

Southern Vermont Economic Development Initiatives

The Case for a Regional Effort to Bring People to Southern Vermont

Vermont House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

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Windham-Bennington EDA Disaster Recovery Grant

- Awarded December 2012
- \$472,000 grant + 130,000 match
- 17-month project
- Regional Collaboration
- Lead – WRC & BCRC
- Partners: BDCC, BCIC, 4 Chambers, VDTM, ANR, ACCD, Preservation Trust of VT

EDA-DR Grant

❖ 3 Project Areas

- Business Recovery Centers
 - Brattleboro & Wilmington
 - Clearinghouse to assist businesses with planning, permitting, coordination of other resources
- Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program
 - 4 Chambers
 - Long-term Strategy
 - Immediate coordinated campaign (\$40,000)
- Downtown and Village Center Support
 - planning, mapping, project development, capacity building, training

Bennington – Windham Workforce Development Activities

- Internship Models
- Higher Ed Collaboration
- Hiring Inventory
- Career Week
- Teacher Tours
- School-Business “Challenges”

Southern Vermont Challenges

- Shrinking Population (faster than Vermont)
 - ACCD Projection – down 3.5% by 2030 (Rest of VT – down by 0.5%)
- Aging Population
 - ACCD Projection – 30% of population >65 by 2030 (2010 Census – 17.6%)
- Educational Attainment
 - 12% of Job Seekers had Bachelors Degree or Higher
- Jobs Unfilled, Yet People Looking
 - Dec 2013-Dec 2014 – VT Job Link – 7028 positions – 3805 Job Seekers
 - However, net employment only rose by 500 (+650 Windham, -150 Bennington)
- Tourism Revenues Rebounding More Slowly Than Northern VT
 - Rooms & Meals Tax Receipts (NW VT - +37%; Southern VT - +11%)
 - Retail Sales (NW VT - +4%; Southern VT – (-11%))

STRENGTHENING
So VERMONT
SOUTHERN VERMONT



Collaborative Marketing Program

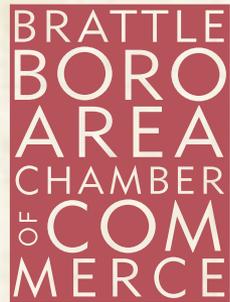
What geography do we represent?



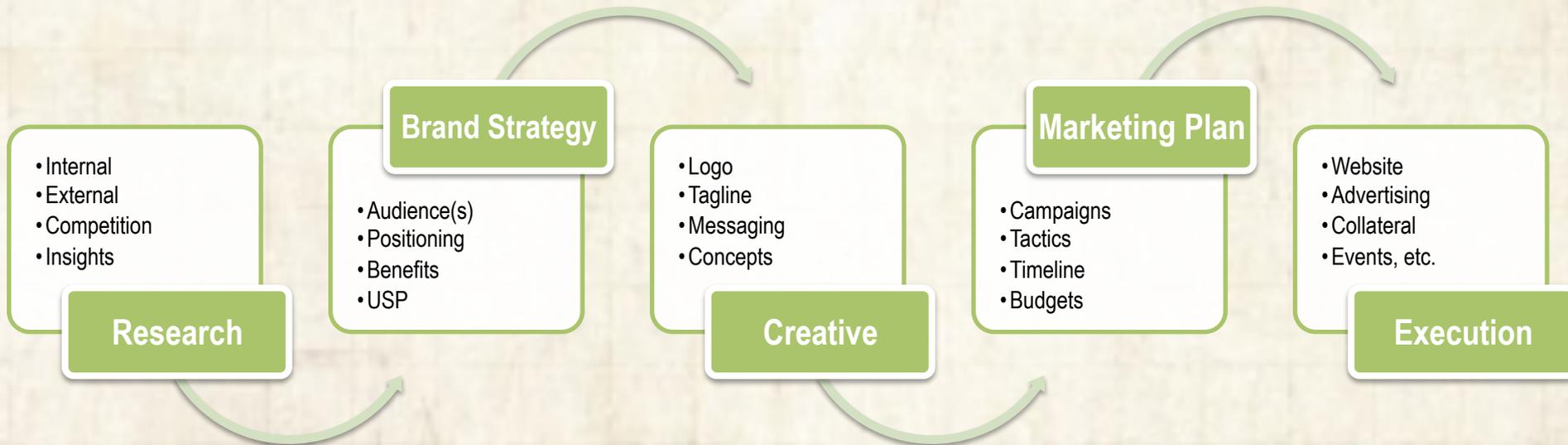
What we hope to gain for the region

1. Increased awareness of the region
2. Click through to a regional website
3. Additional visitation to the region
4. Growth in the working population of the region

