

Central / Southern Region of New Hampshire

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration



Adopted by CNHRPC on MM/DD/2019
Adopted by SNHPC on MM/DD/2019

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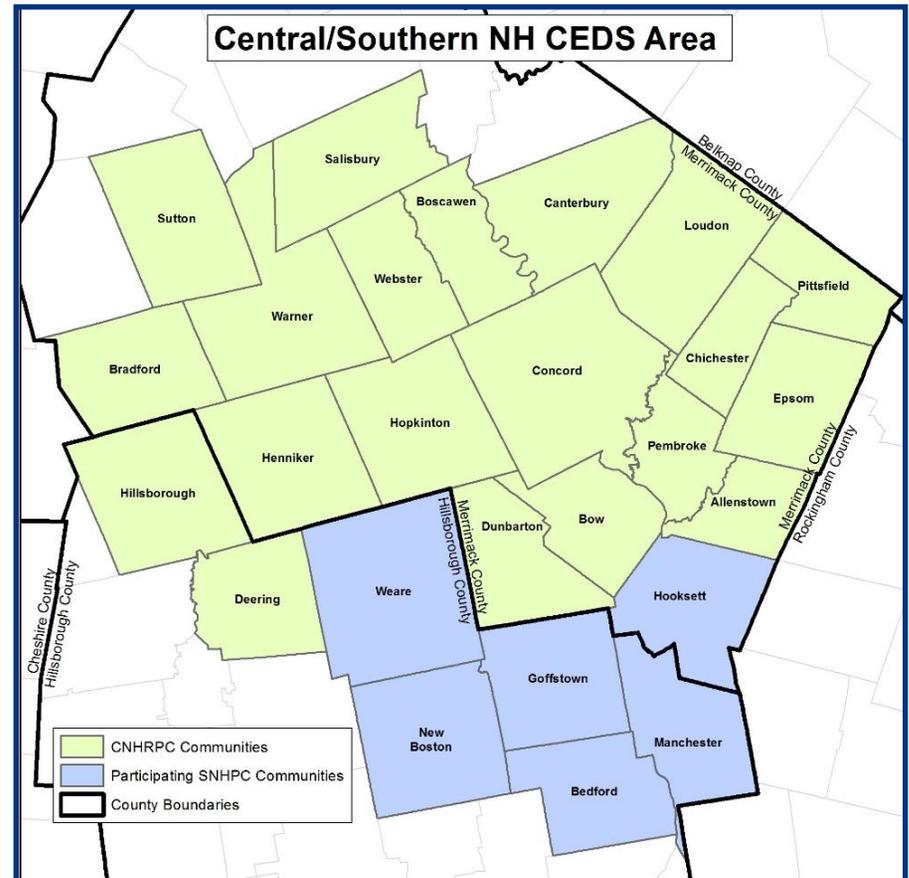
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INTRODUCTION

This Central/Southern New Hampshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) represents a unique partnership between the Central New Hampshire Planning Commission (CNHRPC) and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) in developing and implementing a CEDS process for the Central/Southern region of New Hampshire (see region map). The original CEDS document was developed in 2014 and was the first time two regional planning commissions in New Hampshire joined together to collaboratively develop and implement a CEDS plan for one region.

With this update of the CEDS document, the CEDS project area has increased to 26 municipalities with the addition of Manchester and covers two counties. Of these 26 municipalities, 21 municipalities are located in Merrimack County and 5 municipalities are located in Hillsborough County. Additionally, six of these communities are part of SNHPC and the rest are in CNHRPC. In total, the region is roughly 965 square miles in size and had a reported population of 294,778 people by the 2012-2016 American Community Survey.

The Central/Southern region is the largest populated region in the state, and is an important economic development engine and corridor connecting the City of Concord and the City of Manchester. Thus this CEDS represents an opportunity to spur economic development within the heart of New Hampshire's most populous region.



WHAT IS A CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally-based, regionally-driven planning process designed to bring the public and private sectors together in the creation of a strategic roadmap or plan for regional economic development. A “Project List,” along with a vision, goals and objectives, make up the heart of the CEDS.

This CEDS is designed to foster collaboration between regions and communities, build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of the Central/Southern region. It also includes an analysis of the regional economy; establishes regional goals and objectives; sets forth a regional plan of action; and identifies investment priorities and funding sources for the region.

An important benefit of the CEDS is that it is an important prerequisite for the region to be designated by EDA as an Economic Development District (EDD). A designated EDD enables municipalities and counties to qualify for funding under EDA’s current public works, economic adjustment and planning grant programs (see the Appendix for more information about EDA and other funding sources).

Currently, there are three EDDs located within New Hampshire: the North Country Council, Strafford Economic Development District, and the Rockingham Economic Development Corporation, now referred to as the Regional Economic Development Center (see the [U.S. EDA’s website](#) for more information).

The completed CEDS will help guide revitalization of the local economy in the short-term and help the region become more competitive in the global economy in the future. The CEDS process will enhance economic development planning partnerships in the greater central New Hampshire region. The CEDS can assist in supporting a unified vision and foundation to coordinate and advocate for these regional projects and the CEDS will focus this leading to more and better jobs for people living in the region.

BENEFITS OF HAVING A CEDS

- Identifying regional industry clusters.
- Assessing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
- Identifying regional projects that further local and regional economic development goals.
- Identifying projects that capitalize on our assets and address our challenges.
- Identifying funding sources for projects.
- Making the case for funding regional projects.
- Engaging in cross-border cooperation to strengthen the regional economy.

HOW WAS THE CEDS DEVELOPED?

SNHPC and CNHRPC worked collaboratively to pull together economic development leaders, public officials, community leaders, private individuals, and representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, and minority and labor groups from the 26 communities within the boundary of the CEDS region. This group, the CEDS Strategy Committee, focused their efforts on discussion and information sharing on opportunities to create an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy.

Responsibilities of the CEDS Strategy Committee included:

- Review and comment on the summary of current economic development conditions within the Central/Southern NH CEDS

Region.

- Participate in the update of the regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that was undertaken during the 2014 CEDS development process.
- Provide input to staff on the development of strategies and a plan to build upon the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that is consistent with state and local economic development and workforce development strategies. The plan must also address the issue of regional economic resilience.
- Work with staff on preparing updated regional performance standards that evaluate the development and success of the CEDS update.

CEDS PROCESS

This CEDS represents an update of the 2014 Central/Southern New Hampshire document. It also incorporates Manchester into it. In 2014, five communities from SNHPC were included in the CEDS with CNHRPC's 20 communities. At the time, Manchester had its own CEDS and it was anticipated that in a future update Manchester would join the Central/Southern process. To that end, the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis and cluster analysis were updated in 2018, Manchester was included, and the list of projects was updated.

As in 2014, the process seeks to build the economic development capacity at both the regional and municipal levels, this time building upon lessons and foundations from the past. It will continue to be innovative and will do so in the following manner: 1) it will continue to be the result of collaboration between two planning commissions and 26 communities; 2) it includes New Hampshire's largest city (Manchester) and its capital (Concord) in a collaborative effort; 3) it will

continue to both retain jobs and create new ones; 4) it will continue to seek industry growth that complements existing businesses and draws upon regional and local strengths; 5) it will prioritize job growth that fits citizen needs and education levels; 6) like 2014, it will be comprehensive by including social capital, community character, child care, recreation, housing, and other components that impact local economic development (factors often overlooked in traditional economic development plans); 7) it will also identify projects of local and regional importance and reassess those from 2014; and, 8) it will also incorporate the vision of those in the community.

The scope included:

- Update CEDS Strategy Committee, engage stakeholders, and hold Committee meetings;
- Update the cluster analysis and incorporate Manchester;
- Collection, analysis and organization of economic, demographic, and other background and related data;
- Update the Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis;
- Revisit and adopt a regional economic vision statement, goals and measurable five-year objectives by the Strategy Committee;
- Development of an updated priority project list;
- Include and encourage stakeholder and public input on the development of the CEDS;
- Review and update the previously established process for maintaining the CEDS, including annual performance review and five-year revision;
- Assess evaluation process with performance measures and

benchmarks, for progress toward achieving the regional goals identified in the CEDS, and update benchmarks as necessary; and

- Prepare GIS mapping, as needed.

