

MINUTES

**Lakes Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS)
Strategy Committee Meeting**

Meredith Savings Bank
South Main Street,
Laconia, New Hampshire

January 24, 2007

Committee Members Present:

Bill Beyer, Meredith Village Savings Bank
Jennifer Boulanger, BCEDC
Mark Edelstein, NH Community Technical College
Debbie Frawley-Drake, Lakes Region Linen
Gary Groleau, N.H. Ball Bearing
John Howe, The Citizen of Laconia
Rep. David Knox, Elected State Representative
Moe Lafreniere, The Common Man
Theresa Lamson, Greater Laconia-Weirs Beach
Chamber of Commerce

Henry Lipman, LRGH
Rusty McLear, Hampshire Hospitality Holdings
Linda Normandin, Laconia Savings
Gerry O'Neil, Private Sector representative
Carol Pierce, Laconia Human Relations Committee
Mark Scarano, GCEDC
Denise Sharlow, FBIDC
Jack Terrill, United Way
Dick Waitt, LRPC
Chris Williams, Williams Architects

Others:

John Moen, MVSB
Sen. Deb Reynolds
Kimon Koulet, LRPC
Michael Tardiff, LRPC

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Bill Beyer at 6:10 pm. Members of the CEDS Strategy Committee and others in attendance introduced themselves.

2. CEDS Background

Bill Beyer briefly reviewed the background of the CEDS process. He noted that the BCEDC had commissioned an economic profile several years ago, and the CEDS was a direct outgrowth of that process. He noted that it took several years for the funding to become available for the CEDS.

3. CEDS Overview

Kim Koulet stated that the CEDS effort will bring the public and private sectors together in a process that will hopefully sustain itself well into its future. He then described the CEDS process as the development of an economic road map that seeks to identify the region's unique advantages. He reviewed the role of the LRPC, stating that the Commission's purpose during the study is to facilitate the process, with implementation the role of existing economic development organizations such as BCEDC, GCEDC, Chambers of Commerce, and other local development organizations.

K. Koulet then described other key facts related to the CEDS:

- The adoption of a CEDS is necessary for eligibility for Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding.
- The appointment of a CEDS Strategy Committee is a key component of the CEDS development process. Over 50% of the committee's membership must come from the private sector.
- Once the CEDS is approved, there must be an annual update.

He then described the steps involved in the CEDS preparation, including the development of an economic climate analysis; an analysis of the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT); the identification of regional expectations and strategic projects; a plan of action; and the development of performance measures.

He finished by stating that a key industry cluster analysis will be included, and that staff is proposing to develop a regional business survey modeled after the Council on Competitiveness' guidebook on increasing regional innovation.

B. Beyer stated that it is the role of LRPC staff to gather information while the role of the Strategy Committee is to utilize the information and make decisions. It is the Strategy Committee's job to shape the overall CEDS process.

K. Koulet was asked if the committee would disband once the development of the CEDS was complete. He said that the CEDS document needs to be updated annually and that a committee would be necessary to guide implementation. B. Beyer noted that the committee's real work may begin when the CEDS is done.

Questions and comments related to the proposed CEDS process then followed. K. Koulet was asked to comment on financial resources that may be available based upon the completion of the CEDS. K. Koulet asked Mark Scarano to comment from his experience with the Grafton County Economic Development Council. M. Scarano noted that there is a great deal of EDA funding available in New Hampshire, and specifically described the \$3.1 million utilized by the Grafton

County business incubator in Lebanon. He stated that it would not have been built without EDA funding and if it had not been included in the North Country Council CEDS document.

Chris Williams stated that he assumed that the committee would be looking at smart growth issues.

K. Koulet then reviewed the project's timeline, including the proposed distribution of the business survey in February. It was requested that a draft survey be distributed to the committee for review before it is established on the internet.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Next Steps

Rep. Knox noted his concern about participation from the eastern side of Lake Winnepesaukee. C. Williams noted that the executive director of WEDCO was listed, and K. Koulet identified another business owner from Tamworth.

Sen. Reynolds noted that she is on the Senate Commerce and Banking Committee and she will attend CEDS meetings as her schedule allows.

The next meeting of the CEDS Strategy Committee will be on Wednesday, February 28 beginning at 5:00 pm. The meeting will be held at the MVS Laconia Branch conference room. Successive meetings will be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month.