amendment. Fisher reviewed other sections in the proposed ordinance and confirmed that  
50 the motion deleted the requirement that the deposit be held in an interest bearing account. Wessel  
51 inquired about enforcement. Elwell said that the creation of a Housing Board of Review would be a place  
52 where tenants and landlords could resolve disputes that arose over security deposits. He said that the  
53 statutes were specific as to what a Housing Board of Review could or could not do. Attorney Fisher said  
54 that the Housing Board would be limited in its jurisdiction to what the statutes provide for it, and the Board

1 of Review would not be able to award damages. He said that such claims may have to go to Small  
2 Claims Court in the Superior Court. He said he would review the statutes and have additional information  
3 for the October 20 meeting, including information on decisions from the Burlington Housing Board of  
4 Review. There was further discussion by the Board about the creation of a Housing Board of Review and  
5 possible staffing involvement. The motion was presented unchanged for a vote.

6 **MOTION BY IAN GOODNOW TO BREAK FROM THE PROPOSED RENTAL HOUSING SECURITY**  
7 **DEPOSIT ORDINANCE, ARTICLE 5, FROM SECTION 8-73 (SECURITY DEPOSITS), PARAGRAPH**  
8 **NUMBER (2) IN THE LINE THAT STARTS WITH "THIS SECURITY DEPOSIT MAY NOT EXCEED THE**  
9 **AMOUNT OF ONE MONTH'S RENT FOR THE UNIT RENTED" AND THEN STRIKE THE REST OF**  
10 **THE SENTENCE BEGINNING WITH ". . .AND SHALL ACCUMULATE INTEREST WITH AN INTEREST**  
11 **RATE OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT TO A CURRENT VERMONT BANK PASSBOOK SAVINGS**  
12 **ACCOUNT," AND LEAVE IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, "THIS DEPOSIT SHALL NOT BE USED BY THE**  
13 **TENANT AS THE LAST MONTH'S RENT UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN A WRITTEN LEASE**  
14 **AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES." THE REMAINING PROPOSED ORDINANCE AS WRITTEN**  
15 **BY ATTORNEY FISHER WOULD THEN BE READ FOR ITS FIRST READING AT THE OCTOBER 20,**  
16 **2020 SELECTBOARD MEETING. MOTION CARRIED 3-2 (WESSEL AND McLOUGHLIN OPPOSED).**  
17

18 Wessel called for a recess at 10:00pm. He reconvened the meeting at 10:11pm.  
19

20 Wessel said that due to the late hour, he suggested removing three agenda items from tonight's  
21 discussion and adding them to the October 20 meeting. The items were: Item H (FY20 Year-End  
22 Financial Report), Item I (Long Term Financial Plan), and Item J (Proposed Schedule of Meetings for  
23 Consideration of Proposed FY22 Budget). The Board members agreed to move those items.  
24

#### 25 **NEW BUSINESS**

##### 26 Hinsdale Bridge Project –

- 27 (i) *Provide Notice of Hearing on Laying Out the Highway and the Taking of Lands Therefor*
  - 28 (ii) *Schedule Special Meeting and Site Visit on November 10*
- 29

30 Wessel asked Attorney Fisher to provide information to the Board on this subject. Fisher said that the  
31 Board was asked to schedule a site visit and public hearing on November 10 for a condemnation hearing  
32 for the taking of two properties necessary for the Brattleboro-Hinsdale Bridge Project. He said that the  
33 State of Vermont would provide evidence at the hearing for the necessity of taking those properties and  
34 also provide evidence as to the value of the properties which would then be awarded to the particular  
35 property owners. He noted that the proposed Notice of Hearing was included in the Board's back-up  
36 materials, and upon the Board's approval would be mailed to abutting property owners tomorrow via  
37 certified mail. He said that the two parcels of property included in the condemnation hearing were 28  
38 Vernon Street and 12 Left Bank Way. He said negotiators were working with the owners of 28 Vernon  
39 Street in the hopes of reaching an agreement between the parties. He said that the taking of  
40 approximately 14 parcels would become necessary to construct the bridge and most of those property  
41 owners had reach agreement with the State. McLoughlin asked if this hearing would include discussion  
42 about the existing bridges. Elwell said that the discussion regarding existing bridges would be a separate  
43 meeting, and that meeting was scheduled on Thursday, October 15, at 6:30pm using Zoom. There was  
44 some discussion by the Board about the Hinsdale Bridge Project. The Board agreed to hold the in-  
45 person site visit on Tuesday, November 10 at 12:00pm and the meeting/public hearing on November 10  
46 at 6:15pm using Zoom.  
47

48 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN (1) TO APPROVE THE "NOTICE OF HEARING TO LAY OUT**  
49 **AND ESTABLISH HIGHWAY AND TO CONDEMN PROPERTY NEEDED THEREFOR," (2) TO**  
50 **SCHEDULE A SITE VISIT AT 12:00PM ON NOVEMBER 10, AND (3) TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL**  
51 **MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:15PM ON NOVEMBER 10. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
52  
53

1 VCDP Grant for Red Clover Commons II

2 (i) *Accept and Appropriate Grant*

3 (ii) *Approve Grant Agreement Resolution (PM-1)*

4  
5 Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland said that the Board was asked to adopt a Grant Agreement  
6 Resolution and to accept and appropriate the sum of \$300,000 from the Vermont Community  
7 Development Program (VCDP) in support of the Red Clover Commons II Project of Brattleboro Housing  
8 Partnerships. He said that the Board was also asked to authorize the Town Manager to execute the  
9 Grant Agreement with the State of Vermont and all associated documents necessary for the performance  
10 of the grant funded activities. He briefly spoke about the project and its \$5.6 million in funding, as set  
11 forth in his memo dated September 28, 2020. He clarified that the Subgrant Agreement between the  
12 Town and the subgrantee would be with the Brattleboro Housing Authority, who would then lend the  
13 money to Brattleboro Housing Partnerships. He said that the Board previously approved submission of  
14 the VCDP application and the parties had now met all necessary award conditions. There was a brief  
15 discussion.

16  
17 **MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP (1) TO ADOPT THE VERMONT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
18 **PROGRAM (VCDP GRANT AGREEMENT RESOLUTION FOR THE RED CLOVER COMMONS II**  
19 **PROJECT), (2) TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$300,000 FROM VCDP TO THE**  
20 **BATTLEBORO HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS, AND (3) TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO**  
21 **EXECUTE THE GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF VERMONT AND ALL ASSOCIATED**  
22 **DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE GRANT FUNDED ACTIVITIES.**  
23 **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

24  
25 Authorization to Purchase Replacement Fire Truck. Assistant Fire Chief Leonard Howard said that the  
26 Board was asked to authorize the purchase of a fire pumper truck from Allegiance Fire & Rescue, of  
27 Walpole, Massachusetts, in the net amount of \$549,898. As set forth in his memo dated September 23,  
28 \$223,000 would be funded from the Unassigned General Fund Balance, as approved by Representative  
29 Town Meeting on September 12, 2020. He said the balance of \$326,898 would come from the FY21  
30 Capital Improvement Fund appropriations. Elwell said that the truck would be custom built according to  
31 the specifications submitted by the Fire Department. He also spoke about the benefits of utilizing the  
32 HGAC (Houston-Galveston Area Council) cooperative. There was some discussion by the Board.

33  
34 **MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF A FIRE PUMPER TRUCK**  
35 **FROM ALLEGIANCE FIRE & RESCUE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$549,898. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

36  
37 Brattleboro Transportation Center Waterproofing Project – Award Bid. Assistant Town Manager Patrick  
38 Moreland said that the Board was asked to award a bid to PCS Specialty Contracting of Skowhegan,  
39 Maine, in an amount not to exceed \$18,000 for joint sealing on the first floor of the Brattleboro  
40 Transportation Center (BTC). He spoke about the leakage into leased spaces and the more  
41 comprehensive waterproofing approach that was originally envisioned, as set forth in his memo dated  
42 September 28, 2020. He said that the bids came in substantially higher than anticipated, so the scope of  
43 the project was reduced to include a joint sealing option on the first floor on a linear foot basis. He said  
44 that the project would be re-evaluated in the future. There was a brief discussion.

45  
46 **MOTION BY IAN GOODNOW TO AWARD A BID TO PCS SPECIALTY CONTRACTING IN AN**  
47 **AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$18,000 FOR JOINT SEALING ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE**  
48 **BATTLEBORO TRANSPORTATION CENTER. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

49 U.S. Department of Justice 2020 JAG Grant – Accept and Appropriate. Police Captain Mark Carrigan  
50 said that the Board was asked to accept and appropriate the 2020 JAG Grant in the amount of \$11,614  
51 from the U.S. Department of Justice to pay for law enforcement training. As set forth in the memo dated  
52 August 5, 2020, from Police Chief Michael Fitzgerald, the funds would pay for training that reflected the  
53 ongoing considerations locally and nationally about police and racial equity. There was no discussion by  
54 the Board.

1  
2 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE THE 2020 JAG GRANT IN**  
3 **THE AMOUNT OF \$11,614 FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO PAY FOR LAW**  
4 **ENFORCEMENT TRAINING. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
5

6 Appoint Interim Town Treasurer – Elwell said that the Board was asked to appoint Assistant Town  
7 Treasurer Deborah Desrosiers to serve as Interim Town Treasurer while a search was being conducted to  
8 hire a Finance Director. He said that Desrosiers' appointment would become effective immediately, and  
9 would continue until a new Finance Director/Town Treasurer was hired. There was no discussion by the  
10 Board.  
11

12 **MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO APPOINT DEBORAH DESROSIERS TO SERVE AS INTERIM**  
13 **TOWN TREASURER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, AND CONTINUING UNTIL A NEW FINANCE**  
14 **DIRECTOR/TOWN TREASURER IS HIRED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
15

16 Hire Interim Finance Director –

17 (i) *Ratify Town Manager's Decision to Hire Melanson Heath Accountants/Auditors*

18 (ii) *Approve Contract with Melanson Heath*

19 Elwell said that the Board was asked to ratify his decision to hire Melanson Heath Accountants/Auditors  
20 while a search for a new Finance Director was being conducted. He also asked the Board to approve a  
21 contract with Melanson Heath for an initial term from October 5, 2020, to January 15, 2021, in the  
22 minimum amount of \$5,000 and a maximum amount of \$25,000. There was no discussion by the Board.  
23

24 **MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP TO (1) RATIFY TOWN MANAGER'S DECISION TO HIRE MELANSON**  
25 **HEATH ACCOUNTANTS/AUDITORS, AND (2) APPROVE THE CONTRACT WITH MELANSON**  
26 **HEATH FOR AN INITIAL TERM FROM OCTOBER 5, 2020, TO JANUARY 15, 2021, IN A MINIMUM**  
27 **AMOUNT OF \$5,000 AND MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF \$25,000. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
28

29 FY20 Year-End Financial Report – Final But Unaudited Results. This matter was moved to the October  
30 20, 2020 meeting.  
31

32 **NO ACTION TAKEN.**  
33

34 Long Term Financial Plan – 2020 Update for FY22-FY26. This matter was moved to the October 20,  
35 2020 meeting.  
36

37 **NO ACTION TAKEN.**  
38

39 Proposed Schedule of Meetings for Consideration of Proposed FY22 Budget. This matter was moved to  
40 the October 20, 2020 meeting.  
41

42 **NO ACTION TAKEN.**  
43

44 One-Year Extension of the Brattleboro Reformer's Lease at 62 Black Mountain Road. Elwell said that the  
45 Board was asked to approve a 1-year lease extension with New England Newspapers at a rental rate of  
46 \$8 per square foot and to authorize him to execute the lease extension. As set forth in the memo, dated  
47 October 1, 2020, the tenant, New England Newspapers, requested a reduction in rent due to the severe  
48 financial impacts of COVID-19. There was a brief discussion by the Board.  
49

50 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO APPROVE A 1-YEAR LEASE EXTENSION WITH NEW**  
51 **ENGLAND NEWSPAPERS AT A RENTAL RATE OF \$8 PER SQUARE FOOT AND TO AUTHORIZE**  
52 **THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE LEASE EXTENSION. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
53  
54

- 1 Town Committees/Boards  
2 (i) *Hazard Mitigation Committee*  
3 (a) *Appoint Selectboard Member*  
4 (b) *Appoint Planning Commission Member*  
5 (c) *Appoint Citizen Members*  
6 (ii) *Appointments to Various Other Boards and Committees*  
7 (iii) *Announce Vacancies on Various Boards and Committees*  
8

9 Elwell said that the Board was asked to (1) appoint a Selectboard Member to the newly revised Hazard  
10 Mitigation Committee for a term ending on June 30, 2021; (2) appoint Planning Commission  
11 representative Kathy Urffer to the Hazard Mitigation Committee for a term ending on June 30, 2021; and  
12 (3) appoint two community members to the Hazard Mitigation Committee for one term expiring on June  
13 30, 2021, and one term expiring on June 30, 2022. He said that the applicants for the community  
14 member seats were Christine Hart and Kay Curtis. Goodnow volunteered to serve as Selectboard  
15 member on the Hazard Mitigation Committee. There was a brief discussion about the terms of the  
16 community members.  
17

18 **NOMINATIONS BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN FOR THE HAZARD MITIGATION COMMITTEE:  
19 SELECTBOARD MEMBER IAN GOODNOW; PLANNING COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE KATHY  
20 URFFER; AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS CHRISTINE HART FOR A TERM ENDING JUNE 30, 2022,  
21 AND KAY CURTIS FOR A TERM ENDING JUNE 30, 2021. NOMINATIONS CARRIED 5-0.**  
22

23 Elwell said that the Board was also asked to appoint members to the Agricultural Advisory Committee and  
24 the Planning Commission. There was no discussion.  
25

26 **NOMINATIONS BY DANIEL QUIPP: JIM VERZINO FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY  
27 COMMITTEE, AND DORAN HAMM FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION. NOMINATIONS CARRIED  
28 5-0.**  
29

30 Elwell noted that the Board held interviews at the beginning of this meeting for the single vacant seat on  
31 the Development Review Board, and was now asked to appoint a member to that board. There was a  
32 brief discussion.  
33

34 **DANIEL QUIPP NOMINATED JON SACCOCCIO FOR THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD.  
35 BRANDIE STARR NOMINATED GARY STROUD. SACCOCCIO RECEIVED 5 VOTES; STROUD  
36 RECEIVED 2 VOTES. SACCOCCIO WAS APPOINTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD.**  
37

38 Elwell said that the Board was asked to announce vacancies to other Town committees and boards. He  
39 read the following vacancies:

40 **ADA ADVISORY BOARD**  
41 **AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members)**  
42 **ARTS COMMITTEE**  
43 **CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
44 **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD ALTERNATES**  
45 **ENERGY COMMITTEE**  
46 **INSPECTOR, LUMBER, SHINGLES & WOOD**  
47 **SENIOR SOLUTIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
48

49 There was no further business.  
50

51 **MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO ADJOURN AT 11:14PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**  
52  
53  
54

---

Ian Goodnow, Clerk

**Chapter 8**

**HEALTH, SANITATION, AND FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS,  
AND RENTAL HOUSING**

- Article One – Nuisances**
- Article Two – Fire Safety Inspections**
- Article Three – Rental Housing Code**
- Article Four – Rental Housing Inspections**
- Article Five – Rental Housing Security Deposits**

*Revised after  
October 6  
selectboard  
meeting*

**ARTICLE ONE – NUISANCES**

**Sec. 8-1. Nuisances generally.**

Whatever is dangerous to human life or health, and whatever renders soil, food, water and drink unwholesome, are declared to be nuisances.

**Sec. 8-2. Emission or discharge of pollutants restricted.**

No person shall cause, permit, suffer or allow the emission or discharge of dense smoke, noxious fumes, gas, soot or cinders in such quantities as to render the occupancy of property uncomfortable to a person of ordinary sensibilities.

**Sec. 8-3. Unsanitary use of property.**

It shall be unlawful for any person to allow his or her property to become a public nuisance:

1. the physical condition or occupancy of any premises regarded as a public nuisance at common law;
2. any physical condition or occupancy of any premises considered an attractive nuisance to children, including, but not limited to, abandoned wells, shafts, basements, excavations, and unsafe fences and structures;
3. any premises that has unsanitary sewage or plumbing facilities;
4. any premises designated as unsafe for human habitation;
5. any premises that is manifestly capable of being a fire hazard, or is manifestly unsafe or unsecure so as to endanger life, limb or property;
6. any premises from which plumbing, heating or other facilities required by this code have been removed or disconnected, destroyed or rendered ineffective; or the required precautions against trespassers have not been provided;

**Sec. 8-57. Building Inspection.**

Upon receiving information that any apartment building or other leased residential dwelling unit is in violation of the specifications of this Ordinance, is in violation of the Vermont Rental Housing Code, or is otherwise in such unsafe condition that the public safety is endangered, the Town Health Officer shall cause the building, structure or property to be inspected. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, the Town Health Officer shall cause all public buildings and apartment buildings and any leased residential dwelling units to be inspected once every four years as set forth above.

**Sec. 8-58. Repeal of Prior Conflicting Ordinances.**

The enactment of this Ordinance shall repeal all other ordinances of the Town of Brattleboro that are in direct conflict with the terms and regulations contained herein. This article shall be in addition to Article III, Chapter 8 of the Brattleboro Town Ordinances.

**Sec. 8-59. Severability.**

If any section of this Ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such finding shall not invalidate any other part of this Ordinance.

**Sec. 8-60. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption by the Town Selectboard of the Town of Brattleboro in accordance with 24A V.S.A. Ch. 107, § 4.6.

**Sec. 8-61 – 70. RESERVED.****ARTICLE FIVE - RENTAL HOUSING SECURITY DEPOSITS****Sec. 8-71. Authority.**

This Ordinance is adopted by the Town of Brattleboro under authority granted in 24A V.S.A. Ch. 107, §§ 4.6(4), 4.6(15), 4.6(25) and 4.6(27); 24 V.S.A. §§ 2291(13), (14), and (15), 24 V.S.A. § 2121, 24 V.S.A. Chapter 59, and 9 V.S.A. § 4461(g).

**Sec. 8-72. Statement of Findings and Purpose.**

(1) The Brattleboro Selectboard finds that: (A) 50% of Brattleboro residents are renters, and (B) access to affordable housing is an obstacle facing renters in Brattleboro. When someone inevitably has to move out of their apartment, the often insurmountable challenge of immediately producing the equivalent of 3 months' rent to secure a new residence is one of many factors that keep people chronically unsheltered.

**Sec. 8-73. Security Deposits.**

- (1) No other payments or deposits beyond the first month's rental payment and the deposit described in this section may be required as a condition of rental, lease or occupancy of a rental unit as a dwelling.
- (2) An owner may require a reasonable deposit as a condition for the rental, lease or occupancy of a rental unit as a dwelling as security against damage beyond normal wear and tear to the premises which is attributable to the tenant, against nonpayment of rent, against nonpayment of utility or other charges which the tenant is required to pay directly to the landlord or to a utility, and against expenses required to remove from the rental unit articles abandoned by the tenant. This security deposit may not exceed the amount of one month's rent for the unit rented and shall accumulate interest with an interest rate at least equivalent to a current Vermont bank passbook savings account. This deposit shall not be used by the tenant as the last month's rent unless otherwise specified in a written lease agreement between the parties.
- (3) An owner may require an additional payment equal to one-half (1/2) the amount of one month's rent as a condition for allowing the occupants to have a pet during the rental, lease or occupancy of a rental unit as a dwelling. Such additional payment may not be charged for any animal that mitigates a disability.

**Sec. 8-74. Severability.**

If any section of this Ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such finding shall not invalidate any other part of this Ordinance.

**Sec. 8-75. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption by the Selectboard of the Town of Brattleboro in accordance with 24A V.S.A. Ch. 107, § 4.6.

**Sec. 8-76. Appeals.**

Tenants aggrieved by a violation of the Security Deposit limitation shall have the right to appeal to the Brattleboro Housing Board of Review, which Board shall have the right to adjudicate such appeals in accordance with the powers outlined in 24 V.S.A. §§ 5001-5008.

**Sec. 8-77. Housing Board of Review.**

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 5005, there is hereby established a Housing Board of Review for the Town of Brattleboro. The Board shall consist of five members who shall be appointed by the Selectboard. The members of the Board shall be composed of two landlords, two tenants/renters, and one homeowner. Each member shall be appointed for a term of three years. A board member may be re-appointed after their term expires.