In addition to engaging both planning commissions, as well as drawing upon community members for Committee membership, project solicitation reached out to various not-for-profits. Finally, progress was tracked on planning commission websites and a public comment period of 30 days was held prior to adoption.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS CEDS PLAN

This CEDS includes the following sections:

1. The Project List, Goals and Objectives and the Performance Measures.
2. Data Analysis, consists of an identification of the region's Economic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and the Industry Cluster Analysis. This section also includes a review of the region's economic indicators in the Regional Profile.
3. Technical Data, available online at www.cnhrpc.org or www.snhpc.org, is located in the Appendix, which depicts Partners and Funding Information and Other Development Considerations. Also included in the Appendix is additional information about the region's socio-demographics and copies of notes from CEDS committee meetings, project selection documents, legal notice, and public comments.



PROJECT PRIORITY LIST

The project selection process built on the foundation developed by the Project Selection Subcommittee in 2014. In 2014, the Advisory Committee established selection criteria that each project sponsor had to meet that were tied to one or more of the six goals and indicated the project's readiness. An application form was developed and a cover letter, along with the application form, was sent to key stakeholders including municipalities, businesses and not-for-profits across the region.

Once projects were received by Regional Planning Commission (RPC) staff on behalf of the Committee - 39 in all - a scoring system was adopted by the Committee in 2014. A Project Selection Subcommittee was identified and tasked with reviewing each project to assess how well it met each of the six goals, as well as how ready it was. The projects were then slotted and ranked against like projects (all transportation projects, all sewer/water projects, etc.) with a maximum score of 24 possible. The result was all of the projects, ranked against like projects, that assess how well a particular project fit in with the overall CEDS goals and how ready all the projects were for completion.

In 2018, a similar approach was used. RPC staff solicited project nominations from each municipality, sending a cover letter, as well as an updated and simplified project application form. A total of 19 new

projects were nominated to be incorporated into the CEDS. These new projects, as well as the projects selected in 2014 (eliminating those that were completed), were ranked based on the same 24-point scale used in 2014. As the goals and objectives, for the most part, had carried over from the 2014 goals and objectives, there was an incentive to keep the same ranking system. Additionally, this allowed for new projects and old projects to be ranked together using the same ranking system. The Selection Committee decided to revisit the projects selected in 2014 with the intent of considering any regional economic changes highlighted in the updated SWOT and Cluster Analysis.

After ranking all 58 projects, the full ranking was brought to the full Advisory Committee on July 11, 2018. The projects are listed on pages 6 through 15 and are sorted under the following categories: Education, Energy, Transportation, Sewer & Water, Studies Municipal, Recreation, and Other. Projects with an asterisk* denote a project carried over from 2014. Moving forward, the project list should be updated annually once the CEDS region becomes an Economic Development District (EDD).

The selection criteria can be found in Appendix C in the form of a blank project submittal form.

EDUCATION PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
ED #1	Establish Welding School *	Pittsfield	Pittsfield	Establish a welding school	16	2	\$110,000
ED #2	Mobile/Regional Technology Program*	Hillsborough	Antrim, Bradford, Deering, Henniker, Hillsborough, Stoddard, Washington, Weare, Windsor	A mobile, regional technology outreach program for schools, businesses and nonprofits	15	2	\$630,000

ENERGY PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
EN #1	Extend High Pressure Gas Line through Village*	Goffstown	Route 114 from the Hillsborough County Complex through Village	Extend high pressure gas main along Route 114 through the Village	15	2	TBD
EN #2	Establish Solar Panels on Town Property*	Bradford	Bradford	Establish solar panels on town-owned property	12	2	\$90,000

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
TP #1	Whitney Rd/Hoit Rd Intersection Improvements	Concord	Intersection of Hoit Rd/Whitney Rd	Reconstruction of Hoit Rd/Whitney Rd Intersection	20	3	\$1,500,000

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
TP #2	River Rd Reconstruction	Weare	River Rd	Reconstruction of River Rd	19	3	\$1,629,000
TP #3	Storrs St Expansion	Concord	Storrs St	Property acquisition and expansion of Storrs St to link downtown to I-393	18	2	\$5,750,000
TP #4	Hopkinton Intersection Improvements Rt 202 & Maple St	Henniker, Hopkinton	Old Concord Rd near NH Rt 202/9	Provide intersection access with Rt 202	18	1	\$2,000,000
TP #5	New Airport Terminal Building	Concord	Concord Airport	Construction of a new airport terminal building	18	1	\$3,150,000
TP #6	I-293 Exit 6 & 7 Improvements	Manchester	I-293 Exit 6 & 7	Address the transportation needs of a 3-mile segment of I-293 extending northerly from the Granite St interchange (Exit 5) to approximately one mile north of the NH Route 3A interchange (Exit 7)	17	1	\$151,000,000
TP #7	Upgrade Manchester St	Concord	Manchester St	Rebuilding, expanding, and upgrading Manchester St	16	2	Phase 1: \$2,250,000; Phase 2: \$3,550,000

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
TP #8	King St & North Main St Upgrades	Boscawen	King St & North Main St	Pedestrian and safety intersection improvements	15	2	\$5,149,000
TP #9	Hopkinton Village Intersection Improvements	Hopkinton	Hopkinton Village	Improve	14	1	\$225,000

SEWER & WATER PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
SW #1	Extend Water & Sewer along Route 101*	Bedford	Nashua Road west to Covenant Way, a distance of 1.5 miles	Extend water and sewer along Route 101	18	2	\$4,600,000
SW #2	Water and Sewer Improvements Downtown*	Hillsborough Town	Downtown Hillsborough	Build out sewer and water infrastructure in Downtown Hillsborough	16	2	\$9,058,000
SW #3	Extend Water along Route 3A (Bow Junction)*	Bow	Route 3A/Hall Street to intersection of NH 3A Bridge	Extend Water along Route 3A	16	3	\$1,314,000
SW #4	Sewer Pump Station and Mains River Road/NH3A*	Bow	River Road/NH3A	Complete construction of sewer pump station and transport mains to commence sewer service in the business development area	16	3	\$4,000,000

SEWER & WATER PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
SW #5	Upgrade Sewer/Water Route 103 & I-89 Exit 9*	Warner	Vicinity of Route 103 and the I-89 Exit 9	Upgrade sewer and water	16	2	\$926,000
SW #6	Water storage tank Goffstown/West Side	Manchester	West Side, Manchester	Construct 2-3 MG water storage tank for the West Manchester and Goffstown area.	15	2	\$3,000,000
SW #7	Water Treatment Plant West Side/Hooksett	Manchester	North West Manchester	Construct 7.5-10 MGD Water Treatment Plant; West Manchester and Hooksett area	15	1	\$15,000,000
SW #8	Create a New Water District*	Henniker	Old Concord Road near NH Route 202/9	Build out sewer and water infrastructure in Downtown Henniker	14	1	\$9,058,000
SW #9	Exit 11/3A Public Sewer*	Hooksett	Exit 11 & Route 3A north of Exit 10	Expansion of public sewer	14	2	\$1,200,000
SW #10	Cooperative Water Drive Extension	Goffstown	Goffstown Village Precinct	Installation of treatment to existing wells for Iron and Manganese removal	11	1	\$2,700,000

STUDY PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
SP #1	CEDS Region Website*	CNHRPC	CEDS region	Develop website for CEDS region	22	3	\$20,000

STUDY PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
SP #2	Regional Broadband Internet Access*	CNHRPC	Sutton, Salisbury, Bradford, Warner, Webster, Canterbury	Feasibility analysis to examine options for providing broadband internet access	21	3	\$15,000
SP #3	Create a Town Business Incubator*	Bradford	Portion of the 25 acre recycling center and transfer station	Prepare a master plan/feasibility study to create a business incubator on the current site of the recycling center	20	3	\$15,000
SP #4	Passenger Rail Development Phase for Extension to Manchester	Manchester	City of Manchester	Support the completion of the project development phase.	20	2	\$4,000,000
SP #5	Downtown Growth Study	Manchester	Downtown Manchester (Elm Street, Millyard, and surrounding streets)	An assessment to identify projected growth and areas to improve economic vibrancy.	17	2	TBD
SP #6	Sewer Line Extension to Daniel Plummer/Route 114*	Goffstown	Daniel Plummer Road and Route 114 within access of Route 101	Conduct feasibility study to extend municipal sewer to Daniel Plummer Road and Route 114	16	1	TBD

STUDY PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
SP #7	King Street & North Main Street Upgrades*	Boscawen	King Street & North Main Street	Pedestrian & Safety intersection improvements	15	2	TBD
SP #8	Study & Install New Water Lines in District*	Epsom	Epsom traffic circle to: west to Chichester; north to Chichester; south to Pembroke	Feasibility study, engineering and construction of new water lines to expand municipal water services	15	2	\$3,670,000
SP #9	Update Town Development Strategy*	Bow	Bow	Update Development Strategy	14	3	\$25,000
SP #10	Exit 10 Gateway*	Sutton	Vicinity of Exit 10 in Sutton	Conduct a feasibility study to explore creating commercial gateway at Exit 10	13	2	TBD
SP #11	Commercial Street Study*	Boscawen	Commercial Street	Conduct a study to identify a viable use for adjacent town-owned land and to conduct a study for the extension of a water line	13	2	TBD

