

ECONOMIC BASE

This Chapter is intended to serve two purposes: First, it is the Economic Base Chapter for the Loudon Master Plan; and second, it serves to lay the groundwork for the next several years of implementation for the newly reestablished Loudon Economic Development Committee.

In order for the Town of Loudon to continue to grow and economically mature now and in the future, there is the need to preserve the Town's rural, historical, and agricultural heritage. To accomplish this, it is important to plan for the kinds of business opportunities that are consistent with the Town's goals. The Town of Loudon, up to this point, has enough land that both medium and large house lots are available for residential use and home occupations. The Route 106 corridor, which has limited access, acts as a quality control mechanism, both visually and practically, for future businesses in the town. The current commercial areas are: 1) New Hampshire Motor Speedway; 2) Fillmore's International Drive; 3) Route 106/Shaker Road intersection; 4) Route 106/Route 129 intersection; 5) Route 106/Chichester Road/South Village Road intersection; and 6) Staniels Road/Route 106 Intersection. It is hard to see at this point that further expansion beyond these six areas is in Loudon's immediate interest as there is plenty of available commercial space. The purpose of the Economic Base chapter is to attract new businesses that fit into Loudon's character and to help existing businesses grow and expand.

The retention and promotion of Loudon's agricultural businesses can also foster the type of economy that will best preserve Loudon's

VISION STATEMENT

Promote future economic growth in Loudon that provides a sense of community and promotes quality of life while retaining our Town's rural character through proper planning.

heritage and assist in preserving the rural character of the community. One of the biggest draws for future businesses in Loudon could be universal high speed internet service.

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1

To promote "quality of life" economic development that capitalizes on the Soucook River, trail systems, cultural areas, farms, bed-and-breakfasts, and other recreational and tourism opportunities in order to preserve these resources, as well as encourage appropriate businesses that support these enterprises.

OBJECTIVE 2

To promote businesses in the Village District which will create a thriving Village Center with a sense of community where residents can obtain services and products, and participate in social opportunities within a short walking distance.

OBJECTIVE 3

To promote the creation of new retail businesses and professional offices which are easily accessible along Routes 106 and 129, Shaker Road, and in the Village but are situated in such a way that other businesses are drawn to their locations and possibly expanding those areas by the creation of access roads in a manner that harmonizes the traditional and rural character of the community with commercial uses.

OBJECTIVE 4

To promote commercial and industrial enterprises in orderly, well-landscaped developments which take advantage of highway accessibility through the use of access roads and existing commercial/industrial parks.

OBJECTIVE 5

Maintain strong relationships between and among Town Boards, Town Departments and the general public; ensure effective regulations and ordinances.

OBJECTIVE 6

Increase access to broadband internet (fiber to the home).

OBJECTIVE 7

Revisit infrastructure needs along Route 106 in the future.

OBJECTIVE 8

Promote appropriate economic development opportunities throughout Loudon through the reestablishment of the Loudon Economic Development Committee and through the use of available tools and resources.

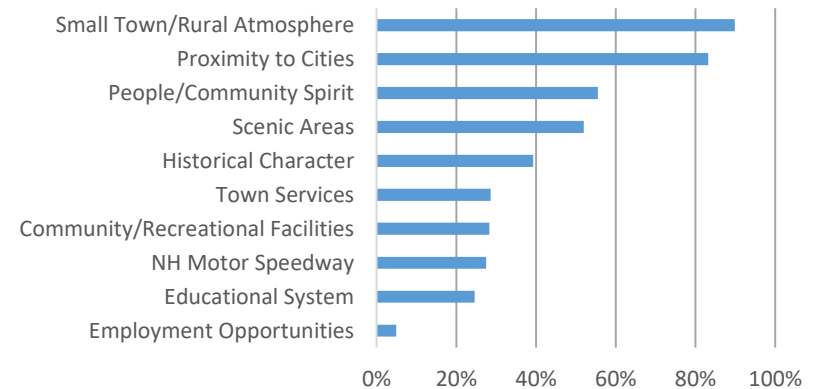
COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In preparation for this Master Plan, a community survey was available for residents to provide input. The survey results demonstrated a mix of those who favor development and those who don't. The majority of participants were in favor of broaden the Town's tax base with additional commercial and industrial uses and supported areas designated strictly for industrial use.

Responses showed support of installing lights at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway (NHMS) to expand a race day in case of rain. Similarly, support was showed for a Saturday night race to shorten the impact on the area. However, there was a much larger mix of responses regarding the construction of a casino at the NHMS, with 50.7% in support, 46.8% against, and 2.5% having no opinion.

Overall, residents live in Loudon for its small town/rural atmosphere, proximity to cities, and its people/community spirit. It was clear residents appreciate Loudon's high quality of life and support preserving its quality of life in the years to come.

Community Survey Question 19: Why do you feel that Loudon is a desirable place to live?



Community Survey Question 11: Are you in favor of Loudon trying to encourage commercial/industrial uses (nonresidential growth) to broaden its tax base?

Q. 11	Total	Percentage
Yes	269	75.6%
No	69	19.4%
No opinion	18	5.1%
Total	356	100.0%

Community Survey Question 12: The current zoning regulations allow for commercial and industrial uses in the same area. Should the Town have an area, or areas, that are dedicated strictly for industrial uses?

