



Quechee Gorge, Hartford

**East Central Vermont Economic Development District
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025**



Chelsea

“We cannot do everything at once, but we can do something at once.”

CALVIN COOLIDGE

Adopted June 26, 2020

*Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional
Commission | Springfield Regional
Development Corporation | Southern Windsor
County Regional Planning Commission | Green
Mountain Economic Development Corporation*

Representing the 40-town region:

**Andover
Baltimore
Barnard
Bethel
Bradford
Braintree
Bridgewater
Brookfield
Cavendish
Chelsea
Chester
Corinth
Fairlee
Granville
Hancock
Hartford
Hartland
Ludlow
Newbury
Norwich
Pittsfield
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Pomfret
Randolph
Reading
Rochester
Royalton
Sharon
Springfield
Stockbridge
Strafford
Thetford
Topsham
Tunbridge
Vershire
Weathersfield
West Fairlee
West Windsor
Windsor
Woodstock**

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White River Junction Village - Hartford

THE District

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The 2020-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) was prepared by the East Central Economic Development District (ECVEDD) using Federal funds from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Funding was also provided by Springfield Regional Development Corporation, Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, and Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission.

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Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge

mission

The East Central Vermont Economic Development District's mission is to access and provide resources and to facilitate support for quality decision making for the benefit of entrepreneurs, businesses, and communities in East Central Vermont.

collaboration

This CEDS is a product of collaboration among many entities.

The eligible members of the East Central Vermont Economic Development District (the District) are our 40 towns within Addison, Orange, Rutland, and Windsor Counties as well as the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation (GMEDC), Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWCRPC), Springfield Regional Development Corporation (SRDC), and Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission (TRORC).

The CEDS planning process was led by the CEDS Strategy Committee, which undertook in-depth discussions to analyze the District's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. From this analysis, the Committee refined the plan goals and then developed and prioritized strategies and actions. Through the Committee's work, ECVEDD Board review, and two public outreach events held during the early stages of plan development, input was gathered from a diverse set stakeholders including (but not limited to) public officials, health professionals, chambers of commerce, private business owners, and workforce and education representatives.



Sugaring - Chelsea

Vision:

A diverse base of locally successful and globally competitive businesses that contribute to a vibrant quality of life and place for people of all ages.

summary

What is an Economic Development District (EDD)?

An Economic Development District is a federally designated organization charged with the development, maintenance, and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Application for designation involves several steps including written support by the State of Vermont and a plan of operation as a non-profit organization. Once designated, the EDD is eligible for planning grants to fund the program. The East Central Vermont EDD uses these planning grants to maintain the organization and to develop projects to implement the strategies and goals contained within this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan.

The 40 towns of East Central Vermont were designated as an Economic Development District in December 2013 and continue to maintain that status. This designation allows the region to gain access to Economic Development Administration (EDA) Investment Assistance through a variety of grant opportunities beyond the above-mentioned planning grant. Any requests for EDA funding must align with this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

What is a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

A CEDS is a strategy-driven, regionally developed guide for community and economic development, with the ultimate goal of having a stronger, more diverse regional and resilient economy.

The CEDS process provides the opportunity for individuals, organizations, local governments, educational institutions, and private industry to engage in meaningful discussions about what economic development efforts could best serve the region.

While the most critical function of the CEDS is to provide an economic development framework, the plan also serves as a required vehicle through which some federal agencies (especially the EDA) evaluate requests for grant assistance. An approved EDA CEDS is required for entities in the region to be eligible for EDA funding.



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Ice Harvest - Brookfield

“When it comes to the reasons 30- to 40-year-olds say they want to move to a rural area, jobs isn’t even in the top 10. Quality of life is No. 1. Others are a slower pace, lower cost of housing, and safety and security. Many of these people are creating their own jobs.”

BEN WINCHESTER, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RURAL SOCIOLOGIST

Through an exploration of our opportunities, challenges, and economic conditions, the CEDS Strategy Committee has authored a vision and six overarching goals. The ECVEDD CEDS is designed to work toward and support the latter.

To achieve our vision, a shared region-wide effort is required to strengthen existing key businesses in the region while continuously searching for and capitalizing on new opportunities for growth.

CEDS Goals

1. A Resilient Region
2. An Innovative Business Environment
3. A Robust and Ready Workforce
4. Infrastructure and Homes for Growth
5. Quality of Life & Place
6. Healthy Communities



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Chamber Musicians - Braintree

snapshot:

economic conditions

Overview

The District ranges from rural working landscapes without a discernible community center to bricked main streets with bustling shops, parks, and civic buildings. East Central Vermont gave birth to the machine tool industry, but most of these businesses are gone, leaving behind a legacy of redevelopment challenges related to brownfields issues. The region is part of the larger Lebanon-Clairemont (NH) Micropolitan Statistical Area, and our economy reflects a healthy interdependency with New Hampshire's Sullivan and Grafton Counties, as well as with adjacent areas within Vermont.

For a rural area, there is excellent access to transportation infrastructure (which also includes public transportation services). This includes passenger and freight rail, two interstate highways, and a growing high-speed Internet network that connects us to the world. The region has changed drastically over the years, but physically it remains a relatively intact, special place that draws visitors from near and far.



Farmer's Market - Bethel

Innovators of all types flourish in the region, from artists and artisans producing glassware, pottery, prints, fine furniture, microbrews, maple syrup, and great cheeses to manufacturers of a wide variety of products, such as robots for bomb squads and precision plastic parts.



Windsor



Downtown Randolph - Village Center

Regional Centers

The District consists of 40 employment centers in Hartford and Springfield as well as the larger Upper Valley core on the eastern edge in Lebanon/Hanover, NH, which includes Dartmouth College and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. Several smaller employment centers include Randolph/Bethel, Ludlow, Bradford, and Windsor.

The District is bisected by two interstate highways and three freight rail lines, one of which serves passenger rail. Much of the District is known as the “Precision Valley,” due to its once predominant machine tool and metal working manufacturing. In the past few decades, rapid changes led to the demise of that part of the District, causing higher property taxes, aging infrastructure, and population loss. The District continues to age with flat population growth. Many smaller towns (those not near the larger employment centers previously mentioned) lack access to services,

such as public transit, job training programs, and other opportunities.

Slow Growth in ECVEDD

Like most other New England states, Vermont’s population is stagnant. The District only had four towns that grew above 10% in the ten-year period between 2000 and 2010.* Vermont’s Agency of Commerce and Community Development has predicted a slow to no growth scenario through 2030.

Between 1990 and 2000, only four towns lost population, yet between 2000 and 2010, 21 of our 40 towns saw their population decline. In fact, only four towns grew above 10% between 2000 and 2010.†

Using post-censal estimates from the US Census Bureau, the ECVEDD’s total population mirrors Vermont’s with no growth between 2010 and 2018. These estimates illustrate how Windsor and Orange Counties have experienced a shift in their demographics, with 41% (Windsor) and 39% (Orange) of the

total population 55 years of age or older, an increase of 7-8% during that period.

Like much of the Northeast, Vermont is graying, with diminishing school-aged population. Two areas in the ECVEDD have completed school district consolidation through Vermont’s Act 46 process. While we continue to support our long time Vermonters who wish to stay here, we must also put those things in place that attract and retain more families with young children: vibrant town centers, affordable housing, a great place to raise children, sustainable economic development and employment, and a place that makes families feel welcome and safe.

While wages have grown in the ECVEDD, 8-10% since 2015, the region also has areas with significant socioeconomic issues, including generational poverty. Nine of the 40 towns in the District have a disproportionately high percentage of households enrolled in Vermont’s

*US Census Bureau

†Ibid.

cash public assistance programs, as compared to the statewide rate, which is 15.2% for 2020. The highest of those is Springfield, whose rate is over 27%.

Lower Taxable Receipts

Taxable room receipts in the ECVEDD have trailed growth in the state as a whole. Windsor and Orange counties' taxable room receipts increased 8.7% and 2.2% (respectively) between 2015 to 2018, compared to a 23.8% statewide increase during those years. Orange County experienced a slight loss (-0.6%) in taxable alcohol receipts, compared to a 18.2% increase in Windsor County and a 17.4% statewide average growth. The District kept pace with statewide growth in taxable meal receipts.

