

Sullivan County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies 2022

Prepared by the
Upper Valley Lake Sunapee
Regional Planning Commission



Sullivan County New Hampshire

Alternative Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy — Spring 2022

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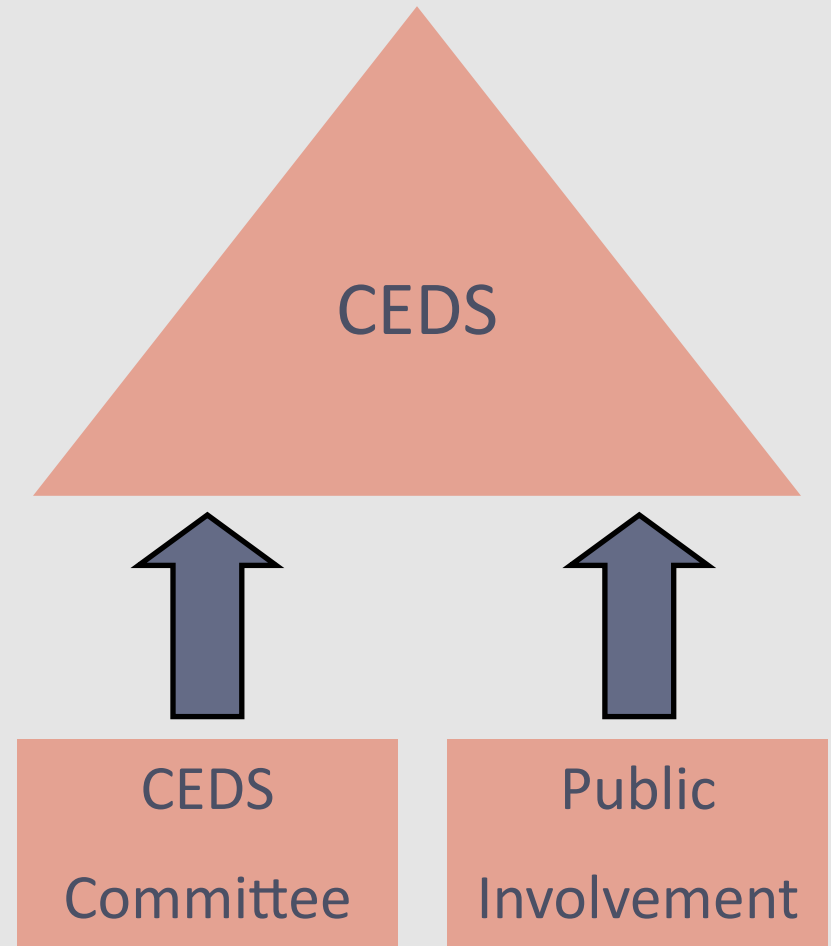
Steven Smith, WCNL AM 1010 / FM 94.7

Hon. Brian Sullivan, State Representative, Grantham

2. Responsible Parties

The CEDS document is produced in conjunction with the CEDS Committee and public involvement. CEDS Committee members are comprised of both private and public community entities, nonprofits, and other such organizations and are led by County leadership. The CEDS Committee members meet annually to discuss key topics related to the CEDS and economic development. The CEDS is updated every 5 years by the CEDS Committee. The CEDS Committee is responsible for the implementation of the CEDS Strategies.

This plan will be shared with municipalities, non-profits, school districts, employers, and any other communities of interest within the region. Their continued input is vital to the overall success of Sullivan County.



3. History, Demographics, & Background



3. Sullivan County — History

Sullivan County is located in the west-central region of New Hampshire, bordered by Grafton County to the north, Merrimack and Hillsborough County to the east, Cheshire County to the south, and the western edge of the county borders Vermont along 38 miles of the Connecticut River. At 537.3 square miles of land area and 14.7 square miles of inland water area, Sullivan County is the third-smallest county by area in the state. Sullivan County's population in the 2020 Census was 43,063, making it the second-smallest by population size in New Hampshire.

Sullivan County's current economic story cannot be fully told without recognizing the long history of people's uses of and impacts on the Connecticut River Valley. Prior to European settlement, the Abenaki people lived in the modern-day regions of New Hampshire, Vermont, Western Maine, Southern Québec and Northern Massachusetts, developing the land for agriculture, hunting the native fauna, and establishing a network of footpaths which many of the roads still follow to this day. The importance of the Connecticut River as a vital transportation route is evidenced by centuries of use to move goods and people from the White Mountains to the Long Island Sound.

While most of Southern New England was being settled by Europeans in the 1600's, the upper Connecticut River Valley was still considered frontier and remained sparsely settled. Only after the end of the French and Indian War did the New Hampshire and Vermont frontier open up for more Colonial American settlers, mostly from Connecticut. Finding prime agricultural land along the Connecticut River, they began with farming but soon turned to more industrious ventures. They cleared forests and harnessed rivers, building mills to power early industries with the first gristmill being constructed in 1767 along the Sugar River, soon followed by the first cotton mill in 1813. In 1820, mill owners from Claremont, Sunapee, and Newport joined together to make the Sunapee Dam Corporation, harnessing the power of the Sugar River with over 120 water wheels that could power mills even during drought. The mechanical skills of the region would evolve over time and help the young United States usher in the Industrial Age as more mills and factories sprang up on the banks of the Sugar River, connecting to trade networks via the new Concord-Claremont Railroad.

3.1 History of the Mills

In the 1830s, local investors banded together in Claremont to establish mills in the city center, incorporating as Monadnock Mills in 1842 and continuing until 1932.

These mills started with raw cotton, spun wool and plain cotton goods but technological advances meant that by 1870 they were making fancy linens, including America's first Marseille quilts but by the Great Depression, demand and sales had dropped off. The Monadnock Mills were sold to a Maine company and soon closed.

Sullivan Machine Company began in 1868 to make highly engineered diamond-tipped mining technology, supplying much of the equipment for expanded mineral extraction across the American West. By 1920 it was the largest machine company in New Hampshire and the largest employer in Claremont with 1,200 employees. Unfortunately, they had reached its capacity within the city and moved their headquarters to the Midwest.

Manufacturing continued in Claremont, but in 1946 Sullivan merged with three other manufacturers to form Joy Manufacturing. By 1983, foreign manufacturing had cut so deeply into their sales that in 1984, the company was sold and closed.



Top: Monadnock Mills, 1891. Appears in the Frederick Hastings Rindge collection, Cambridge Historical Commission

Bottom: Monadnock Mills, current day, after renovation

3.2 Connection and Modernization

In the 1870's the Sugar River Railroad was completed, connecting Sullivan County with Concord to gain direct access to ports to the east and all points west via rail.

Railroad was the ticket to the region's explosive growth from 1870-1910: before this time access to outside markets meant long trips over bumpy roads. The region's mills and downtowns were mostly built in this era, and the historic buildings most in demand are from this time. The unique architecture of mills and other brick buildings are readily adaptable to today's needs.

Today Sullivan County is one of the most well-connected regions in the United States. You can quickly move your goods anywhere in the world with easy connections to the US Eastern Seaboard and Canadian Maritime Provinces or Québec via:

- 2 major interstates (I-89 and I-91)
- Multimodal freight connections
- Freight rail lines connecting to Atlantic ports and western rail lines
- Regional airport adjacent to the county and also within 2 hours of the #2 and #3 freight airports in New England (BDL & MHT)



Picture: Newport, NH rail station, souvenir postcard from late 1800s.

3.3 Sullivan County's Small Towns

The small towns surrounding Claremont and Newport were primarily agricultural in nature and relied upon the larger towns for access to most modern amenities.

Post-Civil War, westward expansion caused a large population drop in many of the smaller towns, some of which are still below their peak population from 1850.

Sullivan County's balance between the rural small towns and the more industrialized areas of Claremont and Newport has largely continued to this day.

The one difference now is that instead of being primarily agricultural, the small towns are mostly residential with some agriculture, forestry, small industry and trade shops.

The small-town lifestyle is highly desirable for many, with local schools, active local governments, and community institutions that can counterbalance the high demands of modern society, creating an ideal place for people to put down roots.



Picture: Bell Cove Historic Caboose Museum on the site of the former Newbury rail station on the shores of Lake Sunapee

3.3 Sullivan County's Small Towns

Population Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Acworth town	898	893	897	910	916	916
Charlestown town	5119	5085	5105	5174	5210	5211
Claremont city	13262	12926	12722	12894	12982	12984
Cornish town	1645	1599	1570	1591	1602	1603
Croydon town	760	766	780	790	796	796
Goshen town	813	812	819	830	836	836
Grantham town	2997	3145	3326	3371	3394	3394
Langdon town	689	699	716	726	731	731
Lempster town	1168	1194	1233	1249	1258	1258
Newport town	6454	6323	6258	6343	6386	6387
Plainfield town	2391	2376	2386	2418	2434	2435
Springfield town	1325	1396	1482	1502	1512	1512
Sunapee town	3430	3458	3522	3569	3594	3594
Unity town	1650	1634	1635	1657	1669	1669
Washington town	1126	1159	1205	1221	1229	1230
Sullivan County	43,726	43,462	43,656	44,24	44,549	44,556

Source: NHES ELMI 2018

Quality of Life

Residents of Sullivan County enjoy some of the most beautiful countryside in the nation. With rolling hills, mountain streams, and world-famous fall foliage, the outdoors is central to Sullivan County living.

Recreation opportunities abound with access to mountain biking, snowmobiling, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, and so much more.

Multiple conservation efforts have led to this point. The Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway is a loose network of preserved land from Mount Monadnock in southern New Hampshire to Mount Sunapee in Newbury. The county also contains a large stretch of the Quabbin-to-Cardigan trail network which seeks to connect green spaces from Mount Cardigan in Orange to the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts.

Sullivan County is home to several state parks and forests, giving residents ample access to natural beauty. Pillsbury State Park in Washington is one of the state's largest and provides multiple recreational opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Economics

Manufacturing has played a very large role in Sullivan County's past and still dominates more of the county's economy than other counties in the state. New Hampshire has leveled off to have about 12.7% of its workforce in manufacturing, but Sullivan County is still above 16%. The manufacturers in Sullivan County are not the same as the manufacturers of old – rather, they are smaller, more nimble shops with fewer employees. Over half of all manufacturing shops in Sullivan County have fewer than 5 employees, and over 2/3 of them have fewer than 9 employees.

Sullivan County is ready for small, nimble manufacturing.

Source: 2020 Census

From 2015-19, manufacturing in Sullivan County dropped from 19% of all jobs to 16.3%. (NH: 12.7%). Manufacturers in Sullivan County are smaller today than their predecessors, with over 2/3 having fewer than 9 employees.

Growing sectors: retail, transportation/warehousing, finance, management, educational services, health care, arts/entertainment/recreation

Retracting sectors: agriculture/forestry, construction, wholesale, manufacturing

SC 2018 GDP: \$1.73 Billion

NH 2018 GDP: \$87.62 Billion

Demographics

Population (2020): **43,063**

Projected (2040): **44,556**

Median Age: **46.3**

96.3% white, **1.6%** Hispanic

18.9% under 18

20.8% over 65

Workforce and Employment

Active workforce: **58%** (NH: 64.7%).