Project Partners



Process

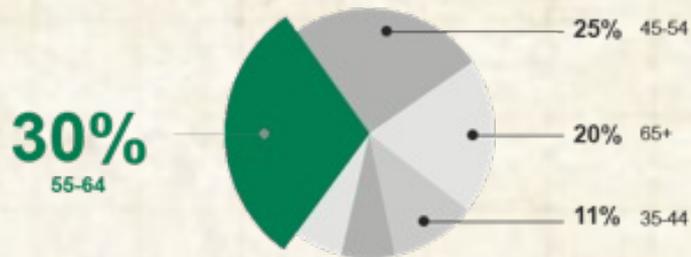


What we learned along the way

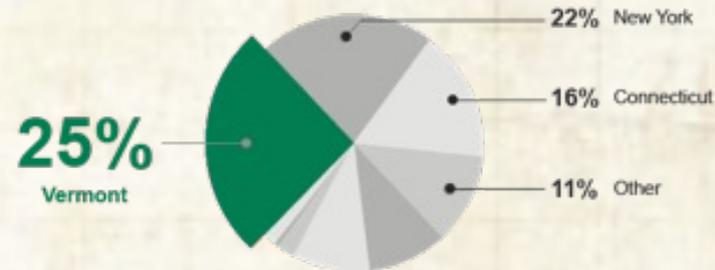
- Economic, Demographic & Market Research
- Interviews
- Extensive Surveying – Employers, Workforce, Visitors

Current Audience

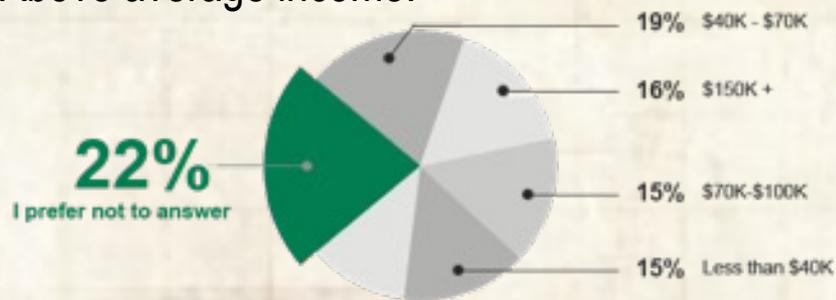
Mature demographic:



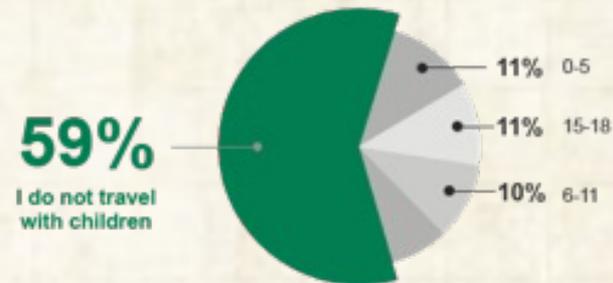
Coming from:



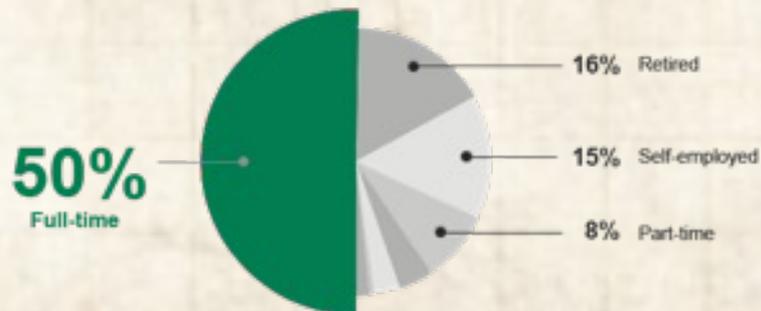
Above average income:



Most not traveling with children:



Employed full-time or retired/self-employed:



Outdoors-y and adventurous:



Top Assets

- Quality of life – a top driver for both business and workforce
- Tourism assets (for both quality of life and visitor impact)
- Access to local/state government
- Higher education
- Industry clusters – tourism, energy, agriculture, precision manufacturing, education, healthcare, and some biotech emerging
- High speed internet/power costs at or below regional rates
- Proximity to NYC, Boston, I-91 border

Biggest Challenges to the Region

- Workforce
- Career opportunities
- Recruiting Companies
- State taxation rate
- Isolated – access to cities via rail, airport (too remote)
- Competition in neighboring regions
- Historic resistance to growth
- Closure of Vermont Yankee
- No available properties (need businesses willing to build)
- We focus a lot on tourism, but not enough on ED or things to sustain residents
- Colleges – we don't engage the students
- We have an awareness issue – the jobs are here, we just need the people

Opportunities to the Region

- Broadband – huge implications
- Ski areas – the marketing arm of our businesses
- Higher Education
 - Education of existing talent
 - UVM is setting up programs in SoVT
 - 2 state colleges moving to downtown Brattleboro
 - Work with high-schools to prepare students, as well as colleges to build the talent pipeline locally
- Tourism
 - Need the visitors for the businesses here
 - These visitors are the ones who have had the VT experience and move here to work or start a business
 - Events bring people here – one of our greatest recruiting tools is the Strolling of the Heifers!
 - The sales pitch for most employers is the lifestyle (and accessibility to Boston, NY, etc.)
 - The draw for many businesses is the association with the Vermont image

