



Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing
Attn: Commissioner Heather Pelham
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620

May 28, 2020

Dear Commissioner Pelham:

DigInVT was established in 2010 as a statewide partnership to strengthen Vermont's agricultural and culinary tourism industry and provide economic benefit across the food system and working landscape. We are focused on collaborative marketing efforts in every region of our state to support the members of our various associations and agritourism as a whole. We represent a coalition that is the backbone of Vermont's tourism industry, inclusive of farmers, restaurants, hotels, inns and B&Bs, farmers markets, breweries, cheesemakers, maple producers, cideries, fruit tree growers, and wineries.

We respect your initial approach of issuing Coronavirus Relief Funding dollars to regional entities for marketing. However, we feel our long established statewide partnership is the most effective way to make the most efficient and pointed use of those marketing dollars at a time when businesses need them most: summer and fall. Unlike the regional entities that are yet to be formed, DigInVT can provide the State of Vermont the following:

- [DigInVT.com](https://www.diginvt.com) is an online platform funded through state and federal grants that currently markets to the industries you want to target. The DigInVT partnership is a useful framework for organizing conversations on how best to address development in the culinary and agricultural tourism sectors. The online platform, overseen by the organizations it represents, is the concrete tool that is the outcome of these conversations. We have the infrastructure within this platform to add additional businesses outside of agritourism and have the staff resources to work with individual

towns to ensure all businesses that could benefit from our marketing efforts would be included. Please reference the attached examples from DigInVt.com.

- The Vermont Brewery Challenge is a mobile app with a following of 19K users that has generated \$1,021,440 of economic activity in the past two years. The State granted \$46K to develop this app and this platform can be replicated to include industries other than breweries. The attached example shows how other beverages can be added to our existing app, but the possibilities are endless for the retail and experience-based establishments that can be added and branded for DigInVT. The DigInVT partnership has an experienced Project Manager on staff that has worked with the app development team and, with the proper funding, can easily implement the replication of a similar platform to target all the industries statewide you want to market. We can target the 19K followers we already have to promote the use of an app that has been expanded to include all markets. Please reference the attached mobile app examples and letter of support from the developer, DarumaTech.
- Springtime is the time to market for outdoor activities. This partnership would allow an immediate implementation of a marketing program without the need to establish regional working groups. The marketing dollars can then efficiently be put to use immediately.
- There are nearly 100K targeted followers of our collective associations.
- We have trained marketing staff that know the nuances of the businesses we represent, what they need and how to put marketing dollars to the most effective use.
- DigInVT manages a consistent and targeted statewide campaign that does and will continue to focus on all regions in the state in the same manner and create familiar, consumer-friendly messaging.
- We have a working group that already has an established office space, strong relationships, functional ways of communicating, and identified strengths between its members.

We believe your concept for a \$25 for \$50 campaign is a fabulous one and estimate that based on the funding you have allocated, 25% of Vermonters could take advantage of such a campaign, assisting their bottom lines and those of our retailers.

The Governor's announcement on Friday May 22nd cancels all large scale events for the remainder of the year. The nonprofit associations that support the sectors that are at the core of Vermont's culinary and agricultural tourism industry are bound to dissolve as their major fundraisers are through large scale events. Festivals such as the Vermont Fresh Network's Annual Forum Dinner, the Vermont Cheese Festival, and the Vermont Brewers Festival will not bring in anticipated funding this year. If our associations cease to exist, the events we host, when we are able to host again, will also disappear. The ripple effect of this will be crippling to the state and the tens of thousands of tourists we attract annually. An economic impact study done by the Brewers Association is attached and shows the \$2.3M impact from tourists that just one of these festivals has on our economy.

By allowing the DigInVT partnership to manage the CRF marketing dollars, the associations that represent the culinary and agricultural tourism of Vermont will be able to support their members in a time when they need us most to survive. We provide the state a valuable, provenly effective team that can execute the vision of the VDTM and ACCD in the immediate. Let us help you and by doing so, you will ensure the survival of the nonprofit entities that support the backbone of Vermont's economy that would otherwise dissolve due to the cancellation of our annual fundraisers.

Attached is a visual example of the DigInVT platform and the mobile app that can be replicated to include other industries. We have also included a letter of support from the developer of the brewers mobile app and a letter from the National Brewers Association.