**Sec. 8-78. Powers**

The Housing Board of Review shall follow the procedures and shall have the powers set forth in 24 V.S.A. § 5005, as may be amended from time to time. In addition, the Housing Board of Review shall have the authority to hear and decide appeals regarding disputes over rental housing security deposits as set forth in 9 V.S.A. § 4461(g).

## LEGAL MEMORANDUM

To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
From: Robert M. Fisher, Esq. Town Attorney  
Date: September 12, 2020  
Re: Possible Ordinance on Rental Housing Security Deposits

Title 9, Vermont Statutes Annotated, section 4461(g) provides authority for the Board to adopt an ordinance regulating security deposits so long as the ordinance is “supplemental to and not inconsistent with the minimum protections” of section 4461 of Title 9. The ordinance may provide that a security deposit be held in an interest bearing account, though that is not required by the statute.

The attached draft ordinance is modeled after a similar ordinance in Burlington, Vermont.

The term, “security deposit” is defined by state law as “any advance, deposit, or prepaid rent, however named, which is *refundable* to the tenant at the termination or expiration of the tenancy.” The “function of a security deposit is to secure the performance of a tenant’s obligations to pay rent and to maintain a dwelling unit.” State law, section 4461, covers what a security deposit may be used for, when such a deposit must be returned to a tenant, how a deposit must be returned, and how a landlord is penalized if the landlord fails to return the deposit or itemizes deductions therefrom in a timely manner. Any town ordinance must be supplemental to the state statute’s protections. For instance, one town provided that the return of a security deposit or the return of the statement itemizing deductions to be sent by certified mail. A court found such a provision to be supplemental and consistent with the state statute. No town ordinance can have the effect of weakening or eliminating the minimum protections provided to tenants by virtue of the state statutes on rental housing agreements.

A couple of items for discussion: One, does the Board wish to require the deposit to be held in an interest bearing account? Two, does the Board wish to regulate the amount that can be requested for the security deposit?

Last, the statute allows a Housing Board of Review which has been previously constituted in accordance with statutes authorizing local housing codes to hear disputes related to security deposits. However, while Brattleboro has adopted a local housing code by adopting the state residential housing code by reference (Chapter 8, Subchapter 3) and has an appeal board for the fire inspections, Brattleboro does not have a constituted “housing board of review,” so there is currently no manner to review on a local basis disputes over security deposits. If the Selectboard wishes to have a Housing Board of Review to consider such disputes over security deposits, the Town would need to amend its local housing code to formally constitute such a

Board. I have attached draft language for such a housing review board if the Selectboard wishes to pursue this.

While I did not find any Vermont Supreme Court cases on this matter, I did run across two Superior Court cases out of Burlington where there were appeals from the housing board of review. In each case, the Court found in favor of the plaintiff because it ruled the rent "binder" as it was referred to in the case to be the equivalent of an application fee which is prohibited under Vermont law. Apparently, there have been no cases which have challenged the limitation on security deposits.

In conclusion, there exists the legal authority to adopt such an ordinance regulating security deposits, but the extent of such an ordinance requires the Board to consider the various "menu" options listed above. I am available to discuss these matters with any of you at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Fisher



# Brattleboro Planning Services

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230 Main Street, Suite 202 • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
Phone 802-251-8154 • [www.brattleboro.org/planning](http://www.brattleboro.org/planning)

To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
Via: Peter Elwell, Town Manager  
From: Sue Fillion, Planning Director  
Date: September 29, 2020  
Re: Rental Housing Deposit Ordinance and Housing Review Board Research

---

Barre City and Burlington are the only two towns in Vermont that have experience with Rental Housing Deposit Ordinances and Housing Review Boards. I communicated with staff from both cities that have some knowledge the programs and the information they shared is below. Both of the staff members I spoke with had more knowledge of Housing Review Boards.

I reached out to the VT Planner's Association Listserv to try and find other people with experiences with rental housing deposits and review boards. There was no response. I spoke with Shaun Gilpin, VT Housing Program Coordinator at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. He mentioned that Burlington and Barre were the only two communities in the state that have rental housing deposit ordinances. He did not have much additional information to share.

## Burlington

Burlington enacted their Rental Housing Deposit Ordinance in 1986. The Housing Review Board was established in 1971.

I communicated with Lisa Jones, a paralegal with the City of Burlington who staffs the Housing Review Board. She felt that overall, the Housing Review Board works well. She advised that it is important that board members understand up front what their role is. They are not advocates for tenants or landlords; they are a quasi-judicial body whose function is to be impartial and fair when considering a case.

Burlington has had challenge filling vacancies on the Board. Burlington has a lot of boards and commissions and people do not seem that interested in serving on this board. One good change made to the ordinance was the length of the term. It was originally a 5-year term which was a big commitment for someone to make; a few years ago, the term was changed to 3 years.

Burlington's ordinance does not require a certain make up for the Board, but it just happens that they have had at least one attorney on the Board for the past several years. She felt that it was helpful.

Staff time to support the Board varies. The summer months and into the fall can be quite busy because that is when the Board sees a lot of cases related to student turnover of apartments. From July into October or November, the Board will meet twice a month and consider 4 cases at a hearing. During other months, the Board may only need to meet once a month. The current Board seems to be good at making sure cases stay on track, so meetings are usually about 2 hours. In addition, to the meetings, the staff person schedules the hearings and sends out notices and agendas (approx. 2 hrs. of time for one meeting). The staff person also drafts the decisions; depending on the issues in a case that can take anywhere from an hour to 2 hrs. If a case is appealed to court, the staff person forwards the request and Board's file to the court, and notifies the opposing party. That probably takes at least an hour of time depending on how big the case file is. At that point, an attorney might also become involved.

The Board does not see a lot of cases appealed to court. She estimated maybe 3-5 cases a year. Over the years, most of the Board's decisions have been affirmed by the court.

Burlington has not researched or collected information regarding what happened to rents or tenant screening after the ordinance was implemented. Burlington has had some cases where a deposit does not cover the damage but there are not a lot of these cases. Ms. Jones suggested I speak with Vermont Tenants to see if they had any information on the unintended consequences of the rental housing deposit ordinance.

I spoke with Sandrine Kibuey, Director for Vermont Tenants at the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity. She did not have any information on the unintended consequences to rents or tenant screening. She acknowledged that they are a tenant advocacy organization and felt that such a deposit requirement has benefits for tenants' rents and that it makes the leasing process clearer. She added that most people that call the Tenant Hotline due so over deposits.

#### Barre City

Barre City has a security deposit law similar to the one in Burlington. Under the law, deposits are limited to one month's rent and tenants are entitled to interest. Barre also had a Housing Board of Review similar to Burlington's. Both of these were enacted by Charter change in 1994. There was no one that I could speak to about the effect of the rental housing deposit rule on rents or tenant screening.

According to the Barre City Planning Director, the last Housing Review Board hearing was held in November of 2012. The files indicate that there was little to no activity, it was tough to keep board members, and all either resigned or chose not to continue another term.

Barre City has been unable to have a 5-member board since early 2014, even with the Council annual volunteer push. There have been random requests for a Housing Review Board hearings (four in 2016, nothing for the last two years). Without a seated board, all security deposit appeals go to Small Claims Court.

In March 2020, Town Meeting voted to abolish the charter provisions by a majority vote of 854 to 807. The revised Charter has been forwarded to the Legislature for review and final approval. Until such time as they are approved, the security deposit rule remains in effect.



# Brattleboro Planning Services

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230 Main Street, Suite 202 • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
Phone 802-251-8154 • [www.brattleboro.org/planning](http://www.brattleboro.org/planning)

To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
Via: Peter Elwell, Town Manager  
From: Sue Fillion, Planning Director  
Date: September 29, 2020  
Re: Select Rental Housing Data for Brattleboro

---

The data below is primarily compiled from Vermont Housing Finance Agency's [housingdata.org](http://housingdata.org) website. This website contains data and resources that align with its mission of promoting safe, affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income Vermonters.

## Households by type

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

There are an estimated 2,672 renter households and 2,646 owner households in Brattleboro. *The renter household rate for Brattleboro is estimated at 50%.* The Brattleboro Tenants Union has used the figure of 60%. This is the Census estimate for a smaller geographic area within Brattleboro that incorporates the settled concentration of population.

## Rental Vacancy Rate

The rental vacancy rate varies depending on the source of the survey. The three listed below present a range of 0.5% - 2.8%. A rental housing market is typically considered healthy when its vacancy rates are between 4%-6%. Low rental vacancy rates are typically interpreted as a sign of a tight housing market, with lower vacancy rates signaling a great housing shortage.

Windham County, Bowen National Research, 2014: 0.5%.

This was a survey of 36 properties accounting for 997 units. It was conducted as part of the Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2015-2020 (see:

<https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/Housing/H-Research-HousingNeedsWindham.pdf>)

Windham County, U.S. Census Bureau estimates, 2018: 2.8%

Brattleboro Planning Services Department Survey: 1.9%

This was a survey conducted in June 2020 with landlords listed in the Rental Registration Database. There were 68 responses accounting for 512 units.

## Households by housing costs as a percentage of household incomes

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

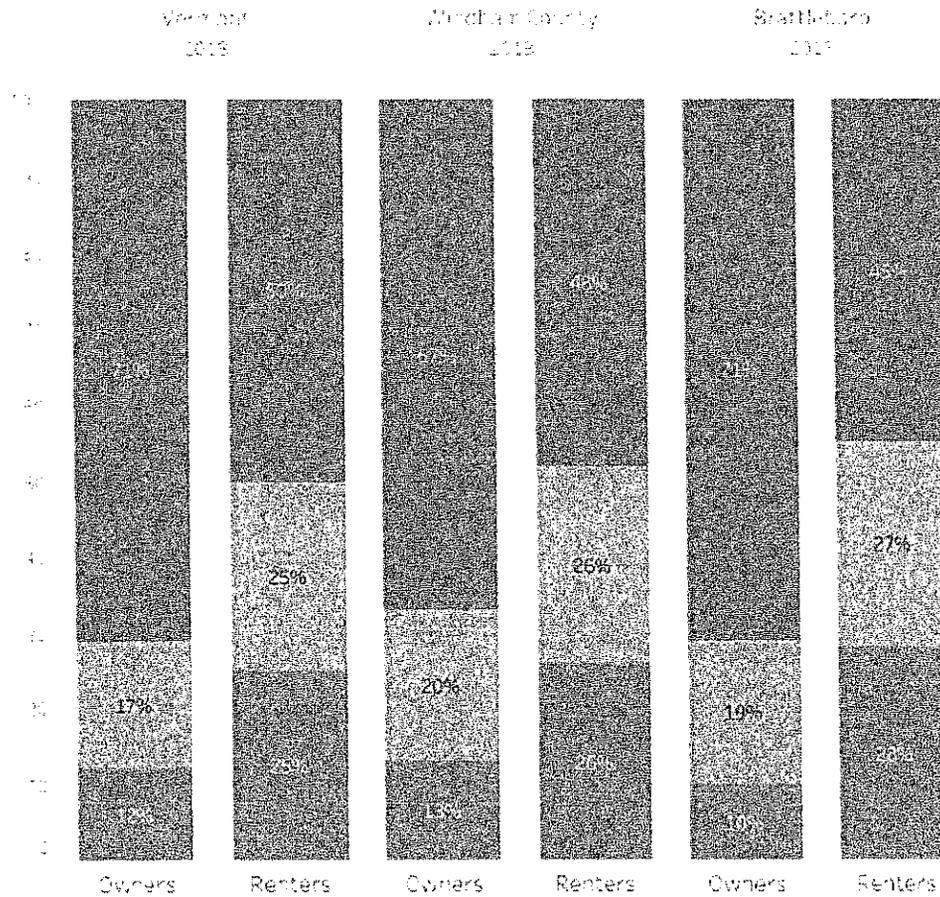
The bars below show households by housing expenses as a percentage of monthly household income. This can include rent, mortgages, real estate taxes, insurances, etc. as well as the monthly costs of utilities. 30% is the federal standard of housing affordability. When households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, it can be difficult to afford other basic necessities such as transportation and healthcare. Households spending more than 30% are considered cost-burdened, and households spending more than 50% are considered severely cost burdened.

Select a view to display:

- % of all households
- Households

Cost burden level

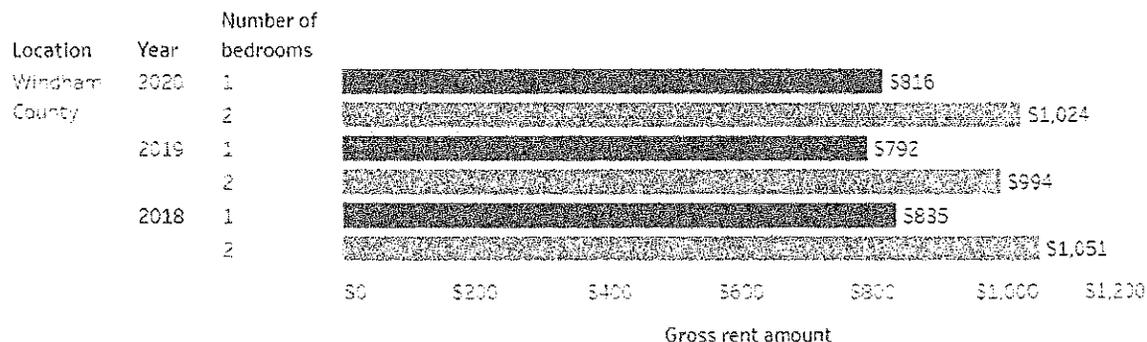
- Paying less than 30% income
- Paying 30-49% income
- Paying 50% income or more



## HUD Fair Market Rent

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

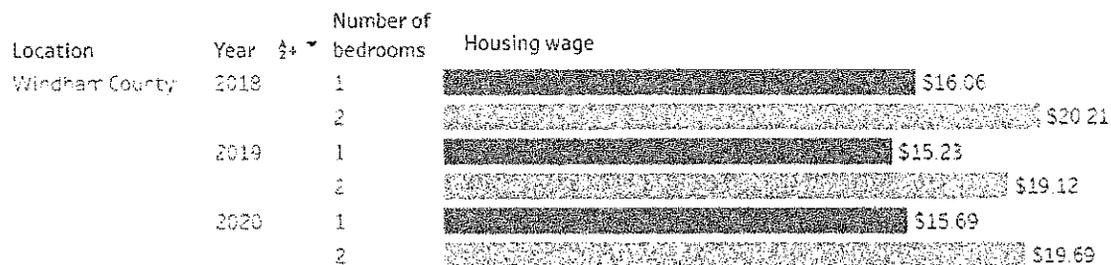
These monthly rental rates are calculated by HUD based on surveys of typical, non-substandard rental units occupied by recent movers in a local housing market. They are the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile of area gross rents.



## Rental Housing Wage

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), Out of Reach Report <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>

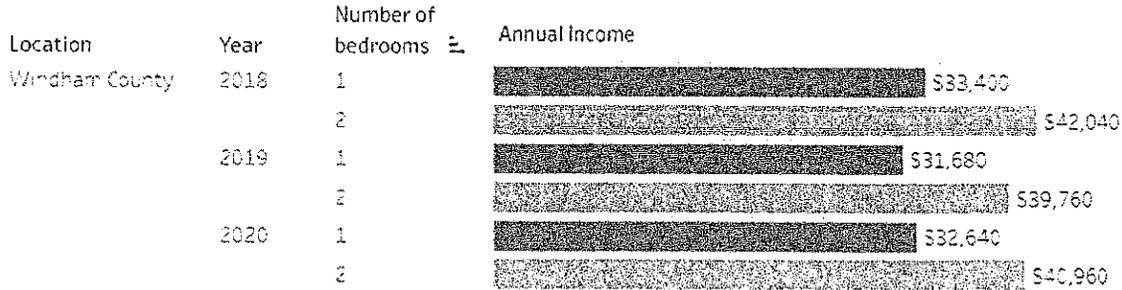
The housing wage is the hourly wage a household must earn while working a minimum of 40 hours a week to afford a rental housing unit a HUD's Fair Market Rent (FMR) and pay no more than 30% of its income towards housing costs.



**Income needed to afford an apartment**

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), Out of Reach Report <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>

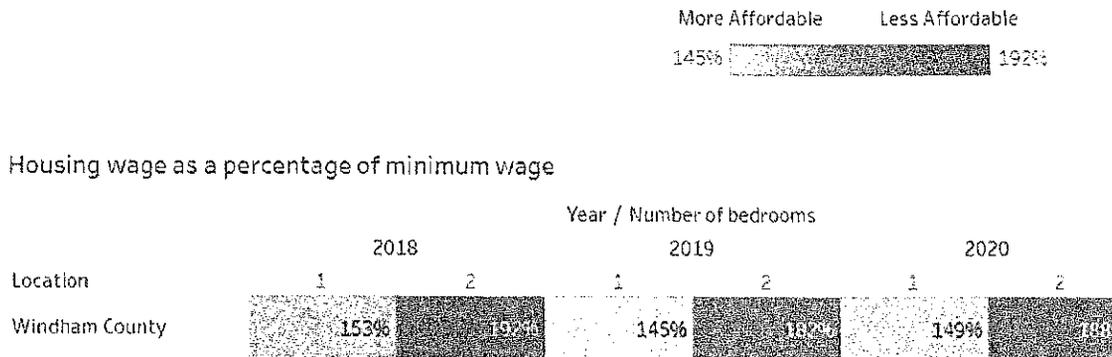
The income needed to afford an apartment at HUD’s FMR is calculated by multiplying the FMR for the number of bedrooms by 12 to get the yearly rental cost and then divide by .30 to determine the total income needed for the unit to be affordable.



**Housing wage as a percentage of minimum wage**

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), Out of Reach Report <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor>

The Housing Wage as a percentage of minimum wage is calculated by dividing the housing wage by Vermont minimum wage and multiplying by 100



**Households receiving assistance**

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

As of February 2020, there were 119 household that received vouchers through the federal Housing Choice Voucher program (Section 8) to subsidize the cost of rent. Vouchers are issued by the public housing agency, Brattleboro Housing Authority, to very-low income households. Households are not restricted to the area covered by the public housing agency that issued the voucher and therefore is able to rent an apartment anywhere in the US where there is a public housing agency that administers a voucher program.

**Apartments by project-based rental assistance source**

Source: Vermont Directory of Affordable Rental Housing

Apartments that have received project-based subsidies are categorized by funding source for rental assistance for tenants. Development may have multiple sources of rental assistance funding. This data is for Brattleboro only.

# of apartment complexes	Total apartments	Total apartments with any types of project based rental assistance	Section 8 project-based assistance	Public housing	Rural Development Section 521	New construction/substantial Rehab
34	854	440	69	283	62	90

August 18, 2020

## Proposal to Adopt Reasonable Limits on Payments and Deposits Required as a Condition for the Rental, Lease, or Occupancy of a Rental Dwelling

### Summary

The Tenants Union of Brattleboro (TUB) is seeking to petition the Brattleboro Selectboard to adopt an ordinance limiting the value of required security deposits. The enormous costs of securing a new place to live is an ever-rising hurdle to housing people in our town. There is no reason to require more than the first month's rent and a "security deposit" equal to that amount before allowing a tenant to move in. The City of Burlington has already voted this basic protection into law, ordinance 18-120 Deposits. We can use the language of this ordinance to adopt this protection here in Brattleboro.

### Background

60% of Brattleboro residents are renters.<sup>1</sup> As anyone who has been houseless, or has houseless friends and family, knows: all that it takes is a momentary loss of income to lose access to housing. When someone inevitably has to move out of their apartment, the often insurmountable challenge of immediately producing the equivalent of 3 or 4 months rent to secure a new residence is one of many factors that keep people chronically unsheltered.

There are a large number of factors that force (particularly low income) people to move and search for new housing. A 2014 survey found that 20% of houseless folks had experienced some kind of domestic abuse; another 20% were children.<sup>2</sup> Though many of these issues are systemic and long-standing, the COVID crisis has further isolated many people in abusive situations, and the "first, last, and security" formula is one more barrier to families leaving abusers behind. These deposit costs inevitably punish the most vulnerable segments of our society.

As of 2019, Vermont's houseless population was decreasing, but there were still severe shortages of spaces in shelters.<sup>3</sup> Of course there has been a spike in unemployment this year, and almost a third of Americans are behind on their rent.<sup>4</sup> With Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, federally subsidized motel vouchers, and the federal eviction moratorium coming to an end, we need to ensure that housing is accessible and affordable for the people who need it.