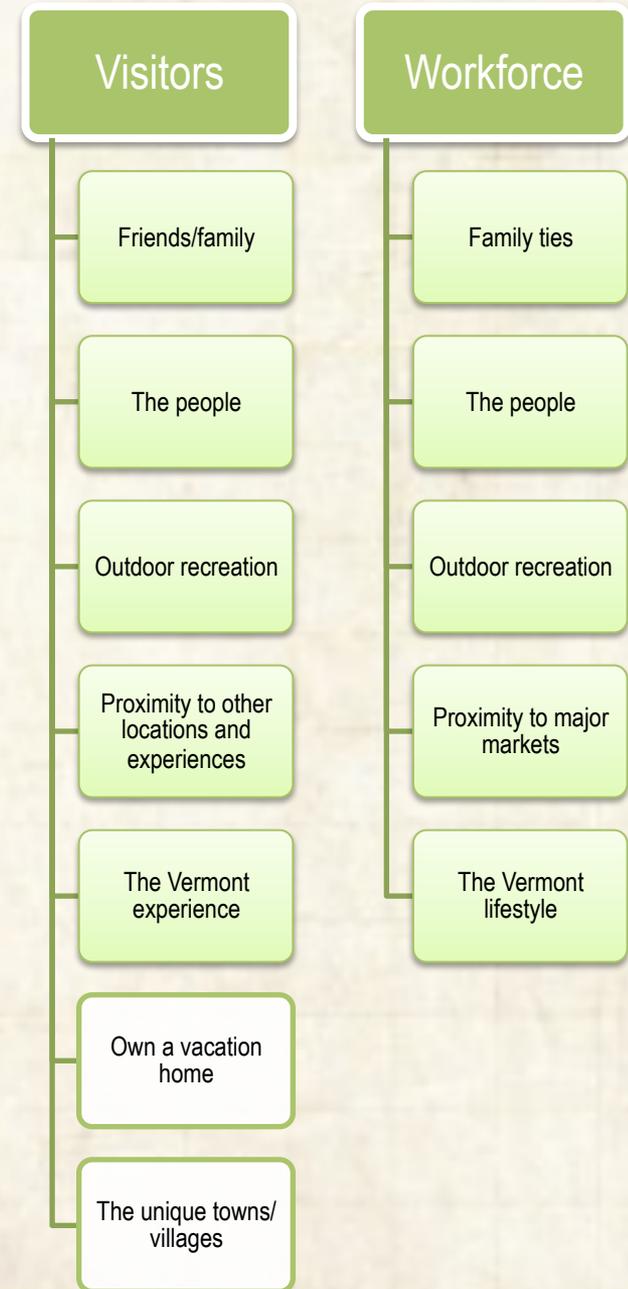
Differentiators

- We have a business counter-culture
- Socially responsible companies (VBSR – largest in U.S.)
- More employee-owned businesses per capita than anywhere else in the world
- Owners are passionate about keeping their companies here

Disadvantages

- Diversity and volume of industry
- Minimal manufacturing opportunities
- VT income taxes
- Lacks the offerings of bigger cities – hard to attract high-tech employees
- Lack of security (not many alternative options if you lose your job or want to find something else)
- “Trailing Spouse” issue
- Lack of affordable housing, high cost of living
- No public transportation
- Wages are not competitive
- Lack of publicity about what opportunities are available
- Not much to do for young professionals

Top drivers are consistent:



The purpose of this brand:

Bringing *people* here.

OUR CREATIVE STRATEGY

Geography that drove our campaigns:

“So Vermont”

Brand concept that drove our campaigns

BECOME A VERMONTETZ



So VERMONT

www.VisitSouthernVermont.com

Become a Vermonter for a weekend.

Become a Vermonter for life.

Southern Vermont has it all.

The arts, music, great food, outdoor recreation, beautiful scenery and more! But why limit yourself to living as a Vermonter just on the weekends? Southern Vermont is a wonderful place to reconnect with family, nature and the things that matter, all while disconnecting from the everyday hustle and bustle. Make a life for yourself in Southern Vermont — not just another reason for a weekend getaway.



SO VERMONT

Alternative works here.

No one would ever use the word “conventional” to describe Olga Stark or her approach to cheese. She came to Southern Vermont in the mid-90’s with the desire to create something new — but according to her own rules. Since then, Olga’s company Molly Cheese has grown from the humblest beginnings to a thriving business. Southern Vermont – where being a pioneer is a part of everyday life.

Become a Vermonter



www.southernvermont.com



“The entrepreneurial spirit has room to play here.”

Olga Stark Owner — Molly Cheese



Outdoor and print advertising executions

CLEAR CHANNEL



BECOME A VERMONTER FOR A WEEKEND.
BECOME A VERMONTER FOR LIFE.



So VERMONT

www.VisitSouthernVermont.com



CLEAR CHANNEL



BECOME A VERMONTIER
for a weekend at Mount Snow.


So VERMONT

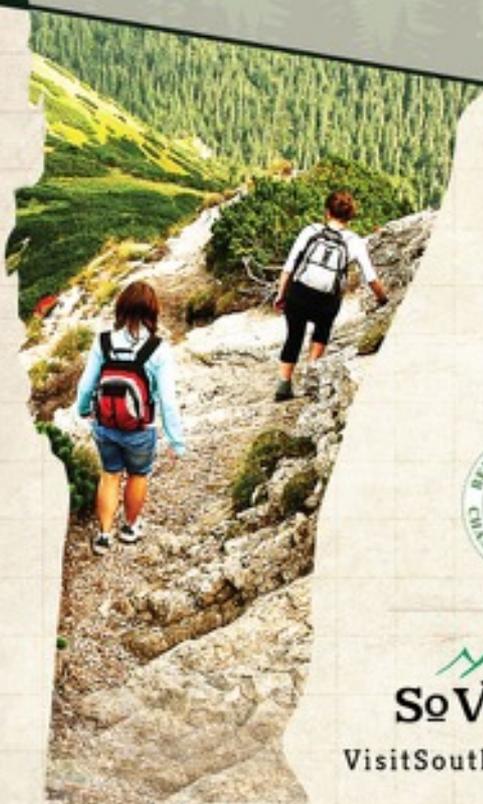

mount snow.
VERMONT

www.VisitSouthernVermont.com



CLEAR CHANNEL

BECOME A VERMONTER
FOR A WEEKEND IN BENNINGTON.