From 2015 to 2018, gross sales receipts (including non-taxable items) in the District grew more slowly than the statewide average. Retail receipts (i.e. taxable sales) lagged severely in Orange County, growing only 1.3% compared to the statewide growth of 10.8%. Business purchases subject to the state's use tax fell 34% in Windsor County and 36.2% in Orange County, compared to a statewide decline of only 6.7%.*

The advent of the COVID-19 global pandemic has had a drastic impact on receipts in the District, but at the time of the writing of this plan, the full extent and duration of those impacts is unknown.

Workforce

As the national economy has gone, so has Vermont's and, by extension,

*Vermont Dept of Taxes



*Terry Hendee, LOVEJOY Tools, Inc
- Springfield*

the Labor Market Areas in the ECVEDD. In recent years unemployment was at historic lows and, much like many parts of the country, businesses had challenges in finding enough workers. With the economic fallout from COVID-19, the District's labor market has changed dramatically. Due to the

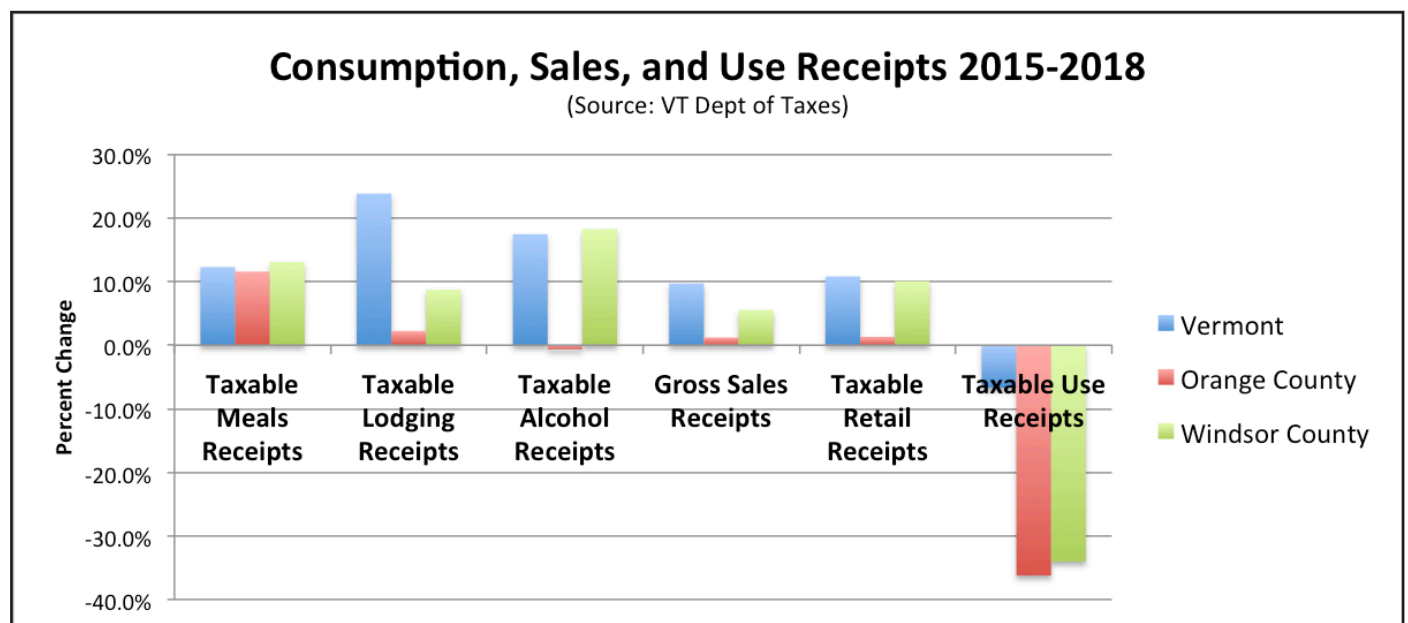


Figure 1



Farmers Market - Bethel

present uncertainty about recovery timelines, a pandemic employment impact analysis is beyond the scope of this CEDS.

Workforce Summits were held around Vermont in the fall of 2019, including two in the ECVEDD region in partnership with the Vermont Department of Labor. The results of those Summits, which included employers and providers, were presented to Governor Scott in early 2020. The report included specific recommendations on education/training, service coordination and career exploration.

Covered Employment in the ECVEDD has generally tracked with Vermont's totals, in comparing 2015 with 2018, the last year with full data available as of this writing. Wage increases in Orange and Windsor Counties were slightly higher than for the state as a whole, with total employment generally staying level during the same period.

Looking at specific industry sectors, the State and the District both showed a continuing loss in manufacturing jobs, particularly in durable goods production. Windsor County had a loss in durable goods manufacturing jobs of 16.6% from 2015 to 2018, with the State losing 6.5% and Orange County losing 5.9%. Overall manufacturing jobs were down 2.1% in Orange County

and 4.8% in Windsor County, compared to a State loss of 3.6%.

Service jobs continued to show slight growth in the state and the District from 2015 to 2018.*

The Vermont Department of Labor completed an analysis of distribution of jobs by Career and Technical Education (CTE) region for 2017. For the Hartford and River Valley CTE regions, the top 2 industries by percentage of total employment were Health & Social Services and Hotel & Food Services. In the River Bend and Randolph CTE regions, the top 2 industries by employment were Educational Services and Health & Social Services.

The ECVEDD has begun to see fruit from its efforts to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in tech-related economic development. The District has two hubs for Co-Working – The Space on Main

*VT Dept of Labor

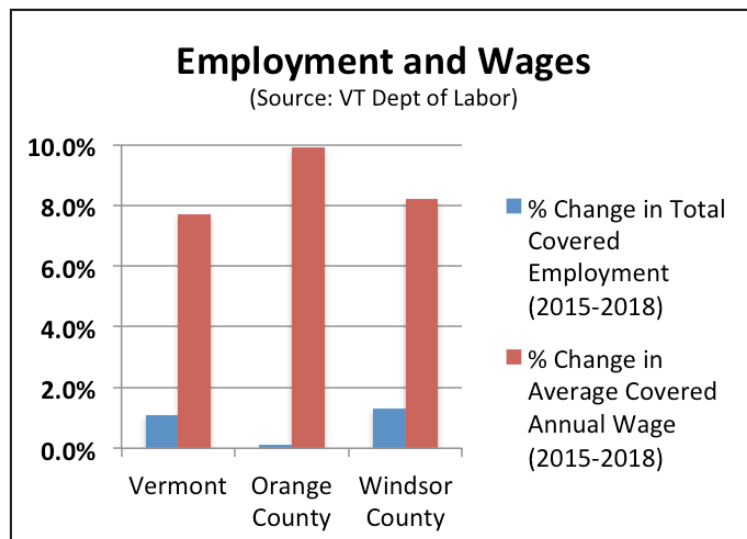


Figure 2

in Bradford and the Black River Innovation Campus in Springfield (which has received an EDA i6 award). While the two facilities differ slightly, both are focused on cultivating entrepreneurship and innovation in the region.

The creative sector serves as a driving force of the District's economy; creative economy jobs grew 14% between 2010 and 2018, compared to 2% overall job growth in the District over the same time period. Creative sector employment is dominated by design jobs (26%), followed by artisan food (17%), visual arts and crafts (16%), and performing arts (15%).*

* Mt. Auburn Associates forthcoming publication

Housing

One of the biggest challenges to attracting a vibrant workforce to our region is the lack of affordable, energy-efficient housing near opportunity centers. Economic prosperity depends on a truly integrated, mixed-income region that offers a variety of housing types. Strategies for successfully proposing and providing affordable housing need to be addressed, and building community support for affordable housing is crucial.

Between 2000 and 2010, in spite of declining population in many of the District's towns and the shockwaves of the 2008 Great Recession, the number of housing units increased

by almost 1,500 units in Orange County and nearly 2,500 in Windsor County.† The increase in housing units is partly attributable to the second home market, which has captured an even greater share of the regional housing market in recent decades. Although the number of housing units has grown, the District hasn't seen enough growth in the types of homes that are most needed, particularly affordable, workforce, multifamily, and senior housing.

