

**STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR
DOVER AND WILMINGTON, VT**

Tri Town Economic Development Committee

December 2009

**Assisted by
Mullin Associates Inc.**

Summary of the Strategic Economic Development Plan

This Strategic Economic Development Plan is designed to help the Towns of Dover and Wilmington improve their economic base and quality of life through economic development. The goal of this Plan is to enhance the tax base through development of diversified land use while maintaining the Towns' community character. Based on a careful review of previous plans, regulatory documents, the character and development capacity of the Towns, local interviews and community workshops, we propose a series of strategic assessments and an action agenda. The major assessments include:

- An analysis of the socio-economic base the communities and its surrounding area, with a focus on demographics, economic profile and retail market potential;
- A summary of input received from both the public and the private sectors. Key leaders in the communities were interviewed and input was solicited during a research and assessment phase; and
- An assessment of the development capacity within the Towns and the region were assessed to create an implementation program that would enable the Towns to move forward with this plan.

Highlights of the economic development strategy are as follows:

The Towns of Dover and Wilmington are facing a period of economic transformation. Long dependent on a steady tourist activity for their job base, it is essential, over the long term, that they begin to expand their base in new directions.

The Towns lie in the Deerfield Valley of Southern Vermont and are overlooked by Mount Snow. Its topography and clean streams are marked by great beauty and have been attracting visitors for more than a century. Their villages are compact and placed along crossroads that lace the region. They still function, to a degree, as the civic and retail hubs of the region. They also contribute to the unique cultural, historic, and recreational characteristics that make Vermont such a special place. They are places of great pride.

The citizens are committed to their communities and have, over time, developed means and methods to invest and make a living in an economy that is quite cyclical. Many will gain their income by cobbling together seasonal jobs, others commute to nearby centers of employment and still others, through their artisanal and professional skills, are able to successfully operate full time local businesses. With the exception of the Mount Snow Ski Company, there are no large businesses in the area. In fact, more than 90% of the companies in the two-town region employ less than five full time workers.

The citizens, while well educated, are not keeping pace with the educational attainment of other parts of Vermont and New England. In fact, its most highly educated workers, including most of its latest graduates, are seeking employment opportunities outside of the two-town region. This exodus, coupled with a falling birthrate and an influx of retirees, is contributing to the towns becoming places of increasingly older citizens.

The two towns are not in a crisis at the moment. However, they are in an economic climate of gradual decline that will only continue if they do nothing. They are able to survive recessions and times of severe distress but are unable to regain that which they have lost and are not growing in new areas. The decline is slow and subtle, but constant. They have no choice but to change if they wish to remain vibrant and maintain their quality of life.

This report focuses upon the state of the two-town economy, assesses current conditions and offers a road map of recommended future actions that are intended to guide the communities in new directions. It calls for seven overarching actions.

First, they must work rigorously to obtain high speed broadband and fiber optic connectivity. In town after town across New England, the presence of high-speed connectivity is fundamental for almost all economic development. One increasingly hears the mantra "Be wired or be gone"! If the towns are to prosper, they must gain the political support and investment to make this happen.

Secondly, they must increasingly become part of the Vermont economy that emphasizes unique Vermont products and names. The Vermont brand is powerful and adds great value whether at the smallest of levels (a nearby farm selling its own maple syrup) to unique cultural festivals to such nationally identified firms such as Orvis and Cabot cheeses. The Deerfield Valley is laced with small companies that could and should build on the Vermont brand.

Thirdly, the two towns must protect their cultural, historical and topographical character. This means creating additional historic districts, protecting farmlands and adopting architectural/site design standards. It is this uniqueness, specialty and cachet of the two towns that form their critical tourist base. If this character is eroded, their guests will move elsewhere. Bluntly stated, the area has no choice but to stop strip development, increase density in the villages with carefully articulated design standards and maintain its farmlands.

Fourth, the two towns must become partners with Mount Snow. The Mountain represents the largest employer and investor in the region. It is refocusing on how best to capture the changing skiing industry. While one must applaud and encourage this effort, it must be recognized that Mount Snow is increasingly looking inward. The towns and the Mount Snow operators must become partners in four ways: a) All parties must develop opportunities for local firms to compete for business on the mountain; b) Mount Snow officials must help local merchants to gain business from seasonal festivals; c) Large scale business decisions must reflect the need for linkage with the village centers and; d) The towns should become spokespersons and promoters for Mount Snow on topics that require governmental intervention.

Fifth, the towns must create long-term capital improvement programs that are designed to maintain and/or create first rate infrastructure systems. This program should include municipal parking, street lighting, pedestrian amenities in the villages and carefully placed water, sewer and fiber-optic lines in areas where growth is desired. It must also address school needs. In fact, it is a common statement amongst economic development planners that the most important economic development asset for local New England towns is a first class education system: If the two towns are to economically prosper, the schools will play a critical role.

Sixth, the towns must become focused upon creating a climate of constant improvement for its entrepreneurs. To this end, it must strive to integrate the University of Vermont's Extension Service, Vermont's Small Business Development Center, the Community College and the Chamber of Commerce into a connected program of technical assistance for its businesses.

And finally, if the towns are seriously committed to making these improvements, they must hire a professional economic development planner. This should be considered as an investment rather than a cost. In fact, the overwhelming numbers of communities that invest in planning typically gain 3-5 times their costs through grants, lowered bond rates, higher valued construction and more appropriately planned functions.

If the towns do nothing, it is likely they will stagnate and move into a long period of gentle decline. If, on the other hand, they embrace the recommendations explained above, they will be well positioned to accomplish their vision, protect their environment, embrace their quality of life, and stimulate the creation of well paying jobs, providing economic opportunities for their children and maintaining their historic and cultural qualities. Above all, they will maintain and enhance their unique places in a special region in an admired State.

Introduction

The Towns of Dover and Wilmington, in concert with its Economic Development Committee, contracted with Mullin Associates Incorporated to develop an Economic Strategies Plan to guide the Towns' economic development efforts. This Action Plan is based on supporting plans, documents and assessments. The major assessments include:

- An analysis of the socio-economic base of the community and its surrounding area, with a focus on demographics, economic profile and retail market potential;
- An analysis of input received from both the public and the private sectors. Key leaders in the community were interviewed and citizen input was solicited during the community wide workshop; and
- An assessment of the economic capacity in Dover and Wilmington with particular reference to an over dependency on a single, transitional industry.

Dover and Wilmington are in need of a coordinated economic strategy that combines the resources of its citizens, government, local and regional companies and institutions to insure that their quality of life is maintained and enhanced. Dover and Wilmington are clearly being buffeted by market forces that are beyond their control. There is much the Towns can do to take advantage of these forces and to take independent and cooperative actions to determine its future. However, over the years, the Towns have taken a largely passive position in terms of controlling their economic future. It is only at the present time that representatives have begun to take concrete steps to insure that the best interests of the citizenry are being protected.

If the Towns take no action on their economic future, it is likely that there will be an increasing dependence on an industry in transition (skiing), increasing dependence on a single major seasonal employer (Mount Snow), high tax burden on the home owners, more traffic, disorderly encroachment of commercial activity in residential areas, increased strip development, an inability to fund needed capital improvements and the loss of the opportunity to create diversified businesses. Above all, there will be an erosion of the Towns' special character.

Based on the insights and comments of the citizens, community officials, business leaders and other stakeholders, there is strong support for an action program that addresses these issues. It is equally clear that there is strong support for a balanced economic development strategy that adds to the Towns' tax base, expands employment choice and that respects the Towns' character. Finally, all participants saw the need to articulate a vision that reinforces a sense of quality in terms of development. Simply having increased economic activity would not meet the citizens' needs. Development must meet strong design and environmental standards.

Summary of Key Observations, Questions and Implications

Demographic Challenges

- The region's median age is higher than other parts of the State (Wilmington 45.2 years; Dover 43.6 years) and is projected to increase. Coincidentally, some of the largest employers in southern Vermont are health care providers and areas of anticipated job growth (2% to 4%) through 2016 are mostly health care related (aides, nurses). Should the region focus on the generation of a younger labor force (and the jobs to utilize that force) or on jobs that are suited to the older worker?
 - You are becoming older: Will you be willing to invest in schools?
 - You are becoming a region of retirees who value your character, pace of life and beauty: Is this enough?
 - Your youngsters are leaving if they are well educated or highly skilled.
- The area has a very large seasonal population base with the majority of residential assets in the second home market (Wilmington with approximately 55% and Dover with 75%). A seasonal population base has its unique set of issues related to public funding for community and economic development.

