



**NRPC Regional Plan
Community & Economic Vitality
Subcommittee Meeting**

**NRPC Conference Room
July 17, 2013 ~ 2:00 – 3:30PM**

Agenda

1. Introductions & Committee Goals
2. CEV Workshop Summary – What We Heard
3. Overview Discussion:
 - a. Vision, Goals, Objectives for Economic Vitality
 - b. Regional Needs and Opportunities
4. Focus Group Discussion Questions
5. Draft Chapter Outline & Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Requirements
6. Next Steps



Community and Economic Vitality Committee Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2013

Members Present:

Tom Galligani, City of Nashua Economic Development

Michael Tabacsko, City of Nashua Board of Aldermen
Sarah Marchant, Town of Amherst Community Development

Michael Dell Orfano, Town of Amherst Planning Board

Tracy Hutchins, Milford Improvement Team

Staff Present:

Kerrie Diers, Executive Director

Mark Connors, Regional Planner

Kerrie Diers began the meeting by briefly introducing committee members and describing the committee's charge to develop an Economic Development Chapter which detail's the region's economic and demographic profile, analyzes comparative economic advantages, opportunities and weaknesses, and meets the requirements of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

This was followed by a discussion of the benefits of a CEDS and how the 8 towns in the western part of the NRPC Region are currently not covered by any CEDS. Michael Dell Orfano inquired about how economic development efforts have been handled in individual towns and among the region and this was followed by a general discussion of present and past economic development efforts in the region.

Mark Connors described the commission's Community and Economic Vitality Workshop on May 31 and summarized some of the major themes that emerged from participants. Michael Dell Orfano inquired about the most interesting themes to emerge from the workshop. Diers noted there was a consensus from attendees that NRPC had a significant role to play in economic development efforts. She added that fewer people commute to Massachusetts than many people expect and 58 percent of residents in the region work in the region. Michael Tabacsko noted that the region might be able to better advertise its reverse commute advantage. Sarah Marchant noted that the lack of affordable daycare in the region was one interesting theme that emerged from the workshop. This was followed by some discussion that high childcare expenses and a lack of workforce housing in the region might be a barrier to economic development.

Connors reviewed the major requirements of a CEDS, noting that the Economic Development chapter would fulfill both the Granite State Future Regional Plan chapter and the CEDS requirements developed by the Economic Development Administration. Michael Dell Orfano asked what the committee would look like. Connors noted that the CEDS should represent a public-private partnership and that members of the region's business community should be on the committee. Diers explained that NRPC wanted the group's feedback on who should be on the committee. This was followed by some discussion of members of the business community who should be considered for the committee.

Kerrie Diers introduced the draft goals of the Nashua Region CEDS and asked the committee to review the draft goals over the next few weeks and to send NRPC any feedback they might have. Tracy Hutchins noted that one area the CEDS might be a big help is in quantifying the economic impacts of community events. Because the events often require some funding from the town, she noted it is critical for elected officials to see the impacts of those investments. Diers said that she would inquire with NRPC's data team to see if the commission could help in that area. She added that the University of New Hampshire would run a Regional Economic Model (REMI) as part of the regional plan process and noted that might also be able to assist in quantifying the economic impacts of events.

Diers noted that NRPC will be conducting focus groups this summer to gain additional public input for the regional plan and to help fulfill the equity and engagement goals of the plan. She reviewed a series of questions facilitators may ask regarding economic development in the groups to help spur discussion and asked the committee to send any feedback if they have additional ideas for questions.

Before closing the meeting, Diers noted that the committee would meet again in early September. That meeting will cover results of the focus group discussions, finalize the draft goals and objectives of the chapter based on the committee's input, discuss progress in running the REMI economic model and discuss possible projects that might be appropriate for the CEDS.