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*Preserving America's Heritage*

**Contacts:** ACHP: **Bruce Milhans**, 202-606-8513; [bmilhans@achp.gov](mailto:bmilhans@achp.gov)  
Sen. Leahy: **David Carle**, 202-224-3693; [david\\_carle@leahy.senate.gov](mailto:david_carle@leahy.senate.gov)

## **Vermont's Village Revitalization Initiative Receives ACHP Historic Preservation Award**

WASHINGTON (THURSDAY, Nov. 10) – The Village Revitalization Initiative—a cooperative effort among Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), the Preservation Trust of Vermont, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—drew national recognition Thursday in garnering the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's (ACHP) Chairman's Award for Achievement in Historic Preservation.

“This creative and important initiative demonstrates how effective partnerships can use relatively modest funding to accomplish important local projects that create jobs, preserve our heritage, and improve the vitality of communities,” said Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, ACHP chairman. “It is a great model for other elected officials and preservation organizations to emulate across the country.”

In 2005, Leahy and the Preservation Trust of Vermont—using HUD Economic Development Initiative Special Projects Congressional Grants—embarked on a partnership to build stronger and more economically vibrant villages and small downtowns.

Leahy said, “This initiative proves again that historic preservation is not a cost for saving the past, but a wise investment in the future. Vermonters are respectful stewards of our state's rich heritage. Cookie-cutter solutions are not the Vermont way. Paul Bruhn and the other partners in this effort carefully and thoughtfully forged unique, local, ‘hand-crafted’ solutions that embrace our history, while envisioning a vibrant future for these special Vermont places.”

During its first six years, the Village Revitalization Initiative supported 27 projects in 25 different communities in Vermont (*see list below*). A federal investment of \$2,435,200 has helped leverage more than \$27 million in total project costs.

At the ACHP Fall Business Meeting on Thursday in Washington, D.C., Donaldson presented the award to Leahy; Paul Bruhn, Executive Director, Preservation Trust of Vermont; and Yolanda Chávez, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grant Programs, Office of Community Planning and Development, HUD.

The Village Revitalization Initiative's goals are to use targeted federal grants to leverage investments that have made possible a collection of village-scaled historic preservation projects across Vermont. In 1995, when the average earmark was well over \$1 million, the small scale of many projects in Vermont was a stumbling block for gaining federal support. For Leahy—a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee—and his Initiative partners, the solution was to aggregate the smaller projects and to direct the overall grant monies, secured by Leahy, through the Preservation Trust of Vermont, which in turn sub-granted to communities. The grants are for rehabilitation of historic community buildings located in the heart of a community center or in a small downtown. A primary criterion is that projects must result in enhanced community use of a facility.

The Preservation Trust of Vermont provided hands-on technical assistance, project management and

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803 • Washington, DC 20004  
Phone: 202-606-8503 • Fax: 202-606-8647 • [achp@achp.gov](mailto:achp@achp.gov) • [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)

grants management assistance. Leahy's seasoned and accomplished economic development staffers visited prospective grantees with the Preservation Trust personnel, and they worked closely together in vetting and refining proposals and then in making selections.

The projects have created both short-term construction and permanent jobs in Vermont. Short-term federal and state income tax revenues have grown from construction jobs, as have long-term property tax revenues. HUD-EDI investments will play a crucial continuing role in the vitality of these communities. The individual projects, while strengthening their own communities, together reinforce the essential unique character of Vermont, helping to maintain the state's special brand.

The federal grants ranged from \$20,000 to \$250,000 for revitalization projects ranging from \$50,000 to \$7 million in overall costs.

For more information, visit [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov) and also <http://leahy.senate.gov> and [www.ptvermont.org](http://www.ptvermont.org)

The location of projects to date and their grant/total cost include the following:

**Addison County**

Salisbury – Shard Villa  
\$100,000/\$200,000 total  
Ferrisburgh – Grange/Town Hall  
\$100,000/\$2.5 million

**Bennington County**

Readsboro – Bullock Block  
\$100,000/\$200,000 first phase

**Caledonia County**

Hardwick – Jeudevine Memorial Library  
\$50,000/\$200,000 total  
– Memorial Hall  
\$20,000/\$40,000 total  
– Town House  
\$30,000/\$50,000  
Groton – Village Store and Library  
\$54,900/\$3.5 million total

**Chittenden County**

Richmond – Round Church fire suppressions system  
\$25,000/\$215,000 in this phase

**Essex County**

Bloomfield – Town Hall  
\$70,000/\$75,000 this phase/\$200,000 total  
Brighton – Town Hall/Opera House  
\$60,000/\$500,000 total

**Franklin County**

Richford – Sweat Comings Health Care Center  
\$100,000/\$7 million total

**Grand Isle County**

North Hero – Community Center  
\$100,000/\$800,000 total

**Orange County**

Brookfield – Old Town Hall  
 \$100,000/\$400,000 total  
 Strafford – Town House Bell Tower  
 \$50,000/\$100,000  
 Bradford – Public Library  
 \$75,000/\$203,000 total  
 Randolph – Chandler Music Hall  
 \$250,000/\$3.5 million total

**Rutland County**

Brandon – Old Town Hall  
 \$70,000/\$900,000 total  
 Pawlet – Town Hall Auditorium  
 \$75,000/\$200,000 this phase  
 West Rutland – Carving Studio  
 \$75,000/\$200,000 total  
 Sudbury – Meeting House  
 \$75,000/\$130,000 phases 5 & 6/\$250,000 total  
 Poultney – Bentley House  
 \$100,000/\$220,000 total

**Washington County**

Worcester – Town Hall  
 \$50,000/\$162,300 total

**Windham County**

Rockingham Bellows Falls – Town Hall Theatre  
 \$200,000/\$850,000 total  
 Putney – General Store (Putney Historical Society)  
 \$160,000/\$800,000 total  
 Guilford – Housing and General Store (Friends of Algiers Village)  
 \$65,000/\$250,000 first phase

**Windsor County**

Rochester – Pierce Hall  
 \$100,000/\$700,000 this phase  
 Springfield – Ellis Block  
 \$125,000/\$3,401,051 total

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