



CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

Equity Statement

CCRPC Board

September 20, 2023

We have...

- Mission Statement (*Why do we exist?*)
- Vision Statement (*What are we working towards?*)

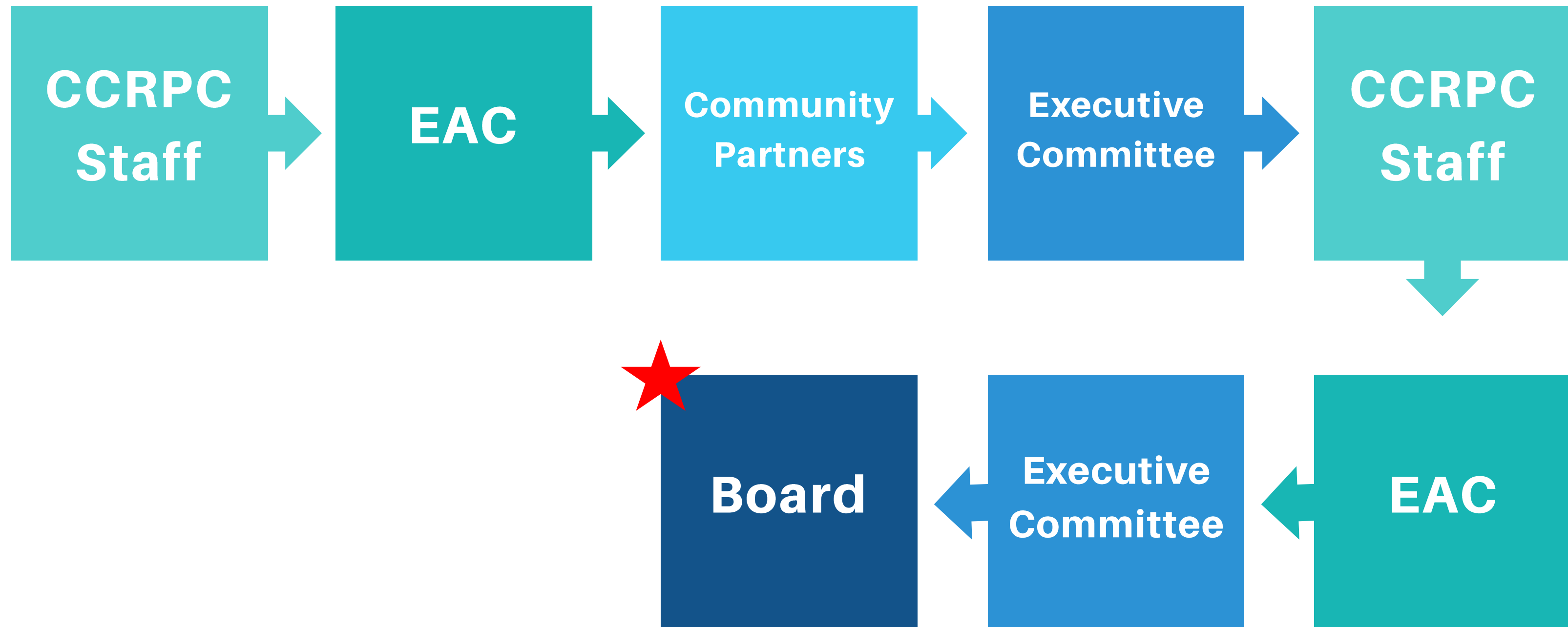
We need...

- Equity Statement (*Who do we need to look out for and why?*)
- Code of Conduct (*How must we behave along the way?*)
- Equity Action Plan (*What does the work look like?*)

Equity Foundation Workflow



Equity Statement Process



Why an Equity Statement?

Our Collective History

"Before there was the United States, there was slavery. It is the basis of our economic and social order."

