



# The Vermont Video Connect Opportunity

November 2015

# Background

- ▶ During the 2015 legislative session, Vermont Interactive Technologies (VIT) was defunded and will cease to operate in its current form on December 31, 2015
- ▶ VIT currently operates studios at 13 locations across Vermont, and has been used by government, education, non-profit organizations and businesses to hold hearings, meetings, and trainings.
- ▶ The legislature created a working group to explore videoconferencing impacts and options post-VIT. At their meeting on October 28, the VIT Working Group voted to endorse a successor videoconferencing proposal called **Vermont Video Connect**, and authorized staff to begin formal discussions with potential partners - career technical education centers (CTE), public libraries, cable access stations, senior citizens centers and planning organizations - all of which are valuable community resources and cover much of the same regions currently served by VIT

## Innovative opportunities

- ▶ VIT currently employs technicians to manually operate the codec cameras and adjust microphones at VIT sites; however, new videoconferencing innovations enable sophisticated auto-operation capabilities at a fraction of the cost
- ▶ **Vermont Video Connect (VVC)** partners will reap benefits from this videoconferencing technology - the opportunities are many

## Benefits

- ▶ Expanded online learning opportunities at CTEs, including dual enrollment and adult education course offerings
- ▶ Technological capability to interconnect with all VVC partners for trainings, meetings, planning, and information dissemination
- ▶ Enhanced role as a community resource by providing a local venue for statewide hearings on topical issues such as appropriations budget development, education policy changes, siting of renewable generation projects and more

# The conceptual proposal

- ▶ VVC partners will be provided with codec cameras, monitors, microphones and a mobile cart thus maximizing flexibility at each location
- ▶ Centralized scheduling services provided by the Department of Public Service with each site retaining local control over their room availability
- ▶ Technical support and maintenance of the equipment, as well as training on equipment use, will be managed by the Department of Public Service
- ▶ VVC participants will receive an annual stipend estimated to be \$4,000 to offset incidental costs incurred, for example if a staff person stays on for an extra couple of hours to open and close a room where a videoconference is being held in the evening

## The transition period

- ▶ Departments within the Vermont Agency of Administration will fund and coordinate the dismantling of VIT studios, and relocation and installation of equipment at **VVC** partner locations\*
- ▶ *\* Current VIT sites that partner with Vermont Video Connect will not have their studios dismantled.*
- ▶ The Department of Public Service will fund and manage the videoconferencing bridge and will coordinate with other state agencies to market **Vermont Video Connect**

## What's next

- ▶ The VIT Working Group will next meet on November 24, 2015 and will receive an update on what organizations have expressed interest in **Vermont Video Connect** participation
- ▶ On December 1, 2015, the VIT Working Group will submit a report with recommendations to the legislature related to the closure of VIT
- ▶ Organizations interested in **Vermont Video Connect** participation will receive regular updates as the process continues and decisions are made

## Contact us

- ▶ Please feel free to contact us at any time to learn more about **Vermont Video Connect** and decisions related to its deployment:

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# VVC Future Locations



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