Southern Vermont: A Joint Proposal for Economic Development

BCRC presentation to the RED Group
Bennington College, April 12 2017
Presentation Outline

- Regional Context
- Windham County SMART CEDS
- Rationale for a Joint CEDS
- Formal Motion from SeVEDS
- Joint Proposal
- Commitments
Regional Context
Data and Directives for and within Southern Vermont
Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone

- Legislature created – 2015
- 44 towns – BDCC & BCRC
- 9 Member Committee
  - Gubernatorial Appointee – Wayne Granquist (Chair)
  - 2 House – Lisa Sullivan, Michael Keane
  - 2 Senate – Tom Cain, Dr. Mariko Silver
  - RDC’s – Adam Grinold, Peter Odierna
  - RPC’s – Chris Campany, Bill Colvin
- Report due December 1, 2015
- Report supplement issued July 7, 2016
Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone

- **Shrinking Population**
  down 3.5% by 2030 (Rest of VT – down by 0.5%)

- **Aging Population**
  30% of population over 65 by 2030
  (2010 Census – 17.6%)

- **Jobs Unfilled, Yet People Looking**
  VT Job Link in 2016: 7,529 Job Listings – 3,057 Job Seekers

- **Tourism Revenues** Rebounding More Slowly Than Northwestern VT
  Rooms & Meals Tax Receipts - NW VT: +37%; So. VT: +11%
  Retail Sales - NW VT: +4%; Southern VT: -11%
Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone

1. **Spur business development** in the Zone through an integrated strategy.
   - Create *Southern Vermont CEDS* – build off Windham Region/SeVEDS

2. Implement the Southern Vermont Sustainable Recruitment and Marketing Program.

3. Integrate workforce **education, internship and career development programs**.

4. Create a private-public partnership to **attract investment capital** to the Zone

5. Define the role of the Zone Committee and/or other groups in **continuing the work** and its mission.
Southern Vermont

Population Growth

![Population Growth Graph]

- Benn Co
- Wind Co
- Vermont
Southern Vermont
Age Distribution

2000

- 65 and up
- 55-64
- 35-54
- 20-34
- 15-19
- 5-14
- 0-4

Benn Co, Wind Co, Vermont
Southern Vermont

Age Distribution

2014

- Benn Co
- Wind Co
- Vermont
Bennington County

Age Distribution

[Bar chart showing age distribution with details for each age group and population numbers.]

- Male
- Female

Age Group: 85+
- Male: 108
- Female: 30

Age Group: 80-84
- Male: 331
- Female: 0

Age Group: 75-79
- Male: 332
- Female: 115

Age Group: 70-74
- Male: 66
- Female: 124

Age Group: 65-69
- Male: 111
- Female: -178

Age Group: 60-64
- Male: 219
- Female: -236

Age Group: 55-59
- Male: 440
- Female: -506

Age Group: 50-54
- Male: -108
- Female: -159

Age Group: 45-49
- Male: -59
- Female: -80

Age Group: 40-44
- Male: -80
- Female: -108

Age Group: 35-39
- Male: -159
- Female: -180

Age Group: 30-34
- Male: -236
- Female: -250

Age Group: 25-29
- Male: -440
- Female: -506

Age Group: 20-24
- Male: -59
- Female: -80

Age Group: 15-19
- Male: -80
- Female: -108

Age Group: 10-14
- Male: -159
- Female: -180

Age Group: 5-9
- Male: -236
- Female: -250

Age Group: < 5
- Male: -440
- Female: -506

Population per Age Group
Southern Vermont Wages

Average Employer Wages, 2007-2015
Southern Vermont Earnings

Median Worker Earnings, 2011-2015

- Benn Co
- Wind Co
- Vermont

- All Workers
- Women FT/YR
- Men FT/YR
Southern Vermont Tax Revenues

Southern Vermont Share of Statewide Tax Revenues

- Personal Income
- Sales & Use
- Rooms & Meals

- 2008
- 2012
- 2016
Southern Vermont Community Distress
The S.M.A.R.T. CEDS
Projects, Strategies, and Results: 2011-2017
Windham County’s S.M.A.R.T. CEDS

Goals & Objectives

Clear GOALS

- Reverse population decline
- Increase the number of good paying jobs
- Improve the quality of the workforce
- Raise household income relative to surrounding areas

Clear OBJECTIVES

- Act regionally
- Create an entrepreneurial environment and culture
- Improve wage parity with the surrounding labor-shed
- Increase the size and quality of the workforce
- Retain and attract younger talent
- Develop immediate Vermont Yankee-specific workforce and site impact mitigation strategies
Windham County’s S.M.A.R.T. CEDS

Projects & Funding

Commitments

- Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
  - $250,000 of staff time since 2011

- Windham County Municipalities
  - $309,665 since 2013 ($1.80 per person per year)

- Public participation, 2011-14
  - 55 SeVEDS Board mtgs
  - 8 Post-VY Task Force mtgs
  - 25 Workforce Com. mtgs
  - 10 CEDS Com. mtgs

Projects & Funding

- Six College Collaborative Internship Project
  - DOL Funding: $150,000 over 3 years

- Tri-State Regional Accelerated Cluster Development
  - EDA Funding: $265,000

- Southern Vermont Economy Project
  - USDA Funding: $230,000 over two years

- Windham County Economic Development Program
  - Entergy Funding: $10,000,000 over five years
Windham County’s S.M.A.R.T. CEDS

Results to date

- Population: 42,600 to 43,400
- Wages: $896m to $943m
- Region GDP: $2.37b to $2.6b
- Investment: $15m in grants leads to $55m in private equity
- Jobs: over 750 created or retained
Why a Joint CEDS?
Scale and Logistics
Why a Joint CEDS?