Community Character

- The region is an area of great beauty, charm, culture and history. Few regions in the nation have this combined set of positive characteristics.
- Recreational assets are many and are key components of economic development planning. The local economic development plans, the Town Plans, and the Tri-Town Economic Development Plan all prioritize recreation (trails, waterways) as draws for visitors. Dover is considering the creation of an entertainment/recreation venue. Many interviews focused on the need for additional activities to either draw visitors or for visitors once the ski day or summer bike ride is done. Will recreation and entertainment generate jobs and revenues?
- Building on your physical characteristics, there does appear to be extensive cultural opportunities (i.e.: Bread and Puppet Festival in Glover VT) and health opportunities (i.e.: Canyon Ranch Spa in Lenox, MA). An example of "upscale" investment in the area would be the Hermitage Inn.
- There is anecdotal evidence that suggests that this area has remarkable beauty in spring and fall. Expanding those "shoulders" appears to be an opportunity.
- The reservoirs and lakes are underplayed resources. Opportunities ranging from boat tours to fishing appear to have merit.
- The area is to be applauded for its well-run and highly popular festivals. However, these activities must shift to insure the celebration of the area and profitability for the merchants.
- The village/town centers are critical defining elements in the area. At the same time, there are pressures to build outward along major roadways. There is still time to control sprawl. To this end, the area's towns should look to expanding density (including retail and office functions) in their core areas and become more restrictive along the highways.
- While the Route 100 corridor is being "stripped", there are still opportunities to improve its character.
- The commercial zoning districts in Dover and Wilmington along Route 100 are laid out in such a way as to encourage commercial sprawl development. Town Plans and drafted zoning amendments recommend the creation of pockets of deeper commercial development districts rather than the linear district. Wilmington has a design review district. It may be

appropriate to establish standards for architectural design and signs along Route 100. What does Vermont built character look like? Consistency along Route 100 with the architecture of the villages will add to attractiveness.

- While you are in Vermont, there are very few Vermont products that are featured in the area. It appears that with thousands of out-of-staters passing along Route 100 and Route 9, that there is a retail opportunity of high quality that could be tapped. Where fits Orvis (larger than at present), Bennington Potters, Sam's Sporting Goods, the Grafton Cheese Company, the Vermont Country Store and the like?

Marketing

- As with recreation, marketing is often identified in local and regional strategies as key for economic growth. Commitment to marketing as a region is important. Marketing has historically been to visitors. If non-tourism economic growth is sought, should marketing turn to attracting residents, businesses, and employees?
- The area appears to have a niche market for furniture and home furnishings. This complements the findings on artists and artisans as well as the seasonal, second home markets. This might be a cluster worth building on.
- There appears to be significant market leakage within the following retail sectors:
 - Electronics and Appliances
 - Lawn and Garden Improvements
 - Clothing and Accessories
 - Specialty Food Stores

Mount Snow and the Ski Industry

- You are known as Mount Snow. Few people think of you as Dover and/or Wilmington. Are the towns simply in the shadow of Mount Snow? What happens when it rains on the mountains? It appears that quick creation "pop-up" markets may have potential.
- Mt. Snow has 425,000 visitors per year and is the region's largest industry and employer (240 to 1,500 depending on the season). Yet skiing is not a growth industry, fluctuating on available income and weather conditions. If ski visits and/or overnight ski stays decrease, sales revenue from retail (additional spending from 27% of visitors), lodging (24%), food and beverage (24%), and other recreation (11%) will decrease.
 - Mount Snow, representing 10% of the Vermont ski market, is in your backyard.
 - Mount Snow is prepared to invest in its marketing, infrastructure and new directions.
 - Mount Snow does not have a "local purchase policy". Moreover, your restaurants tend to buy goods from distant points. There is an opportunity to influence local purchasing approaches
 - It is likely that the skiing industry will be in decline. Moreover, it is explicit that Mount Snow will endeavor to capture more visitor dollars with its property. Therefore, it is crucial that the area's merchants aggressively move to become suppliers and source providers to Mount Snow.
 - The Skiing industry is in transformations: It will increasingly rely on more day-trippers spending less money.
 - The skiing industry will endeavor to capture more revenue from non-skiing activities (shopping, restaurants, entertainment). Mount Snow will be more of an enclave.
 - The skiing industry is a great part time and low supplemental employer. It has few well paying jobs. It is attracting and targeting international workers for its lowest paying jobs.

Business Development

- It's hard being an employee in the region. In May 2009 the unemployment rate in Dover (14.9%) and Wilmington (11.7%) are higher than the overall Vermont rate (7.1%). At the same time the average annual wage (\$24,030 Dover-Wilmington) was lower (\$35,585, Vermont). The employment areas that drive the region's economy (lodging, food, recreation-related services) are expected to lose 3% to 4% in 2010. Housing costs continue to rise.
- Part time/Minimum wage jobs are apparently not the problem: There are ample such jobs on a seasonal basis. There appears to be the opportunity to create networks of babysitters, day-care providers, tutors and house cleaners such that part time workers could earn additional money.
- In this economy, banks are not financing hospitality businesses, making it difficult to invest, purchase or grow.
- Community College of Vermont should become a partner in the future development of the area. It needs to identify the skills required and potential jobs for its students such that they can stay in the area. Online certificate programs and educational opportunities are essential.
- Given the education, skills and work ethic of the area's residents, there is a dramatic opportunity to stimulate the formation of new companies. The creations of micro-loan programs and assistance of the Small Business Development Center would be extremely helpful.
- While there has been little discussion linking green industries and economic development, the area does seem to have the ability to tap natural resources such that businesses are able to make a profit and the environment is protected.
- There is anecdotal evidence of extensive "artisanal" activity in the Tri Town area. Those people offering these services or making these products should be identified. If needed, they may be candidates for marketing and promotional assistance, micro-loans or SBDC assistance.
- Farmland and forestry provide the backdrop of the Vermont landscape. Agricultural operations, even large farms, struggle. To generate income necessary to survive, farms are adding petting zoos, direct sales to customers, events, and specialty products.
- The skills of retirees should be tapped. While most have moved here to enjoy the quality of life, they may have a continued interest in working. If not, they will have an interest in the growth of their new towns. The local SCORE Chapter can help.
- To balance the economic base, non-tourist/hospitality business strategies are wanted in the region. Do the region's location, infrastructure, and demographics suit non-tourism hospitality growth?
- There are no parcels of land that meet the basic needs for a 21st century office park or a modern industrial park.
- There is an extreme weakness in terms of telecommunications: "Be Wired or be Gone". The creation of a first class fiber optic network will stimulate extensive economic gain.
- You have a narrow state highway, minimal additional water and sewer supply, weak fiber-optic connectivity and few skilled workers.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of the businesses listed on the Chamber are hospitality or recreation based. Another 35% provide services at some level to the tourist/entertainment industry. Over 95% of the page hits on the Chamber site and Google are for hospitality sites or events, with the two key other sites being Cable and Trash disposal.

Towards a Legislative Agenda

- The modern employer and visitor both want access to technology including high speed internet. The Valley lacks this in many places. According to interviewees, in order to draw business, employees, and visitors, the system must improve. Legislation and state/federal funding could assist with access and expansion. As with other rural areas, the customer base may not exist in the Valley for providers to prioritize the area.
- Taxes are another concern of residents and businesses. In order to draw new residents and laborers, the area must maintain a high quality of life, including education. The new tax distribution system for non-residential properties raises concerns with residents concerning the ability to pay for education costs including capital. (Another point on aging: Will an aging population support educational improvement?). Tax changes, if warranted and desired, should be sought in Montpelier.

Economic Development Strategy

The following economic strategy is designed to help the Towns of Dover and Wilmington improve their tax base and quality of life through economic development. The economic development plan's "mission" is to **create a long-term vision based on an economic strategy of constant improvement**. The guiding assumptions for the strategic plan are as follows:

- The Plan is to be **long term** intending to guide the communities for the next ten to fifteen years with an update after every five years.
- The Plan focuses on **economic development** and should tie in with community Masterplans.
- The Plan must be reflective of the **core values** of the citizens of the two towns.
- The Plan must be carried out **with respect to the resources** available to the two towns.
- The Plan is intended to emphasize **strategic** policies and approaches to be taken **rather than tactical** actions.