We thank you in advance for your consideration and welcome the opportunity to discuss.

Sincerely,

Vermont Fresh Network
Vermont Brewers Association
Vermont Cheese Council
Vermont Grape and Wine Council
Vermont Cider Association
Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association
Vermont Farmers Market Association
Vermont Fruit Tree Growers Association
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

CC:
Commissioner Joan Goldstein, ACCD
Secretary Lindsay Kurrle, ACCD
Representative Mitzi Johnson, Speaker of the House
Senator Tim Ashe, President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Vermont Fresh Network Board of Directors
Vermont Brewers Association Board of Directors

Shop Local From Home

[LEARN MORE](#)
[Find a Virtual Event](#)
[Meet the Makers](#)
[Explore a Farm from Home](#)

BLOG

Stay Connected

- Experience Vermont Farms from Home**

[Read More](#)
- Happy Hour at Home**

[Read More](#)
- Support our Vermont Food and Farm Businesses**

[Read More](#)
- Explore Maple on the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail**

[Read More](#)
- New Breweries on the Craft Beer Scene**
- Meet the Maple Sugarmaker: Stewart Maple**

Events

Vermont's calendar is always full of food and farm activities.

MAY 29, 2020 **WINE TASTING KIT**
Dry to Sweet



JUN 4, 2020



JUN 25, 2020



HOME > SHELBURNE TRAIL

The Shelburne Trail

Contributed by: DignVT

[CHEESE](#)
[EATERIES](#)
[FARM VISITS](#)
[WINERIES & DISTILLERIES](#)
[FARMSTANDS & U-PICK](#)



ADD ALL TO MY PLACES

[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

- Shelburne Museum**
Explore and discover art, history, and the natural beauty of Vermont at Shelburne Museum, an unconventional and utterly delightful destination in the Champlain Valley. Fall...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Shelburne Farmers Market**
The Shelburne Farmers Market was started by the SBFA in 2006 to bring local Vermont produce to Shelburne and surrounding communities. It makes available Vermont...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Fiddlehead Brewing Company**
Fiddlehead Brewing Company focuses primarily on high quality craft beer for bars and restaurants around Vermont. Fiddlehead IPA is their flagship beer, which is widely...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Shelburne Vineyard**
As pioneers of the Vermont wine industry, founded in 1996, Shelburne Vineyard now harvests about 17 acres of grapes annually from three vineyard sites in...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Archie's Grill**
Welcome to Archie's Grill in Shelburne, VT—where it's all about good, fresh food and community. Offering locally sourced burgers, homemade fries and chips, VT...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Inn at Shelburne Farms**
The Inn at Shelburne Farms restaurant features regional American cuisine and utilizes fresh, local ingredients served in an elegant 19th century dining room with spectacular...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Shelburne Orchards**
Shelburne Orchards includes 80 acres of apple trees on the shores of gorgeous Lake Champlain in Shelburne, Vermont. The orchard has been in the same...

[Add to My Places](#)
- Vermont Artisan Village**
Vermont Artisan Village is a working community of artisans and food producers that promises to be one of the top food and tourist destinations in...

[Add to My Places](#)
- The Flying Pig Bookstore**
The Flying Pig Bookstore opened in 1996 in Charlotte. In 2006, when "lovers of knowledge" (also known as stacks of books on the floor) made...

[Add to My Places](#)

FIND YOUR OWN
Classic Vermont Trail

All Categories All Towns

Keywords

[SEARCH](#)

[Archie's Grill, 4056 Shelburne Rd, Shelbu](#)
[Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd, Shelb](#)
[The Inn at Shelburne Farms, 99 Inn Rd, S](#)
[O Bread Bakery, 352 Farm Barn Ln, Shel](#)
[shelburne Farmers Market, Church St, Shel](#)
[Flying Pig Bookstore, 5247 Shelburne Rr](#)
[Shelburne Museum, 6000 Shelburne Rd,](#)
[Fiddlehead Brewing Company, 6305 She](#)
[Shelburne Vineyard, 6308 Shelburne Rd,](#)
[Vermont Artisan Village, 120 Graham W.](#)
[Shelburne Orchards, 216 Orchard Rd, Sh](#)

OPTIONS

Send directions to your phone

via US-7 S and Harbor Rd 40 min 14.4 miles
40 min without traffic
 This route has restricted usage or private roads.

