



Keys to the Valley Newsletter

As we round the corner into fall, Keys to the Valley is readying our findings for public view and conversation. In 2019, the challenges of finding a home in the area were commonly recognized by residents. Our homes are older and less efficient; they need to meet new lifestyle needs for our aging and disabled residents; and they lack in number at an affordable price - just to name a few identified challenges. The pandemic has worsened the situation for many and made the need to address homelessness more pressing. With many residents now at home a lot, many people are fixing up their homes. Many of the second homes in the area are occupied much of the time during the pandemic, and the real estate market is hot with many people looking to relocate here from metro areas. Looking to the future, we wonder who may stay or relocate permanently as fires rage in the west and hurricanes dump water on the coastal south.

All of these challenges and unknowns offer opportunities. To face difficulty and change with hope and creativity. Our economy, natural environment and culture depend in part on us planning effectively and then turning those plans into action. We learn a lot from actions taken nearby and faraway. Keys to the Valley will add to these conversations by highlighting new housing models, regulatory options, infrastructure considerations, and landscape. Despite the different approaches that are and will be taken, one thing will be the same - each community will take actions to ensure we have adequate homes.



Lebanon, NH
Photo by Braxton Freeman

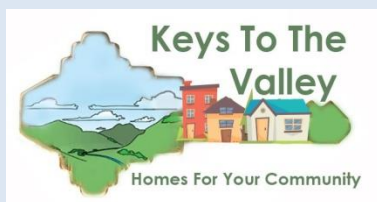


Pomfret, VT
Photo by Braxton Freeman

The Upper Valley Continuum of Care is working on a strategic plan. Please [help us distribute these surveys to address housing insecurity in our region](#). Surveys close Friday Oct 2nd.

Community members who are experiencing, or have experienced homelessness and housing insecurity. Respondents will have the opportunity to win a \$25 VISA gift card. [Survey Link](#).

Providers who serve community members experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. [Provider Survey Link](#).



In Focus

Ideas for New Homes In Chester VT

The need for new homes at a reasonable price is clearly understood. However, they are generally not being produced by the market. It may be possible to provide new homes incrementally, especially in village locations that are served by infrastructure. Many people think there is "no room" for new homes in these areas. We developed a few mock developments to demonstrate and visualize what appears to be feasible. One such idea was done along Church Street in the Village of Chester, Vermont to help visualize how 7 new homes could fit within an existing neighborhood. See if you can identify the 2 mock buildings in the image below – one a duplex with 3 bedrooms for each unit and the other a smaller building to hold two detached rental units. Further down the street, there are locations imagined for accessory dwelling units as a low cost rental opportunities and the conversion of a large single family home to a duplex. Interacting visually with an *imagined* future can help us consider possibilities more clearly and make better decisions.



An example accessory dwelling unit.
<https://inhabitat.com/>



Chester, VT. Photo by Braxton Freeman with modifications by Keys to the Valley