

Bedford Economic Development Commission

Report to the Town Council

December 16, 2009

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Background.....	2
Charge to the Bedford Economic Development Commission (BEDC).....	2
Commission Process.....	2
Economic Development Activity in Surrounding Communities.....	3
State and Regional Resources.....	6
Current Economic Profile.....	8
Historical Growth of the Town of Bedford.....	9
The Past 15 Years: “Natural” Economic Development.....	9
Trend Analysis: Impact of Past Growth and Approaching “Build Out”.....	11
The Next Ten Years if Past Trends Continue.....	11
Tax Relief via Targeted Economic Development.....	11
Budget Increases.....	12
Keys to Success.....	13
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT).....	13
Strengths.....	13
Weaknesses.....	14
Opportunities.....	14
Threats.....	15
Economic Development Requirements.....	17
Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses.....	17
Attract New Businesses.....	18
Participate on State and Regional Planning Boards and Commissions.....	19
Develop and Implement a Marketing Plan.....	19
Recommendations.....	20
New Paradigm.....	20
Primary Recommendation: Hire a Full-Time Staff	
Position for Economic Development.....	22
Alternative #1 – Contract with Regional Resources.....	25
Alternative #2 - Establish Partnership(s) with Communities.....	25
Economic Development Advisory Committee.....	26
Conclusion.....	27
Appendix: Bedford Economic Development Commission.....	28
Appendix A: Summary Business Outreach Forums.....	29
Appendix B: Summary Business Visitations.....	31
Appendix C: Bedford Businesses.....	33

The Bedford Economic Commission thanks all of the people – surrounding communities, regional and state economic development groups and local businesses – that shared their time and expertise with us over the last year.

A special thank you to Matt Henry, an MPA graduate student at the University of New Hampshire and our economic development intern through the fellowship grant program, for his months of hard work in researching and compiling information. He has been invaluable to our report.

Executive Summary

Bedford must invest in economic development

Bedford has many benefits – easy access to major highways, two airports, and close proximity to major cities and rural getaways; a quality school system; a diverse work force; a smaller town atmosphere with the many benefits of city living.

Bedford's benefits – and identity – will get lost in the competition without an economic development champion. A “new normal” has been created by the recession and the pace of growth will not be the same as it has been, nor will it “just happen.” There are several locations in Bedford that are ideal for redevelopment. Four high-profile parcels *currently* represent almost 600,000 square feet and \$800,000 in tax revenue.

Communities all around Bedford are competing for the same business. Many of them have bigger budgets, more land or incentives for development. Many communities are hungrier and are working hard and investing to maintain and fuel their growth.

For the past twelve months the Bedford Economic Development Commission has met with local, regional and state economic development experts, surrounding communities, and Bedford businesses. To preserve jobs and maintain Bedford's unique characteristics and quality of life, we must invest in an economic development position. An economic development director would:

- Build and strengthen relationships with existing businesses
- Attract new business
- Participate on regional and state economic development boards and commissions
- Develop and implement a marketing plan

The Commission does not make this recommendation lightly. An economic development director is an investment that will conservatively see a return in two years and a significant return in five years. Residents will also feel the positive impact of increased commercial tax revenue in their own tax bills. In addition to the financial impact, an economic development director will work with existing businesses to keep them in Bedford and build relationships with the communities surrounding Bedford – a benefit that cannot be overstated.

Background

Charge to the Bedford Economic Development Commission (BEDC)

The Bedford Town Council established the BEDC on November 5, 2008 and charged the Commission as follows:

The Bedford Economic Development Commission will seek to improve the quality of life for the taxpayers of Bedford by expanding the commercial and industrial tax base. The Commission shall achieve its goal by preserving existing jobs and businesses and welcoming new businesses, while maintaining Bedford's unique characteristics and quality of life.

The Town Council assigned a sunset date for the Commission of December 31, 2009. Monthly BEDC meetings were open to the public as required by Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA) Chapter 91:A and broadcasted locally on BCTV channels 16 and 22.

The Town Council encouraged the BEDC to consider all options and make the recommendations that the Commission deemed most advisable. Nothing was to be considered “*off the table*.”

Commission Process

In conducting its research and developing its recommendations, the BEDC widely publicized its activities and sought input from a broad range of experts and stakeholders through a process that included the following.

Business Outreach Forum: On May 5, 2009, the BEDC met with a broad group of business leaders and owners for a roundtable discussion on the business climate and issues in Bedford and suggestions related to economic development. (See summary in Appendix A)

Sector-Specific Leadership Forums: The BEDC hosted four additional public forums between June 24 and September 23 in order to gain additional information and feedback on economic development. While open to all who were interested, each forum focused on a specific sector of the community: retail, development, professional, and residential. (See summary in Appendix A).

Business Visitations: In order to broaden the outreach and input further, each of the BEDC members met personally with two to three business owners and managers in Bedford who were not able to attend one of the Forums. (See summary in Appendix B).

Presentations and Informational Sessions: BEDC meetings included presentations by local, regional, and state economic development experts and leaders in order to learn from their experience and insights. Commission members also participated in numerous economic development informational sessions and meetings in the region

and state. Through this process, BEDC members established relationships with and gained input from the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), the Capital Regional Development Corporation (CRDC), Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), the Metro Center-NH, the Airport Master Plan Advisory Committee, the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the Londonderry Community Development Director, the Chairman of the Hooksett Economic Development Committee, and economic development representatives from Merrimack and Derry.

Coordination with Bedford Master Plan Steering Committee Consultants (RKG): BEDC members participated in and coordinated closely with the Bedford Master Plan Steering Committee and consultants to ensure alignment and efficient use of resources between the two planning processes.

Website Communications: The BEDC added an economic development section to the Town website to post Commission documents and established an e-mail address to provide a means for Town stakeholders to provide feedback to the Commission throughout this process.

Economic Development Activity in Surrounding Communities

The BEDC researched the economic development activities of surrounding communities and met with representatives from Hooksett, Londonderry, Manchester, Merrimack, and Derry. Following is a brief summary of what the BEDC learned.

Hooksett

Hooksett is proactive in their approach to economic development and has had an economic development committee for more than two years. The Town has just launched a newly redesigned web site with a high-profile economic development page. The Commission has received significant coverage in the local media for their economic development efforts. Hooksett offers easy accessibility and available land and has seen significant economic development in recent years, particularly along Route 3 and Route 28.¹ Their economic incentives include Economic Revitalization Zone Tax Credits applied through DRED and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.

CNN Money ranked Hooksett #66 in their listing of best places to live. Their high school students attend Manchester schools. A town committee is evaluating other high school options.

Londonderry

Londonderry will be a NH sweet spot for economic development for the next 5-10 years. Part of the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport is located in Londonderry, which has

¹ CNN Money. *Best Places to Live: Money's list of America's Best Small Towns*. Time Warner Company. 2009. <http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/bplive/2009/index.html>

been an asset for the town. Additionally, Londonderry will benefit from the new bridge that is being constructed to allow greater airport access. They have a significant amount of land for commercial and industrial development, as well as a full-time, dedicated Director of Community Development with GIS support staff to ensure that Londonderry is positioned favorably to attract businesses interested in locating in New Hampshire. Their economic incentives include Economic Revitalization Zone Tax Credits applied through DRED.

Londonderry is currently developing a new web site that is expected to launch in late fall.² Their current website has some of the most robust economic development tools available, including a custom site finder for available properties. Londonderry has also hired a firm to help develop the town's brand and establish a sustainable marketing campaign. Their new slogan was unveiled this summer: "Londonderry: Life is good. Business is better."

Manchester

Manchester has a dedicated Economic Development Office and an excellent, comprehensive economic development website.³ Front and center on Manchester's web site is an invitation to do business in Manchester. The Economic Development Office is separate from the planning department and employs marketing and retention specialists to wage an active marketing campaign that promotes Manchester as a business location. The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce assists in networking efforts and includes membership services to businesses in adjacent towns as well as in Manchester.