Vermont historically is among the states with the lowest vacancy rates in the nation. Even where the vacancy rates may appear higher, this is often due to the second home

† US Census Bureau



© Braxton Freeman

Wilder

and seasonal home market, and these units are often not available for purchase or for rent. Seasonal, recreational, and occasional use homes comprise approximately 68% of vacancies in Orange County and 76% of vacancies in Windsor County. Roughly 2 to 3% of housing units in the District are available to be rented or sold for year-round occupation.*

Roughly 33% of Orange County households and 34% of Windsor County households are living in unaffordable housing (i.e., housing costs more than 30% of their household income). For renters, affordability is an even greater challenge; about 44% of renter households in Orange County and 46% of renter households in Windsor County are burdened with unaffordable rents.† Even in areas where people might be able to afford

* US Census Bureau: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

† Ibid.

a decent, energy efficient house, very little, if any, inventory exists. Also of note, almost 30% of the housing stock in both Orange and Windsor Counties was built prior to 1939.‡

Education

The District's graduation rates reflect the socioeconomic dichotomy in the region. 2018 statistics show high schools in the northern portion of the ECVEDD had graduation rates above (and lower dropout rates than) the state average (85.1% graduation rate and 13.3% dropout rate, for the 4-year cohort). Hartford High School had the highest rate for 2018 at 90.08%. However, the 4 high schools in the southern area had graduation rates ranging from 62.5% to 79.4%, with correspondingly high dropout rates.

‡ Ibid.

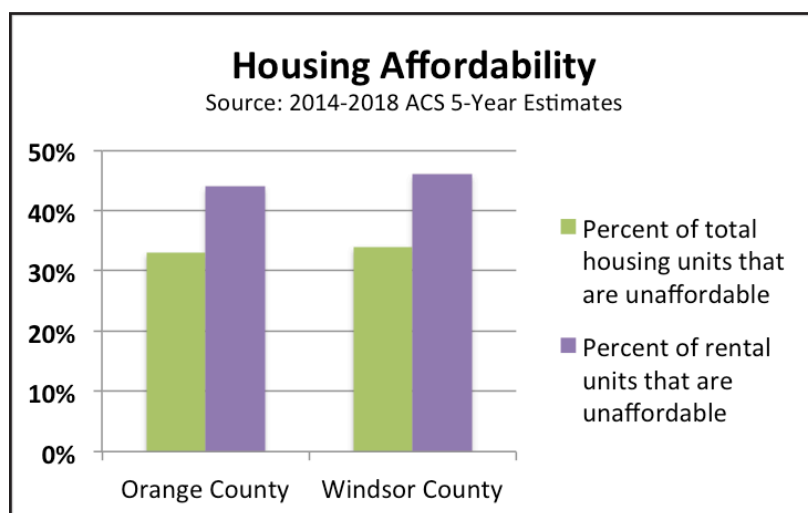


Figure 3



Bandstand - South Royalton

Students who enrolled in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program graduated with their cohort at a 5% higher rate on average than peers who didn't enroll in CTE. 2018 statistics show students who enrolled in the ECVEDD Career and Technical Education centers (including Randolph Technical Center, River Bend Career and Technical Center, Hartford Area Career and Technical Center, and the River Valley Technical Center) had an average cohort graduation rate of 90.9% in 2018.

Energy

The 40 Towns within the ECVEDD are currently working toward implementing Vermont's 2016 Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), which established the following set of goals:

- Reduce total energy consumption per capita by 15% by 2025, and by more than one-third by 2050.



White River Junction Solar Farm

- Meet 25% of the remaining energy need from renewable sources by 2025, 40% by 2035, and 90% by 2050.
- Sectors that need to be renewable by 2025: 10% transportation, 30% buildings, and 67% electric power.

TRORC and SWCRPC coordinate energy planning for the region, which entails quantifying regional energy supply and consumption; setting targets for conservation and renewable energy generation; and developing strategies to achieve regional targets through conservation and renewable energy generation, as well as adaptation strategies that focus on local economies to improve our regional climate and energy resilience. Through their transportation

planning programs, TRORC and SWCRPC work on planning for more energy efficient modes of travel and help to promote efforts to reduce the use of single-occupant vehicles. In addition, TRORC and SWCRPC develop town plan energy elements and renewable energy bylaws.

In order to meet state energy goals, both the TRORC and SWCRPC regions will need to reduce their respective energy consumption by about 50%. By 2050, the SWCRPC region will need to achieve a 984.7% increase in renewable energy generation over 2015 levels. The TRORC region needs to increase renewable energy production at least 34% above 2018 levels.

If we are able to achieve progress with the Strategies and Goals in this CEDS Plan, we will be on a path towards sustainable and equitable economic development in the ECVEDD that will increase opportunities and improve outcomes for all of our residents.

district-wide SWOT analysis



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Snowfall - Braintree



© SRDC

The Great Hall - Springfield

The following section provides an overview of the East Central Vermont Economic Development District region SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats) analysis. This analysis is based on input from the CEDS Strategy Committee along with various community stakeholder groups through interactive discussion with business owners, municipal staff, town representatives and other interested individuals.

The purpose of this SWOT analysis is to form a basis of understanding

regarding the region's assets and challenges in order to formulate a plan of action, which capitalizes on assets and helps manage and address threats. This helps guide the process to identify regional priorities for economic and community development. The following pages summarize the SWOT results and integrate the data into themes that are used to organize the CEDS goals and objectives.

SWOT Analysis

Theme	Strength S	Weakness W	Opportunity O	Threat T
Education & Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong relationships between housing organizations, towns, RDCs and RPCs • Proximity of Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Regional Technology Center • Strong relationship between RDCs, regional technical centers, high schools, and workforce investment boards • Strong volunteer base centered around schools • Good schools throughout a majority of the region • 4 Career and Technical Education Centers and VT Technical College • Low crime rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for more education and job training programming for all ages • Slow wage growth compared to other regions in VT and adjoining regions of NH • Lack of human capital, particularly for middle and upper-level positions • Dependency on NH side of UV for jobs • Lack of a statewide workforce development strategy • Weak links between economic development, human services, and education initiatives • Difficulty informing businesses of resources • Fragmentation and dilution of advertising due to proliferation of platforms • Lack of quality adult day care • Disproportionate share of subsidized housing in towns with sewer and water • Inadequate supply of all housing types • Substandard and aging housing stock • High cost of living • VT tax policy with respect to remote workers • Lack of reliable transportation • Fragmented relocation resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low cost of middle income/ workforce housing in the southern half of the District • Potential to expand transit industry • Ongoing transition to advanced manufacturing • Recovery-friendly workplaces, housing, and policies • Pop-up trainings and education events • Expanding creative economy • Tourism as potential workforce recruitment tool • Regional co-working spaces provide workspace for distributed and remote workers • Technical training at both high-school and post-high school levels • Full development of career pathways • VTC major in Renewable Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce shortages • Aging population resulting in higher healthcare costs and a declining workforce • Lack, and high cost of, qualified childcare • Stigma associated with “affordable” housing • Social Isolation • High employee turnover