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
MU #1	Town Hall Renovations	Bradford	Bradford Town Hall	Renovate the second floor Bradford theater located in the Town Hall	17	3	\$600,000
MU #2	Bedford Safety Substation*	Bedford	South River Road	Construction of a Safety Substation within the town's Performance Zone along South River Road (US Route 3) to best supply emergency response for commercial development.	16	2	\$4,300,000
MU #3	Hillsborough Downtown Revitalization*	Hillsborough Town	Downtown Hillsborough	Downtown cleanup, revitalization and building reuse analysis	15	2	\$1,162,000
MU #4	Fire Department Expansion	Bradford	Town of Bradford	Expand Bradford Fire House	15	1	\$750,000
MU #5	Woods Woolen Mill Hazardous Waste Cleanup*	Hillsborough Town	Near Downtown Hillsborough	Assessment and cleanup activities for abandoned mill	14	2	\$1,200,000
MU #6	Upgrade Downtown Sidewalk Network*	Henniker	Downtown Henniker per 2012 Henniker Safe Routes to School Travel Plan	Upgrade sidewalk network downtown	14	2	\$1,500,000
MU #7	Upgrade Downtown Sidewalks*	Hillsborough Town	Downtown Hillsborough	Upgrade downtown sidewalks	14	2	\$1,208,000

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
MU #8	1913 Library Renovations	Boscawen	Boscawen Library	Renovate library including add handicapped accessibility and identify a viable use	14	2	TBD
MU #9	Create a Community Center*	Hillsborough Town	Downtown Hillsborough	Create a community Center	13	1	\$12,000,000
MU #10	Public Safety Communication Improvement Enhancement	Weare	Town of Weare	Improve radio communication for three major public safety departments (police, fire, and highway).	13	1	>\$20,000

RECREATION PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
RC #1	15 Mile Paved Merrimack River Greenway Trail*	Concord	Adjacent to Merrimack River	Develop a 15 mile paved trail along Merrimack River for a recreation/nonmotorized trail	19	2	\$1,100,000
RC #2	Goffstown Rail Trail*	Goffstown	Goffstown Rail Trail	2.39 Mile Rail Trail Construction	19	2	\$343,500

RECREATION PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
RC #3	Riverwalk Development	City of Manchester	Riverwalk along Merrimack River	Support the construction of a pedestrian walkway along the east side of the Merrimack River, spanning from the existing Heritage Trail at Arms Park to the pedestrian bridge, south of Granite Street.	18	2	>\$4,000,000
RC #4	Manchester Merrimack River Riverwalk (Manchester Connects)	City of Manchester	Riverwalk along Merrimack River	Construction of a pedestrian walkway along the east side of the Merrimack River, extending 1.5 route miles from the Bridge to the Merrimack River Park in Manchester.	18	2	\$4,300,000
RC #5	Manchester Merrimack River Pedestrian Foot bridge (Manchester Connects)	City of Manchester	Merrimack River	Construct a pedestrian footbridge connecting the Manchester Millyard across the Merrimack River to Manchester's West Side.	13	1	>\$14,000,000

OTHER PROJECTS

Rank	Project	Community	Location	Project Description	Points Awarded	Readiness (3 Most; 1 Least)	Cost Estimate
OP #1	Reclaim Lot for Business Use - along length of East Main (Naughton Property)*	Bradford	North of East Main Street	Reclaim lot to salable standards for development	18	2	\$500,000
OP #2	Reconstruct Fair Grandstand*	Hopkinton	Hopkinton State Fair Grounds	Reconstruct Fair Grandstand	18	2	\$300,000
OP #3	Web Tool Development (Hope Wheel)	Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester	Development of a web tool to enhance collaboration among governments, non-profits, and education.	16	3	\$700,000
OP #4	Program expansion startup (adults with disabilities)	Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester	Program support for partnerships with local universities, non-profits, and local schools.	14	3	\$83,000
OP #5	Reclaim Lot for Business Use - Route 114/Jones Road*	Bradford	Corner of Route 114 and Jones Road	Reclaim lot to salable standards for business location/expansion and build a steel building	12	1	TBD



Vision, Goals, Objectives, & Performance Measures

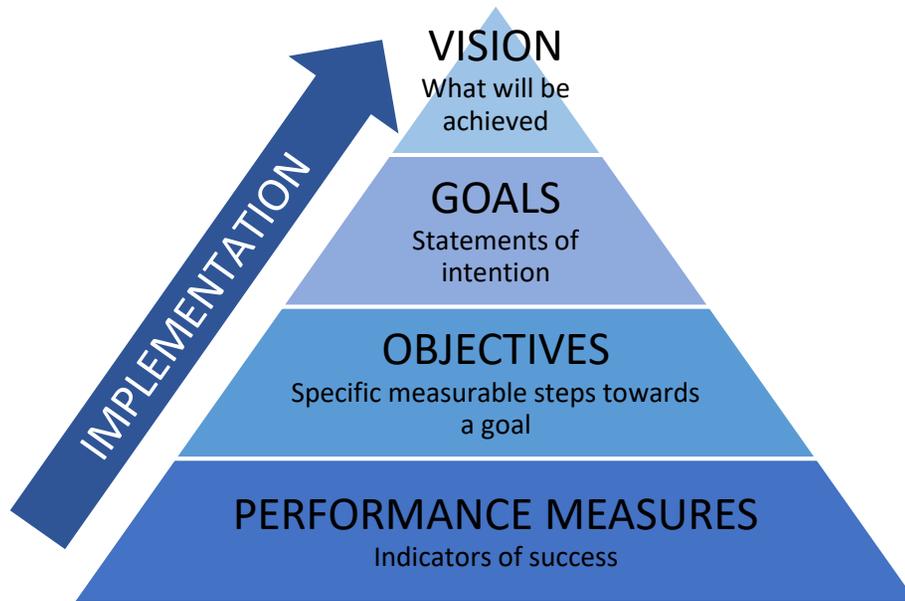
The Advisory Committee worked with CNHRPC and SNHPC staff to develop an overall vision and to outline the overall goals and objectives of the CEDS. This was done early on in the process by a subcommittee and the full Committee. A draft vision derived from the 2014 CEDS was prepared by RPC staff and presented to the Committee for their input. The result is a robust vision statement that recognizes the need to balance several factors: economic growth and quality of life; attracting new business while supporting existing employers; and “hard” and “soft” infrastructure needs. Finally, the statement builds the foundation for linking the projects to the goals and objectives.

Goals and objectives from the 2014 CEDS were reviewed and revised accordingly by the RPC, the subcommittee and the Committee. The goals and objectives that are identified seek to develop strategies to address the weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by the SWOT while capitalizing on the region’s strengths. Additionally, the goals and objectives provide the foundation and basis for project ranking. The objectives serve as the action items to implement each goal, and, in turn, can serve as performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation activities.

VISION STATEMENT

Continue to support and encourage a diversified economy in the region that recognizes the need to maintain a balance between attracting new investment, supporting local businesses, fostering local entrepreneurship, and strengthening the region’s key industries. The region’s quality of life will be enhanced by maintaining the region’s rural character in balance with identifying and promoting projects for funding that strengthens the regional economy and workforce that leads to job creation and enhancement.

HOW DO THESE COMPONENTS ALL RELATE?



GOALS:

Goal 1: Maintain the region's quality of life as an attractive place to live, work and play.

- a. Objective: Identify, support and engage with key organizations, businesses, and other groups that conduct natural resource protection and management activities.
- b. Objective: Support projects that enhance and sustain the quality of life of the region, such as sustainability, walkable communities, low impact development, mixed-use development, etc.

- c. Objective: Encourage the development of a vibrant business environment, including amenities such as personal services, eateries, child care, grocery stores, co-ops, etc.

Goal 2: Facilitate opportunities to develop, maintain and strengthen adequate hard and soft infrastructure for business development.

- a. Objective: Encourage the development of partnerships between governments, investors, nonprofits, businesses, and other groups.
- b. Objective: Support the development of a strong local workforce, including quality education.
- c. Objective: Expand telecommunications, broadband services and other information technologies.
- d. Objective: Facilitate the expansion and maintenance of key infrastructure, including but not limited to water, sewer, public transportation, roads, parking etc.
- e. Objective: Encourage the cleanup of brownfields for reuse or redevelopment.

