Cornerstone Creative Community (3CVT)
Windsor & Orange Counties
ecvedd.org/3cvt/

CREATIVE ZONE SNAPSHOT

About the Zone

- Population: 84,183
- 40 towns
- Creative sector jobs: 5,364
  - Creative employment growth: 10.8%
  - Creative jobs: 2,644
  - Creative workers in creative industries: 1,427

Creative Sector

- Creative Zone employment statewide, as % of all jobs
- Largest segment of creative jobs: Design
- Specialty Foods: strongest growth

Creative Jobs

- Creative workers in creative industries: 1,427
- Creative workers in other industries: 1,293

Creative Segments

- Claims to Fame
- Highest creative sector employment statewide
- Highest growth rate in creative employment statewide
- Zone with strongest growth in three segments (Specialty Foods—36%, Film & Media—32%, Performing Arts—30%)

CREATIVE ZONE IN DEPTH

Claims to Fame

- Highest creative sector employment statewide
- Highest growth rate in creative employment statewide
- Zone with strongest growth in three segments (Specialty Foods—36%, Film & Media—32%, Performing Arts—30%)

Segment Size & Growth

- Design: 26%
- Visual Arts & Crafts: 16%
- Literary Arts: 10%
- Film & Media: 11%
- Performing Arts: 15%
- Culture & Heritage: 6%
- Specialty Foods: 17%

Employment Types

- Design: 49%
- Visual Arts & Crafts: 28%
- Literary Arts: 27%
- Film & Media: 50%
- Performing Arts: 27%
- Culture & Heritage: 90%
- Specialty Foods: 72%
- TOTAL: 67%

CreateVT Action Plan | AUGUST 2021
CREATIVE ZONE ASSESSMENT

Strengths

• Artisanal culture and enterprises, including high concentration of microbusinesses
• Strong knowledge economy and large number of higher education institutions, libraries, hospitals, and local media
• Strong sense of place, downtowns, authenticity, and small town character in towns and micro-regions
• Creative sector planning integrated with strong regional planning
• Highest concentration of Performing Arts jobs in any zone (2010-2018)
• Significant growth in Film & Media jobs (second only to Chittenden County)
• Accessible location and transportation networks, including proximity to NH
• Strong broadband development, schools, and social services
• Multiple designated Opportunity Zones
• Strong agricultural and industrial history
• Strong and collaborative local food and outdoor recreation sectors
• Strong performing and visual arts centers in several communities

Challenges

• Decline in Visual Arts & Fine Crafts and Literary Arts jobs (2010-2018)
• Many small towns with relatively low municipal capacity and high dependence on volunteers
• Rural and mountainous region makes travel within zone challenging and leaves communities isolated
• Large region, and lack of unified regional identity
• Upper Valley region crosses state lines, making planning and coordination challenging
• Aging population (older than much of state)
• Proximity to tax-free NH challenges retail competitiveness

Needs

• Developing a "creative identity" for the region
• Collaborative work/maker spaces (and repurposing vacant/existing buildings)
• Business development and marketing training
• Funding and collaborative systems to support small towns, venues and organizations (to reach economies of scale and reduce reliance on volunteers)
• Inter-state development of advanced manufacturing
• More networking events and activities

Plans, Programs & Studies

• Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis (2020)
• Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs: Creative Economy of the East Central Vermont Region (2016)
• East Central Vermont Economic Development District (ECVEDD) 2020-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• Randolph Area Creative Communities Program (2007)
• Creative Communities Programs Final Report and Action Plan, Windsor, VT (2006)

CREATIVE ZONE FUTURE

Key Support Organizations

• Center for Cartoon Studies
• Dartmouth College (NH)
• Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation
• Mount Ascutney Regional Commission
• Springfield Regional Development Corporation
• Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission
• Vermont Law School

Key Support Organizations (cont.)

• Vermont Technical College
• Vital Communities

Current Priorities (From 3CVT Work Plan)

• Regional marketing plan
• Business development trainings and workshops
• Zoom networking events
• Coordination with other sectors (farm/food, health/wellness, education)

Key Activities

Communication channels: website, Listserv and Facebook group

Events: 2017-2019 "Mashup" networking events

Programs: 2021 Creative Sector Recovery Program (US Economic Development Admin. grant)