



SeVEDS Fiscal Year 2016 CEDS Update

MISSION: SeVEDS exists to reverse the Windham Region's economic decline. We envision developing the Southern Vermont economy to generate long-term growth and prosperity, improve the region's quality of life and sustain its quality of place.

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Southeastern Vermont's Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

These four core data driven goals, objectives and strategies respond to the regions previously articulated challenges and opportunities and are themes for improving the region's economy and the metrics by which SeVEDS will measure success and will be updated in 2018:

1. Reversing population decline

- Increase Population from 2011 baseline of 44,266 (estimated) to 46,266 by 2019
- Increasing population proportion of 25-44 year-olds from 21% to 25% of total population by 2018
- Double the percentage of foreign born resident in the region from 3.5% to 7% of total population by 2018

2. Increasing the number of good paying jobs

- 1,054 new jobs @\$ 46,340 and 702 new jobs @\$42,130 (new regional average wage goal)
- Improvement of 4,650 jobs by \$5,000/yr
- Increase Median Annual Income for Associates/Some College from \$27,869 to \$32,328
- Increase Median Annual Income for Bachelor's Degree from \$34,155 to \$40,597

3. Improving the quality of the workforce

- Increase Associate Degrees/Some College and Technical Certificates among 18-24 year old age bracket by 2018

4. Raising household income relative to surrounding areas

- \$174M in new wages and \$470M in new GDP
- Reach Regional GDP of \$3.07B

- Improve the Ratio of Net Earned Income to Total Income from .566 to .65

Objective 1: Act Regionally.

Strategy 1.1 Implement a regional asset based S.M.A.R.T.[i] comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) and ecosystem, which expands public, private and nonprofit collaboration with a common strategic vision that is annually updated.

1. Expand representation and engagement of private sector in the SeVEDS initiative and Board.

ACTIONS:

- The original CEDS projects were updated and new projects submitted and ranked as part of a regularly scheduled process. Project updates included at the end of this update.
- The SeVEDS Board is maintaining strong representation from regional business sector with private sector representation from Wilmington, Bellows Falls, Brattleboro. .
- We convened a regional School/Employer Work group to begin work connecting employers to educators and identifying opportunities for collaboration in strengthening the Workforce Continuum.
- We are engaging with the Green Building/Services Cluster in their leadership development, including private sector owners and working with the tri state region connections existing in this cluster.
- We have conducted initial Healthcare Cluster meeting, primarily consisting of employers in the Healthcare sector.
- The BDCC Business Cluster Roundtable Initiative has held 4 meetings with leaders in the Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Hospitality & Tourism sectors.

2. Institutionalize a culture of collaboration by formalizing a Technical Working Group (TWG) as a regional Subject Matter Expert (SME) of economic and workforce development professionals and educators drawn from towns and villages from across the region in collaboration with BDCC and WRC staff to collaborate across boundaries. The TWG will bring together community, economic, workforce development and planning practitioners in the region to collaborate, and share knowledge and opportunities to advance the region and local economic development pace.

ACTIONS:

- We convene the TWG periodically as a means of sharing regional program updates amongst partners as well as multiple organization review of community and economic development components i.e. housing, education, transportation, communication.

3. The Southeastern Vermont region will achieve a good to excellent rating for best practices in regional CED and collaboration by end of 2018.

ACTIONS:

- Rating will be done in September 2017.

STRATEGY 1.2: Maintain a regional economic development planning organization, including funding, to update and guide implementation of the CEDS.

1.Prepare and maintain 3-year budgets for operations and initiatives.

ACTIONS:

- Two year budget planning has begun with FY16 budget planning.

2. Develop and implement a private fundraising campaign with a goal of raising \$250,000 in 2015 from the private sector.

ACTIONS:

- BDCC has directly invested 250K in CEDS development and implementation since 2011 and has invested an 250K in inkind services and support.
- In December of 2013, Entergy Vermont Yankee agreed to a \$10,000,000 dollar fund for economic development in the Windham Region as part of the settlement with the State of Vermont. This settlement was announced two weeks after the public CEDS presentation and two months after a joint legislative hearing in the region garnered testimony that the region had detailed and identified over 2 million dollars a year in project need to mitigate the economic impacts of the closure.
- Ultimately it was determined that final decisions on appropriations from the fund would be made by the Governor of Vermont. Nonetheless, responding to the region's CEDS is a pre qualifier for receiving funding.
- We developed a five year collaborative private sector plan and will begin implementation in FY17.