SWOT Analysis

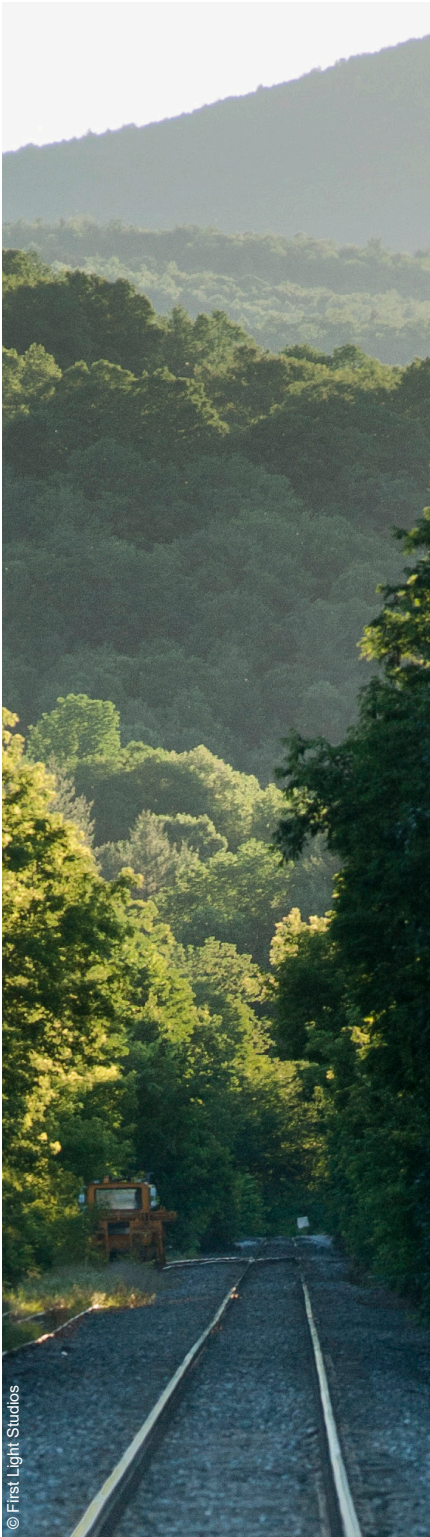
Theme	Strength S	Weakness W	Opportunity O	Threat T
Land Use and Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working landscape and rural entrepreneurial spirit • Natural beauty • Heritage-based tourism • Rural character • Four season resorts • Forest products economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived and real conflicts between regulatory hurdles and development demand • Expense, time and regulatory constraints, around permit approval, combine to limit development • Lack of pre-permitted buildings and land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage-based tourism • Growth in value-added agriculture • Expand year-round recreation opportunities • Strengthen outdoor recreation economy • Eco-tourism • State Designated Downtown Program • Hemp business • Expansion of modern wood heating market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggling “conventional” agriculture • Fragmentation threatens ecological systems and the forest products industry • Climate change impacts on seasonal tourism businesses
Public Health/ Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to federal qualified health centers • Access to quality food and fresh produce • Diversified farmers markets • Farm to table initiatives • Dartmouth Hitchcock Health, SMCS, and Mount Ascutney hospitals • Recent Community Health Needs Assessment completed for MAHHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance misuse • Attracting and retaining professionals • Challenging payer mix due to socioeconomic conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partnerships • Collaboration between healthcare and community improvement groups • Improve health outcomes through connections to local food options and recreational opportunities • “Age in Place” community nursing model • Lifestyle medicine • Community nurses • Regional health advisory network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Springfield hospital and SMCS bankruptcy • Lack of maternity services • Public policies supporting cannabis use • Large share of region’s population depends on social services • Aging population will increase demand for support services • Workforce shortages and difficulty retaining qualified workers • Tick-borne diseases

SWOT Analysis

Theme	Strength S	Weakness W	Opportunity O	Threat T
Infra- structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to numerous metro centers • Proximity to two interstate highways • Served by three freight rail lines • Amtrak Vermonter passenger service • Proximity to bus services • Growing pockets of high-speed internet and Fiber • Water and wastewater capacity • Hartness Airport • State Designated Growth Center and TIF District in Hartford • Opportunity Zones in Randolph, Royalton, and Springfield • Hospitals and rural health center systems • Comprehensive upgrade and maintenance schedules for highway and bridge infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging infrastructure and lack of funding for maintenance • Truck access to industrial parks through downtowns creates potential conflicts • Limited rural public transit • Limited rural broadband services • Insufficient cellular infrastructure • Very limited presence of rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, etc) • Unmet school infrastructure needs and lack of state funding support • Declining student enrollment = higher cost per pupil • Elderly & Disabled transportation needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing broadband coverage • Availability of grants and loans for broadband and fiber optic Internet expansion • Green Mountain Railway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance to ports and international airports • Uncertainty about future energy costs and dependency on non-local energy sources • Climate change impacts can affect a range of transportation-related decisions

SWOT Analysis

Theme	Strength S	Weakness W	Opportunity O	Threat T
Support for Economic Development and Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships between RPCs and RDCs ED support system interfaces well with businesses Professional training resources available via collaborations between elected officials and development groups Cross pollination among businesses and entrepreneurs Ease of access to business owners and politicians The "Vermont Brand" as advertising tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General lack of investment capital Difficulty retaining successful local ownership Small businesses lack capacity and resources to perform vital professional functions (technological, marketing, human resources, etc.) to meet long-term growth needs Perception of poor business climate Disengaged citizens, challenges recruiting volunteers to serve as town officials, and lack of participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State incentive programs available Availability of commercial and industrial space for lease and/or purchase Multiple Opportunity Zones Commercial hemp and cannabis market Collaboration between schools, communities, and businesses to identify and address skill shortages among the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of state-level political consensus Changing tax structure in NH and NY Competition from NH, which has no sales or income tax



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Evening - Randolph

goals

Vision:

A diverse base of locally successful and globally competitive businesses that contribute to a vibrant quality of life and place for people of all ages.

The vision, developed by the CEDS Strategy Committee, was derived from our opportunities and challenges analysis and guided our goals and action plan throughout. We believe our vision and the action plan are attainable given our existing opportunities and our ability to overcome our challenges.

Our goals, strategies, and actions are designed to build and support a more robust and resilient region. With that said, we also felt the need to have a separate and distinct goal to guide us in strengthening our overall resiliency.

1. A Resilient Region

In the face of economic shocks and climate disasters—which create economic shocks of their own—we want a region that is rapidly resilient in the face of such challenges. This requires that we first, as a region, determine and agree upon what resilience is and determine in what areas we need to devote more resources.

- Economic shocks:
 - » The greater the income gaps between the rich and the poor, the more likely the District is to lose jobs during economic shocks and the longer it will take to recover.
 - » Regions with many export industries are more resilient to employment downturns.
- Climate disasters:
 - » We need capacity to absorb stresses and maintain functions in the face of climate disruptions.
 - » We must be able to adapt and reorganize quickly in the wake of disasters.

2. An Innovative Business Environment

The regional economy is made up of a variety of businesses of every shape and size. It's important to continue to support the companies we have established and help them to



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Vermont Law School Graduation



© LOVEJOY Tools, Inc.

*Derek Deline, LOVEJOY Tools, Inc
- Springfield*



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Route 66 Paving - Randolph

thrive and prosper while also attracting entrepreneurs and innovators that will stimulate future growth. Tools to do this include providing effective financing, incentives, business counseling, incubators (including “co-working space,” “Maker spaces,” etc.), and related resources.

3. A Robust and Ready Workforce

One of the most urgent needs of the area’s economy is the retention and growth of the region’s workforce. Workforce development incorporates education (primary, secondary, and post-secondary), internships, re-training, up-skilling the incumbent workforce, etc., as well as addressing

other mitigating factors (wages, transitioning people from public assistance to employment, and much more). It’s important to recognize the challenges facing all levels of the workforce, from the lack of upper management staff to the many challenges associated with those trying to enter the labor pool.

4. Infrastructure and Homes for Growth

Infrastructure is essential for business success as well as the region’s ability to sustain and encourage growth. It includes structures (e.g. transportation facilities, homes, water and sewer systems, etc.) as well as communications and advertising networks. The region needs to provide adequate housing



One Main Street - Randolph

and commercial opportunities as well as preserve and grow the value of existing residential and commercial stock. Accomplishing this goal will require an analysis of: the location and condition of the existing resources within the region; where upgrades or new infrastructure are most needed to spur economic growth; and the associated costs.

5. Quality of Life and Place

The District is a great place to live and work. To maintain and nurture our quality of life, we as a region must adapt to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions. In particular, the region's aging

population is raising concerns about long-term economic sustainability. Countering this demographic shift will require a better understanding of the challenges of attracting people to live in this area, as well as the amenities and social infrastructure that are needed to retain them.

Also central to preserving and enhancing quality of life and place is leveraging our natural resources and working landscapes and supporting enterprises that rely upon them.

6. Healthy Communities

The health and wellbeing of our communities is inextricably linked to the region's ability to attract and retain new

residents, meet workforce needs, and adapt to economic and environmental stressors. It is vital to develop, maintain, and improve physical infrastructure, social systems and programs, and other resources that support all aspects of wellbeing.

action plan

Goal 1: A Resilient Region

Strategy 1.1: Explore and maximize market opportunities for value-added wood products.

Action 1: Expand the regional market for products made with low grade wood.

Tasks:

1. Identify public and private financing options for production facilities.
2. With support and guidance from the Vermont Forest Product Industry Network, support collaboration of key regional businesses to identify and strategize around market needs.
3. Support visibility and participation of key regional businesses in local and regional economic development planning efforts.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC & GMEDC (leads), VFPI	Businesses reached	\$10,000	Mid-Term	USDA, NBRC

Action 2: Provide better incentives to address thermal energy costs by converting to modern wood heating.

