

Gov. Shumlin Announces \$2.8 million in Community Development Grants

Partnerships and funding save affordable housing, support senior services, and create jobs

BRATTLEBORO – Gov. Peter Shumlin joined local, state and federal partners in front of the historic Bradley House on Wednesday to announce more than \$2.8 million in community development grants to eight communities.

A \$450,000 community development grant was awarded to the Bradley House, a licensed Level III senior residential care home serving lower income seniors. The critical funding will help with a \$5.3 million project made possible through public sources and private fundraising efforts that will modernize and add seven new housing units. Originally built in 1868 the Bradley House has been serving seniors in the Brattleboro region since 1964.

Suffering from deferred maintenance and poor management, the Bradley house has now joined forces with the Holton Home in Brattleboro and development consultants from Cathedral Square, a statewide non-profit organization based in South Burlington that operates and assists senior care facilities. With these strong partners now behind it, the Bradley House will continue to provide a safe, comfortable facility for seniors to live in close to their families.

“From Arlington to Lunenburg, communities across Vermont will use these grants to build affordable housing, provide services to seniors and create jobs”, said Gov. Shumlin.

Other grants announced today include:

- A grant of \$455,000 to the Town of Rochester to subgrant to Rochester Community Care, Home, Inc. to complete critical safety improvements, energy improvements and modernization of the Park House, a community housing development for frail seniors.
- An award of \$250,000 to start a pilot program which will assist small scale-rental property owners increase the availability, and quality, of affordable housing in Bennington’s downtown neighborhoods.
- A \$550,000 loan for the re-development and transformation of a former paper mill into a wood pellet manufacturing facility, which will create 21 new jobs in Lunenburg.

“We are excited to support these community projects and support new jobs in the forestry and green energy sector,” said Gov. Shumlin. “Amazing people are working hard every day to improve the lives of Vermonters and the communities we call home, and I can’t thank them enough.”

The state awards approximately \$7 million annually in competitive grants through the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development. The grants are funded through the federal Community Development Block Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Vermont’s congressional delegation has been steadfast in supporting the funding that makes the program possible.

Senator Patrick Leahy, who leads the effort to fund the CDBG program in the annual appropriations bills said, “Each community in Vermont has qualities that make it distinct, and as a result each has different needs. The beauty of the CDBG program is that its flexible nature allows the State to use these federal funds to advance projects that are important to growing the economies of local communities. All of these projects will have a positive impact on the lives of Vermonters.”

“While targeted to the needs of lower income Vermonters, community development block grants address the needs of communities and represent a true partnership between the federal, state and local government,” said Department of Housing and Community Development Deputy Commissioner Josh Hanford.

For more information about the Vermont Community Development Program, please visit the Agency of Commerce and Community Development website at: http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/vcdp.

The complete list of projects funded with Wednesday’s grant is listed below:

\$375,000 **Town of Arlington-** Deferred loan to a partnership between Shires Housing and Housing Vermont to rehabilitate 22 units of affordable rental housing contained in seven buildings located in the Towns of Arlington, Bennington, and Shaftsbury.

\$450,000 **Town of Bradford-** Deferred loan to Downstreet Housing & Community Development to rehabilitate 21 affordable apartments for seniors and families in Bradford Village.

\$450,000 **Town of Brattleboro-** Subgrant to the Bradley House to complete the renovations and expansion of the licensed Residential Care Home serving seniors in the Brattleboro area.

\$250,000 **Town of Bennington-** Subgrant to NeighborWorks of Western Vermont to develop a pilot program for the Town of Bennington to encourage small scale rental property owners to reinvest in their rental units through a combination grant/loan.

\$550,000 **Town of Lunenburg-** Subgrant to Northeastern Vermont Development Association that will be loaned to Kingdom Pellets to build and operate a 30,000-ton softwood pellet mill at the site of the old paper mill in Gilman, resulting in 21 new full-time jobs.

\$455,000 **Town of Rochester-** Subgrant to Rochester Community Care Home, Inc. to complete critical safety improvements, energy improvements and modernization of the Park House, a community housing development for frail seniors.

\$250,000 **City of Rutland-** Subgrant to Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging to renovate the 5,000 sq. ft. property located at 143 Maple Street, to serve as their permanent home allowing them to serve over 2,000 seniors.

\$29,535 **Town of St Johnsbury-** Grant to the Town of St. Johnsbury to complete a comprehensive assessment of the housing stock within the town.