Manchester takes advantage of numerous federal, state, and local economic development incentives including: Economic Revitalization Zone Tax Credits, Research and Development Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits (not specific to Manchester), Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program (CROP), City of Manchester Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), Neighborhood Facade Improvement Program, Section 108 Loans (Federal), Workforce Development Training Fund, Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB), Citizen's Bank Low Interest Loan Program, and Ocean Bank's Energy Efficiency Loan Program.

Merrimack

Merrimack has also been proactive in their approach to economic development. In May 2009, an Economic Development Citizen's Advisory Committee released their report, and the town is currently evaluating how best to support economic development. Members of the Bedford Economic Development Commission have met with leaders in Merrimack to discuss the possibility of developing some form of partnership in developing an economic development partnering program jointly.

² Town of Londonderry. *Community Development Department*. 2009.

<http://www.londonderrynh.org/planning/planning.htm>

³ City of Manchester. *Birthplace of Your American Dream*. 2009. <http://www.yourmanchesternh.com/>.

Merrimack notes on its web site that CNN Money magazine ranked it #43 in best small towns in America, and Forbes magazine ranked the Manchester-Nashua Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as the most inexpensive place to live in America.⁴⁵ Their economic incentives include Economic Revitalization Zone Tax Credits proposed for preservation/restoration of historical structures.

Derry

Derry has been examining the role that economic development will play in their future. Turnover is relatively high among Derry businesses, particularly in their downtown and commercial areas. In May 2009, the Town Council made three major decisions that will impact future economic development in the town. The Town Council voted to:

- Eliminate the Community Development Coordinator position. Immediately following this elimination, Derry hired an economic development consulting firm to assist with economic development.
- Withdraw funding of their Economic Development Corporation (DEDC), an autonomous organization devoted to assisting the town's efforts in developing the local economy.
- Eliminate their Tax Increment Financing (TIF) appropriations for FY 2010, a plan that was meant to revitalize Route 28 through infrastructure improvements funded through TIF tax revenue. They agreed that TIF money is necessary in the future and later voted to bond the necessary revenue required to create a new TIF district instead.

Derry's economic incentives include Economic Revitalization Zone Tax Credits applied through DRED and TIF districts as noted above.

Goffstown

Much like Bedford, Goffstown has seen substantial population increases in recent years. Goffstown has a Planner and Community Development Coordinator who simultaneously assumes the planning and economic development function. For its size, Goffstown has a progressive economic development philosophy. Goffstown has an active economic development council that gives direction to the Planning and Community Development Coordinator. Because Bedford shares a major corridor along Route 114 with Goffstown, Bedford has a mutual interest in the economic development of Goffstown.

Amherst

Although Amherst does not have an active economic development function, it has laid out seven economic development goals in their master plan. These goals articulate the need for infrastructure improvements along shared Route 101, as well as a mixed-use

⁴ CNN Money. *Best Places to Live: Money's list of America's Best Small Towns*. Time Warner Company. 2009. <http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/bplive/2009/index.html>.

⁵ <http://www.forbes.com/2009/07/13/cheap-cities-property-lifestyle-real-estate-cheap-places-chart.html>.

zoning philosophy in that area.⁶ Amherst offers no economic development incentives currently.

State and Regional Resources

While local advocacy of Bedford will continue to be essential, participation in regional collaborations will become increasingly important to Bedford's success with economic development. The BEDC met with the directors and representatives from the following state and regional resources and concluded that Bedford could be greatly disadvantaged economically if it does not actively participate in state and regional economic development planning and marketing initiatives. Following is a brief summary of what the BEDC learned.

New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)

The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), through its Business Resource Center, seeks to recruit new businesses to NH, grow existing businesses, and assist businesses that face economic challenges. As a state agency, DRED offers a comprehensive set of resources to help all communities in New Hampshire grow and prosper.

It would be in Bedford's best interest to work closely with DRED to communicate Bedford's economic development plans and objectives and take advantage of their expertise and resources. By linking to the DRED website (www.nheconomy.com), Bedford's website could offer valuable information about the state. Bedford should also take advantage of opportunities to partner with DRED in trade shows, to respond to business inquiries, and to familiarize prospective businesses with locations within the state. DRED offers significant opportunities to partner and supplement our local resources.

Metro Center-NH

The Metro Center-NH is a partnership between the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce (GMCC), and the NH Business Resource Center of the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). Representing thirteen communities with a quarter of the state's population, its mission is to foster positive relationships and cooperation among neighboring communities and to draw economic development to the Greater Manchester region from around the nation and the world. The Metro Center-NH is evolving into a driver of economic development planning, marketing and advocacy in the region.

⁶ Town of Amherst Master Plan Steering Committee. *Amherst Master Plan Goals*. October 22, 2008. <http://www.amherstnh.gov/MP/MPGoals-10-22-08.pdf>

Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC)

The SNHPC has a staff of twenty consultants available on a contractual basis to local communities. Bedford has utilized SNHPC services in the past for pertinent planning and development information. Most recently, the SNHPC has proposed the development of a Regional Economic Development Plan based on the Metro Center-NH Strategic Plan in order to transition the Metro Center-NH from an advocacy role to an action-driven organization that promotes economic development and job creation within the region.

Bedford can benefit by participating in this new regional planning effort and taking advantage of the tools and resources available to the group from the combined expertise of SNHPC consultants, state and federal resources, and local community economic development professionals and business leaders.

The SNHPC recently released a regional analysis regarding the types of businesses that are appropriate to the infrastructure and existing businesses in each community. Their model separates businesses into three categories that make up the “economic portfolio:”⁷

Primary industries: These are industries that infuse money into the region from outside sources, such that residents do not need to change their spending habits or behavior in order to sustain the influx of money. Sustainability of these industries relies upon external economies. Some examples include: state/federal government, colleges/universities, manufacturing, and regional operations.⁸

Business support industries: Businesses whose purpose is to support primary industries. Primary industries depend on business support industries to maintain their infrastructure and financial support systems. Sustainability of these industries relies upon both internal and external economies. Some examples include services that support commerce/business, such as construction, banking, insurance, hospitality, and transportation.⁹

Consumer services: Consumers are typically local residents who create a demand for goods and services. With the exception of tourist destinations, these businesses tend to rely upon the behavior of the local economy and spending habits. Some examples include services that support individuals/consumers, such as retail, healthcare, education, banking, insurance, and construction.¹⁰

Capital Regional Development Corporation (CRDC)

The Capital Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) is one of ten regional development corporations in New Hampshire that provides a variety of economic development services as a non-profit 501(c) (4) corporation. The CRDC is specifically

⁷ Moran, Stahl, & Boyer. Target Industry Analysis: Prepared for the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. Draft Copy November, 2009. p. A-2

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

targeted to Merrimack and Sullivan Counties and eight Hillsborough County communities south along the I-93 corridor. The CRDC provides core services in the following areas.¹¹

Small business lending: The CRDC is an approved Small Business Administration certified development company that provides SBA 504 loans and manages direct loan funds that, in combination with bank participation, provide financing for small business.

Real estate development: The CRDC buys and develops land to accommodate business parks, buys and develops commercial buildings, build-to-lease facilities, and acts as a master developer in order to attract businesses and jobs and enhance the local tax base in NH communities.

Economic development assistance: The CRDC provides technical assistance to communities to help stimulate economic development. This includes the Community Economic Development Assistance Program (CEDAP), grant writing, site analysis, TIF plans, business recruiting, business visitations, project coordination, developer/landowner negotiations, community education, regional marketing, and strategic planning.

