



Healthy Economic Region: DRAFT Economic Development Goals, Strategies and Actions for Franklin & Grand Isle Counties

<p><b>Strategy 1.2</b></p> <p>Increase the Production, Marketing and Access of Local Foods, Wines &amp; Natural Products to local and broad-based markets through supporting production and educating &amp; engaging the public.</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Host 2 separate county-wide meetings that gives consideration to inviting organizations such as Vermont Sustainable Job Fund and University of Vermont Extension, representatives from Vermont Agency of Agriculture, respective county sugar makers associations and Farm Bureaus to meet with in Franklin County the Regional Diversified Agriculture Committee (which includes FCIDC, Franklin Grand Isle Workforce Investment Board, Fairfield Farmers Market Online and regional Farm Service Agency, and in Grand Isle County the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Council (LCIEDC), Lake Champlain Islands Ag Network and Lake Champlain Islands Farmers Market, Champlain Valley Wine Trail organization. Discussion shall focus on:</p> <p><b>A1.1</b> Outside Franklin &amp; Grand Isle County: What is working in other places and how can Franklin &amp; Grand Isle County learn and benefit from others, and what funding and human resources are available from outside of the counties.</p> <p><b>A1.2</b> Inside Franklin &amp; Grand Isle County: What are we already doing, how do we support producers need to grow, distribute, &amp; market their product, how do we engage &amp; educate our local citizens of food choices &amp; availability, how do we set benchmarks and how do we know if we are successful in meeting goals.</p> <p><b>A1.3</b> Considerable attention shall be given to funding and process for hiring a Franklin County Local Foods Coordinator, and in Grand Isle County for funding local foods and wine marketing programs, as well as the potential for a processing center.</p> <p><b>A2</b> Identify priorities for the Region, aligning priorities where applicable, and identifying sources of funding to support sustainable and diversified agriculture.</p>	<p><b>FCIDC &amp; NRPC</b></p> <p><b>LCIEDC &amp; NRPC</b></p> <p><b>NRPC, FCIDC &amp; LCIEDC</b></p>	<p><b>By December 1, 2013 for Franklin County</b></p> <p><b>By January 1, 2014 for Grand Isle County</b></p> <p><b>By February 1, 2014</b></p>
<p><b>Strategy 1.3</b></p> <p>Promote County Assets, Destinations and Quality of Life for Citizens of</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Create a Regional Directory of Assets &amp; Activities categorized by county and type of activity, marketing to citizens &amp; tourists.</p> <p><b>A2</b> Create system for collecting data on the number of visitors to regional areas of interest, activities and events to be used for future planning.</p>	<p><b>FCRCC, FCIDC, LCIEDC, LCRCC with support from other local public</b></p>	<p><b>By March 1, 2014</b></p>



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<p>rigors of higher education programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business and Education supporting students to better understand the requirements and importance of Workforce Readiness, including basic skills, workplace ethics, communications and time management</li> <li>- Business and Education informing students of all higher education programs available for various professions and the skill sets needed for acceptance into these programs</li> <li>- Business and Education support students in transitioning from school to workplace through career exploration, resume writing &amp; interviewing, and awareness of job opportunities and availability</li> <li>- Business and Education working collaboratively to provide students opportunities in Career Exploration Mentoring, Job Shadows and Internships</li> <li>- Business and Education support FGIWIB in its effort to ensure that training dollars are used for incumbent workers for career education and job site training, supporting our workers and our industries.</li> <li>- Business and Education supporting the transition of Grand Isle County students in high schools in bordering counties through making them aware of jobs in Grand Isle County.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Strategy 2.2</b></p> <p>All sectors of business, education, public protection and community must actively participate in economic sustainability through educating, supporting and addressing the abuse of drugs and the crimes often related to the addiction of this abuse.</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Gather information from and collaborating with the existing regional and statewide infrastructure that already exist, including Grand Isle County’s Healthy Community group, to understand and address the growing drug abuse and related crime in our communities. The purpose of the meeting is to form a working group that will collaborate with existing groups and other business, public protection and educational institutions to address drugs in our communities, schools and workplaces.</p> <p><b>A2</b> Host a meeting that invites, at a minimum, identified existing groups, which may include the Regional Prevention Collaborative, Northwestern Medical Center, NCSS, the Franklin &amp; Grand Isle County State Legislative Body, Resource Officers and public safety personnel throughout the region, regional public officials, regional and statewide health officials and physicians, and organizations involved in community support programs, such as Front Porch Forum, The Clean Team and Community Health Center.</p> <p><b>A3</b> Report on the details of the collaboration, the specific actions that the collaborative will be taking, and incentives that will be used to encourage businesses and communities to get actively involved in the solutions.</p>	<p><b>FGIWIB, FCIDC and LCIEDC</b></p> <p><b>FGIWIB, FCIDC, LCIEDC and Human Resource Roundtable</b></p> <p><b>FGIWIB, FCIDC and LCIEDC and working group</b></p>	<p><b>By October 1, 2013 ??</b></p> <p><b>By November 1, 2013 ??</b></p> <p><b>By January 1, 2014</b></p>