Sullivan County makes up **2.9%** of NH's workforce

Unemployment rate: **2.3%** (Oct 2021)
(NH: 2.2%)

Median annual earnings:

High school graduate: **\$35,737** (NH: \$36,311)

Bachelor's degree: **\$54,514** (NH: \$57,385)

9.6% of Sullivan County is self-employed

Over **75%** of all businesses in Sullivan County employ fewer than 10 people

Source: 2015-19 ACS, 2020 Census

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Economics

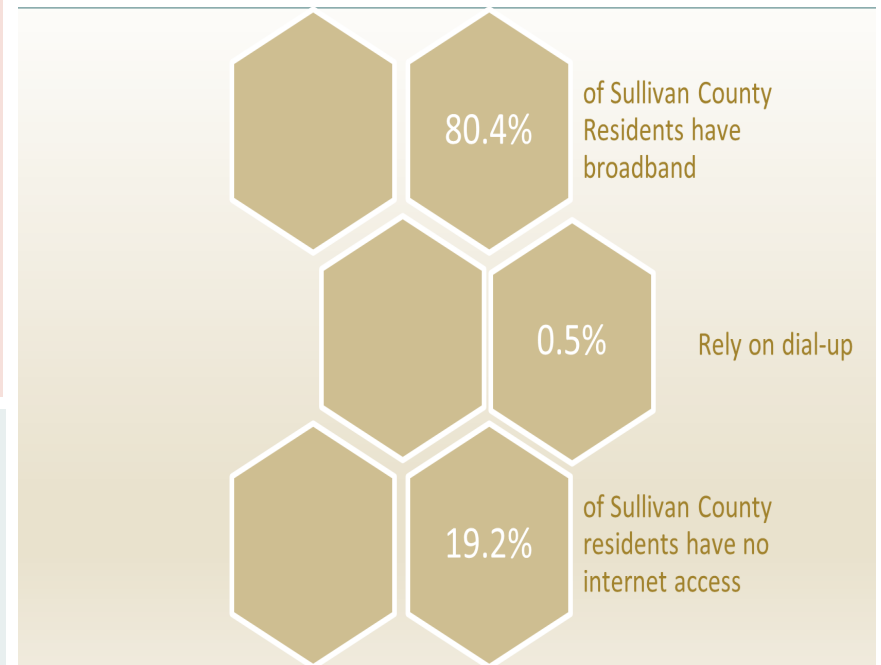
Digital Divide in Sullivan County

Those with high speed internet:

- **92.8%** of earners over \$75k
- **78.8%** of earners between \$20k-75k
- **56.3%** of earners below \$20k

Broadband and Cellular

Broadband and cellular coverage is adequate for the populated areas of the county but more expansion is needed in the outer reaches. Faster options such as fiber optic and 5G have not yet been expanded into much of rural New Hampshire.



3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Modern Communications

Sullivan County is served by Consolidated Communications for most of its landline telephones, and the three major cellular networks all have a presence in the area. However, tower location and directional cellular data shows that most cellular towers are aimed at the interstates, leaving large areas uncovered. A large swath of the middle of the county has decent reception – there are towers near Lake Sunapee, pointed over the lake and paralleling NH-11/103 through Newport and into Claremont. The rest of the county leaves much to be desired for cell service.

Internet access is a must to be able to participate in today's modern society. Sullivan County is ready for business with broadband coverage of 87.6%. Unfortunately, Sullivan is the third lowest covered county in the state behind Coös and Cheshire, and under the state average of 89.6%. Sullivan County's topography and relation to the rest of the state hinder some areas for broadband build-out, such as Springfield with only 34% of the town covered and Lempster where only 13% of the town has access to high speed internet, making it the least connected town in the state.

Not everyone is lacking internet – the digital divide is prevalent in Sullivan County with 92.8% of people making more than \$75k having high speed internet compared to just 56.3% of those making less than \$20,000. That number jumps to 78.8% of people making between \$20k-74k. Those residents on the lower end of earnings are falling behind and losing access to opportunities because of the lack of internet availability.

That being said, a large number of Sullivan County residents DO have access to the internet and would only benefit from faster speeds and better infrastructure.

5G infrastructure has rolled out in the more populated areas of New England. Studies from Accenture have shown that expanding 5G into New Hampshire will bring \$6 billion in new GDP, \$10.7 billion in additional sales, and 63,000 jobs created.* A study from Deloitte found that rural towns are not gaining access as much as urban areas, and that the problem in rural areas is a lack of infrastructure investment. "Fiber and wireline buildout or extension is expensive given middle-mile capacity can be a bottleneck; lack of specialized labor for deployment, operations and services."**

Sources:

* <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/high-tech/5g-economic-impact>

** <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/process-and-operations/us-broadband-for-all-economic-growth.pdf>

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Housing

Like most of New Hampshire, housing is at a premium in Sullivan County. However, it remains one of the more affordable corners of the state, with competitive rents and home prices. Recent housing has largely been on either end of the spectrum — \$50-100,000 homes or \$300,000+ ones — creating a high demand for middle-of-the-market housing. The region is in short supply of traditional “starter homes,” creating ample opportunities for those willing to meet this need. When combined with public input and resident feedback, creative solutions such as cottage courts and village planning can contribute to a community-building laboratory of sorts. Sullivan County has room for targeted development that meets the needs of its people and businesses with available land at reasonable prices when compared to much of New England. Historic renovation and infill development provides unique opportunities for development and investment while contributing to the region’s future.

Median Gross Rent:

NH: \$1,147/mo

Sullivan County: \$1,119/mo

Vacancy Rate:

NH: 0.9%

Sullivan County: 0.5%

Source: 2015-19 ACS, 2020 Census, 2021 New Hampshire Residential Rental Cost Survey Report, NH Housing

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Housing

For home ownership, the median price of homes in Sullivan County moved from \$170,700 in 2014 to \$173,600 in 2019. Homes priced under \$300,000 have been harder and harder to find while the county saw a marked increase in both units between \$50-99,000 and \$300,000-\$999,999, meaning that the housing stock is moving apart and squeezing the middle class out of the market. Reactions in the housing market to the COVID pandemic has only caused these prices to move further in an unsustainable direction. These trends are parallel with New Hampshire as a whole but the area where there's a large difference is the number of sub-\$100k houses on the rise in Sullivan County. This can indicate an increase in mobile homes in Sullivan County as those are typically under \$100,000.

Sullivan County has a higher percentage of homeowners without a mortgage – a large leap from 2014 to 2019 indicates that the region is bucking the state trend. In 2014, it was 2/3rd with, 1/3rd without a mortgage, and in 2019 it was 57%/43%. Perhaps this is a benefit as more homeowners are able to tap into home equity for improvements or rehabilitation.

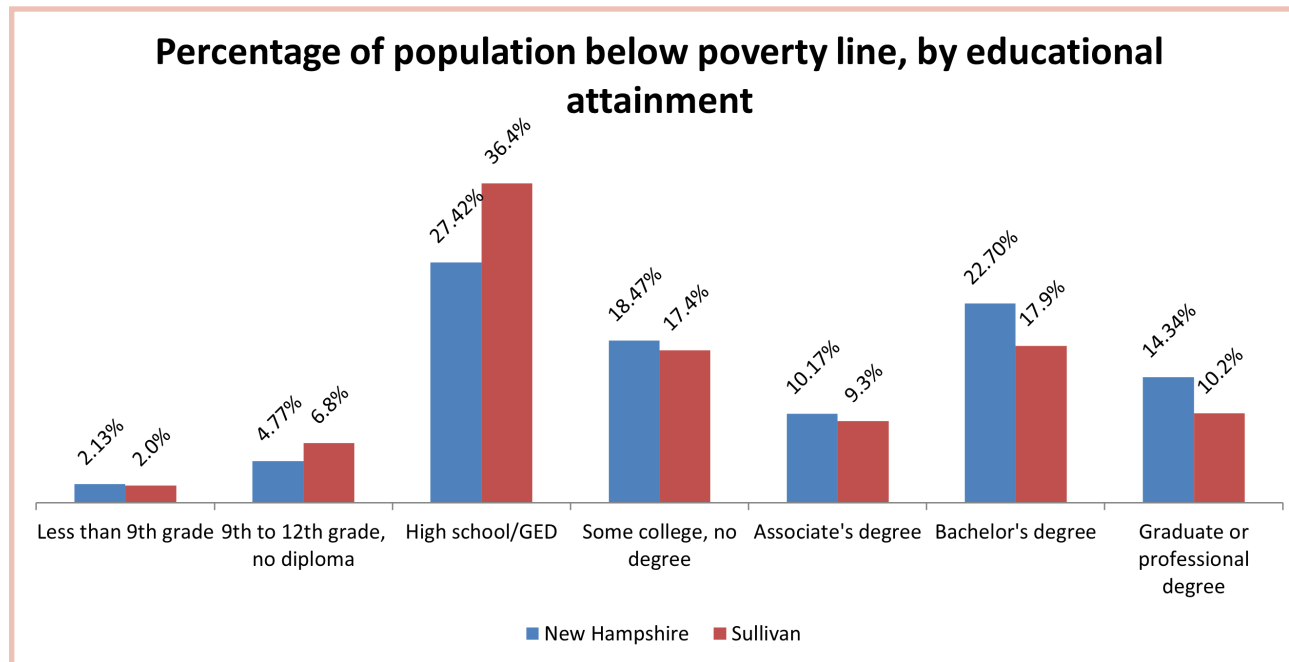
Sullivan County does have more affordable, developable land when compared to the southern areas of the state. This can be leveraged into well-placed housing that does not increase rural sprawl. Smart developments of homes, close to existing infrastructure, can alleviate the crunch on the middle housing market. Older homes that have fallen into disrepair can be restored and returned to the market and vacant lots in cities like Claremont filled in with vibrant development.

Sullivan County is in need of middle-market housing, but is well-positioned to grow.

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Education

Sullivan County has a relatively educated workforce with 9.3% having an associate's, 18% bachelor's, 7.7% Master's, 1.4% with a professional degree and 1% holding a doctorate. Only 8.8% of the county's population has not attained a high school degree or the equivalent (NH: 6.7%). When looked at closer, the numbers show that women are more likely to be higher educated, attaining a higher rate of high school graduation and a higher rate of all degrees with the exception of doctorate. However, the county is overall less educated than the state as a whole, with a much higher percentage of people only having a high school diploma (36.4% vs 28.1%). A lack of access to secondary education and a history of jobs that required only minimal schooling led to this trend. Those in Sullivan County without a high school diploma have a 1 in 3 chance of living in poverty, compared to a 1 in 20 chance if they have a bachelor's degree or higher. The earning difference between a high school dropout and a high school graduate is \$26,826 vs \$35,737 in Sullivan County. However, with a bachelor's the earning potential becomes more than double that of a high school drop out with \$54,514 in average annual earnings. Even additional training in specialized industries can improve on the earnings of a high school graduate.

Adult education is the key to lowering the number of those without high school diplomas as well as improving the earning potential of the population.



Source: 2015-19 ACS, 2020 Census

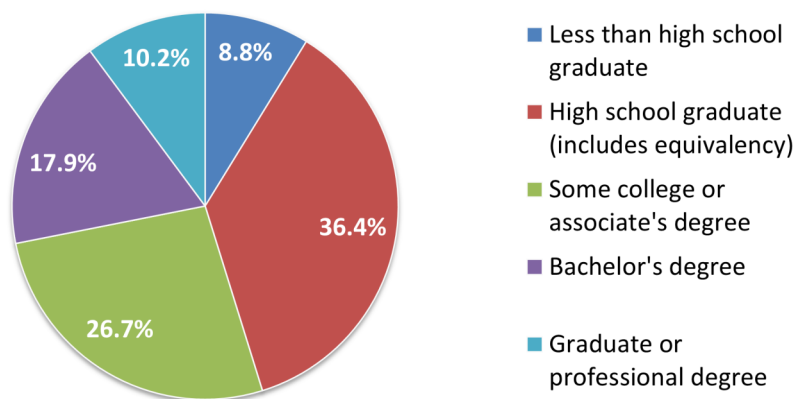
3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Education

Sullivan County has a community college and two high-school level regional technical centers (Claremont, Newport). These RTCs have done adult education in the past, and have the infrastructure ready to hold more classes in the future. Partnerships with employers have happened in the past, but funds are needed to get more adult education programs off the ground.

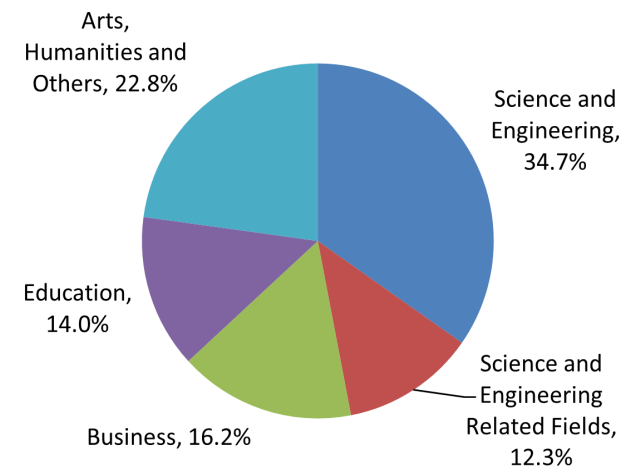
Sullivan County is ready for more technical education to continue its manufacturing tradition in the 21st century.

18.4% of native-born population in Sullivan County holds bachelor's degree or higher (NH: 21.5%) while 35.5% of those born in a different state have a bachelor's degree or higher (NH: 41.9%).