Grants and New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) programs: The CRDC works with the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) on projects that are suitable for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Community Development Investment program (CDIP) financial assistance. They also package New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) programs.

Current Economic Profile

Located in the Greater Manchester region of southern New Hampshire, Bedford has grown dramatically over the last 10 years. Between 1998 and 2008, 1.12 million square feet of nonresidential space was constructed in Bedford, bringing the total commercial and industrial space to 5.6 million square feet. This represented an average annual construction rate of 112,675 sq. ft. compared to 94,000 sq. ft. annually during the prior 10 years. The increase in total assessed value between 1998 and 2008 was approximately \$85 million. The majority of this (985,000 sq. ft.) was commercial development in retail, services, restaurants and banks in the “Performance Zone” (PZ) running along Route 3.

The remaining undeveloped land zoned for nonresidential development totals approximately 300 acres, 200 acres of which are in the performance and/or enterprise zones on Route 3 and Route 101. The draft 2010 Master Plan (not-yet published) states that it is reasonable to assume that the build-out period will occur within the next 10 to 15 years, based on the historical pace over the last 10 years and that there are constraints that have to be taken into consideration.

¹¹ Heavener, Stephen A. *CRDC: Economic Development Solutions Annual Report*, 2009. Pg 4

Development on the remaining vacant land could conservatively add an estimated 1.0 to 1.5 million square feet of commercial structures to the town’s existing inventory. This estimate is subject to change, depending on variables such as the impact of the airport access road and the pace of recovery from the current recession.¹²

One factor that could increase the amount of nonresidential building space in Bedford is the potential expansion and redevelopment of properties with existing commercial buildings or residential structures. Since many of these properties are smaller lots, redevelopment would necessitate aggregation of multiple parcels making their potential redevelopment more complex and, thus, less certain to occur. Full redevelopment of this underutilized acreage could extend the build-out period beyond the 15-year horizon noted above and increase the additional building space to 2.0 million square feet or more.

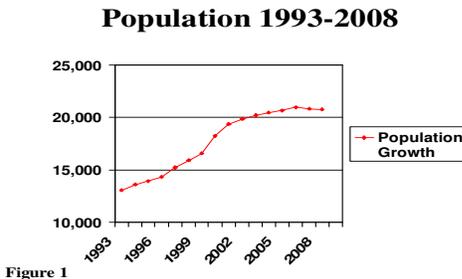
Commuting patterns from the 2000 Census indicate that Bedford is a net importer of labor by about 4,000 workers. Further evidence of this characteristic is the fact that the number of jobs in the Town totaled approximately 13,280 in 2000 as compared to a Bedford labor force of 9,800.

Currently, nearly 90% of Bedford’s commercial businesses are in the service sector, 67% of which are small businesses with 5 to 10 employees. From 2000-2007, the largest gains in jobs were in administrative, retail, management, healthcare & social services.¹³ The most significant job losses were in manufacturing, finance & insurance, real estate, and construction.

Historical Growth of the Town of Bedford

The Past 15 Years: “Natural” Economic Development

As shown in Figure 1, the population in Bedford grew rapidly between 1993 and 2002 and has leveled off in the last five years as the economy slowed and the Town has approached residential “build out.”



¹² RKG Associates Inc. (2009). *Economic Conditions - Bedford Master Plan 2010 (Second Draft)*. Bedford, NH: Town of Bedford

¹³ Ibid

The Town’s budget is a lagging indicator of population growth, showing an average annual growth of 6.7% annually since 1993,¹⁴ with most of the growth after 2003 due to major capital outlays related to school construction and road bonds.¹⁵

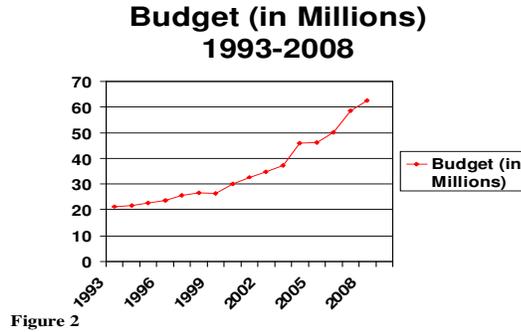
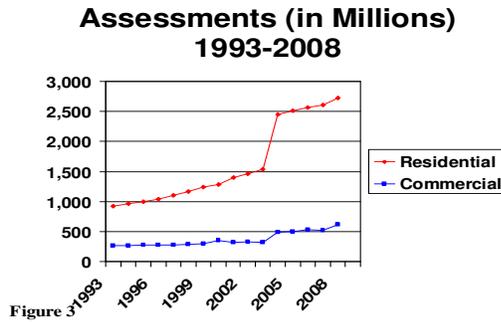


Figure 3 shows that since 1993, residential assessments in Bedford increased at a median rate of 4.1%,¹⁶ while commercial assessments grew at a median rate of 1.9%/year.



This disparity in the growth rate of residential assessments compared to commercial assessments has had the effect of increasing the share of the total tax burden that residents pay compared to the share that commercial establishments pay. In 1993, residents paid 77% of total tax revenues, while businesses paid 23%. By 2008, the residential share of taxes had increased to 81% of the total, with businesses paying 19%.¹⁷

¹⁴ The budget reflects amounts that are funded through taxes. Other sources of revenue such as fees and interest are excluded.

¹⁵ The dramatic increase from 2003-2005 is due to three items: 1) Construction and phasing in of Bedford High School and Middle School, 2) One-time payments to Manchester for capital improvements, 3) Road bonds issued in 2003 and 2005.

¹⁶ The median rate of growth in assessments is used to show a more accurate trend. Because the reassessment in 2004 represented an increase of 37%, it inflated the average yearly assessment to a misleading rate of nearly 7%.

¹⁷ While the percent of the tax burden paid by businesses decreased from 1993-2008, it is important to emphasize that commercial assessments as well as the raw number of businesses did indeed increase from 1993-2008. However, business development was slower than residential, which results in the shift in the tax burden.

Trend Analysis: Impact of Past Growth and Approaching “Build Out”

The trends over the past 10 years cannot be assumed to continue in the next 10 years. Commercial activity is a dynamic process, subject to change and influenced by local, state, federal, and international factors, as well as economic, demographic, political, and regulatory trends.

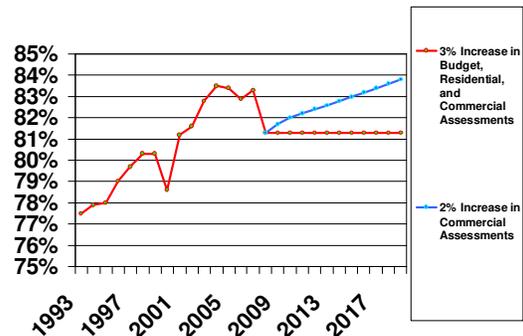
Commercial development over the last 15 years has been at a relatively constant rate of 100,000 square feet per year, resulting in about \$200,000 in added revenue to the Town each year. This trend is not likely to continue in the future, however, due to the slowing in the economy and less attractive development opportunities as full build-out approaches. Thus, the primary focus of the Town must shift toward *retention*, redevelopment and expansion of existing businesses in addition to attracting targeted new businesses that represent advantageous use of limited undeveloped land.

The Next Ten Years if Past Trends Continue

If over the next ten years commercial assessments continue to lag residential assessments at the same pace that they have over the past 10 years, residential taxpayers will be paying approximately 84% of total taxes vs. 81% today.