A Sense of Vision

Given the importance of protecting the environment and the uncommon beauty that marks our communities, it is essential that all long-term economic activity reflect our special character. We are two small communities that endeavor to develop such that our water, air, fields, farms, villages and roadways are of the highest possible quality. We embrace the concept of a balanced local economy where there is the opportunity for all citizens, ranging from our latest high school graduates to our newest senior citizens, to find satisfying employment at wages that enable them to comfortably reside in our communities. We will endeavor to stimulate a balanced portfolio of jobs ranging from those of the tourist industry, to professional services, light manufacturing and agriculture to the latest in high technology. We are connected to Vermont, New England, the nation and the world. We will make every effort to have an infrastructural system that enables us to communicate with distant points. We will strive to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit for our citizens and work to find places and spaces to help them to meet their economic interests.

Given the presence of Mount Snow, its beauty and powerful economic influence on our prosperity, we will endeavor to partner with the owners in such ways that will enable the proprietors and the communities can mutually benefit. We recognize that if our children are to find meaningful employment in our communities, then a solid educational framework is a necessity. To this end, we believe that the creation of a top level educational system from kindergarten through high school, collaborate with vocation schools, the community college are critical to our long term future: Economic development and education are inextricably linked.

Finally, we recognize that we have a special responsibility to respect our legacy, history, culture and Vermont values. Our efforts will ensure that our special characteristics, uniqueness and values are maintained and enhanced.

Summary of Goals

To develop and install state-of-the-art broadband internet and cellular telephone systems throughout the Deerfield Valley, with special attention to the Towns of Dover and Wilmington, that will enable businesses to have efficient, sustained connectivity across the globe over the next 20 years.

To provide support services such that businesses in the two towns have the ability to maximize their potential and provide a living wage.

To encourage development of industry that utilizes renewable natural resources and agricultural products from within Dover, Wilmington, the Windham Region and Vermont.

To attract & retain younger population

To reduce the costs of doing business in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

To enhance the job base and tax base of the communities over the long term while respecting the qualities that make them special.

To ensure that the transportation system is safe, efficient and matches our character.

To compile a comprehensive tourism plan for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

To create a platform and environment such that steady implementation of this plan can occur. The success and effectiveness of the proposed strategic action plan will depend on the Towns' ability to get professional staff that will initiate and monitor the detailed actions recommended in this Plan.

Goal One - Develop and install state-of-the-art broadband internet and cellular telephone systems throughout the Deerfield Valley, with special attention to the Towns of Dover and Wilmington, that will enable businesses to have efficient, sustained connectivity across the globe over the next 20 years.

Objective 1: Determine the demand for service in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington by: SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

1. Developing an inventory of the current service levels in all areas of the Towns of Dover and Wilmington;
2. Identifying all potential broadband, internet and cellular telephone service providers in southern Vermont;
3. Identifying state-of-the-art communications technologies; and
4. Identifying best potential solutions for different areas of each town.

Action 1: Contact the Vermont Telecommunications Authority (www.telecomvt.org) for assistance with determining the four aspects of local demand for service.

Action 2: Create a Universal Broadband and Cell Access Committee Authorization (sample document authorizing a municipal broadband committee on (<http://www.telecomvt.org/municipalities.php>)).

Action 3: Provide progress reports and recommendations to the elected officials in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington every three months.

Expected Results: The business community will have sufficient broadband service to compete and participate with the outside world.

Possible Resources: Staff time, volunteer time, Vermont Telecommunications Authority, Universal Broadband and Cell Access Committee

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 2: To determine how other rural regions in New England have acquired such service in order to establish model approaches. Special attention must be focused upon “the last mile of service”.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Review documents such as *Wiring Rural Vermont: A Tool Kit For Community Telecommunications Planning* (<http://crs.uvm.edu/vcrd/toolkit.pdf>).

Action 2: Contact Berkshire Connect (www.bconnect.org), Monadnock Connect, (www.monadnockbroadband.org), North Country Connect, (www.northcountryconnect.org), Franklin Hampshire Connect, (www.franklinconnect.org), Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (www.mtpc.org/index.htm) and Minnesota’s NETPLAN, (www.mnplan.state.mn.us/pdf/2000/planning/netplan.pdf) to obtain information about how other rural regions have acquired such service.

Action 3: Contact the Southern Vermont Broadband Cooperative, which offers a web site illustrating the efforts of the town of Stamford, VT to form a broadband cooperative (<http://svtbbc.googlepages.com/home>)

Action 4: Contact the 2008 Broadband Grant winners (Canaan/Norton, EC Fiber/25 towns, Global Net/Fletcher & surrounding area, Powershift/Elmore & Hardwick, Ripton Broadband Coop./Ripton, SVBC/Stamford) for advice on how to acquire such service.

Expected Results: A model approach will be developed for the Deerfield Valley.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 3: To vigorously pursue the political support in Montpelier to make state-of-the-art telecommunications connectivity a reality.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact state agencies including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Public Service - Telecommunications Division for recommendations as to the best ways to garner political support for this effort.

Action 2: Contact the local representatives in state government for Dover and Wilmington to determine the best way to garner political support for this effort.

Expected Results: State politicians will support the development of state-of-the-art broadband internet and cellular telephone systems throughout the Deerfield Valley.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 4: Create a regional coalition around the topic in order to get as extensive political support as possible.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Review documents such as *Wiring Rural Vermont: A Tool Kit For Community Telecommunications Planning* (<http://crs.uvm.edu/vcrd/toolkit.pdf>).
- Action 2:** Contact Berkshire Connect (www.bconnect.org), Monadnock Connect, (www.monadnockbroadband.org), North Country Connect, (www.northcountryconnect.org), Franklin Hampshire Connect, (www.franklinconnect.org), Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (www.mtpc.org/index.htm) and Minnesota's NETPLAN, (www.mnplan.state.mn.us/pdf/2000/planning/netplan.pdf) to obtain information about how other rural regions have acquired such service.
- Action 3:** Contact the Southern Vermont Broadband Cooperative, which offers a web site illustrating the efforts of the town of Stamford, VT to form a broadband cooperative (<http://svtbbc.googlepages.com/home>)
- Action 4:** Contact the 2008 Broadband Grant winners (Canaan/Norton, EC Fiber/25 towns, Global Net/Fletcher & surrounding area, Powershift/Elmore & Hardwick, Ripton Broadband Coop./Ripton, SVBC/Stamford) for advice on how to acquire such service.
- Action 5:** Determine level of interest and proposed membership in a regional coalition.
- Expected Results:** If appropriate, a coalition will be established in Windham County.
- Possible Resources:** Staff and volunteer time
- Responsibility:** Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)
- Timing:** 0-12 months

Goal Two - To provide support services such that businesses in the two towns have the ability to maximize their potential and provide a living wage.

Objective 1: To ensure that the infrastructural needs (water, sewer, roads, power, telecommunications, parking, signage) are being met.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Designate an entity to develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact the Windham Regional Commission for advice on how to best to develop a Capital Improvement Plan and for suggestions of successful plans in the county and state.

Action 3: Provide progress reports to the elected officials in Dover and Wilmington on a regular basis (every 3 months).

Expected Results: The infrastructure needs of Dover and Wilmington will be properly managed.

Possible Resources: Town departments, elected officials of Dover and Wilmington

Responsibility: Town departments, elected officials of Dover and Wilmington

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 2: To ensure that possible impediments to economic growth are minimized or mitigated (i.e.: telecommunications, off street parking, snow removal).

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Identify the impediments to economic growth in Dover and Wilmington through review of existing and past municipal documents and interviews with groups including but not limited to local business owners, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, town officials and elected officials.

Action 2: Identify ways in which the municipalities can eliminate those impediments including but not limited to engaging volunteer organizations to assist the towns and pursuing grants to support improvements.

Action 3: Provide progress reports to the elected officials in Dover and Wilmington on a regular basis (such as every 3 months).

Expected Results: The impediments to economic growth identified by the Dover Economic Development Committee and the Tri-Town Economic Development Committee are minimized or mitigated.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, grant programs

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 0-12 months for research, 1-5 years to implement findings from the research

Objective 3: To develop and continuously update an inventory of small businesses (including home-based, artisanal activities) such that trends can be determined.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Develop and update the small business inventory as well as to provide a progress report to a specific municipal board on a regular basis.
- Action 2:** Determine parameters of inventory of small businesses including but not limited to number of employees and gross revenue.
- Action 3:** Obtain municipal information about existing businesses including but not limited to address, zoning, owner, description, number of employees, taxes, permits, and violations.
- Action 4:** Obtain information about existing small businesses in Dover and Wilmington at the regional levels from a variety of organizations including but not limited to the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce (www.visitvermont.com), the Windham Regional Commission (www.rpc.windham.vt.us), local organizations that provide business assistance, the Vermont Small Business Development Center (www.vtsbdc.org) and the U.S. Census.
- Action 5:** Contact small businesses on a regular basis to update the inventory and to inquire as to what the Towns can do to assist the businesses to be successful.
- Action 6:** Provide progress reports and identified trends to the elected officials in Dover and Wilmington on a regular basis (every 3 months).