3. Commit Public Sector partners to multi-year investment commitment.

ACTIONS:

- We have received four years of municipal support for SeVEDS activities, specifically workforce development staffing to implement major projects. In total we have raised \$309,665 in municipal funding since 2013.
- We have successfully applied for \$150,000 in DOL funding over three years of Six College Collaborative Internship program support and development.
- We have received an additional \$38,000 in DOL funding over the last three years to develop high school and middle school connections and programming to meet our employer's articulated needs.
- We were awarded 170K in Windham County Economic Development Funds for Accelerated Cluster Development
- We were awarded 265K by the EDA for Tri State Regional Accelerated Cluster Development

4. In conjunction with Windham Regional Planning Commission and BDCC, support towns incorporating the CEDS strategies as appropriate in their economic development planning.

ACTIONS:

- BDCC staff are regularly attending Selectboard Meetings across region to further inform SeVEDS of local issues and begin more relationship building with town leadership. We have begun to assist towns with incorporating CEDS strategies in economic development planning in FY16.

STRATEGY 1.3: Create redevelopment capacity in the Southeastern Vermont region.

1. Research legal options for the creation of a SeVEDS redevelopment authority unrestricted by town or village boundaries.

ACTIONS:

- Comprehensive redevelopment and expansion funding ability, featuring successful NMTC utilization, has been growing since the 2013 completion of a \$24M redevelopment project in the heart of the region's largest town Brattleboro. In 2015 NMTC was a key factor in a \$17M expansion of a key employer in Brattleboro. At least two other significant development projects are in the research planning stage.
- Research is underway to develop a CDFI.

2. Conduct an inventory and assemble a database of distressed and/or vacant properties with redevelopment/re-use potential.

ACTIONS:

- An Initial inventory was completed in Fall 2014. We began sharing this resource with the Windham Regional Commission and other interested parties posted at <http://brattleborodevelopment.com/commercial-real-estate/regional-properties>

3. Conduct a market possibilities assessment for commercial and industrial real estate.

ACTIONS:

- Research on this has been initiated through the 2015/16 Accelerator Feasibility study

4. In 2015 set goals for number of properties to be redeveloped and capital investment attraction.

ACTIONS:

- N/A

STRATEGY 1.4: Recognize and blend Quality of Place characteristics and concepts into the SEVEDS strategies

1. Establish a group of relevant regional stakeholders to review Quality of Place concepts and index methodologies to craft a set of appropriate regional metrics

ACTIONS:

- N/A

2. Develop and conduct several community presentations describing the role and critical components of Quality of Place within the SeVEDS strategy

ACTIONS:

- N/A

3. Develop internal (within Windham Region) and external (out of Windham Region) marketing plan.

ACTIONS:

- In 2013/14 a two county regional marketing feasibility study was conducted and determined the region's employers and tourism entities wanted to collaborate on a more effective shared message to recruit both employees and new visitors. This Southern Vermont Marketing and Recruitment project is pending funding of staff capacity.
- We applied for USDA Funds to support a Windham Region communications plan to specifically engage Young Professionals within the region, ensuring they are aware of and connected to regional professional development and social networking resources.
- The Southern VT Economic Development Zone was established in 2015 by the VT Legislature. A recommendation for the funding of Southern Vermont Marketing and Recruitment Project was made.

Objective 2: Create an Entrepreneurial Environment and Culture to enhance existing business and grow new business.

STRATEGY 2.1: Within three years, implement an Innovation Ecosystem which provides tools and services that enhance the capacity for innovation within existing and new businesses. Further, that fosters entrepreneurship and the likelihood of success for new and existing entrepreneurs.

1. In 2014, engage with existing entrepreneurs to determine the critical services and tools that enhance the likelihood of success for themselves and new entrepreneurs. Encourage their involvement with mentoring new entrepreneurs to utilize their expertise.