Q. 12	Total	Percentage
Yes	174	49.7%
No	120	34.3%
No opinion	56	16.0%
Total	350	100.0%

Community Survey Question 14: Should Loudon consider allowing New Hampshire Motor Speedway (NHMS) to build a casino on their property if future state legislation permits it?

Q. 14	Total	Percentage
Yes	181	50.7%
No	167	46.8%
No opinion	9	2.5%
Total	357	100.0%

Community Survey Question 43: Would you support the New Hampshire Motor Speedway (NHMS) installing lights to help extend the NASCAR event day in case of rain (to eliminate a delay of the race until Monday)?

Q. 43	Total	Percentage
Yes	201	58.6%
No	117	34.1%
No opinion	25	7.3%
Total	343	100.0%

Community Survey Question 44: Would you support a Saturday night NHMS race to shorten a race weekend's impact on the area?

Q. 44	Total	Percentage
Yes	198	58.1%
No	121	35.5%
No opinion	22	6.4%
Total	343	100.0%

Community Survey Question 16: What types of development would you prefer in Loudon? Please give order of priority (1,2,3, etc.)

Q. 16	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
Any Type of Development Designed to Help Preserve Loudon’s Quality of Life	46.4%	14.6%	10.2%	24.5%	3.7%	0.6%	2.26	323
Industrial/Commercial Development	24.8%	26.0%	18.6%	19.8%	6.5%	4.3%	2.70	323
Residential Development	13.0%	27.2%	32.2%	19.8%	4.0%	3.7%	2.86	323
Mixed-Use Development	9.0%	25.1%	32.5%	26.6%	5.6%	1.2%	2.98	323
No Development	5.0%	4.6%	4.3%	6.5%	64.7%	14.9%	4.66	323
Other	1.9%	2.5%	2.2%	2.8%	15.5%	75.2%	5.53	323

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISIONING SESSION

On November 14, 2013, a visioning session was held with local businesses, citizens and the Master Plan Committee. In general, the meeting participants found that the assets to doing business in Loudon included location, quality of life, and good governance. Challenges included internet access, costs of doing business (utilities, taxes), transportation issues/utilities and balancing growth with the quality of life.

<u>ADVANTAGES</u>	<u>CHALLENGES</u>	<u>WAYS TO CAPITALIZE ADVANTAGES</u>	<u>WAYS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to major highways, lakes, mountains, seacoast and southern NH/MA • Potential for tourist/recreation business • Rural quality of life • Good governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure, including internet access, and funding • Growth rate has been slowing • Competing interests in town • Taxes and the cost of infrastructure are problematic • Transportation challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize web presence • Develop an EDC to implement this Chapter/Plan • Develop EDC to serve as an economic development advocate in town • Community character/ quality of life as economic development draw • Capitalizing on the New Hampshire Motor Speedway’s vital role in Loudon’s economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater regional connectivity (Lakes Region included) • Careful, “smart growth” along 106 to ensure that growth is maximized while protecting community character • Find create ways to fund needed infrastructure

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Economic indicators for Loudon and surrounding communities are shown in Table 5.1. These indicators include population data from 2010 and 2016, showing Loudon’s population increase that would be classified as stable by demographers, given the margin of error with estimates. Loudon's population is keeping a slightly higher pace statistically, as its growth is a higher than the slow or no growth of its surrounding communities. Loudon's median household income is in the middle of the range of the surrounding communities, which is similar of its poverty rate at 7.2%. Unemployment rates decreased from 2010 to 2017 for all surrounding communities as well as Loudon, reflective of the improved jobs picture in New Hampshire.

Employment and Wages indicators found in Table 5.2 include Average Covered Employment, Average Weekly Wage and Annual Average Employed Civilian Labor Force. Annual Average Covered Employment is reported by employers (excluding self-employed) and shows a gain for Loudon from 2010 to 2016, which was also experienced by all abutting communities. New Hampshire also shows a gain in Annual Average Covered Employment from 2010 to 2016 and experienced a higher annual weekly wage than Loudon, as well as all of Loudon’s surrounding communities.

Table 5.1: Area Economic Indicators

	Population		Median Household Income (ACS 2012-2016)	Individuals Below Poverty Level (ACS 2012-16)	Unemployment Rate (NHES)	
	2010 Census	2016 Estimate			2010	2017
Canterbury	2,352	2,366	\$82,847	2.3%	4.2%	1.9%
Chichester	2,523	2,573	\$82,928	7.2%	4.0%	2.1%
Concord	42,695	42,501	\$57,566	11.3%	5.3%	2.3%
Gilmanton	3,777	3,731	\$68,085	9.6%	6.8%	3.0%
Loudon	5,317	5,466	\$68,750	7.2%	4.8%	2.3%
Pembroke	7,115	7,072	\$77,845	6.8%	5.7%	2.3%
Pittsfield	4,106	4,072	\$49,087	14.8%	7.6%	2.6%
NH	1,316,470	1,334,795	\$68,485	8.5%	5.8%	2.7%

