

2006 CEDS Annual Report for Chittenden County

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I. Introduction

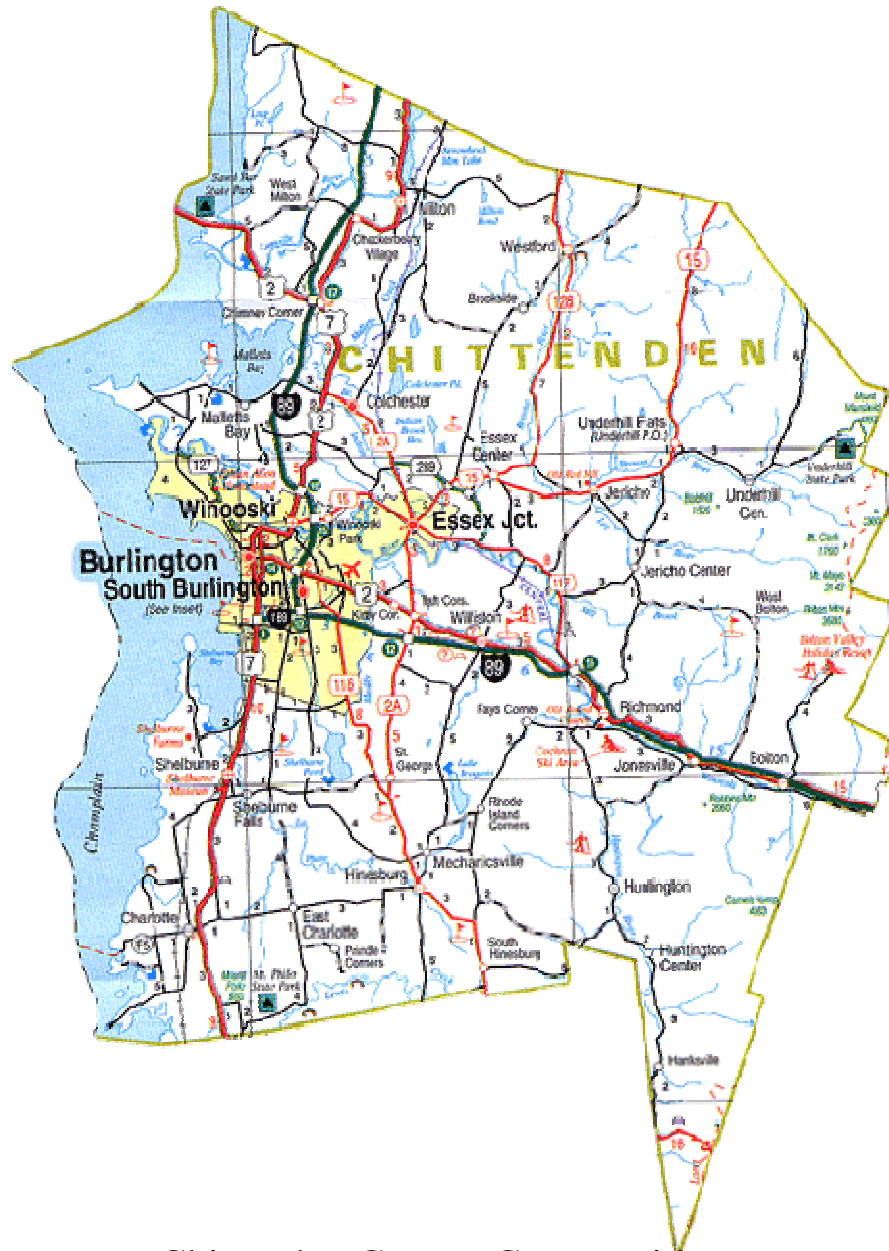
Welcome to Chittenden County, located on the shores of Lake Champlain in northwestern Vermont. Chittenden County is home to nearly 25% of the State's residents and many of the State's businesses. The economy has evolved from agrarian, to industrial and continues to change and evolve with the rest of the United States. Chittenden County is a region blessed with a clean environment, beautiful natural resources, a hardy workforce with a great work ethic and a diversity of communities, from the biggest city in Vermont (Burlington) to Buel's Gore (population 12). In the following pages the strengths of the Greater Burlington area will be presented and explained. This is the 2006 Annual CEDS Report for Chittenden County, Vermont.

In 2004, the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation was invited by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to compose and submit a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Chittenden County due to substantial job loss from a major area employer. Over the course of a year the CEDS process pulled together hundreds of individuals representing diverse backgrounds to help shape, compile, draft and finally complete the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County, Vermont. The Final Report was submitted by the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) on behalf of its many staff members and volunteers who dedicated countless hours to the process.

In August, 2005 the Chittenden County CEDS Final Report was accepted by the EDA, thus initiating an ongoing process to annual update the Chittenden County CEDS Report and potentially enabling municipalities, organizations and institutions to apply for grant funding. The report, as implied by its name, offers a comprehensive guide to economic development initiatives throughout the region.

The following pages inventory the CEDS process for Chittenden County. Each piece of the process and its corresponding information are included in the following sections, each of which is outlined in the Table of Contents.

II. Greater Burlington Area Comprehensive Economic Development Region



Chittenden County Communities

Bolton	Hinesburg	St. George
Buel's Gore	Huntington	Underhill
Burlington	Jericho	Westford
Charlotte	Milton	Williston
Colchester	Richmond	Winooski
Essex Junction	Shelburne	
Essex Town	South Burlington	

III. Executive Summary

The following document represents the 2006 CEDS Annual Report for Chittenden County. The document catalogues the CEDS process for Chittenden County occurring between August 1st, 2005 and July 31st, 2006.

The report is a compilation of efforts by volunteers and staff to inventory, once again, all economic development activities within the region. This year nearly 100 individuals, representing nearly as many organizations, were asked to submit their projects to the CEDS process. Additionally, members of our volunteer Citizen Work Groups were asked to formulate and submit any projects they believed were missing and important to the economic wellbeing of the region.

Since August, 2005 and the certification of the original Chittenden County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document, much has changed in the region and within the organizations submitting the CEDS Report. Staff members integral to the compilation of the original report have now moved onto other regions or onto projects which will have a great and lasting impact on the economic development of Chittenden County. It is first and foremost that their efforts to bringing the original Chittenden County CEDS Document to fruition be recognized.

Arguably, the most important piece of the CEDS document is contained in the Implementation Plan (Section VII of this CEDS document). Within the Implementation Plan is the cumulative inventory of economic development projects for the Chittenden County region. Each of the projects was culled by its respective Citizen Work Group and was evaluated using criteria and methods developed in 2005 as part of the initial CEDS process; each of the steps will be explained in greater detail below.

The Chittenden County CEDS Process is long and involved, seeking time and effort from many individuals and organizations throughout the community. The CEDS for the Greater Burlington area is founded in, and successful due to collaboration, volunteerism and outreach.

IV. Chittenden County, GBIC & the CEDS

A. Description of the Region

Chittenden County is Vermont's economic hub and features a mix of high tech manufacturing and value-added businesses as well as a rich, natural resource based working lands and tourism sector. Bordered to the west by Lake Champlain, the greater Burlington area is home to Vermont's most dense population including over 15,000 college students from three colleges and the state's only university.

	Chittenden County	State of Vermont
Land Area (sq. mi.)	614	9,609
2004 Population	149,286	621,394
Employment	93,533	294,288
Unemployment Rate	3.1%	3.4%
2004 Average Annual Wage	\$38,433	\$33,275

Chittenden County is comprised of 18 municipalities and one gore. The total Chittenden County population actually decreased over the course of 2003-2004. Utilizing the most up to date information available, the 2004 Population by municipality is as follows:

Bolton: 974	Hinesburg: 4,527	S. Burlington: 16,460
Buel's Gore: 12	Huntington: 1,939	St. George: 688
Burlington: 38,934	Jericho: 5,067	Underhill: 3,020
Charlotte: 3,644	Milton: 10,065	Westford: 2,121
Colchester: 17,177	Richmond: 4,120	Williston: 8,224
Essex: 19,065	Shelburne: 6,984	Winooski: 6,365

Chittenden County, while serving as the state's economic hub with a strong high tech industrial base, also hosts active working farms and forests with associated value added industries. It is a priority to protect agricultural and forestry lands, encourage sound soil and water quality management practices and sustain the natural resource base upon which the economy depends. In discussions with community members, support for agriculture was highlighted as a key strategy related to economic development.

The agriculture and forestry industry feeds other industries including retail, wholesale distributing and tourism. Agriculture is also a major contributor to Vermont's tourism industry. A recent study linked the farm landscape with tourism, 'Interdependence of Farming and Tourism in Vermont: Quantifying the Value of the Farm Landscape'¹ According to this study, 96% of visitors surveyed at a Vermont Welcome Center indicated that scenery was a "very important" or "important" reason for visiting the state. Tourism contributes a total impact of over \$4 billion or 13% of the total state's output.

¹ Wood, Nancy, M.S. Thesis, Community Development and Applied Economics, University of Vermont, March 2000.

Using 2000 data, the Vermont Council on Rural Development cites the state's economic impact from Vermont farm products at \$681 million. Our county towns are very oriented toward using natural systems/ecological services to enhance and sustain agriculture and natural resource based economies and investments, e.g. farm and forestry value-added manufacturing, tourism and organic/market gardening.

Other parts of our county are more oriented toward high tech manufacturing including production of semi-conductor components, high-speed cable, metal casting and injection molding machines. Still, some of our towns share both an agricultural and high tech base and support small and medium size entrepreneurial companies.

Chittenden County is also home to many second homeowners and telecommuters. They are able to enjoy Vermont's quality of life and support the knowledge-based economy providing there is easy access to needed technology like wireless and broadband.

Community stakeholders agree that our region cannot sustain a diversity of well paying jobs without a clean environment, well functioning natural systems, a strong agricultural and working lands base, and telecommunications backbone necessary for businesses in the 21st century. The balance of land-based and high tech industries plays an integral part in our region's economic strategy and provides for a diversified economy that supports a variety of employers and employees.

B. Overview of Existing Economic Development Services Providers & Programs in the Region

Chittenden County currently has a diverse mix of public and private organizations that are currently involved with promoting economic and community development throughout the region. Most of the municipalities in the county have established programs, and there are a wide variety of groups that are either directly or indirectly providing economic development and community development services to selected populations. Various types of public financial assistance (mostly with federal and/or state participation) are available to businesses, individuals, and entrepreneurs to facilitate a wide variety of private sector, commercial and industrial, and community development strategies and projects.