Access to affordable housing is one of the largest obstacles facing renters today, and though the Coronavirus pandemic has catalyzed many pre-existing issues, we need to treat these issues as long-standing and, without mitigation, persistent. Limiting the cost of required deposits is a simple, immediate, and effective step in this direction.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.towncharts.com/Vermont/Housing/Brattleboro-CDP-VT-Housing-data.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reformer.com/stories/survey-vermont-homeless-population-increases-by-9-percent.350986>

<sup>3</sup> <https://vtdigger.org/2019/11/29/despite-dropping-homeless-population-vermonts-shelters-are-full/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/nearly-a-third-of-u-s-renters-didnt-pay-april-rent-11586340000>

## **Proposed Ordinance**

(adapted from The City of Burlington's ordinance 18-120\*)

### Deposits:

(a) No other payments or deposits beyond the first month's rental payment and the deposit described in this section may be required as a condition of rental, lease or occupancy of a rental unit as a dwelling.

(1) An owner may require a reasonable deposit as a condition for the rental, lease or occupancy of a rental unit as a dwelling as security against damage beyond normal wear and tear to the premises which is attributable to the tenant, against nonpayment of rent, against nonpayment of utility or other charges which the tenant was required to pay directly to the landlord or to a utility, and against expenses required to remove from the rental unit articles abandoned by the tenant. This deposit may not exceed the amount of one month's rent for the unit rented and shall accumulate interest with an interest rate at least equivalent to a current Vermont bank passbook savings account. This deposit shall not be used by the tenant as the last month's rent unless otherwise specified in a written lease agreement between the parties.

\*The language of this ordinance has been edited slightly from the original Burlington text to reflect that it is not legal to limit how security deposits are held, **9 V.S.A. § 4461.g.**

# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

Town Manager's Office · 230 Main Street · Brattleboro, VT 05301  
(802) 251-8151 Fax (802) 257-2322

October 13, 2020

Memo To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
Via: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
Memo From: Patrick Moreland, Assistant Town Manager  
Re: 54/60 South Main Street, Groundworks Collaborative - Accept & Appropriate

**Recommendation 1:** To adopt the Grant Agreement Resolution and to accept and appropriate the sum of \$450,000 from the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) for the 54/60 South Main Street project of Groundworks Collaborative.

**Recommendation 2:** To authorize the Town Manager to execute the Grant Agreement with the State of Vermont, and all other associated documents necessary for the performance of the grant funded activities.

In January of 2019, the Selectboard authorized submission of a grant application to VCDP in the amount of \$500,000 in support of 54/60 South Main Street. The project was initiated by Groundworks Collaborative and is intended to construct a mixed-use facility that will house a new drop-in center, administrative office space and a permanent home for the seasonal overflow shelter. The Selectboard authorized a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from the Town's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) at the time of application. The Town received preliminary notification of a partial grant award in the amount of \$400,000 in April of 2019.

The Town's financial contribution to the project continued to evolve as the timing of the project became increasingly tight, so that the project could to be open in time for winter 2020/2021. The Selectboard committed an additional \$100,000 from the RLF in July of 2019, and then another \$100,000 in March of 2020, raising the Town's overall commitment to the project to \$250,000. The State also agreed to an enhancement request for an additional \$50,000, raising overall VCDP funding to \$450,000. The successive increases in funding all were driven by the need to get construction underway last April.

The initial notification from VCDP contained a standard set of award conditions that included the need to document all other funding commitments, and for the developer to certify that all necessary permits have been secured. Despite all the additional funding noted above, and the fact that the project was initiated in a phased approach beginning in April, it has only recently that final funding for all project elements has been secured.

The Town and Groundworks have now met all necessary award conditions and are ready to proceed.

The grant agreement between the Vermont Community Development Program and the Town of Brattleboro has been reviewed and is recommended for your approval by staff and Town Attorney Bob Fisher.

***Attachments***

State of Vermont Offer of Grant Agreement Dated October 8, 2020

Grant Agreement Resolution, PM-1

Memo from Patrick Moreland Dated January 28, 2019 (54/60 South Main Background)



State of Vermont  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
Deane C. Davis Building -- 6<sup>th</sup> Floor [phone] 802-828-3211  
One National Life Drive  
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

*Agency of Commerce and  
Community Development*

October 8, 2020

Patrick Moreland, Assistant Town Manager  
Town of Brattleboro  
230 Main Street  
Brattleboro VT 05301

RE: 07110-IG-2018-Brattleboro-11; 54/60 South Main Street, Groundworks  
Grant Agreement Offer

Dear Mr. Moreland:

Uploaded for your consideration is the Grant Agreement between the Town of Brattleboro and this Agency. Please review the offer carefully. **Prior to signing the Grant Agreement in the GEARS system your Legislative Body is required to adopt a resolution, Form PM-1. This form states the acceptance and responsibility of the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and designates the person with the overall responsibility and authority to execute all appropriate documents.** If it is satisfactory you need to log into your account in the GEARS system and go to the Grant Agreement and Amendment Documents page of the grant above, upload the signed Grant Agreement Resolution(s), certify, select your name, date and save the page and then change the status of the Grant to "Grant Agreement Accepted" by October 29, 2020. This will have the same legal effect as a hand-written signature.

If the Grant Agreement is not acceptable as offered, please add a note with the suggested changes on the page and change the status of the grant to "Grant Agreement Offer Mods Required". The Agency will review what has been suggested and make the necessary changes and will reoffer the Grant Agreement for you to sign.

Once pushed to "Grant Agreement Accepted" the Commissioner will receive a notification that it has been executed by the Town of Brattleboro and then will fully execute it in the GEARS system. You will receive a notification of this execution.

Before a request for funds can be processed, all requirements and special conditions as stated in the Grant Agreement must be satisfied. It is important to understand that some special conditions may have already been met, and if you have any questions in this regard please contact me. We recommend that you review the requirements set out in the Grants Management Guide, paying particular attention to **the chapter on The Grant Agreement**, and that you review your Grant Agreement carefully for all requirements.



Patrick Moreland, Assistant Town Manager  
October 8, 2020  
Page 2

If you have any questions regarding the Grant Agreement, please contact me by email  
**Nathan.Cleveland@vermont.gov** or by phone at 585-5659.

Sincerely,



Community Development Specialist

NC:cmb

Enclosures

cc: Jon Hoover, Groundworks Collaborative  
Arthur Whitman, Grants Manager



**STATE OF VERMONT GRANT AGREEMENT**

**Part 1 - Grant Award Detail**

**SECTION I - GENERAL GRANT INFORMATION**

<sup>1</sup> Grant #: 07110-IG-2018-Brattleboro-11      <sup>2</sup> Original  Amendment # \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>3</sup> Grant Title: 54/60 South Main Street, Groundworks

<sup>4</sup> Amount Previously Awarded: \$ 0.00      <sup>5</sup> Amount Awarded This Action: \$ 450,000.00      <sup>6</sup> Total Award Amount: \$ 450,000.00

<sup>7</sup> Award Start Date: 4/10/2019, enhanced 4/13/2020      <sup>8</sup> Award End Date: 12/31/2021      <sup>9</sup> Subrecipient Award: YES  NO

<sup>10</sup> Vendor #: 40616      <sup>11</sup> Grantee Name: Town of Brattleboro

<sup>12</sup> Grantee Address: 230 Main Street

<sup>13</sup> City: Brattleboro      <sup>14</sup> State: VT      <sup>15</sup> Zip Code: 05301

<sup>16</sup> State Granting Agency: Agency of Commerce and Community Development-DHCD      <sup>17</sup> Business Unit: 07110

<sup>18</sup> Performance Measures: YES  NO       <sup>19</sup> Match/In-Kind: \$ 3,024,096 Description: See Attachment B - Payment Provisions and Project Budget, 4. Sources and Uses

<sup>20</sup> If this action is an amendment, the following is amended:  
 Amount:  Funding Allocation:  Performance Period:  Scope of Work:  Other:

**SECTION II - SUBRECIPIENT AWARD INFORMATION**

<sup>21</sup> Grantee DUNS #: 073995169      <sup>22</sup> Indirect Rate: N/A      <sup>23</sup> FFATA: YES  NO

<sup>24</sup> Grantee Fiscal Year End Month (MM format): 6/30      (Approved rate or de minimis 10%)      <sup>25</sup> R&D:

<sup>26</sup> DUNS Registered Name (if different than VISION Vendor Name in Box 11):

**SECTION III - FUNDING ALLOCATION**

**STATE FUNDS**

Fund Type	<sup>27</sup> Awarded Previously	<sup>28</sup> Award This Action	<sup>29</sup> Cumulative Award	<sup>30</sup> Special & Other Fund Descriptions
General Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Special Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Global Commitment (non-subrecipient funds)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Other State Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	

**FEDERAL FUNDS**

(includes subrecipient Global Commitment funds)

**Required Federal Award Information**

<sup>31</sup> CFDA #	<sup>32</sup> Program Title	<sup>33</sup> Awarded Previously	<sup>34</sup> Award This Action	<sup>35</sup> Cumulative Award	<sup>36</sup> FAIN	<sup>37</sup> Federal Award Date	<sup>38</sup> Total Federal Award
14.228	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$0.00	\$39,624.00	\$39,624.00	B.18.DC.50.0001	8/21/2019	\$6,920,250.00
<sup>39</sup> Federal Awarding Agency: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)		<sup>40</sup> Federal Award Project Description: CDBG FY19					
14.228	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$0.00	\$408,391.00	\$408,391.00	B.18.DC.50.0001	8/7/2018	\$6,892,861.00
<sup>39</sup> Federal Awarding Agency: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)		<sup>40</sup> Federal Award Project Description: CDBG FY18					
14.228	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$0.00	\$1,985.00	\$1,985.00	B.17.DC.50.0001	9/23/2017	\$6,282,682.00
<sup>39</sup> Federal Awarding Agency: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)		<sup>40</sup> Federal Award Project Description: CDBG FY17					
		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00
<sup>39</sup> Federal Awarding Agency:		<sup>40</sup> Federal Award Project Description:					
<b>Total Awarded - All Funds</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$450,000.00</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>			

**SECTION IV - CONTACT INFORMATION**

STATE GRANTING AGENCY	GRANTEE
NAME: Nathan Cleveland	NAME: Patrick Moreland
TITLE: Community Development Specialist	TITLE: Assistant Town Manager
PHONE: 802-585-5659	PHONE: 802-251-8101
EMAIL: Nathan.Cleveland@vermont.gov	EMAIL: pmoreland@brattleboro.org

## GRANT AGREEMENT # 07110-IG-2018-BRATTLEBORO-11

1. **Parties:** This is a Grant Agreement between State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (hereinafter called "State" or "Agency") and Town of Brattleboro with principal place of business at 230 Main Street, Brattleboro VT 05301 (hereinafter called "Grantee"). It is the grantee's responsibility to contact the Vermont Department of Taxes to determine if, by law, the grantee is required to have a Vermont Department of Taxes Business Account Number. The grantee is required by law to have a Federal ID# and it is 036000393.
2. **Subject Matter:** The subject matter of this Grant Agreement is Community Development Block Grant.
3. **Award Details:** Amounts, dates and other award details are as shown in the attached *Grant Agreement Part 1-Grant Award Detail*. A detailed scope of work covered by this award is described in Attachment A.
4. **Amendment:** No changes, modifications, or amendments in the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement shall be effective unless reduced to writing, numbered, and signed by the duly authorized representative of the State and Grantee.
5. **Cancellation:** This Grant Agreement may be suspended or cancelled by either party by giving written notice at least 30 days in advance.
6. **Attachments:** This Grant consists of 29 pages including the following attachments that are incorporated herein:
  - Attachment A – Scope of Work to Be Performed and Special Conditions
  - Attachment B – Payment Provisions and Project Budget
  - Attachment C – Customary State Grant Provisions
  - Attachment D – Other Provisions (CDBG Standard Provisions)
  - Attachment E – Certifications

**NOTE:** Signatures blocks have been omitted because document will use e-signing technology in lieu of signatures.

**GRANT AGREEMENT RESOLUTION - SINGLE GRANTEE**

**Form PM-1**

**WHEREAS**, the (check one)  Town  City  Village of Brattleboro  
has applied for funding under the Vermont Community Development Program, as provided for in 10  
VSA Ch. 29, and has received an award of funds under said provisions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development has tendered a Grant  
Agreement  
# IG-2018-Brattleboro-11 to this municipality for said funding:

**Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:**

- 1) that the legislative body of this municipality accepts and agrees to the terms and conditions of said Grant Agreement;
- 2) that (Name) Patrick Moreland Title Assistant Town Manager  
is hereby designated as the person with overall Administrative responsibility for the VCDP activities related to this Grant Agreement; and
- 3) that (Name) Peter B. Elwell Title Town Manager  
who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or is the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, hereby designated as the Authorizing Official (AO) to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

Passed this 20th day of October 2020.

**LEGISLATIVE BODY**

(Typed Name)	(Signature)
Tim Wessel, Chair	
_____ Elizabeth McLoughlin, Vice Chair	_____
_____ Ian Goodnow, Clerk	_____
_____ Brandie Starr	_____
_____ Daniel Quipp	_____

**For Agency Use:**

Processed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

Town Manager's Office · 230 Main Street · Brattleboro, VT 05301  
(802) 251-8151 Fax (802) 257-2322

January 28, 2019

Memo To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
Via: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
Memo From: Patrick Moreland, Assistant Town Manager  
Re: VCDP Application, Groundworks Resource Center

**Recommendation 1:** The board is asked to hold a public hearing and to approve an application to the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) for an Implementation Grant for Groundworks Collaborative in the amount of \$500,000 for the Groundworks Housing Resource Center project.

**Recommendation 2:** The board is asked to adopt the resolution from the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) for grant application authority, to identify Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland as the Contact Person and to identify Town Manager Peter Elwell as the Authorizing Official.

**Recommendation 3:** The board is asked to approve a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from Program Income to Groundworks Collaborative in support of the Groundworks Housing Resource Center project.

## ***Project Background:***

Groundworks Collaborative has operated a year round shelter at 81 Royal Road in Brattleboro serving the region's homeless population for 39 years. When the Brattleboro Area Drop-In Center and Morningside Shelter merged in June 2015 to form Groundworks Collaborative, Groundworks assumed responsibility for operating the existing Drop-In Center at 60 S. Main Street as well as the seasonal overflow shelter that had operated in leased space since 2006. It was apparent, following the merger, that expanded and permanent space for a seasonal overflow shelter was an immediate and strategic need for the newly formed organization. Groundworks lost the long-time leased space for the seasonal overflow shelter at the Baptist Church on Main Street two years ago and has been temporarily leasing space from the Winston Prouty Center on the campus of the former Austine School. This solution is understood by all parties to be temporary, as the search for a permanent solution continues.

What is needed is a consolidated, multi-use facility: a drop-in center, seasonal overflow shelter, and office space for Groundworks administrative and program staff. One expanded and unified facility will allow Groundworks to meet ever-increasing demand, as well as to provide a spatially cohesive program of shelter and supportive services for the homeless population in the region.

To that end, Groundworks is planning a \$3.1 million effort to purchase 54 South Main Street, the property immediately adjacent to Groundworks' current Drop-In Center, and construct a new

building in its place that will connect to a newly renovated Drop In Center at 60 South Main. The project will create a campus at 54-60 South Main Street, large enough to provide a permanent home for Brattleboro's Seasonal Overflow Shelter, Groundworks' Day Shelter/Drop-In Center, and space to consolidate program and administrative offices into a single location. Currently, program and administrative offices are spread across multiple locations in Brattleboro, proving inefficient and costly for Groundworks' operations.

The campus at South Main Street will house the Seasonal Overflow Shelter and Groundworks Drop-In Center / Day Shelter. This will enable Groundworks to permanently site the Seasonal Overflow Shelter. The plan will also create an additional 4 shelter beds at Groundworks Shelter (81 Royal Road) by relocating the administrative offices to the new South Main Street campus. The expanded facilities will provide adequate restrooms showers, laundry facilities, and lockers for clients to store personal belongings and provide enough space for confidential counseling and case management services. Current service collaborations include partners such as the Brattleboro Retreat, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, and Health Care & Rehabilitative Services (HCRS). This project will result in appropriately sited programs for improved access and program efficiency throughout Groundworks Collaborative—allowing members of our community to get their basic needs met with dignity.

***Project Need:***

Groundworks Collaborative serves a critical need in our community by providing overnight seasonal shelter for adults experiencing homelessness, however Brattleboro's Seasonal Overflow Shelter (SOS) currently has no permanent home and has been forced to make a series of difficult shelter relocations and short term lease engagements. The SOS served 154 unduplicated individuals in the 2016/2017 season (making it the highest-utilized warming shelter in the state of Vermont that year) and 155 in the winter of 2017/2018. In the current season (2018/2019), which began November 12, 2018, the SOS is already seeing a record increase in nights at or over our 33-bed capacity. By the end of the first week, the SOS sheltered 35 individuals. Since that first week, the SOS has consistently sheltered 30 or more individuals each night and as many as 36 on multiple nights

In January 2018, 112 individuals in 84 households were homeless in Windham County on the night of the annual Point-In-Time Count. Of the 84 households counted, 70 were adult individuals without children. Over half (46 out of the 84 households counted in Windham County) were experiencing homelessness for the first time. Statewide, the numbers of people experiencing homelessness have been on an upward trend since 2016.

Citizens experiencing homelessness face threats of frostbite, pneumonia, and even death as a result of exposure to the elements, making emergency shelter necessary both day and night. Groundworks Drop-In Center is intended to be a space where homeless members of our community can feel a sense of belonging. Once the basic need of shelter has been met, the staff at Groundworks, along with other community partners, can begin to forge a plan for sustainable long term housing.

**Project Budget & Brattleboro's Contribution**

The overall project budget is \$3,167,000 and includes the acquisition, demolition and new construction at 54 South Main Street, along with the rehabilitation of the existing day shelter at 60 South Main Street, along with all other ancillary program management expenses (architecture, engineering, permitting, operating reserves, etc.). Funding will come through a combination of private fundraising, a capital campaign, foundation grants, Efficiency Vermont, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Town of Brattleboro and an Implementation Grant from the Vermont Community Development Program.

Groundworks Resource Center		
Capital Campaign	\$ 2,000,000.00	63%
Efficiency Vermont	\$ 30,000.00	1%
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board	\$ 335,000.00	11%
Private Grants	\$ 250,000.00	8%
VCDP	\$ 500,000.00	16%
Municipal Contribution In Kind	\$ 2,000.00	0%
Municipal Contribution Cash	\$ 50,000.00	2%
	\$ 3,167,000.00	
Public Facility Rehabilitation	\$ 188,200.00	6%
Public Facility New Construction	\$ 1,975,594.00	62%
Program Management	\$ 938,206.00	30%
General Adminsitration	\$ 2,000.00	0%
Acquisition Real Property	\$ 63,000.00	2%
	\$ 3,167,000.00	

The request from Vermont Community Development Program is \$500,000, and staff is recommending that the Town of Brattleboro match this request with a grant of \$50,000 from Program Income. Staff is also recommending that the Town contribute its General Administrative expense, estimated at \$2,000, as an in kind contribution.

# A Status Update on Brattleboro's Sustainability Work

10/15/2020

By: Stephen Dotson

Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Brattleboro

## How I have come to define “sustainability” for this role:

***“Sustainability” means that Brattleboro becomes more livable, for longer, for everyone.***

How do we do that? By building more resilient, just, and regenerative relationships.

What is the opposite of “sustainability”? **Ongoing upheaval and disruption** of life’s quality.