Source: NH Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau, NH Office of Strategic Initiatives Population Estimates

Table 5.2: Employment and Wages

	Annual Average Covered Employment		Average Weekly Wage (Covered Employment)		Annual Average Employed Civilian Labor Force	
	2010	2016	2010	2016	2010	2016
Canterbury	263	318	\$564	\$829	1,378	1,414
Chichester	520	702	\$656	\$869	1,426	1,472
Concord	40,179	40,396	\$855	\$990	21,647	21,910
Gilmanton	275	298	\$649	\$832	1,734	1,732
Loudon	833	998	\$627	\$750	3,035	3,129
Pembroke	2,204	2,287	\$800	\$913	4,196	3,997
Pittsfield	965	1,137	\$735	\$955	1,993	2,003
NH	600,540	647,375	\$884	\$1,030	695,135	727,420

Sources: NH Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

Table 5.3: Jobs by Industry Sector

	Canterbury	Chichester	Concord	Gilmanton	Loudon	Pembroke	Pittsfield
Total Jobs - 2015	312	644	41,374	264	912	2,451	1,294
Goods-Producing Industries							
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	19	47	34	0	202	17	0
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0	0	19	0	0
Utilities	0	0	37	0	0	6	1
Construction	30	44	605	43	81	282	63
Manufacturing	0	8	1,450	0	81	158	464
Subtotal	49	99	2,126	43	383	463	528
Service Producing Industries							
Wholesale Trade	20	62	1,330	6	10	591	50
Retail Trade	90	166	4,996	12	91	255	95
Transportation and Warehousing	4	0	537	11	31	51	33
Information	0	0	607	3	7	5	4
Finance and Insurance	0	18	2,134	0	14	18	18
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0	36	407	7	1	27	13
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	13	36	2,383	8	15	60	7
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0	0	238	0	0	0	7
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgt.& Remediation	18	58	1,480	25	61	74	128
Educational Services	27	45	2,528	92	54	534	152
Health Care and Social Assistance	18	40	10,214	16	18	90	39
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	30	0	279	0	87	48	0
Accommodation and Food Services	2	20	2,516	5	70	92	66
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	14	29	1,881	0	16	45	103
Subtotal	236	510	31,530	185	475	1,890	715
Public Administration	27	35	7,718	36	54	98	51

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap Application

Average Weekly Wage statistics from 2010 to 2016 show increase for Loudon from \$627 to \$750, one of the smaller increases compared to those of surrounding communities. It is important to note that the weekly wage in both of these years is also one of the lowest when compared to the other communities.

Jobs by industry sector for Loudon and surrounding communities are shown in Table 5.3 for the year 2015. These sectors include good-producing industries, such as utilities, construction, and manufacturing, and service producing industries, such as wholesale trade, finance and insurance, and education services. Public administration is also included as an industry sector within the table.

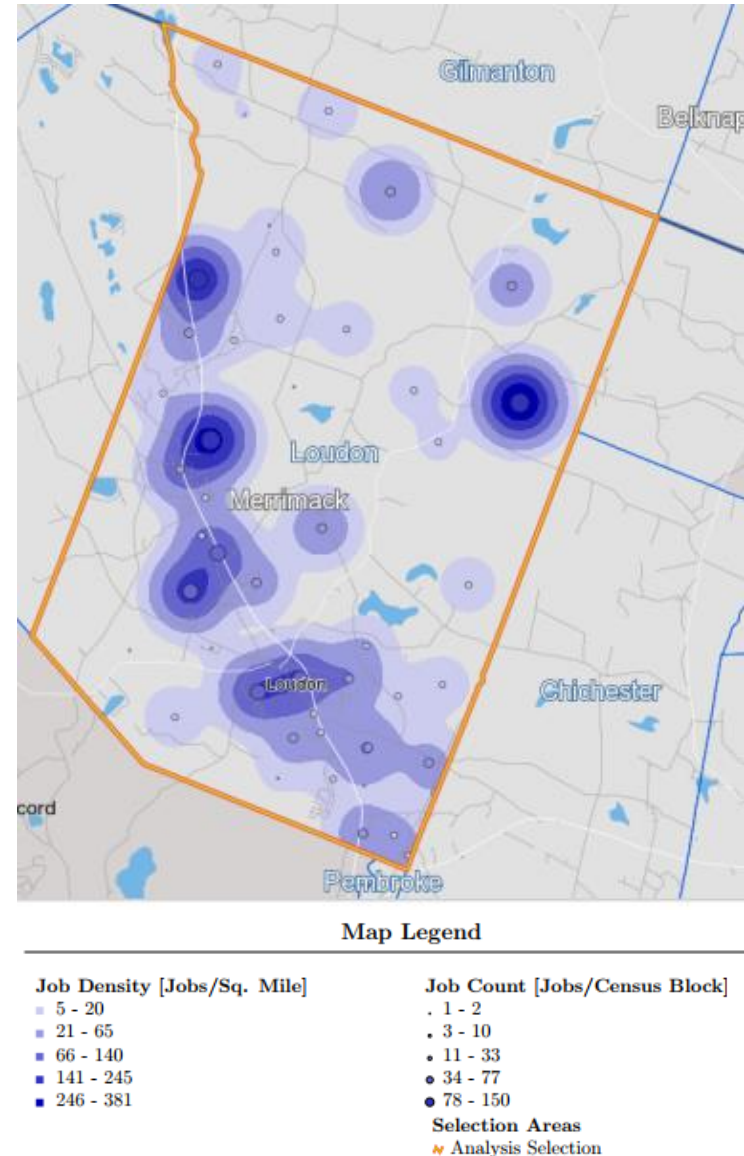
The highest amount of jobs within Loudon is within the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector, with nearly 202 jobs, followed by arts, entertainment, and recreation. Of the surrounding communities, Concord had the highest number of jobs in all sectors, with the exception of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector, which only had 28 jobs to Loudon’s 178.