ACTIONS:

- We have provided support to the establishment of locally based Co-working space in Brattleboro. We will continue to track progress and offer supports to Wilmington effort.
- We are monitoring and participating with Brattleboro based Tech/IT Networking Group “Brattleboro Area Techies”.
- Development of new program to foster entrepreneur and innovation ecosystem - INSTIG8
- Sustained general small business development outreach on behalf of WCEDP and INSTIG8.
- Early stages of building mentor pool for alternate business counseling services
- Re-focus incubation lease models at BDCC properties

2. Assess regional innovation and entrepreneurial climate based upon best practice criteria (elements found in the Innovation Index): facilities, governance, business services, access to capital, business networks, culture, R&D capacities, etc.

ACTIONS:

- Part of 2016 Southern Vermont Business Accelerator Plan will be a feasibility study and outreach program to regional and targeted entrepreneur populations.
- 2015/16 Accelerator Feasibility study has been recently completed and can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3EDKsnXT7geMIN6N1loR3luWi1HbFN2UmFLM0ZTNzJBT2lv/view?usp=sharing>
- In 2016 we launched “Idea Jam” which generated 50 entrepreneurial suggestions and multiple follow ups.

3. Develop new capacity based on the assessment in 2.1.A and 2.1.B.

ACTIONS:

- Part of affiliated Windham County Economic Development Program (WCEDP) Fund (Entergy-VT funds) will be used to add small business and entrepreneur support for developing good applications to access 10M in economic development funding. Southern Vermont Business Accelerator will add capacity in alignment with WCEDP staff.
- Align newly developed programming (INSTIG8) with activities related to WCEDP

4. Identify New England R&D centers and innovation entities that can link to the region’s targeted industry clusters and niche markets

ACTIONS:

- As part of our Cluster and Accelerator efforts we have linkages with Yale Forestry Center, UMass Donahue Institute and Keene State’s Technology. Design and Safety Center.

5. Create a regional business incubator or accelerator

ACTIONS:

- Accelerator feasibility has been recently completed. Next stage is adding implementation capacity pending EDA Final Approval.
- We are engaged in ongoing research of additional co-working spaces, makerspaces, accelerator programs, and similar programs or resources.
- We are working with the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies as one of our mentoring organizations.

6. Conduct a robust business visitation and outreach program annually with the goal of assisting 50 existing businesses and 25 new or potential businesses each year.

ACTIONS:

- We have completed a SE Vermont Hiring Inventory working directly with 35 of the region's largest employers to develop five year hiring inventory and surveyed 100's more.
- We have hired full time staff to coordinate with businesses regarding use of the Windham County Economic Development Program and to assist in identifying additional resources to be utilized in business start ups, expansions or relocations.
- As part of our Southern Vermont Internship Program, we have regular outreach to 5-10 businesses per week.

STRATEGY 2.2: Expand and enhance Windham County fixed broadband subscriptions and wireless access to global best practice.

1. Launch a Network Provider Community of Interest in 2014

ACTIONS:

- N/A

2. Verify and benchmark existing broadband and wireless access and subscription rates in Windham County utilizing the Vermont Telecommunications Authority.

ACTIONS:

- The Vermont Telecommunications Authority has been disbanded. In 2015 we began working with the the Vermont Department of Public Service and our 27 regional towns to identify problem areas needing improved internet and/or cell service.

3. Design comprehensive broadband adoption and digital literacy initiative targeting residential, institutional, and commercial users

ACTIONS:

- N/A

4. Work with telecom providers and the Vermont Telecommunications Authority to bridge last mile gaps between new and existing mid-mile broadband networks.

ACTIONS:

- Pending

STRATEGY 2.3: Leverage ultra-high speed broadband expansions

1. Convene a knowledge group to articulate the new capacity and opportunity

ACTIONS:

- N/A

2. Design comprehensive education initiative targeting residential, institutional, and commercial users to promote the new capacity and opportunity

ACTIONS:

- N/A

3. Ensure new capacity and opportunity is a part of entrepreneurial support programs and regional business marketing strategies

ACTIONS:

- N/A

Objective 3: Improve wage parity with the surrounding labor-shed.[ii]

STRATEGY 3.1: Increase employment opportunities for mid- and high-skilled labor

1. Establish a Healthcare cluster action team by June 2014.

ACTIONS:

- Regional Leadership team has identified goals, opportunities and strategies for training workforce.
- BDCC/SeVEDS convened the first meeting in 2015, and continue to meet regularly with individual private sector partners.