Tasks:

1. Consult with industry experts and consumers to assess impacts of existing incentives and identify unmet needs.
2. Work with lawmakers to advocate for supplemental or improved incentives.
3. Develop a regional outreach strategy to raise public awareness of available incentives and to support public access to those incentives.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners	Homeowners reached	\$15,000	Mid-Term	State

Continued →

Acronyms

- **ACCD:** VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development
- **ANR:** VT Agency of Natural Resources
- **CTEC:** Career Technical Education Centers
- **CVCOA:** Central VT Council on Aging
- **EPA:** US Environmental Protection Agency
- **FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **GMEDC:** Green Mountain Economic Development Corp.
- **HUD:** US Dept of Housing and Urban Development
- **MAPP:** Mt Ascutney Prevention Partnership
- **NBRC:** Northern Border Regional Commission
- **RASTA:** Rochester/Randolph Area Sports Trail Alliance
- **SRDC:** Springfield Regional Development Corp.
- **STAB:** Sports Trails of the Ascutney Basin
- **SWCRPC:** Southern Windsor Co. Regional Planning Commission
- **TRORC:** Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission
- **USDA:** US Dept. of Agriculture
- **VCDP:** VT Community Development Program
- **VDT&M:** VT Dept. of Tourism and Marketing
- **VFPI:** VT Forest Product Industry Network
- **VHCB:** Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
- **VTrans:** Vermont Agency of Transportation
- **WIBs:** Workforce Investment Boards (Regional and State)

Goal 1: A Resilient Region

Strategy 1.2: Develop and deliver outreach programs that take business owners step-by-step through continuity of operations emergency planning.

Action 1: Offer workshops for businesses through existing networks and organizations.

Tasks:

1. Meet with or survey Chambers of Commerce and other business associations to identify specific needs with regard to emergency planning.
2. Develop workshops and handout materials.
3. Coordinate with existing networks and organizations to present the workshop as part of regular member meetings or in conjunction with other business education/training programming.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC	Workshops	\$3,000	Mid-Term	TRORC, SWCRPC, GMEDC, SRDC, State

Strategy 1.3: Work with Towns to reduce flood risk to new and existing businesses.

Action 1: Continue helping Towns to change their land use patterns in order to minimize the number of businesses located in hazardous areas.

Tasks:

1. Continue assisting Towns in revising their zoning regulations, Town Plans, and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans to restrict new development in flood hazard areas.
2. Continue assisting Towns in accessing federal funds to buy out flood-damaged properties and permanently convert them to open space.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC & SWCRPC (leads), municipal governments	Regulations revised	\$3,000 per plan or ordinance, roughly \$100,000 to \$200,000 per buyout	Ongoing	Vermont ACCD, HUD, FEMA, TRORC, SWCRPC

Strategy 1.4: Work with Towns to increase the resilience of transportation infrastructure.

Action 1: Continue assisting Towns in upgrading culverts and bridges to withstand the projected increases in frequency and severity of flood events.

Tasks:

1. Continue assisting Towns in inventorying the condition of culverts and bridges, to identify infrastructure needs.
2. Continue assisting Towns to apply for and manage funding assistance for needed construction projects.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC & SWCRPC (leads), municipal governments	Transportation projects	\$18,000 management costs per construction project	Ongoing	VTrans; FEMA

Continued →

Strategy 1.5: Support natural resource-dependent industries in adapting to climate change.

Action 1: Support agricultural, forestry, and tourism businesses in understanding and adapting to changes in weather patterns, growing seasons, and the types of plants and animals that can survive in the region.

Tasks:

1. Meet with or survey Chambers of Commerce and other business associations to identify specific needs of businesses in our region.
2. Incorporate climate change adaptation training and resources into existing business support networks.
3. Work with Chambers of Commerce and other business associations to provide opportunities for businesses to report on and strategize around emerging climate change-related challenges.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners (leads)	Training packets circulated	\$20,000	Mid-Term	USDA

Strategy 1.6: Strengthen local capacity for emergency response and crisis management

Action 1: Expand upon existing emergency management planning efforts to improve regional coordination in the event of disasters with wide-ranging impacts.

Tasks:

1. Identify and analyze communication, service, and resource gaps.
2. Develop a Regional Emergency Communications Plan.
3. Develop a Regional plan for mobilizing and sharing resources and services among local communities and critical facilities.
4. Establish institutional partnerships and infrastructure necessary to implement plans.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners (leads), Critical service providers	Plan completion and steps toward plan implementation	\$50,000	Mid-Term	State, FEMA

Strategy 1.7: Support economic recovery efforts in the wake of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Action 1: Support current federal and state existing programs.

Tasks:

1. Support outreach/promotion for existing programs such as revolving loan funds.
2. Identify and analyze communication, service, and resource gaps.

Organizer & Partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners, Chambers, Business associations and co-working spaces	Documentation of gaps/needs; population reached	\$30,000	Mid-Term	State, FEMA

Continued →

Strategy 1.7: Support economic recovery efforts in the wake of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
(continued)

Action 2: Support and expand upon local and town revolving loan funds and direct business monetary support programs.

Tasks:

1. Support outreach for existing programs.
2. Identify and analyze communication, service, and resource gaps.
3. Identify new sources of funding for communication, service, and resource gaps.
4. Develop programs that address state and federal gaps.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners, Chambers, Business associations and co-working spaces	Documentation of gaps/needs; population reached; programs developed	\$100,000	Mid-Term	State, FEMA, Private

Action 3: Support Chambers, volunteer business groups, and co-working spaces.

Tasks:

1. Support groups needs reaching business owners through events, online outreach, etc.
2. Facilitate coordinated resilience planning among local businesses.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners, Chambers, Business associations and co-working spaces	Population reached and number of events	\$50,000	Mid-Term	State, FEMA, Private

Goal 2: An Innovative Business Environment

Strategy 2.1: Engage business leaders and entrepreneurs to understand business needs within the region.

Action 1: Conduct assessment of regional needs to attract, support, and expand businesses.

Tasks:

1. Work with Chambers of Commerce to identify businesses/sectors to survey.
2. Design survey (i.e., questions, language, and length) with input from Chambers of Commerce and other business leaders.
3. Conduct survey and analyze results.
4. Identify common threads and barriers/opportunities, including regulatory challenges, existing incentives/support, and agglomeration effects of existing businesses.
5. Produce a map of current locations and types of businesses and working landscapes; potentially viable areas for business attraction or expansion; and the types of businesses/industries to target.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC	N/A	\$20,000	Short-Term	SRDC

Continued →

Strategy 2.2: Support the growth of existing businesses and attract new businesses**Action 1: Provide technical assistance to businesses wishing to stay in or relocate to the region.****Tasks:**

1. Research capital availability and develop additional capital pathways, including mezzanine financing options/ investors.
2. Identify and promote sources of financial assistance available to businesses.
3. Develop and deliver business accelerator hybrid classes and other business support programming at co-working spaces.
4. Research market and resource needs relating to development of start-up incubator/shared work spaces within the region.
5. Assist Towns and businesses with zoning and permitting questions and evaluating potential incentives for businesses.
6. Provide businesses with technical support for promotion and expansion planning.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC & GMEDC (leads), SWCRPC, TRORC, Chambers	Businesses reached	\$15,000	Mid-Term	SRDC, GMEDC, TRORC, SWCRPC

Action 2: Strengthen business communication networks in the region, especially between sectors.**Tasks:**

1. Foster communication and support collaboration between local food networks and local artisan networks.
2. Develop a young professional group for the region.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC & SRDC (leads), Chambers	Farmers and artisans reached	\$2,500	Short-Term	GMEDC, SRDC

Strategy 2.3: Continue to strengthen recognition of the economic impact of and support for the creative economy.**Action 1: Facilitate networking and collaboration amongst creatives.****Tasks:**

1. Host networking events, including outreach to art students.
2. Develop a 3CVT Listserv.
3. Host/sponsor business support workshops for creatives.
4. Support relationship building between creatives and area chambers of commerce.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC & TRORC (leads), Chambers	Events	\$12,000	Short-Term	Private foundations, State

Continued →

Strategy 2.3: Continue to strengthen recognition of the economic impact of and support for the creative economy. (continued)

Action 2: Help creatives address their promotion and marketing needs.

Tasks:

1. Continue gathering information about promotion/marketing needs by conducting outreach through the 3CVT network.
2. Focus on artist promotion by collaborating with state office of Tourism & Marketing.
3. Publish 3CVT members highlights through available media.
4. Develop an art cooperative.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC & TRORC (leads), Chambers	Artists promoted	\$5,000	Mid-Term	State

Goal 3: A Robust and Ready Workforce

Strategy 3.1: Ensure grade school education helps young people find reasons and opportunities to stay in the area after high school.