Expected Results: An inventory of small businesses will be developed and updated on a regular basis and trends will be identified and shared with elected officials.

Possible Resources: Volunteer and staff time, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce (www.visitvermont.com), the Windham Regional Commission (www.rpc.windham.vt.us), local organizations that provide business assistance, the Vermont Small Business Development Center (www.vtsbdc.org) and the U.S. Census.

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 4: Through the University of Vermont, the Community College, Chamber of Commerce and Mount Snow, create a series of seasonal economic forecasting sessions to inform businesses of the state of the economy.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the University of Vermont (specifically, the Vermont Business Center, the Vermont Family Business Initiative, and the Center for Rural Studies), the Community College of Vermont (Central Administrative Business Program and the Business Program Faculty), the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce and Mount Snow to gauge their interest in participating, funding and/or coordinating these sessions.

Action 2: Schedule the sessions, determine the venue and develop publicity materials.

Expected Results: A series of economic forecasting sessions will be offered for businesses in Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Volunteer and staff time, University of Vermont, the Community College of Vermont, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mount Snow, Dover Economic Development Committee, Tri-Town Economic Development Committee

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 12-18 months

Objective 5: Understand the long-term plans of Mount Snow and assess their economic impacts on the communities on a long-term basis.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Meet with Mount Snow representatives to discuss their long-term plans and publicize findings.

Action 2: Compare Mount Snow’s long-term plans with the long-term plans of Dover and Wilmington to determine the economic impacts on the communities.

Expected Results: The long-term plans of Mount Snow will be shared with the Towns of Dover and Wilmington and the economic impacts of those plans will be assessed.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Mount Snow

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 6: Explore means and methods to create a linkage program that would support and encourage Mount Snow to invest in the villages.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact organizations that support the purchasing of local products including but not limited to Smart Growth Vermont (www.smartgrowthvermont.org) to obtain advice on the development of a linkage program with Mount Snow.

Action 2: Meet with Mount Snow representatives to determine the ways in which it invests locally.

Action 3: Discuss the development of a local linkage program with Mount Snow representatives in which Mount Snow would increase its purchase of products and services from Dover and Wilmington and assist in the revitalization of the downtowns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 4: Find ways to assist Mount Snow with meeting its long-term goals locally including but not limited to grants and tax incentives.

Expected Results: A linkage program will be established between Mount Snow and the Towns of Dover and Wilmington that will be of mutual benefit.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Mount Snow, Smart Growth Vermont

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-3 Years

Objective 7: Gain the assistance of the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), the Community College, and the University of Vermont Extension for long term, sustained economic development assistance, to include the possibility of a “virtual incubator”, for businesses in the two towns.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the Business Advisor at the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC) in Brattleboro to determine the type of assistance that can be offered to Dover and Wilmington over the long term.

Action 2: Contact the Community College of Vermont (Central Administrative Business Program and the Business Program Faculty) to determine the type of assistance that can be offered to Dover and Wilmington over the long term.

Action 3: Contact the University of Vermont Extension to determine the type of economic development assistance, particularly in the areas of Community and Economic Vitality, Business Management, Food Business Development and Community & Leadership Development, that can be offered to Dover and Wilmington over the long term.

Action 4: Obtain information about setting up a virtual incubator. Potential information sources include Digital Bridges at Middlebury College, InventVermont in Burlington, BROCC-Community Action in Southwestern Vermont.

Expected Results: A formal agreement will be reached to provide long-term economic development assistance to the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Vermont Small Business Development Center, Community College of Vermont, University of Vermont Extension, Digital Bridges at Middlebury College

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-5 years

Objective 8: Working with Mount Snow and restaurateurs to develop formal local purchase policies.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a contact list of restaurants in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact representatives from Mount Snow and local restaurateurs to determine their level of interest in developing formal local purchase policies.

Action 3: Contact companies and organizations with existing local purchase policies including but not limited to the University of Vermont Dining Services.

Action 4: Contact organizations including but not limited to the Vermont Fresh Network (www.vermontfresh.net) and the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (www.vbsr.org) for advice on how to develop formal local purchase policies.

Action 5: Develop possible formal local purchase policies for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington to set an example for Mount Snow and local restaurateurs.

Expected Results: Formal local purchase policies will be developed between Mount Snow and restaurants in Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, local restaurants, Mount Snow, University of Vermont Dining Services, Vermont Fresh Network, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 9: Develop a Plan to enhance and promote artisanal/craft production.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop an inventory of local artisans and craftspeople in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Survey the local artisans and craftspeople to determine how the Towns of Dover and Wilmington could help enhance or promote their work.

Action 3: Contact organizations including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing (VDTM) (www.vermontpartners.org), the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org), local chambers of commerce and Smart Growth Vermont (www.smartgrowthvermont.org) for advice as to how to improve the promotion of local artisan's craft products.

Action 4: Conduct an internet search to find grant and funding programs that would support efforts to enhance the local creative economy.

Expected Results: A long-term plan for the creative economy in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington will be developed.

Possible Resources: Grant and funding programs, local artisans and craftspeople, volunteer time, Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing, the Vermont Council on Rural Development, Smart Growth Vermont

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 10: Develop design standards that reflect community character and enable us to expand while protecting our natural view-sheds and scenic vistas. Particular emphasis should be on preventing sprawl, sign control and curb cut controls.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact organizations including but not limited to the University of Vermont's Vermont Design Institute (www.uvm.edu/~vdi/index.html) for advice on developing design standards for Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Hold a forum with local landscape architects and designers to obtain their opinions about design standards for Dover and Wilmington.

Action 3: Contact planning organizations in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Planning Association (vermontplanners.org) to obtain information concerning municipal design standards in Vermont.

Action 4: Develop a request for proposals (RFP) to develop design standards for Dover and Wilmington.

Expected Results: Design standards for Dover and Wilmington will be developed.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, University of Vermont's Vermont Design Institute, local landscape architects, Vermont Planning Association, Orton Foundation, Grafton Foundation

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-5 years

Objective 11: To develop support plan that will help to stimulate existing clusters (i.e., furniture).

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Identify existing clusters in southern Vermont including but not limited to furniture and optic lenses (Omega Optical, Chroma Technology).

Action 2: Contact businesses in those identified clusters to determine the ways in which the Towns of Dover and Wilmington can help them expand, grow and locate in the Tri-Town area.

Action 3: Contact local business assistance organizations including but not limited to the Vermont Small Business Center (www.vtsbdc.org) to determine how best to stimulate existing clusters.

Action 4: Contact state agencies that assist businesses including but not limited to the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (<http://www.dca.state.vt.us/>) to determine how best to stimulate existing clusters.

Action 5: Develop a formal plan to stimulate the existing clusters based on the suggestions from the local businesses, the local organizations, and the state agencies.

Expected Results: A formal support plan will be developed to stimulate the existing clusters in southern Vermont.

Possible Resources: Local businesses, volunteer time, the Vermont Small Business Center, Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 12: Enhance village life with capital improvements such as improved signage, sidewalks and street lighting.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop design standards for streetscape amenities in the village.

Action 2: Obtain estimates on improved signage, sidewalks and street lighting in the village.

Action 3: Determine eligibility for grants and CDBG funds.

Action 4: Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for Dover and Wilmington, especially for the village, to help determine how to support the changes to the streetscape.

Expected Results: The local village will be enhanced with improved signage, sidewalks and street lighting.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, grant and funding programs

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 13: Inventory agricultural parcels to determine current activity and future plans. The intent is to determine if farming is continuing and/or changing its character in agricultural areas.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a comprehensive list of the parcels in Dover and Wilmington currently used for agriculture including but not limited to information on ownership, zoning, permits, uses and taxes.

Action 2: Contact the property owners of such parcels to determine the current activity on the land as well as any future plans for the property.

Action 3: Report the results of this information gathering process to the elected officials of the towns.