## Leadership style, approach, and key concepts

- I practice **servant leadership**, which is about articulating the consensus of a group, serving to identify options and research the pros/cons, not seeking to be the advocate or champion for any one group or concept, nor thinking of one’s self as the great visionary or deciding voice in any way.
- **Keen on developing leadership and engagement in the community**, building new and stronger relationships to enable more effective work and greater collective impact.
- **Building community consensus on the priorities within the broad world of “sustainability”**
  - The role of servant leadership in building that consensus and mobilizing community
  - Justice and equity must be present in all aspects of sustainability as a prerequisite
- **Resiliency** is a key concept to approach sustainability through because it implicitly considers inequities, and acknowledges a need for action to strengthen everyone by protecting the most vulnerable, without unnecessary debate over the root causes of disruption.
- **Relocalization** is fundamental to addressing climate and resiliency, and where our greatest ability to impact lies.
- **Regeneration** is a key concept. Maintaining a “business-as-usual” approach is unsustainable. We must be regenerative and incentivize the ongoing improvement of the fundamental resources and systems we rely on for critical needs. If we fail to, we’re ultimately only stirring up more eventual, and greater, disruption for ourselves, and the rest of the biosphere.
- **Systems theory**, social theory, social change, systems change:

*“You never change things by fighting the existing reality.*

*To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”*

*- Buckminster Fuller*

## The nature of being one person, and specifically a “coordinator” (not director, officer, czar, etc.)

- The Town was clear it wanted a coordinator, not a director or officer. I resonate with that, considering the nature of our community and the resources, both human and financial, that I have to work with.
- It is a **mandate to collaborate**. I’m not able to single-handedly champion a single program or cause without it consuming too much time for other required work across a broad spectrum.
- Most of all: it relies on **being responsive to the community’s needs and recognizing the energy offered for organizing** into better relationships.

- Seeking to be a **catalyst, a bridge, a backbone, the connective tissue, the additional capacity** to enable the community to capitalize on an opportunity at a critical moment, when it would otherwise just be concerned about keeping the ship afloat. **A neutral facilitator and convener, able to test and research feasibility of new opportunities** for those who wish they could, etc.
- Simultaneously: **address the core energy and conservation issues and savings opportunities that are standard in municipal sustainability work across all departments and aspects of Town government.**

## How does this position fit into the other parts of Town government?

### Internal Town relationships

- Member of Leadership Team - meeting twice weekly, with Town Manager and Department Heads
- Departmental work - site visits, consulting on special projects with energy/sustainability potential
- Committee relationships:
  - Energy Committee - staff, provide more energy to than any of the others. More details to come...
  - Agricultural Advisory Committee - will staff once it begins meeting again. Needs to find new purpose for funds associated with the committee.
  - Conservation Commission - participate as needed or requested to advise on land use and conservation. In this work I will bring a special concern for carbon-sequestration through improved conservation and management approaches.
  - Planning Commission - participate as needed or requested to integrate a sustainability perspective into larger planning decisions and processes.
  - Tree Committee - participate as requested
  - Hazard Mitigation Committee - will participate, haven't yet, will bring a concern for equity issues at play in who still lives in the floodplain and protecting historic buildings and resources.

### Regular reporting, advancing towards sustainability-informed Town Planning

- Monthly Planning Department reports to the Select Board with updates from the Sustainability Coordinator
- Annual Energy Report every spring from Energy Committee with the Sustainability Coordinator in support
- Annual Sustainability Report every fall from the Sustainability Coordinator
- Community Sustainability Prioritization survey and multi-committee/commission huddle every winter
- Eventually: determining a framework and process that ultimately integrates sustainability into all aspects of the Town Planning process.
  - Examining LEED for Cities, the Eco-Municipality process, Transition Town tools, and other available resources from networks (such as Local Governments for Sustainability - ICLEI, the Northeast Municipal Sustainability network - NEMS, American Planners Association - APA, Vermont League of Cities and Towns - VLCT, Vermont Council on Rural Development - VCRD, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network - USDN, and more) for facilitating comprehensive community sustainability assessment and planning.
  - Prerequisite: gathering data, establishing metrics, performing an initial assessment of the Town.

## What has happened since I started in this position, and since COVID struck?

February - 2/4/2020 was my first day on the job, and the initial aspirations and efforts looked like this:

- Organizing with the Energy Committee and make a determination on the “Cow Power” proposal.
- Begin visiting different departments to orient to their work and goals, starting with Public Works.
- Engage and join numerous networks and groups related to the work, join the community of practice and expertise related to the field of municipal sustainability.
- Continue National Park Service technical assistance grant to strengthen and interconnect trail systems across Brattleboro
- Planning a tool library and repair cafes with Brooks Memorial Library and Brattleboro Time Trade.
- Introducing myself to various organizations and leaders around town who have connections to my work.
- Plan for collecting energy data and other metrics for a new energy report
  - First across Town government, and then across the wider community footprint.
- Assess frameworks for certification and processes for community consensus-building around sustainability.

**COVID comes:** *The needs and priorities of our community shifted dramatically, and my role has been to shift with it and work to support the emerging solutions to the unique challenges this crisis has presented us.*

3/5 - Town holds first Coronavirus training/information session for first responders on how to approach COVID.

3/13 - I'm pulled into the first conversation about COVID-related support the local economy as lockdown looms.

3/19 - Vermont's first 2 COVID deaths, and everything starts to shutdown.

3/23 - Schools closed, businesses closed, and Stay Home, Stay Safe order is given for full-lockdown.

3/23-30 - Toilet paper is hoarded, shelves are emptied, and it becomes painfully clear we don't have enough PPE if there's a spike.

**Well, we all need masks now.**

- 4/1 I connect with **Jen Batty** and begin a 2-week sprint to enable community mask-making, safely, and at scale.
  - Helped create a website, newsletter, downtown depots, social media outreach and organizing, supply chain and donated materials coordination. Courtney Carey of Brooks Memorial Library was highly appreciated for her efforts in creating a website, newsletter, and outreach on social media.
- **I don't know how to sew, I'm a logistics guy**, so I was the gopher while others were locked-down. At one point I was distributing sewing machines to people who didn't have them, but were desperate to use them, and distributing quilter's cotton & medical-grade elastic (generously donated by Fulflex) by the lbs. to whomever needed it (though some preferred other types of elastic).
- **Jen and her team deserve the highest praise and even more support from the community.** Their work continues for all our sake, and is especially **important to the schools right now**. Please find them on Facebook, the group's name is “Sewing Masks - So VT/SW NH Area” and support them in whatever way feels best. In my mind, they deserve a monument for their collective response to this unprecedented situation. **300+ members, 16,000 masks sewn and still going.**

**We need greater connection and communication during lockdown.**

- **Worked with the Windham Regional Commission** on development of a comprehensive community resource document that would help the public access the critical services and resources they needed in the greater Brattleboro/Windham region.
- **Coordinated with Vermont Council for Rural Development, Vermont Natural Resource Council, the Vermont Energy Coordination Action Network, and others in state-wide response networks** to share ideas and approaches and generally, have a support network for crisis-oriented work.
- **Engaged with Brattleboro Area Mutual Aid, Groundworks/Foodworks, Windsor Windham Housing Trust, United Way, first-line workplaces, and others to help form new local community working relationships.** These were critical new collaborations for community cohesion at the very beginning. I recruited neighborhood leaders for the mutual aid districts that were created across Brattleboro and facilitated these neighborhood districts becoming a mapping layer in the Town's GIS system for use in the future. Helped new emerging/informal networks connect with established organizations.
  - **Example of community in action:** through April, my phone line was receiving distress calls, such as one from distant family members who couldn't locate a relative with dementia, who lived downtown in Brattleboro, and could be locked-out of their home during the lockdown. Responding to these needs brought together new networks and old. It would be hard to overstate the value provided to the community through the combined efforts of Brattleboro Area Mutual Aid, Groundworks, WWHT, Windham Regional Commission, and many others.
  - The importance of having a **neighborhood-level response capability, and communication network to coordinate thru during disruptions, is something I can't emphasize enough. We can and must continue to build on the great work we've begun in this area.**

**We need food. Food insecurity quadrupled during COVID, remains high, and is likely under-reported.**

- **The recently revived Town's Agricultural Advisory Committee** has an important role to play moving forward. It was around this time that Sue and I committed to re-launching it with a new focus and I started actively recruiting for potential members.
- **Organized an action team, the Community Food Farm Action Team (CFFAT or "see-fat"),** to coordinate the various efforts related to the community food system and growing food in Brattleboro. This shared effort to support the community's gardening through **the Growing Resilience initiative** resulted in a number of collaborations:
  - A community gardening supply depot at Rich Earth Institute housed reclaimed materials from Deconstruction Works that generated new community gardens by Edible Brattleboro/NECCA/the Root, a new community hoop-house at Retreat Farm, tons of free seeds and starts given to the community, seed-saving and canning workshops, a few small grants for the organizations involved, increased charitable food distribution and donation, increased support for the school garden programs, a windowsill family gardening program, and more.
- **Provided a backbone to collaborate, served as storyteller.** I led the creation of a collectively-published op-ed, website, educational resources, yard signs, printing support, and connected with an existing Facebook group dedicated to Brattleboro Gardening for outreach, whose admins enthusiastically joined in support.
- **Example of equity work as a part of sustainability:** CFFAT felt it necessary to include land acknowledgement language, articulating the connection between the land, the food, our traditions, and all the people who have lived here and still live here today. **This land acknowledgement language has been approved by the Town Manager and is included on the back of the yard signs for Growing Resilience.** It has since been drawn on by

other groups for similar purposes. It was developed in partnership with Rich Holschuh, who serves as a local liaison to the Abenaki community. I am grateful to Rich for his generous contributions of time and energy.

- *"We acknowledge the Indigenous People of this place, the Abenaki, their ancestors and allies, who have cared for this land for many generations and continue to do so. Their relationship with their homelands calls us to learn to be better caretakers of the land ourselves, and we recognize that this region's food traditions are founded upon both their example and their dispossession. We look forward to working together with the Land and all of its People, with healing restoration, returning our respects to past, present, and future generations. We honor with gratitude this land and all of its gifts."*

- **This initiative wasn't just about gardening or food**, it was about mental health, connection, contribution, reminders of self-reliance, passing on skills to new generations, and providing a shared story to participate in together, while being so forced apart. It also forged new working relationships between organizations in ways that have felt life-giving and exciting.

**Everyone needs to get outside RIGHT NOW and do something that feels useful and healthy.**

- The increased interest in outdoor recreation and trail use due to COVID was drastic. Everyone needed space to spread out, support mental health, and our area became a destination for others to spread out as well.
- This accelerated my work with **the National Park Service and the "Furthering Connecting Brattleboro" technical assistance grant**, to create a more connected town, less divided by geography, with improved trails, more traversable on foot. The following efforts are currently being supported by this grant:
  - **The River Connector Rail Trail Effort** - working in conjunction with Friends of the West River Trail, United States Department of Agriculture, the Monadnock Regional Rail Trail Coalition, and others to establish a bikeable path alongside the rail line that runs between the Hinsdale Bridge and Veterans Bridge on Rt. 5 at the confluence of the Connecticut and West Rivers.
  - **Delta campus - Winston-Prouty - Living Memorial Park Interconnection** - NPS has funded a small assessment and scoping for a bikeable trail to connect the Delta and Winston-Prouty campuses, there are also opportunities and established right-of-ways to build upon that could further connect these campuses to Hilltop Montessori School and Living Memorial Park.
  - **Retreat Farm, the Abenaki, and formalizing the Meadows' Trail** - Retreat Farm has worked diligently with the local Abenaki community to reclaim the Meadows' full history and significance to our community. NPS is working to build on this work by inviting an application from Retreat Farm to pursue an initial opportunity and needs assessment, including cultural and technical aspects, on a portion of the informal trail on the southwest side of the Meadows. This is in support of a larger ongoing effort led by Retreat Farm.
  - Overall supporting **trail assessment and cataloging improvements into future work projects** that could be tackled by the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) or other such groups sometime in the future.

**School MUST HAPPEN.** Nothing else can really happen if school doesn't happen safely.

- **Met with school board members as well as the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union's Climate Crisis Task Force** to explore how I may be able to support the schools.
- Assessing and developing opportunities for more **outdoor gathering spaces**:
  - Potential for 805 Western Ave. to become a public gathering space/permaculture garden
  - 250 Birge St. as a potential eco-classroom, gathering space
  - Oak Grove School's Wangari Mathaai tree & social justice classroom/gathering space

- **Winter = everyone comes indoors**, density increases, and the need shifts from finding outdoor spaces to finding and utilizing alternative indoor gathering spaces in the community.
  - Aspiring with Starr Latronica and Brooke Memorial Library to **establish a central system for “checking-out” under-used in-door gathering spaces** in the community to support schools, public meetings, and other such needs.

**The Energy Committee has never stopped working.** In fact, many of the members became organizers in other networks in response to COVID and the committee meetings became a new hub of interconnection and news sharing for community resilience.

- **Continuing work on Cow Power/carbon offsets**, but ran into the question: “what exactly is our goal?”
  - Pursuing carbon neutrality?
  - Investing in local/Vermont-based renewable energy generation?
  - If offsets are to be purchased, what are the offsets meant to cover, the organizational Town footprint, or the community-wide footprint?
  - Collaborating with the Conservation Commission to explore the potential for carbon sequestration in our own Town and community forests, rather than purchasing carbon credits from the improvement of forests elsewhere.
- **The Committee’s upcoming Carbon Neutrality timeline proposal**
  - Next big step: determining goal w/year target.
    - Existing 2002 Town resolution to “reduce emissions” and pursue neutrality (eventually) as part of ICLEI’s Climate Cities Program (see Appendix D), no year target.
    - Upcoming Carbon Neutrality Roadmap Proposal at future select board meeting
- **Building engagement with the committee** by trying to cultivate diverse elements of Brattleboro’s community (youth, BIPOC, LGBTQ, activists, etc.).
  - Now have Django Grace as a member, and are consulting with Youth Services/Building a Positive Community for guidance and support in assuring his successful participation.
- Currently **working to generate a 2020 Energy Report & Status Update** to update the 2012 Energy Audit (and 2016 update) to identify the remaining items to pursue and next steps
  - AmeriCorps service member to conduct lighting, propane, and thermostat audits this winter.
- **Energy communications to grow and increase**, supported by AmeriCorps service member
- I facilitated a number of meetings between our energy committee members and members/chairs of other Energy Committee members across both Bennington and Windham Counties, we continue to stay connected in order to identify opportunities that we could tackle collectively.

**Projects, efforts and collaborations in motion for the coming year:**

- AmeriCorps service member: this is where most of my position’s \$10,000 budget is going.
  - This position will support: the community sustainability prioritization survey; a thermostat, lighting, and propane audit and analysis; a natural resource inventory with carbon management in mind; tool library creation and development; trail assessment; support for the charitable food system; and educating the public on opportunities and insights related to all these sectors.
- Creating a community seed & tool library: partnering with Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro Time Trade, possibly Rich Earth Institute, and others.
- Continuation of NPS technical assistance grant work.

- Food systems work: farms, gardens, restaurants, the charitable food system, and more. Working with the newly reformed Ag. Advisory committee. Another garden initiative in the spring. Developing tools and identifying opportunities for greater food sovereignty, security, and system resilience, regionally.
- Exploring creative supports for the regional economy: local currency? Re-use of storefronts for new purposes?
- Natural resources inventorying, with carbon management in mind
- Preparing for a comprehensive Town GHG inventory and new Energy Report
- Determining a process and assessment framework to use for comprehensive sustainability planning

### **Always testing feasibility of new opportunities**

- The graveyard of good ideas, or **ideas I've tested that aren't viable at this time:**
  - Thermal energy storage opportunities, hydropower generated from the gravity drop and pressure within the Town's reservoir supply, applications of Rich Earth composting toilets for managing public sanitation, Windowdressers community window-insert program, creating an internship-funding program for sustainability-related nonprofits in the region, establishing a community wood bank to help with heating needs, facilitating rooftop solar for Brattleboro's schools, having gardeners grow produce for restaurants to use in the Everyone Eats! Program, creating a local conservation corps, and finding conservation and cost-savings applications for our municipally-generated compost.
    - This aspect of my work won't pop-up as much in the monthly reports to the Select Board, which focus on the concrete accomplishments instead of looking into possibilities.

### **In Closing**

**What? I didn't hear about that!** My single recommendation on spending to enable success in Brattleboro's sustainability, is to **budget and plan for upgraded Town communications and work to ensure equitable public access** and awareness of the Town's activities, in whatever ways are needed. We must improve access to the internet and devices in our community, and improve the systems we offer people to engage the public process. The Town needs a new website and other tools, and the realities of COVID have made digital access in the wider community a serious equity issue. We must ensure that all Brattleboro residents are able to access and participate in the community discussions that shape their futures, and that's become more difficult post-COVID.

**There is a mandate to further define what Brattleboro means when it thinks of a sustainable future.** There are trade-offs and priorities that must be considered, and this process would serve as a systematic way to approach these questions and develop a consensus that will enable us to move forward with confidence and effectiveness. I will be here to point out the paths open to us, and the associated benefits and costs, but we choose our destiny together. Increased involvement on the Town's committees and governance is critical to achieving a sustainable future and having these discussions and ensuring that our local government is serving the long-term interests of everyone, with the quality of life we desire. The Planning Department will be sending out a survey to receive input on the different priorities within sustainability, and we encourage as many people to participate and make their voice known.

**When it really gets hard, we're the only ones who are here to take care of each other.** Recently we've seen how the system won't take care of us on it's own, we will only take care of each other, in the long run. The examples were abundant. We are home to the nation's largest food distributor, but our shelves went empty. We are home to a regional manufacturer of medical-grade elastic, used in PPE, but we experienced a shortage of PPE in our most vulnerable areas. I

live down the street from a paper plant that manufactures toilet tissue, but we all know what happened. We saw very starkly how global supply chains and the business models of our manufacturing/distribution companies couldn't respond quickly enough to the most severe disruption and threat we have faced in generations. It isn't the fault of any specific company, it's a flaw in the system that we see very clearly right now.

In response, **the world is waking-up to the reality of needing to relocalize, protect, and regenerate vital community resources, especially the food and health systems.** This is one area where Brattleboro is especially rich in resources to take its own destiny in its hands, and work to be able to do more for itself to be resilient in the face of disruption, whatever form it may take. The frames of relocalization, resiliency, and regeneration enable us to **pursue an intersectional approach.** Such approaches have been modeled by efforts like Project Drawdown (<https://drawdown.org/>) which ranks the top 100 intersecting solutions that most effectively address climate change. We are analyzing this research to assess which of these solutions we, as a rural Town, have the greatest ability to influence with our limited resources. These same steps would also serve to protect our quality of life from other non-climate disruptions, such as another COVID-like pandemic, a solar flare event, or a cyber attack.

**The work of this position has only been successful because of the tremendous community we are a part of,** not the result of my energy. I am privileged to play storyteller and enabler for so many passionate and committed community members and organizations. I don't have time to express my gratitude appropriately and recognize each person who I've had the pleasure of working with, but thank you, thank you, thank you. This work only succeeds because of teamwork.

This past 8 months has proven to me that **there's nowhere else I would rather be,** and no other community I'd rather serve. I have tremendous faith in Brattleboro and **thank you for this opportunity, because I feel I was dealt a winning hand.** We are uniquely positioned to address these challenges and build a more sustainable Brattleboro together, but it will come by **weighing the costs and benefits** of pursuing certain opportunities first, learning to connect and communicate in new ways to build trusting, resilient relationships, and carefully decide **what investments will serve in maintaining a high quality of life for ALL of our community.**

**The community priorities survey and multi-committee huddle will be the next steps in this process.**

## APPENDIX A - Town Goals Related to Sustainability

The goals were pulled, verbatim, from the Brattleboro Town Plan by Tom Franks, as possibly relating to the sustainability coordinator position, when first conceiving of this position:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GGE) 40% from 1990 levels by 2030
  - This is impossible to determine because no one was around to record the 1990 emission level, we are left approximating wildly.
- 25x25 – 25 percent “in-state” renewables supply for all energy and 25 percent of homes made efficient by 2025.
  - Due to the nature of the electric grid and utility structure, it is very difficult to determine with certainty that one is supporting “in-state” renewables, and there are few options to choose from that have a direct, verifiable impact in this way. Additionally, hydropower and biomass are considered renewable by the state, but have valid critiques to consider as to why they shouldn’t be.
  - What would constitute a home being “efficient” is not listed in the plan, and is relative to the performance of the housing stock around it, and the technology of the day. We need to determine some sort of criteria to pursue this, otherwise it’s a vague goal without a target that we can identify.
    - The energy committee is actively working to further clarify our commitments and reframe these goals in better language, with a timeline for achieving them.
- Measure municipal energy use
  - Note: doesn’t say “manage” or “reduce”!
- Foster sustainable development
- Assist energy consumers to make the most informed choices.
- Support community efforts to strengthen the food system
- Promote healthy and safe school environments
- Promote energy efficiency in housing, both new and existing stock.
- Develop standards to promote solar energy access and community solar
- Make roads safe for all traffic (particularly pedestrians and bicycles)
- Improve bicycle infrastructure and perform bike/ped audits
- Promote alternatives to single-occupant vehicles, increase walkability
- Reduce waste generation and provide environmentally sound waste disposal opportunities
- Restrict light pollution
- Assist in strategizing around stormwater management, provide the highest degree of flood protection
- Foster a well-organized, cohesive community that functions efficiently.
- Educate residents, visitors and town personnel regarding invasive species.
- Conduct a “Natural resources inventory”
- Support land-use that promotes public health, safety against floods, ensures the viability of agricultural and forestry economies, protects natural resources, promotes transportation accessibility, and reinforces compact development.