The following is an inventory of the region's service providers for any and all aspects of economic community development. This listing of service providers is categorized by type of service provided, a summary of the services provided, and includes relevant contact information for each listing. The five categories are:

- 1) Local Development Agencies [Municipal development offices, municipal revolving funds, etc.]
 - i) Local Industrial Development Agencies
 - ii) Local Development Corporations
 - iii) Local Municipal and Non-Profit Agencies-Committees

- 2) Regional/Multi-Municipal Development Organizations [GBIC-Cynosure, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, UVM Center for Emerging Technologies]
- 3) State Economic Development Agencies and Resources [Vermont Department of Economic Development (VDED), Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA), Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (VDTM), The University of Vermont (UVM), Champlain College, Vermont State Colleges, Vermont Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC), Vermont Training Program, Vermont Technology Council, Sustainable Jobs Fund, Vermont Council on Rural Development, State Chamber of Commerce, etc.]
- 4) Federal Economic Development Agencies and Resources [Small Business Association (SBA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Economic Development Administration (EDA), Department of Agriculture (USDA), USDA Rural Development, etc.]
- 5) Community Resources and Services to Support the Economy and Quality of Life [GBIC, Lake Champlain Workforce Investment Board, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, housing groups, YMCA, Champlain Initiative, other social cultural, educational and faith-based organizations, basic human services and substance abuse programs, groups and programs to assist low- and moderate-income groups.]

C. The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County

1) GBIC

The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation, as listed above has dual purpose and function: it is both a Regional Development Organization and a resource and service provider to the community in order to support the economy and quality of life in Chittenden County (the Greater Burlington area).

GBIC is the non-profit, certified Regional Economic Development Corporation (RDC) in Chittenden County. It was created in 1954 by an Act of the Vermont Legislature. Today, Vermont has 12 Certified RDCs providing the state's regional economic development programs and services. The primary economic market focus of GBIC is the region's value-added industry sectors and the region's economy-driving businesses.

The Mission of GBIC is to attract, retain, and expand environmentally sensitive, high-wage paying jobs in the Champlain Valley; and to initiate and support advocacy, education, and collaborative programs in promoting its Vision. Its Vision is a thriving Lake Champlain region with an economic environment providing meaningful employment consistent within uncompromised natural environment, enabling present and future generations of Vermonters to live, learn, work, and play in the Champlain Valley.

To achieve its mission GBIC provides several services and an inventory of resources for current and new businesses within Chittenden County and businesses wishing to relocate into the Greater Burlington area. Services include confidential site selection, research, networking and community outreach opportunities, financing assistance by working with State programs (such as the Vermont Economic Development Authority), permitting assistance, economic incentives assistance, program development through collaboration with other area organizations and finally, managing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

2) GBIC Membership

Unlike a chamber of commerce or other business advocacy organization GBIC does not have formal membership dues or costs of utilizing its services. All value-added, high-tech, manufacturing and service businesses in the area which champion GBIC's mission are considered members. Its only true members are the 18 Municipalities and one Gore within Chittenden County.

GBIC conducts annual visits to each municipality and also completes more than 200 business visits with Chittenden County businesses annually. This does not include community outreach through GBIC's involvement with many organizations which affect economic and community development in the area, such as the Vermont Technology Council, the Lake Champlain Regional Workforce Investment Board, the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, the University of Vermont, the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies, and many others.

3) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Chittenden County

Since invited to coordinate and submit a CEDS document for Chittenden County, GBIC has played an integral role in its development, dedicating funds, staff and countless hours to bringing the original document and subsequent annual report to fruition.

During the original process GBIC contracted a local consulting firm to coordinate the process. For each of the subsequent annual report GBIC alone will dedicate the staff to coordinate the process with the input and interaction of 100s of volunteers from the community. Indeed, it is the willingness and partnership of these volunteers that have achieved a successful CEDS process for Chittenden County.

With the guidance of three committees, five Citizen Work Groups, and the 'Governance, Policies and Procedures' the course and process to update the CEDS for Chittenden County and to produce the 2006 CEDS Annual Report was clearly outlined.

V. The Planning Process

A. Development of the Chittenden County CEDS Governance

Near the end of the original CEDS process, staff and committee members began to develop plans for the process of future iterations of the document. These guidelines were developed by CEDS Staff in conjunction with the CEDS Executive Committee. On December 21st, 2005 the ‘Governance, Policies and Procedures for Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS’ was adopted by the full Chittenden County CEDS Committee.

The passage of the document established the Chittenden County CEDS Committee, the Chittenden County CEDS Executive Committee and the CEDS Project Advisory Committee for Chittenden County. The three committees become the basis for all action to be taken through the CEDS process.

The Project Advisory Committee was established to review new proposals to be included in the CEDS Project Implementation Plan and also works closely with the CEDS Staff to evaluate whether submitted projects qualify for current EDA Funding Priorities and EDA Funding eligible. All five Citizen Work Group chairs are also members of the Project Advisory Committee. Actions performed or initiatives suggested are forwarded either to the CEDS Executive Committee or the CEDS Committee.

The CEDS Executive Committee was established to be a faster reacting committee for time-sensitive initiatives that needed immediate attention. The CEDS Executive Committee may act on all CEDS related activities on behalf of the CEDS Committee. It will review and approve all projects for inclusion into the CEDS Project Implementation plan and provides its recommendations to the CEDS Committee.

The CEDS Committee is the highest governance body of the Chittenden County CEDS governance structure. The CEDS Committee may accept or reject any recommendations made by the CEDS Executive Committee or the CEDS Project Advisory Committee. The CEDS Committee has final authority on the CEDS Project Implementation Plan and also the CEDS Annual Reports. The CEDS Committee also issues letters of support for entities pursuing EDA funding and can amend the ‘Governance, Policies and Procedures for the Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS’ in conjunction with the CEDS Executive Committee.

The ‘Governance, Policies and Procedures for the Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS’ also outlines the procedures for developing and submitting grant applications to the EDA. Once listed as a priority in the CEDS document the initiative will first be cleared by the Project Advisory Committee and then through the CEDS Committee (or CEDS Executive Committee). This process uses the criteria outlined by the EDA and subsequently included in the 2005 Chittenden County CEDS as a measure of eligibility for projects. Any project not meeting those criteria will not be approved by the CEDS Committees for application to the EDA.

A full version of the ‘Governance, Policy and Procedures for Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS’ can be viewed in Appendix A of this document.

B. Development of the Chittenden County CEDS Policies and Procedures

The Chittenden County CEDS process for evaluating projects was developed early by the Citizen Work Groups and the Vision 2020 Conferences held in 2004 and 2005. The process followed to compile the original CEDS document was followed closely in order to give credibility and consistency to the 2006 CEDS Annual Report.

The original ‘GBIC CEDS Public Process & Decision-Making Flowchart for Project List Development’ was adapted for the annual process, but its main course and elements remain. With the bulk of the CEDS process already completed in 2005 by the original initiative, there were elements that did not need updating or editing and are considered to be intact to the Chittenden County CEDS through this report, though they have been left out for considerations of brevity.

It must be noted that the Citizen Work Groups, though not formally instituted by the ‘Governance, Policy and Procedures for Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS’, remain an integral piece of the Chittenden County CEDS effort. Originally formed to meet the desire to adequately represent all aspects of economic development in Chittenden County, the five Citizen Work Groups (CWGs) remain essential aspects of the CEDS Process. They are:

- Business Environment
- Education and Workforce Development
- Infrastructure
- Social Environment
- Technology

These five groups and their members represent a wide array of area businesses, non-profits, institutions and local and state government and are considered a representative cross-section of Chittenden County. The CWGs fill an important role as the first contact of projects to the CEDS process. Each of the CWGs met once for the update of the CEDS process and evaluated 19 new projects.

These policies and procedures were first adapted by the CWGs and the participants in the Vision 2020 Conferences in 2004 and 2005. This iteration of the Chittenden County CEDS Annual Report adheres to those policies as they were generated and intended.

C. Community Involvement

Community involvement and outreach is what gives credibility to the Chittenden County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Membership of the Citizen Work Groups totals nearly 100 individuals representing many diverse business, education, social, public and institutional organizations in Chittenden County. The purpose of these five CWGs is to focus efforts on one of the five areas highlighted above and to promote qualified feedback from the volunteering community members of each of the CWGs concerning the strategies, projects and initiatives they evaluate over the course of the CEDS annual process.

Additionally, public outreach was achieved through public forums, including an update at the GBIC 52nd Annual Membership Meeting which is held every June. Through this meeting over 300 individuals were able to hear about the CEDS process for 2006. The public forums, held in June and July, provided the public an opportunity to view the 2006 Annual CEDS Report for Chittenden County, to review the new project priority matrix and the revised CEDS Project Implementation Plan and to provide input on what the economic development priorities for the area should be. The presentation of the CEDS update was performed by CEDS staff and volunteers.

The public was also offered the opportunity to view all Chittenden County CEDS documents online at <http://www.gbicvtceds.org>, which is continually updated with CEDS information and progress reports. A compilation of the CEDS Website is included in Appendix B of this document.

The public forums presented GBIC and the CEDS Process with input from area stakeholders, including students, professionals and individuals utilizing social services. During the forums the CEDS Project Implementation Plan was discussed and questions were answered concerning the projects listed therein which were of particular interest to the public group and individuals present. After the presentation there was a discussion of economic development priorities and basic commentary on the strengths and weaknesses of Chittenden County. Opinions and discussion details can be found in the minutes to those meetings in Appendix D.

VI. Results

A. Drivers of the CEDS Process

During the initial process of creating the CEDS for Chittenden County an inventory of strengths and weaknesses was identified. These strengths and weaknesses helped to mold the CEDS initiative with the purpose of alleviating the weaknesses and utilizing the region's strengths to the advantage of the CEDS. Below is a list of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the initial CEDS Process.

Relative Strengths

- An available workforce with a solid work ethic.
- Access to good quality K-12 educational resources and high quality higher educational resources.
- Generally available and affordable telecommunications.
- Generally good environmental quality and good access to recreational resources.
- Generally available and for the most part affordably priced industrial and commercial space-sites—particularly in the near-term time horizon with some exceptions.
- Good access to quality health care.
- An overall excellent quality of life.
- Generally good access to major market areas.
- Good access to debt capital sources that are competitively priced.
- Pockets of willing and active local governments pursuing economic development.
- The region has always had a “welcoming attitude” towards foreign nationals and those visiting for extended periods, offering opportunities for augmentation of the regional work force and as a source of potential regional entrepreneurs.

Regional Weaknesses

- Limited work force availability in higher skilled occupations.
- Students interested in technical education are being turned away because of a lack of space in current programs.
- Difficulty—as with many other regions of the state—for the regional work force to move from lower tech, blue-collar occupations to jobs with higher skills requirements.
- Significant parts of the work force lack basic communication and interpersonal skills in some key sectors of the regional economy.
- The region has a limited supply of equity and venture capital resources—almost non-existent for some types of early-stage equity capital—particularly for technology related opportunities outside of the area of medical technology and selected areas of primary research competency at the region's higher education institutions.
- A perceived, and in most cases, a real problem with predictability and ease of obtaining state approvals/permits and local approvals/permits. Although much of this is beyond the immediate scope and influence of the region, the region needs

- to work cooperatively with municipalities within the Chittenden County region and with state agencies to address these concerns.
- Although perhaps the deepest in the state, the region has limited resources for technology related companies dependent upon higher educational resources.
 - The region lacks a large inventory of potentially developable commercial/industrial sites that could be used to meet the region's long-term commercial and industrial development needs.
 - The region has high relative electrical energy costs for regional businesses—and particularly for manufacturers—who are competing in a global market place.
 - Parts of the region have limited waste water treatment discharge capacity into the Winooski River—without moving to a higher level of treatment technology with its attendant higher costs.