2. Establish a Technology Driven Manufacturing cluster action team by June 2014.

ACTIONS:

- The Action Team model has been replaced by a facilitated Roundtable model through which needs assessments, problem-solving, and resource development occurs.

3. Establish a Green Building Products and Services cluster action team by end of January 2014.

ACTIONS:

- The Green Building Products and Services Cluster team convened with ViTAL Economies in June 2015 to establish goals and begin leadership team planning.

4. Complete industry sector value chain and market analysis studies for the three targeted industry clusters September 2015

ACTIONS:

- Value chain and market analysis for Green Building sector is underway and will be completed in November of 2016. EDA is partnering with state and regional funding to complete the Southeastern Vermont Green Building Cluster study which will focus on development of green building and energy research, systems and product development, financial and consultant services and development of a national center of excellence to address the current and future green building and energy needs of the existing built environment.

5. Utilize existing assets to expand employment by via a collaborative, synergistic relationship between ski resort community and higher education assets to create a Chautauqua[iii] Institution type educational tourism experience by summer 2015.

ACTIONS:

- We supported the Six College Collaborative planning process for a pilot collaborative event for cross-campus staff/faculty development. Work from this effort will contribute toward planning for larger endeavors.

STRATEGY 3.2: Expand contribution to the Regional Economy from the Global Economy by leveraging businesses w/global connections seeking higher skilled workers in high wage jobs.

1. Create a database of businesses with international relationships

ACTIONS:

- N/A

2. Map international, linguistic, cultural, and technical knowledge assets

ACTIONS:

- N/A

3. Create a Global Marketing plan that links with International trade marketing tools and programs to expand markets and attract new business to leverage regional assets

ACTIONS:

- Research is underway on better utilization of the Brattleboro Foreign Trade Zone.

4. Define three (3) Global Niche Markets having value chain gaps that can be filled by regional assets (This is in addition to the clusters identified in STRATEGY 3.1 above)

ACTIONS:

- Expected development as part of the Green Building cluster work.

5. Identify workforce skill gaps that might be filled by international workers and create a worker recruitment plan

ACTIONS:

- Connections with the Burlington, VT based refugee Center and a local group focusing on workforce diversity issues is ongoing.
- BDCC is engaging the private sector to sponsor diverse workforce development tools in collaboration with the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity, primarily in funding the I am a Vermonter website.

6. Identify potential needs of international workers and develop a plan to meet those needs

ACTIONS:

- N/A

7. Develop Immigration Attraction Strategy focused on doubling the percentage of foreign born population in the region

ACTIONS:

- Connections with the Burlington, VT based refugee Center and a local group focusing on workforce diversity issues is ongoing.

Objective 4: Increase the Size and Quality of the Workforce

STRATEGY 4.1: Develop a Workforce Center of Excellence Collaborative between providers and users of workforce development services that identifies and connects existing workforce development assets, defines future workforce requirements and gaps by September 2014

1. Inventory education and workforce training resources

ACTIONS:

- A Career Menu Survey was conducted in 2015-2016 with the Educators Workforce Committee that identifies the strengths and areas of development within career development offices at Windham County schools.
- BDCC Workforce and Education Specialist meets regularly with the Windham Regional Career Center to identify relevant training opportunities for young students
- The Six College Collaborative members have begun indexing relevant training, credentialing, and skill-development resources.

2. Conduct a workforce inventory of the top 25-50 employers in to project the number of new workers and the occupations needed given growth and turnover. Utilize this information to work with area K-12 schools, career technical centers and higher education to align education and training programs. Update this information every two years.

ACTIONS:

- The Workforce Inventory was completed in Fall 2014. Reports from inventory continue to be shared across the region and with all relevant SeVEDS work groups, particularly with area Guidance Counselor group.
- Data from the Inventory fueled the formation of School/Employer Work Group to help further align education and training programs with employer needs.