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# REPORT CAMPAIGN SUCCESS JAN 1 - OCT 1

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## LOVE Brattleboro VT Campaign 2020

Jan 1 - Mar 4, 2020: Roll-out

Mar 5 - June 24, 2020: Campaign Pause (social media only)

June 25 - Oct 1, 2020: Revised Covid-Conscious Plan

Prepared for  
Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce  
Downtown Brattleboro Alliance  
LOVE Brattleboro VT Steering Committee  
Brattleboro Selectboard

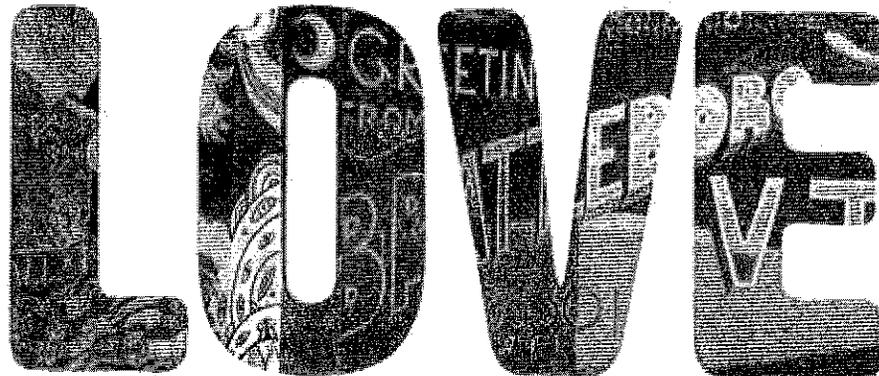
Report Start  
**01.01.2020**

Report End  
**10.01.2020**

# LOVE Brattleboro VT - Campaign Report

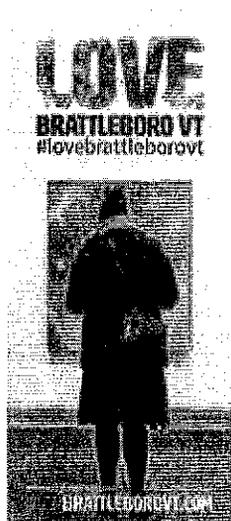
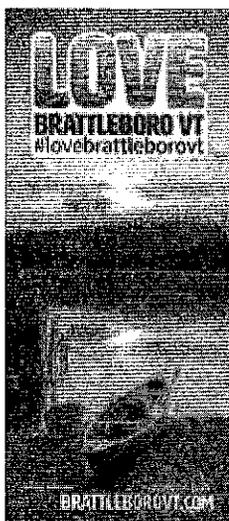
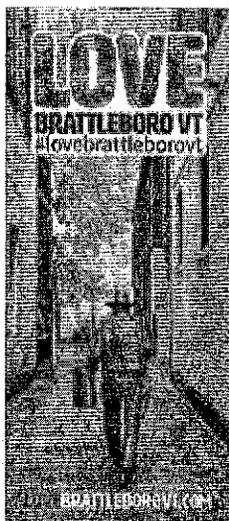
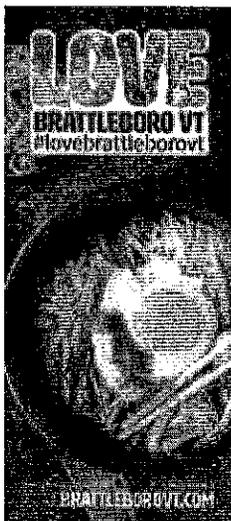
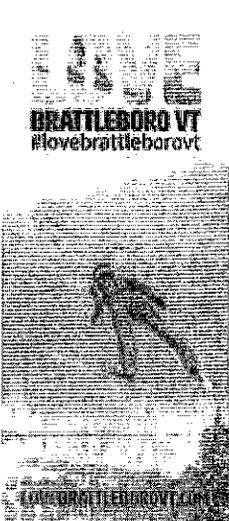
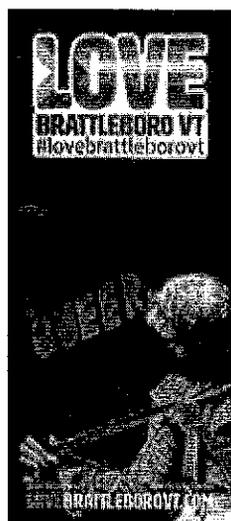
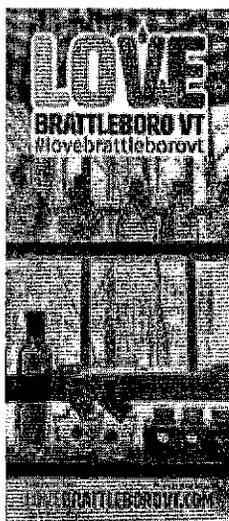
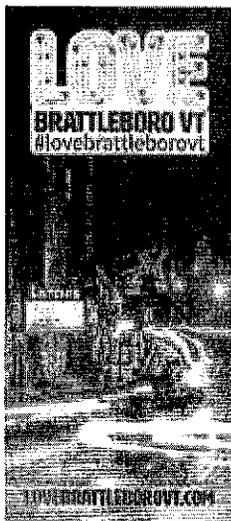
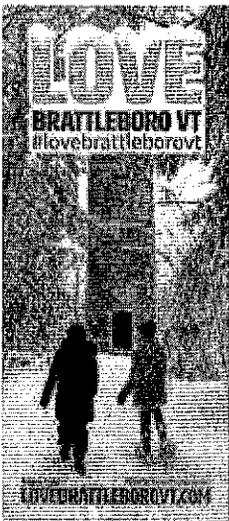
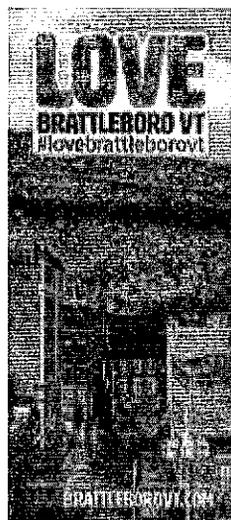
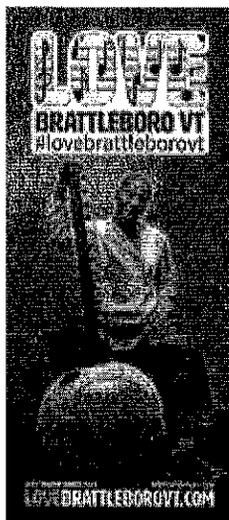
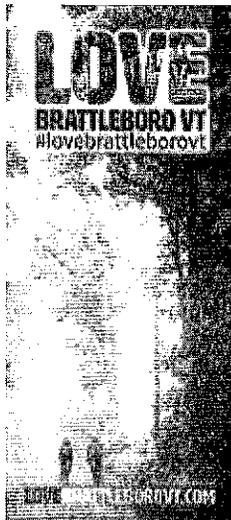
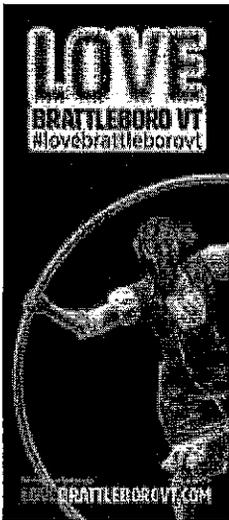
## Table of Contents

Campaign Executive Summary.....	1
Campaign Scorecard.....	2
Campaign Strategy.....	3
Campaign Results.....	4
Ad Execution Examples.....	11
LGBTQIA+ Mini-Campaign Report.....	16



**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
**#lovebrattleborovt**

LOVE Brattleboro Window Cling and Sticker - Mural



Rack Cards - Draft Designs



# Love Brattleboro Community Marketing Initiative 2020 Executive Summary

## Campaign Timeline

January 1 - March 4, 2020: Roll-out

March 5 – June 24, 2020 Campaign Pause: (social media only)

June 25 – October 1, 2020: Revised Covid-Conscious Plan

The initial effort of Brattleboro’s Community Marketing Initiative visitors’ campaign, Love Brattleboro VT, was approved to move forward in late November 2019.

After a few weeks of research, the campaign rolled out mid-January 2020, in time to support events during Valentine’s Day week, driving home the “love” connection. The continuing plan, crafted to run through June, was abruptly halted the first week of March due to the Covid pandemic crisis. For the following four months, the campaign paused with only the slightest touch on social media. In late June, we deployed a new, Covid-conscious plan to carry through August, concluding the first round of the effort.

Ultimately, the only way to know if the campaign is working is to find an increase in the 1% for rooms and meals tax revenue for the Town of Brattleboro year over year. Unfortunately, the brief time for this first effort – less than a year, with half of the allotted time “on pause” in the middle of a pandemic - did not allow time to measure this.

However, at the outset of the campaign, we set goals to give us indications of whether messages are landing with the intended audiences. No single metric can paint a full picture of what is working and what is not. Therefore, goals were set for the areas of public relations, advertising reach and interactions, social media engagement, and facilitated direct sales through campaign tools. We monitor these individually and analyse them together to understand the full impact of the efforts.

We did not alter our goals after the pandemic hit. Despite this, all tools that we engaged performed better than expected. **Ultimately, we exceeded goals in every category by 46% to 576%.** We attribute this success to a multi-touchpoint plan with compelling content placed in the right outlets and in front of the right audiences. By showcasing the beauty and surprisingly cosmopolitan aspects of the town, Brattleboro captured attention as a new and exciting destination for folks outside of the area.

These numbers, though strong, do not tell the complete story of success to date. Community engagement with Love Brattleboro has begun to take hold with stickers, window clings, masks, and art featuring various executions of the Love Brattleboro logo. These have been spotted throughout the area at retailers, on personal property including cars, on social media, and in community art projects. This outward expression of Brattleboro pride not only strengthens positive feelings within the community, but also helps to create a warm welcome when visitors arrive, making it more likely that they will come again to support our beloved local businesses.

Following is the scorecard for all goals set for the campaign.



# Love Brattleboro Community Marketing Initiative 2020 Campaign Scorecard

## Advertising

**Goal 1:** Achieve 2 million impressions via print, online, and email content.

**Actual:** 2,915,646 = **146% of goal.**

**Bonus:** *Yankee Magazine* "New England Focus" 10-Days to Love Brattleboro created a total of 2,256 clicks directly to Brattleboro businesses and events.

**Goal 2:** Targeted advertising impressions via LGBTQIA publications: Included in overall impressions.

**Actual:** Impressions through *Rainbow Times* alone totalled 2.2 million (**120% of overall goal**) with 27,870 clicks to the website for an extremely high click-through rate (CTR) of 1.12%.

**Bonus:** Overall CTR was 1.12% = **2140% higher than the sector average CTR of 0.05%.**

## Partnering

**Goal:** Partner with VT State Tourism to feature 2 Love Brattleboro VT pieces of content on the website, emails, or other communications efforts.

**Actual:** 12 Instagram photo posts = **600% of goal:** Love Brattleboro takeover of "ThisisVT" Vermont Tourism Instagram account via Stephanie Bonin.

**Note:** Additional plans to partner with VT Tourism were placed on hold due to Covid.

## Print

**Goal:** Distribute 2500 rack cards to 3 welcome centers, Brattleboro Area Chamber, and key properties outside of Brattleboro.

**Actual:** Due to Covid, the rack cards portion of the campaign was dropped.

**Bonus:** Love Brattleboro branded stickers, door clings, masks, post cards, and "Wear your mask" signs were created and have been spotted frequently in social media and in real life around Brattleboro.

## Social Media

**Goal 1:** 20 #lovebrattleborovt photo contest entries per month.

**Actual:** 118 average photos posted per month with #lovebrattleborovt tag = **947 total or 676% of goal.**

**Bonus:** 10 photo winners were chosen bringing \$1000 worth of gift card purchases to local businesses.

**Goal 2:** 1000 social media engagement interactions for the duration of the campaign.

**Actual:** 6,439 engagements on social media (Facebook & Instagram) = **644% of goal.**

## Web Activity & Direct Sales

**Goal:** Provide the medium for 20 verifiable sales or registrations for special offers and featured content.

**Actual:** 40 Deals purchased during "10-Days of Deals to Love" = **200% of Goal.**

**Bonus:** Day & Stay Itineraries promotion brought over 200 clicks through the site directly to business websites.

# LOVE Brattleboro VT Campaign Strategy

## Phase I - Rollout: January 1 – March 4, 2020

Our goal was to reach out to “urban adventurers,” New Englanders, and LGBTQIA+ travelers within drive time of Brattleboro. We rolled out the “Love Brattleboro” campaign near Valentine’s Day to capitalize on the “love” theme. We curated 39, mostly preexisting events to create “10 days to Love Brattleboro, VT.” We were able to present a wide array of high-quality events to potential visitors who are unlikely to realize the critical mass of compelling activities in Brattleboro. We created links through the Love Brattleboro website to events and coded special offers to drive sales to directly to businesses and events so that we could track success. **200% of our special offer goal was achieved.**

We kicked off a full advertising campaign in print, digital, and social media using platforms to amplify and drive attendance for great local events. Notably, we supported targeted events for LGBTQIA+ travelers such as Queer Dance Party and Gay Cross Country Ski Tour at Brattleboro Outing Club. Other targeted advertising focused on LGBTQIA+ owned businesses.

We also drove visitors to fundraisers that showcased some of the best of Brattleboro such as the annual Collegiate A Capella Concert fundraising event for Brattleboro Museum and Art Center (BMAC) at Latchis Theater, and LGBTQIA+ Night at Circus Spectacular, a fund raiser for the SAMARA Fund which offers scholarships to LGBTQIA+ youth, adults, and professional-track students at New England Center for Circus Arts (NECCA).

The metrics during this time exceeded expectations in every category, particularly the response to our targeted advertising to LGBTQIA+ communities in the Boston and Montreal areas. **We exceeded our reach goal of 2 million impressions in this sector in the first two months, and experienced ad click rates over 2100% higher than the sector average.**

The plan was to continue to highlight businesses and events until July.

## Phase II - Pause + Covid-Conscious Plan: Mar 5 – Oct 1, 2020

After four full months “on pause” with only limited social media activity, we received clear directives from the Governor’s Office on travel and redirected our campaign to safely focus on Vermonters for day and overnight trips. Messaging played on the theme: “It’s time for a change of scenery, it’s time to Love Brattleboro VT.” Highlighting specific businesses, we painstakingly curated itineraries for different types of travelers. **Advertisements for these itineraries drove over 200 clicks through the website to individual businesses.**

Additionally, in response to local business requests, we created campaign-sponsored images that kindly, but firmly, remind visitors that they are required to wear masks while they are in Brattleboro. Along with this, we created a few Love Brattleboro masks to hang on the mask tree – enough to reinforce the message but not enough to take away mask sales from local retailers. We have been delighted to see these masks, as well as those created by the Chamber, pop up on social media. Finally, grassroots support started to take hold for the campaign with the logo showing up in various forms on social media, in shop windows, on cars, and in community art projects. All of this creates a warmer welcome for visitors and encourages them to come back.

# Direct Purchases

Roll-out of the new campaign centered around “10-Days to Love Brattleboro VT,” which included 39 individual events over 10 days, curated mostly from hundreds of pre-existing events between February 6 to 16, 2020.

Of these, we partnered with organizations to promote 7 special offers which we featured on the website with links directly to businesses and organizations offering them. Two organizations created offers specifically for the Love Brattleboro campaign. We left it to the organizations to track their special offers. Below are the results as reported to us. We include *Yankee Magazine* newsletter clicks as this was the strongest trackable response to the promotion.

GOAL	Number	% to goal
☰ 20 Special Offer Packages Purchased	40 Packages / 83 Participants	200%

## 10 Days to Love Brattleboro VT - February 6-16 2020 Total special offers sold directly benefitting businesses & events

### Bratt LUV Crawl: 16 packages = 32 total tickets

- 97 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### Collegiate A Cappella fundraiser for BMAC @ Latchis: 7 packages = 14 tickets

- 111 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### Duo: Not tracked

- 76 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### Harris Hill Ski Jump: 15 packages = 30 tickets (about 10% of total ticket sales)

- 8 Locals
- 8 Greenfield area
- 6 New York
- 2 New Jersey
- 4 Connecticut
- 2 New Hampshire
- 77 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### Latchis “Date Night Sweet Treats”: No way to book online - not tracked

Package, created for LOVE Brattleboro Campaign

- 273 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### NECCA “Hoop Your Heart Out”: 3 tickets

Special class created for LOVE Brattleboro Campaign

- 31 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

### Retreat Farm “Sweethearts & Snowshoes”: 2 packages = 4 tickets

- 2 out of 16 couples
- 76 clicks via *Yankee* newsletter

# Advertising

The advertising strategy was to maximize the budget in targeted geographic and demographic areas. We found tremendous value particularly in our buys with *Yankee Magazine* which drove over 2200 clicks directly to Brattleboro businesses and events through a single communication. Our LGBTQIA+ publication partners gave us thousands of dollars in free advertising. These performed at an interaction rate over 2100 times higher than the sector average.

This response was driven by compelling content including extraordinary photography from local photographers, eye-catching graphics, curated experiences and events of interest to the audience.

## Digital Advertising

DIGITAL - Sector Average - 0.05% CTR	Executions	Impressions	Clicks to Website	CTR
Yankee	3	52,665	339	0.21%
Valley Advocate	4	25,400	126	0.50%
Seven Days	3	73,295	102	0.14%
Rainbow Times	6	2,174,561	27,870	1.30%
Fugues	3	24,926	314	1.30%
VT Digger	4	228,928	396	0.17%
VPR	4	37,630	171	0.45%
Facebook	11	13,631	119	0.87%
Instagram	1	4,739	22	0.46%
<b>Total + Average CTR</b>		<b>2,635,775</b>	<b>29,459</b>	<b>1.12%</b>

### Highest Performing Digital Ads:

#### YANKEE

The “New England Focus” Partner Content Newsletter was opened **52,665** times with **2,256** clicks to links throughout the newsletter. **339** of those clicks were direct to [lovebrattleborovt.com](http://lovebrattleborovt.com) and was the highest performing link. **Overall CTR was 4.3%.**

#### RAINBOW TIMES

E-Blast Performance: Feb **13,320** Opens, **892** clicks on the ad = **CTR of 6.7%**

#### FUGUES

A *Fugues* article about the campaign was featured content in their bi-weekly newsletter **6** times, and gained click-throughs back to the article **239** times.

#### VT DIGGER

Love Brattleboro VT content placed in the *Daily Digger* newsletter performed extremely well with **139,572** total impressions, and **252** clicks-throughs to the campaign website for a **total CTR of 0.20%**

# Print Advertising

PRINT	Executions	Circulation
Valley Advocate	2	25,000 weekly
Seven Days	3	36,000 weekly
Seven Days Special 8.5x11 Insert - Phase II	1	10,000 distribution
Rainbow Times	2	75,000 monthly
Fugues	1	38,500 monthly

**TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY FEB 6-16**

Hoop Your Heart Out Workshop  
Feb 14th at New England Center for Circus Arts  
\$10 per person with promo code  
BrattLove

Harris Hill Ski Jump - Feb 15 & 16  
Buy 1 ticket get 1 ticket 50% off  
Ticket discount available 2/6 - 2/14  
with code LOVEBRATTLEBORO

**VISIT LOVEBRATTLEBOROVT.COM**

Valley Advocate - Print Ad

## PR Efforts

Public relations efforts included a communication announcing the launch of the campaign, one that focused on the “10-days to Love Brattleboro VT,” and targeted PR to LGBTQIA+ publications under the expertise of Desmond Peebles a then Brattleboro-based LGBTQIA+ activist and writer.

In addition to raising awareness and driving action to learn more about what Brattleboro has to offer, unpaid news stories that reference the campaign help to create high search rankings for the Town of Brattleboro. Each placement, even if it is repeated content that is shared across platforms, reaches a different audience and increases the breadth of the message.