B. Overview of Global-National Forces Impacting the Region

The original CEDS Report for Chittenden County included a list of many forces and their implications to economic development in the region. This extensive list was an inventory of many global and external factors that are each having a direct and significant impact on Chittenden County and its economy. It was acknowledged that the CEDS document might not have the ability to address these forces impacting the region, however through outreach and partnership it was deemed possible to provide input to the organizations, individuals and collaboratives that were focused on the forces.

It was concurred that a better understanding of these forces was necessary so that the county can adapt to them. In many respects, these factors or forces represent significant sources of opportunity and/or represent significant threats to the effective implementation of this CEDS plan. Below is a complete list of the forces identified in 2005:

1. Markets are becoming increasingly global;
2. Technology is increasingly dominating the economy and society;
3. The pace of innovation is accelerating;
4. The county's population is aging, raising concerns about the adequacy of the county's future labor force;
5. The aging Baby-Boom population is more demanding of quality-of-life and greater corporate social responsibility;
6. More and more entrepreneurs start new businesses every year;
7. Two income families are increasingly becoming "the norm" and time is becoming these families' most precious commodity;
8. The rapid erosion in the federal budget balance threatens to reduce the availability of public resources to support economic and community development for many years.

Since, several initiatives have started in Chittenden County to address these forces. Below is the force expanded in greater detail, including a description of the initiatives and their progress which have come to light over the past year.

- **Markets are becoming increasingly global...**

Trend: The world is becoming more integrated economically and the region has become less and less isolated (protected) from national and global economic events. Economic development policy must take into consideration the regional implications of these still evolving national and global markets for many of the county's key employers.

Implications: Policy, therefore, cannot be made in a vacuum, and must be sensitive to these still-unfolding market developments. This globalization also raises the level of risk to a terrorist attack, and threatens to reduce the financial return of business as more resources are devoted to protection-self defense.

Movement Update: The Vermont Global Trade Partnership (VGTP) is Vermont's center for international business assistance. Formed in 2004, the Trade Partnership provides technical assistance and trade counseling, import and export leads, educational programs, coordinated trade missions and trade shows, and many other useful services to help Vermont companies seeking to succeed in international markets. The Global Trade Partnership was in part listed as an expansion project in the 2005 CEDS Report. More information about the VGTP can be found at <http://www.thinkvermont.com/globaltrade>.

▪ **Technology is increasingly dominating the economy and society ...**

Trend: Rapidly advancing technological innovation is making us more productive and changing the way goods and services are made and transported to markets in the county. At the same time, it also is challenging regional employers to deal effectively with the fact that skills are becoming increasingly mobile (from a geographic perspective), and the "half life" for skills sets is currently shorter than was the case just five years ago. New technologies will require a higher and higher level of education and skills in the region and the training to use those skills effectively. This trend will also provide the region with numerous opportunities to create new businesses and high-skilled jobs.

Implications: Encouraging the further advancement of innovation and the continuous improvement of worker skills in today's idea-based economy are keys to the regional economy's ability to continue to compete.

Movement Update: Several initiatives have taken the lead in turning technology into an asset instead of an obstacle for area businesses:

Vermont Information Technology Center (VITC):

Information Technology is vital to the future of Vermont's economy and its gentle environmental footprint is consistent with the Vermont way of life. It is a clean, growing industry that provides high-paying jobs. A fundamental component of the VITC mission is to foster a nurturing environment for information technology-one that allows it to grow and flourish. The Center can foster IT growth in three ways:

- By helping small businesses more effectively use the many aspects of Information Technology in their operations.
- By reinforcing the positive image of Vermont as a state committed to staying on the leading edge of information technology.
- By coordinating and supporting an educational infrastructure in the state that is responsive to IT workforce needs and demands.²

For more information please visit <http://www.champlain.edu/corporate/vitc/>

Workforce Development Accelerated Response Team (WDART):

The Lake Champlain Regional Workforce Investment Board initiated WDART as a fast response team to meet the needs of Chittenden County businesses. The scope of initiatives includes addressing technology needs, state support and workforce requirements. Projects may also include relevant workforce development issues included in the CEDS Report. This year, as a result of WDART’s work the Burlington Technical Center Avionics Program Expansion is included in the CEDS project matrix.

Vermont Broadband Council:

Established in 2004, the mission of the Vermont Broadband Council is “to promote the use and availability of broadband services throughout the state. Our approach is to do this through demonstration projects that are designed to give individuals and businesses first hand experience with the benefits of high-speed, always-on Internet services. We also are working with organizations, agencies, institutions and businesses around the state to coordinate activities that will help to make affordable broadband service available to more Vermonters. The Vermont Broadband Council is affiliated with the Vermont State Colleges, which has a strong commitment to developing partnerships between the business and education communities. With smart investments in infrastructure, education and workforce development, Vermont can become a magnet for businesses that use cutting-edge telecommunications services.”³ Bringing the mission to fruition is an important step in creating open access to technology and information, and alleviating stresses on workforce needs of the region and within the state.

There are several CEDS projects for Chittenden County that involve both the Vermont Broadband Council and the Vermont Information Technology Center.

Vermont Training Program:

The Vermont Training Program (VTP), implemented through the Vermont Department of Labor “promotes industrial expansion and encourages the creation and retention of jobs in manufacturing by providing training for new and existing businesses thereby increasing the skills of the Vermont workforce, the wages and Vermonters' standard of living.”⁴ This is accomplished through established training entities. Such as Vermont HITEC; all of the jobs created pay higher than the established livable-wage and many have provided high-tech training for those in the program.

² <http://www.champlain.edu/corporate/vitc/>

³ <http://www.vtbroadband.org/>

⁴ http://www.thinkvermont.com/workforce/vt_train.cfm

- **The pace of innovation is accelerating ...**

Trend: The design and marketing cycle—from idea-to-invention-to-innovation-to-imitation—has shrunk and continues to shrink. Products must capture their market quickly, before competitors can copy and market them. This changed competitive landscape has simultaneously opened the region to new economic opportunities and exposed the region to new economic risks. This will challenge companies in the region to continuously improve their ability to apply knowledge and technology to the production process better than their competitors as computer aided design across industries shortens the lag time between idea and finished design.

Implications: The region's key employers in its strategic clusters will face much tighter competition based on new technologies and the increasingly simultaneous exchange of ideas through telecommunications. Those that adapt quickly and with state-of-the-art methods will prosper. Those companies who do not, will likely struggle and potentially fail. Lifelong learning by the county's current and potential workforce will be a necessity for an increasingly large percentage of the county's work force.

Movement Update: The Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies (VCET) is a leading-edge business incubator located on Trinity Campus at the University of Vermont in Burlington. VCET offers selected early-stage businesses a menu of traditional incubator services such as furnished office and laboratory space, business consultation, shared office equipment, administrative support, business education and workshops.

Resident and affiliated companies receive added value through VCET's association with the University of Vermont (UVM), and other educational institutions. The role of the Center is twofold:

1. To increase the number of successful technology-based small companies originating in or relocating to Vermont.
2. To promote and accelerate university and industry technology transfer and commercialization.

Residents of the Center enjoy access to UVM, including many of the same benefits and privileges afforded to faculty, staff and students.⁵

A planned expansion of the facility was included in the 2005 CEDS Report and will be completed by the end of 2006.

- **The county's population is aging, raising concerns about the adequacy of the county's future labor force...**

Trend: Although it is doing so at a slightly slower rate than the state or nation as a whole, the county's population is aging. Over the next 25-30 years, this trend means that the regional pool of potential workers may experience labor force supply pressures that could result in a shortfall in an available labor force in the county's longer-term future.

⁵ <http://www.vermonttechnologies.com/index.htm>

Implications: The region has an opportunity with its higher educational institutions to turn this issue into a regional strength. Other options include the importation of needed workers and/or encouraging regional workers to retire later in life (e.g. provide options for 2nd and 3rd careers) to address labor force supply issues.

Movement Update: Increased scrutiny of the aging workforce has prompted government action. Initiated this year by the executive branch of State Government was a hybrid scholarship and loan forgiveness program for college-bound students in Vermont. Public interest in this issue is growing and initiatives to alleviate the problem continue to arise.

▪ **New Trends:**

The housing market threatens the region's ability to recruit employers and retain Vermonters...

Trend: The local housing market in Chittenden County has impeded the region's employers' ability to recruit new employees to the area. The cost of houses is such that new graduates also have difficulty finding adequate and affordable housing in the area. The Vermont Housing Council, for the past five years has published "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Housing and Wages in Vermont" to highlight the issues of housing within the state.

Implications: Issues with housing costs affect many aspects of the state's and region's economy. In 2005 the median purchase price for a home was 182,000 dollars, which means that a Vermonter seeking a median priced home would need an annual income of 65,000 dollars. The median household income in Vermont is far below the 65,000 dollar annual income at approximately 46,000.⁶

Movement Update: In order to alleviate Vermont employees' struggle with high and rising house and rental prices a housing group was formed in the mold of the Upper Valley Housing Coalition located in mid-eastern Vermont. This new advocacy group, the Northwestern Vermont Housing Coalition, was formed in early 2006 with the expressed goals to "encourage the planning and production of a diversity of housing that:

1. Increases the supply of rental and ownership housing to serve a diversity of incomes and abilities in the workforce of the greater Chittenden County market.
2. Is consistent with "Smart Growth" town planning principles.⁷