[DETAILS](#)



FRESH FEED

EXPERIENCE THE AUTHENTIC
TASTE OF VERMONT
FOOD • FARMS • EVENTS



Hey Folks,

This plate of pancakes needs an extra generous pour of warm fresh maple syrup. It's a good thing sugaring season has begun! How are you enjoying the warmer days and cold nights of March?

And if you need a good pancake recipe, King Arthur Flour has you covered.

Enjoy,

The DiginVT Team 🍯🍯🍯



THE SNACK

JUST A LITTLE TASTE OF
VERMONT'S AUTHENTIC
FOOD AND FARM EXPERIENCES



Hey Folks,

The scent of lilacs are in the air, can you smell them? Many of us have officially opened our porches for local beverage sipping.

We've all been spending a lot of time at home. Now that our inns & B&B's are open, plan a Vermont staycation and explore a different part of the state. Enjoy a picnic with a local beverage and enjoy the sweet fresh air.

Food and Farm Stories



Spotlight on Stewart Maple

Alyssa from Stewart Maple told us all about how her family got involved with sugaring and even shared a few of her favorite maple recipes! Be sure to tune in to @DiginVT's Instagram stories on March 18th and 19th for Stewart Maple's takeover.

Meet the sugarmaker!

New Breweries on the Scene

We all know Vermont has amazing craft beer. Sample from some of our state's new(jah) breweries at the Vermont Brewers Festival at Killington on March 21st or plan a visit.

Check 'em out!



Explore Maple on the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail

Maple Open House Weekend is a great opportunity to visit stops on the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail and learn about the important role a healthy environment plays in maple sugaring.

On to the syrup!

Explore and Discover



In Case You Missed It

Congratulations to Sean and Karen Lawson of Lawson's Finest Liquids who were recently named Vermont's 2020 Small Business Persons of the Year for their business success and community involvement.

Eater Montreal came south of the border and shared 13 destinations for **Lovely Local Fare in Northern Vermont**. Shoutout to Vermont Fresh Network members Inn at Shelburne Farms, Guild Tavern, Junction, Hen of the Wood, and Michael's on the Hill.

Vermont Fresh Network member Runamok Maple was just featured on Forbes.com. Read up on how owners Eric and Laura Sorokin are taking maple syrup way beyond pancakes!

Vermont cheesemakers won big at the 2020 World Championship Cheese Contest! Jasper Hill Farm earned two spots in the Top 20, Vermont Creamery and Cabot Creamery Cooperative won two Best in Class awards each, and Spring Brook Farm took home one. We are so proud!

Insta Picks

Calling all foodies - this Instagram account is for you. You may start feeling hungry as you scroll through Morse Block Deli's page but we promise it's worth it. And yes, their food tastes as amazing as it looks!

Morse Block Deli - Barre
@morseblockdeli



If you've ever been curious about what making maple syrup is all about, check out Baird Farm's Instagram account. As fourth generation sugarmakers, Jenna and Jacob share lots of posts and stories about life on the family maple farm.

Baird Farm - Chittenden
@bairdfarm



Don't Miss These Events

VIRTUAL: If you're missing going out for drinks as much as we are, follow along with **Boyden Valley Winery & Spirits** (4:00pm) and **Eden Specialty Cider** (5:00pm) today, Friday, May 29th, for virtual guided tastings and pairings. Don't forget to pick up some wine and cider and taste along.

WILLISTON: Every Tuesday evening, head to Adams Apple Orchard and get takeout from local food trucks! Pre-registration is required for on-site picnicking. [Get the details here.](#)

VIRTUAL: Learn about the innovative techniques large food, beverage, and local producers are utilizing to help reduce climate change at the **Slow Living Summit**, June 4th - 12th. \$25/person. [Pre-registration information and summit schedule available here.](#)

VIRTUAL: Chocolate is the perfect 3:00pm pick-me-up, so order ahead from **Lake Champlain Chocolates** and tune into **Virtual Snack Time** on Thursday, June 4th.