**Goal #3: The health of businesses, employees and communities depend upon funding that is achievable and affordable, business costs that are reasonable and appropriate, and an infrastructure that is available and predictable.**

Context: Strengthening small and large businesses and encouraging startup businesses and entrepreneurial endeavors in Franklin & Grand Isle counties requires a strong and predictable infrastructure, encouraging new owners and markets to support economic development.

Strategy	Action	Responsible Party	Date
<p><b>Strategy 3.1</b> The Existing Vibrant Base of businesses, including manufacturing, agriculture and ag-related businesses, healthcare, retail &amp; service industries, home-based businesses, telecommuting, seasonal &amp; tourist-based businesses can be supported by knowing what resources are available. Businesses continue to struggle with the cost of healthcare, electricity, and site permitting, all of which seriously affect economic development</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Perform a region-wide inventory of all infrastructure, the unused capacity of existing inventory, and the additional infrastructure needed at local/regional/state level to support businesses &amp; communities. At a minimum, the following categories must be considered:</p> <p>Lead Group: NRPC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critical Roads &amp; Bridges</li> <li>- Commercial Building Lots</li> <li>- Available Commercial and Industrial Buildings</li> <li>- Water &amp; Wastewater</li> <li>- Telecommunication</li> <li>- Border Patrol &amp; Homeland Security Requirements &amp; Activities</li> </ul> <p>Lead Group: FCIDC &amp; LCIEDC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capital Resources for employers at regional &amp; state levels</li> <li>- Education Opportunities to Support Adults &amp; Families</li> <li>- K-16 Educational Institutions &amp; Resources for Incumbent Worker Training</li> <li>- Community Halls and Anchor Businesses</li> <li>- Programs related to Tax Incentives</li> <li>- Programs related to expanding existing business &amp; new business</li> <li>- Programs related to Niche Markets &amp; Entrepreneurs</li> </ul> <p>Lead Group: LCRCC &amp; FCRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distribution &amp; Marketing Centers to support all Businesses</li> <li>- Critical Recreational Resources</li> <li>- Lake Champlain and critical tributaries</li> </ul>	<p><b>FCIDC, LCIEDC &amp; NRPC with municipalities</b></p>	<p><b>By January 1, 2014</b></p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the common threads throughout the Northwest Region that are essential in supporting business and social communities, as employers and employees, and are unique threads in each county</li> <li>- Continue to collaborate with groups to develop water quality improvement projects and to educate municipalities, businesses and individuals on the economic importance of a healthy Lake Champlain and watersheds.</li> <li>- What necessary Infrastructure is missing by category, municipality and county region</li> <li>- How do we connect municipalities within each county together and is there enough collaboration and planning</li> <li>- How do we better understand the needs of the individual communities and within each county region to determine where efficiencies can be gained, such as common grant writers, sharing of critical employees &amp; services, etc.</li> <li>- Is a Regional Directory of infrastructure and support systems a possible way to connect municipalities &amp; county regions</li> </ul> <p><b>A5</b> The outcome of the Business Survey and Forum on Supporting Infrastructure will be a more focused message to state and/or national legislative bodies, and greater communications among businesses and municipalities in the Northwest Region.</p>		
<p><b>Goal #4: The economic future of Grand Isle County depends upon collaboration among the communities to address issues that are similar throughout the Islands.</b></p>			
<p><b>Context:</b> Grand Isle County is unique in its geography and peoples, creating unique challenges in economic growth, sustainability and development. The separate and unique land masses of South Hero, Grand Isle, North Hero, Isle La Motte and Alburgh that form Grand Isle County have as many differences as they do similarities, challenging their economy and communities.</p>			
Strategy	Action	Responsible Party	Date
<p><b>Strategy 4.1</b></p> <p>Establish Common Goals for Grand Isle County that seeks to improve collaboration among “islands” while distinguishing the unique</p>	<p><b>A1</b> Organize the first annual Island Economic Retreat, shaping the activities of the Island Economic Initiatives, based upon actions and outcomes associated with, but not limited to, NRPC’s Healthy People, Strong Communities project. The following will be invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The historical society, development boards and organizations, municipal officials, recreation and parks committees, business associations, performing art organizations, water quality and working landscape groups, travel &amp; tourism organizations, outdoor recreation groups, diversified agriculture producers and farmer markets, dairy based organizations, and artisans, and local media and promotion organizations.</li> </ul>	<p>LCIEDC</p>	<p>By March 1, 2014</p>