Expected Results: The Towns will determine the status of local farming through an inventory of local agricultural parcels.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, local farmers

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 14: Develop standards and sites for possible light manufacturing and/or office uses that have stringent performance standards and are in scale with community character.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine which sites in the towns would be best suited for light manufacturing and/or office uses.

Action 2: Review existing standards for light manufacturing and office uses with organizations including but not limited to the Vermont Planning Association (vermontplanners.org), the Windham Regional Commission (www.rpc.windham.vt.us) and the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (www.vmec.org) for changes that can be incorporated into the standards to encourage light manufacturing and/or office uses that have stringent performance standards and are in scale with the local community character.

Action 3: Contact other nearby Vermont communities to determine how they best manage their light manufacturing and/or office uses.

Expected Results: Zoning standards that encourage light manufacturing firms and/or office uses in scale with the local community character with stringent performance standards will be developed.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Planning Association, the Windham Regional Commission, the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Objective 15: Develop a market attracting plan that is designed to match the expenditure patterns of local residents **and** tourists.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Examine the expenditure patterns of local residents in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Examine the expenditure patterns of visitors to Dover and Wilmington.

Action 3: Determine what retail businesses should be available in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington to better capture those dollars.

Action 4: Contact local business assistance organizations including but not limited to the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce for advice as to how best to develop a market attracting plan based on the data gathered.

Expected Results: A market attraction plan will be developed for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Volunteer and staff time, spending patterns data, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 16: Analyze the impact of festivals to determine their value to local merchants. Where necessary, change policies such that these become prosperous events for merchants.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact state agencies and affiliated organizations including, but not limited to the Vermont Agency on Agriculture (www.vermontagriculture.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain information about the fiscal impact of festivals in small towns such as Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Survey local merchants in Dover and Wilmington to determine their opinions on the values of festivals.

Action 3: Following an examination of the existing policies managing local festivals, formalize and amend those policies as necessary to maximize the benefit to local merchants.

Expected Results: Formal festival management policies that provide a maximum benefit to local merchants will be developed.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, local merchants, Vermont Agency on Agriculture, the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Council on Rural Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Objective 17: Update and analyze market leakage data to target new enterprises.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact data sources including but not limited to the Vermont State Data Center (<http://crs.uvm.edu/census/>) to determine the market leakage data that currently exists for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Identify all sectors in the economies of Dover and Wilmington where the communities are potentially and unnecessarily importing goods and services including but not limited to food, energy, finance, services, entertainment, charity, investment, healthy lifestyles, green markets and personal frugality.

Action 3: Review and update the existing trade data analysis and market leakage data for the two towns.

Action 4: Analyze the market leakage data with some local business assistance organizations including but not limited to the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce to identify new enterprises that may be attracted to the area.

Expected Results: An analysis of up-to-date market leakage data will lead to new businesses located in the two towns.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, the Vermont State Data Center, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 18: Encourage residents in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington to become entrepreneurs.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact local business assistance organizations including but not limited to the regional banks, Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBC) for information on how to encourage entrepreneurial activities in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Encourage the local community college to offer educational programs in Dover and Wilmington presented by local business assistance organizations to encourage people to become entrepreneurs.

Action 3: Offer information packets describing the different types of municipal, regional and federal assistance and programs available to assist entrepreneurs. Share the information with the public in a variety of ways including but not limited to on the towns' websites, through newspaper articles and free seminars.

Action 4: Ask local successful entrepreneurs to serve as mentors to other local entrepreneurs and to share their business experiences with local groups and classes at the local schools.

Expected Results: More residents will become entrepreneurs.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBC)

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 19: Survey local home-based businesses and small firms to determine how the two towns can help them succeed. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of the home-based businesses and small firms in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact those local businesses to determine how the two municipalities can best assist them.

Action 3: Contact the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBC) to determine what assistance is available to home-based businesses and small firms.

Expected Results: The towns will learn what types of municipal assistance is needed by local small businesses.

Possible Resources: Volunteer and staff time, Vermont Small Business Development Center

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 20: Coordinate technical assistance and networking opportunities for local entrepreneurs. LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what technical assistance programs are offered to entrepreneurs in southern Vermont.

Action 2: Determine what networking opportunities are offered for entrepreneurs in southern Vermont.

Action 3: Develop a list of entrepreneurs located in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 4: Contact the entrepreneurs to ascertain what types of technical assistance and networking opportunities would be useful to them.

Expected Results: A coordinated effort will be established to provide business assistance to local entrepreneurs.

Possible Resources: Volunteer and staff time, local business assistance organizations, local entrepreneurs

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Objective 21: Become active participants in the FERC processes concerning the reservoirs to ensure that local needs are met. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the local office of the Department of Environmental Conservation regarding any current Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) processes in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact the local office of the Department of Environmental Conservation to determine the best way for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington to become active participants in any current or future Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) processes.

Expected Results: The two towns will actively participate in the FERC processes to ensure that local needs are met concerning the protection of the reservoirs.

Possible Resources: Staff time, Department of Environmental Conservation

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Goal Three - Encourage development of industry that utilizes renewable natural resources and agricultural products from within Dover, Wilmington, the Windham Region and Vermont.

Objective 1: Facilitate a conversation on what is required (demand) and what can be supplied locally. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the 5 largest employers in Dover and Wilmington to determine what products they do (or could) purchase locally.

Action 2: Contact the 5 largest agricultural producers in Dover, Wilmington and the Windham Region to determine what products are currently sold locally.

Action 3: Contact the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to determine what types of agriculture are being encouraged and try to match local producers with that demand (i.e., the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant funds for beginning beekeepers to establish one or two colonies of honey bees).

Action 4: Contact the University of Vermont Center for Sustainable Agriculture for information on the supply & demand in Dover, Wilmington and the Windham Region.

Expected Results: A consensus on what products can be purchased and sold locally in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Staff time or volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-6 months

Objective 2: Encourage restaurants and markets to obtain and supply agricultural products from within Dover, Wilmington, the Windham Region and Vermont. LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to learn more about its Matchmaker program that pairs local food producers with buyers for 10 minute “speed dating” style sessions to learn if there might be a good sales match.

Action 2: Determine which grant programs may be able to fund a “Buy Local” program for local businesses and organizations (i.e., the Rozo McLaughlin Farm-to-School Grant Program that awards Vermont schools with funds to integrate local foods in school cafeterias, classrooms and communities).

Action 3: Assist restaurants and markets in integrating the Vermont Agency of Agriculture’s *Buy Local, Buy Vermont* campaign information into their menus and marketing materials.

Expected Results: An increase in the number of restaurants and markets that exchange agricultural products from Dover, Wilmington, the Windham Region and Vermont.

Possible Resources: Staff time, volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 Years

Objective 3: Encourage community supported agriculture as a means of making small farm operations more economically viable.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop an updatable local food directory for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington with financial assistance from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.

Action 2: Incorporate the Vermont Agency of Agriculture's *Buy Local, Buy Vermont* campaign information into local publicity materials for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 3: Pursue grant opportunities to fund renewable energy projects in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.

Action 4: Pursue grant opportunities to assist farmers with business plans through the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program.

Action 5: Pursue grant opportunities that reward farmers for current and future conservation practices like the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) program.

Expected Results: Retention of small farm operations in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Staff time, volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-5 years

Goal Four - Attract & retain younger population.

Objective 1: Encourage businesses to provide decent wages.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Obtain background information from local organizations that advocate for decent wages including but not limited to the Vermont Livable Wage Campaign (www.vtlivablewage.org) and Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (www.vbsr.org).

Action 2: Determine what the Towns of Dover and Wilmington consider to be decent wages and what wages local businesses are providing.

Action 3: Determine what type of assistance is available to local businesses that encourage them to provide decent wages such as the Livable Jobs Toolkit (<http://vbsr.org/documents/misc/toolkitrevised06.pdf>) available from Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (www.vbsr.org).

Expected Results: Local businesses will provide decent wages.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Vermont Livable Wage Campaign, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, local businesses

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 2: Increase stock of attainable housing for broader category of employees/workers

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what type and amount of housing stock that is attainable and/or affordable in Dover and Wilmington. Incorporate housing that is an appropriate scale to Wilmington-Dover region and is developed in small clusters.

Action 2: Obtain background information from local organizations that advocate for attainable housing including but not limited to the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign (www.housingawareness.org).

Action 3: Contact the state political representatives from the Towns of Dover and Wilmington for input on how communities and the state can best assist public service providers in finding housing locally.

