

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### ***Vermont Department of Public Service Announces Release of the Final Draft of the Ten-Year Telecommunications Plan.***

*Montpelier* – The Vermont Department of Public Service is pleased to announce the issuance of the final draft of the 2021 Vermont Ten-Year Telecommunications Plan. The Ten-Year Plan was developed in partnership with CTC Energy and Technology and Rural Innovations Strategies, Inc. The Plan provides an overview of the current state of telecommunications services and facilities in the state, current trends in usage and adoption, and recommendations for improving access to broadband services throughout Vermont. Specifically, the Plan provides a roadmap to achieving the state’s most pressing telecommunications and broadband goals, including:

- Bringing every currently unserved and underserved on-grid Vermont home access to 100/100 megabits per second (Mbps) broadband that can be scalable to faster speeds as demand warrants;
- Leveraging residential fiber deployments into better mobile voice coverage along key roadways and in small communities;
- Ensuring that telecommunications systems are resilient, redundant, secure, and future-proof for commercial, consumer, and public safety needs;
- Facilitating competition and choice of multiple internet service providers at the majority of premises in the state;
- Promoting local input and oversight in the direction of future use for publicly funded broadband infrastructure through empowered regional Communications Union Districts; and
- Leveraging fiber broadband expansion to ensure public safety has access to reliable and redundant communications capacity.

Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback on the Plan. The Department will hold four hearings on the final draft. Hearings will be held June 17<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. A hearing will be held with members of the Vermont General Assembly on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at noon. Members of the public may also submit written comments to the Department. Due to pandemic restrictions, these hearings will be held online. Information about the hearings and instructions for filing written comments can be found at the Department’s website by visiting:

<https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/10-year-telecommunications-plan> or by contacting [Onion River Community Access Media \(ORCA\)](#). The Plan is due to be finalized June 30, 2021.

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