On Deck

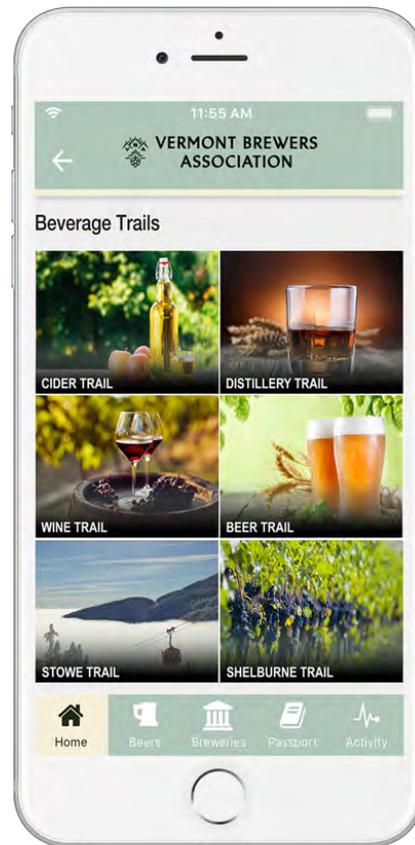
VIRTUAL: On Thursday, June 18th, Mill City Cheesemongers will be talking with Tom Perry of Shelburne Farms all about one of our favorite cheeses - cheddar! \$25/person. [Registration details here.](#)

VIRTUAL: On Saturday, June 20th, join Red Wagon Plants for a discussion of organic tactics to prevent and treat some of the common pests and diseases in the home garden. \$25/person. [Registration details here.](#)

WAITSFIELD: Celebrate community at **Knoll Farm's Volunteer Work Party**, July 3rd - 5th! Free, meals included. Pre-registration is required. [More information here.](#)

BEVERAGE TRAILS

Curated Collections



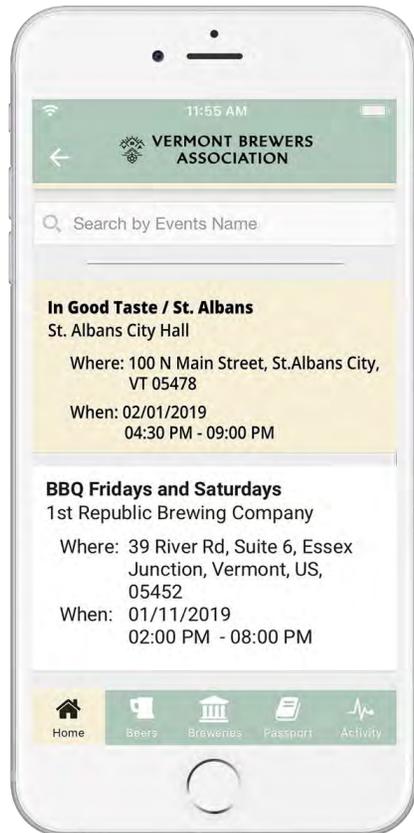
THEME SPECIFIC TRAILS

Provide users with curated trails centered around a theme, like locations, ingredients or beverage type. You can create as many trails as you would like.



EVENTS PAGE

People are always looking for things to do and places to go.



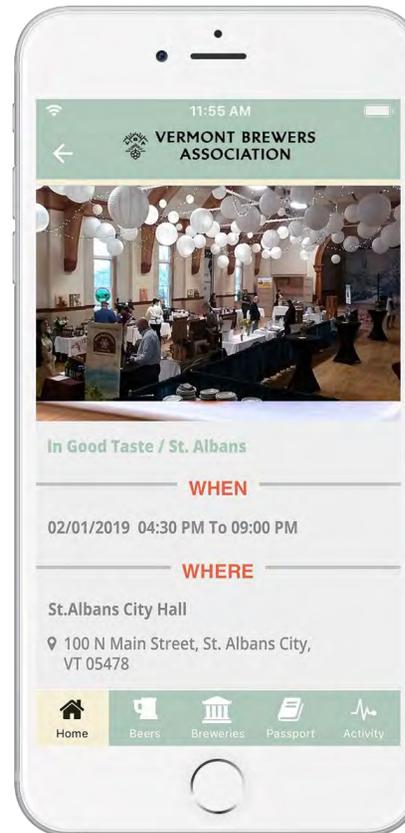
1.