- Roughly \$70 trillion dollars were made off free Black labor
 - If disparities in wealth were to continue at the current pace, it would take Black families 228 years to amass the wealth that white families now have.
 - 2022 marks the first year that the US will have been an independent nation for as long as slavery lasted on its soil. **No current day adult will be alive in the year in which African-Americans as a group will have been free for as long as they have been enslaved. That will not come until 2111.**
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Planning's History

- Redlining
 - Racial covenants
 - Urban renewal
 - Poor quality public housing
 - Exclusionary zoning & regulations
 - Highway construction
 - Environmental injustices
 - Financial policies
 - Disinvestment
 - Lending practices
 - Tax assessments
 - Audits
 - Black land loss
 - + MANY MORE
-

"The prejudice of race appears to be stronger in the states that have abolished slavery than in those where it still exists; and nowhere is it so intolerable as in those states where servitude has never been known... The negro is free, but he can share neither the rights, nor the pleasures, nor the labor, nor the afflictions, nor the tomb of him whose equal he has been declared to be; and he cannot meet him upon fair terms in life or in death."

Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America 1831

Vermont's Planning History

- Unceded Indigenous territory
 - State-sanctioned eugenics
 - Exclusionary housing covenants
 - Urban renewal & poor-quality public housing
 - Exclusionary single-family zoning
 - I-89 Construction
 - Environmental & climate injustice
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Where Are We Now?

“My last plea as a Black Vermonter”

“Mississippi’s racism is the kind that will look you in your face and say, “Yes, I am a racist... Racism in Vermont is death by 1000 pin pricks... when you start with a population that can at least acknowledge the presence of racism it pushes the fight for equity twenty steps forward past the point of denial. How can we gain support to stop oppression from a population that won’t even say it exists?”



Population Change

If this trend continues, we will have nearly 60,000 new People of Color in Chittenden County by 2070.

The racial and ethnic makeup of Chittenden County

While non-Hispanic white residents remain the largest category, people of color represent an increasing percent of the population.

Category	Population 2020	Change since 2010	Percent change since 2010
White non-Hispanic	142,880	32	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	4,751	1,895	66.4%
Black or African American	4,757	1,585	50.0%
Asian	7,203	2,835	64.9%
Some Other Race*	762	590	343.0%
Two or more races*	7,630	4,914	180.9%

* changes to how the Census asked about and reported "other race" and multiracial people led to nationwide increases in these two categories.

Income Inequality

“In the area of wealth, we’ve seen almost no change, none, since the civil rights days... the wealth disparity has gotten wider.”

Income inequality rising steadily since the 1970s (by 27%).

86% of Black and African American households rent in Chittenden County, while 65% of white households own homes.

White households have more than double the income of Black households in Chittenden County

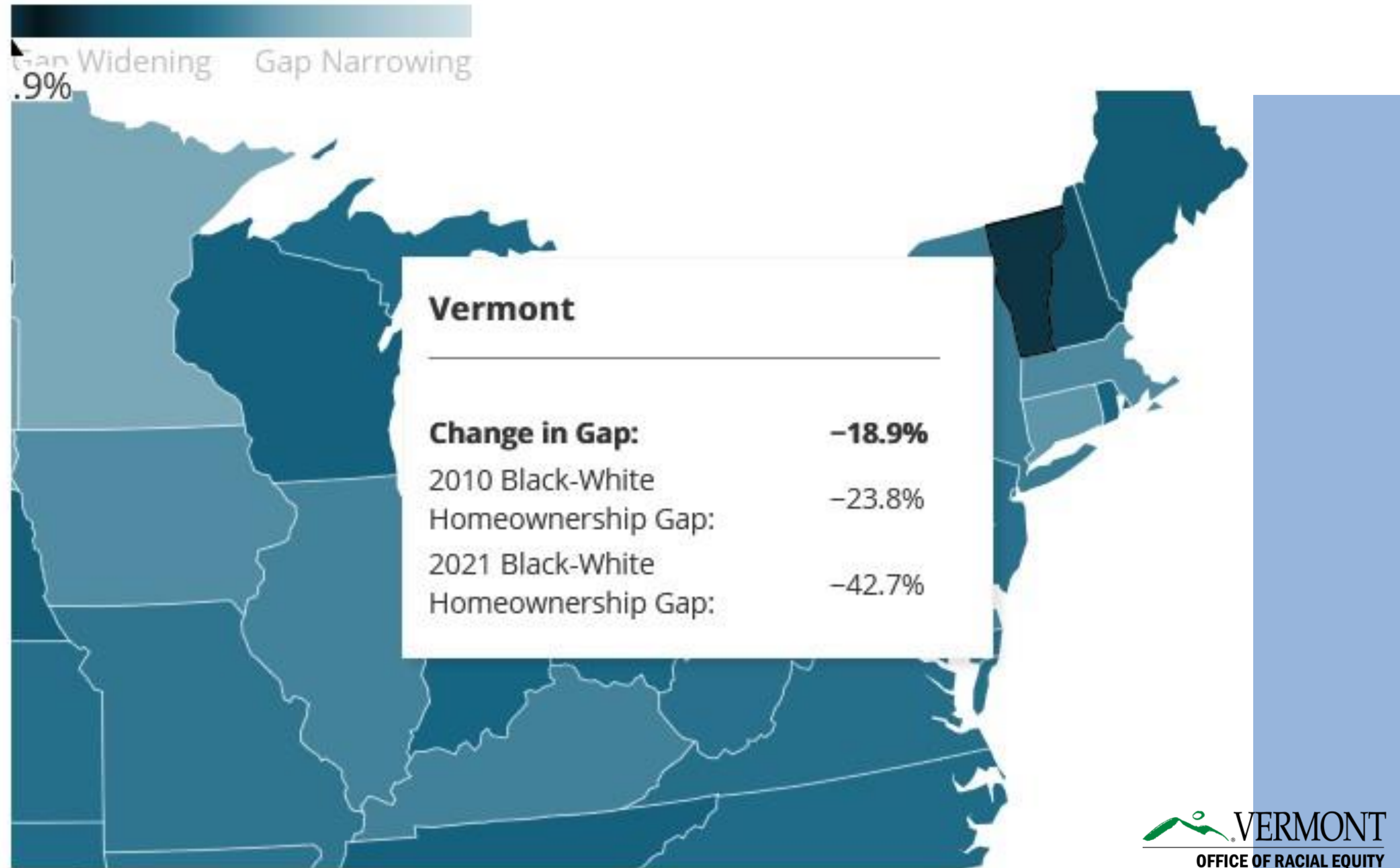
Median household income by race and ethnicity:



Racial categories with a higher margin of error were excluded.

Chart: Erin Petenko • Source: [U.S. Census 2020 5-year estimates](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

How the Black-White Homeownership Gap Has Changed Since 2010



Vermont's rates of homelessness are (almost) the worst in the country

By Lola Duffort
February 7, 2023, 7:56 pm

Among the lowest vacancy rate in the country.

Over half of Chittenden County renters pay over one-third of their income on housing.

Homelessness rates by state

Based on a point-in-time count conducted in each state in January:

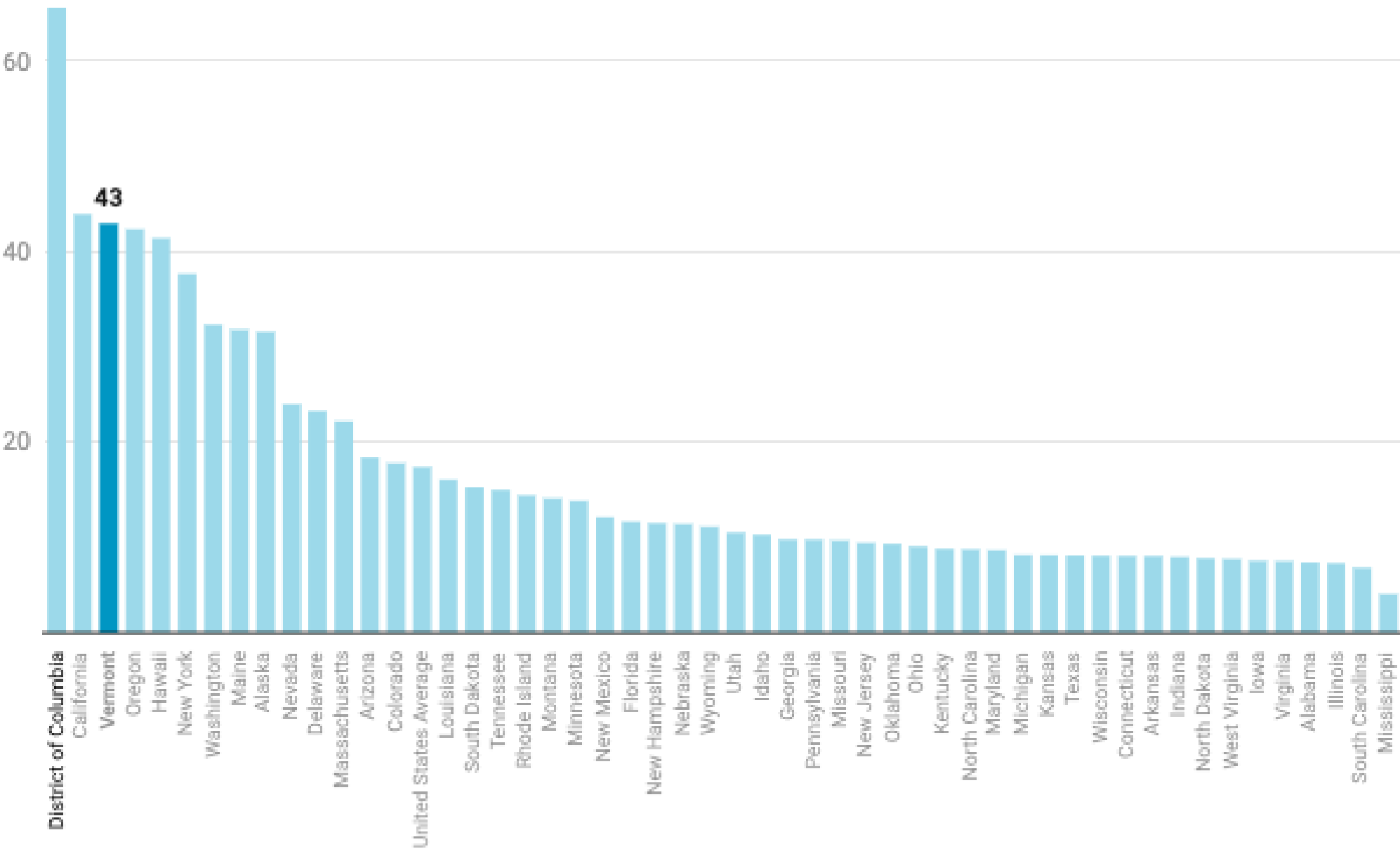
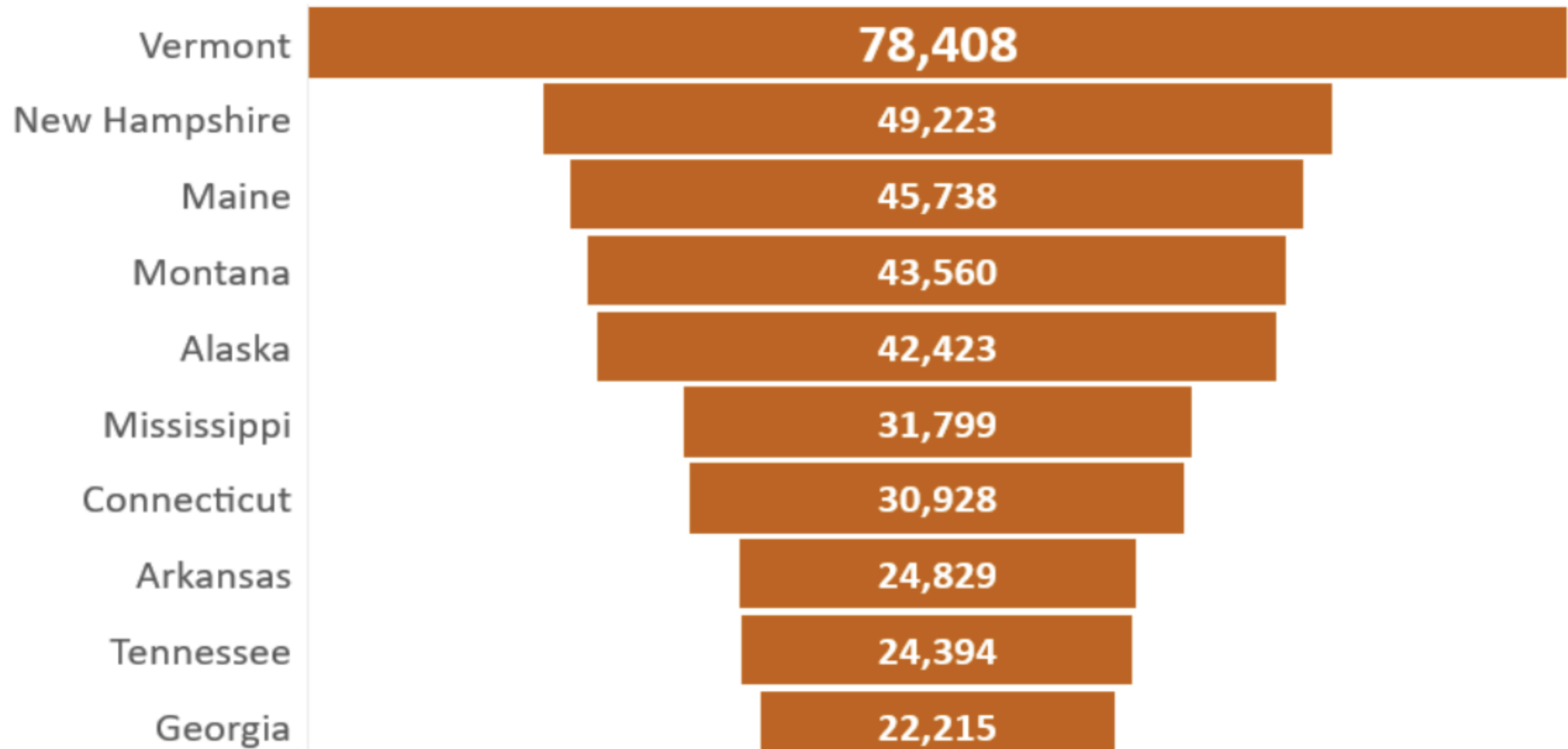