GOAL	Actual	% to goal
3 Wide Audience (un-targeted) Placements	10 Placements	333%
1 Targeted LGBTQIA+ Placement	3 Placements	300%

# PR Efforts - Continued

## General Placements:

- January 16, 2020 *VT Digger* Brattleboro unveils community marketing campaign LOVE BRATTLEBORO
- January 19, 2020 *Reformer* Marketing campaign begins
- January 16, 2020 *Vermont Business Magazine* Community marketing campaign 'Love Brattleboro VT' leads with town's strengths
- January 25, 2020 *Vermont Journal* Community campaign "Love Brattleboro VT" leads with town's many strengths
- February 1, 2020 *Valley Advocate* 10-days to Love Brattleboro VT 39 Events Celebrate Valentines
- February 1, 2020 *Berkshire Eagle* 10 Days to Love Brattleboro, VT
- February 12, 2020 *Vermont Business Magazine* Barrett: Tourism = Economic Development
- February 23, 2020 *Manchester Journal* Barrett: Tourism = Economic Development
- March 23, 2020 *Reformer* Successful community marketing campaign on pause
- *Newsbreak* Brattleboro unveils community marketing campaign LOVE BRATTLEBORO

**Bonus: "10-Days to Love Brattleboro VT" curated list of events published in dozens of regional online event calendars.**

## LGBTQIA+ Placements:

- January 23, 2020 *Fugues* À Brattleboro, des expériences romantiques pas comme d'habitude
- February 6, 2020 *Rainbow Times* LOVE BRATTLEBORO VT Campaign On LGBTQ+ Community
- February 27, 2020 *Fugues* Une Gay Night au Circus Spectacular

**Bonus: "Love Brattleboro VT Campaign on LGBTQ Community" story featured on cover of Rainbow Times (4/6/20), and story was shared 424 times from RBT website story posting.**

# Social Media

Social media accounts for Love Brattleboro allow for customized messaging for target audiences and interactions with people following the campaign. This also allows for flexible and responsive action for events that pop up or to share relevant content from local businesses or organizations.

We only had a short period of time to build our Facebook and Instagram followers, and encourage posts with the #lovebrattleborovt hashtag. However, we are thrilled to have over 900 followers on Facebook in less than 9 months, and to have over 900 hashtagged posts on Instagram, including hundreds of photos submitted for the photo contest.

GOAL	Number	% to goal
1000 Engagements	6,439	644%
Post Total Reach	47,819	

## Facebook:

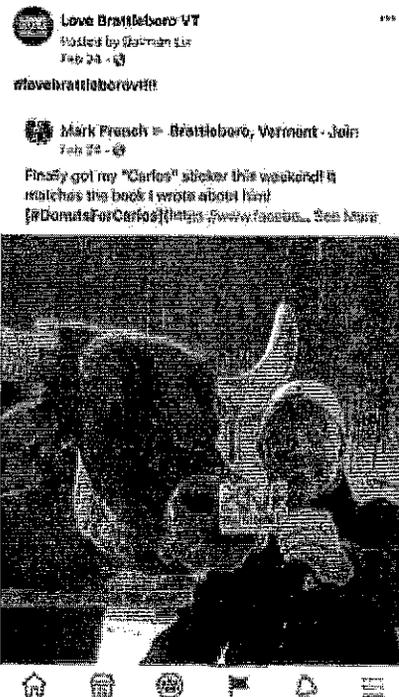
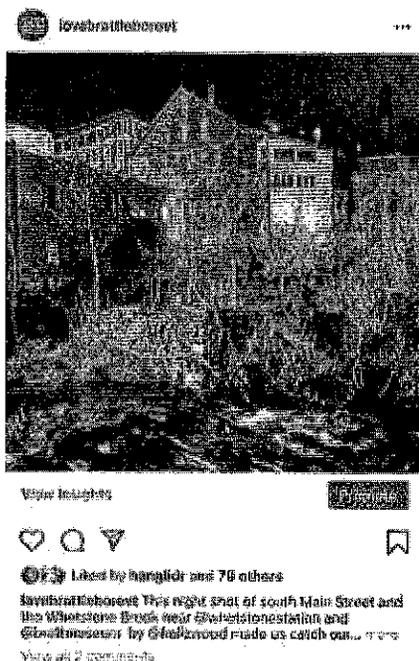
Total Current Likes to Facebook Page: **832**  
 Total Current Page Followers: **901**  
 Paid Social Reach: **8,027**  
 Paid Social Engagement: **811**  
 Total Ad Spend for (5) ads: **\$140.00**

## Instagram:

Total Current Followers: **473**  
 Lifetime hashtag use by visitors: **947**  
 Paid Social Reach: **3,140**  
 Paid Social Engagement: **28**  
 Total Ad Spend for (1) ad: **\$30.00**

## Twitter:

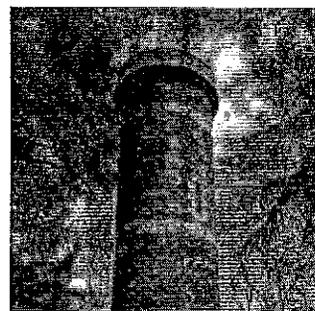
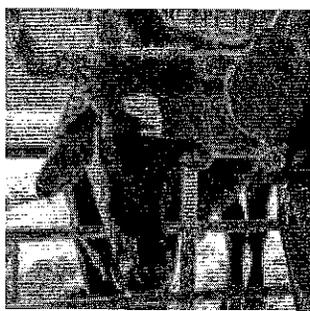
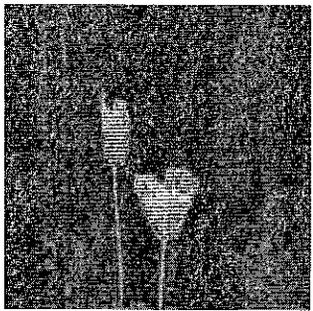
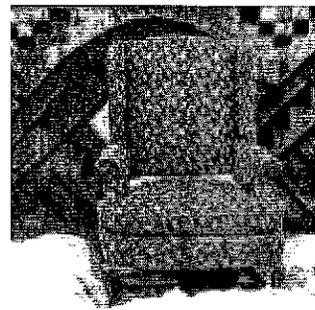
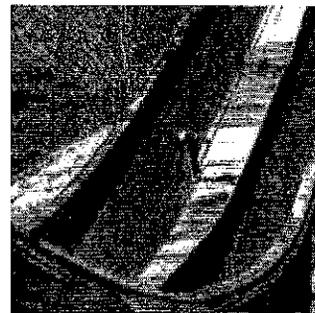
Lifetime #lovebrattleborovt hashtag use: **144**



# Photo Contest

GOAL	Number	% to goal
☐ 20 Entries per month, Jan - July - 140 Total	947	676%

WINNERS	Claimed	Local Business Revenue
☐ 10 winners of gift certificates to Brattleboro businesses	10	\$1000



# Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a valuable tool for campaign awareness and to monitor website traffic. SEO is significant because it makes your website, and ultimately your advertising and social media presence more visible. Keywords used throughout the web through shared links, posts online, public relations, and social media content all point back to online searchability.

The following is an example of a simple Google search. The “Term” is the exact words used in the search bar, and the “Page” and “List number” show where the [lovebrattleborovt.com](http://lovebrattleborovt.com) webpage link is listed within the loaded search page.

The higher you rank on a search engine result page, the more likely prospects are to see you and click through to your site. This generally takes many months to build. These rankings are strong for such a short time period.

Term	Search Page	List Number
☰ “Love Brattleboro VT”	1	1
☰ “Brattleboro VT”	1	9
☰ “Visit Brattleboro VT”	2	2
☰ “Brattleboro”	6	9

# Website Traffic

Featured content on the website encourages potential visitors to learn more about Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Brattleboro Alliance, and the Planagogo local event calendar, as well as featuring curated events and itineraries to draw people to the area.

The most recent effort featuring curated itineraries was supported by advertising, and inspired 200 clicks through the site to local business websites. The website also allows us an analytics program to track and consider where our ads are effective and what entities are driving traffic to the site.

Measurement	Total
☰ Website Sessions	29,459
☰ Pages Per Session	2.45
☰ Average Time Spent	00:02:02
☰ Outbound Links Clicked	262

# Digital Advertising - Phase I - Examples



VPR - Digital Banner



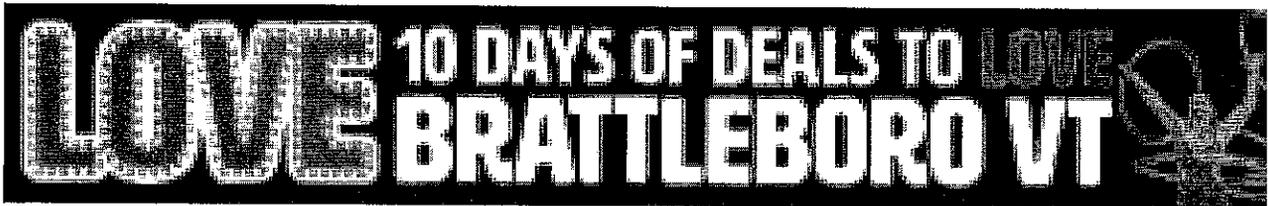
Seven Days - Digital Banner



Yankee - Digital Banner



Valley Advocate - Digital Banner



Valley Advocate - Digital Banner

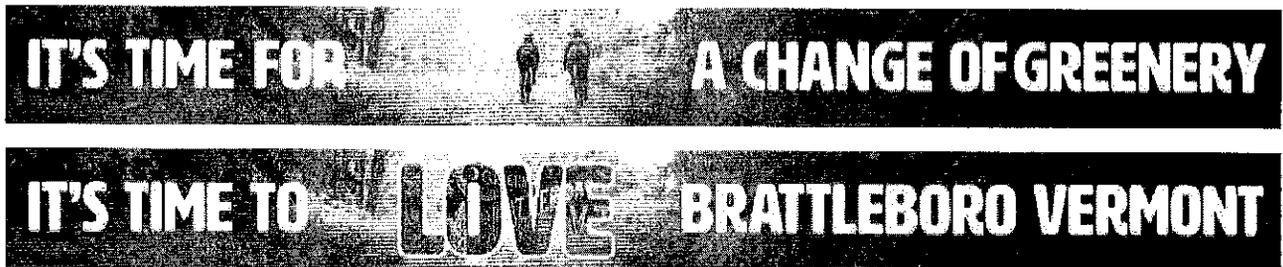


Valley Advocate - Digital Banner

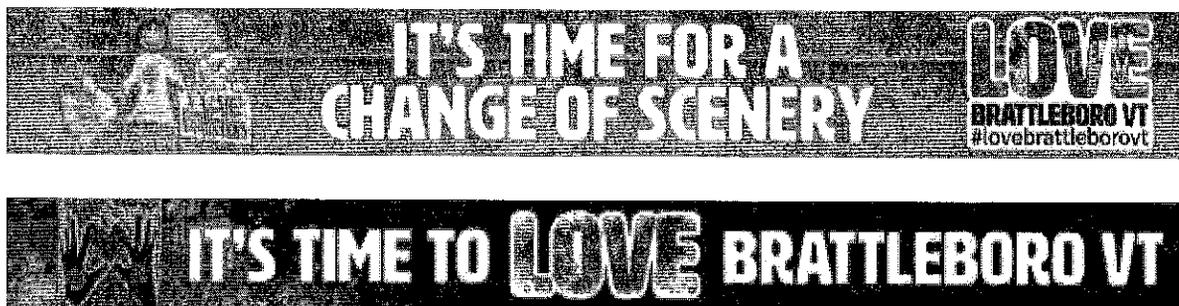
# Digital Advertising - Phase II - Examples



Seven Days - Animated GIF's



VT Digger - Animated GIF's



Vermont Arts & Living - Static PNG's

# Print Advertising - Phase I - Examples

Collegiate A Cappella Concert at Latchis Theatre

Hoop Your Heart Out Workshop at New England Center for Circus Arts

**LOVE**  
**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
 #lovebrattleborovt  
**VERMONT - USA**

**10 DAYS OF DEALS TO LOVE 6-16 FEBRUARY LOVEBRATTLEBOROVT.COM**

Fugues - Print Ad

**LOVE**  
**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
 #lovebrattleborovt

**10 DAYS OF DEALS TO LOVE**  
**FEBRUARY 6-16**

Seven Days - Print Ad

**10 DAYS OF DEALS TO LOVE FEB 6-16**

Harris Hill Ski Jump - Feb 15 & 16  
 Buy 1 ticket get 1 ticket 50% off  
 Ticket discount available 2/6 - 2/14  
 with code LOVEBRATTLEBORO

**LOVE**  
**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
 #lovebrattleborovt

**LOVEBRATTLEBOROVT.COM**

Seven Days - Print Ad

**10 DAYS OF DEALS TO LOVE FEB 6-16**

February 14 - Hoop Your Heart Out Workshop  
 at New England Center for Circus Arts  
 \$10 per person with  
 promo code: BrattLove

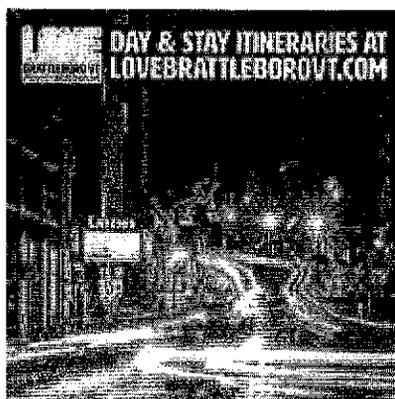
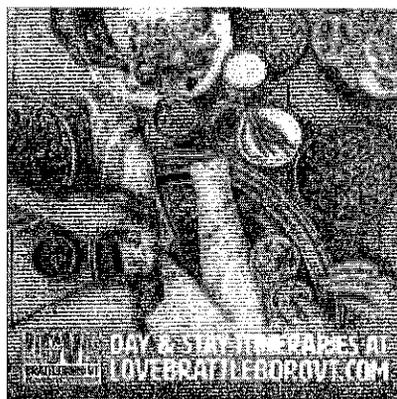
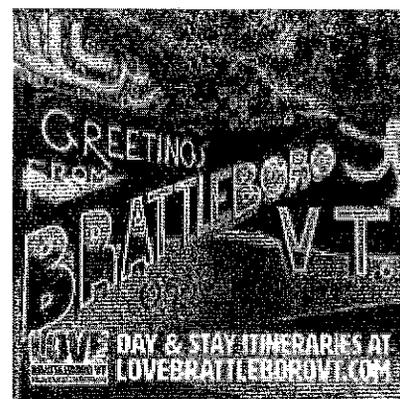
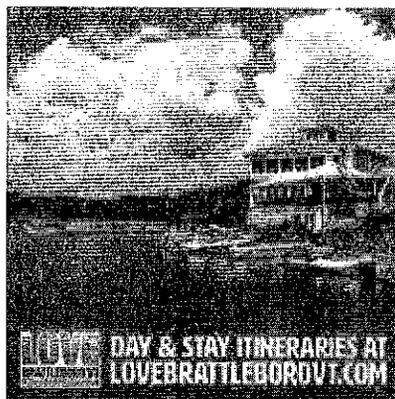
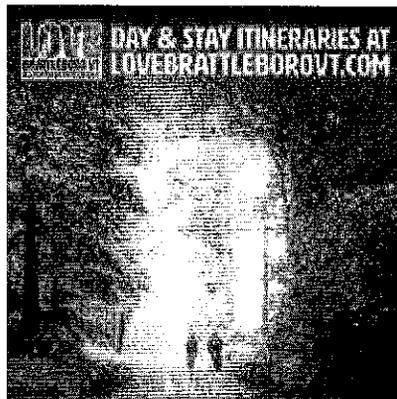
**LOVE**  
**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
 #lovebrattleborovt

**LOVEBRATTLEBOROVT.COM**

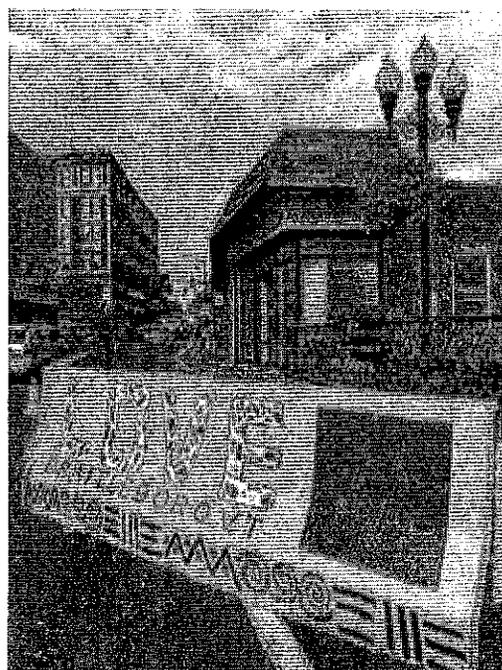
Valley Advocate - Print Ad



# Social Media Advertising - Examples



# Community Engagement





# Love Brattleboro Community Marketing Initiative 2020 LGBTQIA+ Mini-Campaign

## Executive Summary

Brattleboro is an open and inclusive town that has long been home to strong and vibrant LGBTQIA+ communities. Why then, did it not register on the Vermont LGBTQIA+ traveler map? Much needed traffic from this sector has passed right by Brattleboro for years to northern towns that have reached out and courted these communities, instead of visiting our own local businesses – many of which are owned by members of these communities. As a result, a portion of the Love Brattleboro community marketing initiative was devoted specifically to inviting LGBTQIA+ folks to Brattleboro to see what the town has to offer.

**The overall goals for attracting regional LGBTQIA+ travelers to the Brattleboro area were:**

1. Capture visitor revenue from a group that is spending their travel dollars in other regions in Vermont that have specifically reached out and marketed to this segment.
2. Drive traffic to LGBTQIA+ owned and ally businesses and organizations by featuring them and specific events in advertising and public relations.
3. Hire PR consultant from within the LGBTQIA+ community.
4. Highlight the current support for these communities by creating special door clings and stickers for retailers and individuals to display.
5. Support the effort to build these local communities by attracting LGBTQIA+ travelers who may want to consider moving to Brattleboro permanently.

The LGBTQIA+ targeted campaign was intended and planned to cover the entire initial campaign timeline of January – August. Unfortunately, due to the interruption of COVID, the LGBTQIA+ portion of the campaign was only on full cylinders for less than 3 months - from January until the first week of March.

However, in that short time frame, potential visitors that were targeted in this segment responded positively to the effort with a **content engagement rate 2100% higher** than the sector average. While clicking on links is not and should not be, the only way to gauge success, it is a good indicator that the effort landed with the intended audience.

Additionally, we were able to **showcase 9 LGBTQIA+ and ally businesses in advertising and public relations and provide professional photo sessions for 4 LGBTQIA+ owned businesses.** We also leveraged the campaign to sponsor and encourage visitors to **support a fundraising event for the SAMARA Fund providing scholarships for LGBTQIA youth, adults, and professional track students at New England Center for Circus Arts (NECCA).**

When COVID hit, the campaign was put on pause and then shifted to a generalized in-state traveler effort. Most of the marketing plan that we had for this segment was not able to be realized. As such, dozens of advertising opportunities that were contracted are still awaiting execution when appropriate. However, during this time, we observed local store owners and

others express their support for the LGBTQIA communities through materials created for the campaign such as door clings, stickers, and masks.

The results below reflect the work and results prior to the COVID shift.

## Scorecard



Brattleboro has long been home to a thriving LGBTQIA+ social and business community. Come and say "Hello" to some of our favorite business owners, and be sure to check them out online.

**LOVEBRATTLEBOROVT.COM**

**LOVE**  
**BRATTLEBORO VT**  
#lovebrattleborovt

Rainbow Times - Full Back Cover Ad - Photography by Kelly Fletcher

## Capacity-Building

- **LGBTQIA+ owned & ally businesses featured in advertising and PR: 9**
  - Shapeshifters
  - Windham Movement and Apparel
  - George J Brooks Florist
  - Mount Island
  - NECCA
  - Latchis
  - Echo
  - Brattleboro Outing Club
  - Queer Dance Party
- **Free professional photo shoots: 4**
  - In addition to promoting businesses, professional photo shoots were arranged with Kelly Fletcher for the following businesses and business owners: Krista & Eli Coughlin-Galbraith with Shapeshifters, Francesca Bourgault with Windham Movement & Apparel, Jim Andrews with George J Brooks Florist, and Desmond Peebles with Mount Island. All photos from the shoots were made available to businesses to use for promotional purposes as they see fit, as well as selected photos being featured in advertising.
  - Queer Dance Party founders, and professional photos of the Queer Dance party were also produced by Kelly Fletcher on behalf of the campaign. Queer Dance Party photos were made available to performers for their own promotional uses.
- **Co-sponsorship of LGBTQIA Night at Circus Spectacular**
  - Love Brattleboro was an official co-sponsor for this event which was a fundraiser for the SAMARA Fund which provides scholarships for LGBTQIA+ youth, adults and professional track students at NECCA.