3. Define 3 to 5 Career Pathways that will meet the needs of the priority industries defined in Strategy 4.2 Career Pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop and individuals academic, technical and employability skills; provide them with continuous education and training; and place them in high demand, high opportunity jobs.

ACTIONS:

- Workforce Committee and School/Employer Work group has been reenvisioned as the Business Roundtable groups and Educators Workforce Committee.
- Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing and Green Building & Services remain pathway priorities.
- This group then developed the “Fast Tracks to Success” program which exposes high school students to the existing jobs in the region and helps plan education and training needs plans.

4. Expand technical educational opportunities in the region both secondary and post-secondary

ACTIONS:

- Six College Collaborative formed in 2013 has worked to develop both cross registration programs and Internship program.
- School/Employer Work Group is assessing full range of what is available and what is needed to fill gaps.
- Six College Collaborative holds annual full day symposium for faculty and staff to become better acquainted with individual opportunities and curricula.
- A facilitated industry specific roundtable model through which needs assessments, problem-solving, and resource development is ongoing. The Business Cluster Roundtable Initiative has led to the development of innovative credentialing and technical education opportunities in Windham County, including a Certified Production Technician and Medical Assistant credentialing program in partnership with CCV. These programs are directed at secondary and postsecondary students.

5. Identify workforce development Best Practices appropriate to the region

ACTIONS:

- With multiple year financial support from our municipalities, we have added workforce development capacity and work to support education efforts. The Workforce and Education Specialist connects Young Professionals program with all Workforce related groups.

- We have created career development programming for grades 6-12. This includes in classroom, virtual, extracurricular, intern and field trip type of activities on a one time or repeating basis.
- BDCC is engaging the private sector to sponsor diverse workforce development tools in collaboration with the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity, primarily in funding the I am a Vermonter website.f4.1
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6. Recommend and Implement Workforce Development Collaborative Plan by December 2014

ACTIONS:

- The employer led Workforce Committee completed a 5 year hiring inventory and school career awareness project. This group has met quarterly to assess the effectiveness and integration progress of the following established regional workforce development initiatives: Education-Employer work group, Six College and Internship Program, Young Professionals
- A new set of partners, convened under the Windham Region Workforce Center of Excellence, continues to meet as needed to support existing workforce programming.

STRATEGY 4.2: Increase Associate Degrees/Some College and Technical Certificates with a particular focus on the 18-24 year old age bracket.

1. Utilize the hiring inventory to identify critical skill needs in key industry sectors.

ACTIONS:

- We are supporting critical skill identification for Green Building/Services, Healthcare Cluster, and School/Employer groups.
- Business Cluster Roundtable Initiative and Fast Tracks to Success both focus on increasing the credentialing and certification of young Vermonters.

2. Work with the Windham Higher Education Cooperative (WHEC) to develop education programs meet targeted industry needs with joint marketing for unique programs The WHEC consists of Vermont Technical College, Community College of Vermont, Marlboro College, Landmark College, Union Institute and University, World Learning/SIT Institute

ACTIONS:

- WHEC, now renamed the Six College Collaborative continues, to work with our Internship Program Coordinator. They have presented to the Workforce Committee and have begun to attend Healthcare Cluster meetings to ensure their programs are relevant and affordable for the targeted workforce.
- A CEDS Vital Project, led by Union Institute and University, is being developed to serve the needs of Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, Vermont.

3. Work with universities to establish a University Center in Windham County

ACTIONS:

- We have had infrequent conversations with University of Vermont.

4. Partner with UMass and other post-secondary education institutions to offer degree and certificate programs virtually via broadband technology.

ACTIONS:

- N/A

Objective 5: Retain and attract younger talent through engagement linkages, lifestyle amenities, and meaningful career opportunities[iv].

STRATEGY 5.1: Develop a Knowledge Based Economy (KBE) Strategy connecting the SeVEDS region to the New England Knowledge Corridor by January 2016

ACTIONS:

- We are working with the Green Building and Services Sector on developing a KBE strategy based on the number of national and international consultants and researchers based in the region. Key regional leaders in this sector have connections to Yale University and to University of Massachusetts, both part of the New England Knowledge Corridor.
- Brattleboro Tech Group has formed in the region and looks to support, connect and recruit KBE workforce.