FEATURED EVENTS

Make your app even more appealing to users. Invite businesses located along your trails to add events so users think of the app as their go-to place to find places to go and things to do.

You can charge for featured listings to create additional revenue for the Vermont Brewers Association.

And let's not forget advertising. This is a great pool of businesses that can place ads that appear throughout the app.



2.

EVENTS DETAILS

Event details provide all the information a user needs to attend an event. Event hosts can add images to really convey the spirit of an event. Who doesn't get inspired by images?



Splash Page



Historical Trails Page





May 27, 2020

To whom it may concern,

This letter is meant to outline the role that beer tourism more generally, and more specifically the Vermont Brewers Festival, can play in tourism and economic development.

As background, the Brewers Association is the national not-for-profit trade association for small and independent brewers. As part of that, we are the pre-eminent source for data on small breweries in the United States and collect data on a variety of topics via surveys, internal research, data purchasing, and other methods. Relevant to this issue, we conduct multiple nationally representative surveys regarding beer tourism, craft beer spending, and do extensive analysis looking at the economic impact small brewers have on their communities. As Chief Economist, I oversee those efforts and broadly track the craft brewing market and was the keynote speaker at the recent Beer Marketing and Tourism Conference.

Beer tourism has increased sharply in recent years. In our annual survey conducted through Nielsen's Harris Poll division, we find that 53% of craft beer drinkers indicate they visited a brewery more than 2 hours away from their house in the past year. Extrapolating based on the number of 21+ craft beer drinkers, this is more than 55.4 million unique tourists visiting a brewery more than 2 hours away from their home, with hundreds of millions of total visitors. As the state with the most craft breweries per capita in the United States, Vermont is likely a beneficiary of many of those visits.

Similarly, beer festival visitation has increased in popularity and high visibility festivals have the ability to draw visitors from neighboring states. A survey conducted by the Vermont Brewers Association (n = 683) bears this out. The survey found that 58.3% of respondents to the survey attended the festival from outside Vermont, with 5.7% visitors coming from international destinations, including as far away as Germany. For a festival that saw nearly 10,000 attendees (9,978), this translates to more than 5,800 out-of-state visitors, not including any additional travelers in their party who came to Vermont but did not attend the festival.

That is an exceptionally high out-of-state percentage and shows the powerful draw the festival holds for attendees. For comparison, a 2017 impact study of the Great American Beer Festival, the largest ticketed beer festival in the United States, found that out-of-state patrons accounted for 37.9% of attendees.

What is equally, if not more impressive, is the strong evidence that attendees to the festival came to Vermont specifically for the festival. 46.7% of the out-of-state respondents indicated they were already "familiar with the event and mark my calendar every year to attend." A slightly higher percentage of out-of-state respondents, 53.8%, indicated that craft beer was the primary reason for their visit to Vermont.

Those visits pay significant economic dividends to the state, with the average out-of-state visitor indicating they planned to stay 2.2 days in the state, were travelling as part of a party that average 4.6 people, and they indicated spending an average more than \$1,200 (\$1,232.95) in the state, not including travel costs, which we cannot be certain originated in Vermont. Using the most conservative approach and assuming that everyone in the party attended the festival, and a tourism spending multiplier of 1.5, suggests an economic impact of more than \$2.3 million dollars to the state from out-of-state visitors to the festival ($9,978 * .583 / 4.6 * \$1,232.95 * 1.5$ [multiplier] = \$2,338,788.48). Using a non-multiplier approach,

the U.S. Travel Association estimates that each \$1 million in travel spending creates 8 jobs, implying 12.5 jobs were created in Vermont as a result of spending generated by out-of-state visitors to this festival.