Tax Ratio: Residential Burden

Figure 5



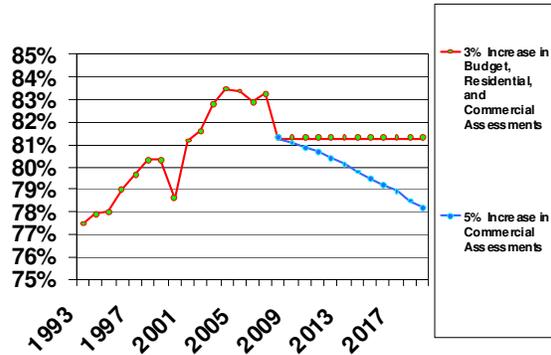
Tax Relief via Targeted Economic Development

On the other hand, if Bedford can shift the historical trend and grow the commercial base in the Town faster than the residential base, commercial establishments will be paying a growing proportion of the total Town budget and residential taxpayers will benefit. Figure 6 illustrates what happens when commercial assessments grow 2% faster than residential assessments over a ten-year period. The proportion of total tax revenues paid by residents declines as the proportion paid by commercial establishments increases.

This scenario assumes that the only aspect of Bedford that grows at a rate other than 3% is the growth of commercial assessments. This would result in Bedford residents receiving the same quantity and quality of services from the Town while paying less of a percentage of the tax bill because the commercial tax base was expanded.

There is a significant amount of revenue that is gained when comparing the two scenarios. With a 2% annual increase in economic development, the commercial assessment after the ten-year period was \$14,382,413. Compare that with a 5% annual increase of commercial assessments over the ten-year period, which amounts to a 2019 commercial tax revenue of \$18,312,670. When all of the differences in revenue are added up between 2008-2019, the small change in the annual commercial assessment percentage amounts to a ten-year total of almost \$20 million of total additional revenue for the Town of Bedford.

Tax Ratio: Residential Burden



Budget Increases

From a historical perspective, over the last four years (2007-2010), the school- and town-approved appropriation budgets have increased as shown in the table below. It should be noted that future budget appropriation increases, or decreases in revenue, do not include the State of New Hampshire shifting financial burdens onto the Town or the school budgets.

Year	School (Fiscal Year)	Town (Calendar Year)
2007	7.2%	12.6%
2008	16.7%	5.9%
2009	5.3%	1.2%
2010	2.2%	.6%

Keys to Success

As explained by the economic development experts with whom the BEDC consulted, success in adding to the tax base through effective economic development requires:

- Proactive, consistent, and sustained commitment on development appropriate for towns and municipalities
- An effective marketing effort, starting with a well-designed web site that contains useful information and contacts
- Streamlined planning and permitting process
- Clear accountability and role definitions for economic development functions, including:
 - Building and maintaining relationships with existing businesses
 - Staying abreast of business plans and needs
 - Developing and maintaining an inventory of underutilized and available properties for development
- Clear and consistent definition of the kinds of development that Bedford wants as suggested by the Master Plan
- Positive public support and messaging regarding economic development
- Participation with outside entities and commissions focused on regional development initiatives

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

Strengths

Bedford has substantial assets as a town and is well positioned to leverage them for success in economic development to their highest potential for serving residents in the future as well as the present.

Location: Bedford's location is optimal for economic development due to its access to major highways, the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, current freight and proposed passenger rail lines, and major population centers, including Boston, Manchester, Nashua, and Concord. Routes 101, 3, 293, and 114 provide easy access between Bedford and nearly all of New England. Bordering on Manchester, Merrimack, and Londonderry, Bedford offers a combination of metropolitan accessibility and smaller town atmosphere.

Education: Nearly half (49%) of Bedford's adult population holds at least a bachelor's degree¹⁸ and 93% have high school diplomas. Bedford has a new high school (grades 9 to

¹⁸ Information was retrieved from the Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Employment Security, 2008.

12) and middle school (grades 7 and 8), an intermediate school (grades 5 and 6), and three elementary schools (grades K to 4.) Bedford's students consistently score highly on statewide evaluations. Bedford is conveniently located near seven institutions of higher education and training: St. Anselm College, Southern New Hampshire University, Daniel Webster College, University of New Hampshire-Manchester, Granite State College, Hesser College, and Manchester Community College.

Labor Force: Because of its location adjacent to Manchester and at the cross roads of all major north-south and east-west highways in NH, Bedford is easily accessible to a diversified labor pool throughout central and southern New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts.

Quality of life: Bedford offers many quality-of-life advantages, including its smaller town atmosphere, family orientation, sports and recreation programs, attractive rural setting and accessibility to diverse cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities throughout the region and state.

Weaknesses

Limited undeveloped land: Currently, Bedford has a total of approximately 300 acres of commercially zoned land available for new development, not all of which is contiguous, or useable, due to constraints such as wetlands. Two hundred of those acres are along Route 3 and Route 101.

Infrastructure funding constraints: Water and sewer limitations along the Route 101 corridor and in certain other areas will limit the ability to attract new development. Traffic congestion is also a major issue that needs to be resolved along Routes 3 and 101. Approximately 25% of 190 miles of town-maintained roadway is in need of major repairs. It is currently estimated that just over \$30 million is needed to complete all the needed roadway repairs and improvements up to standard.

Unpredictable planning/ permitting process: The feedback from the business community cited inconsistencies and timing issues in the permitting process for development and signage, which can increase businesses' costs and has the possibility of making Bedford a difficult town in which to do business.

Lack of business incentives: As noted above, some communities in our area offer economic incentives to attract businesses. Bedford lacks incentives such as TIF districts, New Market Tax Incentives, and other tax credit, fee rebate, or low-interest loan programs, which can be a competitive disadvantage.

Opportunities

Re-development of existing properties: Bedford's best opportunities to increase commercial market values are in redevelopment of existing properties, including those listed in the prior section. As in most communities, 80% of the opportunity in economic development is in the retention and expansion of existing businesses; 20% is in new

development. The ability to make these opportunities happen depends upon the ability to proactively bring multiple parties together to envision and bring to fruition projects that are not likely to happen on their own.

Airport access road: Expected to be completed in 2012, the connecting road between the Everett Turnpike and the Boston-Manchester Regional Airport will connect with Route 3 just south of the Coastal Forest Products lumberyard and north of the Merrimack border. It will open up at least 800 acres to development in Londonderry, Merrimack, and Bedford.

Workforce housing initiatives: The State of New Hampshire has recently mandated that municipalities provide opportunities for development of workforce housing infrastructure. One way that Bedford can address this is through mixed-use developments that include workforce housing in combination with commercial development. To do that, Bedford must take an active role in project planning to promote best use from the town's perspective. This is being considered and addressed within the master planning process.

Entrepreneurial approach: Many communities in NH are turning to economic development as a solution for increasing revenue. A successful economic development initiative takes commitment, focus, and investment. Major investments have been made by Manchester and Londonderry. Derry, Merrimack, and Hooksett are investing at some level. Many communities started the process with volunteer commissions, yet not many have made the financial commitment to seriously pursue economic development. There is an opportunity for Bedford to differentiate itself, participate as a valuable partner, and be positioned advantageously for the future.

Become more business friendly: Bedford has an opportunity to change its perceived image to one that welcomes and encourages businesses that are identified as a strong fit with the community. By making Bedford an attractive place for businesses to locate, it will be easier to retain current businesses and help ensure that Bedford is competitive for new business development.

Threats

Future tax impact of residential build-out: Bedford is approaching full build-out in residential construction, which means that the impact fees and infrastructure costs that developers have paid over the past 10 years will no longer be a significant source of revenue to offset residential taxes in the Town. Without targeted and well-managed economic development in Bedford, residential taxpayers will have to absorb an increasing share of the Town's budget.

Increasing percentage of total tax burden falling on the residential taxpayer: Ninety percent of the Town's budget is paid with revenues from residential and commercial real estate taxes, which are based on assessed valuations. Because the rate of growth in market values of residential properties in Bedford was higher than that of commercial

properties during the past 10 years, residential properties were assessed an increasing share of the Town budget.