So VERMONT

VisitSouthernVermont.com

CLEAR CHANNEL

BECOME A VERMONT^{ER}



So VERMONT

www.SouthernVermontJobs.com



NEWCHAPTER.

Paul & Barbi Schlick
Co-Founders
New Chapter-Whole Foods Vitamins

"JOIN THE HEALING MISSION."

Display advertising



Road Block Digital Banner Ads

SIGN IN OR SIGN UP LOCAL BUSINESSES CLASSIFIEDS JOBS CARS RENTALS HOMES SAVEDWGT ADVERTISE E-COURANT HOME DELIVERY

The Courant

MONDAY, FEB. 24, 2014 | 1:13 PM EST

34°
Hi 34° | Lo 23°
Cloudy

Home News Towns Sports Blogs Entertainment Business Life Health Opinion Video Obits Weekly Ads

BECOME A VERMONTIER FOR A WEEKEND.
BECOME A VERMONTIER FOR LIFE.

So VERMONT

www.VisitSouthernVermont.com

Learn More

Justina Pelletier with her parents, Lou and Linda. (A Miracle for Justina/Facebook)

West Hartford Family Back In Boston Seeking To Regain Custody Of Ill Daughter

Updated: 11:55 a.m.

BOSTON — A West Hartford couple returned to juvenile court Monday in their continuing attempt to regain custody of the sick 15-year-old daughter, Justina Pelletier, from the state of Massachusetts.

VIDEO: Custody Battle Over Justina Pelletier

- West Hartford Family Disheartened After MA Hearing On Custody Of Daughter
- FOX CT's Complete Coverage Of The Justina Pelletier Custody Case

LATEST NEWS

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Updated: 33 minutes ago

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Russia Tops Medals Table As Games End Amid Doping Scandals

Supreme Court Declines Challenges To Gun Laws

Man Forceibly Sexually Assaulted Minor, South Windsor Police Say

Finding The Best Places To Work: Nominate

mount snow. VERMONT

ENJOY A WEEKEND at Mount Snow.

Learn More

Facebook and Google PPC Advertising



A vertical column of three Facebook ads. The top ad is for 'Free ebook - B2B Display' from b2bmarketing.biz, featuring a green download arrow icon. The middle ad is for 'Visit Southern Vermont' with a green 'So VERMONT' logo and text about 'Strolling of the Heifers June 4-7'. The bottom ad is for 'Shoe Stretchers' from colonialmedical.com, showing an image of wooden shoe stretchers.