Action 1: Expand career planning and critical employment skills training for grade school students and educators, beginning in middle school.

Tasks:

1. Support continued dialogue between grade school administrators, career technical education centers, and regional workforce investment boards.
2. Work with the aforementioned partners to identify priority industry sectors (e.g. technical fields, health, tourism) for which employment pathways are needed.
3. Work with the aforementioned partners to inventory existing educational/training programs and identify unmet needs, including academic challenges for applicants and student transportation to programs.
4. Work with the aforementioned partners to develop an action plan for the region.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC, SRDC	Schools and students reached	\$10,000	Long-Term	GMEDC, SRDC, CTECs, WIBs

Action 2: Promote, educate about, and expand opportunities to earn local college credits in high school.

Tasks:

1. Survey grade schools and higher education institutions in the region to identify which college credits are available in local high schools and where disconnects exist in the credit transfer process.
2. Produce a report summarizing survey results, including visual graphic illustrating credit transfer pathways.
3. Support individual education partners in addressing programmatic gaps and producing written guidance to help high school students (and their guardians) understand credit transfer options.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC, SRDC	Schools contacted	\$7,000	Long-Term	GMEDC, SRDC, CTECs, WIBs

Continued →

Strategy 3.1: Ensure grade school education helps young people find reasons and opportunities to stay in the area after high school. (continued)

Action 3: Work with schools and employers to re-brand manufacturing as a cool, well-paying career path.

Tasks:

1. Help create a positive advanced manufacturing brand that appeals to students.
2. Organize networking opportunities for students, families, educators, and companies to expose them to each other and to the possibilities advanced manufacturing offers.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
EDD Partners	Students reached	\$15,000	Long-Term	SRDC, GMEDC, SWCRPC, TRORC, CTECs, WIBs, State

Strategy 3.2: Address workforce needs through local and regional adult education and training and retention initiatives.

Action 1: Encourage the growth of adult education offerings, based on determination of needs.

Tasks:

1. Inventory current adult education programs.
2. Identify current and anticipated gaps (including communication gaps between employers and education centers) and opportunities for cross-sector sharing of educational resources, especially with regard to manufacturing training programs.
3. Facilitate dialogue with state, regional, and local partners about the potential restructuring of Vermont Technical College. Develop strategies for sustaining the campus and continuing to meet community needs, with particular emphasis on manufacturing education.
4. Create action plan to meet current and anticipated community needs.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC, GMEDC	Opportunities identified	\$15,000	Mid-Term	GMEDC, SRDC, CTECs, WIBs

Action 2: Create more apprenticeship opportunities for all ages.

Tasks:

1. Identify existing apprenticeship opportunities for priority sectors.
2. Identify possible gaps/opportunities for creation of new programs.
3. Work with established professional associations to create an action plan for developing new apprenticeship programs.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC, GMEDC	Programs identified	\$5,000	Mid-Term	GMEDC, SRDC, CTECs, WIBs

Continued →

Strategy 3.2: Address workforce needs through local and regional adult education and training and retention initiatives. (continued)

Action 3: Focus on employee retention through Recovery Friendly Workforce initiatives.

Tasks:

1. Survey employers to identify existing recovery-friendly workplaces as well as those employers that are seeking to make their workplaces recovery-friendly.
2. Develop educational materials and workshops for Human Resource Professionals to help tackle stigma and to provide guidance on supportive policies and procedures.
3. Create opportunities for networking between employers around recovery-friendly workplace initiatives.
4. Collaborate with area Recovery Networks to align efforts and ensure sustainability of recovery resources.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC, GMEDC	Employers reached	\$10,000	Mid-Term	SRDC, GMEDC, Recovery Centers

Goal 4: Infrastructure and Homes for Growth

Strategy 4.1 : Identify and evaluate the region's infrastructure needs.

Action 1: Map and analyze the age, capacity, and condition of the region's existing infrastructure, especially in areas with infill and redevelopment potential.

Tasks:

1. For each type of infrastructure, determine which characteristics are of interest and gather associated data. Data may be gleaned from existing assessments.
2. Produce maps and report documenting condition and capacity of existing infrastructure networks.
3. Share results with key stakeholders, such as regional housing work groups.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SWCRPC	N/A	\$33,000	Short-term	SWCRPC, TRORC, State

Action 2: Map and analyze property value and transfer patterns.

Tasks:

1. Analyze current grand list composition in each town, including historic trends.
2. Create a map showing property values and sales over the past 5 years.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SRDC, TRORC	N/A	\$25,000	Mid-Term	SWCRPC, TRORC, GMEDC, SWCRPC, State

Continued →

Strategy 4.1 : Identify and evaluate the region's infrastructure needs. (continued)**Action 3:** Inventory and analyze the region's infrastructure needs in relation to planned projects, property values, and affordability concerns.**Tasks:**

1. Identify parcels in already-developed areas that are vacant or have excess capacity in existing utilities or roads.
2. Identify planned projects, their current status, and their potential impacts on property values and infrastructure capacity.
3. Overlap maps to identify unrealized opportunities for infill and redevelopment.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC	N/A	\$30,000	Mid-Term	SWCRPC, TRORC

Strategy 4.2: Support efforts to improve/add/remove/update infrastructure and increase property values.**Action 1:** Support efforts to expand transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.**Tasks**

1. Inventory and analyze existing commuter and in-town services, along with public transit, sidewalks, and bike routes, to determine where expansion can take place.
2. Conduct public outreach.
3. Identify issue/needs.
4. Design a long-term regional plan to provide adequate facilities.
5. Support Towns in seeking funding, and provide capital budget training as needed.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC	Towns reached	\$30,000	Long-Term	TRORC, SWCRPC, VHCB, VTrans, VDT&M

Action 2: Support development of needed housing types and upgrades of aging housing stock.**Tasks:**

1. Ensure political leaders are aware of specific housing needs.
2. Help Towns to review and revise (as needed) local regulations in order to ensure that they support development of diverse housing types and ownership models, in proximity to jobs.
3. Support efforts to secure financial support for housing development projects.
4. Collaborate with the regional housing work group based at Mt Ascutney Hospital.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC	Towns reached	\$20,000	Long-Term	SWCRPC, TRORC, VHCB, VCDP

Continued →

Strategy 4.2: Support efforts to improve/add/remove/update infrastructure and increase property values.
(continued)

Action 3: Promote infill and redevelopment to enhance the region's existing commercial inventory (e.g., downtowns, industrial parks, empty buildings) as a first priority for business development.

Tasks:

1. Provide technical support to businesses in strategizing how to finance infrastructure changes needed to accommodate new types of commercial activity.
2. Support Town planning efforts to co-locate diverse and mutually supportive uses in downtowns and villages.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
EDD Partners (leads)	Towns reached	\$10,000	Long-Term	TRORC, SWCRPC, GMEDC, SRDC

Action 4: Expand high speed internet, especially fiber.

Tasks:

1. Support the continued development of community-owned fiber optic internet service.
2. Support Towns in finding funding to create or sustain public wi-fi zones.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
EDD Partners (leads)	Towns reached	\$10,000	Mid-Term	State, Private Funding

Action 5: Support brownfields redevelopment and reuse/adaptation of existing commercial infrastructure.

Tasks:

1. Identify potential brownfield sites within the region.
2. Bolster site redevelopment prospects by helping interested parties understand technical and regulatory aspects of working with brownfields.
3. Coordinate federal and state financial assistance for site assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC (leads)	Sites contacted or assessed	Site-dependent	Long-Term	EPA

Continued →

GOAL 5: Quality of Life and Place

Strategy 5.1: Leverage and promote the region's existing resources.

Action 1: Promote and expand homeshare programs.

Tasks:

1. Support integration of outreach about homeshare with other housing and senior outreach efforts.
2. Support homeshare programs in complying with local zoning regulations and assist Towns with revising local regulations as needed.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC (leads)	Towns and organizations contacted	\$1,500	Ongoing	TRORC, SWCRPC

Action 2: Promote and expand welcome resources for new residents and visitors in order to advertise quality of life and relocation opportunities.