▪ **Other Forces are identified as they arise...**

⁶ <http://www.housingawareness.org/publications/housing-wages-2006.pdf>

⁷ Northwest Vermont Housing Coalition Project Endorsement Guidelines, 2006

C. Chittenden County CEDS Process

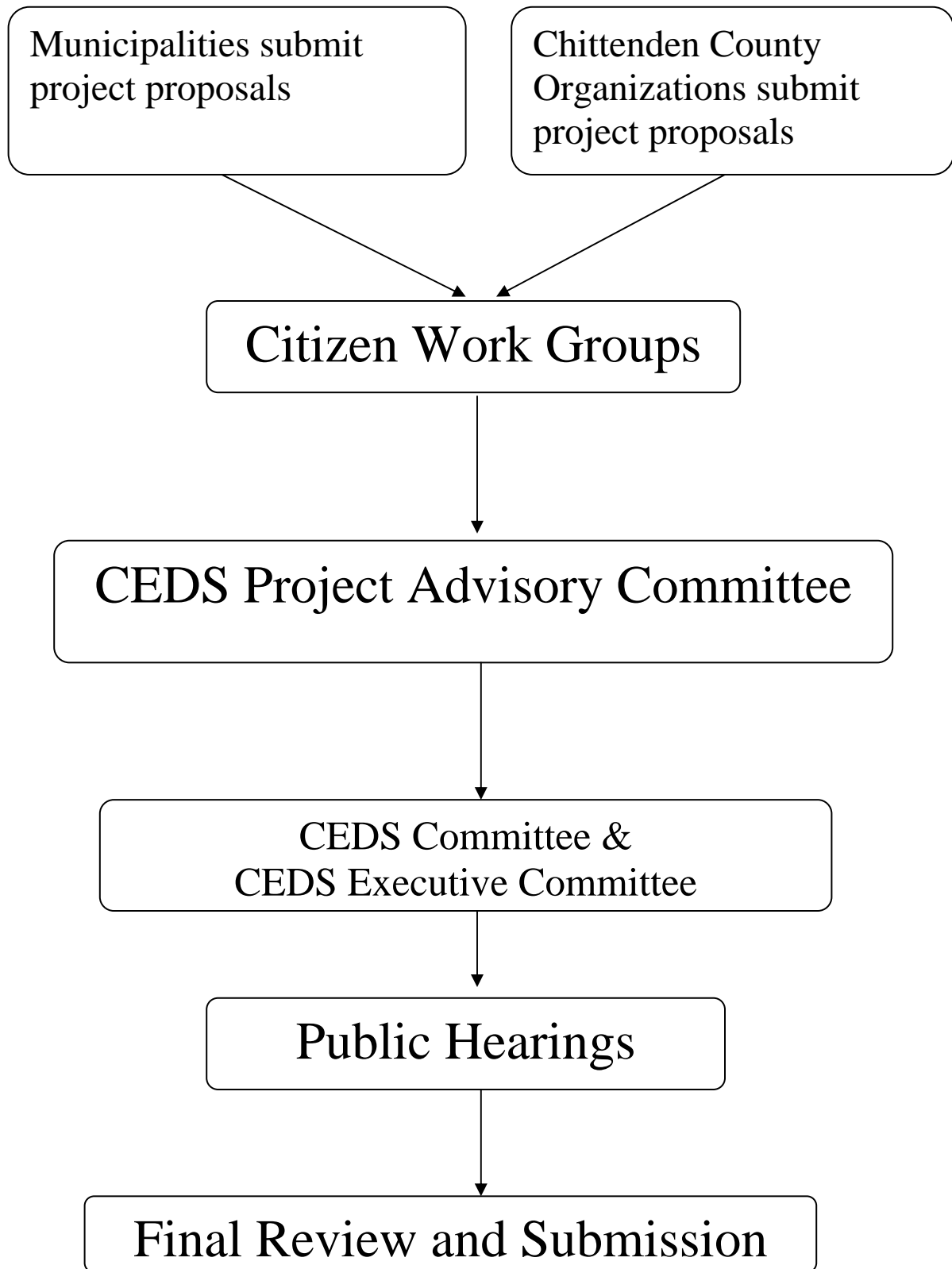
In addition to working within Chittenden County to address the weaknesses and forced described in this CEDS document (including all previous documents), CEDS Staff has focused on updating the Chittenden County CEDS to produce the 2006 CEDS Annual Report. Efforts to complete this update commenced in late 2005 with the completion of the 'Governance, Policy and Procedures for Implementation of the Chittenden County CEDS' and the approval of the Milton Wastewater project to submit a pre-application to the EDA.

In order to update the CEDS document with sufficient credibility the process has followed and adhered to the standards set during the first iteration process. The process to solicit projects for the CEDS update began by contacting nearly 100 individuals representing nearly 75 organizations, institutions and municipalities in Chittenden County; a list that was expanded over the course of the year to include more organizations and stakeholders in the area. For a complete listing of all contacted organizations please refer to Appendix C.

An initial mailing was followed up by emails and postcards in order to thoroughly invite responses and submissions. Each entity that had submitted projects to the original process was provided with a list of their original projects and asked to edit, add or remove any projects. The response to the survey brought over 250 projects total into the CEDS process. These projects included all projects submitted last year to the CEDS Staff and Citizen Work Groups

Once all projects were gathered, CEDS Staff worked with project champions to gather appropriate information and guide submitters through the CEDS process. Staff also revised the original CEDS Flowchart into a more streamlined process. Below is the edited process, which still replicates each major stage of the original CEDS process.

GBIC CEDS Public Process & Decision-Making Flowchart



To promote consistency in project evaluation, Citizen Work Groups members from the original process were asked back this year. Each of the Citizen Work Groups met in the 2nd half of May to evaluate projects. Nearly 40 individuals came together over the course of the five meetings to review nearly 20 projects suitable for evaluation.⁸

As specified by the ‘CEDS Public Process & Decision-Making Flowchart,’ once projects were evaluated by the CWGs they were forwarded to the CEDS Project Advisory Committee for review and to be prioritized into the CEDS Implementation Plan FY 2007-2012. Each of the projects was scrutinized and discussed for relevance and urgency to address regional needs, weaknesses and forces as identified above.

Additionally, the CEDS Staff employed a labeling process to help further identify which projects are important to the region. This identification process was developed in the original CEDS process and will be used to ensure each project listed in the Chittenden County CEDS Document is necessary for the economic wellbeing of the region. In each project description matrix (Appendices E, F, & I) a column titled “connection to long range economic development strategies” is listed, each strategy reflects one of the two goals of the CEDS process:

GOAL A: Facilitate/Build Regional Competitiveness in the County:

- Strategy A1- Promote workforce development/training for a high performance economy;
- Strategy A2- Promote infrastructure readiness for quality job retention-creation;
- Strategy A3- Facilitate state-local development review process to enhance fairness and predictability;
- Strategy A4- Promote access to affordable early-stage capital for regional businesses – particularly for start-up businesses; and
- Strategy A5- Facilitate a climate of business development support throughout the entire Lake Champlain Basin.

GOAL B: Define a Competitive Difference in Chittenden County:

- Strategy B1- Promote job retention to solidify the regional job base;
- Strategy B2- Promote strategic business expansion and recruitment to diversify the regional job base;
- Strategy B3- Facilitate technology incubator-centers of innovation with strategic partners to encourage entrepreneurship;
- Strategy B4- Develop options to enhance work force housing in the northwest region; and
- Strategy B5- Preserve and enhance regional “quality of life.”

⁸ Suitable projects were those submitted with adequate information. Projects were omitted from the process for several reasons: inadequate descriptions, being too early in the planning process, irrelevance to economic development, or no strong leadership/community support identified. Each project was evaluated first by CEDS staff to ensure that all aspects of the survey were included with enough information. Conversations with some project champions led to agreement that the projects not be evaluated for this year or be removed from the evaluation list all together.

A draft CEDS Implementation Plan FY 2007-2012 was then forwarded to the CEDS Executive Committee and subsequently the CEDS Committee for review and editing along with draft copies of this document.

To complete the process both the 2006 CEDS Annual Report for Chittenden County and the included CEDS Implementation Plan FY 2007-2012 were shown at public meetings. Suggestions and comments are reflected in this document.

The public was also updated on the CEDS Process at the GBIC 52nd Annual Meeting where over 400 individuals from Northwestern Vermont were present and updated about the CEDS process for 2006. A CEDS Committee Meeting directly followed the Annual Meeting.

Minutes of each CEDS related meeting are included in Appendix D.

D. New Submitted Project Submissions

Project descriptions of over 60 original projects are included in the 2005 Chittenden County CEDS Final Report. Each of the new projects submitted and evaluated by the CWGs and CEDS Committees are listed below. A Matrix of new projects submitted with the relevant information can be found in Appendix E.

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Vermont Technology Council Promotion of a Knowledge- and Innovation-Based Society

The Vermont Technology Council (Tech Council) is a catalyst for the creation of science- and technology-based business in Vermont. The Technology Council was formed in 1992 by a group of Vermonters who recognized the potential of bringing together the high quality research of our universities and colleges, the entrepreneurial capacity of our business sector, and the support and collaboration of state government in ways that would benefit the Vermont economy.

The mission of the Technology Council is to foster competitive, profitable enterprise and research and development based on science, technology and engineering, to provide ongoing benefits to the State of Vermont. The council is comprised of up to 24 members who are leaders in higher education, business, state government, and venture capital.

To further the mission of the Technology Council the next necessary step is to prepare and launch a campaign to highlight each of the council's past initiatives and advance their current initiatives, and promote the linkages and their importance to the Vermont economy. Public knowledge of the programs will heighten awareness of a knowledge-based society movement in Vermont and help to pave the way for increased investment in research and development and acceptance of emerging knowledge-based business sectors.

The initiative would help to develop and implement a marketing and communications campaign to educate Vermont residents and stakeholders about the Vermont Technology Council and its Centers of Excellence. Centers of Excellence exist in information technology, advanced manufacturing, environmental sciences, and

biological and medical sciences and are currently being cultivated in emerging technologies through incubator initiatives.

Payoff:

Increased interest and knowledge of the Technology Council will pave the way for new initiatives that focus on creating sustainable, high-quality, high-wage paying jobs for Vermont residents. Already the footprint of the Tech Council can be seen throughout the state, an increased and concerted effort by it will only improve the status of a knowledge- and innovation-based society.

Electronic Game Development Initiative at Champlain College

Program History and Current Status:

In 2002 the Director of Champlain College's Multi-Media and Graphic Design (MMG) degree program, Ann DeMarle, proposed development of a new major – Electronic Game Development. After 18 months of planning, curriculum development, academic review and accreditation, the first cohort of 30 freshmen students were enrolled for September 2004. In December of 2005 after applications totaled over 350, the degree program capped acceptance at 90 freshmen per year divided between 3 areas of specialization: game design, computer game programming, and art & animation.

In April 2006 the College announced the formation of the Center for Electronic Game Development at Champlain College. Center creation is being led by Professor DeMarle, who has been awarded a one-year appointment to the Roger H. Perry Endowed Chair.

Two academic areas at Champlain provide an academic foundation for the new Center.

Electronic Game Development includes:

- Electronic Game and Interactive Development Program (EGD) was initiated in 2002, and will begin its third year of operation in September 2006. This program has 3 principal academic areas: game design, programming, and art & animation. In September a total of 165 students will be enrolled in the program.
- Electronic Game Programming (EGP) was approved spring, 2005, will work in collaboration with (EGD) and opens with 30 freshmen. This program has a solid software engineering core.
- Multimedia and Graphic Design Program (MMG) started in 1998. In the fall of 2006, over 300 full time students will be enrolled this program.

In 2009, when Champlain's E-Game program is fully populated, over 360 students will be enrolled and the two programs will comprise about one-third of Champlain's student body.

Vermont is uniquely positioned to benefit from the growth of this industry due to the importance of Boston and Montreal in the e-game world. To tap diverse talent pools, companies select key locations to locate major studios. In Montreal the 1st and 12th largest producers, Electronic Arts (rev. \$2482.2m) and Ubisoft (rev. \$493.8m), have both created studios and employ over 3,000. The presence of these studios attracts smaller companies who either provide support services or who work in the same space. Currently Montreal supports over 50 game related companies. Boston is home to many mid-sized and small companies who are profiting significantly from the growth in the e-game world.