COUNTY ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

As the first step in developing strategies for economic development is to understand what industries the region is currently strong in, it is also important to understand what the projected performance of those industries will be. In short, the question to answer is: “to what extent can we rely on our key industries in the future?” To answer these question is to get a sense as to how the economy of tomorrow might look and, to develop strategies around that potential future.

The State of New Hampshire, specifically, the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, conducts analysis of the economy and develops economic projections at the state and county level.

Figure 5.1: Location and Density of Jobs in Loudon, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap Application

Though the projections are not done at the Planning Commission level, the majority of the CNHRPC area is within Merrimack County and the county level projections can be used to get a pretty good projection for the region. Merrimack County industry projections from 2010 to 2020 are shown in Tables 5.4 and 5.5.

Looking at the projections, it seems that among the region’s clusters, all but Internet Technology and Manufacturing are projected to experience growth. This suggests that there will be opportunity to strengthen and/or expand the economy within most of the key industries and it is reasonable to expect that they will expand. The implications are not that retail and manufacturing should be “ignored” or that they are “undesired;” quite the contrary. They represent a significant part of the Region’s economy: service and tourism are tied to retail, and Internet Technology also plays a role in the success of other businesses as it represents vital infrastructure. Moving forward, replacing copper internet conduit with fiber optic conduit in an effort to ensure that the region has adequate broadband coverage may will be vital.

THE CENTRAL/SOUTHERN NH COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

The 2014 Central/Southern New Hampshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was prepared in coordination with the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC). The CEDS represents a significant in-depth analysis of the regional economy and the development of regional economic development strategies for the area that includes all 20 CNHRPC communities as well as five communities from SNHPC.

These include Bedford, Goffstown, Hooksett, New Boston, and Weare. Major tasks completed during the CEDS process included:

Table 5.4: Overall Merrimack County Employment Projections

Industry	2010 Estimated Employment	2020 Projected Employment	2010-2020 Numeric Change	Growth Rate (%)
Total Employment	80,051	88,026	7,975	10
Total Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	6,419	6,689	270	4.2
Goods-Producing Industries	9,627	10,235	608	6.3
Service-Producing Industries	64,005	71,102	7,097	11.1

Source: NH Labor Market Bureau & CNHRPC Calculations

Table 5.5: Cluster Projections

Regional Industry Cluster	2010 Estimated Employment	2020 Projected Employment	2010-2020 Numeric Change	Growth Rate (%)
Business Services	1,775	2,145	370	20.9%
Finance	3,955	4,310	355	9
Health Care and Social Assistance	12,183	15,358	3,175	26.1
Arts & Entertainment	1,532	1,700	168	11
Internet Technology	557	557	0	0
Retail	9,317	10,028	711	7.6
Manufacturing	5,513	5,267	-246	-4.5

Source: NH Labor Market Bureau & CNHRPC Calculations

- Preparation of an industry cluster analysis,
- Preparation of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis,
- Development of a regional economic vision statement, goals and measurable five-year objectives by the Strategy

Committee, and

- Development of a plan of action and priority project and activity lists by the Strategy Committee.

The selection of priority projects began with the development of criteria. An application form and cover letter were developed and sent to key stakeholders including municipalities, businesses and not-for profits across the region. The projects were then scored and ranked in eight categories: Education, Energy, Sewer/Water, Studies, Municipal, Recreation and Other. In total, 39 projects are included in the CEDS document, however, none were included for the Town of Loudon.

Another important benefits of the CEDS is that it is an important prerequisite for the region to be designated by U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an Economic Development District (EDD). A designated district enables municipalities and counties to qualify for EDA funding under EDA's current public works, economic adjustment and planning grant programs.

CEDS SWOT ANALYSIS RESULTS

As part of the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Document (CEDS), a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis was conducted. Arnett Development conducted the SWOT, and, although the CEDS region includes five towns from the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission Region, Central is heavily represented with 20 communities.

In general, the Region as a whole has a number of key assets, including quality of life, proximity to many desirable locations throughout the State and all of New England, as well as an educated workforce and a higher overall income. Challenges stem from an

ageing workforce and telecommunications coverage (both cell phone and broadband internet).