Sullivan County Educational Attainment



Type of Degree (Sullivan County)



Source: 2015-19 ACS, 2020 Census

3.4 Sullivan County by the Numbers — Transportation

Transportation in Sullivan County is, like most parts of the country, automobile-centered. An overwhelming majority drives to work each day (92%) but carpooling is higher here as only 82.4% of people rode alone. A small number (2.3%) walked to work each day, and we can assume that a vast majority of those are in the larger population centers of Claremont and Newport.

Opportunities exist within Sullivan County for expanded bicycle access and improved pedestrian infrastructure.

When traveling to their place of employment, over half of the people work within the county (55.6%) while about one third (31.3%) work in a New Hampshire county other than Sullivan. Over 13% work in a different state and given Sullivan County's geography, these jobs are all likely in Vermont. Similar to other rural areas, car ownership is crucial for transportation and 97.9% of residents have access to a car, with over 80% of people having access to either two or three cars.

Sullivan County can get to work, no problem.

Overwhelmingly, residents of Sullivan County drive places by car, due in large part to the rural nature of the region and the distance between destinations. Public transit does exist, with buses operating in Claremont on a fee-per-ride basis and commuter buses to

Charlestown and Newport. Southwestern Community Services recently began (July 2020) running a commuter shuttle between Claremont and Lebanon along the NH-120 corridor, fulfilling a long-standing need of both communities.

These transit options are vital to those who depend on them and need continued support.

Rail freight still operates along the western edge of the county, with most of the operations being in Claremont or Charlestown. Rail freight is one of the most economical methods of moving goods to market and with transmodal loading facilities in Claremont and Charlestown, ***Sullivan County is ready to ship.***

Sullivan County's Passenger Rail Connections:

Montreal, QC
Springfield, MA and all points west
Hartford, CT
New Haven, CT
New York City
Philadelphia
Baltimore
Washington, DC

3.5 Sullivan County — Transport and Logistics

One interstate passes through the northeastern corner of the county – Interstate 89 which runs from Concord, NH to the Vermont/Québec border and on to Montreal. The towns of Grantham and Springfield have small, relatively undeveloped exits in this remote stretch of highway. Most of western Sullivan County is within a short distance to Interstate 91 which goes from New Haven, CT to Littleton, NH along the Connecticut River.

I-91 is a crucial backbone for all Connecticut River Valley economic activity and Sullivan County is well-positioned along its route. I-89 is a vital link to the rest of New Hampshire.

Within the county, the state highways of NH-10, NH-11, NH-12, NH-103 and NH-120 provide connectivity between the communities. NH-11 and NH-103 run concurrently as the main east-west axis between the Connecticut River in Claremont, through Newport and Sunapee before reaching Interstate 89 in Springfield. NH 10 and 12 provides southern Sullivan County with access to Keene and the Monadnock Region while NH 12A and NH 120 connect the northern part of the county with Lebanon and the rest of the Upper Valley.

Claremont has a small, city-owned municipal airport for charter and private flights located on the western side of town, offering 24/7 access for pilots with airplane services and fuel. It features a 3100' x 100' length paved runway with two landing strips of 2045' and 3100'. Sullivan County does not have an airport with regular passenger service but has access to regional airline carrier Cape Air from the airport in Lebanon, NH with regular service to New York City (White Plains, NY with shuttles to Manhattan) and Boston (Logan). Manchester-Boston Regional Airport is no more than 75 miles away from most areas in the county. The western side of the county is close to I-91 in Vermont and the distance to Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, CT is about 120 miles. Both of these airports are in larger metropolitan areas but Sullivan County's proximity to both gives them a unique advantage through additional transit corridors.

3.5 Sullivan County — Energy and Utilities

Sullivan County draws its electricity from one of three main utilities: Eversource, New Hampshire Electric Co-Op, and Liberty Utilities. These are three of the top four electric companies in the state, so reliability of the grid is well-integrated. Sullivan County has robust transmission capabilities, with major transmission lines running north/south along the Connecticut River. The lines split in Claremont and head east roughly parallel to NH-11 in order to connect to the main transmission spines in Andover and Bristol, NH. The main north-south transmission that runs along the western border of the county is well-suited for expansion and operational capabilities. The city of Claremont has wisely placed their industrial parks along these transmission corridors, allowing easy access to the large amounts of power needed for industrial applications.

Sullivan County is juiced up and ready for industry to plug in!



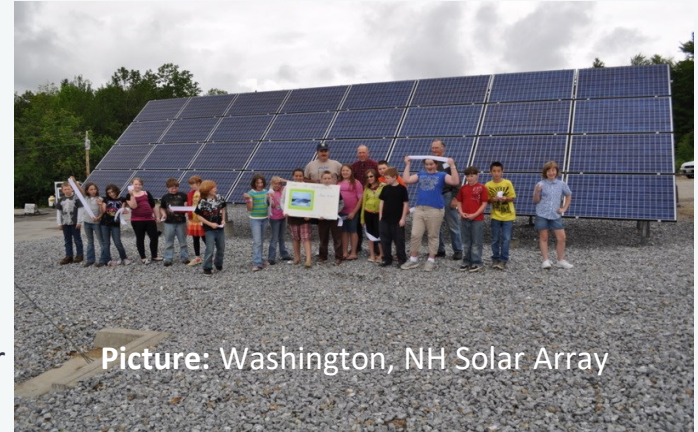
Picture: New Hampshire Electric Co-Op turning on the power in Lempster in 1939

3.5 Sullivan County — Energy and Utilities

Solar, hydro, and wind are emerging industries in Sullivan County. New Hampshire on the whole has been slower to adopt alternative energy yet some progress is being made despite a lack of incentives that other states have for energy efficiency and alternative energy.

Sullivan County is home to the first – and still the largest – wind farm in the state, the Lempster Mountain Wind Power Project. Online since 2008, it produces 24 megawatts from 12 turbines. Solar power is slowly taking off, with larger projects being led by the municipalities. Claremont added a solar farm at their wastewater treatment plant, coming online in 2018 with a capacity of 151 kW. Newport – also known as the **Sunshine Town** – has taken solar energy to heart by operating Newport Town Solar, coming online in 2020 with an initial capacity of 250 kW and plans for more. The village of Eastman in Grantham has a solar farm with a 260 kW capacity to offset their residents' usage. **There is still a great deal of potential for solar and wind projects all throughout Sullivan County.**

Hydroelectric dams have a long and storied history in Sullivan County. While the Connecticut River is dammed to the north (Wilder Dam) and south (Bellows Falls) for electric generation, the Sugar River has been used for over 200 years to power industry, a tradition that continues to this day. Harnessing the power of the river's flow, six different hydropower dams are located on the Sugar River producing a combined 4.5 megawatts. This is a small amount of energy, but an important source for reliability and resiliency for the industries which rely on them. **As more environmentally-friendly hydropower technologies come to market, Sullivan County is ready to harness its energy.**



Picture: Washington, NH Solar Array



4. SWOT Analysis and Stakeholder Group



4.1 SWOT Analysis and TOWS Exercise

In the winter of 2022, a Stakeholder committee was assembled and asked to undertake a SWOT analysis of economic development in Sullivan County. We asked the group to think of their first impressions of the region in regards to workforce, quality of life, resources, and infrastructure. We brainstormed **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** to Sullivan County's economic prosperity and visualized those suggestions in order to identify common themes.

We then took the brainstorming and crossed the internal factors (Strengths and Weaknesses) and the external factors (Opportunities and Threats), and then overlaying each category with the others to give a TOWS analysis where we were match each column with each of the others to identify and prioritize the needs of the region and the best path forward.

These activities guided the development of the Goals/Objectives/Strategies and can be found in the appendix.

4.2 Visioning Statement: Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The Stakeholder Committee developed a visioning statement to guide our goals:

“Sullivan County will be a vibrant, inclusive, and industrious community recognized for the adaptability of its workforce, the diversity of its economy, and its abundance of natural, educational, and cultural opportunities.”

4.2 Visioning Statement: Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The Stakeholder Committee centered our goals around the three pillars of People, Places, and Things. Each pillar had an underlying theme that guided the strategy development.

PEOPLE

Increase and expand economic growth opportunities for residents

PLACES

Establish Sullivan County as a unique destination for all in the 21st century

THINGS

Bridge the gap between Sullivan County's 20th century prosperity and its 21st century potential

People: Increase and expand economic growth opportunities for residents

Goal 1 : Develop and sustain an adaptable workforce

Objective 1: Coordinate tech centers, makerspaces, and community college with employer needs in the region

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Align curriculum to base needs of area employers (math, science, business, technology, engineering, management) with established track programs.	Sullivan County has the tools it needs to further educate its workforce, but better coordination is needed between the educational institutions and the various employment sectors in the region. A targeted effort to establish new collaborations or strengthen existing ones would allow more communication between “town and gown” and serve to connect residents with the needs of the business community.	Establish a council between the largest employers and the educational institutions, with a focus on the needs of the employers and how the educational institutions can provide those skills to their students.	Improved curriculum Number of established track programs
B. Celebrate the trades as a worthwhile career for all students, outreach to underrepresented populations to advance via trades.	In recent years, many young people have been steered away from the trades and toward college when it may not have been a good fit, resulting in student loan debt and a decrease in economic power. Sullivan County will promote the trades as a worthwhile career with limitless opportunities and ensure the underlying framework to support a young person choosing the trades. By directly engaging with various trade sectors and unions, opportunities can be identified and promoted.	Increase hands-on activities with students such as career fairs, internships, and apprenticeships. Target events for underserved communities within the trades, such as women and minorities, can find a career for new advancement with targeted outreach.	Number of outreach events
C. Microenterprise investments to bolster the biggest sector of the local economy – small businesses	Many small businesses start at a kitchen table, in a garage, or as a vague idea. When people are given the tools to grow and expand their idea into a money-making business, more money stays locally and increases the buying power.	Increase access to microenterprise training and resources through investment in trainings and programs	Amount of dollars spent
D. Expand childcare access for all and expand career opportunities for those going into the field.	One of the top barriers to entering the workforce is the cost and availability of childcare. Increasing availability of childcare is a key component of building up Sullivan County’s workforce.	Provide or subsidize training and skills to new childcare workers Encourage combining childcare education with entrepreneurial education to add new skills and add new childcare access.	Number of childcare facilities Number of childcare workers Number of children served

Goal 1 : Develop and sustain an adaptable workforce**Objective 2: Expand educational offerings**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Expand and encourage adult education in various sectors	Currently, few options exist for adult education in Sullivan County aside from limited places to earn your GED/HiSET. Increasing access to educational opportunities allows residents to learn new skills and boost their economic prospects. By allowing people to earn their high school equivalency diploma, update their skills, or learn new technology, employers will have a better educated workforce to hire from for tomorrow's jobs.	Facilitate meeting with educational partners to develop more robust adult education programs	Number of adult education courses/ students
		Create a scholarship program to subsidize adult education opportunities	Dollars spent
B. Investment in Career Technical Centers in Claremont and Newport	There are high school Career and Technical Centers (CTCs) in both the Claremont and Newport school districts. However, their primary funding is through local property taxes and their investment has lagged, leaving these communities with costly measures to update and improve the campuses. The educational offerings at both campuses need modernization and coordination to keep up with the existing job market. By coordinating efforts, both CTCs can carve out a niche in their communities and provide high school students with marketable skills for the modern job market.	Draft comprehensive plan to invest in and modernize CTC resources with Claremont and Newport schools districts.	Dollars spent Documented plan
C. Encourage job skills training based on both the needs of area employers and the modernization of technology in general.	Modern jobs require modern skills. Existing industries are finding that the previous amount of skills training is not enough to be ready to compete in the global economy. Technological advances in manufacturing, healthcare, and other sectors mean that new skills must be developed to be able to effectively work within today's market. With an eye toward the exact skills of area employers, Sullivan County will coordinate educational offerings and skills improvements between educational institutions and the local, national, and global economy.	Facilitate networking and county-wide meetings of educators and various business sectors to encourage coordination of needed skills for local employers	Number of new educational offerings
D. Increase apprenticeship and internship programs and expand sector use	Classrooms and technical centers are one way to learn skills, but many careers are best learned in hands-on, on-the-job training. Apprenticeship and internship programs are an important segment of skills training as they represent a worthwhile investment in the employee and provide the employer with a worthwhile employee. Increasing access to apprenticeship and internship programs and expanding their use in new sectors would provide a path towards a new, more lucrative career for many residents.	Invest in apprenticeship and internship programs to encourage employers to support these opportunities	Dollars spent Number of apprenticeships and internships