STRATEGY 5.2: Develop a Livable Communities Strategy by December 2015

ACTIONS:

- We continued monitoring of efforts by Windham Regional Commission, United Way, and other community-based, public sector entities who are engaged in community development.

STRATEGY 5.3: Leverage tourism assets to attract and retain young resident families

ACTIONS:

- We wrote a USDA Grant to support targeted communications strategy for Young Professionals.

STRATEGY 5.4: Develop a coordinated regional marketing plan to promote SE Vermont as the best place to live, place, and work.

1. Implement Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Project by developing a brand for Southern Vermont recruitment of talent and visitors and creating a website for Southern Vermont that displays career, economic and visitor opportunities including a “job board”.

ACTIONS:

- A Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone and Zone Committee was created by the Vermont Legislature in the 2015 Legislative Session. They made a recommendations to the Legislature and Administration in December of 2015 on four economic development priorities including an implementation plan for phase two of the 2013 Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Project. The Administration vetoed the plan.

2. Coordinate stakeholder buy in by top 75 employers in southern Vermont at 5K annually.

ACTIONS:

- This will be a part of the implementation plan for the project.

3. Coordinate stakeholder buy in by the 40 largest Southern Vermont tourism businesses and events at \$25,000 annually to fund an annual Tourism Marketing Campaign.

ACTIONS:

- It is expected that this will be a part of the implementation plan for the project.

STRATEGY 5.5: Implement a Young Professionals Group (YPG) to support and attract 22-44 year old professionals and workers

1. Based on the Young Professionals survey conducted in 2013, identifies interests, concerns, and needs of younger population.

ACTIONS:

- A follow-up survey was conducted after the first annual fundraising gala for the young professionals. Responses are used to continue the development of engaging opportunities for YP's in the economy and community.

2. Engage a representative group of existing younger individuals (especially 22-44 yrs. old) in the community to assess interests and the role of young professionals in the region's economic future

ACTIONS:

- A regionally representative YP Steering Committee has been developed and works on planning of events and recruitment.

3. As a result of Action 5.5.A and B recommend a set of activities and actions to be adopted supporting both the YPG and entrepreneurial climate of the regions, such as: business seminars, speakers, business plan competitions, investment forums, social events, relocation support, mentoring, referral etc.

ACTIONS:

- The Southern Vermont Young Professionals hold one social networking event a month, and are beginning to program more regular professional development and support opportunities. These include, but are not limited to: financial literacy seminars, first-time homebuyers workshops, gardening courses, and community volunteer opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 6: Develop immediate VY specific workforce and site impact mitigation strategies prior to the 2014 closure of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant.[v]

STRATEGY 6.1: Plan for the loss of at least 600 high paying jobs due to the closure of Vermont Yankee.

1. Work with VY and Entergy corporate leadership to inventory employee occupation mix and skills which can be redeployed into other targeted jobs and retained in the regional economy

2. Proactively engage and contract with State and Federal agencies to provide post VY employment transition planning and outplacement services.

- Vermont DOL has applied for and received Trade Adjustment for VY employees.

3. Work with Entergy, State, and Federal legislative representative to ensure that appropriate funds are made available for closure economic impact mitigation planning and project/initiative implementation.

ACTIONS:

- Entergy and the State of Vermont reached a settlement agreement in December of 2013 which included 10M in funding over five years to "promote economic development in Windham County." With the first 2M, the State of Vermont created what was primarily a business loan program in 2014. Partial funding for three CEDS projects was awarded Green Building and Services Cluster Analysis, Southern Vermont Business Accelerator and Business Plan Competition. In 2015 BDCC/SeVEDS worked with Governor Shumlin's Administration to revise Windham County Economic Development Program. Included in the revisions were an agreement to form a Windham County advisory panel for the Administration an agreement to fund a staff position to promote the State of Vermont Loan and Incentive program.

4. During 2014 develop relevant, implementable post-VY strategies and action plans for inclusion in the first CEDS update.