Chart: Erin Petenko • Source: HUD • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Vermont has largest median home lot size in U.S.

Top 10 states for largest median lot size, 2022



Climate Change

“Not ‘Going to put it on the most expensive land...”

10% of the State’s manufactured home lots are in flood plains.

ECONOMY

The flood waters disproportionately hit Vermont’s affordable housing stock — at the worst time

“Just the lack of available affordable housing in high, dry places, is a major factor in all of this,” said state Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale.

By Lola Duffort

July 31, 2023, 6:19 am

Who are we planning for?

Components of Statement

- Acknowledgement of the problem
- Recognition of regional planning's role & responsibility
- Our commitment moving forward
- Our goal

Acknowledgement of the problem: CCRPC acknowledges that structural oppression contributes to persistent disparities and condemns racism and discrimination in all its forms.

Recognition of our role & responsibility: As a governmental planning organization with decision-making influence, the work of CCRPC significantly impacts people throughout Chittenden County. We hold ourselves responsible for identifying and addressing historic and current inequities in our own practices as well as those of the planning field as a whole.

Our commitment: We commit to constantly evaluating our work to transform our actions, policies, and procedures through continuous education, leveraging assets to improve access, and meaningful collaboration with those most impacted by the problems we seek to address.

Our goal: In doing so, we hope to co-create a community where identity and socio-economic status no longer influence life outcomes and where all – not the select few—are heard, seen, belong, and treated as experts in their own experience.

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CCRPC Staff

- Be explicit, clear & concise
- Use strong language (not “fluffy” language)
- Acknowledge our role as planners (also tension around acknowledging “our” role)
- Commit to what we have influence over
- Call out racism and discrimination
- Doesn’t make sense to list out “categories” of marginalization
- Focus on the outcome

Executive Committee

- Calling out race, socio-economic status, and ability does not capture the full range of DEI elements relevant and of interest to CCRPC. Consider including all listed in the VT Declaration of Inclusion: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability. Add socio-economic status.
- Change word predestine because there are exceptions to the rule

Equity Advisory Committee

- Be direct, simple, and concise. Short and powerful.
- CCRCPC doesn't get to just be a part of the solution, need to call out the role planning & CCRPC specifically has played in perpetuating systems of inequality
- Prioritize calling out race, socio-economic status, and ability as groups most impacted by planning's work
- Make it different than other generic equity statements
- Without the first sentence of the second paragraph, I would not support it.
- Don't rush, let's get this right.

Community Partners

- Use stronger language than "improving"
- Commit to addressing inequities not only in the past, but in the present and future
- Consider adding word "effectively" – we can address the inequities, but not well
- Be clear, strong, and direct, with no way to escape accountability ("no way to wiggle out")