Goal 1 : Develop and sustain an adaptable workforce**Objective 3: Build on established community traditions to bring new residents to the region**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Seek out “boomerang” people returning to the northeast; give current youth an anchor to always call home.	Much has been said about the flight of youth from states like New Hampshire. Research has found that when people move to New Hampshire, they are further along in their careers and looking for a place to settle down and establish roots. Whatever path they take, these people see New Hampshire as an alternative to the hustle and bustle of other East Coast metropolitan areas. Sullivan County can position itself as a great alternative to more congested areas of the state while remaining accessible to major markets and attractions.	Host a series of community-wide events to promote Sullivan County as a great place to live, work, and play. Host an event geared toward young professionals	Number of outreach events Number of new residents
B. Encourage opportunities for community building such as interest groups, sports leagues, community gardens, cultural festivals, and other avenues for	Community takes time to foster. After the initial onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people relocated to communities in Sullivan County to get outside of the more congested, urbanized areas. However, these new residents need ways to meet their neighbors and become familiar with community traditions both old and new. By providing a variety of opportunities for social interaction, residents from different walks of life can interact with each other, cross-pollinating the community with neighborly bonds and ideas.	Sponsor an adult sports league Sponsor cultural and “meet your neighbor” events	Number of events Number of opportunities created

Goal 1 : Develop and sustain an adaptable workforce**Objective 4: Increase awareness and access to foreign workforces**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Bring awareness of the guest worker visa program to area employers and help navigate process; identify barriers for businesses to utilize the program and work with local networks to remove them.	In economic sectors with seasonal fluctuations, guest workers from other areas are important ways to temporarily boost the local workforce when population numbers cannot sustain the demand for labor. The ski and hospitality industries have long used these programs, but with New Hampshire's labor force being squeezed even more, other sectors could utilize these programs at various times of the year to boost their productivity. Many businesses are open to the idea of participating in these programs, but barriers exist and much confusion remains.	Host trainings for employers on the worker visa program Conduct study to identify barriers for businesses to utilize the program	Number of trainings/ workshops Number of surveys/ respondents
B. Explore immigration programs and foreign investment.	Most everyone in today's United States had their ancestors arrive here at some point in our nation's history. As people across the world recognize the advantages and opportunities here in America, immigration continues to be an important pipeline in developing new workers across all sectors. Promotion of Sullivan County as a welcoming, inclusive community that will work with new immigrants as they build their new life will strengthen the bonds between neighbors and increase area diversity.	Establish a Sullivan County Welcome Committee for new residents Create outreach campaign in foreign markets	Percentage of immigrants to the region
C. Build connections between employers and social service providers to help new workers once they arrive.	New immigrants arrive in America with few, if any connections to their new home. The connections and bonds they build in their new community are important to foster, and that is why Sullivan County will work to connect employers engaged in guest worker programs with the social service providers in the region who can help new residents transition to Sullivan County quickly and smoothly.	Sponsor a welcome program to connect new residents to current residents	Program attendees

Goal 2: Encourage entrepreneurship in Sullivan County.**Objective 1: Nurture an entrepreneur culture within the county.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Develop a small business incubator and associated infrastructure with a targeted sector(s).	Small businesses are the lifeblood of New Hampshire and Sullivan County is no exception. Sector-specific incubators in Lebanon and Hanover have developed multiple biotech firms under the umbrella of Dartmouth College. Sullivan County can follow suit in other sectors by working with existing institutions and networks. A small business incubator in a specific sector can be established that attracts new talent, nurtures local ideas while diversifying our region's economy. An incubator centered around a specific industry can aid the sector's growth while providing people with the resources they need to get a footing in a new field.	Coordinate kickoff meeting of stakeholders to create a sector-specific incubator.	Number of small business incubators
B. Build and strengthen connections between local education and entrepreneurship as a career.	Much has been made of young people either going to college or starting a career in the trades, but what about those who are hungry for entrepreneurship? These students, with their bright ideas and limitless energy, are an important part of growing the local economy and filling needs that existing businesses have ignored or overlooked.	Coordinate network event between local entrepreneurs and educational institutions Develop training materials and workshops to track entrepreneurial skills	Number of new courses or trainings
C. Encourage entrepreneurship around a visitor economy/outdoor economy/arts economy.	Investment in these sectors will serve to diversify the regional economy and bolster resiliency against future sector shocks. These sectors also rely on the strengths of Sullivan County's natural resources and artisan community and will allow these elements to shine brighter and attract positive attention to Sullivan County. By seeding these sectors with new enterprises, they will take root and prove vital to Sullivan County's overall economy.	Implement projects from the Sugar River Trails Plan Sponsor a community art event	Projects implemented Number of events

Goal 2: Encourage entrepreneurship in Sullivan County.**Objective 2: Develop a Framework for small business networking and promotion.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Collaborate on promotion of Sullivan County to those outside the region.	Sullivan County has long been in the “donut hole” of New Hampshire counties as one of the smallest geographically and least populated and it is largely unknown to many within the southern part of the state.	Draft promotional materials Start a marketing campaign to promote the region	Number of promotion events
B. Expand lending opportunities for investment in small businesses	Many people have great ideas for businesses but no means to make them a reality. Others have a small business but need help making the leap to the next level of growth. Increasing awareness and expansion of existing programs, exploration of new programs, and development of programs in-house that work for our local economy.	Identify barriers to capital funds for small businesses Create an information network for grant opportunities	Grant dollars to the county
C. Nurture and encourage networking opportunities between area businesses in cross-sector and same sector as well as regional connections.	All too often, businesses fall back and rely on their usual networks which, over time, have the potential to grow stagnant. This strategy will seek to open new avenues for area businesses and residents to collaborate both within existing sectors as well as across traditional sector barriers. By creating new networks and new collaborations, new ideas and relationships will take root and help foster growth across all sectors.	Participate and expand Sullivan County participation in the South West Collaborative Economic Development Region (SW-CEDR)	Geography of network

Goal 2: Encourage entrepreneurship in Sullivan County.**Objective 3: Highlight maker economy and historical ingenuity of machining and mechanics.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Promote the entire region as one big makerspace – Sugar River Region is the Maker Valley.	It's no secret that Sullivan County's history is industrious and creative. Even today, the backbone of Sullivan County's economy is manufacturing, and small businesses with fewer than 10 employees make up a large percentage of those manufacturers. With their small size and adaptability, residents are ready to make whatever is needed. That's why the Sugar River Region is the Maker Valley – if you can think it, we can make it. New advances in technology will necessitate a quicker turnaround time and given the fickle nature of global supply chains, domestic manufacturing is a solid economic policy. Sullivan County can use the advantages of small, nimble manufacturing to contribute to both the regional and national economies.	Draft promotional materials Start a marketing campaign to promote the region	Number of promotion events
B. Collaborate with the arts and makers community to promote the maker economy.	Sullivan County is home to many artisans and makers who craft unique and one-of-a-kind products. The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen have their annual fair at Mt. Sunapee, on the border of Sullivan County, attracting visitors from all over New England for the weeklong festival.	Draft promotional materials Hold event or demonstration	Number of promotion events
C. Build on historical contributions to the state and nation in order to promote current and encourage future contributions.	The late 19 th and early 20 th century were boom times for many communities in Sullivan County, particularly the large mill towns of Claremont and Newport. As the nation expanded westward, many of the components of railroad tracks being laid across the country were made in Claremont, and millions of yards of fabric and fine lace passed through mills in the county. Times and technologies have changed, but the region's contributions to the national and global economy have continued through machining, technical components, and other unique pieces of engineering. Sullivan County will expand on its long tradition of making the supplies that build America by celebrating its past and drawing connections toward future technologies and industries where it can take the lead. where Sullivan County's ingenuity can fill a need.	Draft promotional materials Hold educational event or forum	Number of events
D. Establish and nurture connections between unique arts history of the region and today.	Sullivan County is home to a National Historic Site, St. Gaudens. It also once housed the Cornish Colony, one of the artist colonies popular in the 19 th century. Building on these historical connections to the arts, Sullivan County will expand opportunities for artists and collaborations between these historic sites and the region in order to attract residents and celebrate their unique place in our nation's arts history.	Host a workshops, hands-on experience, festival or other community events to celebrate artistic roots	Number of events

Places: Establish Sullivan County as a unique destination for all people business and family in the 21st century

Goal 1: Sullivan County will establish identity in the state and region as a unique place to do business and put down roots.

Objective 1: Sugar River Region will lean into the outdoors, arts, and other non-traditional economies.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Create a Sullivan County experience marketing campaign	Creating and celebrating a common bond within the region is a way to strengthen the sense of place residents have with their communities. Sullivan County recognizes the need to communicate the resources of our region with its residents and bring more attention to the under-recognized areas or attractions. Sullivan County will coordinate attractions into an easy-to-access guide for those looking for something to do in Sullivan County.	Create an experience attraction highlighting the Sugar River Region's trail system informed by the Sugar River Region Trails Plan. Create marketing materials and maps to serve as a guide to Sullivan County destinations, shops, and restaurants.	Number of experiences or destinations marketed
B. Promote and coordination of arts, outdoors, and visitor sectors.	These non-traditional sectors are vital to Sullivan County's economic health. Coordinating efforts within these sectors to promote the region as a destination is an effective way of combining resources, avoiding repetition, and establishment of a culture of collaboration within the communities.	Create cross-collaboration event to connect representatives from the arts, outdoors, and visitor-focused businesses Participate in and promote an event	Number of events
C. Expand micro-entrepreneurship for new business ideas targeted at the arts, outdoors, and visitor sectors.	Micro-entrepreneurship is an ideal way for someone to take a small idea and turn it into an economic reality, and by leveraging the arts, outdoors, and visitor sectors, our microentrepreneurs can have a unique angle by capitalizing on under-utilized resources within the region.	Apply for CDBG micro-entrepreneur grant funding	Number of new businesses
D. Utilize proximity to the Sugar and Connecticut Rivers as an asset and build on historic uses, natural beauty, and new, innovative connections to the rivers.	The central thread between many communities in Sullivan County has been the rivers providing food and transportation and then the water's power was harnessed for mill operations. Larger mills sprung up and supplied the growing country with many of the goods and materials they needed during rapid American expansion. However, the downturn of domestic manufacturing in the late 20 th century caused many of the mills to close, leaving unique historic riverfront buildings that sit idle. There are many more opportunities for mill rehabilitation into new uses such as high-density housing, light industrial, and mixed-use development.	Conduct inventory of renovation or rehabilitation opportunities along the rivers Identify areas for public spaces along rivers .	Opportunities identified and pursued

Goal 1: Sullivan County will establish identity in the state and region as a different place to do business and put down roots.

Objective 2: Make Sullivan County attractive to investors.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Engage with large regional and state businesses interested in expansion.	Some of the most obvious candidates to move to Sullivan County are right under our noses – our neighbors. Large businesses within the region and the state should look to Sullivan County as a place to expand their business and reach while retaining all the economic advantages of New Hampshire.	Promote Sullivan County to large businesses through promotional materials Collaborate with chambers of commerce to identify large businesses in New England and the Northeast.	Number of new businesses expanded to Sullivan County
B. Create reasons to stop in Sullivan County instead of driving through.	Due to its location in the state and its proximity to – yet disconnection from – the interstate system, most people drive around Sullivan County on the north or west. Sullivan County will look for methods to give people reasons to stop in the county and visit rather than drive around or through without stopping.	Install signage near major transportation corridors directing travelers to key destinations	Signs placed Number of visitors to Claremont Visitor Center
C. Highlight maker economy in relation to ingenuity and creativity towards tackling challenges.	Historically, Sullivan County has been made up of communities of makers – whether they are tool and die, machinists, engineers, or craftsmen. They had weathered over 150 years of technological changes in industries and have survived to this day by remaining adaptable and nimble. Today, most of the manufacturing in Sullivan County is done by small shops with fewer than 10 employees, allowing these places to keep up with industry changes and fluctuations. This strong survival skill should be celebrated and highlighted as a regional strength – that Sullivan County can get things done through hard work and ingenuity	Create marketing materials to brand the Sugar River Region as the “Maker Valley”. Draft an interactive story map highlighting the history of the Sugar River Region and post on all county and municipal websites	Marketing materials, blog posts, clicks on website

Goal 1: Sullivan County will establish identity in the state and region as a different place to do business and put down roots.