ACTIONS:

- The Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel, or NDCAP, was formed to work with the State of Vermont, the region and Entergy-VY on decommissioning strategies and action plans. <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/topics/electric/nuclear#NDCAP> Our sister agency, Windham Regional Commission, are named participants to this board. Furthering this work specifically for economic development will be undertaken as part of the Windham County Economic Development Program and will include the Town of Vernon and an invitation to Entergy.

5. Determine how many existing Vermont Yankee employees may have an interest in starting their own business. Provide appropriate entrepreneurial support.

ACTIONS:

- Interested Vermont Yankee employees will be prioritized for receipt of Southern Vermont Business Accelerator Services. We were challenged to reach and target the first round of layoffs for business development services as Entergy-VY needed to maintain an appropriately sized workforce for the plant. We are in the initial stages of conversation with Entergy and Vermont Department of Labor on the next round of layoffs.

STRATEGY 6.2: Support for Windham Regional Commission's engagement in regulatory and non-regulatory closure and decommissioning activities. Windham Regional Commission has stated they intend to:

1. Provide a regional voice in regulatory processes at the state and federal level.
2. Coordinate with sister agencies in Massachusetts and New Hampshire in support of tri-state regional responses to the closure and decommissioning.

ACTIONS:

- BDCC, SeVEDS and Windham Regional Commission continuing to meet with MA and NH and exploring potential collaborative efforts. We plan to conduct a review of all three regions' CEDS to see where complementary efforts, assets, and/or opportunities may exist, and have applied for EDA funds to support this CEDS review process.

3. Represent and advocate for local/regional government in national and federal decommissioning deliberations (Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Federal Legislation, Federal Rulemaking, NGOs (Natl. Association of Development Organizations; National Association of Counties).

ACTIONS:

- The Windham Regional Commission and the University of Massachusetts aligned and Brattleboro based Institute for Nuclear Host Communities are involved in federal and national level conversations on decommissioning.

4. Create and maintain an Online Regional Decommissioning Information Center to keep the public informed about ongoing closure and decommissioning processes.

ACTIONS:

- Windham Regional Commission maintains this site <http://windhamregional.org/vermont-yankee> and Entergy-VY has been producing a regular decommissioning show which can be found here: <http://www.brattleborotv.org/safstor-matters>

5. Research and issue tracking related to the eventual closure and decommissioning of Vermont Yankee, and legal, regulatory and policy issues related to the same.

ACTIONS:

- See above resources in item 4.

STRATEGY 6.3: Implement action items from Post VY task force Report **Mitigating job impacts and GDP impacts:**

Short term options:

1. Expansion of assistance services for existing businesses

ACTIONS:

- We have continued to partner with Small Business Development Center and BDCC to ensure small businesses have access to assistance in strategy and further development.
- We have worked with the State Agency of Commerce and Community Development in the re-working of the Windham County Economic Development Program to clarify the program and ensure more businesses will be able to benefit from those funds.

2. Marketing outreach designed to promote the area to visitors, potential homeowners and potential business investors

ACTIONS:

- The materials were created in the initial Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing plan. The launch of the plan has been delayed due to a lack of committed funding for implementation.
- We are beginning to participate in the planning group for the newly created Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone. Shared marketing strategies and implementation are part of those conversations and will be further developing.

3. Application of state resources to a defined comprehensive mitigation plan

ACTIONS:

- We continue to apply state resources to continue our work defining and developing the workforce development system in our region.
- We have applied state funding toward the development of a business innovation accelerator program and the Green Building/Services Cluster analysis as part of our comprehensive mitigation plan.

4. Prepare for the proposed location of a Vermont Technical College location in Brattleboro

ACTIONS:

- The move to the Brooks House location was completed in 2014. SeVEDS has been using the campus for meetings in order to raise more awareness of the new location and amenities offered in the Brooks House location.

5. Advocate for immediate decommissioning of VY following closure, rather than long-term SafeStor, so that there is mitigation in the form of decommissioning jobs and economic impact over a period of up to 10 years.

ACTIONS:

- The Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel (NDCAP) is a regionally named group working with the State of Vermont and Entergy Nuclear Power on advocating for the region and communicating to the region about decommissioning issues.