A summary of the findings includes:

Strengths:

- Labor Availability
- Well Educated Population
- Highway Access
- Business Friendly Environment
- Business Costs (real estate, wage rates)
- Critical Mass of Firms (health, finance, trade)
- High % of Self-employed & Work-at-home
- Natural Environment / Outdoor Activities

Weaknesses/Threats:

- Communication / Information Bandwidth
- No Research University
- Few Nearby Amenities
- Little Public Transit
- Physical Infrastructure Limitations
- Community – Entrepreneur Connection

Opportunities:

- Local Schools Involvement
- Local Business Involvement
- Cross Marketing (towns, firms, brokers)
- Available Sites Inventory
- Entrepreneur Relations
- Access to Development Information
- Website Development & Improvement

Recommendations:

- Don't Chase
- Grow Your Own
- Engage Local Entrepreneurs & Investor
- Support & Incubate
- Emphasis on Streamlining Local Processes
- Emphasis on Skills Training & Work Readiness
- Pursue Broadband & Cellular Upgrade
- Improve Website(s) Utility & Content
- Increase Business Development Services & TA
- View through a Regional Lens
- Take Regional Approach... Create Regional Brand

CEDS REGIONAL INDUSTRY CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Regional economic trends are best assessed using an industry cluster analysis. Camoin Associates of Saratoga Springs NY, an economic consulting firm, completed the analysis in the spring of 2011 for the CNHRPC area. The method used was the Location Quotient Analysis (LQ). What an LQ assesses is the importance of an industry to a particular area compared to a larger area. For the Camoin analysis, the region and the nation were the two areas of comparison. For the analysis, a value of 1.00 demonstrates that the employment concentration in a particular industry is roughly the same locally and nationally. An LQ greater than 1.00 indicates an industry with a high degree of concentration relative to a certain area. An LQ less than 1.00 indicates that the industry's share of local employment is less than that industry's share of the national employment.

The Regional Industry Clusters identified in the analysis identified the four following clusters*:

- Business and Financial Services (ICS Codes: 52-54) with an LQ of .097. Top 10 businesses in this cluster include:
 - Life Insurance Carriers
 - Lawyers
 - Health Insurance Carriers
 - Insurance Agencies and Brokerages
 - Property and Casualty Advice
 - Investment Advice
 - Engineering Services
 - Portfolio Management
 - Custom Computer Programming Services
 - Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
- Medical Services (ICS Code: 33, 44, 54, 62 & 63) with an LQ of 1.13. Top 10 businesses in this cluster include:
 - General Medical and Surgical Hospitals
 - Nursing Care Facilities
 - Home Health Care Services
 - Pharmacies and Drug Stores
 - Other Residential Care Facilities
 - Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers
 - Homes for the Elderly
 - Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals
 - Residential Mental Retardation Facilities
 - Continuing Care Retirement Communities
- Arts and Entertainment (ICS Code:) with an LQ of 0.73. Top 10 businesses in this cluster include:
 - Independent Artists, Writers and Performers
 - Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels
 - Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers

- Golf Courses and Country Clubs
- Racetracks
- All Other Amusement and Recreation Industries
- Radio Stations
- Motion Picture Theaters (except Drive-Ins)
- Skiing Facilities
- Museums
- Information Technology (ICS Code:) with an LQ of 0.67. Top 10 businesses in this cluster include:
 - Custom Computer Programming Services
 - Computer Systems Design Services
 - Instrument Manufacturing – Measuring & Testing Electricity/Elect. Signals
 - Wired Telecommunications Carriers
 - Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services
 - Telephone Apparatus Manufacturing
 - All Other Miscellaneous Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing
 - Analytical Laboratory Instrument Manufacturing
 - Power, Distribution and Specialty Transformer Manufacturing
 - Other Computer Related Services

*Although they were not identified as clusters with “regional” importance, it is also important to point out that both Manufacturing and Retail are significant within certain communities within the region.

Taken together, these industries represent the core of the region’s economy. Though some of these industries may have varying needs, a lot of what can be done to: 1) help these industries grow and expand; and, 2) attract new and supporting industries will be the

same. For instance, access to information and a streamlined permitting process will benefit all of them.

Though the analysis is undertaken regionally, the findings do impact Loudon individually. While implementing this Chapter, the Town should be aware that the weaknesses and threats of the region must be overcome locally as well as regionally; additionally, regional strengths and opportunities can and should be capitalized on at the local level as well.

The update of the 2014 Central/Southern New Hampshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is scheduled to be completed in 2018.

AVAILABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Economic development tools available for use by New Hampshire’s municipalities include the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive and the establishment of Economic Revitalizations Zones (ERZs). While different in their application (temporary local property tax relief vs. a potential reduction in New Hampshire business profits tax levied), the tools are can be used in a local community to help further their economic development goals. A summary of the tools follow, along with a potential area in Loudon where each could be implemented.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE (RSA 79-E)

If the provisions of RSA 79E are adopted by Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen have the authority to delay any *increase* in taxes for property owners in the Downtown (Village District) if they replace or substantially rehabilitate their property. Its goal is to encourage the rehabilitation and active reuse of under-utilized buildings. How it works:

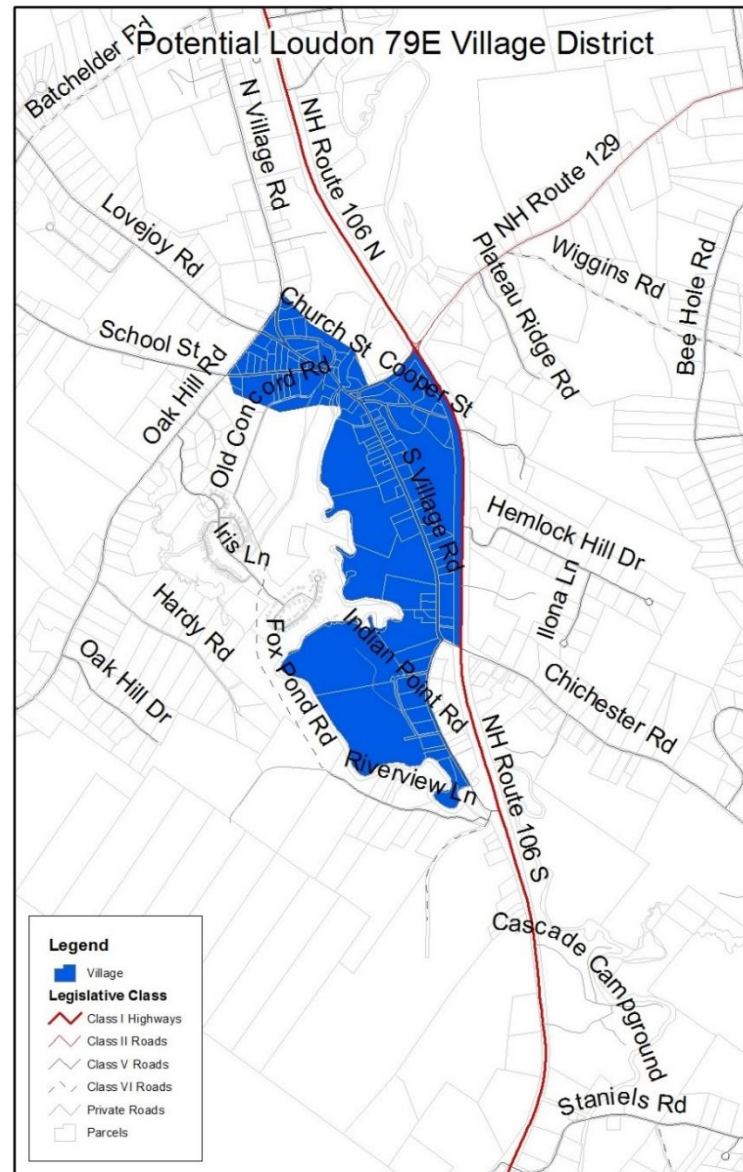
- In a municipality that has adopted this enabling legislation, a property owner who wants to substantially rehabilitate a building located in a designated district may apply to the local governing body for a period of temporary tax relief.
- The temporary tax relief, if granted, would consist of a finite period of time during which the property tax on the structure would not increase as a result of its substantial rehabilitation. In exchange for the relief, the property owner grants a covenant ensuring there is a public benefit to the rehabilitation.
- Following expiration of the finite tax relief period, the structure would be taxed at its full market value taking into account the rehabilitation.

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION ZONES (ERZs)

The Economic Revitalization Zone (ERZ) program is enabled in the State of New Hampshire through NH RSA 162-N. The program allows municipalities to establish certain zones in a community where a business can then seek a credit on its New Hampshire Business Profits Tax. To establish a zone or zones, the Town may apply to the program (administered by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development) following a process outlined in NH RSA 162-N:8.

- To be eligible for the program, a designated zone must meet one of the following requirements:
 - a. Unused or underutilized industrial parks; or
 - b. Vacant land or structures previously used for industrial, commercial or retail purposes but currently not so used due to demolition, age, relocation of the former occupant’s operations, obsolescence, deterioration,

Figure 5.2: Potential Loudon 79E Village District



brownfields, or cessation of operation resulting from unfavorable economic conditions either generally or in a specific economics sector.