Payoff:

Growth of E-Game Industry in Vermont: The Center seeks to create opportunities for Industry exchanges and the growth of e-game industry in Vermont:

- Business cluster growth in Vermont supporting the international Game Industry (consider using the work of Macedonia as a model). Example businesses include:
- Resolution Inc. — duplication & distribution resources and video production,
- Polhemus & Ascension Technology — motion capture & eye tracking
- Vermont Film Commission — locations, film making resources
- Local Businesses affiliated with game industry — JDK, JNJ Mobile, BullDog Entertainment, EpikOne
- Student business start-ups — outsourcing animation, programming, etc. and creating products such as mobile games
- Sponsor yearly industry-related conference, industry visits to campus & a speaker series
- Create products (serious games) for training ex: Eli Lilly workforce training
- Manage Serious Game & industry partnerships & endeavors ex: Mercury Project, NeighborKeepers, America's Army, etc.
- Host student competitions and provide student interns to businesses

The Center has a first year budget of \$50,000 through the Roger H. Perry Endowment to launch this initiative. Inclusion in the CEDS Plan will hopefully place the support and growth of a cluster of Chittenden County e-game businesses on regional and state-wide economic development agendas. In addition, Champlain seeks discussion and partnerships with like-minded individuals, groups and institutions.

Chittenden County Creative Economy & Entrepreneurial Business Plan Competition

Regional emphasis on a creative and entrepreneurial economy has grown in the past decades in Chittenden County. Small and new businesses have created many high wage paying, quality jobs for Chittenden County residents and some have grown into huge, multimillion-dollar businesses with global reach and hundreds of employees.

In an effort to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of Chittenden County residents, a coordinated business plan competition will be held on a regular basis. The coordination will bring together local leaders of higher education, business and non-profit organizations to administer the competition. A monetary award will be given to the top judged entry.

To coordinate the process a standing committee of community stakeholders will be formed. The committee will include representatives from higher education, the Regional Development Corporation, business leaders, and state/local government officials. The standing committee will take action to raise award money and set the parameters and process of the competition. By working through local businesses, colleges/universities, municipalities and their social networks the competition will advertised to the entire Chittenden County community.

It is the goal of the competition to gather entries from all interested individuals including students, business people and any other parties throughout the county. The committee will judge each of the business plans submitted through a process developed by the committee.

At least 50% of award and advertising costs will be raised through private contributions and sponsorships. This proposal is for a multiyear initiative (5-10 years) where the competition will grow and annually contribute to growing the local economy.

Payoff:

By promoting new businesses in the area this initiative will create jobs and opportunities for growth for individuals in the area. It will be the charge of the implementing committee to choose a business plan that can be executed locally and with a strong likelihood of success. It will also be their charge to choose the business plan that has a maximum, long-lasting impact on the local economy.

Champlain Valley Exposition Pavilion for Music and Special Events

Since 1967 the Grandstand at CVE has served as the key component for large spectator events in Chittenden County. Though it has served its purpose well, its current state is inadequate for the business and attractions that Chittenden County will pursue in the future.

The upgrade to the facility will allow CVE to accomplish several goals. It will update the comfort of the most important multipurpose venue during Fair time, it will be able to be used during inclement weather, thereby reducing financial risk to CVE and promoters, and it will also provide a less expensive alternative to a multipurpose arena. The Pavilion will accommodate audiences in a 3,700 seat theatre configuration with a theatre curtain system and audiences as large as 10,700 for a sold-out show.

The expansion will create attached wings to the east and west of the current facility and also will pave the area (which is currently dirt/gravel) facing the Grandstand. A Permanent stage and support complex will be located just north of the new paved area. There are three phases of the projects; the start date is scheduled for September 2008.

CVE intends to fund this \$6 million project privately.

Payoff:

By expanding the biggest convention/exposition center in the region tourism capacity is also increased. It is believed that this investment will open the door for increased tourism within the area, expanding the impact on secondary amenities procured while visitors utilize the space and take advantage of the facilities programmatic offerings.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**Burlington Technical Center Aviation Program Expansion**

The purpose of this project is to enable the expansion of the current BTC post-secondary aviation program to meet area labor market shortages in the field of aircraft repair and maintenance. This program leads to FAA licensure as an Airframe and Power Plant Technician. We currently are staffed and equipped to train 12 students per year in Airframe and Power plant technology. The project would create the needed infrastructure to enable this program to train 50 students per year who will enter the field of aviation maintenance or other high skill occupations in the greater area.

The project would fund a new facility and the equipment required to train more adult students in aviation maintenance. The project proposes a new building on the Burlington International Airport campus. Currently, the airport has set aside space for the expansion. This project has the support of several businesses located at the airport, the airport itself and the City of Burlington.

Costs:

- the Burlington International Airport has approved a location on which to build the new facility

- funding sources for the project need to be identified
- preliminary designs and conceptual drawings have been created by BTC staff/instructors
- program revenue is derived solely from student tuition payments, which cover the cost of instructors, equipment, supplies and utilities

Payoff:

The project will increase the number of qualified & FAA licensed aviation maintenance technicians to address a skilled labor shortage at employers such as Continental Express and Pratt & Whitney.

Champlain College Workforce Development Center (WDC)

The Workforce Development Center at Champlain College extends the College's reach deeper into the business community and enhances its capacity to be a catalyst for economic development by providing workforce development education to new and existing businesses and incumbent workers.

The WDC, as part of the Center for Continuing and Online Education Division, will provide credit-bearing educational opportunities to adult learners, who desire to improve, upgrade and master professional and technical knowledge and skills for career advancement or change. These opportunities will include academic programs on campus in the evening and summer, and on-line courses throughout the year.

Specific strategies:

- Expand Champlain's summer, evening and online courses to meet the workforce needs of individuals and employers.
- Identify workforce needs and provide customized corporate education and training opportunities to companies, including new masters and bachelor's degrees or professional certificates.
- Provide outreach to the business community and connect employees with existing Champlain's degree and certificate programs.
- Foster community partnerships to bring more adults to campus and our on-line courses.
- Work with regional economic development organizations and Chambers of Commerce to help boost the economy and business competitiveness through training and education.
- Identify emerging, high growth industries in Vermont and respond to workforce needs in these businesses.

Payoff:

This initiative is designed to meet business and employer needs as they arise through directed and specific education and training initiatives. It will help to combat the rising forces affecting the workforce population in the area.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water Storage Capacity Addition & Expanded Distribution System, Colchester

Water distribution in Colchester is accomplished through three independent Fire districts and two separate water companies. Two of the three fire districts receive their water from the Champlain Water District, as do the two water companies. The third fire

district receives its water from the City of Burlington and is not in need of additional water storage capacity.

In November 2005, the largest distributor, Colchester Fire District #3 was notified by the Champlain Water District, the water supplier/wholesaler, that the Fire District had “run out of water storage capacity” for its territory. This development literally brought to a halt all new development in Colchester’s area of greatest growth.

To address the immediate crisis, the Town of Colchester—working in partnership with the Champlain Water District—agreed to buy the two independent water companies owned by the Champlain Water District in order to gain unused “storage capacity” to address Colchester’s immediate development needs. The agreement between the Town and the Champlain Water District stipulated that the Town would replace the storage capacity it planned to use and also design and construct the necessary facilities to address Fire District #3’s anticipated water storage capacity needs for the next twenty years.

As a result of this acquisition, the Town is now in a position to ameliorate Fire District #3’s immediate capacity needs. As these events were unfolding the Town also spoke with Fire District #1 and learned that it is in the process of writing a RFP for a Water Storage Facilities Plan in anticipation of an increased need to address growth in its territory during the next twenty years. The Town proposed that the Fire Districts join with the Town to jointly address the future water storage capacity needs for all three entities.

In March 2006, the three entities joined together as a consortium to design and build water storage capacity and additional distribution lines to meet the needs of all three retail distribution entities. To date, a RFP was created to be advertised seeking a Water Facilities Plan that will outline the design and costs of addressing the water storage and delivery needs for the three entities that purchase wholesale water from the Champlain Water District and distribute this water on the east side of I-89 that runs through Colchester.

It is estimated that the design and construction costs associated with this project total \$1.5 million.

Payoff:

The significance of this project is twofold: first, it addresses the storage capacity needed for fire suppression required by the Federal and State Governments. Secondly, this additional capacity will provide the means to utilize the new wastewater treatment capacity that is currently being developed for the town’s wastewater collection system. This new water storage capacity for potable water will compliment and match the capacity designed for the current expansion of the wastewater treatment facility. Together, both systems will allow the Town to utilize “smart growth” planning in its designated growth centers for residential, commercial and industrial development.

Town Core Roadway System & Wastewater Collection Services to Town/Village Core, Milton

These two projects will create a new grid roadway system and connect all non-serviced areas of the town/village core with municipal wastewater services within the Town Core of Milton, Vermont. The initiative is designed to enhance and maximize economic development opportunities within the Core by facilitating the transportation flow and making more land accessible for development.

The project will be accomplished utilizing existing master planning and smart growth principles held by the region and State of Vermont. It is estimated that the

Roadway project will cost \$3 million and the Wastewater project is estimated to cost \$1.8 million; municipal administrators are currently seeking grants, and will utilize loans and local funds for the projects.

Payoff:

These projects will allow Milton to advance its economic development and achieve planned growth within its designated town core. It is vital to Milton's wellbeing and aesthetic planning that this roadway system and wastewater infrastructure be implemented.

Exit 17A off I-89, Milton

This project is to add an I-89 interchange in Milton off of West Milton Road. This interchange would provide enhanced access to Route 7 and the Town Core Area, which will be needed as this area continues to grow.

It is estimated that this project will cost \$15 million; Milton is currently seeking grants, and will utilize local monies and loans to bring the project to fruition. This is a long-term project proposal (taking place in five years or longer).

Payoff:

Advantages of this projects completion include decreased traffic on one of Vermont's major trucking routes, better access to Milton's commercial facilities, efficient traffic flow and better utilization of Interstate 89 which runs through Milton.

Pearl Street Streetscape and Transportation Improvements, Essex Junction

The purpose of the project is to enhance the streetscape to help attract private sector investment. It is also to improve transportation efficiency and safety. The Champlain Valley Exposition is one of Vermont's largest tourist destinations with over 100 events and over 4 million visitors.

This project will enhance the image of Vermont for the users of the Champlain Valley Exposition who travel through Essex Junction or visit any of its attractions, businesses or other facilities. Pearl Street is an arterial street that gives you the impression that you are on the way somewhere, instead of already being somewhere. With the growth in events and visitors, there is also an increasing recognition of the need to better facilitate the movement of pedestrian and motor vehicular traffic in and out of the site in a safe and efficient manner.

