**Zone CEDS Public Input Sessions**

**Round 1- Manchester, June 18th**

(KB Notes)

Laura - welcome and introduction

Lynn and David Reese, RED Group - “why are you investing your time in this effort?”

Rachel:

Introduction

CEDS overview - what is it? - important outcomes for the process - action plan for the process - what are the priorities and the work plan

Project overview - work plan overview of tasks and planning over the next 6 months

What will be the outcome? This plan will not just sit on the shelf - you should and will be using this plan. There will be specific action plans that should be taken

What do you love about southern Vermont?

* Small in size - Access to neighbors, politics
* Lower stress level
* Quality of education - a challenge and an opportunity
* Community
* Access to local, state and regional influencers
* Willingness to engage
* Need to identify what scale
* What changes are you hoping to see?
* Attendance in local town level government
* Generate apathy
* Being small we don’t have all the public resources needed for change
* There has to be enough people willing to make noise about the change
* Seasonality
* Find ways to stay outside and be engaged all year long
* You have to do it yourself - individuality - no expectation from the state or federal level
* Lovely arts community - opportunity to cross pollenate in the tri-state region

What is the greatest challenge facing business owners in southern Vermont? How about residents?

* Commercial building stock and the value
* Market rate salaries and in-tune with the 21st century
* High property value and the taxes
* Infrastructure - sewer systems, education system and need for workforce ready employees.
* Opportunity for the trades - what can we do to fill the need
* Regulations
* Business Competition
* Lack of career opportunities and education to get these careers
* Housing
* Transportation
* Lack of variety in the business type - need to diversify the type of businesses to attract and retain people here
* Lack of workforce
* Lack of financing
* We don’t want another large company to leave the region because they can’t find quality workforce
* Childcare - cost, availability
* Need to revitalize our downtowns - plan and organize - need for retail - public private partnership
* Broadband and cell phone service

This plan will be a success if it addresses what key issues?

* Population growth
* Community leadership is engaged in the process - went don’t see enough of this
* Increase the size of pool of qualified workforce
* Children are educated to leave the region - need to have them go out and come back to live
* Economic development is the key issue
* We need to show momentum and have small wins and keep consistent

Money is no object, what one project would have the greatest impact on the southern Vermont economy?

(Whiteboard Notes)

What do you love about SoVermont?

 Access to neighbors, politicians, business owners

 Low stress lifestyle

 Education quality

 Community

 Scale to engage/make change in apathy, willingness to do so must take a different approach, but

also a challenge due to lack of resources

 Seasonality  Find ways to stay engaged outdoors and all outdoor recreation opportunities

available in SoVermont  appreciation of the cycle

 Entrepreneurial spirit: do it yourself

 Lively arts community

 Cross pollination / in tri state region

Greatest Challenges

 Business

o Commercial business

o Stock

o Market rate salaries

o Transportation infrastructure

o Education infrastructure

o Workforce/trade

o Cost of doing business: employees, taxes, regulations, comp.

o Local and state government snot showing interest in why businesses are leaving (plisan)

 Residents

o High property values

o Transportation

o Lack of career opportunities housing

o No focus on community development services

o Childcare: cost, availability

o Reimagine downtowns (community owned assets)

 Both

o Lack of business diversity (the need for experience)

o Lack of finances/financing options

o Broadband and cell

Key Issues

 Population group

 Community leadership engagement (SB etc)

 Increasing pool of workforce ready residents

 Incentivizing getting native VTs back here after leaving for school, jobs, etc.  $ to come back

home

 Show progress, success, to take control of our narrative: baby steps to gain buy in (keep pipeline

full)

Projects BIG idea

 Large scale immigration project trans/bus

 Cohesive marketing

 Loop rail road public transport

Projects Quick

 Phase 1 Putnam Project

 Bike infrastructure

 Broadband

 Housing

 Uber/Lyft services

 Streamlined process  Green (for storefront space)

Closing remarks

 ITVFest  bring these people into process

 Hospitals master plan

 Burr and Barton future investment