Objective 3: Enhance sense of place to highlight region's strengths

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Develop methods of aesthetic improvements based on local design, input, and needs, while developing comprehensive places for "sense of place" for each community within the county.	So much of a community's identity hinges on the pride one has for their home. It's also easy to forgo needed upgrades and improvements when budgets are tight and tough choices must be made. Sadly, this can often result in neglected properties, infrastructure being relied upon past its usefulness, and other town properties falling by the wayside.	Support municipalities in locally led initiative to beautify villages and downtowns. Create an event such as a "tour of flowers" across the county highlighting downtown gardens Use of LCHIP programs to aid in rehabilitation and historic preservation	Number of initiatives
B. Nurture and develop locally led initiatives that strengthen community bonds; work to establish local identity in villages and neighborhoods through community outreach.	Community is the difference between "being neighbors" and "belonging to a neighborhood." When residents join with their neighbors to improve their immediate surroundings, people take ownership of their place instead of thinking it's someone else's problem.	Conduct a community survey highlighting "What does community mean to you?" to inform events around building bonds Highlight local community initiatives in newsletters	Surveys conducted Articles written

Goal 2: Sullivan County will preserve, re-use, and re-imagine our historic buildings and other features.

Objective 1: Align regional plans to prioritize density within established population areas and to conserve natural areas.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Target development of historic downtowns for live/work/play.	The city of Claremont and the town of Newport each have sizable, walkable downtowns with on street parking, mixed use development, and historic buildings. These urban centers were once bustling hubs of activity in mills and factories, with workers living close to jobs and commerce attracting those from around the region. Recognizing that existing density is ideal for redevelopment due to current land use and infrastructure. Sullivan County will work to rehabilitate its historic downtown buildings and blocks.	Assist community in finding and applying for funding to rehabilitate buildings for housing in downtown areas	Housing units established
B. Target development of historic village areas with locally led projects to preserve character while also retaining residents.	By contrast, smaller towns in Sullivan County do not have urbanized infrastructure. However, many of them have small, central village districts that serve as a gathering location for town business and community events. Each village district has its own unique character and by directing resources to these areas, residents can choose how they want to best preserve the character of their community for future generations.	Meet with each municipality to identify projects in historic villages that are suitable for rehabilitation and increased density	Identified projects
C. Conduct outreach and educate municipal leaders on regional needs and each community's role to play.	Every town in Sullivan County is different from the next. Some are tranquil, hidden spots and some are bustling, popular centers but each one is intertwined with each other as residents move between each for work, home, and recreation. No matter what the size of the town, each one has a role to play within the region -- some may be best preserving natural resources while allowing development that has a smaller impact on the land, while others may have the ability to expand and grow with larger developments.	Conduct a series of outreach efforts with Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission to provide context to regional needs Schedule a convening of municipal leaders to discuss competing needs and opportunities to combine efforts and collaborate	Number of events
D. Identify and target preservation of natural resources that serve as an economic asset.	One of Sullivan County's most unique features is its natural beauty – visitors come from around the world to see the fall foliage, take part in outdoor winter activities, and enjoy the many lakes in the summer. These features are vital to Sullivan County's identity and economic success.	Continue partnership with Sullivan County Conservation District Provide support to municipal conservation commissions through media and information sharing	Media materials

Goal 2: Sullivan County will preserve, re-use, and re-imagine our historic buildings and other features.

Objective 2: Identify unique features within Sullivan County that can be leveraged for better community access and use.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Identify and explore use of riverfront properties for recreational and economic opportunities.	One of Sullivan County's most unique features is its rivers. From small, babbling mountain brooks to the Sugar River's industrious past to the Connecticut's long, wide banks, rivers have made a lasting impact on the region. Recognizing that full enjoyment of these important waterways is still a challenge, Sullivan County will seek to increase recreational access, redevelop historic properties along the river, and find new methods of economic development that center on the riverfronts.	<p>Conduct an inventory of potential recreation opportunities along the rivers</p> <p>Conduct a survey to determine what types of recreation is desired along the rivers</p>	<p>Inventory</p> <p>New recreation opportunities</p>
B. Establish and/or expand locally led initiatives to identify potential re-uses of existing structures that fit with community needs.	For a project to be successful, it needs to have community buy-in. When people direct the outcomes of their historic buildings, ideas are better able to take root because they have been grown organically from local input. Sullivan County will work with existing organizations and initiatives to preserve historic structures while also identifying gaps in the region where residents struggle with access to historic preservation resources.	<p>Participate in locally led efforts through collaboration and common events</p> <p>Assist in identifying funding sources</p>	Number of successful initiatives
C. Identify underutilized assets within Sullivan County that would suit modern needs and prioritize re-development of these areas.	Over the past few decades as the American economy changed, many of the buildings that once housed important industries have fallen by the wayside, abandoned due to clean up costs, contamination, or lack of clear ownership. Many of these sites are still located in prime areas near dense development and could offer a multitude of new uses applicable to the current needs of residents.	<p>Continue to partner with UVLSRPC to seek EPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup funding</p> <p>Encourage multi-use and housing strategies in redevelopment projects</p>	# of opportunities worked on

Goal 2: Sullivan County will preserve, re-use, and re-imagine our historic buildings and other features.

Objective 3: Re-invest in historical assets with an eye on the future.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Educate, promote, and expand historic preservation funding opportunities/tax relief programs.	Many funding opportunities exist for public bodies to rehabilitate historic structures as well as ones for private landowners. Unfortunately, knowledge of these programs is spotty at best, with a lack of coordination between different sectors and a confusing landscape. While funding does exist, access to this funding is a barrier for many in the region.	Create listserv digest to spread outreach regarding funding opportunities Partner with developers to write funding proposal for the renovation of a historic building Host an event for historic preservation groups in the county to share ideas and resources	Dollars received Buildings restored
B. Streamline bureaucratic process for historic preservation and increase access to lead abatement, brownfield, and other hazardous removal programs for residents.	The previous strategy referred to the difficulty in accessing funding for historic preservation but navigating the bureaucratic paperwork around historic redevelopment is daunting at best. Sullivan County will encourage the analysis, reconfiguration, and streamlining of historic preservation paperwork and guides to better promote use of existing state and federal programs. The simplification of the process should be paramount to allow more access to historic preservation initiatives. One of the biggest difficulties in accessing these programs is navigating the wide variety of programs for contaminated and brownfield sites. Sullivan County will also work to increase awareness of and access to these programs so more people can take advantage of existing initiatives to preserve, rehabilitate, and protect these important sites.	Contact legislators and funders to encourage improvements to funding processes and the struggle small communities face in these processes Hire a grant writer and administrator to navigate the bureaucratic processes on behalf of the municipalities of Sullivan County	Number of advocacy efforts
C. Expand training in lead abatement, hazardous material cleanup, etc. for area contractors to better service these properties.	Ideally, the aforementioned programs such as lead abatement and hazardous waste remediation would have plenty of workers to perform the dangerous tasks of removing harmful toxins from our environment. However, this sector, like many others, is experiencing a lack of employees. Sullivan County will collaborate with various sectors to expand training for new and existing contractors and others on hazardous waste cleanup and removal to meet the expected demand from rehabilitation programs. Through an increase in available workers, the wait time for clean up should diminish and structures can realize their new uses even faster.	Sponsor workshop or training for contractors focused on lead abatement Seek education funds to train contractors on a specific project	Number of trained contractors

Things: Bridge the gap between Sullivan County's 20th century prosperity and its 21st century potential

Goal 1: Build on Sullivan County's proximity to major markets.

Objective 1: Strengthen ties between the Sugar River and Upper Valley regions and the Sugar River and Monadnock regions.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Build better connections between population centers in Sullivan County and population centers in adjacent regions.	As is the case with many rural areas, wide variations emerge between different regions that seem to be close together on the map. While only separated by a short car ride, the differences between Sullivan County and that of its neighboring regions are notable and as such, should be reflected when discussing the regions of New Hampshire. The culture, the industries, the communities that have prevailed through the decades – these identifying factors have a distinct flavor in Sullivan County that lend to its uniqueness.	Have a meeting with regional leaders in the Upper Valley and Monadnock Regions to discuss economic strategy and common goals	Number of organizations in network
B. Establish and encourage regional initiatives to promote Western New Hampshire as a whole.	While each of the regions in Western New Hampshire are distinct with their own identities, they share the connection of the Connecticut River Valley and at the same time, a disconnection from the rest of the state of New Hampshire. Building on these shared attributes, Sullivan County recognizes the strength of collaboration across the regions to cover all Western New Hampshire. Sometimes referred to affectionately as “New Hampshire’s West Coast,” the Connecticut River Valley is a strong economic region of the Twin States with a diverse subset of industry sectors.	Facilitate meetings of the SW CEDR group to focus on marketing Western New Hampshire	Meetings and marketing materials
C. Establish new and strengthen existing regional alliances for workforce, housing, transportation, education, etc.	Recognizing the strength of collaboration across the broader region, Sullivan County will work to grow alliances that seek to solve some of the universal challenges facing Western New Hampshire. Workforce development, housing initiatives, transportation connectivity, and educational collaboration are examples of the types of cross-sector regional issues that require a deeper, coordinated approach.	Identify organizations doing work in the region Lead effort to convene cross-sector meetings of regional leaders	Number of organizations in network

Goal 1: Build on Sullivan County's proximity to major markets.**Objective 2: Strengthen ties between Sullivan County and the broader New England region.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Promote Sullivan County's proximity to major shipping routes as an asset for national and international trade.	Sullivan County has a geographical advantage being in the middle of Western New Hampshire along the Connecticut River Valley. Two interstate highways run along the western side of the county and to the north, connecting to Boston, Montreal, and Western Mass/Connecticut. Claremont is home to the only Amtrak station on the western side of the state with direct service to New York City and Montreal, while freight rail travels north-south to connect to broader rail networks as well as down to shipping ports on the Long Island Sound. Sullivan County is within a two-hour drive of the #2 and #3 busiest freight airports in New England (Manchester-Boston Regional and Bradley International), allowing worldwide shipment for goods from the region.	Promote Sullivan County in major shipping areas to highlight connections to major shipping routes	Number of promotional campaigns
B. Study underutilized transportation and logistics infrastructure in the region to identify transportation opportunities and work to promote solutions.	While Sullivan County lies in a geographically advantageous area, it still has gaps in its transportation infrastructure. Sullivan County will look for ways to improve connectivity within the county in terms of transit, logistics, infrastructure, and mobility networks.	<p>Continue partnership with Southwestern Community Transportation and work to expand service</p> <p>Continue to work with UVLSRPC to stay connected to regional and statewide transportation efforts</p>	Expanded services and opportunities
C. Promote economic sectors unique to Sullivan County such as arts and recreation; industry traditions such as precision machining; and emerging sectors such as green technology.	Sullivan County is within a three-hour drive of most of New England yet is often overlooked by those in the more populated areas. Sullivan County will build on this proximity to attract visitors through its arts and recreation sectors, combining efforts when appropriate and coordinating efforts to promote the region to New England. Sullivan County will also promote its historic industrial traditions such as precision machining to attract broader New England support and seek out ways to expand emerging sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. Building on Sullivan County's location, these sectors offer an alternative to southern New England for both business and pleasure.	Produce promotional materials that attract unique economic interests	Number of promotional campaigns

Goal 2: Advance Sullivan County with 21st century infrastructure investments.