This project will cost between \$3-5 million. Currently, Essex Junction municipal administrators are seeking earmarked funds and also working with the Chittenden County Municipal Planning Office to locate funding.

Payoff:

In conjunction with the expansions and upgrades to the Champlain Valley Exposition, this street upgrade will enhance the pedestrian and vehicular routes to the event site. By adding mixed-use space, better traffic routes and increasing safety, increased use of the surrounding commercial spaces will help the local economy.

Multi-Modal Transportation Center/Bike Path, Milton

This project is to construct a multi-modal transportation center within the Town Core Area to provide alternative transportation options for Milton residents and visitors. Additionally, the Town is seeking to construct a bicycle/multi-use path that would link the Town Core to the Park and Ride on Route 7 in Colchester.

This project has an estimated cost of \$1.2 million. Milton will seek grants and local funds to cover the cost; it is also a long-term project.

Payoff:

Vermont's roads have seen an increased traffic volume over the past decade. To alleviate the high volume and increase efficiency it is necessary to initiate alternative routes and modes of transportation for residents. A multi-modal center will allow for carpooling, busing and other transportation methods to be more easily found and utilized.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Winooski Community Center

With the revitalization of the downtown in Winooski, and the movement toward a pedestrian city, Winooski is now evaluating the need of a Community Center for its residents. This estimated \$8 million project is currently in development stages. A proposed site has been chosen and amenities have been suggested.

The diverse and multi-use community center could include a swimming pool, gyms and other recreational spaces, subsidized dental, medicine and social service offices, a site for the YMCA and others. The site will bring together many community-based resources and support services. It is possible that this community center will serve recreational, spiritual, emotional and educational purposes as it is developed.

The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program will have a satellite operation within the facility, serving relocated individuals. Support for this population is very important because the refugees often have to learn a new language and how to navigate employment, housing and other needs for themselves and their families.

Winooski administrators hope to start this project in 2006. Financing options include a 1.5 million-dollar grant, and local financing.

Payoff:

This project will fill a need in the community and relocated many of the far-flung amenities that are used in the city already. Community partnerships have been forged and will strengthen as the separate entities utilize and share a common space. Rerouted resources and facilities will be centralized at an already underutilized and blighted space.

TECHNOLOGY

Wireless Internet Service

To bring wireless broadband internet to rural users (households and businesses) who would otherwise not have access broadband internet. As a rural community in Chittenden County, Westford has lacked in adequate broadband access for its residents and businesses. Until now, DSL or connections via the telephone line were the only options for users.

By working with a private service provider and the state, Westford residents and businesses will now be able to purchase a WiFi connection. This project has been partially funded by the State of Vermont through a Broadband grant that covers 33% of the total cost for implementation. This project is ready to go.

Payoff:

Benefits of this project relate to forced outlined above. By increasing the availability of Broadband in Vermont, residents and businesses alike will benefit from increased access to internet and communications. This project is reflective of a larger

community movement to increase broadband accessibility within the region and its completion allows for greater viability of many other projects and initiatives already stated in this CEDS document.

VII. Implementation Plan

A. CEDS Process Qualitative-Implementation Indicators Update

This list was first compiled in 2005 and stands as the first progress report for the CEDS in Chittenden County. After each of the original indicators the status of the task has been listed, '**COMPLETE**' or '**PENDING**'.

- Complete the necessary steps to establish a permanent and flexible CEDS planning process and have the essential elements of this permanence in place by December 31, 2005.
 - a. Establish a permanent CEDS Committee, (**COMPLETE**)
 - b. Complete a first year CEDS work plan and supporting funding, and (**COMPLETE**)
 - c. Recruit and hire needed professional CEDS staff. (**COMPLETE**)
- Establish a protocol process (e.g. similar to an RFP process but internal to the CEDS) along which all projects proceed from idea, to concept, to definition, to funding plan-application, including EDA and other funding sources. (**COMPLETE**)
- Establish a communications plan for the Chittenden County CEDS process. (**COMPLETE**)
- Establish an on-going process-system for bringing together CEDS project champions-stakeholders with individuals and groups that are potential non-federal/non-EDA funding sources for identified projects.
 - a. Complete the planning for and convene a funding workshop or similar event (by the end of CEDS operating year #1), (**PENDING**)
 - b. Establish an initial data base of funding source contacts (by the end of CEDS operating year #1), and (**PENDING**)
- Submit at least 2 full EDA applications by the end of operations year #1 (or September 30, 2006). (1 project Submitted; **PENDING**)

A new and updated CEDS Process Qualitative-Implementation Indicators for Year #2 can be found in Part H of this Section.

B. Program Strategy Actions

The Five Citizen Work Groups, Strategy and Executive Committees worked diligently for six months in developing specific strategies and projects that would meet the region's economic development priorities. 19 projects were identified. CEDS volunteers unanimously agreed that each project should be described in detail as a component of this report (see above section) as viable future activities for our region to pursue.

The CEDS Project Advisory Committee was charged with determining which of the 19 projects were EDA eligible (based on our understanding of the criteria) and which projects had the highest level of readiness. The chart below reflects their deliberations.

These projects strongly support our economic development long range goals and strategies, as well as the strategies developed by the citizen work groups. They respond to our need to build a high tech infrastructure that supports good paying jobs and provides our region with the competitive edge or “difference” that distinguishes Chittenden County as an attractive place to work, live and do business. Projects that made this list last year have been included unless the projects has since made progress (been started or completed) or was withdrawn by the project sponsor/champion.

Committee members also agreed that additional projects (not yet identified) might surface in the near term that will require our region’s immediate attention.

CEDS Implementation Plan FY 2007-2012				
Projects that are EDA Eligible and Their Cost				
	Project Name (& Champion)	Estimated Cost	EDA Eligible	Meets EDA Investment Criteria?
	CAPACITY BUILDING			
1	Establish a Regional CEDS Infrastructure to Build Economic Development Capacity in the Region	\$150,000	Yes	Yes
	SECTOR-CLUSTER RESEARCH			
2	Research Into Supplier-Customer Linkages for the County's Key Export-Oriented Sectors-Clusters	\$50,000	Yes	Yes
3	Research Into Linkages and Workforce Development Needs of the High Value Added Professional Services Sector-Cluster	\$30,000	Yes	Yes
	INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT			
4	Airport Parkway Wastewater Treatment Facility in South Burlington & Colchester (Town of Colchester, City of South Burlington)	\$30,000	Yes	Yes
5	Water Storage Capacity Addition & Expanded Distribution System (Town of Colchester)	\$1,500,000	Yes	Yes
6	Wastewater collection Services to Town/Village core area (Town of Milton)	\$1,800,000	Yes	Yes
7	Regional Landfill Design (Chittenden Solid Waste District)	\$6,200,000	Yes	Yes
	TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT			
8	Wireless Broadband Service (Westford)	\$60,000	Yes	Yes
9	Broadband Applications for Businesses and Government (Vermont Information Technology Center)	\$50,000	Yes	Yes
10	Broadband Wireless Engineering Study (Vermont Information Technology Center)	\$100,000	Yes	Yes
11	Vermont Technology & Innovation Center (GBIC)	\$2,000,000	Yes	Yes

CEDS Implementation Plan FY 2007-2012 (Continued)				
Projects that are EDA Eligible and Their Cost				
	Project Name (& Champion)	Estimated Cost	EDA Eligible	Meets EDA Investment Criteria?
	BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT			
12	Vermont Technology Council Promotion of a Knowledge- and Innovation-Based Society (GBIC)	\$50,000	Yes	Yes
13	Chittenden County Creative Economy & Entrepreneurial Business Plan Competition (GBIC)	\$200,000	Yes	Yes
	SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT			
14	Winooski Community Center (Winooski)	\$8,000,000	Yes	Yes
	EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
15	Center for Academy Learning (Center for Technology Essex)	\$167,000	Yes	Yes
16	Fast Trac Entrepreneurial Training (Vermont Small Business Development Center)	\$7,425	Yes	Yes
17	Health Career Opportunities Program (VT Association of Business, Industry & Rehabilitation - VABIR)	\$150,000	Yes	Yes
18	Student Entrepreneurship Training (Linking Learning to Life)	\$53,510	Yes	Yes
19	Training for Women to Enter Non- Traditional Jobs (Northern New England Tradeswomen, Inc.)	\$47,397	Yes	Yes
20	Workforce Incubator/Management Center (Regional Workforce Investment Board)	\$100,000	Yes	Yes
21	Burlington Technical Center Aviation Program Expansion (City of Burlington)	\$5,000,000	Yes	Yes
22	Champlain College Workforce Development Center (Champlain College)	\$1,000,000	Yes	Yes

C. Monitoring & Evaluating Strategy-Program Implementation

Why Should the Chittenden County CEDS Monitor Plan Implementation through Benchmarking?

Much has been written in “how to” economic development literature about the importance of measuring the outcomes of strategic economic development plans. Although benchmarking to measure the implementation progress-success of a CEDS is an EDA requirement, “best practices” approaches in strategic economic development

planning through the years indicate that all good strategic economic development plans make a concerted effort to measure the outcomes of implementing their plans. As a result, even if benchmarking was not a CEDS requirement, most of the hundreds of volunteers involved with this Chittenden County CEDS effort determined it was important to develop a set of realistic benchmarks or measures against which the success of the implementation of this CEDS plan could be gauged over time. Once established, progress or lack of progress towards achieving these goals could be reported on a yearly basis as part of the annual reporting requirement of a CEDS to the EDA.

D. Conceptual Basis for Outcome-Based Benchmarks

There are many reasons for establishing a proposed system of benchmarks for evaluating any strategic economic development plan. In the case of this CEDS planning effort, the primary objective for establishing a system of benchmarks is to enable the CEDS Committees to periodically and objectively monitor the implementation and progress of the CEDS toward a defined set of desired outcomes for the county-region.

The Chittenden County CEDS plan reflects the consensus vision and mission statements as contained in Section V. of the original Final Report. These two broad statements included a further refinement of the Vision and Mission statements of the recently completed Chittenden County Long Term Strategic Economic Development Plan that reflects: (1) where the CEDS volunteers and participants see the region in the future (the CEDS Vision Statement), and (2) a broad statement about the general road map of how the CEDS Plan's volunteers and participants should follow in order to assist the Chittenden County region in getting to that vision (the Mission Statement). The Chittenden County CEDS Vision and Mission follow:

Vision Statement:

Our economy will be strong and more diverse, with a base of small and large globally competitive employers, and will provide meaningful and challenging jobs that are consistent with Vermont's culture, values, & a high quality of life.

Mission:

Through a focused effort in collaboration with the state and other regions, strengthen existing businesses and search out new opportunities to achieve a diverse economy of globally-competitive businesses that offer challenging and good-paying job opportunities, offer the resources necessary to support a high quality of life, and provide economic opportunity for those who work and reside in northwest Vermont.