Goal 3: Promote the region.

- a. Objective: Develop a regional brand.
- b. Objective: Ensure that data and information about the region, as well as a list of key municipal contacts are readily available online.
- c. Objective: Build capacity for local chambers and economic development committees to efficiently support economic growth in municipalities and at the regional level.

- d. Objective: Build collaborations within the region to enhance capacity and better support economic and business development opportunities.

Goal 4: Identify support for implementing the CEDS.

- a. Objective: Identify and secure funding from public entities, including Economic Development Administration, State of New Hampshire, and others.
- b. Objective: Identify and secure private investment.
- c. Objective: Identify and secure local advocates for CEDS.
- d. Objective: Pursue establishment of an Economic Development District (EDD).

Goal 5: Support efforts to streamline local governmental processes and create a business friendly environment.

- a. Objective: Encourage municipalities to make development applications, regulations, fees, forms and contacts available online.
- b. Objective: Support municipal efforts to develop or revise regulations that are clear, concise and streamlined, including appropriate fee schedules.
- c. Objective: Ensure that business recovery is part of public disaster recovery efforts.
- d. Objective: Encourage municipalities to identify and certify properties for immediate use/reuse.
- e. Objective: Make various additional development information available online including property listings, demographic data, economic data, transportation data, etc.

Goal 6: Support business promotion and development.

- a. Objective: Encourage and foster the development of growing and emerging industries, including but not limited to local renewable energy resources and technologies.
- b. Objective: Encourage communities to create, establish and support local economic development committees.
- c. Objective: Encourage Home Business expansion and development.
- d. Objective: Reinforce and strengthen regional industry clusters and industries of local importance, including the development of strategies for the expansion of complementary businesses and services.
- e. Objective: Expand business technical assistance and development assistance services.
- f. Objective: Ensure access to sector specific skills training.
- g. Objective: Engage area investors, traditional financiers, and alternative financiers, to facilitate business development and financing.
- h. Objective: Support efforts to maintain an adequate supply of housing that meets the needs of the workforce.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This Plan will be evaluated annually for the purpose of determining success in meeting its goals and objectives. This evaluation component will be fairly broad in addressing each of these areas, while specific enough to quantify the results achieved by this CEDS.

An evaluation methodology was established that focuses upon quantitative and qualitative measures related to program performance.

The evaluation process will review the actions from the preceding twelve months as part of an annual CEDS update. Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the CEDS process, progress made towards CEDS goals and objectives, and progress made on projects.

EVALUATION OF THE INITIAL CEDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The CEDS process used to create this document is based upon the EDA guidelines and recommendations for developing a CEDS document. The first step was to create a steering committee. This Committee met several times throughout the CEDS process, driving the development of this document. Both the Committee and the planning commissions' staff worked to develop maps, data and text to create the written document. Meeting notes from each meeting in which the Committee participated can be found in the Appendix of this document.

- **Public Participation:** To encourage continued high level of participation in CEDS activities by a diverse group representative of both municipal and business leaders.

During the development of the CEDS, 4 meetings of the Committee were held. These meetings were attended by a broad cross section of private business persons, municipal employees, economic development and planning practitioners, as well as elected officials. The meetings were held in Concord as the location was the most centrally-located area to accommodate the greatest participation.

- **Data Development and Dissemination:** To provide comprehensive data and other statistical analysis tools for the region's economic development stakeholders; and to have that body of work "recognized" as an all-inclusive source of current information on each of the communities that make up the region.

During the development of the CEDS, staff from both Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission and Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission developed current and accurate demographic, economic and other data on all communities in the region. This data was compiled into the information contained in the CEDS. Sources included cluster analyses completed by both RPCs for their respective regions, US Census American Community Survey Data, information from the SWOT analysis as well as data from the State of New Hampshire and other sources.

The CEDS area is positively impacted by the availability of the CEDS as it brings together many different types of data and analysis and is a unique tool that gives the area an advantage in economic development and in securing funds. The communities, in turn, disseminate the data to stakeholders, including planning boards as a resource for the development of a local economic development chapters in master plans. Finally, the CEDS document will be maintained on both the CNHRPC and SNHPC websites and will be used to support any updates to the 2014 Regional Plans.

- **Marketing and Outreach of CEDS:** To promote the use of the CEDS document by the area's economic stakeholders as a resource in the region, as well as a "blueprint for success."

In addition to review and adoption of the document by the CEDS Committee, key portions of the CEDS were shared with the full commissions of both CNHRPC and SNHPC, and, the Executive Committee of each planning commission will have the opportunity to review and comment on the document prior to finalization. As stated previously, the document will also be available to the general public on the websites of both RPCs.

EVALUATION OF CEDS GOALS & PROJECT COMPLETION

Implementation of the goals and objectives, through the completion of projects, will be evaluated in terms of whether or not a given project or task that is completed leads to an objective being met. While each project meets all six of the CEDS goals listed above (merely a question of degree), each project will further different objectives that support each goal. Completion of the projects will therefore result in various objectives being met.

The following measures will be used to assess the implementation of the CEDS during its first 12 months of existence:

- Continue the “Grass Roots” Planning Process: During the development of this CEDS, this was met by holding the steering committee meetings throughout the planning cycle, developing the project list by engaging municipalities and other organizations in the region and by collecting data about the region. Engagement with each planning commission’s Executive Committees and full membership, as well as the public comment process during adoption, ensured a broader level of public participation. Moving forward, similar outreach efforts will continue during the annual update of the project list and evaluation of plan implementation. It is anticipated that similar outreach methods will be utilized.
- Provide Support for Local Economic Development Efforts: This CEDS can be used to influence both the CNHRPC and SNHPC Regional Plans, as well as local economic development plans. The SWOT, Cluster Analysis, Data and Project List can provide direct support to other economic development planning efforts. Additionally, if it could be completed, the regional web portal could assist towns with a marketing component.
- Provide Technical Assistance for Regional Economic Development Projects: Part of the CEDS process is to develop long-term local economic development capacity and technical assistance is a vital piece of this effort. RPC staff will assist with grant writing and other local economic development efforts (planning, data collection/analysis, interfacing with developers, etc.) in the future. Much of this is built into the work programs of each RPC already (economic development planning, for example), and, in the event an Economic Development District is developed, will become more robust in the future.
- Continue to facilitate an ongoing CEDS Advisory Committee consisting of key economic development organizations, municipal officials and professionals and key businesses and corporations located within the service region.
- Implement the economic development needs and projects of the region.
- Seek public input and attract private investment to the region to address these needs.
- Conduct annual updates to the CEDS, including replacing the CEDS document with a new CEDS every five years.
- Assess the implementation of the goals and objective and project implementation.



REGIONAL PROFILE

While economic conditions can fluctuate from time to time, NH continues to perform well in terms of maintaining a strong economy and remaining a desirable place to live and work. In the CEDS region, quality of life is highly valued for its strong sense of community, rural character and access to natural resources and recreational opportunities within the region and beyond. While sustaining and growing an economy relies on business recruitment as well as retention and expansion efforts, managing this potential growth without compromising the region's rural character and high quality of life is the challenge. Attracting and sustaining good jobs and competitive salaries are key factors that need to be balanced with quality public services that not only enhance quality of life but can be an important consideration when attracting additional business activity. Transportation infrastructure, access to amenities and services and the availability of housing to meet workforce needs also need to be evaluated when looking at future economic development.

The trends discussed in this section present both challenges and opportunities that are not unique to the region. Data such as an aging population and low unemployment point to the need for developing, attracting and retaining a talented workforce to support job creation and business development. The key to long term economic

development is tied to workforce development that is most successful when pursued at a regional scale.

Using the regional profile data in concert with employment and industry trends helps support the development of strategies for workforce development and recruitment. In particular, the cluster analysis completed for this CEDS identifies those key industries that employ a high number of commuters that could be targeted for recruitment to the region. The analysis also looks at key industries that employ a large number of workers within the region that could benefit from the attraction of more workers to the region. In short, differences between in-town and commuter workforce is another way to identify different opportunities for economic expansion through workforce or industry recruitment strategies.

