

Homes for All Project Update 2

802 Homes & New Developer Training

Hello everyone,

We're back with another update on our Homes for All work—including 802 Homes and our Small-Scale Developer Training Program. Both efforts are currently underway and have received a lot of positive feedback and attention!

Like the last update, we want to pause and say thank you. None of this work would be possible without the partnership and support of the Vermont Community Foundation, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Vermont Treasurer's Office, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Land Access and Opportunity Board, and the Vermont General Assembly. Their willingness to help turn ideas into action has made a real difference—and we're grateful to be doing this work together. Additionally, we are supported by countless professionals who continue to help us move ideas forward by providing their time and expertise—thank you!

Stay Connected and Help Spread the Word

Want to keep up with the latest on housing, community development, and the 802 Homes initiative? [Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for updates, plan previews, and opportunities to get involved.

If you find this work valuable, we'd appreciate your help sharing it with your networks. The more people we reach—local leaders, builders, partners—the more momentum we can build to move from plans to projects.

Subscribe and share with a colleague who should be part of this work.

802 Homes Engagement

Communities Are Ready

Despite the heavy snow, the February design workshops in our “housing development ready” pilot communities of Essex Junction, Hartford, and Manchester drew strong participation and confirmed what we've heard across the state: there is genuine demand for practical, buildable, small-scale housing. Participants helped shape the home designs by providing feedback on specific housing needs, such as aging-in-place and starter homes, and by balancing affordability, sustainability, and livability. Many expressed that the home designs felt right at home in Vermont communities and would be willing to see these homes in their neighborhoods – even in their own back or side yard.

Affordability was the key takeaway message—people are willing to trade size for affordability and walkability. Many participants also expressed interest in becoming landlords of attached ADUs if they offered a path to homeownership and financial stability. Additionally, many felt that affordability upfront was important and supported designing homes with future expansion options in mind.

With this feedback, the Team has selected the 10 home designs that will advance to the construction documents phase. We are now working to refine the home designs for the next round of engagement and design development. As the designs progress, we will engage technical advisors to ensure the home designs are code-compliant and permit-ready, affordable by design, and optimized for off-site construction.

Visual Preference Survey

Later this month, we will launch a statewide visual preference survey to gather input on the 10 homes in the catalog—covering architectural styles, floor plans, and neighborhood fit. We'll ask our partners to help share the survey widely through their channels and networks. The goal is to raise awareness and demonstrate that these homes reflect what Vermonters will welcome in their communities.

AARP Community Challenge Grant

We've applied to support deeper engagement with older Vermonters and veterans on the home designs. The goal is to go beyond the minimum ADA standards and create safe, accessible, and connected homes that work for people of all ages and abilities. If awarded, this effort will directly inform and refine the catalog designs' features for access, mobility, and livability.

Permitting and Regulatory Alignment

Local Permitting

While the design team advances the build-ready plan sets, we are working with our pilot communities to identify opportunities to streamline local permitting processes for catalog homes. The focus is on creating clear, predictable pathways that reduce time, cost, and permitting uncertainty for homes in the catalog. Although not one of the initial pilot communities, the City of Burlington also sees potential in 802 Homes and is exploring ways to align its approval processes to simplify permitting and create incentives for builders who use the catalog.

State Permitting

We are also working with the Division of Fire Safety to establish a pre-approval process for 802 Homes designs, completing life-safety and code review at the state level. This approach saves time, reduces permit uncertainty, and lowers costs. Running the case study sites through a state and local “permit audit” may also reveal additional

opportunities for process improvements and information that can be shared through the catalog to minimize back-and-forth during the permit process.

Development-Ready Resources and Best Practices

In addition to the home designs, 802 Homes will develop resources that communities can use to facilitate the implementation of the catalog and boost housing production. These will include best practices for site design, infill opportunity mapping within partnering communities, and zoning reform and permitting best practices to enable flexible by-right approaches to development.