## Public Relations

### LGBTQIA+ Public relations consultant hired: 1

- We were happy to work with Desmond Peebles who helped with research and authored a key PR piece which received a prominent placement in *Fugues*. The magazine even chose to translate the piece into French for their Mintreal audience.

**Goal:** 1 Non-paid story placement

**Actual:** 3 Placements = **300% of goal**

January 23, 2020, *Fugues*, "À Brattleboro, des expériences romantiques pas comme d'habitude"

<https://www.fugues.com/255620-article-a-brattleboro-des-experiences-romantiques-pas-comme-d-habitude.html>

**Bonus:** 330 people clicked on the story to read it via *Fugues* website.

February 6, 2020, *Rainbow Times*, “LOVE BRATTLEBORO VT Campaign on LGBTQ+ Community” – featured on front cover

<http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/love-brattleboro-vt-campaign-on-lgbtq-community/>

**Bonus:** Story shared 424 times from *Rainbow Times* website.

February 27, 2020, *Fugues*, “Une Gay Night au Circus Spectacular” by Desmond Peebles

<https://www.fugues.com/255897-article-une-gay-night-au-circus-spectacular.html>

**Bonus:** June 22, 2020, Realtor.com, “The 10 Most LGBTQ-Friendly Towns and Cities in the U.S. Provide a Few Fierce Surprises” Brattleboro is #9 on the list.

While we can’t directly take credit for this piece, it features information that we provided in our press releases highlighting the LGBTQIA+ campaign. It may well be a coincidence, but we appreciate the timing.

DU 6 AU 16 FEVRIER, A BRATTLEBORO

## DES EXPERIENCES ROMANTIQUES PAS COMME D'HABITUDE

Brattleboro est une ville du comté de Windham dans l'Etat américain du Vermont. A environ quatre heures de route de Montréal, elle est peuplée de plus de 12 000 habitants et se situe dans le coin sud-est de l'Etat. Située, elle s'étend dans la vallée de la Connecticut, le long du flanc oriental de la rivière de même nom et est entourée de champs ouverts et jardins escarpés.

Brattleboro fut fondée avec l'édification du Fort Devens en 1724. Ville d'origine de la maison de l'acteur du film de la Anouilh *Les Fugues*, on trouve y vit et travaille aussi.

Malgré sa réputation de ville calme, agitée et de la ville d'été, elle accueille plus de 1000 touristes par jour et offre de nombreuses activités. Elle est peuplée de personnes de toutes origines et de toutes religions et de toutes cultures.

Cette année, Brattleboro veut célébrer les amoureux dans le cadre de la Saint-Valentin et pour le lancement de la campagne *LOVE BRATTLEBORO VT*. Pour ce faire, elle organise une série d'événements et de rencontres pour tous les amoureux. Pour en savoir plus, rendez-vous sur le site [www.lovebrattleborovt.com](http://www.lovebrattleborovt.com)

10 DAYS OF DEALS TO LOVE 6-16 FEBRUARY LOVEBRATTLEBOROV.COM

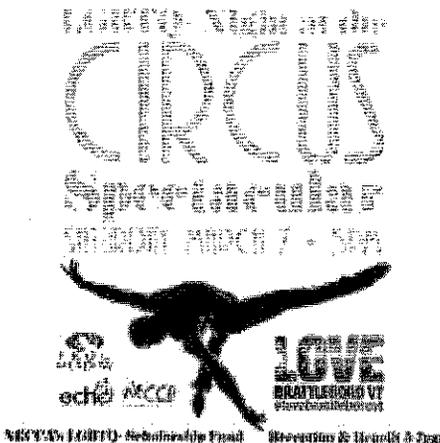
*Fugues* - January 23, 2020 - Story in print with Ad

## Targeted Advertising Partnerships

- Strategic advertising alliances were created with LGBTQIA publications *Rainbow Times* in the Boston area and *Fugues* in the Montréal area. Both publications were so supportive of the campaign that they included a significant amount of bonus and free digital and print advertising placements.
- We also negotiated a strong digital and print advertising package with *The Valley Advocate*, which has a high LGBTQIA readership.

## Digital Advertising Metrics

- 2.2 million total targeted advertising impressions.
- 28,184 clicks on links.
- Click through rate was 2140% higher than the sector average.



### Events featured and promoted in advertising: 4

- Queer Dance Party 1/31
- Gay X-Ski Weekend 2/21-23
- LGBTQIA Night at Circus Spectacular 3/7
- NECCA Circus Spectacular 3/8

NOTE: A long list of additional events were scheduled to be promoted, however all were canceled due to COVID.

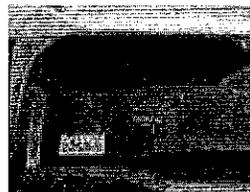
In addition to the above, multiple LGBTQIA+ events were shared on social media and the web site.

## Daylight Support for Communities

### LGBTQIA+ Window Clings, Stickers, and Masks

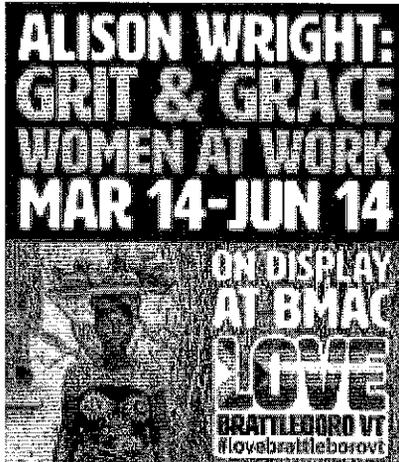
Love Brattleboro graphics with the flag were produced into stickers, window clings, and masks. These have been spotted in public and on social media. When given the options of the branded mural window cling or the LGBTQIA+ version, most businesses were very excited and eager to place the LGBTQIA+ graphic in their windows as a show of solidarity for the community.

Additionally, an LGBTQIA+ rack card was planned, but the graphic has morphed into advertising when the rack card plan was canceled.



# Advertising

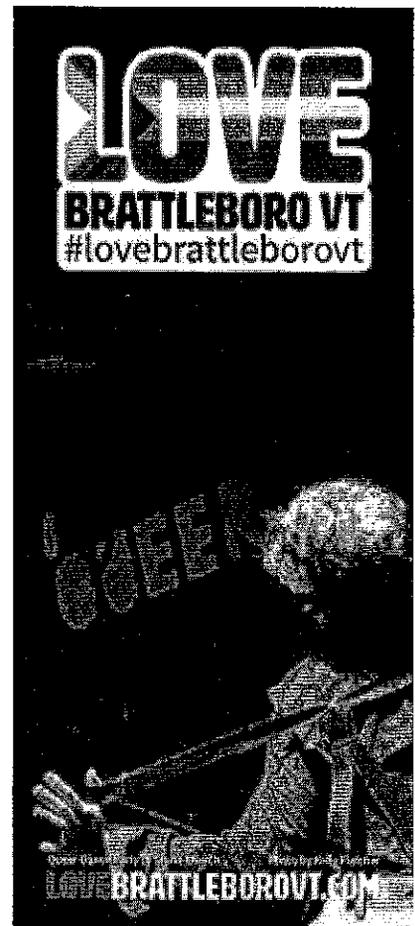
Total ad executions: 11



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner



Rack Card - Draft



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner



Fugues - Digital Banner



Instagram Post



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner



Rainbow Times - Digital Banner

## Mini-campaign Research Background

As with any marketing or communications effort where a special group is targeted or featured, members of that group must be consulted, and ideas and concerns incorporated into the communication effort. In preparation for the Love Brattleboro LGBTQIA+ mini-campaign, we interviewed nine LGBTQIA+ leaders and business owners in the Brattleboro area, as well as one high-profile ally organization. During these interviews we asked, as we would with any project, what specific imagery, words, or concepts we should include where possible, and which we should avoid.

The results of these interviews were included in the strategy, messaging, and creative efforts of this portion of the campaign.

## Stakeholders Consulted

- HB Lozito, *Out in the Open* Executive Director
- Ain Thompson, *Out in the Open* Director of Development & Outreach
- Eli Coughlin-Galbraith, *Shapeshifters* business owner
- Krista Coughlin-Galbraith, *Shapeshifters* business owner
- Desmond Peebles, activist, writer, *Mount Island* business owner, *Out in the Open* board member
- Francesca Bourgault, *Windham Movement & Apparel* business owner, *Downtown Brattleboro Alliance* board member
- Scott Heller, activist, hospitality expert, *Frog Meadow Bed & Breakfast and Massage Oasis for Men* business owner
- David King, activist, hospitality expert, *Frog Meadow Bed & Breakfast and Massage Oasis for Men* business owner
- Jamie Hodgson, *New England Center for Circus Arts* communications director

## Research Results and Subsequent Campaign Direction

Based on the conversations with stakeholders, we determined the following:

- A Brattleboro LGBTQIA+ visitor campaign must be authentic and focus on the unique aspects of the area.
- Brattleboro should be presented as a friendly, open community where LGBTQIA people are welcome.
- Campaign should focus primarily on LGBTQIA-owned and ally businesses, specifically highlighting their owners.
- LGBTQIA+ and LGBTQIA-friendly events should be highlighted throughout the campaign. NECCA events and Queer Dance Parties are opportunities to support recurring events and ideal to promote.
- In no way should LGBTQIA+ community members be tokenized. For example, pictures of same sex couples in advertising is not supported by the community, and should not appear in the campaign.
- Some LGBTQIA events are not appropriate to promote to outsiders. However, the campaign should support local organization events whenever possible.
- Opportunities should be sought for capacity-building/support for business-owners.

All of this feedback was considered and helped to determine the strategy and creative for this part of the campaign

ATTACHED: Please see letter of support for the LGBTQIA+ targeted campaign from Scott Heller, Frog Meadow.

# Letter of Support



2/19/20

To: Stephanie Bonin  
Kate O'Conner  
Brattleboro Select Board

A quick note to recap my thoughts about our experience at Frog Meadow Farm Bed & Breakfast with the recently introduced LoveBrattleboroVT Campaign:

As the co-owner of a lodging establishment that caters specifically to the Gay & Trans Men's market and to the greater LGBTQ+ market nationwide, the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign reinforces and extends our message that the Brattleboro region of southeast Vermont offers much that appeals to these visitors. We've found that the campaign readily and quickly and resonates with our current and prospective guests, for both our Bed & Breakfast Business, as well as our Men's Retreats Business.

We position ourselves as "An Oasis for Men" and it is very important for us to communicate to prospective guests that not only is Frog Meadow an inviting, safe and welcoming place for them to stay - but even more importantly - that we are located in a region that (1) wholeheartedly embraces and fully supports LGBTQ+ diversity; and (2) offers a broad array of cultural, recreational and culinary diversions. This is extremely important because many guests travel to us from urban areas where the stereotype of a rural destination typically plays to the notion of unfriendly rednecks, a culturally/socially conservative perspective, and perhaps not the most cutting edge of food options.

As a point of information, Frog Meadow is open year-round; conservative estimates are that we host approximately 1,500 guests annually. Even though we are based in Newfane, we consider ourselves and our business part of the "greater Brattleboro area metroplex" and Brattleboro is where we shop and send our guests due entirely to the welcoming nature of the town, it's shops, restaurants, attractions and the overall friendly and accommodating vibe of the locals. Additionally, anecdotal information confirms that our guests spend well above average at local establishments (e.g. Saxton's River Distillery, Fire Arts and several restaurants).

The LoveBrattleboroVT initiative not only drives home the fact that our region is culturally, socially, culinarily and economically (from the perspective of unique shopping diversions and employment opportunities) progressive, it communicates these points mightily and in way that continuously exceeds expectations when they experience what Brattleboro has to offer.

To cite some of the ways we've found the campaign to be effective for us:

- We've incorporated the attention getting LoveBrattleboroVT campaign graphics and website content into our overall marketing efforts including email campaigns, reservation confirmations, social media marketing as well as our events calendar.
- We've adapted the LoveBrattleboroVT Graphics (with links) into our Discover Gay Brattleboro Vermont mini-website because it communicates specifically in words and images that our guests will be welcome here and - just as importantly - that the region offers a bounty of goods, services, recreation and event

NEWFANE VERMONT | 802.365.7242 | [WWW.FROGMEADOW.COM](http://WWW.FROGMEADOW.COM)

2/19/20

Stephanie Bonin

Kate O'Conner

Brattleboro Select Board

options for them to experience, enjoy, attend, consume and purchase. As a point of information, approximately 50% of our lodging stays are returning guests who come back because of what Brattleboro offers, in addition to our on-property amenities.

- Many of our guests (perhaps close to a dozen) have purchased second homes or simply moved lock, stock and barrel to the area in recent years. I've spoken with a few of these past guests (now dear friends) about the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign and their takeaway is that the campaign has further reinforced their role as "cheerleaders for the region" as residents, employees and business owners. In effect, the presence of the campaign affirms their relocation decision.
- Lastly, as the primary organizer and lead sponsor for the March 7 Reception & Benefit for the new LGBTQ+ Scholarship fund at NECCA, we've identified the core values of community, inclusiveness and diversity which unite us as Brattleboro area residents. To the extent that the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign communicates these core values so well, we have merged the campaign with our Reception & Benefit event, and we have included LoveBrattleboroVT as a lead event sponsor. As a highlight of the NECCA LGBTQ+ Scholarship Reception & Benefit's program there will be a raffle with \$3,000+ in local goods and services. The Benefit's Raffle Grand Prize is an all-expense paid LoveBrattleboroVT "*BrattleLicious, BrattleFabulous (lodging, dining and experiences) Weekend for Two*" valued at \$1,500. Additionally, we will distribute 200+ of the rainbow flag LoveBrattleboroVT window stickers (at our expense) to all attendees to reinforce (and promote to others) what Brattleboro offers to locals as well as those who are "from away".

Based on our experience, the campaign is a very powerful and empowering draw for the LGBTQ+ community. The campaign's appeal demonstrably extends well beyond the LGBTQ+ market segment to encompass and address many additional demographic interest groups and activities - as indicated by the 15+ "graphic flavors" portrayed here. The broad scope of appeal of the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign makes clear its "multiplier effect" and the potential magnitude of economic and tourism opportunities that the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign will produce for the town and the region.

We think that the LoveBrattleboroVT campaign - now in its initial stages - has very quickly created a level of interest, excitement and momentum, and that it will be a significant short & long-term economic driver for Brattleboro and the surrounding region on so many fronts. We are strong supporters and look forward to its rollout this spring!

Please let me know any questions.

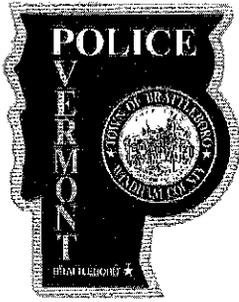
Best



Scott Heller



206.724.8041 / [daimian@pennilessprojects.com](mailto:daimian@pennilessprojects.com) / [www.pennilessprojects.com](http://www.pennilessprojects.com)



# BRATTLEBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 62 BLACK MOUNTAIN ROAD - BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT 05301 -  
802.257.7950

**To:** Brattleboro Selectboard  
**Via:** Peter Elwell, Town Manager  
**From:** Captain Mark Carignan *MSC*  
**Re:** FY21 Capital purchase – police cruisers  
**Date:** 9/25/2020

The purpose of this memorandum is to recommend the Town of Brattleboro purchase two police vehicles, currently budgeted in FY21 capital at \$96,000. \$52,000 is allocated to purchase a replacement patrol vehicle and \$44,000 to purchase a replacement CID vehicle. I recommend we utilize the State of Vermont contract with *Formula Ford* of Montpelier for the purchase of the vehicles. The State of Vermont participated in a competitive bid process that resulted in the selection of Formula Ford. Further, we have done business with Formula Ford and they were prompt, responsive, and reliable.

There are two parts to a cruiser purchase. Generally we purchase the vehicle itself using the state bid. We then conduct a sealed public bid process for the upfit. Staff is currently designing the exact specifications for the upfit. As in previous years, I recommend we order the vehicles now as delivery takes many months.

The 2021 model year Ford SUV police vehicle offers a hybrid option. The hybrid includes a large lithium-ion battery that powers the A/C, heat, emergency lights, and other equipment when the car would ordinarily idle. It allows the vehicle to be turned off instead of idling and burning gas. The vehicle does not include an electric motor and there is no drive-provision that does not involve gasoline. The only fuel savings is from a lack of idle. The hybrid feature costs an additional \$3,353.00 per vehicle.

I recommend we purchase a hybrid vehicle for the patrol cruiser. This vehicle regularly idles and there is a potential for gas savings and environmental benefit. I recommend we purchase the gas-only vehicle for CID. This vehicle rarely sits at idle and there would be little or no benefit to the environment or budget.

## Vehicle Prices

### PATROL

\$37,163	2021 Ford Explorer Interceptor ( <b>hybrid</b> ) with required features
4,000	Trade-in for 2016 Ford Explorer
Included	5yr/100,000 mile drivetrain warranty
Included	8yr/100,000 mile hybrid components warranty
\$33,163	

DETECTIVE

\$33,115	2021 Ford Explorer Interceptor ( <b>gas only</b> ) with required features
1,500	Trade-in for 2009 Chevrolet Trailblazer
<u>Included</u>	5yr/100,000 mile drivetrain warranty
\$31,615	

LEGAL MEMORANDUM

To: Selectboard

From: Robert M. Fisher, Esq.

Date: October 14, 2020

Re: Town Tax Sale—Authorizing Deborah Desrosiers to Bid on Town's Behalf

The Brattleboro 2020 Tax Sale is coming up on October 28, 2020. As part of the preparation for the tax sale, it is requested of the Board that the Board authorize a particular officer of the Town to bid on behalf of the Town in the event that no other bidders make bids on the subject property. Staff respectfully requests that the Board appoint Deborah Desrosiers, Acting Town Treasurer, as the authorized person to place a bid on behalf of the Town.

Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. section 5259, "By the act of its mayor or selectboard, when a tax warrant is extended on any land in this State, the city or town by which the tax is assessed may become the purchaser at the tax sale thereof, if a bid not equal to the tax and costs is made at such sale." This is the statutory authority for the Town to make a bid if there is no other bid that equals the minimum bid price at the tax sale. In order to authorize one particular person to place the bid, the Selectboard should act by making a motion to appoint an officer of the Town to make the bid in the absence of any other minimum bids on the properties.

The Motion: I move that the Board appoint Deborah Desrosiers, Acting Town Treasurer, to make bids on tax sale properties in the absence of a minimum bid on the respective property.

# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

Town Manager's Office · 230 Main Street · Brattleboro, VT 05301  
(802) 251-8151 Fax (802) 257-2322

## **MEMORANDUM**

To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
From: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
Subject: Employee Health Insurance Renewal for Calendar Year 2021  
Date: October 14, 2020

---

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Selectboard approve renewal of the Town's Employee Health Insurance Program for calendar year 2021, as described in this memorandum and on the attached summary of costs.

### **Background Information**

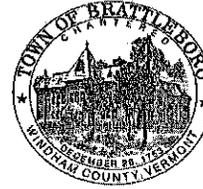
The proposed Town Employee Health Insurance Program for 2021 includes all the same coverages and all the same total costs as the 2020 program. Our health insurance renewal with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) is at an unchanged premium (0.0% increase) and the unchanged structure of the overall program results in an unchanged budget (0.0% increase) for the Town's Health Savings Account costs and Health Reimbursement Arrangement costs.

While the total costs are unchanged from 2020 to 2021, the portion of those costs that is paid by Town taxpayers will be reduced by \$42,731 (1.7%) from \$2,543,740 in 2020 to \$2,501,009 in 2021. This is because of the agreement reached last year between the Town and its employees (including the four employee unions) for a multi-year phase-in of cost sharing between the employees and the Town in payment of the BCBS premiums. In 2020, the employees paid 1% of those premiums. In 2021, the employees will pay 3% of those premiums (as shown at the bottom of the attached summary of costs). In 2022, the employees' cost share will increase to 5% of the BCBS premiums.