Objective 1: Modernize communication networks ensuring access for all.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Invest in middle-mile and last-mile networks for broadband and other forms of high-speed internet	The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed gaps in high-speed internet, especially in rural communities. Sullivan County will improve the percentage of homes with high-speed internet by taking advantage of opportunities to expand middle-mile and last-mile broadband capabilities. Last-mile buildout means connecting every house to high-speed wired internet, no matter what the location. By seeking out ways to expand last-mile connections for its residents, Sullivan County will make the region connected to the global economy.	Seek funding for middle-mile and last-mile broadband implementation	Residents served
B. Identify and solve gaps in cellular networks across the region.	Sullivan County's rural landscape has rolling foothills and narrow mountain valleys which may be picturesque but aren't very conducive to cellular coverage. It is not uncommon to hear about "the good spot in town" where you can get a cell signal to (hopefully) make a call. Currently, a vast majority of cellular coverage is along the major roadways, but not in the smaller towns and villages. Even the largest city in the county, Claremont, has cellular network dead zones. The more remote areas of the county encourage recreation, but lack of cellular networks lead to longer emergency services response times. Sullivan County will encourage and promote the expansion of cellular coverage across the region so that residents of all towns have a chance to fully communicate and participate in the national economy.	Inventory and locate "dead zones" Meet with cellular service providers to discuss options to improve coverage	Dead zones recovered
C. Improve each municipality's broadband coverage to a baseline of 90% of all households.	Internet connectivity has become a vital part of everyday life for work, school, socializing, community, and entertainment. While some towns in Sullivan County (Grantham) have very robust broadband coverage, others (Washington and Lempster) have some of the worst coverage in the entire state. While topography is certainly a barrier, it is not insurmountable. Sullivan County recognizes that broadband coverage is essential for 21 st century living and will promote, encourage, and work to support expansion of broadband and high-speed internet access to a baseline access level of at least 90% of all households in each municipality.	Facilitate meeting of telecommunications companies representatives and municipal leaders	Percentage of households covered

Goal 2: Advance Sullivan County with 21st century infrastructure investments.**Objective 2: Prioritize infrastructure improvements that encourage smart growth and building on existing density.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Streamline local land use regulations and utility access to encourage modern and future technological investments	One of the common barriers to infrastructure improvements is the confusing and time-consuming process that many projects become tangled in. With different entities each having a stake in the process, it is certainly important to have all voices heard but there are certainly ways to make things easier for development. Sullivan County will analyze land use regulations and help municipalities better promote technological infrastructure improvements through updates to their ordinances. Many of these ordinances and regulations were written decades ago and no longer serve the needs of the community, but they take dedicated time, effort, and expense to update and modernize.	Consult with UVLSRPC to determine best practices and most common updates to municipal land use regulations to implement in the County Host a discussion with planning boards to discuss infrastructure barriers	Updated local regulations
B. Seek out funding opportunities for water and sewer system upgrades and modernization.	Sullivan County's small-town water and sewer infrastructure has a variety of needs, with some places needing small adjustments and some needing major upgrades to stay in compliance with water standards. These expenses often come on the backs of only those living within the water district, not the entire municipality, which means that the expensive upgrades and repairs are often minimally patched together or ignored completely. This pattern of minor repairs is unsustainable and needs intervention from outside sources of funding to ensure communities' long-term health and well-being.	Sponsor grant applications and/or write letters of support Assist communities in using ARPA funds	Grant dollars awarded
C. Identify and promote rehabilitation of brownfield sites with a focus on infill, downtown, and village development.	Brownfield sites were once healthy, economically viable pieces of land – until their use was no longer needed, the land was discovered to be contaminated, and they were more easily abandoned than cleaned up. Determining which parcels of land are officially “brownfields” is a difficult process, with cross-referencing of arduous state databases and inconsistent record keeping between municipalities. Sullivan County will work to catalog these sites in an easy-to-read format with an emphasis on public awareness while also promoting their redevelopment and coordination of funding sources for potential developers. These sites occupy prime pieces of real estate vital to economic redevelopment in many municipalities and would be highly beneficial to residents and visitors alike if they were returned to general use.	Identify and prioritize brownfields sites. Engage developers and promote downtown locations	Sites rehabilitated

Goal 2: Advance Sullivan County with 21st century infrastructure investments.**Objective 3: Facilitate the growth of communities with targeted infrastructure improvements and rehabilitation.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Promote locally led initiatives on historic preservation, civic improvements, and beautification	When people take charge of their own communities, it instills pride and a sense of place. To empower people to take action and affect positive change on the appearance of their communities, Sullivan County will coordinate, promote, and facilitate community initiatives seeking to improve the appearance of common public space. Through the improvement of public spaces such as village greens, town centers, and city blocks, residents can have a sense of place and community pride in its appearance.	Start a municipal beautification content Promote an improvement effort happening in the County	Locally led initiatives
B. Update disaster plans for communities in the region.	The resiliency of Sullivan County is dependent on the strength and hard work of its residents, but even the best intentions need plans. Sullivan County will work with its municipalities to ensure that their disaster planning is up to date and equipped to handle modern emergency situations. Hazardous waste spills, flash flooding, road washouts, and other unpredictable events can be planned for so disruption to normal services and health risk to the population is minimal.	Provide financial support for plan updates Seek grant funding Collaborate with UVLSRPC to address planning concerns for smaller communities	Number of plan updates
C. Educate planning boards, selectboards, and other municipal leaders to inform communities of best land use practices and laws and regulations	Many planning boards and selectboards in New Hampshire have members with decades of experience, providing valuable insight and wisdom to the process. However, many people volunteer for these positions and are not up to speed with the most current land use techniques or best practices around community planning.	Promote trainings and workshops held by NH Municipal Association or NH Office of Planning and Development	Trainings promoted
D. Establish coordination between municipalities and private infrastructure owners to ensure long-term resiliency and reliability	In New Hampshire, private roads are quite common in rural areas. As they are not rated for general traffic, they only require minimum requirements for emergency vehicles at the time of their construction or at the sale of the property. Additionally, along the many rivers and lakes in Sullivan County there are several private dams with some producing hydroelectricity and others serving only to retain water. These types of private infrastructure are not always maintained at the level required and may cause larger problems for the municipality down the road.	Expand educational and planning resources to improve or replace privately held infrastructure such as private dams and private roads Advertise funding programs for private landowners to upgrade infrastructure	Promotional materials shared

Goal 3: Increase Housing Stock for everybody

Objective 1: Center density in cities and villages while maintaining open spaces in rural areas.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Explore and encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings.	With over 250 years of development, Sullivan County has a wealth of buildings that have seen generations come and go. Their uses have been adapted over the years, but over the past 50 years, they have often been neglected or undermaintained. With infrastructure such as water and sewer often already in place, it makes sense to redevelop these lots with a creative new use. Large homes from the late 19 th century can be converted into multi-family dwellings while older schools and churches can be converted into residential, commercial, or mixed use. Through creativity, new uses for these historic buildings can bring new life into neglected neighborhoods.	Promote successful mixed use projects to encourage more projects	Promotional materials
B. Engage in aggressive rehabilitation of brownfields to revitalize once prosperous areas.	As mentioned above, brownfields were once vital properties that contributed a great deal to the local economy. Not only will Sullivan County identify and catalog brownfields, but also aggressively seek out funding opportunities, promote their redevelopment, and work with state and federal partners to move long-neglected properties back onto the tax rolls. The most common obstacle is the clean-up of these sites, so Sullivan County will undertake initiatives to increase the number of people who can do the actual work of rehabilitating hazardous materials from these sites through workforce training.	Seek EPA Brownfields clean up funds Provide incentive to developers to rehabilitate brownfields	Brownfields sites revitalized
C. Identify regulatory barriers to housing density and develop creative, locally produced solutions.	Land use regulations currently on the books in many municipalities may have made sense at the time but have become increasingly out of touch with the current needs of the populace. Public hearings, setback requirements, required environmental studies – all well-intentioned and important factors in land use – are examples of regulatory barriers that each require a great deal of time and effort on the part of both the applicant and the municipality.	Assist municipality to improve local regulations through consultant sponsorship Survey municipalities to identify regulatory barriers	Number of regulations updates

Goal 3: Increase Housing Stock for everybody**Objective 2: Make investments more accessible for more people.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Invest in incremental historical rehabilitation with a focus on weatherization/modernization for energy efficiency	Many homes in Sullivan County were built prior to 1980, before modern weatherization technologies had been in place. A lack of proper insulation and inefficient heating systems reliant on fossil fuels make these dwellings costly to heat while wasting resources. Sullivan County will direct investments to incremental historical rehabilitation that focus on energy efficiency. This would be a methodical process where properties are identified, contacted, and connected to resources for weatherization.	Connect with local energy committees to determine and document energy saving efforts Connect with organizations like UVLSRPC and Vital Communities to promote energy efficiency strategies and programs	Energy efficiency improvements in historical buildings
B. Expand lending programs for more people looking to invest in ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, etc.	With recent developments in New Hampshire law, all single family zoned lots must allow attached accessory dwelling units (ADUs). These are a smaller part of the home, with its own entrance, kitchen, and bath, is a second housing unit for one or two people. However, just because the law allows these units does not mean it is easy to construct them. Regulatory hurdles as well as a lack of lending opportunities still exist for these non-single-family types of housing. Banks are sometimes unsure how to lend on properties like this and have trouble with comparable parcels.	Create a lending program to provide financial support to residents and/or developers Meet with local banks to determine barriers to current lending practices	ADUs built
C. Increase access to revolving loan funds for small, local landlords looking to make improvements to their properties.	Recognizing that many rental units in Sullivan County are owned by smaller landlords and not large real estate investors, increasing access to financing and capital for improvements to these properties is vital for rehabilitation of the communities. These landlords don't always have the cash on hand to make needed upgrades or repairs to their properties, resulting in sub-par housing that, because of the housing crisis, stay in circulation while being eyesores and hazards.	Create a landlord listserv Seek and increase access to loan and grant funds for local landlords	Rental improvements as a result of advertised funding sources

Goal 3: Increase Housing Stock for everybody

Objective 3: Empower residents to improve their community aesthetically and structurally.

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Tie together adult education and home repair classes to teach people the necessary skills to rehabilitate properties.	A barrier towards home ownership is the required knowledge or resources to make repairs to your property. With many people lacking cash reserves for contractors to do the repairs, advanced skills in light carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and efficiency are required. Sullivan County will connect homeowners with home repair skills classes for residents who wish to repair and refurbish their own homes. These additional skills would then be used to restore properties locally and improve the aesthetics of area neighborhoods. Making the classes free or very affordable is an important component of a program such as this so the maximum number of people can engage.	Host a collaboration round table with local educational institutions, contractors, and real estate agencies to advertise home ownership classes to new homeowners	Number of home-skills classes offered
B. Train residents in home repair business practices with skills on construction as well as business operations.	Building on Strategy A above, these types of classes will spur people's interests, and some may find a skill they never realized they possessed. Sullivan County will work to expand home repair skills training and include the operational skills needed to start a business. By giving people the power to make a living using a skill that helps their community, local dollars circulate locally while filling a need in the area. Accounting, bookkeeping, HR, marketing, and access to capital are all important skills required to make a contracting business work. These types of classes would also be geared towards those apprenticing in the trades so they may also learn the skills needed to run a vital business.	Connect RVCC microentrepreneur efforts to homeowners	Number of home repair workers
C. Build a DIY culture around rehabilitation and reuse of notable properties.	Sullivan County has long had a history and culture around craftsmanship, creativity, and a maker mentality. Using this heritage as a base, Sullivan County will foster and encourage a DIY culture around home repair, property maintenance, adaptive reuses, and creative use of existing structures. Initiatives could include home repair classes, promotional campaigns around existing resources for home rehabilitation, or the creation of a DIY work group for residents to share experiences and trade skills. Through these and similar initiatives, Sullivan County can increase the DIY spirit locally and empower residents to improve their communities.	Sponsor a "tool library" effort for residents to share tools Host a DIY day where people can meet to share materials and experiences related to home improvement projects	Number of event participants

Goal 4: Prepare region's disaster response capabilities and resiliency for climate change and other disasters unique to the area.**Objective 1: Update local and regional emergency action plans**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Ensure infrastructure is prepared for flash flooding emergencies.	Climate change is evidenced in different ways around the country. In northern New England it often takes the form of flash flooding, overwhelming small creeks and rivers resulting in washed out bridges, culverts, and roads. Entire communities can be cut off from the outside world, requiring emergency services to work under hazardous conditions to restore service. Recognizing that there will be future seasons of flooding, Sullivan County will prepare its infrastructure to better handle flash flood conditions.	Engage with UVLSRPC to inventory and collect data on stormwater infrastructure Conduct an outreach campaign to share low-cost green infrastructure options for stormwater management	Number of infrastructure improvements
B. Explore potential for climate change regionalism approach through state mechanisms.	The larger issue of climate change is a daunting, overwhelming concept. Individual towns in the region (primarily run by small selectboards) lack staffing and resources to plan for major infrastructure projects that would tackle the serious issue of climate change. Sullivan County will explore various methods for a regional approach to the topic of climate change preparedness to best pool resources, leverage expertise, and collaborate in a locally centered method.	Become a member of the Upper Valley Adaptation Workgroup	Number of regional climate efforts
C. Create opportunities for cross-community collaboration on emergency planning.	When disasters strike, having a plan ready ahead of time is crucial for reducing hazardous conditions and returning the community to normalcy. Smaller towns with limited budgets may have only done the minimum on their disaster mitigation plans in years past. Additionally, many smaller towns have similar issues and could benefit from a regional approach. Sullivan County will aid towns in collaboration on long-range disaster planning in a regional capacity, assisting them with needs that require more technical assistance and directing them to the necessary resources.	Work with UVLSRPC on a regionally based emergency plan Host meetings with local emergency managers to collaborate and share challenges and strategies	Improved regional collaboration