Longer term options:

1. Expansion of education services with state investment: Expanded local presence

Windham Regional Career Center, Vermont Technical College, Community College of Vermont, University of Vermont as well as the private institutions: Marlboro College, Marlboro Graduate School, Union Institute, World Learning/SIT and Landmark College.

ACTIONS:

- We have continued to support and develop the Six College Collaborative partnership to better ensure cross campus collaboration on the cross-registration and internship programs, offering paying internships in a wide range of sectors including our target sectors of technical manufacturing, green building/services, and eventually healthcare.
2. Expansion of healthcare services and senior housing and assistance services
 3. Support for startups; incubator space and services, support for specifically identified clusters like food, energy conservation, tourism, recreation

ACTIONS:

- We have supported groups seeking to establish co-working spaces throughout the region, including in Brattleboro and Wilmington.
 - We are designing our Accelerator program to target the specifically identified clusters showing the most potential to create high wage earning jobs, beginning with the Green Building/Services Cluster in 2016
4. Mitigation of real estate valuation impacts:
 5. Regional marketing efforts designed to attract young retirees, career changers
 6. Homeowner tax credits designed to encourage investment in improving condition of existing housing stock
 7. Commercial property inventory system, coordination of existing entities with inventory data, mutual marketing steps

ACTIONS:

- An inventory of properties was completed. The coordinated system is a next step in coordination with representatives from the realty sector.

Mitigation of human capital losses:

1. Reported by Entergy, WRC---TB---5, filed in docket 7440.
2. Entergy pays a generation tax in lieu of a property tax.
3. Steps to attract and retain new/recent college graduates, including career services and entrepreneurship training

ACTIONS:

- We will continue our current efforts in workforce development in the Windham Region and beyond as the SoVT Economic Development Zone begins more of its work. The internship program, cross registration program, and the Accelerator program are all aimed at providing career and entrepreneurship training as well as viable, local options for high wage employment and/or business creation.
- We continue to develop our Young Professional program offerings in more isolated sectors of the Windham Region.

4. Steps to retain new/recent high school graduates not attending college, including training, internships, matching programs to connect students with employers

ACTIONS:

- We have begun efforts to connect employers from our key identified sectors with our middle and high schools to help them co-create the career pathways as well as local career awareness programming. The School/Employer Work group is also exploring expanding their current internship/co-op offerings and creating a more comprehensive menu of career continuum options for interested employers to engage with at the middle and high school levels.
5. Promotion of Vermont and specifically Southeast Vermont to immigrants and immigrant communities, steps to include partnership with World Learning/SIT and other existing entities with international outreach

ACTIONS:

- N/A

Steps to engage retirees and second home owners

1. Mitigation of tax revenue losses:
2. Expansion of tax base with new businesses and residents
3. Consolidation of municipal services; exploration of regional or county-level services

ACTIONS:

- SeVEDS, BDCC, Windham Regional Commission, and several Windham regional employers are engaging with Bennington County in exploring opportunities for expansion, consolidation, or regional services as part of the emerging SoVT Economic Development Zone work.

[i] ViTAL Economy's S.M.A.R.T. CEDS framework and principles to guide the development of CEDS

[ii] A *labor shed* is *defined* as the area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers.

[iii] See Chautauqua Institution website <http://www.ciweb.org/#1>

[iv] Action Plans for Strategies 5.1 – 5.4 to be developed in by September 2014 for inclusion in first annual CEDS update to accommodate completion of the Southern Vermont Sustainable Marketing Project

[v] Background: On 26 August 2013, Entergy announced the date certain closure of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon, setting the closure for October 2014. This announcement came just two weeks after the parent company won a protracted legal battle with the State of Vermont over relicensing of the generation facility. Even though the legal hurdle for continued licensed operation had been cleared and notwithstanding that the plant requires significant capital improvements for continued operations with a remaining expected lifespan of 20 more years, the company cited falling electrical rates and low natural gas prices as the primary factor in the decision to shut down this facility. In the history of nuclear energy in North America no nuclear power generation site has ever been returned to productive use following closure. SeVEDS must therefore plan for this date certain closure.