I am sure that many of you, like me, have always taken "a place to call home" for granted. But we live in perilous times, and increasingly, the ability to pay for housing and to hold on to that housing is in jeopardy. The economy has receded quickly leaving many Vermonters without employment or with reduced hours at work.

Adding to this “perfect storm” for those seeking affordable housing, fair market rents in Vermont have increased 9% in the past year, and, unlike other parts of the country where home values have plummeted, sales prices have largely remained stable.

I shudder to think what our communities would look like without the Champlain Housing Trust providing affordable housing opportunity across the northwestern part of our state.

Apartment rents continue to rise, in part because Vermont has the tightest vacancy rate in the country. That is why it is so important that CHT develop affordable alternatives such as the 20 new apartments in downtown Burlington completed earlier this year, or the 42 new apartments under construction in Colchester, or the 16 new apartments being built in Swanton.

These are just a few of the over 300 affordable apartments on CHT’s drawing board.

While CHT is best known for its homeowner-ship programs, they stepped up to help when the foreclosure crisis struck Vermont. Over 350 people contacted the Champlain Housing Trust in the past year seeking assistance to save their homes. Through the generosity of a few dozen donors, CHT’s staff was there to help these people in trouble - a true testament to its mission. Now it is our turn to follow their example by giving generously.

Please join me in making a donation to support an exemplary local institution that gives us all so much.

A look back at twenty-five years of creating housing opportunity offers a chance to look at the influence of this organization that seamlessly serves our communities. They have created over 460 permanently affordable single family homes and condos, 81 cooperative homes, and over 1,500 affordable apartments.

Their affordable apartments are the critical first step for so many in need, including those moving out of homelessness, medical care and other life crises. Homebuyer education and affordable homes-for-purchase provide financial security and opportunity that also changes lives. These homes and neighborhoods belong to us all, and make our towns and cities better places to live.

We can be proud that the Champlain Housing Trust is a housing model that is being emulated across the globe even as it provides lasting and significant benefits to so many including, on a community level, to each and every one of us. Let us not take that for granted. Please join me in making a donation to support an exemplary local institution that gives us all so much.

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A special thank you to the members who give $50 or more! Get a 25th anniversary tee-shirt.

Your Community

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- 25th Anniversary Tee-Shirt
- Support Champlain Housing Trust

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For a long journey, Andrea Todd finally got what she wanted: past summer
her own home. As a self-employed landscaper, she first started planning
to buy a home five years ago when she decided
to commit to a path that would help her reach
her dream. She enrolled in a CHT homeownership
class. From the course and follow-up
counseling she learned she had an excellent credit
score, that there were programs for first time
homeowners, and that she needed pre-approval
for a loan. But even with her great credit, understanding of
the home buying process and landing a steady job
with a literary center, Andrea still could not find
a home on the market that she could afford. “I want
to build equity,” she told the Burlington Free Press
in an article last April. “I want to plant roots.”

That’s when she turned to CHT’s shared equity
program, one which provides downpayment
grants in turn for homeowners sharing the market appreciation with future owners. Instead of contemplating a $170,000 home in need of
significant repairs, Andrea was able to purchase
a home in the Old North End of Burlington with
a grant and a mortgage of $107,000, keeping her
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The process has made an affordable housing
advocate out of Andrea. In addition to speaking to
the Free Press, she has been interviewed by local
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about the difficulty average Vermonters have in
accessing homeownership. This fall, she relayed
her experience to two dozen international visitors
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“I love my new home, and feel fortunate every day from when
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But it wasn’t so easy to find something in her price
range. Place after place was “so run down, cracked
windows, gaps between the floors and the walls...
...it was depressing, and I knew the heating bills
would be out of sight,” she recalls.

She was starting to feel desperate about finding
a place decent enough to raise her child in, when
she remembered that CHT – where she had looked
into buying a home – also has rentals. She applied
in August and quickly found an apartment in
the Waterfront building, a new, energy-efficient
structure with some of the lowest utility costs
in town.

“It’s great to know that this landlord won’t let the apartments
dilapidated, that providing
affordable housing is its mission.”

Living in the city is key for Sara both personally
and professionally. As a parent she wants her
daughter to experience the diversity of Burlington
and she is pleased that their neighbors in the
building include a family from Bhutan. Working for
the school system, Sara’s job includes connecting
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“It’s great to know that ChHT said they could help and
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Now Jeff, who has lived on the fire axe property
for ten years with two Morgan horses, has a new
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"It’s important for me to be part of this community 24/7, so I can keep up with what’s happening in the lives of the families,” Sara explains.

Now when a family needs housing, Sara refers them to
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"I would hear the click-click-click of the keyboard
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With this knowledge, she started shopping – but she couldn’t secure financing because of the source of her income. She couldn’t find anything in the Old North End of Burlington with a mortgage of $107,000, keeping her mortgage affordable. The process has made an affordable housing advocate out of Andrea. In addition to speaking to the Free Press, she has been interviewed by local television stations and the Wall Street Journal about the difficulty affordable Vermonters have in accessing homeownership. That’s when Andrea was able to purchase a home in the Old North End of Burlington with a grant and a mortgage of $107,000, keeping her mortgage affordable.

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Mission: The Champlain Housing Trust is a community land trust that supports strong, vital communities in northwest Vermont through the development and stewardship of permanently affordable homes and associated community assets.

Donate: Please help us to provide affordable housing in your community by sending in a donation with the enclosed envelope or by visiting us at www.champlainhousingtrust.org/donate.

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