Expected Results: Appropriately priced housing stock will be increasingly available to residents in Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, public service departments, Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign, state political representatives for Dover and Wilmington

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 3: Enhance the creative economy in Southern Vermont.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact organizations that advocate for the creative economy in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) for advice as to how to enhance the local creative economy.

Action 2: Survey members of the creative economy in the two towns for suggestions as to how to enhance the local creative economy.

Action 3: Search for grant and funding programs that fund projects that enhance creative economies.

Expected Results: The local creative economy will be enhanced as measured by additional revenues or businesses in that sector of the overall economy.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Objective 4: Promote amenities for younger population such as gym, community center, recreational activities for families, and day care (with/without extended hours)

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of amenities for the people in their 20s and 30s as well as for families with young children.

Action 2: Determine the closest location for each of those amenities.

Action 3: Post the closest locations on the Towns' websites and have the list available for distribution to people who are new to the towns.

Action 4: Consider creating or building an amenity with Mt. Snow like a waterpark or amphitheater

Expected Results: Amenities for the younger population will be promoted throughout the two towns.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 5: Improve and maintain the quality of local education and school systems and publicize unique local educational opportunities.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Review all the available local and state data about the educational systems in Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Determine which aspects of the data can be improved or are areas of concern.

Action 3: Develop strategies to improve those areas of concern.

Action 4: Determine which local educational opportunities are unique and develop publicity materials describing them for public distribution and posting on the Towns' websites.

Expected Results: The quality of the local educational system will be improved and unique local educational opportunities will be appropriately publicized.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Department of Education (education.vermont.gov), School Boards for the two towns

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Goal Five - Reduce the costs of doing business in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Objective 1: Survey existing businesses in the two towns to determine how their local governments can best assist them (such as managing sidewalk snow removal for easier access to local shops).

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of the businesses in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact the businesses and inquire as to what the local governments can do to best assist them in a variety of ways including but not limited to sidewalk snow removal, increased public safety patrols, changes in parking availability and management).

Action 3: Review results of survey with the elected officials in each town to determine which suggestions can be implemented.

Expected Results: The towns will learn how to best assist their existing businesses.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 2: Determine the advantages and disadvantages of developing a regional business assistance center that could coordinate activities such as, but not limited to, energy efficiency programs and offer low interest loans.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what activities the Towns of Dover and Wilmington would like a regional business center to undertake including but not limited to energy efficiency programs and low-interest loans.

Action 2: Develop a list of existing government agencies and organizations that currently assist businesses in Dover and Wilmington including but not limited to the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC).

Action 3: Contact the existing government agencies and organizations that currently assist businesses to determine if they could offer the services described in Action 1 above.

Expected Results: After a careful analysis, the towns will determine if a regional business assistance center should be established.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Small Business Development Center

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 3: Conduct an ongoing business visitation program to determine how the public sector can be of assistance.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of the businesses in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Action 2: Visit the businesses on a regular basis (perhaps, annually) and contact them via telephone regularly (every 3 months) and inquire as how the Towns can be of assistance to them.

Action 3: Review results of the visits and phone calls with the elected officials in each town to determine which suggestions can be implemented.

Expected Results: An ongoing business visitation program will be established.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Goal Six - To enhance the job base and tax base of the communities over the long term while respecting the qualities that make them special.

Objective 1: Obtain information about local and state grant programs, private grant programs such as Windham Foundation grants, and funding programs such as the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what types of economic activities in Dover and Wilmington should be the subject of future applications for grants and funding programs.

Action 2: Develop a list and calendar of all the state and federal grant programs available to Dover and Wilmington by visiting the website for the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont (<http://crs.uvm.edu/municipal/#grants>).

Action 3: Conduct internet research on private grant and funding programs for programs of interest to Dover and Wilmington.

Expected Results: Information about grant and funding programs to support projects in Dover and Wilmington will be obtained.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 2: Pursue grants to improve the physical qualities of the village for economic development. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what types of changes to the physical qualities of the village should be the subject of future applications for grants and funding programs.

Action 2: Develop a list and calendar of all the state and federal grant programs available to Dover and Wilmington to fund those changes by visiting the website for the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont (<http://crs.uvm.edu/municipal/#grants>).

Action 3: Contact the person/agency responsible for the grant program or funding program to determine if the activity is indeed eligible for the program.

Action 4: Review the possible activities and grant/funding programs with the elected officials of the towns to determine which programs to pursue.

Expected Results: The physical aspects of the village will be improved.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont, staff at various grant programs

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 3: Strengthen zoning and design standards such that all economic development reflects the qualities and values of the area.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine which qualities and values of Dover and Wilmington should be maintained and enhanced through zoning and design standards.

Action 2: Review existing zoning and design standards to determine areas of opportunity to strengthen the requirements.

Action 3: Contact statewide planning and landscape organizations including but not limited to the Vermont Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (<http://host.asla.org/chapters/vermont/index.cfm>) and the Vermont Planners Association (www.vermontplanners.org) for ways to strengthen zoning and design standards.

Expected Results: The zoning and design standards of Dover and Wilmington will guide development that reflects the qualities and values of southern Vermont.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Vermont Planners Association

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 4: Develop agreements of mutual assistance with Mount Snow.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine which services the Towns of Dover and Wilmington would like covered in a mutual assistance understanding with Mount Snow.

Action 2: Determine if Mount Snow would be interested in entering into a mutual assistance agreement with the two towns.

Action 3: Request the attorneys representing the Towns of Dover and Wilmington draw up documents establishing a mutual assistance agreement with Mount Snow and provide them to the representatives of Mount Snow for their review and comment.

Expected Results: Mutual assistance agreements will be developed between Mount Snow and the two towns.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 4-5 years

Objective 5: To become active participants in Windham County Regional Economic Development Planning (including the Economic Development Administration’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy process).

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of the state, regional and local organizations that manage the economic development planning in the Windham County region including but not limited to the Vermont Small Business Development Center (www.vtsbdc.org)

Action 2: Review the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) currently in effect in Vermont to learn about the CEDS development process and its benefits for Dover, Wilmington and the region.

Action 3: Develop a list of agencies that would best coordinate the regional economic development planning and the CEDS process for Windham County and approach them to determine their level of interest.

Expected Results: The two towns will become active participants in the economic development planning for Windham County and will participate in the CEDS process.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Small Business Development Center and other organizations engaged in economic development planning in the Windham region

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 6: To establish a capital planning approach to assist local economic development.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine which capital projects or equipment should be purchased to support local economic development efforts.

Action 2: Rank the economic development projects in order of preference.

Action 3: Develop a plan for financing the projects.

Action 4: Develop a timetable for the construction or completion of the project.

Action 5: Provide justification for the projects.

Action 6: Provide progress reports to the elected officials in Dover and Wilmington on a regular basis (such as every 3 months).

Expected Results: A Capital Improvement Plan for economic development will be developed.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Town departments, elected officials of Dover and Wilmington

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Goal Seven - To ensure that the transportation system is safe, efficient and matches our character.

Objective 1: Maximize pedestrian walking opportunities in town centers. Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian movement in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington. Develop an inventory of existing, proposed and needed sidewalks, pedestrian paths and trails in the two towns. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact agencies and organizations that address planning for pedestrian movement in Vermont including but not limited to the Windham Regional Commission (www.rpc.windham.vt.us), Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us) and the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition (<http://www.vtbikeped.org/>) to obtain information about maximizing pedestrian walking opportunities.

Action 2: Review documents that focus on pedestrian opportunities in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual and the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan.

Action 3: Develop an inventory (written and mapped) of areas with existing sidewalks, pedestrian paths and trails in the two towns as well as areas where they should be proposed or repaired.

Expected Results: The towns will know the location of their existing and proposed sidewalks and will have a better understanding of how to plan and encourage use of them.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 2: Ensure that road signage is clear and informative, reflecting that travelers are entering Dover and Wilmington. These should include coordinated signage for the pedestrian walkways, directing people to parking areas as well as to bicycle lanes and paths in the two towns. LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine the different types of road signage in the two towns and rate its condition and applicability.

Action 2: Contact the highway departments of the two towns and the Sign Control Unit of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us) to obtain information about sign requirements and suggestions for how to best coordinate road and pedestrian signage in small towns.

Action 3: Contact the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Windham Regional Commission to learn what types of coordinated signage programs are being developed in other communities in Vermont.