Advantages of surrounding communities with more property for new construction: Bedford will find it increasingly difficult to compete with communities that have a greater amount of land for development and advantageous infrastructures and access to transportation and labor forces.

Slowing economic growth: Though some may consider Bedford to be in a better economic situation than many other communities in NH, Bedford has not been immune to the impact of economic recession. The Town has a number of commercial properties that are underutilized and/or vacant, including the Bedford Mall, the Quality Court Hotel, the Wayfarer Convention Center, and the Macy's area.

Lack of support for road improvements: Bedford voters turned down road bond articles for \$12 million in 2008 and 2009 that were proposed for improvement of major connector roads. The more the repairs are delayed the more costly they are likely to be in the future. Another bond authorization article has been recommended for a vote in 2010.

Lack of state support for Route 101 improvements: The Airport Access Road and development along Route 3 are likely to exacerbate the traffic congestion to and from the west via Route 101. Significant Route 101 road improvements need to be included in the ten-year plan of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT).

Decreasing state revenue: The state has eliminated revenue sharing dollars and lowered its share of retirement contributions for municipal employees as a means of balancing the state budget. The loss of state revenue will cost the Town of Bedford \$194,751 and \$233,911 in fiscal years 2009 and 2010, respectively.¹⁹ This is a fact that may impact the Town's willingness to make needed investments and will have a cumulative impact over time between the town and school budgets.

Doing nothing is a high risk option for Bedford: Surrounding cities and towns such as Manchester, Merrimack, Hooksett, Londonderry, and Derry are now recognizing the importance of economic development as a means of increasing tax revenues and relieving the burden on residential tax payers and are gearing up to effectively market themselves and attract businesses. Regional alliances and partnerships are forming. Bedford could find itself at a significant disadvantage if we do not position ourselves to be an effective player and partner in this process.

¹⁹ Local Government Center. *Final Budget Numbers: NHMA Spreadsheet Outlines State Budget's Financial Affect on Municipalities*. June 26, 2009
http://www.nhlgc.org/LGCWebsite/PDFDocuments/NHMA_Advocacy/NHMA_FY1011_NHRSHwyFunds.xls

Economic Development Requirements

The BEDC has concluded after twelve months of research and deliberation that Bedford is in a strong position for future economic development, provided that the Town takes the steps required to succeed. To compete successfully, Bedford will need to change some of its current policies and practices and will need to make some investments. Each investment must be evaluated not only in terms of the return that Bedford expects to get on the investment but also in terms of the risks of doing nothing and the potential losses in future tax revenues if Bedford fails to sustain our current commercial base and grow in ways that best support the Town's desired quality of life.

In order to effectively manage and control our economic development future, the BEDC has identified the following requirements for success.

Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses

Eighty percent of economic development comes from the retention and growth of existing business. Retaining and growing existing businesses in Bedford must be a priority.

Develop and maintain a database of Bedford businesses

The BEDC has started the process of developing a database of Bedford businesses to enable communication, networking, research, and business engagement. Improving communication between the Town and businesses must be the first step in Bedford's economic development initiative.

At an optimum it would be an advantage to maintain an inventory of all available commercial real estate.

Promote the benefits of local business

Share the positive impact of commercial development to the town and to the residents of Bedford. Businesses bring jobs, tax revenue and services to a community. Encourage Bedford residents to support local businesses.

Build relationships with and between Bedford businesses

Create an outreach program and develop relationships with local businesses through business visitations, outreach forums, and surveys.

Develop a relationship with BHS

Bedford High School has a school-to-career counselor to work with the local community. The Town should work the high school to foster that relationship which makes students feel they are an important part of their community.

Attract New Businesses

Improve and maintain the infrastructure

Successful economic development requires access to transportation, water and sewer, and other infrastructure needs that are critical to commercial establishments. Bedford must continue to extend water and sewer in commercially zoned areas along Routes 101 and Route 114 as opportunities present themselves and must make a concerted effort to work with the State of New Hampshire, surrounding towns, and businesses to ensure that the infrastructure needs for economic development are met. Bedford must work in conjunction with other towns along the Route 101 corridor to monitor plans for improvements and ensure that they stay in the 10-year plan and are carried out to completion.

Target businesses most suitable to Bedford

Due to the limited amount of commercially zoned land in Bedford, Bedford should thoughtfully determine the types of new commercial development and then actively seek it out. The Town should target specific segments that diversify the commercial base, increase market assessments, are consistent with the infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life in Bedford. According to the analysis by the SNHPC and discussions with Metro Center-NH and DRED, Bedford should target the following industries:

- High technology
- Computer
- Electronics
- Biotech
- Government services
- Advanced manufacturing
- Research
- Health care

Promote development of workforce housing

Create an over-lay district, which would permit a more intense use of property in combination with mixed uses on the same lot. The overlay district could be permitted in the Performance Zone and in certain commercial areas. The design criteria should be drawn from the principles of the Congress for New Urbanism, which state that development of land should provide a variety of uses on a livable and workable scale so that residents will be able to live, work and shop in an area that is either walkable or accessible with public transportation.

A Bedford zoning ordinance entitled “Traditional Neighborhood Development” (TND) was adopted by the Town of Bedford in March 1991, which would have permitted mixed-use development. A form of TND should be adopted to revise the Bedford Land Control Ordinances to permit mixed uses and more intense development or

redevelopment as an overlay district in the Performance Zone and in certain Commercial areas.

Streamline the planning process

Businesses have indicated that the permitting process in Bedford can be cumbersome, drawn out, and costly. Every effort must be made to make this process more efficient, timely, and predictable. Streamlining the permitting process will give Bedford significant a competitive edge. Communication between the planning board, businesses, engineers, and staff should be improved in order to be more unified and efficient.

Currently, any changes to Town zoning ordinances are approved by the voters during the annual Town election. Nashua and Manchester have authorized their Boards of Aldermen to make changes to zoning ordinances, as well as Londonderry and Derry's town councils. It shortens the overall length of the planning process and is consistent with how this is handled in most communities with a Town Council form of government.

Create/expand incentives

Bedford should use targeted incentives to attract priority businesses to Bedford and to encourage expansion and retention of existing businesses that will contribute most to the desired commercial and industrial profile for Bedford. Some ways in which the Town could structure incentives include establishing TIF districts, fee waivers, or Economic Revitalization Tax Credits (RSA 79:E).

Participate on State and Regional Planning Boards and Commissions

Bedford must stay abreast of developments within the region and neighboring towns and work in partnership with organizations such as DRED, Metro Center-NH, and the SNHPC. Such relationships with state, regional, and non-profit entities should be created, maintained, and strengthened.

Develop and Implement a Marketing Plan

Define Bedford's identity/brand

The town's identity and reputation is currently segmented and defined by areas beyond the town's control. A successful economic development initiative will require professional assistance to define *our* identity and to develop a marketing effort to promote that identity and the other recommendations in this report.

Web site

An effective web site is essential for economic development. It is often the first impression a business has of a town. The site must be current, visually pleasing, easy-to-navigate, and contain the information that users need.

The Town has already taken a first step with the redesign of the town's web site. The web site allows staff to quickly update information and keep it current. Expanded search

capabilities provide for an incredible depth of information. The new site has a *basic* economic development section. The Commission has done significant research of desirable traits for an economic development web site. This section must sell the features and benefits of Bedford and demonstrate to potential businesses why they should locate in Bedford.

Recommendations

In considering the charge to the Commission and the requirements for effective economic development as outlined in the previous section, the Commission considered the different options available to the Town for meeting those requirements. In evaluating the options, the Commission considered the costs, the benefits, and the risks of each. We also agreed on the following premises:

- Doing business “as usual” will not likely yield the outcomes in the future that Bedford is seeking. Bedford’s situation has changed in significant ways that must be acknowledged.
- If we are serious about economic development and the benefits that commercial development can provide to Bedford taxpayers, we must invest as needed to ensure that those benefits are achieved.
- In order to achieve the desired results, there must be accountability for effective implementation. Accountability is a staff function, not a volunteer function.