In sum, Vermont is a leading state in the craft brewing industry for a variety of reasons, one of which is the exceptional events and beers that draw visitors from out of state specifically to visit them. Vermont's ability to support the highest number of breweries per capita in the United States draws in part from its ability to sell those beers outside the state and attract brewery visitors from outside the state. As evidence by the high percentage of out of state visitors, and their indication of previous knowledge of the festival, the Vermont Brewers Festival has played a key role in building the brand of Vermont beer, supporting Vermont's diverse breweries, and brings a broader economic impact to the state.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bart Watson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Bart Watson, PhD
Chief Economist
Brewers Association

May 26, 2020

Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing
Attn: Commissioner Heather Pelham
National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620

RE: Letter of Support and Commitment (LOS) to support Vermont's economy and a possible Grant Application involving DigInVT.com and the development of the agritourism sectors and the nonprofit entities that support the Vermont's economy

Dear Commissioner Heather Pelham,

On behalf of Daruma Tech, LLC, I am writing to communicate our support and commitment to the efforts of Melissa Corbin in a grant application for funding of a project for the DigInVT platform utilizing a replica of the successful Vermont Brewery Challenge App that has demonstrated success in other states as well.

The ability to customize the success of the craft passport / loyalty mobile app that is carried by consumers everywhere in their mobile smartphone, including their back pocket, is available to be replicated for cider, wine, maple sugar makers, cheese, fruit, etc.. The success of this approach is highlighted by many non-profit organizations now (NY, PA, MA, CT, RI, WA, OH, VT, etc.) and is being considered by many more as we re-start the economy (Nova Scotia, Maryland, KY, etc.).

Over the past years, the program has garnered the following quotes from users:

- Ohio Craft Brewers Association: "The Ohio On Tap brewery passport app that Brewers Marketing/Daruma Tech developed for the Ohio Craft Brewers Association has drawn rave reviews from users. The app has proven to be among the best methods of fostering public engagement that we have implemented so far. The feature set within the app is powerful, easy-to-use and - most importantly - entertaining and fun, leading to a strong percentage of returning users." *"In addition, the Ohio On Tap app, created by Brewers Marketing/ Daruma Tech for the Ohio Craft Brewers Association, earned the prestigious RUBY award from the Ohio Travel Association for outstanding innovation in marketing destinations, experiences, or services."*
- Mass Brewers Guild: "The Massachusetts Brewers Guild's mobile passport application, "Mass Craft Beer," is now in its second year and has 14.2k users. Since its inception, the program has incentivized 200+ craft beer fans to visit more than 75 Massachusetts breweries. Craft beer fans have shared that they are grateful for the new program – they love its functionalities, ease of use, and that they always have it with them in their pocket."
- Washington State Beer Commission: "In a span of 10 months we've had 6,139 downloads. We have a 3,900-member Washington Beer fan club that can collect 'stamps' on this mobile app as they visit different Washington breweries," Executive Director Eric Radovich said. "To date more than 33,000 stamps have been collected. Since each stamp collected is worth two pints of beer, that's 66,000 pints!" Another benefit is the data collected from their app provide useful insights for tourism promotion, Radovich said. "We are able to track which breweries and how many stamps at each have been collected."

- Pearl Street Brewery: “Our app is allowing us to stay connected to customers and helps us continue our business with carry-outs and gift certificate sales,” said Tami Plourde, owner of Pearl Street Brewery in La Crosse, Wisconsin. “It allows us to notify them when we have a promotion or alert. And although we look forward to the time when we’ll be able to meet our customers face to face again after covid-19, our Brewers Marketing / Daruma Tech app is now allowing us to continue business every day.”

As partners in this project, we will be committing our support to Vermont’s tourism industry inclusive of farmers, restaurants, hotels, inns and B&Bs, markets, breweries, cheesemakers, maple producers, cideries, fruit tree growers and wineries. This partnership would allow a proven pathway for heightened collaboration for all the below councils and associations:

- Vermont Fresh Network
- Vermont Brewers Association
- Vermont Cheese Council
- Vermont Grape and Wine Council
- Vermont Cider Association
- Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association
- Vermont Farmers Market Association
- Vermont Fruit Tree Growers Association
- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

I urge your close and careful consideration in providing support to this initiative. Let us help you and by doing so, help to ensure the survival of the nonprofit entities that support the backbone of Vermont’s economy. Vermont’s Department of Tourism and Marketing will be achieving excellence as a public agency through collaborative partnerships, staying current by utilizing emerging technology trends and providing project based designed programming and generating measurable results.

We, here at Daruma Tech, look forward to continuing working with the dynamic team in Vermont to launch, maintain and expand this innovative program.

Sincerely,

Rick Griswold

Richard L. Griswold
Director of Finance & Business Operations

Rick@darumatech.com

561-990-1625