Goal 4: Prepare region's disaster response capabilities and resiliency for climate change and other disasters unique to the area.**Objective 2: Identify infrastructure needs and risks related to disasters: climate change or catastrophic event.**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Identify needs for long-range and disaster scenario planning for infrastructure resiliency of municipalities.	Many of Sullivan County's small towns lack the resources to take on a larger project such as long-range or disaster scenario planning. Collaboration between towns will strengthen bonds and encourage broader community cooperation. Long-term planning allows a municipality to develop a capital improvement schedule for their infrastructure and know what expenses to anticipate down the line. Sullivan County will help communities find ways to undertake long-term and disaster scenario planning while also facilitating collaboration between towns.	Engage with municipalities and inventory large, multi-municipality infrastructure projects Seek grant funding for large projects	Long-range plans
B. Expand opportunities for emergency personnel to collaborate regionally on disaster responses and prevention.	As mentioned previously, many towns in the region are smaller and lack the capacity for more advanced planning. In these towns, first responders such as fire and EMS are often volunteer organizations with limited budgets. As such, they cannot always receive the most up-to-date training or planning.	Facilitate trainings and round-table events for emergency personnel in the region	Number of trainings and events
C. Perform a Climate Risk Assessment on the region to allow communities to inventory and prioritize their needs and resources.	With a changing climate, it seems like what is "normal" is always shifting so having an accurate picture of the situation will allow for better planning and preparation. Sullivan County will perform a county-wide climate risk assessment to inventory, measure, and analyze specific risk factors that threaten the region's livelihood because of climate change. This initiative will be coordinated with individual municipalities and their own Climate Risk Assessments.	Seek funds to perform a Climate Risk Assessment	Assessment Report

Goal 4: Prepare region's disaster response capabilities and resiliency for climate change and other disasters unique to the area.

Objective 3: Identify risks to economic development in Sullivan County due to climate change and work to mitigate

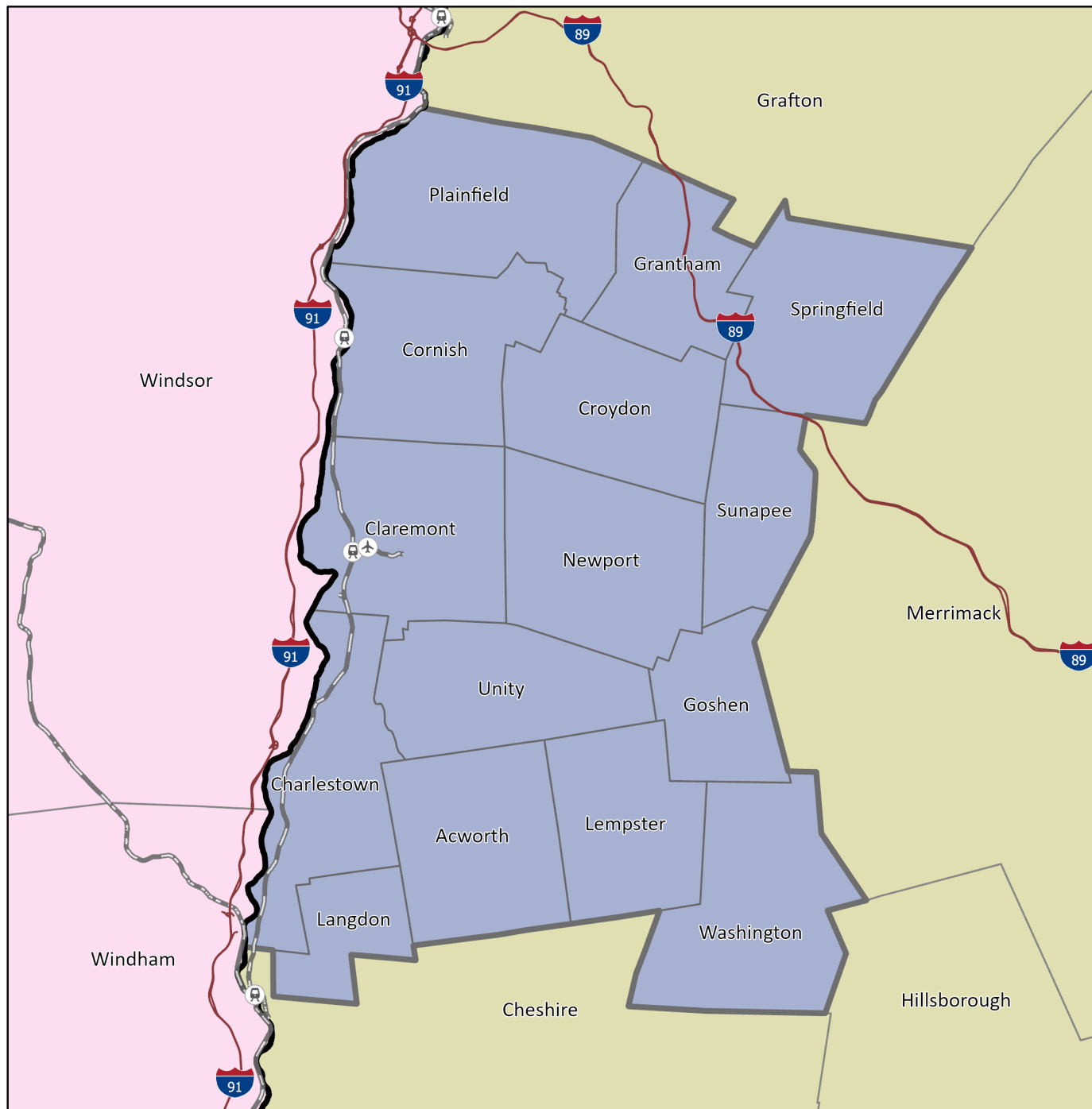
Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Expand resiliency measures for sectors most affected by climate change.	Certain sectors within Sullivan County are poised to be greatly affected by a change in climate, most notably outdoor winter recreation and maple sugaring. Winter recreation requires consistent cold temperatures and regular snowfall to maintain viability, while maple sugaring season is heavily dependent upon specific temperature and climate conditions for maple sap to run. Recognizing the specific threat climate change poses to these very unique sectors while also recognizing their importance to regional identity,	Hold stakeholder meetings to discuss climate change impacts on the local economy	Expanded measures
B. Assist communities in preparation for climate migration of new residents.	As scientists try to predict future climate changes, northern New England consistently ranks at the top of the list in the United States for climate resiliency. Away from western wildfires and earthquakes, tornadoes and extreme heat across the Midwest, and hurricanes and humidity in the Southeast, and extreme heat conditions across the country, New England is well-suited with its four-season climate to adapt to a new normal with comparatively minimal disruption.	Work with local and regional planners to develop long-range planning scenarios to prepare for a change in population	Climate migration plans
C. Design and implement programs for companies to perform their own Climate Risk Assessments to identify threats and opportunities surrounding climate change.	Municipalities conduct Climate Risk Assessments, but what about businesses? Their longevity is dependent on being able to make informed decisions based on real data. Recognizing the need for businesses to engage in effective long-term planning, Sullivan County will support and encourage tools analyzing the impacts of climate change (like a Climate Risk Assessment) for businesses and industry coalitions in the region. Larger employers can conduct their own analysis, while smaller outfits may want to collaborate on a sector-wide assessment. Helping businesses create long-term plans around climate change will allow them to further solidify their connections to our communities while ensuring longevity and resiliency in the future.	Promote Climate Change Assessments to businesses	Materials created

Goal 4: Prepare region's disaster response capabilities and resiliency for climate change and other disasters unique to the area.**Objective 4: Modernization of resources with an emphasis on efficiency and longevity**

Strategy	Need	Example Action	Performance Measure
A. Expand general public access to electric vehicles by identifying and working to overcome purchasing, infrastructure, and regulatory barriers.	Similar to the shift from horse-and-buggy to the automobile, electric vehicles (EVs) are radically changing the transportation landscape. Automobile manufacturers are ramping up production of EVs over the next several years, with many of them pledging to go entirely electric at some point. To prepare for the changing technology, Sullivan County will aid residents with access to EVs and take steps to encourage adoption.	Engage with UVLSRPC to stay up-to-date on EV funding sources Connect with local energy committees to collaborate on EV efforts	Number of EVs Number of EV infrastructure
B. Expand access to and the use of renewable energy resources and explore local economic sectors that can carve out a niche for future technologies.	Great strides have been made in recent years for green energy production, with an increase in locally produced power. Along with that, there has been increased demand in the various components and resources needed to produce alternative energy as well as an increase in specialized jobs. Given the urgent need for reducing the demand for fossil fuels and increasing the resiliency through energy security, Sullivan County will encourage and promote the advancement of green energy production within the region.	Sponsor renewable energy pilot programs in the region Engage with utilities to help streamline processes	Renewable efforts
C. Assist municipalities with modernization of vehicles and equipment, exploring long-term costs and financing.	Along with home adoption of green energy solutions, municipalities need to upgrade and adopt new technologies to better prepare for the future. Many municipalities have several vehicles in a fleet for road maintenance, emergency vehicles, and general transportation. Sullivan County will work to assist municipalities with conversion of their fleets from fossil fuels to electric through promotion of existing and new programs designed to expand the use of EVs.	Bundle equipment purchases with municipalities to encourage modernization and group financing	Converted or replaced equipment
D. Establish, expand, and encourage a culture of repair and reuse to lessen waste.	Granite Staters have always been creative in extending the lifespan of infrastructure and materials. Partially driven by Yankee thriftiness and partially by the challenge of ingenuity, New Hampshire has historically celebrated the full value of a dollar. As American society has shifted to a more disposable consumption of goods, this mentality has waned across the region. Recognizing the urgent need for a shift in attitudes, Sullivan County will work to facilitate methods of reuse and repair. Allowing more repair and reuse of goods means less waste in landfills and fewer resources on new products.	Highlight repair shops in monthly newsletter Promote DIY trainings on repair vs. replace	Reduced waste

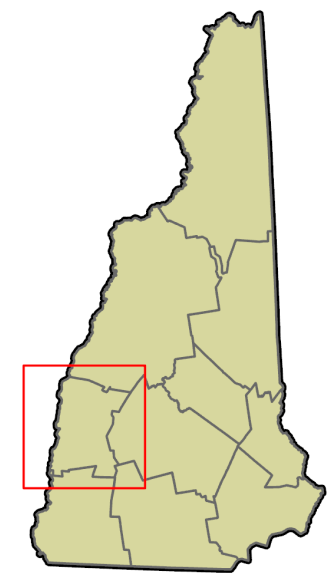
Appendix





UPPER VALLEY LAKE SUNAPEE
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

This map was produced by UVLSRPC in June of 2022 for the CEDS Report for Sullivan County, NH. It is intended for planning purposes only.