Benchmarks to be used in this CEDS plan reflect a combination of: (1) an understanding of the long-term economic performance and economic structural issues that have been impacting the region, (2) a general understanding of the global competitive environment that businesses today in the Chittenden County regional economy operate within, and (3)

the above-referenced strategies-projects that arose from the Vision and Mission statements.

Regarding the first, the plan and these benchmarks should recognize the following realities evident in the region:

- The region has four employment centers that import workers—the City of Burlington, the City of South Burlington, the Town of Essex, and the Town of Williston. Together, these four communities import approximately 26,606 workers, and Chittenden County overall imports approximately 7,400 people to fill the jobs within the borders of the county.
- Over the last two business cycles, 9 Chittenden County Communities have seen more growth in jobs than the state as a whole, but this success is more an artifact of the 1980s than more recent times—where several of the region’s major employers have permanently reduced their work forces.
- What job success there has been has occurred in the Services sector, which added 8,300 jobs or 47.6% of the total job growth for the last two business cycles—more than double the next closest job category.
- The share of total jobs represented by the Services sector increased by eleven percentage points over the 1981-2000 period to equal 30% of total jobs in calendar year 2000.
- The majority of this eleven percentage point increase in share for Services came at the same time there was a ten percentage point loss in share in the Manufacturing sector, which fell from 28% of total jobs in 1981 to 18% of total jobs in 2000.
- Within the Services sector, Health Services has historically played a significant role in the region, although job increases since 1981 have not kept pace with job growth in the rest of the region’s economy. As a result, the share of Service sector jobs accounted for by this sub-sector declined slightly over the 1981 to 2000 time frame.
- Growth in average wages has generally tracked with that of the state from 1981-1989, and edged slightly ahead from 1989-2000. Wage growth since 2000 has been less robust, reflecting the regional employment adjustments in information technology and several other parts of the regional economy.
- Data on entrepreneurial activity shows that such activity is high in Chittenden County, but the levels of economic reward (e.g. income) from this activity is lagging—a sign of potential economic stress.

⁹ The objective of this review of history is to assess long-term job change and structural trends. Readers will note that the 1981 to 2000 period excludes the period defined by the most recent recession that has resulted in significant job losses in northwest Vermont. To the extent those losses are cyclical (vs. structural) job reductions (which is still open to debate), the case presented here is more positive than these data indicate.

- Chittenden County has a higher proportion of high school graduates than either the state or the nation as a whole, along with a lower proportion of the population with less than a ninth grade education. Chittenden County also exceeds the state and national averages in the percentage of the population with Associate’s degrees, Bachelor’s degrees and Ph.D.s.
- In a global economy, the county’s residents, businesses, and municipalities should be very concerned about the fact that Chittenden County’s economy remains concentrated in too few sectors and in too few large employers within those sectors. This is perhaps best illustrated by the share of international trade in Vermont in the Electrical Machinery, Equipment & Parts portion of Vermont’s trade data, where the amount of exports is dominated by the region’s largest employer—IBM in Essex Junction.
- Chittenden County continued to have a higher percentage of households paying 30+% of their household incomes in housing costs than the state at all income levels in 2000 versus 1990—but particularly in the owner category. This indicates a continuation of an ‘affordability problem’ in owner-occupied housing in the region that appears to be a key issue for economic development in Chittenden County.

At the same time, it has become clear that the competitive dynamics of the Chittenden County economy has been transformed over the past decade as indicated in Section VI. of this update. Today, several forces are at work on the northwest regional economy that have had and continue to have far-reaching effects on the region’s economic fortunes. They include:

- (1) Markets are becoming increasingly global,
- (2) Technology is increasingly dominating and re-shaping the economy and society,
- (3) The pace of innovation is accelerating,
- (4) The county’s population is aging, raising concerns about the adequacy of the county’s future labor force,
- (5) The aging Baby-Boom population is more demanding of quality-of-life and greater corporate responsibility,
- (6) More and more entrepreneurs start new businesses every year,
- (7) Two income families are increasingly the “norm,” and time is becoming these families’ most precious commodity, and
- (8) The rapid erosion in the federal budget balance threatens to reduce the availability of public resources to support economic and community development in the county for many years.
- (9) New Trend: The housing market threatens the region’s ability to recruit employers and retain Vermonters.

In addition, the recently completed regional strategic economic development plan and this CEDS effort identified a total of five factors that were critical to the success of the region's 12 industry clusters—including those firms that export goods and/or services outside of the regional economy. Successful companies in Chittenden County had all or substantially all (e.g. 4 of 5) of these key company attributes. These attributes include:

- They produced high-value goods and/or services for “export,”
- They achieved superior levels of labor productivity through specialized applications and/or knowledge to the production or distribution process.
- They maintained a continuous program of improvement to productive capacity and efficiency through capital investment.
- They maximized the region's intellectual capital resources through collaborative initiatives that utilize the strengths of industry, higher education, government, and civic organizations.
- They were attracted to the region's natural resource endowments to gain competitive advantage.

This CEDS plan blended the above information into its strategic goals upon which these benchmarks are configured. In order to successfully achieve those goals, specific actions will be required by each part of the county's “community.”

These benchmarks are intended to reflect the interdependence to our actions. Businesses need the involvement public sector to attend to such important aspects of quality of life as a stable tax policy and regulatory climate, workforce education-training, and protecting the environment. The public sector needs the business community to create-retain the well-paying job opportunities that financially support all aspects of healthy communities. The volunteer-nonprofit portion of the county's human and services delivery infrastructure needs assistance from both businesses and the public sector to effectively do their work as well.

The original CEDS document for Chittenden County stressed achieving outcomes; along with various benchmarks and indicators, several process-oriented measures and qualitative measures were included in order to measure intermediate progress towards the longer term, targeted outcomes stated below and updated annually by CEDS staff.

E. Proposed Benchmarks

With the above as background, a three-step process of developing a set of benchmarks and outcome-based targets (or goals) began. Regarding the first step, an inventory of potential quantitative indicators by major subject areas (see below) was assembled. This

list included only those indicators where data is reliably, economically, and regularly available. This was particularly challenging since the availability of indicators on the county level is considerably less robust than that which would be available from many government and third party sources on the state or national level.

Regarding the second step, the stated targets for each of the quantitative benchmark indicators were developed. These initial outcome-based targets are thought to be aggressive yet plausible, and included only those indicators where local-regional action could effect significant change. However as stated earlier, these targets were developed without the benefit of CEDS program implementation activity since this is an initial CEDS plan. There needs to be additional capacity built in this area to more directly measure CEDS program activities to expected outcomes. This will remain part of the on-going work program of the CEDS Committees and staff. These Outcome Based-Quantitative Indicators may be revisited at a later time to evaluate their effectiveness in measuring the success of the Chittenden County CEDS.

With respect to the third step, a comprehensive set of process-oriented and qualitative measures was assembled to gauge near-term implementation progress. The reasoning underpinning this set of process-oriented indicators is to provide near-term guidance to the CEDS Committee and CEDS staff. Short-term targets will only be utilized in order to steer towards longer-term quantitative benchmark targets.

The following list of benchmark indicators was identified to serve as an initial evaluative framework for gauging the progress of the implementation of this CEDS plan. The CEDS process participants felt that aggressive but plausible targets were essential to the credibility of the plan's strategies. Only with a credible set of benchmarks this reasoning goes, will it be possible for the plan's implementation to have the type of broad-based, system-wide collaboration that is needed to work together to achieve the objectives of the region's daunting economic and community development agenda for the county. This collaboration is needed between citizen volunteers, stakeholder groups, and the representatives of the various levels of government if this plan is to be effectively implemented.

F. CEDS Outcome-Based Quantitative Indicators

Area 1: Employment Opportunity: Promote the retention and creation of quality job opportunities in the county.

- Average annual private sector wage level in Chittenden County as a percentage of the Vermont statewide average and the U.S. average:

The county seeks to achieve a private sector average wage level that is:

- (1) *Equal to the average U.S. private sector wage by 2010 and equal to the previous all-time high¹⁰ of 102.5% of the U.S. average private sector wage by 2015, and*
- (2) *At least equal to previous cyclical peak of 119.7% of the Vermont private sector average wage by 2010¹¹ and 122.5% higher than the Vermont private sector average wage by 2015.*

Private Sector Wage Level (% of VT/U.S. Average)

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004	2010	2015
Chittenden County (\$)	\$18,510	\$23,761	\$26,970	\$34,354	\$38,433	NA	NA
Percent of Vermont Average	117.4%	117.4%	116.6%	119.7%	115.5%	119.7%	122.2%
Percent of United States Average	97.6%	102.2%	98.3%	97.3%	101.6%	100.0%	102.5%

Sources: VT DET (VT; Chittenden County); U.S. DOL (U.S.)

- Average Annual Wage in Chittenden County as a percentage of the Chittenden County Basic Needs Budget Annual Wage (Urban, 2-Children, 1 Wage Earner):

The county seeks to have the average annual earned wage at a level equal to or greater than the Basic Needs Budget:

- (1) *Stay at the level of not less than 85% through calendar year 2010, and*
- (2) *Increase to 90% of the average annual Basic Needs Budget in VT by 2015.¹²*

Percentage of Chittenden County Sectors Paying Higher than the Urban Basic Needs Wage*

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2010	2015
Average Annual Basic Needs Budget (BNB) in VT	\$42,577	\$44,928	\$47,923	\$50,253	\$45,698	\$45,706	NA	NA
Chittenden County Average Annual Wage	\$32,896	\$34,327	\$35,618	\$36,370	\$37,432	\$38,433	NA	NA
Average Wage as a % of BNB	77.3%	76.4%	74.3%	72.4%	81.9%	84.1%	90%	95%

Note:

*This Basic Needs Budget uses the two adults and two children with one wage earner category.

A decline in healthcare costs accounts for the decline in BNB from 2002-2003.

Sources: VT DOL; UVM Center for Rural Studies; Joint Fiscal Office (Basic Needs Budget)

¹⁰ Experienced in calendar year 1991.

¹¹ Of 119.7% experienced in calendar year 2000.

¹² Or increase %5 over the period from 2005-2010 and 2010-2015.

Area 2: Promote sustainable improvements in the quality of the region’s communities.

- County Air Quality

The county seeks to implement policies to strengthen its economic base and communities through 2015 and remain in attainment (which means at or below a set of standards for carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, and ozone) relative to National Ambient Air Quality Standards under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA).

Currently, Vermont is only one of two states east of the Mississippi River (the other being Florida) that are in attainment with CAA standards. The state has been in attainment in all years since monitoring began except for 1977 when the state was in “non-attainment” for carbon monoxide, particulate matter and ozone. Since Chittenden County has three of the state’s eight monitoring stations, it is an important part of the state’s continued “in attainment” status.

The CAA was passed to protect the health of the population. Therefore, it is important to make sustainable economic progress without deteriorating air quality. If the region (or state) goes to non-attainment in the future, federal funding for major transportation projects in the region and federal air quality permits for major industrial projects in the region would face additional planning and other obstacles.

