



REPORT

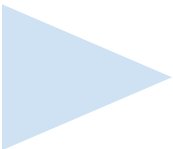


BDCC
Project Report
February 16, 2017



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Windham Region CEDS Report

This CEDS is the result of years of unprecedented collaboration across the public, private and nonprofit sectors of southeastern Vermont. The people, businesses and towns in our twenty-seven town region have invested significantly of their time and talents to learn about how our regional economy works and how we can improve it while sustaining our quality of place. In a

place where individuality is one of our most cherished attributes, we have come together and created an opportunity for our future.

[Full Report Here](#)

Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone

The Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone was created by the Legislature during the 2015 session. The Zone is comprised of the forty-four towns within the boundaries of the Windham Regional Commission and the Bennington Regional Commission. The legislation created a nine-person Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone Committee, which was charged with submitting a report on or before December 1, 2015, to the Secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the House Committee on Commerce and Community Development, and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs. The legislation directed that the Report should include proposals:

- 1) To establish an integrated investment strategy for retaining businesses within and recruiting business to the Zone;
- 2) to establish an implementation plan for the Southern Vermont Sustainable Recruitment and Marketing Project created in 2014 and contained in the Windham Region's federally recognized Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy;
- 3) to outline the benefits and obstacles within the Zone involved in integrating internship and career exposure programs, workforce development programs, and young professional activities;
- 4) to propose an organizational and operational structure of a public-private partnership with the mission of aggregating capital and coordinating investment in small-and medium-size businesses located within the Zone; and
- 5) to recommend whether and in what configuration the Study Committee or other group should continue and its mission.

[Full Report Here](#)

Evocation Hub

The Ecovation Hub is an exciting vision for sustainable economic growth and

community-scale resilience to climate change is emerging in the tri-state region, centered in Brattleboro, Vermont. Spurred by the closure of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant, a local initiative has emerged to replace those lost jobs with employment in the fields of green building and resilient design.

Since 2007, the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) and Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategy (SEVEDS) has led an investigation to assess existing assets that could fuel economic development in the tri-state region, including Windham and Bennington Counties in Vermont, Cheshire County in New Hampshire, and Franklin County in Massachusetts.

This team has identified a unique cluster of green building assets across the region that includes recognized national leaders in research, product development, manufacturing, and design and construction of high-performance buildings and communities. Now with over half a million dollars in federal and state investment, a “Green Economy Innovation Hub” is being pursued to unite these assets and build a hub of sustainability and resilience that will serve as a model for other rural communities nationally and internationally.

[Full Report Here](#)

RCDI Grant & SVEP Update

The Southern Vermont Economy Project (SVEP) is intended to stabilize, improve and expand the rural economic and workforce development network in Southern Vermont. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) received a USDA RCDI grant to facilitate this two-year project to connect and expand economic and community development work in the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone. This project was one on only 23 nationally to be awarded. To grow a more resilient region, leaders in business, workforce & community development, are convening to advance the economy of Southern Vermont. Goals include to;

- 1) Strengthen relationships;
- 2) Increase communication and access to economic & workforce development information, programs, services, technical assistance and best practices training and funding initiatives; and
- 3) Grow a well-balanced system of economic & workforce development services in Windham and Bennington Counties.

[Web Page Here](#)

Apprenticeship Report

This study begins to outline the feasibility of developing apprenticeship and training programs with regional employers, to be leveraged for in and out of state recruitment to attract, train and retain workforce for the Windham County area. BDCC through SeVEDS has conducted research demonstrating workforce supply to be a significant constraint on sustaining or growing the regional economy. Based on surveys among existing and potential users of the Vermont Department of Labor Apprenticeship program, as well as interviews with training institutions and employers involved in a variety of workforce training practices, this study assessed the feasibility of extending apprenticeship programs in Windham and across southern Vermont.

Workforce training is a critical for continued progress towards regional economic goals as articulated in the Windham Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)¹; increasing the attraction and retention of young workers, increasing employment and business growth, and increasing employee training and wages.