The Richards Group was instrumental in achieving this renewal with unchanged total costs. Also, the Richards Group and Town management met with an employee committee representing all four unions and the non-union employees, and that employee committee joins Town management in recommending Selectboard approval of the 2021 Employee Health Insurance Program, as presented.

PBE:  
Attachment

Town of Brattleboro  
 11 2021 BCBS Medical Plan Renewal  
 September 24, 2020



		2020	2021
		Current	Renewal
<b>Plan Design</b>	deductible	\$4,000/\$8,000	\$4,000/\$8,000
	H.S.A.	\$750/\$1,500	\$750/\$1,500
	EE Responsibility	\$750/\$1,500	\$750/\$1,500
	H.R.A.	\$2,500/\$5,000	\$2,500/\$5,000
<b>Premium:</b>	BCBS Premium		
	s 43	\$753.69	\$753.69
	d 43	\$1,306.92	\$1,306.92
	f 44	\$2,032.68	\$2,032.68
	<b>A. Total Annual Premium</b>	<b>\$2,136,530</b>	<b>\$2,136,530</b>
<i>BCBS increase from 2020:</i>		<i>0.00%</i>	
<b>H.S.A. Funding:</b>	s \$750	\$32,250	\$32,250
	d/f \$1,500	\$130,500	\$130,500
	<b>B. Total H.S.A. Funding</b>	<b>\$162,750</b>	<b>\$162,750</b>
<b>H.R.A. Funding:</b>	s \$2,500	\$107,500	\$107,500
	d/f \$5,000	\$435,000	\$435,000
	Total HRA Liability	\$542,500	\$542,500
	Expected Utilization	49.0%	49.0%
	<b>C. Expected HRA Funding</b>	<b>\$265,825</b>	<b>\$265,825</b>
	<b>Total Plan Cost (A+B+C)</b>	<b>\$2,565,105</b>	<b>\$2,565,105</b>
<i>total plan renewal increase:</i>		<i>0.0%</i>	

<b>Employee Payroll Deductions</b>		1%	3%	
Monthly	single	\$7.54	\$22.61	
	double	\$13.07	\$39.21	
	family	\$20.33	\$60.98	
Per Payroll (24/annual)	single	\$3.77	\$11.31	change \$7.54
	double	\$6.53	\$19.60	\$13.07
	family	\$10.16	\$30.49	\$20.33



# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

Town Manager's Office · 230 Main Street · Brattleboro, VT 05301  
(802) 251-8151 Fax (802) 257-2322

October 13, 2020

Memo To: Brattleboro Selectboard  
Via: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
Memo From: Patrick Moreland, Assistant Town Manager  
Memo Re: 2021 Lease with Experienced Goods

**Recommendation:** To authorize the Town Manager to execute a one year lease for \$3,000 per month, beginning on 2/1/21 and continuing through 1/31/22, with Brattleboro Area Hospice on behalf of Experienced Goods for 7,068 of commercial space in the Brattleboro Transportation Center, located at 77 Flat Street.

Experienced Goods, a shop selling used clothing and household goods, has been a tenant in the Brattleboro Transportation Center since 2006. The current lease expires at the end of January 2020. Covid-19 has hit Experienced Goods especially hard because the entire business model is centered around volume sales and the Governor's order places restrictions on the total number of staff and shoppers allowed in the store at any one time. At the beginning of Covid-19, for a three-month period between March and June, the business was completely closed. We waived the rent for these three months and have charged reduced rent since July.

At the October 6 Selectboard meeting, Town staff recommended and the Selectboard approved a one-year lease with the Brattleboro Reformer for a significantly reduced rate of monthly rent. The reduced rent and short duration were agreeable explicitly because of the significant economic impacts of Covid-19. In this case, in addition to deserving a Covid-19 related reduction in the rent, Experienced Goods has been offered similar space by another property owner for \$3,000 per month. If Experienced Goods relocated, the Town would be hard pressed to find a new tenant. With so much uncertainty, two things stand out as making sense. The first is that right now is not the time to be negotiating long term agreements. Staff is recommending only a one-year lease. Covid-19 may get better or it may get worse, we simply do not know. Accordingly, we should adopt a wait and see approach and revisit the issue one year from now. The second thing that makes sense is that we take this opportunity to invest in the future success of one of our long-term tenants. Although there are no guarantees of what may follow in the years to come either for Experienced Goods (will they survive?) or for the Town (will the Parking Fund be able to stand on its own?), Town staff believes that a show of good faith during this period of economic turmoil is the right thing to do.



# Brattleboro Planning Services

230 Main Street, Suite 202 • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
Phone 802-251-8154 • [planning@brattleboro.org](mailto:planning@brattleboro.org)

To: Selectboard  
Via: Peter Elwell, Town Manager  
From: Sue Fillion, Planning Director  
Date: October 14, 2020  
Re: FY21 EPA Brownfields Grant

The EPA is accepting applications for its Assessment Grants through October 28, 2020. The Town received \$400,000 in EPA Assessment funding in 2015. The remaining funds that are available are currently earmarked for sites that are currently in our program. I am seeking authorization to apply for an additional \$200,000 in EPA Assessment grant funding to extend the program.

The Brattleboro Brownfields Program was started because bringing brownfields back into active use has many benefits: protecting water quality, decreasing vacancy, reducing hazards to human health and the environment, increasing the tax base, and providing new neighborhood amenities. The grant funding allows the Town to work with eligible property owners or prospective purchasers to provide environmental assessments and other valuable technical reports. These assessments ensure that sufficient environmental information is obtained to manage risk and liability for the property owner and encourage the reuse and redevelopment of properties. The funding cannot be used for cleaning up a site, but other sources of federal and state funds are potentially available. The Windham Regional Commission (WRC) does have a revolving loan fund that can make low-interest loans or give grants for cleanup.

The chart below illustrates some of the projects that have been through the Town's Brownfields program. Brownfields assessment happens early in the redevelopment process and is often essential that it be done prior to a lender providing finance for the purchase of a property.

Site	EPA Funding	Use of Funds	Leveraged
Brattleboro Police Department (former Reformer Building)	\$26,203	Phase II Assessment	\$4,100,000
250 Birge Street	\$75,105	Phase I, Phase II, Cleanup Planning, Historic Resource Assessment, Archeological Resource Assessment	Not yet determined

Site	EPA Funding	Use of Funds	Leveraged
Groundworks – South Main Street Project	\$6,831	Hazardous Building Materials Testing	Approx. \$3,165,000
NEYT outdoor amphitheater	\$13,589	Cleanup Planning, Supplemental Assessment	\$226,000

The Windham Regional Commission currently has an EPA Assessment Grant, but they are low on funds and not eligible to apply this year. Their program has been used over the last two years to help several sites in Brattleboro that needed assessment or corrective action planning. Without additional funding, there will be no locally accessible source of assessment funding for projects in Brattleboro.

The continuation of a Brownfields Assessment Program will help implement the following Town Plan goals and policies:

- To pursue local economic development strategies to increase prosperity and economic opportunity, to ensure a healthy community that respects the physical environment. (Economic Development Goal A)
- Build partnerships with public and private stakeholder groups to capitalize on significant development opportunities (Economic Development Policy 2.1)
- Support organizations working on economic and community development (Economic Development Action 2.1.1)
- Direct development to existing development areas. (Land Use Policy 12.1)
- Utilize EPA and State of Vermont assessment and clean up grants to help reduce hazards to human health and the environment. (Land Use Action 12.1.3)

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO  
Finance Department  
230 Main Street, Suite 208  
Brattleboro, VT 05301  
Phone (802)251-8104 • FAX (802)257-2322

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: 10/9/2020  
TO: Brattleboro Selectboard  
VIA: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
FROM: Miriam Tallman, Grants Manager  
SUBJECT: Brownfield's Assessment Grant

For the 10/20/2020 Selectboard meeting, please add the following to the agenda:

The Planning Department requests authority to apply for a \$200,000.00 Brownfield's Assessment Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to pay for continuing the municipal Brownfield's program.

Please see the attached GISTD and other supporting documents for additional details.

Request a Motion:

To approve the Planning Department's application for a \$200,000.00 Brownfield's Assessment Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to pay for continuing the municipal Brownfield's program.

**TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO**  
**GRANT INFORMATION STATUS TRACKING DOCUMENT (GISTD)**

**APPLICATION PHASE**

Date: **October 8, 2020**

Grantor/funder: **US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

Funder's name of grant: **Brownfields Assessment Grant**

Internal name of grant: **Brownfields Assessment Grant**

Funder's grant description/purpose: **To inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites**

Applicant's purpose/use of grant: **Continue the municipal Brownfields Program that provides technical and financial assistance to private businesses and landowners, nonprofit organizations, and the Town (in limited situations) interested in redeveloping a brownfields site(s). Financial assistance can include funding the following:**

**1. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment: This report includes a background and historical investigation and a site inspection. It is conducted prior the transfer of a property and is the minimum report required in order to establish federal liability protection for the purchaser of a brownfield site.**

**2. Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, including sampling activities to identify types and concentrations of contaminants and the areas of contamination that must be cleaned up; and**

**3. Cleanup Planning: The determination of how much more investigation is needed and/or the establishment of cleanup options and cost estimates based on future uses and redevelopment plans.**

What will the money be spent on specifically? **The money will be spent on the following tasks:**

**1) Cooperative Agreement Oversight: These tasks include project coordination, reporting, managing sub-consultant agreements, and attending EPA sponsored trainings. 2) Community Engagement: resources will be dedicated to community outreach and education. Staff will disseminate user-friendly financial, technical and educational materials that outline brownfields redevelopment issues. 3) Assesment: the majority of the funding will be used to contract with qualified environmental firms to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments and cleanup planning. 4) Site Reuse and Cleanup Planning: Evaluate cleanup alternatives for specific sites.**

Amount being requested: **\$\$200,000** Required match amount: **\$0**

Sources of Match Funds, i.e. donations, general funds? **n/a**

Application deadline: **October 28, 2020**

Award notification date: **May 2021**

Grant term start date: **October 1, 2021**

Grant term end date: **September 30, 2024**

# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

## GRANT INFORMATION STATUS TRACKING DOCUMENT (GISTD)

Grant payout:  Up-front (deferred), or  Reimbursed basis (accrued)

How much administrative allowance does the grant permit if any: \$ or **the grant allows for up to 10% of the funds to cover personnel costs associated with the grant management ; indirect costs cannot exceed 5% of the personnel costs%**

Department or community group requesting grant: **Planning Services Department**

Department sponsoring the grant: **Planning Services Department**

Contact name (person submitting): **Sue Fillion**

Contact phone: **251-8112**

Contact email: **sfillion@brattleboro.org**

Second contact:

2<sup>nd</sup> contact phone:

2<sup>nd</sup> contact email:

Is this a new program or new service(s)?  yes  no

Is this a  new grant, or  renewal of an existing/active grant?

How will this grant improve functions in your department or for the town and/or how will it save money or increase services? **This will result in an increase in service and resources that the Town can draw on to promote economic development by maximizing opportunities to redevelop land. Assessment funding would allow the Town to offer all or a portion of the costs for environmental site assessments and/or remediation planning. Federal and state laws were passed in 2002 to remove barriers to reusing sites with environmental issues. The program will assist an owner or developer establish liability limitations/amnesty for environmental issues and give them access state and federal funds to help address those issues.**

How will the program or service be sustained after end of grant? **The Town could re-apply for additional funds to continue the program.**

How will the project impact the resources of the rest of the department? **It is anticipated that one staff member will spend approximately 1/2 day per week on this program. The amount of time can fluctuate depending on the number of sites being assessed at one time.**

How will the project affect the resources of other departments? **The Finance Department will need to assist with requisition and providing financial information for the quarterly reports and the Final Report. Total time on these tasks should not exceed 15 hours annually.**

Will this grant trigger review by the Capital Grants Review Committee?  yes  no

Is this a program/service/item that would need to be paid for out of the general fund if the grant is not awarded, accepted and appropriated?  yes  no

What are the other sources of funding for this project? **The Windham Regional Commission has limited remaining funding for environmental assessment and are not able eligible to apply this year.**

# TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

## GRANT INFORMATION STATUS TRACKING DOCUMENT (GISTD)

Those funds are generally allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis for worthy projects from all 27 towns in their region. Starting our own program will increase the funding available for Brattleboro.

What other town commitments will be required during the life of the grant? 1) **Reporting - submission of quarterly reports and a final report as well as updating the EPA database when milestones occur.** 2) **Attendance at EPA-sponsored trainings. The grant funding will cover the expenses for these commitments.**

What are the on-going commitments or costs to town after the end of the grant? **There are no ongoing costs at the end of the grant. Staff will need to continue to provide information (e.g funding leveraged, jobs created) in the EPA database as sites are redeveloped.**

Department Head Name & Title: ~~Juan El~~ Susan Fillic, Planning Director  
Department Head Signature: Susan Fillic Date: 10/9/2020

Finance Director Recommendations/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Approved  yes, or  no

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Finance Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Town Manager Recommendations/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Approved  yes, or  no

Printed Name: PETER B. ELWELL

Town Manager Signature: Peter B. Elwell Date: 10/14/20

Capital Grants Review Committee Recommendations/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Approved  yes, or  no, or  not applicable

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectboard Recommendations/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Approved  yes, or  no, or  not applicable

**TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO**  
**GRANT INFORMATION STATUS TRACKING DOCUMENT (GISTD)**

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Selectboard Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO  
Finance Department  
230 Main Street, Suite 208  
Brattleboro, VT 05301  
Phone (802)251-8104 • FAX (802)257-2322

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: 10/6/2020  
TO: Brattleboro Selectboard  
VIA: Peter B. Elwell, Town Manager  
FROM: Miriam Tallman  
GRANT: FY21 Loan Courier Grant

For the 10/20/2020 Selectboard agenda, please add the following:

The Library Department requests approval to accept and appropriate a \$520.00 FY21 Loan Courier Grant from the Vermont Department of Libraries awarded to the Town of Brattleboro on September 25 2020. This grant will pay for interlibrary courier services.

Please see the attached award letter for additional details.

Request a Motion:

To accept the FY21 Loan Courier Grant and to appropriate \$520.00 from the Vermont Department of Libraries to pay for interlibrary courier services.

## Kim Ellison

---

**From:** Starr Latronica  
**Sent:** Friday, October 2, 2020 11:42 AM  
**To:** Kim Ellison  
**Subject:** FW: Congratulations! Courier FFY20 Grant  
**Attachments:** Grantee Information Form.pdf; fw9.pdf

Hi Kim—this is the only notification I have received.

Thanks again for your help,  
Starr

**From:** Shaw, April <April.Shaw@vermont.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 25, 2020 3:12 PM  
**Subject:** Congratulations! Courier FFY20 Grant

Hello,

Congratulations! Your application for the FFY20 Courier Grant has been accepted and your library is being awarded a grant of \$520 towards the cost of the Courier Service. The grant agreement forms will be signed using the State of Vermont eSign software this year, and those letters should be arriving at your email inbox the third week in October.

To assist with the processing of your grant agreement and check disbursement I am requesting that you **please submit the following forms by Friday, October 16, 2020:**  
Grantee Information Sheet (attached)  
W9 signed within the last six months (a blank W9 is attached if needed)  
A Certificate of Insurance from your insurance company

The Department of Finance does require these to be submitted for every grant awarded, so even if they were submitted with the Summer Performer Grant, we will need new documents to file with this grant.

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks,  
April

April Shaw  
Librarian, Government Services  
Vermont Department of Libraries  
802.318.7889 | [april.shaw@vermont.gov](mailto:april.shaw@vermont.gov)

# **BASIC**

**BRATTLEBORO AREA SKATEPARK IS COMING**

September 17, 2020

## **BASIC**

c/o Brattleboro Rec. &  
Parks Dept.  
P.O. Box 513  
Brattleboro, VT 05302

## **Committee**

### **Members**

**Jeff Clark**  
Chair

**Melissa Clark**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Spencer Crispe**  
**Matthew Rink**  
**Francine Vallario**

Dear Brattleboro Selectboard Members,

On behalf of the Brattleboro Area Skate Park Committee (BASIC), I am writing to request that BASIC be relieved of their duties and the committee be disbanded as of October 31, 2020.

Following countless volunteer hours, BASIC has raised more than \$365,000 over the past 11 years and construction of the Perseverance Skatepark has been completed in Living Memorial Park. With general care and low maintenance, this high quality skatepark should remain an asset for many decades to come.

This has been a very long and challenging project, but one that we have put our heart and soul into and are proud to have been a part of. We hope that the Brattleboro Selectboard and all residents of the town are pleased with the results as well.

We thank you for allowing us to serve the Town of Brattleboro and we hope to see you all at the park.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Clark*  
BASIC Chair

Town of Brattleboro, VT

*Board and Committee Application*

**Date:**

*Oct 07, 2020*

**Applicant's Name:**

*Gary Stroud*

**Name of Town Committee or Board to which you are applying: (hold Ctrl key for multiple selections)**

- ADA Advisory Committee 1 year
- ADA Advisory Committee 2 year
- ADA Advisory Committee 3 year
- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Arts Committee
- Cemetery Committee
- Citizen Police Communications Committee
- Community Safety Review Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Development Review Board
- \* Development Review Board, Alternate
- Design Review Committee
- Design Review Committee, Alternate
- Energy Committee, one year term
- Energy Committee, two year term
- Energy Committee, three year term
- Hazard Mitigation Committee
- Honor Roll Committee
- Planning Commission
- Recreation & Parks Board
- Skatepark Committee (BASIC)
- Traffic Safety and Control Committee
- pf\_style
- Tree Advisory Committee
- enable\_other\_option
- enable\_select\_all\_option
- select\_all\_by\_default\_option

pf\_style

**Town Appointed Committee Member for which you are applying: (hold Control key for multiple selections)**

- Brattleboro Housing Partnership
- Nelson E Withington Fund Advisory Committee
- Senior Solutions

**Appointed position for which you are applying: (hold Control key for multiple selections)**

- Energy Coordinator
- Fence Viewer
- Rescue, Inc., Trustee
- Tree Warden
- Weigher of Coal
- Windham Regional Commission

**Other position not listed:**

*Rental Housing Improvement Program Loan Committee*

**email: (none@none.com if none)**

*garycs2004@gmail.com*

**Residential Address**

Street Name: *CANAL ST*

Street Num: *92* Unit:

**If your street address is not listed, enter it here:**

**What town do you live in?**

*Brattleboro*

**State:**

*VT*

**Zip Code:**

05301

**Phone Number:**

Column 1	Column 2
Home:	
Work:	
Cell:	( 802 ) 490-4878

**Employer**

*Vermont Associates*

**Address:**

**Position:**

*Culinary Trainee*

**Other Relevant Employment:**

*Volunteer for Loaves and Fish's. Volunteer for Everyone Eats*

**Educational Background:**

*2 Year College, Associates Degree in International Corp. Law*

**Number of Years as a Resident of Brattleboro:**

14 years

**How Much Time Are You Able to Give?**

3000%

Other Information: Please answer the following questions.

**List your involvement on other municipal committees, commissions or boards, civic organizations, school or neighborhood groups whether in Brattleboro or another community. Please include any offices held on any of the groups listed.**

*1. District 2 Representative 2. CCPC: Vice Chair 3. Parks and Recreation Board 4. Agricultural Committee*  
*5. Human Services Review Committee 6. Capital Grant Review Board*

**Why are you interested in this position and what particular skills would you bring to the organization?**

1. To learn more about how the Development Review Board works and make a difference to improving business in brattleboro. 2. To learn and help give input as well as my experience as being a renter for 14 years here in brattleboro myself and getting help from State Aid Agencies as well i want to look and see an contribute my time in helping everyone get fair loans for housing.

**Have you ever attended a meeting of this committee?**

Yes

No

**What is your vision of the Town of Brattleboro?**

Building a Better and Safer and Diverse and Equitable Brattleboro now and for the Future!

**Do you or any member of your family have any business dealings with the Town?**

Yes

No

**If yes, please explain. (Note that rules of law or ethics may prohibit members from participating in or voting on matters in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest.)**

To complete this form, press submit to email it to the Town offices or press print and mail with any supplemental materials to: Town Manager's Office, Ste 208, Municipal Building, 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

You may visit our website for additional information on various committees, commissions or boards at: <http://tinyurl.com/Brattleboro-boards-commissions>

Or call us by phone at 802-251-8100