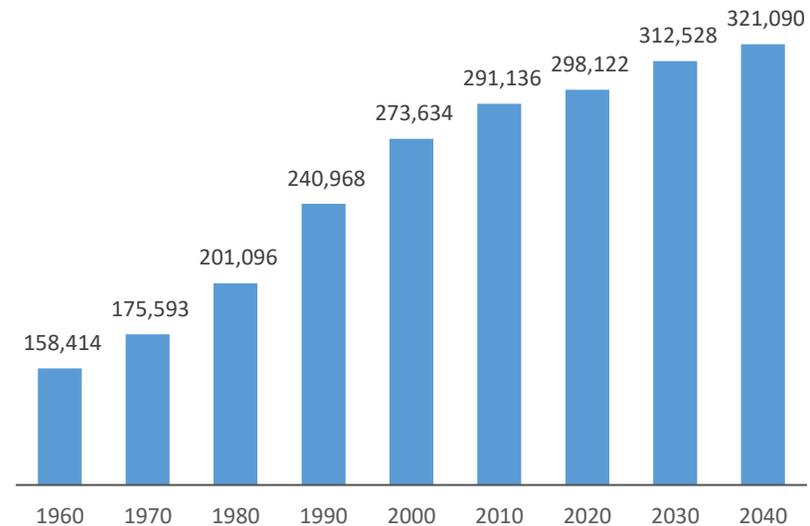
POPULATION

A SLOWER RATE OF GROWTH, BUT.....

Over the last decade, the demographic trends for the CEDS region show a slowing population growth and continuing aging of its residents. Total population in the region increased by nearly 84% from 1960 to 2010, increasing over 132,000 residents. Population projections released by the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives (NH OSI) for 2020, 2030, and 2040 show a more modest rate of growth into the next two decades, with an expected percent increase of 2.4%, 7.3%, 10.3%, respectively from the benchmark year of 2010. As these percentages represent the region as whole, this slower rate of growth will be more evident in some of the region's smaller communities, as some individual communities have already experienced an actual decrease in total population over the past few years, and are expected to see either little to no increase in the upcoming years.

Could this trend be changing? The U.S. Census Bureau's most recent data estimates show a growth of 7,780 residents between the July 2016 population of 1,335,015 and the July 2017 population of 1,342,795, the largest population gain for NH since 2005. This increase is 60 percent greater than the previous year, and is mostly attributed to a net migration gain of approximately 6,900 residents; the growth from natural increase (births minus deaths) was close to 900. As Dr. Kenneth M. Johnson of the UNH Carsey School of Public Policy describes in a recent publication,¹ migration accounted for nearly all of NH's growth, which is a striking change from earlier in the decade when more people left NH for other U.S. destinations than moved to the state. While it is too soon to forecast this as a trend back to the patterns before the recession, it could signal a positive change in NH attracting a workforce

¹ Johnson, K.M. (2017, December 22). Migration Fuels Largest New Hampshire Population Gain in a Decade. *University of New Hampshire Carsey School of Public Policy*. Retrieved from <https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1333&context=carsey>.

Figure 1: Past and Projected Population of the CEDS Region

Source: 1960-2010 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2040 projections from the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives, September 2016

population once again as many of these migrants tend to be from Massachusetts, well-educated and actively engaged in the workforce.

AN AGING POPULATION

New Hampshire, along with much of the U.S., experienced a large increase in births due to the baby boom post-World War II. Baby boomers now contribute to a larger adult population as they start to reach their 50's and 60's, causing a dramatic shift in the makeup of the population. The shift towards an older population with fewer younger adults has many potential impacts, including a high portion of experienced workers at the peak of their earning potential with considerable social, economic and intellectual capital. In coming years,

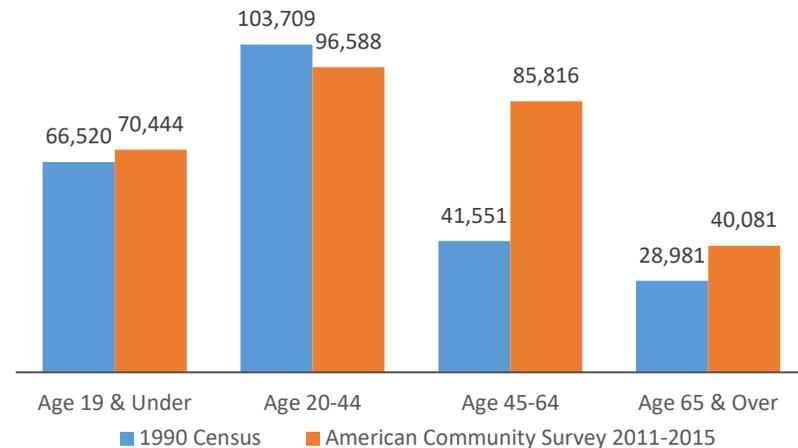
there will be a higher portion of workers who are age 65 and older and who are getting closer to retirement. In contrast, national trends show young adults are moving to large metropolitan areas, spending less time commuting in a car and buying smaller houses later in life compared to their predecessors.

GROWING DIVERSITY

Though NH remains less diverse compared to other states, the number of minority residents statewide is growing and is accounting for much of NH’s population increase. Between 2000 and 2010, US Census data indicates that the percent of the minority population in the CEDS region increased by over 10,000 people, while the white population increased by nearly 7,900 people. As described by Dr. Kenneth M. Johnson, the increase in diversity is especially predominant among children, who occupied a higher percent of the minority population than adults.² Additionally, much of the diverse population in NH as whole is located within the CEDS region, particular in and around the City of Manchester, and though less, the City of Concord.

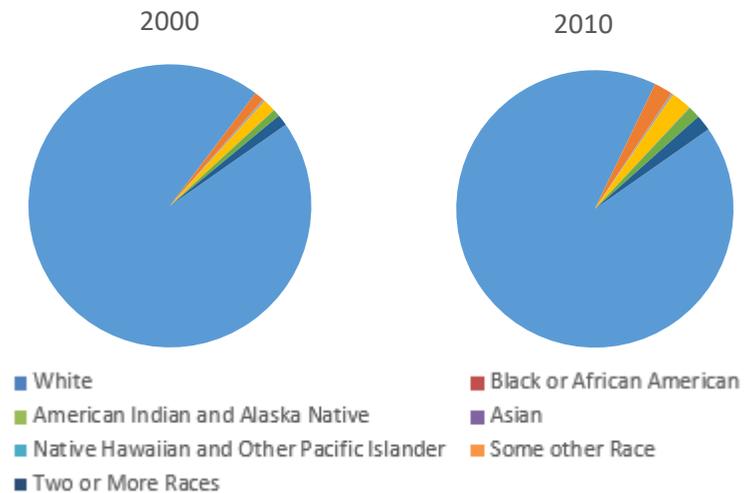
As the population becomes more diverse, so will the workforce. Businesses that recruit from a diverse workforce broaden the talent and innovation that are needed to compete in an increasingly global economy. Meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base is an important component of growing the economy as well as a company’s market share.

Figure 2: Population by Age of the CEDS region



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3: Population by Race of the CEDS region



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

² Johnson, K.M. (2017, December 29). Diversity Trends in NH. *Business NH Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.millyardcommunications.com/index.php?src=news&refno=7492&wpos=5000,5000,8515>.

SNAPSHOT OF THE ECONOMY

THE REGION'S RURAL NATURE

The twenty-six communities that make up the CEDS region are markedly different with regard to a number of current economic indicators as shown in Table 1. With regard to population, the 2016 estimated population ranged from a high of 109,886 in Manchester to a low of 1,399 in Salisbury. The overall rural nature of the region is highlighted by the number of communities that have populations lower than 5,000 people.

REGIONAL TRENDS

Median household incomes vary dramatically throughout the region. Led by the Towns of Bedford, Bow, and New Boston, sixteen communities had a median household income that exceeded NH's median household income of \$68,485.

Another key economic indicator is the number of individuals that are estimated to live below the poverty line. As shown in Table 1, New Boston had the lowest rate of 1.4%. In contrast, six communities had estimated poverty rates in excess of 10%: Allenstown (11.1%), Boscawen (12.7%) Concord (11.3%), Henniker (12.1%), Pittsfield (14.8%), and Manchester (14.6%).

Additional economic indicators shown are the region's labor force and unemployment rate. As to be expected, the City of Manchester and Concord held the highest percentage of the region's overall labor force with 38% and 14%, respectively. In order to portray recent trends, unemployment rates from 2014, 2015, and 2016 were compared, demonstrating an improving overall regional trend. All of the twenty-six communities in the region experienced a drop in their unemployment rate over the three year period.