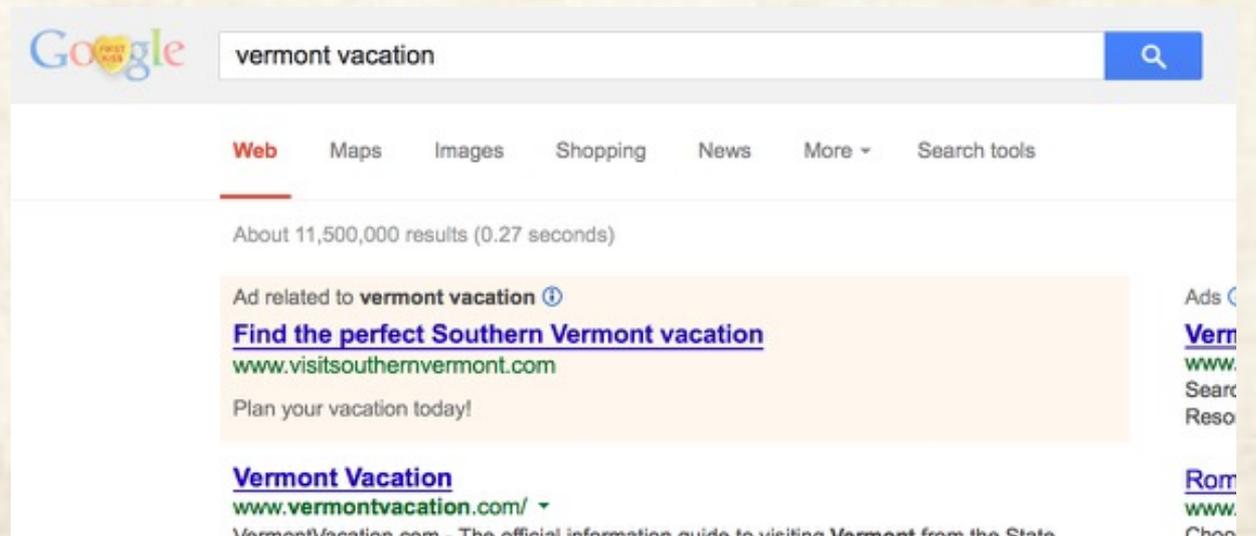
Facebook Column Ad

Facebook Feed Ad



A Facebook feed ad for Southern Vermont. It features a green 'So VERMONT' logo at the top left. The main text reads: 'Southern Vermont - Suggested Post Whether you're the outdoor enthusiast, history aficionado or just exploring a new place, Southern Vermont has plenty of things to do. Find out here:'. Below this is a large image with the text 'BECOME A VERMONTNER FOR A WEEKEND. BECOME A VERMONTNER FOR LIFE.' and a 'So VERMONT' logo at the bottom. The ad includes a 'Like Page' button and engagement metrics at the bottom: 'Like - Comment - Share - 39 183 3 - Sponsored'.

Google PPC ad



A Google search results page for the query 'vermont vacation'. The search bar shows the query and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar are tabs for 'Web', 'Maps', 'Images', 'Shopping', 'News', 'More', and 'Search tools'. The results show 'About 11,500,000 results (0.27 seconds)'. An ad is displayed with the text: 'Ad related to vermont vacation Find the perfect Southern Vermont vacation www.visitsouthernvermont.com Plan your vacation today!'. Below the ad is a search result for 'Vermont Vacation' with the URL 'www.vermontvacation.com/' and a snippet: 'VermontVacation.com - The official information guide to visiting Vermont from the State'.

Website

The screenshot shows the homepage of the So Vermont website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'So VERMONT' logo on the left and links for 'About Us', 'Blog', 'Directory', and 'Search' on the right. A 'PLAN a trip' button shows '2 items'. Below the navigation bar are tabs for 'STAY', 'PLAY', 'EVENTS', 'LIVE', and 'WORK'. The main banner features a photograph of a man and a woman hiking on a trail. Overlaid on the banner is the text 'BECOME A VERMONTER FOR A WEEKEND' and 'BECOME A VERMONTER FOR LIFE'. A vertical menu on the left side of the banner lists categories: Cultural, Fairs & Festivals, Music & Arts, Sports & Recreation, and Area Maps. Below the banner is a map of Southern Vermont and its surrounding states (Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York). The map highlights travel times from major cities: 1 HR from Montpelier, 2 hrs from Concord, and 3 hrs from Boston. To the right of the map is the heading 'Southern Vermont has it all' followed by a paragraph of placeholder text. A green button labeled 'Plan Your Trip' is located at the bottom right of the map area.

So VERMONT

STAY PLAY **EVENTS** LIVE WORK

PLAN a trip 2 items

SHARE

f p

ABOUT US BLOG DIRECTORY SEARCH

BECOME A VERMONTER FOR A WEEKEND

BECOME A VERMONTER FOR LIFE

Cultural

Fairs & Festivals

Music & Arts

Sports & Recreation

Area Maps

MAINE

VERMONT

NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEW YORK

MASSACHUSETTS

CONNECTICUT

BOSTON

HARTFORD

PROVIDENCE

1 HR

2 hrs

3 hrs

AUGUSTA

CONCORD

Montpelier

Manchester

Bennington

Windsorboro

Southern Vermont has it all

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, sunt explicabo. Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit architecto ut perspiciatis unde architecto ut perspiciatis unde aspernatur aut.

Plan Your Trip

Now – Let's Get Building

- > Build Awareness
- > Build Capacity
- > Build Support
- > Build the Website
- > Launch Campaign

STRENGTHENING

So VERMONT
SOUTHERN VERMONT