Expected Results: The towns will have clear and informative road signage that is coordinated with signage for local pedestrian paths.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Windham Regional Commission

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-5 years

Objective 3: Optimize the use of public transit in the two towns. After inventorying conditions, become active participants in the regional transportation improvement program.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Review existing policy and planning documents for public transportation including but not limited to the Vermont Agency of Transportation Public Transportation Policy Plan.

Action 2: Contact agencies and organizations that work to maximize public transit use in Vermont including but not limited to the Windham Regional Commission (www.rpc.windham.vt.us), Deerfield Valley Transit Association (www.moover.com), Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us) to obtain information about maximizing pedestrian walking opportunities.

Action 3: Contact the Windham Regional Commission and the Vermont Agency of Transportation to learn how to become active participants in the regional transportation improvement program.

Expected Results: Public transit ridership in the two towns will be optimized and the two towns will become active participants in the region's transportation improvement program (TIP).

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Windham Regional Commission, Deerfield Valley Transit Association

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 4: Integrate mass transit stops with bicycle racks in town centers.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine proposed locations for bicycle racks at mass transit stops in the two towns.

Action 2: Obtain information about integrating mass transit and bicycle racks from organizations including but not limited to Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition (www.vtbikeped.org), Deerfield Valley Transit Association (www.moover.com) and Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us).

Action 3: Research funding opportunities for the purchase and installation of bicycle racks at mass transit stops.

Action 4: Purchase and install bicycle racks at selected mass transit stops in the two towns.

Expected Results: Bicycle racks will be installed at mass transit stops in Dover and Wilmington.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition, Deerfield Valley Transit Association, Vermont Agency of Transportation

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-5 years

Objective 5: Plan for a range of roads ranging from high-speed roadways to narrow, unpaved lanes that reflect our character.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Review existing guidelines and planning documents for roads from the towns and the Roadway, Traffic and Safety Program of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us).

Action 2: Review the road maps for the two towns to determine the types of roads that currently exist or should be encouraged if reconstruction takes place.

Expected Results: A plan for future roadway design that reflects the small towns' character will be developed.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Agency of Transportation

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 3-4 years

Objective 6: To adopt road design policies that respect unpaved roads, gentle curves, canopies of trees, slow speeds and stonewalls.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Review existing design policies and planning documents for roads from the towns and the Roadway, Traffic and Safety Program of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (www.aot.state.vt.us).

Action 2: Contact the Windham Regional Commission and the Vermont Agency of Transportation to learn about the various design policies that can be adopted to respect unpaved roads, gentle curves, canopies of trees, slow speeds and stonewalls.

Action 3: Develop road design policies that respect unpaved roads, gentle curves, canopies of trees, slow speeds and stonewalls in-house or distribute a request for proposals to develop such policies.

Expected Results: Road design policies that respect unpaved roads, gentle curves, canopies of trees, slow speeds and stonewalls will be adopted.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Windham Regional Commission

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Goal Eight - Compile a comprehensive tourism plan for the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.

Objective 1: Obtain input from local tourist-related companies regarding assistance that the towns can provide to aid in their success SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact local tourist-related companies to determine how the towns can best assist them.

Action 2: Contact organizations that help facilitate tourism in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain information about the types of assistance that municipalities can obtain on behalf of tourist-related companies.

Action 3: Search for ways in which the towns can help assist those companies including but not limited to grant and funding programs and volunteer organizations.

Expected Results: The two towns will provide appropriate assistance to local tourist-related companies to help them succeed.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Tourist-related companies, Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing,), the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Council on Rural Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 2: Obtain data describing the local tourism market, levels of demand, planned investment, tourism revenues and broader economic impact on the community, tourism labor market, and costs & timings of tourism development. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the Vermont Tourism Data Center at the University of Vermont (<http://www.uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/>) to obtain tourism data for the state and southern Vermont.

Action 2: Contact organizations that help facilitate tourism in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain tourism data for the state and southern Vermont.

Expected Results: Tourism data will be obtained.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, the Vermont Tourism Data Center at the University of Vermont, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Council on Rural Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 3: Develop a comprehensive inventory of existing local recreational activities in all four seasons (such as Art on the Mountain art shows, walking trails, visiting natural amenities like the Green Mountain Giant, and motorcycle runs).

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Contact the Vermont Tourism Data Center at the University of Vermont (<http://www.uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/>) to obtain information on existing local recreational activities in all four seasons.

Action 2: Contact organizations that help facilitate tourism in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain existing local recreational activities in all four seasons.

Expected Results: An inventory of local recreational activities throughout the year will be developed.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, the Vermont Tourism Data Center at the University of Vermont, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Council on Rural Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 4: Promote the local area as a hub from where to explore the region. Identify unique aspects of the Deerfield Valley (i.e., identify great events or famous current or former residents, writers, musicians, etc.) to include in visitor information.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Identify unique aspects of Deerfield Valley including great events, famous current or former residents through research at the Dover Historical Society and the Historical Society of Wilmington.

Action 2: Contact organizations that help facilitate tourism in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) for assistance on how to develop a promotional campaign including unique aspects of the two towns.

Expected Results: A publicity campaign promoting Dover and Wilmington as a regional hub will be launched.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, Dover Historical Society, the Historical Society of Wilmington, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Council on Rural Development

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 2-3 years

Objective 5: Actively promote local tourist activities through various venues including by posting local hiking trail maps on line, creating point of interest maps, posting information at available marquees and other key meeting places, and providing visitor information on travel websites like www.visitvermont.com.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list of existing and proposed promotional materials for local tourist activities.

Action 2: Determine the locations where this information can be placed throughout the towns and online including but not limited to town websites, marquees, meeting places, and travel websites.

Action 3: Contact the organizations that manage those locations for specifics as to how to provide this information to them.

Action 4: Once information is provided, contact the hosting organizations every 2-3 months to provide them with updated information or to see if any additional assistance is required.

Expected Results: The tourist activities offered in Dover and Wilmington will be widely publicized.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, town websites, marquees, meeting places, and travel websites

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 6: Utilize local, state, federal and private funding sources to support the plan.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Develop a list and calendar of all the state and federal grant programs available to Dover and Wilmington to support this plan by visiting the website for the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont (<http://crs.uvm.edu/municipal/#grants>).

Action 2: Conduct internet research on private grant and funding programs to support this plan.

Action 3: Contact local legislators for information about funding sources to support this plan.

Expected Results: Grant and funding programs will be utilized to support this plan.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Responsibility: Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 7: Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other tourism organizations to actively utilize the internet to promote the local activities in both towns and the area.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Develop a list of existing and proposed promotional materials for local tourist activities that can be posted online.
- Action 2:** Contact tourism organizations including but not limited to the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to determine how best to utilize the internet to promote local activities.
- Action 3:** Once information is provided, contact the tourism organizations every 2-3 months to provide them with updated information or to see if any additional assistance is required in addition to regularly updating the information posted on the websites of Dover and Wilmington.
- Expected Results:** The Towns of Dover and Wilmington will actively utilize the internet to promote local activities to tourists.
- Possible Resources:** Volunteer time, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Council on Rural Development, Town webmasters
- Responsibility:** Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)
- Timing:** 6-12 months

Objective 8: Determine means and methods to expand tourism on the shoulders of the ski season and other seasons.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Contact organizations that help facilitate tourism in Vermont including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (www.travel-vermont.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain information about expanding tourism before and after the ski season and into other seasons.
- Action 2:** Search for ways in which the towns can help expand the tourist-seasons including but not limited to grant and funding programs and volunteer organizations.
- Expected Results:** The towns will see more tourists visiting Dover and Wilmington outside the ski season.
- Possible Resources:** Volunteer time, Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Council on Rural Development
- Responsibility:** Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)
- Timing:** 2-5 years

Objective 9: Encourage Downtown businesses in both towns to cater to multiple publics. Encourage entertainment and food related businesses to stay open later and longer during the year. LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Determine the different segments of the population that are currently underserved by downtown businesses.
- Action 2:** Determine ways in which downtown businesses can better serve those customers by obtaining guidance from tourist-related organizations including but not limited to Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing (VDTM) (www.vermontpartners.org), the Southern Vermont Regional Marketing Program (www.southernvermont.com), the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) and Smart Growth Vermont (www.smartgrowthvermont.org).
- Action 3:** Search for ways in which the towns can help support these changes including but not limited to grant and funding programs and volunteer organizations.
- Expected Results:** Downtown businesses in Dover and Wilmington will better cater to a wide-range of customers.
- Possible Resources:** Volunteer time, downtown businesses, Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing (VDTM), the Vermont Council on Rural Development and Smart Growth Vermont
- Responsibility:** Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)
- Timing:** 1-2 years