Table 1: Economic Data, 2016

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	INDIVIDUALS BELOW POVERTY	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
CNHRPC REGION COMMUNITIES					
Allenstown	4,322	\$53,448	11.1%	2,309	3.4%
Boscawen	3,952	\$57,235	12.7%	1,906	2.7%
Bow	7,715	\$101,413	4.4%	4,397	2.2%
Bradford	1,663	\$61,324	5.2%	933	2.7%
Canterbury	2,366	\$82,847	2.3%	1,444	2.1%
Chichester	2,573	\$82,928	7.2%	1,506	2.3%
Concord	42,501	\$57,566	11.3%	22,460	2.4%
Deering	1,910	\$66,087	6.1%	1,063	2.9%
Dunbarton	2,800	\$88,333	4.9%	1,678	2.3%
Epsom	4,702	\$69,583	3.1%	2,909	2.1%
Henniker	4,871	\$65,776	12.1%	2,733	2.3%
Hillsborough	5,958	\$60,796	6.5%	2,864	2.7%
Hopkinton	5,612	\$90,701	4.3%	3,375	1.9%
Loudon	5,466	\$68,750	7.2%	3,212	2.6%
Pembroke	7,072	\$77,845	6.8%	4,305	2.5%
Pittsfield	4,072	\$49,087	14.8%	2,062	2.9%
Salisbury	1,399	\$67,438	2.8%	800	2.4%
Sutton	1,849	\$82,321	5.0%	1,068	2.0%
Warner	2,888	\$72,865	8.7%	1,539	2.4%
Webster	1,877	\$69,250	5.7%	1,138	2.5%
SNHPC REGION COMMUNITIES					
Bedford	22,733	\$126,030	1.9%	11,719	2.4%
Goffstown	17,765	\$78,304	5.9%	10,395	2.5%
Hooksett	14,464	\$84,159	4.2%	8,726	2.4%
Manchester	109,886	\$54,899	14.6%	62,411	3.0%
New Boston	5,541	\$101,833	1.4%	3,573	2.2%
Weare	8,821	\$90,421	4.0%	5,763	2.2%

Sources: 2016 population estimates from NH Office of Strategic Initiatives; Median Household Income and Individuals Below Poverty from the American Community Survey 2012-2016, U.S. Census Bureau; Labor Force and Unemployment rate from NH Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau.

HOUSING

Overall, the region has experienced several housing changes over the past few decades. Building permits for new residential construction are on the rise after dramatically decreasing for the region since 2005; only 19.4% of the building permits issued between 2000 and 2016 were issued in the past five years.

Median rental housing costs have continued to grow since the early 1990s, with the highest median gross rent reported in NH of \$1,143 in 2017 – more than \$550 higher than the median gross rent reported in 1990. Similar to building permit trends, median home purchase prices for NH peaked in the mid to late 2000s, before dropping to a lower, steadier pace. Recent purchase trends point towards an increase in purchase price, though not as high as the peaks previously experienced.



MERRIMACK COUNTY 2017: \$1,089

MERRIMACK COUNTY 1990: \$626

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2017: \$1,280

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 1990: \$609

NEW HAMPSHIRE 2017: \$1,143

NEW HAMPSHIRE 1990: \$583



MERRIMACK COUNTY 2017: \$210,000

MERRIMACK COUNTY 1990: \$105,048

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2017: \$235,000

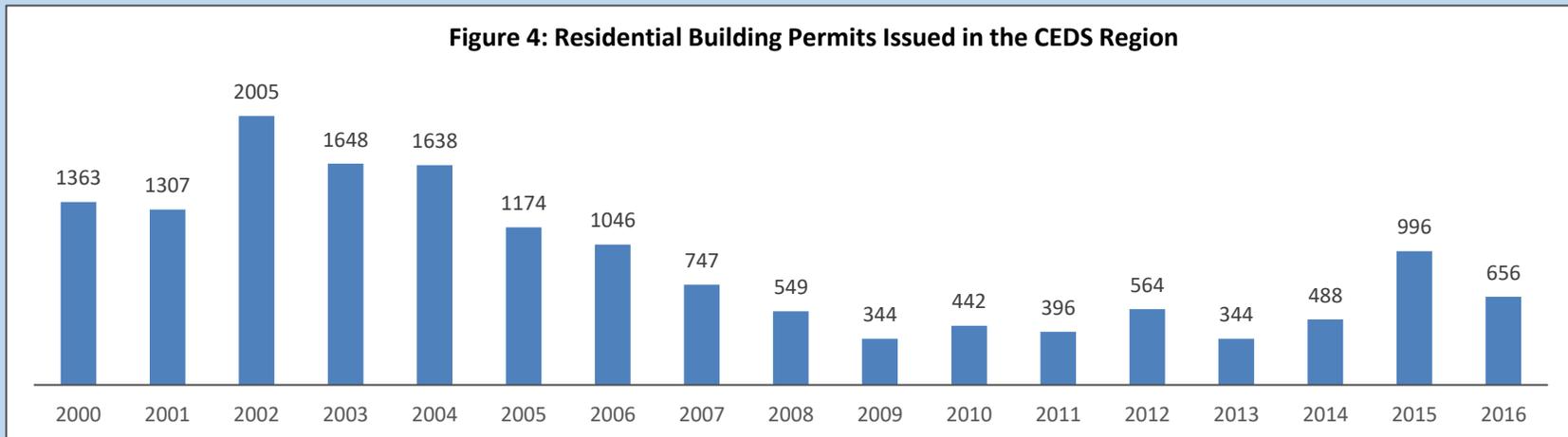
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 1990: \$125,048

NEW HAMPSHIRE 2017: \$230,000

NEW HAMPSHIRE 1990: \$119,905

Sources: NHHRA Residential Rental Cost Survey and NHHFA Purchase Price Database

Figure 4: Residential Building Permits Issued in the CEDS Region



Source: NH Office of Strategic Initiatives. Values represent the net change of dwelling units and includes any demolitions that year. Thus, negative values represent a net loss of dwelling units and have been incorporated into this dataset.



BROWNFIELDS

The U.S. EPA's Brownfield Assessment Grant Program is a very effective way to bring contaminated properties back to productive use. Revitalization projects funded through this Program can have significant positive impacts on a community's social and economic fabric. In short, the EPA Brownfields Program spurs redevelopment of blighted properties where it otherwise might not happen. Utilizing the EPA's Brownfield Assessment Grant Program can help to identify recognized environmental conditions and avoid potential environmental enforcement; reduce uncertainty of clean-up costs while accessing economic incentives such as loans, grants, and/or tax relief; reduce liability and risk through Phase I Environmental Site Assessments; facilitate property transfers; and help leverage funding for environmental cleanup.

The purpose of the assessment process is to identify the type of contamination first, then identify cleanup methods and reuse goals. This planning process creates a roadmap from blight to productive reuse. There are several phases involved in this process. First, assessment of the site must occur. This involves Phase I Site Assessments (research of deeds, public records, etc.) and then Phase II Assessments (soil testing, water testing, etc. for specific chemicals suggested by the Phase I Assessment). Once assessment work is

WHAT ARE BROWNFIELDS?

"A Brownfield is defined as: real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The 2002 Brownfields Law further defines the term to include a site that is: contaminated by a controlled substance; contaminated by petroleum or a petroleum product excluded from the definition of 'hazardous substance,' or mine-scarred land."

Definition from the United States Environmental Protection Agency

complete, reuse planning can begin. The reuse planning phase considers several factors, including the type of contamination and the desired end use(s). Once these components are identified a contamination mitigation strategy can be developed. The final reuse plan will then put all of these factors down on paper; the contamination, the reuse, and the mitigation strategy. The process then culminates with cleanup and redevelopment.

A number of planning commissions in New England have been awarded assessment grants from EPA (\$300,000 and \$400,000) with the task of conducting assessments of many sites around their region. Environmental engineering firms are retained by the RPC to do the work. Using this model, both CNHRPC and SNHPC have received multiple assessment grants from EPA and are seeking additional sites to assess throughout the two regions. To find out more or to explore the site nomination process please visit [CNHRPC](#) and [SNHPC](#) brownfields program pages.



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS

Developing a comprehensive economic strategy requires understanding the region's prospects for growth as well as identifying barriers to economic development. Regional Planning Commission staff and the CEDS Stakeholder group conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis to improve understanding of the region's strengths and potential barriers as well as opportunities for economic development.

In 2014, a team of consultants assisted RPC staff on the SWOT analysis, developing a survey for various stakeholders including business owners and municipal representatives and analyzing the results. For this CEDS update, RPC staff built on this earlier work by scheduling an interactive discussion with business owners, municipal staff, town representatives and other interested individuals to discuss the 2014 SWOT results and to gather input on any revisions/new information that should be incorporated into the analysis. The result is a revised SWOT that reflects any necessary revisions to the major themes that are used to summarize the SWOT findings.

