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**Southeastern Vermont economic development plan vital projects list released**

**Windham County – Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) has released a list of 52 projects to be included in its federally recognized comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). The completed CEDS will be released for public comment on December 5th at Marlboro College’s Ragel Hall.**

CEDS are designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The Windham region CEDS will analyze the regional economy and serve as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying [investment](http://seveds.com/ceds-projects/) priorities and funding sources.

A CEDS must and must include a section listing all suggested projects and the projected numbers of jobs created.  The CEDS will also contain a section identifying and prioritizing vital projects, programs and activities that address the region’s greatest needs or that will best enhance the region’s competitiveness.

The fifty two projects were submitted by a variety of entities and individuals throughout Southeastern Vermont. “This reflects the diversity of activities underway in our region,” commented SeVEDS board chair Jenna Pugliese. “It’s been terrific seeing so many respond to the request for projects with such enthusiasm.”

While inclusion of a project in **no way guarantees funding of any sort,** many federal agencies look more favorably upon projects which have the kind of broad support inclusion in a region CEDS indicates.  EDA often requires a CEDS be in place for a region in order for a project grant application to be considered.

The CEDS process requires that all projects submitted should be acknowledged in the CEDS.  Therefore all submitted projects will be included in the CEDS. However, certain projects have been identified and selected as vital projects.  The purpose of this vital list is to publically acknowledge the top actions that will result in the most significant progress towards the Windham region’s economic development goals.

A project selection committee comprised of asmall group individuals that represent the region and are firmly established in their field of expertise were chosen by SeVEDS to review, score and rank the 52 projects submissions received. This committee was made up of Stratton Resort General Manager Sky Foulkes, Strolling of the Heifers Executive Director Orly Munzing, ROV Technologies CFO Jill Zachary, Landmark College Senior Vice President Brent Betit and Sonnax Industries CEO Tommy Harmon. Documents outlining the full project ranking process and scoring criteria can be found at www.seveds.com.

Below is the final listing of the 52 submitted CEDS projects which will be included in the Windham Region CEDS:

**VITAL Projects:**

1. Job Board for employers in Windham and Bennington Counties (connects to Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Program): **SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee**
2. Assess existing key elements of innovation ecosystem, determine missing elements, research models for missing elements and development of metrics for evaluating success **– Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
3. Build a more sustainable childcare system through innovative shared practices to increase overall program quality and earnings, workforce development for childcare workers - **Windham Child Care Association**
4. Build a rapid prototyping facility at existing shop for prefab high performance building envelopes and resilient mechanical systems - **Ironwood Brand, PreCraft, STIX**
5. Extend electric water and sewer to new industrial sites off of Exit 1 in Brattleboro - **Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
6. Scope and Sequence Project to build workforce pathways –**SeVEDS Workforce Committee**
7. Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Project for employers and tourism entities, a mechanism for collaborative recruitment and tourism marketing - **Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
8. Legal creation of Wilmington Downtown Commercial Redevelopment Project whose purpose is to purchase 10 vacant buildings in downtown and renovate - **Wilmington Works**
9. Define regional organization structure of redevelopment organization, conduct market study, conduct regional inventory of vacant commercial and industrial sites - **Windham County Redevelopment Group**
10. Leveraging broadband including measuring demand for last mile investments - increase utilization, market high capacity - **Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
11. SE Vermont Machine apprenticeship program - **SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee**
12. Windham Region Village Water and Wastewater Need Assessment and Feasibility Plan - **Windham Regional Commission**