Objective 10: To establish festivals that celebrate the area and enables merchants to make a profit. LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Determine which festivals are already occurring or planned in southern Vermont on a regular basis.
- Action 2:** Brainstorm with local merchants and residents to determine what types of festival(s) should be established in Dover and Wilmington.
- Action 3:** Contact state agencies and affiliated organizations including, but not limited to the Vermont Agency on Agriculture (www.vermontagriculture.com), the Vermont Arts Council (www.vermontartscouncil.org) and the Vermont Council on Rural Development (www.vtrural.org) to obtain information about establishing festivals in small towns such as Dover and Wilmington.
- Expected Results:** One or more new festivals will be established in the two towns.
- Possible Resources:** Volunteer time, local merchants, residents, Vermont Agency on Agriculture, the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Council on Rural Development
- Responsibility:** Refer to Implementation Strategy (starting on page 42 of this Plan)
- Timing:** 1-5 years

Toward Implementation and Benchmarking for Success

The old adage “if every one is responsible nobody is” too often dooms a community’s best intentions. While volunteerism is a cornerstone of many towns’ governmental structure, it can only provide limited support on a time-available basis, and may not always contain the requisite expertise. **The success and effectiveness of the proposed strategic action plan will depend on the Towns’ ability to get professional staff (see objective #1) that will initiate and monitor the actions recommended.** The Tri-Town Economic Development Committee (TTEDC), with the help of a profession Planner, can and should assume a pro-active role in economic development. The proposed action agenda is such that professional expertise and responsibility will be necessary to achieve them. Together, the TTEDC and the Planner will be able to establish on-going and long-term attention to the various tasks. The planner’s position will readily provide expertise and day-to-day contacts and responsibilities in dealing with development issues. Such a position is very highly supported in this proposed economic development strategy. A draft job description for the Planner is presented in the Appendix.

The second critical element in the implementation of this plan is the need for both Towns to work on a regional platform. The need to forge a regional identity, to work regional organizations, and perhaps form a regional economic development organization that can secure state and federal funding sources to protect the overall character and promote growth nodes where applicable. What follows are actions that will support both local efforts and foster a more regional agenda.

Objective 1: Create a full time professional planner position. The success of this economic development plan is highly contingent on the EDC securing some full-time professional staff to initiate and monitor many of the actions proposed. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
HIGH COST (Above \$10,000)

Action 1: Approve the Professional Planner Position and Job Description (Appendix D)

Action 2: Develop funding for direct and indirect expenses

Action 3: Conduct interviews and hiring

Expected Results: This person would have the goal of diversifying economic base of the two towns and creating employment choice for local residents. After three years, there will be more companies, more jobs

Possible Resources: The cost of a full-time Planner is approximately \$60,000 per year, for the first 3 years, from the Towns’ budgets. After that time, a portion of the salary may be raised through grants, fundraising activities and private sector support.

Timing: 1 - 12 months

Objective 2: Examine different organizational structures (such as a public entity, a private group or a public/private partnership) to determine which is appropriate for the two towns. SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Review the advantages and disadvantages of various organizational structures to determine how best to guide long-term economic development efforts in the two towns.

Action 2: Learn what types of organizations best coordinate economic development efforts in other areas of Vermont.

Action 3: Determine if any existing organizations can undertake the implementation of this plan and monitor its progress.

Expected Results: The type of organization structure to best implement this plan and monitor its progress will be identified.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Timing: 12-18 months

Objective 3: To charge the Tri-Town Economic Development Committee to stimulate economic development in the two-town area for the long term. To require this committee to report before each town's annual town meeting on the state of the local economy and on the progress of this plan.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Approve a Dover-Wilmington Economic Development Committee Authorization formally authorizing the Committee to stimulate the economic development in Dover and Wilmington for the long term.

Action 2: This Committee should provide an overview of the state of the local economy and on the progress of this plan to the elected officials in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington every 3 months as well as at each town's annual meeting.

Expected Results: A Dover-Wilmington Economic Development Committee with the goal of stimulating the economic development in Dover and Wilmington for the long term will be established and will report the state of the local economy and the progress of this plan regularly (including at annual town meetings) to the two towns.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 4: Determine tasks that can be completed in 60-90 day intervals (such as information cards describing upcoming events, seasonal plantings & lights, trails signage, web notices, maps showing local attractions, etc.). Determine optimal timing of benchmarks (such as 5-year updates with annual feedback, 20-year plan & vision, etc.)

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Sort tasks into short-term (60-90 days) and long-term (more than 90 days) timeframes.

Action 2: Review status of tasks on a regular basis (short-term tasks after 3 months, long-term tasks after 6 months)

Action 3: Coordinate the benchmarks with those of existing progress reports or plans for the two towns.

Expected Results: Short-term tasks and benchmarks will be established.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time

Timing: 6-12 months

Objective 5: To establish a legislative agenda concerning long-term legislative economic development needs.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine which legislative issues the towns should raise to ensure long-term economic development success.

Action 2: Contact local legislators and elected officials in the two towns to determine the current legislative issues of note.

Action 3: Contact local economic development assistance organizations to determine which issues they would like to add to the legislative agenda.

Expected Results: A legislative agenda focusing on long-term economic development needs will be developed.

Possible Resources: Volunteer time, local legislators, local economic development assistance organizations

Timing: 1-5 years

Objective 6: Reinforce the importance of communication and information sharing, especially with small business entrepreneurs.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

Action 1: Request the local economic development assistance organizations including but not limited to the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Small Business Development Center and/or the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing give a presentation to the public about the importance of communications and information sharing.

Action 2: Share information from the presentation and about the importance of communication and information sharing with the public in a variety of ways including but not limited to postings on the Towns' websites, email distribution and newspaper articles.

Action 3: Provide networking opportunities for local businesses.

Action 4: The Towns should review their policies and practices with communication and information sharing to identify ways in which they could set a good example for the residents and businesses.

Expected Results: Better communications in the two towns will lead to a more coordinated approach to economic development efforts.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Small Business Development Center, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing

Responsibility: Tri-Town Economic Development Committee

Timing: 1-5 years

Objective 7: To explore the creation of a regionally based community and economic development corporation.

LONG TERM (0-5 Years)
HIGH COST (Over \$10,000)

Action 1: Determine what activities the Towns of Dover and Wilmington would like a regionally based community and economic development corporation to undertake.

Action 2: Develop a list of existing government agencies and organizations that currently assist businesses in Dover and Wilmington including but not limited to the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC).

Action 3: Contact the existing government agencies and organizations that currently assist businesses to determine if they could offer the services described in Action 1 above.

Expected Results: After a careful analysis, the towns will determine if a regionally based community and economic development corporation should be established.

Possible Resources: Staff and volunteer time, Vermont Small Business Development Center

Responsibility: Tri-Town Economic Development Committee

Timing: 1-2 years

Objective 8: Educate Boards and Public for the need for communications and public relations.

SHORT TERM (0-2 Years)
LOW COST (Under \$10,000)

- Action 1:** Review existing communications and public relations policies in the Towns of Dover and Wilmington with Board of Selectmen/Select Board members to determine areas of improvement.
- Action 2:** Survey the local boards (i.e., Board of Selectmen/Select Board, Planning Commission, Recreation Commission, Development Review Board, School Board Members, Library Trustees, etc.) to obtain suggestions as to the best methods to communicate with them and for them to distribute information to the public.
- Action 3:** Survey the public to determine the best way(s) to communicate with them (possibilities include a local e-mail distribution list, regular postings on the Town's websites, newspaper articles, etc.).
- Action 4:** Publicize the Tri-Town Community Calendar that is on the website for the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce through the Town's websites, press releases, etc.
- Action 5:** Request the Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce and/or the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing give a presentation to the public and the local boards about the importance of communications and public relations. Afterwards, post the information on the Towns' websites and distribute it to the Boards and the public as needed.
- Action 6:** Simplify the public relations process as much as possible by providing standardized formats for press releases, which will be approved by the Board of Selectmen/Select Board prior to submission.
- Expected Results:** A protocol for press releases and the exchange of information between the Board and the public endorsed by the Towns of Dover and Wilmington.
- Possible Resources:** Staff time or volunteer time, Mount Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce, Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing
- Responsibility:** Board of Selectmen/Select Board, Marketing Committee of Dover Economic Development Committee, Tri-Town Economic Development Committee
- Timing:** 1-6 months