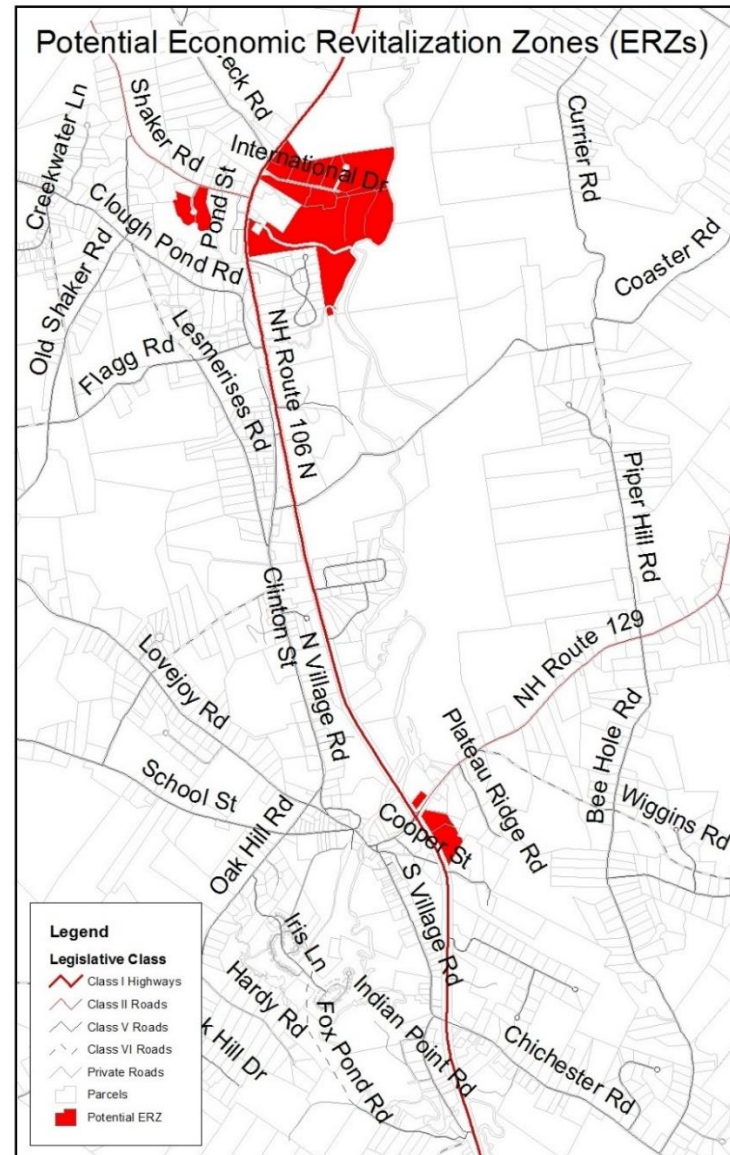
The ERZ program currently has \$825,000 available per year for tax credits throughout the State of New Hampshire.

It is not only business recruitment that is desired, but making sure that those industries already in town stay. This applies to the target industries too. Targeting industries such as Retail, Finance/Insurance/Real Estate/Rental, Education Services, Health Care/Social Assistance, Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, and Accommodation/Food Service represent a strategy for strengthening what Loudon already has and at the same time, capitalizing on those strong regional industry clusters that are expected to grow. These industries, along with supporting all businesses in Loudon, will strengthen and diversify the community's economy for the long haul.

AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Loudon is well positioned to take advantage of both its varied local economy as well as tapping into those portions of the regional economy that fit with its identity. Such an approach would protect the community's character, capitalize on regional industry growth opportunities, and enable the Town to continue to benefit from a somewhat unique local economy that was better suited than the region to endure the Great Recession. This would provide jobs, diversify the local economy, and above all, strengthen the quality of life for Loudon Residents. In addition, the Town's natural resources, its agricultural character and outdoor recreational amenities such as trails and river access as outlined in the Natural Resources and Transportation Chapters of the Master Plan are key economic

Figure 5.3: Potential Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZs)



development opportunities as well.

Given the presence of opportunity, there are challenges to overcome as well. Infrastructure, for one, is a challenge. Broadband internet access is varied: New Hampshire Motor Speedway and Route 106 enjoy such access though other portions of town do not. In the Twenty First Century, broadband internet access is essential to all economic endeavors, from the small home business to the major corporation. Additionally, such access is essential in real estate sales.

In addition to broadband, sewer and water as well as transportation networks, are an issue as well. Sewer and water connections would provide the opportunity for expansion amongst many growth areas in town. Transportation networks, on the other hand need to ensure that traffic flows both freely and safely into and out of town.

Taxes and competing interests also present challenges. In New Hampshire, property taxes drive the municipal revenue stream which can create challenges to starting and maintaining a business. Competing interests and interest groups can create conflicting policy direction for the community which can slow responsiveness to the various challenges to economic growth.

Despite the many challenges, Loudon has many tools at its disposal to address these issues. Good governance and efficient/effective permitting protect the Town's interests and at the same time, a predictable process minimizes delays for economic development. This works hand in hand with another strategy: capitalizing on, and protecting community character by guiding the development process. Loudon should continue to ensure that the process is purposeful, predictable, and above all, protects the identity of the Town.

Attention also needs to be turned to infrastructure challenges and taxes. To begin with, broadband needs to be expanded and sewer/water expansion should be assessed (both in terms of desirability and feasibility). As stated previously, property taxes can impede economic development. The adoption of the provisions of RSA 79E can help with development and redevelopment efforts in the Village area, while the implementation of Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZs) can provide incentives for investment in equipment and employment in specific commercial and industrial areas in Loudon.

Lastly, establishing a strong Economic Development Committee (EDC), along with understanding local economic interests and helping serve all of these stakeholders can work to balance competing local interests for the best of all. Additionally, the EDC can help position Loudon regionally within the state and New England as a whole, to maximize economic development. The EDC becomes the advocate for local economic development and implements the community's vision for such efforts.

OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1

To promote "quality of life" economic development that capitalizes on the Soucook River, trail systems, cultural areas, farms, bed-and-breakfasts, and other recreational and tourism opportunities in order to preserve these resources, as well as encourage appropriate businesses that support these enterprises.