Tasks:

1. Facilitate networking through established business and Town government networks to promote sharing of best practices for marketing places and welcoming new residents.
2. Support curation of resource lists that highlight local activities and attractions.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
GMEDC, SRDC	Towns contacted	\$2,500	Mid-Term	GMEDC, SRDC

Action 3: Promote the Vermont brand, especially through social media.

Tasks:

1. Facilitate networking for brand coordination through established business networks and organizations.
2. Work with Town governments and local business networks to ensure that planning decisions and branding efforts are mutually supportive.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners	Towns/businesses contacted	\$0	Ongoing	N/A

Strategy 5.2: Strengthen the emerging outdoor recreation economy.

Action 1: Support local recreation initiatives such as RASTA, STAB, and associated organizations.

Tasks:

1. Invite and support the participation of outdoor recreation associations in natural resource and land use planning processes.
2. Support the participation of outdoor recreation business stakeholders in local and regional business associations and networks.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners	Organizations contacted	\$0	Ongoing	N/A

Continued →

Strategy 5.2: Strengthen the emerging outdoor recreation economy. (continued)

Action 2: Support regional and statewide initiatives such as Velomont that are modelled on the Appalachian Trail and Long Trail success.

Tasks:

1. Support coordination of planning efforts between jurisdictions to promote connectivity of recreational resources and shared economic benefits.
2. Provide technical assistance to regional stakeholders writing grants for developing, expanding, or improving recreational resources.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
SWCRPC, TRORC (leads)	Stakeholders contacted	\$15,000	Ongoing	SWCRPC, TRORC

Action 3: Support integration of these projects with local agritourism initiatives and destination Vermont vacation and camp programs for children and adults

Tasks:

1. Convene key stakeholders to discuss opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.
2. Identify potential projects and project locations.
3. Develop strategy document.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners, ANR, USDA	Stakeholders contacted	\$10,000	Short-Term	USDA

Strategy 5.3: Strengthen community relationships and combat social isolation.

Action 1: Create more spaces and opportunities for relationship building, filling the void left by the decline of traditional social networks like churches and grange halls.

Tasks:

1. Support Towns in specifically addressing social isolation through local health and recreation planning efforts.
2. Provide guidance and technical assistance to Towns in envisioning and developing multi-use public and private spaces that can facilitate community building.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC	Towns contacted	\$0	Ongoing	TRORC, SWCRPC

Continued →

GOAL 6: Healthy Communities

Strategy 6.1: Strengthen health-related policy in the region.

Action 1: Continue assisting Towns with health-related planning and policy change.

Tasks:

1. Continue providing technical assistance to towns for health planning, policy development, and policy analysis.
2. In providing technical assistance, leverage the expertise of existing networks of health partners serving the region.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, MAPP (leads)	Towns contacted, assisted	\$6,600	Mid-Term	MAPP

Action 2: Develop an online resource library focused on policy interventions related to reducing the risk of substance misuse.

Tasks:

1. Research cost-effective and user-friendly web platforms to house a resource library.
2. Gather and curate example policy language and best practices literature related to reducing substance misuse.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, MAPP (leads)	N/A	\$10,000	Short-Term	MAPP

Strategy 6.2: Support increased availability and access to quality and affordable health care services and wellness / preventative practices for all populations.

Action 1: Strengthen communication and collaboration between health partners and community advocates.

Tasks:

1. Work with health partners to compile and curate online resource lists to streamline regional healthcare and wellness information delivery.
2. Work with health partners and community advocates to coordinate existing communication networks so as to streamline access to information about local and regional resources, current and upcoming initiatives, and emergency response.
3. Continue helping Towns to establish health action committees that implement health policy and work to expand local health care options, including wellness services and preventative medicine.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, MAPP (leads)	Towns contacted, assisted; resource lists	\$5,000	Mid-Term	Hospitals

Continued →

Strategy 6.2: Support increased availability and access to quality and affordable health care services and wellness / preventative practices for all populations. *(continued)*

Action 2: Support aging in place initiatives throughout the region.

Tasks:

1. Partner with regional seniors work group based at Mt. Ascutney Hospital to coordinate aging in place initiatives. Regional efforts should be aimed at centralizing and sharing staffing resources and best practices.
2. Support Towns in establishing and strengthening community nurse positions through guidance, regional coordination and sharing of resources, and assistance with budgeting and securing financing.
3. Develop a regional action plan for aging in place initiatives, drawing on lessons from Mt Ascutney's seniors work group and community nurse coordination work.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC (leads); CVCOA	Towns contacted	\$20,000	Long-Term	State, MAPP

Action 3: Improve access to healthy and affordable food by strengthening local food networks.

Tasks:

1. Identify potential locations for new farmers' markets in the southern portion of the region.
2. Evaluate existing linkages of farms with school meal programs and food assistance programs, and identify unmet needs.
3. Identify existing community gardens and potential locations for new gardens.
4. Prepare a regional strategy document in collaboration with regional partners such as the food security work group based at Mt. Ascutney Hospital.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC (lead); Farm to Plate Network	N/A	\$15,000	Mid-Term	USDA

Action 4: Increase access to opportunities for physical activity, recreation, and fitness.

Tasks:

1. Evaluate gaps in access to recreation and fitness infrastructure/resources in relation to existing and projected concentrations of housing and employers.
2. Identify and map potential projects that would increase access for underserved areas, support the use of nearby recreational assets, and produce economic benefits for nearby businesses.
3. Produce a strategy document.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, SWCRPC	N/A	\$25,000	Mid-Term	State

Continued →

Strategy 6.2: Support increased availability and access to quality and affordable health care services and wellness / preventative practices for all populations. *(continued)*.

Action 5: Support education and prevention policy and programming around issues of mental health and substance misuse.

Tasks:

1. Inventory existing education initiatives, policies, and programs addressing mental health and substance misuse in our region.
2. Identify gaps.
3. Support Towns or other entities in seeking funding assistance to implement or sustain projects.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
TRORC, MAPP (leads)	Towns contacted	\$35,000	Mid-Term	MAPP

Action 6: Expand options for child, adult, and elder care.

Tasks:

1. Map and evaluate capacity of existing facilities/programs.
2. Interview providers to understand and quantify unmet demand for care services.
3. Work with elderly and disabled transportation providers to evaluate existing transportation options and unmet transportation needs.
4. Develop outreach materials that help employers connect their employees with existing resources and options for care.
5. Support Towns in reviewing and revising zoning regulations to support the creation of new facilities.
6. Work with employers to develop creative solutions to funding new care facilities/programs.

Organizer & partners	Performance Measure	Cost Estimate	Time-frame	Non-EDA Funding Sources
ECVEDD partners (leads); Let's Grow Kids	Towns, businesses, and employers contacted	\$40,000	Long-Term	State

The margin of error for town-level* data provided by the American Community Survey (ACS) is quite high; therefore, the CEDS committees used Orange and Windsor County data as the proxy for the entire District.

The District does include one town in Rutland County (Pittsfield) and two towns in Addison County (Granville and Hancock).

* Smaller Vermont towns cannot be measured with the standard tools such as the Census 5 year ACS data. The ACS only samples 6.5% of the statewide Vermont population over 5 years and only 1.5% per year for the smallest geographies.

performance measures

As the EDA CEDS guidelines indicate, performance measures are an important tool that will allow us to measure our progress in implementing our CEDS and its impact on the regional economy over time.