New Paradigm

The Commission believes that we cannot expect the next decade to be similar to the last decade in Bedford’s development. Too many major factors have changed. Commercial and residential development will be facing numerous new headwinds, including reduced federal and state funding, tightening lending requirements, less available land for new development and an uncertain economic recovery. Additionally, there will be a significant increase in competition for attractive development projects in the region.

The Commission is respectful of the current draft of the 2010 Master Plan; however, the Commission disagrees with the assumptions that it contains with regard to economic development. Bedford cannot assume that commercial development will average 100,000 square feet per year and commercial build-out will occur within the next 10 to 15 years. The Commission believes that it will only happen in the current economic and political environment with a smarter, coordinated, targeted, accelerated and sustained effort in commercial development and redevelopment.

Developers have many choices of locations. At the same time, the current businesses in Bedford are expressing the desire for a more business-friendly atmosphere and structure in Bedford. A full-time economic development director will best meet this expectation and cultivate the desired tax base in Bedford.

While difficult to quantify, we believe there is a significant future “opportunity cost” to not making this investment. We cannot afford to have the:

- Owner of CR Sparks redevelop in a new location outside of Bedford
- Wayfarer Convention Center sit idle
- Performance Zone on Route 3 be underdeveloped
- Macy’s area be underutilized
- Bedford Mall remain nearly empty without a redevelopment plan in place
- Quality Inn continue to be vacated and surrounded by chain link fencing
- Route 101 western corridor continue without water and sewer and remain undeveloped

Here is a snapshot of just a few current Bedford properties that are ideal for redevelopment. As these several properties illustrate with a focus on the development and redevelopment of the Performance Zone there would be a significant reduction in the tax burden of our citizens.

Property	Assessed Value	Tax Revenue	Building Size (SF)	Lot Size (Acres)
CR Sparks	\$2,542,400	\$49,145	31,520	4.25
Wayfarer Convention Center	\$7,104,500	\$137,330	85,099	6.16
Macy’s*	\$13,677,500	\$264,386	178,550	15.71
Bedford Mall	\$18,145,009	\$350,743	300,000±	20.60
	\$41,469,409	\$801,604	595,169	46.72

*Macy’s 2008 redevelopment plans called for the addition of approximately 138,000 SF or \$266,754 in taxes Bedford.

These current properties are contemplating independent developments. **A collaborative effort may be more beneficial.** This can be influenced by an economic development position.

We must demonstrate to the business community that targeted economic development is a priority. The Commission recognizes that this represents a change in focus and attitude for Bedford.

The Bedford Town Council charged the Commission as follows:

The Bedford Economic Development Commission will seek to improve the quality of life for the taxpayers of Bedford by expanding the commercial and industrial tax base. The Commission shall achieve its goal by preserving existing jobs and businesses and welcoming new businesses, while maintaining Bedford’s unique characteristics and quality of life.

In light of this charge, the BEDC makes the following recommendation.

Establish a volunteer advisory committee

The Commission recommends that the Town establish a volunteer advisory committee, irrespective of any recommendation followed, to represent business interests and serve as a sounding board and group of business ambassadors for Bedford. Such a committee will be critical to the long-term success of business retention, expansion, and growth. The volunteer group would be comprised of a representative cross section of business owners and representatives in the town who would act in both an advisory capacity and as business liaisons to the town administration and the Town Council. For numerous reasons, the Commission does not believe that a volunteer group could be successful in functioning on a stand-alone basis without staff accountability and support.

Primary Recommendation:

Hire a Full-Time Staff Position for Economic Development

A full-time position responsible for economic development would encompass both new business recruitment and existing business retention. The position would serve as a liaison to other regional resources as well as to applicants coming before boards for planning and related approvals. This business community advocate would be accountable for meeting predetermined objectives set by the Town Council and Town Administration.

Alternatively, the Town Administration could be reorganized such that a position is added whereby the majority of the role incorporates the same objectives.

Benefits of this position

- Establishes accountability and provides a point person for all stakeholders
- Maximizes the potential revenues to Bedford by putting the structure in place for accelerated, targeted, and sustained economic development and redevelopment
- Minimizes the risks of loss of existing businesses
- Provides a full-time, dedicated resource
- Frees up time currently being spent by the Town Manager and Town Planning Director on economic development, allowing them to focus on core job responsibilities
- Resolves conflicts currently created by using the Town Manager to cultivate economic development opportunities while also serving on the Planning Board
- Commits to a proactive versus reactive approach to economic development
- Allows for established and measurable performance objectives
- Promotes sustainability of the economic development effort
- Ensures high visibility for Bedford
- Provides a resource for local businesses
- Facilitates communication and partnerships at the regional, state, and national levels
- When executed, there will be an economic multiplier effect in the form of revenues such as rooms and meals taxes, etc.

Drawbacks

- Financial investment required and impact on the Town budget, given an additional FTE.

Primary responsibilities of the economic development director

The primary responsibilities of the Bedford economic development director would correspond to the requirements that have been outlined in the *Economic Development Requirements* section.

- Strengthen relationships with existing businesses
 - Develop and maintain a database of Bedford businesses
 - Promote the benefits of local businesses
 - Build relationships with and between Bedford businesses
 - Develop a relationship with BHS
- Attract new businesses
 - Improve and maintain the infrastructure
 - Target businesses most suitable to Bedford
 - Promote development of workforce housing
 - Streamline the planning process
 - Create/expand incentives
- Participate on state and regional planning boards and commissions
 - NH-DRED
 - Metro Center-NH
 - SNHPC
- Develop and implement a marketing plan
 - Define Bedford's identity/brand
 - Economic development web site

Business Case Supporting the Primary Recommendation

The Commission has spent considerable time reviewing the financial impact of its recommendation. We believe that this decision cannot be considered solely upon the basis of a short-term “cost lens.” It is acknowledged that there will be a 12-to 18-month return on investment.

The following financial business case is presented in support of our recommendation.

Business Case Assumptions

- 100,000 sq feet = \$10,000,000 new assessments
- Tax Rate \$18.24 (less County portion of \$1.09) used consistently each year - \$19.33 - 1.09 = \$18.24
- \$100,000 approximate impact: \$0.03/\$1,000 (assuming no revenue benefit) - Ex: \$12 on a \$400,000 home
- Cost = Salary + benefits + operating budget (\$100,000 first year with \$10,000 increase in subsequent years comprised of salary and benefits as outlined in the Town’s personnel policies and operating costs ie: expanded programs, website management, marketing, and other functional costs)

Worst Case - 75,000 SF per YR

	Cost	Tax Revenue	One-Time Fees	Annual Difference	Cumulative Net
YR 1 (no additional SF)	-\$100,000	\$0	\$0	-\$100,000	-\$100,000
YR 2 (additional 75,000 SF)	-\$110,000	\$136,800	\$24,300	\$51,100	-\$48,900
YR 3 (additional 75,000 SF)	-\$120,000	\$273,600	\$24,300	\$177,900	\$129,000
YR 4 (additional 75,000 SF)	-\$130,000	\$410,400	\$24,300	\$304,700	\$433,700
YR 5 (additional 75,000 SF)	-\$140,000	\$547,200	\$24,300	\$431,500	\$865,200

Base Case - 100,000 SF per YR (Master Plan Steering Committee's Assumption)

