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Wednesday, March 27, 2019
Burke Mountain Resort, East Burke

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE:

Community and Economic Development Forum

AGENDA

Program Highlights:

- Keynote address by Rebecca Sanborn Stone, Principal Engagement Specialist and Senior Planner, Community Workshop, LLC
- Resource organization contact information
- Topics include creative initiatives, marketing, infrastructure, and more
- Community success stories
- Networking opportunities

March 27, 2019 | Burke Mountain Resort, East Burke, VT

8:00 Registration and Visit Display Tables (coffee and light breakfast provided)

9:00 Welcome

Maura Carroll, Executive Director, Vermont League of Cities and Towns

9:15 Keynote – Building Strong Communities through Civic Infrastructure

This session sets the stage for a full day of inspiring ideas and examples by focusing on civic infrastructure and the specific ways that municipal leaders can strengthen it. From fixing potholes and planning community events to changing zoning and building business networks, residents and visitors to your town expect a lot from local government. But government doesn't have to do it all. Communities are stronger when individuals take responsibility for building the places they want to live in. Municipal leadership can support and catalyze local action by building strong civic infrastructure. Towns are building stronger green infrastructure every day, recognizing that healthy natural systems will protect residents and save money in the long run. Likewise, investment in our civic infrastructure allows community members to solve problems they identify themselves and build vibrant communities. Learn specific strategies that municipal leaders can use and take note of examples from communities that are leading the way. Plus, you'll take home ideas for easy projects you can start right now.

Speaker: Rebecca Sanborn Stone, Community Workshop LLC

9:45 Community Sandbox

In this interactive session, attendees will discover ways to strengthen civic infrastructure in their own communities. You'll work in teams to brainstorm, design, and explore quick, easy, and low-cost projects that improve public spaces, transparency, communication and more. Projects and ideas will be displayed in an "idea gallery" where attendees can view what teams create and add to them throughout the forum. Stop by during the networking session to see the final results and take note of ideas that best address issues in your community.

Facilitator: Rebecca Sanborn Stone, Community Workshop LLC

10:30 Break and Visit Display Tables

10:45 Leadership in Community and Economic Development

Leadership is key to community and economic development. In this session, you'll learn about statewide and regional efforts. The Vermont Council on Rural Development will share outcomes and next steps from its successful "Making it Happen" leadership summit and findings report. You'll also hear about insights and themes the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative gathered during its series of regional summits and summarized in its "Wisdom in the Room" report.

Jenna Koloski, Community and Policy Manager, Vermont Council on Rural Development

Katherine Sims, Executive Director, Northeast Kingdom Collaborative

Mike Strait, Chair, Brighton Selectboard

11:30 Community Stories

Using case studies to tell stories about asset driven-community development, our speakers will summarize various community success stories and strategies while using them to frame approaches to community and municipal engagement, identify community assets, and promote scalable economic innovation in small but effective ways.

Kelly Stoddard-Poor, Associate State Director, AARP Vermont

Dave Snedeker, Executive Director, Northeastern Vermont Development Association

12:00 Lunch (provided) and Networking

12:45 Where Does Vermont Stand on Broadband?

Access to high-speed internet is vital for Vermont's rural communities to prosper, but many still don't have it. Municipal officials often struggle to move the conversation forward, commit to planning strategies and invest resources in establishing widespread broadband service in their area. Learn how you can help your community prepare for and engage in the process. We will also discuss successful ways to promote and enhance high-speed internet access around the state, including updates from the recent Northeast Kingdom Connectivity Summit.

Clay Purvis, Director for Telecommunications and Connectivity, Vermont Department of Public Service

1:15 Breakout Sessions

1. Creating Creative Economies

Get an introduction to Vermont's thriving creative economy and learn how your community can benefit from it. Artists, arts organizations, and other creative businesses can boost a community's profile and promote downtown engagement. This session will focus on examples of the creative economy in Vermont as well as results of and recommendations from the Northeast Kingdom Creative Economy study. Learn how Vermont towns are leveraging creative resources to enhance the appeal of their communities while promoting economic opportunity.

Amy Cunningham, Deputy Director, Vermont Arts Council, and Manager, Vermont Creative Network

Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager and Economic Development Director, St. Johnsbury Town

2. Outdoor Recreational Economic Opportunities

Learn how Vermont towns utilize their natural assets in inventive and economically sustainable ways. Vermont has a uniquely beautiful and diverse landscape that appeals to outdoor enthusiasts from around the world and lifelong residents alike. In this session, our speakers will discuss ways to promote access to natural assets and to overcome challenges, such as essential infrastructure upgrades, while maintaining and preserving the health of Vermont's natural treasures.

Laura Dolgin, City Manager, Newport City

Karen Geraghty, Economic Development Specialist, Northeastern Vermont Development Association

3. Finding Vermont's Fountain of Youth: Promoting Youth and Young Professional Engagement

Attracting and cultivating youth and young professional talent in Vermont is key to increasing economic and social stability. Panelists will discuss initiatives to draw young professionals to the state and how to keep them here in the future. Topics will include promoting youth employment, civic leadership, business development, diversity, and cultural engagement.

Panelists:

David Voegele, Executive Director, Essex CHIPS

Representative from Northeast Kingdom Young Professionals Network (Invited)

Facilitator: Elaine Haney, Legislative Liaison/ThinkVermont Project Manager, Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

2:15 Break and Visit Display Tables

2:30 Solutions, Technical Assistance, and Funding Resources

Talk to funding sources and technical assistance providers about available resources. Participants can sign up for coaching, funding assistance, and technical help during this session. Find a table, sign up for help, and get started!

3:00 Insights from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Our speaker will share his wit and wisdom regarding the future of economic development and send attendees off to network invigorated, energized, and ready to use the new tools they've gleaned from the day's sessions.

Ted Brady, Deputy Commissioner, Agency of Commerce and Community Development

3:15 Networking Session (snacks and drinks provided)

Network with the various non-profit, government, and municipal groups from the day's sessions. We encourage you to take advantage of all of the connections and available resources.

4:15 Conclusion

KEYNOTE

Rebecca Sanborn Stone

is a Principal at the Vermont consulting firm Community Workshop, which brings creative engagement, planning, placemaking, and effective communications to towns, cities and non-profit organizations across North America.



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