

ADDISON COUNTY TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

The **Addison County Tourism Partnership** is made up of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce, Addison County Economic Development Corporation, Better Middlebury Partnership, Vergennes Partnership, and Bristol CORE. The purpose of the partnership is to advance Addison County as a place to live, play, work, and visit. The Partnership has several initiatives underway and others in the concept stage to attract families and individuals to Addison County as new residents or visitors:

Tourism Grant

The Partnership received a [\\$30,000 grant](#) from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Department of Tourism and Marketing, for regional marketing. These funds were awarded to the State of Vermont through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and have been distributed to 22 grantees across the state. The Tourism and Economic Recovery Marketing Grants are intended to enable local, regional, and statewide organizations to implement campaigns and initiatives that increase tourism spending, support local businesses, and advance community recovery efforts to support businesses in Vermont that have suffered economic harm due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The Addison County Regional Marketing Partnership contracted with marketing agency [LONDONmiddlebury](#) to create an integrated campaign (digital, social & collateral), called “48 Hours in Addison County” to promote Addison County as a welcoming, community-minded tourism destination with opportunities for everyone to explore. The campaign featured seasonal (Summer, Fall, and Winter), interest-based sample weekend or short trip itineraries for the county, highlighting shopping, dining and hospitality businesses, historical sites, museums, and local recreational opportunities.

The target audiences for these efforts include individuals and families interested in day, weekend, and extended trips within a day’s drive of the metro areas of the Albany Capital Region, New York City, and Boston. One of the goals of the campaign was to encourage a diversity of visitors, including BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities to discover all that Addison County has to offer as a welcoming destination with a multitude of tourism opportunities.

The campaign used social media and influencers to drive traffic to the campaign website. Click [here](#) to view the “48 Hours In Addison County” website.

Amtrak

The Addison County Tourism Partnership is partnered with VTrans and the Addison County Regional Planning Commission to plan community events around the return of Amtrak to western Vermont.

Starting in July of 2022, Amtrak’s Ethan Allen Express train, which previously only traveled from New York City to Rutland, VT via Albany, NY, and Castleton, VT, extended service north to Burlington, with new planned stops in Middlebury and Vergennes. In anticipation of this new

service, the Partnership scheduled a public informational meeting on June 17, 2022. The meeting offered the general public the opportunity to learn more about the route and service, including when the new Ethan Allen Express route will begin running, pricing, timing, stop times, deals, where to find information and get tickets, and, of course, train safety.

To commemorate the return of the Ethan Allen Express, the Partnership planned celebrations at the train station in Vergennes and the train platform in Middlebury. To view a video of the train arriving in Vergennes, click [here](#).

The Partnership is continuing efforts to ensure there is traveler information and connections at both stops. Recently, the Addison County Chamber of Commerce relocated and opened their offices and a Visitor Center in the Vergennes/Ferrisburgh Train Station.