



Central/Southern NH Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Strategy Committee Meeting Meeting Notes

*Central NH Regional Planning Commission
Horseshoe Pond Place Community Center
26 Commercial Street, Concord, NH 03301
June 29, 2017 - 6:00 PM*

In attendance: Harry Wright, Town of Bradford
Jim Bibbo, Town of Bradford
Thomas Clow, Town of Weare
Chris Nadeau, Nobis Engineering
Hugh Curley, U.S. Small Business Administration
Laura Buono, Town of Hillsborough
Ed Carroll, Town of New Boston
Jo Ann Duffy, Town of Hooksett
Bill Klubben, City of Manchester
Stan Brehm, Town of Chichester
Matt Taylor, Town of Bow
Suzi Pegg, City of Concord
Stephanie Verdile, Town of Pembroke
Alice Veenstra, Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP
Dean Shankle, Town of Hooksett
Melanie Sanuth, City of Manchester
Tom Furtado, Catch Neighborhood Housing
Chris Wellington, Capital Regional Development Council
Tony Puntin, Puntin Engineering, Inc.
Cam Prolman, SNHPC
Matt Monahan, CNHRPC
Mike Tardiff, CNHRPC
Katie Nelson, CNHRPC

- I. Introductions: The meeting opened at 6:04 PM. Introductions were made around the table with attendees introducing themselves and briefly indicating what community or organization they represent.

Matt Monahan thanked those who attended the first meeting and gave a brief overview of the evening's agenda. Mike Tardiff noted that Manchester had their own CEDS document in 2009, but was added to the Region for this update.

- II. Election of a Chair & Vice Chair: Mike suggested this agenda item be moved to the next meeting. No Strategy Committee members were opposed.

- III. Report of the Regional Cluster Analysis Findings: Matt and Cam Prolman provided an overview of the cluster analysis provided to members with a corresponding handout. The cluster analysis is used to identify key industries in the Region and provides the percent of local jobs in each industry and the percent of regional jobs in each industry. The analysis can assess the degree of regional specialization in an industry as compared to a larger geography, which is done by using a location quotient that compares each industry to the state total. Cam provided an overview of the industries listed on the handout with a few examples. It was noted that the industry categories used were designated by the federal government and each categories has a wide range of sub-categories not presented here.

- IV. Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, & Threat Analysis (SWOT): Matt collected the SWOT feedback handout from committee members that was passed out at the previous meeting. An overview was provided on the SWOT, stating that the original SWOT from 2014 had been done by a consultant. For this 2017 update, the SWOT will be created by a discussion held by the CEDS Strategy Committee. Things for the committee to think about include how much has changed with the passage of time and how will these change with the addition of Manchester to the region.

- V. Discussion: A discussion was held and key points were written under each topic on an easel. Comments from the discussion include:
 - i. Momentum can't be measured, but is present in some Towns.
 - ii. It was asked whether there was value in breaking up the CEDS Region into smaller regions. For example, Manchester acts as an incubator and is much different than smaller Towns such as Bradford.
 - iii. The SWOT can be used to drive an identity for the Region by picking common strengths. The interstate system and the spine of NH economy was given as examples.
 - iv. Labor availability is not as much as a strength now as it was previously.
 - v. Low unemployment rate can be considered a threat as it may prevent companies from choosing a NH location. As the population ages, where will the workforce come from?
 - vi. There is a lack of trained trade workers available, particularly after the recession in the late 2000's where many went into other fields of work. There is a gap in education for students going straight into the work force.
 - vii. Job posting is an important part of bringing the workforce into NH, it isn't just posting in the classifieds anymore.
 - viii. A mix and density of housing is needed in many communities. Places to live are needed that attract talent.
 - ix. Refugees and immigration is seen as an opportunity.
 - x. Current drug crisis seen as a weakness and threat.
 - xi. Industries need to accommodate millennials.
 - xii. Trends indicate baby boomers and millennials are both looking for the same things- smaller housing and closer to amenities.
 - xiii. Recreation is still a strength.
 - xiv. NH is becoming a place to retire too with less workforce migration. More businesses are starting to become services and amenities.
 - xv. Small business births are declining with small business deaths are increasing.

- xvi. Job turnover rate has been decreasing preventing employees from “moving up”, causing less replacement job openings.
- xvii. A strength is the Region’s central location. Can get there from here.
- xviii. Property taxes funding municipal services leads communities away from a regional approach.
- xix. Lack of broadband or cell service is a weakness and threat.
- xx. High utility costs is a weakness and threat.
- xxi. Rail transit is provides opportunities to bring workforce into the Region, but also the opportunity to send workforce out of the Region. Allows workers to live in the Region but work elsewhere.
- xxii. Accessory dwelling units and the accessory dwelling unit RSA viewed as a strength.

VI. Next Steps: Next steps include soliciting priority projects. A subcommittee will be formed of 3-4 Strategy Committee members that will meet twice. The next full Strategy Committee meeting will be held in September with a goal to complete the CEDS update in October.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.