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**House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development**

**AGENDA**

**Room 35**

**January 27, 2014 - January 31, 2014**

**Tuesday, January 28, 2014**

2:00 – 3:15 PM

**Bennington Economic Development partners**

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Recent Successes

- 1. Reduction of silos among economic professions; continuous involvement by more than 20 participants;*
- 2. Economic strategic plan reviewed and updated monthly*

Current Challenges

- 1. Competing at regional and national level for business recruitment;*
- 2. Accurately understanding workforce demographics;*
- 3. Key recruitment strategies and identification of target markets*

Needed Support

- 1. Available resources for time-sensitive projects;*
- 2. Improve agility and flexibility of state and individual townships;*
- 3. Resources for small business development; infrastructure upgrades,; Educational funding support; other key economic drivers*

Michael Harrington  
John Shannahan

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**Workforce and Education**

Recent Successes

- 1. Identifying and developing comprehensive solutions to workforce needs – key partners K-12, college, local employers and economic development communities;*
- 2. Education and career continuum K through Adult developed;*

*3. Refocusing of the jobs v. education narrative to careers and education discussion*

Reviewed

- 1. Current challenges and opportunities;*
- 2. Develop strategic collaborations to identify employer needs and strengthen workforce opportunity with Windham and Rutland counties;*
- 3. Develop education and career exploration continuum to increase Bennington County’s workforce readiness and availability*
- 4. Identification of career pathways to enhance capability of key employers*

Needed Support

- 1. Opportunities to access statewide economic development expertise;*
- 2. Compete for funding to develop rigorous protocols for workforce initiatives*

Jeannie Jenkins  
 Peter Odierna  
 Donna Leap  
 Wendy Morse

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**Recruitment and Retention**

Recent Successes

- 1. Good understanding of issues facing employers – skills/talents of workforce, availability of suitable housing aligned with workers’ compensation, ratio of contract-tem vs permanent employment; attracting and retaining young talent*

Current Challenges

- 1. Identify industries likely to grow exponentially ten years from now;*
- 2. Determine industries to target and what companies to focus on*
- 3. Build a pipeline of prospective companies and businesses*
- 4. Providing accurate and up to date info for spouse employment of potential employees*

Needed Support

- 1. Funding research and marketing outreach to businesses*
- 2. Understanding what industries/firms are contacting the state to provide follow up and showcasing of Bennington region*

Michael Keane  
 Michael Harrington  
 Dan Monks

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## **Transportation**

### Recent Successes

- 1. Awarded six state Bicycle/Pedestrian grants*
- 2. Local bike path has had significant progress via volunteered resources*
- 3. Kocher Drive/US 7 Scoping report for bike/ped improvements nearly complete. State/town/regional coordination opportunity.*
- 4. Walmart development plan includes roadway improvements*

### Current Challenges

- 1. 7A/67A corridor in Bennington requires significant upgrades to address Traffic congestion, safety, pedestrian needs*
- 2. North-south traffic flow improvement – Center of Bennington*
- 3. Lack of good access to major regional transportation hubs – including Rail service*

### Needed Support

- 1. Funding for improvements to lead to implementing planned improvements of 7A/67A corridor*
- 2. Acquisition of land for improvement to 7A/67A intersection*
- 3. Direct transit connection to Rensselaer rail station*
- 4. Vision of 21st century transportation system for state, targeted funding/support for project with specific problems, improve long term project completion time for small federally funded project*

Jim Sullivan  
Mark Anders  
Dan Monks

3:15-3:30 PM

**Public Comment Period**