Four County
Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Washington Counties

CREATIVE ZONE SNAPSHOT

About the Zone

Creative Sector

Creative Jobs

Creative Segments

139,806 population
50 towns
8,404 creative sector jobs (0.06 per capita)
9% creative employment growth (2010-2018)
4,345 other workers in creative industries
2,221 creative workers in other industries
1,838 creative workers in creative industries

CREATIVE ZONE IN DEPTH

Claims to Fame

Second highest percentage of Specialty Foods jobs (26%)—higher than the Vermont and U.S. averages
Second highest percentage of Visual Arts & Fine Crafts jobs (19%)
Second highest growth in Literary Arts jobs (7%), and one of only two zones where segment is growing

Segment Size & Growth

Employment Types

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

Design
Visual Arts & Crafts
Literary Arts
Film & Media
Performing Arts
Culture & Heritage
Specialty Foods

TOTAL

0 20 40 60 80 100

% Employed % Self-Employed % Extended Proprietors

% of Creative Sector Jobs % Growth (2010-2018)

CreateVT Action Plan | AUGUST 2021

"Before I Die" installation at Langdon Street Alive, Montpelier. Photo: Ward Joyce.
CREATIVE ZONE ASSESSMENT

Strengths
- Strong local and artisan food culture and enterprises
- Strong collaborative spaces, culture and environment
- Strong institutions focused on creative skills
- Large amount of public art, placemaking and vibrant town centers
- Fastest rate of growth statewide in Literary Arts (2010-2018), which declined in most others areas
- Grand Isle, Lake Champlain and Stowe tourist destinations; proximity to Canada
- State capital and access to state government
- Vibrant, authentic and unique small towns with strong character and volunteerism
- Strong and growing outdoor recreation and farm/food economies and infrastructure
- Strong local arts and cultural development in individual towns (Waterbury, Montpelier, Plainfield, Grand Isle, Swanton, St. Albans, Stowe)

Challenges
- Relatively slow growth in Culture & Heritage, Design, and Visual Arts & Fine Crafts
- 25% decline in jobs in Film & Media (2010-2018)
- Large and diverse geographic area, with no unified regional identity
- Lack of recent or coordinated creative sector planning
- Developing winter attractions
- Large number of small, rural towns with limited capacity and venues

Needs
- Expanding four-county collaboration and creative sector planning or localized versions
- Expanding strategic connections with outdoor recreation and farm/food sectors
- Connecting creatives to grant opportunities, resources, and COVID-19 support
- Business development and recovery support
- Integrating and connecting creative sector with leadership, social justice and other sectors

Plans, Programs & Studies
- Plainfield Creative Communities Program-Final Report and Action Plan (2007)
- St. Albans City Creative Communities Program-Final Report and Action Plan (2006)
- Montpelier Public Art Master Plan (2018)

CREATIVE ZONE FUTURE

Key Support Organizations
- Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation
- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
- Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation
- Goddard College
- Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation
- Lamoille County Planning Commission
- Lamoille Economic Development Corporation

Key Support Organizations (cont.)
- Northern Vermont University—Johnson
- Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- Vermont College of Fine Arts
- Vermont Studio Center
- Yestermorrow Design/Build School

Current Priorities (From CreateVT ZoneJam notes)
- Increasing and building connections within the zone
- COVID-19 recovery and support