**Additional projects to be included in CEDS:**

1. Integrated workforce development system for the sustainable building and design sector in Windham County - **SEON**
2. Green Island Project - **Sustainable Valley Group**
3. Bring Governors Career Ready Certificate to Windham County - **SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee**
4. Downtown arts campus - environmental cleanup of two contaminated buildings, construction of a second theater, conference center and outdoor amphitheater, low income housing, gap year professional theater training **- New England Youth Theater**
5. Feasibility study to determine if adequate facilities exist for expansion of Vermont Maple Cream Liqueur manufacturing facility **- Vermont Distillers**
6. Performs analysis on viability of green building products and services cluster dev. - **SeVEDS**
7. Job Readiness Program - **SEVCA**
8. Construction of 80,000 sf base lodge utilizing local contractors - **The Hermitage Club**
9. Windham Region Residential Real Estate Market Analysis - **Windham Regional Commission**
10. Southeastern Vermont Food and Agricultural Information Center at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 157 Main Street, Brattleboro - **Strolling of the Heifers**
11. Significant conversion of heating systems from heating oil to regionally produced pellet puel; pellet fuel distribution infrastructure - **FutureMetrics and Northeast Center for Social Issues Studies**
12. Implement the Southeastern Vermont Initiative for Art Enterprises in order to enhance technical assistance available to small and emerging for profit Arts businesses broadly represented in NAICS codes 711110, 711120, 711130, 711190, 711510 that are located within Windham County, Vermont, with the primary service area of Brattleboro and Bellows Falls. - **Arts Council of Windham County, Inc.**
13. Expanding regional tourism product offerings - **SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee & Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
14. Improve existing facility for year-round root crop storage facility **- High Meadows Farm and Greenhouses, LLC**
15. Regional Marketing of the HeART & Culture of Southern Vermont, Official Artisan Center of Southern Vermont facility to promote tourism, Development of SoVT Artisan Trail **- Arts Council of Windham County and Primetime Concepts**
16. Biz network Route 30/West River Valley - **Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
17. Windham Voices - bring together sectors of community to engage in civil and substantive conversations about state of the regional economy - **SeVEDS Workforce Development Committee & Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation**
18. Resource Circles: Creating Wellness in Windham County - **Vermont Wellness Education, L3C**
19. Next Stage Arts Project renovation of 15 Kimball Hill - **Putney Historical Society**
20. West River Community Kitchen and Food Storage Initiative - **West River Community Project**
21. Additional cell tower **- Stratton Mountain Resort**
22. Plant expansion - **The Winston Prouty Center**
23. Dover Master Landscape Plan - **Town of Dover**
24. Upgrade 3 base lodges - **Stratton Mountain Resort**
25. Upgrade the Inn at Stratton Mountain - **Stratton Mountain Resort**
26. Wilmington Water District Merger /Acquisition and Expand Wilmington Wastewater District - **Town of Wilmington**
27. Preliminary research and development of large scale community solar photovoltaic project - **Tad Montgomery & Associates**
28. Arts, Ag, Healing Summit - **Arts Council of Windham County**
29. Convert three screen movie theater in Dover into a multi artistic use center - **Memorial Hall Center for the Arts**
30. Re-use of Melrose Terrace in West Brattleboro as workforce housing - **Brattleboro Housing Authority**
31. Feasibility study to determine on logistics and opportunities in SoVT to relocate to accommodate significant growth - **Southern Vermont Natural History Museum**
32. Upgrade Snowbowl lift to high speed quad **- Stratton Mountain Resort**
33. Twin Valley High School Building Feasibility Project phase 2; implement findings of phase 1 feasibility study to repurpose 52,000 sf school building - **Town of Wilmington**
34. Continued restoration of Bullock building as multi use community center in downtown Readsboro - **Readsboro Hometown Redevelopment, Inc.**
35. Add 66 units of employee housing - **Stratton Mountain Resort**
36. Permanent facility for recovery center in downtown Brattleboro - **Turning Point**
37. Walkway Project connecting downtown to Landmark College and workforce housing - **Town of Putney**
38. Green Building and Building Research - incentivizing use of window quilts and repair of old windows - **Tad Montgomery & Associates**
39. Generate economic activity from forest products; culinary and medicinal mushrooms - **Tad Montgomery & Associates**
40. County - Wide Home Energy Conservation Initiative - **Tad Montgomery & Associates**