	Cost	Tax Revenue	One-Time Fees	Annual Difference	Cumulative Net
YR 1 (no additional SF)	-\$100,000	\$0	\$0	-\$100,000	-\$100,000
YR 2 (additional 100,000 SF)	-\$110,000	\$182,400	\$32,400	\$104,800	\$4,800
YR 3 (additional 100,000 SF)	-\$120,000	\$364,800	\$32,400	\$277,200	\$282,000
YR 4 (additional 100,000 SF)	-\$130,000	\$547,200	\$32,400	\$449,600	\$731,600
YR 5 (additional 100,000 SF)	-\$140,000	\$729,600	\$32,400	\$622,000	\$1,353,600

Target Case - 125,000 SF per YR

	Cost	Tax Revenue	One-Time Fees	Annual Difference	Cumulative Net
YR 1 (no additional SF)	-\$100,000	\$0	\$0	-\$100,000	-\$100,000
YR 2 (additional 125,000 SF)	-\$110,000	\$228,000	\$40,500	\$158,500	\$58,500
YR 3 (additional 125,000 SF)	-\$120,000	\$456,000	\$40,500	\$376,500	\$435,000
YR 4 (additional 125,000 SF)	-\$130,000	\$684,000	\$40,500	\$594,500	\$1,029,500
YR 5 (additional 125,000 SF)	-\$140,000	\$912,000	\$40,500	\$812,500	\$1,842,000

* Each case assumes there will be no revenue during the first year. However, it is feasible Bedford will receive tax revenue from additional square footage during the following year because the entire development process (from the start of the project to the Town receiving revenue from new development) is typically represented in a 12-18 month period.

Alternative #1 – Contract with Regional Resources

This option would rely principally on purchasing desired services as needed from various public or private entities such as the SNHPC, DRED, CRDC, or the Metro Center-NH.

Benefits

- There are a number of entities from which to choose requested services
- Costs are likely to be less as no FTE is added to Town budget. Costs would vary dependent on the nature and scope of the engagement.
- It is a “pay as you go” model
- Changeover is easily done when the Town is not satisfied with a vendor’s performance

Drawbacks

- The staff burden for economic development continues to fall on the Town Manager and Town Planning Director.
- No dedicated resource or focal point to advocate for economic development
- Potential conflicts of priority or interest in the region
- Does not establish a vehicle for sustainability or continuity over time
- Will be prone to deferral and budget cuts
- Fails to give Bedford a competitive edge

Alternative #2 - Establish Partnership(s) with Communities

This option involves working cooperatively with another community in the region on either a “shared” employee or contractor basis.

Benefits

- Cost sharing reduces the budgetary impact to the Town
- Could bring experienced resources to the table as well as regional knowledge and familiarity
- May relieve some of the time burden on the Town Manager and Town Planning Director

Drawbacks

- Difficulty in finding a compatible and willing partner
- Challenging managerially to ensure agreeable resource allocation of time, responsiveness, and priority
- Shared versus dedicated resource or focal point to advocate for economic development
- Challenging to report to two bosses
- May be difficult to sustain and maintain continuity over time
- Less favorable in giving Bedford a competitive edge

Economic Development Advisory Committee

As discussed earlier, the Commission recommends that the Town establish a volunteer advisory committee to support the Town's economic development efforts and act as a liaison with the business community. The advisory committee is *not a substitute* for a long-term economic development effort. If we are to retain and grow existing businesses, attract new business, and build relationships with surrounding communities to grow our commercial tax revenue, it requires a commitment and investment beyond what volunteers are able to make for a sustained period of time.

Conclusion

The members of the Commission recognize the significance of our recommendation. The current land that is available for redevelopment, undeveloped parcels, the airport access road and the priority of economic development in other communities requires the dedicated focus and attention of an Economic Development Director. This report reinforces the financial benefits of our primary recommendation. It is important to remember the harder to quantify benefits: a positive relationship with the Town and local businesses; increased employment opportunities for Bedford residents; and quality of life.

Appendix: Bedford Economic Development Commission

Russell R. Marcoux, Chair
Town Manager
Town of Bedford

Jack Sullivan, Vice Chair
John B. Sullivan Jr. Companies

Henry A. Bechard, Jr.
Managing Partner
Haffner Hanson Hildreth
Business Consultants

Mark P. Prestipino
President & CEO
Scribe Software

Pamela Brown
President
Brown Performance Group

Joe Reilly
President/CEO
Centrix Bank

Alice L. DeSouza
Director of Travel & Tourism Development
New Hampshire Department of Resources
and Economic Development

Michael S. Sandhu
Sandhu Properties

Bill Dermody
Town Councilor

Rick Sawyer
Planning Director
Town of Bedford

Terry Wolf
Vice Chair
Bedford School Board

Appendix A:

Summary Business Outreach Forums

1) How do you see an economic development function benefitting your business? What support would you expect?

There are many different variations of an economic development function that were discussed during each of the forums. Each function has positives as well as negatives. The possibility of a full-time economic development director was discussed at virtually every forum. Those in favor of this approach argued that it would provide the most accountability for economic development. The other end of the spectrum is recruiting a volunteer to implement the wishes of a standing economic development commission. Other specific suggestions were mentioned that would be grouped somewhere between both of these extremes such as an ambassador program, regional partnerships, commission based, and a part-time employee. However, nobody suggested that the function should be performed through the town manager and town planner as it is currently which means they are generally not satisfied with the way Bedford currently conducts Economic Development. The function should be a cheerleader, quarterback, and advocate for Bedford businesses. Likewise, the function should be a salesperson, communicator, and advocate for the town.

2) What are the most important issues that you currently face that an economic development function might be able to assist with?

- Communication was a major theme that was mentioned at every forum. Whatever the function that is to be employed, it should ensure that adequate communication is upheld between all stakeholders. A constant information exchange through e-mail newsletters and website communication need to be employed. An ongoing business directory would help with this.
- Town identity was a concern that was brought up by more than one individual at each of the forums. They felt that there was no real “town center” to attract people. There really is no economic identity that is unique to Bedford such as being a town where businesses go for office space. Selling a reputation is crucial for creating a town identity. Bedford should be specific about what caliber of business that it should attract.
- Incentives should be used in order to attract specific types of businesses.
- Airport access road is a fantastic opportunity for economic development. What should go here? Hotels and restaurants may feed into the airport clientele as well as provide helpful tax revenue. These businesses should appeal to the airport consumer. Bedford should get the best “bang for their buck” here.
- Keeping businesses from relocating is just as important as economic development. 80% of businesses come from within. Therefore, the economic development function should not forget about businesses once they are up and running.

- Infrastructure Needs such as water and sewer and other utilities on route 101 were mentioned multiple times. A clear infrastructure plan would give businesses a direction as to where they should develop.

3) How do you see the business climate in Bedford compared to surrounding areas?

- Location is Bedford's major strength because of major roads and highways such as 101, 293, 3, etc.
- People in the community are also a major strength compared to other communities. While they are unique and progressive in nature they are also apathetic when it comes to volunteering for positions and attending public meetings.
- The planning process has been improved greatly since Bedford acquired Rick. However, the development process should continue to be improved and more business friendly. The planning board should act more cohesively perhaps by authoring a mission statement and lessening the time and delay's in the process. More autonomy should be given to the town council to make change to ordinances more efficient. Overall, the process is too time consuming.
- Signage compared to other town is a weakness of Bedford. Many find the signage ordinances to be far too restrictive. However, they also mentioned the need to maintain Bedford's character so it does not evolve into a south willow street.

Appendix B: Summary Business Visitations

Local Government Regulations: Too restricting

- Noise ordinance, permits, signage restrictions,
- Town places limits on merchandising capabilities outside of the store
- Restrictions should be the same for all businesses: eliminate “Grandfather Clauses”

Types of businesses:

- Lack of fast food restaurants
- Office space
- Technology industry
- Software industry
- Airport access road: Retail? Offices? Businesses? Financial?