- Support the formation of the Loudon Trails Committee.
- Promote architectural and landscaping standards within the Village and along Route 106 retain historic and rural character.

OBJECTIVE 2

To promote businesses in the Village District which will create a thriving Village Center with a sense of community where residents can obtain services and products, and participate in social opportunities within a short walking distance.

- Work with CNHRPC staff to Investigate funding opportunities and options to extend sidewalks throughout Village District.
- Re-evaluate the previous village plan for the feasibility of and public desire for a Village Center and consider its revision to include best management practices.
- Assess the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Regulations for Village Center businesses and community vibrancy compatibility and make any relevant changes.
- Consider adoption of Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-e) in portions of the Village District, including defining the area, adopting the area and authority at Town Meeting, and developing local criteria for review and approval of requests for tax relief.

OBJECTIVE 3

To promote the creation of new retail businesses and professional offices which are easily accessible along Routes 106 and 129, Shaker Road, and in the Village but are situated in such a way that other businesses are drawn to their locations and possibly expanding those areas by the creation of access roads in a manner that harmonizes the traditional and rural character of the community with commercial uses.

- Assess the Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Regulations for compatibility. Make relevant changes.

OBJECTIVE 4

To promote commercial and industrial enterprises in orderly, well-landscaped developments which take advantage of highway accessibility through the use of access roads and existing commercial/industrial parks.

- Apply for and establish Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZs) in appropriate commercially zoned areas per RSA 162-N, by identifying potential zones by parcel and working with NH DRED and CNHRPC to establish and promote the ERZs.

OBJECTIVE 5

Maintain strong relationships between and among Town Boards, Town Departments and the general public; ensure effective regulations and ordinances.

- Continue to foster a closer working relationship between the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and the Board of Selectmen and hold periodic meetings between Board and Committee chairs and Department heads.
- Assess the Zoning Ordinance, Site Plan Regulations and Subdivision Regulations to ensure effectiveness by exploring the following:

Zoning Ordinance:

- a. Desired economic uses are permissible and, to the maximum extent possible, situated in locations that capitalize on nearby assets and infrastructure (internet, roads, etc.)
- b. Economic uses “fit” Loudon’s character.
- c. That the Home Occupation use is maximized and are well supported by relevant infrastructure.

- d. Buffers between residential and commercial uses are adequate.

Site Plan Regulations:

- a. Ensure clarity of when a Site Plan Review before the Planning Board is required.
- b. Ensure the scope of review is commensurate with what is being proposed (i.e. that major and minor subdivision are dealt with appropriately).

Subdivision Regulations:

- a. That there are no issues with regard to commercial subdivision vs. residential.

All Regulations and Ordinances:

- a. Opportunity exists for mixed-use development, including a clear process.
- b. That ordinances requiring regulations to include certain provisions are provided for (such as cluster subdivisions) in the regulations.
- c. That the processes are clearly specified.
- d. That all three documents are listed on the Town's website.

OBJECTIVE 6

Increase access to broadband internet (fiber to the home).

- Monitor for and participate in regional broadband initiatives, including the following:
 - a. NH Broadband Mapping and Planning Program (funds UNH mapping and RPC broadband plans).
 - b. Participate in Broadband Speed Test www.iwantbroadbandnh.org.

- c. Utilize resources available at the newly formed Broadband Center for Excellence at UNH available at <http://www.unhbcoe.org/>.
- d. Through CNHRPC, UNH and other initiatives, monitor what other opportunities may arise and participate as applicable.

- Create/maintain a map of broadband access in town.

OBJECTIVE 7

Revisit infrastructure needs along Route 106 in the future.

- Monitor public preference for sewer and water through surveys.
- Explore the possible funding sources for sewer and water.
- Assess whether sewer and water infrastructure along Route 106 are possible and desired through public feedback and available funding sources; if so, undertake a Water and Sewer Feasibility Analysis.

OBJECTIVE 8

Promote appropriate economic development opportunities throughout Loudon by reestablishing the Loudon Economic Development Committee and through the use of available tools and resources.

- Identify potential individuals to sit on/groups to be represented on the newly reestablished Economic Development Committee (EDC).
- Through its Charter, empower the EDC to act as nimbly and privately as possible by:

- a. Develop a not-for-profit development corporation to engage in development activities.
 - b. Seek funding for Town Meeting for economic development activities – i.e. develop a “fund” for the EDC to implement the components of this Chapter and subsequent Economic Development Plans/Chapters.
 - c. Seek Town Meeting approval for the authority to engage outside economic consultants, as needed, to implement this and future Plans.
- Develop a mission statement capturing EDC’s purpose, including considering advocating for existing businesses, engaging potential new businesses, and facilitating inter-town coordination and cooperation regarding economic development activities.
 - Implement other economic development activities as specified in this chapter such as Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZs), the adoption of the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-e), and the initiation of a Business Retention and Expansion Program.
 - Develop a strong EDC web presence, including contact lists, documents needed for all approvals and permits, data about the Town (demographics/economic/ transportation), available tracts of land, lists of certified sites, and links to other regional economic development organizations.
 - Participate in regional economic development/marketing programs such as periodic updates of the regional CEDS and market available local commercial sites on the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development choosenh.com website.