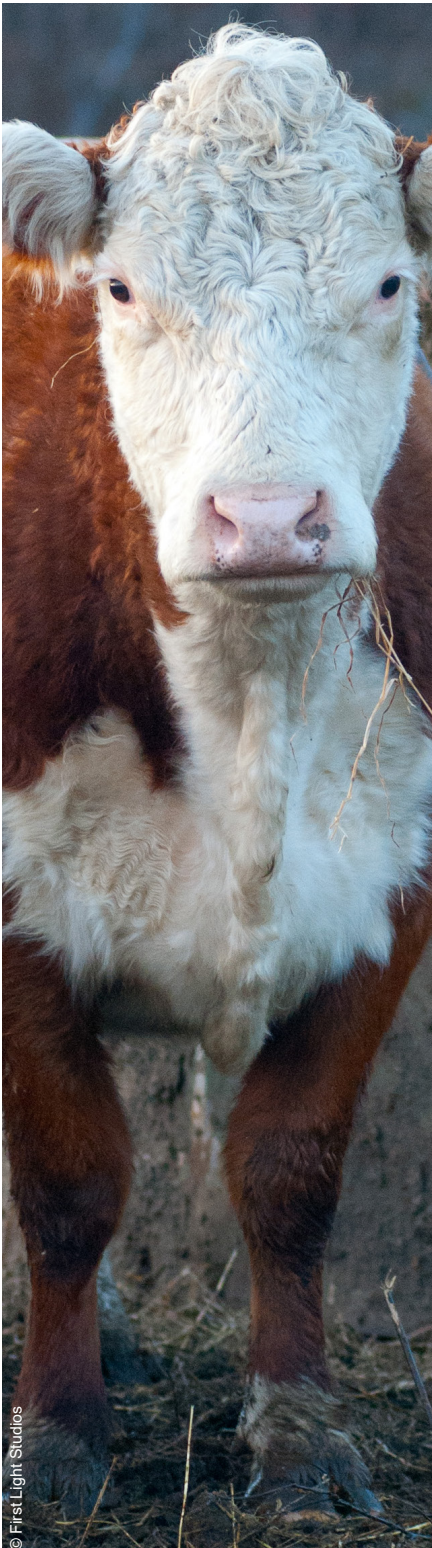
The following measures were developed in conjunction with the CEDS planning process, keeping in mind that the data we use must be readily available and replicable over time.

Measures	Source
1. Number of Jobs Created/Retained After Implementation of the CEDS*	
a. Total Employment in Initial Year Employed 16 years and over	ACS†
b. Total Employment in Subsequent Years Employed 16 years and over	ACS
c. Number of Jobs Retained as a Result of Select State and Local Investments.....	RDC‡
2. Number and Types of Public Sector Investments Undertaken in the Region	
a. EDA Sponsored Investments	RDC
b. Significant State and Local Investments.....	RDC
3. Private Sector Investment in the Region After Implementation of the CEDS	RDC
4. Action plan accomplishments	# completed actions.

* Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

† American Community Survey

‡ Regional Development Corporations



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Vermont Beef

Goals Indicators

1. A Resilient Region
 - a. ERAF* progress.....town/VT
 - b. #orgs/people engaged local
2. An Innovative Business Environment
 - a. Trade name registrationstown/VT
 - b. Number of businesses engagedRDC
 - c. Commercial square footage in regionRDC
3. A Robust and Ready Workforce
 - a. Companies receiving training assistance.....RDC
 - b. Enrollment in adult education programs local
4. Infrastructure and Homes for Growth
 - a. Regional infrastructure investments.....RDC
 - b. Grand list of EDD regiontown/VT
 - c. Participants in affordable housing projects local
 - d. House Purchase Pricetown/VT
5. Quality of Life and Place
 - a. #orgs/people engaged local
 - b. Recreational asset/infrastructure investments local
6. Healthy Communities
 - a. Per Capita Incometown/ACS
 - b. % below poverty leveltown/ACS
 - c. Unemployment rate.....town/ACS
 - d. #orgs/people engaged local
 - e. Health chapters adopted into planstown/local
 - f. Healthy policies adopted.....town/local
 - g. Health & wellness committees formedtown/local
 - h. Towns with community nursestown/local

* Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund

strategic projects

Each of our goals and strategies includes action plans with associated tasks. Through this planning process, we determined the most relevant projects that would positively impact the region as a whole based on the regional SWOT analysis. The ECVEDD partners met and determined which projects we will pursue in the coming fiscal year. Those items marked “short-term” on the action plan are this year’s priorities.



New World Festival, Chandler Music Hall - Randolph

illustrations

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resources

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Back Cover: Map and Population Table | TRORC Staff

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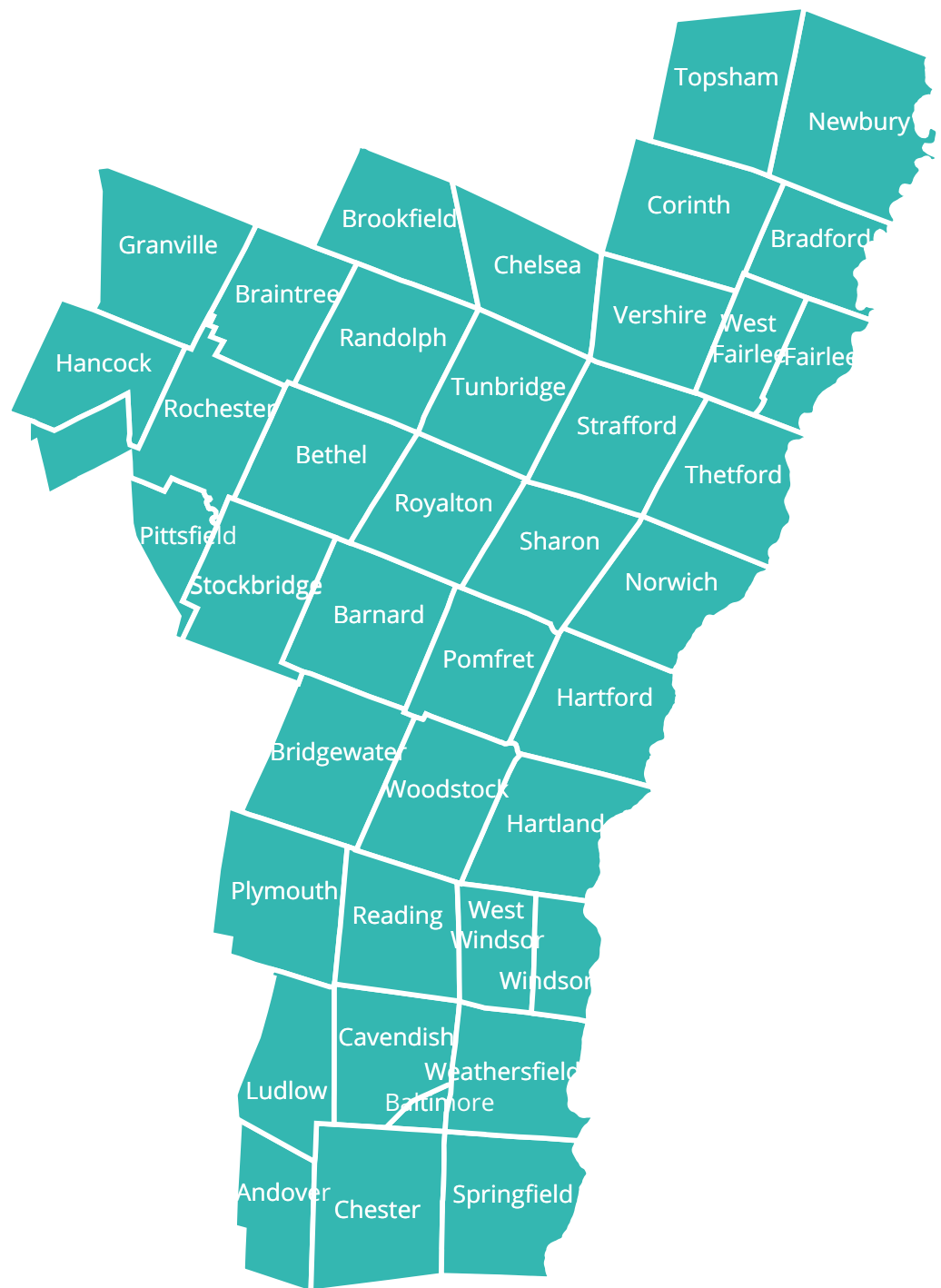


Springfield

Population

Town	2010
Andover	467
Baltimore	244
Barnard	947
Bethel	2,030
Bradford	2,797
Braintree	1,246
Bridgewater	936
Brookfield	1,292
Cavendish	1,367
Chelsea	1,238
Chester	3,154
Corinth	1,367
Fairlee	977
Granville	298
Hancock	323
Hartford	9,952
Hartland	3,393
Ludlow	1,963
Newbury	2,216
Norwich	3,414
Pittsfield	546
Plymouth	619
Pomfret	904
Randolph	4,778
Reading	666
Rochester	1,139
Royalton	2,773
Sharon	1,502
Springfield	9,373
Stockbridge	736
Strafford	1,098
Thetford	2,588
Topsham	1,173
Tunbridge	1,284
Vershire	730
Weathersfield	2,825
West Fairlee	652
West Windsor	1,099
Windsor	3,553
Woodstock	3,048
TOTAL	80,707

Source: U.S. Census - 2010



THE District
ECVEDD
East Central Vermont Economic Development District

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