

THE VERMONT DESIGN INSTITUTE

Community Design Charrettes

Design and Planning Projects

Design Workshops and Conferences

Innovative Design Courses

Publications and Outreach

The Vermont Design Institute (VDI) is a non-profit collaborative of design professionals formed to serve rural communities in Vermont. VDI has been in existence since 1993 when it was born out of an outreach effort by the Vermont Council on the Arts. The Design Institute has been a stand-alone organization since 1995 and has expanded to serve places beyond our own region. VDI is a diverse group of professionals with expertise in architecture, historic preservation, landscape architecture, transportation and regional planning, natural resource protection, ecological economics, and land conservation. The intent of VDI is to facilitate community problem-solving through access to more holistic and inclusive design and planning.



Vermont Design Institute Programs

Our projects involve working with rural communities and urban neighborhoods to empower them in their redevelopment and transformation. This may include enhancement of the village center, development of a network of trails and open space, solving transportation conflicts, strengthening historic places through restoration, or envisioning the greening and healing of old industrial sites. Through its hands-on design processes VDI provides resources and expertise to develop a community vision, create the necessary drawings, and empower the implementation.

Community Design Charrettes.

The Vermont Design Institute typically takes on one community design charrette or workshop per year. We match professional design expertise with local knowledge to address enhancement of historic villages, find solutions to gateway and circulation issues, or develop build-out scenarios for critical parcels of land.



Design and Planning Projects.

These design projects reinforce and extend our mission into neighborhoods, villages, and towns. The community design projects are most often grant-funded and enhance sustainability at the local level through locally developed design and planning projects.

Innovative Design Courses.

VDI continues to be involved in programs at the elementary school through university level. VDI thrives on the passion of its designers, the strength of its volunteers and interns, and the commitment towards change by those with whom we work.

Design Workshops and Conferences.

The focus of workshops and conferences is to offer design-thinking and problem-solving as a community building tool to lay-practitioners and municipal leaders. VDI works with the University of Vermont's Extension Service to include workshops on community design, transportation planning, municipal lighting, historic preservation elements, land conservation methods, etc. in their programs. The Design



Institute has facilitated several design conferences over the years. In 2004 VDI is a sponsor in the international Sustainable Communities 2004 conference.

Publications and Outreach. VDI has four years of VDQ quarterly design newsletters, video recordings of previous conferences, the publication *Groundswell* on community design and planning, and a website supported by the University of Vermont.



Vermont Design Institute

A collaborative of practitioners striving for sustainability through community empowerment, design, and implementation.

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