New and Emerging Developer Trainings

Developer Workshops and Academy

More than 65 people—from all walks of life and neighboring states—joined us in Montpelier to learn how to turn ideas into real housing projects. The next [Small-Scale Developer Workshop](#) (101-level) with the Incremental Development Alliance is on [April 22 at Middlebury Town Hall Theater](#). For those ready to go further, the [six-week Academy](#) supports participants working on real projects here in Vermont. The training program and 802 Homes are intended to work in concert—the training increases local developer capacity needed to deliver homes, while 802 Homes creates a clear, cost-effective pathway for small-scale developers. More information is available on the [Small-Scale Developer Training Program website](#).

Peer Learning and the Community of Practice

More than 200 Vermonters have signed up for the Small-Scale Developer Community of Practice hosted by the Land Access and Opportunity Board (LAOB). The Community of Practice includes an online platform that empowers beginning developers to network, ask questions, and share resources with one another. Over the coming months, the Community of Practice will be hosting in-person and online meetups.

In direct response to community requests for support, LAOB is launching Affinity Groups to focus on specialized housing development needs. The first Affinity Groups in development are: Cooperative Housing Communities, Farm Worker Housing, Developmental Disabilities Housing, and Black-Led Housing.

1:1 Technical Assistance

Each development project is unique, and many projects will benefit from 1:1 technical assistance now available through LAOB and Helm Construction Solutions. This technical assistance includes help navigating permitting, fine-tuning financial projections, finding qualified contractors, and complying with lenders' underwriting requirements.

From Local Workshops to National Spotlight

Carly Berlin from Vermont Public and Vermont Digger attended the Essex Junction workshop and wrote an 802 Homes story that helped elevate the conversation at the state and national levels. We also recently published a [piece with the Congress for the New Urbanism](#) outlining how Vermont is working to align design, permitting, financing, and delivery into a repeatable system to quickly build affordable housing without heavy reliance on public funding.

Partnerships

Where Should We Build the First 802 Home?

We're working with Vermont League of Cities and Towns to identify 2–3 development-ready sites to demonstrate how 802 Homes can be paired with the new \$2 billion [CHIP program](#) to lower the cost of essential infrastructure—roads, sidewalks, utilities, and water/wastewater. Our outreach is focused on motivated partners with buildable land with access to water and sewer services. If that sounds like you, we'd welcome a conversation.

Regional Partnerships

We are in early conversations with the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Urban Land Institute, and partners across New England and New York to advance a coordinated, multi-state approach to Missing Middle Housing and off-site construction. This work may include facilitating regional convenings to co-develop pre-approved plan sets, aligning state off-site building codes, aggregating demand through bulk purchasing, and addressing persistent financing barriers.

The goal is to establish shared regional design and code standards, unlock scale for off-site construction, and strengthen a New England-based supply chain. 802 Homes is helping lead the way—shaping a more predictable, efficient system for delivering high-quality, attainable housing at scale.

Legislative Update

Momentum is building at the State House—and beyond. Several bills aligned with the goals of 802 Homes cleared crossover:

- [H.775](#) – Proposes up to \$12M to purchase off-site built homes and establish an off-site construction accelerator program
- [S.325](#) – Includes funding to expand the 802 Homes catalog and a DHCD-led study on improving local discretionary review processes
- [S.328](#) – Includes \$4M in new funding for [VHIP](#)
- [Act 74](#) – FY26 Budget Adjustment passed on March 5, reauthorizing \$1M to the Land Access and Opportunity Board. \$750,000 of these funds will be awarded to support early-stage, pre-development costs, especially for capital-constrained small-scale developers.

At the federal level, momentum is moving in the same direction. The Senate's [Road to Housing Act of 2025](#) and the House-passed [Housing for the 21st Century Act](#) both support off-site construction, standardized designs, and more predictable approval processes. Together, these efforts show a national policy shift toward more reliable, scalable housing delivery—creating real opportunities to advance the 802 Homes model in Vermont.

Looking Ahead

In the coming months, we will:

- Launch a statewide visual preference survey to gather input on the 10 designs in the catalog.
- Seek guidance from our technical advisors to inform the construction documents
- Share updates on refined 802 Homes designs
- Announce news about the AARP Community Challenge Grants
- Outline next steps toward construction in pilot communities

As technical advisors and partners, your expertise will be especially valuable as projects move closer to implementation. Thank you for your continued collaboration and support—we are grateful to be doing this work together.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or ideas.

Thank you!