Included in this report is information about apprenticeship and training programs that are currently being developed to address the workforce needs of key Windham employers, as well as model programs and resources that can help to inform future program development. It provides recommendations based on interviews with workforce development professionals and employers on ways to continue meet workforce recruitment, training, and retention in a manner suited to the employment based capacity and institutional resources of the Windham region.

[Full Report Here](#)

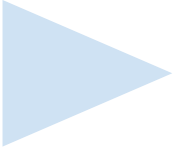
[Full Summary Here](#)

Workforce Center of Excellence Packet

The Six Colleges Collaborative Internship Program works with local

businesses, post-secondary student(s) and colleges both in and outside of Vermont. The program works to partner college students and recent graduates with local companies and contribute to Vermont's economic development, while introducing students to the opportunities that exist here in Vermont. It attracts students from across Windham County, the State, and the Country to start their careers in Southern Vermont, providing work-based learning experiences to students and qualified labor to Windham County's growing businesses and nonprofits. Currently, five higher education institutions are participating in the program: Community College of Vermont, Landmark College, Marlboro College, World Learning/School for International Training (S.I.T.) and Vermont Technical College. This is an opportunity for an employer to explore a special or short-term project, build capacity for current employees so they may focus on higher-level tasks and try out potential employees in a low-risk environment.

[Full Packet Here](#)



Internship White Paper 2017

The Six College Collaborative was formed by area higher education institutions--Community College of Vermont, Marlboro College, Union Institute & University, SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont Technical College, and Landmark College -- in partnership with the BDCC and SeVEDS. With the purpose of enhancing educational opportunities and engaging in economic development in the region. The Six College Collaborative flagship programs include a cross-registration program which allows students to take courses at other member institutions, and an internship program that places students with local businesses.

In 2014, the BDCC and Six College Collaborative launched its collegiate Internship Program. The program works to partner college students and recent graduates with local companies and contribute to Vermont's economic development, while introducing students to the opportunities that exist here in Vermont. It attracts students from across Windham County, the State, and the Country to start their careers in Southern Vermont, providing work-based learning experiences to students and qualified labor to Windham County's growing businesses and nonprofits.

The BDCC & Six College Collaborative Internship Program offers: (1) a motivated, highly skilled applicant pool, (2) a rigorous program offering individualized support, (3) screening of candidates, reducing the hiring workload for the business organization, and (4) a local and regional model built on strong relationships between businesses, colleges and students. The program supports businesses in finding qualified, dedicated interns and college students in finding valuable internships.

[Full Report Here](#)

Accelerator Feasibility Study

The Southern Vermont Business Innovation Accelerator leverages our commercial, creative, and community resources to create a unified economic development engine for a thriving region. The Accelerator will,

- 1) Foster a strong entrepreneurial culture and dynamic business environment
- 2) Provide long term resources and support for successfully launching and scaling innovation-based businesses
- 3) Nurtures a diversified economic base that is robust and resilient
- 4) Suite of services for small, specialty or location-specific enterprises
- 5) Attracts new opportunities to the region based on a thriving business environment and high quality of life
- 6) Serve Green Economy, Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing and Agriculture Sectors

[Full Study Here](#)

[Full Summary Here](#)

Instig8 & Xclr8

Instig8VT will be a catalyst within the community to cultivate new business creation. Through programming and events, creative and developing entrepreneurs can gather face-to-face for workshops, events, co-working opportunities, and social networking to hone their ideas and take the first steps toward market readiness. It is essentially a continuing education series with a business-minded, business-creation focus. This series is the first phase, of an

ecosystem that includes business acceleration and incubation. Instig8VT will be located in Brattleboro using various locations and sponsored by the Windham County Economic Development Program (WCEDP) to start, followed by other business/organizational partners. This program strategically fosters a safe environment for creative entrepreneurs to try, fail, learn, build, explore, and connect to other like-minded individuals while developing their business concepts and models.

[Full Report Here](#)

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Report Links:

[Windham Region CEDS Report](#)

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Workforce Center of Excellence Packet

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Accelerator Feasibility Study

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