SWOT SUMMARY

In general, the CEDS Stakeholder group found that one of the greater strengths of the region was its business-friendly environment. From necessary infrastructure like highway access to relatively affordable

real estate and a high number of educated residents, the Region is considered to be a welcoming place for economic development. The intrinsic qualities such as clean air and water as well as the Region's natural/rural environment and outdoor activities were seen as a strength in that they can attract and retain a workforce.

The Region's strengths can be useful in illustrating the underlying barriers to development. For instance, while the Region is valued for its natural resources and open space, development is often restricted due to fears of compromising the area's rural character. Many in the Stakeholder group noted that the slow pace of government change can lead to a lack of needed development, such as affordable housing. Additionally, while the region has relatively affordable real estate and buildable open space, it lacks the water and sewer infrastructure to handle larger development.

The following pages summarize the SWOT results and synthesize the data into broad themes that are used to organize the CEDS goals and objectives.

STRENGTHS

- Well-educated population
- Relatively low business costs (real estate, wage rates)
- Proximity of natural resources/outdoor activities
- Centrally located to amenities & urban centers
- Legislation establishing accessory dwelling unit guidelines
- Good highway access
- Strong presence of businesses in health, finance, & trade
- More relaxed quality of life
- Clean air/water
- Low unemployment
- Business friendly environment
- High percentage of self-employed & work at home
- Quality local schools (Grades K-12)
- Many colleges/universities
- Communities with varied densities

REGIONAL WEAKNESSES/THREATS

- Lack of labor availability
- Limited public transit, including no commuter rail
- High housing costs & lack of diversity
- Limited tax incentives
- Slow pace of government change
- High student debt
- Inconsistent broadband/telecommunications coverage
- Limited public water/sewer
- Opioid/drug epidemic and stigma
- Lack of inter-municipal cooperation
- High price of utilities
- Differing needs in urban, suburban, and rural communities
- No major research university
- Workforce age and skills not always aligned
- Low wages and high cost of living
- High reliance on property taxes
- Meeting the needs of an aging population

OPPORTUNITIES

- Stronger partnerships between universities, local schools, businesses, governments, & industries
- Available pre-approved sites inventory and fast-track planning board approval process
- More outreach to refugees and immigrants – under-utilized workforce
- Target industries to community strengths/assets
- Coordinated marketing (towns, firms, brokers)
- Entrepreneur relations including incubator start-ups
- Improve housing diversity
- Utilize synergies among seniors/young adults
- Maintain quality of life by balancing natural resources/recreation needs with economic development
- Identify, engage, and reengage local champions for economic development projects
- Regional branding, including and eye towards tourism
- Efficient access to development information – one stop shop website
- Strengthen focus on transition of military to civilian careers
- High School training for trades
- Small business expansion
- Support for local farms/local food sources

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strategically recruit/target employers/businesses from outside the region
- Support & incubate entrepreneurs
- Pursue broadband & cellular upgrades in rural areas
- View infrastructure improvements through a regional lens
- Support more public transportation, including rail
- Encourage affordable housing for all ages
- Grow local talent
- Emphasize streamlining local land use processes
- Improve website(s) utility & content, including mobile apps
- Create a regional brand
- Highlight regional assets
- Encourage energy efficiency and diversity of supply
- Engage local entrepreneurs & investors
- Emphasize workforce readiness, skill & training
- Increase business development services & technical assistance
- Promote age friendly communities (transportation & housing options, walkable)
- Increase awareness of trade schools

The SWOT Analysis findings were broken down into general themes as a means of better communicating the region's barriers and opportunities.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Educational Institutions are key components of the region's overall economic success and stability. The presence of an "Education" category in the project list along with commentary on training and education in the SWOT reinforces this. Further, the area is home to many colleges and universities, many of those who attend are residents in the region. However, many of these graduates move out-of-state for more work opportunities. Additionally, the SWOT found a need to improve relationships between schools, universities and trade schools, municipalities, and businesses to create stronger incentives for young people to work in the area.

WORKFORCE TRAINING AND RETENTION

The region is often described as having a well-educated workforce. While this continues to be valid, the aging workforce and slower growth are creating challenges for businesses. A skilled workforce is a critical factor as well as need for economic resilience and business

growth. As businesses and institutions grow, the challenge to find and retain skilled workers needs to be met. Partnerships with educational institutions and other training initiatives can help to meet this need by directing and focusing programs on the training that is needed. Being proactive and working with other partners needs to be a regional effort if there is to be real progress on addressing the strengthening of the region's economy

WHAT CAN A SWOT DO?

- Explore possibilities for new efforts or solutions to problems.
- Identify opportunities for success that help define a best path for a strategy.
- Determine where change is possible. An inventory of strengths and weaknesses can reveal priorities as well as possibilities.

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The area is seen as welcoming to businesses in terms of real estate cost, relatively low taxes, and available developable land. However, the lack of critical infrastructure such as sewer and water in the region's more rural areas is seen as a barrier to economic growth. Water and sewer infrastructure represents one of the most costly systems for local governments.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the state's largest highways runs through the middle of the CEDS region, making it a valued asset for many businesses and employees. Interstate 93, as well as many state highways were seen as vital transportation resources. However, the SWOT found that lack of public transportation, including passenger rail, can be a major barrier to workforce and economic development. An aging population and workforce also creates challenges. Additionally, the physical nature of many towns in the region can be a barrier to creating a connected, walkable community. Many of the rural communities lack sidewalks – and continued sprawled development can create a burden on those who cannot drive.

MUNICIPAL AND BUSINESS RELATIONS

While the area is seen as a business-friendly environment, the SWOT found areas where regulatory policies could be revisited to encourage economic development. For instance, the SWOT found a lack of incentives for businesses to move to the area. It was also found that having access to development information, as well as available pre-approved property inventory and fast-track planning board approval processes, could lead to more economic development.

UTILITIES AND SOFT-INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2017, New Hampshire had the highest average monthly electricity bill compared to its bordering states.³ The SWOT found that the region had high commercial utility costs. The SWOT also found that diversifying energy sources, such as solar energy, could help to lower utility costs. Additionally, the SWOT found a lack of consistent cellular and broadband in remote and rural areas in the region. Expanding on these services could improve communication, and provide more opportunity to attract, retain and expand job creating businesses and institutions.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Lack of affordable housing was seen as a barrier to workforce development, as well as keeping new graduates in the region. Similarly, affordable housing was seen as an important resource for older workers looking to down-size to a more affordable home. Outside of the region's urban centers, housing stock lacks diversity in options for new home-buyers and renters. While lack of new affordable housing stock is a barrier to economic development, in June, 2017, the New Hampshire Accessory Dwelling Units statute (RSA 674:71 - 73) became law. The intent of the law is to expand the supply of housing in New Hampshire communities without further land development, as well as to encourage efficient use of existing housing stock and infrastructure, and provide an affordable housing option in communities.

A RICH CULTURAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

There are many assets in the region and nearby for residents and visitors. These features contribute to the highly regarded quality of life by providing the amenities and opportunities for leisure, entertainment and relaxation. Outdoor recreation, historic downtowns, agricultural and working forest lands all contribute value to the economy. The

³ U.S. Energy Information Administration

region must maintain and enhance its strong quality of life characteristics as a place where people want to work, play and live.

Quality of life is highly regarded as an important factor in attracting and maintaining a workforce.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

This region has many unique opportunities for regional partnerships – formally and informally. The Regional Planning Commissions directly provide regional resources that towns can capitalize on for economic development. The prospect of a regional web portal (a project in this and the 2014 CEDS) and brownfields assistance are just two examples of what kind of direct technical support the RPCs can provide each community. Further, the strong presence of state and federal agencies brings in an added workforce as well as additional funds to the region. Capitalizing on this connection for workforce training and funding opportunities should be pursued. Communities also need to work closely with one another to share goals to advance economic resiliency and develop new networks that support regional and local goals. By partnering with others, there is a stronger opportunity to build capacity to support economic growth.



CLUSTER ANALYSIS

The 2014 CEDS and this 2018 update both include an industry cluster analysis. A cluster analysis is of key importance as it can help local decision makers to better understand what industries are important to the region. It can also shed light on what sectors are growing and which sectors may be in decline. Lastly, by comparing the change in these trends between the two CEDS, a community can better understand the dynamic economic development environment they are trying to influence.