Vermont 2020 CEDS
- Top-down impetus
- Broad service area
- Difficult to serve Burlington and Bennington equally well
- Public represented by delegates
- Local indifference

Windham S.M.A.R.T. CEDS
- Evolved from community conversations
- Very small service area
- Unique stressor (VY closure)
- Public represented by grassroots organizations
- Local support

Status quo
Why a Joint CEDS?

Advantages

Southern Vermont CEDS
- Manageable size
- Expanded geographic reach
- Multiple entities share work
- Shared socioeconomic challenges
- Preserves local oversight
- State and federal support

Southern Vermont Region
- 80,000 Vermonters
- Links to MA, CT, NH, NY
- BDCC, BCRC, SeVEDS, RED
- Issues relevant on both sides of the mountains
- Grassroots approach intact
- Southern Vermont EDZ
Why a Joint CEDS?

Considerations

• SCALE
  • Too big, you lose the local connection
  • Too small, you can’t reach a critical mass

• MOMENTUM
  • Existing Windham CEDS means many pieces are in place
  • Capitalizes on ongoing bi-county efforts: Zone Report, SVEP, etc.

• STRATEGY
  • Resolves difficulty of one-county CEDS renewal
  • Renewal process can expand to include Bennington County
  • Aligns with EDA guidance
SeVEDS Formal Motion

Collaboration and Conditions
March 2017: SeVEDS board votes unanimously for BDCC and BCRC staff to draft a proposal for a Southern Vermont CEDS.
March 2017: SeVEDS board votes *unanimously* for BDCC and BCRC staff to draft a proposal for a **Southern Vermont CEDS**.

Vote followed updates from Bill Colvin on **progress** and **capacity building** in the Bennington Region.
SeVEDS
Formal Motion: Priorities

• Partnership characteristics:
  • Participation throughout region
  • High-level coordination
  • Preservation of “sub-regional” processes
  • Creative approaches for new opportunities
  • Critical mass influencing state policy

• Application requirements:
  • Equivalent commitment of resources
Joint Proposal: Southern Vermont CEDS
Rationale, Organization, and Framework
Joint Proposal: Outline

• **Goal:** A CEDS for Southern Vermont.
• **Geography:** Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone.
• **Framework:** S.M.A.R.T. criteria for accountability and regional impact.
• **Deliverable:** Engaging document for the general public.
• **Application:** BDCC as applicant, BCRC as a sub-recipient.
• **Steering Committees:** The RED Group and SeVEDS will devise strategies in sub-regions, and recommend local projects to Joint Board.
• **Joint Board:** Meets 4-6 times per year to review progress, evaluate strategies, prioritize funding applications, etc.
Joint Proposal: Framework

- Increase the 25-44 age cohort from 33 percent to 38 percent of the region's total population by 2017.
- Create an entrepreneurial environment.
- An additional objective was discussed early in the 2012 CEEDS process:
  - Build regional redevelopment capacity by 2018.
- Recognizing the progress already made by SeVEDS since 2011, and as a result of all community input and the diligent work of the Board and CEEDS advisory committee, the following six guiding objectives have been adopted as the core of the 2013 CEEDS Framework.
- Objective 1: Act regionally.
- Objective 2: Create an entrepreneurial environment and culture to enhance existing businesses and grow new business.
- Objective 3: Improving wage parity with the surrounding labor market.
- Objective 4: Increase the size and quality of the workforce.
- Objective 5: Recruit and attract younger talent through engagement, lifestyle amenities, and meaningful career opportunities.
- Objective 6: Develop immediate VT-specific workforce and site mitigation strategies prior to the 2014 closure of Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant.

How will this Strategy be different from previous planning efforts?

Economic development, as practiced by many communities, is plagued by a lack of seriousness about measurable progress and tangible improvement in the livelihood of residents. Traditional programs, such as marketing and recruiting, are necessary components of a well-rounded economic development effort, but insufficient if the goal is economic transformation, which is expected for Southeastern Vermont.

SeVEDS is employing Vital Economy’s S.M.A.R.T. CEEDS framework and principles to guide the development of SeVEDS S.M.A.R.T. CEEDS Report. These principles include:
- Process—based on proven best practices for regional community economic development and open, transparent collaboration.
- Regional focus—coordinating and leveraging assets at the regional level in order to compete successfully in the global economy.
- Asset-based—focus on indigenous assets and home-grown competitive advantage rather than defining strategies around what the region lacks.
- Diversified—regional resiliency requires diversification in order to weather downturns and navigate economic change successfully.
- Measurable strategy—formed by trends, relevant to the true priorities of the region, and focused on tangible progress.
- Disciplined and consistent—open collaboration requires a commitment to broad participation but recognition that all ideas are not equal and priorities matter in order to be successful.
Commitments

Roles and Responsibilities for the RED Group
Commitments: RED Group

- Process participation
- Regional language
- Municipal integration
- Financial support