



# Building Homes Together 2.0

*A campaign to strengthen Chittenden County communities*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Building Homes Together campaign: “We’re not keeping up”**

*Calls on continued State and Federal spending to address affordable housing shortage in Chittenden County*

**Burlington, Vermont** – At the site of an empty block in the center of Vermont’s largest city, flanked by the Vermont Speaker of the House Jill Krowinski, Senate President Pro Tempore Becca Balint, and Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger, the [Building Homes Together campaign](#) issued its annual assessment of housing production in Chittenden County, delivering the message that continued spending on affordable housing was necessary to have any lasting impact on affordability.

“With nearly 1,000 homes overall completed and occupied in 2021, communities in our region have made some progress towards addressing the simple lack of housing available,” said Charlie Baker, executive director of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. “But we are still seeing an affordability problem that has been exacerbated in recent years by many factors. We’re past the tipping point. We all need to fully support the building of more housing to address climate change, equity, and people’s economic needs.”

The Regional Planning Commission, along with Evernorth and Champlain Housing Trust, organized the Building Homes Together campaign with the support of 125 local leaders.

In 2021, [909 homes overall were completed in Chittenden County](#). This includes single family homes, condominiums and apartments. Of that total, 151 will be permanently affordable. The county still suffers from historic low rental vacancy rates, with a rate of 0.4% measured in June.

“I cannot stress this strongly enough. There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in Burlington and Chittenden County,” said Michael Monte, CEO of the Champlain Housing Trust. “In addition to the direct negative impact this has on individual Vermonters and on our communities, the housing crisis in Chittenden County threatens the economic well-being of the whole State of Vermont.”

The campaign’s goal of 250 permanently affordable homes developed per year in Chittenden County may be reached by 2024, but to truly make a difference the organizations stressed that this level of production needs be sustained through at least 2026 or 2027 – and now was the time to commit to that goal.

“We have to build upon the historic and necessary investments in affordable housing the State has made in the past few years if we want to solve this problem,” added Monte.

“Every day, in each news cycle, we hear about another manufacturer or another school district or another small business that cannot hire for lack of affordable housing,” said Nancy Owens, co-president of Evernorth. “We also hear about continued vulnerability and housing instability of low-income Vermonters. Now is the time to build more housing.”

While funding for affordable housing is important, the Building Homes Together campaign organizations are also focused on policy efforts to enable increased housing production in the County. Specifically, the BHT campaign supports efforts by the Administration, Legislature and individual municipalities to focus much-needed housing development in our downtowns and villages throughout the State. These efforts include smart-growth oriented statutory changes to improve permitting processes, increase density and building heights, decrease minimum parking standards, and other supporting changes designed to make it easier to implement municipal and regional plans and construct housing in areas planned for growth.