At its most basic level, a cluster analysis is a way to look at a geographic area and explore what industries (including support industries) drive the local economy. To complete this analysis, a method called a “location quotient” – or LQ – can be used. An LQ compares two geographies, one large and one small (in this case the CEDS region and the State of New Hampshire), and tries to identify which industries are more important to the smaller geography. The result is an LQ. An LQ of 1 or more signifies that the industry is more important to the smaller geography than the larger one and therefore, this becomes a way to identify a key industry cluster for the smaller geography. The number 1 becomes the threshold for analysis once calculations are complete.

Calculating an LQ is a fairly simple process. First, workforce totals for each industry need to be determined as well as the overall workforce totals for the whole geography. Next, the workforce totals for each

WHAT IS AN INDUSTRY CLUSTER?

“An industry cluster is a group of firms, and related economic actors and institutions that are located near one another and draw productive advantage from their mutual proximity and connections.”

Brookings Institution definition of industry cluster

In short, a cluster is a group of businesses that work together in a region – auto industry in Detroit or computers in Silicon Valley for instance. They are key industries for a region and they drive the economy.

industry needs to be divided by the total workforce totals for the geography to determine the industry’s share of the workforce. This needs to be done for both the large and the smaller geographies that are being considered in the analysis. Finally, once percentages of the workforce have been identified for each industry in each geography, the result of the smaller geography must be divided by the results of the larger geography. For example, say there is a small geography A and a large geography B. Looking at the “Wholesale Industry” sector it may be determined that it makes up 5.5% of geography A’s total

“INDUSTRIES” AND THE NAICS CODES

According to the U.S. Small Business Association, “[T]he North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifies business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. economy.”

NAICS, then, is merely a tool for classifying sectors of the economy. Within each of the 20 NAICS codes, there are sub-codes. Cluster analysis and LQs use these codes in the analysis when determining “industry” clusters.

HOW CAN MY COMMUNITY USE A CLUSTER ANALYSIS?

A Cluster Analysis can help a community understand how decisions may impact the local economy by thinking about how they impact key industries. For example: does the current zoning allow for an industry cluster to come to town or grow? Will a proposed ordinance negatively or positively impact a target industry? Can you take steps to attract key industries? Do infrastructure improvements need to match up with what zone a use is permitted in? These are some ways to use a Cluster Analysis. The key takeaway: understand what industries are driving the economy and from there, understand how local decisions impact those industries.

employment and 4.54% of geography B’s. Dividing 5.5% by 4.54% would give an LQ of 1.21. As the answer is greater than 1 it is more important to the smaller geography than the larger one and this could be considered a key industry cluster for geography A. On the other hand, say the “Manufacturing Industry” had a 9.5% share of the total workforce in geography A and 13.21% in geography B. Dividing 9.5% by 13.21% would result in an LQ of 0.72. This would signify that manufacturing is less important for geography A than geography B.

For the Central and Southern New Hampshire CEDS region, the industry clusters (as identified by LQs greater than 1) can be found in the chart below. The top clusters were Public Administration, Information (i.e. internet, etc.), and Other Services Except Public Administration. Other clusters included: Professional/Scientific, Mining/Quarrying, Wholesale, Real Estate, Health Care/Social Assistance, Administrative Support, and Finance/Insurance. All of these had high LQ’s (more than 1) in 2010 as well. Of particular note is Management of Companies. This had a significant LQ in 2010 (1.15) and had an LQ greater than 1 in 2014 (1.08). This was not identified as a strong cluster due primarily to the fact that there was almost a 4% decline in employment between 2010 and 2014 for this cluster. This may change in a future CEDS, but as it was closer to 1 than other clusters, coupled with a notable decline in employment, it was excluded.

With regard to the overall change in employment between 2010 and 2014, with the exceptions of Management of Companies and Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, every industry saw an increase. The top three industries to grow were Administration and Support, Professional/Scientific, and Information. Coincidentally, Information also had the second-highest LQ for the region. Strengthening and growing all of the clusters are good policies but the industries that saw significant increases in employment are especially desirable.

Table 2: Location Quotients & Employment Trends

INDUSTRY	NUMBER EMPLOYEES 2014	NUMBER EMPLOYEES 2010	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2010	LOCATION QUOTIENTS	
				2014	2010
Public Administration	11,853	11,709	1.23%	1.57	1.57
Information	4,064	3,725	9.10%	1.28	1.24
Other Services (exc. Public Administration)	6,601	6,099	8.23%	1.21	1.22
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	10,701	9,447	13.27%	1.20	1.23
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil and Gas Extraction	159	158	0.63%	1.19	1.24
Wholesale Trade	8,501	8,090	5.08%	1.19	1.22
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	2,098	2,052	2.24%	1.18	1.21
Health Care & Social Assistance	28,501	28,083	1.49%	1.17	1.20
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation	9,676	7,328	32.04%	1.15	1.10
Finance & Insurance	8,215	7,764	5.81%	1.15	1.18
Management of Companies & Enterprises	2,359	2,434	-3.08%	1.08	1.15
Construction	6,143	4,968	23.65%	0.97	0.96
Utilities	641	597	7.37%	0.93	0.84
Transportation & Warehousing	3,286	3,233	1.64%	0.92	0.97
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	432	376	14.89%	0.86	0.90
Educational Services	14,824	14,235	4.14%	0.86	0.84
Accommodation & Food Services	11,311	10,049	12.56%	0.84	0.84
Retail Trade	19,957	17,823	11.97%	0.81	0.77
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	1,792	1,837	-2.45%	0.72	0.72
Manufacturing	11,958	11,360	5.26%	0.68	0.68

Source: US Census ACS 2015; CNHRPC & SNHPC Calculations

A final statistic to consider is whether there are any discrepancies between commuter and in-town workforces with regard to key industry cluster employment. This can be done by using the location quotient method to analyze commuter vs. in-town workers; specifically to identify key industries that employ commuters vs. in-town employees. Key industries that are more important to commuters could be recruited to the region to serve the local workforce. Conversely, key industries that are more important to in-town workers may benefit from the attraction of more workers to the region. In short, differences between in-town and commuter workforce is another way to identify different opportunities for economic expansion through workforce or industry recruitment strategies.

In looking at this data, the key is to find industries with significant commuter employment (Note: “commuter” means someone who commutes to another community for work and this destination may be outside of the region or inside the region but in another community).

WHAT ARE THE ADMINISTRATION/SUPPORT AND OTHER SERVICES EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION INDUSTRIES?

These include professions such as construction supervisors, mechanics, business support, employment support, investigation/security services, etc. (Administration/Support) and accountants, chefs, child care, business specialists, maintenance/repair, landscaping, LPNs, barbers, personal trainers, etc. (Other Services Except Public Administration). For more detail see the full breakdown of these NAICS Codes at the US SBA Website: <https://www.sba.gov/contracting/getting-started-contractor/determine-your-naics-code>

Using the LQ process to identify “clusters” for the commuters vs. those working in-town and the following trends are evident:

- All key employers for commuters are key industry clusters for the CEDS region. This suggests that workers are: a) at least commuting from one community within the region to another; and, 2) people are commuting in from outside of the Region for employment in these industries. This makes sense when considering that both Manchester and Concord are significant state employment centers. It suggests that in order for these industries to grow there may be a need to attract workforce to the region.
- Five of the eight industries are more important for regional in-town workers than they are for the commuters, though they are fairly important for both.
- One Industry, Public Administration shows an even LQ between In-Town and Commuters suggesting that many in this sector work in the same community in which they work.
- Two industries in particular show that there may be opportunity for expansion, both within the region and within each community. These industries are Administration/Support and Other Services Except Public Administration. The discrepancy between Commuters and In-Town suggests that for these industries to expand more jobs are needed in these sectors.

Table 3: In-Town vs. Commuter Location Quotients

INDUSTRY SIGNIFICANT TO "COMMUTERS"	LOCATION QUOTIENT SCORE VS IN-TOWN	IDENTIFIED REGIONAL INDUSTRY CLUSTER?	MORE IMPORTANT TO COMMUTER OR IN-TOWN WORKFORCE?
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1.17	Yes (1.19 LQ VS State)	In-Town
Wholesale Trade	1.17	Yes (1.19 LQ VS State)	In-Town
Information	1.13	Yes (1.28 LQ VS State)	In-Town
Finance and Insurance	1.19	Yes (1.15 LQ VS State)	In-Town
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.13	Yes (1.18 LQ VS State)	In-Town
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	1.20	Yes (1.15 LQ VS State)	Commuter
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1.23	Yes (1.21 LQ VS State)	Commuter
Public Administration	1.57	Yes (1.57 LQ VS State)	EVEN

Source: U.S. Census ACS 2015; CNHRPC & SNHPC Calculations