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<p>communities of each “island”.</p>	<p><b>A2</b> The yearly Island Economic Retreat will focus on economic outcomes that continue to be important to all of the island communities, as well as those that are unique to each island community.</p> <p><b>A3</b> The 2014 Island Economic Retreat, and subsequent retreats as needed, will address topics specific to Grand Isle County. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of a “Shop Local” Campaign targeting residents; increasing local knowledge of household goods and products available year round and supporting local merchants</li> <li>- Addressing the “isolation” issue through increasing activities specific to residents, especially during winter month, and activities for teenagers after school hours</li> <li>- Addressing the lack of collaboration between the 5 island communities, and the impact of the differing views and needs of year round &amp; seasonal residents, and if an island-wide Front Porch Forum would support change</li> <li>- Capitalizing on US Route 2 as being the scenic alternative to I-89 and ways to create a corridor of “anchors” and “gateways” that welcome visitors and support residents, such as the former Sandbar Inn</li> <li>- Working with UVM Extension to optimize island soils, climate and landscape to encourage wineries, breweries, tree farming, cider mills, and other ag related businesses</li> <li>- Increasing use of schools as community centers to deliver adult and family educational programs and to host island wide or local community events</li> <li>- Educating residents, fulltime and seasonal, including young adults, about the benefits of home-based businesses, home offices, cottage industries, and ability to support all through telecommunications and available local markets</li> <li>- Capitalizing on fisheries, marinas, fishing derbies, ice fishing, and water activities that have direct competition from bordering counties and states</li> <li>- Initiatives to increase the number of year-round residents that are families with children through promoting the benefits of small schools in K-8 and school choice in 9-12, and understanding how to capitalize on education funding to support small schools</li> </ul> <p><b>A4</b> Specific information from NRPC’s Healthy People, Strong Community project that will shape the discussion may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outcome of the Regional Brand Initiatives</li> <li>- Outcomes for increasing production, marketing and access to local foods</li> <li>- Priorities and funding sources identified for diversified &amp; sustainable agriculture</li> </ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Status of NRPC Regional Directory of Assets &amp; Activities</li> <li>- Initiatives created at NRPC regional level that are specific to Grand Isle County for Quality of Life promotion</li> <li>- Status of Activi-Days specific to Grand Isle County</li> <li>- Development of Workforce Readiness initiatives, specifically the transition of Grand Isle County youths from high school to workplace</li> <li>- Development of NRPC's regional effort to address drug abuse and related crime</li> <li>- Status and use of the Regional Inventory of Infrastructure, specifically that addressing lack of adult and family education programs, water and waste water throughout Islands, and increasing available space for lease</li> <li>- Results of Forum Supporting Infrastructure relative to Grand Isle County, including message to state and/or national legislative bodies</li> </ul> <p><b>A5</b> The Island Economic Retreat will identify those initiative that are most important to the communities, realistic and achievable. Community groups and members will collaborate on assigning action items, forming new collaborations if necessary to produce outcomes, and scheduling follow up discussions. Identified items will become part of the Island Economic Initiative, which will be on-going and fluid to support the Islands communities.</p>		
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