Clean Air Act National Air Quality Standards (% in Attainment)

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004	2010	2015
Carbon Monoxide	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%
Sulfur Dioxide	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%
Lead	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%
Nitrogen Dioxide	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%
Particulate Matter	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%
Ozone	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%	<=100%

Source: Air Quality Program, Vermont Department of Natural Resources

- Per Capita Personal Income:

The county seeks to achieve a per person personal income level that:

- (1) *Rises to the level of 120% average U.S. private sector wage by 2010,¹³ and equal to 125% of the U.S. per person personal income level by 2015,¹⁴ and;*
- (2) *At least equal to previous cyclical peak of 116.5% of the state per person personal income level by 2010¹⁵ and 119.5% higher than the Vermont per capita personal income level by 2015.¹⁶*

Per Capita (Per Person) Personal Income (% of VT/U.S. Average)

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2004	2010	2015
Chittenden County (\$)	\$24,091	\$20,710	\$24,091	\$32,243	\$38,433	NA	NA
Vermont Average (\$)	\$21,003	\$17,868	\$21,003	\$27,676	\$33,276	NA	NA
U.S. Average (\$)	\$23,075	\$19,482	\$23,075	\$29,854	\$33,050	NA	NA
Percent of Vermont Average	114.7%	115.9%	114.7%	116.5%	115.5%	116.5%	119.0%
Percent of U.S. Average	104.4%	106.3%	104.4%	108.0%	116.3%	120.0%	125.0%

Sources: VT DOL (VT; Chittenden County); U.S. DOL (U.S.)

- Percentage of Chittenden County Jobs Paying Higher than the Wage Needed in Chittenden County to Afford a Two-Bedroom Unit at the County's Fair Market Rent:

The number of major job categories with an average wage at a level paying a wage for one-wager earner in the county seeks to:

- (1) *Remain at the level of not less than 41.5% (corresponding to roughly 1 of every 2 jobs in the county) for a sustained period through calendar year 2010, and*
- (2) *Increase to 44.5% of the total job categories in the county by 2015.¹⁷*

Percentage of Chittenden County Sectors Paying Higher than the housing Wage (% total)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2010	2015
Chittenden County Annual Housing Wage (\$)	\$28,517	\$29,682	\$30,555	\$30,992	\$33,120	NA	NA
Number of Sectors	37	36	36	34	30	NA	NA
Percent of the total	43.0%	42.4%	43.9%	41.5%	36.6%	41.5%	44.5%

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition; Vermont Housing Finance Agency

¹³ Or at a rate of roughly 75% of the rate of increase over the last 8 years.

¹⁴ Or at the rate of 1 percentage point increase in relative average per year during the 2010-2015 period.

¹⁵ Of 119.7% experienced in calendar year 2000.

¹⁶ Or an average of one percentage point increase in relative average per year during the 2010-2015 period.

¹⁷ Or increase at the rate of ½ of one percentage point per year from 2010-2015.

- Children Aged 0-17 Years in Poverty:

The number of children aged 0 to 17 years in the county seeks to achieve a decline in absolute numbers and:

- (1) *Fall to the level of 14.6% of the statewide average of children aged 0-17 years living in poverty by 2010,¹⁸ and decline to a level equal to 0.017% of the U.S. percentage of children aged 0-17 years per person personal income level by 2015,¹⁹ and*
- (2) *Fall to a level equal to the 1989 reading for the county relative to the state in 1989 and fall to the level of 0.015% as a percentage of the U.S. total by 2015.*

Estimates of Children Under 17 Years of Age in Poverty

	1989	1993	1995	1999	2002	2003	2010	2015
Chittenden County Children Age 0-17 in Poverty (#)	2,902	3,931	3,088	3,028	2,407	2,702	NA	NA
Percent of Vermont Total	13.7%	15.4%	14.6%	17.0%	15.5%	16.9%	14.6%	13.7%
Percent of United States Total	0.023%	0.025%	0.021%	0.025%	0.020%	0.021%	0.017%	0.015%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SAIPE)

G. Developmental Benchmarks

The original CEDS document includes a total of 7 implementation-process benchmarks and 8 quantitative benchmark indicators against which the success of the implementation of this CEDS plan is intended to be measured against. The qualitative-process benchmarks are included as internal work-operations plan goals. The quantitative measures are intended to emphasize results that are consistent with the goals-strategies of the initial CEDS Plan, and include measurable data from reliable third party (preferably governmental) sources (i.e. The US Census Bureau, US DOL, Vermont DOL, Vermont Housing Finance Agency, etc.). Any not included are omitted due to a lack of information readily available to update annually (each of the benchmarks may be revisited in future iterations of the Annual CEDS Report for Chittenden County).

In addition, this initial design of the benchmark system is intended to be flexible to allow for change to be incorporated into the benchmark system. The quantitative benchmarks also are designed to be understandable to a broad range of audiences—including members of the general public. These quantitative benchmarks also are assembled to be comparable to an independent standard outside of the CEDS Committee and the CEDS process itself.

¹⁸ Or at a rate of roughly 75% of the rate of increase over the last 8 years.

¹⁹ Or to a level roughly ½ of the way between the current level and the recent historic low in 1989 in Vermont and at roughly the same rate of decline in this percentage relative to the U.S. over the last ten years.

Since this CEDS plan is a living document, the CEDS Committee may revise and amend the aforementioned benchmarks. The process identified nine additional developmental benchmarks that could either replace or supplement the existing proposed set of CEDS benchmarks established by the prospective CEDS Committee of an EDA-certified CEDS.

The following is a list of possible alternatives:

1. A benchmark describing Chittenden County's (Burlington Metro area) relative position (e.g. perhaps in percentage terms) versus Vermont, and/or a peer group of economic competitor states-metro areas, and/or the U.S. average in terms of the total cost of doing business.
Resource Partner: GBIC, Green Mountain Power Corporation, Vermont Gas Systems
2. A benchmark that compares the percentage of county residents with access to video broadband telecommunications relative to the state average, and/or a peer group of economic competitor states-metro areas, and/or the U.S. average.
Resource Partners: Vermont Technology Council, University of Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies
3. A benchmark that compares the level of educational attainment of the county population (e.g. completed high school, 4-year degrees, etc.) to those metrics on the State level, and/or among a peer group of economic competitor states-metro areas, and/or the U.S. average.
Resource Partners: Lake Champlain Work Force Investment Board-LCRCC; Human Resources Investment Council
4. A benchmark of water quality of similar construction to the Air Quality attainment indicator
Resource Partner: Lake Champlain Basin Initiative
5. A benchmark that indicates the trend in the Percent of Families Reporting Difficulty Finding Affordable Child Care
Resource Partner: Champlain Initiative
6. A benchmark that indicates the trend over time of the tonnage or percentage of solid waste materials diverted from disposition in the regional land fill or the number of pounds of solid waste generated per person per day
Resource Partners: Chittenden Solid Waste District; Champlain Initiative
7. A benchmark that indicates comparative Violent Crime Rate statistics (per 100,000 people) versus Vermont, and/or a peer group of economic competitor states-metro areas, and/or the U.S. average.
Resource Partners: Vermont Agency of Human Services; State Police; Regional law enforcement agencies

8. A benchmark that compares Chittenden County’s share of cluster jobs in state to their U.S. counterpart sectors.
Resource Partners: Vermont Department of Labor, US Department of Labor
9. A benchmark that would compare worker productivity—gross regional product per non-farm job between Chittenden County and the nation and break down the measurement by individual job.

An additional benchmark may also be used in the future to monitor the number of individuals involved in the Chittenden County CEDS process. It must be noted that other CEDS process documents, as reviewed by the Greater Burlington CEDS staff show active scrutiny of attendance at CEDS events; this is certainly a useful tool showing public support and buy in from economic development and community stakeholders. The Chittenden County CEDS document reflects stakeholder buy in throughout this document:

Number of individuals contacted to submit projects	100
Number of organizations contacted to submit projects	75
Attendance at Annual Meeting/Presentation of the CEDS	300
Total attendance at CEDS related meetings	143
Total participants	618

CEDS Staff in Chittenden County believe that this reflects the process’s attention to attract as many stakeholders as possible and a sufficient outreach plan which is already in place.

H. Conclusion and Next Steps

(Process Qualitative-Implementation Indicators for Year #2)

To date, the CEDS process in Chittenden County, Vermont has been an opportunity for our community to have a broad conversation about economic development and how the various sectors of our community impact our economic vitality. This process brought together small, medium and large employers, K-12, college and university educators, nonprofit organizations, environmentalists, farmers, state and federal officials and staff, and human service providers. Through this process and the resulting documents, we annually gain a common understanding of the components necessary to sustain and grow our regional economy.

As soon as our CEDS document was certified in 2005, GBIC dedicated staff members to plan the annual process and develop projects within in the CEDS to a point where they would be ready to start the process to apply for EDA funding. This was only done for projects that were eligible, ready to go, and met the region's economic development needs. The first of these projects was the Milton Wastewater Expansion. CEDS staff will continue to promote the CEDS and identify projects which are sufficient in scope and readiness (and included in the CEDS document) for pre-application to the EDA.

A "fundings workshop" will be planned in the near future to bring together all CEDS participants to determine collaborative ways to obtain funding for the projects identified in the CEDS Report. It is hoped that the State of Vermont will assist in the planning and hosting of this workshop so that it is available to all CEDS regions in the state as well as other stakeholders throughout the region.

CEDS staff will also work to promote understanding of the complex CEDS process and its relevance to Chittenden County residents. This will be an important initiative in order to recruit, familiarize and retain volunteers in future annual processes. Staff will also continue to work with community partners to develop CEDS eligible projects.

The connections and relationship building that have developed through this process will be sustained in future collaborative efforts to improve the economic health of our region.

Process Qualitative-Implementation Indicators for Year #2

- Continue to hone the CEDS Process for Chittenden County so that it may become a streamlined, efficient process for all parties involved,
- Utilize the CEDS Communications Plan to reach more organizations, individuals and stakeholders who should be involved with the CEDS Process for Chittenden County,
- Establish an on-going process-system for bringing together CEDS project champions-stakeholders with individuals and groups that are potential non-federal/non-EDA funding sources for identified projects.
 - a. Work with the State of Vermont to sponsor, plan and convene a funding workshop or similar event
 - b. Establish an initial data base of funding source contacts

- i. This database should include those funding sources already compiled by the CEDS Staff:
 1. Community Development Block Grant Program
 2. Vermont Community Loan Fund
 3. Vermont Broadband Council Grants
 4. Workforce Education and Training Funds
 5. Workforce Investment Board Grants
 6. Vermont Training Program Grants/Funds
 7. City of Burlington Community and Economic Development Office
 8. Rural Development Program, State of Vermont
 9. Key Bank (and other local financial institutions)
 10. EPSCoR Grants
 11. Local Revolving Loans
 12. ...more to be added,
- Bring as many CEDS Projects to the stage where their champion can apply to the EDA, and
 - Work with community partners to ensure that each CEDS project is moving towards completion.