- Claremont Airport
- Amtrak Passenger Rail Stations
- Interstate
- Sullivan County Towns
- Vermont Counties
- Railroads



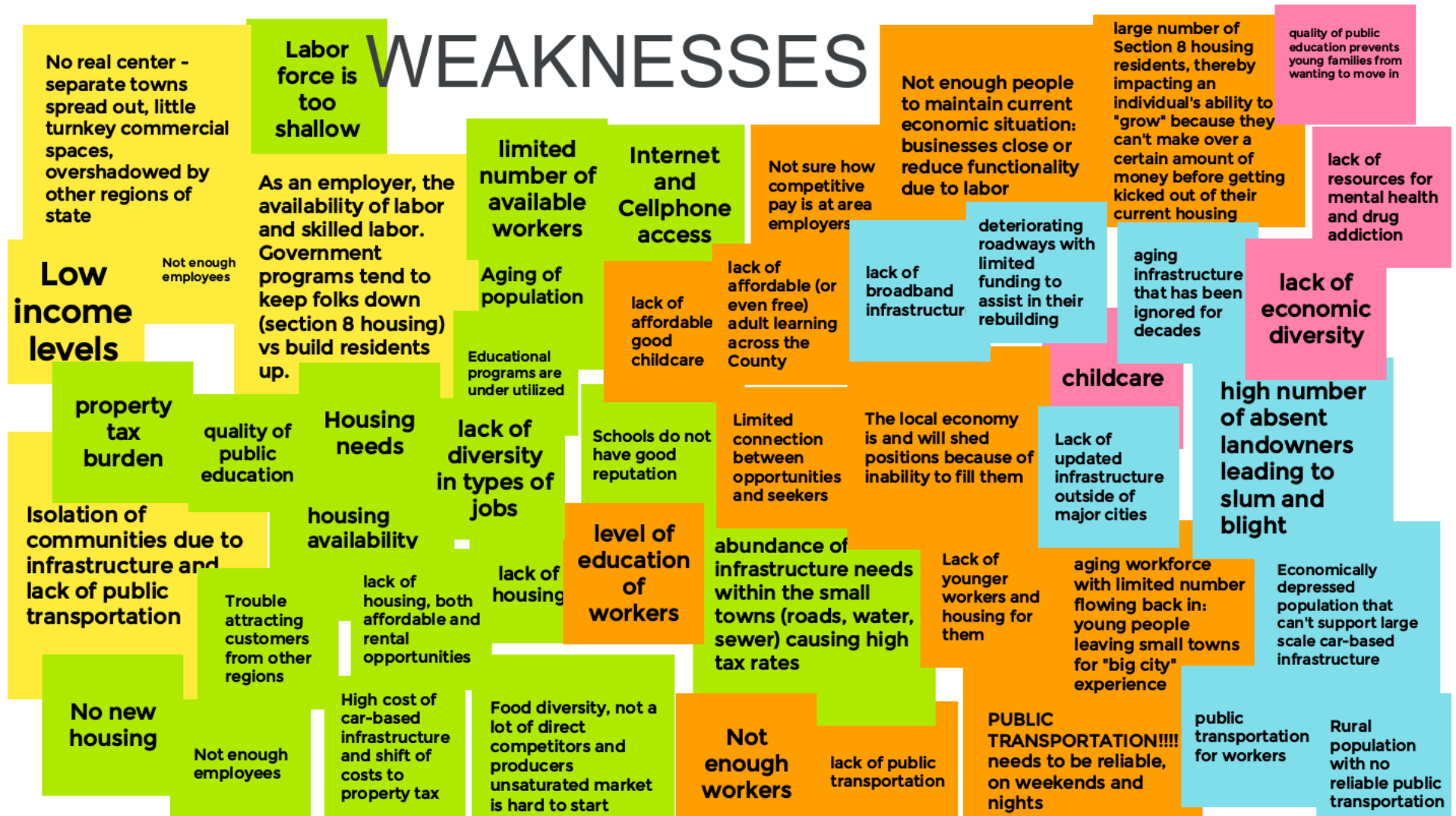
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SWOT Analysis Jamboard



SWOT Analysis Jamboard

WEAKNESSES



SWOT Analysis Jamboard



SWOT Analysis Jamboard

THREATS



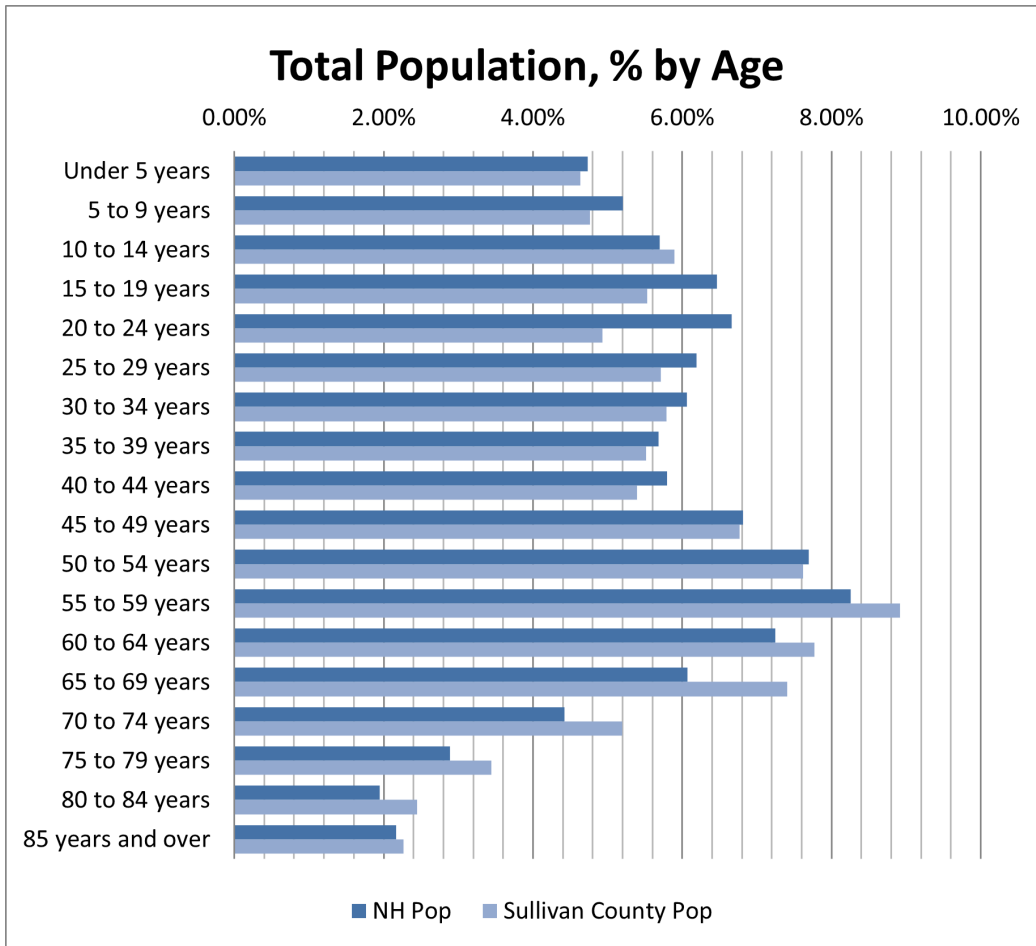
TOWS

TOWS

	<u>Internal Strengths</u> Natural Beauty Accessibility to Markets Natural Resources Small Businesses/Sense of Entrepreneurship Quality of Life Tech Centers Culture of Community Hard-working People Existing Main Streets and urban cores Rural lifestyle	<u>Internal Weaknesses</u> Lack of Housing Isolation from rest of state Missing internet/cell phone coverage Connections missing between opportunities and seekers Lack of child care access Reputation of Schools Attracting customers from other regions shallow labor pool historical under-investment in infrastructure lack of a center/spread out/no public transit/car-centered
<u>External Opportunities</u> Additional workforce housing Workforce training highlighting quality of life better marketing of outdoor economy redevelop Main St/Downtowns/Village Centers Room for growth Made in USA Manufacturing Adult education/Vocational career path Density in urban centers ready for redevelopment Diversification through immigration	STRENGTH PLUS OPPORTUNITY Working Class Community can grow their skills through additional training Promotion of outdoor opportunities and quality of life to outsiders, highlight remote work options Ample infill potential within existing city/village centers with room for all types of housing Promotion of manufacturing in the new custom economy to the outside world Additional housing for county immigrants and current youth to fill existing jobs	WEAKNESS PLUS OPPORTUNITY Investment in schools and adult education to grow technical skills for high-demand jobs Promote region's isolation as a positive alternative to crowded cities Expanding the labor pool by encouraging retirees to rejoin Encourage immigration and to grow labor force and diversify Take advantage of federal programs for middle-mile broadband and cellular service
<u>External Threats</u> brain drain/youth flight lack of investment lack of population to maintain employers Climate change/flooding and the economy Aging population College debt reducing young people's buying power cuts to public transportation projected housing needs not being met inflation absentee landlords/slide into blight	STRENGTH PLUS THREAT Opportunity to blaze your own path in business or the trades through tech center rather than college debt Expand workforce/volunteer force with more outlets for retirees & those who left the workforce Use recent natural disasters to tap into federal funding for resiliency Empowering new local landlords invested in their communities through management and engagement Accessibility to markets allow the region to grow more connections by better diversifying sectors	WEAKNESS PLUS THREAT Turn weaknesses into opportunities for growth Address resiliency measures for natural disasters Lack of public transit keeps people stuck in jobs they can get to Absentee landlords continue to neglect properties and bring down neighboring values, decreasing tax revenue Housing does not materialize, driving home prices up on the high end and quality down on the low end

Reverse SWOT analysis — TOWS analysis — showing the intersection of each section. By combining the existing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, Sullivan County has a better snapshot of challenges and potential solutions.

Sullivan County's Population



Sullivan County's population is similar to that of New Hampshire as a whole. The population of the 65+ residents did not increase as much as the rest of the state, but Sullivan County also lagged behind the rest of the state in population of those under 34.

Source: ACS 2010-2014, ACS 2015-2019

Indicator	Time Period	NH	Sullivan County
Total Population	2015-2019	1,348,124	43,104
	2010-2014	1,321,069	43,291
	change	2.05%	-0.43%
Over 65	2015-2019	107,673	4,138
	2010-2014	80,794	3,432
	change	33.27%	20.57%
Under 24	2015-2019	387,787	11,103
	2010-2014	374,736	11,827
	change	3.48%	-6.12%
Population 25 to 34	2015-2019	165,193	4,956
	2010-2014	149,321	4,539
	change	10.63%	9.19%
Median Age	2015-2019	42.9	46.3
	2010-2014	41.8	44.8
	change	1.10	1.50

Internet Access in Sullivan County	New Hampshire		Sullivan County	
Total:	532037		17328	
Has one or more types of computing devices:	494980	93.0%	15552	89.8%
Desktop or laptop	451375	84.8%	13885	80.1%
Desktop or laptop with no other type of computing device	51226	9.6%	2282	13.2%
Smartphone	417747	78.5%	12107	69.9%
Smartphone with no other type of computing device	20275	3.8%	901	5.2%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer	333653	62.7%	9224	53.2%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer with no other type of computing device	4785	0.9%	137	0.8%
Other computer	19571	3.7%	356	2.1%
Other computer with no other type of computing device	351	0.1%	0	0.0%
No Computer	37057	7.0%	1776	10.2%
Total:	532037		17328	
Has a computer:	494980	93.0%	15552	89.8%
With dial-up Internet subscription alone	2111	0.4%	82	0.5%
With a broadband Internet subscription	463463	87.1%	13925	80.4%
Without an Internet subscription	29406	5.5%	1545	8.9%
No computer	37057	7.0%	1776	10.2%
No Internet Access (No Computer and/or No Subscription)	66463	12.5%	3321	19.2%

Source: 2015-19 ACS, 2020 Census

Wages

Annual Average Covered Employment, Sullivan County	2009	2019
Goods Producing Industries		
Average Employment	3,466	3,818
Average Weekly Wage	\$887	\$1,081
Service Providing Industries		
Average Employment	7,121	7,573
Average Weekly Wage	\$617	\$755
Total Private Industry		
Average Employment	10,586	11,390
Average Weekly Wage	\$706	\$864
Government (Federal, State, and Local)		
Average Employment	2,598	2,344
Average Weekly Wage	\$806	\$806
Total, Private Industry plus Government		
Average Employment	13,185	13,735
Average Weekly Wage	\$698	\$854

The GDP for Sullivan County in 2018 was \$1.73 billion, but the GDP for the state of New Hampshire in 2018 was \$87.62 billion, meaning that Sullivan County only produced 2% of the state's GDP. With 2.9% of the state's workforce and a lower employment rate than the state (58% vs 64.7%),

Sullivan County has the capacity to grow their economic output.

They also have the capacity for better paying jobs, as the annual payroll average was \$492,727 — 2nd lowest in the state (behind only Coös).

	Claremont-Charlestown CDA	Sullivan County
Total Employment, May 2020	15,540	21,960
Entry Level Wage	\$12.81	\$16.77
Mean (Avg) Wage	\$22.28	\$24.00
Median Wage	\$19.38	\$21.34
Experienced Wage	\$27.02	\$29.31

Source: NHES-ELMI 2019 <https://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/documents/sullivan-cp.pdf>

Source: NHES-ELMI 2021