Economic Development Function: Options

- Full-time staff member
 - Would serve as an advocate for the business community
 - Would act as a liaison between business and the town of Bedford.
 - ED director should attend town meetings to speak on behalf of business.
- Communication would improve
- Bedford organization different from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce would be beneficial.
- BEDC should be different than a town sanctioned commission. Perhaps a 501 (c) (3).
- Function should be separate from the town in order to be a true advocate for businesses.
- Function is best served to be external and consisting of businesses

SWOT

Strengths

- Location, image, transportation
- Quality of development
- Services
- Demographics

Weaknesses

- Town services to businesses
- Communication
- Lack of ED direction,
- Consistency – Treating all businesses equally
- Lack of outreach to businesses
- Local Regulations
- More authority to the Planning Dep't and Town Council on planning issues.
- Faster approval process needed
- Lack of public transportation

Opportunities

- Airport Access Road
- BEDC

Threats

- State corporate tax Structure
- Economic Downturn
- Balancing Residential/commercial development needs
- Fast food restaurants

Appendix C: Bedford Businesses

A partial list of Bedford businesses, listed in alphabetical order.

Absolute Fitness	Bedford Deli	Citizens Bank New Hampshire
Agile Resources LLC	Bedford Fields	Clix Photo
Alapage	Bedford High School - School to Career Program	Clougherty Law Office
Alfano Baroff & Kasten	Bedford Internal Medicine	CMA Engineers Inc.
Allen Kate Certified Financial	Bedford Pharmacy	CMGC Building Corp.
Altos Marketing Group	Bedford Pool and Patio	CMGC Building Corp.
American Cancer Soc., N.E.Div., Inc.	Bedford Self Storage	Coldwell Banker
America's Best Companies	Bedford Tree Services	Counterpoint Insurance
Ameriprise Financial	Bedford Village Inn	Country Inn & Suites by Carlson
Anagnost	Bedford Village Realty	CRP Contract Flooring
Anchorage Appraisal Group	Bentley Commons at Bedford	Culligan Water Systems
Andre Garron	Berard Martel Architecture	CVS
Animal Rescue League of NH	Blowin' Smoke	Dartmouth Hitchcock Bedford
Ansell & Anderson	Bob's Stores	Devine, Millimet
Applebees	Body Bronze Tanning Salon	Dick Stonner
Arbors of Bedford	Boston Group	Dividers Plus
Armand Karolian	Breathe New Hampshire	Dixieland Florist
AspenCross Financial Group	Brokers Title & Closing LLC	Druke Accounting & Tax Services
Aubuchon Hardware	Bugaboo Creek Steakhouse	Dunkin Donuts
Avery Search Associates	Burke Advertising	Eastern New England Hydraulics
Baldwin & Clarke Companies	Burlington Foreign Car Parts	EastPoint Executive Center
Bank of America	C.R. Sparks Restaurant/The Event Center	EB Gamestop
Diane P. Bauer	Camp Allen, Inc.	Eckman Construction Co.
Beasley & Ferber	Campbell Campbell Edwards	Elliot Family Medicine At Employmoms
Beals Insurance Agency	Cancun Restaurant	Enhanced Life Options Group
Bedfor Prime Meats	Carbone Floral Distributors	Enviro-Tote Inc.
Bedford Ambulatory Surgical	Carrabba's Italian Grill	Ethan Allen Home Interiors
Bedford Ambulatory Surgical Center	Centrix Bank	Events Your Way LLC
Bedford Commons OB/GYN P.A.	CEO, Inc.	
	Chartwell Hotels	
	Chen Yang Li	
	Chiocca Homes LLC	

Extra Touch Gourmet
Farley White
Fast-Teks On-site Computer Services
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Fedex Office
Ferrotec (USA) Corporation
Fireplace Village
First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA
Flower Cart
Focus Capital Wealth Management, Inc.
Fredricks Pastry
Frizzhome Gardens
Fulcrum Appraisal
Futureplus Systems Corporation
Gale Associates
Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains
Gloria Jeans
Goedecke Decorating Center
Granite Commercial Group, Inc.
Granite State Cabinetry
Greater Manchester/Nashua Board of Realtors
Greiner Investments, LLC
Grenon Trading Company
Grubb & Ellis/Coldstream Real Estate Advisors, Inc
H2O Salon Spa
Hampshire First Bank
Hampshire Green
Hampton Inn & Suites
Hannaford Brothers
Harbor Group, Inc.

Harborside Healthcare-Northwood
Hartley Law
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of NE
Harvest Market
Harvey Construction Corp. of NH
Highland Forwarding, Inc.
Hill-Brook Motel
Holden Engineering & Surveying
Home Goods
HTE Northeast
IBM Corporation
Idearc Media Corp.
Infantine Insurance Inc
Integrated Floral Services
Integrity Health Support for Women
Interstate Electrical Services
Jean R Chagnon DDS
JitterGram, Inc.
John Vaillancourt & Assoc
Jon Levenstein Attorney
Jonathan's Jewelers
Just Results
Karen's Kitchen & Gourmet Shoppe
KBW Financial Staffing & Recruiting
Keach-Nordstorm Associates
Keller Williams Realty Metropolitan
Kelly Temporary Services, Inc.
Laconia Savings Bank
Lamontagne Builders
Leddy Group

Liberty Mutual Personal Markets
Lowe's
LTD Company, Inc.
Luisa's Pizza
Macy's
Manchester Country Club marketreach, Inc.
Marquis-Whitman Commercial Group
Marshall's
Masiello Group
Hildneth, McLane, Gray, Raulerson, & Middleton
Meathouse
Mervyn Taub
Microdesk of New England
Milan Salon & Spa
Ms. Merideth Ham
NAI Norwood Group
NAPA Auto Parts
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
New York Life
NH DRED
NH Tourism & Travel
NL Financial Alliance
Northern Acres
NSS Corp.
Océ Imagistics Inc.
Off The Wall Promotions
Off The Wall Promotions
Outback Steakhouse
Packard Development
Panera Bread
Papa Gino's
PC Solutions Corp.
Pepperidge Farm

Pinard Law Offices	Sandler Sales	Sullivan Construction, Inc.
Pink Sapphire	Institute/BestSalesPeople.com	Taipei & Tokyo 3 Place
Pizza Bella	Savings Bank Life Insurance	Talbots
Pizza Mia	Segula Technologies	Tamposi Professional Assn
PJ's Flowers and Antiques	Segway LLC	Tanglewood Gardens
Quality Inn & Wayfarer Convention Center	SERESC	Target
Rainbowland Child Development	Service Credit Union	T-Bones Restaurant
R.J. Moreau Companies	Shorty's Mexican Roadhouse-Manchester	TFMoran, Inc.
RE Development	Sir Speedy Printing	Top Drawer
RE/MAX Properties Group	Ski 93 Trips	Town of Bedford
Reilly Enterprises	Slammers	Town Planner of Manchester
Reilly Enterprises	Sojourn Partners	U.S. Cellular
Retirement Advisors	Solomon Professional Assn	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc.
Richmond Law Firm	Southern New Hampshire Software Wholesalers	Varuna Design & Advertising, LLC
Ridgewood Realty Inc.	Special Education New Hampshire "CP ED"	Venteq Inc.
Rite-aid	Sperry Van Ness/Fini Group	Vintner's Cellar of Bedford
Riverwalk @ Bedford Sales Office	Staples	VIP Auto Parts
RKG Associates, Inc.	Star Media of New Hampshire, Inc.	Wadleigh, Starr & Peters, LLC
Robin Shevenell	State Farm Mutual Insurance Company	Walgreen's
Royal Bouquet	Stella Fine Chocolates	Wal-Mart
Sandford Surveying and Engineering	Stop & Shop	Weathervane Seafoods
Sandhu Properties	Success Management Center	WJM Financial LLC
		Yellow Transportation Inc.